
Wicklow County Council

MAJOR EMERGENCY PLAN



Title:	Major Emergency Plan
Version:	1.4
Date:	9th February 2017
Status:	Adopted
Approved By:	MEMC 9th February 2017

FOREWORD

The new format Major Emergency Plan based on the content of the Framework for Major Emergency Management was initially adopted in September 2008.

This updated version of Wicklow County Council's Major Emergency Plan (MEP) has been developed following an extensive review process undertaken in 2016 and 2017 based on research and on experience gained since the original plan was drafted.

This version of the MEP retains much of the preceding content due to its importance and relevance which was most notably applied during inclement weather events in January and December 2010.

The Plan has formed the basis of close co-operation between all departments of Wicklow County Council. It has been beneficial in establishing and maintaining close contacts with the other Principal Response Agencies i.e. the HSE and An Garda Síochána.

The Major Emergency Plan continues to evolve and with the increased awareness and training provided for County Council Staff, there is enhanced capacity and resilience to ensure that Wicklow County Council is in a position to best assist our communities and deal with a major emergency should one arise.



Mr Bryan Doyle,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
9th June 2017.

Record of Issues and Amendments

Amendment No.	Version No.	Date	Section(s) Amended	Amended By
1.	1.1	July 2009	3.2, 3.5, 8,12.2, 15	Fire Service
2.	1.2	January 2011	Revised	MEMC
3.	1.3	Nov 2016	Revised	MEMC
4.	1.4	Feb 2017	Adopted	MEMC
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A3-2	Bray Town Council Flood Emergency Plan
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Activation Process

This plan is activated when a Major Emergency is declared in the functional area of Wicklow County Council. Within Wicklow County Council, the County Manager and persons appointed by him to the following positions are authorised to declare a Major Emergency on behalf of the Local Authority:

- **Director of Service**
- **Senior Executive Officer**
- **District Administrator**
- **Senior Engineer**
- **Rostered Senior Fire Officer**

As per persons named in *Appendix E1 "Mobilisation Procedures and Persons Authorised to Activate the Plan"*

The Chief Executive or an authorised officer may declare a Major Emergency when the following circumstances prevail:

- The incident has the potential to escalate beyond the normal response capability of existing resources;
- The scale, extent and duration of the incident requires the activation of specific additional measures;
- The timely declaration of a major emergency will assist in preventing the escalation of the event beyond the control of the existing resources; or
- On receipt of a message declaring a Major Emergency by an authorised officer of any of the following:
 - An Garda Síochána
 - The Health Service Executive
 - A Government Department

Declaration Process

The declaration of a Major Emergency by an authorised officer of Wicklow County Council must be immediately followed by the notification of the declaration to An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive. It has been agreed that the contact for notification to these agencies shall be via the 999/112 system.

Person Authorised	Telephone Number	Cascade Contact
Member in Charge, Wicklow Divisional Headquarters, Garda Communications Centre, Bray Garda Station	999 or 112	An Garda Síochána Defence Forces Irish Coastguard Service
Health Service Executive (Via Ambulance Control)	999 or 112	Health Services Ambulance Service Hospitals Public Health Community Health

Contact details for informing the other Principal Response Agencies

The formal message declaring a Major Emergency is standard to all of the Principal Response Agencies. The formal declaration of a Major Emergency should follow the format below.

This is *(state name, title)*

A *(state type of incident)*

Has occurred / is imminent at *(state incident location)*

As an authorised officer I declare that a Major Emergency exists.

Please activate the mobilisation arrangements in Wicklow **County Councils Major Emergency Plan.** *(state date & time)*

The declaration of a Major Emergency should be followed by an information message containing available, essential and relevant information. In the majority of cases the mnemonic **METHANE** can be used to structure and deliver this information.

Major Emergency declared	Information Required
Exact Location of the emergency	Full details of location of incident site. Identify areas that will be affected immediately; and in the short term
Type of Emergency	Detail on the type of the emergency (Transport, Chemical Spill, Severe Weather etc.)
Hazards, present and potential.	Fire, Explosives, Dangerous Chemicals etc.
Access / Egress routes	Full details of emergency service response routes to and/from the incident location. Safe routes may be influenced by wind direction and/or obstructions (e.g. flooding).
Number and types of Casualties	Number and type of confirmed casualties and estimate of potential casualties.
Emergency services present and required.	Full details of resources present and required. Include the means of communication with persons activating the plan; telephone numbers etc.

The message format is designed to ensure that as much initial information as required is included, it does not however prevent the inclusion of any other information deemed relevant.

NOTE: The management and coordination methods outlined in this plan, in particular the Local and/or Regional Co-ordination Centres for Major Emergency Management, may be activated to manage the response to other incidents, whether a Major Emergency is declared or not.

Section 1

The Major Emergency Plan

1.1 Introduction to the Plan

A Major Emergency is any event which, usually with little or no warning, causes or threatens death or injury, serious disruption of essential services or damage to property, the environment or infrastructure beyond the normal capabilities of the Principal Emergency Services in the area in which the event occurs, and requires the activation of specific additional procedures and the mobilisation of additional resources to ensure an effective, co-ordinated response.

The Major Emergency Plan is designed primarily to provide for the protection, support and welfare of the public in times of emergency. The Plan therefore provides for the collective preparedness by the Principal Response Agencies so as to ensure a prompt and effective coordinated response by them to a major emergency.

1.2 Background

The Major Emergency plan for Wicklow County Council has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Government and is consistent with the Government issued document 'A Framework for Major Emergency Management' 2006. The plan should therefore be read in conjunction with this framework. The purpose of this plan is to put in place arrangements that will enable the three Principal Response Agencies (An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and the Local Authorities) to coordinate their efforts whenever a major emergency occurs.

The systems approach to Major Emergency Management involves a continuous cycle of activity. The principal elements of the systems approach are:

- Hazard Analysis/ Risk Assessment;
- Mitigation/ Risk Management;
- Planning and Preparedness;
- Co-ordinated Response; and
- Recovery.



Fig 1.1: Five Stage Emergency Management Paradigm

1.3 The objectives

The objective of this Plan is to protect life and property, to minimize disruption to the County of Wicklow, and to provide immediate support for those affected.

To achieve these objectives, the Major Emergency Plan sets out the basis for a coordinated response to a major emergency and lays down the different roles and functions to be performed by Wicklow County Council and by the Principal Response Agencies. Wicklow County Council aims to carry out its objectives in a Major Emergency by offering:

- Protection and care of the public at times of vulnerability
- Clear leadership in times of crisis
- Early and appropriate response
- Efficient and coordinated operations
- Realistic and rational approach, capable of being delivered
- Transparent systems
- Harnessing community spirit
- The ethos of self-protection
- Maintenance of essential services
- Safe working systems

1.4 The scope of the Major Emergency Plan

The Major Emergency Plan is designed primarily for the protection, support and welfare of the public in times of emergency. Therefore the plan provides for a coordinated response to an emergency which is beyond the normal capabilities of Wicklow County Council, An Garda Síochána or the HSE.

1.5 The relationship / inter-operability with other emergency plans

It is considered important that there is co-ordination with neighbouring local authorities, in particular in relation to published Major Emergency Plans.

An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and Wicklow County Council are the Principal Response Agencies charged with managing the response to emergency situations, which arise at a local level.

In certain circumstances, the local response to a Major Emergency may be scaled up to a Regional level, by activating the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination. In these circumstances the Principal Response Agencies are An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and Eastern Region Local Authorities (Dublin City, Dun-Laoghaire Rathdown, South Dublin, Fingal, Kildare and Wicklow) members of which all sit on the Regional Steering and Working Group.

The Major Emergency Plans of local authorities in the region follow the national format and can be accessed on line. Similarly the plans for Wexford and Carlow, who are in the South East Region, are also available.

1.6 The language / terminology of the Plan

In situations where different organisations are working together, there is a need for common vocabulary to enable them to communicate effectively. This is particularly the case where the Principal Emergency Services and a range of other bodies are working together under the pressures that a Major Emergency brings. Therefore a set of relevant terms and acronyms are provided in *Appendix A1 - Terminology*, which should be used by all Agencies.

1.7 The distribution of the Plan

Copies of the plan will be distributed to all departments of Wicklow County Council, appropriate Heads of Service, Major Emergency Management Committee members, and Emergency Services. The distribution list is given in *Appendix A4 – Distribution List*, and a full set of names and addresses is provided in *Appendices C2 & C3 – Contact Details*.

1.8 The status of the Plan

Previous issues of this plan are now superseded. The current issue will be active from the 9th February 2017 and the plans contents are valid from that date, which has been approved by the Major Emergency Management Committee (MEMC). It will be reviewed annually and/or following any exercise or incidents, and updated accordingly.

- Plan Implementation Date: 9th February 2017
- Plan Review Date: February 2018

1.9 Public access to the Plan

A copy of Wicklow County Council Major Emergency Plan is available for viewing on the website of Wicklow County Council at www.wicklow.ie.

Section 2

Wicklow County Council and its Functional Area

2.1 Role of Wicklow County Council

The functional area of this Plan is the county boundaries of County Wicklow. In June 2014, the administrative function of Wicklow County Council was sub-divided into the five Municipal Districts of Bray, Greystones, Wicklow, Arklow and Baltinglass.

In the event of a Major Emergency the role of Wicklow County Council is to ensure life safety by providing emergency services in the form of the Fire Service, Civil Defence and other appropriate Local Authority services. Other sections of the Local Authority will also be required to ensure business continuity and ensure the general needs of the community are addressed to the best of their ability in an emergency situation. Wicklow County Council will ensure that danger areas are made safe in order to permit other agencies to undertake recovery and rehabilitation operations. In the immediate aftermath of an incident principal concerns will include support for the emergency services, support and care for the local and wider community, use of resources to mitigate the effects of the emergency and co-ordination of voluntary organisations. In the 'recovery' phase the local authority will be responsible to lead and co-ordinate the rehabilitation of the community and the restoration of the environment, services and infrastructure.

2.2 Boundaries and characteristics of the area

Wicklow is located in the Eastern Region of Ireland. Wicklow County covers a land area of approximately 2,024km². The County is dominated by the Wicklow Mountains. With the exception of a narrow coastal strip and some low elevation in the south, most of County Wicklow lies above the 200 metre contour line and over one third of the County lies above the 300 metre contour line. County Wicklow has 66 kilometers of coastline and is bordered by Counties Dublin to the North, Kildare and Carlow to the West and Wexford to the South.

County Wicklow has a population of 142,425¹. The administrative capital of Wicklow County is Wicklow Town. Between the 2011 and 2016 census, the population of the county grew by 4.2%.

See Appendix B1-County Wicklow Risk Assessment Document for a more detailed assessment of the characteristics of the area

¹ Central Statistics Office, 2016 Census

2.3 Partner Principal Response Agencies

Other agencies responsible for Emergency Services in this area are:

- (a) Health Service Executive: Dublin and Mid-Leinster Region comprising counties South Dublin, Wicklow, Kildare, Laois, Offaly, Westmeath and Longford
- (b) An Garda Síochána: Wicklow Division

2.4 Regional preparedness

Under certain specific circumstances Regional level Major Emergencies may be declared, and a Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination activated. This will provide for mutual aid, support and co-ordination facilities to be activated in a region.

There are eight regions in total that have been created for Major Emergency purposes. The regions are shown in the Map below:

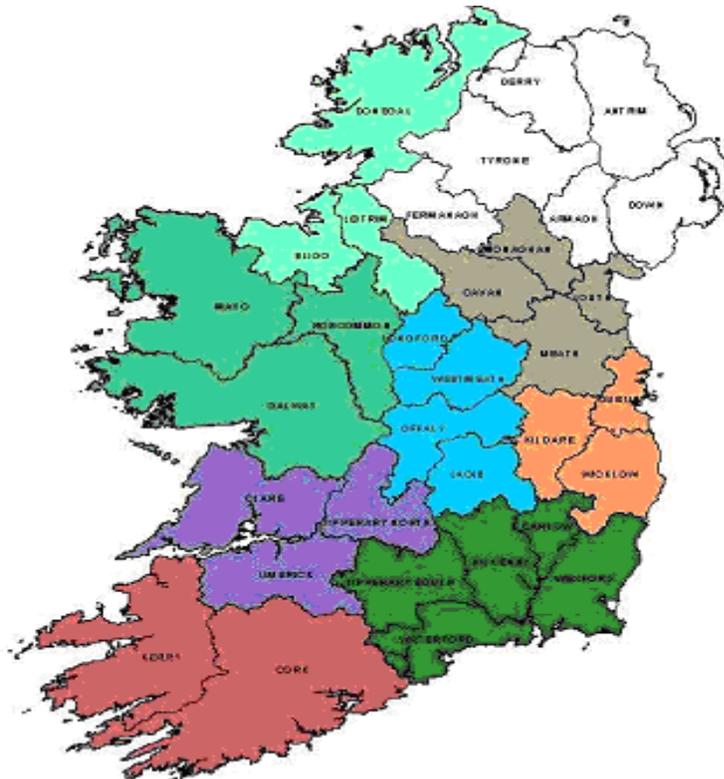


Figure 2.1: Map of the Major Emergency Management regions

Wicklow County Council is part of the East Region. This region incorporates the following Local Authorities:

- Wicklow County Council
- Kildare County Council
- Dún Laoghaire - Rathdown County Council
- Fingal County Council
- South Dublin County Council
- Dublin City Council

An inter-agency Regional Steering Group and Regional Working Group have been formed for the Eastern Major Emergency Region. This group is representative of senior management from each of the Principal Response Agencies.

A Regional Working Group on Major Emergency Management has also been established to support and progress Major Emergency Management in the East Region.

Section 3

Risk Assessment for the Area

3.1 History of the area in terms of emergency events

To prepare effectively to deal with potential emergencies it is necessary to have regard to specific risks faced by a community. Risk Assessment is a process in which the hazards facing a particular community are identified and assessed in terms of the risk, which they pose. (See *Appendix B1, for detailed Risk Assessments*)

Major Emergencies by their very nature are few and far between. The Country has experienced major emergencies events in recent years, which resulted in the declaration of a Major Emergency

- On the 12th February 2014 the County Manager for Kilkenny County and City, invoked its Major Emergency Plan due to storm weather across the county. Met Eireann had issued a Status Red severe weather warning and the number of emergency calls for assistance from the public had overwhelmed the response capacity.
- On the 24th October 2011, significant pluvial flooding occurred in the greater Dublin area which had tragic consequences, with the loss of two lives.
- On the 20th February 2011 the crash landing of a Manx2 flight with two crew and ten passengers at Cork airport resulted in the tragic loss of six people on-board.

