



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council

MAJOR EMERGENCY PLAN

2023

Public Edition

Document Title:	Major Emergency Plan		
Issue No:	7	Date:	01 st August 2023
Status:	FINAL		
Reviewed By:	Major Emergency Management Office		

Record of Issues and Amendments

Amendment No.	Issue No.	Date	Section Amended	Amended By
1.	1	26/09/08	All Appendices	KMcG
2.	2	01/12/10	Appendices E1, E2, E4, E5, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, L1, M2	KMcG
3.	3	18/12/14	Appendices C1-C7, D1-D2, E1 - E6, L1	KMcG
4.	4	05/09/16	Appendix D1	KMcG
5.	5	16/04/18	Appendices D1, C2	KMcG
6.	6	03/08/18	All Sections	KMcG
7.	7	01/08/23	All Sections	EG
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Foreword

Major emergencies are rare events in Ireland, but when one does occur it places a huge strain on the resources and capabilities of the responding agencies. As one of the three Principal Response Agencies, Donegal County Council plays a key role, not just in responding to such events, but also by planning and preparing for one too.

As it is not possible to foresee the potential causes for all major emergencies an all-hazards approach is taken to planning for one – an approach which is capable of being adapted in the light of prevailing circumstances. It is therefore important that the necessary resources, structures and training are in place to give the different services within our organisation the capabilities required to meet the challenges posed by such events.

This Plan has been developed in accordance with the *Framework for Major Emergency Management (2006)* and sets out mechanisms for co-ordination at all levels of Major Emergency Management. It is designed to integrate seamlessly with corresponding plans from the other two Principal Response Agencies (PRAs) - An Garda Síochána and the HSE – to ensure that effective inter-agency preparations are in place.

An ever-changing society will continue to present new and challenging risks. Consequently, major emergency management needs to be dynamic and to continually evolve to match those risks. By using a systems approach to major emergency management - one that involves a continuous cycle of activity and development - will ensure that Donegal County Council is in the best position possible to respond effectively to a major emergency, should one arise.

It is essential that everyone involved in major emergency management within our organisation is familiar with this Plan, understands his/her role and responsibilities, the working arrangements, and how these will be implemented in the event of the Plan being activated.



John G. McLaughlin
Chief Executive
Donegal County Council

10 August 2023

Section 1 – Introduction to the Plan

1.1 Background

This plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of *A Framework for Major Emergency Management (2006)* and sets out the arrangements which will be activated by an Authorised Officer to facilitate the Donegal County Council response to a major emergency, which is defined as follows:

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.

1.2 Objectives of the Major Emergency Plan

The objectives of the Major Emergency Plan are:

- Protection and care of the public at times of vulnerability
- Clear leadership in a time of crisis
- Early and appropriate response
- Efficient, co-ordinated operations
- Realistic and rationale approach, capable of being delivered
- Transparent systems, with accountability
- Harnessing community spirit
- The ethos of self-protection
- Maintenance of essential services
- Safe working practices

1.3 Scope of the Major Emergency Plan

Donegal County Council, the Donegal Garda Division and Health Service Executive (West) District are the Principal Response Agencies (PRA) charged with managing the response to major emergency situations that arise within the administrative boundaries of County Donegal.

The plan is based on an 'All-Hazards' approach, where the common features of co-ordinated response and the management of common outcomes are the same, regardless of the type of emergency. This typically could include major emergencies arising from incidents such as severe weather events, fires, hazardous material releases, transportation accidents, flooding, landslides, environmental damage etc.

The plan is structured to allow for scaling up the response to a major emergency with local co-ordination, to regional-level co-ordination, involving several

administrative areas of the responding agencies, and if necessary for escalating to a national-level response. Section 9 and Section 10 of this Plan gives details for scaling up a response to a regional or national level.

1.4 Interoperability with other Emergency Plans

The Major Emergency Plan will be activated by whichever of the three Principal Response Agencies first becomes aware of the need to declare a Major Emergency.

This plan is supported by, and is compatible with, the Major Emergency Plans of An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive. In certain circumstances, the local response may be escalated to regional level, thus activating the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination. If this is activated, the management of the incident will be co-ordinated from a regional perspective.

The Major Emergency Plan may also contain specific sub-plans such as the Flood Emergency Response Plan etc. These plans can operate independently of the Major Emergency Plan and can be activated whether a Major Emergency has occurred or not.

1.5 Language & Terminology

There is a need for the common use of terms and language amongst all responding agencies to ensure communications are clearly understood during a major emergency. To this end this plan incorporates the common language and terminology set out in the *Framework for Major Emergency Management (2006)*. Appendix A1 and A2 of this document contains a list of common major emergency terms and acronyms used.

1.6 Distribution of the Plan

This plan will be distributed in electronic format only. A copy will be issued to all managers within Donegal County Council and to any other relevant employees that would be involved in a major emergency response.

Electronic copies will also be distributed to the other two PRAs in County Donegal, and other relevant agencies. The distribution list is provided in *Appendix A3*.

1.7 Review of Plan

The Major Emergency Management Committee of Donegal County Council will undertake a regular review of the Plan as required by Section 14.

1.8 Public access to the Plan

Relevant sections of this plan, i.e., one without operational details, will be made available to the public via Donegal County Council website at: www.donegalcoco.ie

Section 2 – The Council and its Functional Area

2.1 Functional Area of Donegal County Council

This plan applies to the functional areas of Donegal County Council. The County is divided into five Municipal Districts: Donegal, Lifford/Stranorlar, Letterkenny/Milford, Inishowen and Glenties.

Council services are delivered through six distinct Directorates, which are each headed up by a Director of Service. The Directorates are as follows:

- Roads and Transportation
- Water and Environment
- Housing, Corporate and Cultural Services
- Community Development and Planning Services
- Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services
- Finance

2.2 Partner Principal Response Agencies

The other agencies responsible for emergency services in this area are:

- Health Service Executive (West)
- An Garda Síochána (Donegal Division)

Emergency assistance may also be proffered by several other agencies / Voluntary Emergency Services such as the Irish Coastguard, Defence Forces, Civil Defence, Red Cross, Mountain Rescue etc.

Please refer to *Appendix G2* for Regional Directory of Contacts.

2.3 Role of Donegal County Council

In the event of a major emergency the role of Donegal County Council is to ensure life safety by providing a top-class emergency service in the form of the Fire Service and Civil Defence.

In addition, the various sections of the Council will also be required to support the Emergency Services depending on the nature of the incident. We will ensure a rapid and co-ordinated response from all of our available resources. We will provide expertise in a range of areas from transport, water sanitation (in line with service-level responsibilities to Irish Water), environmental damage to animal welfare.

We will also ensure business continuity within the organisation so the ongoing needs of the community are also addressed to the best of our ability during a Major Emergency situation.

In the 'Recovery Phase' Donegal County Council will have a major role to play in the rehabilitation of the community and the restoration of the environment.

Please refer to *Appendix G1* for a detailed list of the functions of each Principal Response Agency.

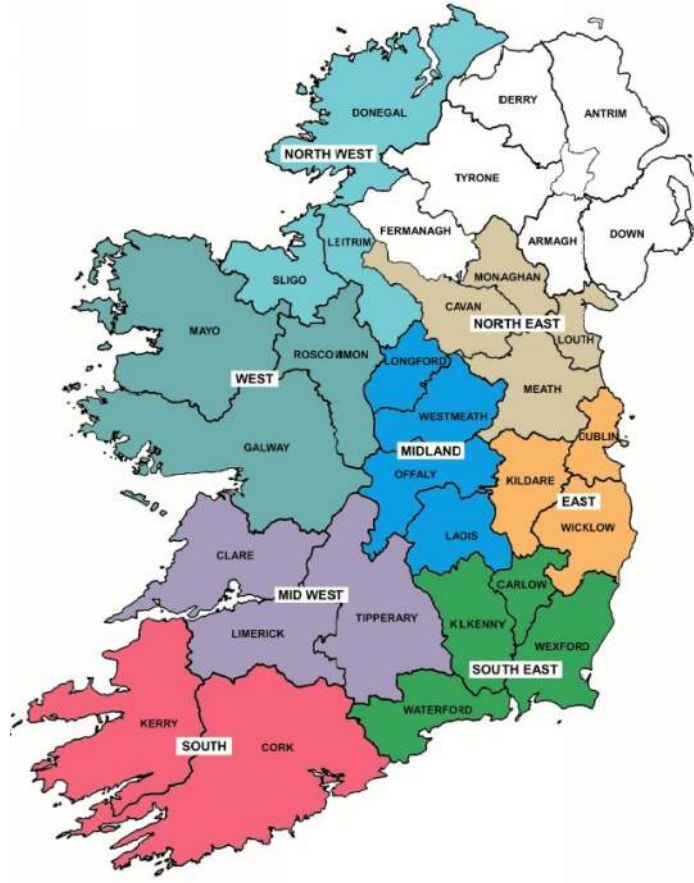


Figure 2.1: Map of the Major Emergency Management regions

2.4 Boundaries and Characteristics of the Area

Donegal is located on the northwest coast of Ireland. It is bound on the south, west and north by the Atlantic Ocean and on the east by the counties of Derry, Tyrone, Fermanagh and Leitrim.

It is regarded worldwide as a place of natural beauty with rich heritage. Sites of peat bogs, national parks and coastline within the region have been designated as Nature Conservation Sites.

The total land area of County Donegal is 486,091 hectares, which represents 6.9% of the total land area of the State.

County Donegal is a predominantly rural county with 75% of its total population living in rural areas. *Census 2022* shows that County Donegal has a population of 166,321.

Please refer to *Appendix B1 – Donegal County Council Risk Assessment* for a more detailed description of the characteristics of County Donegal.

2.5 Regional Preparedness

Under certain specific circumstances a Regional Level Major Emergency may be declared, with a Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination activated. This will provide for the mutual receiving or contributing of aid, with the establishment of support and co-ordination facilities on a region basis.

There are eight regions in total that have been created for Major Emergency purposes. The regions are shown in Figure 2.1 above.

Donegal County Council are part of the Northwest MEM Region. This region incorporates the Local Authorities of Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim; the Garda Divisions of Donegal and Sligo/Leitrim and the Health Service (West).

Please refer to Section 7.1 on how to activate the Northwest Region Major Emergency Plan.

Section 3 - Risk Assessment for the Area

3.1 History of emergency events within County Donegal

To prepare effectively to deal with potential emergencies it is necessary to have regard to specific risks faced by a community. The Risk Assessment is a process by which the hazards facing a particular community have been identified and assessed in terms of the risk that they pose.

Major Emergencies are by their nature few and far between. A Major Emergency has never been declared in County Donegal to date, however the county has experienced a number of emergency events over the years, in particular:

- 1980 – Central Hotel Fire, Bundoran*
- 1984 – Ballyshannon water supply contamination*
- 2002 – Princess Eva Oil Tanker, Donegal Bay
- 2003 – School Bus crash, Creeslough
- 2011 – Extensive wildland fires, Across County Donegal
- 2017 – Severe pluvial flooding event, Inishowen Peninsula
- 2019 – Extensive wildland fires, Across County Donegal
- 2022 – Building collapse, Creeslough

* Event could have been classified as a Major Emergency if guidelines had existed at that time.

3.2 General and specific risks

This Major Emergency Plan has been developed taking into account the hazards that are present within the functional area of Donegal County Council.

These hazards may be classified as generic, i.e. hazards that have the possibility occurring anywhere in the County, e.g. major flooding, multi-vehicle RTA etc. and hazards that are specific to the locality, e.g. major marine accident at Killybegs Harbour.

Generally speaking, the hazards selected fall into four broadly used categories, these are:

- Natural
- Civil
- Technological
- Transportation

3.3 Exemplars for Preparedness

Donegal County Council has undertaken a Risk Assessment in accordance with the 'Framework for Major Emergency Management 2006' and 'A Guide to Risk Assessment in Major Emergency Management'.

A selection of 11 Risks has been chosen as exemplars upon which preparedness measures are based. These are as follows:

No.	Category	Description
1.	Natural	Severe Weather Event
2.		Wildland Fires
3.		Animal Disease
4.	Civil	Water Contamination
5.		Influenza (Flu) Pandemic
6.	Technological	Building Fire
7.		Hazmat release
8.		Industrial Fire / Explosion
9.	Transportation	Aircraft Incident
10.		Multi-vehicle RTC
11.		Marine Incident

Table 3.1 Exemplars for Preparedness

A Regional Risk Assessment has also been undertaken by the Principal Response Agencies in the Northwest Region and has been approved by the RSG.

Please refer to *Appendix B1* for the complete detailed Risk Assessment for County Donegal.

3.4 Risk Management

An inter-agency team, comprising members of An Garda Síochána, the HSE and Donegal County Council, carried out the risk assessment process initially. This document, once completed, was then considered and approved by the Major Emergency Development Committee, MEDC.

