

Sligo County Council

Comhairle Chontae na Shiligh



MAJOR EMERGENCY PLAN

Ver.6 - April 2020

Public Edition

Annex 1– Declaring a Major Emergency

TO ACTIVATE THIS PLAN

Contact

West Region Communication Centre, Castlebar

Using the following Confidential Numbers:

Telephone	Back up	e-mail
094-90 34747	094-90 34708	CAMP@MayoCoCo.ie

If this number is not answered use 112/999 as an alternative

The authorised officer of Sligo County Council should notify the West Region Communications Centre (WRCC) of the Declaration of the Major Emergency using the 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 Sligo County Council
Major Emergency Plan.**

After the declaration is made the authorised 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

This message format is designed to ensure that as much initial information as required is included. However it does not prevent the inclusion of any other information that has been deemed relevant.

Notification of the other two PRAs

Where the initial declaration of the Major Emergency is made by Sligo County Council, WRCC as part of pre-set actions, will notify the other two Principal Response Agencies (PRAs), An Garda Síochána & HSE West, of the declaration and provide information as available, using the following numbers:

HSE West	Telephone	Back up
Ballyshannon	086 1740829	087 2299221
Garda Div. HQ	Telephone	Back up
Sligo	071-57000	

Notification from one of the other PRAs

Where WRCC receives notification of a Major Emergency from another PRA, the Regional Fire Service Controller on duty, as part of pre-set actions, will confirm to the other two Principal Response Agencies involved that the Local Authority Major Emergency Plan has been activated.

WRCC will prepare and circulate, by group-fax or group email a written version of the METHANE message.

Note: *A version of these pages is placed inside the front cover of the Major Emergency Plan of each PRA. As a result, each PRA will make and receive two calls in relation to any Major Emergency Declaration. The purpose of this crosscheck is to confirm that relevant PRAs are aware that a Major Emergency has been declared. It also ensures that the notification/confirmation has come from an authorised officer.*

Record of Issues and Amendments

Amendment No.	Version No.	Date	Section Amended	Amended By
1.	Version 2	11 Nov 2008	Various	MEMC
2.	Version 3	31 Jan 2009	Common Page	T.Gallagher
3.	Version 4	August 2011	All	T.Gallagher
4.	Version 5	Sept 2016	All	G.O'Malley
5.	Version 6	April 2020	All	D.McSharry
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Appendices Contain Personal Data and are NOT part of the Public Edition

Section 1 – Introduction to the Plan

1.1 Foreword

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

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

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 Sligo 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 the 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 in dealing with major emergencies is a well defined co-ordinated and integrated plan and the readiness and preparedness of responder. It is essential that all relevant persons read this plan carefully, familiarise themselves with its contents and recognise their own role as part of a team responding to a major emergency incident.

Ciarán Hayes
Chief Executive

1.2 Background

This Major Emergency Plan is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Government Decision of May 2006 and is consistent with *A Framework for Emergency Management (2006)*. It applies to the functional area of Sligo County Council.

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

1.3 Objectives of the Major Emergency Plan

The objectives of Sligo County Council's Major Emergency Plan 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
- Maintenance of essential services
- Safe working

1.4 Scope of the Major Emergency Plan

The plan provides for a co-ordinated response to major emergencies arising, for example, from fires, explosions, gas releases, transportation accidents, incidents involving dangerous substances, flooding, landslides, environmental contamination etc. that are beyond the normal capabilities of the Fire Service, Gardaí or the HSE.

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

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



Potential emergencies may occur on a national scale. In these situations the relevant National Emergency Plan will be activated by the Lead Government Department or the appropriate national body. The co-ordination arrangements of Sligo County Council's Major Emergency Plan may be activated in support of these National Emergency Plans.

1.5 Relationship/Interoperability with other Emergency Plans

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

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

This document is complemented by Sligo Local Authority Major Emergency Appendices Document and a series of other Sub Plans and Procedures as identified in the Major Emergency Appendices Document. Please refer to Section 3.5.

1.6 Common Language and Terminology

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

1.7 Distribution of the Plan

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

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

1.8 Status of Plan and Review Process

The Major Emergency Plan will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis, and also following any exercise or incident as required.

1.9 Public Access to the Plan

An edited copy of the Major Emergency Plan, with contact telephone numbers and other personal information removed, is available to the public via Sligo County Council website at www.sligococo.ie

Section 2 - Sligo Local Authority and its Functional Area

2.1 Functional Area of Sligo Local Authority

The functional area of Sligo Local Authority is the administrative county of Sligo. Council services are delivered through four distinct directorates as follows:

- Infrastructure, Environment & Fire Services
- Planning, Community and & Development
- Housing & Corporate
- Finance

2.2 Partner Principal Response Agencies

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

- Health Service Executive – West Area
- Sligo/Leitrim Division of An Garda Síochána
(Relevant Garda Districts are Sligo, Ballymote, Carrick-on-Shannon and Manorhamilton).

Emergency assistance may also be proffered by several other agencies / Voluntary emergency Services such as Irish Coastguard, Defence forces, Civil Defence, Mountain rescue, etc.

2.3 Role of Sligo Local Authority

The role of Sligo Local Authority in the event of a major emergency is to ensure life safety by providing a coordinated emergency. Sligo Local Authority will ensure that danger areas are made safe in order to permit other agencies to undertake their recovery and rehabilitation operations. In the immediate aftermath of an incident principal concerns include support for the other emergency services, support and care for the local and wider community, use its resources to mitigate the effects of the emergency and co-ordination of the voluntary organisations. In the 'recovery' phase the local authority will be responsible to lead role and co-ordinate the rehabilitation of the community and the restoration of the environment.

Refer to Section 8 for specific responsibilities

2.4 Boundaries and Characteristics of the Area

County Sligo is a county in the North West of Ireland, on the border with Northern Ireland. County Sligo covers a total land mass of 1836 km² (709 square miles and is bordered to the west by Mayo, to the south by Roscommon and to the east Leitrim. The county town is Sligo, which is also the largest town in the county. The overall population of Co. Sligo is 65,535 [Census 2016].

A breakdown of the population centres from 2016 is given below:

Major Centres	Population	Major Centres	Population
Sligo & Environs	19,199	Ballisodare	1,350
Tubbercurry	1,986	Ballymote	1,229
Strandhill	1,753	Enniscrone	1,156
Collooney	1,610		

2.5 Regional Major Emergency Preparedness

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

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

In certain circumstances, the Framework provides that the local response to a major emergency may be scaled up to a regional level. This will provide for mutual aid, support and co-ordination facilities to be activated in a region, the boundaries of which are determined to suit the exigencies of the particular emergency. This may occur where the nature of an emergency is such that:

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



Map of the Major Emergency Management Regions

Section 3 - Risk Assessment for Sligo City & County

3.1 History of Sligo Local Authority Emergency Events

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

Major emergencies by their very nature are few and far between. A Major Emergency has to date never been declared in Sligo, however the county has experienced its fair share of emergency events over the years. The callouts experienced within recent years which have had the most potential for escalating into a major emergency would include:

- Sligo Airport plane crash
- Industrial chemical incidents, army Explosives Ordnance Division called in to assist
- Hospitals – Sligo General Hospital, St. Columbas Hospital where there is potential for major loss of life from fire, explosion etc.
- Hotels where there is potential for major loss of life from fire, explosion etc.
- Petrol Storage in various locations throughout county, e.g. Sligo Port.
- Petrol storage holds risks of possible explosions, loss of life, contamination etc.
- Severe Weather as Sligo is a coastal county and risks include severe winters; snow; ice; heavy rain; flooding both inland and coastal; landslides; severe gales causing building debris, falling trees on roads; lightning strikes with multiple casualties; multiple vehicle collision due to fog; drinking water contamination etc.
- Fillings Stations; where risks include possible explosions, loss of life, contamination etc.
- Road traffic collisions (RTC's), where loss of life has occurred in the past.
- Ship fires which Sligo Local Authority have attended.
- Large forest and gorse fires which Sligo Local Authority have attended.
- Rail network through County Sligo.
- House/Building Fires, where loss of life has occurred in the past

3.2 General and Specific Risks

This Major Emergency Plan has been developed taking into account the hazards that are present within the functional area of the Sligo Local Authority.

These hazards may be classified as generic, i.e. hazards that have the possibility occurring anywhere in the County, e.g. major flooding, multi-vehicle RTCs etc., and hazards that are specific to the locality, e.g. underground car park explosion in Sligo City.

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

- Natural
- Civil
- Technological
- Transportational

3.3 Exemplars for Preparedness

Sligo Local Authority has undertaken a Risk Assessment in accordance with the 'Framework for Major Emergency Management 2006' and 'A Guide to Risk Assessment in Major Emergency Management'.

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

No.	Category	Description
1 2 3 4	Natural Hazards (Reference = N)	NH1 Flooding NG1 Tsunami NO1 Landslide NO2 Forest Fire
5 6	Civil Hazards (Reference = C)	CE1 Influenza Pandemic CMC1 Crowd Safety
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	Technological Hazards (Reference = Te)	TeC1 Industrial Chemical TeE1 Underground (Car Park) Explosion Acetylene TeE2 Explosion TeE3 Garages TeF1 Discos TeF2 Sligo Hospitals TeF3 Nursing Homes TeF4 Hotels TeF5 Theatres/Cinemas TeF6 Large Residential TeF7 Caravan Parks TeI1 Sligo Port TeP1 Water Pollution

21		TeP2 Oil Pollution
22	Transportation Hazards (Reference = Tr)	TrA1 Aviation
23		TrA2 Sligo Airport
24		TrRa1 Railway
25		TrRo1 Major RTC
26		TrRo2 HAZMAT
27		TrW1 Marine Emergency

Exemplars for Preparedness

A Regional Risk Assessment has also been undertaken by the Principal Response Agencies in the Northwest Region and has been approved by the Regional Steering Group. Please refer to *Appendix B1* for the Risk Assessment.

3.4 Risk Management / Mitigation / Reduction Strategies

Risk management starts with an examination of the potential impact of the hazards identified and the likelihood of the hazard occurring within the Sligo Region. The resulting judgement is recorded on a risk matrix for each event.

The risk assessment provides a sound basis for determining a range of steps at later stages of the emergency management cycle; especially in the Mitigation and the Planning and Preparedness stages.

Mitigation includes any actions which are taken in advance of the occurrence of an emergency to reduce the probability of that event happening. The most effective form of mitigation is total elimination of the hazard concerned.

In general responsibility for the mitigation of specific hazards lies with the organisations and companies which own and operate the facilities and services where the relevant hazards are found, such as airlines, railway companies, chemical manufactures etc. These organisations are referred to as “risk holders”.

Typical examples of mitigation measures include:

- The enforcement of legislation related to road safety and safety in places of assembly (An Garda Síochána).
- Monitoring of Food and Water Safety (The Health Service Executive)
- Planning and Building Control including Fire Safety of buildings (Sligo Local Authority).

Section 4 - Resources for Emergency Response

4.1 Sligo Local Authority Structure

Sligo Local Authority carries out its functions in accordance with the provisions as set out in the Local Government Act 2001, as amended.