A Major Emergency has to date never been declared in County Wicklow. However, the county has experienced a number of emergency events over the recent years.

- Flooding and Severe Cold of November/December 2009 and January 2010
- Burst Water main on N11 at rush hour November 2006;
- Large Gorse Fires, Wicklow Mountains, Summer 1995;
- Bus Crash with large number of casualties on N11 in July 1991;
- Serious flooding caused by Hurricane Charlie in August 1986 in North East Wicklow.

3.2 General and specific risks evaluation

Wicklow County Council's All Hazard Risk Assessment Process and the Eastern Region Major Emergency Planning Working Group recorded the following general and specific risks that may be faced in County Wicklow and within the Eastern Region:

1. Severe Weather
2. Mass Casualty/Crowd Incident
3. Industrial Accident/Seveso/Hazmat
4. Transport Incident
5. Terrorist CBRN
6. Public Health
7. Loss of Utilities

3.3 Scenarios

The following have been selected as exemplars on which, emergency preparedness for County Wicklow has been based:

- Major Transport Incident (e.g. road/aviation/rail)
- Natural - Flooding
- Technological e.g. Industrial Incident at a Seveso Site
- Civil e.g. Flu Epidemics/Pandemics
- Natural – snow, severe weather

(See Appendix B1, for detailed Risk Assessments)

In relation to the above the following should be noted:

Hazardous Sites Emergencies:

The European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substance) Regulations, 2006 (The Seveso II Directive) applies to sites that hold specific quantities of specified dangerous substances, or combinations of dangerous substances. These sites are classified as upper tier or lower tier.

County Wicklow had two such sites:

- MSD Ireland, Rathdrum
This site was an upper tier site and as such the Regulations require them to prepare an Internal Emergency Plan. The Regulations also requires the Local Authority to prepare an External Emergency Plan for this site, which is appended to the Major Emergency Plan. While the site has now been decommissioned the possibility exists that the plant could re-open and the plan could be reactivated taking account of new activities on site.
- Sigma-Aldrich Ireland Ltd, Arklow
This site is a lower tier site and the Regulations require them to prepare an Internal Emergency Plan, which is appended to the Major Emergency Plan.

Major Transport Incidents

1. National Primary and Secondary Roads e.g. M11, N11, N81.
2. Iarnród Éireann: DART & Mainline Rail line running through the county.
3. Aviation – possible aircraft incidents

It should be noted that all three scenarios have been the basis of exercises in recent years. In the case of roads and aviation, MEM inter-agency exercises have been undertaken, in the case of rail exercises and detailed planning has taken place.

CBRNe emergencies:

Although the risk is deemed low in this country, following internal terrorist incidents in recent years, the Government Task Force on Emergency Planning in 2012 approved a Protocol for responding to malign Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) incidents.

3.4 Risk management / mitigation / risk reduction strategies

By carrying out a risk assessment, risks can be identified that pose a risk to the county and we can mitigate their effects. It also enables us to plan and prepare for those risks, which cannot be eliminated.

The risk assessment comprises of four stages:

1. Establishing the context,
2. Hazard Identification,
3. Risk Assessment,
4. Recording potential hazards on a risk matrix.

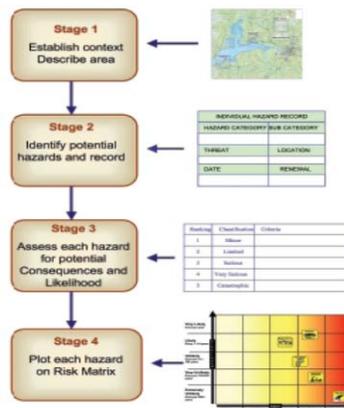


Fig3.1: Schematic Risk Assessment Process

The risk assessment process was initially documented by the Major Emergency Development Committee of Wicklow Local Authorities in 2007. To-date several risk prevention and mitigation strategies are in place in relation to the potential hazards listed above and these are managed through the day-to-day function of the Local Authority and relevant stakeholder as well as various regulations.

3.5 Associated Plans and their compatibility

Associated with this Plan are sub-plans (See Section 15, Appendices). These plans will be appended to the Major Emergency Plan and can be tested through exercises.

Any other plans dealing with Major Emergency situations will be appended to Wicklow County Council Major Emergency Plan, as they are developed. National Guidelines for generic incidents will be issued on an on-going basis on the national major emergency website: www.mem.ie

Section 4

Resources for Emergency Response

4.1 Structure / resources / services of the Wicklow County Council

The organisational structure of Wicklow County Council is divided into two parts; firstly the Elected Members of which there are 32, and secondly, the Executive/Administration which includes the Chief Executive and his staff. Details of both can be found in Wicklow County Council, Annual Reports.

Wicklow County Council is governed by the Local Government Reform Act 2014. This Act in June 2014 provided for the establishment of Municipal District for the administrating area of Bray, Greystones, Wicklow, Arklow and Baltinglass. There are six Directors of Service in Wicklow County Council who reports directly to the Chief Executive and who are responsible for the functioning of their section within the council. These sections are:

- Community, Cultural & Social Development
- Enterprise & Corporate Services
- Water & Environmental Services
- Housing & Corporate Estate
- Planning
- Transportation & Roads Infrastructure

The Chief Executive is responsible for supervising the operations of Wicklow County Council and implementing the policies adopted by the council. Any or all sections of Wicklow County Council may be called upon to act in the event of a Major Emergency. *(See Appendices C2 & C3)*

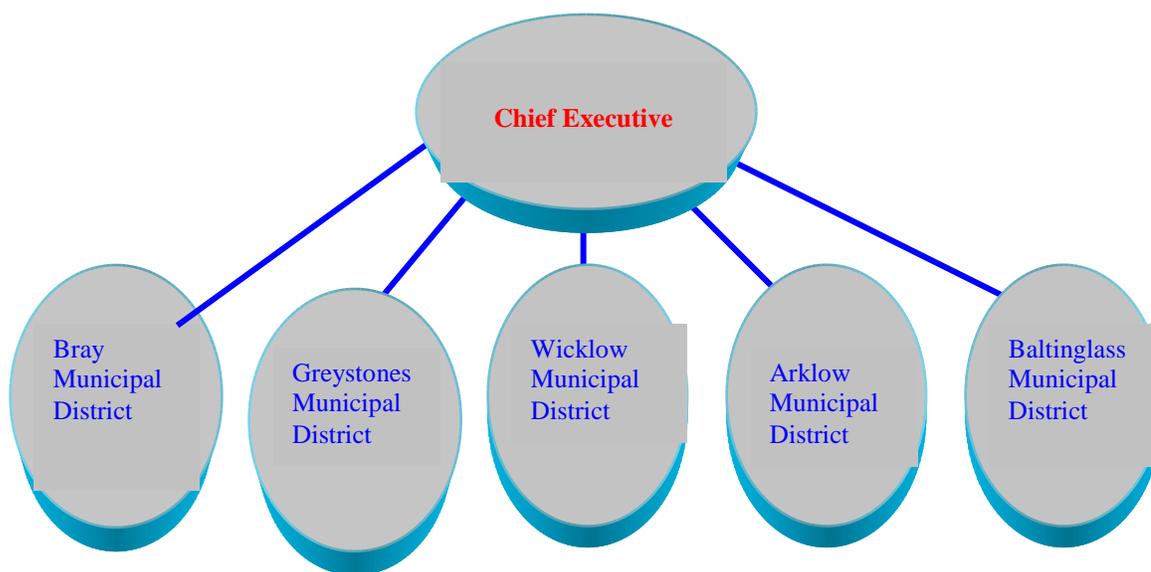


Fig 4.1 Structure within Wicklow County Council

4.2 Special staffing arrangements during a Major Emergency

The majority of Wicklow County Council staff requested to carry out functions in relation to a Major Emergency will be mobilised in accordance with pre-determined procedures. In addition the Civil Defence, under the authority of Wicklow County Council, operate on a call out system, however it must be noted that their response is completely subject to the availability of volunteers, see *section 4.4.1*.

(See Appendices E1: Mobilisation Procedures and persons authorised to activate the Plan)

4.3 Resources of the Local Authorities matching the functions assigned

Wicklow County Council has identified, matched and formally nominated competent individuals and alternates to key roles to enable the Local Authority to function in accordance with the common arrangements set out in its Major Emergency Plan.

Support teams have been put in place for key roles, and Operational Protocols setting out the arrangements which enable the support teams to be mobilised and function in accordance with the arrangements set out in the Major Emergency Plan.

Assignment of key roles and how those roles are to be delivered is set out in *Section 5.4 of this document*. *(See Appendices C2 & C3)*

4.4 Other organisations / agencies that may be mobilised to assist

There are a number of organisations and agencies, which may be called upon to assist the Principal Response Agencies in responding to major emergencies in addition to specialist national and local organisations. These organisations may be grouped as follows:

- Civil Defence
- Defence Forces
- Irish Coast Guard/RNLI
- The Irish Red Cross
- Voluntary Emergency Services (Wicklow Mountain Rescue, Coast Guard, Order of Malta)
- Community Volunteers
- Utility companies (ESB, Bord Gáis, Bus Éireann etc)
- Private contractors

(See Appendix C1 Voluntary Emergency Services)

4.4.1 Civil Defence

Civil Defence, which is part of the Local Authority, is a body of trained volunteers in the disciplines of First Aid, Rescue, Fire, Welfare, water based activities, search and recovery. There are currently 130 registered members in Wicklow. A Mobilisation system is in place in the event of an emergency.

Civil Defence is available to help with any area assigned to them to assist the Local Authority or other Statutory Service, subject to the availability of volunteers.

4.4.2 The Defence Forces

The Defence Forces can provide a significant support role in a Major Emergency response. However, there are constraints and limitations and their involvement has to be pre-planned through the development of Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) and Service Level Agreements (SLAs). Consequently, assumptions should not be made regarding the availability of Defence Forces resources or materials to respond to a major emergency. Provision of Defence Forces capabilities is, therefore, dependent on the exigencies of the service and within available resources at the time.

It is recognised that assistance requested from the Defence Forces should be either in Aid to the Civil Power (An Garda Síochána), primarily an armed response, or in Aid to the Civil Authority (Local Authority or Health Service Executive) in an unarmed response.

Requests for Defence Forces assistance can be channelled through An Garda Síochána to Defence Forces Headquarters (DFHQ) as in accordance with Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) and Service Level Agreements (SLA).

4.4.3 The Irish Red Cross

The Irish Red Cross is established and regulated under the Red Cross Acts, 1938-54. These statutes define a role for the Irish Red Cross as an auxiliary to the state authorities in time of emergency and also provide a specific mandate to assist the medical services of the Irish Defence Forces in time of armed conflict. The main relationship with the Principal Response Agencies in Major Emergency response is as an auxiliary resource to the ambulance services. Subsidiary search and rescue and in-shore rescue units of the Irish Red Cross support An Garda Síochána and the Irish Coast Guard. (*See Appendix C1 Voluntary Emergency Services*)

4.4.4 Voluntary Emergency Services Sector

Other Voluntary Emergency Services in the Wicklow area include:

- Wicklow and Dublin Mountain Rescue;
- Order of Malta Ambulance Corps;
- The Irish Coastguard
- RNLI

(See Appendix C1 Voluntary Emergency Services)

4.4.5 The Community

It is recognised that communities that are empowered to be part of the response to a disaster, rather than allowing themselves to be simply victims of it, are more likely to deal effectively with it and to recover and to restore normality more quickly, with fewer long-term consequences.

At an early stage the On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other Controllers, should determine if ongoing assistance is required from “casual volunteers” within the community, so that An Garda Síochána cordoning arrangements can take account of this.

Where the On-Site Co-ordinator determines that casual volunteers should be integrated into the response, it is recommended that the service tasking them, or confirming them in tasks on which they are engaged, should request volunteers to form teams of three to five persons, with one of their number as team leader. Where available, orange armbands emblazoned with the word ‘Volunteer’ or suitable abbreviation, e.g. ‘VOL’, will be issued by Civil Defence, with whom they will be offered a temporary volunteer status.

4.4.6 Utilities

Utilities are frequently involved in the response to emergencies, usually to assist the Principal Response Agencies in making situations safe. They may also be directly involved in restoring their own services, for example, electricity supply in the aftermath of a storm.

It is important that there is close co-ordination between the Principal Response Agencies and utilities involved in or affected by an emergency. Utilities operate under their own legislative and regulatory frameworks but, during the response to an emergency, they need to liaise with the On-Site Co-ordinator. It is also recommended that representatives of individual utilities on-site should be invited to provide a representative for the On-Site Co-ordination Group. It is recommended that individual utilities be invited to attend and participate in relevant work of Local Co-ordination Groups, if considered appropriate. (See *Appendices C2 & C3*)

4.4.7 Private Sector

Private sector organisations may be involved in a Major Emergency situation in a number of ways, through, for example, ownership of the site where the emergency has occurred or through ownership of some element involved in the emergency e.g. an aircraft, bus, factory, etc. They may also be called on to assist in the response to a Major Emergency by providing specialist services and equipment, which would not normally be held or available within the principal, response agencies.
(See *Appendices C2 & C3*)

4.5 How mutual-aid will be sought from neighbours

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may request assistance via mutual aid arrangements from a neighbouring county; such support is not equivalent to the activation of the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination and, in fact will often precede the activation of the regional plan. Support is most likely to be requested from:

- Kildare County Council
- Dublin City Council
- Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council
- Carlow County Council
- Wexford County Council
- South Dublin County Council
- Fingal County Council

4.6 Regional level of co-ordinated response

In the event of a Regional level response the lead agency that has declared the regional level emergency will convene and chair the Regional Co-ordination Group. Depending on the circumstances, the goal of regional co-ordination may be achieved by using a single Regional Co-ordination Centre.

The method of operation of a Regional Co-ordination Centre will be similar to that of the Local Co-ordination Centre.

4.7 National and International assistance

The Eastern Regional Co-ordination Group should identify and dimension the level/type of assistance likely to be required and its duration. It should also seek to identify the possible options for sourcing such assistance, be that from neighbouring Regions, elsewhere in the state, the United Kingdom or from other EU member states.

