

Note for Guidance: Bariatric Rescue Equipment

This training note has been produced to ensure all Operational personnel are familiar with the use of the Bariatric Rescue Equipment. This note should be brought to the attention of all personnel and recorded in their IDR/EIDR.

Introduction

The Bariatric Rescue Equipment is intended for use on casualties of all sizes from large to Bariatric, that require rescue from unusual positions or areas of restricted space, where there is no alternative to manual handling.

West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) utilise specialist vehicles and equipment for use with Bariatric patients. The nearest of these is based at Dudley in the West Midlands. A specialist stretcher is however located at the Ambulance station in Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury. There may be occasions whereby WMAS make requests to Shropshire FRS for assistance when they have exhausted their own resources and all other mechanical means have been considered.

The equipment is a professional and methodical solution to dealing with this type of incident and puts in place a "safe system of work" that reduces the risk of physical injury to personnel.

It will be carried on the Rescue Tender and mobilised from Wellington in the event of any request from the Ambulance service or an Incident Commander for this type of assistance. In all cases involving operational use of this equipment the Tactical Commander will be mobilised as well as the nearest pumping appliance.

The Bariatric Rescue Equipment is designed to allow as many personnel as the situation dictates to share the weight of the casualty or where possible only enough weight to allow the casualty to be moved to safety.



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Description

The Bariatric Rescue Equipment comprises of:

- 2 x rescue slings
- 1 x small rescue sheet
- 1 x large rescue sheet and heavy duty storage bag marked with the manufacturers WLL (Working Load Limit of 400kgs)

Operational Use:

Rescue Sling

A full risk assessment and safety brief must be carried out prior to use. Appendix A should be used to assist you in your risk assessment, yet understand it is not an exhaustive list.

The rescue slings are designed to pull the casualty out of a restricted space into an area where they can be transferred to either the small or large rescue sheet. They could also be used to help the position of the casualty onto one of the rescue sheets by lifting part of the casualty and unrolling the rescue sheet in stages.

Ideally the longer of the two rescue slings should be manoeuvred under the casualty's upper chest and arms then the shorter sling placed under the upper part of the casualty's legs. If possible four personnel can then pull on the slings to lift and drag the casualty to another location.

Small Rescue Sheet

The small rescue sheet (as seen in Appendix B photographs 1 - 6) is designed to move the casualty over short distances or transfer the casualty, (lifting the casualty back onto a bed or chair). The sheet has low friction PVC backing to allow it to slide where possible and 2 rows of carrying handles to accommodate different sizes of casualty and aid personnel in lifting manoeuvres.

To place a casualty on the sheet, first roll part of the sheet on to itself then either partly lift the casualty with a rescue sling and unroll the sheet in stages under the casualty or use the technique of rolling the casualty on their side placing the rolled part of the sheet up against them and rolling them back over onto the other side of the rolled sheet before unrolling it.

Large Rescue Sheet

The large rescue sheet is designed for the complete evacuation and removal of a casualty (as seen in Appendix B photographs 7 - 11). Like the small sheet it has a low friction PVC backing to allow personnel to slide the casualty where possible and 2 rows of carrying handles to accommodate different sizes of casualty and aid personnel in lifting manoeuvres. Where extra support or protection is required for the casualty's back, a Spinal/ Long Board can be used in conjunction with the sheet by means of the full length pocket on its upper side.

To move a casualty up or down a flight of stairs the large sheet has Velcro straps at both ends of the sheet to prevent the casualty slipping off the sheet.

(To create a good-sized foot pocket, loop the Velcro strap through the 3rd outer handle). In this way personnel can then slide the casualty on the sheet up or down the stairs. The same techniques used to place a casualty on the small sheet can be used with the large sheet.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personnel using the Bariatric Rescue Equipment should wear firefighting gloves at all times to prevent the webbing strop carrying handles from injuring their hands.

Testing and Cleaning

After every use the Bariatric Rescue Equipment should be given a thorough visual examination checking all carrying handles and stitching for any signs of damage or wear.

If the canvas is soiled it should be scrubbed and washed with detergent and rinsed clean with water then dried before restoring in its storage bag.



Bariatric Rescue Equipment Assessment of Risks

Hazard	Control Measure
Injury to handles from webbing strop carrying handles	Personnel using the equipment must wear firefighting gloves at all times.
Injury to personnel and casualties from failure of equipment caused through misuse	The Bariatric Rescue Equipment is only to be used for the manual handling of casualties. It must not be used in conjunction with any mechanical hoist or winching equipment.
Casualty asphyxiation during rescue operations	Personnel should have awareness training of the medical complications that can occur when very large Bariatric casualties are placed in a position which causes their own weight to asphyxiate them.
Manual handling injuries to personnel during lifting operations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Always use the maximum number of personnel possible to carry out lift and share load; 2. Slide casualty on rescue sheets where ever possible to keep lifting to a minimum; 3. Train personnel in correct lifting techniques; 4. Team work is essential, personnel must operate as a coordinated unit when moving heavy loads; and 5. Ongoing refresher training with regular team work exercises using heavy Bariatric training casualty if available.
Injury to personnel caused by the uncontrolled movement of a Bariatric casualty whilst being moved up or down a slope/ staircase	Where possible the movement of a casualty up or down a slope / staircase should be controlled by securing a fixed point.



Appendix B



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4



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6



7



8



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11



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Title
Bariatric Rescue Equipment

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1.0

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