

# ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL



## MAJOR EMERGENCY PLAN 2021

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## Record of Issues and Amendments

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## Section 1

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### Introduction to the Plan

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<b>1.1 Foreword by the Chief Executive.</b>
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I welcome the publication of the Major Emergency Plan under the Framework for Major Emergency Planning and pledge Roscommon County Council's commitment to the provision of an effective Major Emergency Service for the benefit of the citizens of Roscommon and the broader community. I am confident that the commitment, dedication, training and professionalism of the employees of Roscommon County Council will serve us well in dealing with any major emergencies that may arise under this plan. The Major Emergency Plan will enable Roscommon County Council to fulfil our commitment locally, regionally and nationally in the area of Major Emergency Planning in line with the framework for Major Emergency Management.

The Major Emergency Plan has been developed in conjunction with An Garda Síochána, Health Service Executive and all relevant stakeholders to establish a planned approach for the efficient and effective deployment of resources that will be fundamental in enhancing the capabilities of the principal response services to meet the challenges posed by a major emergency. The aims of the plan are: (i) to protect and preserve the safety, health and welfare of any person affected by an incident; (ii) to limit and prevent damage and destruction of the environment; (iii) to minimise disruption, assist and support communities to return to normality as soon as possible.

The key to success in dealing with Major Emergencies is a well-defined, co-ordinated and integrated plan and the readiness and preparedness of responder. It is essential that all relevant persons read this plan carefully, familiarise themselves with its contents and recognise their own role as part of a team responding to a major emergency incident. This plan will provide guidance for all of us in responding in a systematic and professional manner in partnership with An Garda Síochána, Health Service Executive and other agencies.

Major Emergency Planning is an ongoing process, which will require Roscommon County Council to monitor and review this plan on an ongoing basis.

I take this opportunity to thank all that have been involved in the preparation of this plan, including the Directors of Services, Chief Fire Officer and his staff, and the Regional and National Working and Steering Groups.

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**Mr. Eugene Cummins**  
**Chief Executive**

## 1.2 Preparation of Major Emergency Plan

This Major Emergency Plan is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Government Decision of May 2006 and is consistent with ‘A Framework for Emergency Management’ (2006).

A **Major Emergency** is defined as;

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

## 1.3 The Objectives of the Plan;

The objectives of Roscommon County Council’s 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.
- Maintenance of essential services.
- Safe working.

## 1.4 The Scope of the Plan.

This Plan provides for a co-ordinated response to major emergencies arising, for example, from fires, explosions, gas releases, transportation accidents of dangerous substances, and severe weather emergencies. The types of emergency normally resulting from oil supply crises, E.S.B. blackouts, industrial disputes, etc. are of a different nature and are not catered for in this Plan. It is recognised, 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 Relationship / Inter-operability of the Major Emergency Plan with other Emergency Plans.**

This Major Emergency Plan should be read in conjunction with the Major Emergency Plans of the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána, as it outlines the relationships and inter-operability between the services. Once the Major Emergency Plan of any one of the Principle Response Agencies (i.e. Local Authority, HSE or An Garda Síochána) is activated, the Major Emergency Plans of the other two Principle Response Agencies are automatically activated.

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

In situations where different organisations are working together, they need a common vocabulary to enable them to communicate effectively. Therefore, this plan provides for the common terminology and a full set of relevant terms is provided in *Appendix i*.

### **1.7 The Distribution of the Plan**

Copies of the plan will be distributed to all departments of Roscommon County Council, appropriate Heads of Service, Major Emergency Management Team Key Role holders, and the Emergency Services. The distribution list is given in *Appendix ii*.

### **1.8 The Status of the Plan and how it will be Reviewed / Updated**

This Major Emergency Plan is operational, having been finalised in consultation with the appropriate staff within Roscommon County Council, signed off for inter-operability with other agency plans by the Regional Steering Group and submitted as a matter of record to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. This plan will be reviewed internally and updated on an annual basis.

### **1.9 Public access to the Plan**

An edited copy of the Major Emergency Plan, with contact telephone numbers and other personal information removed, is available on the Council's website at [www.roscommoncoco.ie](http://www.roscommoncoco.ie) for viewing by the public.

## Section 2

### County Council and its Functional Area

#### 2.1 Roscommon County Council's functions in Emergency Management, and its Response Capability.

Roscommon County Council is the administrative authority for the County of Roscommon.

In the event of a Major Emergency the role of Roscommon County Council is to protect life safety by providing a top class emergency service in the form of the Fire service and Civil Defence. Other sections of the County Council will also be required to ensure business continuity and also to ensure the general needs of the community are addressed to the best of their ability in an emergency situation. Roscommon County Council will ensure that identified danger areas (See [Figure 7.5](#)), are made safe in order to permit other agencies to undertake their recovery and rehabilitation operations. In the immediate aftermath of an incident, principal concerns include support for the other emergency services, support and care for the local and wider community, use its resources to mitigate the effects of the emergency and co-ordination of the voluntary organisations. In the 'recovery' phase the County Council will be responsible for leading and co-ordinating the rehabilitation of the community and the restoration of the environment.

In effect, Roscommon County Council applies a systems approach to Major Emergency Management within the county based on the Five Stage Emergency Management Paradigm (See [Figure 2.1](#)), which are:

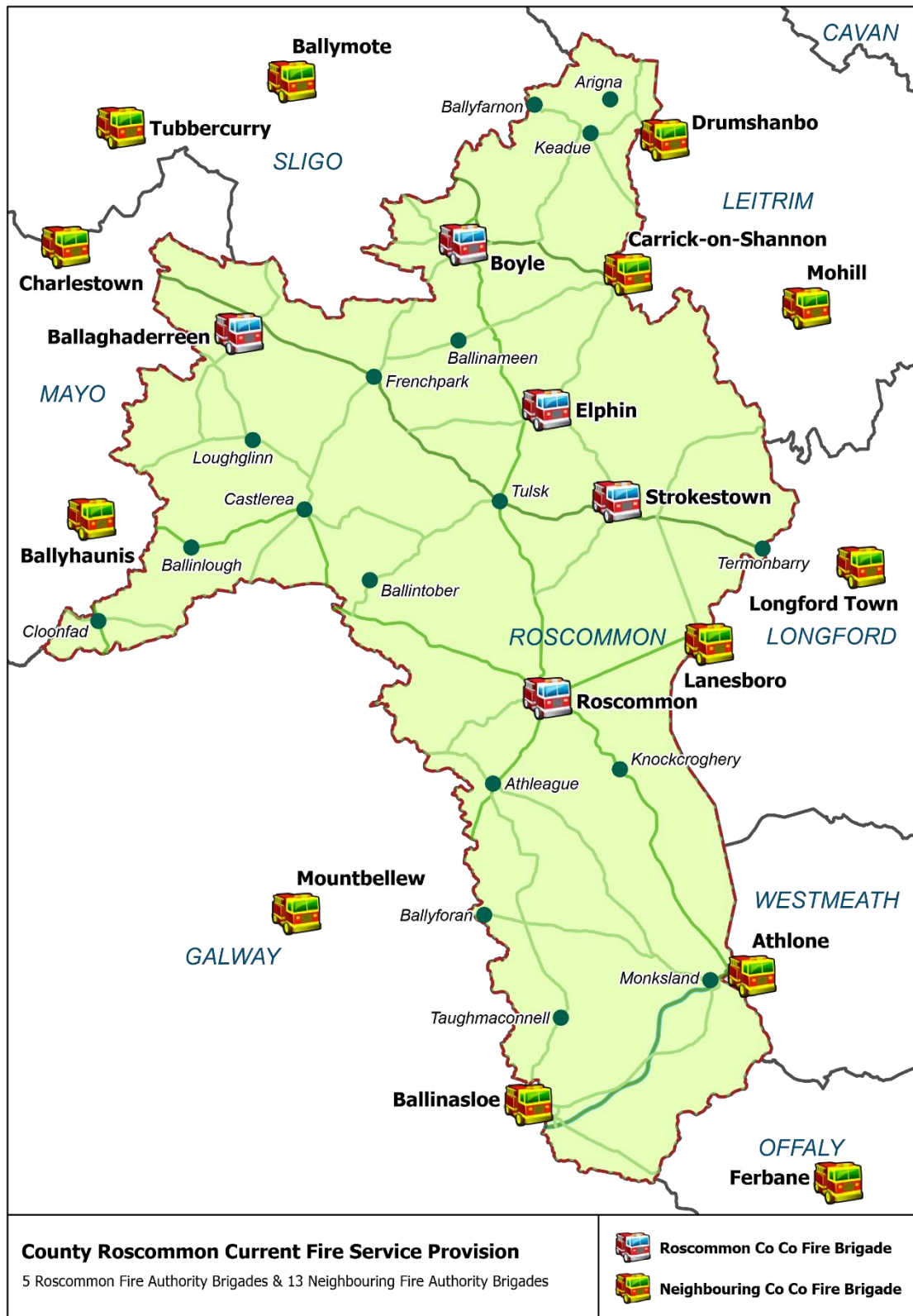
- Hazard Analysis / Risk Assessment
- Mitigation / Risk Management
- Planning and Preparedness
- Co-ordinated Response
- Recovery



Figure 2.1.



Roscommon County Council has five fire stations in the county, located in Ballaghaderreen, Boyle, Elphin, Roscommon and Strokestown. Please see **Figure 2.2** for map.



**Figure 2.2 Map of County Roscommon.**

## **2.2 Boundaries and Characteristics of County Roscommon**

The functional area of this Major Emergency Plan is the administrative County of Roscommon.

County Roscommon occupies an area of 629,926 acres (254,800 hectares) and is geographically situated in Ireland's north midlands, whilst administratively part of the West Regional Authority area. The county is bounded to the east and west by the River Shannon and River Suck respectively. It is surrounded by seven counties namely Sligo, Mayo, Galway, Offaly, Westmeath, Longford and Leitrim. It is an inland county and mainly flat with few areas rising to more than one hundred metres above sea level. The M6 Motorway is the only motorway in the County, and runs between Athlone and Ballinasloe, in the South of the County. Three national primary routes traverse the county – N4 in the north of the county, N5 in the centre of the county and N6 in the south of the county. The County Town of Roscommon is situated at the junction of the N60 / N61, (Please refer to **Figure 2.2** for map), and, together with Monksland near Athlone, are the growth centres of the county, where strong housing, retail and employment activity is creating sustained population increases. The majority of the County's population lives in Roscommon Town and Monksland. The 2016 Census confirmed an overall population of 64,544.

## **2.3 Partner Principal Response Agencies and their assigned functions**

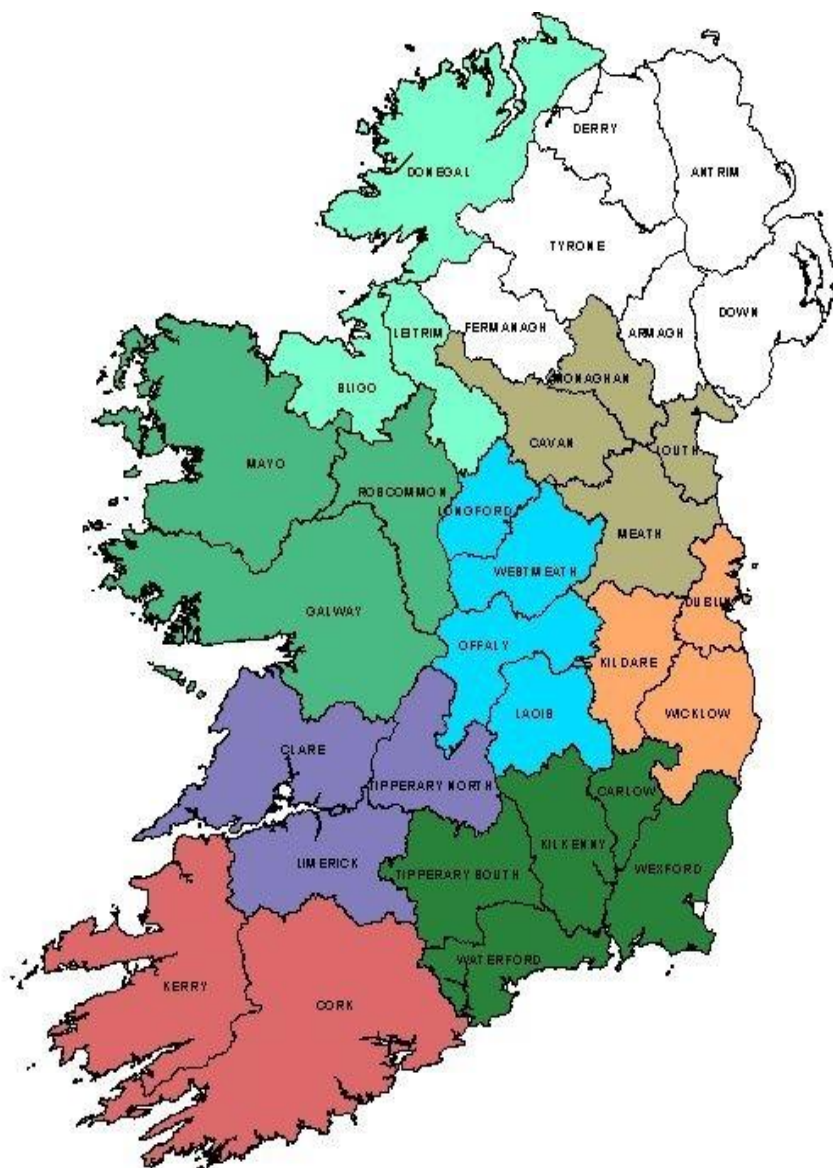
The other agencies responsible for Emergency Services in this area are the Health Service Executive West Region and An Garda Síochána (Roscommon / Longford Division.) Details of the responsibilities of the other agencies are given in **Appendix A8**.