Sligo Local Authority is composed of the Elected Members and the Executive. The Elected Members of the council are elected by the public and are responsible for the development and adoption of policies to be implemented by the executive.

The executive role is performed by the Chief Executive and his staff who are responsible for the day to day operation of the Council. The Council operations are divided into a number of Directorates, under the control of the Directors of Service, which are responsible for the functioning of sections within the Council.

Sligo's Local Authority Management Team is as follows:

Mr. Ciarán Hayes	Chief Executive
Mr. Tom Kilfeather	Director of Infrastructure, Environment & Fire Services
Mr. Bartley Gavin	A/ Director of Housing & Corporate
Ms. Dorothy Clarke	Director of Planning Community & Economic Development
Ms. Marie Whelan	Head of Finance
Mr. John Reilly	Head of Enterprise Local Enterprise Office

4.2 Major Emergency Staffing Arrangements

Management of the Major Emergency shall take place in 3 key areas as follows:

- 1) On site
- 2) Crisis Management Team
- 3) Local Co-ordination Centre

This Crisis Management Team are the Management Team outlined above.

The Crisis Management Team, together with Camp West, facilitates the mobilisation of senior staff to deal with the crisis in light of the evolving situation. The Crisis Management Team provides support to the local authority'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.

Additional persons may be nominated to the Crisis Management Team. Crisis Management Team support staff are listed in *Appendix D* of Sligo Local Authority Major Emergency Plan Appendices document.

The following Appendices in Sligo Local Authority Major Emergency Appendices Document show mobilisation details, particular actions and protocols to be undertaken for individual sections and nominated officers:

Appendix D2	Crisis Management Team
Appendix D3	Sligo Fire Authority
Appendix D4	Civil Defence
Appendix D5	Sanitary Services
Appendix D6	Environment
Appendix D7	Roads & Transportation
Appendix D8	Housing
Appendix D9	Community & Enterprise
Appendix D10	Corporate Services
Appendix D11	IT Department
Appendix E1	Role of Controller of Operations
Appendix E2	Role of Co-ordination Group
Appendix E3	Role of Crises Management Team
Appendix E4	Role of Information Management Officer
Appendix E5	Role of Media Liaison Officers
Appendix E6	Role of Action Management Officer

4.2.1 Fire Service

The initial Local Authority response to a Major Emergency will be by the Sligo Fire Service. See *Appendix D3* for further details and contact numbers.

4.2.2 Civil Defence

The Civil Defence service is a statutory organisation of volunteers, which can provide a very important resource for use in Major Emergencies in support of the Principal Response Agencies. Civil Defence services are structured on a County basis and are operated by the Local Authority. See *Appendix D4* for further details and contact numbers.

4.3 Other Organisations / Agencies

Depending on the circumstances of the Major Emergency it may be necessary to mobilise additional resources to assist the Principal Response Agencies. These organisations/agencies may include but are not limited to:

- Government Departments
- The Defence Forces
- Irish Coast Guard
- The Irish Red Cross
- Voluntary Emergency Services
- Community Volunteers
- Utilities (ESB, Eircom etc.)
- Semi-State Bodies
- Private Sector

Contact details for the various organisations/agencies are listed in *Appendices F1, G1, H1 & J1*, and some of those agencies are described below as follows:

4.3.1 Defence Forces

The Defence Forces can provide a significant support role in a major emergency response. The Defence Forces capabilities can be employed across a wide spectrum of activity in a major emergency. Provision of Defence Forces capabilities is dependent on the exigencies of other demands and on prior agreed arrangements through Memorandums of Understanding and Service Level Agreements between the Department of Defence, the Defence Forces and relevant Government Departments.

In addition, the Defence Forces have a key role in responding to all emergency incidents involving improvised explosive devices, when they are called upon by An Garda Síochána, by the provision of Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD) teams, in an Aid to the Civil Power role. See *Appendix H1* for further details.

4.3.2 The Irish Coast Guard

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

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

The IRCG co-ordinates its Search and Rescue through its Maritime Rescue Sub- Centres (MRSC) at Malin Head in Co. Donegal. Within each Coast Guard Division there are SAR resources such as:

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

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

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

See *Appendix F1* for further details.

4.3.3 Irish Red Cross

The Irish Red Cross is established and regulated under the Red Cross Acts, 1938-54. These statutes define a role for the Irish Red Cross as an auxiliary to the state Authority 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. Volunteers are organised in local units, with overarching county and regional structures.

The main relationship with the principal response agencies in major emergency response is as an auxiliary resource to the ambulance services. Subsidiary search and rescue and in-shore rescue units of the Irish Red Cross support An Garda Síochána and the Irish Coast Guard. See *Appendix F1* for further details.

4.3.4 Voluntary Emergency Services

The voluntary emergency services sector provides a significant potential resource to assist the principal response agencies in major emergency response. They may provide a pool of persons with relevant skills, vehicles and useful equipment and facilities. The normal range of voluntary emergency services includes the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps, St John's Ambulance Service, Mountain Rescue Teams, Mountaineering Club, Cave Rescue Teams, Search and Rescue Dog Associations, RNLI, Sub-Aqua Units, 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. See *Appendix F1* for further details.

4.3.5 Community Volunteers

In many emergency situations, the public respond to assist friends, neighbours and even complete strangers when disaster strikes. Community volunteers may provide assistance in search and rescue, food and shelter.

4.3.6 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 / affected by an emergency, e.g. ESB, Bord Gáis, Bus Éireann, etc.

4.3.7 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.

4.4 Mutual-aid from Neighbouring Authority

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 neighbouring principal response agencies. As they are national organisations, the Crisis Management Teams of the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána should arrange to provide the additional support required; Local Authority will support each other on a mutual aid basis.

In the event that mutual aid from neighbouring Local Authority is required the On-Site Co-ordinator shall request the provision of mutual aid. Please refer to Section 6.2.

4.5 Regional Level Co-Ordinated Response

Sligo Local Authority belongs to the North West MEM Region. Depending on the scale of the Major Emergency it may be necessary to escalate the level of response from a local one to that of a Regional Level Response. This is a decision for the Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group. Please refer to Section 6.2.

4.6 National / International Assistance

The scale, complexity or likely duration of some emergencies may be such that significant assistance is required from neighbouring or other regions of the country, or from outside the state. The decision to seek assistance from outside the region should be made by the Lead Agency, in association with the other principal response agencies, at the Local/Regional Coordination Centre.

The Local/Regional Co-ordination Group should identify and dimension the level/type of assistance likely to be required and its duration. It should also seek to identify the possible options for sourcing such assistance, be that from neighbouring regions,

elsewhere in the state, from Northern Ireland, the rest of the United Kingdom or from other EU member states.

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

A Regional Co-ordination Group may also request assistance from Government. National resources will be available in the event of a major emergency at local or regional level. Requests for assistance should be developed at local or regional co-ordination level and directed by the Lead Agency to the lead Government Department.

The European Community has established a Community Mechanism to facilitate the provision of assistance between the member states in the event of major emergencies. 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, Heritage and Local Government.

Section 5 - Preparedness for Major Emergency Response

5.1 Business Planning Process

Depending on the type of Major Emergency, it may impact on the day to day activities of the Local Authority in the provision of its services. As such the Business Planning Process has taken account of this.

The Sligo County Council Business Continuity Plan outlines how and to what degree Local Authority services are to be maintained in the event of a Major Emergency.

5.2 Responsibility for Leading Preparedness

5.2.1 Internal:

The Chief Executive for Sligo Local Authority is responsible for 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.

The responsibility for overseeing the Major Emergency Plan within Sligo Local Authority is assigned to the Director of Infrastructure, Environment & Fire Services, supported by the Chief Fire Officer. Each directorate is responsible for the implementation of directorate-specific actions arising from the programme.

5.2.2 Inter-agency:

It is the responsibility of the Northwest Regional Steering and Working Groups to ensure the overall preparedness in response to a Major Emergency.

The Chief Executive sits on the inter-agency North West Steering Group and the Director of Infrastructure, Environment & Fire Services. The Chief Fire Officer and the Assistant Chief Fire Officer sit on the Major Emergency North West Regional Working Group.

5.3 Major Emergency Development Programme

The National Steering Group (NSG) oversee the development and implementation of the Major Emergency program. The NSG had in turn established a National Working Group (NWG) to progress the programme.

A Major Emergency Development Committee (MEDC) has been established within Sligo Local Authority, chaired by the Director of Service, with representation from all appropriate sections of Sligo Local Authority to assist with the programme.

5.4 Nominations for Key Roles

Sligo Local Authority has nominated competent individuals and alternates to the key roles to enable the agency to function in accordance with the common arrangements set out in its Major Emergency Plan. The persons nominated for the various key roles within this Major Emergency Plan are detailed in the *Appendices D and E*.

5.5 Support Teams for Key Roles

Support teams have been formed to support and assist individuals in key roles and Operational Protocols setting out the arrangements to enable the agency's support teams to be mobilised and function in accordance with the arrangements set out in the Major Emergency Plan. The persons nominated to the various support are detailed in the *Appendices E*.

5.6 Staff Development Programme

Training is a key element in the development of preparedness for Sligo Local Authority so as to ensure that they can provide an effective, co-ordinated response to major emergencies when required. There are many levels of training, ranging from general awareness of the major emergency management arrangements to equipping people with knowledge and skills to perform key roles. All training is consistent with the provisions of the Framework and the specifics of the Major Emergency Plan.

5.7 Training Programme

The NWR MEM Sub Working Group devises a working calendar each year that includes MEM training for all the PRA's in the North West Region. Each individual PRA is responsible for their internal staff MEM training.

5.8 Joint/Inter-agency Training & Exercises

Exercises are carried out in accordance with the MEM guidance document 'A Guide To Planning And Staging Exercises' as per www.mem.ie website. An exercise report from each exercise is presented to the NWR Working Group for recommendation before being presented to the NWR Steering Group for validation and then presented to the National Working Groups.

MEM training programme reports are also presented and approved via the same route as above.

5.9 Allocation of Resources for Major Emergency Management

Sligo Local Authority shall provide a budget for Major Emergency preparedness, which reflects the expenditure required to meet the costs of implementing the agency's internal preparedness, as well as the agency's contribution to the regional level inter-agency preparedness.

5.10 Authorisation for Procurement and Use of Resources

The Authorisation for the procurement and Use of resources is established under the decision making mandates of the Local Authority Controller of Operations, On-Site Co-ordinator, and Chair of Local Co-ordination Group.

5.11 Annual Appraisal of Preparedness

Sligo Local Authority carry out and document an annual appraisal of its preparedness for major emergency response and an annual appraisal of the North West regional level preparedness is also prepared. These appraisals are sent to the National Working Group for review and any changes deemed necessary to improve preparedness are reported back to regional level to be put in place.

5.12 Informing the Public in the event of an emergency

There may be situations where it will be crucial for the Sligo Local Authority 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.

Section 6 - The Generic Command, Control and Co-ordination Systems

6.1 Command Arrangements

The Chief Executive of Sligo Local Authority is responsible for the organisation'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.

