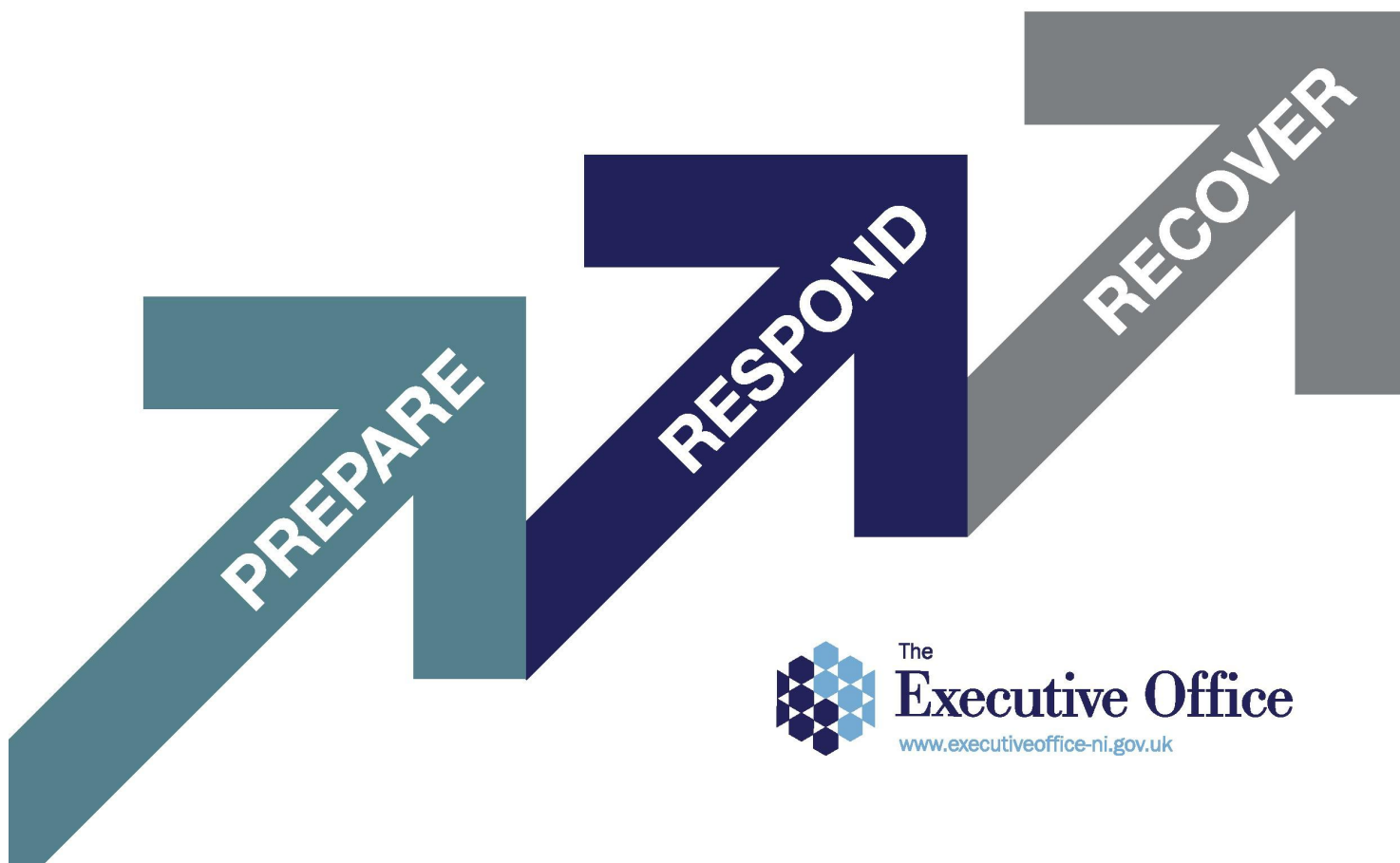


# Building Resilience Together

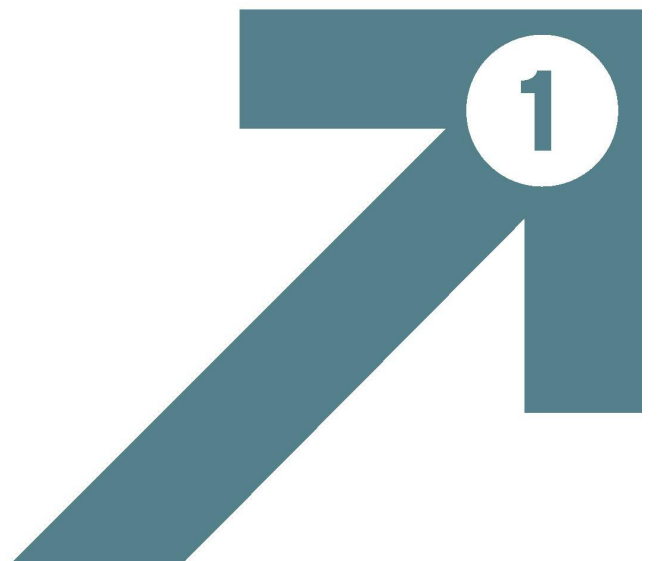
**NI CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FRAMEWORK**



The  
**Executive Office**

[www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk](http://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk)

# Foreword





## FOREWORD

Joint liaison between our front-line responders is a daily occurrence, but in times of larger scale emergencies we need to ensure that the cohesion of agencies, effectiveness of response and the conditions for a return to normal are; known, rehearsed and executed in a timely fashion.

The resilience of our communities to deal with and recover from emergencies depends upon clear direction and collaboration. Sometimes that collaboration and direction can come from the local level multi-agency response teams; sometimes it requires a more strategic cohesion at Government level. Understanding the language, the frameworks and the mechanisms for providing support to those dealing with an emergency must be part of our psyche, whether at local council, or Government level.

The purpose of this document is to outline the philosophy of civil contingencies in Northern Ireland, the guiding principles of emergency response and recovery, and practical considerations at times of an emergency, set within this robust Northern Ireland framework. Understanding this framework is a key foundation stone for joint collaboration in a civil contingencies setting. Leadership training, routine exercising and testing of our plans are vital to building public and practitioners' confidence in our systems.

I welcome the clarity this framework provides and take the opportunity to thank all who have contributed to it. It has been developed from the lessons we have learned from our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, EU Exit, EU Transition and smaller scale emergencies. It is guidance on best practice. I encourage all staff to read it, understand it and embed it within their own plans and training.



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**Plan Owner**            **HEAD OF CIVIL CONTINGENCIES DIVISION**

**Version**                **1**

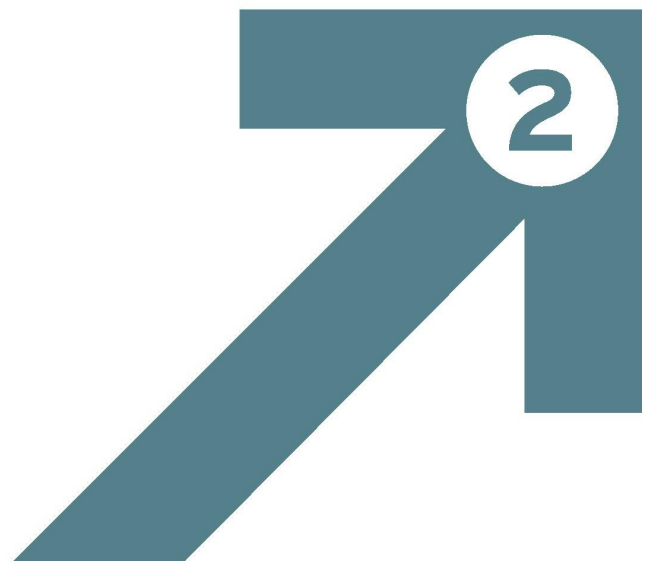
**Issue Date**            **30 June 2021**

This Framework document is owned and held centrally by the Head of Civil Contingencies Division, The Executive Office.

Due to the nature of the plan, any changes made must be recorded. The table below will be used to record version control changes to the Framework.

Version	Date of Issue	Changed By	Reason for the Change and details of the changes made

# Introduction



## INTRODUCTION

We live in a complex and interdependent world with unprecedented challenges to our normal way of life. Some of these challenges are relatively new, such as disruptive cyber-attacks, some are inherent to the fact that we live on an island, and some are centuries old, like pandemics. Each challenge has the potential to disrupt our way of living, unless we plan, prepare and respond in a timely fashion. That resilience needs to be developed in individuals, communities and Government, ensuring that in times of need there is a coherence and framework that protects our people, our infrastructure and our functions.

### 2.1 Purpose of Framework

The purpose of this document is to set out the Northern Ireland arrangements for effective emergency management, identifying the processes involved in preparing for, responding to and recovering from an emergency. It cannot be prescriptive in terms of the incidents it outlines, but provides generic guidance for all types of emergencies. In terms of governance it is complementary to the Civil Contingencies Act of 2004, hereafter referred to as CCA, and provides tools to those responsible for drawing up emergency plans. It draws upon best practice and lessons learned from previous emergencies, both within Northern Ireland and from UK, Republic of Ireland (ROI) and global experiences. This framework brings together the existing protocols and guidance under one umbrella. These protocols are now rescinded:

- CCG (NI) Protocol for the NI Central Crisis Management Arrangements (NICCMA) 2016
- CCG (NI) Protocol for the Escalation of the Multi-Agency Response 2016
- CCG (NI) Protocol For Multi-Agency Co-ordination Of Local Level Response and Recovery 2016
- CCG (NI) Vulnerable People Protocol September 2016
- CCG (NI) Protocol for the Collaborative Communications Process 2016
- Guide to Risk Assessment in NI - January 2010
- NI Guide to Plan Preparation 2002
- A Guide to Emergency Planning Arrangements in NI September 2011

Figure 1: Hierarchy of Framework



This Framework is not a legislative document but provides regional cohesion to the civil contingencies agencies by common acceptance of its principles and guides. The Framework cannot be prescriptive, as resourcing requirements differ across the civil contingencies community, and Government Departments will and have their own plans and tried and tested mechanisms for escalation and de-escalation. It should be used in conjunction with individual emergency plans:

- **Regional Cohesion** – NI Civil Contingencies Framework – Strategic Level
- **Local and Departmental Plans** – highlight differences in working practices – Operational and Tactical Level

## 2.2 Types of Emergency

The range of emergencies a country can experience is vast and as such emergencies are classified by scale, rather than by type. The UK scales are as follows, the colour coding relates to the escalation diagram at figure 17. These scales are owned and defined by UK Government and therefore included for ease of reference.

Figure 2: UK Emergency Scale Levels



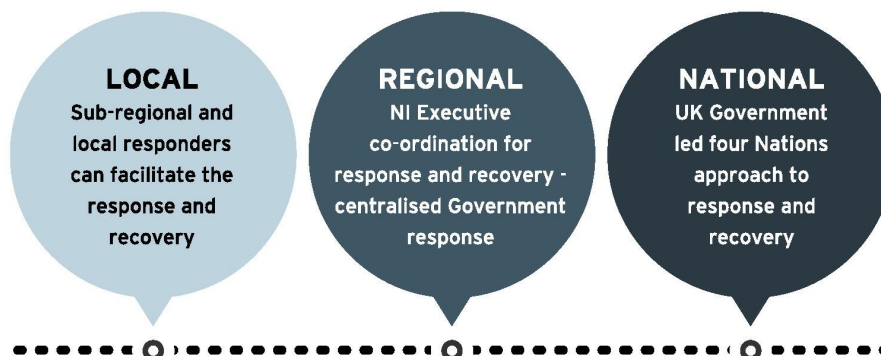
There are, of course minor emergencies which do not breach into the levels described above, and for which Departments, agencies and partners routinely and effectively step up an emergency response. The principles of collaboration, co-ordination and transparency highlighted throughout this Framework apply to all types of emergency.

## 2.3 Geographical Description

Emergencies can also be classified by geography. An example of these definitions would be; a village or town in Kent experiencing an emergency would be a LOCAL event, the county of Kent experiencing an emergency would be a REGIONAL issue and an emergency that transcends across Kent and breaches other counties would become a NATIONAL event with UK Government interest. Given the small geographical space in Northern Ireland the terms translate as; LOCAL allows for a response in and across council and PSNI boundaries in which a RESPONSE can be stood up and down without the need for the NI Executive involvement. Lead Government Departments and local structures can, and do, resolve those issues. REGIONAL is where the NI Executive is starting to become interested in an emergency which is starting to transcend the wider Northern Ireland space. This interest can start at warn and inform the

whole way through to the NI Executive co-ordination. The NATIONAL level is normally top down, but not always, and is the space in which UK Government will issue four-Nation direction for the management of the emergency. To summarise:

Figure 3: Geographical Definitions



## 2.4 Tiers of Co-ordination

Tiers of co-ordination can mean different things to different responders, so to provide clarity the following levels of co-ordination are adhered to throughout Northern Ireland. These levels do not indicate rank or seniority of the responder, rather the level of responsibility generally afforded to them.

Figure 4: Definitions of Co-ordination Levels



## 2.5 Northern Ireland Context

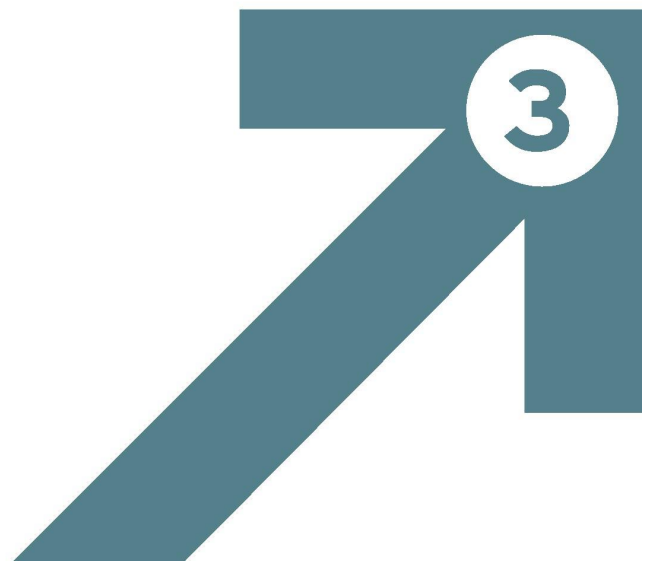
The definitions above are not mutually exclusive; for example a local emergency (figure 3) can have significant impacts, (figure 2). Northern Ireland is in an enviable position because of the fact that the geographical space is small and that the emergency management leads are well known to each other, therefore communication should be more naturally enabled to understand when and how an emergency could potentially escalate from an operational to a strategic issue, or from a local to a regional emergency or from a Level 1 to a Level 2 incident.

## 2.6 Management of the NI Civil Contingencies Framework

Civil Contingencies Policy Branch in The Executive Office (TEO) is responsible for the management and dissemination of this Framework. It is to be reviewed as follows:

- **Incident Specific** - after every emergency and operational stand-up from Lessons Learned and from Lessons Learned from Global and UK disasters.
- **Time specific** - at least every 12 months for currency of policy & structures.
- **Policy Specific** - on receipt of new Civil Contingencies policy, guidance or doctrine.

# Principles for Joint Working



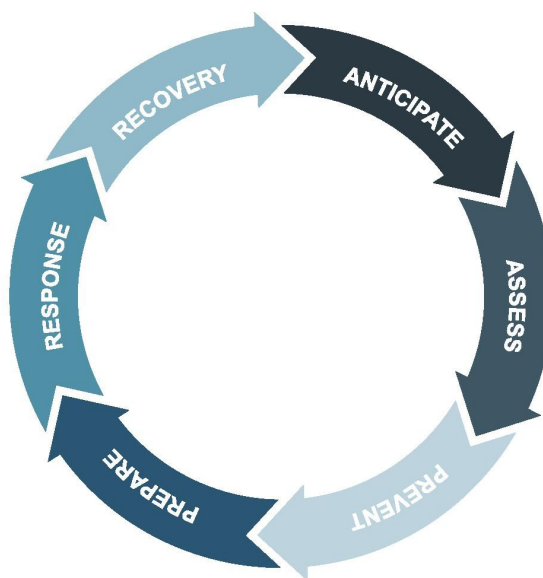


## PRINCIPLES FOR JOINT WORKING

### 3.1 Integrated Emergency Management

Integrated Emergency Management (IEM) is a holistic approach to preventing and managing emergencies that entails six key steps: anticipation; assessment; prevention; preparation; response; and recovery. Each part is inextricably linked to the others. IEM should be interwoven into structures in Northern Ireland, promoting collaborative working as a routine, such that it is normal during an emergency. Developing the skills and knowledge of responders will enhance resilience at all levels. Each of these IEM steps will now be explained in more detail within this Framework.

Figure 5: Six Steps of Integrated Emergency Management



The concept of working to a unified purpose of returning life to normal during an emergency is not new and is well documented in the lessons learned from every emergency. The principles have been developed through the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) programme which is the foundation stone for civil contingencies doctrine and training UK wide. Its aim is to provide coherence to organisations and people who may not be used to routinely working together. Similar principles are used in ROI, which is helpful in reacting to an all-island emergency, aiding joint understanding from the outset. There are existing cross border operational arrangements in place to enhance mutual cooperation in relation to planning for and responding to emergency situations.

### 3.2 JESIP Principles

The JESIP principles are used through all phases of operations; PREPARE, RESPOND, RECOVER and are not just for use by the emergency services. The ability to co-locate as quickly as possible in a joint operational room eases communication, co-ordination, joint understanding of the risk and situational awareness whether that be; in the PREPARE mode of improving resilience, preparing emergency plans or updating the risk register; in the RESPONSE mode of returning the situation to normal as soon as possible; or through the RECOVERY phase of stabilising the community, environment and people to enable a return to resilience, whilst learning lessons to strengthen our ability to deal with future emergencies.

