

**MAJOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**



**MAJOR  
EMERGENCY  
PLAN**

## RECORD OF ISSUES AND AMENDMENTS

<b>Current Issue of Major Emergency Plan</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	Limerick City & County Council Major Emergency Plan
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<b>Date:</b>	June 2014
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<b>Prepared By:</b>	Niall Murray (Assistant Chief Fire Officer)
<b>Reviewed By:</b>	Major Emergency Management Committee
<b>Approved By:</b>	Conn Murray (Chief Executive)

<b>Record of Issues and Amendments</b>			
<b>Version No.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Section Amended</b>	<b>Amended By</b>
0.1a-0.1d	Dec 2013	Drafting of new Major Emergency Plan for the Amalgamation of the Limerick City and County Council.	MEMC
1.0	June 2014	New Major Emergency Plan for the Amalgamation of the Limerick City and County Council.	MEMC

<b>Documents used in the preparation of this Risk Assessment document</b>	
1	A Framework for Major Emergency Management (2006)
2	A Framework for Major Emergency Management Appendices (2006)
3	Guidance Document 2 - A Guide to Preparing a Major Emergency Plan (January 2010)
4	Limerick County Council Major Emergency Plan (2011)
5	Limerick City Council Major Emergency Plan (2008)

# **ACTIVATION PROCEDURE FOR LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL**

**TO ACTIVATE THIS PLAN**  
**Contact Munster Regional Communications Centre**  
**Using the following Confidential Numbers**

Regional Fire Service Communications Centre	Telephone Number	Back up Number	Fax Number	e-mail
Munster Regional Communications Centre				-

**If these numbers are not answered use 112/999 as an alternative**

The approved person/officer should notify the Munster Regional Communications Centre of the Declaration of a Major Emergency using the following message format:

**This is ..... (Name, rank and service) .....**

**A ..... (Type of incident) ..... has occurred/is imminent at .....(Location) .....**

**As an authorised officer I declare that a major emergency exists.**

**Please activate the mobilisation arrangements in the Limerick City and County Council Major Emergency Plan.**

After the declaration is made the approved person/officer should use the mnemonic **METHANE** to structure and deliver an information message.

- M Major Emergency Declared**
- E Exact Location of the emergency**
- T Type of Emergency (Transport, Chemical, etc.)**
- H Hazards, present and potential**
- A Access/egress routes**
- N Number and types of Casualties**
- E Emergency services present and required**

## **MOBILISATION PROCEDURE FOR MUNSTER REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE PERSONNEL**

On activation of the Limerick City and County Council Major Emergency Plan by an Approved person/officer, the MRCC Staff on duty will need to:

- 1).** If the Fire Service are required, mobilise the PDA for Major Emergency Plan.
- 2).** Notify the other two Principal Response Agencies (PRA) of the declaration and provide information as available, using the following numbers.

<b>Ambulance Control</b>	<b>Tel. Number</b>	<b>Back up Number</b>	<b>Fax Number</b>
Mid-West Region			
<b>Garda Div. HQ:</b>	<b>Tel. Number</b>	<b>Back up Number</b>	<b>Fax Number</b>
Henry Street Limerick City			

**If these numbers are not answered use 112/999 as an alternative.**

Where the MRCC receives notification of a Major Emergency from another Principal Response Agency, the MRCC Controller on duty, as part of pre-set actions, will confirm to the other two Principal Response Agencies that the Limerick City and County Council Major Emergency Plan has been activated.

Each Principal Response Agency will make and receive two calls in relation to any Major Emergency Declaration. The purpose of this crosscheck is to confirm that relevant Principal Response Agencies are aware that a Major Emergency has been declared. It also ensures that the notification/confirmation has come from an approved person/officer.

- 3).** Implement the Limerick City & County Council Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure (Appendix A of the Major Emergency Plan).

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# SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION TO PLAN

## 1.1 Introduction to the Major Emergency Plan by Chief Executive

Major Emergency Management is a key challenge and a priority issue for Limerick City and County Council. This Major Emergency Plan, which has been prepared and reviewed in accordance with the *Framework for Major Emergency Management (2006)*, sets out how we as a Local Authority are prepared to protect our citizens, environment and infrastructure in the event of a Major Emergency.

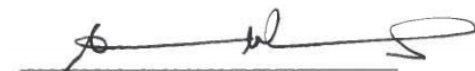
The purpose of this Major Emergency Plan is to put in place arrangements that will enable Limerick City and County Council to effectively manage a major emergency in co-ordination with the other Principal Response Agencies, An Garda Síochána and Health Service Executive.

While no contingency plan can cater for every possible scenario, the procedures set out in this Major Emergency Plan will ensure that staff at all levels are aware of their responsibilities and that appropriate actions are initiated in a timely and effective manner to deal with a major emergency through all its phases.

This is achieved by the continual planning and preparedness by the Limerick City and County Council staff to ensure that we as an organisation can provide an effective, coordinated response to any major emergency and in doing so ensure a return to normality as quickly as possible.

The Major Emergency Plan and indeed the many more specific plans that support it are subject to regular review and appraisal under the terms of the Framework. In particular, the lessons to be learned from emergencies that occur locally, nationally or internationally will be captured and used to continually improve and strengthen our arrangements.

The key to success is a co-ordinated and integrated response to an emergency which is why it is essential that all of us read this plan carefully, familiarise ourselves with its contents and recognise our own roles as part of the team responding to an emergency.



Mr. Conn Murray  
Chief Executive  
Limerick City and County Council

## **1.2 Purpose of the Major Emergency Plan**

The purpose of this Major Emergency Plan is to put in place arrangements that will enable the three Principal Response Agencies for the area, Limerick City and County Council, An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive to co-ordinate their efforts in the response to major emergencies.

The Framework for Major Emergency Management defines a Major Emergency as:  
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.

This Limerick City and County Council Major Emergency Plan has been prepared in accordance with the guidance issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in relation to Major Emergency Management and is consistent with 'A Framework for Major Emergency Management' (2006).

## **1.3 Objectives of the Major Emergency Plan**

The objectives of this Plan are to protect life and property, to minimise disruption to the community and to provide immediate support for those affected. To achieve this objective the Plan sets out the basis for a co-ordinated response to a major emergency and the different roles and functions to be performed by the various agencies. The priorities of the Limerick City and County Council response in an emergency are:

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



## **1.4 Scope of the Major Emergency Plan**

This Plan provides for a coordinated response to major emergencies arising, for example, from fires, explosions, gas releases, transportation accidents, spillages of dangerous substances, etc, which would be beyond the normal response capability of the principal emergency services.

The purpose of this plan, which is the Limerick City and County Council Major Emergency Plan, in the event of such an emergency, is:

- (a) To outline generally the procedures to be followed and the functions to be undertaken by the Limerick City and County Council services, and
- (b) To co-ordinate and align the procedures to be followed and functions to be undertaken by the Limerick City and County Council with those of the Health Services Executive, and An Garda Síochána in the area where the emergency occurs.

The fact that procedures have been specified in the plan should not restrict the use of initiative or common sense by individual officers in the light of prevailing circumstances in a particular emergency.

The type of emergency normally resulting from oil supply crises, power blackouts, industrial disputes etc are of a different nature and are not specifically catered for in this Plan. It is recognized, however, that such emergencies could result in a situation, such as a major gas explosion, requiring activation of the Major Emergency Plan.

## **1.5 Inter-operability of the Major Emergency Plan 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 do so. Each Principal Response Agency has prepared an individual Major Emergency Plan which sets out its arrangements to respond to events occurring in, or impacting on, its functional area which require the declaration of a major emergency.

The overall Major Emergency response will likely comprise the combined co-ordinated plans of the Limerick City and County Council, Health Services Executive and An Garda Síochána in the area where the emergency occurs.

This plan sets out the basis for a co-coordinated response to a major emergency and the different roles and functions to be performed by the various agencies as specified in each agency's own Major Emergency Plan.

In certain circumstances, the local response to a major emergency may be scaled up to a regional level, activating the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination. The Limerick City and County Council are part of the Mid-West Region for major emergencies. The Principle Response Agencies at Regional Level are:

- Local Authorities (Limerick City and County, Clare County and Tipperary North)
- An Garda Síochána (Limerick Division, Clare Division and Tipperary Division)
- Health Service Executive (West Region)

The Major Emergency Plan also contains specific sub-plans which can operate independently of the Major Emergency Plan and can be activated whether a Major Emergency has occurred or not.

## **1.6 Language / Terminology of the Major Emergency Plan**

In order to ensure consistency and interoperability, the language and terminology used in this Major Emergency Plan is set out so as to be consistent with that specified in Appendix F3 of 'A Framework for Major Emergency Management' (2006).

A full set of relevant terms and acronyms, which should be used by all agencies, are provided in the appendices of this plan.

## **1.7 Distribution of the Major Emergency Plan**

A copy of the Major Emergency Plan is distributed to each member of the Major Emergency Development Committee (MEDC) and to other relevant personnel in Limerick City & County Council who would be involved in a Major Emergency. Copies are also distributed to each Principal Response Agency, neighbouring Local Authorities, Defence Forces, Government Departments, local companies and relevant statutory agencies. A full distribution list for the Major Emergency Plan is provided in the appendices of this plan.

## **1.8 Status of the Major Emergency Plan**

The Limerick City and County Council Major Emergency Management Committee (MEMC) appraises and updates this Plan on an annual basis or earlier if an incident or occurrence arises which merits a review of the plan.

## **1.9 Public access to the Major Emergency Plan**

An abridged version of this Major Emergency Plan shall be available in electronic format for public access via the Limerick City and County Council website.

Note: Information of a private nature relating to any of the individuals and/or companies listed in the plan and the associated appendices shall be deemed confidential and will not be made available to the general public.

## **SECTION 2 LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL AND ITS FUNCTIONAL AREA**

### **2.1 Limerick City and County Council Functions in Emergency Management**

Limerick City and County Council is the designated local authority for the City and County of Limerick and exercises its roles and responsibilities as such under the provisions of Local Government legislation. The functional area of this Major Emergency Plan is the administrative area of the Limerick City and County Council.

Limerick City and County Council delivers its functions and services through the structure outlined in Section 4 of this plan. A full description of the Limerick City and County Council functions and resources is detailed in the appendices of this plan.

### **2.2 Boundaries and Characteristics of Limerick City and County**

The County of Limerick has a total population of 191,306 with 56,779 in Limerick City and 134,527 in the County (Census 2011). Limerick City is the industrial, commercial, administrative and cultural capital of the Mid-West Region.

The County is characterized by the mountains of Mullaghareik in the South-West, Ballyhoura and Galtee in the South-East and the Sliabh Felim in the North-East.

The tidal Shannon Estuary is situated in the North-West of Limerick. Limerick County also has a number of major rivers including the Maigue, Deel, Mulkear and Comage. Limerick City has approximately 38km of regional roads and 200km of local roads. Limerick County has approximately 136km of national primary roads, 58km of national secondary roads, 468km of regional roads and 2,925km of local roads.

Limerick City and County Council functional area is bounded by the neighboring local authorities of: Cork County Council, Tipperary County Council, Clare County Council and Kerry County Council.

## **2.3 Partner Principal Response Agencies**

The other agencies responsible for Emergency Services in Limerick are:-

- Health Service Executive (West):
- An Garda Síochána: (3 District HQ: Askeaton, Bruff and Newcastle West)

Assistance may be required by other agencies such as the Irish Coastguard, Defence Forces, Civil Defence, Irish Red Cross, Mountain Rescue etc.

## **2.4 Regional Preparedness**

The Limerick City and County Council is a member of the Mid-West Region for major emergency preparedness purposes. This Region incorporates the relevant divisions of the Principal Response Agencies covering Limerick, Clare and Tipperary.

An inter-agency Regional Steering Group has been established for the Mid-West Region. This group is representative of the senior management from each of the Principal Response Agencies.

An inter-agency Regional Working Group has also been established to support and progress Major Emergency Management in the Mid-West Region. The membership of the Regional Working Group is drawn from key personnel in the Principal Response Agencies.

