

SECTION 4 COMMAND AND CONTROL

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The SOLFIRE Plan is divided into three command areas: (See Fig 1 SOLFIRE Command Areas - page ix)

- **SOLFIRE East**
- **SOLFIRE West**
- **SOLFIRE South**

The response to an emergency in any of these areas will have one or more levels of management, dependent on the classification of the emergency and the nature of the incident. Normally, the need will be determined by starting at the operational (BRONZE) level and then only moving on to the tactical (SILVER) and finally strategic (GOLD) levels should this prove necessary.

For any incident, the individual agency SILVER Commanders will gather at the Marine Response Centre (MRC) and be co-ordinated by the SILVER Commander of the Initiating Authority for Class A and B incidents. Where a SOLFIRE Class C or D is declared responsibility for co-ordinating the multi agency response will be transferred to the Police Silver Commander.

All BRONZE Commanders located onboard a vessel in distress will, whenever possible, come together and be co-ordinated by the Forward Control Coordinator (FCC). This group is known as the Forward Control Team (FCT).

SEARCH AND RESCUE

Search and rescue response will be co-ordinated by Solent Coastguard.

4.2 SOLFIRE INCIDENTS

For a declared SOLFIRE incident the Initiating Authority and MRC are detailed below.

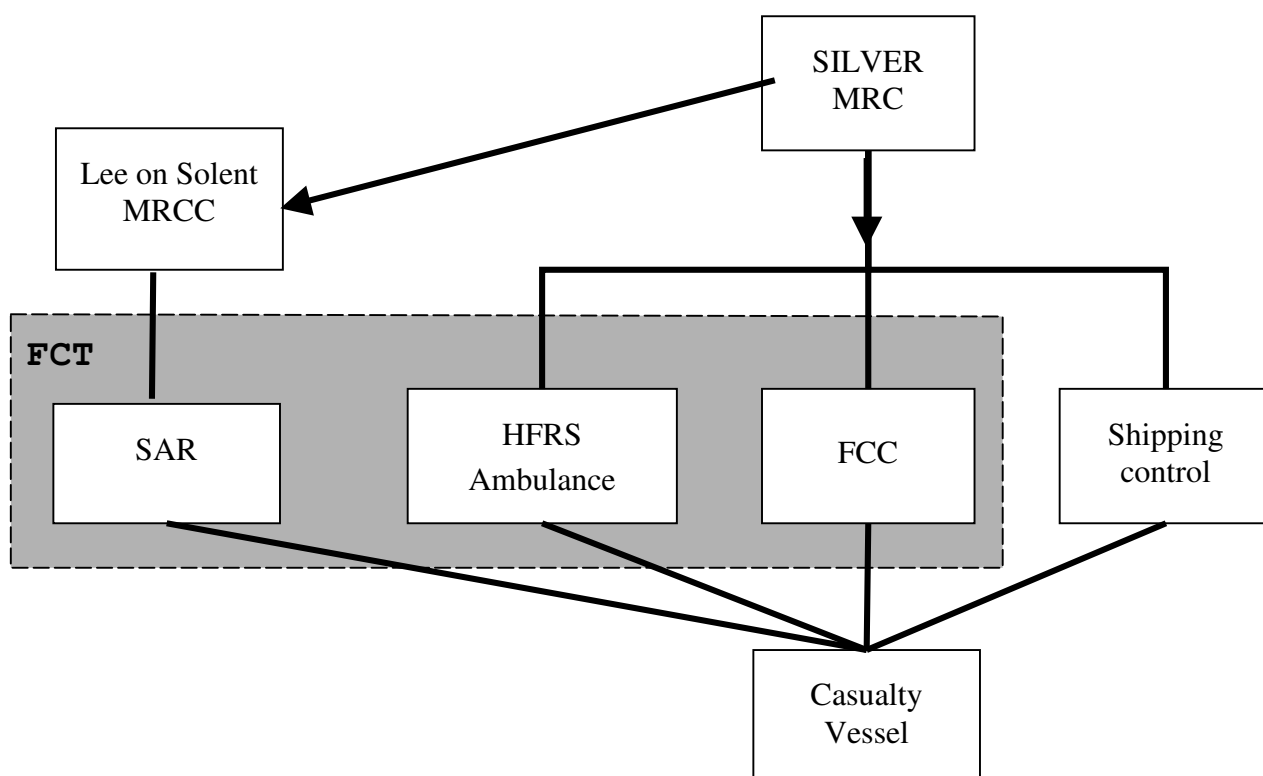
INCIDENT LOCATION	INITIATING AUTHORITY	MARINE RESPONSE CENTRE (SILVER)
SOLFIRE EAST	QHM PORTSMOUTH	SEMAPHORE TOWER PORTSMOUTH NAVAL BASE
SOLFIRE WEST	SOUTHAMPTON HARBOUR AUTHORITY	VTS CENTRE SOUTHAMPTON DOCKS
SOLFIRE SOUTH	SOLENT COASTGUARD	MRCC SOLENT LEE-ON-SOLENT