Figure 6: JESIP Principles



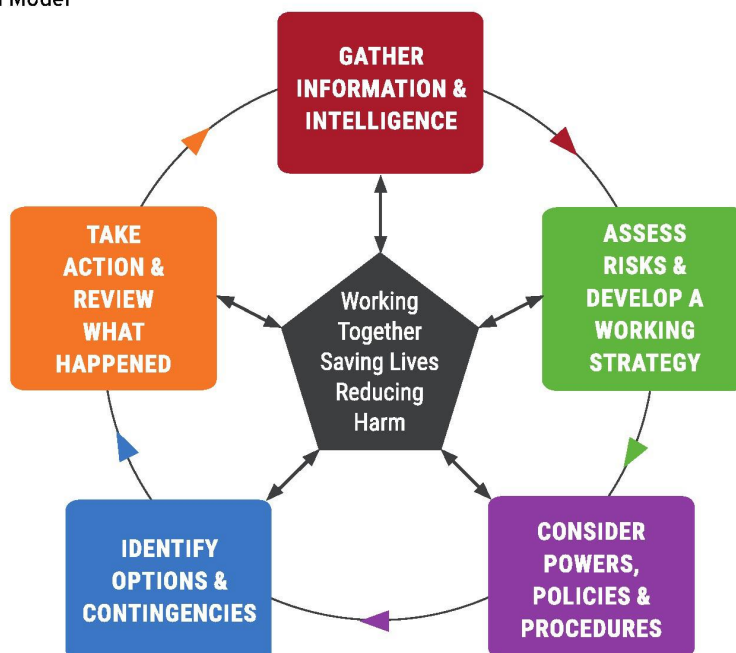
### 3.3 Joint Decision Model

Decision making in an emergency seeks to determine 3 things:

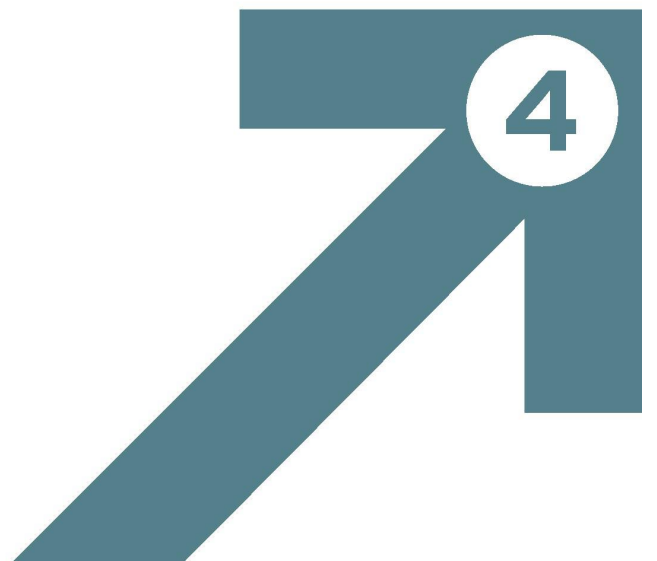
1. Working out what is going on - SITUATION
2. Establishing what you need to achieve - DIRECTION
3. Deciding what to do about it - ACTION

The Joint Decision Model was designed to assist commanders, at all levels, in fusing together information into a shared operational picture. By understanding competing priorities, risks and options all responders are afforded the opportunity to influence actions whilst understanding the wider situation. This is a model mostly used by the blue light responders, but its principles apply to all involved in civil contingency management.

Figure 7: Joint Decision Model



# Northern Ireland





Civil contingencies in Northern Ireland is largely a devolved matter, with functions being exercised routinely by the Northern Ireland Departments. Some functions are not devolved and are delivered in Northern Ireland by bodies that fall within the remit of the UK Government.

This can be summarised as:

Figure 8: Summary of Devolved and Reserved Matters

DEVOLVED	RESERVED (UKG)
Economic Development	Foreign Policy
Agriculture and Fisheries	Defence and Security
Justice and Policing	Constitution
Education	Transport Policy
Environment	
Energy	
Health and Social Care	
NI Civil Service	
Some Tax Powers	
Food safety and food standards	
NI Transport policies	

Northern Ireland mirrors many of the tasks of the UK central crisis mechanism and will play a full role in the response to and recovery from an emergency. The level of the role will depend on whether the issue is a reserved matter, a devolved matter and/or whether its impacts are cross-border.

## 4.1 Legislation

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) delivers a single framework for civil protection in the United Kingdom capable of meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century. The Act is separated into two substantive parts: local arrangements for civil protection (Part 1) and emergency powers (Part 2). The CCA will be reviewed in the next year and it is hoped to clarify the Northern Ireland legislation at that point, including secondary legislation if required and appropriate.

**Part 1: Local arrangements for Civil Protection** – Part 1 of the Act establishes a clear set of roles and responsibilities for those involved in emergency preparation and response at the local level. The Act divides local responders into two categories, imposing a different set of duties on each:

**Category 1 Responders** - Category 1 responders are those organisations at the core of emergency response. Category 1 responders are subject to the full set of civil protection duties. In Northern Ireland only the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) are named as Category 1 responders, with the Department of Justice responsible for oversight of the PSNI's delivery of its duties in relation to the CCA.

In practice PSNI and MCA undertake the full cooperative duties, listed within Part 1 of the CCA, with the many local civil contingencies organisations who are not specifically named<sup>1</sup>. The legal duties of Category 1 responders are:

- Duty to assess risk
- Duty to maintain emergency plans
- Duty to maintain business continuity plans
- Duty to communicate with the public
- Duty to share information
- Duty to co-operate

**Category 2 Responders** - Category 2 responders have a lesser set of duties and are usually only involved in incidents that are heavily involved within their sector. Only telecommunications operators are named as Category 2 responders within the Northern Ireland part of the CCA. The CCA requires Category 2 responders to co-operate with Category 1 responders and share information.

**Part 2: Emergency Powers** - Part 2 of the Act updated the Emergency Powers Act 1920 to reflect the developments in the intervening years and the risks faced in the twenty-first century. It allows for the making of temporary special legislation (emergency regulations) to help deal with the most serious of emergencies but can only be used in exceptional circumstances.

**Secondary Legislation** - The CCA states: In Northern Ireland different administrative arrangements at the local level make it impossible for Part 1 to apply to Northern Ireland in the same way as it applies in the rest of the UK. It does apply to certain bodies in Northern Ireland who exercise non-devolved functions.

## 4.2 Major and Imminent Threat to Life

In terms of civil contingencies, major means an event which is important, serious or significant and imminent means almost certain to happen with little time remaining to change that outcome. The PSNI operate as the only named Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and will take the Strategic Co-ordination role for emergencies in Northern Ireland where; the scale and complexity of the humanitarian issues requires Command; Control and Co-ordination by the PSNI on the basis that urgent intervention to prevent a worsening of the situation is required.

The definition above is the accepted definition of the term major and imminent threat to life but does not preclude communication, at all levels, to determine support in scenarios where an emergency may start below this threshold but has the potential to breach it. PSNI officers are embedded in all levels of the civil contingency arrangements and will participate in the Local Impact Group assessments to collaboratively determine the best outcome.

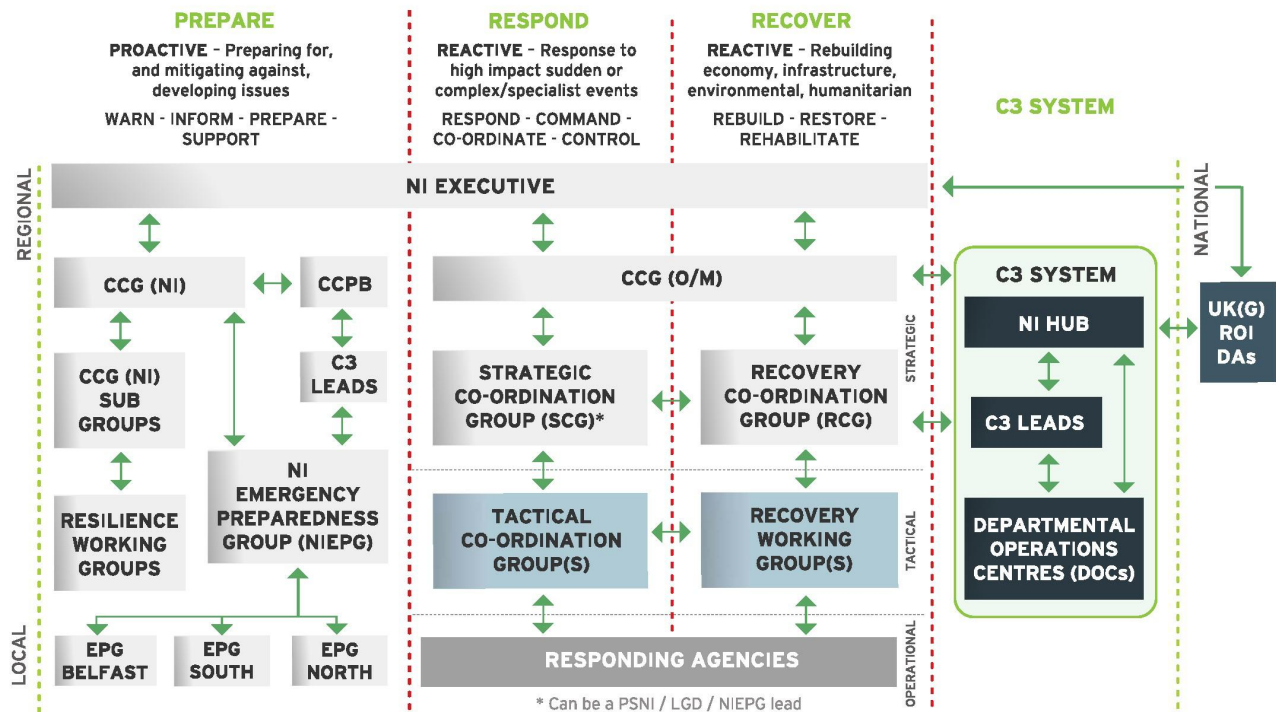
## 4.3 Framework

Overall civil contingency policy and strategy co-ordination falls to TEO which provides the NI Executive with immediate oversight of cross-cutting civil contingency arrangements for devolved matters. The Northern Ireland Office (NIO) has responsibility for national security matters and will lead the strategic response to such emergencies.

These structures exist for routine preparedness, resilience and emergency assessment but can be escalated to response mode depending on the nature of the emergency. Chapter 6 outlines the emergency response escalation process. The Framework for Northern Ireland civil contingencies management is shown here for completeness, but will be broken down into the phases, as we now move through them, to aid better understanding:

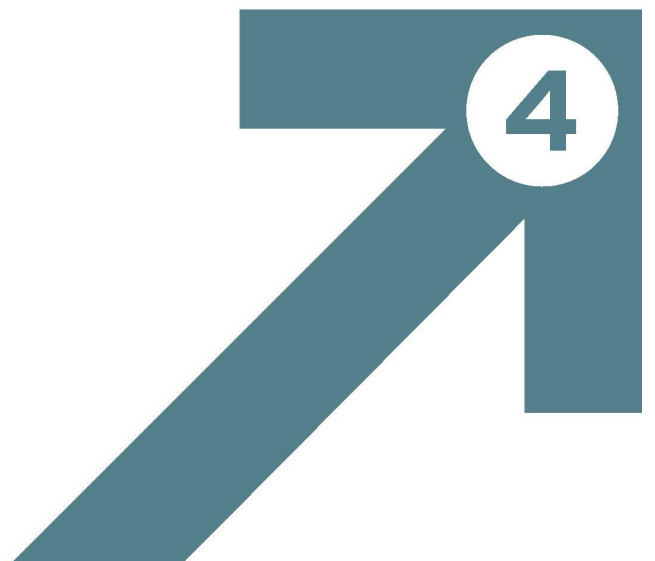
<sup>1</sup> NI Ambulance Service and NI Fire & Rescue Service as emergency responders

Figure 9: NI Civil Contingencies Framework Diagram



We will now look at each of those structures through the IEM phases of a civil contingency operation; PREPARE, RESPOND and RECOVER.

# Prepare





## PREPARE

Northern Ireland resilience is largely managed at the local and regional level on a daily basis. Structures exist to provide governance and unity in preparing for emergencies, risk assessing, mitigating risks and exercising. This chapter will focus only on the PREPARE phase, many of the structures also deliver during the RESPOND phase. Where possible the National Resilience Standards should be used as a guide to best practice in the PREPARE phase. They are available online or as pdf downloads on Resilience Direct.

### 5.1 Regional Resilience Structures

**Civil Contingencies Group (NI) (CCG (NI))** - In the PREPARE phase of operations CCG (NI)<sup>2</sup> will meet a minimum of three times per year; generally March, June and November. CCG (NI) sets the strategic direction for civil contingencies in Northern Ireland and is chaired by the Deputy Secretary with responsibility for civil contingencies in TEO. The meetings of CCG (NI) are timed to provide governance to the structures below it; Emergency Preparedness Groups (EPGs) will meet and provide any issues for escalation to the Northern Ireland Emergency Preparedness Group (NIEPG), NIEPG will then meet and provide updates and escalation issues for CCG (NI), CCG (NI) will then meet to consider the issues, provide strategic co-ordination and communicate back down to the EPGs, through the NIEPG. The terms of reference for CCG (NI) are at Appendix 1.

**LGDs** - The regional level of resilience is interwoven with the local level through daily LGD interactions with the NIEPG, EPGs, external stakeholders, working and steering groups. LGDs and their Arms Lengths Bodies (ALBs) also play a pivotal role in the management of business as usual resilience planning. Departments communicate into CCG (NI) through an agreed programme of work and CCG (NI) brings together the Local and Regional resilience efforts into one co-joined forum. On behalf of CCG (NI) the Civil Contingencies Policy Branch (CCPB), within TEO, will enable effective emergency management during the PREPARE phase by acting as the link to National resilience structures by:

- Engaging with stakeholders
- Acting as a subject matter expert, where appropriate, on civil contingency related working groups
- Assisting LGDs and EPGs in preparing their Emergency Plans
- Maintaining NI HUB readiness
- Activating escalations as required
- Horizon scanning for escalating issues
- Maintaining collaborative C3 tools and interfaces
- Acting as the focal point for the National Security Risk Assessment and Northern Ireland Risk Register
- Networking across the 4 Nations and ROI
- Providing training opportunities for any staff involved in civil contingencies management
- Sharing best practice
- Updating and amending this Framework
- Developing and maintaining assurance on behalf of CCG (NI)
- Taking opportunities for national benchmarking of civil contingencies management in Northern Ireland

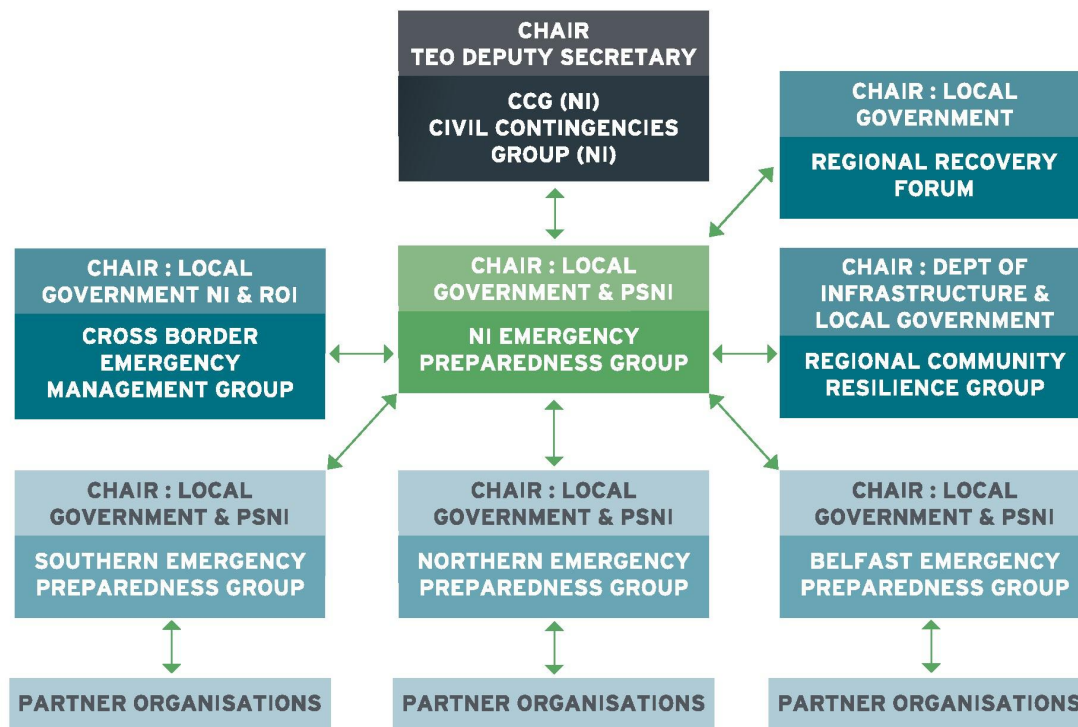
In the PREPARE phase Government Departments will continue to be responsible for the management of their own resilience programmes.

<sup>2</sup> It is important to understand that in routine times CCG will always be referred to as CCG (NI), which differentiates from its RESPONSE role when it can be formed as CCG (O) or CCG (M) - as clarified in Chapter 6



## 5.2 Local Resilience Structures

Figure 10: Resilience Structure Interactions at the Local Level



**NI Emergency Preparedness Group (NIEPG)** - The local and sub-regional level focus for resilience and preparedness work during the PREPARE phase is the NIEPG, which meets a minimum of three times per year and is jointly chaired by the PSNI and Local Government. It is a sub-group of CCG (NI). Its purpose is to ensure that work at local level is in line with strategic direction provided by CCG (NI) and it provides direction to the work of the Northern, Southern and Belfast EPGs and is in daily liaison with their Resilience Managers. The NIEPG work programme is implemented through their Civil Contingencies Resilience Strategy NI 2020-2025. NIEPG co-ordinates planning, response and recovery on a sub-regional local level with all members of the 3 sub-regional EPG groupings and to its various sub groups, some of which are included in Figure 10.

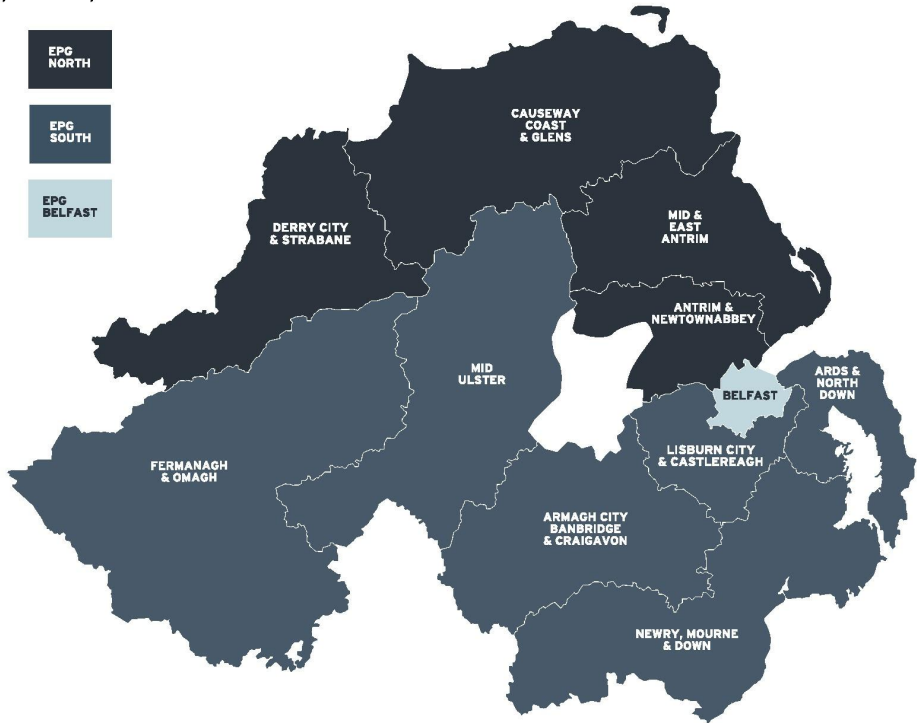
This collaborative relationship ensures flow of information between all levels facilitating effective and efficient planning, information sharing and joint understanding of each other's capabilities. The programme management for all these groups is the responsibility of the local government resilience function. The funding for the management and resourcing of the local government civil contingencies arrangements is delivered via the Department for Communities, which has responsibility for local government. The terms of reference for NIEPG are at Appendix 2.