## **2.4 Introduce the region, and the areas from which it may receive mutual aid (or may contribute aid to)**

Eight Major Emergency Management Regions have been established throughout Ireland. Roscommon County Council is part of the West Region. The region incorporates the following counties:

- (a) County Roscommon
- (b) County Galway
- (c) County Mayo

Under certain specific circumstances regional level major emergencies may be declared, with a Plan for Regional Level Co-Ordination activated. This will provide for mutual aid, support and co-ordination facilities to be activated in a region, the boundaries of which are determined to suit the exigencies of the particular emergency. Please refer to **Figure 2.3** for map. The Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination has been prepared in accordance with the Project Initiation Document by the Regional Working Group and has been approved by the Regional Steering Group.



**Figure 2.3. Map of the Major Emergency Management Regions.**

## Section 3

### Risk Assessment for the Area

#### 3.1 History of area in terms of Emergency Events.

Major emergencies in their very nature are few and far between. However, County Roscommon has experienced its share of emergency events over the past number of years. Below is a list of some events that have occurred:

1. UMP Fire 1991
2. Glanbia 2002
3. Bus Crashes
4. Rail derailment
5. Bog Fires
6. Collapse of N5 in early 1980s
7. Contamination of water source 2006
8. Royal Hotel Fire, Roscommon Town 2007.

#### 3.2 The general and specific risks that may be faced locally and regionally.

This Major Emergency Plan has been developed taking into account the hazards which are present within the functional Area of Roscommon Co. Co. These hazards may be classified as generic, i.e. hazards that have the possibility of occurring anywhere in the County (for example flooding, multi-vehicle R.T.C., etc.) or hazards that are specific to the locality (for example Industrial Accidents, etc.)

Generally speaking, the hazards selected fall into four main categories:

- Natural
- Civil
- Technological
- Transportational

In greater detail, the Major Emergency Development Committee, (MEDC) has identified the following potential major emergency scenarios:

##### 3.2.1 Hazardous Sites Emergencies:

The European Communities Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substance Regulations, 2000, applies to sites where certain quantities of specified dangerous substances are present. These sites (SEVESO Sites) are classified as upper tier and lower tier.

At present, there are no SEVESO Sites within County Roscommon.

### **3.2.2 Critical Infrastructure Emergencies:**

- M6 Motorway
- National Primary route N6, N5 & N4
- Iarnród Éireann: The Inter-City service
- Shannon Waterway / Bridges over Shannon

### **3.2.3 Flooding/Severe weather/Pollution/Animal disease emergencies:**

- Roscommon County Council Functional Area

### **3.2.4 Utility company emergencies:**

- Bord Gáis
- E.S.B
- Eircom

*(The above is by no means an exhaustive list)*

A Risk Assessment is conducted by Roscommon County Council, every two years or as required, on all risks that fit into the category of Major Emergency Management and these Risk Assessment Documents are held at Roscommon County Council offices.

In addition, a Regional Risk Assessment is undertaken by the Principal Response Agencies in the Western Region on a two yearly basis, and these are submitted for approval by the Regional Steering Group.

### **3.3 Sample Risk Assessment Scenarios on which preparedness is based.**

- Rail - Train derailment
- Severe Weather – Flooding
- Fire – Night Club/Major Crowd Event
- Major road traffic collision/Hazardous Materials

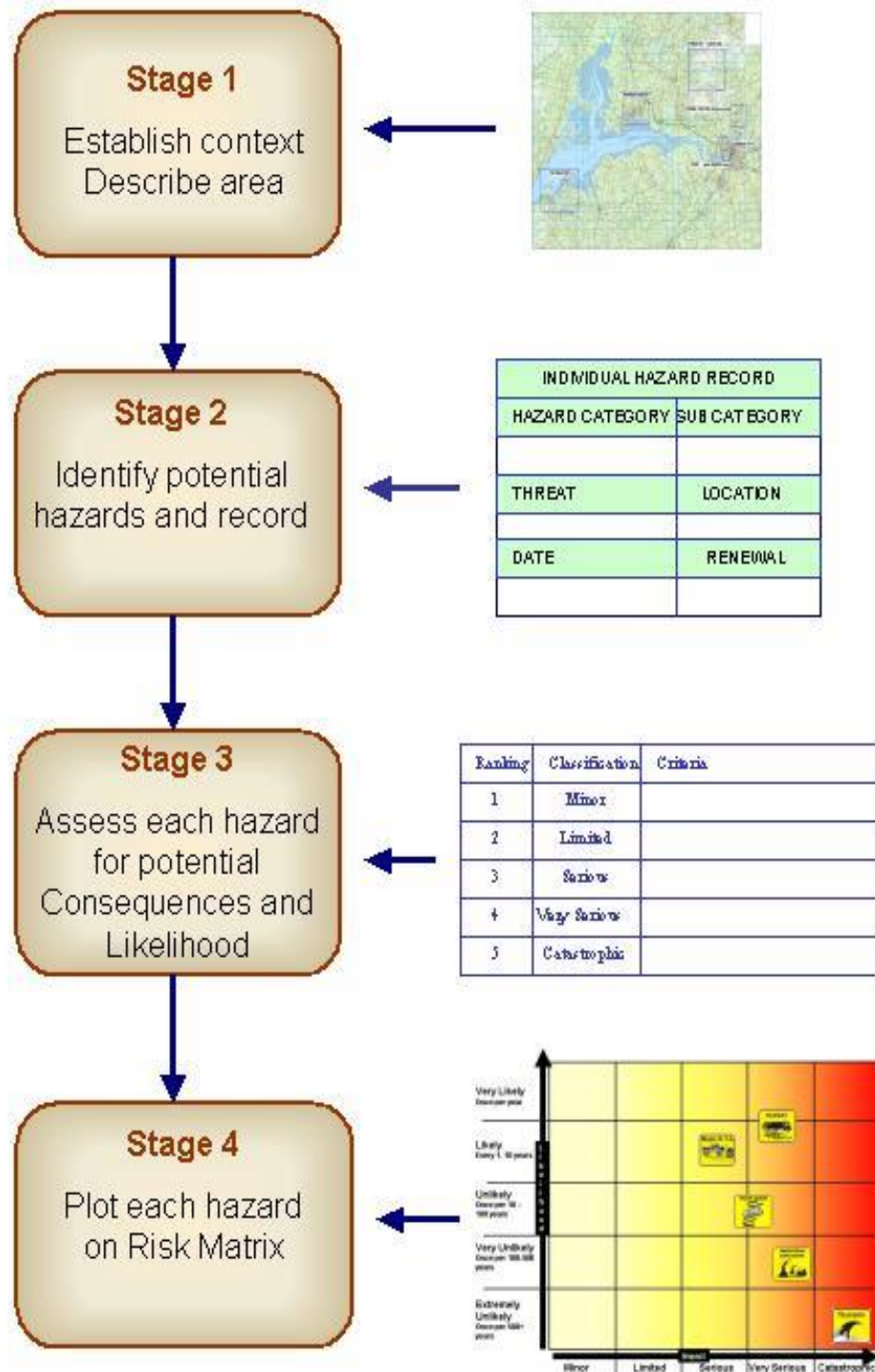
### **3.4 Risk Management / Mitigation / Risk Reduction Strategies.**

As part of the Risk Assessment process, a Hazard Analysis is carried out on hazards identified in County Roscommon. The results are plotted on a Risk Matrix (See **Figure 3.1** at the end of this Section), and subsequently has resulted in the creation of various sub-plans which are located in *Appendix B* of this Document.