Sligo Local Authority shall exercise command over its own resources in accordance with its normal command structure. The Directors of Services shall exercise operational control over their own section subject to the overall control and direction of the Local Authority Controller of Operations.

6.2 Control Arrangements

Sligo Local Authority shall appoint a Controller of Operations at the site (or at each site) of the emergency. The officer in command of the initial response of each principal emergency service should be the principle response agency's Controller of Operations until relieved through the agency's pre-determined process.

The off-site 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. See *Appendix E1*.

6.2.1 Controller of Operations

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

- To make such decisions as are appropriate to the role of controlling the activities of his/her agency's services at the site (Controlling in this context may mean setting priority objectives for individual services; command of each service should remain with the officers of that service.);
- To meet with the other two controllers and determine the Lead Agency;
- To undertake the role of On-Site Co-ordinator, where the service s/he represents is identified as the Lead Agency;
- To participate fully in the site co-ordination activity, including the establishment of a Site Management Plan;
- Where another service is the Lead Agency, to ensure that his/her agency's operations are co-ordinated with the other principal response agencies,

- including ensuring secure communications with all agencies responding to the major emergency at the site;
- To decide and request the attendance of such services as s/he determines are needed;
 - To exercise control over such services as s/he has requested to attend;
 - To operate a Holding Area to which personnel from his/her agency will report on arrival at the site of the major emergency and from which they will be deployed;
 - To requisition any equipment s/he deems necessary to deal with the incident;
 - To seek such advice as s/he requires;
 - To maintain a log of his/her agency's activity at the incident site and decisions made;
 - To contribute to and ensure information management systems operate effectively;
 - To liaise with his/her principal response agency's Crisis Management Team on the handling of the major emergency.

6.2.2 On-Site Co-ordinator

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

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

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

- To assume the role of On-Site Co-ordinator when the three controllers determine the Lead Agency. Once appointed s/he should note the time and that the determination was made in the presence of the two other controllers on site;
- To inform all parties involved in the response that s/he has assumed the role of On-Site Co-ordinator;
- To determine which facility should be used as the On-Site Co-ordination Centre. Depending on the circumstance, this may be a vehicle designated for the task, a specific, purpose-built vehicle, a tent or other temporary structure or an appropriate space/building adjacent to the site, which can be used for coordination purposes;
- To ensure involvement of the three principal response agencies and the principal emergency services (and others, as appropriate) in the On-Site Co-ordination Group;

- To ensure that mandated co-ordination decisions are made promptly and communicated to all involved;
- To ensure that a Scene Management Plan is made, disseminated to all services and applied;
- To develop an auditable list of Actions (an Action Plan) and appoint an Action Management Officer where necessary;
- To determine if and what public information messages are to be developed and issued;
- To ensure that media briefings are co-ordinated;
- To ensure that pre-arranged communications (technical) links are put in place and operating;
- To ensure that the information management system is operated, including the capture of data for record-purposes at regular intervals;
- To ensure that the ownership of the Lead Agency role is reviewed, and modified as appropriate;
- To ensure that inter-service communication systems have been established and that communications from site to the Local Co-ordination Centre have been established and are functioning;
- To exercise an over-viewing role of all arrangements to mobilise additional resources to the site of the major emergency, and to track the status of mobilization requests, and deployment of additional resources;
- To ensure that, where the resources of an individual principal response agency do not appear to be sufficient to bring a situation under control, or the duration of an incident is extended, support is obtained via mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring principal response agencies;
- To determine, at an early stage, if ongoing assistance is required from casual volunteers, so that An Garda Síochána cordoning arrangements can take account of this;
- To co-ordinate external assistance into the overall response action plan;
- To ensure that, where appropriate, pastoral services are mobilised to the site and facilitated by the principal response agencies in their work with casualties;
- To work with the 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;
- To decide to stand down the major emergency status of the incident at the site, in consultation with the Controllers of Operations, and the Local Co-ordination Group;
- To ensure that all aspects of the management of the incident are dealt with before the response is stood down; and,
- To ensure that a report on the co-ordination function is prepared in respect of the major emergency after it is closed down, and circulated (first as a draft) to the other services that attended.

6.2.3 Local co-ordination Group

The Local Co-ordination group will comprise representatives of the other two Principal Response Agencies, an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer, an Action Management Officer (where considered appropriate), representatives of other agencies and specialists, as appropriate.

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

- To determine and disseminate the overall architecture of response co-ordination;
- To anticipate issues arising;
- To provide support for the on-site response;
- To resolve issues arising from the site;
- To ensure the generic information management system is operated;
- To take over the task of co-ordinating the provision of information for the public as soon as it meets and use all available channels to make concise and accurate information available;
- To decide and to take action to manage public perceptions of the risks involved, as well as managing the risks, during emergencies that threaten the public;
- To co-ordinate and manage all matters relating to the media, other than on-site;
- To establish and maintain links with the Regional Coordination Centre (if involved);
- To establish and maintain links with the lead Government Department/National Emergency Co-ordination Centre;
- To ensure co-ordination of the response activity, other than the on-site element;
- To decide on resource and financial provision; and
- To take whatever steps are necessary to start to plan for recovery.

6.2.4 Crisis Management Team

The Crisis Management Team is a Strategic Level management group within Sligo Local Authority, refer to Section 4.2. The use of a Crisis Management Team facilitates the mobilisation of senior staff to deal with the crisis, in a pre-designated location with all necessary support and resources.

In general the Crisis Management Team is established to:

- Manage, control and co-ordinate the organisations overall response to the situation

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

The composition of the Crisis Management Team Support Staff is provided in *Appendix D2*.

6.2.5 Control Arrangements of External Organisations / Agencies

There are a number of organisations and agencies, which may be called on to assist the principal response agencies in responding to major emergencies. The arrangements for this assistance should be agreed with each agency.

At the site of an emergency, Sligo Local Authority will exercise control over, not only its own services, but any additional services (other than the principle response agencies) which the Local Authority mobilises to the site.

6.2.6 Support Arrangements for the Control Function

Sligo Local Authority staff will respond to any Major Emergency in accordance with pre determined agreements and protocols.

6.3 Co-ordination Arrangements

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

6.3.1 Lead Agency Concept

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

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

- **Pre-nomination.** *Appendix K1* contains a list of incident types that reflect who the Lead Agency is. This method is the primary basis for determining the Lead Agency.

- **Default Arrangement.** Where the categorisations in the above-mentioned table do not appear to apply and the Lead Agency is not obvious, then the default arrangement is that the Local Authority will become the “default” Lead Agency.

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

6.3.2 On-Site Co-ordination Functions

On-site Co-ordination is facilitated by the On-Site Controller of operation and the On-Site Co-ordination group. The roles of the On-site Co-ordinator and the On-Site Co-ordination Group have been outlined in Section 6.2.1 of this document.

6.3.3 Co-ordination function at the Local / Regional Co-ordination Centres

When a Major Emergency has been declared, the representative of the Lead Agency will chair the Local Co-ordination Group, located in the Local Co-ordination centre, and will exercise the mandates associated with this position. The Local Coordination Group will comprise representatives of the other two PRA’s, an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer, an Action Management Officer (where considered appropriate), representatives of other agencies and specialists, as appropriate.

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may declare a regional level emergency and activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination and in doing so the activation of a "Regional Coordination Group" to maintain co-ordination of the principal response agencies involved from the extended “response region”.

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

6.4 Co-ordination in Other Specific Circumstances

In the event of the Local Co-ordination Centre being rendered unworkable possibly as a result of being involved in the actual event itself, then the other nearest Local Co-ordination Centre within the region shall be used.

The three Local Co-ordination Centres have been agreed in inter agency inter operability meetings as

- Áras An Chontae, Sligo County Council

- Áras An Chontae, Carrick On Shannon,
- County Buildings, Lifford, Donegal County Council.

6.4.1 Mutual Aid and Regional Level Co-Ordination

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

As they are national organisations, the Crisis Management Teams of the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána should arrange to provide the additional support required; Local Authority will support each other on a mutual aid basis. See section 4.5 and 4.6 of this document.

6.4.2 Incidents Occurring On Council Boundaries

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

In the case of Local Authority, which are statutorily empowered in respect of their functional areas, procedures for resolving such issues may already be set out in what are referred to as Section 81 agreements of the Local Government Act, 1941.

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 who first attended the incident.

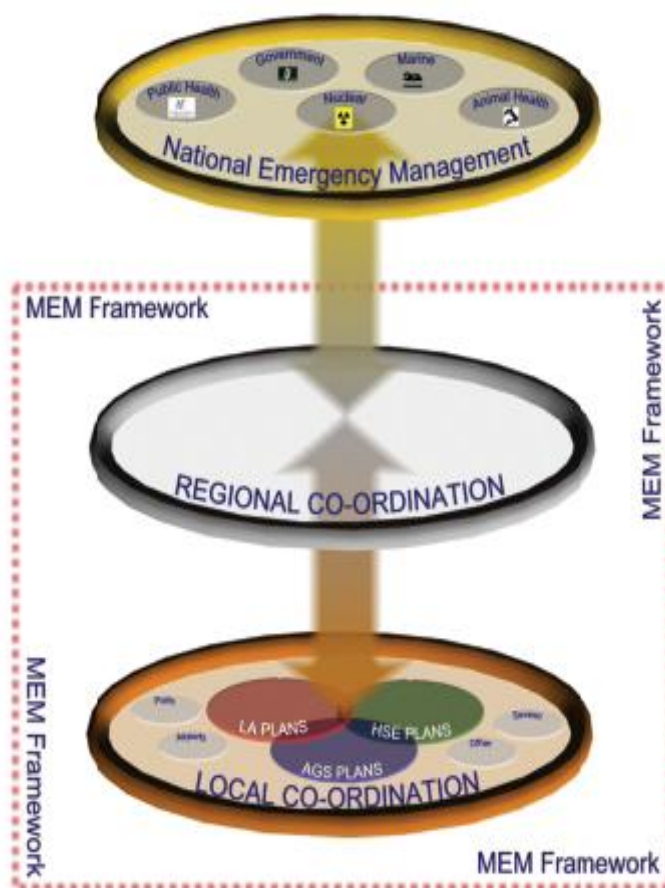
6.4.3 Multi-site or Wide Area Emergencies

Multi-site or wide area emergencies may require the setting up of multiple On-site Co-ordination centres which will feed into the one Local Co-Ordination Group.

6.4.4 Links to National Emergency Plans

The Sligo Major Emergency Plan will operate as an integral part of any National plans developed for scenarios affecting the population on a National Level. Refer to *Appendices P*.

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



Linking Major Emergency Plans with National Plans and Other Plans

6.4.5 Links with National Government

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

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

The Departments, should then consult and agree which Department will be designated as Lead Department, in keeping with the directions set out in *A Framework for Major Emergency Planning*. Links to National Emergency Plans, and Co-ordination arrangements are detailed in Section 10.

Section 7 - The Common Elements of Response

This section is divided into 20 different sub-sections that set out how the common elements of the response to a Major Emergency Response will be implemented.