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

We will mitigate the extent of the risks posed by a number of means including, but not confined to, the following:

- Enforcement of legislation
- Inter-agency co-operation, training and exercising
- Development of pre-fire plans and site-specific Emergency Plans

3.5 Site / Event-Specific Plans

According to the HSA, there are no registered sites within the county boundary that store/handle sufficient quantities of hazardous materials to constitute classification as a SEVESO site.

Section 4 - Resources for Emergency Response

4.1 Local Authority Structure

Donegal County Council is the Local Authority for all of County Donegal. It carries out its functions in accordance with the provisions as set out in the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended.

The executive role of Donegal County Council is performed by the Chief Executive and his staff who are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Council. The functions performed by the Chief Executive are called the Executive Functions.

The Council operations are divided into a number of Directorates. A Director of Service, who has a further management structure below them, manages these various departments as represented in Figure 4.1 below:

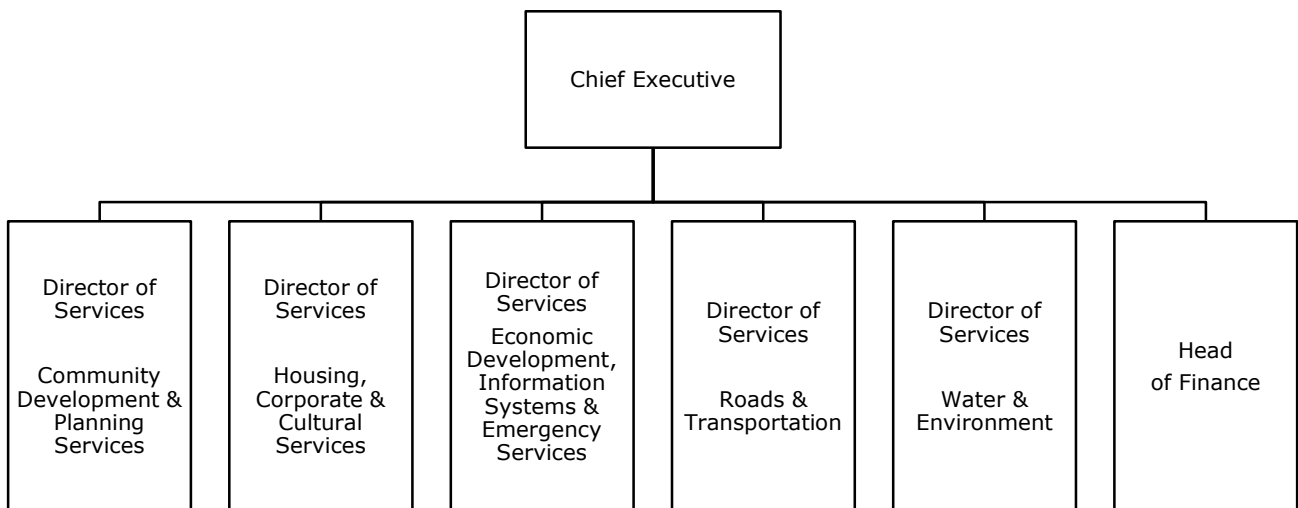


Figure 4.1 Donegal County Council Executive Management Structure

In addition to the Executive, there is also a system of democratically elected members represented within the County Council.

They are required to perform a representational role within the Local Authorities under a system of Reserved Functions. They are responsible for developing the policies under which the Management Team operates. From their ranks a Corporate Policy Group and a number of Strategic Policy Committees formulate and agree policy across the range of Council services.

4.2 Resources and Services

In the event of a Major Emergency, it is likely that personnel and resources from some or all of the various Directorates within the Council may be required. Please refer to *Appendix S* for individual Section Emergency Sub-Plans.

The initial Local Authority response to a Major Emergency will be by the Donegal Fire Service. The following resources are available:

4.2.1 Fire Service

The Fire Service's organisational structure starts with the Director of Emergency Services. The Chief Fire Officer, who is a professional technically qualified officer, has primary responsibility for the delivery of the Fire Services within County Donegal under the direction of the Director of Emergency Services. The organisational structure of Donegal Fire Service is set out in Figure 4.2 below.

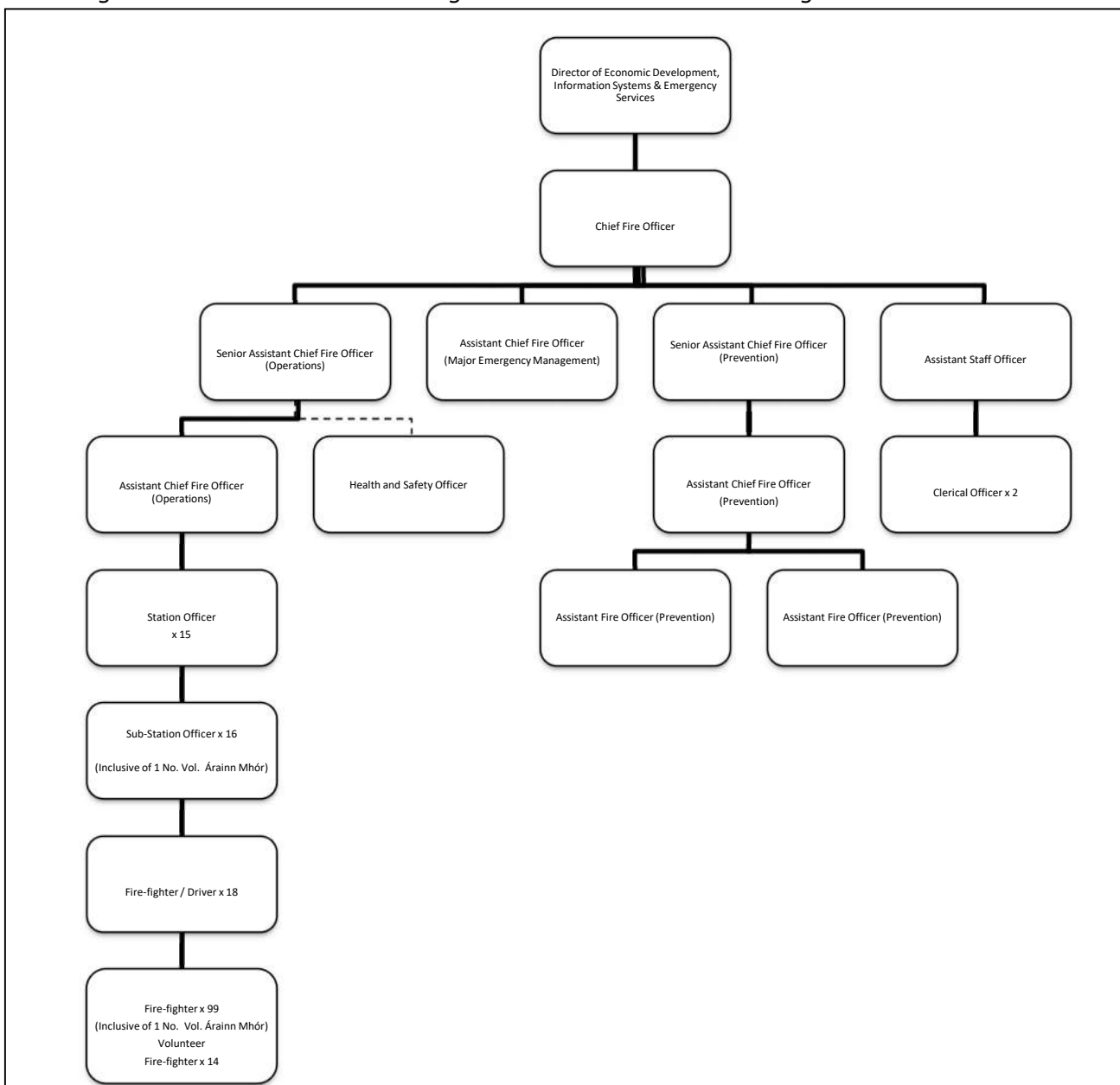


Figure 4.2: Organisational Structure of Donegal Fire Service

There are five Rostered Senior Fire Officers (RSFO) appointed within Donegal Fire Service. A RSFO is available 24/7 to direct and control emergency operations of more serious incidents and to provide advice, guidance and assistance where required.

Fire Brigades:

Donegal Fire Service operates a 100% retained Fire Service. The number of retained personnel within the service totals 147.

Please refer to *Appendix D1* for the Fire Service Contact List.

Station	Appliance Call Sign	Appliance Type
Letterkenny	DL11 A1	Water Tender
	DL11 A2	Water Tender
	DL11 B1	Emergency Tender
	DL11 E1	Hydraulic Platform
	DL11 K1	Water Tanker
	DL C1	Incident Command Unit
	DL11 M1	Van
	DL11 J1 & J2	4x4 Jeeps
Buncrana	DL12 A1	Water Tender
	DL12 A2	Water Tender
	DL12 J1	4x4 Jeep
Carndonagh	DL13 A1	Water Tender
	DL13 J1	4x4 Jeep
Moville	DL14 A1	Water Tender
	DL14 J1	4x4 Jeep
Stranorlar	DL15 A1	Water Tender
	DL15 J1	4x4 Jeep
Donegal	DL16 A1	Water Tender
	DL16 J1	4x4 Jeep
Ballyshannon	DL17 A1	Water Tender
	DL17 J1	4x4 Jeep
Bundoran	DL18 A1	Water Tender
	DL18 J1	4x4 Jeep
Killybegs	DL19 A1	Water Tender
	DL19 J1	4x4 Jeep
Glenties	DL21 A1	Water Tender
	DL21 J1	4x4 Jeep
Dungloe	DL22 A1	Water Tender
	DL22 J1	4x4 Jeep
Gweedore	DL23 A1	Water Tender
	DL23 J1	4x4 Jeep
Falcarragh	DL24 A1	Water Tender
	DL24 J1	4x4 Jeep
Milford	DL25 A1	Water Tender
	DL25 J1	4x4 Jeep
Glencolmcille	DL26 A1	Water Tender
	DL26 J1	4x4 Jeep
Arranmore Island	DL27 A1	Midi Water Tender
Tory Island	----	Water Pump

Table 4.1 Fire Stations and Resources within County Donegal

4.2.2 Civil Defence:

The Civil Defence, which is part of the Local Authority, is a body of trained volunteers who assist the Principal Response Agencies (PRA's) to include the Local Authority, Health Service Executive, An Garda Síochána and other state agencies during times of a Local, Regional or National Emergency. The Director of Emergency Services, has responsibility for Civil Defence within the Donegal Local Authority.

The Civil Defence in Donegal currently 109 registered volunteers, 60% of whom are active on a weekly basis. All are available to be called upon in the event of an emergency.

The Civil Defence is co-ordinated by the Civil Defence Officer, who is supported by a County Commander, Area Commanders and Service Instructors. The County Commander deputises on behalf of the Civil Defence Officer in their absence.

There is an Area Commander based in each of the 5 Municipal Districts of the County, i.e. Donegal, Glenties, Inishowen, Letterkenny/Milford and Lifford/Stranorlar. They co-ordinate all activities with the Civil Defence Officer within these areas.

Civil Defence has trained personnel in the following areas:

- Medical-PHECC Certified Cardiac First Responder/ First Aid Responder/Emergency First Responder / Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)
- Urban Search and Rescue
- Swift Water Team and Boating
- Radio Communications: UHF, VHF & Tetra
- Drones
- Auxiliary Fire Service / Flood Response and Wildland Fire Fighting
- Radiation Monitoring Service
- Welfare Service – Food Preparation, Setting up a Rest Centre, CISM

Please refer to *Appendix D2* for the Civil Defence Sub-Plan.

4.3 Special Staffing Arrangements

The majority of Donegal County Council staff requested to carry out functions in relation to a Major Emergency will be responding on a voluntary basis with the exception of certain Fire Service personnel such as the Rostered Senior Fire Officer and Fire Brigade personnel. Staff will be mobilised in accordance with pre-determined procedures, see *Appendix D1*.

In addition, the Civil Defence, under the authority of Donegal County Council, operates on a call-out system. It is important to note, however, that its response is subject to the availability of volunteers.

4.4 Matching Resources with Functions

Donegal County Council have identified, trained and formally nominated competent individuals (and alternates) to the Key Role positions to enable the organisation function in accordance with the arrangements as set out in the Major Emergency Plan.

A Crisis Management Team has been nominated, and Operational Protocols are in place to enable the Crisis Management Team to mobilise and function in accordance with the arrangements as set out in the Major Emergency Plan.

Assignment of Key Role positions and how those roles are to be delivered are documented in *Appendix E*.

4.5 Other Organisations / Agencies

There are a number of organisations and agencies that may be called upon to assist the Principal Response Agencies in responding to a Major Emergency. These organisations include but are not limited to:

- Government Departments
- Defence Forces
- Irish Coast Guard
- The Irish Red Cross
- Voluntary Emergency Service
- Community Volunteers
- Utility companies (Electricity providers, Telecom companies etc.)
- Private contractors

4.5.1 The Defence Forces

The Defence Forces can provide a significant support role in a major emergency response. However, the provision of Defence Forces capabilities is dependent on the exigency of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and Service Level Agreements (SLAs). As a consequence, an assumption may not be made regarding the availability of Defence Forces resources to respond to a major emergency.