The chair of the Regional Steering and Working Groups is agreed between the Principal Response Agencies for the Mid-West Region every two years.

## **SECTION 3 RISK ASSESSMENT FOR THE AREA**

### **3.1 History of Major Emergency Events**

To date, the Major Emergency Plan has not been activated within the Limerick City and County Council administrative area. However, in order to prepare effectively to deal with potential emergencies, it is necessary to have regard to specific risks faced by a community. Risk Assessment is a process by which the hazards facing a particular community are identified and assessed in terms of the risk they pose.

### **3.2 Generic and Specific Risks**

The Limerick City and County Council undertake risk assessments on an annual basis in accordance with the 'Framework for Major Emergency Management' and 'A Guide to Risk Assessment in Major Emergency Management'. Regional risk assessments are also undertaken annually by the Principal Response Agencies in the Mid-West Region and approved by the Regional Steering Group.

The following have been selected as exemplars on which preparedness for Major Emergencies in the Limerick City and County Council administrative area has been based.

1. Aircraft / Rail Incidents
2. Flooding / Severe Weather
3. Large Forest Fire / Building Fire
4. Major Road Traffic Accident
5. Explosions
6. Building collapse
7. Hazmat incident (Technological / Transportation)
8. Public Water Supply (Contamination / Reduction in supply)
9. Oil Pollution
10. Civil Disturbance
11. Influenza pandemic
12. Coastal / Marine Incident

### **3.3 Risk Management / Mitigation / Risk Reduction Strategies**

There are several risk prevention and mitigation strategies in place in relation to the potential hazards listed above, through the day-to-day functions of the Limerick City and County Council and relevant stakeholders as well as various regulations in place. These risk assessments shall be reviewed and updated annually, or as circumstances require.

### **3.4 Site/Event Specific Emergency Plans associated with the Major Emergency Plan**

Associated with this Plan are the Limerick City and County Council Sub Plans and site specific External Emergency Plans for the Seveso sites situated in Limerick. Details of these plans are contained in Section 8, 12 and Appendices of this plan.

## **SECTION 4    RESOURCES            FOR            EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

### **4.1    Limerick City and County Council Major Emergency Structure and Resources**

The Limerick City and County Council is divided into the following Directorates each overseen by a Director of Service:

- Travel & Transportation
- Home & Social Development
- Economic Development & Planning
- Environment & Water
- Community, Leisure & Emergency Services
- Corporate Services and Change Management
- Human Resources
- Finance, Motor Tax and ICT

The resources available within each of these Directorates, for emergency response is listed in the each Directorate's Sub Plan and the Major Emergency Contact List, which are Appendices of this plan.

### **4.2    Major Emergency Staffing Arrangements**

On-call resources available to the Limerick City and County Council include both full time and retained fire fighting personnel, rostered senior fire officers and particular resources from the Housing, Transportation and Environment sections. Directors, senior engineers, area engineers, senior supervisors etc. are contactable by either their mobile, home or work phone in the event of an emergency.

While these personnel are listed in the Major Emergency Contact List, there is no guarantee regarding their availability outside of office hours.



### 4.3 Limerick City and County Council Functions and Resources

As outlined in Appendix F5 of A Framework for Major Emergency Management, 2006, the following is a list of the functions assigned to the Limerick City and County Council in the response to a major emergency: -

- Declaration of a Major Emergency and notifying the other two relevant principal response agencies;
- Mobilisation of predetermined resources and activating predetermined procedures in accordance with its Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure;
- Acting as lead agency, where this is determined in accordance with Appendix F7 and undertaking the specified coordination function;
- Protection and rescue of persons and property;
- Controlling and/or extinguishing of fires;
- Dealing with hazardous material incidents including:
  - Identification, containment, neutralisation and clearance of chemical spills and emissions;
  - Decontamination (other than clinical decontamination) on-site of persons affected (under medical supervision where necessary);
- Advising on protection of persons threatened, by sheltering or evacuation;
- Arranging/overseeing clean-up of affected areas;
- Limiting damage to infrastructure and property;
- Provision of access/transport to/from the site of the emergency;
- Provision of additional lighting required, beyond what the principal emergency services normally carry;
- Assisting An Garda Síochána to recover bodies, when requested;
- Support for An Garda Síochána forensic work;
- Support for the Coroner's role, including provision of temporary mortuary facilities; accommodation and welfare<sup>1</sup> of evacuees and persons displaced by the emergency;
- Provision of food, rest and sanitary facilities as appropriate for personnel involved in the response to the emergency;
- Engaging any specialist contractors required to assist with emergency operations;
- Exercising control of any voluntary or other service which it mobilises to the site;
- Liaison with utilities regarding restoration/maintenance/or enhancing services provided to the site or to persons affected;
- Site clearance, demolition, clear-up operations, removal and disposal of debris<sup>2</sup>
- Monitoring and/or reporting on the impact in its functional area of any emergency/crisis which falls within the ambit of a "National Emergency", and coordinating<sup>3</sup>/ undertaking any countermeasures in its functional area which are required/ recommended by an appropriate national body;

- Any other function, related to its normal functions, which is necessary for the management of the emergency/crisis;
- Any function which the On-Site Co-ordinating Group requests it to perform; and,
- Maintaining essential Limerick City and County Council services (e.g. roads availability, fire and emergency operations cover, public water supply, waste water treatment, waste disposal) during the major emergency.

<sup>1</sup> Welfare in this case is intended to mean food, bedding, sanitary and washing facilities;

<sup>2</sup> This should be done after consultation with An Garda Síochána to avoid the possible destruction of evidence.

<sup>3</sup> The Limerick City and County Council should co-ordinate local aspects of National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents

The Limerick City and County Council services shall operate in accordance with the provisions set out in this plan and with their own operational procedures. A full description of the Limerick City and County Council functions in the event of a major emergency and its resources assigned to these functions are outlined in the Appendices of this plan.

#### **4.4 Assistance from other Organisations / Agencies**

There are a number of organisations and agencies which may be called on to assist the Limerick City and County Council in responding to major emergencies in addition to specialist national and local organisations. These organizations are:

- The Civil Defence
- The Defence Forces
- Voluntary Emergency Services
- The community affected
- Utilities (ESB, Bord Gáis)
- Private Sector
- Critical Incident Stress Management Providers

##### **4.4.1 Civil Defence**

The Civil Defence is an organisation of approximately 6000 volunteers who have received training in First Aid, Search and Rescue, Fire Fighting, Boating Techniques, Radiation Monitoring, Radio Communications and Welfare Provision.

The services of the Civil Defence are delivered by Local Authorities for their own administrative area through their Civil Defence Officer. These Officers are involved in planning, organizing and recruiting for the Civil Defence. Other skills taught are map reading, compass work, stewarding, response to flooding, environmental problems, blizzard conditions and major emergencies.

The Limerick City & County Civil Defence Offices are situated in the Local Authority Building in Dooradoyle. Contact Details for the Civil Defence are available in the Major Emergency Contact List.

#### **4.4.2 Defence Forces**

The Defence Forces can provide a significant support role in a major emergency response. However, there are constraints and limitations, and their involvement has to be pre-planned through the development of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and Service Level Agreements (SLAs).

Consequently, assumptions should not be made regarding the availability of the Defence Force resources or materials to respond to a major emergency. Military assistance and support may not be available if local units are deployed on operations, nor should it be assumed that local units have personnel available, with either the skill set or equipment to undertake specialist tasks. Provision of the Defence Forces capabilities is therefore, dependent on the exigencies of the service and within available resources at the time.

Where assistance from the Defence Force is required, they can be requisitioned through An Garda Síochána to Defence Forces Headquarters. The Defence Forces will operate under the provision of the Defence Act, 1954 to 1998 (as amended).

#### **4.4.3 Irish Red Cross**

The Irish Red Cross is a voluntary organization and 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.

Irish Red Cross's membership comprises 2,500 volunteers nationwide, supported by staff in Head Office in Dublin and three regional offices. The main relationship with the Principal Response Agencies in major emergency response is 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.

Contact details for the Irish Red Cross are available in the Major Emergency Contact List.

#### **4.4.4 Voluntary Emergency Services Sector**

The Voluntary Emergency Services sector provides a significant potential resource to assist the Principal Response Agencies in major emergency response. They may provide personnel with relevant skills, vehicles and useful equipment and facilities.

The normal range of voluntary emergency services includes the Limerick Marine Search and Rescue, Order of Malta Ambulance Corps, St John's Ambulance Service, Mountain Rescue Teams, Cave Rescue Teams, Search and Rescue Dog Associations, RNLI etc. Their ongoing service to the public includes attendance at public events, as well as searches for missing persons and rescue of persons in distress. Contact details for such Voluntary Emergency Services are available in the Major Emergency Contact List.

#### **4.4.5 Community Affected**

In many emergency situations, the public respond to assist other people when disaster strikes. Individuals acting in this way are termed “casual volunteers” in major emergency management and can provide a valuable resource to the principal response agencies in a major emergency, as well as to casualties and those needing assistance. The activities of the “casual volunteer” may fall into two categories:

- those which are instinctive and unplanned in the immediate aftermath of an emergency occurring; and
- those which are part of a planned responses to a situation (such as a search for missing persons).

At first, the involvement of casual volunteers could give rise to conflict with the designation of cordons as part of site management arrangements. It is important that at an early stage the On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other Controllers, should determine if ongoing assistance is required from casual volunteers, so that An Garda Síochána cordoning arrangements can take account of this.

#### **4.4.6 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.

Utilities operate under their own legislative and regulatory frameworks but, during the response to a major emergency, they need to liaise with the On-Site Co-ordinator. Representatives of individual utilities may be requested to participate in the On-Site Co-ordination and/or Local Co-ordination Centres. Contact details for the Utility Companies are available in the Major Emergency Contact List.

#### **4.4.7 Private Sector**

Private sector organisations may be involved in a major emergency situation in two ways. They may be involved 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.

### **4.5 Regional assistance from other Local Authorities**

In the event that resources within the Limerick City and County Council are not sufficient to bring a situation under control, or the duration of an incident is extended such that additional resources are required, then support may be obtained via mutual aid arrangements with neighboring counties. Local Authorities will support each other on a mutual aid basis. Support is most likely to be requested through the Munster Regional Communications Centre from:

- Clare County Council
- Tipperary County Council
- Cork County Council
- Kerry County Council

## **4.6 Scaling up to a Regional Level Co-ordination Response**

Section 9 of this document deals with how a local response to a major emergency may be scaled up to a regional level. The local response to a major emergency may be scaled up to a regional level where the nature of an emergency is such that:

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

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may declare a regional level emergency and activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination. The key provision in ensuring co-ordination of the extended response is the activation of a "Regional Coordination Group".

The primary function of the Regional Co-ordination Group is to maintain co-ordination of the principal response agencies involved from the extended "response region". The boundaries of the actual "region" for response purposes should be determined by the lead agency, which has declared the regional level emergency, in light of the circumstances prevailing, or likely to develop.

The regions for response purposes need not necessarily coincide with the designated regions for preparedness. The lead agency which has declared the regional level emergency will convene and chair the Regional Co-ordination Group.

## **4.7 National / International assistance**

National resources will be available in the event of a major emergency at local or regional level. Requests for assistance should be directed by the lead agency to the lead Government Department.

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

## **SECTION 5      PREPAREDNESS                      FOR                      MAJOR EMERGENCY RESPOSNE**

### **5.1    Major Emergency Management within the Limerick City and County Council**

The Limerick City and County Council have established a Major Emergency Management Committee (MEMC), which consists of senior personnel from each directorate, to oversee the ongoing development of the Major Emergency Management programme.

The committee was agreed by the Limerick City and County Council Management Team. The Director of Services for the Emergency Services is appointed the chair of the committee who is also responsible for briefing the Management Team on the progress of the Major Emergency Management programme and matters arising.

The Major Emergency Management programme is incorporated into each directorate's operational plan and into the PMDS process. Each directorate is responsible for the implementation of directorate-specific actions arising from the MEM programme. Any significant change in scope of the project will be recorded and approved by the MEMC who will advise on its impact on timelines and resources.

