

PROTOCOL FOR MULTI-AGENCY CO-ORDINATION OF LOCAL LEVEL RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

Introduction

1. The term emergency within this Protocol is defined as:
 - An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare, the environment or the security of Northern Ireland or the UK as a whole. (NI Civil Contingencies Framework - refreshed 2011)
2. In Northern Ireland emergencies are classified as follows:
 - Local Level – emergencies where the outcomes are such that the response can be delivered entirely by organisations operating locally/sub-regionally, or
 - Strategic Level – emergencies where the extent or severity of their impact is such that strategic level intervention and co-ordination by central government is required.
3. The purpose of this Protocol is to set out arrangements to facilitate the multi-agency response to, and recovery from, local level emergencies.
4. The terms of this Protocol are complementary to those of the separate but associated 'Protocol for the Escalation of the Response from the Local to the Strategic Level', and follow the principles of DOE Circular LG 07/06 which provided guidance to District Councils in Northern Ireland in relation to emergencies. That guidance was specifically developed to assist Councils in the discharge of discretionary functions adopted under Article 29 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 2005.
5. The document sets out arrangements for:
 - multi-agency assessment of an anticipated or developing situation;
 - co-ordination of the multi-agency response and recovery; and

- inter-agency communication and compilation of an accurate and up to date information picture for the developing situation.
6. It is anticipated that these arrangements will usually be delivered on a sub-regional basis, based on the boundaries of the Sub-regional Civil Emergency Preparedness Groups (EPGs), but can be delivered regionally for local level type issues.
 7. The document does not set out the detail of internal arrangements within individual organisations, but rather focuses on the multi-agency effort.

Multi-Agency Assessment

8. It is important that when an issue is anticipated or developing which has the potential for multi-agency impacts it is monitored and assessed on a multi-agency basis to determine the need to activate arrangements to co-ordinate the multi-agency response / recovery.

Alert

9. Where a lead agency anticipates an issue within its sector with the potential for multi-agency impacts, it will alert all relevant response partners who may be required to provide support or assistance should an emergency develop. In most instances these partners will comprise those organisations that are represented within the EPG for that area.
10. In response to an alert from the lead agency, or from another emergency responder or essential service provider anticipating an issue, depending on circumstances at the time either PSNI or the relevant District Council CEO/Emergency Planning Co-ordinator (EPCO) can convene multi-agency conference calls / meetings to monitor and assess the developing situation. The relevant District Council will be the one within whose area the emergency has occurred. Alternatively where the emergency impacts on more than one District Council within the sub-region; or where it is unclear which District Council should co-ordinate; this function will be delivered by an agreed Council Chief Executive or the EPCO. A key outcome from these conference calls/meetings will be the determination of the need to establish full multi-agency co-ordination of the emergency response /recovery.

Multi-agency Co-ordination

Activation

11. Where a Lead Agency, District Council, EPCO, other emergency responder or an essential service provider becomes aware of an emergency with multi-agency impacts a sub-regional multi-agency emergency response group may be convened.
12. Where the emergency services (first responders) do not clearly have a primary role in responding to the incident the response group would normally be convened by the relevant EPCO and be chaired by the District Council Chief Executive. (The District Council Chief Executive may delegate the role of chair to the EPCO). However, where the first responders have a primary role in the response, PSNI can convene and chair the multi-agency response group.
13. Where another emergency responder organisation, e.g. PHA would more appropriately chair the multi-agency response group, this would be determined by agreement.

Responsibilities

14. Response to Local Incidents. The PSNI will co-ordinate the multi-agency response group where the incident poses a threat to life. In all other circumstances the co-ordination role will be assumed by the relevant District Council unless it is more appropriate for another member of the multi-agency group to do so. The EPCO for the area will support the District Councils in the coordination.
15. Where PSNI is co-ordinating the multi-agency response group the District Council may identify a need during the response phase, to co-ordinate the contributions of responding organisations not directly concerned with the main strands of the response. Where this occurs, the District Council, via the EPCO, will determine the most advantageous means of providing the necessary co-ordination of these organisations, while also reporting the activities, developments and support available at that level into the consideration and agreed actions of the main multi-agency response group.
16. Response to tactical level sub-regional Incidents. Where incidents affect a wider area than single or conjoined council areas and risks to life are limited to discrete locations

within the affected area, it may be appropriate for PSNI to coordinate the response in those areas where the risk to life occurs, whilst agreeing that the coordination of the multi-agency response to the wider, lower-risk, incident may fall to local government or other agreed appropriate agency.