The Eastern Regional Co-ordination Group may also request assistance from Government. National resources will be available in the event of a Major Emergency at local or regional level. Requests for assistance should be developed at local or regional co-ordination level and directed by the lead agency to the lead Government Department.

The European Community has established a Community Mechanism to facilitate the provision of assistance between the member states in the event of major emergencies. The chair of the Wicklow Local or Eastern Regional Coordination Group should make requests for such assistance to the National Liaison Officer at the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Section 5

Preparedness for Major Emergency Response

5.1 The incorporation of Major Emergency management into the Local Authorities business planning process

The development of Wicklow County Council, Major Emergency Plan is part of a Major Emergency Management Programme within the local authority. This ensures that all necessary arrangements, systems, people and resources are in place to discharge the functions assigned to them.

The senior management team of Wicklow County Council shall undertake a process of examining this plan to determine how they may incorporate emergency preparedness as part of their business planning. Where a breakdown in the delivery of a service may adversely affect the response to a major emergency, this should be addressed through the normal departmental business continuity planning process.

5.2 Assignment of responsibility

The Chief Executive is responsible for Wicklow County Councils Major Emergency Management arrangements and preparedness, as well as for the effectiveness of the agency's response to any major emergency, which occurs in its functional area.

Responsibility for ensuring that resources are available for Major Emergency planning within the authority has been delegated to the Director of Services with responsibility for Environment and Water Services, however all Directorates will have a role to play in ensuring preparedness for Major Emergencies. A Major Emergency Management Committee has been set up for Wicklow County Council. This Committee shall meet on a regular basis throughout a year to deal with ongoing issues relating to Major Emergency Preparedness.

5.3 Documentation of a Major Emergency development programme

The responsibility for overseeing the Major Emergency development programme within Wicklow County Council has been assigned to the Director of Services for Environment and Water Services, whom the Chief Fire Officer will support along with other staff members within the Fire Services. Each of the sections within the Local Authority will be involved in reviewing the Plan and as such a Major Emergency Management Committee consisting of senior local authority staff has been set up, which meet on a regular basis. Documentation of the major emergency development programme shall be held in the Wicklow County Fire Service Headquarters, Boghall Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

5.4 Key roles identified in the Major Emergency Plan

Wicklow County Council has nominated competent individuals and alternates to the key roles to enable it to function in accordance with the common arrangements set out in its Major Emergency Plan. (See *Appendices C2 & C3*)

5.5 Support teams for key roles

The person designated in a key role will identify personnel to form his/her support team, which will help the key role holder initiate an effective response to a Major Emergency.

5.6 Staff development programme

The provisions of the Framework and the tasks arising from the major emergency management arrangements involve a significant level of development activity, both within Wicklow County Council and jointly with our regional partners.

In parallel with risk assessment and mitigation processes and the preparation of the Major Emergency Plan, Wicklow County Council has initiated an internal programme to develop its level of preparedness, so that in a major emergency it will be in a position to respond in an efficient and effective manner and discharge the assigned functions in accordance with the Framework.

It is also imperative that we not only develop within our own agency but that we also continue to work with the other Principal Response Agencies through ongoing training and inter-agency exercises. To achieve this on a National level personnel from each of the Principal Response Agencies within a region will be appropriately trained and these trainers will deliver training at both local and region level. Inter-agency exercises will also be held on a regular basis. This allows each of the agencies to develop a good working relationship, prior to the declaration of a Major Emergency, should one arise. Feedback from the exercises has assisted in updating and amending plans.

5.7 Training programme

All personnel involved in the preparation for a response to a Major Emergency are required to participate in inter-agency training and exercises in order to ensure effective co-operation between agencies during a Major Emergency.

5.8 Internal exercises

Internal exercises are used to raise awareness, educate individuals on their roles and the roles of others and promote co-ordination and cooperation, as well as validating plans, systems and procedures. Examples of internal MEM exercises are:

- Railway Exercise (Bray/Greystones) – May 2016

5.9 Joint / Inter-agency training and exercise

Joint interagency training is provided at a Local and Regional level. This is coordinated by the Eastern Regional Working Group. Exercises shall follow on from training to improve the awareness and education of all involved, specific to the roles and functions of the respective Principal Response Agencies. Exercises shall be performed on a three year rolling cycle. Recent examples of Local inter-agency training / exercises are:

- Inter-agency Seveso Exercise MSD Rathdrum – 2011
- Inter-agency Motorway Exercise – December 2013
- Inter-agency Workshop and Emergency Traffic Management Exercise – July 2015
- Interagency Aviation Exercise – June 2016

5.10 The allocation of specific resources including a budget for preparedness

Wicklow County Council and the Eastern Regional Steering Group shall provide a budget for major emergency preparedness, which reflects the expenditure required to meet the costs of implementing an agencies internal preparedness, as well as the agency's contribution to the regional level inter-agency preparedness.

5.11 Procurement procedures

The arrangements to authorise procurement and use of resources (including engaging third parties) to assist in response to major emergencies are governed in the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

Arrangements have been put in place by certain sections of the Local Authorities, including Roads and Civil Defence, with local suppliers to supply urgent goods when required, and for the issuing of purchase orders the following day in the event of an emergency.

5.12 Annual appraisal of preparedness

Wicklow County Council shall carry out and document an annual internal appraisal of its preparedness for major emergency response. This is then sent for external appraisal to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. An annual appraisal of the Eastern Regional level preparedness shall also be documented, in accordance with the Appraisal Document.

5.13 Steps taken to inform the public as to what action they should take in the event of an emergency

There may be situations where it will be crucial for Wicklow County Council to provide timely and accurate information directly to the public on an emergency situation. This will be especially important where members of the public may perceive themselves and their families to be at risk and are seeking information on actions, which they can take to protect themselves and their families.

The Local Co-ordination Group is tasked with co-ordinating the provision of information to the public as soon as it meets. This activity should be co-ordinated by the lead agency. The Local Co-ordination Group may establish a sub-group for this purpose and use all available channels to make concise and accurate information available. This may include the use of dedicated “help-lines”, web-pages, Aertel, automatic text messaging, as well as through liaison with the media.

Section 6

Generic Command, Control and Co-ordination Systems

6.1 Command arrangements

The Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council is responsible for the major emergency management arrangements and preparedness, as well as for the effectiveness of the agency's response to any Major Emergency that occurs in its functional area. Wicklow County Council will exercise command over its own resources in accordance with its normal command structure.

6.1.1 Within individual services belonging to the Local Authorities

Wicklow County Council will exercise command over its own services in accordance with its normal command structure. At the site of an emergency, it will also exercise control over not only its own services but also any additional services (other than the Principal Response Agencies) that the Local Authority mobilises to the site. Control of the Local Authority services at the site of the Emergency shall be exercised by the Local Authority Controller of Operations.

6.2 Control arrangements

Wicklow County Council shall appoint a Controller of Operations at the site (or at each site) of an emergency. The officer in command of the initial response of each Principal Emergency Service should be the Principal Response Agency's Controller of Operations until relieved through the agency's pre-determined process.

Please see section 6.3.4.2 for arrangements where an emergency affects an extensive area or occurs near borders.

6.2.1 Control of all services / sections of the Local Authorities which respond

Controller of services / sections and Controller of Operations:

The Controller of Operations is empowered to make all decisions relating to his/her agency's functions, but in so doing, he/she must take account of the decisions of the On-Site Co-ordination Group.

The mandate of the Controller of Operations is:

- To make such decisions as are appropriate to the role of controlling the activities of his/her agency's services at the site (Controlling in this context may mean setting priority objectives for individual services; command of each service should remain with the officers of that service),
- To meet with the other two controllers and determine the lead agency,
- To undertake the role of On-Site Co-ordinator, where the service he/she represents is identified as the lead agency,
- To participate fully in the site co-ordination activity, including the establishment of a Site Management Plan,
- Where another service is the lead agency, to ensure that his/her agency's operations are co-ordinated with the other Principal Response Agencies, including ensuring secure communications with all agencies responding to the major emergency at the site,
- To decide and request the attendance of such services as s/he determines are needed,
- To exercise control over such services as s/he has requested to attend,
- To operate a Holding Area to which personnel from his/her agency will report on arrival at the site of the major emergency and from which they will be deployed,
- To requisition any equipment s/he deems necessary to deal with the incident,
- To seek such advice as s/he requires,
- To maintain a log of his/her agency's activity at the incident site and decisions made,
- To contribute to and ensure information management systems operate effectively,
- To liaise with his/her Principal Response Agency's Crisis Management Team on the handling of the major emergency.

On-Site Co-ordinator:

The On-Site Co-ordinator is empowered to make decisions, as set out below. Decisions should be arrived at, generally, by the consensus of the On-Site Co-ordinating Group. Where consensus is not possible, the On-Site Co-ordinator should only make decisions after hearing and considering the views of the other two Controllers.

The mandate of the On-Site Co-ordinator is set out below:

- To assume the role of On-Site Co-ordinator when the three controllers determine the lead agency. Once appointed he/she should note the time and that the determination was made in the presence of the two other controllers on-site,
- To inform all parties involved in the response that he/she has assumed the role of On-Site Co-ordinator,
- To determine which facility should be used as the On-Site Co-ordination Centre. Depending on the circumstance, this may be a vehicle designated for the task, a specific, purpose-built vehicle, a tent or other temporary structure or an appropriate space/building adjacent to the site, which can be used for coordination purposes,
- To ensure involvement of the three Principal Response Agencies and the Principal Emergency Services (and others, as appropriate) in the On-Site Co-ordination Group,
- To ensure that mandated co-ordination decisions are made promptly and communicated to all involved,
- To ensure that a Scene Management Plan is made and disseminated to all services and applied,
- To develop an auditable list of actions (an Action Plan) and appoint an Action Management Officer where necessary,
- To determine if and what public information messages are to be developed and issued,
- To ensure that media briefings are co-ordinated,
- To ensure that pre-arranged communications (technical) links are put in place and operating,
- To ensure that the information management system is operated, including the capture of data for record-purposes; at regular intervals,
- To ensure that the ownership of the lead agency role is reviewed, and modified as appropriate,
- To ensure that inter-service communication systems have been established and that communications from site to the Local Co-ordination Centre have been established and are functioning,
- To exercise an over-viewing role of all arrangements to mobilise additional resources to the site of the major emergency, and to track the status of mobilisation requests and deployment of additional resources,

- To ensure that, where the resources of an individual principal response agency do not appear to be sufficient to bring a situation under control or the duration of an incident is extended, support is obtained via mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring Principal Response Agencies,
- To determine, at an early stage, if ongoing assistance is required from casual volunteers, so that An Garda Síochána cordoning arrangements can take account of this
- To co-ordinate external assistance into the overall response action plan,
- To ensure that, where appropriate, Pastoral Services are mobilised to the site and facilitated by the Principal Response Agencies in their work with casualties,
- To work with the Health Service Executive Controller to establish the likely nature, dimensions, priorities and optimum location for delivering any psycho social support that might be required, and to determine how this is to be delivered and integrated with the overall response effort,
- To decide to stand down the major emergency status of the incident at the site, in consultation with the other Controllers of Operations, and the Local Co-ordination Group,
- To ensure that all aspects of the management of the incident are dealt with before the response is stood down; and
- To ensure that a report on the co-ordination function is prepared in respect of the major emergency after it is closed down, and circulated (first as a draft) to the other services that attended.

Local co-ordination Group:

When the Local Co-ordination Group has been activated, its mandate is as follows:

- To establish high level objectives for the situation and give strategic direction to the response,
- To determine and disseminate the overall architecture of response co-ordination,
- To anticipate issues arising,
- To provide support for the on-site response,
- To resolve issues arising from the site,
- To ensure the generic information management system is operated,
- To take over the task of co-ordinating the provision of information for the public as soon as it meets and use all available channels to make concise and accurate information available,
- To decide and to take action to manage public perceptions of the risks involved, as well as managing the risks, during emergencies that threaten the public,

- To co-ordinate and manage all matters relating to the media other than on-site,
- To establish and maintain links with a Regional Coordination Centre, if involved,
- To establish and maintain links with the lead Government Department and/or the National Emergency Co-ordination Centre,
- To ensure co-ordination of the response activity other than the on-site element,
- To decide on resource and financial provision and,
- To take whatever steps are necessary to start to plan for recovery.

Crisis Management Team:

The Crisis Management Team is a strategic level management group within each Principal Response Agency, which is assembled during a major emergency to:

- Manage, control and co-ordinate the agency's overall response to the situation,
- Provide support to the agency's Controller of Operations on-site and mobilise resources from within the agency or externally as required,
- Liaise with national head quarters, in the case of An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive, and relevant Government Departments on strategic issues, and,
- Ensure appropriate participation of the agency in the inter-agency co-ordination structures.

The members of the Crisis Management Team for Wicklow County Council as designated in *Appendices C2 & C3* may meet at the pre-arranged location in County Buildings, Wicklow Town.

The use of Crisis Management Teams within each of the Principal Response Agencies facilitates the mobilisation of senior staff to deal with the crisis, in light of the evolving situation, rather than leaving multiple roles to a small number of individuals who hold key positions. In this way, the objectives of prioritising and managing a protracted crisis can be dealt with effectively, while keeping the day-to-day business running.

A Crisis Management Team provides support to the Principal Response Agency's representative on the Local Co-ordination Group, supports their own Controller of Operations on-site and maintains the agency's normal day-to-day essential services to community.

6.2.2 Control of external organisations / agencies mobilised to assist the Local Authorities during the response

There are a number of organisations and agencies that may be called on to assist the Principal Response Agencies in responding to major emergencies. The arrangements for this assistance should be agreed with each individual agency.

At the site of an emergency, Wicklow County Council will exercise control, not only over its own services but any additional services (other than other Principal Response Agencies) which the Local Authority mobilises to the site.

6.2.3 Support arrangements for the Control function

Wicklow County Council staff will respond to any Major Emergency in accordance with pre-determined agreements. The Crisis Management Team will control all Local Authority personnel that respond to the emergency.

6.3 Co-ordination arrangements

The co-ordination of the efforts of all services is recognised as a vital element in successful response to major emergencies so that the combined result is greater than the sum of their individual efforts.

6.3.1 Lead Agency

The concept of the Lead Agency is accepted as the method for establishing which Agency has initial responsibility for Coordination of all Services at the various levels of co-ordination of a Major Emergency. The pre-determined and default agencies for different types of emergencies are set out in *Appendix D1*.