### **5.2    Key Roles identified in the Major Emergency Plan**

The effectiveness of the response to any major emergency will depend on the individuals within the organisations who undertake specific key co-ordination and lead roles. The Limerick City and County Council have identified, matched and formally nominated competent individuals and alternates to the key roles to enable it to function in accordance with the common arrangements set out in this Major Emergency Plan.

The key roles as identified in the Framework are as follows:

- Controller of Operations
- On-Site Co-ordinator
- Chair of Crisis Management Team
- Chair of Local Co-ordination Group
- Information Management Officers
- Action Management Officers
- Media Liaison Officers

A list of key personnel within the Limerick City and County Council to undertake the above key roles are outlined in the Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure of this plan.

### **5.3 Staff Development Programme**

The Limerick City and County Council shall prepare and implement a staff development and training programme, designed to develop its level of preparedness so that, in the event of a major emergency, it will be in a position to respond in an efficient and effective manner and discharge the assigned functions in accordance with the Major Emergency Plan and relevant Sub Plans. This programme will be revised periodically.

This development programme includes creating awareness, providing appropriate training, assessing competencies and matching individuals with roles appropriate to their strengths, exercising to enhance and assess capability, and reviewing and revising staff assignments and training programmes.

### **5.4 Internal Training & Exercise Programme**

Training is a key element in the development of preparedness for the Limerick City and County Council to ensure the provision of an effective, co-ordinated response to major emergencies when required. The key areas of training required are:

- Risk Assessment
- Staff Development
- Information Management
- Controller of Operations
- Planning and running exercises
- Media skills
- Inter Agency Training

The Limerick City and County Council develop an internal training and exercise programme annually with clearly defined and progressive objectives in place to validate its preparedness for responding to major emergencies.

The objective of this internal training and exercise programme is to raise awareness, educate individuals on their roles and the roles of others and to promote co-ordination and co-operation, as well as validating plans, systems and procedures. All training shall



be consistent with the provisions of the Framework and the specifics of the Major Emergency Plan.

## **5.5 Joint Inter-Agency Training and Exercise Programme within Mid-West Region**

Limerick City & County Council participate with the other Principal Response Agencies within the Mid West region in developing and running joint/inter-agency training and exercise programmes which are co-ordinated by the Mid West Regional Working Group.

## **5.6 Procurement and use of Resources**

The Local Government Act 2001 (Part 12 Section 104) states that:

*Nothing in this section shall prevent a manager from incurring additional expenditure where he/she is of the opinion that such expenditure is necessary to avert or minimize a threat to public health, public safety, property or the environment.*

This shall allow designated officers such as the Controllers of Operations, On-site Coordinator and Local Coordinating Group to procure goods or services and deploy resources necessary to deal with the situation when a major emergency is declared and where the normal procurement processes are not relevant or applicable.

## **5.7 Annual Appraisal of Preparedness**

The Limerick City and County Council MEMC shall meet on an annual basis to review the co-ordination of Major Emergency Management, and to appraise and update this Plan as required. On completion, an appraisal report shall be forwarded to the chair of the Regional Steering Group, as well as the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government.

## **5.8 Communication of Information to the Public**

There may be situations where it will be crucial for the Limerick City and 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 concise and accurate information available. This may include the use of dedicated emergency help-lines, web-pages, Aertel, automatic text messaging, as well as through liaison with the media.

## **SECTION 6    GENERIC    COMMAND,    CONTROL    AND CO-ORDINATION SYSTEMS**

### **6.1    Command Arrangements for Major Emergencies**

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

#### **6.1.1    Command Arrangements within Limerick City and County Council Services**

The Limerick City and County Council exercises command over its own services in accordance with its normal command structure, command systems and arrangements. At the site of an emergency, it will also exercise control over any additional services (other than the other Principal Response Agencies) that it mobilises to the site. Control of the Limerick City and County Council services at the site of the emergency shall be exercised by the Controller of Operations.

### **6.2    Control Arrangements for Major Emergencies**

#### **6.2.1    Control Arrangements within Limerick City and County Council**

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

In certain situations, e.g. where an emergency affects an extensive area or occurs near the borders of Divisions of An Garda Síochána or areas of the Health Service Executive or of the Local Authorities, there may be response from multiple units of the principal response agencies. There should be only one Controller of Operations for each of the three principal response agencies.

In the case of the Limerick City and County Council, which is statutorily empowered in respect of its functional area, procedures for resolving such issues may already be set out in what are referred to as Section 81 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.

The various roles and groupings which together comprise the control system for Major Emergencies are summarised in the table below:

<b>Role or Group</b>	<b>Located</b>	<b>Key Function</b>
Controller of Operations	On-site at the incident	Manages Limerick City and County Council services at the incident.
On-Site Coordinator	On-site at the incident	Lead-Agency manages the overall response to the incident by the responding PRAs.
Local Coordination Group	Off-site	Establishes objectives for management of the incident and provide strategic direction.
Crisis Management Team	Off-site	Supports Limerick City and County Council response to the incident.

**Table 6.1: Summary of Control Functions**

Each of the roles and grouping functions and mandates are expanded upon further in the upcoming sections.

## **6.2.2 Control of Services and Response**

### **6.2.1.1 The 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 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.);
- Meet with the other two controllers and determine the lead agency;

- Undertake the role of On-Site Co-ordinator, where the service s/he represents is identified as the lead agency;
- Participate fully in the site co-ordination activity, including the establishment of a Site Management Plan;
- 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;
- Decide and request the attendance of such services as s/he determines are needed;
- Exercise control over such services as s/he has requested to attend;
- 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;
- Make requisition for any equipment s/he deems necessary to deal with the incident;
- Seek such advice as s/he requires;
- Maintain a log of his/her agency's activity at the incident site and decisions made;
- Contribute to and ensure information management systems operate effectively;
- Liaise with his/her principal response agency's Crisis Management Team on the handling of the major emergency.

#### **6.2.1.2 The On-Site Co-ordinator:**

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

The mandate of the On-Site Co-ordinator is 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;
- Inform all parties involved in the response that s/he has assumed the role of On-Site Co-ordinator;
- Determine which facility should be used as the On-Site Co-ordination Centre. Depending on the circumstance, this may be a specific purpose built vehicle designated for the task, a tent or other temporary structure or an appropriate space/building adjacent to the site, which can be used for co-ordination purposes;
- Ensure involvement of the three principal response agencies and the principal emergency services (and others, as appropriate) in the On-Site Co-ordination Group;

- Ensure that mandated co-ordination decisions are made promptly and communicated to all involved;
- Ensure that a Scene Management Plan is made, disseminated to all services and applied;
- Develop an auditable list of Actions (an Action Plan) and appoint an Action Management Officer where necessary;
- Determine if and what public information messages are to be developed and issued;
- Ensure that media briefings are co-ordinated;
- Ensure that pre-arranged communications (technical) links are put in place and operating;
- Ensure that the information management system is operated, including the capture of data for record-purposes at regular intervals;
- Ensure that the ownership of the lead agency role is reviewed, and modified as appropriate;
- 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;
- Exercise an over-viewing role of all arrangements to mobilise additional resources to the site of the major emergency, and to track the status of mobilisation requests, and deployment of additional resources;
- 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;
- 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;
- Co-ordinate external assistance into the overall response action plan;
- Ensure that, where appropriate, pastoral services are mobilised to the site and facilitated by the principal response agencies in their work with casualties;
- Work with the Health Service Executive Controller to establish the likely nature, dimensions, priorities and optimum location for delivering any psycho-social support that will be required, and how this is to be delivered and integrated with the overall response effort;
- 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;
- Ensure that all aspects of the management of the incident are dealt with before the response is stood down; and,

- 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.

#### **6.2.1.3 Local Co-ordination Group:**

Once the Local Co-ordination Group has been activated the mandate of the group is to:

- Establish high level objectives for the situation and give strategic direction to the response;
- Determine and disseminate the overall architecture of response co-ordination;
- Anticipate issues arising;
- Provide support for the on-site response;
- Resolve issues arising from the site;
- Ensure the generic information management system is operated;
- 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;
- 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;
- Co-ordinate and manage all matters relating to the media, other than on-site;
- Establish and maintain links with the Regional Co-ordination Centre (if involved);
- Establish and maintain links with the lead Government Department/National Emergency Co-ordination Centre;
- Ensure co-ordination of the response activity, other than the on-site element;
- Decide on resource and financial provision; and
- Take whatever steps are necessary to start to plan for recovery.

#### **6.2.1.4 Crisis Management Team:**

The Crisis Management Team is a strategic level management group within each principal response agency, which is assembled during a major emergency to:

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

- Ensure appropriate participation of the agency in the inter-agency co-ordination structures.

The members of the Crisis Management Team are usually the senior managers of the agency, who will meet at one of the pre-determined locations designated for this use. The use of Crisis Management Teams within each of the principal response agencies facilitates the mobilisation of senior staff to deal with the crisis, in light of the evolving situation, rather than leaving multiple roles to a small number of individuals who hold key positions. This allows for the prioritisation and management a protracted crisis to be dealt with effectively, while keeping the day-to-day business running.

The Crisis Management Team provides support to the principal response agency's representative at the Local Co-ordination Group, supports their own Controller of Operations on site and maintains the agency's normal day-to-day services that the community requires.

### **6.2.2 Control of External Organisations / Agencies**

The Controller of Operations of the Limerick City and County Council is responsible for the managing and integrating the contribution of the external resources that it requested to be mobilized to the emergency. See Section 7.10 for more information on mobilising additional resources. The On-Site Co-ordinator has the task of co-ordinating all external support and assistance into the overall response action plan.

### **6.2.3 Support Arrangements for the Control Function**

An On-Site Co-ordination centre will be set up in the event of a major emergency, which will be made up of a Controller of Operations from each of the three Principal Response Agencies and each agency's support team.