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), which is an unarmed response.

All requests for Defence Forces assistance should be made in accordance with the aide memoire on seeking Defence Forces assistance in the aid to the Civil Authority form as set out in Appendix G5 of this document.

4.5.2 The Irish Coast Guard

The Irish Coast Guard (IRCG) is part of the Department of Transport (DoT). It is responsible for:

- Search and Rescue
- Pollution and Salvage response in the marine environment
- Marine communications network
- Marine safety awareness

The IRCG co-ordinates its Search and Rescue through its Maritime Rescue Sub-Centres (MRSC) at Malin Head in Co. Donegal.

Within each Coast Guard Division there are SAR resources such as:

- IRCG Volunteer Coastal Units capable of search, cliff and coastal rescue.
- Lifeboats provided by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)
- 4 Search and Rescue helicopters (Dublin, Shannon, Waterford & Sligo)

The IRCG is also responsible for co-ordinating an effective regime for:

- Response to spills of oil and other hazardous substances
- Providing an effective response to marine casualty incidents
- To monitor/intervene in marine salvage operations.

It provides and maintains a 24hr marine pollution notification centres; develops approved pollution response plans in all harbours and ports, oil handling facilities, marine local authority and offshore installations; provides and maintains a national stockpile of pollution equipment.

4.5.3 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.

4.5.4 Voluntary Emergency Services Sector

The Voluntary Emergency Services sector provides a significant potential resource to assist the Principal Response Agencies in a Major Emergency Response. They may provide a pool of persons with relevant skills, vehicles and useful equipment and facilities.

Voluntary Emergency Services in the northwest region include the following:

- Irish Underwater Council Search & Rescue Teams (Sub-Aqua Teams)
- Mountain Rescue Ireland
- Irish Red Cross
- Order of Malta
- RNLI – Royal National Lifeboat Institution
- Search and Rescue Dog Association of Ireland (S.A.R.D.A.)
- Foyle Search and Rescue
- Community Rescue Service, N.I.
- Irish Cave Rescue Organisation (I.C.R.O.)
- Blood Bikes Northwest

Please refer to *Appendix S5* for a full list of contact details for the above Voluntary organisations

4.5.5 Community Volunteers

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 recover and to restore normality quickly, with fewer long-term consequences.

At an early stage the On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other Controllers of Operations, should determine if ongoing assistance is required from the ‘Casual Volunteers’ within the community, so that An Garda Síochána cordoning arrangements can take account of it.

4.5.6 Utility Companies

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. Utility companies 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 recommended that representatives of individual utilities on site should be invited to provide a representative for the On-Site Co-ordination Group. It is also recommended that individual utilities be invited to attend and participate in relevant work of Local Co-ordination Groups.

4.5.7 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.

4.6 Mutual aid from neighbouring Counties.

The Local Co-ordination Group may request assistance via mutual aid arrangements from a neighbouring Local Authority. This 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 Northwest Regional Major Emergency Plan.

Support is most likely to be requested from the following Local Authorities and State Agencies:

- Sligo County Council
- Leitrim County Council
- Derry City and Strabane District Council
- Fermanagh and Omagh District Council
- Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service (NIFRS)

4.7 Regional level of co-ordinated response.

Depending on the scale of the Major Emergency it may be necessary to escalate the level of response from a Local one to that of a Regional Level Response. This is a decision for the Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group.

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

4.8 National / International assistance

The scale, complexity or likely duration of some emergencies may be such that significant assistance is required from neighbouring or other regions within the country, or from outside the state.

The decision to seek assistance from outside the region should be made by the Lead Agency, in association with the other Principal Response Agencies, at the Local/Regional Coordination Centre.

The Local/Regional Co-ordination Group should identify and quantify the level or type of assistance that is likely to be required and the duration of that assistance. It should also seek to identify the possible options for sourcing such assistance, i.e.,

from neighbouring MEP Regions, from elsewhere in the State, from Northern Ireland, from the United Kingdom or from another EU member state.

Regional Co-ordination Groups needing assistance from neighbouring Regions, including border Regions needing assistance from Northern Ireland, should make the request directly (on a mutual aid basis).

A Regional Co-ordination Group may also request assistance from the 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 a Major Emergency. The chair of the Local or Regional Coordination Group should make requests for such assistance to the National Liaison Officer at the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

Section 5 – Preparedness for a Major Emergency Response

5.1 Business Planning Process

The development of the Donegal County Council Major Emergency Plan is part of an Emergency Management Development Programme within the Local Authorities to ensure that all the necessary arrangements, systems, people and resources are in place to discharge the functions assigned to it.

The role of the Major Emergency Development Committee (MEDC) will be incorporated into the Council's Corporate Plan. This will ensure that the MEM becomes an integral part of the Council's work programme and can be reviewed and monitored as per the other service areas within the organisation.

5.2 Responsibility for leading Preparedness

5.2.1 Internal

It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to ensure the overall preparedness of Donegal County Council in respect of a Major Emergency. Under the executive's management structure this task has been delegated to the Director of Services for Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services.

They will be supported by the Chief Fire Officer and a full-time Assistant Chief Fire Officer with responsibility for Major Emergency Management. In addition, the Major Emergency Development Committee (MEDC) has been established to provide ongoing management and guidance.

5.2.2 Inter-agency

In respect of the inter-agency preparedness, it is the responsibility of the Northwest Regional Steering and Working Groups to ensure the overall preparedness in response to a Major Emergency.

The Chief Executive and/or the Director of Emergency Services represent Donegal County Council on the Regional Steering Group.

The Director of Emergency Services, the Chief Fire Officer and the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (MEM) are the representatives on the Regional Working Group

5.3 Major Emergency Development Programme

A Major Emergency Development Programme has been carried out. This was facilitated within Donegal County Council through the establishment of a Major Emergency Development Committee (MEDC), which has overseen the migration from the *1984 Framework for a Co-ordinated Response to Major Emergencies* to the *2006 Framework for Major Emergency Management*.

Documentation relating to the work of the Major Emergency Development Committee is held at the Fire Brigade HQ and also available on Donegal County Council's [Major Emergency - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

5.4 Nominations for Key Roles

Donegal County Council has nominated competent individuals and alternates to the Key Role positions to enable the organisation function in accordance with the common arrangements set out in this Major Emergency Plan.

Please refer to *Appendix E* for the list of Key Roles.

5.5 Support Teams for Key Roles

The Crisis Management Team (CMT) will provide overall support to the Local Authority representative on the Local Co-ordination Group and Controller of Operations. In support of this each Directorate has developed an Action Plan to which the CMT can refer to in order to mobilise the appropriate staff to a given incident.

5.6 Staff Development Programme

Staff members nominated to fill Key Roles will undergo training for the role prior to filling such an appointment. Courses will be provided in accordance with the programme approved by the National Working Group under the Framework arrangements.

The numbers of Donegal County Council personnel on such courses will be based upon requirements, and courses will be included in the annual staff-training plan. Trained staff should participate in exercises, both internal and those organised at Regional Level.

5.7 Internal Exercise Programme

As part of Donegal County Council's commitment to ensuring preparedness for a Major Emergency response it will undertake to carry out an internal exercise programme in accordance with the requirements of the Framework.

Exercises will be designed to practice staff in their designated Key Roles and to test various elements of the plan. MEM exercises may take the form of workshops, seminars, tabletop / live simulation exercises or any other activities as deemed appropriate.

The exercises undertaken will be based on the guidance provided in '*A Guide to Planning and Staging Exercises*' approved by the National Steering Group. Appropriate documentation of the exercises as per the guide will be provided to aid the recording of the exercise programme.

Where an exercise to test the assumptions and procedures in this Plan is held, alert messages activating any element of the plan shall be preceded by the statement,

"THIS IS AN EXERCISE, I REPEAT, THIS IS AN EXERCISE".

5.8 Joint/Inter-agency Training & Exercises

Donegal County Council shall participate in developing and running joint / inter-agency training and exercise programmes with its partner agencies in the Northwest Region and a co-ordinated programme which dove-tails with the internal programme referred to in Section 5.7 above shall be prepared and agreed on a rolling three-year cycle.

Exercises conducted on a joint/inter-agency basis shall also be based on the guidance provided in 'A Guide to Planning and Staging Exercises' approved by the National Steering Group. As with the internal exercise programme appropriate documentation of the exercises will be provided to aid the recording of the exercise programme.

5.9 Allocation of Resources for Major Emergency Management

Donegal County Council has included Major Emergency Management within its annual budget in order to underpin the provision of Major Emergency Management arrangements.

5.10 Authorisation for Procurement and Use of Resources

The arrangements to authorise procurement and use of resources (including engaging third parties) to assist in response to Major Emergencies are governed by the Local Government Act 2001, as amended: (Part 12: Section 104).

Arrangements have been put in place by certain sections of the LA with local suppliers to supply urgent goods when required and issues Purchase Orders the following day in the event of an Emergency.

5.11 Annual Appraisal of Preparedness

Donegal County Council will carry out and document an annual internal appraisal of its preparedness for Major Emergency response and it will then be sent for external appraisal to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in accordance with the Appraisal Document.

An annual appraisal of the Northwest Regional level preparedness shall also be documented, again in accordance with the Appraisal Document.

5.12 Informing the Public

There may be situations where it will be crucial for Donegal 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 will take over 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. The Local Co-ordination Group may establish a sub-group for this purpose and use all available channels to make this information available.

Section 6 – The Command, Control and Co-ordination System

6.1 Command Arrangements

The Chief Executive for Donegal County Council has overall responsibility for the organisation's response to a Major Emergency. The Directors of Service, see Section 4.1, shall exercise operational control over their own section subject to the overall control and direction of the Local Authority Controller of Operations.

6.2 Control Arrangements

Donegal County Council shall appoint a Controller of Operations at the site (or at each site) of a Major Emergency. Pending the arrival of the Controller of Operations, see *Appendix E1 – Key Roles*, that person will be temporarily appointed as follows:

- If the Fire Service are the first responders from the Local Authority, then the Officer-in-Charge (O-i-C) from the Fire Service shall become the Controller of Operations.
- If the Fire Service has not responded, but some other senior manager from the Local Authority has responded, that senior manager shall become the Controller of Operations.

The Chief Executive (or his alternate) may decide at a later stage to transfer the role of Controller of Operations to some other member of staff. He may also order the transfer of this function from one person to another throughout the duration of the Major Emergency response.

In certain situations, e.g., where the emergency affects a large area or occurs near the borders of multiple local authorities, there may be a response from multiple units of different local authorities. Where the issue of who should assume the role of Controller of Operations cannot be resolved quickly then the role should be undertaken by the designated person from the Local Authority whose rostered Senior Fire Officer was the first to attend the scene.

The Controller of Operations will also exercise control over, not only its own services, but also any additional services (other than the other two Principal Response Agencies) that the Local Authority requests onto the site.

6.2.1 Role of Controller of Operations

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

The role of the Controller of Operations is set out below:

- 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 s/he 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.

6.2.2 On-Site Co-ordinator

The Controller of Operations from the Lead Agency will become the On-Site Co-ordinator – once the Lead Agency has been determined. Please Refer to Section 7.6 and *Appendix K1 - Pre-nomination of Lead Agency*, regarding the determination of the Lead Agency.

The On-Site Co-ordinator will also hold the Chair of the On-Site Co-ordination Group. In addition, the Group should comprise; the Controllers of Operations of the other two Agencies, an Information Management Officer, a Media Officer, an Action Management Officer (where considered appropriate), representatives of other agencies, and specialists as appropriate.

While the On-Site Co-ordinator is empowered to make decisions, these 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 s/he 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 s/he 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 the 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, 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 mobilization 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 HSE Controller of Operations to establish the likely nature, dimensions, priorities, and optimum location for delivering any psychosocial support that will be required, and 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 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.
- 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.

6.2.3 Crisis Management Team

The Crisis Management Team is a Strategic Level management group within Donegal County Council. The use of a Crisis Management Team facilitates the mobilisation of senior staff to deal with the crisis, in a pre-designated location with all necessary support and resources.

The Local Authority Crisis Management Team provides support to the Local Authority's representative at the Local Co-ordination Group; it supports the Controller of Operations on site and maintains the Local Authorities normal day-to-day services that the community requires.

In general, the Crisis Management Team is established to:

- Manage, control and co-ordinate the organisations overall response to the situation.
- Provide support to the organisation's Controller of Operations on-site and mobilise resources from within the organisation or externally, as required.
- Liaise with relevant Government Departments on strategic issues.
- Ensure appropriate participation of the organisation in the inter-agency co-ordination structures.

The composition of the Crisis Management Team is provided in *Appendix C5 – Crisis Management Team Action Plan*.

6.2.4 Local Co-ordination Group:

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.

In general, it is the function of the Local Co-ordination Group to provide strategic level management for the immediate, medium and long-term consequences of these incidents. The strategic management function will include:

- 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 the Regional Co-ordination Centre (if involved).
- To establish and maintain links with the Lead Government Department/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.
- To take whatever steps are necessary to start to plan for recovery.