### **3.5 Site / Event specific Emergency Plans**

A number of Site/Event Specific Emergency Plans are already in place these include the following

- Rail Plan
- M6 Motorway



**Figure 3.1 Risk Assessment Process**



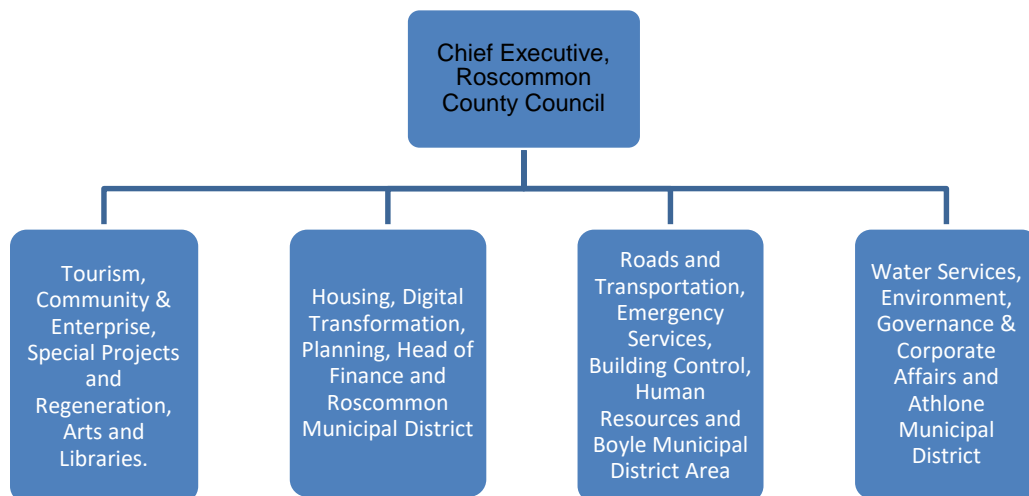
## Section 4

### Resources for Emergency Response

#### 4.1 The Structure / Resources / Services of the Council, which may be used for emergency response

Roscommon County Council is governed by the Local Government Acts. Each section of the Local Authority reports to the Chief Executive (*this position was known as the County Manager prior to 2015*). The Chief Executive is responsible for supervising government operations and implementing the policies adopted by the Council.

Roscommon County Council is composed of the Elected Members and the Executive. The Elected Members of the council are elected by the public and are responsible for the development and adoption of policies to be implemented by the executive. The Chief Executive is supported by the Executive Management Team. This Executive is divided up into different directorates, under the control of the Directors of Service, which are responsible for the functioning of sections within the Council.



#### 4.2 Special staffing arrangements during a Major Emergency.

**The actions to be taken by Roscommon County Council personnel when a Major Emergency is declared are given in the Action Plans for each service as outlined in *Appendix A6*.** All Local Authority staff requested to carry out functions in relation to a Major Emergency will be acting on a voluntary basis with the exception of specific Local Authority staff such as the Rostered Senior Fire Officer and Fire Fighters. In addition to the resources that have been mentioned, the Civil Defence, under the authority of Roscommon County Council, can be called upon in the event of an emergency.

#### **4.3 Describe how resources of the Council are matched to the functions assigned to it.**

Roscommon County Council services shall carry out their functions in accordance with the provisions of this plan. In addition, Roscommon County Council services shall operate in accordance with their own operational instructions.

The following sections of Roscommon County Council have Pre-determined Arrangements.

- Roads Section & Municipal Districts (See *Appendix A6.11*)
- Water Services Section (See *Appendix A6.15*)
- Environment Section (See *Appendix A6.12*)
- Civil Defence (See 4.4.1 below and *Appendices A6.9 & B12*)
- Housing Section (See *Appendix A6.13*)
- Corporate Services Section (See *Appendix A6.10*)
- I.T. Section (See *Appendix A6.14*)

#### **4.4 Other organizations / agencies that may be mobilized to assist Roscommon County Council**

There are a number of organisations and agencies which may be called upon to assist the principle response agencies in responding to major emergencies in addition to specialist national and local organisations. The organisations may be grouped as follows:

- Defence Forces
- Irish Red Cross
- Voluntary emergency service sector
  - RNLI*
  - Mountain Rescue, etc.*
- Community Volunteers:
- Utility Companies
  - Bord Gas*
  - ESB*
  - Bus Eireann*
  - Irish Rail, etc.*
- Private Sector

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

Roscommon Civil Defence, as a second line Emergency Service, services Roscommon County under the direction of the Civil Defence Officer. It is a body of trained volunteers in the disciplines of First Aid, Fire and Rescue, Welfare, Water Based Activities, Search and Recovery. There are currently about 120 registered members in Roscommon. A phone call-out system is in place in the event of an emergency however



it is worth considering that a response is completely subject to the availability of Volunteers.

Civil Defence will be available to help with any area assigned to them to assist the local authority or other Statutory Service, subject to the availability of volunteers.

(See *Appendix C10 & Appendix B12*)

#### **4.4.2 The Defence Forces**

The Defence Forces can provide a significant support role in a Major Emergency response. It is recognised that assistance requested from the Defence Forces should be either in:

Aid to the Civil Power (An Garda Síochána) - *primarily an armed response*, or  
Aid to the Civil Authority (Local Authority or Health Service Executive) - *unarmed response*.

All requests for Defence Forces assistance should be channelled through An Garda Síochána to Defence Forces Headquarters (D.F.H.Q.).

(See *Appendix C6 – Defence Forces*)

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

The Irish Red Cross is established and regulated under the Red Cross Acts, 1938-54. The main relationship with the principal response agencies in Major Emergency response is as an auxiliary resource to the ambulance services. Subsidiary search and rescue and in-shore rescue units of the Irish Red Cross support An Garda Síochána and the Irish Coast Guard.

(See *Appendices B12 & C10 – Voluntary Emergency and Search & Rescue Services*)

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

Other Voluntary Emergency Services in the Roscommon area include

(See *Appendices B12 & C10 - Voluntary Emergency and Search & Rescue*):

- Roscommon Sub Aqua / Roscommon Underwater Search & Rescue Club & other Aqua Clubs (See also *Appendices B12 & Appendix C10*)
- Search and Rescue Dog Association
- Order of Malta Ambulance Corps & St. John's Ambulance
- Irish Cave Rescue Organization

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

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

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

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

#### **4.4.6 Utilities**

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

(See [Section 7.10.3](#) for further details)

#### **4.4.7 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.

(See [Appendix B6](#) & [Appendix C7](#))

### **4.5 Mutual-aid from Neighbours**

Roscommon County Council will ensure that, where its resources 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 arrangement with neighbouring local authorities.