**Emergency Preparedness Groups (EPGs)** - There are three EPGs in Northern Ireland and they have a similar role and purpose to the Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) in Great Britain<sup>3</sup>, ensuring the appropriate level of preparedness to enable an effective multi-agency response to emergencies. There are a number of multi-agency response plans that have been developed by the EPGs to ensure a co-ordinated response. Representation on these Groups include senior officers from; all the emergency services, health, councils, Government Departments including Infrastructure, Economy, Justice, Health, NI Water, Education Authority, NI Housing Executive, NI Environment Agency, Met Office, Utilities, Voluntary Sector, Military, Ports, Translink and other relevant organisations essential to ensure an integrated approach to emergency

<sup>3</sup> Unlike LRFs, the Northern Ireland EPGs are not statutory bodies.

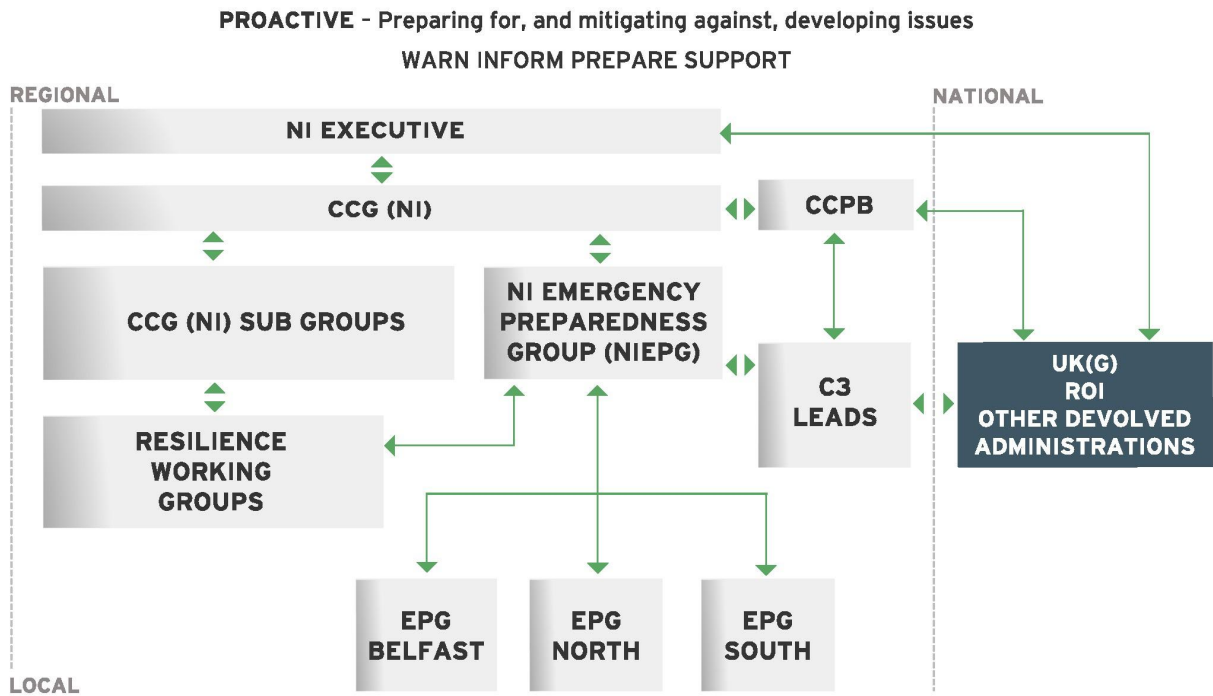
management. The EPGs link directly to the Council areas who they represent and sit within the PSNI command districts. They are jointly chaired by PSNI and Local Government. The EPG areas are as follows:

Figure 11: Geographical representation of EPG areas



The resilience structures in place during the PREPARE phase are shown below:

Figure 12<sup>4</sup> : NI Civil Contingencies Framework in the PREPARE phase



<sup>4</sup> The governance structure around the working groups will be finalised shortly.

## 5.3 IEM Activities In Relation To Preparedness

The IEM model highlights four key activities within the PREPARE phase:

**Anticipate** - anticipation of events is linked to identifying and maintaining good records of scenarios that arise year on year, annual and seasonal emergencies. It also links to Lessons Learned from previous emergencies, incorporating those into amended plans and training. Training of staff and active use of technology will assist with anticipation of developing issues. Anticipating risk also requires communication both with partners and with the public, warning and informing for example, of imminent bad weather. Anticipation of risk should be a shared activity with partners to understand likelihoods of a developing scenario, mitigation measures and response.

**Assess** - risk exists in every part of society, regardless of geography or socioeconomic factors, but understanding the risks and reducing their likelihood and impacts is a key part of building resilience. Northern Ireland risk assessment has largely fitted within the National Security Risk Assessment, owned by Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS), of which there are 131 identified risks, grouped into 40-50 broader risk categories, and identified in the National Risk Register. These documents are iterative, given the possibility for new and emerging risks. CCPB works closely with the Northern Ireland Departments and UK Government to identify and assess risks. Appendix 3 will provide more detail on the completion of risk assessments, but at this time the risk assessment methodology used by UK Government is changing. Training in the production of risk assessments is also available through CCS.

**Prevent** - where an emergency cannot be prevented entirely, the mitigation of its likelihood and impact should be considered in risk reduction measures. During the prevention phase it is vital that interdependencies are identified to ensure that shared risks are known and responsibilities understood. Partners who have an interdependency must be included in the risk assessment, mitigation and prevention processes and involved in the development of plans. Prevention and mitigation will be key outputs of the Northern Ireland Risk Register work, which will follow in Autumn 2021.

**Prepare** - Civil Contingency preparation is a duty under the terms of the CCA and is a key aspect of responders' efforts. It involves planning, training and exercising activities. A robust risk assessment is the foundation for an effective plan. Plans should include business continuity functions and identify critical functions, processes, people and structures. Plans depend upon people to implement them. People must be trained and exercised in their role so that when an emergency develops they intuitively know how to respond. The CCS website offers templates for exercising planning, the JESIP website has toolkits to download and assistance is available locally, through CCPB, to assist in exercise planning. Key to preparing is planning. The 2002 NI Guide to Plan Preparation has been updated and is at Appendix 4. CCPB can assist partners with emergency planning. CCPB can also facilitate a "critical friend" forum where plans can be communicated in a multi-agency setting.

Training of C3 staff should take place both individually and collectively to ensure they are prepared to react. CCPB will provide refresher and induction training for any volunteers stood up in response to an emerging crisis. Exercising is a means of testing plans, learning best practice and enabling joint understanding in a realistic setting. There are many online tools that can assist in preparing exercises, debriefing and recording joint organisational learning. Downloads are available at: [www.jesip.org.uk/home](http://www.jesip.org.uk/home)

CCPB will maintain a central register of all NI exercises and publish details of shared learning opportunities. In terms of an annual exercise cycle it should build upon foundations throughout the year and be intrinsically linked to the NI Risk Register. An example exercise cycle is shown below<sup>5</sup>. This is not a prescribed time-line for now, there is more work to be completed on how this will develop within Northern Ireland.

<sup>5</sup> Northern Ireland will move to a similar cycle as soon as the NI Risk Register is completed.

Figure 13: Example Annual Exercise Cycle



A useful guide to exercising resilience arrangements is attached at Appendix 5.

## 5.4 Data Sharing

The ability to share personal data in an emergency should be discussed and agreed, during the PREPARE phase to allow for clarity of what can and cannot be shared. Departmental plans should include an information sharing protocol, or if necessary these protocols should be developed as stand-alone documents ready for activation during the RESPOND phase. The ability to share data will largely be determined by the nature of the data required. Medical information, for example, is strictly governed and cannot be widely shared with partners. Further work is required to add clarity to information sharing governance.

## 5.5 Summary

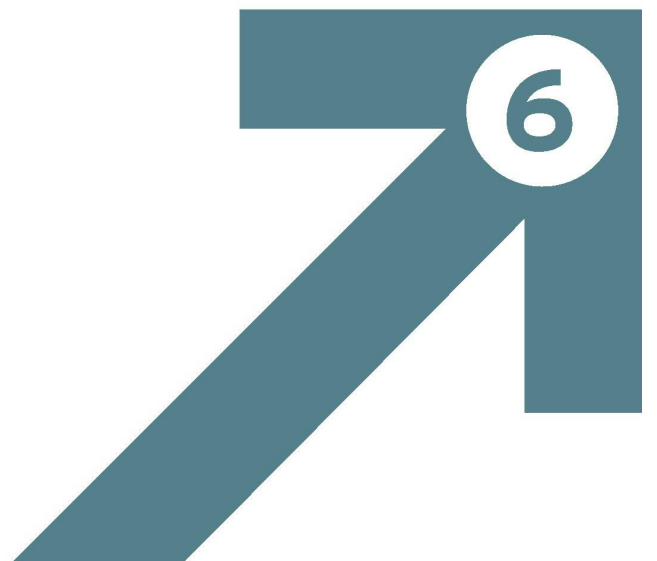
The table below summarises what good practice looks like during the PREPARE phase. The inclusion of these activities will build better resilience throughout the civil contingency structures of Northern Ireland, from communities the whole way through to Government. The lists aren't exhaustive or prescriptive but provide a guide to best practice activities.

Figure 14: Best Practice Activities in the PREPARE Phase

LOCAL LEVEL	REGIONAL LEVEL	NATIONAL LEVEL
Train staff	Train staff	Warn and inform
Allocate staff	Allocate staff	Provide training opportunities
Prepare staff	Prepare staff	Share best practice
Anticipate risk	Identify risks at departmental level	Share knowledge
Mitigate risk or escalate	Engage with stakeholders to understand risk	Provide exercising opportunities
Manage risk measures	Identify critical infrastructure and functions	Provide UK guidance and policy
Review risks periodically	Prepare plans	Fund civil contingencies
Engage with community	Communicate plans	Horizon scan nationally and internationally
Engage with partners	Test and assure plans	Enable four nations networking
Share knowledge	Exercise plans	Enable collaboration with ROI
Share training	Share training experiences	Share plans which impact or could impact on NI area of operations
Share exercising	Learn lessons and review	Provide C3 strategic leadership
Share best practice	Prepare media lines-to-take	Share methodology of National Risk Register
Prepare plans	Fund resourcing as appropriate	Share lessons learned

LOCAL LEVEL	REGIONAL LEVEL	NATIONAL LEVEL
Test and assures plans	Provide C3 leadership	
Exercise plans	Horizon scan across NI	
Learn lessons and review	Be prepared	
Horizon scan sub-regionally	Maintain NI input to National Risk Register	
Be prepared	Enable collaboration with ROI	
Use LRF Resilience Standards, as appropriate	Use National Resilience Standards, as appropriate	

# Respond





## RESPOND

Minor emergencies can and are dealt with without the need for any escalation. These systems are tried and tested by the Departments who own the business area; for example; Health Trusts, Public Health Agency and many flooding incidents at the minor level.

In most cases of an emerging crisis the initial response will be provided by the statutory emergency services and often in conjunction with local council and LGD responders. At the lowest levels these systems are well proven and often tested by single-service or multi-agency exercises. PSNI or Local Government will often stand-up a Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG), which is largely based on the EPG membership but in response mode and can call upon other experts as required. This is in line with the principle of subsidiarity, by which decisions should be taken at the lowest appropriate level, with co-ordination at the highest necessary level. This Framework does not alter those local level arrangements, but seeks to support them with better cohesion and transparency at the central Government, Regional level.

The RESPONSE processes outlined in this chapter are applicable to both slow-developing emergencies and fast developing emergencies. In fast developing scenarios many of the actions can be taken quickly and followed up, in slower time, with the elements that enhance governance and assurance.

### 6.1 Northern Ireland Central Crisis Management Arrangements (NICCMA)

When an emergency occurs which is likely to have a serious impact to all or part of Northern Ireland, central crisis management arrangements can be activated to enable a clear understanding that organisations within the framework have moved from PREPARE to a RESPONSE mode. That escalation enables strategic co-ordination both within and outside of Northern Ireland. In such instances it is likely that the emergency has or threatens to cause serious damage to human welfare, the environment or the security of Northern Ireland or the UK as a whole. It is likely therefore that only Level 2 and Level 3 emergencies will require activation of NICCMA, (see paragraph 2.2 for definitions).

**Triggers for Escalation** - if an emergency or crisis cannot be dealt with by a single council, LGD or emergency responder<sup>6</sup> then sub-regional, regional or national co-ordination can occur:

**Local Co-ordination** - Local and sub-regional co-ordination are the norm. PSNI or Local Government can co-ordinate the response by standing up TCG(s) as required. The likely triggers for sub-regional co-ordination could include:

- People/ environment affected confined to sub-regional area
- Disruption to services/ public confined to sub-regional area
- Incident capable of being dealt with by organisations acting on a sub-regional basis
- Short-term impact on delivery of sub-regional supply chains and services
- Small number of District Council areas impacted
- Some impact on economy in sub-regional area
- An unusual event which has multi-agency impacts
- Small scale human health issue

**Regional Co-ordination** - in instances where the emergency is wider in scale or impact a Strategic Co-ordination Group may be required. The likely triggers for regional, across Northern Ireland, co-ordination could include:

- People/ environment affected across a wide geographical area
- Disruption to local area services over a wide geographical area
- Impact covering a wide geographical/ large number of District Council areas

<sup>6</sup>Normally PSNI if there is a major and imminent threat to life but can include NIAS, NIFRS or HMC



- Impact of the incident across wide geographical area cannot be dealt with by organisations acting at sub-regional level
- Short-term impact on delivery of supply chain and services
- Impact on economy in local areas
- Impact on key infrastructure
- Regional human health issue

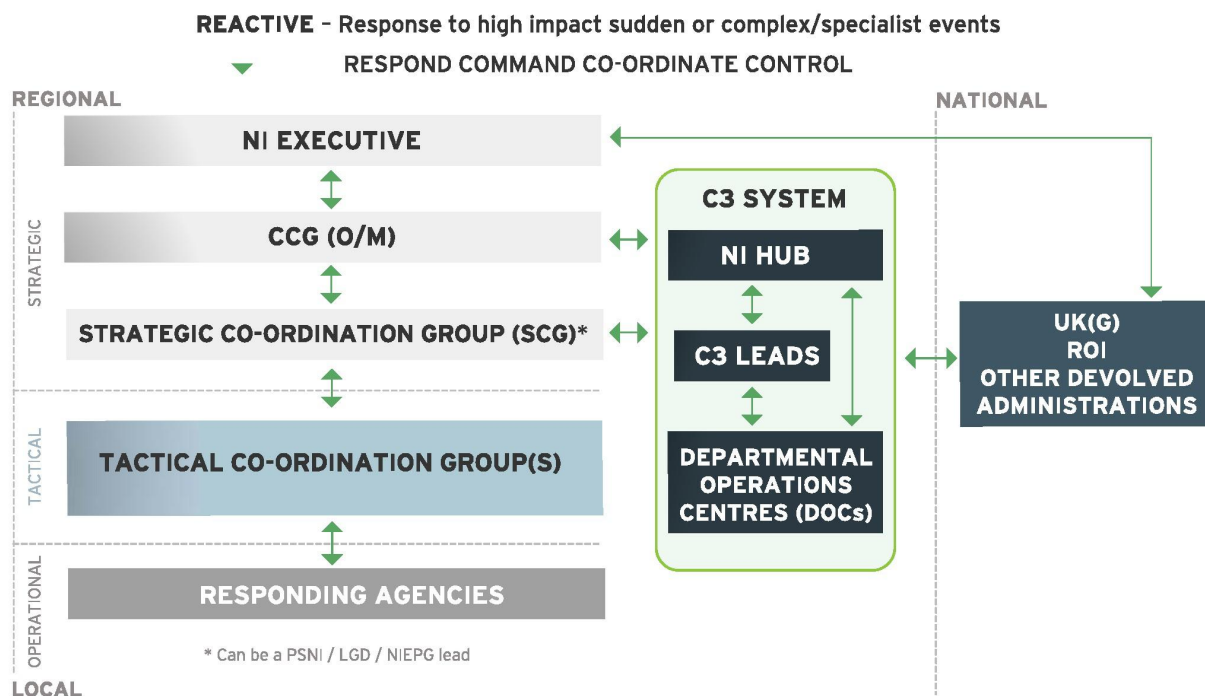
**National Co-ordination** - the likely triggers for National, Northern Ireland and UK co-ordination could include:

- Very large numbers of people affected
- Serious and prolonged damage to the environment
- Serious and prolonged damage to key infrastructure
- Prolonged impact on delivery of key supply chains and services
- Serious impact on the economy
- Extensive clean up and recovery costs
- High degree of public anxiety
- Need for strategic co-ordination of the media response
- Implications beyond NI
- Not a devolved matter
- Pandemic or large-scale public health issue

## 6.2 NICCMA Structures

The structures which exist for activation of NICCMA are the same as those that exist in the PREPARE phase of civil contingencies management but in the RESPOND phase they switch to the operational, tactical and strategic duties of C3. The diagram below shows the NICCMA structures for the RESPONSE phase:

Figure 15: NI Civil Contingencies Framework in the RESPOND phase





**CCG (O) and (M)** - in RESPONSE mode CCG will change its name and can meet at two levels, Officials, CCG (O) and Ministers, CCG (M) though this only relates to the level of membership and does not change the role of the Group. CCG (O) is the default Group which will meet on activation of NICCMA and CCG (M) will only meet if Ministers decide it is necessary. In this document CCG (O) will be used as default for ease of reading, although any reference to CCG (O) can also refer to CCG (M).