6.3 Control Arrangements of external organisations / agencies

There are a number of organisations and agencies which 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 agency.

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

6.4 Support arrangements for the control function

Donegal 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.

6.5 Co-ordination arrangements

6.5.1 Lead Agency Concept

The Framework provides that one of the Principal Response Agencies will be designated as the Lead Agency for any Emergency and therefore assume responsibility for leading co-ordination.

The Lead Agency has both a responsibility and a mandate for the co-ordination function.

There are two mechanisms for determining and designating the Lead Agency in any given situation. These are to be applied by all three Controllers of Operations at the site. They are:

- **Pre-nomination.** *Appendix K1* contains a list of incident types that reflect who the Lead Agency is. This method is the primary basis for determining the Lead Agency.
- **Default Arrangement.** Where the categorisations in the above-mentioned table do not appear to apply and the Lead Agency is not obvious, then the default arrangement is that the Local Authority will become the 'default' Lead Agency.

Once this determination has been made, the person assuming the role of On-Site Co-ordinator should note the time and that the determination was made in the presence of the other two Controllers. This decision should then be communicated to all parties involved in the response.

6.5.2 On-Site Co-ordination functions

Being assigned the Lead Agency role means that a specific Principal Response Agency is assigned responsibility for the co-ordination function (in addition to its own functions) and should lead all co-ordination activities associated with the emergency (on-site, off-site, etc.) and make every effort to achieve a high level of co-ordination and co-operation. The role of the On-Site Co-ordinator has been set out in Section 6.2.2 above.

6.5.3 Arrangements for Support Teams

It is a function of the On-site Co-ordinator to determine the facility that should be used as the On-Site Co-ordination Centre.

Where the Local Authority has been designated as the Lead Agency then the first arriving Fire Service appliance may operate as the On-Site Co-ordination Centre.

This situation may be reviewed and changed by the On-Site Co-ordinator as other options arise. This may include the use of a tent/temporary structure or an appropriate space/building adjacent to the site.

6.5.4 Local Co-ordination Centre

The **County House building in Lifford** has been designated as the Local Co-ordination Centre¹. Please refer to *Appendix L1* for the allocation of spaces within the Local Co-ordination Centre.

In the event that the Local Co-ordination Centre in Lifford is inaccessible, the back-up arrangement is to use one of the other Local Co-ordination Centres in the Northwest Region:

- Option 1. **Árus An Chontae, Riverside, Sligo, Co. Sligo**
- Option 2. **Árus An Chontae, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim**

A representative of the Lead Agency will chair the Local Co-ordination Group and will exercise the mandates associated with this position. Refer to *Appendix E2 – Key Roles* regarding the Mandates of the Local Co-ordination Group and its Chairperson.

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 representatives² on the Local Co-Ordination Group from the three Principal Response Agencies are as follows:

- Chief Executive, Donegal County Council
- Chief Officer, HSE (West)
- The Garda Chief Superintendent, Donegal Division

¹ This decision has been agreed by all three PRAs at the Northwest Regional Steering Group.

² Or their nominated deputy

The Local Authority Crisis Management Team will assist the Local Authority's representative in carrying out their functions.

6.5.4 Regional Co-ordination Centre

In the event of a Major Emergency being escalated to a Regional Level Emergency, the Chair of the Local Co-ordinating Group will determine the location of the Regional Co-ordination Centre. Their decision will depend on the location and nature of the emergency and any associated infrastructural damage.

Any of the Local Co-ordination Centres within the region may serve as the Regional Co-ordination Centre. The Centres within the Northwest region are located at:

- **County House, Lifford, Co. Donegal**
- **Árus An Chontae, Riverside, Sligo, Co. Sligo**
- **Árus An Chontae, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim**

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

6.6 Co-ordination in other specific circumstances

In order to achieve co-ordination in other specific circumstances it may be considered appropriate to invite representatives from other agencies and/or specialist fields to participate in the co-ordination process.

6.6.1 Mutual Aid and Regional Level Co-ordination

Each Controller of Operations should ensure that, where the resources of their own 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.

As they are national organisations, the Crisis Management Teams of the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána should arrange to provide the additional support required; the Local Authorities will support each other on a mutual aid basis. See section 4.6 and 4.7 of this document.

Where appropriate, representatives of the equivalent of the Principal Response Agencies in Northern Ireland should be invited to participate in Local/Regional Co-ordination Groups.

6.6.2 Incidents occurring along Donegal County Council's boundaries

In certain situations, e.g., where an emergency affects an extensive area or occurs near the borders of the Local Authorities, there may be response from various Local Authorities. There should be only one Controller of Operations for each of the three PRAs and it is necessary to determine from which unit of the Principal Response Agency the Controller of Operations should come.

In the case of Local Authorities, which are statutorily empowered in respect of their functional areas, procedures for resolving such issues may already be set out in

pre-defined agreements. Where they are not so covered and the issue cannot be resolved quickly in discussion between the responding officers of the different units of those services, 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.

6.6.3 Links to National Emergency Plans

The Donegal County Council Major Emergency Plan will operate as an integral part of any National plans developed for scenarios affecting the population on a National Level.

The arrangements for linking the local response to a Major Emergency with National Level Co-ordination arise from what might be termed a 'bottom up' situation, see Figure 6.1 below.

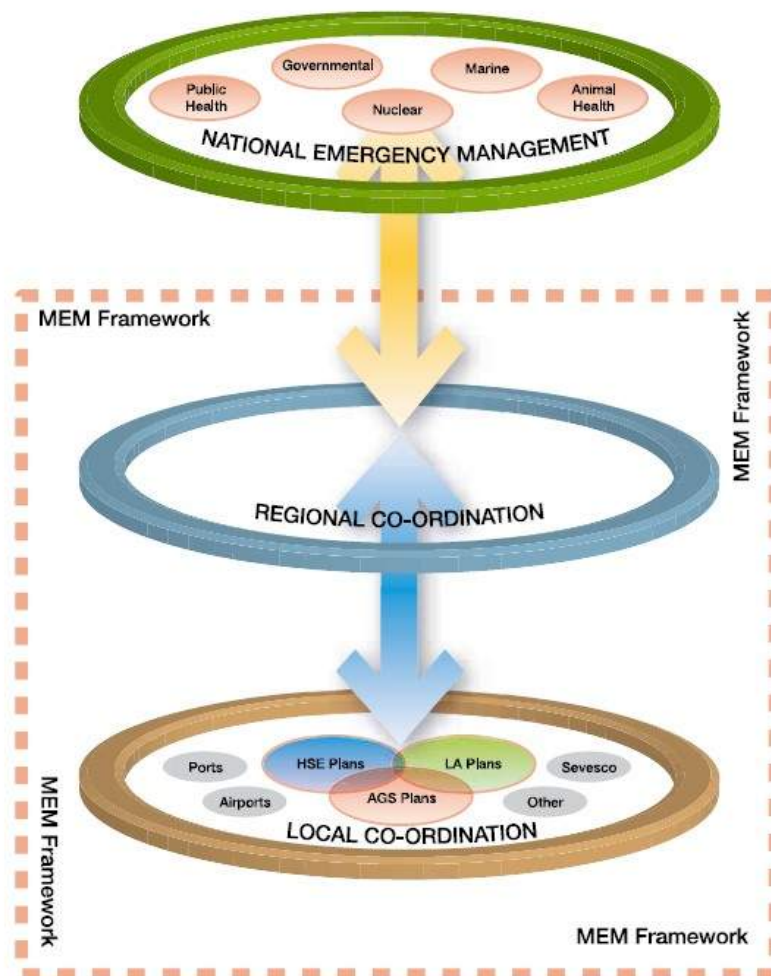


Figure 6.1: Linking Major Emergency Plans with National Plans and Other Plans

Where one of the National Emergency Plans, (i.e., National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents, Animal Health Plan etc.) is activated, a 'top down' connection may be put in place, i.e. the Regional and Local Co-ordination Centres are requested to become operational by the lead Department.

The establishment of Regional and Local Co-ordination Centres under this provision should be determined in light of the circumstances prevailing at that time.

6.6.4 Links with National Government

In every situation where a Major Emergency is declared, the Local Authority shall inform the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage of the declaration, as part of its mobilisation procedure.

The Department, in its role as a member of the National Steering Group, should consult and agree with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Department of Health and Children, on the basis of available information, which Government Department will be designated as Lead Department, in keeping with the Department of Defence's Strategic Emergency Planning Guidance.

Where the determination is that the Lead Department is a Government Department other than one of the members of the National Steering Group, the chair of the National Steering Group (or a person acting on his/her behalf) should inform both the Lead Department and the Lead Agency of the designation. Where there is difficulty in designating a Lead Department in accordance with these arrangements, the chair of the National Steering Group should contact the Department of the Taoiseach, and that Department will determine the matter.

Section 7 – The Common Elements of Response

This section is divided into 20 different sub-sections that set out how the common elements of a Major Emergency Response will be implemented within the Local Authority. The Sections are as follows:

- 7.1 Declaring a Major Emergency
- 7.2 Initial Mobilisation
- 7.3 Command, Control and Communication Centres
- 7.4 Co-ordination Centres
- 7.5 Communication Facilities
- 7.6 Exercising the Lead Agency's Co-ordination Roles
- 7.7 Public Information
- 7.8 The Media
- 7.9 Site Management Arrangements
- 7.10 Mobilising Additional Resources
- 7.11 Casualty and Survivor Arrangements
- 7.12 Emergencies involving Hazardous Materials
- 7.13 Protecting Threatened Populations
- 7.14 Early and Public Warning Systems
- 7.15 Emergencies arising on Inland Waterways
- 7.16 Safety, Health and Welfare Considerations
- 7.17 Logistical Issues/ Protracted Incidents
- 7.18 Investigations
- 7.19 Community/ VIPs/ Observers
- 7.20 Standing-Down the Major Emergency

7.2 Initial Mobilisation

Donegal County Council's Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure will be implemented immediately on notification of the declaration of a Major Emergency. The initial mobilisation of the Local Authority's resources will be facilitated through the CAMP WEST Regional Control Centre. They will activate the Donegal County Council Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure in accordance with pre-determined arrangements. The Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure is detailed in *Appendix C3*.

In some situations, there may be an early warning of an impending emergency. Mobilisation within Donegal 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

The CAMP West Regional Communications Centre (WRCC) located at Castlebar, Co. Mayo shall be the control centre that will mobilise, support and monitor the Fire Service and other Services requested/required by the Local Authority.

They will communicate with the personnel on-site until such time as the Crisis Management Team and Local Co-ordination Group have been established in accordance with national pre-determined arrangements.

7.4 Co-ordination Centres

7.4.1 On-Site Co-ordination Centre

It is a function of the On-site Co-ordinator to determine what facility should be used as the On-Site Co-ordination Centre. This space will accommodate the Controllers from each Agency, their support teams, and any other expertise that may be required.

Where the Local Authority has been designated as the Lead Agency the first-attending Local Authority vehicle may operate as the On-Site Co-ordination Centre. It may also be appropriate, depending on the circumstances, to utilise a tent/temporary structure or another appropriate space/building adjacent to the site.

7.4.2 Crisis Management Team Centre

The Donegal County Council Crisis Management Team will meet in the Training Room of the County House building, Lifford. Please refer to *Appendix C5 - Crisis Management Team Action Plan* for more details.

7.4.3 Location of Local Co-ordination Centre

The three PRAs within County Donegal have agreed on the following location as the Local Co-ordination Centre for strategic level co-ordination within Donegal:

- **County House, Lifford, Co. Donegal**

This building was chosen to facilitate the effective working of the Local Co-ordination Group and Local Authority Crisis Management Team.

All co-ordination centres will follow a generic model of operation. Please refer to *Appendix L1* for further details.

7.4.4 Regional Co-ordination Centre

The Local Co-ordination Centres will have the capacity to function as a Regional Co-ordination Centre, should the Major Emergency be scaled up to a Regional Level Major Emergency.

Where the Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group has declared a Regional Major Emergency, that Local Co-ordination Centre shall then become the Regional Co-ordination Centre, and communications links to the other Local Co-ordination Centres involved in the Regional Level response shall be established.

7.4.5 Information Management Team

- **Information Management Officers**

The role of Information Management Officer has been assigned to relatively senior management grades within the organisation. The function of the Information Management Officer will be to interrogate, test, process and present all incoming information required for the decision-making process at On-Site and Off-Site Centres.

- **Action Management Officer**

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, track the progress of the action, and report back to the Co-ordination Group.

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 Co-ordination Group desk. They may themselves lead teams either at or remote from the centre. On occasion, they may be invited to contribute to debate in a broader context. They need to be quite clear in which capacity they are acting at any juncture and adjust their perspective accordingly.

7.5 Communication Facilities

Donegal County Council will rely heavily on technical communication facilities to enable it function efficiently and for different units to communicate, both at the site and between the site and its command, control or communications centre.

