



**Comhairle Contae  
Loch Garman  
Wexford  
County Council**

# Major Emergency Plan 2024



Photo: Bridgetown 25 December 2021. David Parsons Photography

<b>Title</b>	<b>Major Emergency Plan 2024</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> October 2024</b>
<b>Version</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Prepared By</b>	<b>Ray Murphy</b>
<b>Approved By</b>	<b>DoS Em. Management</b>

**Section 0****Glossary of Terms and Acronyms**

vi

**Section 1****Introduction to Plan**

1.1	An Introduction to the Plan	1
1.2	Background	
1.3	Objectives	
1.4	Scope of the Major Emergency Plan	2
1.5	The Relationship / Inter-operability of the Major Emergency Plan with Other Emergency Plans	
1.6	The Language / Terminology of the Plan	
1.7	Plan Review and Update	
1.8	Public Access to the Plan	

**Section 2****Wexford County Council and their Functional Area**

2.1	Role of Wexford County Council	3
2.2	Boundaries and Characteristics of Area	
2.3	Other Principal Response Agencies	
2.4	Regional Preparedness	

**Section 3****Risk Assessment for the Area**

3.1	The Risk Assessment Process	5
3.2	The General and Specific Risks that May be Faced Locally and Regionally	
3.2.1	Natural	
3.2.2	Transportation	
3.2.3	Technological	
3.2.4	Civil	
3.3	Risk Management / Mitigation / Risk Reduction Strategies	6
3.4	Associated Plans and their Compatibility with the Major Emergency Plan	

**Section 4****Resources for Emergency Response**

4.1	Structure / Resources / Services of the County Council	7
4.2	Special Staffing Arrangements During a Major Emergency	
4.3	Other Organisations / Agencies that may be Mobilised to Assist	
4.3.1	Civil Defence	8
4.3.2	The Defence Forces	
4.3.3	The Irish Red Cross	
4.3.4	The Community Affected	
4.3.5	Utilities	9
4.3.6	Private Sector	
4.4	How Mutual-aid will be Sought from Neighbouring Counties	

4.5	Regional Level of Co-Ordinated Response	
4.6	National / International Assistance	10

## **Section 5**

### **Preparedness for Major Emergency Response**

5.1	The Incorporation of Major Emergency Management into the County Councils Business Planning Process	11
5.2	Assignment of Responsibility	
5.3	Documentation of a Major Emergency Development Programme	
5.4	Key Roles Identified in the Major Emergency Plan	
5.5	Support Teams for Key Roles	
5.6	Staff Development Programme	12
5.7	Training Programme	
5.8	Internal Exercise	
5.9	Joint / Inter-agency Training and Exercise	
5.10	The Allocation of Specific Resources Including a Budget for Preparedness	
5.11	Procurement Procedures	
5.12	Annual Appraisal of Preparedness	13
5.13	Steps Taken to Inform the Public	

## **Section 6**

### **The Generic Command, Control and Co-ordination Systems**

6.1	Command Arrangements	14
6.2	Control Arrangements	
6.2.1	Controller of Operations	
6.2.2	Mandate of the Controller of Operations	
6.2.3	On-Site Co-ordinator	15
6.2.4	Mandate of the On-Site Co-ordinator	
6.2.5	The On-Site Co-ordination Group	16
6.2.6	The Local Co-ordination Group	
6.2.7	Mandate of the Local Co-Ordination Group	17
6.2.8	Crisis Management Team	
6.2.9	Control of External Organisations/Agencies Mobilised	18
6.3	Co-ordination Arrangements	
6.3.1	Lead Agency	
6.3.2	On-site Co-ordination Function, Including Arrangements for Support Teams	
6.3.3	Co-ordination Function at the Local/Regional Co-ordination Centres	
6.3.4	Mutual Aid and Regional Level Co-ordination	19
6.3.5	Incidents Occurring on the County Boundaries	
6.3.6	Multi-site or Wide Area Emergencies	
6.3.7	Links with National Emergency Plans	
6.3.8	Links with National Government	20

## Section 7

### The Common Elements of Response

7.1	Declaring a Major Emergency	21
7.1.1	Major Emergency Plan Exercise	22
7.2	Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure	
7.3	Command, Control and Communication Centres	
7.4	Co-ordination Centres	
7.4.1	On-Site Co-ordination	
7.4.2	Local Co-ordination and Crisis Management Team	23
7.4.3	Layout of Co-ordination Centres	
7.4.4	Location of Predetermined Regional Co-ordination Centre(s)	
7.4.5	Information Management	24
7.4.6	Action Management Officer/Team	
7.4.7	Team Leaders and Expert Advisors	
7.4.8	Support Teams	
7.5	Communications Facilities	
7.5.1	Communications systems	
7.5.2	Inter-agency Communication On Site, Including Protocols and Procedures	
7.5.3	Communications Between Site and Co-ordination Centres	25
7.6	Exercising the Lead Agency's Co-ordination Roles	26
7.6.1	Lead Agency	
7.6.2	Review and transfer of the Lead Agency Role	
7.6.3	<i>Wexford County Councils Co-Ordination Role as a "Lead Agency"</i>	
7.7	Public Information	
7.8	The Media	27
7.8.1	Arrangements for Liaison with the Media	
7.8.2	Arrangements for Media On-site	
7.8.3	Arrangements for Media at Local and/or Regional Co-ordination Centres	28
7.8.4	Arrangements for Media at, or Adjacent to, Other Locations Associated with the Major Emergency	
7.9	Site Management Arrangements	
7.9.1	Generic Site Management Elements/Arrangements	
7.9.2	Control of Access	29
7.9.3	Danger Area	
7.9.4	Identification of Personnel at the Site of a Major Emergency	30
7.9.5	Non-Uniformed Personnel	
7.9.6	Air Exclusion Zones	
7.10	Mobilising Additional Resources	31
7.10.1	The Mobilisation of all Voluntary Emergency Services	
7.10.2	Mobilisation of Utilities	
7.10.3	Mobilisation of Private Sector	
7.10.4	Arrangements for Identifying and Mobilising Additional Organisations	32
7.10.5	Arrangements for Command, Control, Co-ordination and Demobilisation of Organisations Mobilised to the site	
7.10.6	Mutual Aid Arrangements	
7.10.7	Requests for Out-of-County Assistance	

7.10.8	Requests for National Assistance	
7.11	Casualty and Survivor Arrangements	33
7.11.1	General	
7.11.2	Casualties and Survivors	
7.11.3	Arrangements for Triage	
7.11.4	Transporting Lightly Injured and Uninjured Persons from the Site	
7.11.5	Casualty Clearing	34
7.11.6	Fatalities	
7.11.7	Coroner's Role	
7.11.8	Temporary Mortuaries	
7.11.9	Identification of the Deceased	35
7.11.10	Survivor Reception Centre	
7.11.11	Arrangements for Dealing with Uninjured Survivors who Require Support	
7.11.12	Casualty Bureau	
7.11.13	Friends and Relatives Reception Centres	
7.11.14	Non-National Casualties	36
7.11.15	Pastoral and Psycho-social Care	
7.12	Emergencies involving Hazardous Materials	
7.12.1	Hazardous Materials incidents	
7.12.2	CBRN Incidents	37
7.12.3	Biological Incidents	
7.12.4	National Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Plan	
7.12.5	Nuclear Accidents	
7.12.6	Decontamination	
7.13	Protecting Threatened Populations	38
7.13.1	Threatened Population	
7.13.2	Evacuation Arrangements	
7.13.3	Arrangements for the Involvement of the Public Health Service	39
7.14	Early and Public Warning Systems	
7.14.1	Monitoring Potentially Hazardous Situations	
7.14.2	How Warnings are to be Disseminated	
7.15	Emergencies arising on Inland Waterways	
7.16	Safety, Health and Welfare Considerations	40
7.17	Logistical Issues/ Protracted Incidents	
7.17.1	Arrangements for Rotation of Front Line Staff	
7.17.2	Arrangements for Initial and Ongoing Welfare for Front Line Staff	
7.18	Investigations	
7.18.1	Investigations Arising From the Emergency	
7.18.2	Minimise Disruption of Evidence	41
7.18.3	Other Parties with Statutory Investigation Roles	
7.19	Community/VIPs/Observers	
7.19.1	Links to Communities Affected by an Emergency	
7.19.2	VIP Visits	
7.19.3	Arrangements for National / International Observers	
7.20	Standing Down the Major Emergency	42
7.20.1	Standing Down WCC Services	
7.20.2	Operational Debrief	

<b>Section 8</b>	
<b>Site Specific Plans and Wexford County Council Sub-Plans</b>	
8.1 Agency Specific Plans	
8.2 Wexford County Council Sub-Plans	43
<b>Section 9</b>	
<b>Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination</b>	
9.1 Regional Level Co-ordination	44
<b>Section 10</b>	
<b>Links with National Emergency Plans</b>	
10.1 National Emergency Plans	45
10.2 National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents	
10.3 National Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Plan	
10.4 Animal Health Plan	
10.5 Activations on request from the Irish Coast Guard	
10.6 Activation on request from a Minister of Government	
<b>Section 11</b>	
<b>The Recovery Phase</b>	
11.1 Support for Individuals and Communities	46
11.2 Co-ordination of the Recovery Phase	
11.3 Clean-Up	47
11.4 Procedure for liaison with utilities	
<b>Section 12</b>	
<b>Review of the Major Emergency Plan</b>	
12.1 Internal Review Process	48
12.2 External Review Process	
12.3 Appraisal of the Major Emergency Plan	
<b>Section 13</b>	
<b>Appendices</b>	49

## Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

### Section 0

**Ambulance Loading Point** An area, close to the Casualty Clearing Station where casualties are transferred to ambulances for transport to hospital.

**Body Holding Area** An area, under the control of An Garda Síochána, where the dead can be held temporarily until transferred to a Mortuary or Temporary Mortuary.

**Business Continuity** The processes and procedures an organisation puts in place to ensure that essential functions can continue during and after an adverse event.

**Casualty** Any person killed or injured during the event. (For the purpose of the Casualty Bureau it also includes survivors, missing persons and evacuees).

**Casualty Bureau** Central contact and information point, operated by An Garda Síochána, for all those seeking or providing information about individuals who may have been involved.

**Casualty Clearing Station** The area established at the site by the ambulance service where casualties are collected, triaged, treated and prepared for evacuation.

**Casualty Form** A standard form completed in respect of each casualty and collated in the Casualty Bureau.

**Civil Protection** The term used in the European Union to describe the collective approach to protecting populations from a wide range of hazards.

**Collaboration** Working jointly on an activity.

**Command** The process of directing the operations of all or part of a particular service (or group of services) by giving direct orders.

**Control** The process of influencing the activity of a service or group of services, by setting tasks, objectives or targets, without necessarily having the authority to give direct orders.

**Controller of Operations** The person given authority by a principal response agency to control all elements of its activities at and about the site.

**Co-operation** Working together towards the same end.

**Co-ordination** Bringing the different elements of a complex activity or organisation into an efficient relationship through a negotiated process.

**Cordons** The designated perimeters of an emergency site, with an Outer Cordon, an Inner Cordon, a Traffic Cordon and a Danger Area Cordon, as appropriate.

**Crisis Management Team** A strategic level management group, which consists of senior managers from within the Principal Response Agency, which is assembled to manage a crisis and deal with issues arising for the agency both during the emergency and the subsequent recovery phase.

**Danger Area** An area where there is a definite risk to rescue personnel, over and above that which would normally pertain at emergency operations.

**Decision Making Mandate** Establishes the envelopes of empowered activity and decision-making to be expected, without references to higher authorities.

**Decontamination** A procedure employed to remove hazardous materials from people and equipment.

**Emergency Response** The short term measures taken to respond to situations which have occurred.

**Evacuation** The process whereby people are directed away from an area where there is danger, whether immediate or anticipated.