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

7.1 Declaring a Major Emergency

7.1.1 Activation of the Plan

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

- Sligo Local Authority (See Appendix C3 for persons authorised)
- An Garda Síochána
- Health Service Executive (West)

A List of Sligo Local Authority persons authorised to declare a Major Emergency is contained in *Appendix C3*.

The Major Emergency Plan is activated by calling 999 / 112 and asking for the Fire Service and instructing the fire controller in the Western Regional Communications Centre to activate the Major Emergency Plan for Sligo County Council by giving a message 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 Sligo Local Authority Major

Emergency Plan”.

7.1.2 Standard Format Information Message METHANE

After the declaration is made the Officer should then 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 type of Casualties
E			Emergency service present and required

7.1.3 Notifying Other PRAs

Where the initial declaration of the Major Emergency is made by the Local Authority, the Regional Fire Service Controller on duty, as part of pre-set actions, will notify the other two PRAs of the declaration and provide information as available, using the following numbers:

Ambulance Control	Tel.	Back-up	Fax.	E-mail
Ballyshannon	0861740829	0872299221		

Garda Div. HQ	Tel.	Back-up	Fax.	E-mail
Sligo Station	0719157000			

7.1.4 Notification from another PRA

Where Camp West Communications Centre receives notification of a Major Emergency from another PRA, the Regional Fire Service Controller on duty, as part of pre-set actions, will confirm to the other two Principal Response Agencies involved that the Local Authority Major Emergency Plan has been activated. Camp West will prepare and circulate, by group-fax and group email, a written version of the METHANE message.

7.2 Initial Mobilisation Procedure

Sligo Local Authority Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure will be implemented immediately on notification of the declaration of a major emergency. When this Plan has been activated, each local Authority service requested shall respond in accordance with pre-determined arrangements. See *Appendix C1*

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

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

7.3 Command, Control and Communication Centres

In the event of a Major Emergency being declared initial mobilisation will be covered by the Regional Control Centre (CAMP West), who will communicate with the personnel on-site until such a time as the Crisis Management Team and Co-ordination Group have been established in accordance with national pre-determined arrangements. Please refer to Section 6 of this document for further details on the functions of these Teams/Groups.

The three Local Co-ordination Centres have been agreed as:

- Áras An Chontae, Sligo County Council
- Áras An Chontae, Carrick On Shannon
- County Buildings, Lifford, Donegal County Council

7.4 Co-ordination Centres

7.4.1 On-Site Co-ordination Centre

An onsite co-ordination centre will be deployed in the event of a major emergency for onsite operational support and command. This may be a dedicated vehicle, tent or an adjacent building that will accommodate all Principle Responses Agencies.

7.4.2 Crisis Management Team Centre

PRA's within Sligo have identified the following locations as suitable Local Co-ordination Centres for strategic level co-ordination:

- Sligo County Council Office (i.e. Áras an Chontae, Riverside, Sligo)
- Alternative 1: Sligo Fire Service Headquarters (St. Anne's Place, Sligo)
- Alternative 2: City Hall, Sligo Borough Council, Quay Street, Sligo

7.4.3 Local Co-ordination Centres

Sligo County Council has identified the following locations as suitable Local Co-ordination Centres for strategic level co-ordination:

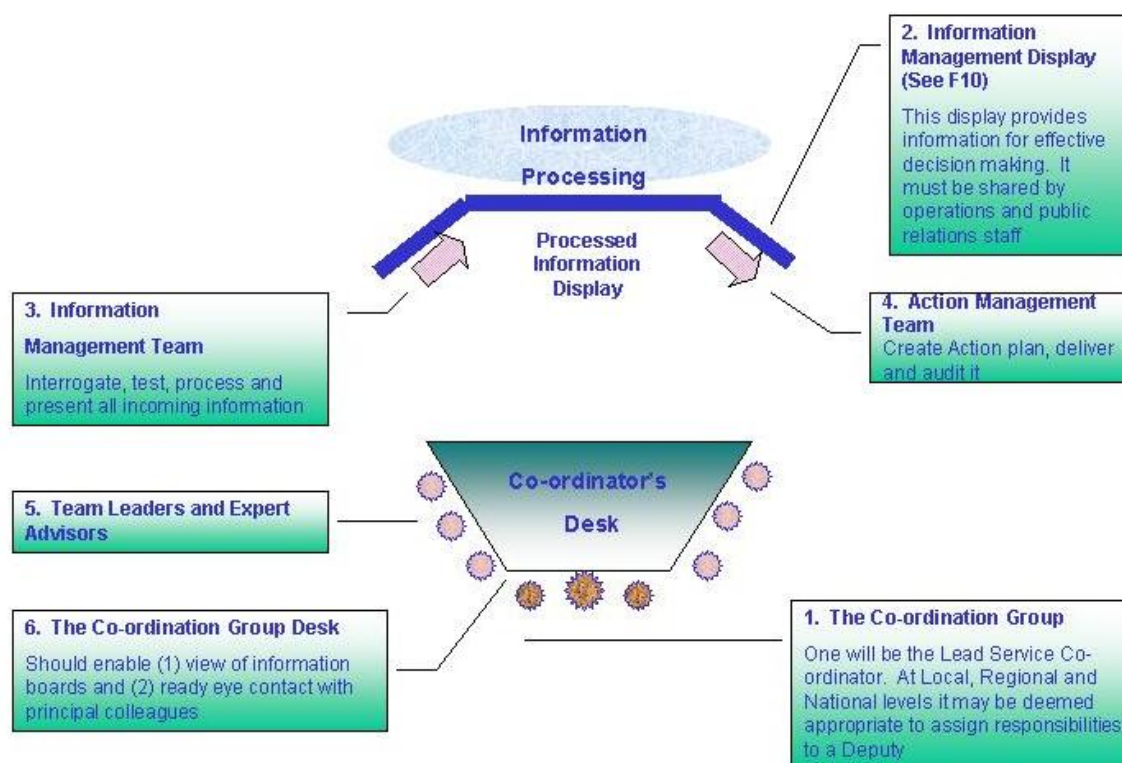
- Sligo County Councils Civic Offices (i.e. County Hall, Riverside, Sligo)
- Alternative 1: Sligo Fire Service Headquarters (St. Anne's Place, Sligo)
- Alternative 2: City Hall, Sligo Borough Council, Quay Street, Sligo

Please refer to 'Guidance to setting up a Co-ordination Centre and *Appendix L1* for further details.

7.4.4 Regional Co-ordination Centre

The local co-ordination centres will have the capacity to act as a regional co-ordination centre, should the Major Emergency be scaled up to a regional level.

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



Generic Co-ordination Centre

7.4.5 Information Management Team

The role of Information Manager will be assigned to senior management see *Appendix E4*. The function of the information management team will be to interrogate, test, process and present all incoming information required for the decision making process

- **Information Management Officers**

The role of Information Management Officer has been assigned to relatively senior management grades within the organisation, see *Appendix E4*. The function of the Information Management Officer will be to interrogate, test, process and present all incoming information required for the decision making process at On-Site and Off-Site Centres.

- **Action Management Officer**

The function of this role is to assemble an Action Plan (from information that has come from the Information Management System) and ensure that it is communicated to all agencies responsible for delivering it, track the progress of the action, and report back to the Co-ordination Group.

At less complex incidents one Officer / Team may undertake both the information and action management functions. Where the demands of the Major Emergency require the appointment of a separate Action Management Officer, this person may be a representative from one of the agencies other than the Lead Agency.

- **Team Leaders and Expert Advisors**

A range of specialist team leaders and expert advisers may be assigned permanent or temporary seats at the Co-ordination Group desk. They may themselves lead teams either at or remote from the centre. Generally they should advise or direct activity strictly within their mandate of Authority. On occasion they may be invited to contribute to debate in a broader context. They need to be quite clear in which capacity they are acting at any juncture and adjust their perspective accordingly.

7.5 Communications Facilities

7.5.1 Communications Systems

Sligo Local Authority relies on technical communication facilities to enable it to function and for different units to communicate, both at the site and between the site and its command, control or communications centre. Radio and other communications facilities are vital tools for the Local Authority.

- **Civil Defence**

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

- **Fire Service**

The Fire Service use mobile digital radio (TETRA) for communication between vehicles and CAMP West Regional Communications Centre. In addition each fire appliance carries a number hand-portable radios (UHF) for communication on-site plus a mobile telephone.

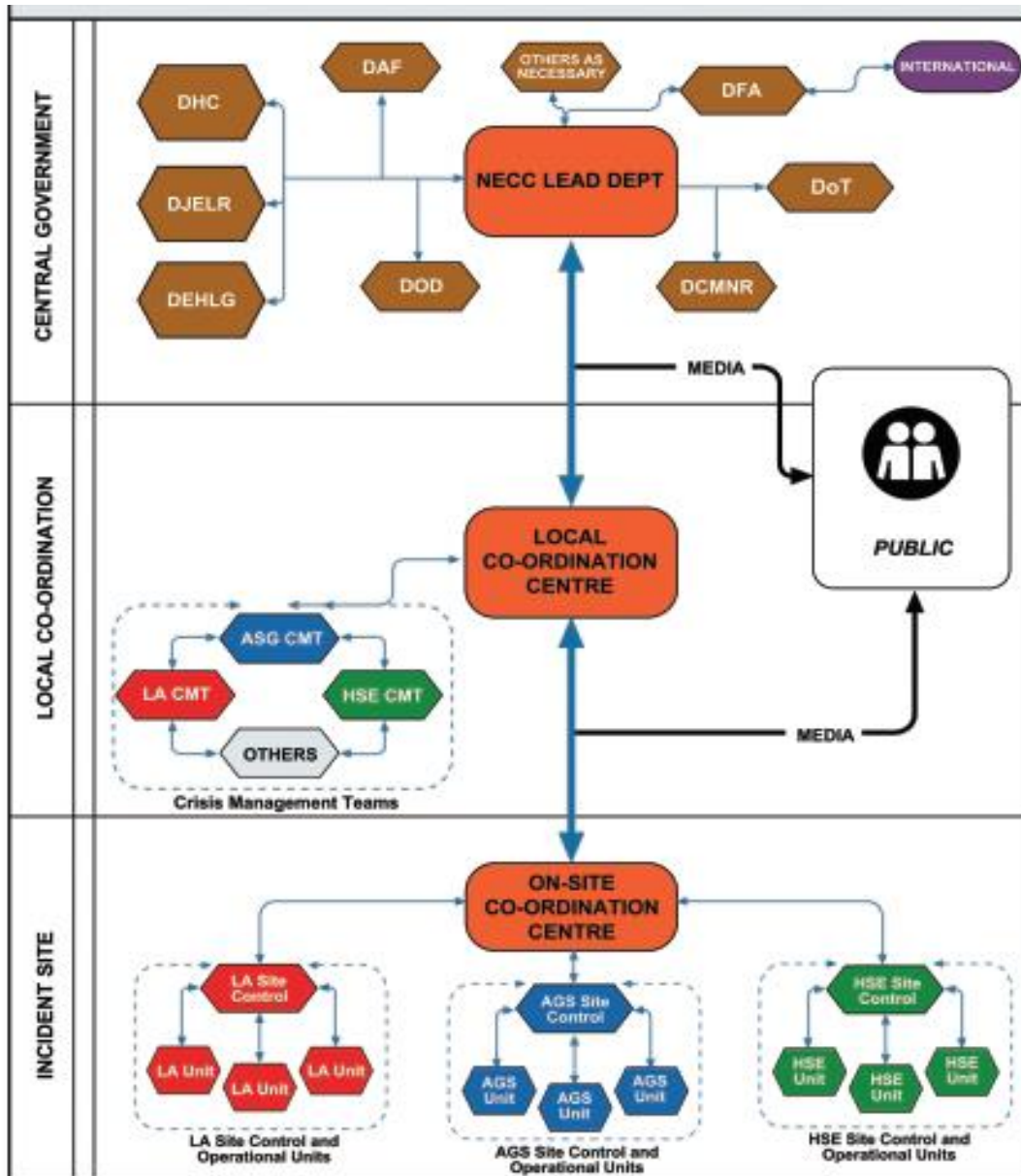
7.5.2 Inter-Agency Communication

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

7.5.3 Communications between Site and Coordination Centres.

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

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



Lines of Communication between Centres

7.6 Exercising the Lead Agency's Co-ordination Roles

7.6.1 Lead Agency

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

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

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

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

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

The Controller of Operations for the Lead Agency then becomes the **On-Site Co-ordinator**. See Section 6.2.2 of this Document.