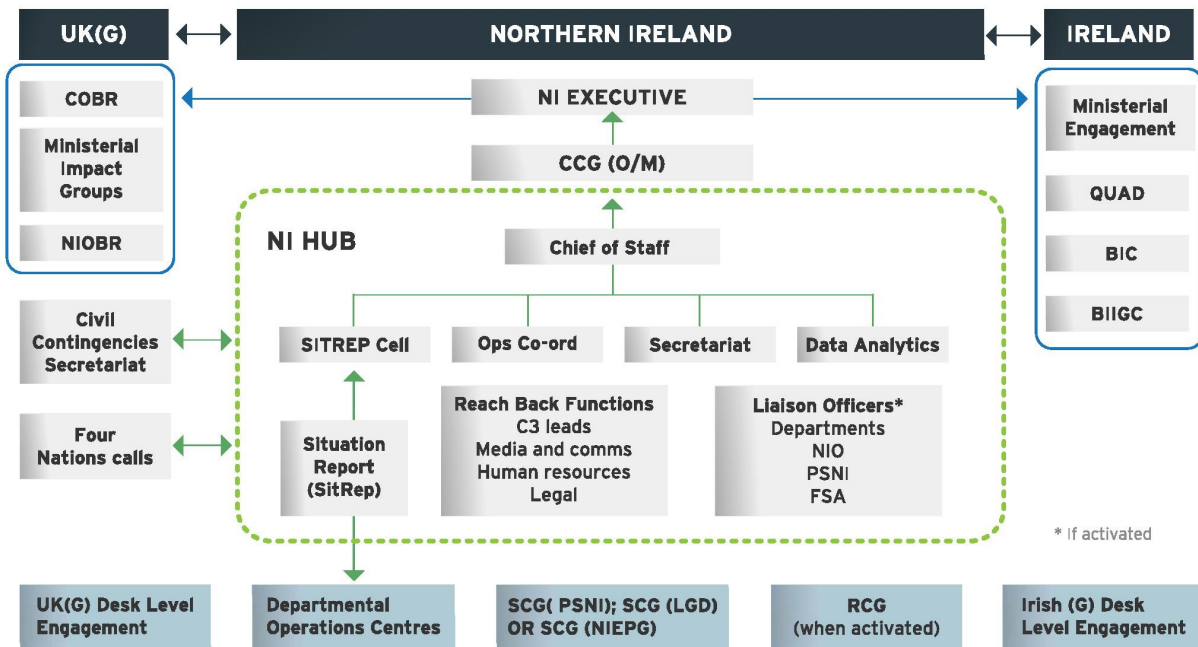
In the RESPOND phase CCG (O) will meet regularly to enable timely decision-making by the NI Executive. On behalf of the NI Executive, CCG (O) will provide strategic direction to the response but will discharge strategic co-ordination to a Strategic Co-ordination Group, chaired by, PSNI SCG (PSNI), the Lead Government Department SCG (LGD), or the NIEPG SCG (NIEPG)<sup>7</sup>. For ease of reading the term SCG will now be used, which can refer to all three mentioned above, unless specified otherwise. Membership of an SCG can be tailored according to the nature of the emergency. The meeting rhythm can be dictated by either; the NI Executive's Critical Information Requirements (CIR), UK Government CIR or by the tempo of the emergency. Tasks of the CCG (O) strategic decision-making role are:

- Direct and co-ordinate the efforts of NI Departments in responding to the emergency
- Assess the wider impacts of events and decisions on vulnerable; infrastructure, systems, people and the environment
- Identify, from the start of the response, the key issues for consequence management and long-term recovery
- Decide on the relative priorities to be attached to the management of the various elements of the overarching response
- Establish the strategic direction of the co-ordinated media and public information policies
- Identify the priorities and interdependencies to be addressed and the actions required by member organisations
- Establish working groups to deal with interdependencies or cross-cutting issues

**NI HUB** - the flow of information sharing up to the NI Executive through CCG (O) will be facilitated by an enhanced information fusion centre known as the NI HUB. Its aim is: The NI HUB centrally coordinates information during an emergency response, across all NI Departments and key partners, providing situational awareness to enhance decision making at all levels, primarily the Civil Contingencies Group (O) and the NI Executive. The NI HUB is generic in design, can deal with single or concurrent issues and provides one single source of cross Departmental, cross Regional impact to CCG (O). The NI HUB is designed to maximise information flow into and out of Northern Ireland, it is not a decision-making body. The NI HUB is facilitated by Civil Contingencies Policy Branch, it will staff the first levels of escalation and will co-ordinate information flow, on behalf of CCG (O).

<sup>7</sup> DFI has a mutually supporting arrangement for Chair of the SCG to come from local government in a severe weather response, which is an example of a good practice arrangement.

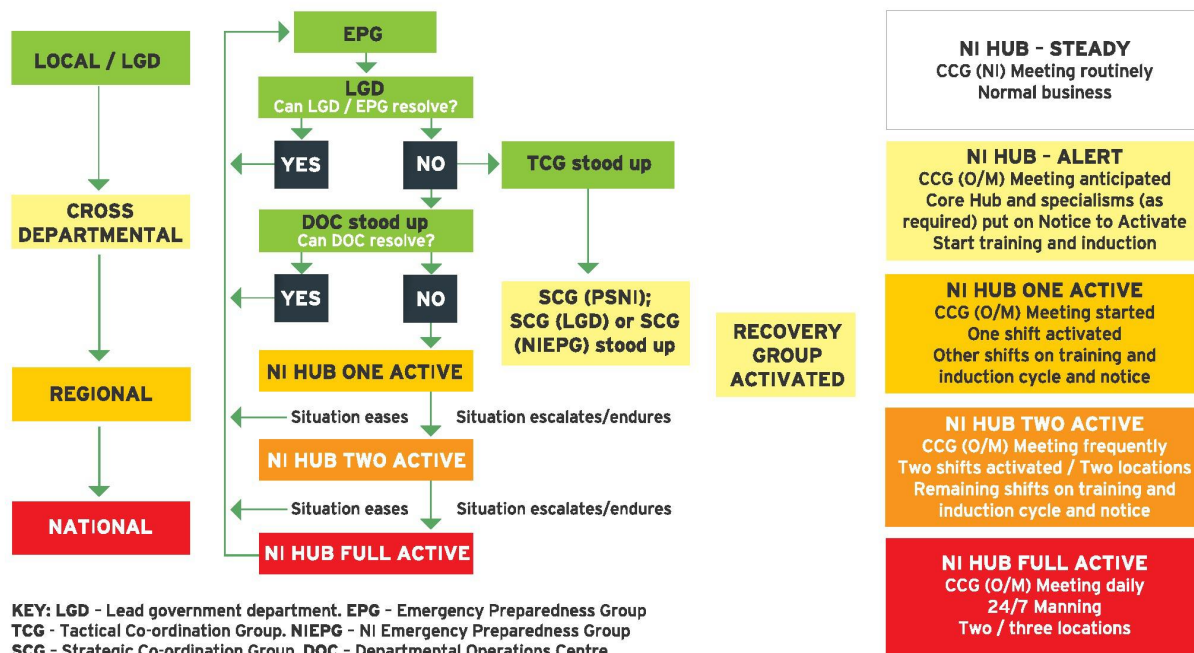
Figure 16: NI HUB Design



**NI HUB Escalation** - the NI HUB will be activated in a graduated escalation and de-escalation process, which is shown in the diagram below. The duration of the NI HUB stand-up will be influenced by the requirement to support CCG (O).

The NI HUB can be stood up physically in more than one location or can be activated to work remotely. The escalation process places staff on a notice to move which; enables training (induction or refresher), allocation of IT resources, access to relevant documentation and resolution of any specific administrative requirements. It also provides time for Line Managers to reallocate tasks that NI HUB volunteers had been performing. CCPB manage the NI HUB on a daily basis and staff its initial stages of activation.

Figure 17: NI HUB Escalation and De-Escalation



**NI HUB Functions** - the NI HUB coordinates multi-departmental/agency activities and planning. It filters and escalates issues to CCG (O) the NI Executive or CCS as required. It fuses information from the Departmental Operation Centres (DOCs), relating to the emergency. It maintains overall situational awareness during the emergency, tracking and managing actions, on behalf of CCG (O) to support the wider Northern Ireland Government response to cumulative effects of impacts across Northern Ireland. The NI HUB Concept of Operations (CONOPs) are available through CCPB. Specific functions of the NI HUB are as follows:

- Enable information flow on behalf of Ministers, CCS, the NI Executive, NI Departments, Ministerial Impact Groups (MIGs) and SCG as required
- Co-ordinate the response to cross-cutting issues, issues requiring strategic support through CCG (O), the NI Executive, Departments and the SCG
- Report and analyse information via the NI Situation Report (Sitrep) to the NI Executive and CCG (O), and downwards to Departmental Operation Centres (DOCs) on shared knowledge platforms
- Support CCG (O) and the NI Executive, and other meetings as required with a Secretariat function. Draft policy options and plans to support decision-making, if deemed appropriate to do so
- Co-ordinate working groups to inform CCG (O) decisions, with a focus on issues escalated from NI Departments and other local stakeholders, as well as the cross-cutting Northern Ireland 'cumulative impacts'
- Coordinate the NI HUB reporting rhythm, actions and information management
- Maintain NI HUB staffing levels and shift rosters (up to 24/7 if required), facilities/infrastructure, security, welfare, and business continuity
- Maintain an operational record for NI HUB C3 governance and operation.

**Lead Government Department (LGD)** - in line with the principle of subsidiarity, the nominated LGD will retain ownership for emergency management expertise in their area of statutory responsibility in Northern Ireland. In a Level 1 emergency the LGD will provide strategic co-ordination for the response, though they should warn and inform CCPB if they think the emergency might breach Level 1. It can call upon support from TEO and partners to assist with emergency response and co-ordination. The list of Northern Ireland nominated LGDs is at Appendix 6. In simplistic terms the LGD is the Department empowered with daily responsibility for an issue. Whilst it may provide the strategic lead on a Level 1 crisis it will also remain through Levels 2 & 3 to provide the expertise to inform the multi-agency and will often lead the minor emergencies, below these Levels. Within the NI Executive there are 9 Government Departments:

- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)
- Department for Communities (DfC)
- Department for the Economy (DfE)
- Department of Education (DE)
- Department of Finance (DoF)
- Department of Health (DoH)
- Department for Infrastructure (DfI)
- Department of Justice (DoJ)
- The Executive Office (TEO)

**Departmental Operations Centre (DOC)** - during an emergency the LGD would be expected to stand up a DOC in order to keep their Minister and partners apprised of the situation. The stand-up of one DOC in a Level 1 emergency will not necessitate the invoking of NICCMA, but if two or more are required, culminating in a Level 2 or Level 3 emergency, it is likely that NICCMA would be invoked and consequently CCG (O) and the NI HUB will also stand up. Once NICCMA is invoked DOCs will be requested to feed information to the NI HUB in terms of a Departmental SitRep. Further information on the form and frequency for SitReps is contained in the NI HUB CONOPs and SOPs. Some Departments operate one

DOC, others have a GOLD, SILVER, BRONZE concept, escalating as required to the developing situation. DOC staffing and reporting internally is a Departmental matter.

**Advantages of the LGD Role** - the limited application of the CCA<sup>8</sup> in Northern Ireland does not legislatively require LGDs to deliver a civil contingencies response but there are many advantages to inviting collaboration from partners by accepting the roles and responsibilities of an LGD:

- Shared situational awareness and expertise, facilitating better response
- Joint understanding of the operational picture and its impacts
- Support from the NI HUB to provide information to CCG (O).
- Secretarial support from the NI HUB to facilitate working groups, CCG (O) meetings and communications
- Joint media campaign directed by EIS, in support of the LGD press office, as needed
- Early indicators of escalating or de-escalating issues from partners
- Enhanced networking from 4 Nations and ROI
- Building public confidence through joint messaging from local areas through to the NI Executive
- Timely decision making by enabling briefings with Ministers
- Enable joint communication
- Establishment of a recovery group to aid the return to normal conditions

**Roles and Responsibilities of the LGD** - as it is likely that the nominated LGD will have responsibility for the emergency, the PREPARE phase of civil contingencies should be part of their normal business in terms of assessing, planning, writing, sharing and testing of their plans. In the RESPOND phase the LGD's roles and responsibilities largely revolve around their expertise, communicating with partners, facilitating shared situational awareness and adopting a collaborative approach to the emergency. A useful guide to joint working principles in an LGD context is attached at Appendix 7. CCS has produced a useful guide for LGDs and whilst all of it may not fit into the Northern Ireland context it provides more detail on each of the tasks listed below<sup>9</sup>.

The table below summarises the key LGD responsibilities through the phases of emergency management:

Figure 18: Roles and responsibilities of a LGD

PREPARE	RESPOND	RECOVER
Assess risks and hazards and mitigate	Strategically manage the emergency at local or departmental level and warn CCD of potential issues	Lead a recovery group or agree handover to another department or agency
Horizon scan and anticipate	Communicate with departments, partners and stakeholders	Co-locate, communicate
Draft plans	Co-locate with partners <sup>10</sup>	Consolidate lessons learnt and communicate to share best practise
Test plans	Establish an SCG as soon as possible	Review and assure plans including lessons learnt
Communicate with partners	Escalate to CCG (O) as appropriate	Reconfigure and start readiness cycle again
Exercise with partners – know who they are and what their capabilities are	Brief and co-ordinate – providing expertise as appropriate	
Assess, feedback and review plans	Set conditions for recovery	
	Capture lessons as soon as possible	

<sup>8</sup>The need for secondary Northern Ireland legislation will be reviewed.

<sup>9</sup> CCS The Lead Government Department and its Role - Guidance and Best Practice.

<sup>10</sup> Does not necessarily mean in the same geographical space. It can involve remote or virtual co-location, depending on the emergency

**Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG)** - the purpose of the SCG is to take overall responsibility for the multi-agency management of an incident and establish a strategic framework for all levels of C3. Its objectives are:

- Protect and preserve life
- Contain the incident - mitigate and minimise impacts
- Create conditions for recovery

In instances where there is a major and imminent threat to life, a significant public order implication or a possibility of criminal or terrorist activity, PSNI will normally Chair the SCG which will be known as SCG (PSNI) and will follow established police procedure. In most other instances the LGD will chair the SCG, known as SCG (LGD) as per the nominated LGDs at Appendix 6<sup>11</sup>, NIEPG can also be allocated the SCG role by CCG (O) and will be known as SCG (NIEPG). It is also quite likely that the SCG could be chaired by one body during the RESPONSE phase and a different one during the RECOVERY phase. An example agenda for the SCG is at Appendix 8. In terms of C3 it should be clear that each agency under the SCG retains its own command but the SCG can issue strategic co-ordination guidance and direction for operational activity which should and must be transmitted to the lower level operational and tactical responders in each organisation.

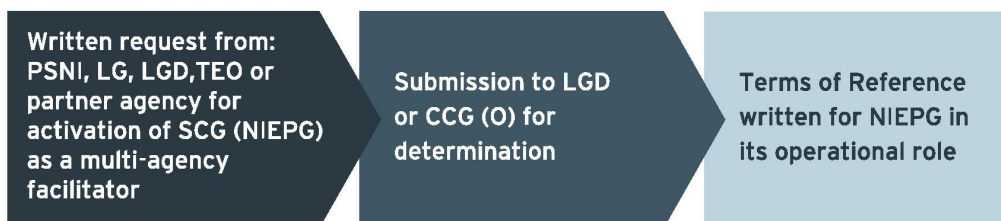
**Roles of an SCG** - No matter who is running the SCG the primary roles that an SCG will undertake are:

- Determine and share clear strategic aims and objectives and review them regularly
- Establish a working framework for the overall management of the event or situation
- Assess the requirements of the tactical level and allocate personnel and resources accordingly
- Formulate and implement media handling and public communication plans, potentially delegating this to one responder agency
- Direct planning and operations beyond the immediate response to manage the recovery process.

**Accountability** - decisions of the SCG must be well logged, recorded and tracked. Establishment of sub-groups to the SCG should also have clear purposes and have accountability through action logs and recorded task and finish objectives.

**NIEPG** - NIEPG is experienced at delivering multi-agency cohesion and will provide the co-ordination of TCGs where more than one is activated, ensuring the local level speaks with one voice to Central Government and the principle of subsidiarity is implemented. SCG (NIEPG) in response mode can be activated during a local or regional level emergency, during a Level 1 emergency and when NICCMA has been activated. In each case its role is the same and it must be remembered that during a Level 1, 2 or 3 emergency all levels of response still operate from local to regional, TCG to SCG to CCG (O) as appropriate. SCG (NIEPG) can activate itself for an operational response to a Local and/or a Level 1 emergency. If CCG (O) determines there is a co-ordination gap, with an LGD unable to facilitate multi-agency cohesion, it can request SCG (NIEPG) to step into that role, as follows:

Figure 19: Activating SCG (NIEPG) in RESPONSE Mode



<sup>11</sup> There is also scope to have a mutual agreement, as per the DfI response for severe weather, in which case local government will Chair on their behalf



**Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCGs)** - the purpose of tactical management is to ensure that actions taken at the operational level are co-ordinated, coherent and integrated in order to maximise effectiveness and efficiency. The TCG is the forum at which the tactical plan is agreed and implemented, with a common aim and objectives. During a spontaneous incident this group may often physically locate itself close to the incident. In Northern Ireland a TCG is largely based on the membership of the EPG with additional partners brought into the forum as required. If more than one TCG is operational it is likely that an SCG would be established to co-ordinate the response. Emergency responders often refer to the operational level as BRONZE, the tactical level as SILVER and the strategic tier of command as GOLD.

**Scientific and Technical Advice Cell** - In emergencies involving hazards or threats that require specialist analysis and advice it is important that CCG (O) has access to such advice to facilitate informed, timely decision making and public messaging. Where a Scientific and Technical Advice Cell (STAC) has been convened to advise the local level response on chemical, biological or radiological emergencies it will also provide advice to CCG (O). In circumstances where a STAC has not been convened but CCG (O) requires scientific/technical advice it shall call experts from relative Departments, agencies, and other stakeholder organisations together to provide this. In the specific case of overseas nuclear incidents, the Northern Ireland Technical Advisory Group (NITAG) will be convened to provide the necessary advice. Once convened, a senior officer from STAC, or NITAG, will act as liaison for communication with CCG (O), attending CCG (O) meetings to brief on the latest scientific picture and to answer queries from members. Northern Ireland is also represented on the UK Government Scientific and Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE), by the Chief Scientific Advisor to the Department of Health.

**Voluntary Partners** - There are many third sector organisations making a significant impact in our communities. These local voluntary, community and non-governmental public bodies are able and willing to assist in times of a crisis and have significant knowledge on the ground. These organisations can play an important role in consolidating our overall resilience, contributing to effective preparation for, response to and recovery from an emergency incident. Many will already be inter-woven with Councils and involved, or known to, the EPG collective. Departments and local government structures should maintain liaison with these groups to understand their working areas, capabilities and support they can offer. This will allow us to make best use of all talents and resources at our disposal. For example, the Department for Communities convened a COVID-19 Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Leadership Group which brought together regional and grassroots voluntary partners to help direct the Department's COVID response and the targeting of support for vulnerable people during the pandemic. Whilst the Department for Communities has a regional level convening role, in support of local government; a capabilities and contacts list for key relevant voluntary support should be maintained by Departments and local government structures. Voluntary bodies should also be involved in training and briefing exercises where appropriate in order to build capability and confidence.

**Military** - the Joint Regional Liaison Officer (JRLO) is the MoD's primary focus for integrating regional UK military operations with civil authorities. Northern Ireland has one JRLO who can be supplemented with additional Liaison Officers depending on the nature of the emergency. During routine periods they represent the MoD at EPGs and attend all relevant training and exercising events. The JRLO can provide advice on the military capability available in an emergency situation and how to submit a request.

If the assistance or support of the military is required at an incident, a 'military aid to the civil authority' (MACA) request is usually made through the relevant LGD to the NIO and then to the MoD. LGDs requesting military aid must first ensure there are no suitable alternatives with Northern Ireland. As part of departmental due diligence this may include making a request to the NI Hub, where the request may be escalated to CCG(O) in order to determine whether there is a wider Northern Ireland solution first. In all cases LGDs should inform the NI Hub of any request they make for military aid.