**Evacuation Assembly Point** A building or area to which evacuees are directed for onward transportation.

**Friends and Relatives Reception Centre** A secure area, operated by An Garda Síochána, for the use of friends and relatives arriving at or near the site of the emergency.

**Hazard** Any phenomenon with the potential to cause direct harm to members of the community, the environment or physical infrastructure, or being potentially damaging to the economic and social infrastructure.

**Hazard Identification** A stage in the Risk Assessment process where potential hazards are identified and recorded.

**Hazard Analysis** A process by which the hazards facing a particular community, region or country are analysed and assessed in terms of the threat/risk which they pose.

**Holding Area** An area at the site, to which resources and personnel, which are not immediately required, are directed to await deployment.

**Impact** The consequences of a hazardous event being realised, expressed in terms of a negative impact on human welfare, damage to the environment or the physical infrastructure or other negative consequences.

**Information Management Officer** A designated member of the support team of a principal response agency who has competency/training in the area of information management.



**Information Management System** A system for the gathering, handling, use and dissemination of information.

**Investigating Agencies** Those organisations with a legal duty to investigate the causes of an event.

**Lead Agency** The principal response agency that is assigned the responsibility and mandate for the Co-ordination function.

**Likelihood** The probability or chance of an event occurring.

**Local Co-ordination Centre** A pre-nominated building, typically at county or subcounty level, with support arrangements in place, and used for meetings of the Local Co-ordination Group.

**Local Co-ordination Group** A group of senior representatives from the three Principal Response Agencies (An Garda Síochána, HSE and County Council) whose function is to facilitate strategic level co-ordination, make policy decisions, liaise with regional/national level Co-ordination centres, if appropriate, and facilitate the distribution of information to the media and the public.

**Major Emergency Management** The range of measures taken under the five stages of the emergency management paradigm described in Section 1.2.

**Major Emergency Plan** A plan prepared by one of the Principal Response Agencies.

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

**Media Centre** A building/area specifically designated for use by the media and for liaison between the media and the Principal Response Agencies.

**Media Holding Statements** Statements that contain generic information that has been assembled in advance, along with preliminary incident information that can be released in the early stages of the emergency.

**Mitigation** A part of risk management that includes all actions taken to eliminate or reduce the risk to people, property and the environment from the hazards which threaten them.

**Mutual Aid** The provision of services and assistance by one organisation to another.

**National Emergency Co-ordination Centre** A centre designated for inter-departmental co-ordination purposes.

**On-Site Coordinator** The person from the lead agency with the role of co-ordinating the activities of all agencies responding to an emergency.

**On-Site Co-ordination Centre** Specific area/facility at the Site Control Point where the On-Site Co-ordinator is located and the On-Site Co-ordination Group meet.

**On-Site Co-ordination Group** A Group that includes the On-Site Co-ordinator and the Controllers of Operations of the other two agencies, an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer and others as appropriate.

**Principal Emergency Services (PES)** The services which respond to normal emergencies in Ireland, namely An Garda Síochána, the Ambulance Service and the Fire Service.

**Principal Response Agencies (PRA)** The agencies designated by the Government to respond to Major Emergencies i.e. An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and the County Councils.

**Protocol** A set of standard procedures for carrying out a task or managing a specific situation.

**Receiving Hospital** A hospital designated by the Health Service Executive to be a principal location to which Major Emergency casualties are directed.

**Recovery** The process of restoring and rebuilding communities, infrastructure, buildings and services.

**Regional Co-ordination Centre** A pre-nominated building, typically at regional level, with support arrangements in place and used by the Regional Co-ordination Group.

**Regional Co-ordination Group** A group of senior representatives of all relevant Principal Response Agencies, whose function is to facilitate strategic level co-ordination at regional level.

**Rendezvous Point (RVP)** The Rendezvous Point is the location to which all resources responding to the emergency site are directed in the first instance. An Garda Síochána will organise the Rendezvous Point. Other services may have one of their officers present to direct responding vehicles into action or to that service's Holding Area.

**Response** The actions taken immediately before, during and/or directly after an emergency.

**Resilience** The term used to describe the inherent capacity of communities, services and infrastructure to withstand the consequences of an incident, and to restore normality.

**Rest Centre** Premises where persons evacuated during an emergency are provided with appropriate welfare and shelter.

**Risk** The combination of the likelihood of a hazardous event and its potential impact.

**Risk Assessment** A systematic process of identifying and evaluating, either qualitatively or quantitatively, the risk resulting from specific hazards.

**Risk Holders** Organisations and companies which own and/or operate facilities and/or services where relevant hazards are found.

**Risk Management** Actions taken to reduce the probability of an event occurring or to mitigate its consequences.

**Risk Matrix** A matrix of likelihood and impact on which the results of a risk assessment are plotted.

**Risk Regulators** Bodies with statutory responsibility for the regulation of activities where there are associated risks, such as the Health and Safety Authority, the Irish Aviation Authority, etc.

**Scenario** A hypothetical sequence of events, usually based on real experiences or on a projection of the consequences of hazards identified during the risk assessment process.

**SEVESO sites** Industrial sites that, because of the presence of dangerous substances in sufficient quantities, are regulated under Council Directive 2012/18/EU, referred to as the Chemicals Act (control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2015.

**Site Casualty Officer** The Member of An Garda Síochána with responsibility for collecting all information on casualties at the site.

**Site Control Point** The place at a Major Emergency site from which the Controllers of Operations control, direct and co-ordinate their organisation's response to the emergency.

**Site Medical Officer** The medical officer with overall medical responsibility at the site, who will liaise with the health service Controller of Operations on all issues related to the treatment of casualties.

**Site Medical Team** A team drawn from a pre-arranged complement of doctors and nurses, with relevant experience and training, which will be sent to the site, if required.

**Site Management Plan** The arrangement of the elements of a typical Major Emergency site, matched to the terrain of the emergency, as determined by the On-Site Co-ordination Group.

**Standard Operating Procedures** Sets of instructions, covering those features of an operation that lend themselves to a definite or standardised procedure, without loss of effectiveness.

**Support Team** A pre-designated group formed to support and assist individuals operating in key roles, such as On-Site Co-ordinator, Chair of Local Co-ordination Group, etc.

**Strategic Level** The level of management that is concerned with the broader and long-term implications of the emergency and which establishes the policies and framework within which decisions at the tactical level are taken.

**Survivor Reception Centre** Secure location to which survivors, not requiring hospital treatment, can be taken for shelter, first aid, interview and documentation.

**Tactical Level** The level at which the emergency is managed, including issues such as, allocation of resources, the procurement of additional resources, if required, and the planning and co-ordination of ongoing operations.

**Temporary Mortuary** A building or vehicle adapted for temporary use as a mortuary in which post mortem examinations can take place.

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

## Acronyms

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

## Section 1

### Introduction to Plan

#### 1.1 Introduction

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

#### 1.2 Background

In 2006 the government approved a two-year Major Emergency Development Programme 2006-2008 (MEDP) to allow for the structured migration from current arrangements to an enhanced level of preparedness via the new emergency management process. The purpose of this plan is to put in place arrangements that will enable the three Principal Response Agencies (PRA's), An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and the County Council to co-ordinate their efforts whenever a Major Emergency occurs.

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

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



Fig 1.1: Five Stage Emergency Management Paradigm

#### 1.3 Objectives

The objective of this Plan is to protect life and property, to minimize disruption to the area, and to provide immediate support for those affected. To achieve this aim the Plan sets out the basis for a co-ordinated response to a Major Emergency and the different roles and functions to be performed by the various agencies. The fact that procedures have been specified in this plan should not restrict the use of initiative or common-sense by individual officers in the light of prevailing circumstances in a particular emergency.

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

The Scope of the Major Emergency Plan is such that the plan provides for a co-ordinated inter-agency response to major emergencies beyond the normal capabilities of the principal emergency services.

## **1.5 The Relationship / Inter-Operability of the Major Emergency Plan with Other Emergency Plans**

An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and Wexford County Council are the Principal Response Agencies (PRA's) charged with managing the response to emergency situations which arise at a local level. In certain circumstances, the local response to a Major Emergency may be scaled up to a regional level, activating the plan for regional level co-ordination. If this is so the Principal Response Agencies are An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and Southeast Region County Councils (Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford) members of which sit on the Regional Steering Group.

## **1.6 The Language / Terminology of the Plan**

In situations where different organisations are working together, there is a need for common vocabulary to enable them to communicate effectively. This is particularly the case where the principal emergency services and a range of other bodies are working together under the pressures that a Major Emergency brings. Therefore, a full set of relevant terms and acronyms, which are provided in section 0, should be used by all agencies.

## **1.7 Plan Review and Update**

The plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated as required or following any exercises or major incidents.

## **1.8 Public Access to the Plan**

The Major Emergency Plan, without appendices, will be available to the public on Wexford County Council's website at [www.wexford.ie](http://www.wexford.ie)

## **Section 2**

### **Wexford County Council and its Functional Area**

#### **2.1 The Role of Wexford County Council**

The functional area of this plan is the administrative county of Wexford. Wexford County Council incorporates Wexford Local Authority and the municipal districts of Wexford, Gorey, Enniscorthy, Rosslare and New Ross.

In the event of a Major Emergency Wexford County Council will ensure that danger areas are made safe to permit other agencies to undertake their recovery and rehabilitation operations. In the immediate aftermath of an incident, principal concerns include support for the other emergency services, support and care for the local and wider community, use of resources to mitigate the effects of the emergency and co-ordination of the voluntary organisations. In the 'recovery' phase Wexford County Council will be responsible to lead and co-ordinate the rehabilitation of the community and the restoration of the environment.

#### **2.2 Boundaries and Characteristics of the Area**

County Wexford is in the Southeast region of Ireland, with a long coastline on the south and east. On the north it is bounded by the hills of County Wicklow and on the west by the River Barrow and the Blackstairs Mountains. The river Slaney runs centrally through Wexford from Bunclody to Wexford town.

Wexford has a population of 163,527 (Census 2023 - Preliminary), with the main urban centres being Wexford, Gorey, Enniscorthy, New Ross and Bunclody.

#### **2.3 Other Principal Response Agencies**

Other agencies responsible for Emergency Services in this area are;

- Health Service Executive: South region comprising of counties Carlow, Cork, Kerry, Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford;
- An Garda Síochána: Wexford Division.

#### **2.4 Regional Preparedness**

Under certain specific circumstances regional level major emergencies may be declared, with a Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination activated. This will provide for mutual aid, support and co-ordination facilities to be activated in the region, the boundaries of which are determined to suit the exigency of the particular emergency. There are eight regions in total that have been created for Major Emergency purposes. The regions are shown in the Map below.



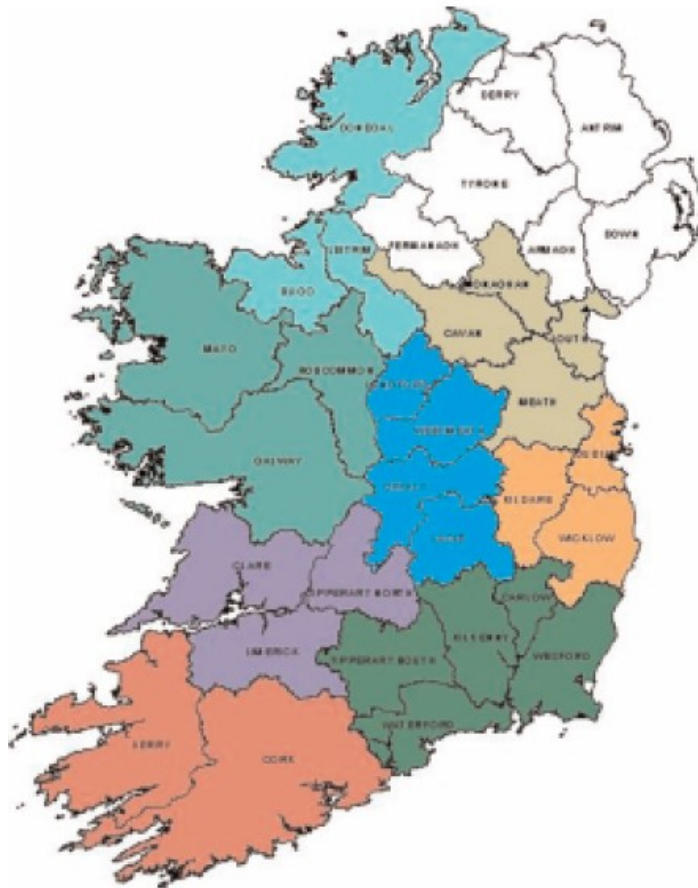


Figure 2.1: Map of the Major Emergency Management regions  
 Note: South Tipperary has become part of the Mid West MEM Region

Wexford County Council operates in the Southeast Major Emergency Management Region. This region incorporates the following counties; Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford.

