

Hazard/threat category	Sub-category
Transport accidents	Local accident on motorways and major trunk roads
Hazard and threat description, plus scale	Risk reference number
Multiple vehicle incident causing up to 10 fatalities and up to 20 casualties. Closure of lanes or carriageways causing major disruption and delays	HL10
Date of revision	Next review
November 2007	November 2008
Version	2
Author	TVP

1. Overview of hazard or threat

Accidents involving fatalities are a regular occurrence on the major trunk road throughout the Thames Valley area. The investigation into any such accident will necessitate the closure of lanes and carriageways. The number of fatalities and or injured persons very often has no bearing on the disruption and delays caused

2. Key historical evidence

28th March 2002 – M40 Oxfordshire

A series of accidents occur in thick morning mist resulting in three persons being killed and a number injured. The motorway is closed for over twelve hours and it is estimated that over 200 vehicles and up to 400 persons are trapped on the south bound carriageway.

June 2004 – A34 West Berkshire

On the hottest day of the year an accident occurs on the northbound carriageway of the A34 just before its junction with the M4 Berkshire. This results in the closure of the carriageway and the resulting tailback ensnares hundreds of motorists. At least one child has to be taken to hospital suffering from heat exhaustion and water has to be distributed by the local authority.

A34 – Oxford

During 2005 there have been a number of incidents on the A34 where it forms part of the Oxford City ring road. These incidents have resulted in the closure of the road which has always resulted in severe disruption to the road infrastructure around the city

3. Likelihood

Hazard	Outcome description	Likelihood
Local accident on motorways and major trunk roads	Multiple vehicle incident causing up to 10 fatalities and up to 20 casualties. Closure of lanes or carriageways causing major disruption and delays	Possible (4)

4. Impact

Summary

Hazard	Outcome description	Impact			
		Health	Social	Env	Econ
Local accident on motorways and major trunk roads	Multiple vehicle incident causing up to 10 fatalities and up to 20 casualties. Closure of lanes or carriageways causing major disruption and delays	3	4	3	3

Details

Impacts
Primary
Death & serious injury to persons
Closure of lanes and carriageways causing severe tailbacks and delays
Welfare issues for the motorists stuck in the tailback especially in extreme or extraordinary weather conditions
Possible serious environmental contamination of land, surface water and/or groundwater from fuel and cargo
Secondary
Severe delays and traffic management issues to surrounding roads due to diverting vehicles
Depending on exact location significant loss of revenue to business in the surrounding area due to major traffic congestion
Possible impact to surface and/or groundwater which may affect abstractions used for industry, agriculture and potable supply
Long term environmental impacts

5. Vulnerability and resilience

The Thames Valley area has, mile for mile, more motorway any other trunk road passing through it than other police area in the country. Some sections are held to be the busiest in Europe

6. Overall assessment

Category	Sub-category		
Transport accidents	Local accident on motorways and major trunk roads		
Outcome description	Impact	Likelihood	Risk
Multiple vehicle incident causing up to 10 fatalities and up to 20 casualties. Closure of lanes or carriageways causing major disruption and delays	Moderate	Possible	High
<p>Controls in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New signage being introduced by Highways Agency • Local Authority Major Incident Plans • Royal Berkshire Hospital NHS Trust Major Incident Plan • Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust Major Incident Plan • Berkshire Primary Care Organisations Major Incident Plan and Operational Response Manuals • Berkshire Healthcare Trust Major Incident Plan • Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust Major Incident Plan • Milton Keynes Hospital NHS Trust Major Incident Plan • Buckinghamshire Mental Health Trust Major Incident Plan • Buckinghamshire Primary Care Organisations Major Incident Plan • Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust Major Incident Plan • Oxford Mental Health Trust Major Incident Plan • Nuffield Orthopaedic Clinic Major Incident Plan • Oxfordshire Primary Care Organisations Major Incident Plan • South Central Strategic Health Authority Major Incident Plan • Berkshire Integrated Emergency Planning Structure • Wokingham District Council Emergency Plan • Reading Borough Council Emergency Plan • West Berkshire Council Emergency Plan • Bracknell Forest Borough Council Emergency Plan • Royal Borough Council of Windsor and Maidenhead Emergency Plan • Slough Borough Council Emergency Plan 			

- Buckinghamshire County Council Emergency Plan.
- Aylesbury Vale District Council Emergency Plan.
- Chiltern District Council Emergency Plan.
- South Bucks District Council Emergency Plan.
- Wycombe District Council Emergency Plan.
- Environment Agency Incident Management Plans
- Environment Agency 24/7 incident response
- Environment Agency Memorandum of Understanding with Fire Brigades, Police, Local Authorities, Highways Agency, Health Protection Agency and Health Authority.
- South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust Major Incident Plan
- Milton Keynes Council Major Incident Guide
- Thames Valley Police Emergency Procedures Manual
- ACPO Emergency Procedures Manual
- ACPO Motorway Manual of Guidance
- Oxfordshire County Council Emergency Plan
- Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service Major Incident Policy
- Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service Major Incident Policy
- Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service Major Incident Policy

Additional risk treatment required

More robust risk assessment of the welfare implications of motorists stuck in tailbacks coupled with a more realistic assessment process on the length of time that closures may be needed.