6.3.2 The Local Authority On-site Co-ordination function and arrangements for support teams

On-site Co-ordination is facilitated by the On-Site Controller of Operations and the On-Site Co-ordination Group. The rolls of the On-site Co-ordinator and the On-Site Co-ordination Group have been outlined in *section 6.2.1 of this document*.

6.3.3 The Local Authority will perform the co-ordination function at the Local / Regional Co-ordination Centres

When a Major Emergency has been declared and the lead agency determined, the relevant personnel of the lead agency should then implement the mobilisation procedure for the Local Co-ordination Group. The representative of the lead agency shall Chair the Local Co-ordination Group, located in the Local Co-ordination Centre, and will exercise the mandates associated with this position. The Local Co-ordination Group will comprise representatives of the other two Principal Response Agencies, an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer, an Action Management Officer (where considered appropriate), representatives of other agencies and specialists, as appropriate.

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may declare a regional level emergency and activate a Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination and in doing so the activation for a "Regional Coordination Group" to maintain co-ordination of the Principal Response Agencies involved from the extended "response region". Any one of the nominated Local Co-ordination Centres may be used as a Regional Coordination Centre, or a specific Regional Centre may be designated for this purpose. The choice of location will be determined in each situation by the Chair of the Local Co-ordinating Group declaring the regional level emergency and will depend on the location and nature of the emergency and any associated infrastructural damage.

6.3.4 Appointment of On-Site Controller

Where the Local Authority has been predetermined as "lead agency", Wicklow County Council Controller of Operations will undertake the functions of On-Site Coordinator. Where there is ambiguity the Controllers of Operations from each of the three Principal Response Agencies should meet and agree which agency shall assume the role of On-Site Coordinator.

The person appointed will Chair the "On-Site Coordination Group"; this group is comprised of the "Controllers of Operations" of Wicklow County Council, An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive.

The appointee assuming the role should note the time they commence the responsibilities of the position and record that the determination of lead agency was made in the presence of the other two Controllers of Operations on-site. This agreement must then be communicated in a formal manner to all parties involved in the response.

6.3.4.1 Mutual aid and regional level co-ordination

Each Controller of Operations should ensure that, where the resources of his/her individual Principal Response Agency do not appear to be sufficient to bring a situation under control, or the duration of an incident is extended, support is obtained by means of mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring Principal Response Agencies. The Crisis Management Teams of the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána should arrange to provide the additional support required as they are national organisations; Local Authorities will support each other on a mutual aid basis. See *section 4.5 and 4.6 of this document*.

6.3.4.2 Incidents occurring on the Agencies boundaries

In certain situations, e.g. where an emergency affects an extensive area or occurs near the borders of Divisions of An Garda Síochána or areas of the Health Service Executive or of the Local Authorities, there may be a response from multiple units of the Principal Response Agencies. There should be only one Controller of Operations for each of the three Principal Response Agencies and it is necessary to determine from which Principal Response Agencies the Controller of Operations should come.

Where it is unclear, which Local Authority should provide a Controller of Operations this can be resolved as follows:

The Local Authority Controller of Operations should be the designated person from the Local Authority whose Rostered Senior Fire Officer was first to attend the incident.

6.3.4.3 Multi-site or wide area emergencies

Multi-site or wide area emergencies may require the setting up of multiple Local Co-Ordination Groups. During such an emergency each Local Co-ordination Group will be in contact with the lead Government Department and, in such a situation, the decision on whether the activities of a number of Local co-ordination Groups should be co-ordinated by a Regional co-ordination Centre or by the lead Government Department will be taken in light of the prevailing circumstances.

6.3.4.4 Links with National Emergency Plans

Wicklow County Councils Major Emergency Plans will operate as an integral part of any National plans developed for scenarios affecting the population on a National Level.

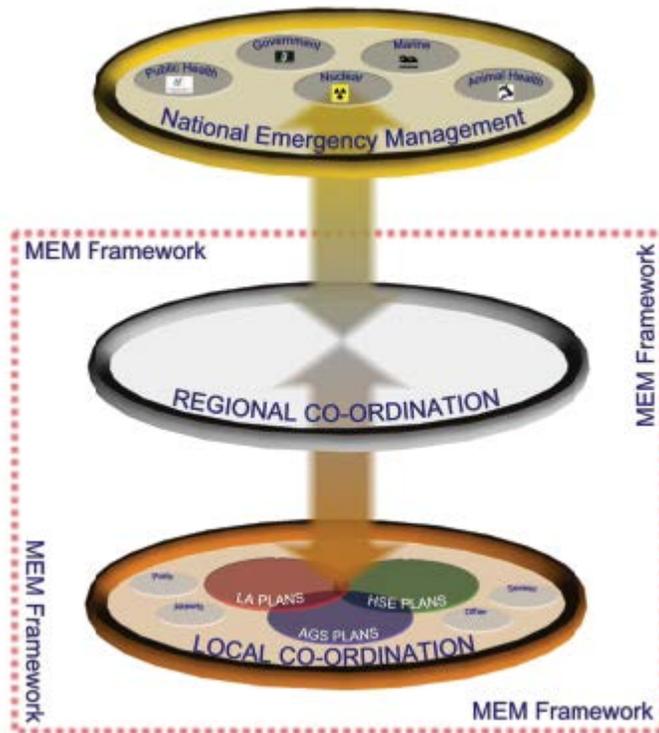


Figure 6: Linking Major Emergency Plans with National Plans and Other Plans

6.3.4.5 Links with National Government work

In every situation where a Major Emergency is declared, each Principal Response Agency should inform its parent Department of the declaration as part of that agency’s mobilisation procedure. The three parent Departments shall then consult and agree, which Department will be designated as Lead Department, in accordance with the directions set out in “A Framework for Major Emergency Planning”.

Section 7

The Common Elements of Response

7.1 Declaration of a Major Emergency

The Major Emergency Plan should be activated by whichever of the following agencies first becomes aware of the Major Emergency:

- Wicklow County Council (*see Appendix E1 for persons authorised to activate plan*)
- An Garda Síochána
- Health Service Executive

A typical message to declare a Major Emergency shall be in the following format:

This is (*state name, title*)

A (*state type of incident*)

Has occurred / is imminent at (*state incident location*)

As an authorised officer I declare that a Major Emergency Exists.

Please activate the mobilisation arrangements in Wicklow County Council Major Emergency Plan. (*state date & time*)

7.1.1 Standard format of the information message

After the declaration is made the Officer should then use the mnemonic **METHANE** to structure and deliver an information message.

Major Emergency declared	Information Required
Exact Location of the emergency	Full details of location of incident site. Identify areas that will be affected immediately; and in the short term
Type of Emergency	Detail on the type of the emergency (Transport, Chemical Spill, Severe Weather etc.)
Hazards, present and potential.	Fire, Explosives, Dangerous Chemicals etc.
Access / Egress routes	Full details of emergency service response routes to and/from the incident location. Safe routes may be influenced by wind direction and/or obstructions (e.g. flooding).
Number and types of Casualties	Number and type of confirmed casualties and estimate of potential casualties.
Emergency services present and required.	Full details of resources present and required. Include the means of communication with persons activating the plan; telephone numbers etc

Each Principal Response Agency should notify its parent department in every situation where a Major Emergency is declared, as part of each agency's Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure. The Department has made arrangements for a telephone number, which can be accessed 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year, where notifications will be received from Local Authorities. Receipt will be acknowledged, and then passed to the Department for appropriate follow-up actions. See below:

MEM C/L 05 - 08
ANNEX 1

Framework for Major Emergency Management
Format for Notifying D/EHLG of Declaration of a Major Emergency

Dial 1 800 303 063

Date: _____

Time: _____

Notification from Local Authority: _____

NOTIFICATION

This is *(Name and Position)* from Local Authority *(Insert)*. In accordance with the provisions of the Framework for Major Emergency Management, I am requesting you to inform the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government that a major emergency has been declared in our functional area.

I can be contacted at *(specify number)*: _____

DETAILS (Where available)

The details (where known at this stage) are as follows:

Major Emergency declared :
By whom :
Time of Declaration :
Exact Location: :
Type of Emergency Situation :
Lead Agency (Where known) :
Local Co-ordination Centre :

EXERCISES and PHONE LINE TESTS

Where this notification function is being exercised, the above NOTIFICATION message should be prefaced by and ended with the words

“THIS IS AN EXERCISE, I REPEAT, THIS IS AN EXERCISE”

Separately when the contact number is being tested the message must identify which local authority is testing the line and the words “PHONE LINE TEST ONLY” must be used

7.2 Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure

Wicklow County Councils Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure will be implemented immediately on notification of the declaration of a major emergency. When this Plan has been activated, each Local Authority service requested shall respond in accordance with pre-determined arrangements. (*See Appendix E1*)

In some situations, there may be an early warning of an impending emergency. Mobilisation within Wicklow County Council may include moving to a standby/alert stage for some of its services or specific individuals, until the situation becomes clearer.

There may also be circumstances where the resources or expertise of agencies other than the Principal Response Agencies will be required. In these situations the relevant arrangements outlined in the Major Emergency Plan will be invoked. No third party should respond to the site of a Major Emergency unless mobilised by one of the Principal Response Agencies through an agreed procedure.

7.3 Command, Control and Communication Centres

In the event of a Major Emergency being declared initial mobilisation will be responsibility of the Eastern Regional Control Centre (ERCC), who will communicate with the personnel on-site until such a time as the Crisis Management Team and Co-ordination Group have been established in accordance with national pre-determined arrangements.

Please refer to Section 6 of this document for further details on the functions of these Teams/Groups.

7.4 Co-ordination Centres

In the event of Major Emergency, there will be an On-site Co-ordination Centre, a Local Co-ordination Centre and where necessary, a Regional and/or National Co-ordination Centre. Where Wicklow County Council is the lead agency, they will be responsible for the On-site Co-ordination Centres and, irrespective of the lead agency, Wicklow County Council should provide for a Local Co-ordination Centre

7.4.1 On-site Co-ordination

An On-site Co-ordination Centre should be established in the event of a Major Emergency for on-site operational support and command. This may be a dedicated vehicle, tent or an adjacent building, that will accommodate all Principal Responses Agencies.

7.4.2 Crisis Management Team

The Crisis Management Team is a strategic level management group within each principal response agency, which is assembled during a Major Emergency. It provides support to the principal response agency's representative at the Local Co-ordination Group, supports their own Controller of Operations on-site and maintains the agency's normal day-to-day services that the community requires.

Please refer to Section 6.2.1 of this document for further details.

7.4.3 Location of pre-determined Local Co-ordination Centres

Principal Response Agencies within Wicklow have identified the following locations as suitable Local Co-ordination Centres for strategic level co-ordination:

- Wicklow County Council, County Buildings in Wicklow Town
- Alternatively, a Local Co-ordination Centre in a neighbouring Local Authorities

These buildings have been chosen to facilitate the effective working of the Local Co-ordination Group and Local Authority Crisis Management Team. Strategic level co-ordination is more usually exercised at the Local Co-ordination Centre. All co-ordination centres will follow a generic model of operation. The generic centre illustrated below has the following characteristics.

Please refer to Section 6 of this document and the relevant guidance document(s) on www.mem.ie

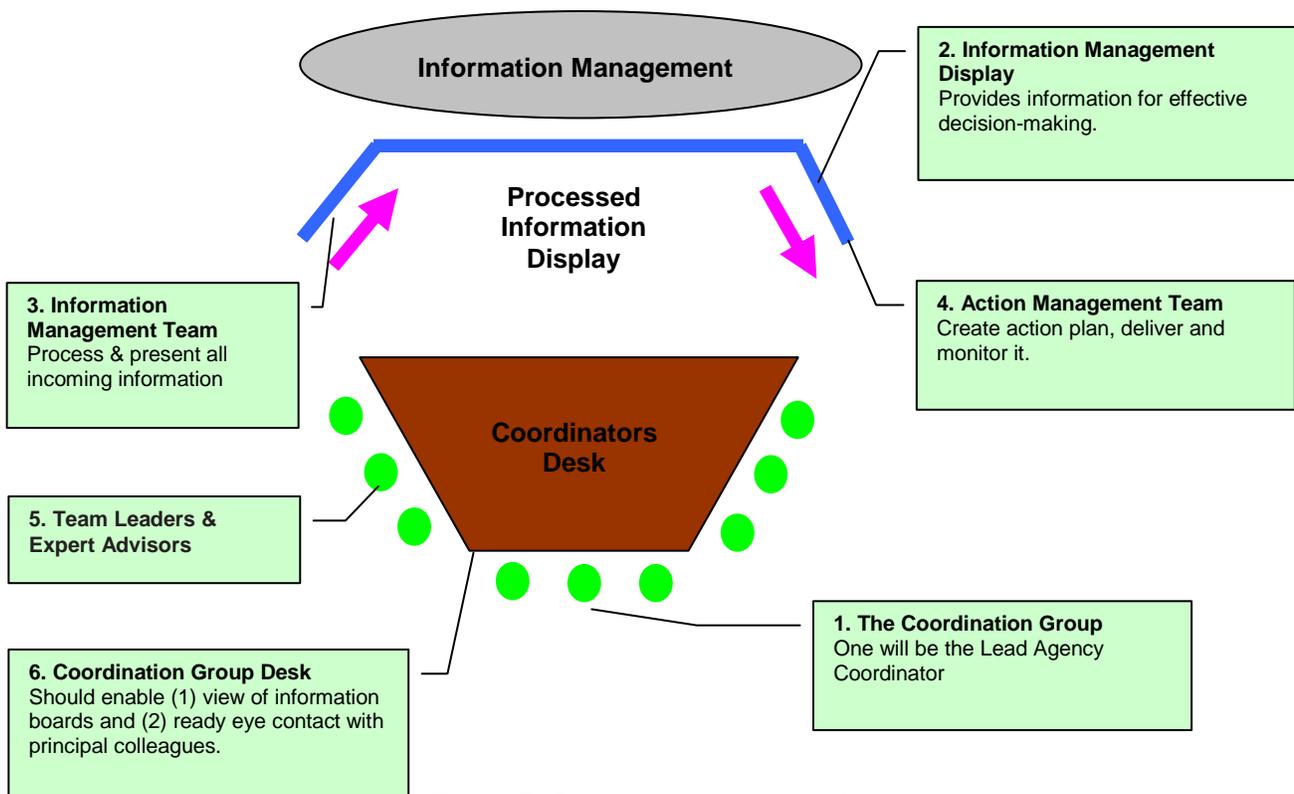


Figure 7: Generic Co-ordination Centre

7.4.4 Location of the predetermined Regional Co-ordination Centre(s)

A Local Co-ordination Centres should have the capacity to act as a Regional Co-ordination Centre, should the Major Emergency be scaled up to a regional level.

