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**Limerick City Council**  
Comhairle Cathrach Luimnigh

# **MAJOR EMERGENCY PLAN**

**2008**



<b>Title:</b>	<b>Major Emergency Plan</b>
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<b>Prepared By:</b>	<b>Scott Keenan A/SACFO</b>
<b>Approved By:</b>	<b>Caroline Curley DoS</b>

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## Record of Issues and Amendments

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<b>Amendment No.</b>	<b>Version No.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Section Amended</b>	<b>Amended By</b>
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## Section 1

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### Introduction to the Plan

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#### 1.1.1 Introduction from the Mayor of Limerick

As Mayor of Limerick, I am delighted to see the production of a plan that will ensure we are prepared as we can be, should a major emergency befall Limerick City.

Recent events on the international stage have demonstrated the devastating effects of major emergencies and it is important that we as a thriving city have policies and procedures in place to protect our community when disaster strikes.

I congratulate all involved in the preparation of the Major Emergency Plan and I hope it clearly demonstrates Limerick City Council's commitment to effective major emergency management both now, and into the future.

Councillor John Gilligan, Mayor of Limerick

#### 1.1.2 Introduction from the City Manager

Limerick City Council's Major Emergency Plan sets out how we as a City Council are prepared to protect our citizens, environment and infrastructure in the event of a Major Emergency.

The plan aims to bring co-ordination and professionalism to the often unpredictable and complicated events of major emergency response.

The purpose of planning for emergencies is to ensure that as an organisation we can provide an effective, coordinated response to any major emergency and in doing so ensure a return to normality as quickly as possible.

The overall aim of the Major Emergency Plan is to achieve an effective response to any emergency regardless of the cause, and as such, this plan is sufficiently flexible to deal with a range of situations.

It is therefore necessary for all staff of Limerick City Council to become acquainted with these procedures and, through training, become fully aware of their individual responsibilities.

This plan has been put together following collaboration between all departments within Limerick City Council under the umbrella of our Major Emergency

Development Committee, and I would like to acknowledge all involved in its preparation for their hard work and commitment.

Tom Mackey, City Manager

## **1.2 Purpose and Preparation**

The purpose of the new Major Emergency Plan is to put in place arrangements that will enable the three principal emergency response agencies, the Local Authority, An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive to co-ordinate their efforts whenever a major emergency occurs.

The Major Emergency Plan for Limerick City Council has been prepared in accordance with the guidance issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to Major Emergency Management and is consistent with 'A Framework for Major Emergency Management' (2006).

## **1.3 Objectives of the Major Emergency Plan**

The objectives of the Limerick City Council Major Emergency Plan are:

- Protection and care of the public at times of vulnerability.
- Clear leadership in times of crisis.
- Early and appropriate response.
- Efficient, co-ordinated operations.
- Realistic and rational approach, capable of being delivered.
- Transparent systems, with accountability.
- Harnessing community spirit.
- The ethos of self protection.
- Safe working.

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

This Plan provides for a coordinated response to major emergencies arising, for example, from fires, explosions, gas releases, transportation accidents, spillages of dangerous substances, etc, which would be beyond the normal response capability of the principal emergency services.

The purpose of this plan, which is the local authority Major Emergency Plan, is in the event of such an emergency:

(a) To outline generally the procedures to be followed and the functions to be undertaken by the local authority services, and

(b) To co-ordinate and align the procedures to be followed and functions to be undertaken by the local authority with those of the Health Services Executive, and An Garda Síochána in the area where the emergency occurs.

The fact that procedures have been specified in the plan should not restrict the use of initiative or common sense by individual officers in the light of prevailing circumstances in a particular emergency.

The types of emergency normally resulting from oil supply crises, power blackouts, industrial disputes etc. are of a different nature and are not specifically catered for in this Plan. It is recognized, however, that such emergencies could result in a situation, such as a major gas explosion, requiring activation of the Major Emergency Plan.

### **1.5 The Major Emergency Plan's Relationship with Other Plans**

The Major Emergency Plan will be activated by whichever of the three principal response agencies first becomes aware of the need to do so. Each principal response agency has prepared an individual Major Emergency Plan which sets out its arrangements to respond to events occurring in, or impacting on, its functional area which require the declaration of a major emergency.

The overall Major Emergency response will likely comprise the combined coordinated plans of the local authority, Health Services Executive and An Garda Síochána in the area where the emergency occurs.

This plan sets out the basis for a co-coordinated response to a major emergency and the different roles and functions to be performed by the various agencies as specified in each agency's own Major Emergency Plan.

In addition, each agency plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of 'A Framework for Major Emergency Management' (2006).

The Major Emergency Plan also contains specific sub-plans which can operate independently of the Major Emergency Plan and can be activated whether a Major Emergency has occurred or not.

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. Limerick City Council is part of the Mid-West Region for major emergencies. The principle response agencies at Regional Level are An Garda Síochána (Limerick Division, Clare Division and Tipperary Division), the Health Service Executive (West Region) and the Local Authorities (Limerick County, Limerick City, Clare County and Tipperary North).

### **1.3 The Language and Terminology of the Major Emergency Plan**

In order to ensure consistency and interoperability, the language and terminology used in this Major Emergency Plan is set out so as to be consistent with that specified in Appendix F3 of 'A Framework for Major Emergency Management' (2006).

A full set of relevant terms and acronyms are provided in the appendices which should be used by **all** agencies.

### **1.7 Distribution of the Major Emergency Plan**

A copy of the Major Emergency Plan is distributed to each member of the Major Emergency Development Committee (MEDC) and to other relevant personnel in Limerick City Council who would be involved in a Major Emergency. Copies are also distributed to each Principal Response Agency, neighbouring Local Authorities, the Defence Forces, Government Departments, local companies and relevant statutory agencies. A full distribution list for the Major Emergency Plan can be found in the appendices to this document.

### **1.8 Status of the Major Emergency Plan**

The status of this plan is: **CURRENT**

This plan will next be reviewed in: September 2009 (or earlier if an incident or occurrence arises which merits a review of the Plan)

If the status of this plan is 'CURRENT' its content is taken to supersede all previously dated versions/issues of the plan, which should then be considered obsolete.

### **1.9 Public Access to the Major Emergency Plan**

This plan shall be available in electronic format for public access via Limerick City Council's website: [www.limerickcity.ie](http://www.limerickcity.ie)

Note: Information of a private nature relating to any of the individuals and/or companies listed in the plan and the associated appendices shall be deemed confidential and will not be made available to the general public.

## Section 2

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### The City Council and its Functional Area

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#### 2.1 Limerick City Council and Major Emergencies

Limerick City Council is the designated local authority for the City of Limerick and exercises its roles and responsibilities as such under the provisions of Local Government legislation.

Limerick City Council prepares the local authority Major Emergency Plan for Limerick City and coordinates the local authority response for Major Emergencies within the City Council area.

Limerick City Council's response capability in the event of a Major Emergency would be as follows:

- The activation of local and regional major emergency functions via the Munster Regional Communications Centre
- The provision of firefighting and specialist rescue by its fulltime Fire Service
- The housing of displaced persons by the City Council Housing Department
- The provision of specialist assistance by the engineering and environment departments as required
- Any other demands that may be made of the City Council which can be met reasonably and where the City Council's facilities, infrastructure or human resources may be of assistance

#### 2.2 Limerick City Council's Area

Limerick City is the third largest urban area in the State, and is the industrial, commercial, administrative, and cultural capital of the Mid-West Region.

Situated at the lowest bridging point of the Shannon estuary, the area administered by Limerick City Council comprises 7, 675 acres with a population of 59,811 persons. (2006 census)

Limerick City Council's functional area is bounded by two neighbouring local authorities: Limerick County Council, and Clare County Council.

#### 2.3 Partner Principal Response Agencies

Partner principal response agencies which exist in Limerick City include:

- The Limerick Division of An Garda Síochána, and
- The Health Service Executive, Mid-Western Region, Western Area.

The assigned functions of each of the principal response agencies in the event of a major emergency are set out clearly in Appendix F5 of 'A Framework for Emergency Management' (2006).

## **2.4 Regional Emergency Preparedness and Response**

Limerick City Council is a member of the Mid-West Region for major emergency preparedness purposes. This Region incorporates the relevant divisions of the Principal Response Agencies covering Limerick County, Limerick City, North Tipperary and Clare County. Assistance may also be required from or offered by other agencies such as the Irish Coastguard, and the Defence Forces.

An inter-agency Regional Steering Group has been established for the Mid-West Region. This group is representative of the senior management from each of the Principal Response Agencies and is currently chaired by the County Manager of North Tipperary.

An inter-agency Regional Working Group has also been established to support and progress Major Emergency Management in the Mid-West Region. The membership of the Regional Working Group is drawn from key personnel in the principal response agencies and is currently chaired by North Tipperary Director of Services.

The chair of the Steering and Working Groups is agreed between the Principal Response Agencies for the Mid-West Region on an annual basis.

## Section 3

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### Risk Assessment for the Area

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#### 3.1 History of Major Emergency Events

To date, the Major Emergency Plan has not been activated within Limerick City Council. However, in order 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 they pose.

#### 3.2 General and Specific Risks

Limerick City Council has undertaken risk assessments in accordance with the 'Framework for Major Emergency Management (2006)' and 'A Guide to Risk Assessment in Major Emergency Management'. Regional risk assessments have also been undertaken by the principal response agencies in the Mid-West Region and approved by the Regional Steering Group.

#### 3.3 Exemplars

The following have been selected as exemplars on which preparedness for Major Emergencies in Limerick City Council has been based. (In no particular order)

1. Building Fire
2. Building Collapse
3. Flooding
4. Industrial Accident (Petroleum)
5. Public Water Supply (Contamination / Reduction in supply)
6. Rail incidents

#### 3.4 Risk Reduction and Mitigation

There are several risk prevention and mitigation strategies in place in relation to the potential hazards listed above, through the day-to-day functions of the Local Authority and relevant stakeholders as well as various regulations in place.

#### 3.5 Other Plans and the Relationship with the Major Emergency Plan

Associated with this Plan are Sub-Plans and External Emergency Plans for Limerick City Council and other agencies/sites which are compatible with the Major Emergency Plan. Details of these plans are contained in the appendices.

## Section 4

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### Resources for Emergency Response

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#### 4.1 Structure and Resources of Limerick City Council

Limerick City Council is divided into the following Directorates each overseen by a Director of Services:

- Housing and Corporate
- Arts, Culture, Community and Enterprise
- Transportation and Infrastructure
- Finance , Human Resources, Planning and Economic Development
- Environment & Emergency Services

The personnel available within each of these Directorates, for emergency response, are listed in the Contacts List. Additional information on resources is also available in the Sub Plans referenced in the appendices.

#### 4.2 Special Staffing Arrangements

Limerick City Council's Fire and Rescue Service is a 24x7x365 resource, available to the Council at all times for emergency response. On-call resources available to Limerick City Council include rostered senior fire officers and particular resources from the Housing, Roads and Environment Departments for out-of-hours emergencies.

Directors of Services, senior engineers, superintendents etc. are also contactable by mobile phone in the event of an emergency (See Contacts List).

#### 4.3 Resources and Functions

Limerick City Council services shall operate in accordance with the provisions set out in this plan and with their own operational procedures. The following table details how the resources of Limerick City Council (as a Local Authority) are matched to the functions assigned to it (As laid out in Appendix F5 of the document 'A Framework for Major Emergency Management').

<b>Local Authority Function</b>	<b>Section(s) or Persons Responsible</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Declaration of a Major Emergency and notifying the other two relevant principal response agencies.	Authorised persons	City Manager, Directors of Services, Chief Fire Officer, On-Call Fire Officers, Civil Defence Officer, Senior Engineers
Mobilisation of predetermined resources and activating predetermined procedures in accordance with its Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure.	Controller of Operations through Munster Regional Communications Centre	Procedures in place/Training for Controller of Operations.
Acting as lead agency, where determined, and undertaking the specified coordination function.	On-Site Co-ordinating group	Training of Controller of Operations and rostered officers.
Protection and rescue of persons and property.	Fire and Rescue Service	Trained fire personnel, cutting equipment & other rescue equipment contained on fire appliances.
Controlling and/or extinguishing of fires.	Fire and Rescue Service	Trained fire personnel, fire appliances & water supplies.