An inter-agency Regional Steering Group was formed for the Southeast Major Emergency Planning Region. This group represents senior management from each of the Principal Response Agencies (PRA's).

A Regional Working Group on Major Emergency Management was also established to support and progress Major Emergency Management in the South-East Region.

## Section 3

### Risk Assessment for the Area

#### 3.1 The Risk Assessment Process

To prepare effectively to deal with potential emergencies it is necessary to have regard to specific risks faced by a community. Risk Assessment is a process by which the hazards facing a particular community are identified and assessed in terms of the risk which they pose and possible consequences. A detailed risk assessment for the area is contained in Appendix B.

#### 3.2 The General and Specific Risks that May be Faced Locally and Regionally

A number of potential hazards were identified and risk assessments have been carried out in relation to these. The potential hazards can be broken into the following categories;

##### 3.2.1 *Natural*

- Flooding/Severe weather;
- Landslide/Mine collapse/Rock slide;
- Forest fires;
- Earthquake/Tsunami/Volcano.

##### 3.2.2 *Transportation*

- Aviation incident;
- Rail incident;
- Road incident;
- Ship and Port incident;
- Water rescue.

##### 3.2.3 *Technological*

- Industrial incidents;
- Seveso sites;
- Loss of utilities/Infrastructure;
- Building collapse;
- Water contamination/pollution.

##### 3.2.4 *Civil*

- Overcrowding;
- Epidemics/pandemics;
- Terrorism/CBRN.

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

By carrying out a risk assessment we can identify the risks posed to the county and mitigate for their effects. It also enables us to plan and prepare for those risks which cannot be eliminated. The risk assessment process was carried out initially by an inter-agency team, with invited members of An Garda Síochána, Health Service Executive and the County Council, before being undertaken and documented by the Major Emergency Development Committee (MEDC).

The risk assessment comprises four stages:

1. Establishing the context
2. Hazard Identification
3. Risk Assessment
4. Recording potential hazards on a risk matrix

By carrying out a risk assessment we can identify the risks posed to the county and mitigate for their effects. It also enables us to plan and prepare for those risks which cannot be eliminated.

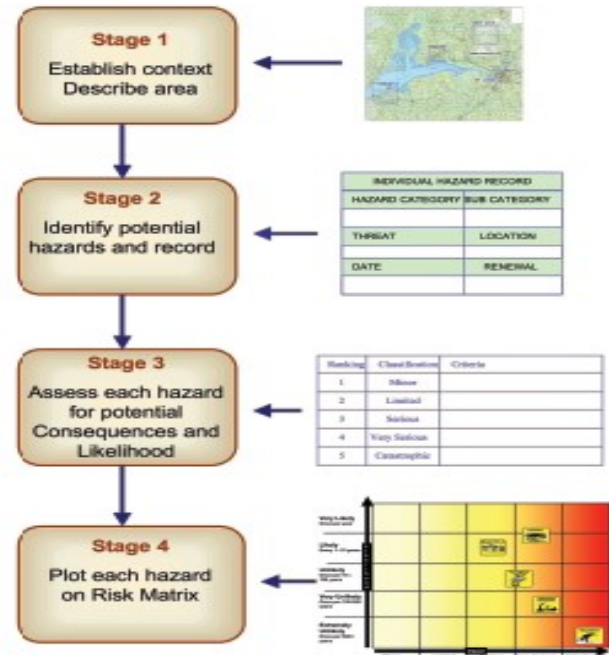


Fig 3.1 Schematic Risk Assessment Process

### 3.4 Associated Plans and Their Compatibility with the Major Emergency Plan

Appendix A contains details of sub-plans, section plans and external agency plans which are all required to be compatible with this Plan.

## **Section 4**

### **Resources for Emergency Response**

#### **4.1 Structure / Resources / Services of the County Council**

Wexford County Council includes the districts of Wexford Town, Gorey, Enniscorthy, Rosslare and New Ross. There are six Directorates in Wexford County Council headed up by a Director of Services who reports directly to the Chief Executive and are responsible for the functioning of their section within the council. These sections are;

1. Economic Development & Planning & Property Management
2. Roads, Transportation, Water Services, Health & Safety
3. Housing, Community, Libraries, Arts, Emergency Services, Environment & Climate Change
4. Human Resources, Corporate Services & Management of Displaced Ukrainian persons situation
5. Capital Development & Special Projects
6. Finance and ICT

The Chief Executive is responsible for supervising operations and implementing the policies adopted by the council. Each department within the County Council may be called upon to act in the event of a Major Emergency. A list of key contact personnel is contained in Appendix C.

#### **4.2 Special Staffing Arrangements During a Major Emergency**

Wexford County Council staff required to carry out functions in relation to a Major Emergency will be mobilised in accordance with pre-determined procedures (See Appendix C). Wexford County Council will however at all times maintain essential services during an emergency.

#### **4.3 Other Organisations / Agencies that may be Mobilised to Assist**

There are a number of organisations and agencies which may be called upon to assist the Principal Response Agencies in responding to major emergencies in addition to specialist national and local organisations, including;

- Civil Defence;
- Defence Forces;
- Irish Red Cross;
- Irish Coast Guard;
- Other Voluntary Emergency Services;
  - Order of Malta,
  - Slaney Rescue,
  - RNLI stations Courtown, Wexford, Rosslare, Kilmore Quay, Fethard,

- Wexford Sub Aqua and Hook Sub Aqua groups,
  - Cahore inshore service,
  - Coast guard units Courtown, Curracloe, Rosslare, Carne, Kilmore and Fethard,
  - Utility companies (ESB, Bus Éireann etc.);
  - Private contractors.
- (See section 7.10.1 and Appendix C)

#### *4.3.1 Civil Defence*

Civil Defence is a body of trained volunteers in the disciplines of EMT, first aid, rescue, fire, welfare, water based activities, search and recovery and technical line rescue. The Wexford Civil Defence has its own communications systems and an Incident Control Vehicle. There are currently 150 registered members in Wexford. A call out system is in place in the event of an emergency however it is worth considering that a response is completely subject to the availability of Volunteers. Civil Defence will be available to help with any area assigned to them to assist the County Council or other Statutory Service, subject to the availability of volunteers.

#### *4.3.2 The Defence Forces*

The Defence Forces can provide a significant support role in a Major Emergency response. However, there are constraints and limitations, and their involvement has to be pre-planned through the development of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU's) and Service Level Agreements (SLA's). Consequently, assumptions should not be made regarding the availability of Defence Forces resources or materials to respond to a major emergency. Provision of Defence Forces capabilities is, therefore, dependent on the exigency of the service and within available resources at the time.

It is recognised that assistance requested from the Defence Forces should be either in Aid to the Civil Power (An Garda Síochána), primarily an armed response or in Aid to the Civil Authority (County Council or Health Service Executive) unarmed response. All requests for Defence Forces assistance should be channelled through An Garda Síochána to Defence Forces Headquarters (DFHQ) in accordance with MOU's and SLA's.

#### *4.3.3 The Irish Red Cross*

The Irish Red Cross is established and regulated under the Red Cross Acts, 1938-54. These statutes define the role for the Irish Red Cross as an auxiliary to the state authorities in time of emergency and also provide a specific mandate to assist the medical services of the Irish Defence Forces in time of armed conflict. The main relationship with the Principal Response Agencies in Major Emergency response is as an auxiliary resource to the ambulance services. Subsidiary search and rescue and in-shore rescue units of the Irish Red Cross support An Garda Síochána and the Irish Coast Guard.

#### *4.3.4 The Community Affected*

It is recognised that communities that are empowered to be part of the response to an emergency, rather than allowing themselves to be simply victims of it, are more likely to recover and to restore normality quickly, with fewer long-term consequences.

At an early stage the On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other Controllers, should determine if ongoing assistance is required from “casual volunteers” within the community, so that An Garda Síochána cordoning arrangements can take account of this.

Where the On-Site Co-ordinator determines that casual volunteers should be integrated into the response, it is recommended that the service tasking them, or involving them in tasks on which they are engaged, should request volunteers to form teams of three to five persons, depending on the tasks, with one of their number as team leader.

#### *4.3.5 Utilities*

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

It is important that there is close co-ordination between the Principal Response Agencies and utilities involved in, or affected by, an emergency. Utilities operate under their own legislative and regulatory frameworks but, during the response to an emergency, they need to liaise with the On-Site Co-ordinator. It is also recommended that representatives of individual utilities on-site should be invited to provide a representative for the On-Site Co-ordination Group. It is recommended that individual utilities be invited to attend and participate in relevant work of Local Co-ordination Groups (See Appendix C).

#### *4.3.6 Private Sector*

Private sector organisations may be involved in a Major Emergency situation in two ways. They may be involved through, for example, ownership of the site where the emergency has occurred or through ownership of some element involved in the emergency e.g. an aircraft, bus, factory, etc. They may also be called on to assist in the response to a Major Emergency by providing specialist services and equipment, which would not normally be held or available within the Principal Response Agencies.

### **4.4 How Mutual-Aid will be Sought from Neighbouring Counties**

The Local Co-ordination Group may request assistance via mutual aid arrangements from a neighbouring county or declare a regional level emergency and activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination. Support is most likely to be requested from Carlow County Council, Kilkenny County Council, Waterford City and County Council and/or Wicklow County Council.

#### **4.5 Regional Level of Co-Ordinated Response**

In the event of a regional level response the lead agency which has declared the regional level emergency will convene and chair the Regional Co-ordination Group. Depending on the circumstances, the goal of regional co-ordination may be achieved by using a single Regional Co-ordination Centre. The method of operation of a Regional Co-ordination Centre will be similar to that of the Local Co-ordination Centre.

#### **4.6 National / International Assistance**

In the event that it is necessary to seek assistance from neighbouring or other regions of the country, or from outside the state, this decision should be made by the lead agency in consultation with the other Principal Response Agencies and the lead government department liaison officer at the Regional Co-ordination Centre.

The South-East Regional Co-ordination Group should identify and dimension the level and type of assistance likely to be required and its duration. It should also seek to identify the possible options for sourcing such assistance, be that from neighbouring regions, elsewhere in the state, the United Kingdom or from other EU member states.

The South-East Regional Co-ordination Group may also request assistance from government. National resources will be available in the event of a Major Emergency at local or regional level. Requests for assistance should be developed at local or regional co-ordination level and directed by the lead agency to the lead government department.

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

## **Section 5**

### **Preparedness for Major Emergency Response**

#### **5.1 The Incorporation of Major Emergency Management into the County Councils Business Planning Process**

The development of the Wexford County Council Major Emergency Plan is part of an emergency management development programme within the County Council to ensure that all necessary arrangements, systems, people and resources are in place to discharge the functions assigned by the plan. The plan therefore does not stand alone but is incorporated into the authorities management programme.

#### **5.2 Assignment of Responsibility**

The Chief Executive (or alternative) and the Inter-Agency Regional Chair are responsible for the principal response agency's Major Emergency Management arrangements and preparedness, as well as for the effectiveness of the agency's response to any Major Emergency which occurs in its functional area.