7.4.5 Information Management

Individuals will be nominated for the role of Information Manager. (See *Appendices C2 & C3*) The function of the information management team will be to interrogate, test, process and present all incoming information required for the decision making process as described below.

- **Action Management Officer / Team:**

The function of this role is to assemble an Action Plan, from information that has come from the Information Management System and ensure that it is communicated to all agencies responsible for delivering it, and monitor / audit delivery as well as reporting this back to the Co-ordination Group (a generic system which operates at all levels). At less complex incidents one Officer / Team may undertake both the information and action management functions. Where the demands of the Major Emergency require the appointment of a separate Action Management Officer, this person may be a representative from one of the agencies other than the lead agency.

- **Team Leaders and Expert Advisors:**
A range of specialist team leaders and expert advisers may be assigned permanent or temporary seats at the Local Co-ordination Group desk. They may themselves lead teams either at or remote from the centre. Generally they should advise or direct activity strictly within the mandate of their Authorities. On occasion they may be invited to contribute to the discussions in a broader context. They need to be quite clear in which capacity they are acting at any juncture and adjust their perspective accordingly.
- **Support Teams:**
Each Principal Response Agency should put support teams in place for key roles and should prepare Operational Protocols setting out the arrangements which will enable the agency's support to be mobilised and function in accordance with this Major Emergency Plan.

7.5 Communications systems within the Local Authorities

Wicklow County Council relies on technical communication facilities to enable it to function and for different units to communicate, both at the site and between the site and its command, control or communications centre. Radio and other communications facilities, such as the use of Local Authority mobile phones, are vital tools for the Local Authority.

- **Civil Defence:**
The Civil Defence operate both mobile radio (VHF) for communication between vehicles and communication centres and hand-portable radio (UHF) for communication on-site. A digital multi-line phone and fax service is also available at Civil Defence Headquarters.
- **Fire Service:**
All front line appliances are equipped with radios, and the Fire Service has hand-portable radios (UHF) available on all its appliances. Satellite phones are also available for use in a Major Emergency.

7.5.1 Inter-agency communication on-site

Communication systems serve command structures within services and it is neither necessary nor desirable that there is inter-agency radio communication at all levels. However, it is critical that robust arrangements for inter-agency communication on-site(s) are provided at Controller of Operations level, as a minimum. For this purpose, the Fire service will bring a set of hand-portable radios, specifically for inter-agency communication, at site.

7.5.2 Communications between site and Co-ordination Centre(s)

All communication between On-site Co-ordination Centre and the Local Co-ordination Group Centre from the Controller of Operations / On-site Co-ordinator to the Local Co-Ordination Group will be supported by the work of trained Information Management Officers at the scene and at the co-ordination centres. Communications between the site and the co-ordination centre will be facilitated by way of radio / phone system available to relevant personnel at the time.

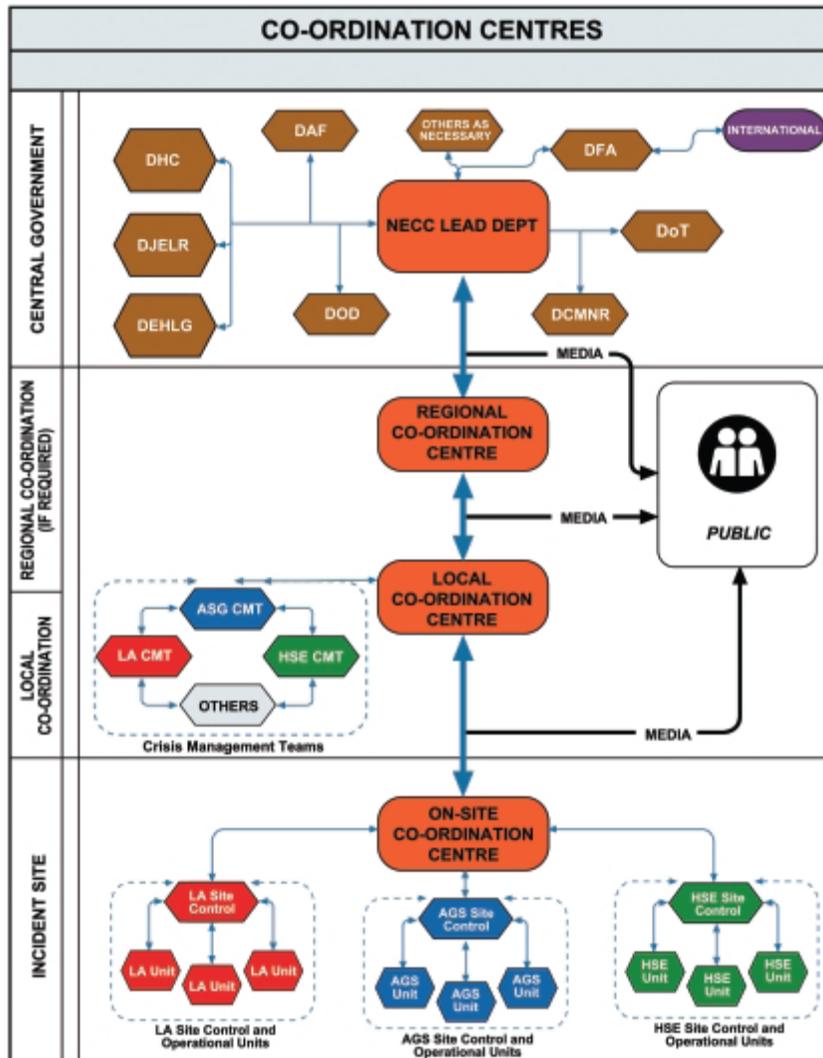


Figure 7.1: Communication

7.6 Exercising the Lead Agency's Co-ordination Roles

One of the three Principal Response Agencies will be designated as the lead agency for any emergency and will assume responsibility for leading co-ordination.

See Section 6.3.1 of this Plan.

7.6.1 Review and transfer of the Lead Agency

The lead agency role may change over time, to reflect the changing circumstances of a major emergency. Therefore ownership of the lead agency mantle should be reviewed at appropriate stages of a major emergency. All changes in lead agency designation emanating from the site, and the timing thereof, will be by agreement of the three Controllers of Operations, and should be recorded and communicated, as well as the initial determination informing the Local Co-ordinating Group. As the emphasis of operations may shift from the site to other areas, the Local Co-ordination Group may review the issue and determine a change in the lead agency, as appropriate.

7.6.2 Wicklow County Council co-ordination function as a Lead Agency

In the event of Wicklow County Council been assigned the Lead Agency role, it will be assigned the responsibility for the interagency co-ordination function (in addition to its own functions) and it should lead all the co-ordination activity associated with the emergency both on-site and off-site, and make every effort to achieve a high level in co-ordination. The function of the lead agency for any emergency includes ensuring:

- involvement of the three Principal Response Agencies and the Principal Emergency Services in sharing information on the nature of the emergency situation,
- involvement of the range of organisations (other than Principal Response Agencies) who may be requested to respond in co-ordination activities and arrangements,
- mandated co-ordination decisions are made promptly and communicated to all involved,
- site management issues are addressed and decided,
- public information messages and media briefings are co-ordinated and implemented,
- pre-arranged communications (technical) links are put in place and operating,
- operation of the generic information management systems,
- ownership of the lead agency role is reviewed, and modified as appropriate,

- all aspects of the management of the incident are dealt with before the response is stood down,
- a report on the co-ordination function is prepared in respect of the emergency after it is closed down, and circulated (first as a draft) to the other services which attended.

7.7 Public Information

There are circumstances when it may be necessary to protect members of the public who are in the vicinity of an emergency event. This protection is usually achieved by moving people temporarily to a safe area by evacuation where appropriate or feasible, or, by advising affected individuals to take shelter in an appropriate place. The On-Site Co-ordinator will make the decision on how best to protect a threatened population after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. The Local Co-ordination Group should manage the task of co-ordinating the provision of information to the public as soon as it meets. This activity should be co-ordinated by the lead agency.

7.7.1 Public Notices

Early warning and special public notices shall be relayed in the event of an emergency. The Public can be kept informed by use of:

- Internet service, www.wicklow.ie,
- Local broadcasters;
- Emergency helpline service

On a national level the public shall be informed by:

- Television and Radio – arrangements exist whereby emergency announcements may be made on RTÉ television and radio channels,
- Television Text Services – not for emergency alerts, but useful for posting more information than would be communicable by emergency calls or broadcasts.

Please refer to the relevant guidance document(s) on www.mem.ie for further information. (See Appendices C2 & C3 for useful phone numbers)

7.8 Media and liaison arrangements

The media will respond quickly to any incident and this media presence may extend into days or weeks. It is the responsibility of the lead agency to establish a Media Centre at or near the site of the emergency for use by the Principal Response Agencies in dealing with the media at the site. The Local Co-ordination Group will be responsible for official media statements and press releases off/on-site. Refer to www.mem.ie for further information.

7.8.1 Arrangements for media on-site

There shall be Media Liaison Officers appointed at both the On-site and Local Co-ordination Centres, from each of the Principal Response Agency's. The Media Liaison Officer of the lead agency must keep accurate and timely information on the emergency so that in consultation with the Local Co-ordination Groups:

- can be the point of contact for all media enquiries,
- can answer information queries from the general public,
- can obtain and provide information from/to Rest Centres, other agencies, press officers, local radio, press etc,
- will be responsible for setting up an information helpline,
- should liaise with other agency's Media Liaison Officers.

7.8.2 Arrangements for off-site media at Local and / or Regional Co-ordination Centres

The Local/Regional Co-ordination Group should take the lead in terms of working with the media, away from the site, during a major emergency. As with arrangements at the site, each principal response agency should designate a Media Liaison Officer at the Local Coordination Centre and the activities of the Media Liaison Officers should be co-ordinated by the Media Liaison Officer of the lead agency. All statements to the media at this level should be cleared with the Chair of the Local/Regional Co-ordination Group.

7.8.3 Arrangements for media at other locations associated with the Major Emergency

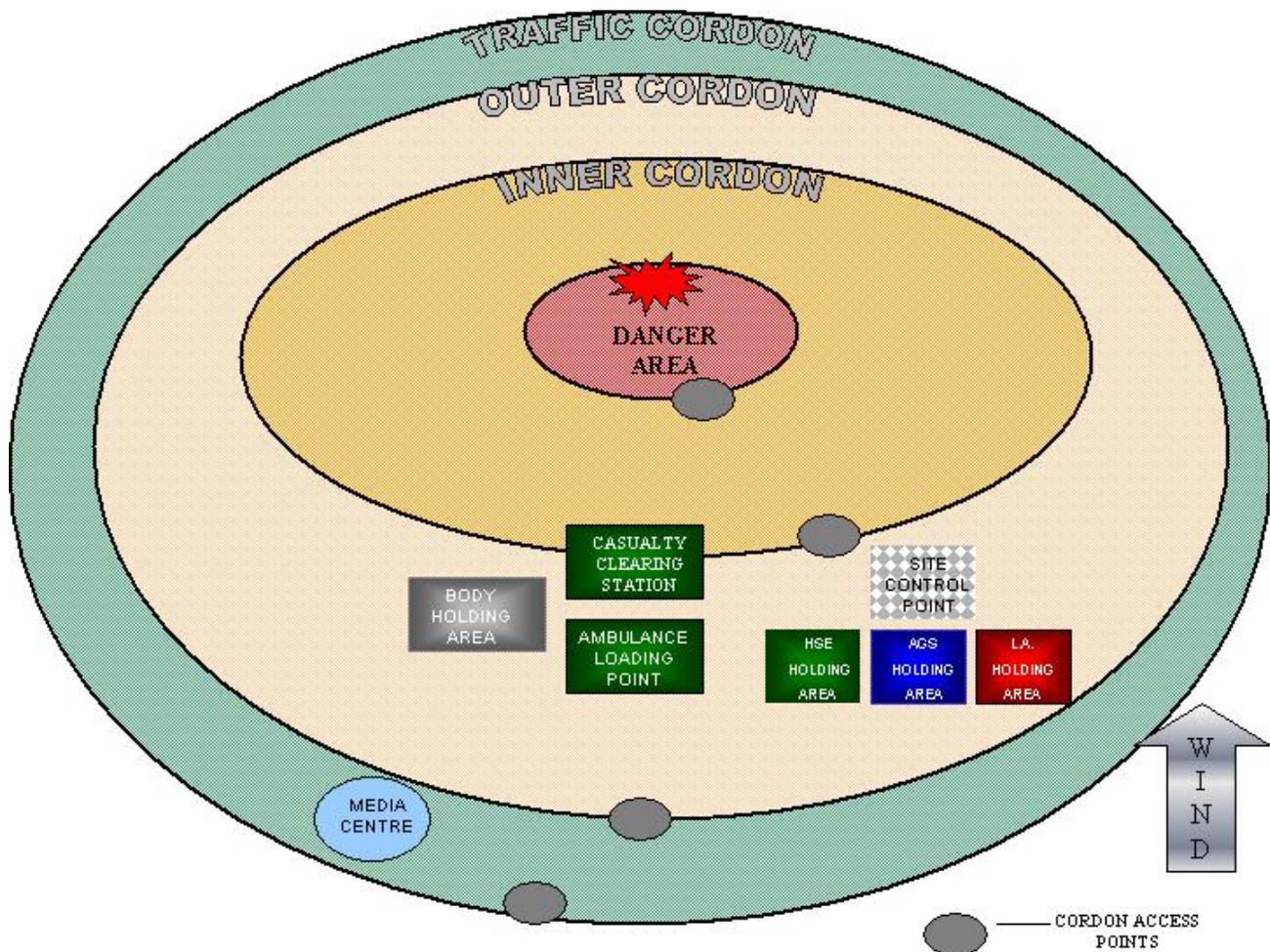
In many situations media attention will move quickly away from the site to other locations, including the Local Co-ordination Centre, hospitals and mortuaries. The Local Co-ordination Group should take the lead in terms of working with the media, off-site.