7.6.2 Review and Transfer of the Lead Agency

The Lead Agency role may change over time, to reflect the changing circumstances of the major emergency. Ownership of the Lead Agency mantle should be reviewed at appropriate stages of the major emergency.

All changes in Lead Agency designation emanating from the site, and the timing thereof, will be by agreement of the three Controllers of Operations, and should be recorded and communicated as per the initial determination, informing the Local Co-ordinating group. As the emphasis of operations may shift from the site to other areas, the Local Co-

ordination Group may review the issue and determine a change in the Lead Agency, as appropriate.

7.6.3 Local Authority function as the Lead Agency

In the event of Sligo Local Authority been assigned the Lead Agency role, it will be assigned the responsibility for the co-ordination function (in addition to its own functions) and it should lead all the co-ordination activity associated with the emergency both on-site and off-site, and make every effort to achieve a high level in co-ordination.

The function of the Lead Agency for any emergency includes ensuring:

- involvement of the three PRA's and the principal emergency services in sharing information on the nature of the emergency situation;
- involvement of the range of organisations (other than PRA's) who may be requested to respond in co-ordination activities and arrangements;
- mandated co-ordination decisions are made promptly and communicated to all involved;
- site management issues are addressed and decided;
- public information messages and media briefings are co-ordinated and implemented;
- pre-arranged communications (technical) links are put in place and operating;
- operating the generic information management systems;
- ownership of the Lead Agency role is reviewed, and modified as appropriate;
- all aspects of the management of the incident are dealt with before the response is stood down;
- a report on the co-ordination function is prepared in respect of the emergency after it is closed down, and circulated (first as a draft) to the other services which attended.

7.7 Public Information

7.7.1 Local Authority Role in Warning Arrangements

There are circumstances when it may be necessary to protect members of the public who are in the vicinity of an emergency event. This protection is usually achieved by moving people temporarily to a safe area, by evacuation where appropriate or feasible, or by advising affected individuals to take shelter in an appropriate place. The On-Site Co-ordinator will take the decision on how best to protect a threatened population, after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations.

The Local Co-ordination Group should manage the task of co-ordinating the provision of information to the public as soon as it meets. This activity should be co-ordinated by the Lead Agency.

7.7.2 Public Notices

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

- Website: www.sligococo.ie
- Social Media: Sligo County Council's Twitter and Facebook Accounts
- Local broadcasters
- Emergency helpline service

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

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

See Appendix M1 for a listing of media outlets.

7.8 The Media

7.8.1 Liaison with the Media.

In the event of a local emergency within the functional area of Sligo, a Media Liaison Officer will be appointed at both the Onsite and Local Co-ordination Centres. The Media Liaison Officer must keep accurate and timely information on the emergency, so that in consultation with the local Co-ordination Groups, he/she:

- Can be the point of contact for all media enquiries.
- Can provide approved information to queries from the general public.
- Can obtain and provide approved information from / to rest centres, other agencies, press officers, local radio, press, etc.
- Will be responsible for setting up an information helpline.
- Should liaise with other Liaison Officers.

7.8.2 Arrangements for Media On-Site

It is the responsibility of the Lead Agency to establish and run a Media Centre at or near the site of the emergency. This is a building / space specifically designed for interaction between the media and the three Principal Response Agencies. It will be established at a location outside of the outer cordon. All On-Site statements should be cleared / approved with the On-Site Co-ordinator.

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

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

7.8.4 Arrangements for Media at Other Locations

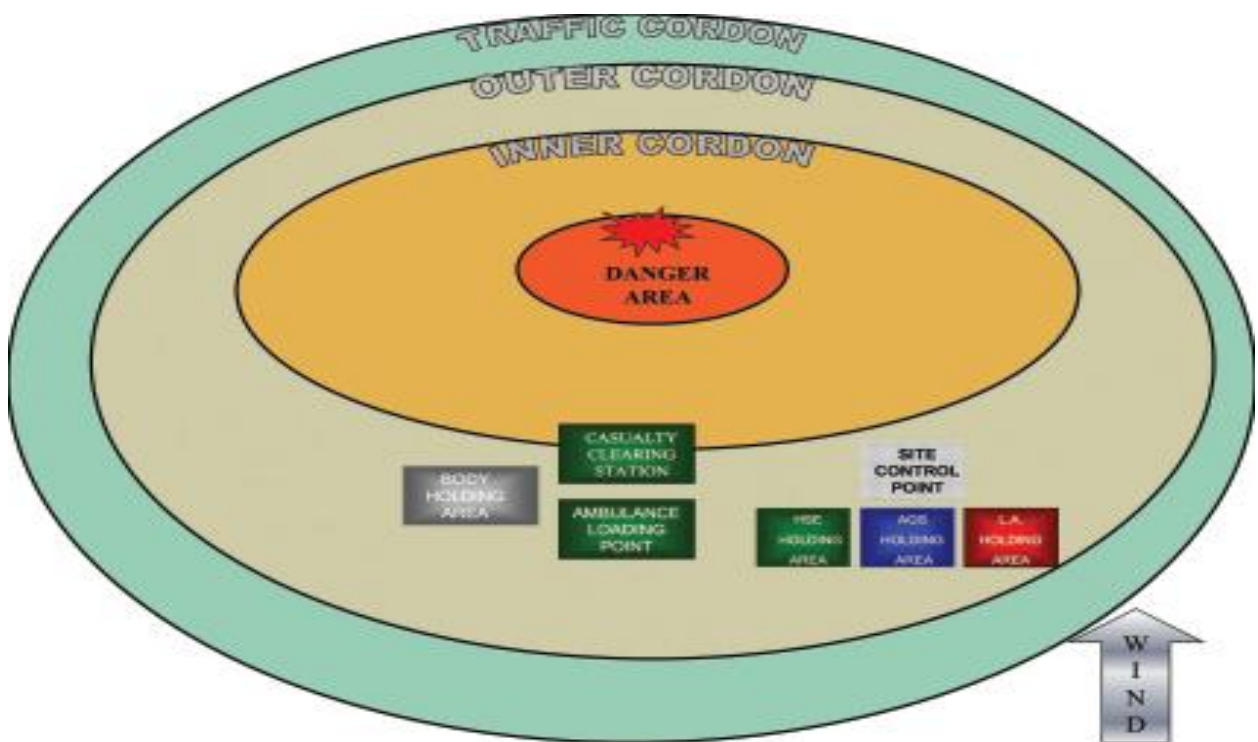
In many situations media attention will move quickly away from the site to other locations, including the Local Co-ordination Centre, hospitals and mortuaries. The Local Co-ordination Group should take the lead in terms of working with the media, away from the site. As with arrangements at the site,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

Liaison Officer at the Local Coordination Centre and the activities of these officers should be co-ordinated by the Media Liaison Officer of the Lead Agency. All statements to the media at this level should be cleared with the chair of the Local Co-ordination Group.

7.9 Site Management Arrangements

7.9.1 Developing a Site Management Plan

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



Idealised Scene Management Arrangements

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

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

7.9.2 Operation and Control of Access

In order to control access to a Major Emergency site, cordons should be established as quickly as possible 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
- To protect evidence and facilitate evidence recovery at the site

Three cordons will be established. An Inner, Outer and Traffic Cordon, along with access cordon points. This will be done by An Garda Síochána 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 at the 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 organisations that may be involved in the response.

Non uniformed personnel from Sligo Local Authority should attend the scene in high visibility jacket with the name Sligo Local Authority and their job function clearly displayed.

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

Organisation	Bib Colour	Wording
Health Service Executive	Green and White Chequer	HSE Controller
Local Authority	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. Below is an example of how the bibs should look for each of the responding agencies.



7.9.4 Air exclusion z

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.

7.10 Mobilising Additional Resources

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

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

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

7.10.1 Mobilisation of Civil Defence

Please refer to section 4.2.2 of this document and *Appendix D4*.

7.10.2 Mobilisation of Defence Forces (Army, Air Corps & Naval Service)

Please refer to section 4.3.1 of this document and *Appendix G3*.

7.10.3 Mobilisation of the Irish Red Cross

Please refer to section 4.3.3 of this document and *Appendix F1*.

7.10.4 Mobilisation of Voluntary Emergency Services

Please refer to section 4.3.4 of this document; details also in *Appendix F1*.

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

Principal Response Agency	Linked Voluntary Emergency Service
An Garda Síochána	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 St. John's Ambulance
Local Authority	Civil Defence

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

7.10.5 Mobilisation of Utility Services

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

Utilities operate under their own legislative and regulatory frameworks but, during the response to an emergency, it is important that they are involved in the co-ordination arrangements. Utilities may be requested to provide representatives and/or experts to the On-Site Co-ordination Group, the Local Coordination Group and/or the Regional Co-ordination Group, as appropriate.

7.10.6 Mobilisation of Private Sector

Private sector organisations may be involved in a major emergency through ownership of the site where the emergency has occurred or through ownership of some element involved in the emergency e.g. an aircraft, bus, factory, etc. They may also be called on to assist in the response to a major emergency, by providing specialist services and/or equipment.

Private sector representatives and/or experts may be requested to support the work of the On-Site Co-ordination Group, the Local Co-ordination Group and/or the Regional Co-ordination Group, as appropriate.

7.10.7 Identifying and Mobilising Additional Organisations

The Local Authority Controller of Operations should ensure that, where the resources of the authority do not appear to be sufficient to bring a situation under control, or the duration of an incident is expected to be extended, the levels, types and duration of

assistance/ support are identified, and that the request for support is passed to either the authority's Crisis Management Team or the Local Co-ordination Centre who will arrange to obtain the support via mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring Authority.

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

7.10.8 Arrangements for Casual Volunteers

Casual Volunteers presenting themselves on-site will be placed in the charge of the Civil Defence Officer who may offer them Temporary Volunteer status. They will be issued with orange armbands emblazoned with the word 'Volunteer' or suitable abbreviation. All Casual Volunteers will remain under the direction of the Civil Defence Officer throughout the duration of the response. Please refer to Section 4.3.4 of this document.