Roscommon County Council is supported by, and supports, neighbouring local authorities on a mutual aid basis. Requests for additional resources can be made through the following:

- Western Regional Control Centre
- Crisis Management Team

Support can be obtained from adjoining Counties, as illustrated in [Figure 2.2](#).

#### **4.6 The procedure for scaling up to a Regional level of coordinated response**

Roscommon County Council is situated in the West Region. Local response to an emergency may be scaled up to a Regional Emergency as follows:

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". 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 coincide necessarily with the pre-determined regions for preparedness.**

The lead agency which has declared the regional level emergency will convene and chair the Regional Co-ordination Group.

The method of operation of a Regional Co-ordination Centre will be similar to that of the Local Co-ordination Centre.

#### **4.7 Arrangements for seeking National / International assistance**

In the event that the scale of the emergency becomes too large, complex or long in duration, a request can be made to seek assistance from outside the region. This decision should be made by the lead agency in consultation with the other principle response agencies at the Regional Co-Ordination Centre.

The 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 U.K. or from other EU Member States.

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

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

For further detail, please refer to **Section 6** and **Section 10** of this document.

## Section 5

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### Preparedness for Major Emergency Response

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#### 5.1 The Incorporation of Major Emergency Management into the Council's Business Planning Process.

The Major Emergency Plan is incorporated into Roscommon County Council's business planning process.

Roscommon County Council initiated and documented a Major Emergency Development Programme to ensure that it has all the necessary arrangements, systems and people in place to discharge the functions assigned to it by the framework and set out in its Major Emergency Plan. After the initial programme, other programmes to maintain the level of preparedness will be prepared and implemented on a three year cycle.

The Western Regional Steering group on Major Emergency Management provides and documents a regional level major emergency development programme to ensure that all necessary arrangements, systems, facilities and resources are in place to discharge the functions assigned by the framework.

#### 5.2 Assignment of Responsibility

The Chief Executive for Roscommon County Council is assigned responsibility for the County Council's management and effectiveness of the major emergency arrangements and preparedness, as well as for the effectiveness of the Council's response to any major emergency which occurs in its functional area.

The Director of Services with responsibility for the Emergency Services, supported by the Chief Fire Officer, has the responsibility for overseeing the major emergency plan.

#### 5.3 Major Emergency Development Programme

A Major Emergency Management Committee (M.E.M.C.) was established in Roscommon County Council, comprising of the Heads of each Department. Progress on the Major Emergency Development Programme was reviewed regularly at Roscommon County Council Management Team meetings and a formal arrangement is in place for the M.E.M.C. to report to the Management Team. The Fire Services Section facilitates the ongoing development of the MEM Plan in cooperation with the Heads of Sections, that have responsibility for ensuring the accuracy of the Roles and Contact Details assigned to their Section.

#### 5.4 Key Roles identified in the Plan.

Key roles have been identified in the Major Emergency Plan. These roles include;

- Controller of Operations
- On-site Co-ordinator
- Chair of Crisis Management team.
- Chair of Local Co-ordination Group
- Chair of Regional Co-ordination Group
- Information Management Officers.
- Media Liaison officers
- Action Management Officers.

Roscommon County Council has nominated competent individuals and alternates to the key roles (*see Appendices A4 & A5*), to enable the Council to function in accordance the common arrangements set out in its Major Emergency Plan. The mandates for the Key Roles are contained in **Section 6.2.1** and *Appendix A6* of this document.

#### 5.5 Support Teams for Key Roles

Support teams will be created to support and assist individuals in key roles and to prepare Operational Protocols to mobilize and function as required in the Major Emergency Plan. Details of the teams and mobilisation procedures are contained in *Appendix A6*.

#### 5.6 Staff Development Programme

The provisions of the Framework and the tasks arising from the new major emergency management arrangements involve a significant level of development activity, both within Roscommon County Council and jointly with our regional partners.

In parallel with risk assessment and mitigation processes and the preparation of the Major Emergency Plan, Roscommon County Council has an internal programme to develop its level of preparedness, so that in a major emergency it will be in a position to respond in an efficient and effective manner and discharge the assigned functions in accordance with the Framework.

It is also imperative that we not only develop within our own agency but that we also continue to work with the other PRAs through continued training and inter-agency exercises. To achieve this on a national level, representatives from each of the PRAs within a region have been trained as trainers in information management; these trainers have delivered training on a local level. Inter-agency exercises will also be held on a regular basis, this will allow each of the agencies to develop a good working relationship prior to the declaration of a Major Emergency, should one arise.

### **5.7 Internal Training / Exercise Programme.**

The staff nominated for the Key Roles identified have undergone (or in the case of newly nominated personnel, will undergo) a training programme which has been in place since 2008. This training develops their skills and abilities with regard to their individual roles for Major Emergency Management. Internal exercises will be used to raise awareness, educate individuals on their roles and the roles of others and promote co-ordination and co-operation while validating plans, systems and procedures. Exercises will be conducted on a three yearly cycle.

### **5.8 Joint / Inter-agency Training and Exercise Programmes with Partner Agencies in the Major Emergency Region.**

All personnel involved in the Major Emergency Plan Organisation are required to participate in inter-agency training and exercises in order to ensure effective co-operation between agencies during a Major Emergency. Joint inter-agency training is provided at a Local and Regional level. Exercises will be carried out in accordance with the Guide to Planning and Staging Exercises as published by the Fire Services and Emergency Planning Section.

### **5.9 The allocation of Specific Resources including a Budget for preparedness.**

Roscommon County Council shall provide a budget for major emergency preparedness, which reflects the expenditure required to meet the costs of implementing the Council's internal preparedness, as well as the Council's contribution to the regional level inter-agency preparedness.

### **5.10 Procurement and Use of Resources**

The arrangements to authorise procurement and use of resources (including engaging third parties) to assist in response to major emergencies are governed by the 'Local Government Act 2001: Part 12: Section 104'.

Arrangements with Finance are in place to allow quick procurement, if required, during an emergency.

### **5.11 Council's Annual Appraisal of Preparedness**

Plans will be reviewed after all emergencies and updated with any learnings. Plans will also be reviewed as part of a structured National Appraisal program. (See [Section 14](#) for further details). Roscommon County Council will carry out and document an annual appraisal of its preparedness for major emergency response when the framework is in use. An annual appraisal of the Western Regional level preparedness shall also be documented.

## 5.12 Public Information

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

The Local Co-ordination group will take over the task of co-ordinating the provision of information to the public as soon as it meets. This activity should be co-ordinated by the Lead Agency (*Appendix A7*). 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. (See *Appendix B8* for further details).

Current information with regard Major Emergency Planning will be available on the following websites:

[www.mem.ie](http://www.mem.ie)

[www.emergencyplanning.ie](http://www.emergencyplanning.ie)

[www.roscommoncoco.ie](http://www.roscommoncoco.ie)

## Section 6

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

#### 6.1 Command Arrangements:

The Chief Executive of Roscommon County 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 Within individual services belonging to the Council.

Roscommon County Council exercises command over its own resources in accordance with its normal command structure, command systems and arrangements.

