

IFE Level 4 Certificate in Fire Safety and Fire Science

Unit 7 – Civil Emergency and Disaster Management

Examiner Report – March 2016

Introduction

Only 30 candidates sat this examination. Those candidates who took the paper generally performed to Pass level and 73% achieved a Pass.

It was notable that many candidates addressed questions as though they were attending a fire and rescue incident and presented their answer from this angle. This meant that candidates often omitted many key elements from their responses. Although many candidates achieved a Pass, few achieved high marks due to the restricted focus of responses.

Question 1

In relation to Major Accident Hazard on-site and off-site emergency planning, describe the aspects to be included in an off-site emergency plan. (20 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Candidates who attempted this question often failed to appreciate that an off-site emergency plan relates to an incident that happens on-site but has off-site implications. Some candidates wrote about actually attending (rather than planning for) an incident and detailed the actions that they would take.

Many candidates failed to explore the issues around protecting the local population and key points such as public warnings/information, humanitarian arrangements and engagement with voluntary organisations were omitted.

Some candidates listed (rather than describing) points to be included; as they failed to “describe” points in full as required by the question, they achieved only low marks.

Question 2

a) Describe the types of information that will be required by emergency services in the initial stages of a major incident. (9 marks)

b) Using a diagram, describe the areas of organisation at the scene of a major incident. (11 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Candidates generally provided only brief lists in response to part a). Many candidates limited their response by stating the acronym METHANE and listing the relevant elements. This brief listing did not provide sufficient depth for a level 4 response; candidates who did not expand their responses to add more depth and detail to their answers achieved only low marks.

Many candidates provided detailed diagrams in response to part 2. However, the majority of candidates failed to follow the instruction in the question to “describe” the areas of organisation. This meant that few candidates achieved high marks for their response to part b).

Question 3

- a) Describe the key training topics which underpin the planning objectives in disaster preparedness. Show how each topic is relevant to disaster management. (12 marks)*
- b) Describe two types of joint exercises that emergency services may undertake, explaining the advantages and disadvantages of each. (8 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

This question was generally answered well and most candidates achieved at least eight marks for their response.

Some candidates did not explain fully the different types of training topics covered as part disaster preparedness training. Although candidates often listed and briefly described the key topics such as awareness and stress, many failed to follow the instruction to explain how the topics are relevant to disaster management.

Nearly all candidates achieved full marks for part b) and demonstrated good understanding of the different types of joint exercises undertaken by emergency services.

Question 4

Describe the phases of a Disaster Management Cycle in detail. Illustrate your answer with a diagram showing the phases. (20 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Most candidates were able to identify the phases of the disaster management cycle. However, few candidates described the phases “in detail” as required by the question. As a result, few candidates achieved very high marks for their response to this question.

The weakest elements of most responses related to the description of the recovery phase. Few candidates identified that there are both short-term and long-term recovery challenges.

Question 5

- a) *The military can have a role during a disaster. Explain the types of assistance that can be given to emergency services in the event of a disaster involving a major landslide upon an inhabited area. (10 marks)*
- b) *Explain the assistance that industrial and commercial organisations can provide to the emergency services during the planning for major disasters. (10 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

Many candidates achieved high marks for the response to part a). However, few candidates demonstrated understanding of the assistance provided by private businesses. Many omitted to consider specialist understanding and skills and the potential role of businesses in planning.

Question 6

- a) *Define the conditions that can cause Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). (4 marks)*
- b) *Describe the symptoms of PTSD. (8 marks)*
- c) *Define 'critical incident' and describe the categories of victims that may be affected by a disaster. (8 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

The majority of candidates who attempted this question demonstrated a thorough understanding of PTSD and secured a high mark for their response. There were many excellent responses. The main area of weakness related to the definition of critical incident.

Question 7

Describe the needs of the media in the early stages of civil disasters and explain how you would engage with, and manage, the media. (20 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Most candidates provided good responses to this question and demonstrated basic understanding of issues in dealing with the media. There were few very high scores, however, as responses often lacked depth.

The issue that was most frequently omitted related to information about, and from, those involved in the incident; few candidates included managing personal information about victims or the need to support relatives/survivors in their responses.

Question 8

In relation to disaster management, identify and describe the typical activities of emergency responders at a major disaster. (20 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Some candidates responded to this question by listing the roles and responsibilities of the police, the fire service and the ambulance service at an incident.

Although candidates who took this approach gained some marks for the identification of relevant activities, these candidates often failed to identify activities such as issuing warnings, managing evacuations, providing humanitarian aid (shelter, food etc) and contributing to transport and logistics.