## 6.3 NICCMA Activation Process

Understanding NICCMA and the process for escalation is key to ensuring governance and transparency. Activation of NICCMA needs to be a formal process so that all partners jointly understand at the same time that NICCMA has been activated, or not, in response to a crisis.

**Decision Makers** - the decision to escalate into central crisis management arrangements will be made by TEO and a request can come from any of the following:

- The NI Executive
- The First Minister and deputy First Minister
- CCG (O)
- The Lead Government Department
- A senior representative of the PSNI GOLD group
- Resilience Managers, Regional Officer and/or SOLACE lead.

**Purpose** - the purpose of activating NICCMA is to gain multi-agency coherence to an escalating emergency which has breached the ability of both the Local level and LGD level to deal with it by setting up and running CCG (O) to co-ordinate the strategic response to the emergency. It should also be remembered that NICCMA activation should be in line with the escalation diagram at Figure 17, and that activation should be stepped up through the ALERT, ONE ACTIVE, TWO ACTIVE, FULL ACTIVE, where possible. Warning and informing as early as possible provides all partners with joint situational awareness should the situation quickly escalate.

**Local Impact Group** - At present, during severe weather events at local level a Regional Pre-Emergency Assessment Teleconference/Meeting (PEAT) is convened with potential LGDs, blue light responders and local government. This process has proven very beneficial in expediting multi-agency co-ordination during response and is recommended that this methodology is expanded for all local level emergency responses. This would align with the TEO impact assessment group methodology outlined below for NICCMA. Co-ordination of local level response is achieved via the establishment of one or more TCGs and if required the stand up of an SCG. As outlined within the Framework, the Chair of the SCG will be dependent on the emergency, however in instances where there is a major and imminent threat to life, a significant public order implication or a possibility of criminal or terrorist activity PSNI will normally Chair this group, with local government Chairing in other instances. That process will enable early identification of whether NICCMA should be activated, with the benefit of a multi-agency setting.

**NICCMA Escalation Process** - The process for escalating NICCMA has been kept as simple as possible and is as follows:

**Written Request to TEO:** The requesting agency is to formally write via email to Head of Civil Contingencies Division in TEO requesting activation of NICCMA, using the formal template below, a copy of which is at Appendix 9. A copy is also to be sent to Head of CCPB and the CCPB mailbox for both situational awareness and redundancy purposes. At weekends or during public holidays, NICCMA activation requests can be made by mobile to the CCPB Duty Officer and followed up with the template during normal working hours:

Figure 20: Example NICCMA Activation Template

<p><b>REQUEST TO ACTIVATE NICCMA IN ACCORDANCE WITH NI CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FRAMEWORK 2021</b></p> <p><b>DATE:</b></p> <p><b>FROM:</b> (NAME, ORGANISATION, CONTACT PHONE AND E-MAIL)</p> <p><b>SUMMARY OF INCIDENT:</b> (Key risks, agencies involved, casualties, anticipated duration, wider impacts (if known))</p> <p><b>BENEFIT NICCMA WILL BRING TO THE INCIDENT:</b> (What partners are required, what aspects of the incident require joint working at the regional level, what output do you need and what are the strategic triggers that require NICCMA activation?)</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> (How quickly does NICCMA need to be activated and how long for (what are the conditions for recovery, (if known)?)</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION FOR SCG (PSNI), SCG (LGD) OR SCG (NIEPG) LEAD ORGANISATION AND CONTACT DETAILS:</b></p> <p><b>SIGNATURE:</b></p> <p><b>(FOR USE BY TEO)</b></p> <p><b>DATE:</b> (Of receipt of request and date of Impact Group Assessment)</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b></p> <p><b>REASON:</b></p> <p><b>SCG (PSNI), SCG (LGD) OR SCG (NIEPG) LEAD ORGANISATION AND CONTACT DETAILS:</b></p> <p><b>SIGNATURE:</b></p>
--

**TEO Impact Group** - immediately upon receipt of such a request TEO is to convene an Impact Group to assess the NICCMA escalation request. The TEO Impact Group will consist of the following:

- Deputy Secretary TEO
- Head of Civil Contingencies Division
- Head of Civil Contingencies Policy Branch
- Lead Government Department
- Requesting authority

**Impact Group Assessment** - there are two options available to the TEO Impact Group:

- Refuse the request for NICCMA activation. Roles, responsibilities and co-ordination remain at the local or LGD level.

OR

- Activate NICCMA with stand up of CCG (O) and escalation of the NI HUB (most likely outcome for Level 2 & 3 emergency, though the NI HUB can be placed onto HUB ALERT for a Level 1 emergency as appropriate). In activating NICCMA the TEO Impact Group should be clear on who the nominated lead



is for the SCG (PSNI), SCG (LGD) or SCG (NIEPG) and should communicate this in all follow-on paperwork, to enhance wider C3 knowledge of who is co-ordinating the response, helping to ensure there is never a gap in this important role.

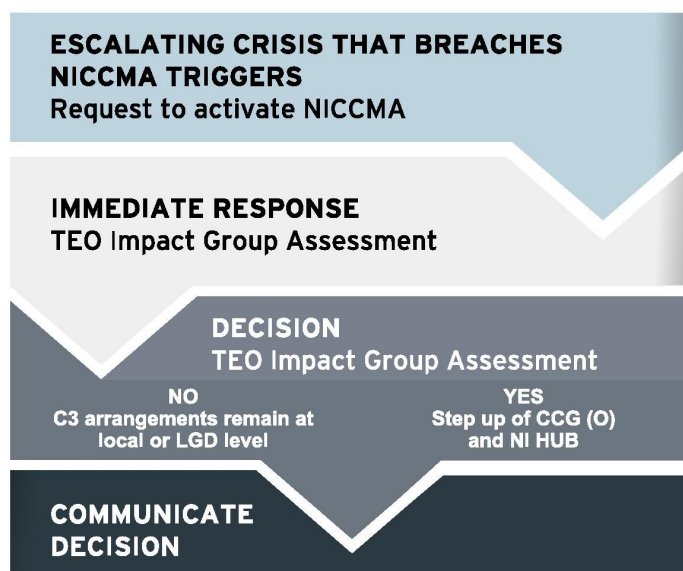
**TEO Response** - for governance purposes the TEO Impact Group assessment is to be formally recorded on the requesting form. This ensures that the requester has sight of the factors that have been taken into account, which enables them to decide at a future point if the issue has escalated again allowing them to submit a second request.

**Communication of TEO Impact Group Assessment** - CCG (NI) is to be informed in all cases of a request for NICCMA, regardless of outcome. As soon as NICCMA is activated by stand up of CCG (O) and the NI HUB, an e-mail outlining the details of activation is to be sent to all C3 leads for situational awareness.

## 6.4 Summary

The NICCMA activation process is as below:

Figure 21: NICCMA Activation Process



# Recover





Recovery from an emergency involves the processes of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community. It can be a complex long-running process, involving many agencies, participants, and interdependent strands and is often the least understood part of the emergency management phases. Key to good recovery, and therefore resilience, is to establish a recovery lead as soon as possible, ideally running in parallel to the RESPONSE phase.

## 7.1 Recovery Themes

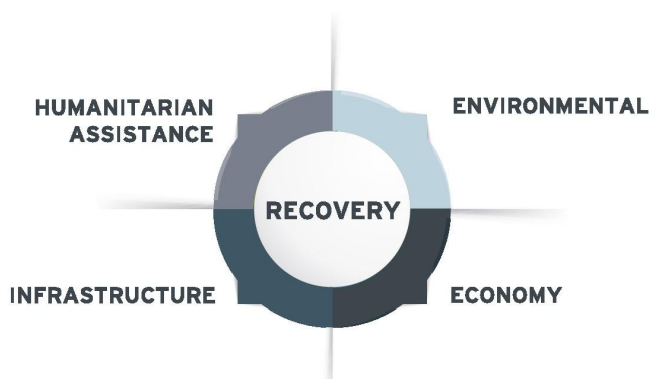
Understanding who and what needs to be in the Recovery Group, requires an assessment of impacts to be completed first, by the Recovery Lead nominated above. That assessment needs to highlight; impacts, mitigations, the level at which the mitigations can be implemented, prioritised and inter-linked dependencies.

**Recovery Strategy** - at the start of the recovery process, it is vital that a clear recovery strategy is developed and agreed and priorities set. The recovery strategy could cover some, or all, of the following key objectives:

- An Impact Assessment (covering impacts on residents, businesses, infrastructure, environment, etc.) is carried out as soon as possible and is regularly updated.
- Determine at an early stage if there is an opportunity for longer term regeneration and economic development as part of the recovery process.
- A co-ordinated, concise, balanced, affordable recovery action plan is developed that can be quickly implemented, involves all affected agencies and fits the needs of the emergency.
- The community is fully involved in the recovery process.
- All agencies work closely with the community and those directly affected, including on monitoring and protection of public health.
- Utilities (e.g. water) and transport networks are brought back into use as soon as practicable.
- A pro-active and integrated framework of support to businesses is established.
- All affected areas are restored to an agreed standard so that they are 'suitable for use' for their defined future purposes.
- Environmental protection and recovery issues are co-ordinated.
- Information and media management of the recovery process is co-ordinated.
- Effective protocols for political involvement and liaison are established.
- Reducing vulnerability to similar emergencies in the future.
- Review of business continuity and emergency response plans in conjunction with the Lessons Learned from the response.
- Review of training needs.

**Recovery Framework** - the establishment of a Recovery Co-ordination Group (RCG) is good practice and can be formed around the Local Government lead, the NIEPG or the LGD. CCG (O) will determine and communicate who is the lead for the recovery phase of a Level 2 or 3 Northern Ireland or UK operation and that decision will be based upon the severity and scale of the emergency and its impacts. In broad terms the impact and severity of an emergency can be assessed within the following generic areas:

Figure 22: Recovery Themes



**Theme Sheets** - the National Recovery Guidance includes topic sheets on each of these four themes. This guidance is regularly updated and can be found at [www.gov.uk/guidance/national-recovery-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-recovery-guidance) Typical issues that would be assessed are as follows:

Figure 23: Recovery Theme Sheets

<b>Humanitarian assistance (including health)</b>	Physical impacts (including individual's health, housing, financial needs)
	Psychological impacts
	Mass deaths
	Community displacement
	Animal health and welfare
	Vulnerable people
<b>Economic</b>	Economic and business recovery
	Compensation
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Disruption to daily life (e.g. educational establishments, welfare services, transport system)
	Disruption to utilities / essential services
	Damage to residential properties and security of empty buildings
<b>Environmental</b>	Pollution and decontamination
	Waste
	Natural resources and habitats

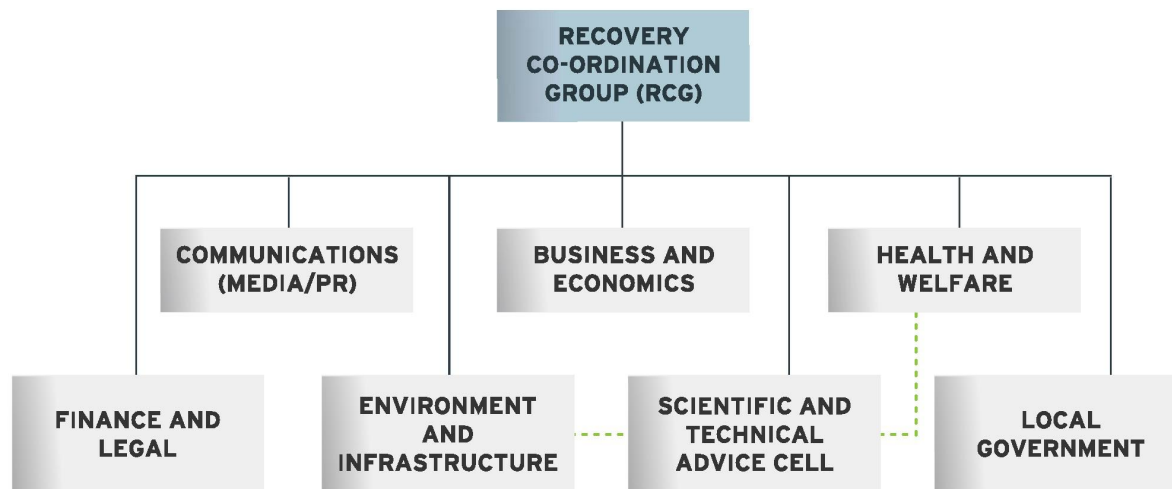
## 7.2 Recovery Co-Ordination Group (RCG)

The activation of the RCG should be one of the first priorities during the RESPOND phase as it enables recovery plans to be developed early and with good joint visibility of the likely impacts. Lessons learned from global disasters state that best practice is to appoint a different LGD for the RECOVERY phase to allow the LGD for the RESPONSE phase to carry on with those activities<sup>12</sup>, but with support and understanding of the conditions for recovery. If this is not possible then the same LGD would run both, providing they have enough resources to do so. An easy example of how this might work is PSNI lead on a risk to life scenario but the lead for the RECOVERY phase passing to a LGD. An RCG can be formed at either the local, regional or national level, depending on the scale of recovery required and likely impacts of the emergency it is recovering from.

<sup>12</sup> Cabinet Office Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance dated February 2013

**Membership** - the membership of a RCG should not be prescriptive, but be based upon the initial impact assessment and priorities. The diagram below shows the work strands that could be included within the RCG and reflects the template that other nations are likely to follow:

Figure 24: Example Membership of an RCG



**Activation of the RCG** - in Northern Ireland the decision to activate an RCG can either be made at a Local, Regional or National level. Terms of Reference for an RCG and an example agenda are at Appendix 10 and 11 respectively.

Figure 25: Likely RCG Lead Outcomes

LOCAL	REGIONAL	NATIONAL
Local Government is the agency responsible for planning for the recovery of the community following any major emergency and usually does this in co-operation with PSNI - if the impacts are within one District Council or EPG area it is likely that the Council Chief Executive or a nominated officer would lead the recovery co-ordination - if the impacts crossed more than one EPG area it is likely that NIEPG would chair the RCG	If the impacts of the emergency affect Northern Ireland and either PSNI or Local Government request it, the LGD will chair the RCG for all recovery issues, regardless of cross-cutting departmental issues - this is likely in emergencies where there is a prolonged and complex recovery programme	If the impacts of the emergency affect both devolved and reserved matters, and/ or wider UK interests the requirement for a RCG may come from UK Government - in such instances CCG (O) will agree and publish details of the LGD to deal with recovery and link to the UK RCG

**Location of the RCG** - the RCG should ideally be located beside the SCG or in the NI HUB during the RESPONSE phase but if this not physically possible a Liaison Officer should be appointed who can link the RCG and SCG together. This is vital in ensuring that the RCG is well informed as it enters the lead co-ordinator role. Care should be taken that those appointed to the RCG are not also pulled back into their day roles and where possible should be ring-fenced to recovery work. The impacts of the emergency will determine the frequency and reporting rate for the RCG, no matter whether it is a local, regional or national lead.

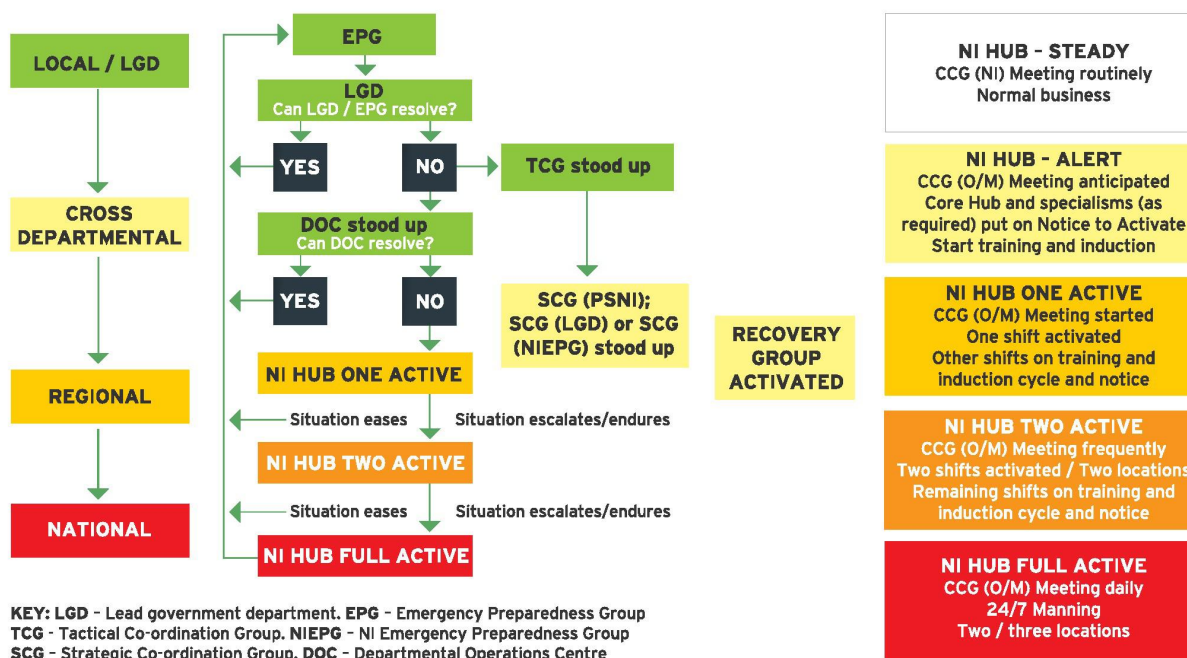
**Formal Handover between RESPONSE and RECOVERY** - while the RCG should be active from the beginning of an emergency it will often not be in the lead role during the RESPONSE phase and there needs to be a clear delineation of when it assumes the lead. The criteria for assessing when the handover can take place from response to recovery should be agreed by the LGD or CCG (O), where appropriate, for regional and national led recovery plans, and by Local Government in conjunction with PSNI for local led recovery plans.

Suggested criteria for declaring the handover of lead to RECOVERY operations are:

- The emergency is contained and there is no significant risk of resurgence.
- Public safety measures are in place and working effectively.
- Recovery Co-ordinating Group (and any supporting Sub-Groups) is firmly established and pro-active.
- Individual organisations are functioning effectively with adequate:
  - Resources
  - Communications
  - Management of outstanding issues
- A Chair of the RCG has been appointed.

**NI HUB and Support to RCG** - the de-escalation of the NI HUB, if running, during the RECOVERY phase will take place at the direction of CCG (O). Key to the de-escalation of the NI HUB is an understanding of the capabilities of the RCG and what enduring support it requires for itself and to provide to partners. Once the NI HUB is de-escalated the CCPB staff will revert to their routine business in the PREPARE phase.