At the site of an emergency, Roscommon County Council will also exercise control over not only its own services but any additional services (other than the principle response agencies) which the Local Authority mobilises to the site. Roscommon County Council shall appoint a Controller of Operations at the site (or at each site) of the emergency. The officer in command of the initial response of Roscommon County Councils emergency service should be Controller of Operations until relieved through the Councils pre-determined process. In certain circumstances (e.g. where an emergency affects an extensive area or occurs near the borders of two local authorities), there may be response from more than one local authority. In this circumstance there should be only one Controller of Operations from the Local Authorities and it will be necessary to determine from which Local Authority the Controller of Operations should come.

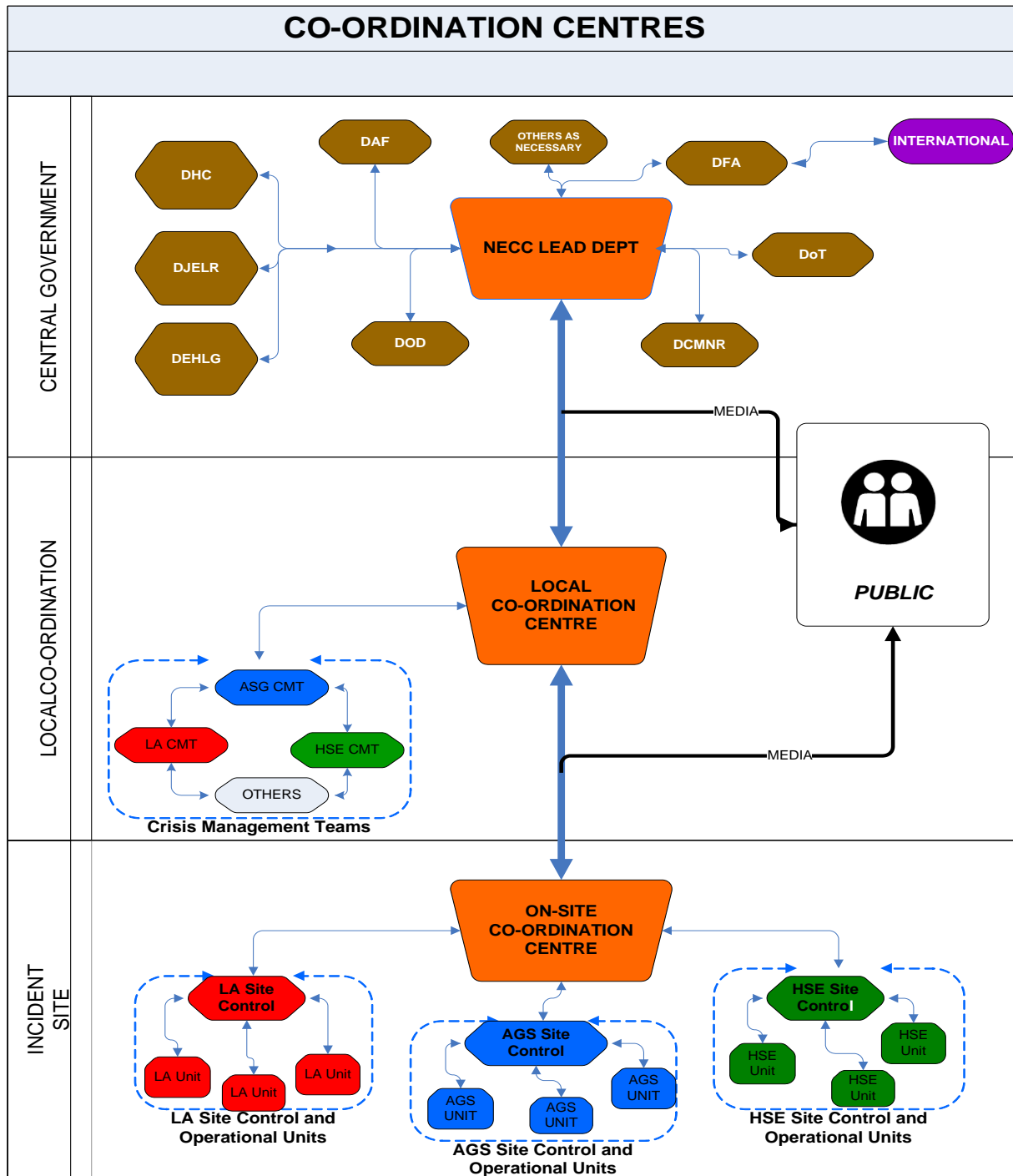
#### 6.2 Control Arrangements:

The most senior Rostered Fire Officer or most senior Council Official present at the initial response will be appointed the Controller of Operations for Roscommon County Council. The Controller of Operations may change as the emergency progresses. The Controller of Operations will exercise command and have control over all Council services, including other services mobilised by the Council.

The Crisis Management Team may be required to control the mobilisation of additional Local Authority personnel to the emergency. All requests for such mobilisations will be made at the Local Coordination Group and communicated from there to the Crisis Management Team.

See **Figure 6.1** overleaf for Relationship of Response Elements and the communication channels.





**Figure 6.1. Relationship of Response Elements and Communication Channels.**

<b>6.2.1 The decision making mandates of the Council's Controller of Operations, the On-Site Coordinator and the Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group, and include the arrangements for the Crisis Management Team at the Council's Headquarters.</b>
---

**6.2.1.1 Controller of Operations**

The Controller of Operations is empowered to make all decisions relating to its agency's functions having due regard to the decisions of the On-Site Co-Ordination Group.

Please refer to [Appendix A6.2](#) for the mandate of the Controller of Operations.

**6.2.1.2 On Site Coordinator**

As soon as the Controllers of Operations from each Principal Response Agency meet they shall determine which is the Lead Agency ([See Appendix A7](#)). The Controller of Operations from the Lead Agency then becomes the On-site Coordinator. The Rostered Senior Fire Officer (RSFO) will be the initial On-site Coordinator when it is determined that Roscommon County Council are the lead agency.

The Onsite Co-Ordinator is empowered to make decisions in accordance with its mandate. The views of other colleagues / controllers of operations in the other P.R.A.'s must be taken into account together with the use of the Information Management System as part of the decision making process.

In general, the group is to provide tactical level management for the immediate, medium and long term consequences of the incident.

Please refer to [Appendix A6.3](#) for the mandate of the On-Site Coordinator

**6.2.1.3 Local Coordinating Group**

The Local Coordination Group will comprise of representatives from the three P.R.A.'s in the Roscommon County Council functional area, an Information Management Officer, A Media Liaison Officer, together with officers and specialists as deemed appropriate. The representative from the Lead Agency will Chair the Local Coordinating Group. The Local Coordination Group will meet in the Local Coordination Centre (LCC) which is located at Aras an Chontae, Roscommon.

In general, the group is to provide strategic level management for the immediate, medium and long term consequences of the incident.

Please refer to [Appendix A6.4](#) for the mandate of the Local Coordination Group and also for the mandate of the Designated Chair of the Local Coordination Group.