The Local Co-ordination Centre at the County House in Lifford has a multi-line landline phone system, WIFI and e-mail services available. A large percentage of Council staff also carry work mobile telephones. In addition, two portable MEM (TETRA) radios are available for communication between the Local Co-ordination Centre and the On-site Co-ordination Centre.

- Fire Service

The Fire Service use mobile digital radio (TETRA) for communication between vehicles and CAMP West Regional Communications Centre and have the ability to communicate within the functional area of Co. Donegal. In addition, each fire appliance carries a number of hand-portable radios (UHF) for communication on-site plus a mobile telephone.

- Civil Defence

The Civil Defence operate both mobile radio (TETRA) for communication between vehicles and communication centres and hand-portable radio (UHF) for communication on-site. A multi-line landline phone service is also available at Civil Defence Headquarters.

- Council General

Vehicles that are used by the Roads & Transportation section of the Council are equipped with VHF mobile radios.

7.5.2 Inter-Agency Communication

Communication systems serve command structures within services. 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 for at Controller of Operations level as a minimum. For this purpose, the Fire Service will provide a set of functioning UHF hand-portable radios, to specifically facilitate Inter-Agency communication, to the site of the Major Emergency. This policy is currently being reviewed in light of the introduction of digital incident ground radios.

The distribution of the hand portable radios will be at the discretion of the On-site Co-ordinator, subject to a minimum of 1 no. hand-portable radio issued to each of the Controllers of Operations or their designated command support staff.

With regard to other Agencies operating at the site, the issue of hand-portable radios will be subject to availability and prioritisation by the On-site Co-ordinator.

7.5.3 Communications between On-Site and Local Co-ordination Centres

All communication between On-site Co-ordination Centre and the Local Co-ordination Centre shall pass between the Controller of Operations / On-site Co-ordinator to the Local Co-Ordination group, supported by the work of trained Information Management Officers at the scene and at the Co-ordination Centres. See Figure 7.2 below.

Communications between the site to the co-ordination centre will be facilitated by way of a radio/phone system available to relevant personnel at the time.

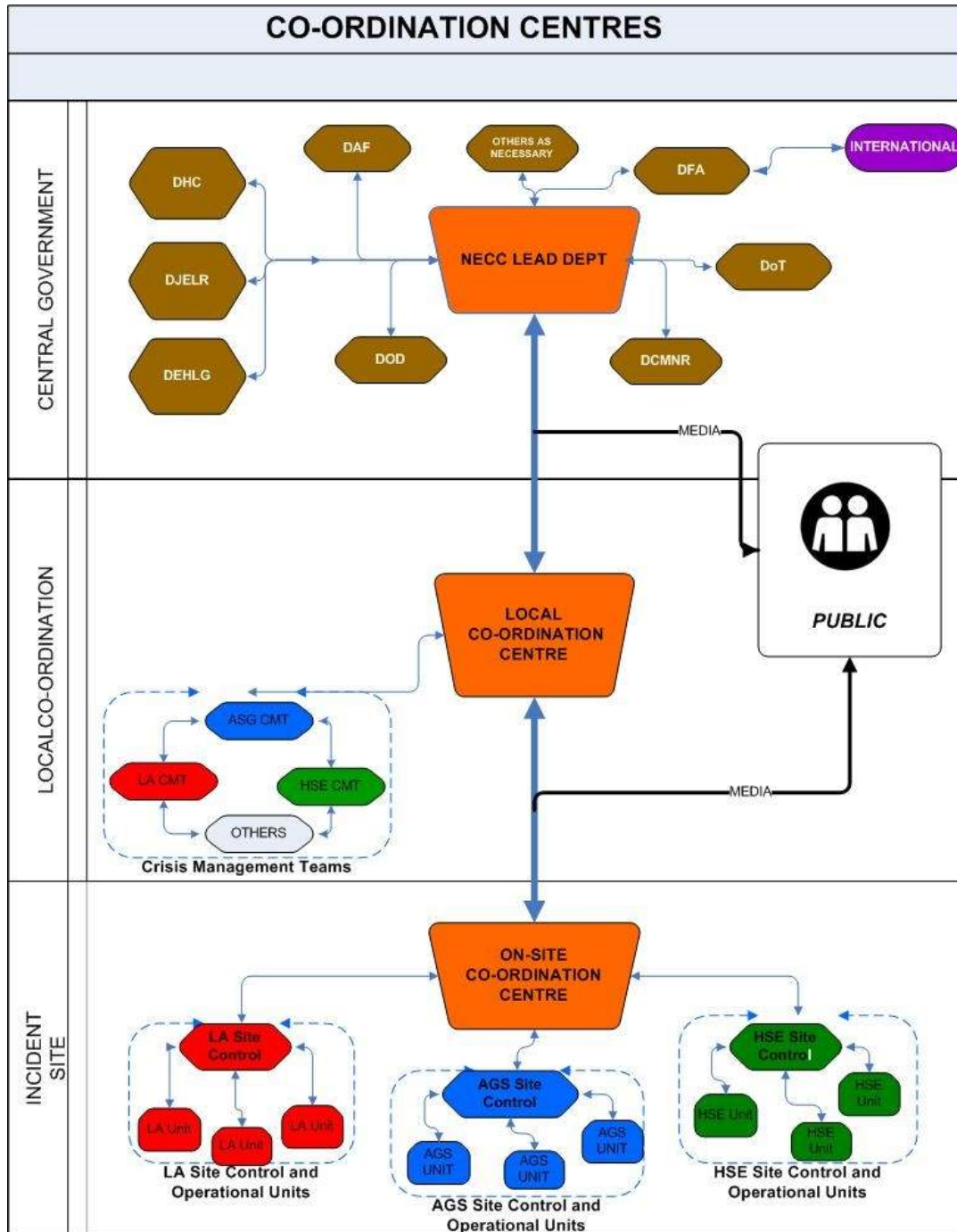


Figure 7.2 Lines of communication between Co-ordination Centres

7.6 Exercising the Lead Agency Co-ordination Role

7.6.1 Determination of the Lead Agency

The Framework provides that one of the Principal Response Agencies will be designated as the Lead Agency for any Emergency and therefore assume responsibility for leading co-ordination.

The Lead Agency has both a responsibility and a mandate for the co-ordination function.

There are two mechanisms for determining and designating the Lead Agency in any given situation. These are to be applied by all three Controllers of Operations at the site. They are:

- **Pre-nomination.** *Appendix K1* contains a list of incident types that reflect who the Lead Agency is. This method is the primary basis for determining the Lead Agency.
- **Default Arrangement.** Where the categorisations in the above-mentioned table do not appear to apply and the Lead Agency is not obvious, then the default arrangement is that the Local Authority will be the 'default' Lead Agency.

Once this determination has been made, the person assuming the role of On-Site Co-ordinator should note the time and that the determination was made in the presence of the other two Controllers. This decision should then be communicated to all parties involved in the response.

The Controller of Operations for the Lead Agency then becomes the **On-Site Co-ordinator**.

7.6.2 Review and Transfer of the Lead Agency

The Lead Agency role may change over time, to reflect the changing circumstances of the emergency. Ownership of the Lead Agency mantle should be reviewed at appropriate stages of the 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 at the site and should be communicated as per the initial determination.

7.6.3 Local Authority's function as the Lead Agency

In the event of Donegal County Council being assigned the Lead Agency role, it will be assigned the responsibility for the 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 PRAs and the principal emergency services in sharing information on the nature of the emergency situation.
- Involvement of the range of organisations (other than PRAs) 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.
- Operating 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

7.7.1 Local Authority's role in providing Public Information

In certain situations, it may be crucial for the Local Authority to provide timely and accurate information directly to the public on an emergency situation. This is 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 should take over the task of co-ordinating the provision of information to the public as soon as it assembles. This activity should be co-ordinated by the Lead Agency.

7.7.2 Public notices

In situations where early warning and special public warning arrangements are required the Media Liaison Officer shall make provision for contacting the appropriate media outlets for the dissemination of warning(s) on behalf of the Local Authority.

The following media outlets may be used:

- Web site: www.donegalcoco.ie
- Social Media – Donegal County Council's *Facebook* & *Twitter* Accounts
- Local broadcasters (includes cross border, e.g. Radio Foyle)
- Emergency helpline service.

On a national level the public shall be informed by use of the following: -

- Television and Radio – arrangements exist whereby emergency announcements may be made on RTÉ / TG4 / Virgin Media television and/or radio channels.

Please refer to *Appendix M2* for a full listing of media outlets.

7.8 The Media

7.8.1 Arrangements for liaison with the media

To facilitate the dissemination of information to the news media and to the general public Donegal County Council have made arrangements for the provision of the following:

- A Local Authority Media Liaison Officer (Local Co-ordination Centre)
- A Local Authority Media Liaison Officer (On-Site)

The names, duties and responsibilities of the Media Liaison Officers are given in *Appendix E5 – Key Roles*.

7.8.2 Arrangements for Media On-Site

It is the responsibility of the Lead Agency to establish and run a Media Centre at or near the site of the emergency. This is a building/space specifically designed for interaction between the media and the three Principal Response Agencies. It will be established at a location outside of the outer cordon.

It should be noted that the media are likely to respond quickly to any major emergency and a media presence at the site may extend for days, or even weeks.

7.8.3 Arrangements for Media at Local / Regional Co-ordination Centres

The Local Co-ordination Group should take the lead in terms of working with the media during a Major Emergency. As with arrangements on-site, each Principal Response Agency has 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.

There is a space identified within the Local Co-ordination Centre specifically to be used by the three Media Liaison Officers to meet and prepare media statements.

In addition, another space has been selected as a Media Briefing Area and this will be located as follows:

- **The Old Courthouse Building, Lifford.**

7.8.4 Media Arrangements at other locations

In many situations, media attention will move quickly away from the site to other locations, including the Local Co-ordination Centre, hospitals where casualties are being treated and mortuaries and, therefore, arrangements for the media at or adjacent to these locations will need to be provided. In these situations, the Media Liaison Officers from the three Principal Response Agencies should make suitable arrangements for the media at those particular location(s).

7.9 Site Management Arrangements

7.9.1 Developing a Site Management Plan

Donegal County Council shall appoint a Controller of Operations at the site (or at each site) of the Emergency. Refer to Section 6.2. A fundamental task of the Controller of Operations, in association with the other two Controllers, is the development of a Site Management Plan.

A typical site management plan should be adopted at the scene of an emergency. As soon as possible, the On-site co-ordinator should discuss and agree arrangements with the other Controller of Operations. Once agreed, the resulting site plan should be implemented and disseminated to all responding groups.

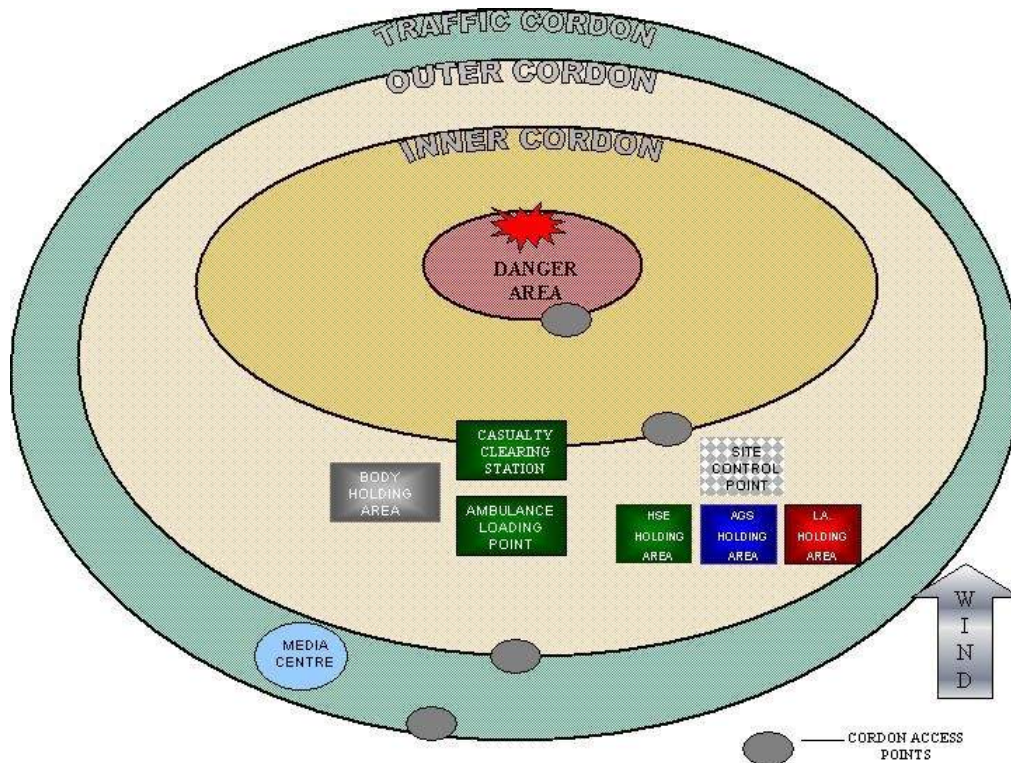


Figure 7.2: Idealised Scene Management Arrangements

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
- Site Control Point
- On-Site Co-ordination Centre
- Casualty Clearing Station
- Ambulance Loading Area
- Body Holding Area
- Survivor Reception Centre
- Friends and Relative Reception Centre
- Media Centre

7.9.2 Operation and control of access arrangements

Cordons should be established as quickly as possible at the site of a Major Emergency for the following reasons:

- Facilitate the operations of the Emergency Services and other Agencies.
- Protect the public, by preventing access to dangerous areas.
- Protect evidence and facilitate evidence recovery at the site.