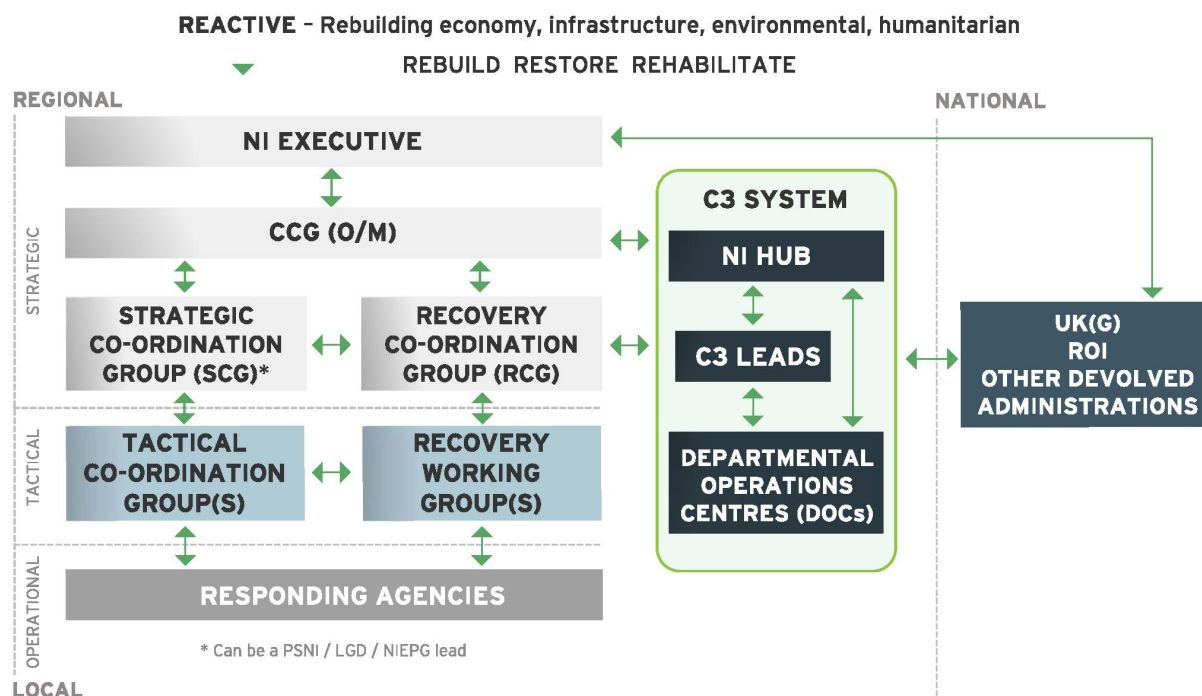
Figure 26: NI HUB De-escalation in the RECOVERY Phase



The NI Civil Contingencies structures in the RECOVER phase remain largely the same as for the RESPOND phase with the addition of the Recovery Co-ordination Group.



Figure 27: NI Civil Contingencies Framework in the RECOVER Phase



**Tempo of RCG** - the tempo of meeting and reporting of the RCG is dictated by the impacts of the emergency, no matter whether the RCG is chaired at a local, regional or national level. TEO retains the strategic C3 overview for civil contingencies in Northern Ireland and will need to be informed when Northern Ireland has returned to resilience and is ready to step back into the PREPARE phase. This information is vital, particularly when there have been concurrent emergencies and one may have de-escalated but another hasn't. Only CCG (O) has the authority to stand-down the RCG, unless it is a Level 1 RCG working only within the remit of NIEPG or a single LGD.

**Standing Down the RCG** - the length of time that the RCG is required to continue meeting will vary according to the nature and scale of the emergency. Some emergencies may have long term issues to consider, such as health monitoring. The RCG will be closed once there is no longer the need for regular multi-agency co-ordination and the remaining issues can be dealt with by individual agencies as a part of their normal business. Depending on the recovery issues being addressed, it may be possible for some of the RCG Sub-Groups to close prior to the main RCG standing down. The decision to stand-down the RCG must be formalised as an agenda item and recorded in the action log.

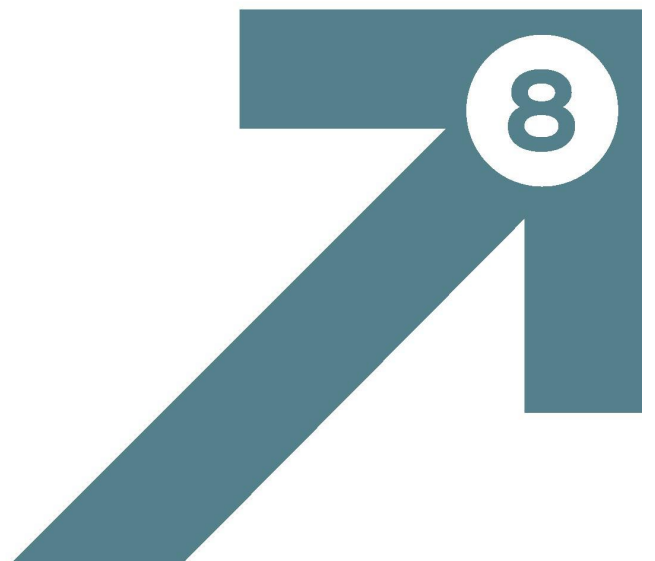
**Glide path of RCG** - the lifecycle of the RCG will typically look like this:

Figure 28: RCG Glidepath





# Vulnerabilities



## VULNERABILITIES

In any emergency there will be areas of regional and community vulnerability, both in terms of people and infrastructure. Both are mentioned in this Framework as they are integral parts of all contingency PREPARE, RESPOND and RECOVER phases.

One of the helpful tools for supporting identification and mapping of vulnerabilities is Spatial NI, which is an Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland's (OSNI) web mapping platform. It provides and facilitates access not only to OSNI's authoritative mapping data but other geospatial information from various and diverse data sources across the public and private sectors.

Spatial NI includes data analysis and visualisation functionalities as well as secure data dissemination capabilities. Critical to the effectiveness of Spatial NI as a tool for emergency planning and response is the potential to interface with other organisations' data infrastructures, consume data from external and authoritative sources, and surface information through web-based mapping applications. Therefore, information can be made accessible to stakeholders in a secure and timely manner when facilitated by robust and effective data flow processes between information asset owners and end-users. Further information about Spatial NI as well as examples use cases highlighting its capabilities can be found here: [www.spatialni.gov.uk](http://www.spatialni.gov.uk)

### 8.1 Vulnerable People

Enhancing resilience is not just a matter for Government but requires every citizen, family and workplace to minimise risks and enhance business, community and home resilience. That said, the differing nature of emergencies and their unpredictability, means that thought must always be given to dealing with vulnerable people in an emergency. The requirement to consider vulnerable people cuts across all Risk Register threats and is therefore a thread that should be considered as a standard part of all emergency plans.

**Definition of Vulnerable People** - the definition of who is vulnerable will differ depending on the impact of the crisis and so it is difficult to be prescriptive. The CCG (NI) Vulnerable People Protocol of 2016<sup>13</sup> defined vulnerable as:

(i) a person/group living in the community who is known to Health and Social Care organisations, is in receipt of health and social care services or packages of care	(ii) those customers of utility companies, agencies or other Government Departments for the purposes of ensuring they are prioritised for receipt of specified services, or for communication in relation to these services, during an emergency.	(iii) those members of the public who are not usually known to any responding organisation/agency or utility company, who declare themselves vulnerable as a result of a prolonged period without essential services, or due to a specific emergency, and who have been risk assessed as vulnerable at the time of the incident.
(i)-(ii) individuals within these categories of the definition must also be risk assessed as being vulnerable for the incident in question.		
(i)-(iii) as part of a joint dynamic risk assessment process, it should also be recognised that people may move between the 3 categories of the definition of vulnerability outlined above as the incident develops/unfolds.		

**List of Lists** - the most effective way of identifying vulnerable people is to work with those organisations which are best placed to have up-to-date records of individuals and will be aware of their specific needs. Identifying, planning and providing for the needs of vulnerable people will involve a significant number

<sup>13</sup> This Framework now replaces that protocol.

of partner organisations and gathering together a large amount of complex and perhaps, rapidly changing, information. The creation of this 'list of lists' at a local level will assist greatly with planning.

**Partner Organisations** - a 'list of lists' will not be a central list of individuals who are vulnerable, but rather is a list of partner organisations and their contact details that can be used to gather relevant information in the event of an emergency. This approach might include development of:

- **List of organisations** - (likely to be key planning partners) which hold and maintain information on vulnerable people. For example a Data Sharing Agreement can be established in advance between partner organisations so there is clarity around the parameters in which they will be working in the event of an emergency. This approach might help avoid some data sharing difficulties during an actual emergency.
- **List of types of vulnerability** - identifying the potential range of vulnerable people with specific needs within a local area in advance of an emergency (but not sharing the details of this) will assist with planning and response. This will need to be built upon in the event of an emergency unfolding and more vulnerable people being identified. Appendix 12 provides templates which summarises potentially vulnerable people/groups and the organisations most likely to be able to identify them. Table 2 at Appendix 12 can be adapted for use at a local level.
- **List of establishments** - housing vulnerable people in your area - identifying the key establishments that accommodate vulnerable people that are likely to require additional assistance - for example nursing and residential homes.

**Currency of Information** - it is important to ensure that lists of key contact details for all appropriate organisations are kept up-to-date, allowing the response to vulnerable people to be activated as soon as required. To ensure a coordinated approach the full range of all available organisations should be used to gather and disseminate information, identify individuals, discuss concerns and identify actions to address needs. These groups include: the statutory sector; the voluntary sector; community groups; elected representatives; utility companies; peripatetic employees (e.g. milkmen, refuse collectors, postmen, hairdressers, etc.); friends and neighbours; family members; faith groups; and other private industry. Processes should be developed and/or in place to facilitate information and data flows to and from organisations and individuals in a secure, accessible and timely manner.

**Actions to Identify and Meet the Needs of Vulnerable People** - in order to provide an effective response to address the needs of vulnerable people and to maximise an effective response in an emergency, all relevant responding organisations and agencies should follow the five steps outlined below to help identify and prioritise vulnerable people:

**Step one - Include 'vulnerable people' as a standing item on agenda for discussion at resilience meetings:**

- This will ensure that there is early identification of specific vulnerable groups and individuals and help inform how they should be prioritised in the response, as well as monitoring how the evolving incident may impact on other groups and cause them to become vulnerable.
- To ensure the identification of vulnerable people is effective, consideration needs to be given at the outset of the resilience group meeting that all appropriate organisations and agencies are represented and actively participate in the discussion. The example templates for an SCG and RCG include this category as a specific area of discussion.

**Step two - Agree an incident-specific definition of "vulnerable" and keep this definition under review as the incident unfolds:**

- Some organisations or agencies already have lists of vulnerable people which they use for the prioritisation of services, such as social services, GPs, utility companies, etc.

- It must be remembered that some people may not perceive themselves as being 'vulnerable' and therefore will not be captured on any list or register or known to services/agencies. However it needs also to be recognised that people may become vulnerable as a situation or emergency unfolds, or continues for a protracted period.
- Consequently responding agencies need to be responsive to emerging situations and recognise that their existing lists of vulnerable people (where these exist) may not be useful in the particular circumstance that they face and that they need to keep this under review.
- Therefore, responding agencies should acknowledge that the definition of 'vulnerable' which is agreed by the group will be subject to the information that is available to it at any given time, as the situation develops.
- Access to data and information is critical in supporting vulnerable people; therefore, information systems and technologies which facilitate data acquisition, dissemination, analyses and visualisation for robust evidence-based decision making should be leveraged by organisations as part of their internal emergency planning and response infrastructures.

### **Step three - Participate in a joint dynamic risk assessment:**

- This will involve all partners involved in the response assessing the information available and reaching a consensus as to which groups of people have specific needs during the emergency, and how these needs can be collectively prioritised and addressed.
- The joint dynamic risk assessment will rely on the range of information tabled by individual organisations, bringing their own unique knowledge and expertise to the situation to inform decisions and achieve effective outcomes.
- Responding agencies also need to ensure that they advise any strategic or tactical coordination tier of the outcomes of the joint dynamic risk assessment they undertake in order to inform potential strategic/tactical level decisions that might be taken, including decisions about the deployment of resources.
- Where responding organisations have identified and agreed the vulnerable groups likely to be impacted by an emergency, they should then seek to identify vulnerable individuals included in their existing critical care lists or customers, patients or clients who are likely to fall within these groups. These individuals should then be prioritised for service provision and to ensure there is close communication with them or their families and friends, as appropriate. These customers, clients and patients falling within the definition of 'vulnerable' should be triaged (and re-triaged) as the emergency progresses to ensure that the needs of individuals are prioritised and responded to appropriately within the resources available.
- Where possible, responding organisations should share and explain the decision-making process on how and why these priorities were agreed, or why this specific service provision will be required to address the circumstances being faced. Whilst consideration may need to be given to sharing information on individuals with other responding organisations, it will be necessary to be mindful of potential issues in relation to data protection and information sharing as outlined below.

### **Step four - Record outcomes and decisions:**

- There is a requirement that all decisions, the rationale for these decisions and the actions proposed are accurately recorded – and that these should all be kept under review as the incident or event unfolds. Extensive contemporaneous records should be logged, stored securely and should be easily retrieved in the event of them being required, particularly for judicial proceedings after an emergency.
- The chair of the resilience group is responsible for recording the detail of the joint dynamic risk assessment, taking account of the likelihood of the situation deteriorating and the impact this will have on the different vulnerable individuals and groups, so that response plans can be adapted accordingly.

### Step five – Communicate with consistent messaging:

- Organisations and agencies need to be careful to manage the public’s perceptions and expectations with regard to how they will be prioritised and ensuring they understand that this prioritisation may not necessarily mean a return to full normal service – it could mean that they will receive a partial return of service or an alternative form of the service as an interim measure.
- This should be carried out in line with the lead organisation’s communications strategy and should be a collaborative and consistent message with responding partner organisations, and in line with the CCG (NI) Collaborative Communication protocol in the next chapter. Full utilisation of nirect and local media should also be considered.
- There should be an agreed Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for handling communications during an emergency, and this SPOC should lead communications with the public, to both ensure consistency of media messaging and to inspire public confidence.

**Data Protection** – Data Protection Regulations do not prevent organisations sharing personal data, where it is appropriate to do so, but it must be founded on a legal basis and compliant with data protection handling regulations. Information Commissioner’s Officer (ICO) has online resources available to assist organisations in ensuring data compliance; <http://ico.org.uk>

## 8.2 Critical Infrastructure

Critical Infrastructure (CI) is a generic title which covers national, regional and local assets, systems or parts thereof which are essential for the maintenance of vital societal functions, health, safety, security, economic or social wellbeing of the people and the disruption or destruction of which would have a significant impact as a result of failure to maintain those functions. Critical Infrastructure can be affected by the collapse of another system or can be spatially (geographically) compromised by being close to another dependency.

**Northern Ireland** – in Northern Ireland the Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) list is owned by the NIO, supported by the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC). Their role is to protect national security by helping to reduce the vulnerability of the CNI to terrorism and other malicious threats. It is quite possible that Departments or Local Government will own infrastructure which does not pass the threshold for classification as CNI but which is of more specific regional importance. In these instances the Department should provide an annual consolidated list to CCPB to enable joint understanding of lower level but nonetheless important infrastructure assets in Northern Ireland. The top diagram shows how the three interlink, the bottom diagram is an example of how this might work in reality.

Figure 29: Critical Infrastructure Relationships



**Methodology** - The methodology for identifying regional, Critical National Infrastructure and National Security Risk Assessment inputs will be disseminated through Civil Contingencies Division, but in broad terms it follows a four step process and is based upon the ethos of collaboration with partners throughout the four steps. It seeks to identify the impact of loss, either by destruction or disruption, whilst assessing what other dependencies are affected by that loss. Building resilience into infrastructure is vital in the PREPARE phase and is developed using; lessons learned from previous emergencies, recognising alternative ways to use resources, well-conceived and robust plans and systems, spare capacity to provide redundancy should one asset or system fail and, embracing shared ownership and responsibility. Resilience is based on four key tenets:

Figure 30: Infrastructure Resilience



**Resistance** - this concerns the provision of direct physical protection; security measures and flood defences would be examples.

**Reliability** - the Reliability component is concerned with ensuring that the infrastructure components are inherently designed to operate under a range of conditions and hence mitigate damage or loss from an event. Testing the capability of a system, such as temperature extremes, will provide evidence of vulnerabilities that can be targeted with resistance measures.

**Response and Recovery** - the Response and Recovery element aims to enable a fast and effective response to and recovery from disruptive events. The effectiveness of this element is determined by the thoroughness of efforts to plan, prepare and exercise in advance of events. The strategy may differentiate between the response and the recovery. Some owners of critical infrastructure understand the weaknesses in their networks and systems and have arrangements in place to respond quickly to restore services. Recovery is considered in pre-event planning to explore opportunities to reduce future risks and/or build resilience in infrastructure during the recovery stage.

**Redundancy** - the Redundancy element is concerned with the design and capacity of the network or system. The availability of backup installations or spare capacity will enable operations to be switched or diverted to alternative parts of the network in the event of disruptions to ensure continuity of services. The telecommunications sector employs a redundancy strategy to provide the capacity and flexibility to meet peak demand for services and enable re-routing of communications traffic in the event of failure or loss of components. In this sector, the switch over to maintain services is instantaneous.