**Table 1: Matching of Local Authority Functions to Resources**

<b>Local Authority Function</b>	<b>Section(s) or Persons Responsible</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Dealing with hazardous material incidents including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification, containment, neutralisation and clearance of chemical spills and emissions.</li> <li>• Decontamination (other than clinical decontamination) on-site of persons affected (under medical supervision where necessary).</li> </ul>	Fire and Rescue Service, Environment, Water Services & Roads	Trained personnel, Hazmat equipment on fire appliances, machinery, material & plant available for hire.
Advising on protection of persons threatened, by sheltering or evacuation.	Fire and Rescue Service, Housing	Trained personnel & available hotels, community centres, schools etc. for sheltering.
Arranging/overseeing clean up of affected areas.	Environment, Water Services, Roads	Trained personnel, machinery in depots.
Limiting damage to infrastructure and property.	Fire and Rescue Service, Environment & Roads	Trained personnel, fire fighting equipment, material & machinery available to Roads section.
Provision of access/transport to/from site of the emergency.	Roads	Machinery & materials sourced by Roads section.
Provision of additional lighting required, beyond what the principal emergency services normally carry.	Roads	List of machinery/plant available locally for hire.

**Table 1: Matching of Local Authority Functions to Resources (continued)**

<b>Local Authority Function</b>	<b>Section(s) or Persons Responsible</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Assisting An Garda Síochána to recover bodies, when requested.	Fire and Rescue Service	Trained personnel & rescue equipment on fire appliance.
Support for An Garda Síochána forensic work.	Fire and Rescue Service	Trained personnel
Support for the Coroner's role, including provision of temporary mortuary facilities.	Fire and Rescue Service & Housing	Suitable community centres, schools etc.
Accommodation and welfare of evacuees and persons displaced by the emergency.	Housing, Civil Defence	Available hotels, community centres, schools etc.
Provision of food, rest and sanitary facilities as appropriate for personnel involved in the response to the emergency.	Housing, Civil Defence	Available hotels, community centres, schools etc.
Engaging any specialist contractors required to assist with the emergency operations.	Controller of Operations	Contact numbers provided in contacts list.
Exercising control of any voluntary or other service which it mobilises to the site.	Controller of Operations	Trained personnel.
Liaison with utilities regarding restoration/maintenance/or enhancing services provided to the site or to persons affected.	Controller of Operations	List of contact personnel provided for each utility company.
Site clearance, demolition, clear-up operations, removal and disposal of debris.	Roads	Machinery depot, materials, plant available for hire.

**Table 1: Matching of Local Authority Functions to Resources (continued)**

<b>Local Authority Function</b>	<b>Section(s) or Persons Responsible</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Monitoring and/or reporting on the impact in its functional area of any emergency/crisis which falls within the ambit of a “National Emergency”, and coordinating/undertaking any countermeasures in its functional area which are required/recommended by an appropriate national body.	All sections	
Any other function, related to its normal functions, which is necessary for the management of the emergency/crisis.	All relevant sections	Training/Equipment
Any function which the On-Site Co-ordinating Group requests it to perform.	Controller of Operations	Training/Equipment
Maintaining essential Local Authority services (e.g. roads availability, fire and emergency operations cover, public water supply, waste water treatment) during the major emergency.	All sections	Contingency plans in place by each section.
Prepare and set-up local co-ordination centre and crisis management centre in the event of a Major Emergency.	IT, Corporate Services	Necessary equipment, facilities etc. available for set up in vicinity of predetermined centres.

**Table 1: Matching of Local Authority Functions to Resources (continued)**

#### **4.4 Other Organisations that may be mobilised to assist Limerick City Council**

There are a number of organisations and agencies which may be called on to assist Limerick City Council in responding to major emergencies in addition to specialist national and local organisations. These organisations are:

- Civil Defence
- The Defence Forces
- The Irish Red Cross
- The Voluntary Emergency Services Sector
- The community affected
- Utilities (ESB, Bord Gáis)
- Private Sector
- Critical Incident Stress Management Providers

Contact numbers for all of these organisations can be found in the appendices.

##### **4.4.1 Civil Defence**

Civil Defence is a nationwide organisation of approximately 6000 volunteers who have received training in First Aid, Search and Rescue, Fire Fighting, Boating Techniques, Radiation Monitoring, Radio Communications and Welfare Provision.

Civil Defence is split into 32 administrative areas based largely on Local Authority administrative areas. Its services are delivered by Local Authorities for their own administrative area through their Civil Defence Officer and/or Assistant Civil Defence Officer. These Officers are involved in planning, organising and recruiting for the Civil Defence.

Other skills taught are map reading, compass work, stewarding, response to flooding, environmental problems, blizzard conditions and major emergencies.

Contact details for the Civil Defence in Limerick City can be found in the appendices.

##### **4.4.2 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 (MOUs) and Service Level Agreements (SLAs). Consequently, assumptions should not be made regarding the availability of the Defence Force resources or materials to respond to a major emergency. Military assistance and support may not be available if local units are deployed on operations, nor should it be

assumed that local units have personnel available, with either the skill set or equipment to undertake specialist tasks. Provision of Defence Forces capabilities is therefore, dependent on the exigencies of the service and within available resources at the time.

Contact details for the Defence Forces can be found in the contacts list in the appendices, and a procedure for requesting Defence Forces assistance can be found in Section 7.10 of this document.

#### **4.4.3 The Irish Red Cross**

The Irish Red Cross is a voluntary organisation and is established and regulated under the Red Cross Acts, 1938-54. These statutes define a role for the Irish Red Cross as an auxiliary to the state 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.

Irish Red Cross's membership comprises 2,500 volunteers nationwide, supported by staff in Head Office in Dublin and three regional offices. The main relationship with the principal response agencies in major emergency response is 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.

Contact details for the Irish Red Cross in Limerick City can be found in the appendices.

#### **4.4.4 The Voluntary Emergency Services Sector**

The voluntary emergency services sector provides a significant potential resource to assist the principal response agencies in major emergency response. They may provide a pool of persons with relevant skills, vehicles and useful equipment and facilities.

The normal range of voluntary emergency services includes the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps, St. John Ambulance Brigade of Ireland, Mountain Rescue Teams, Cave Rescue Teams, Search and Rescue Dog Associations, River Rescue Units, Community Inshore Rescue Units, RNLI, Sub-Aqua Units, etc. Their ongoing service to the public includes attendance at public events, as well as searches for missing persons and rescue of persons in distress

Contact details for voluntary services in Limerick City can be found in the appendices.

#### **4.4.5 The Community Affected**

In many emergency situations, the public respond to assist other people when disaster strikes. Individuals acting in this way are termed “casual volunteers” in major emergency management and can provide a valuable resource to the principal response agencies in a major emergency, as well as to casualties and those needing assistance. The activities of the “casual volunteer” may fall into two categories:

- Those which are instinctive and unplanned in the immediate aftermath of an emergency occurring; and
- Those which are part of a planned response to a situation (such as a search for missing persons).

At first, the involvement of casual volunteers could give rise to conflict with the designation of cordons as part of site management arrangements. It is important that 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, so that An Garda Síochána cordoning arrangements can take account of this.

#### **4.4.6 Utility Companies**

Utilities are frequently involved in the response to emergencies, usually to assist the principal response agencies in making situations safe. They may also be directly involved in restoring their own services, for example, electricity supply in the aftermath of a storm. It is important that there is close co-ordination between the principal response agencies and utilities involved in 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

Contact details for utilities can be found in the appendices.

#### **4.4.6 The 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.

#### **4.5 Mutual Aid from Neighbouring Authorities/Agencies**

In the event that resources within Limerick City Council are not sufficient to bring a situation under control, or the duration of an incident is extended such that additional resources are required, then support may be obtained via mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring counties. Local Authorities will support each other on a mutual aid basis. Support is most likely to be requested through the Munster Regional Communications Centre from:

- Limerick County Council
- Clare County Council
- North Tipperary County Council
- South Tipperary County Council
- Cork County Council
- Kerry County Council

#### **4.6 Regional Level Response**

The local response to a major emergency may be scaled up to a regional level where the nature of an emergency is such that:

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

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 Coordination 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". The boundaries of the actual "region" for response purposes should be determined by the lead agency, which has declared the regional level emergency, in light of the circumstances prevailing, or likely to develop. The regions for response purposes need not necessarily coincide with the designated regions for preparedness. The lead agency which has declared the regional level emergency will convene and chair the Regional Co-ordination Group.

#### **4.7 National and International Assistance**

National resources will be available in the event of a major emergency at local or regional level. Requests for assistance should be directed by the lead agency to the lead Government Department.

The European Community has established a Community Mechanism to facilitate the provision of assistance between the member states in the event of major emergencies. Requests for such assistance should be made by the chair of the Local or Regional Coordination Group to the National Liaison Officer at the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Contact details for Government Departments can be found in the appendices to this document.

## Section 5

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### Preparedness for Major Emergency Response

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#### 5.1 Major Emergency Management in Limerick City Council

A Major Emergency Development Committee (MEDC) has been established in Limerick City Council consisting of senior personnel from each directorate, to oversee the implementation of the Major Emergency Development Programme.

This committee was agreed by the Management Team and the Director of Services of Environment is appointed the chair of the committee who is also responsible for briefing the Management Team on the progress of the Major Emergency Development Programme and matters arising.

#### 5.2 Responsibility for Leading Major Emergency Preparedness

Responsibility for overseeing the Framework implementation within Limerick City Council has been assigned to the Director of Services for Environment and Emergency Services.

#### 5.3 Major Emergency Development Programme

A Major Emergency Development Programme has been recommended by the MEDC and agreed by the Management Team. Each directorate is responsible for the implementation of directorate-specific actions arising from the programme. Any significant change in scope of the project will be recorded and approved by the MEDC who will advise on its impact on timelines and resources.

#### 5.4 Nomination of Individuals to Key Roles

The effectiveness of the response to any major emergency will depend on the individuals within the organisation who undertake specific key co-ordination and lead roles. In Limerick City Council, the personnel who have been nominated to the key roles identified in the Framework are shown in the following Table:

Key Roles	Designated Personnel
Controller of Operations	Director of Services, Environment or designated alternative.
On-Site Co-ordinator	Director of Services, Environment or designated alternative.
Chair of Crisis Management Team	Directors of Services and/or Head of Finance
Chair of Local Co-ordination Group	City Manager or designated alternative

<b>Key Roles</b>	<b>Designated Personnel</b>
Chair of Regional Co-ordination Group (If Local Authority is Lead Agency)	City/County Manager from the authority in which the emergency occurs (or designated alternative)
Information Management Officers	Experienced Personnel in Limerick City Council
Media Liaison Officers	Experienced Personnel in Limerick City Council
Action Management Officers	Experienced Personnel in Limerick City Council

**Table 2: Personnel Nominated to Key Roles**

### **5.5 Support Teams**

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**

Limerick City Council shall prepare and implement a staff development and training programme, designed to develop its level of preparedness so that, in the event of 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. This programme will be revised periodically.

This development programme includes creating awareness, providing appropriate training, assessing competencies and matching individuals with roles appropriate to their strengths, exercising to enhance and assess capability, and reviewing and revising staff assignments and training programmes.

### **5.7 Training**

Training is a key element in the development of preparedness for Limerick City Council to ensure the provision of an effective, co-ordinated response to major emergencies when required. The key areas of training required are:

- Risk Assessment
- Staff Development
- Information Management
- Controller of Operations
- Planning and running exercises
- Media skills
- Inter Agency Training

Limerick City Council shall have a comprehensive training programme in place for those holding key roles in the major emergency response as well as those who will make contributions via support teams. All training shall be consistent with the provisions of the Framework and the specifics of the Major Emergency Plan.