#### **5.3 Documentation of a Major Emergency Development Programme**

The responsibility for overseeing the Major Emergency Plan within Wexford County Council is assigned to the Director of Services with responsibility for Emergency Services, whom the Chief Fire Officer will support along with other staff members within the fire services.

#### **5.4 Key Roles Identified in the Major Emergency Plan**

Wexford County Council has nominated competent individuals and alternates to the key roles to enable the agency to function in accordance with the common arrangements set out in its Major Emergency Plan.

#### **5.5 Support Teams for Key Roles**

Support teams will be formed to support and assist individuals in key roles and will prepare Operational Protocols setting out the arrangements which will enable the agency's support teams to be mobilized and function in accordance with the arrangements set out in the Major Emergency Plan.



## **5.6 Staff Development Programme**

The provisions of the Framework and the tasks arising from the Major Emergency Management arrangements involve a significant level of development activity, both within Wexford County Council and jointly with our regional partners.

In parallel with risk assessment and mitigation processes and the preparation of the Major Emergency Plan, Wexford County Council has initiated an internal programme to develop its level of preparedness, so that in a Major Emergency it will be in a position to respond in an efficient and effective manner and discharge the assigned functions in accordance with the Framework. It is also imperative that we not only develop within our own agency but that we also continue to work with the other PRAs through continued training and inter-agency exercises.

## **5.7 Training Programme**

All personnel involved in the Major Emergency Plan organisation will be required to participate in inter-agency training and exercises in order to ensure effective co-operation between agencies during a Major Emergency.

## **5.8 Internal Exercise**

Internal exercises will be used to raise awareness, educate individuals on their roles and the roles of others and promote co-ordination and cooperation, as well as validating plans, systems and procedures.

## **5.9 Joint / Inter-Agency Training and Exercise**

Joint interagency training will be provided at a Local and Regional level, co-ordinated by the Southeast Regional Working group. Exercises will follow on from this training to improve awareness and educate all involved in the roles and functions of the PRA's in the event of an emergency. Exercises will be preformed on a three yearly cycle.

## **5.10 The Allocation of Specific Resources Including a Budget for Preparedness**

Wexford County Council and the South-East Regional Steering Group shall provide a budget for Major Emergency preparedness, which reflects the expenditure required to meet the costs of implementing the agency's internal preparedness, as well as the agency's contribution to the regional level inter-agency preparedness.

## **5.11 Procurement Procedures**

The arrangements to authorise procurement and use of resources (including engaging third parties) to assist in response to major emergencies are governed by the Local Government Act: 2001. Arrangements may be put in place by Wexford County Council with local suppliers to supply urgent goods when required.

### **5.12 Annual Appraisal of Preparedness**

Wexford County Council may carry out and document an annual internal appraisal of its preparedness for Major Emergency response, which may be sent for external appraisal to the Department of Environment, Climate & Communications. An annual appraisal of the Southeast Regional level preparedness may also be documented in accordance with the appraisal process.

### **5.13 Steps Taken to Inform the Public**

There may be situations where it will be crucial for the Wexford County Council to provide timely and accurate information directly to the public on an emergency situation. This will be especially important where members of the public may perceive themselves and their families to be at risk and are seeking information on actions which they can take to protect themselves and their families.

The Local Co-ordination Group will take over the task of co-ordinating the provision of information to the public as soon as it meets. This activity should be co-ordinated by the lead agency. The Local Co-ordination Group may establish a sub-group for this purpose and use all available channels to make concise and accurate information available. This may include the use of dedicated help lines, social media, webpages, automatic text messaging, as well as through liaison with the traditional media.

## **Section 6**

### **The Generic Command, Control and Co-ordination Systems**

#### **6.1 Command Arrangements**

The Chief Executive is responsible for the Wexford County Council (WCC) Major Emergency Management arrangements and preparedness, as well as for the effectiveness of WCC's response to any Major Emergency which occurs in its functional area. WCC shall exercise command over its own resources in accordance with its normal command structure.

At the site of a Major Emergency, WCC will exercise control over its own services and any additional external support services which the WCC mobilises to the site. Control of WCC services at the site of the emergency shall be exercised by the Controller of Operations.

#### **6.2 Control Arrangements**

Wexford County Council shall appoint a Controller of Operations at the site (or at each site) of the emergency. The officer in command of the initial response of WCC should be the Controller of Operations until relieved through the WCC's pre-determined procedures.

##### *6.2.1 Controller of Operations*

The Controller of Operations is empowered to make all decisions relating to his/her agency's functions but must take account of decisions of the On-Site Co-ordination Group in so doing.

The role of the WCC Controller of Operations is to make such decisions as are appropriate to the role of controlling the activities of WCC services at the site. (Controlling in this context may mean setting priority objectives for individual services. Command of each service should remain with the officers of that service).

##### *6.2.2 Mandate of the Controller of Operations*

- To meet with the other two controllers and determine the lead agency,
- To undertake the role of On-Site Co-ordinator, where WCC is identified as the lead agency,
- To participate fully in the on-site co-ordination activity, including the establishment of a Site Management Plan,
- Where another service is the lead agency, to ensure that WCC's operations are co-ordinated with the other Principal Response Agencies, including ensuring secure communications with all agencies responding to the Major Emergency at the site,
- To decide and request the attendance of such services as he/she determines are necessary,
- To exercise control over such services as he/she has requested to attend,

- To operate a Holding Area to which personnel from WCC will report on arrival at the site of the Major Emergency and from which they will be deployed,
- To requisition any equipment he/she deems necessary to deal with the incident,
- To seek such advice as he/she requires,
- To maintain a log of WCC's activity and decisions made at the incident site,
- To contribute to and ensure information management systems operate effectively,
- To liaise with WCC's Crisis Management Team on the handling of the major emergency.

### *6.2.3 On-Site Co-ordinator*

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

### *6.2.4 Mandate of the On-Site Co-ordinator*

- To assume the role of On-Site Co-ordinator when the three controllers determine the lead agency. Once appointed he/she should note the time and that the determination was made in the presence of the two other controllers on site,
- To inform all parties involved in the response that he/she has assumed the role of On-Site Co-ordinator,
- To determine which facility should be used as the On-Site Co-ordination Centre. Depending on the circumstance, this may be a vehicle designated for the task, a specific, purpose-built vehicle, a tent or other temporary structure or an appropriate space/building adjacent to the site, which can be used for Co-ordination purposes,
- To ensure involvement of the three PRA's and the Principal Emergency Services (and others, as appropriate) in the On-Site Co-ordination Group,
- To ensure that mandated co-ordination decisions are made promptly and communicated to all involved,
- To ensure that a Scene Management Plan is made, disseminated to all services and applied,
- To develop an auditable list of actions (an Action Plan) and appoint an Action Management Officer where necessary,
- To determine if and which public information messages are to be developed and issued,
- To ensure that media briefings are co-ordinated,
- To ensure that pre-arranged communications (technical) links are put in place and operating,
- To ensure that the information management system is operated, including the capture of data for record purposes at regular intervals,
- To ensure that the ownership of the lead agency role is reviewed, and modified as appropriate,

- To ensure that inter-service communication systems have been established and that communications from the site to the Local Co-ordination Centre have been established and are functioning,
- To exercise an over-viewing role of all arrangements to mobilise additional resources to the site of the major emergency, and to track the status of mobilization requests, and deployment of additional resources,
- To ensure that, where the resources of an individual PRA do not appear to be sufficient to bring a situation under control, or the duration of an incident is extended, support is obtained via mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring PRA's,
- To determine, at an early stage, if ongoing assistance is required from casual volunteers, so that An Garda Síochána cordoning arrangements can take account of this,
- To co-ordinate external assistance into the overall response action plan,
- To ensure that, where appropriate, pastoral services are mobilised to the site and facilitated by the Principal Response Agencies in their work with casualties,
- To work with the Health Service Executive Controller to establish the likely nature, dimensions, priorities and optimum location for delivering any psycho social support that will be required, and how this is to be delivered and integrated with the overall response effort,
- To decide to stand down the Major Emergency status of the incident at the site, in consultation with the other Controllers of Operations, and the Local Co-ordination Group,
- To ensure that all aspects of the management of the incident are dealt with before the response is stood down,
- To ensure that a report on the co-ordination function is prepared in respect of the Major Emergency after it is closed down, and circulated (first as a draft) to the other services that attended.

#### *6.2.5 The On-Site Co-ordination Group*

The primary mechanism used to deliver co-ordination on-site is the arrangement for an On-Site Co-ordinator, provided by the lead agency as discussed above. As soon as they meet, the three Controllers of Operations should determine which is the lead agency and thereby establish who is the On-Site Co-ordinator. The On-Site Co-ordinator will chair the "On-Site Co-ordinating Group". In addition to the On-Site Co-ordinator, this group should comprise of the controllers of operations of the other two PRAs, an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer, an Action Management Officer (where considered appropriate), representatives of other agencies and specialists as appropriate.

#### *6.2.6 The Local Co-ordination Group*

The members of the Local Co-ordination Group are the senior managers of the Principal Response Agencies, who will meet at a pre-arranged location (usually the WCC council Chamber, if accessible) designated for this purpose. The representative of the lead agency will chair the Local Co-ordination Group and will exercise the mandates associated

with this position. The Local Co-ordination Group will also comprise of an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer, an Action Management Officer (where considered appropriate), representatives of other agencies and specialists, as appropriate.

#### *6.2.7 Mandate of the Local Co-Ordination Group*

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

#### *6.2.8 Crisis Management Team*

The Crisis Management Team is a strategic level management group within each principal response agency, which is assembled during a major emergency. The functions of WCC's CMT are;

- Manage, control and co-ordinate WCC's overall response to the emergency,
- Provide support to WCC's Controller of Operations on-site and mobilise resources from within WCC or externally as required,
- liaise with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government on strategic issues,
- Ensure appropriate participation of WCC in the inter-agency co-ordination structures.

The members of the Crisis Management Team are usually the senior managers of each PRA, who will meet at a pre-arranged location (usually the WCC council Chamber, if accessible) designated for this purpose. The use of the Crisis Management Team within WCC facilitates the mobilisation of senior staff to deal with the crisis, in light of the evolving situation, rather than leaving multiple roles to a small number of individuals who hold key

positions. In this way, the objectives of prioritising and managing a protracted crisis can be dealt with effectively, while keeping the day-to-day business running.

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

#### *6.2.9 Control of External Organisations/Agencies Mobilised*

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

### **6.3 Co-ordination Arrangements**

#### *6.3.1 Lead Agency*

The concept of the Lead Agency is accepted as the method for establishing which Agency has initial responsibility for Co-ordination of all services on the site of a Major Emergency. The predetermined and default agencies for different types of emergencies are set out in Appendix B.

#### *6.3.2 On-site Co-ordination Function, Including Arrangements for Support Teams*

On-site Co-ordination is facilitated by the On-Site Controller of operation and the On-Site Co-ordination group. The roles of the On-site Co-ordinator and the On-Site Co-ordination group have been outlined in sections 6.2.3 and 6.2.5 of this document.

#### *6.3.3 Co-ordination Function at the Local/Regional Co-ordination Centres*

When a Major Emergency has been declared and the lead agency determined, the lead agency should implement the Local Co-ordination Group mobilization procedure.

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may declare a regional level emergency and activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination and in so doing activate the "Regional Co-ordination Group" to maintain co-ordination of the Principal Response Agencies involved from the extended "response region".

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

#### *6.3.4 Mutual aid and Regional Level Co-Ordination*

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

#### *6.3.5 Incidents Occurring on the County Boundaries*

In certain situations, e.g. where an emergency affects an extensive area or occurs near the borders of divisions of An Garda Síochána or areas of the Health Service Executive or of the County Council, there may be response from multiple units of any PRA. There should be only one Controller of Operations for each of the three PRA and it is necessary to determine from which unit of the principal response agency the Controller of Operations should come.

