

## Hoax Calls Kill

Read the information about the role of the emergency services and dialling 999 on the fact sheet **Getting Help (The Emergency Services)**.

Prank or 'hoax' calls to the emergency services are not only against the law, they cost lives, as they reduce response times of vehicles and staff getting to real emergencies. According to a report in the Times newspaper, hoax emergency calls to UK fire brigades alone cost more than £40 million each year.

### Know the facts

- Calls are traced and recorded so that callers can be identified.
- Mobile phone companies can disconnect phones if they have been used to make hoax calls.
- The maximum penalty is £5,000 and six months in prison.
- The Fire and Rescue Service sometimes publishes clips of calls on the internet, and invites people to listen and call Crimestoppers if they identify the voice of the caller.
- Emergency vehicles have been involved in road crashes when responding to hoax calls.

In groups, write a script for a 30 second radio commercial on behalf of the emergency services, persuading listeners of the dangers (to themselves and others) of making a hoax call to 999.

### You could:

- further research the role and work of the emergency services
- gather statistical evidence about hoax calls
- speak to local emergency service personnel about what they do and how they feel about it.

### Questions to think about

- How will you grab the listeners' attention?
- How will you get your message across clearly and make it memorable?
- Who is the target audience and how will you make an impact on them?
- Which persuasive tools will you use (e.g. slogans, celebrity voiceovers, mental imagery)?
- Will your advert be humorous or hard-hitting, using 'scare' tactics?

### Challenge

Record your radio advert using a recording device. Play it for the class and critically review its effectiveness.