

IFE Level 4 Certificate in Fire Safety and Fire Science

Unit 7 – Civil Emergency and Disaster Management

Examiner Report – March 2017

Introduction

Entries for this examination were low with only 27 candidates booking examinations. 30% of candidates who sat the examination attained a Pass.

Candidates generally performed best on question 4 and least well on question 6.

Many candidates appeared to be ill prepared and to attempt questions from a general knowledge perspective. Whilst candidates often identified some relevant points, responses generally failed to demonstrate the depth of understanding expected at level 4 and few candidates demonstrated ability to apply concepts or to assess issues present in different situations.

Question 1

Emergency plans can be either generic or specific.

- a) *Explain the potential problems that can arise if relying too much on each of these types of plans. (4 marks)*
- b) *Explain the key benefits of each type of plan. (6 marks)*
- c) *Describe the areas that you would expect to see covered in a generic emergency plan (10 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

Many candidates appeared to rely on general knowledge rather than on specific understanding of the planning process. Whilst this approach often enabled candidates to attain some marks for their response to part c), it meant that few candidates were able to attain marks for parts a) or b); depth of understanding was required in order to analyse and explain issues related to the different approaches.

Question 2

Part of the effective response to any disaster or major incident situation must be the sensitive and efficient handling of the dead. Describe the main considerations that would influence your planning for management of the dead. (20 marks)

Examiner Feedback

There were many issues which could have been identified in response to this question. However, many candidates presented only brief responses. A common approach was to list considerations briefly without describing them or assessing their impact on planning. At level 4, candidates should present responses that demonstrate depth of understanding; briefly identifying points will not secure many (if any) marks. Few candidates expanded their points to explain how different contexts could influence planning arrangements.

Question 3

- a) *Explain your considerations in identifying training objectives and key content for a training session on 'Emergency Response and Business Continuity' for the board of directors of a large local business. (12 marks)*
- b) *Describe, including examples, the business continuity cycle. (8 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

In response to part a), few candidates were able to demonstrate a depth of understanding or to apply their understanding of emergency response and business continuity to a business situation. There were many points that could have been made. For example, in considering key content, candidates could have explored issues such as different types of emergencies that could affect resilience (eg extreme weather, pandemics, environmental), risks in different situations, priorities in order to manage business continuity, lessons learned from response to situations in similar businesses, planning to return to normal etc

In response to part b), many candidates were able to describe the business continuity cycle. However, responses often omitted to provide examples as required by the question and this limited the marks that could be attained.

Question 4

In relation to voluntary assistance at civil emergencies and disasters:

- a) *Explain the difficulties associated with informal volunteers at a disaster site and explain how they might be resolved. (6 marks)*
- b) *Describe the roles of formal (organised) volunteers in planning for, and responding to, regional disasters. (14 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

There were many good responses to this question although candidates often failed to expand their points sufficiently to attain all (any) of the marks available. In relation to part a), candidates were often able to identify difficulties but few went on to explain how the difficulties might be resolved. Likewise, in responding to part b), candidates were able to

present lists of roles but often omitted to provide the descriptions required in order to capitalise on the marks available.

Question 5

- a) *Explain the indicators that could be used to analyse the vulnerability of a population in a remote location. (10 marks)*

- b) *Engineered structures have been designed and implemented to protect man and the environment against natural disasters. Using examples, describe the purpose and operating principles of each of the following systems:*
 - i) *barrier (4 marks)*
 - ii) *deflection (3 marks)*
 - iii) *retention (3 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

This question was not a popular option for candidates. However, those candidates that did answer the question generally performed well. Part a), in particular, was often answered well with candidates able to identify and assess vulnerabilities.

Question 6

Explain the steps that local and central authorities can take to prepare for incidents of civil unrest involving actions such as looting and rioting. (20 marks)

Examiner Feedback

This question was not a popular option for candidates. Those candidates that did attempt the question often failed to explore the situation in detail and attained only low marks. The types of actions that could have been identified and explored included co-ordination around traffic and circulation control, identifying and preparing for protection of key areas and facilities, communication protocols, arrangements for use of equipment and facilities etc

Question 7

- a) *Describe the aims of disaster response. (5 marks)*

- b) *Explain how communications technologies can assist with disaster response. (8 marks)*

- c) *Describe the purpose of disaster recovery. (7 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

The areas covered by the question are fundamental to the syllabus. However, few candidates appeared to have a detailed understanding. There were many brief responses with candidates attaining only a few of the marks available.

Question 8

- a) *Describe the ways in which the media can make a positive contribution to disaster management. (12 marks)*
- b) *Explain the arrangements that you would put in place to manage the media during an emergency incident. (8 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

This was a popular option for candidates. Whilst some candidates demonstrated good understanding, it again appeared that some candidates were relying on general knowledge. In relation to part b), it was common for candidates to identify arrangements but fail to explain why they would put the arrangements in place – at Level 4, candidates need to demonstrate ability to assess situations and apply their understanding.