In the case of the County Councils, which are statutorily empowered in respect of their functional areas, procedures for resolving such issues may already be established. Where they are not established and the issue cannot be resolved quickly in discussion between the responding officers of the different units of those services, the County Council Controller of Operations should be the designated person from the County Council whose Rostered Senior Fire Officer was first to attend the incident.

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

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

#### *6.3.7 Links with National Emergency Plans*

The Wexford County Council Major Emergency Plan will operate as an integral part of any National plans developed for scenarios affecting the population on a National Level.



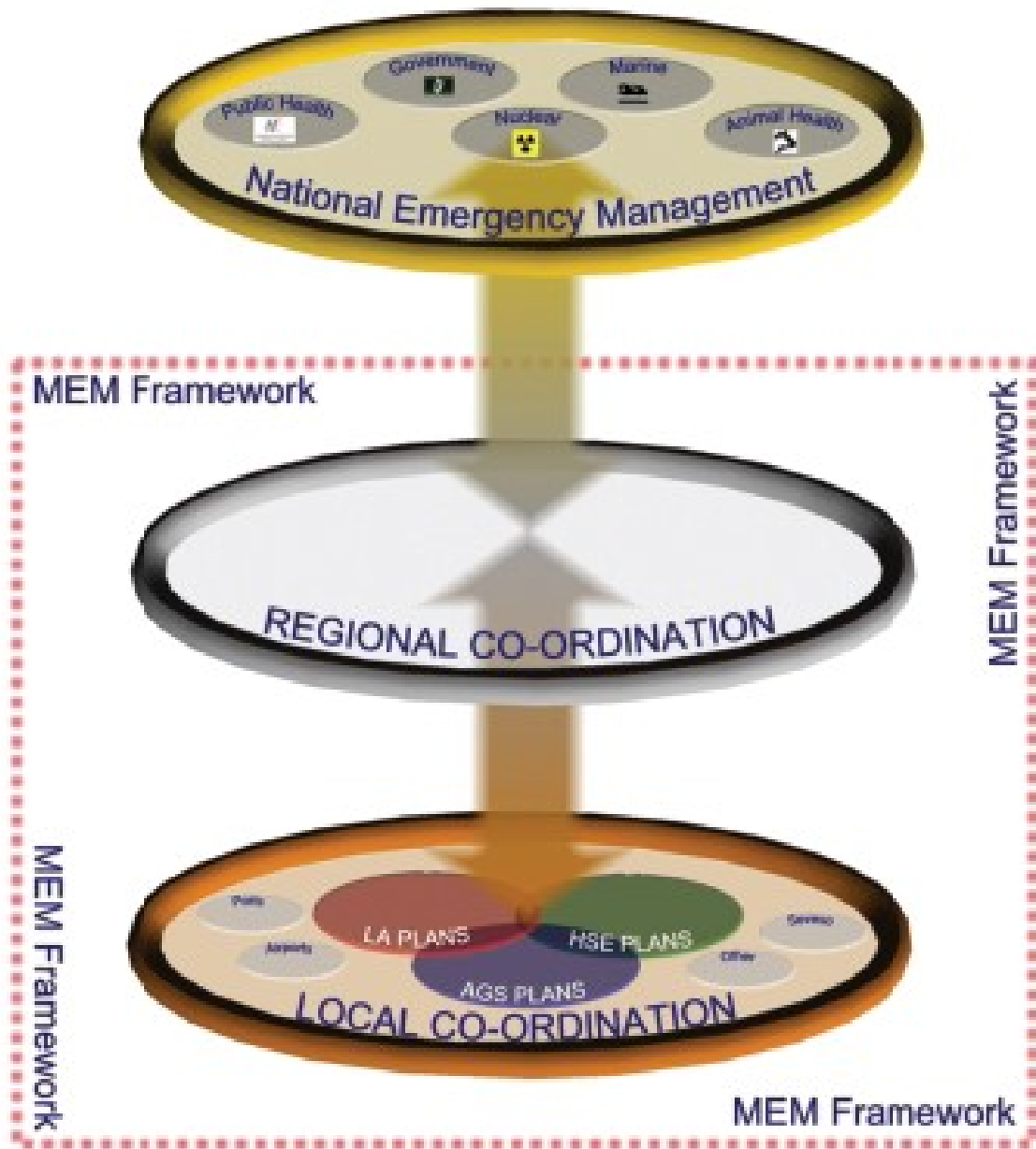


Figure 6.1: Linking Major Emergency Plans with National Plans and Other Plans

#### 6.3.8 Links with National Government

In every situation where a Major Emergency is declared, each principal response agency should inform its parent department of the declaration, as part of that agency's mobilisation procedure. The three parent departments should then consult and agree, which department will be designated as lead department, in keeping with the directions set out in *A Framework for Major Emergency Management*.

## Section 7

### The Common Elements of Response

#### 7.1 Declaring a Major Emergency

The Major Emergency Plan should be activated by whichever of the following agencies first becomes aware of the major emergency;

- Wexford County Council (see Appendix D for authorised persons),
- An Garda Síochána,
- Health Service Executive.

It is the responsibility of the highest-ranking authorised member of the first responding section of WCC to carry out a situation appraisal on-site and decide if WCC's procedures for declaring a Major Emergency should be activated. See Appendix D for persons/grades authorised to make this decision.

He/she should activate the WCC Major Emergency Plan by;

- Notifying and gaining the agreement of the Chief Executive or a Director of Services (or alternates) and then by contacting the East Regional Control Centre (**Dial 999/112 Request Fire Service**) giving the following message.

- **This is ..... (Name, rank and service) .....**
  - **A ..... (Type of incident) ..... has occurred/is imminent at .....**
  - **(Location) .....**
  - **As an authorised officer I declare that a MAJOR EMERGENCY exists.**
  - **Please activate the mobilisation arrangements in the Wexford County Council Major Emergency Plan (Appendix D).**

After this declaration is made, the person activating the Plan should then use the mnemonic METHANE to deliver further information to the ERCC:

<b>M</b>	<b>Major Emergency Declared</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>Exact Location of the Emergency</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>Type of Emergency (Transport, Chemical, etc.)</b>
<b>H</b>	<b>Hazards, Present and Potential</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Access / Egress Routes</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>Number and Type of Casualties</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>Emergency Service Present and Required</b>

The DoECC should be notified by the Chair of the WCC Crisis Management Team of the activation of the Major Emergency Plan using the format outlined in Appendix E.

#### *7.1.1 Major Emergency Plan Exercise*

In the course of a Major Emergency Plan exercise, the above declaration messages should be preceded by the words;

<p><b>“THIS IS AN EXERCISE”</b></p>
-------------------------------------

### **7.2 Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure**

Wexford County Councils Major Emergency mobilisation procedure will be implemented immediately on notification of the declaration of a major emergency. When this Plan has been activated, each County Council service requested shall respond in accordance with pre-determined arrangements. See Appendix D.

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

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

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

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

### **7.4 Co-ordination Centres**

#### *7.4.1 On-Site Co-ordination*

An on-site co-ordination centre will be deployed in the event of a Major Emergency for on-site operational support and command. This may be a dedicated vehicle, tent or an adjacent building that will accommodate all Principal Response Agencies.

#### 7.4.2 Local Co-ordination and Crisis Management Team

WCC have identified the following locations as suitable Local Co-ordination Centres for strategic level co-ordination;

- The council chamber county hall, Wexford.
- The machinery yard building, Enniscorthy (Alternative).

These buildings have been chosen to facilitate the effective working of the Local Co-ordination Group and WCC's Crisis Management Team.

#### 7.4.3 Layout of Co-ordination Centres

Strategic level co-ordination is more usually exercised at the Local Co-ordination Centre. All co-ordination centres will follow a generic model of operation. The generic centre illustrated below has the following characteristics.

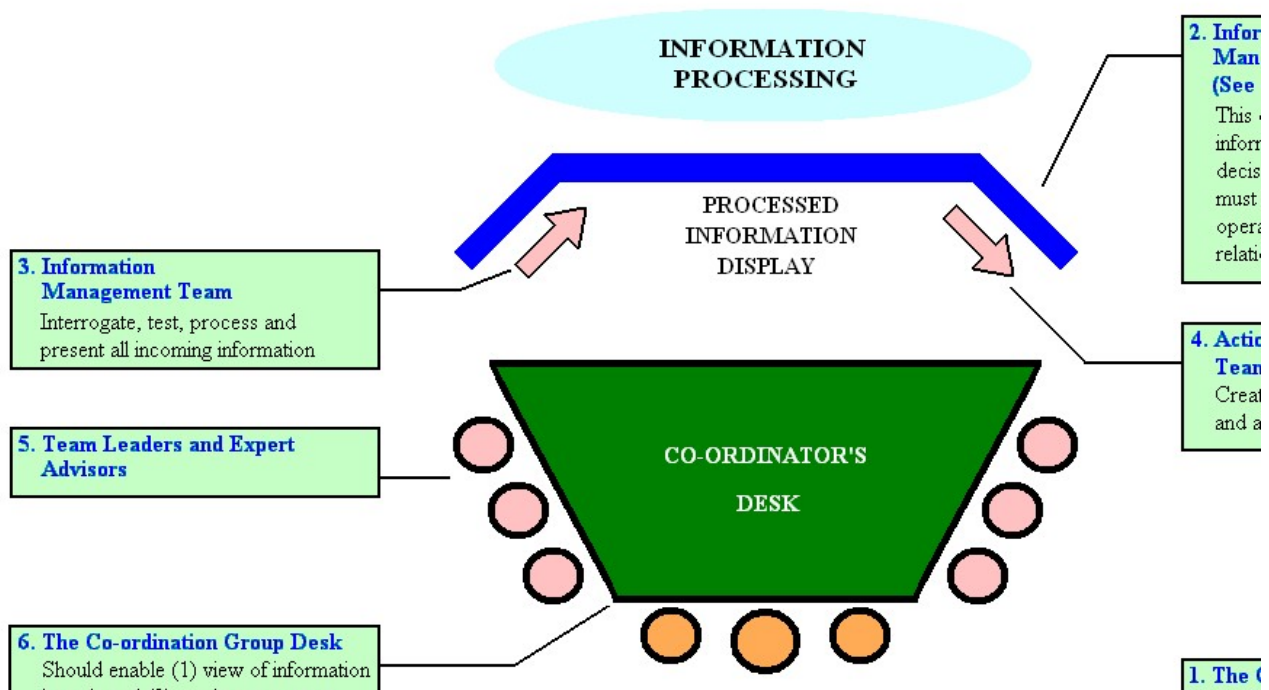


Figure 7.1: Generic Co-ordination Centre

#### 7.4.4 Location of the predetermined Regional Co-ordination Centre(s)

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

#### *7.4.5 Information Management*

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

#### *7.4.6 Action Management Officer/Team*

The role of the Action Management Officer is to assemble an Action Plan (from information that has come from the Information Management System) and ensure that it is communicated to all agencies responsible for delivering it, and monitor/audit delivery as well as reporting this back to the Co-ordination Group. At less complex incidents one Officer/Team may undertake both the information and action management functions. Where the demands of the Major Emergency require the appointment of a separate Action Management Officer, this person may be a representative from one of the agencies other than the lead agency.

#### *7.4.7 Team Leaders and Expert Advisors:*

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

#### *7.4.8 Support Teams*

Each PRA should put support teams in place for key roles and should prepare Operational Protocols setting out the arrangements which will enable the agency's support to be mobilised and function in accordance with this MEP.

### **7.5 Communications Facilities**

#### *7.5.1 Communications Systems*

Wexford County Council relies on technical communication facilities to enable it to function and for different units to communicate, both at the site and between the site and its co-ordination centre/s.