### **5.8 Exercises**

Limerick City Council shall have an internal exercise programme on a three year cycle with clearly defined and progressive objectives in place to validate its preparedness for responding to major emergencies. The objective of internal exercises is to raise awareness, educate individuals on their roles and the roles of others and to promote co-ordination and co-operation, as well as validating plans, systems and procedures.

### **5.9 Inter-Agency Exercises**

Limerick City Council shall participate with the other principal response agencies within the region in developing and running joint/inter-agency training and exercise programmes which will be co-ordinated by the Regional Working Group.

### **5.10 Resources and Budget for Preparedness**

Limerick City Council has appointed a permanent Assistant Chief Fire Officer with responsibility for Major Emergency Management in the Fire and Rescue Service. Limerick City Council shall also make a specific budget provision to aid in meeting the costs of major emergency preparedness.

### **5.11 Procurement and Use of Resources**

Designated officers, including Controllers of Operations, are authorised to procure goods or services and deploy resources necessary to deal with the situation when a major emergency is declared and where the normal procurement processes are not relevant or applicable.

### **5.12 Appraisal and Communication of Information to the Public**

Limerick City Council's MEDC shall meet on an annual basis to review the co-ordination of Major Emergency Management, and to appraise and update this Plan as required. On completion, an appraisal report shall be forwarded to the chair of the Regional Steering Group, as well as the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government.

There may be situations where it will be crucial for Limerick City 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”, web-pages, Aertel, automatic text messaging, as well as through liaison with the media.

## Section 6

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

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#### 6.1 Command Arrangements for Major Emergencies

The City Manager of Limerick City Council is 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.

##### 6.1.1 Command Arrangements within Limerick City Council Services

Limerick City Council shall exercise command over its own services in accordance with its normal command structure. At the site of an emergency, it will also exercise control over any additional services (other than the Principal Response Agencies) that Limerick City Council mobilises to the site. Control of the Limerick City Council services at the site of the Emergency shall be exercised by the Controller of Operations.

#### 6.2 Control Arrangements for Major Emergencies

Limerick City Council shall appoint a Controller of Operations at the site of the emergency. The officer in command of the initial response of each principal emergency service shall be the Principal Response Agency's Controller of Operations until relieved through the agency's pre-determined process.

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 Local Authorities, there may be response from multiple units of the principal response agencies. There should be only one Controller of Operations for each of the three principal response agencies.

In the case of Local Authorities, which are statutorily empowered in respect of their functional area, procedures for resolving such issues may already be set out in what are referred to as Section 81 agreements. Where they are not so covered and the issue cannot be resolved quickly in discussion between the responding officers of the different units of those services, the Local Authority Controller of Operations should be the designated person from the Local Authority whose rostered senior fire officer was first to attend the incident.

The various roles and groupings which together comprise the control system for Major Emergencies are summarised in the table below:

<b>Role or Group</b>	<b>Located</b>	<b>Key Function</b>
Controller of Operations	On-site at the incident	Manage Limerick City Council's services at the incident
On-Site Coordinator	On-site at the incident	Manage the response to the incident by the responding PRAs
Local Coordination Group	Off-site	Establish objectives for management of the incident and provide strategic direction
Crisis Management Team	Off-site	Support Limerick City Council's response to the incident

**Table 3: Summary of Control Functions**

Each of the roles and groupings functions and mandate are expanded upon further in the upcoming sections.

## **6.2.1 Control of Services and Response**

### **6.2.1.1 The 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 Controller of Operations is set out below:

- To make such decisions as are appropriate to the role of controlling the activities of his/her agency's services at the site (Controlling in this context may mean setting priority objectives for individual services; command of each service should remain with the officers of that service.);
- To meet with the other two controllers and determine the lead agency;
- To undertake the role of On-Site Co-ordinator, where the service s/he represents is identified as the lead agency;
- To participate fully in the site co-ordination activity, including the establishment of a Site Management Plan;
- Where another service is the lead agency, to ensure that his/her agency's operations are co-ordinated with the other principal response agencies, including ensuring secure communications with all agencies responding to the major emergency at the site;
- To decide and request the attendance of such services as s/he determines are needed;
- To exercise control over such services as s/he has requested to attend;

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

#### 6.2.1.2 The 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.

The mandate of the On-Site Co-ordinator is as follows:

- To assume the role of On-Site Co-ordinator when the three controllers determine the lead agency. Once appointed s/he should note the time and that the determination was made in the presence of the two other controllers on site;
- To inform all parties involved in the response that s/he has assumed the role of On-Site Co-ordinator;
- To determine which facility should be used as the On-Site Co-ordination Centre. Depending on the circumstance, this may be a specific purpose built vehicle designated for the task, 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 principal response agencies and the principal emergency services (and others, as appropriate) in the On-Site Co-ordination Group;
- To ensure that mandated co-ordination decisions are made promptly and communicated to all involved;
- To ensure that a Scene Management Plan is made, disseminated to all services and applied;
- To develop an auditable list of Actions (an Action Plan) and appoint an Action Management Officer where necessary;
- To determine if and what public information messages are to be developed and issued;

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

#### 6.2.1.3 Local Co-ordination Group:

Once the Local Co-ordination Group has been activated the mandate is as follows:

- 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; and
- To take whatever steps are necessary to start to plan for recovery.

#### 6.2.1.4 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 to:

- Manage, control and co-ordinate the agency's overall response to the situation;
- Provide support to the agency's Controller of Operations on-site and mobilise resources from within the agency or externally as required;
- Liaise with national headquarters, in the case of An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive, and relevant Government Departments on strategic issues; and
- Ensure appropriate participation of the agency in the inter-agency co-ordination structures.

The members of the Crisis Management Team are usually the senior managers of the agency, who will meet at a pre-arranged location (usually in the agency's headquarters) designated for this use. The use of Crisis Management Teams within each of the principal response agencies 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 the principal response agency's representative at the Local Co-ordination Group, supports their own Controller of Operations on site and maintains the agency's normal day-to-day services that the community requires.

### **6.2.2 Control of External Organisations and Agencies**

The On-Site Co-ordinator has the task of co-ordinating all external support and assistance into the overall response action plan. The Controller of Operations of Limerick City Council is responsible for the managing and integrating the contribution of the external resources that it requested to be mobilized to the major emergency. See Section 7.10 for more information on mobilising additional resources.

### **6.2.3 Support Arrangements for the Control Function**

An On-Site Co-ordination Centre (OSCC) will be set up in the event of a major emergency, which will be made up of a Control of Operations from each of the three principal response agencies and each agency's support team.

## **6.3 Arrangements for Coordination**

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

### **6.3.1 The Lead Service and Lead Agency Concepts**

One of the three principal response agencies will be designated as the lead agency for any emergency and thereby assume responsibility for leading co-ordination. In general, therefore, while the responsibility for co-ordination may be shared, in any given situation responsibility for leading cooperation belongs specifically to one of the three principal response agencies. The lead agency has both the responsibility and mandate for the co-ordination function. The mechanisms for determining and designating the lead agency in any situation are set out in Section 7.6.

### **6.3.2 On-site Coordination by Limerick City Council**

On-site co-ordination is facilitated by the On-Site Co-ordinator and the On-Site Co-ordination group. The roles of the On-site Co-ordinator and the On-Site Co-ordination group have been outlined in Section 6.2.1.

### **6.3.3 Coordination at a Local or Regional Coordination Centre**

When a major emergency has been declared and the lead agency determined, the relevant officers of the lead agency should implement a Local Co-ordination Group mobilisation procedure. The representative of the lead agency will chair the Local Co-ordination Group, which will be located in the Local Co-ordination Centre, and will exercise the mandates associated with this position. The Local Co-ordination Group will comprise representatives of the other two principal response agencies, an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer, an Action Management Officer (where considered appropriate), representatives of other agencies and specialists, as appropriate.

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".

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

### **6.3.4 Coordination in Other Circumstances**

Situations may arise whereby the conventional coordination mechanisms as set out already may need to be augmented or modified. The following sections describe specific examples of this.

#### **6.3.4.1 Mutual Aid and Regional Level Incidents**

Each Controller of Operations should ensure that, where the resources of his/her individual principal response agency do not appear to be sufficient to bring a situation under control, or the duration of an incident is extended, support is obtained via mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring principal response agencies. As they are national organisations, the Crisis Management Teams of the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána should arrange to provide the additional support required; Local Authorities will support each other on a mutual basis.

#### **6.3.4.2 Incidents at Council Boundaries**

Attendance at emergency incidents by the Fire and Rescue Service is determined by Pre-Determined Attendance procedures (PDAs) in operation through the Munster Regional Control Centre (MRCC). Such incidents on the Council boundaries shall be dealt with through these procedures.

#### **6.3.4.3 Multi-Site Emergencies**

Multi-site or side area emergencies may require the declaration of a regional level emergency and activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination.

#### **6.3.4.4 Links to National Level Plans**

Limerick City Council shall make provision for responding to and activating appropriate aspects of their Major Emergency Plan on request arising from a national emergency situation. Links with National Emergency Plans are detailed in Section 10.

#### **6.3.4.5 Links with National 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.

## Section 7

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### The Common Elements of Response

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**The following sections of the Major Emergency Plan describe the Common Elements of Response and how they will be implemented**

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

## Section 7.1

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### Declaring a Major Emergency

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#### 7.1.1 Declaration of a Major Emergency

The Major Emergency Plan shall be activated by whichever of the three Principal Response Agencies first becomes aware of the Major Emergency.

The person making the declaration should ensure that the declaration is notified to the heads of all services on site, as well as informing the relevant command, control or communication centres.

The officer activating the Plan must do so by means of the following declaratory message via radio/telephone to the Munster Regional Communications Centre (MRCC). (MRCC may be contacted using 999 or 112).

The message to declare a Major Emergency should be in the following format:

This is ..... (name, rank and service).....

A ..... (type of incident).....has occurred/is imminent at ....  
(location).....

As an authorised officer I declare that a major emergency exists.

Please activate the mobilisation arrangements in the Limerick City Council Major Emergency Plan.

#### 7.1.2 METHANE Message

After the declaration is made the officer should then use the mnemonic METHANE to structure and deliver an information message to the MRCC.

M	Major Emergency Declared
E	Exact Location of the emergency
T	Type of Emergency (Transport, Chemical, etc.)
H	Hazards, present and potential
A	Access/Egress Routes
N	Number and types of Casualties
E	Emergency Services present and required

## Section 7.2

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### Initial Mobilisation

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#### 7.2.1 Initial Mobilisation

Limerick City Council's resources to be mobilised to a Major Emergency will be mobilised in accordance with the Mobilisation Procedure contained in the appendices to this document.

The initial mobilisation of Limerick City Council's fire and rescue service resources will be facilitated through the Munster Regional Communications Centre. The initial fire brigade response to the activation of the major emergency plan will be the pre-determined attendance (PDA) of:

5 No. Water Tenders,  
1 No. Emergency Tender  
1 No. Mobile Control Unit or Command Support Unit

The rostered senior fire service officer will implement the mobilisation procedure detailed in the appendices to this Major Emergency Plan.

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

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.

## Section 7.3

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### Command, Control and Communication Centres

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#### 7.3.1 Command, Control and Communications Centres

The Munster Regional Communications Centre (MRCC) located on the site of Limerick City Fire Station shall be the control centre to mobilise, support and monitor the Fire and Rescue Service and other Services requested/required by Limerick City Council.

The MRCC shall notify the other principal response agencies of the activation of the Major Emergency Plan.

The MRCC will also notify all appropriate personnel in Limerick City Council of the activation of the Major Emergency Plan to the extents specified in the agreed mobilisation procedure.