## **6.3 Co-ordination Arrangements**

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



### **6.3.1 Lead Agency Arrangements for Co-ordination Purposes**

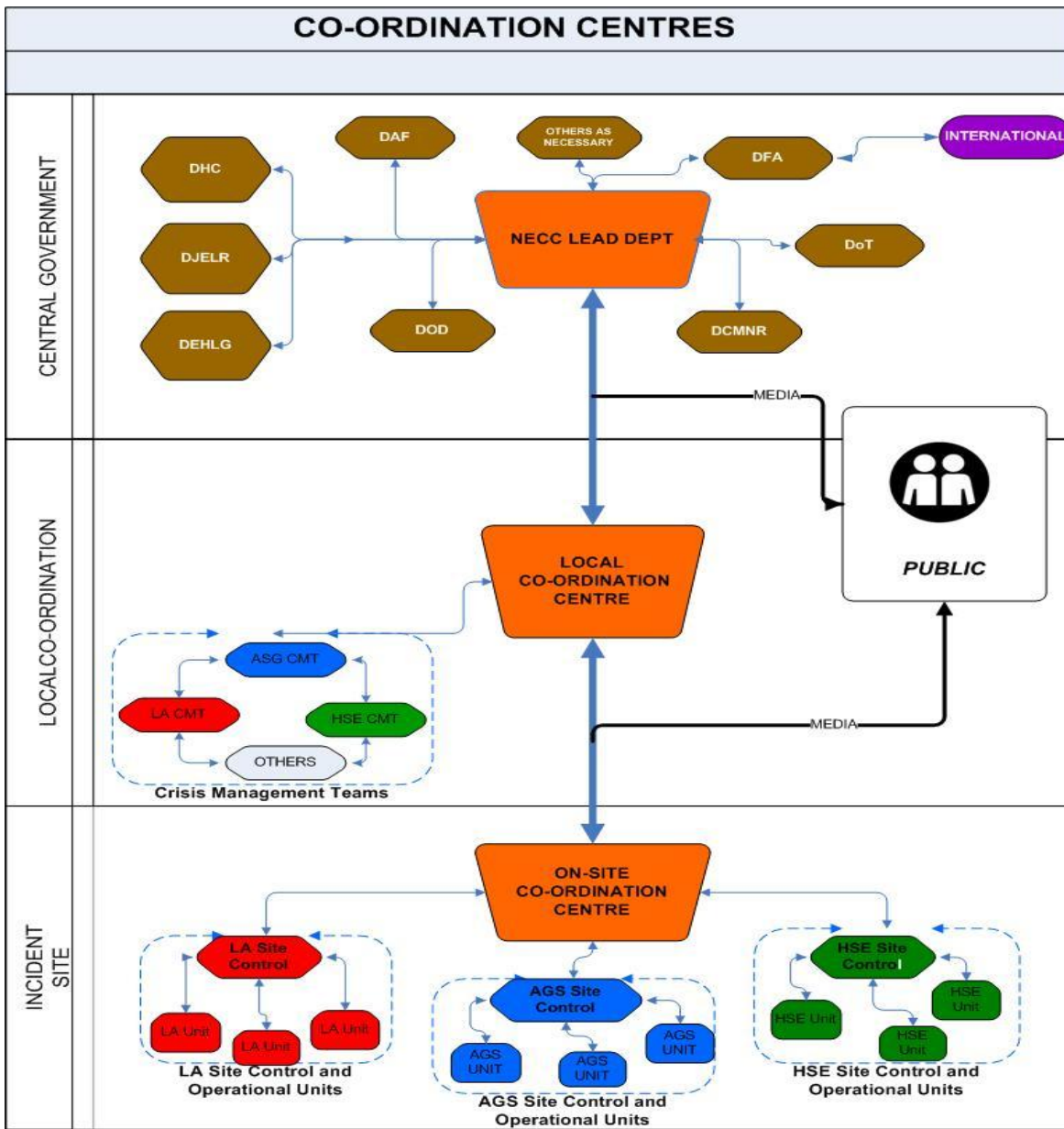
One of the three Principal Response Agencies will be designated as the lead agency for any emergency and thereby assume responsibility for leading co-ordination. In general, therefore, while the responsibility for co-ordination may be shared, in any given situation responsibility for leading co-operation belongs specifically to one of the three Principal Response Agencies. The lead agency has both the responsibility and mandate for the co-ordination function. The mechanisms for determining and designating the lead agency in any situation are set out in Section 7.6 of this plan.

### **6.3.2 Co-ordination Functions at the Local/Regional Co-ordination Centres**

The representative of the lead agency will chair the Local Co-ordination Group, which will be located in the Local Co-ordination Centre, and will exercise the mandates associated with this position. The Local Co-ordination Group will comprise representatives of the Principal Response Agencies, Information Management Officers, Media Liaison Officers, Action Management Officer (where considered appropriate), and representatives of other agencies and specialists, as appropriate.

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may declare a regional level emergency and activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination. The key provision in ensuring co-ordination of the extended response is the activation of a Regional Co-ordination 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”.

Any one of the nominated Local Co-ordination Centres may be used as a Regional Coordination Centre, or a specific Regional Centre may be designated for this purpose. The choice of location will be determined in each situation by the Chair of the Local Co-ordinating Group declaring the regional level emergency and will depend on the location and nature of the emergency and any associated infrastructural damage.



**Figure 6.1: Command, Control and Co-ordination Levels and Information Flows**

### 6.3.3 Co-ordination in other specific circumstances

Situations may arise whereby the conventional coordination mechanisms as set out already may need to be augmented or modified. The following sections describe specific examples of this.

### **6.3.3.1 Mutual Aid and Regional Level Co-ordination**

Each Controller of Operations should ensure that, where the resources of his/her individual Principal Response Agency do not appear to be sufficient to bring a situation under control, or the duration of an incident is extended, support is obtained via mutual aid arrangements with neighboring Principal Response Agencies.

### **6.3.3.2 Incidents occurring on the Council Boundaries**

Attendance at emergency incidents is determined by Pre-Determined Attendance procedures (PDAs) in operation through the Munster Regional Communications Centre (MRCC). As such, incidents on the Council boundaries shall be dealt with through these procedures.

### **6.3.3.3 Multi-Site or Wide Area Emergencies**

Multi-site or wide area emergencies are covered by the PDAs through the MRCC, with the ability for extra cover to be provided through mobilization of services in neighbouring areas or authorities. Multi-site or wide area emergencies may also require the setting up of multiple On-site Co-ordination centres which will feed into the one Local Co-ordination Group.

### **6.3.3.4 Links with National Emergency Plans**

The Limerick City and County Council shall provide procedures for responding to and activating appropriate aspects of their Major Emergency Plan on request arising from a national emergency situation. Links with National Emergency Plans are detailed in Section 10 of this document.

### **6.3.3.5 Links with National 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.

## SECTION 7 THE COMMON ELEMENTS OF RESPONSE

### 7.1 Declaring a Major Emergency

The Major Emergency Plan shall be activated by whichever of the three Principal Agencies first becomes aware of the Major Emergency. The senior staff member activating the Plan must do so by means of the following declaratory message via radio/telephone to the Munster Regional Communications Centre. The activation procedure for the Limerick City and County Council approved person/officer is contained at the start of this Major Emergency Plan.

The message to declare a Major Emergency should be in the following format:

This is ..... (name, rank and service).....

A ..... (type of incident).....has occurred/is imminent at ....  
(location).....

As an authorised officer I declare that a major emergency exists.

Please activate the mobilisation arrangements in the Limerick City  
and County Council Major Emergency Plan.

After the declaration is made the senior staff member should then use the mnemonic METHANE to structure and deliver an information message to the MRCC.

<b>M</b>	Major Emergency Declared
<b>E</b>	Exact Location of the emergency
<b>T</b>	Type of Emergency (Transport, Chemical, etc.)
<b>H</b>	Hazards, present and potential
<b>A</b>	Access/Egress Routes
<b>N</b>	Number and types of Casualties
<b>E</b>	Emergency Services present and required

A list of the Limerick City and County Council personnel approved to declare a major emergency is contained in the Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure, which is an appendix of this plan.

## **7.2. Initial Mobilisation**

The initial mobilisation of the Limerick City and County Council resources will be facilitated through the MRCC. On notification of the declaration of a Major Emergency, the MRCC will contact the relevant personnel listed in the Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure, which is an Appendix of this plan.

The MRCC shall activate additional Sub Plans upon the instruction of the Limerick City and County Council Controller of Operations or Crisis Management Team. A list of these sub plans are outlined in Section 8 of this plan.

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

No third party should respond to the site of a major emergency unless mobilized by one of the Principal Response Agencies through an agreed procedure.

## **7.3 Command, Control and Communication Centres**

The MRCC shall notify the other Principal Response Agencies of the activation of the Major Emergency Plan. The MRCC will also notify all appropriate personnel in the Limerick City and County Council of the activation of the Major Emergency Plan in accordance with preset activation procedures. These procedures for the MRCC personnel are contained at the Activation Procedure page at start of this Major Emergency Plan.

### **7.3.1 On-Site Co-ordination Centre:**

An On-Site Co-ordination centre will be established as soon as is practicable. The location of this centre will depend on the location and nature of the Major Emergency. The On-Site Co-ordination is to be supported by an On-Site Co-ordination Unit. The MRCC is to mobilise this vehicle in accordance with the pre-determined attendance (PDA) on the activation of the Major Emergency Plan.

### **7.3.2 Local Co-ordination Centre:**

This is a strategic level management group for the immediate, medium and long term consequences of the incident. Details of the Local Co-ordination Centre and the list of personnel nominated to represent the Local Authority at the Local Co-ordination Centre are listed in the Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure, which is an appendix of this plan.

### **7.3.3 Crisis Management Centres**

This is a tactical level management group which, supports the Limerick City and County Council representative at the Local Co-ordination Group, supports their Controller of Operations on site and maintains the normal day-to-day services that the community requires.

The designated Limerick City and County Council Crisis Management Centre will depend on the location of the incident. Details of the Crisis Management Centre's and the list of personnel nominated as part of the Crisis Management Team are outlined in the Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure, which is an appendix of this plan.

### **7.3.4 Regional Co-ordination Centre(s)**

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may declare a regional level emergency and activate the plan for Regional Co-ordination if required. The lead agency which has declared the regional level emergency will convene and chair the Regional Co-ordination Group. The choice of location will be determined in each situation by the Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group and will depend on the location and nature of the emergency.

## **7.4. Information Management**

Each Co-ordination Centre will require Information Management Officers. The role of the Information Management Officer is to obtain, process and present information to the main decision-makers. He/she may be part of an Information Management Team with Information Management Officers from the other Principal Response Agencies. Key personnel have been identified to act as Information Management Officers in the event of a major emergency and are listed in the Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure, which is an appendix of this plan.

## **7.5 Communications Facilities**

### **7.5.1 Communications systems**

Fire Services communication facilities:

- Appliance radio system (VHF)
- Handheld portable radio sets (UHF)
- Mobile phones
- Mobile Fax (Emergency Tenders Only)

The Mobile Control Unit is equipped with the following:

- Handheld portable radio sets
- Satellite Phone
- UHF and VHF radios

The Local Co-ordination Centre and Crisis Management Centre are equipped with:

- Fixed Landlines
- Internet / Intranet
- Television / Radio
- Satellite Phone
- Fax machine

### **7.5.2 Inter-Agency Communication on Site**

Handheld radios are stored in the Mobile Control Unit and Support Vehicle and set at a predetermined radio channel (Channel 10) for communication between the Controller of Operations of the Principal Response Agencies.

### **7.5.3 Communications between Site and Coordination Centres**

In general, communications between the On-site Co-ordination Centre, Local Co-ordination Centre and Crisis Management Centre may be through mobile phones and/or pre-dedicated landline telephones and fax machines. Alternatively, there will also be a satellite phone at each Co-ordination Centre. All communications between On-site Co-ordination Centre and the Local Co-ordination shall pass between the Controller of Operations/On-site Co-ordinator to the Local Co-ordination Group, supported by trained Information Management Officers.

## 7.6 Exercising the Lead Agency’s Co-ordination Roles

### 7.6.1 Determination of Lead Agency

A list of pre-nominated lead agencies scenarios are outlined in the following table. The lead agency has both the responsibility and mandate for the co-ordination function. Where the categorizations in the table below do not apply and the lead agency is not obvious, the Limerick City and County Council by “default” is the lead agency.

Rapid determination of the lead agency is essential as this in turn determines which of the three Controllers of Operations is to act as the On-Site Co-ordinator. The On-Site Co-ordinator should note the time that the determination of the lead agency was decided in consultation with the Controller of Operations from the other Principal Response Agency. The determination is to be communicated to all parties involved in the response.