#### *7.5.2 Inter-agency Communication On Site, Including Protocols and Procedures*

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

### 7.5.3 Communications Between Site and Co-Ordination Centres

All communication between the On-site Co-ordination group and the Local Co-ordination group shall be supported by the work of trained Information Management Officers at the scene and at the local co-ordination centre. Communications between the site and the local co-ordination centre will be facilitated by a two-way radio/phone system made available to relevant personnel.

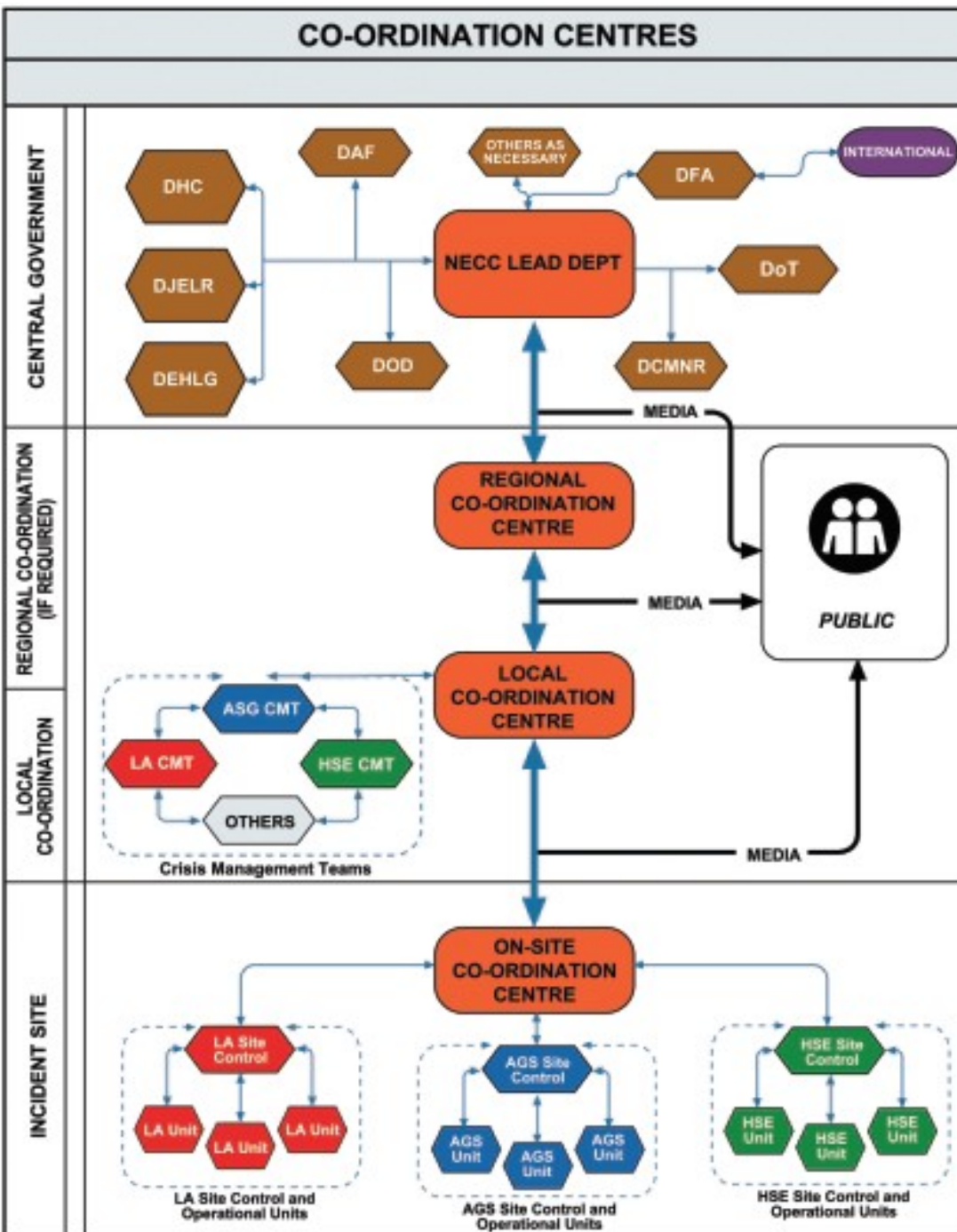


Figure 7.2: Communication

## **7.6 Exercising the Lead Agency's Co-ordination Roles**

### **7.6.1 Lead Agency**

One of the three PRA's will be designated as the lead agency for any emergency and will assume responsibility for leading co-ordination. See Section 6.3 of this Document.

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

The lead agency role may change over time, to reflect the changing circumstances of the major emergency. Ownership of the lead agency mantle should be reviewed at appropriate stages of the major emergency. All changes in lead agency designation emanating from the site, and the timing thereof, will be by agreement of the three Controllers of Operations, and should be recorded and communicated as per the initial determination, informing the Local Co-ordinating group. As the emphasis of operations may shift from the site to other areas, the Local Co-ordination Group may review the issue and determine a change in the lead agency, as appropriate.

### **7.6.3 Wexford County Councils Co-Ordination Role as a "Lead Agency"**

In the event of Wexford County Council been assigned the Lead Agency role, it will be assigned the responsibility for the co-ordination role (in addition to its own functions) and it should lead all the co-ordination activity associated with the emergency both on-site and off-site. The function of the lead agency for any emergency includes ensuring;

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

## **7.7 Public Information**

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

advising affected individuals to take shelter in an appropriate place. The On-Site Co-ordination Group will take the decision on how best to protect a threatened population.

The Local Co-ordination Group should manage the task of co-ordinating the provision of information to the public. This activity should be co-ordinated by the lead agency.

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

- Internet service, [www.wexford.ie](http://www.wexford.ie)
- WCC social media accounts,
- Local broadcasters;
- Emergency helpline service;
- Loudhailers.

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

- Television and Radio – arrangements exist whereby emergency announcements may be made on RTÉ television and radio channels.
- TeleText Services – not for emergency alerts, but useful for posting more information than would be communicable by emergency calls or broadcasts. See appendix C for useful contact numbers and resources.

## **7.8 The Media**

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

The media will respond quickly to a large-scale incident and this media presence may extend into days or weeks. It is the responsibility of the lead agency to establish a media centre at or near the site of the emergency for use by the Principal Response Agencies in dealing with the media at the site. The Local Co-ordination Group will be responsible for official media statements and press releases off-site.

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

There shall be a Media Liaison Officer appointed at both the On-site and Local Co-ordination Centres. The Media Liaison Officer must keep accurate and timely information on the emergency in consultation with the local Co-ordination Groups so that they;

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

### *7.8.3 Arrangements for Media at Local and/or Regional Co-ordination Centres*

The Local/Regional Co-ordination Group should take the lead in terms of working with the media, away from the site, during a major emergency. As with arrangements at the site,



each principal response agency should designate a Media Liaison Officer at the Local Co-ordination Centre and the activities of the Media Liaison Officers should be co-ordinated by the Media Liaison Officer of the lead agency. All statements to the media at this level should be cleared with the chair of the Local/Regional Co-ordination Group.

#### *7.8.4 Arrangements for Media at, or Adjacent to, Other Locations Associated with the Major Emergency*

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

### **7.9 Site Management Arrangements**

#### *7.9.1 Generic Site Management Elements/Arrangements*

Wexford County Council shall appoint a Controller of Operations at the site (or at each site) of the emergency (see section 6 of this document). The initial important task of the Controller of Operations in association with the other two controllers is the development of a Site Management Plan. Once agreed, the resulting site plan should be implemented and communicated to all responding groups.

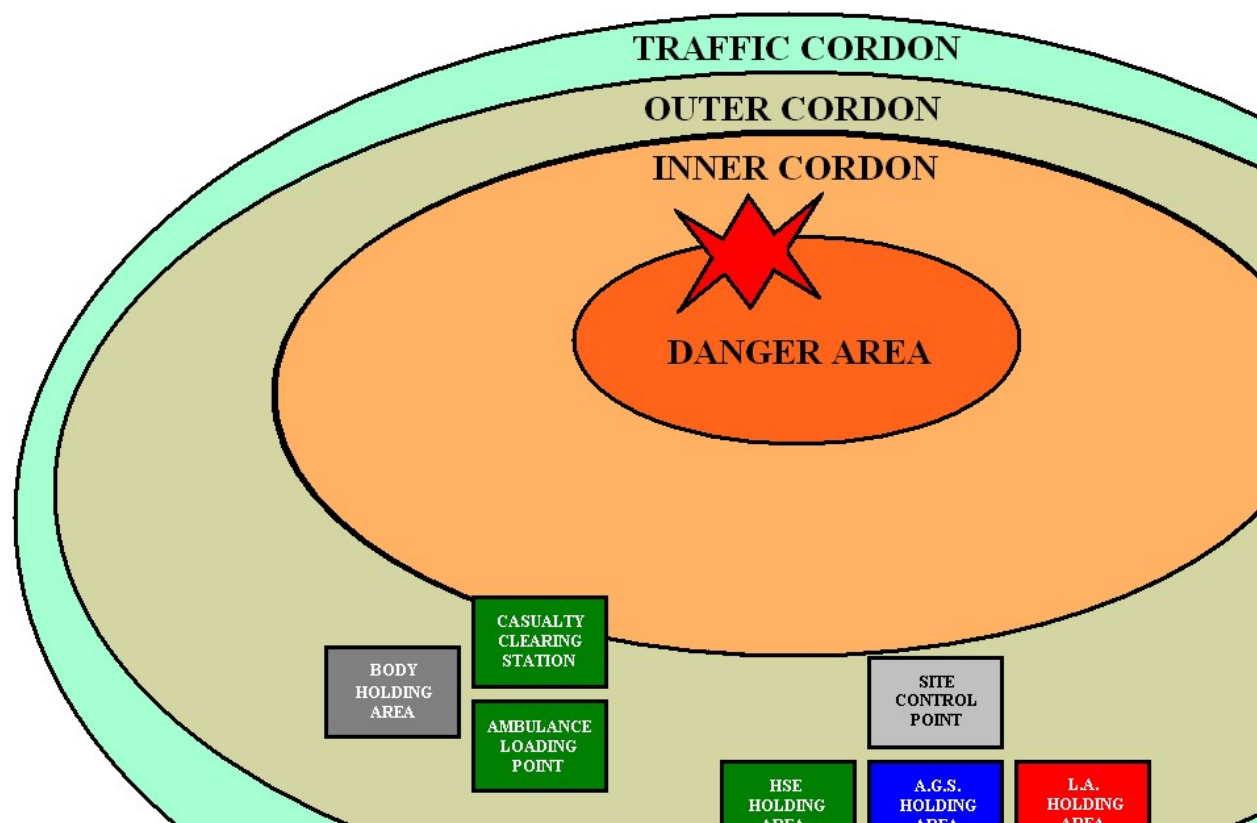


Figure 7.3: Idealised Scene Management Arrangements

The main components of a typical Site Plan should contain some or all of the following:  
(See Appendix D for detailed information on Scene Management)

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

#### *7.9.2 Control of Access*

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

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

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

#### *7.9.3 Danger Area*

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

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

Where a situation deteriorates to a point where the officer in charge of the Danger Area decides that it is necessary to withdraw response personnel from a Danger Area, a signal,

comprising repeated sounding of a siren for ten seconds on, ten seconds off, will be given. All personnel should withdraw on hearing this signal to a pre-determined safe zone.

#### 7.9.4 Identification of Personnel at the Site of a Major Emergency

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

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

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

When the lead agency has been determined, the On-Site Co-ordinator should don a distinctive bib with the words On-Site Co-ordinator clearly visible front and back. Below is an example of how the bibs should look for each of the responding agencies.



Figure 7.4: Distinctive Bibs used by the PRA's

#### 7.9.5 Non-Uniformed Personnel

Non uniformed personnel from Wexford County Council should attend the scene in high visibility jacket with the name Wexford County Council and their job function clearly displayed.