## Section 7.4

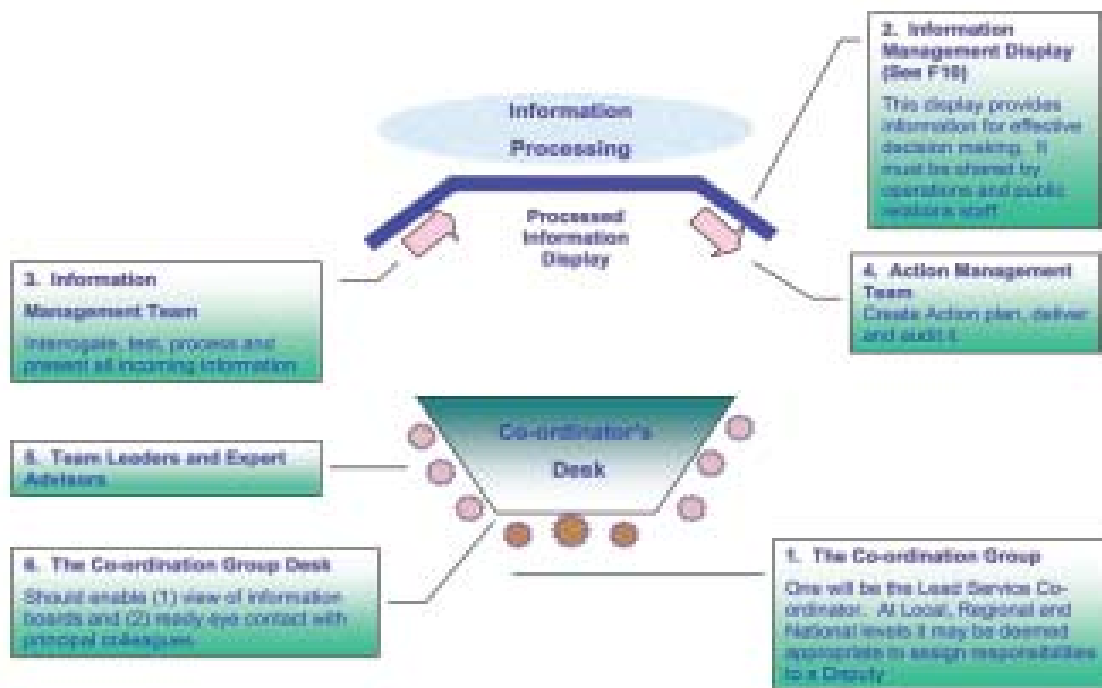
### Co-ordination Centres

#### 7.4.1 Support of On-Site Coordination

On-Site Co-ordination will to be supported by equipment stored at the Fire Station on Mulgrave Street. This will include radios and various items of equipment necessary to support personnel dispatched to the site of the Major Emergency. This equipment may be taken to the site by the Controller of Operations during their response, or transported to the site by the Fire Service or Civil Defence.

#### 7.4.2 Limerick City Council's Crisis Management Team

Limerick City Council's Crisis Management Team will convene in the management suite of Limerick City Council's offices at Merchant's Quay Limerick. This is a strategic level management group which, supports Limerick City Council's representative at the Local Co-ordination Group, supports their Controller of Operations on site and maintains the agency's normal day-to-day services that the community requires. The list of personnel nominated for the Crisis Management Team is included in the appendices.



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Figure 1: Generic Co-ordination Centre Layout

### **7.4.3 Local Coordination Centre**

In the event of a major emergency, Limerick City Council's Local Co-ordination Centre shall be established in the City Manager's Meeting Room (Room 301) at Limerick City Council's offices at Merchant's Quay Limerick.

See also Section 6 of this document for further details.

### **7.4.4 Regional Coordination Centre**

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may declare a regional level emergency and activate the plan for Regional Co-ordination if required. Any one of the nominated Local Co-ordination Centres in the region may be used as a specific Regional Co-ordination Centre, or a specific Regional Centre may be designated for this purpose. The lead agency which has declared the regional level emergency will convene and chair the Regional Co-ordination Group. The choice of location will be determined in each situation by the Chair of the Local Co-ordinating Group and will depend on the location and nature of the emergency.

### **7.4.5 Information Managers**

Key personnel have been identified to act as information managers in the event of a Major Emergency and are listed in the appendices. Information is to be received from the On Site Co-ordinator / Controller of Operations, disseminated into key information points for the Local Co-ordinating Group and developed into key actions for the Crisis Management Team or for the On Site Co-ordinator / Controller of Operations.

## Section 7.5

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### Communications Facilities

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#### 7.5.1 Communications Systems

The primary means of communications for each of Limerick City Council's services will be via telephone, either mobile or fixed landline. The Environment Department also has a number of vehicles contactable via mobile two-way radio.

The Fire and Rescue Service has the following communication facilities:

- Appliance radio system (VHF)
- Handheld portable radio sets (UHF)
- Mobile phones
- Mobile fax (Emergency Tender only)
- Pagers (Senior Officers only)

The Local Co-ordination Centre shall also be equipped with the following communications facilities:

- Fixed Landlines
- Internet / Intranet
- Television / Radio
- Mobile phones
- Fax machine
- Satellite telephone

Crisis Management Teams shall have access to the following communications facilities as a minimum:

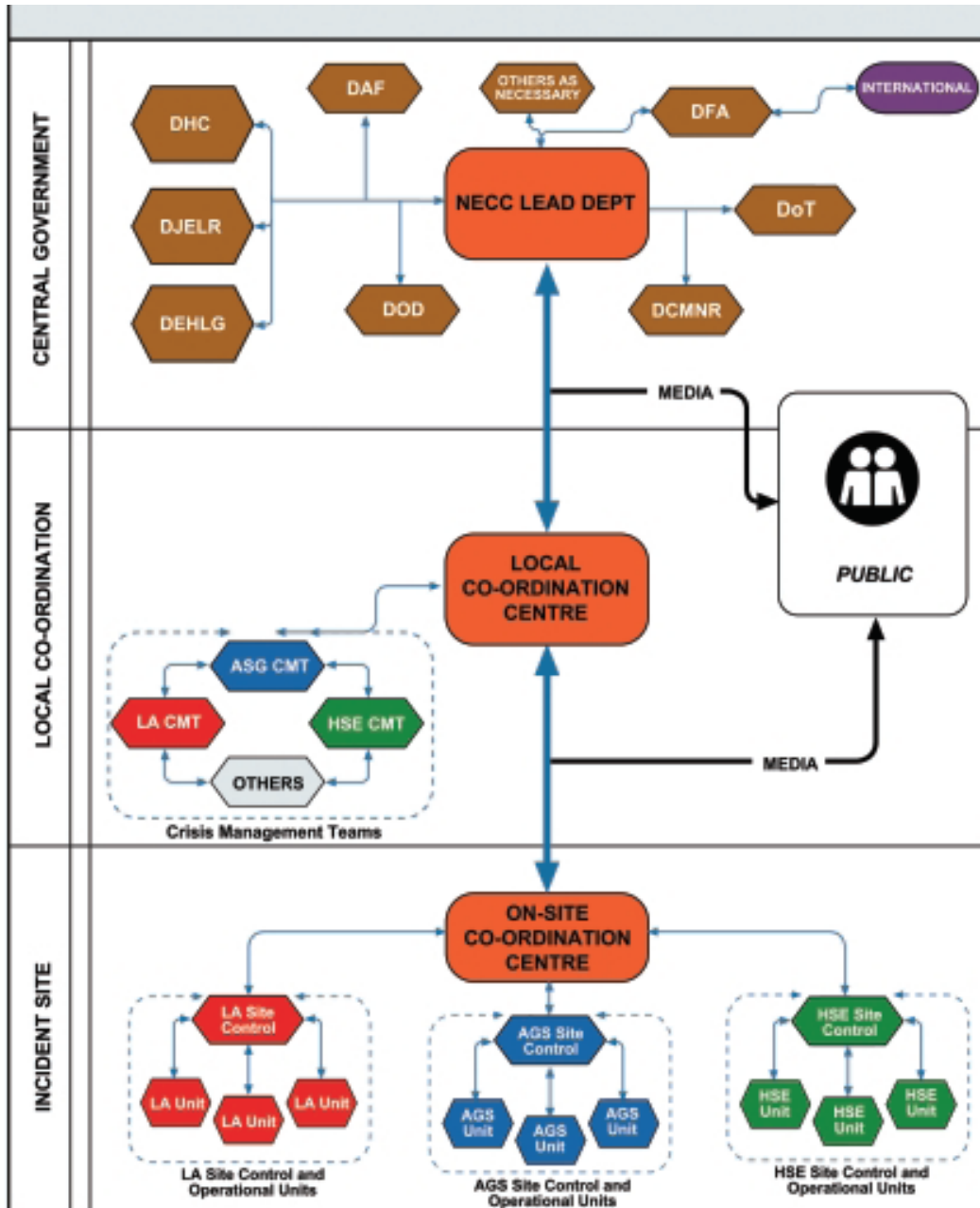
- Fixed Landlines
- Internet / Intranet
- Mobile phones

#### 7.5.2 Inter-Agency Communications On-Site

A set of handheld radios will be stored by the Civil Defence Officer at the Fire Station on Mulgrave Street, and set at a predetermined radio channel for communication between the Controllers of Operations of the principal response agencies on site. These radios can be taken to the site by the Controller of Operations during their response, or transported to the site by the Fire Service or Civil Defence.

### 7.5.3 Communications between the Site and Coordination Centres

In general, communications between the site and co-ordination centres may be through mobile and/or landline telephones and fax machines. All communications between On-site Co-ordination Centre and the Local Co-ordination shall pass between the Controller of Operations/On-site Co-ordinator to the Local Co-ordination Group, supported by the work of trained Information Management Officers at the scene and at the co-ordination centres.



**Figure 2: Command, Control and Co-ordination Levels And Information Flows**

## Section 7.6

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

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#### 7.6.1 Determination of the Lead Service

A list of pre-nominated lead agencies is shown in the table on the next page for common incident types. The lead agency has both the responsibility and mandate for the co-ordination function. Where the categorizations in the table do not apply and the lead agency is not obvious, the Local Authority will be the "default" lead agency.

Rapid determination of the lead agency is essential as this in turn determines which of the three Controllers of Operations is to act as the On-Site Co-ordinator. The Controller of Operations for the Lead Agency is to act as the on-Site Co-ordinator.

The On-Site Co-ordinator should note the time that the determination of the lead agency was made, with of the other two Controller of Operations. The determination is to be communicated to all parties involved in the response.

## Categories of Emergency<sup>1 2</sup>

Emergency Incident Type	Initial Pre-nominated Lead Agency	Likely Change <sup>3</sup>
<b>Road Traffic Accident<sup>4</sup></b>	An Garda Síochána	
<b>Fire</b>	Local Authority <sup>5</sup>	
<b>Hazardous Materials</b>	Local Authority	
<b>Train Crash</b>	Local Authority	<b>To An Garda Síochána when rescue phase is complete</b>
<b>Aircraft Incident</b>	Local Authority	<b>To An Garda Síochána when fire-fighting/rescue phase complete</b>
<b>Rescue</b>	Local Authority	
<b>Weather Related</b>	Local Authority	
<b>Biological Incident</b>	Health Services	
<b>Open Country Search and Rescue (Lowland)</b>	An Garda Síochána	
<b>Open Country Search and Rescue (Mountain)</b>	An Garda Síochána <sup>6</sup>	
<b>Public Order/Crowd Events</b>	An Garda Síochána	
<b>CCBRN<sup>7</sup></b> Conventional <sup>8</sup> Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear <sup>9</sup>	An Garda Síochána	
<b>Accidental Explosions/ Building Collapse</b>	Local Authority	
<b>Environmental/Pollution</b>	Local Authority	
<b>Marine Emergency Impacting On-Shore</b>	Local Authority <sup>10</sup>	
<b>Water Rescue Inland</b>	An Garda Síochána <sup>11</sup>	

**Table 4: Categories of Emergency and Pre-Nominated Lead Agencies**

- 1 These pre-nominations of lead agencies are to apply to all emergencies, from normal through the full range of major emergencies.
- 2 The pre-nomination of a lead agency among the principal response agencies does not necessarily imply a change to the designation of lead Government Department, as set out in the Department of Defence's Strategic Emergency Planning Guidance.
- 3 Likely changes in lead agency will arise from changing circumstances.
- 4 Road Traffic Accident in this context excludes Road Traffic Accidents involving Hazardous Materials (other than fuel in vehicles).