#### **6.2.1.4 Crisis Management Team**

The Crisis Management Team is a strategic level management group within each P.R.A.. 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 of Roscommon County Council running.

The members of the Crisis Management Team are usually made up of Senior Managers of the Agency, and this Team will meet at the Castle Suite, Aras an Chontae, Roscommon

(Please refer to [Appendix A6.6](#) for further details, including the mandate of the Crisis Management Team, and for the listings of personnel nominated in both this team and associated Support Groups).

### **6.2.2 Control of External Organisations / Agencies arriving On Site**

The arrival of external organisations / agencies on site should be immediately notified by the person in charge of the Outer Cordon to the On-Site Co-ordinator who will determine which Controller of Operations will be responsible for their command and control. On arrival all external agencies and organisations must be directed to the Holding Area where they will receive further instructions from the Controller of Operations.

## **6.3 Co-ordination Arrangements**

The co-ordination of the efforts of all services is recognised 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 Lead Agency**

The Lead Agency must be identified at the start of the Emergency. The Lead Agency has responsibility for the co-ordination function. This is determined based on the criteria set out in [Appendix A7](#) of this document.

### **6.3.2 On Site Coordination and Support Teams**

The primary mechanism used to deliver co-ordination on site is the arrangement for an 'On-Site Coordinator', provided by the Lead Agency. As soon as they meet, the three Controllers of Operations should determine which is the Lead Agency and thereby establishing the On- Site Coordinator. This person is tasked with the role of coordinating the activities of all agencies responding to the emergency.

The On-Site Coordinator will chair the 'On-Site Coordinating Group'. In addition to the On-Site Coordinator, this group should comprise the Controllers of Operations of the other two 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 On-Site Coordinator should determine which facilities should be used as the On-Site Co-ordination Centre.

### **6.3.3 Coordination function at the Local / Regional Coordination Centres**

As part of the Major Emergency Planning mobilisation procedures, the Local Coordination group representatives from all agencies will be informed of the time for the first meeting. The Local Coordination Group will be chaired by the Lead Agency representative, and will also 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 Local Coordination Centre shall be located at the Fire Station, Circular Road, Roscommon. In general, it is the function of the Local Co-ordination Group to provide strategic level management for the immediate, medium and long-term consequences of the incident. (Please refer to [Appendix A6.4](#) for Mandates of the Local Coordination Group).

The Chair of the Local Coordination Group may declare a regional level emergency and activate the Plan for Regional Level Coordination. 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'. If the Local Authority is the Lead Agency which has declared the regional level emergency, they will convene and chair the Regional Co-ordination Group.

Any one of the nominated Local Coordination 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 Coordinating Group declaring the regional level emergency and will depend on the location and nature of the emergency and any associated infrastructural damage. A Regional Co-ordination Group may 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 coordination level and directed by the lead agency to the lead Government Department.

#### **6.3.4 Co-ordination for other specific circumstances.**

Where there is ambiguity regarding the On-site Coordinator, the three Controllers of Operations will meet and decide who the On-site Coordinator is for the Incident. If considered necessary, representatives and specialist advisors of other agencies can meet with the On-site Coordinator to aid in decision-making.

##### **6.3.4.1 Mutual Aid and Regional Level Co-ordination.**

The 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 Local Authorities.

##### **6.3.4.2 Incidents occurring on the Council Boundaries**

In certain situations, (e.g. where an emergency affects an extensive area or occurs near the boundary of Roscommon County Council), there may be response from multiple Local Authorities. There should be only one Controller of Operations for each of the three PRA and it is necessary to determine from which unit of the principal response agency the Controller of Operations should come.

In the case of Local Authorities, which are statutorily empowered in respect of their functional areas, procedures for resolving such issues may already be set out in what are referred to as Section 85 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.

##### **6.3.4.3 How Multi-Site or Wide Area Emergencies are to be dealt with**

In some cases, emergencies may occur in a number of different locations, or over a large area **within** the Local Authority's County boundaries. In such a situation, it may be necessary to have a number of On-Site Coordination Centres which would report to a single Local Coordination Centre.

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

Such a Regional Coordination Centre will normally be located at the Local Coordination 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 Coordination Groups will continue to act as per standard arrangements and will communicate with the Regional Coordination Centre through their chairs.

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

#### **6.3.4.4 How Links with National Emergency Plans will Operate.**

National bodies, operating in accordance with National Emergency Plans, may call upon the principal response agencies to assist in responding to, or to perform their normal functions / roles arising from, a national level emergency. (See **Figure 6.2** overleaf to identify how links between National, Regional and Local Emergency Plans will relate to each other).

#### **6.3.4.5 How Links with National Government will Work.**

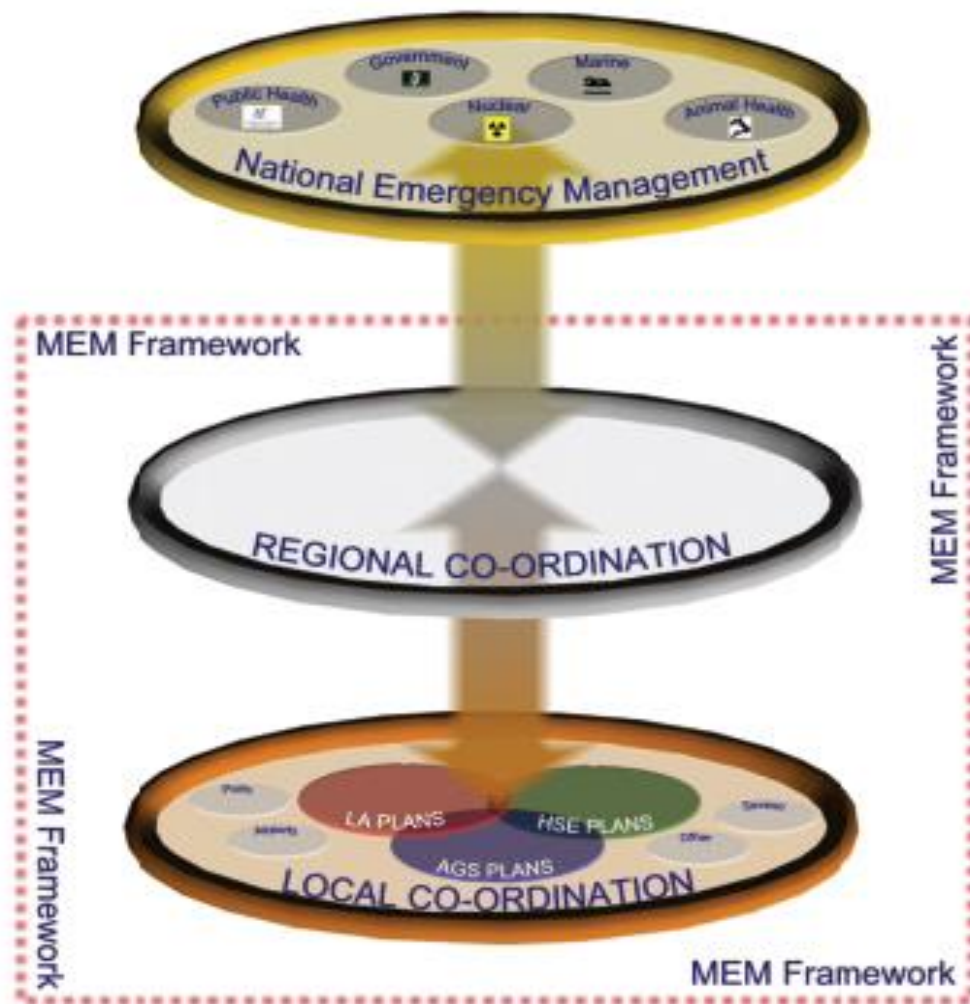
In every situation where a Major Emergency is declared, each principal response agency will inform its parent Department of the declaration, as part of that agency's mobilisation procedure (*Please refer to **Appendix A3***). The three parent Departments, in their role as members of the National Steering Group, will consult and agree, on the basis of available information, which Government Department will be designated as lead Department, in keeping with the Department of Defence's Strategic Emergency Planning Guidance.