**Security** - given the security implications of identifying CI, completed lists will be held at an appropriate security classification and with limited distribution lists. This shouldn't limit collaboration at the local and regional levels. CCD should be the first point of contact for any questions regarding regional infrastructure. Useful resourcing tools are available on the CPNI website, which also provides useful definitions in relation to National Infrastructure and CNI [www.cpni.gov.uk/critical-national-infrastructure-0](http://www.cpni.gov.uk/critical-national-infrastructure-0)



## 8.3 Responders

Maintaining the welfare of our responders is a key vulnerability that must be included within all phases of civil contingency operations. In the welfare sense responders are all people involved in the emergency response; from those at the front-line to those in support. Anyone can be affected by a trigger that brings back an unwelcome memory or incident from their past experience. Understanding and knowing our people is a tenet that runs through all phases. Key activities that enable people resilience are:

**Prepare Phase:** Ensure people are:

- Trained and skilled to the role expected of them in an emergency
- Provided opportunities to learn mental wellbeing tools to help them in an emergency
- Appreciated and included in planning events so they are comfortable with the people around them
- Afforded the opportunity to communicate and influence plans, as appropriate
- Forewarned, as early as reasonably possible, of an impending emergency
- Provided with opportunities to learn in an inclusive and non-judgemental environment
- Aware of the welfare lead who they can speak to if they need to

**Respond Phase:** Ensure responders are:

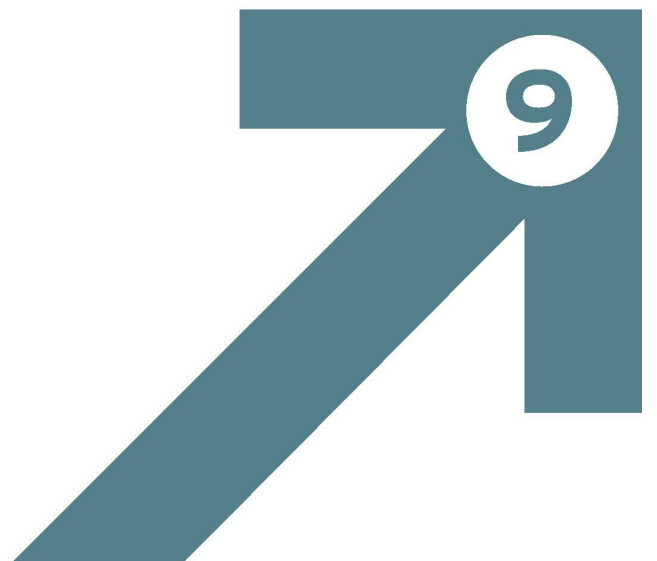
- Given the correct personal protective equipment from the beginning of an operation
- Understand who is in charge and who their Line Manager or welfare lead is
- Know who they can go to if they need mental or physical wellbeing support
- Provided with opportunities to rest and recover
- Provided with opportunities to record traumatic events and discuss their personal impacts with a trained counsellor, if required, or Line Manager as appropriate
- Involved in decision-making to enable their investment in the team effort
- Rewarded and recognised for their inputs to the emergency
- Given only tasks that fit within their grade and skill zone
- Communicated with in terms of debriefs and learning lessons during the response
- Provided with their basic human needs; food, water, sleep and rest
- Understand their role and part in the overall response

**Recover Phase:** Ensure responders are:

- Afforded time away to recover mentally and physically
- Involved in the Lessons Learned process and understand that Lessons Learned are a non-judgemental tool for future development of all responses
- Thanked for their contribution



# Media and Communications





## MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

Building and protecting public trust in emergency planning is an essential part of enabling effective emergency communications. The aim of an emergency communications strategy is to ensure that the necessary information is available to facilitate timely and informed decision making and that the public and responders are given relevant, timely and concise information regarding imminent and ongoing emergencies. Communications are an important part of all the phases of contingency operations through the PREPARE, RESPOND and RECOVER phases and hence is included within this Framework.

### 9.1 Communications Strategy

Communications strategies at all levels should be based on a few key principles.

**Plan** - each Department and agency should have a communications plan focusing on each phase of emergency management. Pre-prepared messages enable timeliness and enable partners to know what is likely to be said at each point, thereby reducing opportunities for inconsistent messaging. Use of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheets is best practice.

**Share Information** - consistency of messaging is vital to enabling public confidence and can only be achieved by a collaborative approach to sharing of information. All levels of response should include a communications item in their meetings.

**Use Multiple Channels to Communicate** - all agencies should plan to use the full spectrum of media messaging, acknowledging that the public have differing likes and media abilities depending on access and age. Equally a wider message spread ensures redundancy should one channel be closed off as a consequence of the emergency. Options should include; TV, radio, digital space, leaflets, newspaper or printed formats and consider target audiences both internally and externally.

**Engage with the Public** - gaining public feedback during an emergency can be challenging and daunting, but is vital to quelling misinformation and addressing issues of public concern.

### 9.2 Communications in the Prepare Phase

**Planning** - Executive Information Service (EIS) can assist Government Departments or agencies with development of the media and communications aspects of their Emergency or Business Continuity Plans. This is not to write the plan but to provide subject matter expertise and ensure all aspects of communication information are included. A media and communications plan should include both internal messaging and external communications with the public and higher authorities.

**Training and Exercising** - EIS can advise responders, agencies and Departments on training opportunities for their staff. Principal Information Officers for Departments and Press Leads/ Media Officers for responding agencies should be professionally trained in role. Exercising of plans should include media handling opportunities to enable those who have been trained to practice their skills in a secure environment. EIS can assist with exercise monitoring.

### 9.3 Communications in the Respond and Recovery Phases

**Local Level Emergency** - in the case of a local level emergency the TCG or SCG will co-ordinate the arrangements for communicating with the public, except in circumstances where there is a threat to life when the PSNI will deliver this function. This is laid out in the EPG Public Information and Media Plan. Likely EIS assistance at this point would be as follows:

- **SCG** - The Head of Communications for the SCG will define the initial communications issues and set out the initial communications strategy, with assistance from EIS as required. EIS operates a rolling list of staff at all grades who will be available on a “drop everything” basis to assist in an emergency, particularly during holiday periods.
- **Collaboration** - It is important to stress that EIS will be offering assistance and will not be seeking to direct the SCG’s communications effort – that is the responsibility of the SCG’s Head of Communications. It may well be that, particularly in the early hours of the emergency, the lead agency does not require formal assistance in terms of resources or expertise but simply requires collaborative idea sharing.
- **Liaison** - In cases where there will be other responders out with the SCG and in the early stages of the emergency, EIS will be in contact with relevant Heads of Communications to become the communications link with the SCG as required. The intention is to take as much of the liaison burden off the SCG’s communications team as possible and to allow them to get on with the core job of delivering their communications strategy.
- **Key Messaging** - the key role for EIS at this point will be to assist in the co-ordination of the key messages across all responders and develop a core script that all responders can draw on and to consider and facilitate as necessary the provision of joint media messaging spanning key responders to the emergency. This will necessitate EIS being supplied with all news releases and all lines to take from all responders, including FAQs. This information will then be published on the NI Direct website and will be significantly augmented through the use of social media. In the event of power outages communication with the public will be via radio bulletins, NIDirect through smart phones and direct contact with emergency centres where applicable.
- **Continuity** - throughout this period the Head of EIS will continue to liaise with the SCG Head of Communications to keep the level of assistance required under review. This will be particularly important if or when the chair of the SCG changes as the emergency moves into the recovery phase, providing consistency and continuity of messaging through all phases.
- **Participation in SCG** - EIS will participate in the SCG meetings as appropriate, to provide briefing for Ministers and senior officials on the developing situation and lines to take. A circulation list, which also includes key officials, has been created within EIS and is shared with all duty press officers.
- **Regional or National Level Emergency** - in the case of Regional or National level emergencies where a Lead Government Department is co-ordinating the response and the NI HUB is active, EIS Principal Information Officers posted in that Department will co-ordinate the media response and provide input to the briefing to Ministers and senior officials. Once NICCMA has been activated, EIS will co-ordinate the media response and will lead on development of the media strategy to support the strategic priorities identified by NICCMA. This will be done in close liaison with the Principal Information Officer/ Head of Communications from the LGD, as well as their counterparts in other responding organisations. The Head of EIS will keep all responders up to date on communications issues at CCG (O) meetings and will be available to brief Ministers and key officials in conjunction with TEO officials co-ordinating the response. EIS can be embedded within the NI HUB structure as required, if the tempo of media and communications briefings and/or Ministerial meetings requires it.

## 9.4 Summary

The diagram below summarises the likely communications related requirements during emergency management and the key engagement from EIS summarised in the collaborative communications process chart below:

Figure 31: Communications Requirements

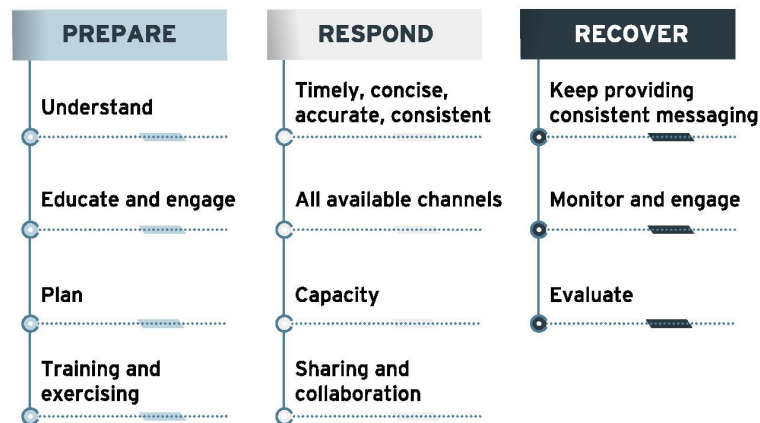
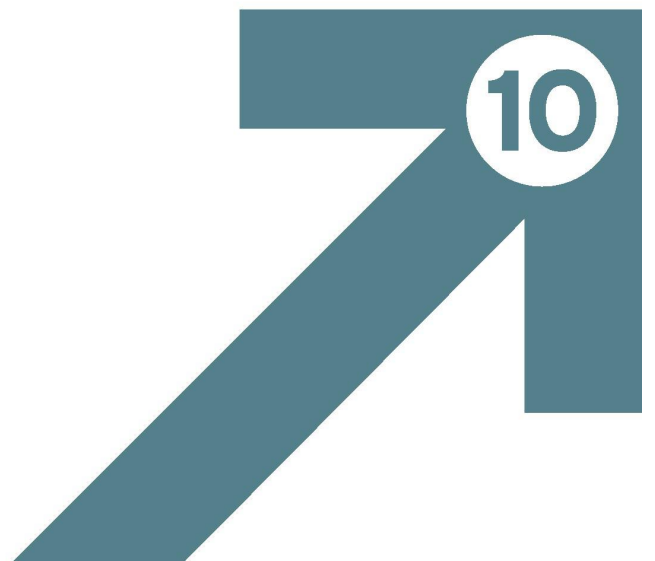


Figure 32: Collaborative Communications Process



# Governance and Assurance





## GOVERNANCE AND ASSURANCE

### 10.1 Governance Definition

In JESIP governance relates to "the processes of interaction and decision-making among the actors involved in a collective problem that lead to the creation, reinforcement, or reproduction of social norms and institutions" or in more simple terms "Governance determines who has power, who makes decisions, how other players make their voice heard and how account is rendered. Governance is how society or groups within it, organize to make decisions".

Governance requires:

- Commonality of Language
- Coherent processes
- Coherent policy
- Consistent management
- Organisations empowered to make decisions and held to account for those decisions
- Collaborative engagement to ensure all contributors have a formal mechanism for contributing
- Record Keeping
- Tracking and logging of decisions
- Openness and transparency of processes
- Understanding how to engage in an emergency
- Understanding how to disengage from an emergency
- Taking opportunities to enable joint organisational learning

**Governance in Northern Ireland** - this framework document provides a basis for common language, processes and sets out roles and responsibilities in all the phases of civil contingency operations in Northern Ireland. The structures listed within it provide the cohesion of governance and the opportunity for good governance to be delivered in any emergency. The framework is generic in nature so it can be shaped to a specific emergency, or deal with concurrent emergencies at the same time. It also covers the routine; governance from Councils to EPGs, to NIEPG to CCG (NI) in building and informing resilience, and it covers the emergency response governance structures. The vision of this framework is that it will lead to future work to bind together the civil contingencies outputs from task and finish groups to working groups to sub-groups to EPGs, to NIEPG, LGDs and CCG (NI) to Ministers. That assurance will come through a streamlined annual cyclical process that will filter from one level to the next, maintaining the principle of subsidiarity but improving accountability for risks, whilst mitigating threats.

**Transparency** - confidence that the NI Civil Contingencies Framework will work comes from the activities mentioned throughout the document; planning, preparation, training, exercising and validating. The structures and activities must remain as transparent as possible enabling, rather than blocking, information sharing at all levels. Lessons Learned should be a welcome process that allows for identification of good and bad practice. It should not seek to apportion blame, simply to change what is not working for best or better practice. These opportunities can only be taken in an environment that welcomes openness and collaboration.

**Inquiries** - Large-scale emergencies are often followed by one or more inquiries. These may take the form of:

- a Coroner's Inquest, where there have been fatalities associated with the emergency;
- a Technical or Public Inquiry, to consider the cause of the emergency, the response, and whether lessons can be learned to prevent future incidents or improve emergency planning arrangements;
- a PSNI investigation, if there is reason to suppose that a crime has been committed.

An emergency may also result in civil litigation, for example, people may seek compensation on the basis that some organisation or individual has been negligent. Organisations should consult their legal advisers to make sure that they have correct procedures in place for the making and keeping of records during and after an emergency, as documents relating to it will be required for any Inquest, Inquiry or legal proceedings.

Results of public inquiries should be:

- Copied to the lead of the appropriate working group, or if the issues fall over more than one working group, added to the work programme by the CCPB Risk management board
- CCPB are the lead for updating this Framework on receipt of Lessons Learned whether from public inquiries or Lessons Learned.

**Emergency Legislation** - the enactment of emergency powers is a Reserved matter which allows the UK Government to make special, temporary emergency regulations, as a matter of last resort and where existing legislation is insufficient to provide an effective response. Emergency powers are not a substitute for effective planning and can only be used as a last resort in the following circumstances:

- Serious damage to human welfare in the UK, a devolved territory or English region
- Serious damage to the environment of the UK, a devolved territory or English region
- War or terrorism, which seriously threatens the security of the UK

The types of provisions that could be included in emergency legislation are set out in Section 22 of the CCA.

## 10.2 Funding

Access to emergency and additional funding should not be a planning assumption, though there have been many examples of additional funding being made available, mostly at the Level 2 and 3 scale of National emergencies. Funding for all local level multi-agency preparedness, training and exercising via the Emergency Preparedness Groups is channelled through DfC on an annual basis.

**PREPARE Phase** - it is likely that Councils, Departments and partners will need to self-fund training and exercising during the PREPARE phase of civil contingencies and these elements should be budgeted for on an annual basis. CCPB will offer any shared or additional training opportunities across the C3 Leads community maximising value for money whilst maintaining professional currency of those staff at the centre of civil contingencies delivery.

**RESPONSE Phase** - the nature of the budgetary cycle means that the ability to flex funding to an unanticipated emergency will prove challenging, but where it is clear that the scale of costs will exceed the normal budget ceiling of that Department or agency, CCG (O) should be informed for their own situational awareness. Requests for funding in the RESPONSE phase are likely to focus on immediate requirements for short-notice impacts. Due diligence of public funds is still required. The receiving agency should be clear on rules for accounting and procurement and where these may be shortened to aid speed of response.



**RECOVERY Phase** - funding allocated for the RECOVERY phase is likely to feature on improvements to resilience, capital projects for example that will stop the event happening again, or longer-term repairs but it should also consider opportunities for incorporating rejuvenation projects for communities. The tempo of the RECOVERY phase is likely to dictate a return to normal funding rules and processes.

### 10.3 Record Keeping

A comprehensive decision and action log should be maintained at each level of civil contingency arrangements. That record must be clear, intelligible and accurate; mindful that it could be used in a future inquiry. If logs are being maintained in hard copy, mistakes should not be erased, but lined through once and initialled. Blank spaces should be lined through. Electronic copies should show signature entries of change of log keepers. In multi-agency meetings the log should clearly identify attendees, decision-makers and their joint reasoning behind decisions. Logs should be factual, non-interpretative and written as soon as possible while the decisions and actions are fresh. Training of log keepers is available through EPC and is a skill that should be tested during live exercises. Logs should be regularly checked and initialled by a senior staff member, usually at shift change over.

Operational logs, e-mails and all operational communications are subject to Freedom of Information requests and their storage must comply with organisational data storage policies. The careful balance between sharing information enough but not too widely can be achieved by using locked down systems like Resilience Direct and suitable sharing software within NICS. Logging of records is important but should never jeopardise speed of response. Logs can be simple note records that are clear and legible.

### 10.4 Lessons Learned

It is important to capture lessons while events are fresh in the minds of those involved. Lessons Learned have a role to play in all phases of contingency operations:

**PREPARE Phase** - exercise and training events should have the capability to learn lessons, which help to assure plans and ensure that changes to policy or plans have an audit trail to support them. This is often referred to as “the taking apart part of the planning cycle”. If exercise utility is maximised lessons will be captured and plans changed. Templates for Umpires and exercising staff are available as downloads on the JESIP website.

**RESPOND Phase** - Emergency services are used to “hot debriefs” at the operational level. As pauses in the tempo allow slower multi-agency debriefs must take place. These should be facilitated by an agreed organisation and lessons captured, preferably on a shared platform to enable wide input. The lessons process should also include examples of best practice so that learning opportunities can be shared appropriately. For those operating within JESIP a joint organisational learning platform and templates can be used. For the NI HUB there is a Lessons Learned template within the SOPs and included here at Appendix 13. Lessons learned should be part of an iterative and dynamic plan analysis and should lead to an assurance that the plan remains current and valid.

**RECOVERY Phase** - during the recovery phase the tempo of the emergency should have reduced sufficiently enough to allow for a full capture and analysis of Lessons Learned. The capture of Lessons should continue until the RCG is stood down. Lessons Learned remain part of the operational archive and must be stored in accordance with organisational practice and potentially made available to future inquiries. Opportunities should be maximised to involve all agencies and the community in the Lessons Learned process. The involvement of public information gathering will assist with the move to the start of the contingency planning cycle of rebuilding resilience through preparedness.

**Joint Organisational Learning** - JOL Online is a unique but simple way to capture lessons identified that may impact on multi-agency working and allow us to continually improve what we do. Lessons identified

or notable practice may come from training, testing and exercising or incidents including a range of external sources. An example flow diagram of how JOL can work, using the Critical Threats Steering Group, is attached at Appendix 14. Similar JOL templates can be adapted for each Departmental Sub-Group, once the review of those groups and outputs is completed. JOL Online is hosted on Resilience Direct. It is a Cabinet Office secure system at official-sensitive and is the national repository for interoperability, national resilience lessons and notable practice across the UK. Training and practice on the JOL systems should be included within civil contingency training and exercising events.

**De-Briefing** - The key to the capture of all interoperability and national capabilities lessons is through local single and multi-agency debriefs. All debriefs should have interoperability as a core theme. Debriefing is a core function of all training, exercising and operational responses. The following is the sequence which should be followed for debriefings following the response to a multi-agency event:

- Internal Organisational debrief
- JESIP Blue Light debrief
- Multi-agency debrief
- Recommendations report

An indicative timeline might look like:

- Internal Organisational debrief - 4 weeks after event.
- JESIP Blue Light debrief - 2-4 weeks after internal debrief.
- Multi-agency debrief - 6-10 weeks after JESIP debrief.
- Recommendations report - 4-8 weeks after Multi Agency debrief.

These timelines are a good practice guideline only. The debriefing process should not impact on flexibility to deal with other incidents urgently requiring attention.

## 10.5 Audit

Auditing of processes and documents is part of good governance and affords the opportunity for a “critical friend” to assess departmental and multi-agency plans. CCS has a regular audit process for UK Mainland. CCPB can assist Departments and local government in Northern Ireland. Audit should be seen as an opportunity to share best practice as well as ensuring all options have been considered. The major advantage of using CCPB as a “critical friend” for audit and assurance purposes is that cross-departmental networking and stakeholder engagement is part of their daily business.

**Audit Checklist** - an audit checklist and associated questions is at Appendix 15 and has been extracted from the CCS LGD Guidance and Best Practice as a tool for those writing multi-agency or LGD plans. Some questions may not be applicable, others will be. Benchmarking plans against this audit guide will ensure compliance with National Resilience Standards.