- 5 As its principal emergency service, the fire service is assigned initial responsibility for each category where the Local Authority is designated as lead agency, as it is likely to be the first attendance of that agency at the site. This may become a broader Local Authority function at a later stage of the major emergency.
- 6 An Garda Síochána may be assisted by specialist groups, such as Mountain Rescue Teams.
- 7 Where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána should assume the lead role, regardless of the agent. Should it subsequently transpire that there is no terrorist involvement, the lead agency may change as indicated above.
- 8 The Defence Forces, when requested, will assist An Garda Síochána, in an Aid to the Civil Power role, with Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams, at suspected terrorist incidents. Additional Defence Forces support in an Aid to the Civil Power role may be sought, if required.
- 9 It is envisaged that Local/Regional involvement would arise only on foot of activation under the National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents (NEPNA).
- 10 The Irish Coast Guard has responsibility for co-ordinating response to marine emergencies at sea. The Irish Coast Guard may, in certain circumstances, request the principal emergency services to assist them offshore. When the Irish Coast Guard request the declaration of a major emergency where casualties are being brought ashore (or pollution is coming, or threatening to come, ashore), the onshore response will be coordinated by the Local Authority.
- 11 The Irish Coast Guard has responsibility for receiving 999/112 calls and the mobilising of resources to Inland Waterway emergencies. The Framework provides that An Garda Síochána should be the principal response agency to undertake initial co-ordination at inland waterway emergencies. After the initial response, this role may be re-assigned, following consultation between the Irish Coast Guard and An Garda Síochána.

### **7.6.2 Review and Transfer of Lead Service Nomination**

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 at the site and should be recorded and communicated as per the initial determination.

### **7.6.3 Delivery of Coordination by Limerick City Council as Lead Agency**

Where Limerick City Council as the lead agency is assigned responsibility for the co-ordination function (in addition to its own functions), it will lead all co-ordination activity associated with the emergency (on-site, off-site, etc.). The co-ordination function for any emergency will include:

- Ensuring involvement of the three principal response agencies and the principal emergency services in sharing information on the nature of the emergency situation;
- Ensuring involvement of the range of organisations (other than principal response agencies) who may be requested to respond in co-ordination activities and arrangements;

- Ensuring that mandated co-ordination decisions are made promptly and communicated to all involved;
- Ensuring that site management issues are addressed and decided;
- Ensuring that public information messages and media briefings are co-ordinated and implemented;
- Ensuring that pre-arranged communications (technical) links are put in place and operating;
- Operating the generic information management systems;
- Ensuring that the ownership of the lead agency role is reviewed, and modified as appropriate;
- Ensuring that all aspects of the management of the incident are dealt with before the response is stood down;
- Ensuring that a report on the co-ordination function is prepared in respect of the emergency after it is closed down, and circulated (first as a draft) to the other services which attended.

## Section 7.7

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### Public Information

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#### **7.7.1 Early Warnings and Special Public Warning Arrangements**

The Local Co-ordination Group should 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 communication channels to make concise and accurate information available.

In situations where early warning and special public warning arrangements are required, the Media Liaison Officer shall make provision for contacting the appropriate media outlets for the dissemination of warnings on behalf of the Limerick City Council.

#### **7.7.2 Help Lines and Handling Contacts**

The appointed Media Liaison Officer shall make arrangements to make known the emergency telephone numbers and/or the location of the public information officers. The Media Liaison Officers / Crisis management Team should make provision for telephone / help line / information line contact numbers, with dedicated telephone lines.

## Section 7.8

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### The Media

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#### 7.8.1 Liaison with the Media

It is the responsibility of the lead agency to establish a Media Centre at or near the site of the emergency for the use by the principal response agencies in dealing with the media at the site. Each principal response agency should designate a Media Liaison Officer at the site and the activities of the Media Liaison Officers on site should be co-ordinated by the Media Liaison Officer of the Lead agency. All statements to the media should be cleared with the On-Site Co-ordinator or his/her Media Liaison Officer.

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

Working to facilitate the needs of the media will help reduce the possibility of attempts at unauthorised access to the site of the emergency or other sites associated with it. Regular media briefings should be scheduled to suit television and radio broadcasts. These briefings should also be used to promulgate help-line telephone numbers and necessary public information messages. Background information that has been compiled before the event can be used to inform holding statements for use during the early stages of the incident.

The Media Liaison Officer must keep accurate and timely information on the emergency so that:

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

#### 7.8.3 Arrangements for the Media at Local and/or Regional Coordination Centres

The Local 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 Co-ordination Group.

#### **7.8.4 Arrangements for the Media at 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 where casualties are being treated and mortuaries and, therefore, arrangements for the media at or adjacent to those locations will need to be provided.

## Section 7.9

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### Site Management Arrangements

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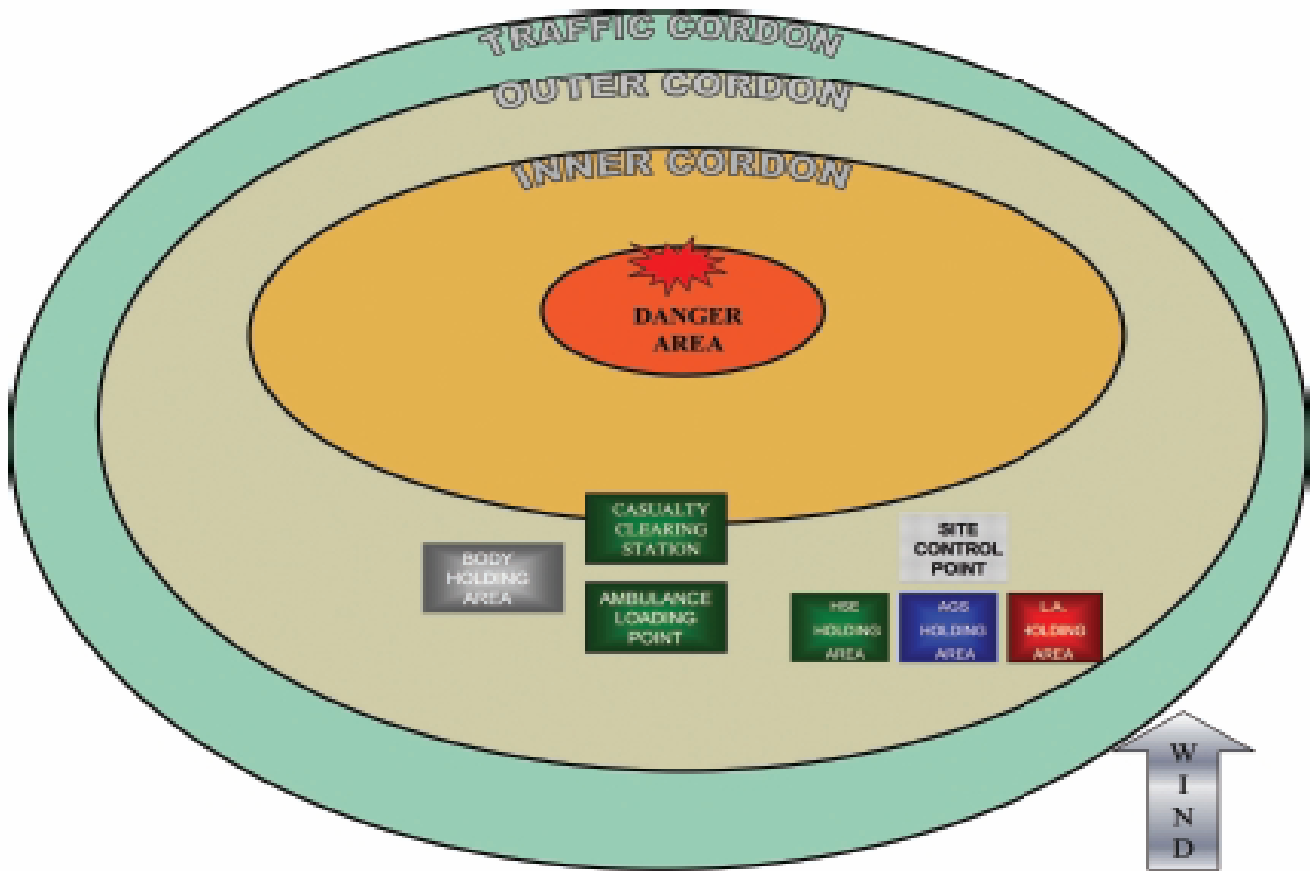
#### 7.9.1 Generic Site Management Arrangements

The highest-ranking officer of the first attendance team from Limerick City Council will have the role of Controller of Operations of that agency at the scene until relieved in accordance with the Council's protocols. The initial important task of the On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other two Controllers, is the development of a Site Management Plan. This should be in accordance with the typical Site Management Arrangements shown below leading to the establishment of all or some of the following:

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

The On-Site Co-ordination Group should arrange that, where possible, the Control Points of the three principal emergency services should be co-located to form the initial Site Control Point. The On-Site Co-ordination Group should establish the Site Control Point as early as practicable.

The Controllers of Operations should ensure that all communications from the scene to individual service command, control or communication centres and to the Local Co-ordination Centre should be routed through the Site Control Point.



**Figure 3: Typical Site Management Arrangements**

### 7.9.2 Access Control and Identification of Personnel

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

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

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 Controller of Operations, should wear bibs designed and co-ordinated as follows:

Organisation	Bib Colour	Wording
Health Service Executive	Green and White Chequer	HSE Controller
Local Authority	Red and White Chequer	Local Authority Controller
An Garda Síochána	Blue and White Chequer	Garda Controller

**Table 5: Description of Controllers Bibs for Each Agency**

Below is an example of how the bibs should look for each of the responding agencies.



**Figure 4: Identification of Agency Controllers**

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.

Non uniformed personnel from Limerick City Council should attend the scene in a high visibility jacket or bib, and where possible bearing the wording “Limerick City Council”. They should also carry their Limerick City Council identification card.

### **7.9.3 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.

Contact details for the Irish Aviation Authority are provided in the appendices.

## Section 7.10

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### Mobilising Additional Resources

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#### 7.10.1 Mobilising Organisation in Support of the Council

If necessary, Limerick City Council can draw upon support from external agencies and organisations, such as:

- Civil Defence
- Defence Forces
- The Irish Red Cross
- Voluntary Emergency Services
- Utilities
- Private Sector

##### 7.10.1.1 Mobilisation of Civil Defence

As the Civil Defence is a Local Authority service, Civil Defence may be activated in the early stages of a Major Emergency by the Local Authority. A sub-plan and contact details for the activation of the Civil Defence are included in the appendices.

##### 7.10.1.2 Mobilisation of the Defence Forces

It should be recognized that assistance requested from the Defence Forces by Local Authority should be in Aid to the Civil Authority i.e. an unarmed response.

The following should be followed when requesting assistance from the Defence Forces:

- (a) Where time is critical, contact should be made with An Garda Síochána, who will then contact the appropriate military post. The Department of Defence should also be notified as soon as possible.
- (b) Where time is not critical, the request should be made through the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (for local authorities) or another relevant Government Department (for other agencies) to the Secretary General, Department of Defence, Parkgate, Infirmary Road, Dublin 7.

Telephone contact details and nominated contact persons for the Department of Defence are detailed in the appendices.

### **7.10.1.3 Mobilisation of the Irish Red Cross**

The Irish Red Cross may be mobilised using the contact details listed in the appendices.

### **7.10.1.4 Mobilisation of Local Voluntary Agencies**

Local voluntary agencies may be mobilised using the contact details listed in the appendices.

### **7.10.1.5 Mobilisation of Utilities**

A list of utilities and their emergency/out of hours contact arrangements is contained in the appendices.

### **7.10.1.6 Mobilisation of Private Sector Resources**

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, as appropriate.

A list of contacts and equipment within the private sector is detailed in the appendices.

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

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

### **7.10.3 Liaison with Utilities**

It may be necessary to liaise with utility companies during the course of a major emergency, to cater for emerging or future needs. Utility companies can be contacted through the telephone numbers provided in the appendices.