17. A multi-agency response group may seek advice from departments, agencies and organisations with specialist knowledge and skills to inform response plans and prioritise actions. Sub-groups of the multi-agency response group may be formed for this purpose.
18. Recovery. In principle the recovery phase of an incident will be chaired and coordinated by a District Council. In the initial phases of an emergency, the multi-agency response group will co-ordinate any necessary recovery issues in parallel with the response. Where the PSNI is co-ordinating the initial response and recovery issues, the handover of co-ordination responsibility to the District Council for the recovery phase can occur by agreement at the most appropriate juncture. Where multi-agency co-ordination is already being provided by the District Council then they will retain this responsibility for the recovery phase to completion.
19. The convening of a multi-agency response / recovery group in no way overrides or affects the policy and operational responsibilities of the constituent organisations.

Membership

20. The range of agencies required to participate in the multi-agency response group will vary according to the nature, scale and scope of the incident. In determining the appropriate membership of the group, the EPCO will immediately facilitate liaison between representatives of the lead agency, PSNI and the District Council who will collectively decide on the initial membership. In the majority of circumstances membership will consist of those individuals represented within the EPG. Other agencies may also be required to participate and these will be contacted as soon as possible on activation of the protocol

Communication

21. To facilitate the timely activation of the multi-agency response, PSNI and the EPCOs will maintain robust and up to date contact arrangements for all relevant organisations

that may be required to participate in the multi-agency group. These contact directories will contain contact details for all members of the EPG and of other organisations that may be required to attend the sub-regional multi-agency response group. Additional details of national and regional, departmental and agency contacts and of key contacts in adjoining EPGs will be held by the EPCO and be available at a regional level

22. In order to ensure full, clear and accurate communication of the initial nature of the incident, the lead agency should in the first instance complete and distribute the Incident Report template attached at Annex A.
23. Following this, upon activation of a multi-agency response group the co-ordinating organisation will ensure completion of a composite Situation Report with input from all participating organisations (Annex E). This template should be used regardless of the medium through which communications are taking place between Group members.
24. The Agenda suggested in Annex B outlines the main considerations that should be discussed during the co-ordination of the multi-agency response and recovery phase. An aide memoire/ checklist of possible actions during implementation of the protocol and for sub regional coordination is attached in Annex C. This document aims to provide a recording mechanism for the allocation and progression of tasks on a multi-agency basis.
25. The multi-agency group will agree the best means and frequency of communication, the appropriate distribution lists for the aide memoire (Annex C), incident log (Annex D), situation reports (Annex E) and any other working documents. In addition and as necessary, they will also agree the communication of essential information and/or support requirements to any strategic co-ordination mechanism forum that may have been activated, e.g. the NI Central Crisis Management Arrangements (NICCMA).

Handover and Stand-down Arrangements

26. The responsibility for chairing the multi-agency group may be passed by agreement to another organisation at any stage within an emergency where it becomes apparent it is more appropriate for that organisation to deliver the function. This is most likely to be the case in the transition from response to recovery where PSNI has been chairing the multi-agency group in the response phase and is handing over to the relevant District

Council for the recovery phase.

27. The multi-agency group co-ordinating the response / recovery will stand-down following agreement amongst members that the group is no longer required to manage the multi-agency effort.