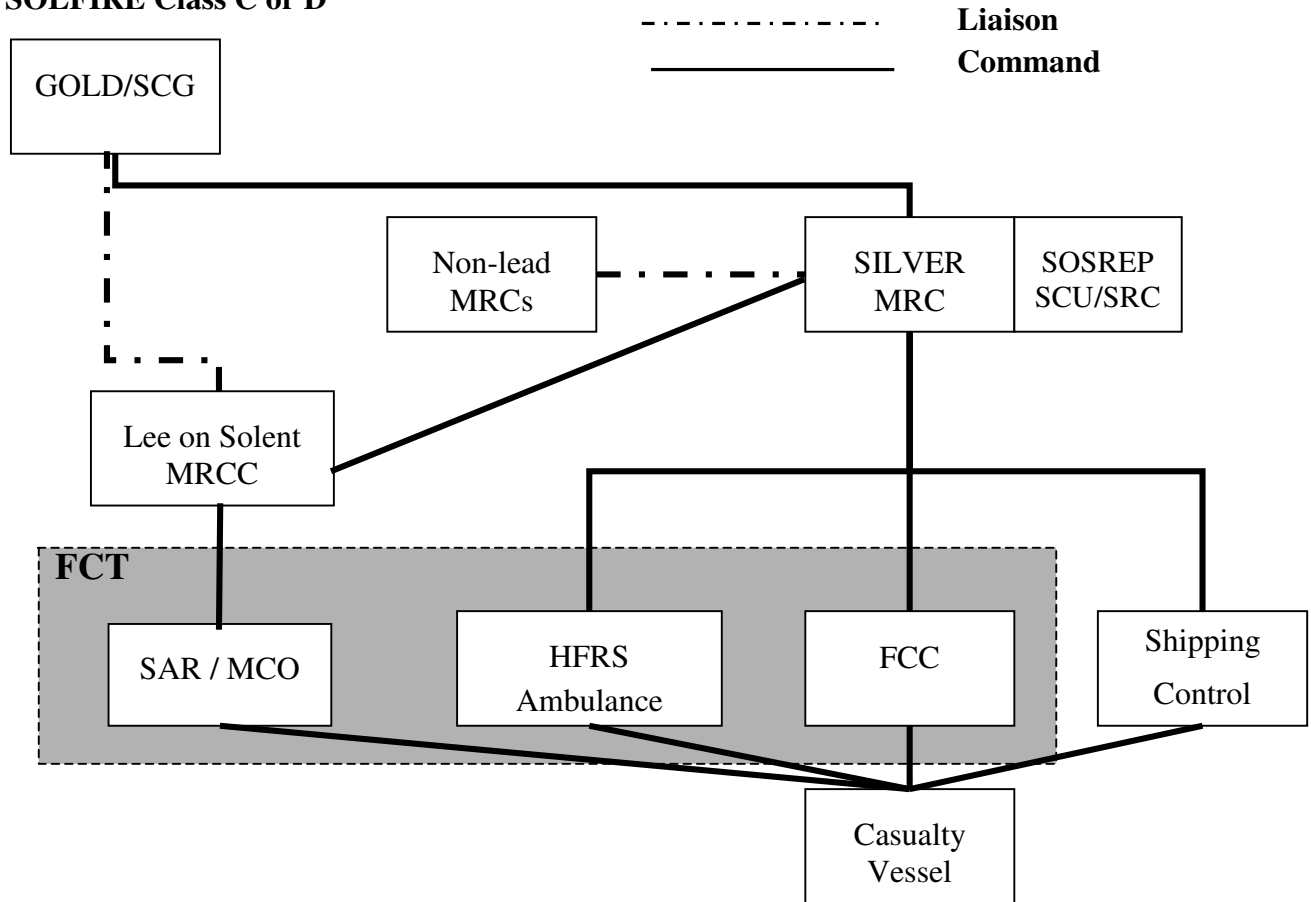
Notwithstanding, for any security or terrorist related incident, regardless of where initiated, overall command of the incident will be with Hampshire Police throughout.

4.3 COMMAND STRUCTURE

The command lines shown in all cases refer to legal orders given by authorities so empowered for the execution of their statutory duties.

SOLFIRE Class A or B



SOLFIRE Class C or D

There are three possible MRC's and for a SOLFIRE C/D it is envisaged that sufficient personnel will close up in the non-lead MRC's to provide assistance and support to the lead MRC (SILVER)

SOSREP will direct the formation of the Salvage Control Unit (SCU) and Shoreline Response Centre (SRC) at the MRC (SILVER) as required by the National Maritime Contingency Plan.

In every case, command and control of a security or suspected terrorist incident will be as for SOLFIRE D.

4.4 OPERATIONAL CONTROL AFLOAT

Forward Control Team (FCT)

The Initiating Authority will normally establish a **FCT** to liaise and offer assistance to the Master of the stricken vessel. It will be advantageous, if the circumstances permit, for the FCT to board the vessel for this purpose. When unsafe to do so, they will embark a vessel in order to be in close proximity to the stricken vessel.