#### **7.10.4 Arrangements for Casual Volunteers**

Where casual volunteers are available and deemed necessary by the On-Site Co-ordination Team, they will be the responsibility of the On-site Co-ordination team while they are on site. Arrangements will be made by Civil Defence for the reception and registration of casual volunteers, and as such the mobilisation of Civil Defence may be necessary simultaneous to the appearance of, or requirement for casual volunteers.

Some form of identification in terms of arm bands etc. will be necessary and should be issued.

It should also be noted that while initially casual volunteers may be of some assistance, their usefulness will lessen due to lack of training, experience and inadequate/absent PPE.

#### **7.10.5 Arrangements for Command, Control, Coordination and Demobilisation of Organisations Mobilised to the Site**

The On-Site Co-ordinator has the task of co-ordinating all external support and assistance into the overall response action plan. The Controller of Operations of the service which requested mobilisation of the external resource has responsibility for managing and integrating the contribution of these resources to the tasks identified in the response.

The successful integration of external assistance should involve the following factors:

- a clear determination by the relevant Controller of Operations of the scope and scale of the tasks to be assigned to the responding organisation (in short, the formulation of a mandate);
- explicit arrangements for the monitoring and reporting of progress on assigned tasks;
- the nomination by the responding organisation of a liaison officer to either (or both as appropriate) the support team of the relevant Controller of Operations or the On-Site Co-ordination Group. The liaison officers should maintain the closest possible contact between their own organisation and the relevant team or group and be changed or rotated only to the minimum extent necessary;
- the ability of each liaison officer to assess and report the capabilities of the external agency to deliver the tasks assigned to that organisation; and
- the quality of mechanisms for communications between the external agency and the lead agency or the principal response agency which mobilised it.

Generally, all responding agencies should be made aware of the site management arrangements and should report as directed to the relevant Holding Area. Attempts should be made to assign external assistance units to tasks in a way that does not involve pooling or sharing equipment. Special attention may be required for both the welfare and safety needs of external agencies. External agencies should be made aware of and should comply with the principal response agencies' arrangements for liaising with the media.

#### **7.10.6 Mutual Aid Arrangements**

Limerick City Council is supported by and supports neighbouring local authorities on a mutual aid basis. Requests for additional fire service resources can be made through the Munster Regional Communications Centre. Contact details for adjoining authorities from whom backup may be requested are contained in the appendices.

#### **7.10.7 Requests for Out-of-Region Assistance**

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.

The decision to seek assistance from outside the region should be made by the lead agency, in association with the other principal response agencies, at the Local/Regional Coordination Centre. The Local/Regional Co-ordination Group should identify and dimension the level/type of assistance likely to be required and its duration. It should also seek to identify the possible options for sourcing such assistance, be that from neighbouring regions, elsewhere in the state, from Northern Ireland, the rest of the United Kingdom or from other EU member states.

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

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

A list of national agencies and contact details is provided in the appendices to this Major Emergency Plan.

#### **7.10.8 Requests for International Assistance**

The European Community has established a Community Mechanism to facilitate the provision of assistance between the member states in the event of major emergencies. The decision to seek assistance from outside the state should be made by the lead agency, in association with the other principal response agencies, at the Local/ Regional Coordination Centre. The Local/ Regional Coordination Group should identify and dimension the level/type of assistance likely to be required and its duration. The chair of the Local/ Regional Coordination Group should make requests for such assistance to the National Liaison Officer in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Contact details for Government Departments can be found in the appendices to this document.

## Section 7.11

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# Casualty and Survivor Arrangements

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### 7.11.1 General Objectives

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.

#### 7.11.1.1 Arrangements for the Rescue and Care of Casualties

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. The lead agency in the provision of care to these casualties will be the Health Service Executive.

Casualties are often found some distance from the primary site, and search teams, coordinated by an Garda Síochána, should be established where it is considered that this may be necessary. Limerick City Council can assist with the search teams by the use of Civil Defence Volunteers, where appropriate.

#### 7.11.2 The Injured

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

The injured need to be rescued from the scene and cared for as quickly and safely as possible by the rescuers, who must be mindful of the requirement of the ambulance and medical teams on site. Ambulance paramedics and technicians then need to be able to administer the appropriate pre-hospital treatment before the patients are taken to the receiving hospitals.

### **7.11.2.1 Triage, Treatment and Transport**

The Health Service Executive has responsibility for the triage, treatment and transportation to hospital of casualties arising from the incident.

Limerick City Council will endeavour to assist the HSE, where possible. This may include the provision of ambulances, minibuses and personnel carriers from Civil Defence for the transportation of casualties.

### **7.11.2.2 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 Local Authority, some casualties may leave the site by other means and may arrive at the designated Receiving Hospital(s), or other hospitals, in cars, buses, etc.

In circumstances where lightly injured or uninjured persons are to be transported from the site, in vehicles such as minibuses and personnel carriers, Civil Defence may be requested to aid in this task.

### **7.11.2.3 Casualty Clearing Station, Ambulance Loading Point and Designation of Receiving Hospitals**

Arrangements for establishing a Casualty Clearing Station, an Ambulance Loading Point, the designation of receiving hospitals and the distribution of injured casualties are all the responsibility of the Health Service Executive.

Patients must be moved to the Casualty Clearing Station (CCS). The Casualty Clearing Station will be established by the ambulance service, in consultation with the Health Service Executive. At this location the casualties are collected, further triaged, treated, as necessary, and prepared for transport to hospital.

The Health Service Executive Controller will, in consultation with the Site Medical Officer and the designated receiving hospitals, decide on the hospital destination of casualties.

### **7.11.3 Fatalities**

The bodies of casualties, which have been triaged as dead, should not be moved from the incident site unless this is necessary to effect 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. Limerick City Council can assist An Garda Síochána in this function.

When a doctor has pronounced an individual dead, arrangements in respect of the body are the responsibility of the local Coroner's Office, in conjunction with An Garda Síochána.

### **7.11.3.1 The Role of the Coroner**

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.

Limerick City Council can support the Coroner in this role by adhering to the requirements for the preservation and integrity of evidence as detailed in section 7.11.3 above, and by assisting with the movement of bodies and by assistance with the provision of temporary mortuary services, where possible.

### **7.11.3.2 Arrangements for Dealing with Fatalities both On and Off-Site**

The On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other Controllers, will decide if it is necessary to designate and 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).

#### Temporary Mortuaries:

It is the responsibility of Limerick City Council to provide a Temporary Mortuary, if required. Arrangements are being made on a national basis for the provision of temporary mortuary facilities on behalf of Local Authorities.

### **7.11.3.3 Identification of the Deceased**

The Coroner, with the assistance of An Garda Síochána, has overall responsibility for the identification of bodies and remains and s/he is entitled to exclusive possession and control of a deceased person until the facts about their death have been established. A full post-mortem and forensic examination will be carried out on every body from a major emergency and each death will be the

subject of an Inquest. The post-mortem is carried out by a Pathologist, who acts as the 'Coroners Agent' for this purpose.

On request, Limerick City Council will render assistance to An Garda Síochána and/or the Coroner with their tasks as outlined above, where possible.

#### **7.11.4 Survivors**

Where considered appropriate, a Survivor Reception Centre will be designated and established at the earliest possible opportunity.

##### **7.11.4.1 Survivor Reception Centres**

A Survivor Reception Centre will be designated and established at the earliest possible opportunity. The On-Site Co-ordinator, in conjunction with the other Controllers, should determine if such a centre is to be established, and its location in the site management plan. It is the responsibility of Limerick City Council to establish and run this centre.

Limerick City Council has identified the following as suitable buildings for setting up a survivor reception centre;

- Recreation Centre
- Parish Hall
- Local Hotels
- Any other building that is large enough to accommodate large amounts of people.
- Local Church
- Local School

All those who have survived the incident uninjured can be directed to the Survivor Centre, where their details will be documented and collated by An Garda Síochána.

The assistance of the 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.

Details of suitable locations for Survivor Reception Centres are included in the Limerick City Council Housing Sub-Plan accompanying this document.

### **7.11.5 Casualty Information**

The gathering of casualty information will be the responsibility of An Garda Síochána.

#### **7.11.5.1 Operation of a Casualty Bureau**

In the event of a major emergency involving significant numbers of casualties, An Garda Síochána will establish a Casualty Bureau to collect and collate the details (including condition and location) of all casualties and survivors. To facilitate this process, a liaison/casualty officer will normally be sent by An Garda Síochána to each hospital where casualties are being treated.

All other services should ensure that any information collected on any casualty is transferred via An Garda Síochána to the Casualty Bureau.

#### **7.11.5.2 Assistance to An Garda Síochána**

It is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána to collect and collate casualty information and provide this information to friends and relatives.

Limerick City Council may assist with this upon request.

### **7.11.6 Friends and Relatives Reception Centres**

Some incidents may warrant the establishment of Friends' and Relatives' Reception Centres at appropriate locations associated with the emergency, in addition to those provided at the hospitals where the injured are being treated.

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. 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.

#### **7.11.6.1 Provisions for the Friends and Relatives of Casualties**

If necessary, a reception centre will be set up to provide an 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.

#### **7.11.7 Non-National Casualties**

In some incidents an emergency may involve significant numbers of non-nationals. If necessary, contact should be made with the relevant embassy if the nationality of the victims is known. The Department of Foreign Affairs (which operates an out of hours Duty Officer System) should also be approached for appropriate assistance and liaison purposes.

##### **7.11.7.1 Arrangements for Situations Involving Non-National Casualties**

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 Justice as to the use of private sector interpreters.

Contact details for interpreters are contained in the appendices.

#### **7.11.8 Pastoral and Psychosocial 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.

##### **7.11.8.1 Arrangements for the Provision of Pastoral and Psychosocial Care**

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 Health Service Executive crisis management team which will make the appropriate arrangements.

## Section 7.12

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### Emergencies involving Hazardous Materials

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#### 7.12.1 Hazardous Materials Incidents

Limerick City Council will be the lead agency for response to hazardous materials incidents, with exception of those involving biological agents. This will be through the Fire and Rescue Service and the Environment Department.

#### 7.12.2 CCBRN Incidents

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a CCBRN (CCBRN meaning terrorist incidents involving C - conventional explosives; C - 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 (in Draft). 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 (in Draft).

#### 7.12.4 Activation of the National Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Plan

For infectious diseases such as Avian Flu, Pandemic Flu, Foot and Mouth there will be a linkage to the National Plan as outlined by the government. Limerick City Council will provide assistance as required, and where possible, under the command of the lead government department.

#### 7.12.5 National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents (NEPNA)

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 Arrangements for Clinical, Personnel and Mass 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 Local Authority 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. It should be noted that emergency decontamination carries risks for vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and the injured. It may be more appropriate in certain circumstances for outer clothing to be removed and blankets provided as a temporary measure to alleviate potential harm through surface contact with contaminants.

## Section 7.13

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### Protecting Threatened Populations

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#### 7.13.1 Decisions Regarding Protecting Threatened Populations

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.