INITIAL INCIDENT REPORT

Annex A

INITIATING AGENCY..... DATE/TIME

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE..... CONTACT DETAILS.....

a) The nature of the incident.	
b) The location of the incident	
c) Date and time of occurrence	
d) Available estimate of the severity. <i>e.g. Casualty numbers, environmental contamination issues, extent of areas affected, areas at risk</i>	
e) Response Phase Lead	
f) The location from which the response will be co-ordinated <i>e.g. Police Silver Command or Sub-regional Multi-Agency Group</i> Contact details for lead agency	
g) Other Organisations and Agencies involved Key contact details	
h) Identified objectives and priorities	
i) Immediate support required. <i>E.g. provision of accommodation, personnel, equipment or other support.</i>	

k) Information available regarding access to designated buildings, safe routes etc.	
l) Estimate of duration of response phase	
m) Key information for public.	

It is suggested that this form should be completed in the first instance by the lead agency and, if subsequently the incident passes to a sub-regional multi-agency group, by the coordinator of that group.

MEETING OF THE MULTI-AGENCY CO-ORDINATION GROUP

1. Purpose of Meeting
2. Assessment of Situation : Update from Relevant Organisations
3. Determine/Anticipate Impacts
4. Vulnerabilities. *Infrastructure, Vulnerable Premises/Persons,*
5. Command and Control. *Responsibility for Coordination, Coordination Centre, Assessment of requirements*
6. Setting Objectives. *Mission and Task objectives. (Long, medium and short term)*
7. Responses. *Capacity of lead departments and agencies, requirements for mutual aid, sources of mutual aid, anticipation of other needs. Sources of support*
8. Media / Information to the Public/ Elected members/. *Multi-agency lead for communication*
9. Next Steps : Actions and Timescales for Delivery
10. AOB
11. Time of Next Meeting

Check list/Situation Report for Multi-Agency UseAide Memoire/ Checklist of Possible Actions during Implementation of the
Protocol for Multi Agency Coordination of Local Level Response & Recovery and Sub Regional Coordination

Cross Ref with Agenda (Annex B)		Issue /Descriptor	Priority (H,M,L)	ACTIONS	Status R, A, G	Assigned To:	Completed Date/Time	Comments/ cross referee with log (Annex D)
2	ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION	Input from Lead department/Agency/Met Office (as reqd) Obtain outline description of event, estimation of extent, duration, severity, known characteristics and unknown characteristics						
3	IMPACT ASSESSMENT	Lead departments/Agency, Met Office Identify geographic area(s) affected, population exposed, extent of knowledge of risks and overview of responses necessary. Consider need for specialist advice/support to determine general and local impacts: (STAC, Vulnerable people, GDS, SpatialINI)						

Cross Ref with Agenda (Annex B)		Issue /Descriptor	Priority (H,M,L)	ACTIONS	Status R, A, G	Assigned To:	Completed Date/Time	Comments/ cross referee with log (Annex D)
4	VULNERABILITIES	Identify/assess Critical Infrastructure in affected area, e.g. NIE, BT, Gas, NIW						
4	VULNERABILITIES	Identification of locations of vulnerable people -Schools, nurseries, playgroups -Hospitals, Residential Homes, Hostels, Care Homes, sheltered accommodation. -Isolated properties -Other						

Cross Ref with Agenda (Annex B)		Issue /Descriptor	Priority (H,M,L)	ACTIONS	Status R, A, G	Assigned To:	Completed Date/Time	Comments/ cross referee with log (Annex D)
4	VULNERABILITIES	Identify vulnerable persons via Critical Care Lists -NIW -HSCT -NIE Invoke community support links Consider media messages for self-declaration of vulnerability						
4	VULNERABILITIES	Identify any Planned Events/Gatherings bringing people into affected areas Consider school opening and closure requirements School transport						

Cross Ref with Agenda (Annex B)		Issue /Descriptor	Priority (H,M,L)	ACTIONS	Status R, A, G	Assigned To:	Completed Date/Time	Comments/ cross referee with log (Annex D)
5	COMMAND & CONTROL	<p>Agree coordination responsibilities. Local, Subregional, Tactical (PSNI/Local Government), Strategic (escalate to CCG(NI))</p> <p>Identify other coordination/command centres</p> <p>Consider/establish communication, liaison and representation between centres.</p> <p>Complete initial incident report (Annex A) and programme on-going situation reports (Annex B).</p> <p>Plan distribution of sitreps. (Lead departments, PSNI, partner agencies, TEO, DfC LGPD, other command/coordination centres)</p> <p>Identify key partners and agree representation required at coordination centre</p>						
5	COORDINATION FACILITIES	<p>Consider requirement/location for coordination centre</p> <p>Pre-planned list of centres, Space, Access, Safety, Facilities, (ITC and IT support, catering arrangements), Administrative capacity, Preparedness, Resilience (power and comms, standby arrangements for failure) Competing uses,</p> <p>Consider/plan shift cover for all personnel</p>						