The Master of the vessel retains responsibility for the actions taken on board his own vessel. He will have access to valuable cargo, stability and damage control information and advice. Additionally, the Master may well have already initiated on board fire fighting operations and other related activity and close liaison with him will be essential.

It will be a SOLFIRE Priority to transport a FCT to the scene of the incident as quickly as possible. The FCT will consist of various BRONZE Commanders as follows:

(i) Forward Control Co-ordinator (FCC)

The Initiating Authority may appoint an appropriate Officer as FCC.

The FCC will be responsible for co-ordinating the joint actions of the FCT, facilitating the prioritisation of actions on-scene and any requests for support services and will be briefed before being deployed.

(ii) Fire & Rescue Service Officer

Who will command On Scene Fire Fighting operation in close liaison with the Master.

(iii) Ambulance/Medical Officer

Who will establish triage of casualties and health communications in conjunction with the Forward Medical Commander (if present)

(iv) Coastguard Liaison Officer

Who, if available, will provide on scene liaison between responding Emergency Services, Marine Units and the Master of the vessel.

Note: The FCT may be supplemented by an MCA Marine Casualty Officer (MCO) when available.

4.5 STRATEGIC (GOLD) CO-ORDINATION - SOLFIRE Class C or D EMERGENCY

If the nature of the incident is such that it is considered by the Tactical (SILVER) Control that further support is required at a strategic level then a Strategic (GOLD) Co-ordinating Group may be established at the direction of the Chief Constable of Hampshire. The location of GOLD is also his decision but will usually be at the 'Strategic Co-ordination Centre' Netley Support HQ.

In every case, command and control of a security or suspected terrorist incident will be as for a SOLFIRE D and a Strategic (GOLD) Co-ordinating Group will be established at Netley Support HQ, at the direction of the Chief Constable of Hampshire.

4.6 TRANSPORTATION OF FORWARD CONTROL TEAM

The SOLFIRE Initiating Authority will determine whether the Forward Control Team will be transported to the scene by either helicopter or suitable vessel. This will be determined by their ability to safely board the vessel by the fastest available method.

(i) By air

A helicopter provided by Solent Coastguard, if available, will embark the Forward Control Team at a designated site. The appointed Forward Control Co-ordinator will be embarked at a designated site. (See Annex 4 for designated landing/embarkation sites).

(ii) By sea

A suitable vessel for the Forward Control Team will be arranged by the SOLFIRE Initiating Authority who will advise on the embarkation location.

It is possible that the various members of the FCT will be transported separately to the Casualty Vessel, however, it is vital that once onboard they work together under the coordination of the FCC.

4.7 COMMAND OF FIRE FIGHTING

- (i) On board vessel fire fighting will be the responsibility of the Senior Fire Officer afloat.
- (ii) The Fire Liaison Officer will attend at the Solent Coastguard.
- (iii) The Marine Casualty Officer (MCO) may request offshore fire-fighting teams to take certain actions with the approval of the Salvage Control Unit (as agreed with the Senior Fire Officer afloat).
- (iv) The HFRS commander will attend MRC (Silver).

4.8 FIRE FIGHTING VESSELS

There are tugs with fire fighting capabilities located at both Southampton and Portsmouth. These may be immediately available or require varying degrees of notice. The most suitable tugs will be made available at the request of the Initiating Authority, which may deploy one or more tugs to the scene of the incident and advise the most appropriate location for the embarkation of Fire & Rescue service personnel. (The Initiating Authorities hold lists of the availability and capabilities of tugs).

Note: Tugs may be required to be utilised in a multi-role capacity involving Fire Fighting, Pollution Response, Salvage and Vessel Control.

4.9 SALVAGE OPERATIONS

A SOLFIRE incident may require the assistance of Salvage Experts who may be

appointed by either the vessel's Master, Owners, SOSREP or the Initiating Authority. Once appointed, they will be represented in the Forward Control Team, or MRC (SILVER).

4.10 HELICOPTER DEPLOYMENT

Requests for helicopter deployment will be directed to MRCC Solent who will liaise with the Air Rescue Coordination Centre Kinloss for provision of suitable aircraft.

It is of note that while helicopters are a valuable asset for the speedy transfer of personnel and equipment, their noise and downdraught may hamper rescue and fire fighting operations under certain circumstances.

In these cases consideration should be given for helicopters to hover well clear of the shipping casualty, until called into the scene for a specific purpose by the Forward Control Co-ordinator or Coastguard Liaison Officer if he is tasked with co-ordinating air assets.

4.11 RESTORATION OF NORMALITY

In a prolonged major incident where the marine aspects of the emergency continue after the initial impact on shore-based agencies has declined, SOLFIRE classification may be down-graded and levels of control stepped down until normality is restored. A Recovery Working Group will be established with the Strategic Coordinating Group at an early stage to coordinate the return to normality.