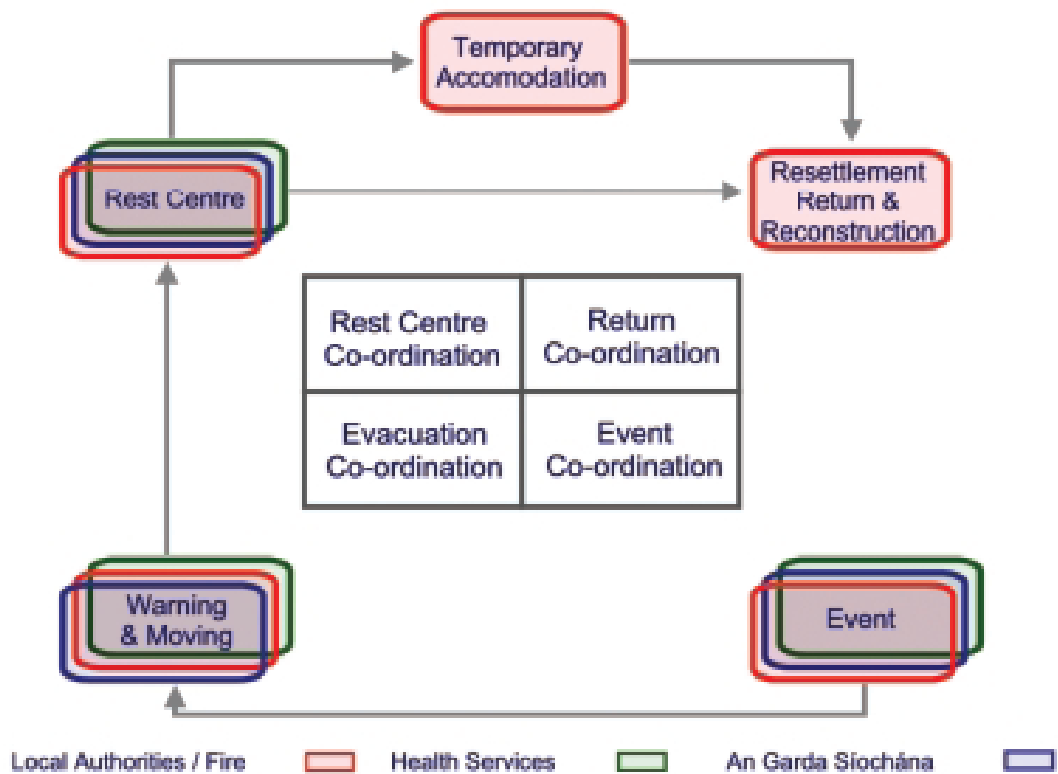
It can be anticipated that there will be a level of self evacuation, and this may need to be considered as part of the emergency management considerations.

#### 7.13.2 Special Evacuation Arrangements

Evacuation is usually undertaken on the advice of the Local Authority or Health Service Executive. Where decided upon, the process of evacuation will be undertaken by An Garda Síochána, with the assistance of the other services. In some circumstances, personnel from all services may have to assist in carrying it out. A suitable evacuation assembly point will need to be established and rest centres set up by Limerick City Council.

The centres will provide security, welfare, communication, catering and medical facilities. Evacuees should be documented and basic details passed to the casualty bureau. Limerick City Council will assist in this role. Temporary accommodation may also be required.

Please also see section 7.17.3 for further details on welfare.



**Figure 5: The Structure of Evacuation**

**7.13.3 Involvement of the Public Health service of the HSE**

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

## Section 7.14

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### Early and Public Warning Systems

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#### 7.14.1 Monitoring for Hazards and the Creation of Warning Messages

The Controller of Operations shall monitor potentially hazardous situations through his/her presence on-site or liaising with on-site personnel. Warnings shall be created by relaying information on a potential hazard to the Local Co-ordination Centre and Crisis Management Centre.

#### 7.14.2 Dissemination of Warning Messages

Warnings may be disseminated to the public by use of some or all of the following media:

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

The lead agency may request the media to carry Public Information Notices during a major emergency to disseminate important messages, such as how individuals may help themselves and their neighbours in a particular situation.

## Section 7.15

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### Emergencies Arising on Inland Waterways

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#### 7.15.1 Liaison with the Irish Coast Guard

The Irish Coast Guard can be contacted via the 999 system by asking for the 'Coast Guard'.

'The Irish Coast Guard may also be contacted through the Munster Regional Communications Centre or using the contact details provided in the Appendices.

#### 7.15.2 Responsibility for Inland Waterways Emergencies

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

## Section 7.16

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### Safety, Health and Welfare Considerations

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#### 7.16.1 Responsibility for Safety, Health and Welfare

Limerick City Council (and other responding agencies) is responsible for the Safety, Health and Welfare of its staff responding to emergencies and shall operate its own safety (including personal protective equipment) and welfare management procedures.

#### 7.16.2 Command Support Arrangements

When working in the environment of a Major Emergency the On-Site Co-ordinator will apply normal incident and safety management arrangements. A 'Safety Officer' will generally be appointed having responsibility for the oversight and management of the safety of the Council's personnel at the incident site. All other relevant officers will continue to exercise command over their own personnel working in the area.

#### 7.16.3 Danger Areas

A 'Danger Area' may be declared at the site where there is a definite risk to rescue personnel over and above that which would normally pertain at emergency operations. Limerick City Council is responsible for the health and safety of its staff when they operate within the 'Danger Area'.

The On-site Co-ordination Group may, in light of the available information, decide to declare a Danger Area and may designate an officer, appropriate for the circumstances, e.g. the Senior Fire Officer at the site in a case involving hazardous materials, to define the boundaries of, and to control access to, the Danger Area.

Each service should establish from the On-Site Co-ordinator if a Danger Area has been defined (see Section 7.9.1 of this document) as part of site management arrangements and, if so, what particular safety provisions may apply.

#### 7.16.4 Evacuation from the Danger Area

Where a situation deteriorates to a point where the officer in charge of the Danger Area decides that it is necessary to withdraw response personnel from a Danger Area, an agreed signal, comprising repeated sounding of a siren for ten seconds on, ten seconds off, will be given. On hearing this signal, all personnel should immediately withdraw to a pre-determined safe zone.

### **7.16.5 Welfare of Responders**

Limerick City Council's Controller of Operations should ensure that appropriate rest and refreshment facilities are provided for responding personnel at the site. This may be facilitated by the Civil Defence Welfare service. These facilities may include the provision of food and drink, rest facilities and sanitary facilities.

In the event that such facilities cannot be made available on site, the Controller of Operations should make arrangements for the delivery of refreshments to the site or to an appropriate location nearby.

### **7.16.6 Psychosocial Support for Responders**

Critical Incident Stress Management services will be provided to Limerick City Council's staff through the existing arrangements in place, and if necessary, augmented using the services of the Health Service Executive.

Fire and Rescue Service staff can also avail of the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) service available nationally. Contact details for this service are provided in the appendices.

## Section 7.17

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### Logistical Issues/Protracted Incidents

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#### 7.17.1 Rotation and Relief of Frontline Staff

Front line rescue / field staff will be relieved at protracted incidents when possible. Crews from throughout the Mid-West region may be called upon to assist and support the emergency.

#### 7.17.2 Reorganisation of Services

The maintenance of fire and rescue services will be organised through the normal call-taking and mobilisation service provided by the Munster Regional Communications Centre.

The Crisis Management Team will be tasked with the maintenance of the City Council's other emergency and public services.

#### 7.17.3 Initial and Ongoing Welfare of Field Staff

Limerick City Council's Controller of Operations should ensure that appropriate rest and refreshment facilities are provided for response personnel at the site, as well as for survivors. Staff welfare will be considered at all times. Civil Defence may be called upon to provide or aid in the administration of such needs. Welfare facilities such as toilets etc may also be required and supplied by Limerick City Council.

## Section 7.18

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### Investigations

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#### 7.18.1 Control of the Site and Investigations

An Garda Síochána will retain control of site and lead 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 members of Limerick City Council staff on their involvement.

#### 7.18.2 Minimising 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 Principal Response Agencies. 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. While the priority is the protection of life, the provisions of the Framework are intended to assist An Garda Síochána with their investigative role.

Limerick City Council will have some role to play in the site clearance, demolition, clean-up operations, removal and disposal of debris and such activity is only to be done following consultation with and approval of An Garda Síochána (or other investigative body) to avoid the possible unnecessary destruction of evidence.

#### 7.18.3 Other Parties with Statutory Investigation Roles

Depending on the nature of the major emergency, agencies other than An Garda Síochána may require access to the site for the purposes of carrying out an investigation. Such agencies could include the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), the Air Accident Investigation Unit (AAIU) of the Department of Transport, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). An Garda Síochána is responsible for carrying out criminal investigations.

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

## Section 7.19

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### Community / VIPs / Observers

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#### 7.19.1 Establishing Links with Affected Communities

Where communities are affected by a major emergency, efforts should be made to establish contacts/links with the community utilising established means, such as Community Groups/ Public Representatives and Community Coordinators within the community. This will be co-ordinated by the Local Co-ordination / Crisis Management Team.

#### 7.19.2 Arrangements for visiting VIPs

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.

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 Limerick City Council-specific locations should be referred to Limerick City Council's Crisis Management Team.

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 and International Observers

National and International observers may request to attend the incident. The presence of experts from other regions or jurisdictions, who wish to act as observers at an incident, can greatly enhance the operational debriefings and facilitate the process of learning lessons from the emergency. The Local Co-ordination Group should make arrangements for any such observers.

## Section 7.20

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### Standing-Down the Major Emergency

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#### 7.20.1 Standing down the Major Emergency

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

A great deal of activity may continue at locations other than the site (such as the hospitals, temporary mortuary, etc.) after the major emergency is stood down at the site. The Local, Regional or National Co-ordination Groups may need to continue their work after activities at the site have ceased.

#### 7.20.2 Operational Debriefing and Reporting

Following the stand-down of the major emergency, Limerick City Council will debrief its members that were involved in the emergency response and document this debriefing in a report.

A multi-agency debrief will then be held and lessons learned will be incorporated into this Plan. This review should be hosted by the lead agency and involve all services which were part of the response.

Multi-agency debriefs should consider the contribution provided by other, non-emergency service agencies to expand the knowledge and learning process that debriefs should collate. This is notwithstanding the potential conflict of interest that may result in later investigations. This aspect should be considered when inviting agencies other than emergency services to the debrief. The purpose of the review should be to formulate the lessons learnt from the incident in relation to co-ordination and to document these.

A composite report, based on appropriate input from each principal response agency's internal report and the report on co-ordination, on every declared major emergency is to be compiled by the principal response agency which was the initial lead agency for submission within a reasonable timescale to the relevant Regional Steering Group and the National Steering group.

## Section 8

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### Agency Specific Elements and Sub-Plans

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Limerick City Council has prepared a number of specific Sub-Plans of the Major Emergency Plan and these plans can be activated whether a major emergency has occurred or not.

The following sub-plans are included in the appendices:

- Limerick City Council Fire and Rescue Service Sub-Plan
- Limerick City Council Emergency Housing Sub-Plan
- Limerick City Council Emergency Drinking Water Action Sub-Plan
- Limerick City Council Civil Defence Sub-Plan
- Limerick City Council Environment Plan (Draft)

## Section 9

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# Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination

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### 9.1 Provisions for Regional Level Coordination

In some situations where a major emergency has been declared and the Major Emergency Plans of the principal response agencies have been activated, it may be appropriate to consider scaling up from a local response to a regional level response. This may occur when:

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

### 9.2 Regional Response

The following sections describe the considerations in a regional response to a Major Emergency.

#### 9.2.1 Scaling Up to a Regional Level Response

The decision to scale up from a local to a regional level response will be taken by the chair of the Local Co-ordination Group, in consultation with the chair of the On-Site Co-ordinating Group and the other members of the Local Co-ordination Group. This consultation may occur at a meeting of the Local Co-ordination Group, where such a group is in session or, alternatively, by means of a telephone conference call.

This decision will, by definition, involve specifying those extra principal response agencies which are to be involved in the regional response.

#### 9.2.2 The Response Region

The areas covered by the principal response agencies which are activated under the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination will constitute the response region for the emergency.

**Note:** The response region for a regional level major emergency need not coincide (and in many cases will not coincide) with one of the predetermined

Major Emergency Management Regions set out in Appendix F4 of the Framework.

### **9.2.3 Activation**

Once the decision has been taken, the chair of the Local Co-ordination Group will declare that a regional level emergency exists and will activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination by:

- notifying each of the principal response agencies involved that the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination has been activated;
- requesting that each of the principal response agencies, which has not already activated its Major Emergency Plan, should do so;
- delivering an information message to each principal response agency using the mnemonic METHANE; and
- providing each of the principal response agencies involved with a list of the agencies which are being activated to form the regional response

## **9.3 Command, Control and Coordination of a Regional Level Response**

The following sections describe the command, control and coordination of a regional response to a Major Emergency.