Three cordons will be established. An Garda Síochána will establish an Inner, Outer and Traffic Cordon, including cordon access points - by agreement with the On-site Co-Ordination Group.

Please refer to *Appendix X1* for a full list of cordons and areas.

7.10 Mobilising Additional Resources

There are a number of organisations and agencies, which may be called on to assist the Principal Response Agencies in responding to Major Emergencies. The organisations may be grouped as follows:

- Civil Defence
- Defence Forces
- Voluntary Emergency Services
- Utilities
- Private Sector

All organisations shall mobilise at the request of the On-site Co-ordinator after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. In turn, the requested Agency will report to the On-site Controller who will assign it a task.

7.10.1.1 Mobilisation of Civil Defence

All requests for Civil Defence assistance will be channelled through the Local Authority Controller of Operations. Once contacted, the Civil Defence Officer is responsible for mobilising the Civil Defence resources within Donegal.

Please refer to *Appendix D2* for Civil Defence contact details.

7.10.1.2 Mobilisation of the Defence Forces:

The Defence Forces may be mobilised at the request of the On-site Co-ordinator after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. All requests for Defence Forces assistance should be made in accordance with the aide memoire on seeking Defence Forces assistance in the aid to the Civil Authority form as set out in Appendix G5 of this document.

7.10.1.3 Mobilisation of The Irish Red Cross

The Irish Red Cross will provide an auxiliary resource to the ambulance service. If required, they will be mobilised by the HSE in accordance with arrangements set out in their Major Emergency Plan.

7.10.1.4 Mobilisation of Voluntary Emergency Services

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

Each Principal Response Agency with a linked Voluntary Emergency Service is responsible for the mobilisation of that service and its integration into the overall response.

The internal command of volunteer organisations resides with that organisation.

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 • 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

Table 7.2 List of Voluntary Emergency Services

7.10.1.5 Mobilisation of Utilities

Utilities may be requested to provide representatives and/or experts to the On-Site Co-ordination Group, the Local Co-ordination Group and/or the Regional Co-ordination Group, as appropriate.

Please refer to *Appendix J1* for contact details for Utility Companies.

7.10.1.6 Mobilisation of Private Sector

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.

7.10.2 Identification of additional organisations

All uniformed Voluntary Emergency Services, members of the private sector and Utilities personnel, responding to the site of the Major Emergency should wear the prescribed uniform, including high visibility and safety clothing, issued by their organisations.

Individual members of voluntary emergency services should carry a form of photo identification. The organisations markings on this clothing should be made known in advance to the other organisations that may be involved in the response. The vehicles of these services responding to a Major Emergency should be readily identifiable.

7.10.3 Arrangements for Command, control, co-ordination and de-mobilisation of Organisations

Each Principal Response Agency with a linked Voluntary Emergency Services/Organisation is responsible for the mobilisation of that service and its integration into the overall response.

The internal command of the organisations resides with that organisation.

7.10.4 Mutual aid arrangements

Please refer to Section 4.6 of this Document.

7.10.5 Requests for out-of-region assistance

The decision to seek assistance from outside the region will be made by the Lead Agency, in association with the other Principal Response Agencies, at the Local/Regional Coordination Centre.

7.10.6 Requesting International Assistance

The decision to seek international assistance will be made by the Lead Agency, in association with the other Principal Response Agencies, at the Local/Regional Co-ordination Centre.

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.
- 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.

7.11.1.1 The Local Authority's role with regard to Casualties and survivors

The On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other two Controllers, will need to make an early assessment of the casualty situation and identify if there are particular aspects which may impact on casualty management, such as, significant numbers of disabled, sick or immobile persons involved, and take action accordingly.

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.

7.11.2 Injured Parties

At the site of a Major Emergency, the priorities of the Principal Response Agencies 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 Triage

Triage is a dynamic process of assessing casualties and deciding the priority of their 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 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 / uninjured from the site

In circumstances where lightly injured or uninjured persons are to be transported from the site, the Civil Defence may be requested to aid in this task. This will be arranged between the On-Site Co-ordinator and the other two Controllers of Operations

7.11.2.3 Casualty Clearing Station

The Ambulance Service, in consultation with the Health Service Executive Controller and the Site Medical Officer, will establish a Casualty Clearing Station at the site. All casualties will be moved to this location in the first instance.

7.11.3 Fatalities

The casualties who have been triaged as dead should not be moved from the incident site unless this is necessary to affect 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 first and their original position clearly marked and recorded. The recovery of the dead and human remains is part of an evidence recovery process and is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána acting as agents of the Coroner. The Local Authority can assist An Garda Síochána in this function.

When a doctor has pronounced an individual dead, arrangements in respect of the body are the responsibility of the local Coroner's Office, in conjunction with An Garda Síochána.

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 deaths. All such deaths in Ireland are investigated under the Coroners' Act, 1962.

7.11.3.1 Arrangements for dealing with fatalities

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).

Where circumstances require it, a Temporary Mortuary may be established. The Local Co-ordination Group, in consultation with the Coroner, should make this decision.

Please note that it is the responsibility of the Local Authority to provide a Temporary Mortuary.

Please refer to *Appendix R1* for contact details for County Donegal Coroner.

7.11.3.2 Identification of the deceased

The Coroner, with the assistance of An Garda Síochána, has overall responsibility for the identification of bodies and remains and s/he is entitled to exclusive possession and control of a deceased person until the facts about his/her death have been established.

A full post-mortem and forensic examination will be carried out on every body from a Major Emergency and each death will be the subject of an Inquest. A Pathologist, who acts as the 'Coroners Agent' for this purpose, will carry out the post-mortem.

7.11.4 Survivors

A Survivor Reception Centre should be designated and established at the earliest possible opportunity. The On-Site Co-ordinator, in conjunction with the other Controllers, should determine if such a centre is to be established, and its location in the site management plan.

Please note that it is the responsibility of the Local Authority to establish and run this centre.

The assistance of Civil Defence and the Voluntary Ambulance Services may be required to provide a variety of services at the Survivor Reception Centre and 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 Survivor Reception Centre should be secure from any unauthorised access and provide the maximum possible privacy for survivors.

Transport from the Survivor Reception Centre to home / safe place should be arranged as soon as it is practicable.

The following types of building would be suitable for setting up a survivor centre:

- Recreation Centre
- Parish Hall
- Local Church
- Local School
- Any other similar building

7.11.5 Casualty Information

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

To facilitate this process, a liaison/casualty officer will normally be sent by An Garda Síochána to each hospital where casualties are being treated. All other services should ensure that any information collected on any casualty is transferred via An Garda Síochána to the Casualty Bureau.

The Casualty Bureau is the central contact point for the matching of information available on casualties with requests from all those seeking or providing information about persons involved in the incident. The media will be asked to promulgate the contact numbers for the Bureau so that the public can make enquiries 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 contain 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.

7.11.7 Non-National Casualties

It is possible that some incidents may involve significant numbers of casualties from other jurisdictions. In such circumstances, the Local Co-ordination Centre should notify the relevant Embassy if the nationality of the victims is known. The Department of Justice should be approached 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 approached for appropriate assistance and liaison purposes.

It should also be noted that An Garda Síochána is likely to have a list of interpretation service providers available.

7.11.8 Pastoral and Psycho-Social Support

It is the responsibility of the Health Service Executive to provide for the pastoral and psychosocial support arrangements of casualties and other affected members of the public.

7.12 Emergencies involving Hazardous Materials

7.12.1 Arrangements for dealing with major hazardous material incidents

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, will assist An Garda Síochána in an Aid to the Civil Power role with Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams.

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a CCBRN incident are contained in the *Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Suspect Chemical and Biological Agents arising from terrorist activity*.

7.12.2 Arrangements for dealing with CCBRN incidents

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a CCBRN (*CCBRN meaning terrorist incidents involving C - conventional explosives; 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* (in Draft).

These protocols deal with a range of matters relevant to managing such incidents, including the identification of the materials involved. They also provide for involvement of the National Poisons Information Centre and the National Virus Reference Laboratory.

7.12.3 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* (in Draft).

7.12.4 National Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Plan

For infectious diseases such as Avian Flu, Pandemic Flu, Foot and Mouth there will be a link to the National Plan as outlined by the government. Donegal County Council will provide assistance under the command of the Lead Government Department.

7.12.5 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 (NEPNA) are detailed in the *Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Radiological/ Nuclear Emergencies* (in Draft).

7.12.6 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 Fire Service may use its fire-fighter 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 contamination 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 through surface contact with contaminants.

7.13 Protecting Threatened Populations

7.13.1 Threatened Population

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.

7.13.2 Evacuation Arrangements

The On-Site Co-ordinator will take the decision on how best to protect a threatened population, after consultation with the other two Controllers of Operations. Evacuation is usually undertaken on the advice of the Local Authority or Health Service Executive.

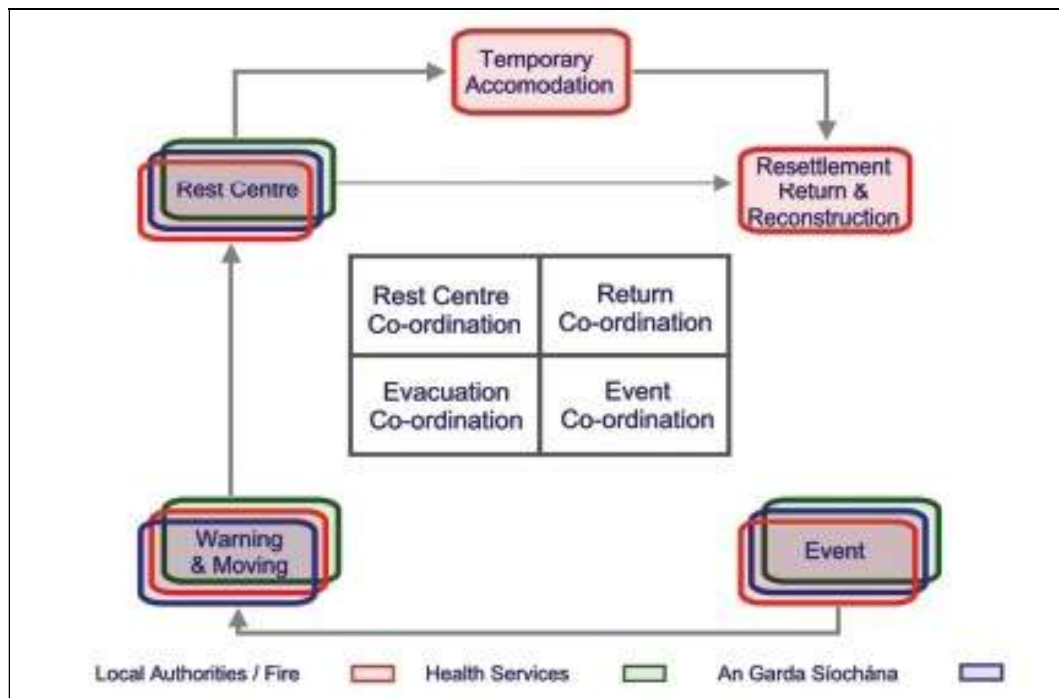


Figure 7.3: Structure of Evacuation

Where decided upon, An Garda Síochána will undertake the process of evacuation, with the assistance of the other Agencies. 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 Local Authority.

7.13.3. Rest Centres / Evacuee Reception Centres

Personnel from the Local Authority, including members of the Civil Defence 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 will assist in this role.

The selection of a suitable Rest Centre should always be made in conjunction with the Local Authority where practicable, as there may already be pre-defined facilities in the area affected. Typical examples of Rest Centres may include one of the following:

- Local Community Centre
- Local School
- Local Church Hall

Temporary Accommodation may also be required.

7.14 Early and Public Warning Systems

7.14.1 Monitoring potentially hazardous situations

Met Éireann have an early warning system in place for Severe Weather Warning on a 24-hour basis.

There may also be a need to inform the public of a current situation or of possible evacuation. Please refer to Section 11.1 of this document for further details.

7.14.2 How warnings are to be disseminated

Warnings may be disseminated to the public by using one or all of the following forums:

- Door to door contact
- Radio and T.V. broadcasting
- Local helpline / information line
- Internet services
- Social Media
- Automated Text Services
- Establish site-specific warning systems

7.15 Emergencies arising on Inland Waterways

7.15 Emergencies arising on Inland Waterways

The Irish Coast Guard has responsibility for receiving 999/112 calls and the mobilising of resources arising from 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.