Emergency Incident Type	Initial Pre-nominated Lead Agency	Likely Change <sup>3</sup>
<b>Road Traffic Accident<sup>4</sup></b>	An Garda Síochána	
<b>Fire</b>	Limerick City and County Council <sup>5</sup>	
<b>Hazardous Materials</b>	Limerick City and County Council	
<b>Train Crash</b>	Limerick City and County Council	To An Garda Síochána when rescue phase is complete
<b>Aircraft Incident</b>	Limerick City and County Council	To An Garda Síochána when fire-fighting/rescue phase complete
<b>Rescue</b>	Limerick City and County Council	
<b>Weather Related</b>	Limerick City and County Council	
<b>Biological Incident</b>	Health Services	
<b>Open Country Search and Rescue (Lowland)</b>	An Garda Síochána	
<b>Open Country Search and Rescue (Mountain)</b>	An Garda Síochána <sup>6</sup>	
<b>Public Order/Crowd Events</b>	An Garda Síochána	
<b>CCBRN<sup>7</sup> Conventional<sup>8</sup></b>	An Garda Síochána	



Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear <sup>9</sup>		
<b>Accidental Explosions/ Building Collapse</b>	Limerick City and County Council	
<b>Environmental/Pollution</b>	Limerick City and County Council	
<b>Marine Emergency Impacting On-Shore</b>	Limerick City and County Council <sup>10</sup>	
Water Rescue Inland	An Garda Síochána <sup>11</sup>	

**Table 7.1: Categories of Emergency and Pre-Nominated Lead Agencies**

- 1 These pre-nominations of lead agencies are to apply to all emergencies, from normal through the full range of major emergencies.
- 2 The pre-nomination of a lead agency among the principal response agencies does not necessarily imply a change to the designation of lead Government Department, as set out in the Department of Defence's Strategic Emergency Planning Guidance.
- 3 Likely changes in lead agency will arise from changing circumstances.
- 4 Road Traffic Accident in this context excludes Road Traffic Accidents involving Hazardous Materials (other than fuel in vehicles).
- 5 As its principal emergency service, the fire service is assigned initial responsibility for each category where the Limerick City and County Council is designated as lead agency, as it is likely to be the first attendance of that agency at the site. This may become a broader Limerick City and County Council function at a later stage of the major emergency.
- 6 An Garda Síochána may be assisted by specialist groups, such as Mountain Rescue Teams.
- 7 Where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána should assume the lead role, regardless of the agent. Should it subsequently transpire that there is no terrorist involvement, the lead agency may change as indicated above.
- 8 The Defence Forces, when requested, will assist An Garda Síochána, in an Aid to the Civil Power role, with Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams, at suspected terrorist incidents. Additional Defence Forces support in an Aid to the Civil Power role may be sought, if required.
- 9 It is envisaged that Local/Regional involvement would arise only on foot of activation under the National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents (NEPNA).
- 10 The Irish Coast Guard has responsibility for co-ordinating response to marine emergencies at sea. The Irish Coast Guard may, in certain circumstances, request the principal emergency services to assist them offshore. When the Irish Coast Guard request the declaration of a major emergency where casualties are being brought ashore (or pollution is coming, or threatening to come, ashore), the onshore response will be coordinated by the Limerick City and County Council.
- 11 The Irish Coast Guard has responsibility for receiving 999/112 calls and the mobilising of resources to Inland Waterway emergencies. The Framework provides that 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.

## **7.6.2 Review and Transfer of Lead Agency**

The lead agency role may change over time, to reflect the changing circumstances of the major emergency. Ownership of the lead agency responsibility 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 recorded and communicated as per the initial determination.

## **7.6.3 Limerick City and County Council Functions as Lead Agency**

Where the Limerick City and County Council is the lead agency, it is assigned responsibility for the co-ordination function (in addition to its own functions), it will lead all co-ordination activity associated with the emergency (on-site, off-site, etc.). The co-ordination function for any emergency will include:

- ensuring involvement of the three principal response agencies and the principal emergency services in sharing information on the nature of the emergency situation;
- ensuring involvement of the range of organisations (other than principal response agencies) who may be requested to respond in co-ordination activities and arrangements;
- ensuring that mandated co-ordination decisions are made promptly and communicated to all involved;
- ensuring that site management issues are addressed and decided;
- ensuring that public information messages and media briefings are co-ordinated and implemented;
- ensuring that pre-arranged communications (technical) links are put in place and operating;
- operating the generic information management systems;
- ensuring that the ownership of the lead agency role is reviewed, and modified as appropriate;
- ensuring that all aspects of the management of the incident are dealt with before the response is stood down;
- ensuring that 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 Early Warning and Special Public Warning Arrangements**

In certain situations, it may be crucial for the Principal Response Agencies 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 meets. This activity should be co-ordinated by the lead agency. The Local Co-ordination Group may establish a sub-group for this purpose and use all available channels to make concise and accurate information available.

The On-Site Co-ordinator or Local Co-ordination Group may request the media to carry *Public Information Notices* during a Major Emergency to disseminate important messages to the public such as:

- Hazard Warning to the Community
- Road Traffic Control Information
- Requests for Specialist Assistance

### **7.7.2 Provision of Emergency Helpline System**

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 contained in the Major Emergency Contacts List or Inter-Agency Media Communication Sub Plan for the dissemination of warnings on behalf of the Limerick City and County Council.

The appointed Media Liaison Officer shall make arrangements to make known the emergency telephone numbers and / or the location of the public information officers. The Media Liaison Officers / Crisis Management Team should make provision for telephone / help line / information line contact numbers and the handling of contacts with dedicated telephone lines.

## **7.8. The Media**

### **7.8.1 Arrangements for Liaison with the Media**

It is the responsibility of the lead agency to establish a Media Centre at or near the site of the emergency for the use by the Principal Response Agencies in dealing with the media at the site. Each Principal Response Agency should designate a Media Liaison Officer at the site and the activities of the Media Liaison Officers on site should be co-ordinated by the Media Liaison Officer of the Lead Agency. All statements to the media should be cleared with the On-Site Co-ordinator. The Inter-Agency Media Communications Plan shall be consulted in dealing with the media.

### **7.8.2 Arrangements for Media On-Site**

Working to facilitate the needs of the media will help reduce the possibility of attempts at unauthorised access to the site of the emergency or other sites associated with it. Regular media briefings should be scheduled to suit television and radio broadcasts. These briefings should also be used to promulgate help-line telephone numbers and necessary public information messages. Background information that has been compiled before the event can be used to inform holding statements for use during the early stages of the incident.

The Media Liaison Officer must keep accurate and timely information on the emergency so that:

- He/She can be the point of contact for all media enquiries.
- He/She can answer information queries from the general public.
- He/She can obtain and provide information from/to Rest Centres, other agencies, press officers, local radio, press etc.
- He/She will be responsible for setting up an information helpline.

### **7.8.3 Arrangements for Media at Local Co-ordination Centre**

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

#### **7.8.4 Arrangements for Media at other locations associated with the Major Emergency**

In many situations media attention will move quickly away from the site to other locations, including the Local Co-ordination Centre, hospitals where casualties are being treated and mortuaries and, therefore, arrangements for the media at or adjacent to those locations will need to be provided.

### **7.9 Site Management Arrangements**

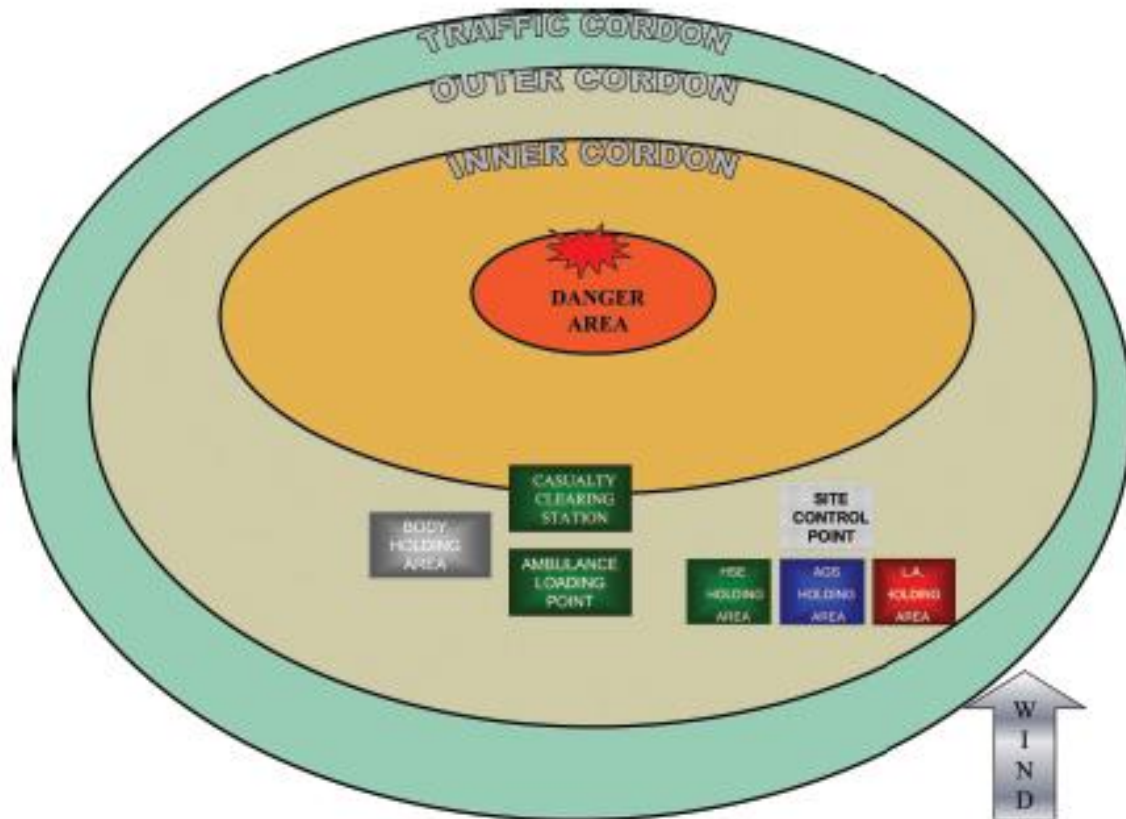
#### **7.9.1 Generic Site Management Arrangements**

The highest-ranking officer of the first attendance team from the Limerick City and County Council will have the role of Controller of Operations of that agency at the scene until relieved in accordance with the Limerick City and County Council Mobilisation Procedure. The initial important task of the On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other two Controllers, is the development of a Site Management Plan. This should be in accordance with the typical Site Management Arrangements shown below leading to the establishment of all or some of the following:

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

The On-Site Co-ordination Group should arrange that, where possible, the Control Points of the three Principal Emergency Services should be co-located to form the initial Site Control Point. The On-Site Co-ordination Group should establish the Site Control Point as early as practicable.

The Controllers of Operations should ensure that all communications from the scene to individual service command, control or communication centres and to the Local Co-ordination Centre should be routed through the Site Control Point.



**Figure 7.1: Typical Site Management Arrangement**

### 7.9.2 Control of Access On-Site

In order to control access to a Major Emergency site cordons will be established as quickly as possible at the site of a major emergency for the following reasons:

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

Three cordons will be established. An Inner Cordon, An Outer Cordon and A Traffic Cordon, along with access cordon points. This will be established by An Garda Síochána after a decision by agreement with the On-site Co-ordination Group.

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

### 7.9.3 Identification of Personnel On-Site

All uniformed personnel, responding to the site of a major emergency, should wear the prescribed uniform, including high visibility and safety clothing, issued by their agency. The service markings on this clothing should be made known in advance to the other organizations that may be involved in the response.

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

Organisation	Bib Colour	Wording
Health Service Executive	Green and White Chequer	HSE Controller
Limerick City and County Council	Red and White Chequer	Local Authority Controller
An Garda Síochána	Blue and White Chequer	Garda Controller

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



**Figure 7.2: Identification tabards for Controller of Operations.**

Non uniformed personnel from the Limerick City and County Council should attend the scene in high visibility jackets provided to them by the Limerick City and County Council.

#### **7.9.4 Air Exclusion Zones**

Where the Principal Response Agencies consider it appropriate and beneficial, the On-Site Co-ordinator may request, through An Garda Síochána, that an Air Exclusion Zone be declared around the emergency site by the Irish Aviation Authority. When a restricted zone above and around the site is declared, it is promulgated by means of a “Notice to Airmen” – NOTAM – from the Irish Aviation Authority. Contact details for the Irish Aviation Authority are provided the Major Emergency Contact List.

### **7.10 Mobilising Additional Resources**

#### **7.10.1 Arrangements for Mobilising Additional Resources**

##### **7.10.1.1 Mobilisation of Civil Defence**

As the Civil Defence is a Local Authority service the protocol for mobilising the Civil Defence is included as part of the Mobilisation Procedures, which is an appendix of this plan. There is also a Civil Defence Sub Plan as an appendix of this plan.

##### **7.10.1.2 Mobilisation of Defence Forces**

Requests regarding the assistance of the Defence Forces (permanent Defence Forces consisting of the Army, Air Corps, Navy and Reserve Defence Forces) to respond to a major emergency should be made as military assistance. Support may not be available if local units are deployed on operations, nor should it be assumed that local units have personnel available, with either the skill set or equipment to undertake specialist tasks. Provision of Defence Forces capabilities is, therefore, dependent on the exigencies of the service and within available resources at the time.