As with arrangements at the site, each Principal Response Agencies should designate a Media Liaison Officer at the Local Coordination Centre and the activities of these officers should be co-ordinated by the Media Liaison Officer of the lead agency. All statements to the media at this level should be cleared with the Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group.

7.9 Generic site management elements / arrangements

Wicklow County Council shall appoint a Controller of Operations at the site (or at each site) of the emergency; see section 6.2 of this document. The initial important task of the Controller of Operations in association with the other two Controllers is the development of a Site Management Plan. Once agreed, the resulting site plan should be implemented and communicated to all responding groups.

Figure 7.1: Idealised Scene Management Arrangements



The main components of a typical Site Plan should contain some or all of the following:

- Inner, Outer and Traffic Cordons
- A Danger Area, if appropriate
- Cordon and Danger Area Access Points
- Rendezvous Point
- Site Access Routes
- Holding Areas for the different services
- Principal Response Agency Control Points
- On-Site Co-ordination Centre
- Body Holding Area
- Rest Centre
- Friends and Relative
- Media Centre
- Ambulance Loading Area
- Casualty Clearing Station
- Site Control Point

(See Appendix E2 for detailed information on Scene Management)

7.9.1 Control of access / identification of personnel and services of the Local Authorities

A Central Access to a Major Emergency site cordons will be established as quickly as possible at the site of a Major Emergency for the following reasons:

- to facilitate the operations of the emergency services and other agencies,
- to protect the public, by preventing access to dangerous areas, and,
- to protect evidence and facilitate evidence recovery at the site.

Three cordons will be established. An Inner, Outer and Traffic Cordon, along with access cordon points. *(See Appendix E2 for detailed information)* This will be done by An Garda Síochána after a decision by and agreement with the On-site Co-Ordination Group.

A Danger Area may also be declared where there is a definite risk to rescue personnel, over and above that which would normally pertain at emergency operations.

- Non-Uniformed Personnel
Non-uniformed personnel from Wicklow County Council should attend the scene with County Council work identification. A Major Emergency Response tag maybe issued to personnel at a Local Authority Holding Area.
- Identification of Personnel at the Site of a Major Emergency
All uniformed personnel, responding to the site of a major emergency, should wear the prescribed uniform, including high visibility and safety clothing, as issued by their agency. The service markings on this clothing should be made known in advance to the other organisations that may be involved in the response.

Senior personnel who are acting in key roles, such as the On-Site Co-ordinator and the Controllers of Operations, should wear bibs designed and coordinated as follows:

Organisation	Bib Colour	Wording
An Garda Síochána	Blue and White Chequer	Garda Controller
Local Authorities	Red and White Chequer	Local Authorities Controller
Health Service Executive	Green and White Chequer	HSE Controller

When the lead agency has been determined, the On-Site Co-ordinator should don a distinctive bib with the words 'On-Site Co-ordinator' clearly visible front and back.

Below are examples of sur-coats for each of the Responding Agencies.



7.9.2 Air Exclusion Zones

Where the Principal Response Agencies consider it appropriate and beneficial, the On-Site Co-ordinator may request, through An Garda Síochána, that an Air Exclusion Zone be declared around the emergency site by the Irish Aviation Authorities. When a restricted zone above and around the site is declared, it is promulgated by means of a "Notice to Airmen" - NOTAM - from the Irish Aviation Authorities.

7.10 Arrangements for mobilising organisations

The Voluntary Emergency Services sector can provide additional equipment and support in the event of a major emergency. Details of local Voluntary Emergency Services, the resources they can provide and their mobilisation procedure is outlined in *Appendix C1*.

Voluntary Emergency Services will link to the Principal Response Agencies in accordance with Table below.

Principal Response Agency	Linked Voluntary Emergency Service
An Garda Síochána	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Irish Mountain Rescue Association• Irish Cave Rescue Association• Search and Rescue Dogs• Garda Sub-Aqua Teams• River Rescue
Health Service Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Irish Red Cross• Order of Malta Ambulance Corps
Local Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civil Defence

Each Principal Response Agency with a linked Voluntary Emergency Services is responsible for the mobilisation of these services and their integration into the overall response; the internal command of volunteer organisations resides with the respective organisations.

7.10.1 Mobilisation of Civil Defence

Refer to section 4.4.1 of this document, details also given in Appendix E1.

7.10.2 Mobilisation of Defence Forces

Refer to section 4.4.2 of this document, details also given in Appendices C2 & C3.

7.10.3 Mobilisation of the Irish Red Cross

Refer to section 4.4.3 of this document, details also given in Appendices C2 & C3.

7.10.4 Mobilisation of Voluntary Emergency Services

Each Principal Response Agency linked Voluntary Emergency Services is responsible for the mobilisation of those services and their integration into the overall response; the internal command of volunteer organisations resides with the respective organisations.

7.10.5 Mobilisation of Utilities

Utilities are frequently involved in the response to emergencies, usually to assist the Principal Response Agencies in making situations safe. They may also be directly involved in restoring their own services, for example, electricity supply in the aftermath of a storm. Utilities operate under their own legislative and regulatory frameworks but, during the response to an emergency, it is important that they are involved in the co-ordination arrangements. Utilities may be requested to provide representatives and/or experts to the On-Site Co-ordination Group, the Local Coordination Group and/or the Regional Co-ordination Group, as appropriate. A list of utilities and their emergency/out of hours contact arrangements are listed in *Appendices C2 & C3*. Please refer to section 4.4.6 of this document for further details.

7.10.6 Mobilisation of Private Sector organisations

Private Sector organisations may be involved in a Major Emergency through ownership of the site where the emergency has occurred or through ownership of some element involved in the emergency e.g. an aircraft, bus, factory, etc. They may also be called on to assist in the response to a major emergency, by providing specialist services and/or equipment. Private Sector representatives and/or experts may be requested to support the work of the On-Site Co-ordination Group, the Local Co-ordination Group and/or the Regional Co-ordination Group, as appropriate. A list of experts within the Private Sector is detailed in *Appendices C2 & C3*.

7.10.7 Arrangements for identifying and mobilising additional resources

The Local Authority Controller of Operations should ensure that, where the resources of the authority do not appear to be sufficient to bring a situation under control, or the duration of an incident is expected to be extended, the levels, types and duration of assistance/ support are identified, and that the request for support is passed to either the authority's Crisis Management Team or the Local Co-ordination Centre, who will arrange to obtain the support through mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring authorities.

Where resources that are held at a national level are required, as part of the management of the incident, requests for those resources should be directed by the lead agency to the lead Government Department.

7.10.8 Arrangements for liaison with utilities

Refer to section 4.4.6 of this document.

7.10.9 Arrangements for integration of casual volunteers

Refer to section 4.4.5 of this document.

7.10.10 Demobilisation of organisations mobilised to the site

Each Principal Response Agency with a linked Voluntary Emergency Services/Organisation is responsible for the mobilisation of that service and their disintegration into the overall response. The internal command of the organisations resides with the respective organisation.

Please refer to section 4.4.1 through 4.4.7 and section 7.10.1 of this document.

7.10.11 Mutual aid arrangements

Refer to section 4.5 of this document.

7.10.12 Requests for out-of-region assistance

The decision to seek assistance from outside the region will be made at Local/Regional Co-ordination Centre, in association with the other Principal Response Agencies.

Refer to section 4.7 of this document.

7.10.13 Requests for international assistance

A Regional Co-ordination Group may also request assistance from Government. National resources will be available in the event of a Major Emergency at local or regional level. Requests for assistance should be developed at local or regional co-ordination level and directed by the lead agency to the lead Government Department. *Refer to section 4.7 of this document.*

7.11 Casualty and Survivor arrangements

The primary objective of any response to a Major Emergency is to provide effective arrangements for the rescue, care, treatment and rehabilitation of all of the individuals who are affected by the emergency. These individuals may be divided into two main categories as follows: Casualties, including persons who are killed or injured, and Survivors. Survivors will include all those individuals who are caught up in an emergency but not injured, such as, uninjured passengers from a transport accident or evacuees.

As well as making provision for casualties and survivors, the Principal Response Agencies should also make arrangements for the reception, facilitation and support of the friends and relatives of some or all of these individuals.

Please refer to the relevant guidance document(s) on www.mem.ie for further information.

7.11.1 Casualties and Survivors; the Local Authority's role

The On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other Controllers of Operations, should make an early assessment of the casualty situation and identify any issues which may impact on casualty management, such as, significant numbers of disabled, sick or immobile persons involved, and make appropriate arrangements.

Individuals may be divided into two main categories as follows:

- Casualties, including persons who are killed or injured
- Survivors. These include all those individuals who are caught up in an emergency but not injured, such as, uninjured passengers from a transport accident or evacuees.

7.11.2 Injured

At the site of a Major Emergency, the priorities of the Principal Response Services are to save life, prevent further injury, rescue those who are trapped or in danger, triage casualties, provide them with appropriate treatment and transport them to the appropriate hospital(s) where necessary.

7.11.2.1 Arrangements for triage

Triage is a dynamic process of assessing casualties and deciding the priority of treatment, using a two-stage process of triage sieve and triage sort. Following initial triage, casualties will normally be labelled, using Triage Cards, and moved to a Casualty Clearing Station. The purpose of this labelling is to indicate the triage category of the casualty, to facilitate the changing of that category,

if required, and, to record any treatment, procedure or medication administered. A standard card with Red (Immediate), Yellow (Urgent), Green (Delayed) and White (Dead) sections is normally used for this purpose.

7.11.2.2 Transporting lightly injured and uninjured persons from the site

It should be noted that while some casualties will be transported to the Receiving Hospital(s) by the Ambulance Service with assistance from the Local Authority, some casualties may leave the site by other means and may arrive at the designated Receiving Hospital(s), or other hospitals, in cars, buses, etc.

7.11.2.3 Casualty Clearing

Patients must be moved to the Casualty Clearing Station. The Casualty Clearing Station will be established by the Ambulance Service, in consultation with the Health Service Executive. At this location the casualties will be collected, further triaged, treated, as necessary, and prepared for transport to hospital. The Health Service Executive Controller will, in consultation with the Site Medical Officer and the designated receiving hospitals, decide on the hospital destination of casualties.

7.11.3 Fatalities

The bodies of casualties, which have been triaged as dead, should not be moved from the incident site unless this is necessary to effect the rescue of other casualties. The only other circumstance where bodies should be moved, before the Garda evidence collection process is complete, is if they are likely to be lost or damaged due to their location or the nature of the incident.

Bodies to be moved should be photographed prior to being moved and their original position clearly marked and recorded. The recovery of the dead and human remains is part of an evidence recovery process and, as such, is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána acting as agents of the Coroner. The Local Authority may assist An Garda Síochána in this function.

7.11.3.1 Coroners role

The Coroner is an independent judicial officer, who has responsibility for investigating all sudden, unexplained, violent or unnatural deaths. It is the task of the Coroner to establish the 'who, when, where and how' of unexplained death. All such deaths in Ireland are investigated under the Coroners' Act, 1962.

7.11.3.2 Arrangements for dealing with fatalities, both on and off-side, including Body Holding Areas and Temporary Mortuaries

The On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other Controllers, will decide if it is necessary to establish a Body Holding Area at the site. The Body Holding Area, if established, should be situated close to the Casualty Clearing Station. Members of An Garda Síochána will staff this area and they will maintain the necessary logs to ensure the continuity of evidence.

It should be noted that the Body Holding Area is not the appropriate place for the prolonged storage of the dead and appropriate arrangements should be made to ensure minimal delay in moving bodies to a mortuary (temporary or otherwise).

- Temporary Mortuaries

It is the responsibility of the Local Authorities in the provision of Temporary Mortuary facilities, if required. For this reason the Eastern Region has collectively purchased temporary mortuary facilities which are stored by Dublin Fire Brigade. The Chief State Pathologist has determined that these facilities should only be used at hospital sites with suitable permanent mortuary facilities. No such hospital currently exists within County Wicklow. In the event of a mass fatality incident District Coroners and health service Pathologists operating in Wicklow on the options/arrangements/plans for Temporary Mortuaries

7.11.3.3 Identification of the deceased

The Coroner, with the assistance of An Garda Síochána, has overall responsibility for the identification of bodies and remains and he/she is entitled to exclusive possession and control of a deceased person until the facts about their death have been established. A full post-mortem and forensic examination will be carried out on every fatality arising from a Major Emergency and each death shall be the subject of an Inquest. The post-mortem is carried out by a Pathologist, who acts as the 'Coroners Agent' for this purpose.

7.11.4 Survivors

A Rest Centre should be designated and established at the earliest possible opportunity. Transport from the Rest Centre to home/meet relatives/safe place will be arranged as soon as it is practicable. This responsibility will lie with Wicklow County Council. *Please refer to the relevant guidance documents on www.mem.ie for further information.*

7.11.4.1 Arrangements for dealing with uninjured survivors who require support

The On-Site Co-ordinator, in conjunction with the other Controllers, should determine if a Rest Centre is to be established, and its location in the site management plan. It is the responsibility of Wicklow County Council to establish and facilitate the running of this centre, initially by Civil Defence and subsequently in conjunction with staff from Housing.

Wicklow County Council has identified the following as suitable buildings types for establishing as a Rest Centre:

- Recreation Centre
- Local Church
- Parish Hall
- Local School
- Any other building that is large enough to accommodate large numbers of people

All those who have survived the incident uninjured can be directed to a Rest Centre, where their details will be documented and collated by An Garda Síochána. Provision should be made at this centre for the immediate physical and psychosocial needs of survivors (e.g. hot drinks, food, blankets, telephones, first aid for minor injuries, etc.).

The assistance of Civil Defence, in conjunction with other agencies, will be required to provide a variety of services at a Rest Centre. The Rest Centre should be secure from any unauthorised access and provide the maximum possible privacy for survivors.

Refer to the relevant guidance document(s) on www.mem.ie for further information.

7.11.5 Casualty information

Gathering of casualty information will be the responsibility of An Garda Síochána.

7.11.5.1 Casualty Bureau

In the event of a Major Emergency involving significant numbers of casualties, An Garda Síochána will establish a Casualty Bureau to collect and collate the details (including condition and location) of all casualties and survivors.

7.11.5.2 Collation of casualty information

To facilitate this process, a liaison/casualty officer will normally be sent by An Garda Síochána to each receiving hospital, Rest Centre and any other place where casualties are being treated.

