



CRASH EXERCISE: Disaster on Harmer Hill

THE SCENARIO: An RAF Griffin helicopter with eight people on board has hit a flock of geese and crashed in a field.

The “mayday” call came in at 11am on the 27th January and immediately more than 100 people sprung into action. A multi-agency response was required to address the simulated crash which fictitiously killed two people on board and a civilian on the ground. This scenario would test all areas of the Station Incident response plan.

As well as RAF Shawbury personnel, the local Police, Ambulance and Fire services took part in the event. Also assisting were the RAF Mountain Rescue service, the Environment Agency, the Police helicopter, the County Air Ambulance and the Defence Estates team.

The crash site chosen was a field at Harmer Hill, 3 miles from RAF Shawbury, is positioned underneath one of the low flying routes. Wreckage from the crash was strewn across the field, while aviation fuel was in danger of leaking into the nearby watercourse.

For obvious cost reasons, a real helicopter couldn't be used so a modified Nissan with the shell of an old helicopter on top served as the crashed aircraft. Military students and other personnel had spent hours with make-up experts to make their injuries look as realistic as possible.

The exercise which was considered a great success, assists the planning for an actual incident and allows everyone on the Station and in the local emergency services to work together.