#### 7.9.6 Air Exclusion Zones

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

## 7.10 Mobilising Additional Resources

The voluntary emergency services sector can provide additional equipment and support in the event of a major emergency. Details of the local Voluntary Emergency Services, the resources they can provide and their mobilisation procedure is outlined in Appendix C. Voluntary emergency services will link to the Principal Response Agencies in accordance with Table below.

Principal Response Agency	Linked Voluntary Emergency Service
An Garda Síochána	Irish Mountain Rescue Association Irish Cave Rescue Association Search and Rescue Dogs Sub-Aqua Teams River Rescue
Health Service Executive	Irish Red Cross Order of Malta Ambulance Corps St. John's Ambulance
County Council	Civil Defence

Each principal response agency with a link to voluntary emergency services is responsible for the mobilisation of that service and their integration into the overall response. The internal command of volunteer organisations resides with that organisation.

### *7.10.1 The Mobilisation of all Voluntary Emergency Services*

The mobilisation of all voluntary emergency services is described in section 4.3 above and Appendix C.

### *7.10.2 Mobilisation of Utilities*

Utilities are frequently involved in the response to emergencies, usually to assist the Principal Response Agencies in making situations safe. They may also be directly involved in restoring their own services, for example, electricity supply in the aftermath of a storm. Utilities operate under their own legislative and regulatory frameworks but, during the response to an emergency, it is important that they are involved in the co-ordination arrangements. Utilities may be requested to provide representatives and/or experts to the On-Site Co-ordination Group, the Local Co-ordination Group and/or the Regional Co-ordination Group, as appropriate. A list of utilities and their emergency/out of hours contact arrangements are listed in Appendix C. Please refer to section 4.3.5 of this document for further details.

### *7.10.3 Mobilisation of Private Sector*

Private sector organisations may be involved in a Major Emergency through ownership of the site where the emergency has occurred or through ownership of some element involved in the emergency e.g. an aircraft, bus, factory, etc. They may also be called on to

assist in the response to a major emergency, by providing specialist services and/or equipment. Private sector representatives and/or experts may be requested to support the work of the On-Site Co-ordination Group, the Local Co-ordination Group and/or the Regional Co-ordination Group, as appropriate. A list of experts and equipment within the private sector is detailed in Appendix C.

#### *7.10.4 Arrangements for Identifying and Mobilising Additional Organisations*

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

Where resources that are held at a national level are required, as part of the management of the incident, requests for those resources should be directed by the lead agency to the lead government department.

#### *7.10.4 Arrangements for Command, Control, Co-ordination and Demobilisation of Organisations Mobilised to the Site*

Each principal response agency with a linked voluntary emergency service/organisation is responsible for the demobilisation of that service and their disintegration from the overall response. The internal command of the organisations resides with that organisation. Refer to section 4.3.1 through to 4.3.6 and section 7.10.1 of this document.

#### *7.10.5 Mutual Aid Arrangements*

Refer to section 4.4 of this document.

#### *7.10.6 Requests for Out-of-County Assistance*

The decision to seek assistance from outside the county will be made by the lead agency, in association with the other Principal Response Agencies, at the Local/Regional Co-ordination Centre. Please refer to section 4.4 of this document.

#### *7.10.7 Requests for National Assistance*

A Regional Co-ordination Group may also request assistance from Government. National resources will be available in the event of a Major Emergency at local or regional level. Requests for assistance should be developed at local or regional co-ordination level and directed by the lead agency to the lead government department. Please refer to section 4.6 of this document.

## **7.11 Casualty and Survivor Arrangements**

### ***7.11.1 General***

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

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

### ***7.11.2 Casualties and Survivors.***

The On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other Controllers, will need to make an early assessment of the casualty situation and identify if there are particular aspects which may impact on casualty management, such as, significant numbers of disabled, sick or immobile persons involved, and take action accordingly.

At the site of a major emergency, the priorities of the Principal Response Agencies are to save life, prevent further injury, rescue those who are trapped or in danger, triage casualties, provide them with appropriate treatment and transport them to the appropriate hospital(s) where necessary.

### ***7.11.3 Arrangements for Triage***

Triage is a dynamic process of assessing casualties and deciding the priority of their treatment, using a two-stage process of triage sieve and triage sort. Following initial triage, casualties will normally be labelled, using Triage Cards, and moved to a Casualty Clearing Station. The purpose of this labelling is to indicate the triage category of the casualty, to facilitate the changing of that category, if required, and to record any treatment, procedure or medication administered. A standard card with Red (Immediate), Yellow (Urgent), Green (Delayed) and White (Dead) sections is normally used for this purpose.

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

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

#### *7.11.5 Casualty Clearing*

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

#### *7.11.6 Fatalities*

The bodies of casualties, which have been triaged as dead, should not be moved from the incident site unless this is necessary to affect the rescue of other casualties. The only other circumstance where bodies should be moved, before the Garda evidence collection process is complete, is if they are likely to be lost or damaged due to their location or the nature of the incident.

Bodies to be moved should be photographed first and their original position clearly marked and recorded. The recovery of the dead and human remains is part of an evidence recovery process and, as such, is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána acting as agents of the Coroner. The County Council can assist An Garda Síochána in this function.

#### *7.11.7 Coroners Role*

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

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

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

#### *7.11.8 Temporary Mortuaries*

It is the responsibility of the County Council to provide a Temporary Mortuary, if required; each County Council should consult with the District Coroners and health service pathologists in its area on the options/arrangements/plans for Temporary Mortuaries.

#### *7.11.9 Identification of the Deceased*

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

#### *7.11.10 Survivor Reception Centre*

A Survivor Reception Centre should be designated and established at the earliest possible opportunity. It is the responsibility of the County Council to establish and run this centre. Transport from the Survivor Reception Centre to home/meet relatives/safe place will be arranged as soon as it is practicable.

#### *7.11.11 Arrangements for Dealing with Uninjured Survivors who Require Support*

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

The assistance of Civil Defence and the voluntary ambulance services may be required to provide a variety of services at the Survivor Reception Centre. The Survivor Reception Centre should be secure from any unauthorised access and provide the maximum possible privacy for survivors. See Appendix C for Temporary Accommodation List.

#### *7.11.12 Casualty Bureau*

Gathering of casualty information will be the responsibility of An Garda Síochána. In the event of a Major Emergency involving significant numbers of casualties, An Garda Síochána will establish a Casualty Bureau to collect and collate the details (including condition and location) of all casualties and survivors.

A liaison/casualty officer will normally be sent by An Garda Síochána to each hospital, survivor reception centre and casualty reception centre where casualties are being treated. The County Council may assist in the collection and collation of casualty data. Any information collected on any casualty is transferred via An Garda Síochána to the Casualty Bureau, who will generally set up an information hot line, in order that concerned family and friend may inquire about 'loved ones'.

#### *7.11.13 Friends and Relatives Reception Centres*

The purpose of a reception centre is to provide a comfortable area where friends and relatives of those involved in the incident (primarily the casualties and survivors) can be



directed for information. The Local Co-ordination Group will determine the need for and arrange for the designation and operation/staffing of such centres.

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

#### *7.11.14 Non-National Casualties*

In some incidents an emergency may involve significant numbers of casualties from other jurisdictions. In such circumstances the Local Co-ordination Centre should notify the relevant embassy if the nationality of the victims is known. The Department of Justice should be approached if assistance is required in obtaining interpreters from private sector providers. The Department of Foreign Affairs (which operates an out of hours Duty Officer System) should also be approached for appropriate assistance and liaison purposes. See Appendix C for contact numbers.

Advice may be sought from An Garda Síochána as to the use of interpreters. Generally, the local Garda Station will have a list of approved interpreters which may be called upon in the event of an emergency. Advice may also be sought from the Department of Foreign Affairs.

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

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

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

### **7.12 Emergencies involving Hazardous Materials**

#### *7.12.1 Hazardous Materials Incidents*

Wexford County Council is the lead agency for response to hazardous materials incidents within Wexford County, with the exception of those involving biological agents. Where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána will act as the lead agency. The Defence Forces, when requested, will assist An Garda Síochána in an Aid to the Civil Power role with Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams. Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a CBRN incident are contained in the Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Suspected Chemical and Biological Agents arising from terrorist activity.

#### *7.12.2 CBRN Incidents*

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a CBRN (*CBRN meaning terrorist incidents involving C - conventional explosives/chemical substances; B - biological agents; R - radiological and N - nuclear material*) incident are detailed in the Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Suspect Chemical and Biological Agents. These protocols deal with a range of matters relevant to managing such incidents, including the identification of the materials involved. They also provide for involvement of the National Poisons Information Centre and the National Virus Reference Laboratory. Where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána will act as the lead agency.

#### *7.12.3 Biological Incidents*

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

#### *7.12.4 National Public Health (Infectious diseases) Plan*

For infectious diseases such as Avian Flu, Pandemic Flu and Foot and Mouth Disease there will be a link to the National Plan as outlined by government. Wexford County Council will provide assistance under the command of the lead government department.

#### *7.12.5 Nuclear Accidents*

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

#### *7.12.6 Decontamination*

The On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other Controllers of Operations, will establish the need for decontamination. The Health Service Executive has responsibility for providing clinical decontamination and medical treatment to casualties affected by hazardous materials. The fire services have responsibility for providing other forms of physical decontamination of persons at the site. The Health Service Executive will be responsible for decontamination where required to protect health service facilities, such as hospitals, from secondary contamination.

Where emergency decontamination of the public is required, the County Council fire service may use its fire-fighter decontamination facilities, or improvised equipment may be used prior to the arrival of dedicated equipment. Where it is decided that persons should undergo this practice, it should be carried out under the guidance of medical personnel.

## 7.13 Protecting Threatened Populations

### 7.13.1 Threatened Population

The On-Site Co-ordinator will take the decision on how best to protect a threatened population, after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. This protection is usually achieved by moving people temporarily to a safe area, by evacuation where appropriate or feasible, or by advising affected individuals to take shelter in an appropriate place.

### 7.13.2 Evacuation Arrangements

The On-Site Co-ordinator will take the decision on how best to protect a threatened population, after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. Evacuation is usually undertaken on the advice of the County Council or Health Service Executive. Where decided upon, the process of evacuation will be undertaken by An Garda Síochána, with the assistance of the other services. A suitable evacuation assembly point will need to be established and rest centres set up by Wexford County Council.

Personnel from the County Council and from voluntary agencies will staff rest centres. The centres will provide security, welfare, communications, catering and medical facilities. Evacuees should be documented and basic details passed to the casualty bureau. The County Council will assist in this role. Temporary Accommodation may also be required. See Appendix C - Temporary Accommodation List.

