

"Heavy Rescue Sweden" Training update:

Heavy vehicle rescue is an experience that we do not deal with on a daily basis; but when we are presented with a situation entailing a juggernaut or equivalent it could be described as a somewhat over powering accident scene. Perhaps through a lack of experience in being able to deal with the situation in a confident manner. Most of the current training is carried out in the classroom based on presentation and stability sessions. Some of which is based on non destructive practical training sessions.

The opportunity to experience practical "hands on" cutting and space creation techniques is very limited and almost non-existent. How nice it would be to have a juggernaut to create scenarios and actually carry out and experience the practical aspects that this presents! However, resources are scarce and the ever spiralling costs create many restrictions in procuring these training beds.



Recently I attended a "Heavy Rescue" course in Sweden (heavyrescue.se) dealing explicitly with the aspects of extrication were juggernauts have been involved in RTCs (road traffic collisions), a whole new ball game.

The experience gained has been very significant and has changed my own thoughts and ideas on the direction in which we need to travel!

Ask yourself this simple question: "How confident do I feel if presented with a RTC involving a 40 ton juggernaut turned on its side, cab partially crushed, the driver trapped"?

What did the training cover?

The course was two days of intensive activity working entirely with new Scania cabs

The first morning involved a very detailed presentation on the theory of rescue techniques and associated knowledge to ensure easy progression through the rest of the course. This entailed the actual "hands on" part utilising extrication techniques based on space creation and stability methods.



During this phase the course members had six new Scania cabs complete with interior fittings which added to the reality of the various exercise scenarios because all the interior plastics and fittings had to be dealt with.

Each training scenario was different from the previous; hence vehicles were put in various positions to test the ingenuity and knowledge of the course members.

These scenarios were created and presented by the course instructor based on many years experience of attending accidents and delivering training sessions to Firefighters from all over Europe.



What did we learn?

Heavy Rescue training needs to be based on a solid foundation; theory alone, whilst it can give a fairly good overview, is insufficient for the reality and skills that are often required.

The resources made available for the course entailed six new Scania Cabs with which to work; there is no substitute for that!

Creation of Space can be achieved with very simple tools such as reciprocating saws and Combi-tools, even down to hammers and pin punches.



Stability can be achieved simply with the minimum of equipment; this is carried out without the worry of damaging the truck, which is often an area that we try to mitigate during training sessions.



The purpose of this article is to highlight the quality training that is available if we are prepared to look for it. Whilst we have good instructors and a vast amount of knowledge available to us we can never afford to sit on our laurels and so we must push against the barriers to better the training.

In Sweden the rescue services attend a great number of heavy vehicle incidents due to a usually long and harsh winter. From this they have a vast knowledge base and understanding of the subject matter collated from actual incident research. Add to this the unlimited number of juggernaut resources available to course and training facilities and we can see a very high level of professional expertise and confidence in being able to deal with all scenarios.

From my own perspective having studied and trained over many years in heavy rescue I now realise that I was not as au-fait as I thought. My recent training, however, has greatly enhanced not only my existing knowledge but also my confidence should I ever be called to a Heavy Rescue incident. I have stabilised and created space in six juggernaut cabs something that has not been available in all my years as a firefighter.

I have no hesitation in recommending the course which I attended, there is a vast amount of knowledge to be gleaned and plenty of opportunity for discussion on the various techniques, very much a learn and share process.

Whilst this article is by no means an advertisement, I am prepared to pass on any relevant information to anyone who might benefit from it. Further to that follow the link below for more information and course details; which can be tailored to individual needs.