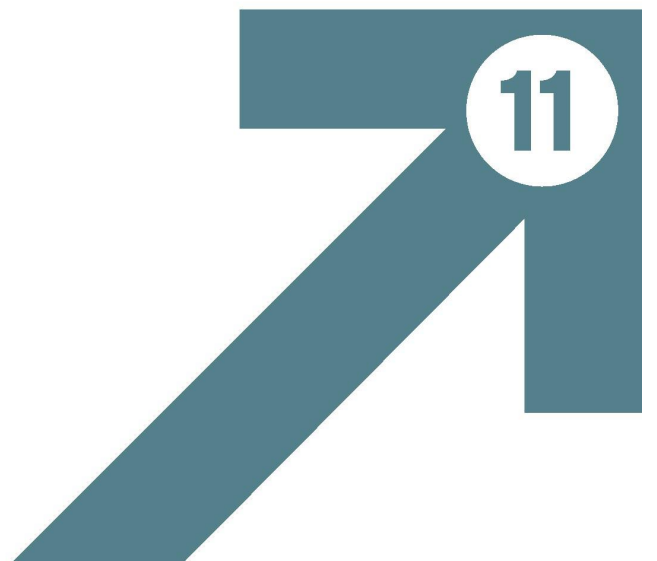
## 10.6 Assurance

In civil contingencies terms assurance is defined as; “the provision of information to enable principals to judge the degree to which something meets the requirements placed on it” Assurance of civil contingencies arrangements in Northern Ireland starts with Line Managers and involves:

- a. Knowledge of the processes and outcomes
- b. Training and exercising of staff
- c. Training and exercising of plans
- d. Knowledge of roles and responsibilities

- e. Knowledge of risk and mitigations
- f. Reviewing Lessons Learned and ensuring they are implemented
- g. Reviews of policies and practices to ensure their validity
- h. Independent reviews of the systems to test collaboration and communication
- i. Transparency, accountability and audit
- j. Trust in the systems and staff
- k. Resourcing of systems and staff
- l. Resourcing of PREPARE, RESPOND and RECOVER in accordance with Departmental and emergency plans.

# Lexicon





A full list of the UK Civil Contingencies Emergencies Responders Interoperability Lexicon is available at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-responder-interoperability-lexicon](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-responder-interoperability-lexicon)

<b>ABBREVIATION/ ACRONYM</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
ALARP	As low as reasonably practicable - usually refers to risk
BCP	Business Continuity Plan - documented collection of procedures and information developed, compiled and maintained in readiness for use in an incident to enable an organisation to deliver its critical functions at an acceptable predefined level
BRAG	BLACK, RED, AMBER, GREEN - grading system used to denote the critical nature and prioritisation of impacts and issues
Bronze Command	The tier of command and control within a single agency (below gold and silver level) at which the management of "hands on" work is taken at the incident site - sometimes referred to as the operational level
Business Continuity	Strategic and tactical capability of an organisation to plan for and respond to incidents and business disruptions in order to continue business operations at an acceptable predefined level
Capability	A demonstrable ability to respond to and recover from a particular threat or hazard
Capability Gap	The gap between the current ability to provide a response and the actual response assessed to be required for a given threat or hazard - plans should be made to reduce or eliminate this gap, if the risk justifies it
Capabilities Programme	A UK Government programme to develop a range of capabilities that underpin the UK's resilience to disruptive challenges
Catastrophic Emergency	Highest level of an emergency, Level 3 - which has an exceptionally high and potentially widespread impact and requires immediate central government direction and support
Category 1 Responder	A person or body listed in Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 - these bodies are likely to be at the core of the response to most emergencies, as such they are subject to the full range of civil protection duties in the Act
Category 2 Responder	A person or body listed in Part 3 of Schedule 1 to the Civil Contingencies Act. These are co-operating responders who are less likely to be involved in the heart of multi-agency planning work, but will be heavily involved in preparing for incidents affecting their sectors. The Act requires them to co-operate and share information with other Category 1 and 2 responders.
CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radiological and/ or Nuclear - the addition of an E CBRNE refers to explosive devices
CCA	Civil Contingencies Act of 2004 which established a single framework for Civil Protection in the United Kingdom. Part 1 of the Act establishes a clear set of roles and responsibilities for Local Responders; Part 2 of the Act establishes emergency powers (not all of this legislation is applicable in NI)
CCD	Civil Contingencies Division - in the Executive Office and facilitates strategic civil contingency arrangements for NI Civil Service
CCG (NI)	Civil Contingencies Group (Northern Ireland) - in Prepare phase a pan NI multi-agency forum for the development, discussion and agreement of civil contingencies preparedness and resilience policy for the NI public services
CCG (O) or (M)	Civil Contingencies Group (Officials) or (Ministers) - in Response phase supports strategic co-ordination of emergencies, supplementing existing Lead Government Department arrangements

CCPB	Civil Contingencies Policy Branch - the centre of excellence for delivering civil contingencies resilience, response and recovery policy in Northern Ireland, part of the Civil Contingencies Division
CCS	Civil Contingencies Secretariat - in the Cabinet Office, which provides the central focus for the cross-departmental and cross-agency commitment, co-ordination and cooperation that will enable the United Kingdom to deal effectively with disruptive challenges
Civil Protection	Organisation and measures, under government or other authority, aimed at preventing, abating or otherwise countering the effects of emergencies for the protection of the civilian population and property
Civilian	Relating to all authorities and agencies other than the military
CIR	Critical Information Requirement - prioritised information requirements identified as being key to informing timely decision making
CMO	Chief Medical Officer
CO	Cabinet Office - Department of the UK Government responsible for supporting the Prime Minister and Cabinet
COBR	Cabinet Office Briefing Rooms - UK Government's dedicated emergency management facilities, which are activated in the event of an emergency requiring support and co-ordination at the national strategic level
COMAH	Control of major accident hazards regulations 1999, Northern Ireland 2000 - Regulations applying to the chemical industry and to some storage sites where threshold quantities of dangerous substances, as identified in the Regulations, are kept or used.
Command	The exercise of vested authority that is associated with a role or a rank within an organisation, to give direction in order to achieve defined objectives
Command and Control	The exercise of vested authority through means of communications and the management of available assets and capabilities, in order to achieve defined objectives
C3	Command, control and co-ordination
CONOPs	Concept of Operations - the high-level description of how systems will operate to achieve defined objectives
COS	Chief of Staff - person responsible for leadership and management of the NI HUB and reporting to CCG(O)
CPNI	Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure - provides protective security advice to businesses and organisations across the national infrastructure
Critical Infrastructure	Critical infrastructure is a broad term used to describe Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) and other infrastructure of national significance, as well as infrastructure and assets of local significance
DA	Devolved Administrations - Devolved Governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland
DAERA	Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs - one of the 9 Northern Ireland Government Departments
DCOS	Deputy Chief of Staff - deputises for and supports the COS in the NI HUB
DE	Department of Education - one of the 9 Northern Ireland Government Departments
DfC	Department for Communities - one of the 9 Northern Ireland Government Departments
DfE	Department for the Economy - one of the 9 Northern Ireland Government Departments
DfI	Department for Infrastructure - one of the 9 Northern Ireland Government Departments
Disaster	Emergency (usually but not exclusively of natural causes) causing, or threatening to cause, widespread and serious disruption to community life through death, injury, and/or damage to property and/or the environment

DOC	Departmental Operations Centre - eight Northern Ireland Departmental operations centres which are scaled up and down to control the response to a emergency at Departmental level
DoF	Department of Finance - one of the 9 Northern Ireland Government Departments
DoH	Department of Health - one of the 9 Northern Ireland Government Departments
DoJ	Department of Justice - one of the 9 Northern Ireland Government Departments
EIS	Executive Information Service leads the NI Civil Service communications and media plan
Emergency	An event or situation which threatens to cause serious damage to human welfare, the environment or the security of Northern Ireland or the UK as a whole
Emergency Services	Generic term for police, fire and rescue, and health agencies - may also include HM Coastguard and other responders
EPC	Emergency Planning College - leading provider of training for emergency preparedness and emergency management, run for and on behalf of Cabinet Office by Serco
EPG	Emergency Preparedness Group - is similar to a Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and brings together all the emergency services, Local Government, NI Depts, utilities, voluntary and community organisations and partners within a PSNI command district for the purpose of facilitating co-operation in planning for and responding to emergencies - they meet both routinely and operationally
Exercise	A simulation designed to validate organisations' capability to manage incidents and emergencies - specifically exercises will seek to validate training undertaken and the procedures and systems within emergency or business continuity plans
FSA	Food Standards Agency - a non-ministerial UK Government department which acts to protect the public's health and consumer interests in relation to food - if necessary, can issue food restriction orders under the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985 (FEPA)
G20	Group of 20 of the world's leading industrial nations
G7	Group of 7 of the world's leading industrial nations: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, US
Gold Command	The strategic level of command and control (above Silver level and Bronze level) at which policy, strategy and the overall response framework are established and managed for individual responder agencies
Harm	Nature and extent of physical injury (including loss of life) or psychological or economic damage to an individual, community, or organisation
Hazard	Accidental or naturally occurring (i.e., non-malicious) event or situation with the potential to cause death or physical or psychological harm, damage or losses to property, and/or disruption to the environment and/or to economic, social and political structures
HSE NI	Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland - is responsible for the regulation of almost all the risks to health and safety arising from work activity in Northern Ireland
HMCG	Her Majesty's Coastguard - body within the Maritime and Coastguard Agency responsible for initiating and co-ordinating civil maritime search and rescue within the United Kingdom search and rescue region
HOCS	Head of the Civil Service
IEM	Integrated Emergency Management - Multi-agency approach to emergency management entailing six key activities - anticipation, assessment, prevention, preparation, response and recovery
Impact	The scale of the consequences of a hazard, threat or emergency expressed in terms of a reduction in human welfare, damage to the environment and loss of security

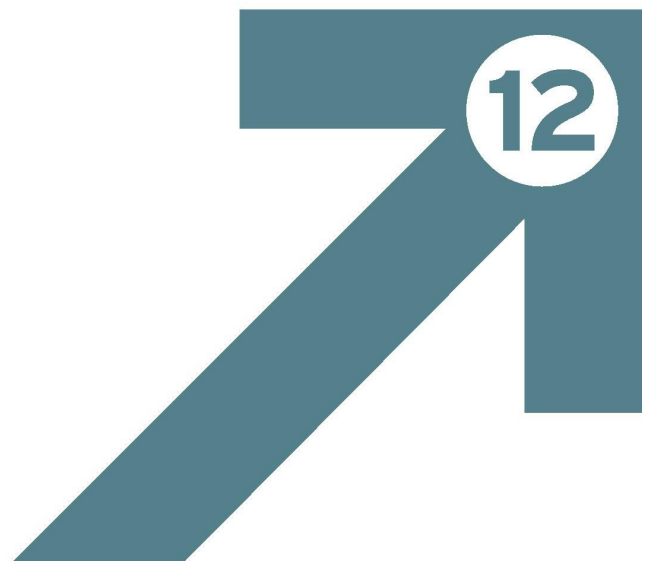


IG	Impact Group can also be a MIG - Ministerial Impact Group - concerned with managing the consequences of an impact
Incident	Event or situation that requires a response from the emergency services or other responders
JESIP	Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles
JOL Online	Joint Organisational Learning Online - secure national platform, hosted on Resilience Direct, for the capture and sharing of lessons and notable practice
JRLO	Officer of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) providing liaison between local or regional civil Emergency Control Centres and the MOD's United Kingdom command structure
LGD	Lead Government Department - is designated as responsible for the overall management of the government response to an emergency or disaster - LGDs are identified for both the response and recovery phases of emergencies
LO	Liaison Officer - liaises between organisations enabling shared knowledge and information sharing enabling timely decision making
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency - Executive agency comprising Her Majesty's Coastguard and the former Marine Safety Agency
Mass Casualty Incident	An incident (or series of incidents) causing casualties on a scale that is beyond the normal resources of the emergency services
MACA	Military Aid to Civil Authorities - any category of assistance provided by the Ministry of Defence to the civil authorities. Includes standing arrangements such as EOD response as well as a local military response for an immediate risk to life. All other use of MACA requires government authority, usually through a JRLO
MAT	Military Assessment Team - planning and exercise team which can be deployed for short periods of time below a full-scale MACA
MERP	Major Emergency Response Plan - Departmental plan which sets out arrangements to respond to events occurring in, or impacting on, its functional area which require the declaration of a major emergency
METHANE	Template used by emergency responders to communicate details of an incident (Major Incident, Exact Location, Type of Incident, Hazards, Access, Number of Casualties, Emergency Services)
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
Multi-Agency Plan	A plan for the co-ordination and integration of the response to an emergency by a number of organisations
NI HUB	Northern Ireland HUB - centrally coordinates information during an emergency response, across all NI Departments and key partners, providing situational awareness to enhance decision making at all levels, primarily the Civil Contingencies Group (O) and the NI Executive
NIAS	Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
NICCMA	Northern Ireland Central Crisis Management Arrangements - now included as a part of this framework
NICS	Northern Ireland Civil Service
NIEPG	Northern Ireland Emergency Preparedness Group - provides direction to the work of the Northern, Southern and Belfast Emergency Preparedness Groups (EPGs), facilitates cohesion between these groups and ensures effective communication between the EPGs, regional working groups and CCG (NI)
NIFRS	Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
NIOBR	Northern Ireland Office Briefing Room - central facility to support The Executive in providing strategic direction following a serious terrorist incident in Northern Ireland

NITAG	Northern Ireland Technical Advisory Group - is convened in response to emergencies involving hazards or threats that require specialist analysis and advice - the remit of the group is to give expert professional or technical advice to the CCG(O) to facilitate decision making - there are 3 possible groupings of NITAG namely, NITAG (Chemical), NITAG (Biological) and NITAG (Nuclear / Radiological)
NSRA	National Security Risk Assessment - the full and classified assessment of the likelihood and potential impact of a range of different risks that might directly affect the UK
NRR	National Risk Register - a publically available statement of the assessment of the likelihood and potential impact of a range of different risks that might directly affect the UK
NSC	National Security Council - a co-ordinating body, chaired by the Prime Minister, to integrate the work of the foreign, defence, home, energy and international development departments, and all other arms of government contributing to national security
PHA	Public Health Agency - is focused on enhancing public health and wellbeing by bringing together a wide range of public health functions under one organisation
Preparedness	Process of preparing to deal with known risks and unforeseen events or situations that have the potential to result in an emergency
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
RCG	Recovery Co-ordination Group - group established to take over from the RESPONSE phase to oversee recovery implementation
RD	ResilienceDirect™ is the UK's free-to-use secure web based platform for all Category 1 & 2 responders, government departments and other key organisations in the UK resilience community to share information in both emergency response and planning. This facilitates real-time information-sharing, across organisational and geographical boundaries, and is capable of linking frontline response to the control room. Hosts the JESIP JOL Online (Joint Organisational Learning) platform.
Recovery	The process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency
Regional Officer	Responsible for programme management of the civil contingencies resilience strategy, which provides oversight of the Northern Ireland Emergency Preparedness Group and the EPGs. Also responsible for facilitating multi-agency co-ordination of emergencies where there is not a major and imminent threat to life.
Reserved responsibility	Responsibility retained by the United Kingdom government, as distinct from those assumed by the devolved administrations
Resilience	Ability of the community, services, area or infrastructure to detect, prevent, and, if necessary to withstand, handle and recover from disruptive challenges
Resilience Manager	Responsible for programme management of Emergency Preparedness Groups and in response phases, responsible for facilitating multi-agency co-ordination of emergencies where there is not a major and imminent threat to life
Response	Decisions and actions taken in accordance with the strategic, tactical and operational objectives defined by emergency responders - at a high level these will be to protect life, contain and mitigate the impacts of the emergency and create the conditions for a return to normality
Risk	Measure of the significance of a potential emergency in terms of its assessed likelihood and impact
Risk assessment	A structured and auditable process of identifying potentially significant events, assessing their likelihood and impacts, and then combining these to provide an overall assessment of risk, as a basis for further decisions and action
ROI	Republic of Ireland

RWCS	Reasonable Worst Case Scenario - within reason, the potential worst case situations that could arise as a result of an emergency - the basis on which C3 Structures and planning have been formulated and constructed on
SAGE	Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies - Group of scientific and technical experts that is established to provide a common source of advice to inform decisions made during the central government response to an emergency.
SCC	Strategic Coordination Centre - a purpose built facility in PSNI Headquarters for joint coordination. This enables partners to work more effectively together and share resources and expertise, to mitigate the impact of emergencies on communities.
SCG (PSNI), SCG (LGD) or SCG (NIEPG)	Strategic Co-ordination Group - Multi-agency body responsible for co-ordinating the joint response to an emergency at the NI strategic level
Serious Emergency	Second highest level of emergency (Level 2), requiring central government direction - see also Catastrophic Emergency (Level 3); Significant Emergency (Level 1)
Significant Emergency	Lowest level of emergency (Level 1), requiring central government direction through a nominated LGD - see also Catastrophic Emergency (Level 3); Serious Emergency (Level 2)
Silver Command	The tactical tier of command and control within a single agency (below Gold level and above Bronze level) at which the response to an emergency is managed
SitRep	Situation Report - Report produced by an officer or body, outlining the current state and potential development of an incident and the response to it
SOLACE	Society of Local Authorities Chief Executives
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures - policies, procedures and standards to ensure efficiency, consistency, a healthy and safe environment and to provide a roadmap for how to resolve general issues and queries
STAC	Scientific and Technical Advice Cell - group of technical experts from those agencies involved in an emergency response that may provide scientific and technical advice to the co-ordinating bodies
Strategic	The level, above tactical and operational level, at which policy, strategy and the overall response framework is managed
Subsidiarity	The principle by which decisions should be taken at the lowest appropriate level, with co-ordination at the highest necessary level
Tactical	Level below strategic and above operational at which the response to an emergency is managed
TCG	Tactical Co-ordination Group - a multi-agency group of tactical commanders that meets to determine, co-ordinate and deliver the tactical response to an emergency
TEO	The Executive Office - One of the 9 Northern Ireland Government Departments
Threat	Intent and capacity to cause loss of life or create adverse consequences to human welfare (including property and the supply of essential services and commodities), the environment or security.
Voluntary Sector	All organisations, regarded as a group, involved in any aspects of the response to an emergency - also known as third sector
Vulnerable Person	A person who is less able to help them self in the circumstances of an emergency
Warning and informing	Arrangements to make the public aware of risks and for responders to warn, inform and advise the public when an emergency is likely to occur or has occurred, and to subsequently provide them with information and advice

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**HM Government** - Emergency Response and Recovery October 2013

**HM Government** - National Recovery Guidance

**JESIP Emergency Responder Interoperability Lexicon**

**JESIP Joint Doctrine** - The Interoperability Framework July 2016

**JESIP** - JESIP Working together, Saving lives

**Local Government** - Civil Contingencies Resilience Strategy for NI - 2020 to 2025

**NI HUB CONOPs** - September 2020

**Scottish Guidance on Resilience** - Preparing Scotland - March 2012