7.10.9 Arrangements for Command, Control, Co-Ordination and Demobilisation of Organisations

Each Principal Response Agency with a linked Voluntary Emergency Services / Organisation is responsible for the mobilisation of that service and their disintegration into the overall response. The internal command of the organisations resides with that organisation. Please refer to section 4.3.1 through 4.3.6 and section 7.10.4 of this document.

7.10.10 Mutual Aid Arrangements

Please refer to Section 4.4 of this document.

7.10.11 Requests for Out-Of-Region Assistance

The decision to seek assistance from outside the region will be made by the Lead Agency, in association with the other principal response agencies, at the Local/Regional Coordination Centre. Please refer to Section 4.6 of this document.

7.10.12 Requests for International Assistance

A Local or 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. Please refer to Section 4.6 of this document.

7.11 Casualty and Survivor Arrangements

7.11.1 General

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. Includes 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 Care of Casualties and Survivors

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.

7.11.2 Injured Parties

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

7.11.2.1 Triage

Triage is a dynamic process of assessing casualties and deciding the priority of their treatment, using a two-stage process of triage sieve and triage sort. Following initial triage, casualties will normally be labelled, using Triage Cards, and moved to a Casualty Clearing Station. The purpose of this labelling is to indicate the 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 / Uninjured Persons from Site

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

7.11.2.3 Casualty Clearing Station

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

7.11.3 Fatalities

The bodies of casualties, which have been triaged as dead, should not be moved from the incident site unless this is necessary to 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 Local Authority can assist An Garda Síochána in this function. Please refer to *Appendix R1 Mass Fatality Plan*, for further information.

7.11.3.1 Coroners Role

The Coroner is an independent judicial officer, who has responsibility for investigating all sudden, unexplained, violent or unnatural deaths. It is the task of the Coroner to establish the 'who, when, where and how' of unexplained death. All such deaths in Ireland are investigated under the Coroners' Act, 1962. Please refer to *Appendix R1 Mass Fatality Plan*, for further information.

7.11.3.2 Body Holding Areas and Temporary Mortuaries

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

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

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to provide a Temporary Mortuary, if required. 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. Please refer to *Appendix R1 Mass Fatality Plan*, for further information.

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.

7.11.4 Survivors

A Survivor Reception Centre should be designated and established at the earliest possible opportunity. The On-Site Co-ordinator, in conjunction with the other Controllers, should determine if such a centre is to be established, and its location in the site management plan. It is the responsibility of Sligo Local Authority to establish and run this centre. The following are suitable buildings for setting up a survivor centre:

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

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 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.

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

7.11.5 Casualty Information

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, survivor reception centre and casualty reception centre where casualties are being treated. 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 inquire about 'loved ones'.

7.11.6 Friends and Relatives Reception Centres

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

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

7.11.7 Non-National Casualties

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.

It should also be noted that An Garda Síochána are likely to have a listing of interpretation service providers available. See *Appendices G1 & H1* for contact numbers.

The Local Authority also have interpreters available to support their Crisis Management Team, See *Appendix D2*.

7.11.8 Pastoral and Psycho-Social Support

The On-Site Co-ordinator will ensure that, where appropriate, pastoral services are mobilised to the site and facilitated by the PRAs 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.

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 Major Hazardous Materials Incidents

The Local Authority is the Lead Agency for response to hazardous materials incidents, with the exception of those involving biological agents. Where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána will act as the Lead Agency.

The Defence Forces, when requested, will assist An Garda Síochána in an Aid to the Civil Power role with Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams. Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a CBRN incident are contained in the *Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Suspect Chemical and Biological Agents arising from Terrorist Activity*, available at www.mem.ie

7.12.2 CCBRN Incidents

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a CCBRN (terrorist incidents involving **C**onventional explosives; **C**hemical substances; **B**iological agents; **R**adiological and **N**uclear material) 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. Where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána will act as the Lead Agency.

7.12.3 Biological Incidents

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a biological incident are detailed in the *Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Suspect Chemical and Biological Agents*.

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. Sligo Local Authority will provide assistance under the command of the lead government department.

7.12.5 Nuclear Accidents

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

7.12.6 Decontamination

The On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other Controllers of Operations, will establish the need for decontamination. The Health Service Executive has responsibility for providing clinical decontamination and medical treatment to casualties affected by hazardous materials. The fire 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.

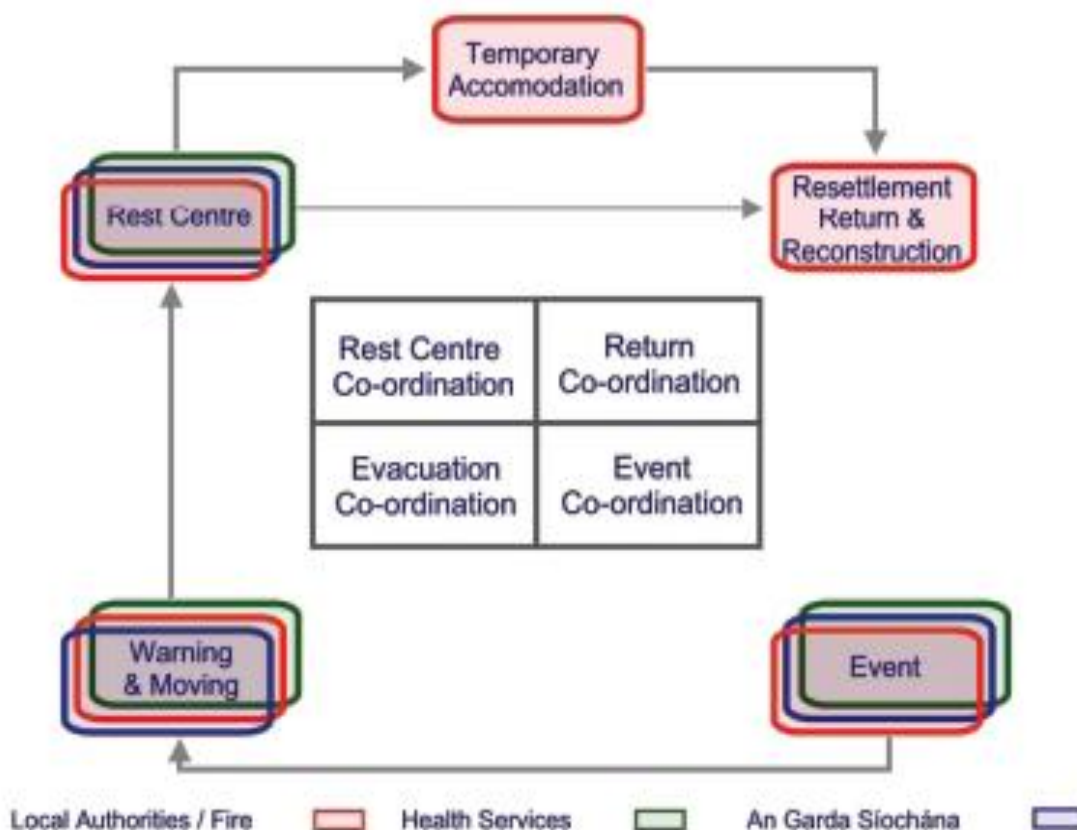
Where emergency decontamination of the public is required, Sligo Fire Service may use its decontamination facilities, or improvised equipment may be used prior to the arrival of dedicated equipment. Where it is decided that persons should undergo this practice, it should be carried out under the guidance 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 Threatened Population & Evacuation

There are circumstances when it may be necessary to protect members of the public who are in the vicinity of an emergency event. This protection is usually achieved by moving people temporarily to a safe area, by evacuation where appropriate or feasible, or by advising affected individuals to take shelter in an appropriate place.

The On-Site Co-ordinator will take the decision on how best to protect a threatened population, after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. Evacuation is usually undertaken on the advice of the Local Authority or Health Service Executive. Where decided upon, the process of evacuation will be undertaken by An Garda Síochána, with the assistance of the other services.



Structure of Evacuation

Source: *A Framework for Major Emergency Management* p.88

In some circumstances, personnel from all services may have to assist in carrying it out. A suitable evacuation assembly point will need to be established and rest centres set up by the Sligo Local Authority.

Personnel from the Local Authority, including members of Civil Defence, will staff rest centres. The centres will provide security, welfare, communication, catering and medical facilities. Evacuees should be documented and basic details passed to the casualty bureau. The Local Authority will assist in this role.

See Appendix T1 Temporary Accommodation (pending)

7.13.2 Involvement of 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 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 Monitoring Potentially Hazardous Situations

Met Éireann have an early warning system in place for Severe Weather on a 24 hour basis. There may be a need to inform the public of the current situation or of possible evacuation. Please refer to Section 11.1 of this document.

Other such warning systems are in place for Flooding, detailed in the Flood Response Plan, Water contamination etc See *Appendix Q1*.

7.14.2 How Warnings are to be Disseminated

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

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

7.15 Emergencies Arising on Inland Waterways

7.15.1 Liaison with the Irish Coast Guard

Sligo Local Authority can provide assistance in the form of the Civil Defence for water rescue / recovery. There are also some inland water rescue volunteer organisations that may be asked to provide assistance such as River Rescue. Please refer to *Appendix F1* for further details on resources.

7.15.2 Receiving 999/112 calls and the Mobilising of Resources

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 Staff

Each principal response agency (and other responding organisation) is responsible for the Safety, Health and Welfare of its staff responding to emergencies and should operate its own safety and welfare management procedures. Please refer to Sligo County Council Organisational Safety Statement for further information.

7.16.2 Safety of Local Authorities Rescue Personnel

When working in the environment of a Major Emergency the On-Site Co-ordinator will apply normal incident and safety management arrangements, a 'Safety Officer' will generally be appointed 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, (refer to Section 7.9.1 of this document). The Local Authority is responsible for the health and safety of its staff when they operate within 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 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 (food, shelter, toilets)

Please refer to section 7.17.3 of this document.

7.16.6 Psycho-social support for Own Personnel

Those who are particularly traumatized by the events of a Major emergency may require skilled professional help. This help will be provided by Sligo County Council.

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

Section 7.17 Logistical Issues/ Protracted Incidents

7.17.1 Arrangements for Rotation of Front Line Rescue / Field Staff

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

7.17.2 Re-organising Normal Emergency and Other Services Cove

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

7.17.3 Arrangements for Initial and Ongoing Welfare for Field Staff

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

Section 7.18 Investigations

7.18.1 Investigations Arising from the Emergency

The scene of a suspected crime should be preserved until a complete and thorough examination has been made. An Garda Síochána 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 Local Authority 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 PRAs. The first member(s) of An Garda Síochána to arrive at the site of a major emergency where a suspected crime has been committed 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 Local Authority will have a primary role in the site clearance, demolition, cleanup operations, removal and disposal of debris. Such activity is only to be done in consultation with An Garda Síochána (or other investigative body) to avoid the possible unnecessary destruction of evidence.