7.15.1 Mobilisation of additional resources

The Civil Defence may be requested to provide support to the Coast Guard in the carrying out of its functions in respect of emergencies arising on Inland Waterways.

The Irish Coast Guard should contact the Civil Defence Officer, via the Local Authority Controller of Operations, to facilitate any request for assistance.

Please refer to the Civil Defence Contact Details provided in *Appendix D2 – Section Plans*.

7.16 Safety, Health and Welfare Considerations

7.16.1 Safety, Health & Welfare

Local Authority is responsible for the Safety, Health and Welfare of their staff that responds to emergencies and will operate within its own safety, health and welfare management systems, including the use of appropriate PPE.

Please refer to *Donegal County Council Parent Safety Statement* for further guidance.

7.16.2 Safety of the Local Authority's rescue personnel

The Local Authority Crisis Management Team will have a Health & Safety advisor involved and they will have responsibility for the oversight and management of the health & safety of the Local Authority's rescue personnel.

7.16.3 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 Authority is responsible for the health and safety of its staff when they operate within the 'Danger Area'.

Each service attending the scene should establish from 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.

7.16.4 Procedures and evacuation signal for the 'Danger Area'

The activities of all Agencies within the 'Danger Area' shall be under the overall control and direction of the Fire Service Incident Commander where appropriate.

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 for ten seconds on - ten seconds off, will be given. All personnel should withdraw on hearing this signal to a pre-determined safe zone.

7.16.5 Physical welfare of responders

The Local Authority Controller of Operations should ensure that appropriate rest and refreshment facilities are provided for response personnel at the site.

These facilities will include the provision of food and drink, rest facilities and toilet facilities.

7.16.6 Psycho-social support for own personnel

Council employees who are traumatized by the events of a major emergency may require skilled professional help. This help will be provided by Donegal County Councils Staff Welfare Officer to employees and their immediate family.

A careline exists which enables employees and their immediate family to access confidential advice and support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

7.17 Logistical Issues / Protracted Incidents

7.17.1 Arrangements for rotation of front-line rescue / field staff

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 Northwest region may be called upon to assist and support the emergency.

7.17.2 Re-organising normal emergency and other services cover

By definition, a major emergency will require the deployment of considerable numbers of personnel. The Fire Service will make special arrangements for the maintenance of fire cover in the case of protracted incidents. Appropriately trained Civil Defence resources may have to be assigned to a strategic location.

The role of staff that are not directly involved in responding to the incident should also be noted. They are critical to the organisation's response and to ensuring that, insofar as possible, normal services to the public continue to be provided by the council. The commitment of the Council's resources to the Major Emergency must be compatible with the requirement to continue to supply a service to the public not affected by the event. The Council's CMT will decide on the appropriate response to the emergency, and on the level of normal services that are required throughout the emergency.

7.17.3 Arrangements for initial and ongoing welfare for field staff

It is a function of the Local Authority to provide food, rest and sanitary facilities as appropriate for all personnel involved in the response to the emergency. The Council's Controller of Operations, when arranging the logistical needs of the resources under his/her control, must consider these issues and should appoint an officer to co-ordinate all personnel welfare needs on site.

This person should make arrangements to engage the services of Civil Defence, event catering companies and sanitary service suppliers to provide the welfare needs of personnel operating on the site.

The response may also involve the utilisation of premises pre-identified as Rest Centres in community halls and sports areas for this purpose if they have not already been utilised as emergency shelters.

A hot meal will be provided to field staff during the break period or every 4/5 hours during an incident.

7.18 Investigations

7.18.1 Investigations arising from the emergency

If there is reason to believe that a criminal act was a contributory factor to a Major Emergency, An Garda Síochána will begin an investigation in parallel with the emergency response.

The scene of a suspected crime should be preserved until An Garda Síochána has made a complete and thorough examination. They will need to obtain evidence of the highest possible standard and will require that all evidence is left in-situ, unless a threat to life or health prevents this from happening.

7.18.2 Minimise disruption of evidence

The preservation of the site of a Major Emergency, which results from criminal action, is of paramount importance and should receive a priority rating from the outset by all of the Principal Response Agencies.

The Local Authority will have a primary role in the site clearance, demolition, clean-up operations, removal and disposal of debris. Such activity is only to be done in consultation with An Garda Síochána (or other investigative body) to avoid the possible unnecessary destruction of evidence.

The first member(s) of An Garda Síochána to arrive at the site of a Major Emergency where a suspected crime has been committed takes on the responsibility of preserving the site.

7.18.3 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. The following agencies may have an investigative function depending on the nature of the incident:

- Air Accident Investigation Unit (AAIU)
- Health and Safety Authority (HSA)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

In some cases, Protocols and Memoranda of Understanding have been established as an effective way of ensuring adequate liaison between different Agencies carrying out investigations.

7.19 Community / VIPs / Observers

7.19.1 Links to be established with affected communities

Where communities are affected by a Major Emergency, efforts should be made to establish contacts/links with a community utilising established links such as Community Groups/ Public Representation and Community Liaison Officers within the community.

7.19.2 Arrangements for receiving VIPs who wish to visit

Public representatives and other dignitaries may wish to attend the site of the Emergency, as well as associated facilities, hospitals etc. to express sympathy on behalf of the public to the injured and bereaved, and to support the emergency response workers. All requests for such visits should be referred to the Local Co-ordination Group.

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.

7.19.3 Arrangements for 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 should make arrangements for any such observers.

7.20 Standing Down the Major Emergency

7.20.1 Standing-Down the Major Emergency

A decision to stand down the Major Emergency status of the incident should be taken by the On-Site Co-ordinator, in consultation with the other two Controllers of Operations 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 down by the Controller of Operations of the Agency that mobilised them. Services operating at other locations should be stood down in a similar manner.

7.20.2 Operational debriefing and reporting of activity

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

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

A multi-agency debrief will be held and any lessons learned will be incorporated into revised editions of 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 to expand the knowledge and learning process that debriefs should collate, notwithstanding the potential conflict of interest that may result in later investigations.

Debriefs should not interfere with, or comment on, investigations into the incident carried out by investigative or judicial authorities.

Section 8 - Agency Specific Elements and Sub-Plans

8.1 Emergency Sub Plans within Donegal County Council

Arising from the risk assessment process described in *Section 3*, Donegal County Council's Major Emergency Plan has identified where specific plans/arrangements are required for responding to emergencies. Donegal County Council currently has or is in the process of preparing specific plans, sub-plans for the following:

- Flood Emergency Response Plan
- Severe Weather Assessment Team Plan
- Plan for Managing Evacuation & Rest Centres
- Northwest Regional Mass Fatality Plan
- The Guidance Document & Service Agreement and Matrix of Resources and Capabilities for Principal Response Agencies & Voluntary Emergency Services in the Northwest Region are included as a sub-plan to the Major Emergency Plan

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

Section 9 – Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination

9.1 Regional Level Co-ordination

Regional-Level Major Emergencies may be declared, with a Plan for Regional-Level Co-ordination activated. This will provide for mutual aid, support and co-ordination facilities to be activated on a regional basis, the boundaries of which are determined to suit the exigencies of the emergency.

Donegal County Council is part of the Northwest Region. Building on good practice that has emerged over the years, the Principal Response Agencies within Northwest Region have worked together to coordinate the Inter-Agency aspects of Major Emergency preparedness and management. The Northwest Region comprises the following Counties:

- Donegal
- Sligo
- Leitrim

A Regional-Level Major Emergency occurs 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,
- Consequences of the Emergency are likely to impact significantly outside of the local area; or,
- Incident(s) is (are) spread over the area of more than one Local Authority or Division of An Garda Síochána; or,
- 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 Major 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'.

Section 10 Links with National Emergency Plans

10.1 National Emergency Plans

There are a number of potential emergencies which if they occur are most likely to be on a national scale, including nuclear accidents, infectious disease outbreaks (e.g. smallpox, influenza pandemic) or outbreaks of animal disease (e.g. foot and mouth, avian flu).

In contrast with Major Emergencies, the characteristics of these Emergencies may include being non-site specific and occurring over an extended time period. In these situations, national bodies, operating in accordance with National Emergency Plans, may call upon the Principal Response Agencies to assist in responding to a National-Level Emergency.

The roles envisaged may include:

- Monitoring and/or reporting on the impact of the emergency within its functional area
- Undertaking pre-assigned roles in National Emergency Plans, such as coordinating/implementing certain countermeasures in their functional area
- Undertaking relevant tasks following an emergency/crisis
- Acting as a communications and co-ordination conduit

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 (in Draft)

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 are detailed in the Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Emergencies arising from Infectious Diseases Pandemics (in Draft)

10.1.3 Animal Health Plan

For infectious diseases such as Avian Flu, Foot and Mouth Disease etc. there will be a link to the National Plan as outlined by the government. Donegal County Council will provide assistance under the command of the Lead Government Department.

10.2 Activated on request from Irish Coast Guard

The Donegal County Council Major Emergency Plan may also be activated 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

This Major Emergency Plans may be activated in response to a request from a Minister of Government in light of an emergency/crisis situation.

Section 11 – Severe Weather Plans

11.1 Severe Weather Plans

Severe weather emergencies may involve significant threats to infrastructure and support may be required for vulnerable sections of the community. It has been pre-determined in the *Framework for Major Emergency Management* that the Local Authorities are the Lead Agency responsible for co-ordinating the response to severe weather events.

Arrangements have been put in place by Met Éireann to issue public service severe weather warnings to the Local Authorities. A copy of these arrangements has been included in *Appendix Q1* of this plan.

Donegal County Council will develop a Severe Weather Plan in response to the need to ensure that effective arrangements are in place to receive and respond promptly to public service severe weather warnings issued by Met Éireann.

This plan has been developed in respect of:

- Flooding Emergencies
- Severe Weather Conditions
 - Storm conditions
 - Heat Wave
 - Snow Blizzard

11.2 Flooding Emergencies

The Flood Response Sub-Plan provides detail on the Local Authority response to occurrences of severe flooding.

11.3 Severe Weather Conditions (Excluding Flooding Emergencies)

The Severe Weather Sub-Plan provides detail on the Local Authority response to occurrences of severe weather events other than flooding such as Storms, Heavy Snow., Heatwave etc.

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*, Donegal County Council's Major Emergency Plan has identified sites/events where specific plans/arrangements exist for responding to emergencies. These include the following:

- Donegal Airport Emergency Plan
- Killybegs Marine Harbour Emergency Plan

The generic response arrangements set out in *Section 7*, will govern the Local Authority's response to such sites/events and whether a Major Emergency is declared or not.

12.2 SEVESO Sites

The Principal Response Agencies are required to prepare External Emergency plans under the European Union (Control of Major Accident Hazards involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2006, i.e. the SEVESO Regulations, for each site designated under these regulations.

At present, there are no sites designated as SEVESO sites within the functional area of Donegal County Council.

Section 13 - The Recovery Phase

13.1 Support for Individuals and Communities

Although the emergency response stage may have passed, the recovery stage is also important and includes consideration of many strategic issues, which need to be addressed, at both individual principal response agency and inter-agency level, during this phase. The recovery phase can 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.
- 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

A Major Emergency will have a serious effect on a community. The recovery phase should provide support and long-term care for individuals involved in the incident and the communities affected by the incident.

It is imperative that the Local Authority restores its critical services to a pre-emergency state as quickly and efficiently as possible. The services that 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 support
- Building Control
- Road services
- Public health
- Environmental issues
- Provision of reception centres
- Accommodation needs
- Transport
- Psycho-social support
- Help lines
- Welfare and financial needs

The specific requirements for the Local Authority in the recovery process include: -

- Clean-up
- Rebuilding the community and infrastructure
- Responding to community welfare needs, e.g. housing
- Restoration of services

It is recommended that the Local Authority's Crisis Management Team should continue to function until the issues arising in the Response Phase are more appropriately dealt with by the organisation's normal management processes.

13.1.2 Managing of public appeals and external aid

There is a need for the co-ordination of emerging recovery issues such as the managing of 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 the response stage to the recovery stage.

Once the issues on the agenda of the Co-ordination Group(s) are largely recovery focussed, it may then 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 Co-ordination Group(s) to appoint a Recovery Working Group to plan ahead.

13.2 Clean-Up

In the aftermath of an Emergency the clean-up operation will be assigned to the Local Authority. The removal of debris and contaminated waste is one of the principal concerns for Donegal County Council. The Crisis Management Team will arrange/oversee the clean-up aspects of the recovery phase following consultation with An Garda Síochána (or other investigative body) to avoid the possible unnecessary destruction of evidence.

13.3 Restoration of infrastructure and services

The Local Co-ordination Group shall be reflective of the need to restore public services affected by a Major Emergency Incident. The Crisis Management Team of the Local Authority shall operate in conjunction with the Recovery Working Group, internal staff and appropriate external agencies, to facilitate the restoration of public services, the rebuilding of community and infrastructure and in responding to community welfare needs as appropriate.