It should be recognized that assistance requested from the Defence Forces by the Limerick City and County Council should be in Aid to the Civil Authority i.e. an unarmed response.

The following should be followed when requesting assistance from the Defence Forces:

- (a) Where time is critical, contact should be made with An Garda Síochána, who will then contact the appropriate military post. The Department of Defence should also be notified as soon as possible.



(b) Where time is not critical, the request should be made through the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (for Local Authorities) or another relevant Government Department (for other agencies) to the Secretary General, Department of Defence, Parkgate, Infirmary Road, Dublin 7.

Telephone contact details and nominated contact persons for the Department of Defence are detailed in the Major Emergency Contact List.

### **7.10.1.3 Mobilisation of Voluntary Emergency Services**

The Voluntary Emergency Services sector can provide additional equipment and support in the event of a major emergency. Mobilisation of the following Voluntary Emergency Services will be through one of the Principal Response Agencies in accordance with Table below.

<b>Principal Response Agency</b>	<b>Linked Voluntary Emergency Service</b>
An Garda Síochána	Irish Mountain Rescue Association Irish Cave Rescue Association Search and Rescue Dogs Sub-Aqua Teams River Rescue
Health Service Executive	Irish Red Cross Order of Malta Ambulance Corps
Limerick City and County Council	Civil Defence

**Table 7.3: Linked Voluntary Emergency Services to PRAs**

Contact details of each Voluntary Emergency Services are contained in the Major Emergency Contact Details, which is an appendix of this plan.

### **7.10.1.5 Mobilisation of Utilities**

Utilities are frequently involved in the response to emergencies, usually to assist the Principal Response Agencies in making situations safe. They may also be directly involved in restoring their own services, for example, electricity supply in the aftermath of a storm. Utilities operate under their own legislative and regulatory framework but, during the response to an emergency, it is important that they are involved in the co-ordination arrangements. Utilities may be requested to provide representatives and/or experts to the On-Site Co-ordination Group and/or the Local Coordination Group, as

appropriate. A list of utilities and their emergency/out of hour's contact arrangements are contained in the Major Emergency Contact Details, which is an appendix of this plan.

#### **7.10.1.6 Mobilisation of Private Sector**

Private sector organizations may be involved in a major emergency through ownership of the site where the emergency has occurred or through ownership of some element involved in the emergency e.g. an aircraft, bus, factory, etc. They may also be called on to assist in the response to a major emergency, by providing specialist services and/or equipment. Private sector representatives and/or experts may be requested to support the work of the On-Site Co-ordination Group and/or the Local Co-ordination Group, as appropriate. A list of private sector companies is contained in the Major Emergency Contact Details, which is an appendix of this plan.

#### **7.10.2 Identifying and Mobilising Additional Organisations**

The Limerick City and County Council Controller of Operations shall ensure that, where the resources of the authority do not appear to be sufficient to bring a situation under control, or the duration of an incident is expected to be extended, the levels, types and duration of assistance/support is passed to either the Crisis Management Team or the Local Co-ordination Centre who will arrange to obtain the support via mutual aid arrangements with neighboring authorities.

#### **7.10.3 Integration of Casual Volunteers**

Where casual volunteers are available and deemed necessary by the On-Site Co-ordination Group, some form of identification in terms of arm bands etc should be issued. It should be noted that while initially they may be of some assistance; their usefulness will lessen due to lack of training, experience and PPE. They will be the responsibility of the On-site Co-ordination Centre while they are on site.

#### **7.10.4 Command, Control, Co-ordination and Demobilisation of Organisations**

The On-Site Co-ordinator has the task of co-ordinating all external support and assistance into the overall response action plan. *The Controller of Operations of the service which requested mobilisation of the external resource has responsibility for managing and integrating the contribution of these resources to the tasks identified in the response.*

The successful integration of external assistance should involve the following factors:

- a clear determination by the relevant Controller of Operations of the scope and scale of the tasks to be assigned to the responding organisation (in short, the formulation of a mandate);
- explicit arrangements for the monitoring and reporting of progress on assigned tasks;
- the nomination by the responding organisation of a liaison officer to either (or both as appropriate) the support team of the relevant Controller of Operations or the On-Site Co-ordination Group. The liaison officers should maintain the closest possible contact between their own organisation and the relevant team or group and be changed or rotated only to the minimum extent necessary;
- the ability of each liaison officer to assess and report the capabilities of the external agency to deliver the tasks assigned to that organisation; and
- the quality of mechanisms for communications between the external agency and the lead agency or the principal response agency which mobilised it.

Generally, all responding agencies should be made aware of the site management arrangements and should report as directed to the relevant Holding Area. Attempts should be made to assign external assistance units to tasks in a way that does not involve pooling or sharing equipment. Special attention may be required for both the welfare and safety needs of external agencies. External agencies should be made aware of and should comply with the principal response agencies' arrangements for liaising with the media.

#### **7.10.7 Request for Out-of-Region Assistance**

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

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 dimension the level/type of assistance likely to be required and its duration. It should also seek to identify the possible options for sourcing such assistance, be that from neighboring regions, elsewhere in the state, from Northern Ireland, the rest of the United Kingdom or from other EU member states.

A Regional Co-ordination Group may also request assistance from Government. National resources will be available in the event of a major emergency at local or regional level.

Requests for assistance should be developed at local or regional co-ordination level and directed by the lead agency to the lead Government Department.

A list of national agencies and contact details is provided in the appendices to this Major Emergency Plan.

#### **7.10.8 Request for International assistance**

The European Community has established a Community Mechanism to facilitate the provision of assistance between the member states in the event of major emergencies. The decision to seek assistance from outside the state 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 dimension the level/type of assistance likely to be required and its duration. The chair of the Local/ Regional Coordination Group should make requests for such assistance to the National Liaison Officer in the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

### **7.11 Casualty and Survivor Arrangements**

#### **7.11.1 General Objectives**

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

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

##### **7.11.1.1 Rescue and Care of all Casualties and Survivors**

Individuals may be divided into two main categories as follows:

- Casualties, including persons who are killed or injured,

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

The On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other 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. The lead agency in the provision of care to these casualties will be the Health Service Executive.

Casualties are often found some distance from the primary site, and search teams, coordinated by an Garda Síochána, should be established where it is considered that this may be necessary. The Limerick City and County Council can assist with the search teams by the use of Civil Defence Volunteers, where appropriate.

#### **7.11.1.2 Injured Casualties**

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.

The injured need to be rescued from the scene and cared for as quickly and safely as possible by the rescuers, who must be mindful of the requirement of the ambulance and medical teams on site. Ambulance paramedics and technicians then need to be able to administer the appropriate pre-hospital treatment before the patients are taken to the receiving hospitals.

#### **7.11.2.1 Triage, Treatment and Transport of all Injured Persons**

Once injured casualties have been rescued or found, they should be assessed or triaged as quickly as possible by the Ambulance Service. Casualties are often found some distance from the primary site and search teams, co-ordinated by An Garda Síochána, should be established where it is considered that this may be necessary.

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 labeled, using Triage Cards, and moved to a Casualty Clearing Station. The purpose of this labeling is to indicate the triage category of the casualty, to facilitate the changing of that category, if required, and to record any treatment, procedure or medication administered. A standard card with Red (Immediate),

Yellow (Urgent), Green (Delayed) and White (Dead) sections is normally used for this purpose.

#### **7.11.2.2 Transporting Lightly Injured and Uninjured Persons from the Site**

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

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.

#### **7.11.2.3 Casualty Clearing Station, Ambulance Loading Point, Designation of Receiving Hospitals and Distribution of Injured Casualties**

The Casualty clearing station will be established by the ambulance service, in consultation with the Health Service Executive. At this location the casualties are collected, further triaged, treated, as necessary, and prepared for transport to hospital. The Health Service Executive Controller of Operations will, in consultation with the Site Medical Officer and the designated receiving hospitals, decide on the hospital destination of casualties.

#### **7.11.3 Fatalities**

The bodies of casualties, which have been triaged as dead, should **not** be moved from the incident site unless this is necessary to 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, as such, is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána acting as agents of the Coroner. The Limerick City and County Council 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.

#### **7.11.3.1 The Role of the Coroner**

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

The Limerick City and County Council can support the Coroner in this role by adhering to the requirements for the preservation and integrity of evidence as detailed in section 7.11.3 above, and by assisting with the movement of bodies and by assistance with the provision of temporary mortuary services, where possible.

#### **7.11.3.2 Dealing with Fatalities On and Off-site including Body Holding Areas and Temporary Mortuaries.**

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

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

##### Temporary Mortuaries:

It is the responsibility of the Limerick City and County Council to provide a Temporary Mortuary, if required. The Limerick City and County Council shall consult with the District Coroners and health service Pathologists in its area on the options/arrangements/plans for Temporary Mortuaries in preparing its Major Emergency Plan.

The likely commissioning time for a Temporary Mortuary is of the order of twenty-four hours, and this may extend to forty-eight hours when victim numbers are extensive. It should be noted that a Temporary Mortuary might be required to operate for weeks or months after an incident.

### **7.11.3.3 Identification of the Deceased**

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

On request, the Limerick City and County Council will render assistance to An Garda Síochána and/or the Coroner with their tasks as outlined above, where possible.

### **7.11.4 Survivors Reception Centres**

Survivor Reception Centre should be designated and established at the earliest possible opportunity. Transport from the Survivor Reception Centre to home/meet relatives/safe place will be arranged as soon as it is practicable. This responsibility will lie with the Limerick City and County Council. 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.

The Limerick City and County Council has identified the following as suitable buildings for setting up a survivor centre;

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

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

The assistance of the Civil Defence and the voluntary ambulance services may be required to provide a variety of services at the Survivor Reception Centre. The Survivor



Reception Centre should be secure from any unauthorised access and provide the maximum possible privacy for survivors. Details of suitable locations for Survivor Reception Centres are included in the Limerick City and County Council Housing Sub Plan, which is an appendix of this plan.

#### **7.11.5 Casualty Information**

##### **7.11.5.1 Operation of the Casualty Bureau**

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

##### **7.11.5.2 Collection and Collation of Casualty Information and Provision of this Information to Friends and Relatives**

The Limerick City and County Council may assist in the collection and collation of casualty data. This information may then be used to provide to family and friends. Any information collected on any casualty is transferred via An Garda Síochána to the Casualty Bureau, who will generally set up an information hot line, in order that concerned family and friend may enquire about ‘loved ones’.

#### **7.11.6 Friends and Relatives Reception Centres**

Some incidents may warrant the establishment of Friends’ and Relatives’ Reception Centres at appropriate locations associated with the emergency, in addition to those provided at the hospitals where the injured are being treated.

**The Local Co-ordination Group should determine the need for and arrange for the designation and operation/staffing of such 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. 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.

#### **7.11.6.1 Provisions for the Friends and Relatives of Casualties**

If necessary, 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.

#### **7.11.7 Non-National Casualties**

In some incidents an emergency may involve significant numbers of casualties from other jurisdictions. In such circumstances the Local Co-ordination 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.

##### **7.11.7.1 Situations which involve Non-national Casualties**

Advice may be sought from An Garda Síochána as to the use of interrupters. Generally the local Garda Station will have a list of approved interpreters which may be call upon in the event of an emergency. Advice may also be sought from the Department of Foreign Affairs. A list of interpreters is available in the Major Emergency Contact List, which is an appendix to his plan.

#### **7.11.8 Pastoral and Psycho-Social Care**

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

##### **7.11.8.1 Pastoral and Psycho-Social Support Arrangements**

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

## **7.12 Emergencies involving Hazardous Materials**

### **7.12.1 Dealing with Major Hazardous Materials**

The Limerick City and County Council will be the lead agency for response to hazardous materials incidents, with 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.

### **7.12.2 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. 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.

### **7.12.4 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. The Limerick City and County Council will provide assistance as required, and where possible under the command of the lead government department.