7.18.3 Other Parties with Statutory Investigation Roles

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

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

Section 7.19 Community / VIPs / Observers

7.19.1 Links to be established with Affected Communities

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

7.19.2 Receiving visiting VIPs

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 Local Authority 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 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.

Section 7.20 Standing-Down the Major Emergency

7.20.1 Standing-Down the Major Emergency

A decision to stand down the major emergency status of the incident at the site should be taken by the On-Site Co-ordinator, in consultation and agreement 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

When the incident has ended, each agency will be obliged to give a debrief to the members of its service that were involved in the emergency. Sligo Local Authority will review the inter-agency co-ordination aspects of the response after every declaration of a Major Emergency. Operational debriefs should identify areas for improvement in procedures, equipment and systems. They should not be forums for criticising the performance of others.

A multi-agency debrief will 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.

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

Section 8 - Agency Specific Elements and Sub-Plans

8.1 Responsibilities

Each PRA should response to an Emergency with its own pre-determined arrangements. The role of each organisation is outlined below:

8.1.1 Sligo Local Authority

Sligo Local Authority will undertake the following responsibilities in response to a Major Emergency being declared:

- notifying the other two relevant principal response agencies, through Camp West, if Sligo Local Authority declared the major emergency
- 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 Section 7, Appendix K1, and undertaking the specified coordination function
- protection and rescue of persons and property
- controlling and/or extinguishing of fires;
- dealing with hazardous material incidents
- 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 welfare¹ 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 debris²

- 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 coordinating³ / 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;
- maintaining essential Local Authority services (e.g. roads availability, fire and emergency operations cover, public water supply, waste water treatment, waste disposal) during the major emergency

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

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

³ The Local Authority should co-ordinate local aspects of National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents

8.1.2 An Garda Síochána

An Garda Síochána should undertake the following responsibilities in response to a major emergency being declared:

- notifying the other two relevant principal response agencies
- mobilisation of predetermined resources and activating predetermined procedures in accordance with its Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure
- requesting assistance from the Defence Forces in line with agreed protocols,
- MOUs, SLAs and current practices
- acting as Lead Agency, where this is determined in accordance with Section 7, Appendix K1, and undertaking the specified coordination function
- maintaining law and order
- implementing agreed site plan/management arrangements, as appropriate
- traffic management
- crowd control
- implementing agreed aspects of evacuation procedures
- informing the public, as necessary and on the advice of the competent Authority, of actual or potential dangers arising from the emergency
- co-ordinating/conducting searches for missing persons
- assisting and directing survivors/uninjured persons away from the site (and any danger area) to places of safety
- collecting information on casualties and survivors
- arrangements in respect of the dead, in association with the Coroner
- recovery of bodies

- provision of casualty bureaux/casualty information service
- preservation of the site
- collection of evidence and forensic work⁴
- assisting the Coroner in the case of fatal casualties, inquiries or criminal proceedings
- engaging any specialist contractors required to assist with emergency operations
- exercising control of any voluntary or other service which it mobilises to the site
- 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 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
- maintaining essential Garda services during the Major Emergency

⁴ Precedence should only be given to this activity where it will not interfere with the protection of life, the rescue of live casualties, and the treatment of casualties

8.1.3 Health Service Executive

Health Service Executive should undertake the following responsibilities in response to an emergency being declared:

- 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 Section 7, Appendix K1, and undertaking the specified coordination function
- provision of medical advice and assistance
- provision of medical aid to casualties at the site
- triage of casualties, and assigning them to hospitals for evacuation
- casualty evacuation and ambulance transport
- provision of hospital treatment
- provision of psycho-social support to persons affected by the emergency
- certification of the dead
- support for An Garda Síochána’s forensic work
- support for the Coroner’s role
- provision of community welfare services⁵
- clinical decontamination and decontamination of contaminated persons on arrival at hospital

- advising and assisting An Garda Síochána and Local Authority on public health issues arising
- exercising control of any voluntary or other service which it mobilises to the site
- 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 coordinating⁶ / 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
- maintaining essential health services during the Major Emergency

⁵ Welfare in this case is intended to mean the normal community welfare support services.

⁶ The Health Service Executive should co-ordinate local aspects of the National Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Emergency Plan.

8.2 Sub Plans

Arising from the risk assessment process described in Section 3, Sligo Local Authority’s Major Emergency Plan has identified where specific plans/ arrangements exist for responding to emergencies.

The following Sub-Plans exist within Sligo County Council:

- **Flood Emergency Response Plan (pending)**

Section 9 - Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination

9.1 Regional Level Co-ordination

Regional level major emergencies may be declared, with a Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination activated. This will provide for mutual aid, support and co-ordination facilities to be activated in a region, the boundaries of which are determined to suit the exigencies of the emergency.

Sligo County Council belongs to the North West region. Building on good practice that has emerged over the years, the principal response agencies, within North-West region, have worked together to coordinate the inter-agency aspects of major emergency preparedness and management. This region incorporates the following counties:

- Sligo
- Donegal
- Leitrim

9.1.1 Regional Steering Group

A Regional Steering Group is in existence in the North-West Region. This group is representative of senior management from each of the Principle Response Agencies. The primary role of the North-West Regional Steering Group will be to ensure that:

- the regional aspects of preparedness set out in the Framework are delivered
- an annual budget to support regional preparedness activities is provided
- a regional level major emergency management development programme is prepared and implemented
- a regional level risk assessment is carried out
- appropriate mitigation steps are taken in respect of priority risks
- a Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination is prepared
- Local and Regional Co-ordination Centres are designed and developed
- the output from each principal response agency's preparedness assessment is reviewed and validated

9.1.2 Regional Working Group

A Regional Working Group is in existence in the North-West Region. This group is representative of senior operational management from each of the Principle Response Agencies.

Both the Regional Steering and Working Groups may invite others that they deem appropriate, such as the Defence Forces, the voluntary emergency services, utilities and private sector organisations, to attend and participate in their work.

9.2 Activation of Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination

A Regional-Level Major Emergency may be declared where the nature of an emergency is such that:

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

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group will declare a Regional-Level Major Emergency and activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination. 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 Lead Agency which has declared the regional level emergency will convene and chair the Regional Co-ordination Group.

Depending on the circumstances, the goal of regional co-ordination may be achieved by using:

- a single Regional Co-ordination Centre, or
- a Regional Co-ordination Centre supported by one or more Local Co-ordination Centres

Any 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.

Section 10 - Links with National Emergency Plans

10.1 National Emergency Plans

Each principal response agency should provide for working with appropriate national bodies and responding to and activating appropriate aspects of their Major Emergency Plan following requests arising from national emergency situations, e.g.

- National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents,
- Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Emergency Plan,
- Animal Health Plan

The roles envisaged may include:

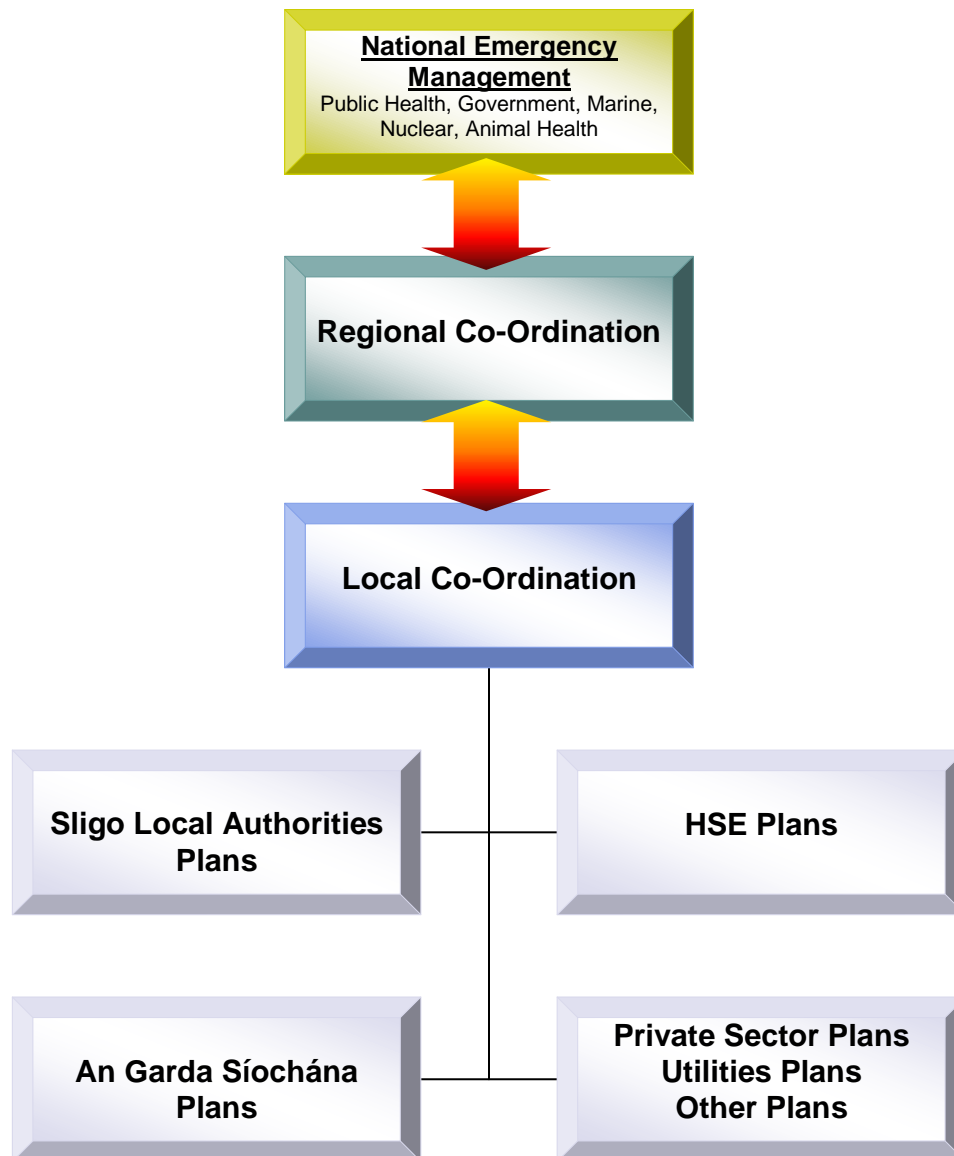
- Monitoring and/or reporting on the impact of the emergency within its functional area
- Undertaking pre-assigned roles in National Emergency Plans, such as coordinating/implementing certain countermeasures in their functional area
- Undertaking relevant tasks following an emergency/crisis
- Acting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

10.2 Activated on request from Irish Coast Guard

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

10.3 Activation on request from a Minister of Government

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



Linking Major Emergency Plans with National and other Plans

Section 11 - Severe Weather Plans

11.1 Responding to Severe Weather Emergencies

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

Arrangements have also been put in place by Met Éireann to issue public service severe weather warnings to the Local Authority. See *Appendix Q1* for further details.

