Call Handler

This course provides an application-focused introduction to the Total Response Call Handler software, a protocol-driven call handling solution for emergency service telecommunicators. Through a series of short, targeted modules, learners will explore the software's user interface, navigation elements, script components, and PowerPhone's emergency call handling process from start to finish. Emphasis is placed on guided flexibility, using structured, evidence-based protocols while adapting to the unique needs of each caller.

By the end of this course, learners will understand how to use Total Response to enhance caller and responder safety, preserve evidence, mitigate risk, and support consistent, efficient call handling across police, fire, and EMS incidents.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, learners will be able to:

1. Explain the purpose and core concepts of the Total Response system, including guided flexibility and the role of protocols and procedures.
2. Identify and describe the primary components of the Total Response call handler user interface and their functions.
3. Use navigation elements and conventions (arrows, dashes, and highlighted elements) to move efficiently through protocols and procedures.
4. Compare and use keyboard and mouse navigation modes to select answer details and trigger system actions appropriately.
5. Distinguish among the four script element answer detail types and accurately record caller information using each.
6. Apply PowerPhone's emergency call handling process to manage a call from initial survey through dispatch, pre-arrival instructions, and call closure within the Total Response software.

Course Modules Overview

1. Module 1: Getting Started with Total Response
2. Module 2: User Interface
3. Module 3: Navigation Elements & Conventions
4. Module 4: Keyboard & Mouse Navigation
5. Module 5: Script Elements
6. Module 6: Call Process Overview and MVA Example

Modules

Module 1: Getting Started with Total Response

Welcome to this introduction to the Total Response Call Handler software. This module introduces the purpose and overall structure of the Total Response software and explains how it turns information into action through people, process, and technology. Learners will explore how Total Response supports any type of emergency call with guided flexibility rather than rigid scripting. The module explains the difference between protocols and procedures, how they work together during dynamic calls, and introduces the two primary configurations of Total Response (integrated and Stand Alone). Learners will also see how the course is organized into modules and understand the importance of practice and simulated calls for building proficiency.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Describe the overall purpose of the Total Response Call Handler and how it supports consistent, flexible emergency call handling.
2. Explain the concepts of protocols and procedures, including how they differ and how they work together during a call.
3. Define the term “chief complaint” and explain its role in protocol selection within Total Response.
4. Differentiate between Total Response and Total Response Stand Alone, including how CAD integration impacts call handling.
5. Summarize the structure of the course and the importance of practice and simulated calls in mastering the software.

Content/Activities

- Introductory video: Overview of Total Response capabilities and configurations
- Concept explanation: Protocols vs. procedures with example (e.g., chest pain, bee sting/EpiPen)
- Knowledge Check: Short quiz on key concepts (chief complaint, protocols, procedures, configurations)

Module 2: User Interface

This module provides a guided tour of the Total Response Call Handler user interface, focusing on the visual components and their functions. Learners will explore the top menus (File, Tools, Help), the main toolbar and call timers, the response advisor, training/live status controls, and the operations status indicator. They will become familiar with the hot keys for critical procedures, the search section (bridges, procedures, knowledge base), the main call entry area, alert and dynamic windows, and the call log, related call list, and status bar. Differences in available features between the integrated Total Response configuration and Stand Alone are highlighted throughout.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Identify the main components of the Total Response user interface (menus, toolbar, response advisor, hot keys, search section, main call entry area, alerts, dynamic area, call log, status bar).
2. Explain the purpose of the File, Tools, and Help menus and perform basic tasks such as changing view mode, text size, and accessing reports or help content.
3. Describe the functions of the Take Call, Close Call, and Hold Call buttons, and the role of call timers where available.
4. Explain how the response advisor displays and communicates dispatch priority and recommendations, and how it integrates with CAD.
5. Distinguish features available only in the integrated Total Response environment from those that are limited or disabled in Total Response Stand Alone.

Content/Activities

- Video: Guided tour of the Total Response Call Handler user interface
- Demonstration segments: Menus, main toolbar, response advisor, status and mode controls, hot keys, search section, alert/dynamic windows, call log and status bar
- Practice activity: “Find and label” exercise using screenshots of the interface components
  Knowledge Check: Drag-and-drop or matching item quiz associating UI components with their functions

Module 3: Navigation Elements & Conventions

In this module, learners will explore the navigation elements and conventions that help them move efficiently through protocols and procedures in Total Response. Using a Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) protocol example, the module explains constants, elements, answer details, and how the system uses red arrows, white arrows, and red dashes to indicate whether elements should be asked, skipped, or are still being evaluated. The highlighted red border that marks the current element is also explained, along with how dynamic updates occur as answer details are selected.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Define “element,” “constant,” and “answer details” within the context of Total Response.
2. Describe how guided flexibility allows call takers to adapt question wording while preserving the intent of the constant.
3. Interpret the navigation symbols (red arrow, white arrow, red dashes) and use them to decide which elements to ask or skip.