13.3.1 Procedures and arrangements for monitoring the situation

The Recovery Working Group 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 Procedure for liaison with utilities

The utility companies may need to be mobilised in the recovery phase in order to provide essential services such as electricity and communications facilities etc.

The Crisis Management Team will need to liaise with the utility companies to facilitate bringing their services back on line.

13.3.3 Determination of 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 is important that staff welfare arrangements are given priority in the recovery stage of an incident, so that the needs of all staff are catered for.

13.3.4 Protection measures against continuing hazards

It will be the responsibility of the Local Authority's Major Emergency Management Committee to assess ongoing hazards and decide if further mitigation measures or further planning and preparing are required to offset the consequences of such hazards.

Section 14 - Review of the Major Emergency Plan

14.1 Internal Review Process

Donegal County Council will undertake an internal review of this Major Emergency Plan on a regular basis. In addition to the annual review, the Plan will also be reviewed after holding Major Emergency Exercises and the actual occurrence of a Major Emergency. The review will include the following:

- Update the roles of individuals that hold key positions.
- Update the risk holders within our functional area.
- Update names and numbers of utility companies, private companies etc.
- Review the current risk assessments and update them as required.
- Plan exercises.

14.2 How the MEP is to be reviewed and amended externally.

Donegal County Council's appraisal will be reviewed and validated by the Northwest Regional Steering Group on Major Emergency Management. This appraisal should also be reviewed and validated by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

Any issues arising from the review should be referred back to Donegal County Council for appropriate action. In cases of disagreement between the Local Authority and the Regional Steering Group, the National Steering Group should be consulted and should decide on the issue.

14.2.1 Inter-agency Review Process at the Regional Steering Group

Each Principal Response Agency's Major Emergency Plan should be reviewed and validated regularly by the relevant Regional Steering Group on Major Emergency Management. This will include updating and amending the plans as mentioned in section 14.1 of this document.

Each agency's appraisal should also be reviewed and validated by the relevant parent Department in accordance with the normal appraisal/reporting relationships within that sector. Any issues arising from the review should be referred back to the organisation for appropriate action.

In cases of disagreement between a Principal Response Agency and a Regional Steering Group, the National Steering Group should be consulted and should decide on the issue.

14.2.2 Review of the MEP by the DoHPLG

The Local Authority's Major Emergency Plan must also be reviewed and validated by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. Any issues arising from the review should be referred back to Donegal County Council for appropriate action.

14.3 Review after declaration of a Major Emergency

Once the Major Emergency Plan 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 and lessons learned will be incorporated into this Plan.

14.3.1 Review of agency's performance of its functions

The Crisis Management Team are responsible for carrying out a review and preparing a report on the performance of the Local Authority Functions.

14.3.2 Inter-Agency Review of the co-ordination function

A composite report, based on appropriate input from each Principal Response Agency's internal report, on every declared Major Emergency should be compiled by the Lead Agency for submission within a reasonable timescale to the relevant Regional Steering Group and the National Steering Group.

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APPENDIX A1 Glossary of Terms

Ambulance Loading Point	An area, close to the Casualty Clearing Station, where casualties are transferred to ambulances for transport to hospital.
Body Holding Area	An area, under the control of An Garda Síochána, where the dead can be held temporarily until transferred to a Mortuary or Temporary Mortuary.
Business Continuity	The processes and procedures an organisation puts in place to ensure that essential functions can continue during and after an adverse event.
Casualty	Any person killed or injured during the event. (For the purpose of the Casualty Bureau it also includes survivors, missing persons and evacuees).
Casualty Bureau / Casualty Information Centre	Central contact and information point, operated by An Garda Síochána, for all those seeking or providing information about individuals who may have been involved.
Casualty Clearing Station	The area established at the site by the ambulance service, where casualties are collected, triaged, treated and prepared for evacuation.
Casualty Form	A standard form completed in respect of each casualty and collated in the Casualty Bureau.
Civil Protection	The term used in the European Union to describe the collective approach to protecting populations from a wide range of hazards.
Collaboration	Working jointly on an activity.
Command	The process of directing the operations of all or part of a particular service (or group of services) by giving direct orders.

Control	The process of influencing the activity of a service or group of services, by setting tasks, objectives or targets, without necessarily having the authority to give direct orders.
Controller of Operations	The person given authority by a Principal Response Agency to control all elements of its activities at and about the site.
Co-operation	Working together towards the same end.
Co-ordination	Bringing the different elements of a complex activity or organisation into an efficient relationship through a negotiated process.
Cordons	The designated perimeters of an emergency site, with an Outer Cordon, an Inner Cordon, a Traffic Cordon and a Danger Area Cordon, as appropriate.
Crisis Management Team	A strategic level management group, which consists of senior managers from within the Principal Response Agency, which is assembled to manage a crisis and deal with issues arising for the agency both during the emergency and the subsequent recovery phase.
Danger Area	An area where there is a definite risk to rescue personnel, over and above that which would normally pertain at emergency operations
Decision Making Mandate	Establishes the envelopes of empowered activity and decision-making to be expected, without references to higher authorities.
Decontamination	A procedure employed to remove hazardous materials from people and equipment.
Emergency Response	The short-term measures taken to respond to situations, which have occurred.
Evacuation	The process whereby people are directed away from an area where there is danger, whether immediate or anticipated.

Evacuation Assembly Point	A building or area to which evacuees are directed for onward transportation.
Friends and Relatives Reception Centre	A secure area, operated by An Garda Síochána, for the use of friends and relatives arriving at or near the site of the emergency.
Garda Code Instructions	A document containing instructions, legislation, processes and procedures in respect of the day-to-day management of An Garda Síochána.
Hazard	Any phenomenon with the potential to cause direct harm to members of the community, the environment or physical infrastructure, or being potentially damaging to the economic and social infrastructure
Hazard Identification	A stage in the Risk Assessment process where potential hazards are identified and recorded.
Hazard Analysis	A process by which the hazards facing a particular community, region or country are analysed and assessed in terms of the threat/risk that they pose.
Holding Area	An area at the site, to which resources and personnel, which are not immediately required, are directed to await deployment.
Hospital Casualty Officer	The Member of An Garda Síochána responsible for collecting all information on casualties arriving at a receiving hospital.
Impact	The consequences of a hazardous event being realised, expressed in terms of a negative impact on human welfare, damage to the environment or the physical infrastructure or other negative consequences.
Information Management Officer	A designated member of the support team of a Principal Response Agency who has competency/training in the area of information management.
Information Management System	A system for the gathering, handling, use and dissemination of information.
Investigating Agencies	Those organisations with a legal duty to investigate the causes of an event.

Lead Agency	The Principal Response Agency that is assigned the responsibility and mandate for the coordination function.
Likelihood	The probability or chance of an event occurring.
Local Co-ordination Centre	A pre-nominated building, typically at county or sub-county level, with support arrangements in place, and used for meetings of the Local Co-ordination Group.
Local Co-ordination Group	A group of senior representatives from the three Principal Response Agencies (An Garda Síochána, HSE and Local Authority) whose function is to facilitate strategic level co-ordination, make policy decisions, liaise with regional/national level coordination centres, if appropriate, and facilitate the distribution of information to the media and the public.
Major Emergency Management	The range of measures taken under the five stages of the emergency management paradigm.
Major Emergency Plan	A plan prepared by one of the Principal Response Agencies.
Major Emergency	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 requiring the activation of specific additional procedures to ensure effective, co-ordinated response.
Media Centre	A building/area specifically designated for use by the media, and for liaison between the media and the principal response agencies.
Media Holding Statements	Statements that contain generic information that has been assembled in advance, along with preliminary incident information that can be released in the early stages of the emergency.

Mitigation	A part of risk management and includes all actions taken to eliminate or reduce the risk to people, property and the environment from the hazards which threaten them.
Mutual Aid	The provision of services and assistance by one organisation to another.
National Emergency	A centre designated for inter-departmental co-ordination purposes.
On-Site Coordinator	The person from the lead agency with the role of coordinating the activities of all agencies responding to an emergency.
On-Site Coordination Centre	Specific area/facility at the Site Control Point where the On-Site Co-ordinator is located and the On-Site Coordination Group meet.
On-Site Co-ordination Group	Group that includes the On-Site Co-ordinator and the Controllers of Operations of the other two agencies, an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer and others as appropriate.
Operational Level	The level at which the management of hands-on work is undertaken at the incident site(s) or associated areas.
Principal Emergency Services (PES)	The services which respond to normal emergencies in Ireland, namely An Garda Síochána, the Ambulance Service and the Fire Service.
Principal Response Agency (PRA)	The agencies designated by the Government to respond to Major Emergencies i.e. An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and the Local Authorities.
Protocol	A set of standard procedures for carrying out a task or managing a specific situation.
Receiving Hospital	A hospital designated by the Health Service Executive to be a principal location to which major emergency casualties are directed.
Recovery	The process of restoring and rebuilding communities, infrastructure, buildings and services.

Regional Co-ordination Centre	A pre-nominated building, typically at regional level, with support arrangements in place and used by the Regional Co-ordination Group.
Regional Co-ordination Group	A group of senior representatives of all relevant Principal Response Agencies, whose function is to facilitate strategic level co-ordination at regional level.
Rendezvous Point (RVP)	The Rendezvous Point is the location to which all resources responding to the emergency site are directed in the first instance. An Garda Síochána will organise the Rendezvous Point. Other services may have one of their officer's present to direct responding vehicles into action or to that service's Holding Area.
Response	The actions taken immediately before, during and/or directly after an emergency.
Resilience	The term used to describe the inherent capacity of communities, services and infrastructure to withstand the consequences of an incident, and to recover/restore normality.
Rest Centre	Premises where persons evacuated during an emergency are provided with appropriate welfare and shelter.
Risk	The combination of the likelihood of a hazardous event and its potential impact.
Risk Assessment	A systematic process of identifying and evaluating, either qualitatively or quantitatively, the risk resulting from specific hazards.
Risk Holders	Organisations and companies, which own and/or operate facilities and/or services where relevant hazards are found, such as Airlines, Chemical Manufacturers, etc.
Risk Management	Actions taken to reduce the probability of an event occurring or to mitigate its consequences.
Risk Matrix	A matrix of likelihood and impact on which the results of a risk assessment are plotted.

Risk Regulators	Bodies with statutory responsibility for the regulation of activities where there are associated risks, such as the Health and Safety Authority, the Irish Aviation Authority, etc.
Scenario	A hypothetical sequence of events, usually based on real experiences or on a projection of the consequences of hazards, identified during the risk assessment process.
SEVESO sites	Industrial sites that, because of the presence of dangerous substances in sufficient quantities, are regulated under Council Directives 96/82/EC and 2003/105/EC, commonly referred to as the SEVESO II Directive.
Site Casualty Officer	The Member of An Garda Síochána with responsibility for collecting all information on casualties at the site.
Site Control Point	The place at a major emergency site from which the Controllers of Operations control, direct and co-ordinate their organisation's response to the emergency.
Site Medical Officer	The medical officer with overall medical responsibility at the site, who will liaise with the health service Controller of Operations on all issues related to the treatment of casualties.
Site Medical Team	A team drawn from a pre-arranged complement of doctors and nurses, with relevant experience and training, which will be sent to the site, if required.
Site Management Plan	The arrangement of the elements of a typical major emergency site, matched to the terrain of the emergency, as determined by the On-Site Co-ordination Group.
Standard Operating Procedures	Sets of instructions, covering those features of an operation that lend themselves to a definite or standardised procedure, without loss of effectiveness.
Support Team	A pre-designated group formed to support and assist individuals operating in key roles, such as On-Site Co-ordinator, Chair of Local Co-ordination Group, etc.

Strategic Level

The level of management that is concerned with the broader and long-term implications of the emergency and which establishes the policies and framework within which decisions at the tactical level are taken.

Survivor Reception Centre

Secure location to which survivors, not requiring hospital treatment, can be taken for shelter, first aid, interview and documentation.

Tactical Level

The level at which the emergency is managed, including issues such as, allocation of resources, the procurement of additional resources, if required, and the planning and co-ordination of ongoing operations.

Temporary Mortuary

A building or vehicle adapted for temporary use as a mortuary in which post mortem examinations can take place.

Triage

A process of assessing casualties and deciding the priority of their treatment and/or evacuation.

APPENDIX A2 Glossary of Acronyms

AAIU	Air Accident Investigation Unit
CCBRN	Conventional, Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear
CMT	Crisis Management Team
EOD	Explosives Ordnance Disposal
ICG	Irish Coast Guard
METHANE	M ajor Emergency Declared E xact Location of the emergency T ype of Emergency (Transport, Chemical etc) H azards present and potential A ccess/egress routes N umber and Types of Casualties E mergency services present and required
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEPNA	National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents
NOTAM	Notice to Airmen
PDF	Permanent Defence Forces
PES	Principle Emergency Services
PRA	Principle Response Agency
RVP	Rendezvous Point
SAR	Search and Rescue
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
VIP	Very Important Person