### **9.3.1 Command and Control Arrangements on Site**

The command and control arrangements at the site(s) of a regional major emergency will be the same as those for a standard major emergency including:

- three Controllers of Operation<sup>1</sup>;
- a lead agency determined in accordance with the Framework; and
- an On-Site Co-ordinating Group
- an On-Site Co-ordinator

### **9.3.2 The Regional Coordination Group**

The mobilisation and operation of the Regional Co-ordination Group will be as per the arrangement for Local Co-ordination Groups set out in Section 5.4.5.2 of the Framework.

The Regional Co-ordination Group will make arrangements for:

- the mobilisation of other organisations/agencies;
- requesting mutual aid from neighbours;
- requesting national/international assistance where required;

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<sup>1</sup>In situations where more than one principal response agency from a particular service is represented at the site, Framework Appendix F7 makes it clear that there will be only one Controller of Operations from that service and the unit from which the Controller of Operations will come should be determined in accordance with the guidance provided in Appendix F7

- dealing with multi site or wide area emergencies;
- linkage to national emergency plans;
- links with Government;
- support for chairs by Information Managers, etc; and
- communication arrangements with the site and with other groups will be as for a Local Co-ordination Group.

#### **9.4 Wide Area Major Emergencies**

Some major emergency events (e.g. severe storms, extensive flooding and/or blizzards) may impact over a wide area and, in such a situation a number of Local Co-ordination Groups may be activated. Where the chair of a Local Co-ordination Group, which has been activated in response to a major emergency, becomes aware that one or more other Local Co-ordination Groups have also been activated, contact should be made with the other chair(s) with a view to considering the establishment of a Regional Co-ordination Centre.

Such a Regional Co-ordination Centre will normally be located at the Local Co-ordination Centre which, in the view of the chairs, is best positioned (in terms of resources, communications and geography) to co-ordinate the activity of the different Local Co-ordination Groups which are active. In such a situation, these Local Co-ordination Groups will continue to act as per standard arrangements and will communicate with the Regional Co-ordination Centre through their chairs.

**Note:** During a wide area major emergency, each Local Co-ordination Group will be in contact with the lead Government Department (in accordance with Section 5.4.5.5 of the Framework) and, in such a situation, the decision on whether the activities of a number of Local Co-ordination Groups should be co-ordinated via a Regional Co-ordination Centre or via the lead Government Department will be taken in light of the prevailing circumstances.

## Section 10

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### Links with National Emergency Plans

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#### **10.1 Activation under the Provisions of a National Emergency Plan**

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. Please refer to section 6.3.4.4/ 6.3.4.5 of this document for further details.

##### **10.1.1 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 (in Draft)

##### **10.1.2 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 (in Draft)

##### **10.1.3 Animal Health Plan**

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

#### **10.2 Activation of the Plan on Request from the Coast Guard**

In the event of a threatened or actual emergency in the Irish Maritime Search and Rescue region Limerick City Council's Major Emergency Plan may also be activated by any Principal Response Agency in response to a request from the Irish Coast Guard.

#### **10.3 Activation of the Plan on Request from a Minister of Government**

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

## Section 11

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### Severe Weather Plans

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#### 11.1 Severe Weather Emergencies

It has been pre-determined that Limerick City Council is the lead agency for co-ordinating the response to severe weather events. Arrangements have also been put in place by Met Éireann to issue public service severe weather warnings to the Local Authorities. The target time for the issuing of a warning is 24 hours before the start of the event, but a warning may be issued up to 48 hours in advance when confidence is high. On Fridays before a holiday period it may be appropriate to issue a preliminary warning or weather watch to Local Authorities.

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

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

##### 11.1.1 Flooding Emergencies

A specific plan for dealing with Flooding Emergencies is currently under development by Limerick City Council's Major Emergency Development Committee. When complete, this plan will be included as an appendix to the Major Emergency Plan.

A Draft Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Severe Weather Emergencies (Flooding) has also been prepared and published by the National Steering Group for Major Emergency Management, and can be downloaded from the [www.mem.ie](http://www.mem.ie) website.

##### 11.1.2 Severe Weather Conditions

Not all severe weather events will be major emergencies, but the principles and arrangements for co-ordinated response to major emergencies shall inform all response to severe weather events. Limerick City Council's response to severe weather events will depend on the nature and scale of the event.

## Section 12

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### Site and Event Specific Arrangements and Plans

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#### 12.1 Sites and Events to which Specific Emergency Plans apply

There are both legislative and procedural arrangements, which require that emergency plans be prepared for specific sites or events (e.g. SEVESO sites, airports, ports, major sports events, etc.). Arising from the risk assessment process, Limerick City Council's Major Emergency Development Committee has identified sites/events where specific plans/ arrangements exist for responding to emergencies. These include the following:

- External Emergency Plan for Incidents at Joint Fuel Terminal, Courtbrack Avenue, Limerick
- Marine Emergency Plan for Shannon Estuary
- National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents
- Bord Gáis Emergency Procedure Manual
- Iarnród Éireann Emergency Plan

The response arrangements set out in the Section 7, will govern the principal response agencies' response to such sites/events, whether a major emergency is declared or not.

#### 12.2 European Union (Control of Major Accident Hazard) Regulations

Limerick City Council is required to prepare External Emergency Plans under the European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations, 2006 (S.I. No. 74 of 2006) for each upper tier establishment.

There are currently no upper tier sites within the functional area of Limerick City Council.

There are two lower tier sites within the functional area of Limerick City Council, as follows:

Lower Tier Seveso Sites: Joint Fuel Terminal Courtbrack Avenue. (Topaz)  
Goulding's Fertilisers, Dock Road.

## Section 13

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### The Recovery Phase

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#### 13.1 Support for Individuals and Communities

The recovery stage is as important as the emergency response stage 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/enquiries into the events and/or the response;
- Restoring normal functioning to the principal response agencies; and
- Managing economic consequences.

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

##### 13.1.1 How Individuals and Communities will be supported

Following an emergency incident, assistance may be required by the victims of the emergency – not only those directly affected, but also family and friends, who may suffer bereavement or anxiety. A major emergency will have a serious effect on a community. The recovery phase should provide support and long term care for individuals involved in the incident and the communities affected by the incident. It is imperative that the Local Authority restores its critical service to a pre-emergency state as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The services and staff that Limerick City Council may be able to provide are based upon a wide range of skills and resources drawn from its day-to-day operations such as;

- Technical and engineering support
- Building control
- Road services
- Public health and environmental issues

- Provision of reception centres
- Re-housing and accommodation needs
- Transport
- Social services
- Psychosocial support
- Help lines
- Welfare

There are specific requirements for each agency in the recovery process. These requirements are:

***Local Authority***

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

***An Garda Síochána***

- Identification of fatalities;
- Preservation and gathering of evidence;
- Investigation and criminal issues;
- Dealing with survivors;
- Dealing with relatives of the deceased and survivors; and
- Provision of an appropriate response to the immediate public need.

***Health Service Executive***

- Provision of health care and support for casualties and survivors;
- Support for relatives of casualties and survivors;
- Responding to community welfare needs; and
- Restoration of health services.

**13.1.2 Organisation and Management of Public Appeals and Aid**

The co-ordination of emerging recovery issues, such as managing public appeals and external aid, may be required 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 Group to appoint a Recovery Working Group to plan ahead. Limerick City Council's Crisis Management Team will continue to function until the issues arising in the response phase are more appropriately dealt with by the agency's normal management processes.

## **13.2 Clean-up**

In the aftermath of an emergency the clean-up operation will be the responsibility of Limerick City Council.

### **13.2.1 Arrangements for the Clean-up of Sites**

The removal of debris and contaminated waste is one of the principal concerns for Limerick City Council. In consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency and specialist contractors, Limerick City Council will commence clean up of a site as soon as possible but without hindering the investigation process. Careful consideration must be provided for the removal of decontaminated debris to locations that will not affect communities.

## **13.3 Restoration of Infrastructure and Services**

Limerick City Council will ensure that its critical services are restored as quickly as possible after a Major Emergency.

### **13.3.1 Procedures and Arrangements for Monitoring the Situation**

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

### **13.3.2 Procedures for Liaison with Utilities**

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

Limerick City Council's Information and Communications Technology section will also have a role to play in the recovery phase and may need to liaise with utilities in order to bring services back on line, such as communication links etc.

### **13.3.3 Determination of the Order of Priority**

It is the responsibility of the Local, Regional or National Recovery Co-ordination Group together with the Recovery Working Group will work together to prioritise events during the recovery phase.

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

#### **13.3.4 Protection against continuing hazards**

The Local, Regional or National Recovery Co-ordination Group together with the Recovery Working Group will work together to ensure protection against continuing hazards, where possible, during the recovery phase.

## Section 14

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### Review of the Major Emergency Plan

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#### 14.1 How the Plan will be reviewed and amended internally

An internal review of the Major Emergency Plan will be undertaken by Limerick City Council on an annual basis, the review should be held on the annual date of implementing the plan and also following any exercises or incidents. The review should:

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

The plan will also be reviewed upon the production of new or applicable sub-plans or guidance documents as they become available. The frequency with which the plan will be updated on this basis shall be decided by the Major Emergency Development Committee.

#### 14.2 How the Plan will be reviewed and amended externally

Limerick City Council's appraisal will be reviewed and validated by the Mid-West Regional Steering Group on Major Emergency Management. This appraisal should also be reviewed and validated by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Any issues arising from the review should be referred back to Limerick City Council for appropriate action. In cases of disagreement between the Local Authority and the Regional Steering Group, the National Steering Group should be consulted and should decide on the issue.

##### 14.2.1 How the Plan will be reviewed and amended with the other Principal Response Agencies

Each principal response agency's Major Emergency Plan should be reviewed and validated annually by the relevant Regional Steering Group on Major Emergency Management.

Each agency's appraisal should also be reviewed and validated by the relevant parent Department in the case of the Local Authorities and by the national headquarters, in consultation with the parent Department, in the case of Divisions of An Garda Síochána and Health Service Executive Areas, in accordance with the normal appraisal/reporting relationships within that sector. Any issues arising from the review should be referred back to the principal response agency for

appropriate action. In cases of disagreement between a principal response agency and a Regional Steering Group, the National Steering Group should be consulted and should decide on the issue.

The regional level report will also be reviewed and validated by the National Steering Group. Any issues arising from the review should be referred back to the Regional Steering Group on Major Emergency Management for appropriate action.

#### **14.2.2 How the Plan will be reviewed and amended by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government**

In addition to Limerick City Council's Major Emergency Plan being reviewed locally and regionally on an annual basis it must also be reviewed and validated by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Any issues arising from the review should be referred back to Limerick City Council for appropriate action.

#### **14.3 Review and Reporting Post-Activation**

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

##### **14.3.1 Review of Performance – Internal**

In addition to the review process outlined in the sections above, which takes place annually on a local, regional and national level, the Major Emergency Plan for Limerick City Council and the performance of the Local Authority as a principal response agency will also be reviewed after a major incident within the county/ region or even national, when there is learning to be gained. Should any new risks become apparent in the City, the plan will be reviewed to reflect this.

##### **14.3.2 Review of Coordination – Externally and Jointly with the Other PRAs**

The three principal response agencies should review the inter-agency co-ordination aspects of the response after every declaration of a major emergency. This review should be hosted by the lead agency and involve all services which were part of the response. 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 principal response agency's internal report and the report on co-ordination, on every declared major emergency should be compiled by the principal response agency which was the initial lead agency for submission within a reasonable timescale to the relevant Regional Steering Group and the National Steering Group.

## Section 15

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### Appendices

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#### 15.0 Appendices and Sub-Plans

This Major Emergency Plan includes the following Appendices and Sub-Plans, published as a separate supporting document:

- 1 Mobilisation Procedures/Persons Authorised to Activate Plan
- 2 Sub-plans/ Section plans
- 3 Contact Personnel within PRA's/ Key Roles
- 4 Lead Agency Pre-determined Procedure
- 5 General Contact List
- 6 Limerick City Council Plant and Equipment
- 7 Limerick City Voluntary Emergency Resources
- 8 Accommodation List
- 9 Distribution List
- 10 Glossary of Terms
- 11 Notifying the Department of the Environment, Heritage and  
Local Government in the Event of a Major Emergency