### **7.12.5 Activation of the 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.

### **7.12.6 Clinical, Personnel and Mass 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 services have 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 Limerick City and County Council 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 decontamination carries risks for vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and the injured. It may be more appropriate in certain circumstances for outer clothing to be removed and blankets provided as a temporary measure to alleviate potential harm through surface contact with contaminants.

## **7.13 Protecting Threatened Populations**

### **7.13.1 General**

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.

It is the function of the Limerick City and County Council to advise on protection of persons threatened, by sheltering or evacuation. In some situations, it can be anticipated that there will be a level of self evacuation, and this may need to be considered as part of the emergency management considerations.

### **7.13.2 Evacuation Arrangements**

The On-Site Co-ordinator will make the decision on how best to protect a threatened population, after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. Where decided upon, the process of evacuation will be undertaken by An Garda Síochána, with the assistance of the other services. A suitable evacuation assembly point will need to be

established and rest centres set up by the Limerick City and County Council. Evacuation arrangements will be implemented on the activation of The Limerick City and County Council Housing Sub Plan.

Personnel from The Limerick City and County Council and from voluntary agencies will staff the 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 Limerick City and County Council will assist in this role.

### **7.13.3 The Public Health Service**

Where an emergency results in a real or perceived threat to public health by, for example, the release of chemical, radioactive or biological agents, the contamination of water or food supplies, or the spread of contaminated flood water, it can be anticipated that there will be considerable concern among both the persons immediately affected and the wider public. In such situations, the Health Service Executive Controller of Operations should ensure that the local public health services are informed of the situation as soon as possible so that they can become involved in the response at the earliest possible stage.

## **7.14 Early and Public Warning Systems**

### **7.14.1 Potentially Hazardous Situations**

The Controller of Operations shall monitor potentially hazardous situations through his/her presence on-site or liaising with on-site personnel. Warnings shall be created by relaying information on a potential hazard to the Local Co-ordination Centre and Crisis Management Centre.

### **7.14.2 How Warnings are to be Disseminated**

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

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

The lead agency may request the media to carry Public Information Notices during a major emergency to disseminate important messages, such as how individuals may help themselves and their neighbours in a particular situation.

## **7.15 Emergencies Arising on Inland Waterways**

### **7.15.1 Liaison with the Irish Coast Guard**

The Irish Coast Guard may be contacted through the Munster Regional Communications Centre or the contact details provided in the Major Emergency Contact List. Limerick Marine Search and Rescue and the Civil Defence can provide assistance for water rescue / recovery.

### **7.15.2 Receiving 999/112 Calls and Mobilising of Resources to Inland Waterway Emergencies**

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

## **7.16 Safety, Health and Welfare Considerations**

### **7.16.1 Safety, Health and Welfare of the Limerick City and County Council Staff**

The Limerick City and County Council (and other responding agencies) is responsible for the Safety, Health and Welfare of its staff responding to emergencies and should operate its own safety (including personal protective equipment) and welfare management procedures.

### **7.16.2 Safety of Limerick City and County Council Rescue Personnel**

When working in the environment of a Major Emergency the On-Site Co-ordinator will apply normal incident and safety management arrangements, a 'Safety Officer' will

generally be appointed having responsibility for the oversight and management of the safety of the Council's rescue personnel. All other relevant officers will continue to exercise command over their own personnel working in the area.

### **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 Limerick City and County Council is responsible for the health and safety of its staff when they operate within the 'Danger Area'.

The On-site Co-ordination Group may, in light of the available information, decide to declare a Danger Area and may designate an officer, appropriate for the circumstances, e.g. the Senior Fire Officer at the site in a case involving hazardous materials, to define the boundaries of, and to control access to, the Danger Area.

Each service should establish from the On-Site Co-ordinator if a Danger Area has been defined as part of site management arrangements set out in Section 7.9 of this plan and, if so, what particular safety provisions may apply.

### **7.16.4 Procedures and Evacuation Signal for the 'Danger Area'**

Where a situation deteriorates to a point where the officer in charge of the Danger Area decides that it is necessary to withdraw response personnel from a Danger Area, a signal, comprising repeated sounding of a siren 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 Limerick City and County Council Controller of Operations should ensure that appropriate rest and refreshment facilities are provided for response personnel at the site. This may be facilitated by the Civil Defence. These facilities may include the provision of food and drink, rest facilities and sanitary facilities. Also refer to Section 7.17.3 of this document.

### **7.16.6 Psycho-Social Support for Limerick City and County Council personnel**

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) services will be provided to staff through the existing arrangements in place in the Limerick City and County Council.

## **7.17 Logistical Issues / Protracted Incidents**

### **7.17.1 Arrangements for Rotation of Frontline Rescue / Field Staff**

Front line rescue / field staff will be relieved at protracted incidents in accordance with The Limerick City and County Council Safety, Health and Welfare arrangements. Crews from the Mid-West region may be called upon to assist and support the emergency. Personnel at the On-Site Co-ordination centre, the Local Co-ordination centre and the Crisis Management Team will similarly arrange for their replacement at suitable intervals throughout an incident

### **7.17.2 Re-organising Normal Emergency and other Services Cover**

Staff welfare arrangements need to be given priority in the recovery stage of an incident, so that the needs of all staff, both emergency response teams and general staff (including management), are catered for. It is the responsibility of the Crisis Management Team to ensure that all sections of Limerick City and County Council will be able to respond to “normal emergencies” and to carry out the essential functions of the Local Authority.

### **7.17.3 Initial and Ongoing Welfare for Field Staff**

The welfare of The Limerick City and County Council staff involved in a major emergency will be considered at all times. The Civil Defence may be called upon to provide or aid in the administration of such needs. Welfare facilities such as toilets etc may also be required and supplied by the Limerick City and County Council.

## **7.18 Investigations**

### **7.18.1 Investigations Arising from Major Emergency**

The scene of a suspected crime should be preserved until a complete and thorough examination has been made by An Garda Síochána. 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. Statements may be required from the members of the Limerick City and County Council staff on their involvement.



### **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 the Principal Response Agencies. The first member(s) of An Garda Síochána to arrive at the site of a major emergency where a suspected crime has been committed automatically incurs the responsibility of preserving the site. While the priority is the protection of life, the provisions of the Framework are intended to assist An Garda Síochána investigative role.

The Limerick City and County Council will have a role to play in the site clearance, demolition, clean-up operations, removal and disposal of debris and such activity is only to be done following consultation with and approval of An Garda Síochána (or other investigative body) to avoid the possible unnecessary destruction of evidence.

### **7.18.3 Liaison of Other Parties with Statutory Investigations with An Garda Síochána**

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

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

## **7.19 Community / VIPs / Observers**

### **7.19.1 Communities Affected by an Emergency**

Where communities are affected by a major emergency, effort should be made to establish contacts/links with a community utilising established links such as Community Groups/ Public Representatives and Community Liaison Officers within the community. This will be co-ordinated by the Local Co-ordination / Crisis Management Team.

### **7.19.2 Receiving VIPs who wish to Visit**

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

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

### **7.19.3 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 a Major Emergency**

### **7.20.1 Standing down the Status of a Major Emergency**

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

A great deal of activity may continue at locations other than the site (such as the hospitals, temporary mortuary, etc.) after the major emergency is stood down at the site. The Local, Regional or National Co-ordination Groups may need to continue their work after activities at the site have ceased.

### **7.20.2 Operational Debriefing and Reporting of Activity**

Following the stand-down of the major emergency, The Limerick City and County Council is to debrief its members that were involved in the emergency response and document this debriefing in a report.

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

Multi-agency debriefs should consider the contribution provided by other, non-emergency service agencies to expand the knowledge and learning process that debriefs should collate. This is notwithstanding the potential conflict of interest that may result in later investigations. This aspect should be considered when inviting agencies other than emergency services to the debrief meeting. The purpose of the review should be to formulate the lessons learnt from the incident in relation to co-ordination and to document these. They should not be forums for criticising the performance of others.

A composite report, based on appropriate input from each principal response agency's internal report and the report on co-ordination, on every declared major emergency is to be compiled by the principal response agency which was the initial lead agency for submission within a reasonable timescale to the relevant Regional Steering Group and the National Steering group.

## **SECTION 8    AGENCY SPECIFIC ELEMENTS AND SUB PLANS**

The Limerick City and County Council have prepared a number of specific Sub-Plans to the Major Emergency Plan and these plans can be activated whether a major emergency has being declared or not. The following is a list of the Limerick City and County Council Sub-Plans, which are contained in the Appendices of this Plan.

Severe Weather Events Sub Plan

Housing Sub Plan

Fire & Emergency Operations Sub Plan

Environmental Sub Plan

Veterinary Sub Plan

Oil Pollution Control Plan

Civil Defence Sub Plan

Human Resources Sub Plan

Flood Response Plan

Inter-Agency Media Communications Sub Plan

Draft Drinking Water Incident Response Plan

### **NOTE:**

Due to the large size and constant revision of the Limerick City and County Council Sub-Plans, they are available to download from the Limerick City and County Council Major Emergency Management intranet page by Limerick City and County Council staff and hardcopies are stored in the Local Co-ordination Centre, Crisis Management Centres and On-Site Co-ordination Unit.

# **SECTION 9 PLANS FOR REGIONAL LEVEL CO-ORDINATION**

## **9.1 Introduction**

In some situations where a major emergency has been declared and the Major Emergency Plans of the principal response agencies have been activated, it may be appropriate to consider scaling up from a local response to a regional level response. This may occur when:

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

## **9.2 Regional Response**

The following sections describe the considerations in a regional response to a Major Emergency.

### **9.2.1 Scaling up to a Regional Level Response**

The decision to scale up from a local to a regional level response will be taken by the chair of the Local Co-ordination Group, in consultation with the chair of the On-Site Co-ordinating Group and the other members of the Local Co-ordination Group. This consultation may occur at a meeting of the Local Co-ordination Group, where such a group is in session or, alternatively, by means of a telephone conference call.

This decision will, by definition, involve specifying those extra principal response agencies which are to be involved in the regional response.

### **9.3 Response Region**

The areas covered by the Principal Response Agencies which are activated under the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination will constitute the response region for the emergency.

**Note:** The response region for a regional level major emergency need not coincide (and in many cases will not coincide) with one of the predetermined Major Emergency Management Regions set out in Appendix F4 of the Framework for Major Emergency Management.

### **9.4 Activation of Regional Response**

Once the decision has been taken, the chair of the Local Co-ordination Group will declare that a regional level emergency exists and will activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination by:

- notifying each of the principal response agencies involved that the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination has been activated;
- requesting that each of the principal response agencies, which has not already activated its MEM Plan, should do so;
- delivering an information message to each principal response agency using the mnemonic METHANE; and
- providing each of the principal response agencies involved with a list of the agencies which are being activated to form the regional response

## **9.5 Command Control and Co-ordination of a Regional Level Response**

### **9.5.1 Command and Control Arrangements on Site**

The command and control arrangements at the site(s) of a regional major emergency will be the same as those for a standard major emergency including:

- three Controllers of Operation<sup>1</sup>;
- a lead agency determined in accordance with Section 7.6 of this plan;
- an On-Site Co-ordinating Group; and
- an On-Site Co-ordinator

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<sup>1</sup>In situations where more than one principal response agency from a particular service is represented at the site, Appendix E makes it clear that there will be only one Controller of Operations from that service and the unit from which the Controller of Operations will come should be determined in accordance with the guidance provided in Appendix E.

### 9.5.2 Provisions for Regional Level Co-ordination Group

The mobilisation and operation of the Regional Co-ordination Group will be as per the arrangement for Local Co-ordination Groups set:

Regional Co-ordination Group arrangements for:

- the mobilisation of other organisations/agencies;
- requesting mutual aid from neighbours;
- requesting national/international assistance where required;
- dealing with multi site or wide area emergencies;
- linkage to national emergency plans;
- links with Government;
- support for chairs by Information Managers, etc; and
- communication arrangements with the site and with other groups will be as for a Local Co-ordination Group.

