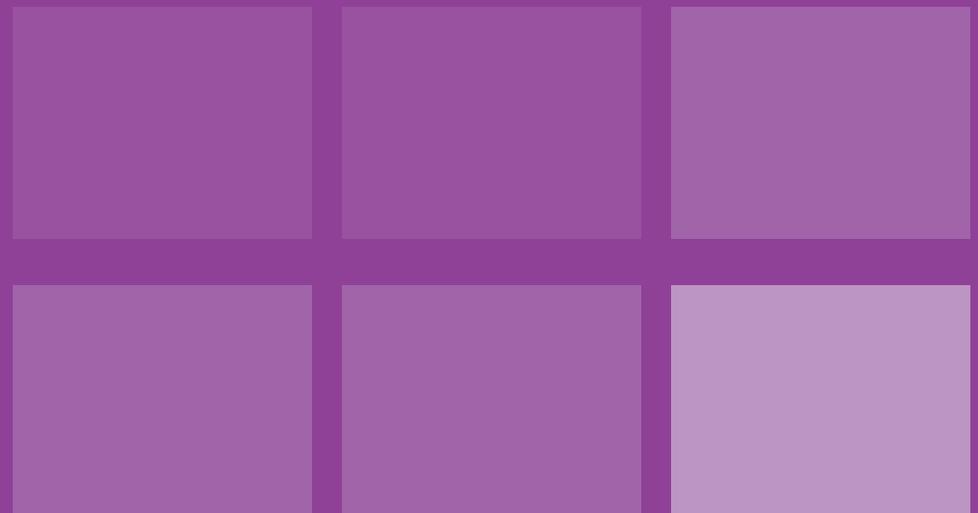




Home Office

**Malicious Chemical, Biological,
Radiological or Nuclear (CBRN) Incidents:
Emergency Co-ordination of Scientific
Advice (ECOSA)**

September 2013



If you think you are dealing with a potential CBRN terrorist incident, receiving scientific advice is crucial to your safety and that of the public. The speed of understanding what you might be dealing with and the impact it may have, will save life and assist in the management of the scene. Such scientific advice is essential in allowing responders to tailor their response to the particular CBRN threat, e.g. the level of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to wear, what treatment to provide to the injured etc.

ECOSA (Emergency Co-ordination of Scientific Advice) is a service that is jointly provided by the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) and Public Health England (PHE). ECOSA has been created to provide immediate, coordinated and effective scientific advice to the **Police, Fire and Rescue Service, Ambulance Service and public health responders across the UK at a CBRN terrorist incident.** This can be a pre-planned operation or in the initial response phase of an incident.

Accessing ECOSA Specialist Advice

You can access specialist ECOSA advice through your normal specialist emergency advice contact routes (whether in AWE, DSTL or PHE). **If you suspect a CBRN incident and/or think specialist advice from ECOSA is required, tell your contact, and explain your reasons for thinking this.**

AWE, DSTL, MET Office and PHE will activate ECOSA internally, if it is required, and ensure relevant specialist scientific advice is provided. Police can also call PN-CBRN-C Ops – 0845 000 6382 to start the process.

In addition to explaining why you think ECOSA advice is needed, you will also need to provide:–

- **Your details – name / role/contact details / purpose of call / reference.**
- **Time the incident occurred.**
- **Location of the incident (including grid reference, if known).**
- **Information on the hazard e.g. name of substance (if known), a description of what you can see, smell, hear.**
- **Any health effects you have noticed.**
- **Numbers of people involved and in the immediate area.**
- **Weather conditions at the scene and any changes in the forecast (if known).**

Key benefits of ECOSA:

- **You will receive immediate, coordinated and effective scientific advice, regardless of the cause of the emergency from the best UK specialists for the materials involved.**
- **Where unusual materials are involved, it ensures the best UK specialist advice is available promptly to responders from a single point of contact.**
- **The immediate and coordinated provision of scientific advice enables the Science and Technical Advice Cell (STAC) and Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) (once set up) to start from a more advanced position than they might otherwise.**

This scientific advice will be provided directly to responders up until the time a STAC is formed (notionally after two hours) and based within the Strategic Coordination Centre (normally at the Police HQ or set up as a virtual cell). After this time, ECOSA will handover to STAC and the coordinated specialist advice will be provided through STAC.