



## INTERPORTPOLICE · Programme Paper

# COMPASS

Cooperative Operations Model for Ports, Airports, and Surface Security

**In one line:** agree how agencies work together, and who commands, before the incident, not during it.

## The challenge

No single agency can secure an airport or a port. Police, security, fire, medical, emergency management, regulators, carriers and tenants all have a part. From 9/11 onwards, major-incident reviews return to the same failure: not courage or equipment, but cooperation and command. Who is in charge, at what level and with what authority? Answered for the first time on the day, the response is improvised and decisions stall when they matter most.

## What it is

COMPASS is the INTERPORTPOLICE model framework for interagency cooperation in aviation, maritime and surface transportation security. It runs on two tracks: routine, day-to-day coordination and crisis response. It is a pre-planning and training model, adapted to local law and resources, not a script to read during a crisis.

It adapts the United Kingdom Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) and multi-sector resilience practice for airports and ports. Its command element trains Strategic, Tactical and Operational commanders on a role-not-rank basis, so police and security work under one command structure.

## What it covers

| Element                           | What it sets out                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Five principles for joint working | Co-locate, communicate, co-ordinate, jointly understand risk, and share situational awareness                              |
| A joint decision model            | Gather information, assess risk, consider powers and policies, identify options, act and review                            |
| Plays agreed in advance           | Jurisdiction settled in advance for hostile events, maritime escalation, hazardous materials and cyber-triggered incidents |
| A common reporting format         | M/ETHANE, so every agency reports an incident the same way                                                                 |
| A standing working group          | Chartered in writing, cross-sector, meeting on a fixed cadence, with a joint decision log                                  |
| Command competence                | Strategic, Tactical and Operational commanders, trained and recognised                                                     |

## What it gives your authority

- Multi-agency response that is interoperable by design, not by luck.
- Relationships, and a common command language, built with partners before they are needed.
- Lessons from every activation and exercise captured and shared.

## Who it is for

Police and security leadership, operational commanders and duty officers, planners and liaison officers at airports, seaports and transportation authorities, and their emergency-management, regulatory and private-sector partners.

## How to take part

1. Contact INTERPORTPOLICE for the COMPASS practice guide.
2. Charter a cross-sector working group and agree your plays before an incident.
3. Train your commanders and rehearse the model through exercises such as ASHER and REDI.

**Listen on Security Mindset:** [COMPASS: Cooperative Operations Model for Ports, Airports, and Surface Security](#)

**Contact INTERPORTPOLICE:** [membership@interportpolice.org](mailto:membership@interportpolice.org) · [www.interportpolice.org](http://www.interportpolice.org)