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FROM: NR Head of Civil Contingencies Policy Branch

DATE: 30 January 2020

TO: 1. Chris Stewart

2. Head Of The Civil Service

SUBJECT: To advise you of the process for activation of the Northern Ireland Central Crisis Management Arrangements (NICCMA)

Issue: Activation of the Northern Ireland Central Crisis Management Arrangements (NICCMA) should the current Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) be declared a global pandemic.

Timescale: IMMEDIATE

Press Office Advice:

FOI Implications: Fully Disclosable

Financial Implications: None.

Legislative Implications: None.

Executive Referral: Not required at present

Recommendation: Note the process for activation of the Northern Ireland Central Crisis Management Arrangements.

Background

1. This paper sets out the process for activation of the NICCMA should the Coronavirus be declared a global pandemic.

Detail

2. As per the NICCMA protocol, the following can activate NICCMA:
 - The First Minister and deputy First Minister **or** TEO may activate NICCMA following a request to do so from the Executive;
 - the Lead Government Department;
 - a senior representative from the NIO Briefing Room (NIOBR);
 - a senior member of PSNI involved in the Police led multi-agency GOLD group; the local level co-ordinator;
 - or in the absence of any such requests, whenever TEO judges it appropriate to do so.
3. Department of Health as the Lead Government Department in relation to the Coronavirus have already set up their Gold Operations Room. Therefore, it is expected that should the Coronavirus be declared a pandemic, DoH would request that NICCMA maybe activated if it became deemed a Strategic Level Emergency. As the Lead Government Department, DoH are required to update the First Minister and deputy First Minister and the HOCS on the evolving position.
4. A recommendation is submitted to Ministers to activate NICCMA protocol. At this point CCPB would activate CCG(NI). Once NICCMA has been activated CCPB would formally notify Ministers and the HOCS and convene a meeting of the Civil Contingencies Group (CCG(NI)).
5. Depending on the severity of the situation the scale of the Operations Room/ NI Hub will need to be determined to control the flow of information into and out of CCG (NI). At present CCPB would need augmented to enable the branch to effectively discharge their duties under NICCMA.
6. NICCMA protocol has provision at any stage for the NI Executive may wish to meet to consider the impacts of the emergency and to offer their support to members of the public affected and to those dealing with the response.
7. The NICCMA protocol is supported by the Pandemic Influenza Health and Non – Health Guidance which were designed to assist those involved in any pandemic response.

Recommendation

8. That you note the process for activation of the Northern Ireland Central Crisis Management Arrangements.

NR

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