

Scene Assessment the Inner and Outer survey

At every incident we attend we must carry out a full 360' assessment of the situation before any operations take place.

This entails an Inner and Outer scene survey, as much as we want to get to work and deal with the casualties we must remain professional and wait for this assessment to be completed!

This will reduce the potential of you to becoming the next casualty.

Inner circle survey

The inner survey must be completed by the first attendance Officer in charge, if due to your SOP's the next higher ranking officer has to take over, the initial attendance OIC should remain in control of the rescue phase as they will have already formulated a plan based on their assessment, an exception to this will be if the incident is not within that officers skill level and technical knowledge, if this is the case the correct line of action must be taken, but this must not hinder or have a detrimental effect on the extrication and casualty centered phase of operations.

The whole process should only take a minute or so depending on incident size and severity.

The inner and outer survey is completed by the OIC and a crew member both working in opposite directions (one clockwise and one anti-clockwise) This will make sure that the whole scene is assessed for hazards.

The inner scene survey should be carried out by the OIC even though this may not be taught across the board, why is this ?

The OIC needs to be able to establish the immediate risks/hazards that are present and evaluate the casualties predicament, this can not be completed unless he/she carries out the inner scene survey.

The inner survey is a multi point inspection of the vehicles top, sides, internal, bottom and immediate surrounding area, the OIC can see first hand what they are presented with and start to formulate a plan of action. No contact should be made with the vehicle to avoid harm from any unseen hazards, ideally remaining at arms length away from the vehicle until the complete 360 has been achieved, avoiding the lure to open doors etc

For example until you have completed the survey you will not know if the vehicle is in contact with a live power cable from a utility.

There are diagrams of the inner and outer survey and they have distances added to them, realistically these are not definitive and the road layout and scene you are faced with will determine the parameters of the inner and outer survey distances out from the scene of operations.



The list is not exhaustive and will be determined by the situation, the inner survey should enable the OIC to pick up such information as:

- Immediate dangers to life and health
- Vehicle type
- Vehicle status (on or off)
- Additional Stability problems
- Automotive power
- SRS activated and non activated
- Number of occupants
- Access / points of access
- Level of entrapment
- Casualty condition
- Ignition keys

If after this assessment a Rapid extrication is needed, protocols for this are:

Only to be called by the medics if a thorough understanding of this terminology is understood by all those on scene.

Can be called by the OIC if that is your procedures.

Incidents in isolated locations, this may be called by the fire officer if they are first on scene, if it is deemed that it will have a beneficial outcome for the casualty.

A rapid extrication must not through caution to the wind, the OIC must not put the crew at risk unless a Risk v Benefit analysis has been carried out.

Crews must be fully aware of what the term [Rapid Extrication](#) means and the techniques that can be used to perform this, at no time should you falter from the casualty centered arena.

Outer Scene Assessment

The outer survey can be carried out by a competent crew member and the information gathered can be passed onto the OIC, if you have an immediate 2 appliance arrival you can then use the second officer to carry out this assessment, by carrying out the assessment in an opposite direction will make sure all the areas are covered and hopefully nothing is missed.

The outer survey will cover:

Immediate hazards to life and health (Gas, Elec, utilities, hazmat)

Ejected passengers

Walking wounded

Other vehicles involved - if persons are trapped the OIC will need to carry out an inner survey and decide on their spans of control.

Car seats

Again this list is not exhaustive it will greatly depend on the scene you are faced with.

There is debate on who should do what and this will also depend on your SOP's and sound operational knowledge of this subject.

The facts are, the OIC needs to evaluate the scene and formulate a plan of action based around a casualty centered rescue, this can only be completed if the officer in charge has the information they need to formulate this plan, the only way this information can be gathered is by them, carrying out the inner survey.

If a thorough inner and outer survey is carried out in a timely and efficient manner that is relevant to the situation, this will have a positive bearing on the rest of the incident.

Whilst this is being carried out the crew can be getting ready the relevant equipment so they can get to work straight away following the brief from the officer in charge, the start of good simultaneous activity and an effective rescue team.