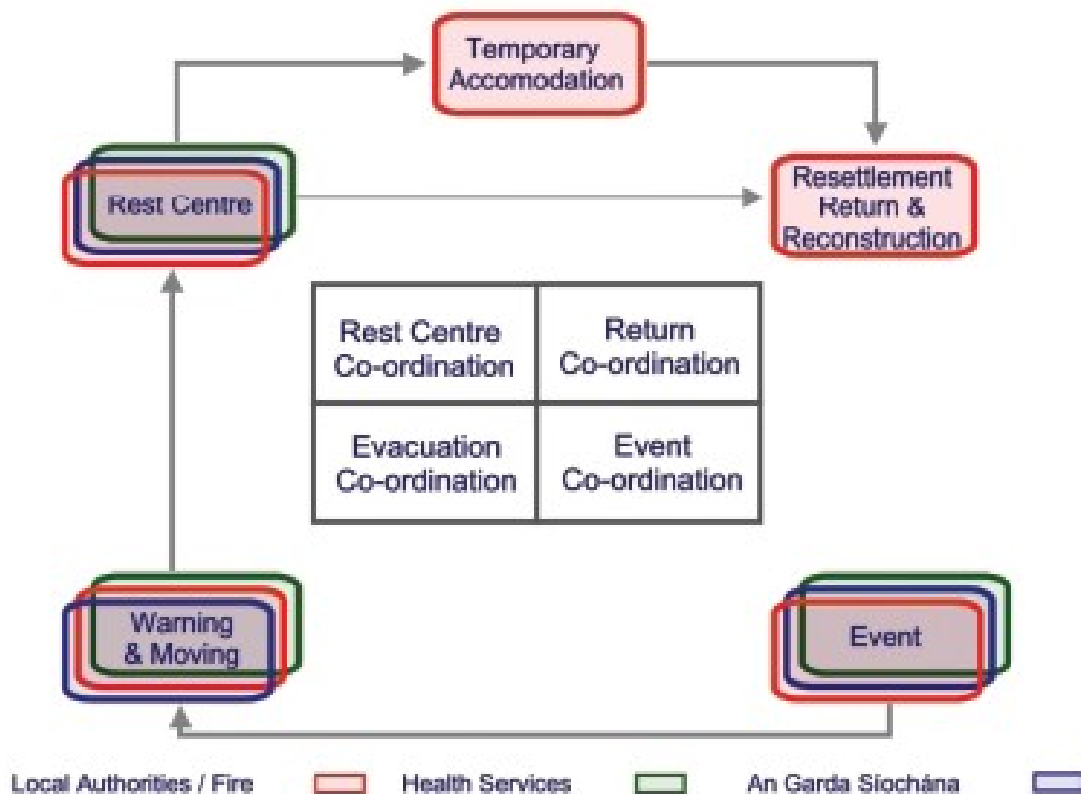


Figure 7.5: Structure of Evacuation

### *7.13.3 Arrangements for the Involvement of the Public Health Service*

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

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

### *7.14.1 Monitoring Potentially Hazardous Situations*

Early warning systems are currently set in place for Severe Weather forecasts. This is a 24-hour service provided by Met Éireann. There may be a need to inform the public of the current situation or of possible evacuation. *Please refer to Section 11.1 of this document.*

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

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

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

### *7.15 Emergencies Arising on Inland Waterways*

The Irish Coast Guard has responsibility for dealing with Inland Waterway emergencies via the 999/112 emergency calls system and mobilising the necessary resources. An Garda Síochána will be the principal response agency to undertake initial co-ordination at inland waterway emergencies. After the initial response, this role may be re-assigned, following consultation between the Irish Coast Guard and An Garda Síochána.

Wexford County Council can provide assistance in the form of the Civil Defence for water rescue/recovery. There are also some inland water rescue volunteer organisations that may be asked to provide assistance. Refer to Appendix C for further details on resources.

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

Each principal response agency (and other responding organisations) is responsible for the Safety, Health and Welfare of its staff responding to emergencies and should operate its own safety (including personal protective equipment) and welfare management procedures.

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

The WCC Controller of Operations should ensure that appropriate rest and refreshment facilities are provided for response personnel at the site, as well as for survivors. These facilities may include the provision of food and drink, rest facilities and sanitary facilities.

WCC staff who are particularly traumatized by the events of a Major Emergency may require skilled professional help. This will be provided by Wexford County Council. Currently a care line exists which enables employees and their immediate family to access confidential advice and support 24 hours a day 365 days a year.

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

#### ***7.17.1 Arrangements for Rotation of Front Line Staff***

Front line staff will be relieved and rotated as necessary at protracted incidents in accordance with the County Council Safety, Health and Welfare arrangements.

#### ***7.17.3 Arrangements for Initial and Ongoing Welfare for Front Line Staff***

The WCC Controller of Operations should ensure that appropriate rest and refreshment facilities are provided for response personnel at the site, as well as for survivors. The Civil Defence may be called upon to provide aid in the administration of such needs. Welfare facilities such as toilets etc. may also be required and supplied by Wexford County Council.

### **7.18 Investigations**

#### ***7.18.1 Investigations Arising from the Emergency***

The scene of a suspected crime should be preserved until a complete and thorough examination has been made. An Garda Síochána will need to obtain evidence of the highest possible standard and will require that all evidence is left in situ, unless a threat to life or health prevents this. Statements may be required from WCC staff on their involvement.

#### *7.18.2 Minimise Disruption of Evidence*

The preservation of the site of a major emergency, which results from criminal action, is of paramount importance and should receive a priority rating from the outset by all PRA's. The first member(s) of An Garda Síochána to arrive at the site of a Major Emergency where a suspected crime has been committed automatically incurs the responsibility of preserving the site.

#### *7.18.3 Other Parties with Statutory Investigation Roles*

Depending on the nature of the Major Emergency, agencies other than An Garda Síochána may require access to the site for the purposes of carrying out an investigation. These agencies include the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), the Air Accident Investigation Unit (AAIU) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). An Garda Síochána is responsible for carrying out criminal investigations. Any agency including the County Council, with an investigative mandate should liaise in the first instance with the On-Site Co-ordinator, who will direct them to the Controller of Operations of An Garda Síochána.

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

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

Where communities are affected by a major emergency, efforts should be made to establish contacts/links with the community utilising established links such as community groups, public representatives and community liaison officers within the community.

#### *7.19.2 VIP Visits*

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

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

#### *7.19.3 Arrangements for National / International Observers*

National and International observers may request to attend the incident. The presence of experts from other regions or jurisdictions, who wish to act as observers at an incident, can greatly enhance the operational debriefings and facilitate the process of learning lessons

from the emergency. The Local Co-ordination Group should make arrangements for any such observers.

### *7.20 Standing Down the Major Emergency*

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

#### *7.20.1 Standing Down WCC Services*

The Plan may be stood down generally following agreement by the three PRAs responding to the emergency or partially stood down in respect of all or certain WCC services following consultation with the other PRAs.

#### *7.20.2 Operational Debrief*

When the Plan is stood down, each agency will carry out an operational debriefing of its involvement. The three PRAs will review the inter-agency co-ordination aspects of the response after every declaration of a major emergency. This review will be hosted by WCC when it has acted as the lead agency at an emergency. The purpose of the review should be to formulate the lessons learned from the incident in relation to co-ordination and to document these.

A composite report, based on appropriate input from each PRA's internal report and the review on co-ordination should be compiled by the lead PRA for submission within a reasonable timescale to the Southeast Regional Steering Group and the National Steering Group.

## **Section 8**

### **Site Specific Plans and Wexford County Council Sub-Plans**

#### **8.1 Agency Specific Plans**

External Emergency Plans for Major Accidents at;

- Atlantic Industries, Drinagh, Wexford, Co. Wexford
- Roche Freight and Warehousing Ltd. Kilrane, Co. Wexford

Rosslare Europort Emergency Plan

Waterford Port Emergency Plan

Iarnrod Eireann, Waterford District, Local Emergency Plan for Wexford Railway Station

BAM, M11 Motorway Emergency Response Procedure

#### **8.2 Wexford County Council Sub-Plans**

- Coastal Pollution response Plan
- Kilmore Quay Marine Emergency Plan
- Wexford Harbour Marine Emergency Plan
- Drinking Water Incident Response Plan (DWIRP)
- Fire and Emergency Operations Plan
- Flood Plan
- Severe Weather Plan
- Winter Service Plan
- Phone and Data Plan



## **Section 9**

### **Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination**

#### **9.1 Regional Level Co-ordination**

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may declare a regional level emergency and activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination. The key provision in ensuring co-ordination of the extended response is the activation of a "Regional Co-ordination Group". The primary function of the Regional Co-ordination Group is to maintain co-ordination of the Principal Response Agencies involved from the extended "response region".

## **Section 10**

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

#### **10.1 National Emergency Plans**

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

#### **10.2 National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents**

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

#### **10.3 National Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Plan**

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of an activation of the National Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Plan are detailed in the Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Emergencies arising from Infectious Diseases Pandemics.

#### **10.4 Animal Health Plan**

For infectious diseases such as Avian Flu, Pandemic Flu and Foot and Mouth there will be a link to the National Plan as outlined by the Government. Wexford County Council will provide assistance under the command of the lead Government Department.

#### **10.5 Activations on request from the Irish Coast Guard**

Wexford County Councils Major Emergency Plan may be activated in response to a request from the Irish Coast Guard following a threatened or actual emergency in the Irish Maritime Search and Rescue Region.

#### **10.6 Activation on request from a Minister of Government**

Wexford County Councils Major Emergency Plan may be activated in response to a request from the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government in the event of an emergency/crisis situation.

## Section 11

### The Recovery Phase

#### 11.1 Support for Individuals and Communities

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

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

The recovery phase should provide support and long-term care for individuals involved in the incident and the communities affected by the incident. It is imperative that Wexford County Council restores critical services to a pre-emergency state as quickly and efficiently as possible. The services and staff WCC may be able to provide are based upon a wide range of skills and resources drawn from its day-to-day operations such as;

- Technical and engineering support,
- Road services,
- Water and sanitary services,
- Environmental protection,
- Provision of reception centres,
- Re-housing and accommodation needs,
- Transport,
- Help lines,
- Welfare and financial needs,
- Clean-up.

#### 11.2 Co-ordination of the Recovery Phase

There is a need for the co-ordination of emerging recovery issues, such as managing public appeals and external aid, from the earliest stages of the response phase. For this reason, the arrangements for co-ordination of response should continue to operate during the transition from response stage to recovery stage. At a point when the issues on the agendas of Co-ordination Groups are largely recovery focussed, it may be appropriate to

re-title the group as the Local, Regional or National Recovery Co-ordination Group. From the earliest stage, it may be appropriate also for the Local, Regional or National Co-ordination Groups to appoint a Recovery Working Group to plan ahead.

It is the responsibility of the Co-ordination Groups together with the Recovery Working Group to prioritise events during the recovery phase. The co-ordination groups should monitor the recovery phase and put in place any protection measures required to guard against continuing hazards.

It is recommended that the WCC Crisis Management Team will continue to function until the issues arising in the response phase are more appropriately dealt with by normal management processes.

### **11.3 Clean-Up**

In the aftermath of an emergency the clean-up operation will be assigned to Wexford County Council. The removal of debris and contaminated waste is one of the principal concerns. In consultation with the EPA and specialist companies WCC will commence clean up of the site as soon as possible but without hindering the investigation process. Careful consideration must be given to the removal of contaminated debris to locations that will not affect communities.

### **11.4 Procedure for liaison with utilities**

The utility companies may need to be mobilised in the recovery phase in order to provide essential services such as electrical supplies and telecom facilities.

The WCC IT section may also have a roll to play in the recovery phase and will need to liaise with utilities in order to bring services back on line, such as communication links etc.

## **Section 12**

### **Review of the Major Emergency Plan**

#### **12.1 Internal Review Process**

An internal review of the Major Emergency Plan will be undertaken by Wexford County Council on an annual basis and if necessary following major exercises or incidents. The review should;

- Update the roles of individuals that hold key positions,
- Update the risk holders within the functional area of WCC,
- Update contact details of key personnel/resources/utilities,
- Review risk assessments and update as required,
- Plan exercises.

#### **14.2 External Review Process**

Wexford County Councils Major Emergency Plan may also be reviewed by the South-East Regional Steering Group on an annual basis and a copy of the revised Plan forwarded to the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

#### **14.3 Appraisal of the Major Emergency Plan**

Following the declaration of a Major Emergency and activation of the Plan, WCC will review and report on the performance of its functions during the emergency and on the co-ordinated response with the other PRAs.

## Section 13

### Appendices

A1	Section Plans/ Sub-Plans/ National Plans
A2	Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination
B1	Risk Assessment
B2	Lead Agency Pre-determined Procedures
C1	Contact Personnel / Key Roles
C2	Voluntary Emergency Services
C3	Emergency Telephone List/ Emergency Resources/ Utilities/ Private Sector (Plant Hire)
C4	Temporary Accommodation List
D1	Persons Authorised to Activate the Plan
D2	Activation of Wexford County Councils MEP
D3	Scene Management
E1	Notification to the DoECC