Any information collected on any casualty is transferred through An Garda Síochána to the Casualty Bureau. The media will be requested to promulgate contact numbers for the Bureau so that the public may make enquires and provide information.

7.11.6 Friends and Relatives Reception Centres

The purpose of a reception centre is to provide a comfortable area where friends and relatives of those involved in the incident (primarily the casualties and survivors) can be directed for information. The Local Co-ordination Group will determine the need for and arrange for the designation and operation/staffing of such centres.

A building used as a Friends' and Relatives' Reception Centre should be secure from media intrusion and have sufficient room to afford privacy to families receiving information about relatives. There will also be a need for a reliable process to establish the credentials of friends and relatives.

Refer to the relevant guidance document(s) on www.mem.ie for further information.

7.11.7 Non-national casualties

In some incidents an emergency may involve significant numbers of casualties from other jurisdictions. In such circumstances the Local Co-ordination Group should notify the relevant embassy, if the Nationality of the victims are known. The Department of Justice should be contacted if assistance is required in obtaining interpreters from private sector providers. The Department of Foreign Affairs (which operates an out of hours Duty Officer System) should also be contacted for appropriate assistance and liaison purposes. *(See Appendices C2 & C3)*

7.11.7.1 Foreign language communication resources

Advice may be sought from An Garda Síochána as to the use of interpreters. Generally the local Garda Station will have a list of approved interpreters, which may be called upon in the event of an emergency. Advice may also be sought from the Department of Foreign Affairs. *(See Appendices C2 & C3)*

7.11.8 Pastoral and Psycho-social care

The On-Site Co-ordinator will ensure that, where appropriate, pastoral services are mobilised to the site and facilitated by the Principal Response Agencies in their work with casualties and survivors. Similarly, individual services should make arrangements for necessary pastoral services at any other locations, such as hospitals, associated with the emergency.

7.11.8.1 Psycho-social support arrangements

Pastoral and psycho-social support arrangements for casualties and other affected members of the public are the responsibility of the Health Service Executive. Requests for such care can be made through HSE who can make the appropriate arrangements.

7.12 Emergencies involving Hazardous Materials

The Local Authority is the lead agency for response to hazardous materials incidents, with the exception of those involving biological agents. Where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána will act as the lead agency. The Defence Forces, when requested may provide an Explosives Ordnance Disposal teams, to An Garda Síochána in its role as an 'Aid to the Civil Power'. Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a CBRN incident are contained in the Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Suspect Chemical and Biological Agents arising from terrorist activity

7.12.1 CBRN incidents

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a CBRN (*CBRN meaning terrorist incidents involving C - chemical substances; B - biological agents; R - radiological and N - nuclear material*) incident are detailed in the Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Suspect Chemical and Biological Agents (www.mem.ie). These protocols deal with a range of matters relevant to managing such incidents, including the identification of the materials involved. They also provide for the involvement of the National Poisons Information Centre and the National Virus Reference Laboratory.

7.12.2 Biological incidents

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a biological incident are detailed in the Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Suspect Chemical and Biological Agents (which will be available on www.mem.ie).

7.12.3 National Public Health (Infectious diseases) Plan

For infectious diseases such as Avian Flu, Pandemic Flu, Foot and Mouth etc there will be a link to the appropriate National Plan as issued by the Government. Wicklow County Council will provide assistance under the command of the lead Government Department.

7.12.4 Nuclear Accidents

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a local radiological emergency or the activation of the National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents are detailed in the Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Radiological/ Nuclear Emergencies (www.mem.ie).

7.12.5 Decontamination

The On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other Controllers of Operations, will establish the need for decontamination. The Health Service Executive has responsibility for providing clinical decontamination and medical treatment to casualties affected by hazardous materials. The Fire Service has responsibility for providing other forms of physical decontamination of persons at the site. The Health Service Executive will be responsible for decontamination where required to protect health service facilities, such as hospitals, from secondary contamination.

Where emergency decontamination of the public is required, the Local Authority Fire Service may use its firefighter decontamination facilities, or improvised equipment may be used prior to the arrival of dedicated equipment. Where it is decided that persons should undergo this practice, it should be carried out under the guidance of medical personnel. It should be noted that emergency decontamination carries risks for vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and the injured. It may be more appropriate in certain circumstances for outer clothing to be removed and blankets provided as a temporary measure to alleviate potential harm from surface contact with contaminants.

7.13 Protecting Threatened Population

The On-Site Co-ordinator will decide on how best to protect a threatened population, after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. This protection will be usually achieved by moving people temporarily to a safe area, by evacuation where appropriate or feasible, or by advising affected individuals to take shelter in an appropriate place, normally their homes.

7.13.1 Evacuation arrangements

Evacuation is usually undertaken on the advice of the Local Authority or Health Service Executive. Where decided upon, An Garda Síochána will undertake the process of evacuation, with the assistance of the other services. In some circumstances, personnel from all services may have to assist in carrying it out. A suitable evacuation assembly point will need to be established and rest centres set up by the Wicklow County Council.

Personnel from the local authorities and from voluntary agencies will staff rest centres. The centres will provide security, welfare, communication, catering and medical facilities. Evacuees should be documented and basic details passed to the Casualty Bureau. The Local Authority(s) will assist in this role.

Refer to Evacuation Plan in Appendix A2 for further information.

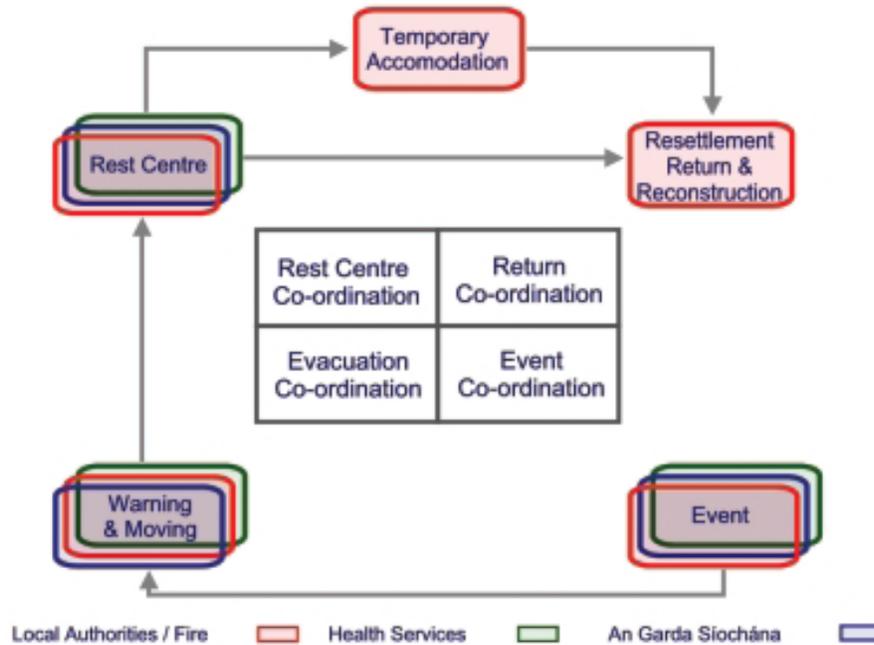


Figure 7.2: Structure of Evacuation

7.13.2 Involvement of the Health Service Executives' department of Public Health

Where an emergency results in a real or perceived threat to public health by, for example, the release of chemical, radioactive or biological agents, the contamination of water or food supplies, or the spread of contaminated flood water, it can be anticipated that there will be considerable concern among both the persons immediately affected and the wider public.

In such situations, the Health Service Executive Controller should ensure that the local public health services are informed of the situation as soon as possible so that they can become involved in the response at the earliest possible stage.

7.14 Early and Public Warning Systems

Early warning systems are currently in place for Severe Weather forecasts. This is a 24-hour service provided by Met Éireann. In an emergency situation there may be a need to inform the public of the current situation or of possible evacuation. *Please refer to Section 11.1 of this document.*

Other such warning systems are in place for Flooding, detailed in the Flood Response Plan, Water contamination etc *See Appendix A2.*

7.14.1 How warnings are to be disseminated

Warnings may be disseminated to the public by use of some or all of the following media:

- Door to Door
- Radio and T.V. broadcasting
- Local helpline / information line
- Web services and internet services
- Automated Text services
- Establish site specific warning systems

7.15 Emergencies arising on Inland Waterways

Wicklow County Council can provide assistance in the form of the Civil Defence for water rescue / recovery. There are also some inland water rescue volunteer organisations that may be requested to provide assistance such for river rescue. *Refer to Appendix C1 for further details on resources.*

7.15.1 Receiving 999/112 calls and the mobilising of resources to inland waterway emergencies

The Irish Coast Guard has responsibility for receiving 999/112 calls and the mobilising of resources to Inland Waterway emergencies. An Garda Síochána should be the principal response agency to undertake initial co-ordination at inland waterway emergencies. After the initial response, this role may be re-assigned, following consultation between the Irish Coast Guard and An Garda Síochána.

7.16 Safety, Health and Welfare Considerations

Each Principal Response Agency (and other responding organisation) is responsible for the Safety, Health and Welfare of its staff responding to emergencies and should operate its own safety (including personal protective equipment) and welfare management procedures. *Refer to the relevant 'Local Authority' Organisational Safety Statement for further information.*

7.16.1 Safety of the Local Authorities rescue personnel

When working in the environment of a Major Emergency the On-Site Co-ordinator will apply normal incident and safety management arrangements. A 'Safety Officer' will generally be appointed and have responsibility for the oversight and management of the safety of the Local Authorities rescue personnel. All other relevant officers will continue to exercise command over their own personnel working in the area.

7.16.2 Operating within the 'Danger Area'

A 'Danger Area' may be declared at the site where there is a definite risk to rescue personnel over and above that which would normally pertain at emergency operations. The Local Authorities are responsible for the health and safety of its staff when they operate within the 'Danger Area'.

Each service should confirm with the On-Site Co-ordinator if a Danger Area has been defined (*see Section 7.9.1 of this document*) as part of site management arrangements and, if so, what particular safety provisions may apply.

7.16.3 Procedures and evacuation signal for the 'Danger Area'

Where a situation deteriorates to a point where the Officer-in-charge of the Danger Area decides that it is necessary to withdraw response personnel from a Danger Area, a signal, comprising repeated sounding of a siren or whistle for ten seconds on, ten seconds off, will be given. All personnel should withdraw on hearing this signal to a pre-determined safe zone.

7.16.4 Physical welfare of responders (food, shelter, toilets)

Please refer to section 7.17.2 of this document.

7.16.5 Psycho-social support for personnel

Those who are particularly traumatised by the events of a Major Emergency may require skilled professional help. This will be provided by Wicklow County Council. Currently a care-line exists for Fire Service Personnel, which enables them and their immediate family to access confidential advice and support. These facilities will also be made available to support staff, even if they are not directly involved at the scene, e.g. administration staff, drivers and communications staff.

7.17 Logistical issues / protracted incidents

Front line rescue / field staff will be relieved at protracted incidents in accordance with the Local Authority Safety, Health and Welfare arrangements. Crews from the Eastern region may be called upon to assist and support at an emergency in any Authority.

7.17.1 Re-organising normal emergency and other priority cover

Staff welfare arrangements need to be given priority in the recovery stage of an incident, so that the needs of all staff, both emergency response teams and general staff (including management), are catered for. In addition, the needs of staff that are not directly involved in responding to the incident should also be considered. Those members of staff who continue in their normal work are supporting colleagues in the emergency response and may be taking on additional work in the process. They can be as critical to the organisation's response as those involved at the 'coalface'.

7.17.2 Arrangements for initial and ongoing welfare for field staff

The Local Authority Controller of Operations should ensure that appropriate rest and refreshment facilities are provided for response personnel at the site, as well as for survivors. Staff welfare will be considered at all times. Civil Defence may be called upon to provide or aid in the administration of such needs. Welfare facilities such as toilets etc may also be required and supplied by Wicklow County Council. The Local Authority will strive and endeavour to provide meals at all meal times to field staff or every 4/5 hours during an incident.

7.18 Investigations

The scene of a suspected crime should be preserved until a complete and thorough examination has been made. An Garda Síochána will require evidence of the highest possible standard and will also require that all evidence is left in situ, unless a threat to life or health prevents this. Statements may be required from the members of Local Authority staff involved in the response to a Major Emergency.

7.18.1 Minimisation of disruption of evidence

The preservation of the site of a Major Emergency, which results from criminal action, is of paramount importance and should be a priority for all the Principal Response Agencies from the outset rating from the outset by all Principal Response Agencies. The first member(s) of An Garda Síochána to arrive at the site of a Major Emergency where a suspected crime has been committed is responsible for preserving the site. While the priority is the protection of life, the provisions of the Framework are intended to assist An Garda Síochána investigative role.

7.18.2 Other parties with statutory investigation roles

Depending on the nature of the Major Emergency, agencies other than An Garda Síochána may require access to the site for the purposes of carrying out an investigation. These agencies may include the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), the Air Accident Investigation Unit (AAIU), Rail Accident Investigation Unit (RAIU) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). An Garda Síochána is responsible for carrying out criminal investigations.

Any agency, including the Local Authority, with an investigative mandate should liaise in the first instance with the On-Site Co-ordinator, who will direct them to the Controller of Operations of An Garda Síochána.

7.19 Non-responding personnel / Communities

Where a Major Emergency affects communities, an effort should be made to establish contacts/links with a community utilising established links such as Community Groups/ Public Representatives and Community Liaison Officers within in the community.

7.19.1 Non-responding personnel / VIP's

All requests for visits to the site or facilities associated with it should be referred to the Local Co-ordination Group. Requests for visits to agency specific locations should be referred to the relevant Crisis Management Team. Public representatives and other dignitaries may wish to attend the site of the emergency, as well as associated facilities, such as hospitals, to express sympathy on behalf of the public to the injured and bereaved, and to support the emergency response workers.

Visits by dignitaries will usually require security arrangements and liaison with the media. It is important that the organisation of such visits does not distract from the response effort. As a general rule, VIPs should be advised not to visit sites where dangers still exist or where ongoing rescues are in progress.

7.19.2 Non-responding personnel / National / International observers

National and International observers may request to attend the incident. The presence of experts from other regions or jurisdictions, who wish to act as observers at an incident, can greatly enhance the operational debriefings and facilitate the process of learning lessons from the emergency. The Local Co-ordination Group may make arrangements for any such observers.