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

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

11.1.1 Flooding Emergencies.

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

11.1.2 Severe Weather Conditions (Excluding Flooding Emergencies)

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

Section 12 - Site and Event Specific Arrangements and Plans

12.1 Site and Event Specific Emergency Plans

There are both legislative and procedural arrangements, which require that emergency plans be prepared for specific sites or events (e.g. SEVESO sites, Airports, Ports, major sports events, etc.).

Arising from the risk assessment process described in Section 3, Sligo's Major Emergency Plan, *Appendix B*, has identified sites/events where specific plans/arrangements exist for responding to emergencies.

Risk Cards are commonly produced by Sligo Fire Service for particular premises and similarly regular inspections and records are recorded by different departments of the local Authority for particular risks, e.g. pollution spills, etc.

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

12.2 SEVESO Sites

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

At present there are no sites designated as SEVESO sites within the functional area of the Sligo's Local Authority.

Section 13 - The Recovery Phase

13.1 Support for Individuals and Communities

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

- • Assisting the physical and emotional recovery of victims
- • Providing support and services to persons affected by the emergency
- • Clean-up of damaged areas
- • Restoration of infrastructure and public services
- • Supporting the recovery of affected communities
- • Planning and managing community events related to the emergency
- • Investigations/inquiries into the events and/or the response
- • Restoring normal functioning to the principal response agencies
- • Managing economic consequences

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

13.1.1 Supporting Individuals and Communities Affected

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

It is imperative that the Local Authority restores its critical service to a pre-emergency state as quickly and efficiently as possible. The services and staff the local authority may be able to provide are based upon a wide range of skills and resources drawn from its day-to-day operations such as:

- Technical and engineering support
- Building control
- Road services
- Public health and environmental issues
- Provision of reception centres
- Re-housing and accommodation needs

- Transport
- Social services
- Psychosocial support
- Help lines
- Welfare and financial needs

There are specific requirements for each agency in the recovery process as follows:

Local Authority

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

13.1.2 Managing of Public Appeals and External Aid

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

Once the issues on the agenda of Co-ordination Group(s) 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.

13.2 Clean-Up

In the aftermath of an emergency the clean-up operation will be assigned to the Local Authority. The removal of debris and contaminated waste is one of the principal concerns for the Local Authority. The Local Authority will commence clean up of a site as soon as possible but without hindering the investigation process. Careful consideration must be provided for the removal of decontaminated debris to locations that will not affect communities.

13.3 Restoration of Infrastructure and Services

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

13.3.1 Procedures and Arrangements for Monitoring the Situation

The Recovery Working Group will be responsible for the co-ordination of the recovery phase, managing resources and monitoring the situation until the issues arising are more appropriately dealt with by the normal management processes.

13.3.2 Procedure for Liaison with Utilities

The utility companies may need to be mobilised in the recovery phase in order to provide essential services such as gas, water and electrical supplies and communications facilities. The Crisis Management Team will need to liaise with the utility companies to facilitate bringing their services back on line.

13.3.3 Determination of Priorities

It is the responsibility of the Local, Regional or National Recovery Co-ordination Group together with the Recovery Working Group to prioritise events during the recovery phase. It is important that staff welfare arrangements are given priority in the recovery stage of an incident, so that the needs of all staff are catered for.

13.3.4 Protection against Continuing Hazards

It will be the responsibility of the Local Co-ordination Group and Crisis Management Team to assess ongoing hazards and decide if further mitigation measures or further planning and preparing are required to offset the consequences of such hazards.

Section 14 - Review of the Major Emergency Plan

14.1 Internal Review Process

An internal review of the Major Emergency Plan will be undertaken by Sligo Local Authority on a yearly basis, the review should be held on the annual date of implementing the plan and also following any exercises or incidents. The review should:

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

14.2 How the Plan is to be Reviewed and Amended Externally

Sligo Local Authority appraisal is reviewed and validated by the North West Regional Working and Steering Groups on Major Emergency Management. This appraisal is also reviewed and validated by the Department of the Housing, Planning and Local Government and the MEM National Working Group.

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

14.2.1 Inter-agency Review Process at the Regional Steering Group

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

Each agency's appraisal should also be reviewed and validated by the relevant parent Department in accordance with the normal appraisal/reporting relationships within that sector. Any issues arising from the review should be referred back to the organisation for appropriate action. In cases of disagreement between a principal response agency and a Regional Steering Group, the National Steering Group should be consulted and should decide on the issue.

14.3 Review after Declaration of a Major Emergency

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

14.3.1 Review of Agency's Performance of its Functions

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

14.3.2 Inter-Agency Review

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

Section 15 – Appendices

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Appendix T2	Evacuation
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Appendix A1 - Glossary of Acronyms

AAIU	Air Accident Investigation Unit
CCBRN	Conventional Explosive, Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear
CMT	Crisis Management Team
EOD	Explosives Ordnance Disposal
ICG	Irish Coast Guard
METHANE	Major Emergency Declared Exact Location of the emergency Type of Emergency (Transport, Chemical etc) Hazards present and potential Access/egress routes Number and Types of Casualties Emergency services present and required
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEPNA	National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents
PDF	Permanent Defence Forces
PES	Principle Emergency Services
PRA	Principle Response Agency
RVP	Rendezvous Point
SAR	Search and Rescue
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
VIP	Very Important Person

Appendix A2 - Glossary of Terms

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

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

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

Information Management System	A system for the gathering, handling, use and dissemination of information.
Investigating Agencies	Those organisations with a legal duty to investigate the causes of an event.
Lead Agency	The principal response agency that is assigned the responsibility and mandate for the coordination function.
Likelihood	The probability or chance of an event occurring.
Local Co-ordination Centre	A pre-nominated building, typically at county or sub-county level, with support arrangements in place, and used for meetings of the Local Co-ordination Group.
Local Co-ordination Group	A group of senior representatives from the three principal response agencies (An Garda Síochána, HSE and Local Authority) whose function is to facilitate strategic level co-ordination, make policy decisions, liaise with regional/national level coordination centres, if appropriate, and facilitate the distribution of information to the media and the public.
Major Emergency Management	The range of measures taken under the five stages of the emergency management paradigm.
Major Emergency Plan	A plan prepared by one of the Principal Response Agencies.
Major Emergency	Any event which, usually with little or no warning, causes or threatens death or injury, serious disruption of essential services, or damage to property, the environment or infrastructure beyond the normal capabilities of the principal emergency services in the area in which the event occurs, and requiring the activation of specific additional procedures to ensure effective, co-ordinated response.

Media Centre	A building/area specifically designated for use by the media, and for liaison between the media and the principal response agencies.
Media Holding Statements	Statements that contain generic information that has been assembled in advance, along with preliminary incident information that can be released in the early stages of the emergency.
Mitigation	Apart of risk management and includes all actions taken to eliminate or reduce the risk to people, property and the environment from the hazards which threaten them.
Mutual Aid	The provision of services and assistance by one organisation to another.
National Emergency	A centre designated for inter-departmental co-ordination purposes.
On-Site Coordinator	The person from the lead agency with the role of coordinating the activities of all agencies responding to an emergency.
On-Site Coordination Centre	Specific area/facility at the Site Control Point where the On-Site Co-ordinator is located and the On-Site Coordination Group meet.
On-Site Co-ordination Group	Group that includes the On-Site Co-ordinator and the Controllers of Operations of the other two agencies, an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer and others as appropriate.
Operational Level	The level at which the management of hands-on work is undertaken at the incident site(s) or associated areas.
Principal Emergency Services (PES)	The services which respond to normal emergencies in Ireland, namely An Garda Síochána, the Ambulance Service and the Fire Service.
Principal Response	The agencies designated by the Government to

Agencies (PRA)	respond to Major Emergencies i.e. An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and the Local Authority.
Protocol	A set of standard procedures for carrying out a task or managing a specific situation.
Receiving Hospital	A hospital designated by the Health Service Executive to be a principal location to which major emergency casualties are directed.
Recovery	The process of restoring and rebuilding communities, infrastructure, buildings and services.
Regional Co-ordination Centre	A pre-nominated building, typically at regional level, with support arrangements in place and used by the Regional Co-ordination Group.
Regional Co-ordination Group	A group of senior representatives of all relevant principal response agencies, whose function is to facilitate strategic level co-ordination at regional level.
Rendezvous Point (RVP)	The Rendezvous Point is the location to which all resources responding to the emergency site are directed in the first instance. An Garda Síochána will organise the Rendezvous Point. Other services may have one of their officers present to direct responding vehicles into action or to that service's Holding Area.
Response	The actions taken immediately before, during and/or directly after an emergency.
Resilience	The term used to describe the inherent capacity of communities, services and infrastructure to withstand the consequences of an incident, and to recover/restore normality.
Rest Centre	Premises where persons evacuated during an emergency are provided with appropriate welfare and shelter.

Risk	The combination of the likelihood of a hazardous event and its potential impact.
Risk Assessment	A systematic process of identifying and evaluating, either qualitatively or quantitatively, the risk resulting from specific hazards.
Risk Holders	Organisations and companies, which own and/or operate facilities and/or services where relevant hazards are found, such as Airlines, Chemical Manufacturers, etc.
Risk Management	Actions taken to reduce the probability of an event occurring or to mitigate its consequences.
Risk Matrix	A matrix of likelihood and impact on which the results of a risk assessment are plotted.
Risk Regulators	Bodies with statutory responsibility for the regulation of activities where there are associated risks, such as the Health and Safety Authority, the Irish Aviation Authority, etc.
Scenario	A hypothetical sequence of events, usually based on real experiences or on a projection of the consequences of hazards identified during the risk assessment process.
SEVESO sites	Industrial sites that, because of the presence of dangerous substances in sufficient quantities, are regulated under Council Directives 96/82/EC and 2003/105/EC, commonly referred to as the Seveso II Directive.
Site Casualty Officer	The Member of An Garda Síochána with responsibility for collecting all information on casualties at the site.
Site Control Point	The place at a major emergency site from which the Controllers of Operations control, direct and co-ordinate their organisation's response to the emergency.

Site Medical Officer	The medical officer with overall medical responsibility at the site, who will liaise with the health service Controller of Operations on all issues related to the treatment of casualties.
Site Medical Team	A team drawn from a pre-arranged complement of doctors and nurses, with relevant experience and training, which will be sent to the site, if required.
Site Management Plan	The arrangement of the elements of a typical major emergency site, matched to the terrain of the emergency, as determined by the On-Site Co-ordination Group.
Standard Operating Procedures	Sets of instructions, covering those features of an operation that lend themselves to a definite or standardised procedure, without loss of effectiveness.
Support Team	A pre-designated group formed to support and assist individuals operating in key roles, such as On-Site Co-ordinator, Chair of Local Co-ordination Group, etc.
Strategic Level	The level of management that is concerned with the broader and long-term implications of the emergency and which establishes the policies and framework within which decisions at the tactical level are taken.
Survivor Reception Centre	Secure location to which survivors, not requiring hospital treatment, can be taken for shelter, first aid, interview and documentation.
Tactical Level	The level at which the emergency is managed, including issues such as, allocation of resources, the procurement of additional resources, if required, and the planning and co-ordination of ongoing operations.
Temporary Mortuary	A building or vehicle adapted for temporary use as a mortuary in which post mortem examinations can take place.

Triage

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