## 9.6 Wide Area Major Emergencies

Some major emergency events (e.g. severe storms, extensive flooding and/or blizzards) may impact over a wide area and, in such a situation; a number of Local Co-ordination Groups may be activated. Where the chair of a Local Co-ordination Group, which has been activated in response to a major emergency, becomes aware that one or more other Local Co-ordination Groups have also been activated, contact should be made with the other chair(s) with a view to considering the establishment of a Regional Co-ordination Centre.

Such a Regional Co-ordination Centre will normally be located at the Local Co-ordination Centre which, in the view of the chairs, is best positioned (in terms of resources, communications and geography) to co-ordinate the activity of the different Local Co-ordination Groups which are active. In such a situation, these Local Co-ordination Groups will continue to act as per standard arrangements and will communicate with the Regional Co-ordination Centre through their chairs.

**Note:** During a wide area major emergency, each Local Co-ordination Group will be in contact with the lead Government Department and, in such a situation, the decision on whether the activities of a number of Local Co-ordination Groups should be co-ordinated via a Regional Co-ordination Centre or via the lead Government Department will be taken in light of the prevailing circumstances.

## **SECTION 10 LINKS WITH NATIONAL EMERGENCY PLANS**

### **10.1 National Emergency Plans**

The structures and resources within this plan may be activated by appropriate national bodies in certain circumstances. National bodies, operating in accordance with National Emergency Plans, may call upon the Principal Response Agencies to assist in responding to, or to perform their normal functions / roles arising from a national emergency.

The envisaged roles may include:

- Monitoring and/or reporting on the impact of the emergency in the functional area of the agency.
- Undertaking pre-assigned roles in National Emergency Plans, such as co-ordinating / implementing certain countermeasures in their functional area;
- Undertaking relevant tasks following an emergency /crisis; or
- Acting as a communication 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 Department of Health & Children Public Health Emergency Plan.

#### **10.1.3 Animal Health 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. The Limerick City and County Council may be required to provide assistance under the command of the lead government department.



## **10.2 Activation of Major Emergency Plan on Request from Irish Coastguard**

In the event of a threatened or actual emergency in the Irish Maritime Search and Rescue region, the Major Emergency Plans of the Principal Response Agencies may be activated in response to a request from the Irish Coastguard.

## **10.3 Activation of Major Emergency Plan on Request from a Minister of Government**

The Major Emergency Plan of the Principal Response Agencies will be activated on request from a Minister of Government in light of an emergency/crisis situation.

## **SECTION 11 SEVERE WEATHER PLANS**

### **11.1 Severe Weather Emergencies**

The Limerick City and County Council is the lead agency 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 and the Munster Regional Communications Centre. The target time for the issuing of a warning is 24 hours before the start of the event, but a warning may be issued up to 48 hours in advance when confidence is high.

Not all severe weather events will be major emergencies, but the principles and arrangements that are used for a co-ordinated response to major emergencies should be used to inform all Principal Response Agencies in relation to severe weather events. The Limerick City and County Council will ensure that effective arrangements are in place to receive and respond promptly to public service severe weather warnings issued by Met Éireann.

The Local and/or Regional Co-ordination Centres for Major Emergency Management may be activated to manage the response to a severe weather event, whether a major emergency is declared or not.

#### **11.1.1 Flooding Emergencies**

A Limerick County Inter-Agency Flood Response Plan has been developed, which enables the Principal Response Agencies along with other agencies such as the Irish Coastguard, Defence Forces, Civil Defence, Limerick Marine Search and Rescue and the Munster Regional Control Centre to respond to various stages of a flooding emergency. This Inter-Agency Flood Response Plan is an Appendix of this plan.

#### **11.1.2 Severe Weather Conditions**

The Limerick City and County Council have a Severe Weather Events Sub Plan and a Winter Maintenance Plan for dealing with severe weather events in the Limerick City and County Council administrative areas. The Severe Weather Sub plan is an Appendix of this plan.

## **SECTION 12 SITE AND EVENT SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS AND PLANS**

### **12.1 Sites and Events 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, the Limerick City and County Council Major Emergency Management Committee has identified sites/events where specific plans/ arrangements exist for responding to emergencies. These include the following:

- **Flooding**

An Flood Response Plan is in place for responding to flooding incidents within Limerick City and County.

- **Severe Weather Events**

The Limerick City and County Council has a Severe Weather Events Sub Plan and a Winter Maintenance Plan for dealing with severe weather events in Limerick City and County.

- **Water Contamination**

The Limerick City and County Council have a Drinking Water Incident Response Plan is in place for dealing with water supply incidents within Limerick City and County.

- **Foynes Port**

Foynes Port is the principle general purpose terminal on the Shannon Estuary and caters for dry bulk, break bulk, liquid and project cargoes. Shannon Foynes Port Company (SFPC) is responsible for all maritime operations within the port. The response plans and procedures in the event of incidents at Foynes Port are detailed in the following plans.

- Shannon Estuary Marine Emergency Plan
- Marine Installation Emergency Plan
- Marine Oil Pollution Plan
- The Limerick City and County Council Oil Pollution 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.

## **12.2 European Union (Control of Major Accident Hazard) Regulations**

The Principal Response Agencies are required to prepare External Emergency Plans for Upper Tier Seveso establishments in their area under the European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations, 2006 S.I. No. 74 of 2006.

There are four Seveso establishments within Limerick.

### **Upper Tier Seveso Sites**

- Atlantic Fuels Supply Company, Foynes Port
- Gouldings Fertilizers, Askeaton

### **Lower Tier Seveso Site**

- Irish Liquid Bulk Storage, Foynes Port
- Grasslands Fertilisers, Dock Road

The objectives of an External Emergency Plan are to prepare for:

- Containing and controlling incidents so as to minimize the effects, and to limit damage to people, the environment and property;
- Implementing the measures necessary to protect people and the environment from the effects of major accidents;
- Communicating the necessary information to the public and to the services or authorities concerned in the area, and
- Providing for the restoration and clean-up of the environment following a major accident.

The External Emergency Plans are Sub-Plans to the Limerick City and County Council Major Emergency Plan. The activation of an External Emergency Plan may not warrant the declaration of a Major Emergency, but may operate the procedures contained within the Major Emergency Plan. A decision on whether or not an emergency requires the activation of the Major Emergency Plan will reside with an authorized officer of a Principal Response Agency.

## **SECTION 13 THE RECOVERY PHASE**

### **13.1 Support for Individuals and Communities**

The recovery stage is as important as the emergency response stage 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; and
- Managing economic consequences.

A structured transition from response to recovery is critical for agencies, both collectively and individually. The recovery stage may be as demanding on the Limerick City and County Council 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 Community Support**

Following an emergency incident, assistance may be required by the victims of the emergency – not only those directly affected, but also family and friends, who may suffer bereavement or anxiety. 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 Limerick City and County Council restore its critical service to a pre-emergency state as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The services and staff that the Limerick City and County Council may be able to provide are based upon a wide range of skills and resources drawn from its day-to-day operations such as;

- Technical and engineering support
- Building control
- Road services

- Environmental issues
- Provision of reception centres
- Re-housing and accommodation needs
- Transport
- Social services
- Psychosocial support
- Help lines
- Welfare and financial needs

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

#### **Limerick City and County Council**

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

#### **An Garda Síochána**

- Identification of fatalities;
- Preservation and gathering of evidence;
- Investigation and criminal issues;
- Dealing with survivors;
- Dealing with relatives of the deceased and survivors; and
- Provision of an appropriate response to the immediate public need.

#### **Health Service Executive**

- Provision of health care and support for casualties and survivors;
- Support for relatives of casualties and survivors;
- Responding to community welfare needs; and
- Restoration of health services.

### **13.1.2 Management of Public Appeals and External Aid**

The co-ordination of emerging recovery issues, such as managing public appeals and external aid, maybe required from the earliest stages of the response phase. For this reason, the arrangements for co-ordination of response should continue to operate during the transition from response stage to recovery stage. At a point when the issues on the agendas of Co-ordination Groups are largely recovery focussed, it may be appropriate to re-title the group as the Local, Regional or National Recovery Co-ordination Group.

From the earliest stage, it may be appropriate also for the Local, Regional or National Co-ordination Group to appoint a Recovery Working Group to plan ahead. The Limerick City and County Council Crisis Management Team will continue to function until the issues arising in the response phase are more appropriately dealt with by the agency's normal management processes.

## **13.2 Clean-Up Operations**

In the aftermath of an emergency the clean-up operation will be the responsibility of the Limerick City and County Council. The removal of debris and contaminated waste is one of the principal concerns for the Limerick City and County Council. In consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency and specialist companies, the Limerick City and County Council will commence clean up of a site as soon as possible but without hindering the investigation process. Careful consideration must be provided for the removal of decontaminated debris to locations that will not affect communities.

## **13.3 Restoration of Infrastructure and Services**

The Limerick City and County Council must ensure that its critical services are restored as quickly as possible after a Major Emergency.

### **13.3.1 Procedures for Monitoring the Situation**

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

### **13.3.2 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 gas, water and electrical supplies and communications facilities.

### **13.3.3 Prioritization of Recovery Phase**

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

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



## **SECTION 14 REVIEW OF THE MAJOR EMERGENCY PLAN**

### **14.1 Internal review of Major Emergency Plan**

An internal review of the Major Emergency Plan will be undertaken by the Limerick City and County Council on an annual basis. The review shall:

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

### **14.2 External review of Major Emergency Plan**

The Limerick City and County Council appraisal will be reviewed and validated by the Mid-West Regional Steering Group on Major Emergency Management. This appraisal should also be reviewed and validated by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. Any issues arising from the review should be referred back to the Limerick City and County Council for appropriate action. In cases of disagreement between the Limerick City and County Council and the Regional Steering Group, the National Steering Group should be consulted and should decide on the issue.

#### **14.2.1 Review of Major Emergency Plan with the other Principal Response Agencies by the Regional Major Emergency Group**

Each Principal Response Agency's Major Emergency Plan should be reviewed and validated annually by the relevant Regional Steering Group on Major Emergency Management.

Any issues arising from the review should be referred back to the Principal Response Agency 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.

The regional level report will also be reviewed and validated by the National Steering Group. Any issues arising from the review should be referred back to the Regional Steering Group on Major Emergency Management for appropriate action.

### **14.3 Review of the Major Emergency Plan after an 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 (Multi-agency debriefs should consider the contribution provided by other, non-emergency service) and lessons learned will be incorporated into this Major Emergency Plan and other service manuals, as appropriate.

#### **14.3.1 Review of Agency's Performance of its Functions**

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

#### **14.3.2 Review of Co-ordination Function with other Principal Response Agencies**

The three Principal Response Agencies should review the inter-agency co-ordination aspects of the response after every declaration of a major emergency. This review should be hosted by the lead agency and involve all services which were part of the response. The purpose of the review should be to formulate the lessons learned from the incident in relation to co-ordination and to document these.

A composite report, based on appropriate input from each Principal Response Agency's internal report and the report on co-ordination, on every declared major emergency should be compiled by the principal response agency which was the initial lead agency for submission within a reasonable timescale to the relevant Regional Steering Group and the National Steering Group.

## **SECTION 15 APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 - Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure**
- Appendix 2 - Major Emergency Contact List**
- Appendix 3 - Terminology**
- Appendix 4 - Distribution List**
- Appendix 5 - Severe Weather Events Sub Plan**
- Appendix 6 - Housing Sub Plan**
- Appendix 7 - Fire & Emergency Operations Sub Plan**
- Appendix 8 - Environmental Sub Plan**
- Appendix 9 - Veterinary Sub Plan**
- Appendix 10 - Oil Pollution Control Plan**
- Appendix 11 - Civil Defence Sub Plan**
- Appendix 12 - Human Resources Sub Plan**
- Appendix 13 - Flood Response Plan**
- Appendix 14 - Inter-Agency Media Communications Sub Plan**
- Appendix 15 - Drinking Water Incident Response Plan**
- Appendix 16 - Atlantic Fuels External Emergency Plan**
- Appendix 17 - Goulding Fertiliser External Emergency Plan**