7.20 Standing down the Major Emergency

A decision to stand down the Major Emergency status of the incident at the site should be taken by the On-Site Co-ordinator, in consultation with the other Controllers of Operations at the site and the Local Co-ordination Group. Where organisations other than the Principal Response Agencies have responded, they should be informed of the decision to stand them down by the Controller of Operations of the agency which mobilised them. Services operating at other locations should be stood down in a similar manner.

The plan may be stood down generally following agreement by the three Principal Response Agencies responding to the emergency or in respect of all or certain local authority services following consultation with the other Principal Response Agencies.

7.20.1 Operational debriefing and reporting of activity

When the incident has ended, each agency will be obliged to give a debrief to the members of its service that were involved in the emergency. Wicklow County Council will review the inter-agency co-ordination aspects of the response after every declaration of a Major Emergency.

A multi-agency debrief will then be held and lessons learned may be incorporated into this Plan. This review should be hosted by the lead agency and involve all services which were part of the response.

Multi-agency debriefs should consider the contribution provided by other non-emergency service agencies, as this could expand the knowledge and learning process that debriefs can collate. This is notwithstanding the potential conflict of interest that may result in later investigations. This aspect should be considered when inviting agencies other than emergency services to a debrief.

Operational debriefs should identify areas for improvement in procedures, equipment and systems. They should not be fora for criticising the performance of others.

Debriefs should not interfere with or comment on investigations into the incident that may be ongoing by investigative or judicial authorities. Debriefs and related documents may be disclosed to individuals involved in legal proceedings.

Section 8

Agency Specific Elements and Sub-Plans

8.1 Plans in Wicklow County Council

Local Authorities are repositories of many plans. One of the benefits of this Major Emergency Plan is that the structures and arrangements contained within it represent an umbrella framework for all of Wicklow County Council responders throughout different departments, sections and functions.

There are both legislative and procedural arrangements, which require that emergency plans be prepared for specific sites or events. Arising from the risk assessment process, as previously described, this Major Emergency Plan has identified sites/events and particular situations in the Authorities' area where specific plans/ arrangements are required to emergencies.

The generic response arrangements set out in the Major Emergency Plan will govern Wicklow County Councils response to such sites/events and specific situations, whether a Major Emergency is declared or not. A list of these plans is contained in *Section 15*.

Section 9

Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination

9.1 Regional Level Co-ordination

Each Principal Response Agency has participated in the preparation of a Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination, which sets out arrangements for a regional level response.

Wicklow County Council is among six other Local Authorities in the East Region, see *section 2.4*. In certain circumstances, the local response to a Major Emergency may be scaled up to a regional level. This may occur where the nature of an emergency is such that:

- the resources available in the local area where the incident occurs do not appear to be sufficient to bring the situation under control in an expeditious and efficient manner or,
- the consequences of the emergency are likely to impact significantly outside of the local area or,
- the incident(s) is spread over the area of more than one Local Authority or Division of An Garda Síochána or,
- the incident occurs at or close to a boundary of several of the Principal Response Agencies.

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may declare a regional level emergency and activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination. The key provision in ensuring co-ordination of the extended response is the activation of a "Regional Coordination Group". The primary function of the Regional Co-ordination Group is to maintain co-ordination of the Principal Response Agencies involved from the extended "response region".

Please refer to section 6 of this document for a more in-depth description at a Regional Level Major Emergency Response and also the relevant guidance document(s) on www.mem.ie

Section 10

Links with National Emergency Plans

10.1 National Emergency Plans

Each Principal Response Agency should make provisions for working with appropriate national bodies and responding to and activating appropriate aspects of their Major Emergency Plan following requests arising from national emergency situations. *Please refer to section 6.3.4.4/ 6.3.4.5 of this document for further details.*

10.1.1 National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a local radiological emergency or the activation of the National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents are detailed in the Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Radiological/ Nuclear Emergencies (www.mem.ie).

10.1.2 National Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Plan

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of an activation of the National Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Plan will be detailed in the Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Emergencies arising from Infectious Diseases Pandemics (www.mem.ie).

10.1.3 Animal Health Plan

For infectious diseases such as Avian Flu (The Department of Agriculture and Food: has an emergency plan designed to contain outbreaks of H5N1 (Avian Influenza) in poultry should the disease arrive in this country), Pandemic Flu, Foot and Mouth there will be a National Plan as outlined by Government. Wicklow County Council will provide assistance under the command of the lead Government Department.

10.2 Activation on request from Irish Coast Guard

The Wicklow County Councils Major Emergency Plan can also be activated by any Principal Response Agency in response to a request from the Irish Coast Guard, following a threatened or actual emergency in the Irish Maritime Search and Rescue Region.

10.3 Activation on request from a Minister of Government

The Major Emergency Plans of the Principal Response Agencies may be activated by an agency in response to a request from a Minister of Government in light of an emergency/crisis situation.

Section 11

Severe Weather Plans

11.1 Sub-Plans for responding to severe weather emergencies

Severe weather emergencies may involve significant threats to infrastructure and support may be required for vulnerable sections of the community or vulnerable communities. It has been pre-determined that Local Authorities are the lead agency for co-ordinating the response to severe weather events.

Arrangements have also been put in place by Met Éireann to issue public service severe weather warnings to the Local Authorities. The target time for the issuing of a warning is 24 hours before the expected event, but a warning may be issued up to 48 hours in advance when confidence is high.

Not all severe weather events will be major emergencies, but the principles and arrangements for a co-ordinated response to major emergencies should inform all response agencies in relation to severe weather events. Local Authorities should ensure that effective arrangements are in place to receive and respond promptly to public service severe weather warnings issued by Met Éireann.

The Local and/or Regional Co-ordination Centres for Major Emergency Management may be activated to manage the response to a severe weather event, whether a Major Emergency is declared or not. Wicklow County Council has produced a comprehensive 'Severe Weather Blizzard Plan'. (See *Appendix A2*)

11.1.1 Flooding Emergencies

Flood plans for all districts have been updated based on information from the OPW. (See *Appendix A3-2*)

11.1.2 Severe Weather Conditions (Excluding Flooding Emergencies)

For Severe Weather Blizzard Conditions refer to *Appendix A2*.

Section 12

Site and Event Specific Arrangements and Plans

12.1 Site and Event Specific Emergency Plans

There are both legislative and procedural arrangements, which require that emergency plans be prepared for specific sites or events (e.g. Seveso sites, airports, ports, major sports events, etc.). Arising from the risk assessment process described in *Section 3*, Wicklow County Councils Major Emergency Plan has identified sites/events where specific plans/ arrangements exist for responding to emergencies. A list of these specific plans is contained in *Section 15*.

The response arrangements set out in the *Section 7*, will govern the Principal Response Agencies' response to such sites/events, whether a Major Emergency is declared or not. (See *Appendices*)

12.2 Seveso Sites

Two sites were originally identified in the County Wicklow which are of special risk and under the European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations, 2006 S.I. No. 74 of 2006, these were MSD Ireland, Rathdrum (upper tier) and Sigma-Aldrich Ireland, Arklow (lower tier). *Please refer to 'Guidance for dealing with Seveso Sites' for further details (www.mem.ie).*

As mentioned above, the MSD plant in Rathdrum has been decommissioned and is therefore no longer on the HSA's register of COMAH sites.

(For further information please see the risks identified in Appendix B1 and MSD Ireland external plan and Sigma-Aldrich Ireland internal plan in Appendix A3)

Section 13

The Recovery Phase

13.1 Support for Individuals and Communities

Although the emergency response phase may be completed, the recovery stage is also important and involves consideration of many strategic issues, which may need to be addressed, at both individual Principal Response Agency and inter-agency level, during this phase. The recovery phase may typically include:

- assisting the physical and emotional recovery of victims,
- providing support and services to persons affected by the emergency,
- clean-up of damaged areas,
- restoration of infrastructure and public services,
- supporting the recovery of affected communities,
- planning and managing community events related to the emergency,
- investigations/inquiries into the events and/or the response,
- restoring normal functioning to the Principal Response Agencies; and,
- managing economic consequences.

A structured transition from response to recovery is critical for all agencies, both collectively and individually. The recovery stage may be as demanding on the Local Authority resources and staff of the individual agencies as the emergency itself, as work may extend for a considerable time after the incident.

13.1.1 Supporting Individuals and Communities affected by the emergency

Following an emergency incident, assistance may be required by the victims of the emergency – not only those directly affected, but also family and friends, who have experience bereavement or anxiety. A Major Emergency will have a serious effect on a community. The recovery phase should include support and long-term care for individuals involved in the incident and the communities affected by the incident.

There is an imperative that the Local Authority restores its critical services to a pre-emergency state as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The services and staff the Local Authority may be able to provide are based upon a wide range of skills and resources drawn from its day-to-day operations such as:

- technical and engineering support,
- building control,
- road services,
- public health and environmental issues,
- provision of reception centres,
- re-housing and accommodation needs,
- transport,
- social services,
- psychosocial support,
- help lines,
- welfare and financial needs.

There are specific requirements for each agency in the recovery process. These requirements are listed below.

Local Authorities:

- clean-up,
- rebuilding the community and infrastructure,
- responding to community welfare needs (e.g. housing); and,
- restoration of services.

An Garda Síochána:

- identification of fatalities,
- preservation and gathering of evidence,
- investigation and criminal issues,
- dealing with survivors,
- dealing with relatives of the deceased and survivors; and,
- provision of an appropriate response to the immediate public need.

Health Service Executive:

- provision of health care and support for casualties and survivors,
- support for relatives of casualties and survivors,
- responding to community welfare needs; and,
- restoration of health services.

13.1.2 Managing of public appeals and external aid

There is a need for the co-ordination of emerging recovery issues, such as managing public appeals and external aid, from the earliest stages of the response phase. For this reason, the arrangements for co-ordination of response should continue to operate during the transition from response stage to recovery stage.

It is recommended that Wicklow's County Council Crisis Management Team will continue to function until the issues arising in the response phase are dealt with by the agency's normal management processes. Aid will be dispensed through established support networks under the guidance of the Department of Social and Family Affairs or the Health Authority.

13.2 Clean-Up

In the aftermath of an emergency the clean-up operation has been assigned to the Local Authority. The removal of debris and contaminated waste will be of the principal concerns for Wicklow County Council.

In consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency and specialist companies the Local Authority will commence clean up of a site as soon as possible but without hindering the investigation process. Careful consideration must be provided for the removal of the decontaminate and that they are dealt with appropriately.

13.2.1 Arrangements for clean up of sites / removal of debris / decontamination of sites of emergency

It is the Local Authority's responsibility to ensure cleaning of sites is carried out.

13.3 Restoration of Infrastructure and Services.

The Local Authority must ensure that its critical services are restored as quickly as possible. A Business Continuity Management Plan may be drawn up to meet these demands.

13.3.1 Arrangements for monitoring the situation

At a point when the issues on the agendas of Co-ordination Groups are largely recovery focussed, it may be appropriate to re-title the group as the Local, Regional or National Recovery Co-ordination Group. From the earliest stage, it may be appropriate also for the Local, Regional or National Co-ordination Group to appoint a Recovery Working Group(s) to plan ahead. These groups will be responsible for the co-ordination of the recovery phase, managing resources and monitoring the situation until the issues arising are more appropriately dealt with by the normal management processes.

13.3.2 Liaison with utilities

The utility companies may need to be mobilised in the recovery phase in order to provide essential services such as gas, water and electrical supplies and communications facilities.

The Information Systems section will also have a role to play in the recovery phase and will need to liaise with utilities in order to bring services back on line, such as communication links etc.

13.3.3 Determining priorities

It is the responsibility of the Local, Regional or National Recovery Co-ordination Group together with the Recovery Working Group to prioritise events during the recovery phase.

It should be noted that staff welfare arrangements maybe considered as a priority in the recovery stage of an incident, so that the needs of all staff, both emergency response teams and general staff (including management) are catered for.

In addition, the needs of staff that are not directly involved in responding to the incident should also be considered. Those members of staff who continue in their normal work are supporting colleagues in the emergency response and may be taking on additional work in the process. They can be as critical to the organisation's response as those involved at the 'coalface'.

13.3.4 Protection measures against continuing hazards

Local Authority and other relevant authorities shall provide protection measures against continuing hazards in line with existing protocols and procedures and 'best practice'.

Section 14

Review of the Major Emergency Plan

14.1 Internal Review Process

An internal review of the Major Emergency Plan will be undertaken by Wicklow County Council on an annual basis. The review should be held on the annual date of implementing the plan and also following any exercises or incidents. The review should:

- update the roles of individuals that hold key positions,
- update the list of risk holders within the functional area of Wicklow County Council,
- update names and numbers of utility companies, private companies etc,
- review current risk assessments and update as required,
- incorporate any changes recommended from reports on incidents/exercises.

Please refer to section 1.8 of this document.

14.2 Post activation review of the Major Emergency Plan

When the Major Emergency has been stood down, each of the services and agencies involved in the incident will hold a series of operational hot-debriefs. Initially these will be confined to each particular service, but later a multi-agency cold-debrief will be held (Multi-agency debriefs should consider the contribution provided by other, non-emergency service) and lessons learned will be incorporated into this Manual and other service manuals, as appropriate.

14.2.1 Internal review of Local Authorities performance of its functions

In addition to the review process outlined in the sections above, which takes place annually on a local level, the Major Emergency Plan for Wicklow and the performance of the Local Authorities, as a Principal Response Agency, will also be reviewed after a major incident within the county/ region or even national. Should any new risks become apparent in the County, the plan will be reviewed to reflect this.

14.2.2 Review of Co-ordination function

Multi-agency debriefs should consider the contribution provided by not only each other but also other, non-emergency service agencies. This is notwithstanding the potential conflict of interest that may result in later investigations. This aspect should be considered when inviting agencies other than emergency services to the 'debrief'.

Multi agency reviews must also be conducted on an annual basis between the Principal Response Agencies on both a local and regional level basis. This will include reviewing and reporting on the co-ordination function of the agencies.

Please refer to www.mem.ie for further details.

Section 15

Appendices

RESTRICTED SECTION

Section 15 of Wicklow County Council Major Emergency Plan is restricted to Wicklow County Council personnel and designated member(s) of the Principal Response Agencies, only.

STATUS OF APPENDICES

Appendices in this section are under continuous review, update and development.

DISTRIBUTION OF UPDATES

Updated sections will be provided for inclusion to Wicklow County Council personnel.