Cross Ref with Agenda (Annex B)		Issue /Descriptor	Priority (H,M,L)	ACTIONS	Status R, A, G	Assigned To:	Completed Date/Time	Comments/ cross referee with log (Annex D)
5	COORDINATION FACILITIES	Assess need for Administrative Support -Logs -Minutes -Conference Calls -SITREPS						
6	TASK OBJECTIVE	Consider: - preservation of life, prevention of injury or harm to people, protection of environment, minimisation of economic impacts, restoration of normal conditions,						

Cross Ref with Agenda (Annex B)		Issue /Descriptor	Priority (H,M,L)	ACTIONS	Status R, A, G	Assigned To:	Complete d Date/Time	Comment s/ cross referee with log (Annex ID)
6	SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES	12 hour objectives Establish sources of advice, information Prioritise responses, seek specialist advice if required Identify resource requirements and availability, mobilise support Assess and respond to requests for support. Need for ESCs, flood mitigation and response, Establish communications – public and cross organisation Identify likely forthcoming requests.						
6	MEDIUM TERM OBJECTIVES	Review response priorities and modify. Improve support services if required. (mapping, specialist advice). Review likely duration and plan for resource needs if extended. Plan hand-over of coordination						

Cross Ref with Agenda (Annex B)		Issue /Descriptor	Priority (H,M,L)	ACTIONS	Status R, A, G	Assigned To:	Completed Date/Time	Comments/ cross referee with log (Annex D)
6	LONG TERM OBJECTIVES	To begin recovery planning as soon as appropriate Consider welfare needs of: affected persons, responders, others Link to CG, Lead Departments, Agencies in respect of housing, economic impacts, funding needs						
7	PERSONNEL	Availability of personnel for response or mutual aid, from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each participating agency - Other agencies/organisations - Planned Mutual Aid Deployment - Community Assistance Ensure provision of advice/briefing – e.g. instruction, supervision, training, PPE.						

Cross Ref with Agenda (Annex B)		Issue /Descriptor	Priority (H,M,L)	ACTIONS	Status R, A, G	Assigned To:	Completed Date/Time	Comments/ cross referee with log (Annex D)
7	EQUIPMENT	Assessment of need for Equipment - Types of equipment required - Availability of equipment from participating agencies - Availability of equipment from other organisations - Lead time until deployed - Expected duration of deployment						
8	PUBLIC INFORMATION	Assessment of need for information to the public via: -Briefed Elected Members -Briefed Community representatives - SMS messaging to known recipients -Social media -Internet -EIS/NI Direct -Other media streams						

Cross Ref with Agenda (Annex B)		Issue /Descriptor	Priority (H,M,L)	ACTIONS	Status R, A, G	Assigned To:	Completed Date/Time	Comments/ cross referee with log (Annex D)
9	OTHER							
9	OTHER							

Status key:

Red = Problem that requires action immediately. Amber = On track but requires attention to complete. Green = On track and no problems are envisaged at this point

[illegible]

SITUATION REPORT FOR DURATION OF MULTI AGENCY COORDINATION**Annex E**

DATE/TIME

CONTACT DETAILS.....a) Situation Overview	
b) Current Situation	
c) Key Events for this Reporting Period	
e) Other relevant Information e.g. manpower/staffing issues/support required media/communications	
f) Actions planned to take place over next reporting period	
g) Forward Look: issues that may arise over longer period	
h) Other Information not covered elsewhere	
i) Attached information	
j) Time of Next Update	
k) Relevant contact details	