



Dealing with Incidents and Accidents

- We consider that **Accidents** involve injury, **Incidents** compromise safety but no injury occurred.
- Following the required steps minimises the risk of further harm, ensures appropriate notification, facilitates proper investigation, and helps prevent future occurrences.

Accident management

- Try to ensure that everyone **stays calm** to ensure the best outcome for all parties involved.
- A Coach or experienced Pilot should take charge to decide how to best deploy resources, prevent confusion and duplication of work. Responsibilities include:
 - Checking for danger to rescuers or the casualty.
 - Assigning volunteers to provide first aid and emergency service communication.
 - Assigning helpers to collect information about the incident.
 - Ensuring safe emergency helicopter landing by securing loose items (aircraft, bags, emergency parachutes, etc.). In a helicopter's rotor downwash, loose items and debris may create a hazard to the helicopter and to people on the ground.
 - Assigning volunteers to alert airborne pilots of an incoming emergency helicopter via radio and visual signals. An "all land" signal laid out in the launch or landing area (BHPA clubs may suggest a large "H" or "X" of paragliders) can be a useful visual cue to airborne pilots but requires constant vigilance and management by at least two helpers to pack it away as soon as a helicopter is detected nearby.
- Pilots must be mindful of orange/red smoke deployed by Mountain Rescue Teams to direct an emergency service helicopter to the scene. Pilots spotting this smoke near a flying site must not launch and should fly well clear if they are in the air.
- There should be no flying or ground handling near the site until after the helicopter has departed.

Calling the emergency services in the UK

- Dial **999** or **112**.
- Request "**Police**", and "**Mountain Rescue**" for incidents in remote areas.
- For sea cliffs, or coastal water landings, call the **Coastguard** via **999** or **112**.
- Relay the key phrases: "**remote location**" and "**fall from height**."
- Provide location details via OS grid reference, "What 3 Words", address and/or postcode.
- The "METHANE" acronym is used by emergency services to build a comprehensive report in the event of a major incident, to aid passing information as effectively as possible.
 - **Major Incident?**
 - **Exact location** of the incident.
 - **Type** of incident.
 - **Hazards** (what hazards or potential hazards can be identified).
 - **Access** (what are the best routes for access and egress to and from the scene?).
 - **Number of casualties** (how many casualties, and what condition are they in?).
 - **Emergency services** present and/or required.

For the medics that arrive on scene, being able to provide them with the following information at handover is useful (often referred to by the mnemonic "ATMIST"):

- **Age** (of patient along with gender and first name).
- **Time** (how long has it been since the impact, give the time the impact happened).
- **Mechanism** (what exactly happened, feet first, head first, with speed, did they bounce or roll or slide).
- **Injuries** (list the sore bits from top to toe).

- **Signs** (heart rate, breathing rate, whether you can feel a strong pulse or not, skin tone & level of alertness and how any of that has changed if at all).
- **Treatments** (what they have had so far - splints, bandages, dressings, reassurance, thermal wraps, medicine and details of last food / fluid).

Dealing with serious accidents – recording what happened

- Assign someone to record the scene using photos, video, and notes.
- In the event of a fatality the Police manage the scene and aircraft wreckage. Only take pictures of wreckage with their express permission. Do not photograph the casualty.
- Collect witness details. Ideally, witnesses should be asked to write down what they saw there and then, before talking to other people clouds their recollections.

Reporting an accident or incident

- There is a legal requirement to report air accidents to the **Police** and the **Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB)**. AAIB 24-hour reporting line 01252 512299. Link to [AAIB guidance](#).
- Inform the Police and **BHPA** of serious accidents. BHPA Office and Technical Officers 0116 289 4316 (24 hours in an emergency)
- Contact BHPA technical staff for fatalities, equipment failures, or serious injuries.

Incident Report Form

- BHPA has an [on-line Incident Report Form](#) linked with a pan-European system hosted by the European Hang Gliding and Paragliding Union (EHPU).
- Try to submit reports for serious incidents and accidents within **48 hours**.
- Please report all accidents/incidents, especially those involving airworthiness. Do not assume that someone else has made a report.
- Complete the report as thoroughly as you can; multiple reports are better than none.
- Non-BHPA members can also use the incident reporting system.

The Media

- The Media may arrive on the scene of an incident quickly and ask leading questions to those involved / witnesses in various stages of shock.
- A CFI or Senior Coach may give a short, factual, statement following the guidance in the BHPA Technical Manual.
- Avoid discussing incidents on social media.
- Be cautious about comments that could harm investigations or the sport's image.

Post Incident Support

- Common reactions to witnessing accidents include shock, guilt, grief, helplessness, confusion, and fear.
- Subsequent symptoms may include depression, anxiety, mood swings, anger, nightmares, and sleep issues. These feelings and symptoms are a common response to seeing something upsetting and are recognised as your body's way of processing what it has seen.
- It is important to talk to someone if you experience any issues that affect your ability to cope and function. Speak to friends, pilots, or seek professional help via your GP.
- GPs can refer individuals to specialists for therapy or support; available in person, by phone, or online.
- The NHS website and mental health charities like Mind.org.uk offer valuable resources.

It is beneficial to have more First Aid trained individuals, and taking part in a Club organised First Aid Course is strongly recommended.