4. Explain the significance of the red border highlighting the current element and how it supports workflow continuity.
5. Use navigation elements to follow the logical progression of a protocol, including revisiting and modifying answer details when new information is obtained.

Content/Activities

- Video: Navigation elements and conventions using the MVA protocol
- Interactive walk-through: Step-by-step progression through selected elements with changes in arrows and dashes
- Scenario activity: Given sample caller statements, determine which elements to address and which can be skipped based on navigation symbols
- Knowledge Check: Multiple-choice and scenario-based questions on interpreting navigation symbols and constants

Module 4: Keyboard & Mouse Navigation

This module explores the two navigation modes available in Total Response—keyboard and mouse—and how they affect the way call takers select answer details and trigger actions. Learners will see how to switch between modes using the navigation drop-down menu and how each mode controls when Total Response processes selections (via the Tab key or mouse click). Special attention is given to the exceptions for multi-select answer details and free form text, where the Tab key is required even in mouse mode. The module emphasizes that navigation mode affects only how answer details are triggered, not general use of the keyboard and mouse for other tasks.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Describe the difference between keyboard and mouse navigation modes in Total Response and how each mode triggers system actions.
2. Change the navigation mode using the navigation drop-down menu and verify the current mode in the status bar.
3. Correctly select and trigger answer details in both keyboard and mouse navigation modes, including use of the Tab key and mouse clicks.
4. Explain the special handling of multi-select and free form text answer details in mouse mode and why the Tab key is still required.
5. Adjust navigation modes mid-call as needed to align with their preferred data entry method and maintain smooth call handling.

Content/Activities

- Video: Overview of keyboard vs. mouse navigation modes with demonstrations
- Hands-on practice (simulated): Switching modes and selecting answer details using keyboard and mouse
- Mini troubleshooting activity: “Why isn’t the system moving?” scenarios where learners diagnose navigation mode issues
- Knowledge Check: Short quiz on when to use Tab vs. mouse click and how to interpret the navigation mode in the status bar

Module 5: Script Elements

This module focuses on script elements—the questions and statements used to communicate with callers—and the four types of answer details that record call information: single select, multi-select, free form text, and statement/instruction. Learners will see how each type behaves, how selections are recorded, and how they support accurate documentation and responder awareness. The module emphasizes proper use of each type, including keyboard shortcuts for multi-select elements and the role of statement/instruction items that guide callers without capturing a response.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Define script elements and answer details and explain their role in collecting and documenting call information.
2. Use single select answer details to choose the most appropriate response when only one option should apply.
3. Use multi-select answer details to record multiple applicable responses, including using keyboard and mouse techniques to select or deselect answers.
4. Enter information correctly into free form text answer details and trigger Total Response to accept the entry.
5. Deliver statement/instruction answer details effectively to callers and recognize that they do not capture a recorded response.

Content/Activities

- Video: Script elements and the four answer detail types
- Interactive practice: Classifying examples as single select, multi-select, free form text, or statement/instruction
- Data entry exercise: Sample call excerpts where learners practice choosing and entering answer details correctly
- Knowledge Check: Mixed item quiz testing identification and correct use of each answer detail type

Module 6: Call Process Overview and Example with Motor Vehicle Accident Call from Start to Finish

In this capstone module, learners will see PowerPhone's emergency call handling process demonstrated from start to finish using a sample motor vehicle accident (MVA) call within Total Response. The module walks through each step: initial survey, protocol selection, entering vital signs (for medical calls), asking primary questions, making and updating dispatch recommendations, asking secondary questions, providing pre-arrival instructions, and closing the call. The example highlights guided flexibility, use of the response advisor, integration with CAD or Stand Alone procedures, and the practical application of the interface, navigation, and script elements introduced in earlier modules.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Describe the full PowerPhone emergency call handling process from initial survey to call closure.
2. Use the initial survey to collect caller and location information and identify the chief complaint for protocol selection.
3. Apply primary and secondary questions, as well as pre-arrival instructions, in a logical sequence while allowing for guided flexibility based on caller needs.
4. Use the response advisor to review, accept, refuse, or amend dispatch recommendations and update CAD or follow Stand Alone procedures as conditions change.
5. Demonstrate the end-to-end handling of a motor vehicle accident call in Total Response, including when and how to close the call in accordance with agency SOPs.

Content/Activities

- Video: End-to-end MVA call example demonstrating the complete call process in Total Response
- Guided walkthrough: Annotated step-by-step breakdown of the MVA call (initial survey, protocol selection, questions, response advisor, pre-arrival instructions, call closure)
- Application activity: “Map the steps” exercise where learners match call actions to each step in the PowerPhone call handling process
- Knowledge Check: Scenario-based questions on when to dispatch, when to ask secondary questions, and appropriate call closure decisions

Course Completion Criteria

To successfully complete this course and earn continuing education hours, learners must achieve a minimum score of 75%. The quiz must be completed within one hour.

- CE hours awarded: 2
- Certificate duration: 12 Months

Technical Requirements

- Desktop, laptop, or mobile device
- Speakers or headphones
- High-speed Internet access
- A current web browser