When designated, the Lead Government Department will be responsible for activating its own internal emergency / crisis management arrangements and making contact with the relevant Local Coordination Group (or Regional Coordination Group, if appropriate).

A Regional Coordination Group may 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 coordination level and directed by the lead agency to the lead Government Department.

The arrangements for linking the local response to a major emergency with national level co-ordination arise from what might be termed a 'bottom up' situation. Where one of the National Emergency Plans is activated, a 'top-down' connection may be put in place, i.e. the Regional and Local Coordination Centres are requested to become operational by the Lead Department. The configuration of Regional and Local Coordination Centres to be activated under this provision should be determined in light of the circumstances warranting the activation.

In addition, the Lead Government Department may decide to activate one of the National Emergency Plans. See [Section 10](#) for Links with National Emergency Plans.



**Figure 6.2. Linking Major Emergency Plans with National Plans and Other Plans**



## Section 7

### The Common Elements of Response

The following subsections are common elements of Roscommon County Council's response to all major emergencies regardless of the cause of the incident.

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## **Section 7.1 - Declaring a Major Emergency**

### **7.1.1 Declaring a Major Emergency**

The Major Emergency Plan should be activated by which ever one of the following agencies first becomes aware of the major emergency:-

- Roscommon County Council
- An Garda Síochána
- Health Service Executive West

The highest ranking member of Roscommon County Council's initial response to an emergency will (in tandem with the highest ranking member of each of the other principle response agencies on site) conduct a detailed appraisal of the situation in order to accumulate all available information and hence enable him / her decide whether the Procedure for Activating Major Emergency Plan (See *Appendix A1*) should be implemented. Once the decision to activate the Major Emergency Plan is made the following typical message relayed back to the West Regional Control Centre.

To activate the Major Emergency Plan the following message must be declared and it shall 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 Roscommon County Council Major Emergency Plan.

If the caller is on the Roscommon County Council list of persons authorised to activate the Major Emergency Plan, then the Emergency Control Operator will activate the Roscommon County Council Major Emergency Plan procedures.

(See *Appendix A2*).

If the caller is not on the list of Authorised persons to activate the plan, the Emergency Control Operator will contact the Rostered Senior Fire Officer and relay the information. The Rostered Senior Fire Officer will then decide whether or not to activate the plan.

If the plan is activated by either of the other two Principal Response Agencies, they will notify WRCC immediately. WRCC will then activate the Roscommon County Council Major Emergency Plan

### 7.1.2 The standard format of the information message **METHANE**

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

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

When reporting a major emergency or notifying local authority services and other agencies that the plan is being activated all available, essential and relevant information should be provided.

## **Section 7.2 - Initial Mobilisation**

### **7.2.1 Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure**

Roscommon County Council's Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure will be implemented immediately on notification of the declaration of a major emergency. When this Plan has been activated, each County Council service requested shall respond in accordance with pre-determined arrangements.

*(See **Appendix A6** for this procedure).*

In some situations, there may be an early warning of an impending emergency. Mobilisation within Roscommon County Council may include moving to a standby / alert stage for some of its services or specific individuals, until the situation becomes clearer. Examples of this may be early warnings of severe storms, emergency landing of an aircraft, etc.

There may also be circumstances where the resources or expertise of agencies other than the principal response agencies will be required. In these situations, the relevant arrangements outlined in the Major Emergency Plan will be invoked.

*(See **Appendix B12**, **Appendices C1 to C7** & **Appendix C10** for details)*

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 - Command, Control and Communication Centres**

### **7.3.1 Command, Control and Communication Centre(s)**

In the event of a Major Emergency being declared initial mobilisation will be covered by Western Regional Control Centre (WRCC), who will communicate with the personnel On-Site until such a time as the Crisis Management Team and Local Co-ordination Group have been established in accordance with national pre-determined arrangements.

(See **Section 6** of this document for further details on the functions of these Teams / Groups).

The following centres will be used by Roscommon County Council once the Major Emergency structure is in place.

#### **Onsite Co-Ordination Group**

The three Controllers of Operations, chaired by the Lead Agency (Onsite-Co-Coordinator) will exercise overall command and control at the site of the emergency. The On-Site Coordination Group will meet at the MEM Tent or at a building designated by the On Site Coordinator, both of which should be On Site near to the Incident.

#### **Local Co-Ordination**

The Local Co-Ordination Centre will be located at The Loughnenane Suite, Aras an Chontae, Roscommon.

#### **Crisis Management Team**

The Crisis Management Team for Roscommon County Council will be located in the Castle Suite, Aras an Chontae, Roscommon. Once the Crisis management team is established, it will take over the responsibility for mobilising all resources (both internal and external) required in response to the emergency, from WRCC.

#### **WRCC**

West Regional Communications Centre, based in Castlebar is the Fire Services Communication Centre for Roscommon, Mayo, Galway, Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal

This Fire Service communication centre will be used to mobilise, support and monitor the principle emergency services and other services of the local authority.

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

### **7.4.1 Support Arrangements for the On-Site Co-ordination**

An On-Site Coordination Centre will be deployed at a suitable location adjacent to the incident site in the event of a major emergency for on-site operational support and command. This may be a dedicated vehicle, tent or an adjacent building that will accommodate all Principal Response Agencies. The Roscommon County Council Controller of Operations will be supported by other senior personnel from Roscommon County Council.

### **7.4.2 Crisis Management Team**

The Crisis Management Team is a strategic level management group that has been established within Roscommon County Council. The Crisis Management Team will provide support to the principal response agency's representative at the Local Coordination Group, supports their own Controller of Operations on site (via the Local Coordinating Group), control all Local Authority personnel that respond to the emergency and maintain the agency's normal day-to-day services that the community requires. The members of the Crisis Management Team are the senior managers of the Local Authority, who will meet at the Co-ordination Centre for Roscommon Local Authorities in the Castle Suite, Aras an Chontae, Roscommon.

Details of the members, the Chair and the Mandate of this Group are contained in [Appendix A5](#) and [A6.6](#) respectively.

### **7.4.3 Local Co-ordination Centre**

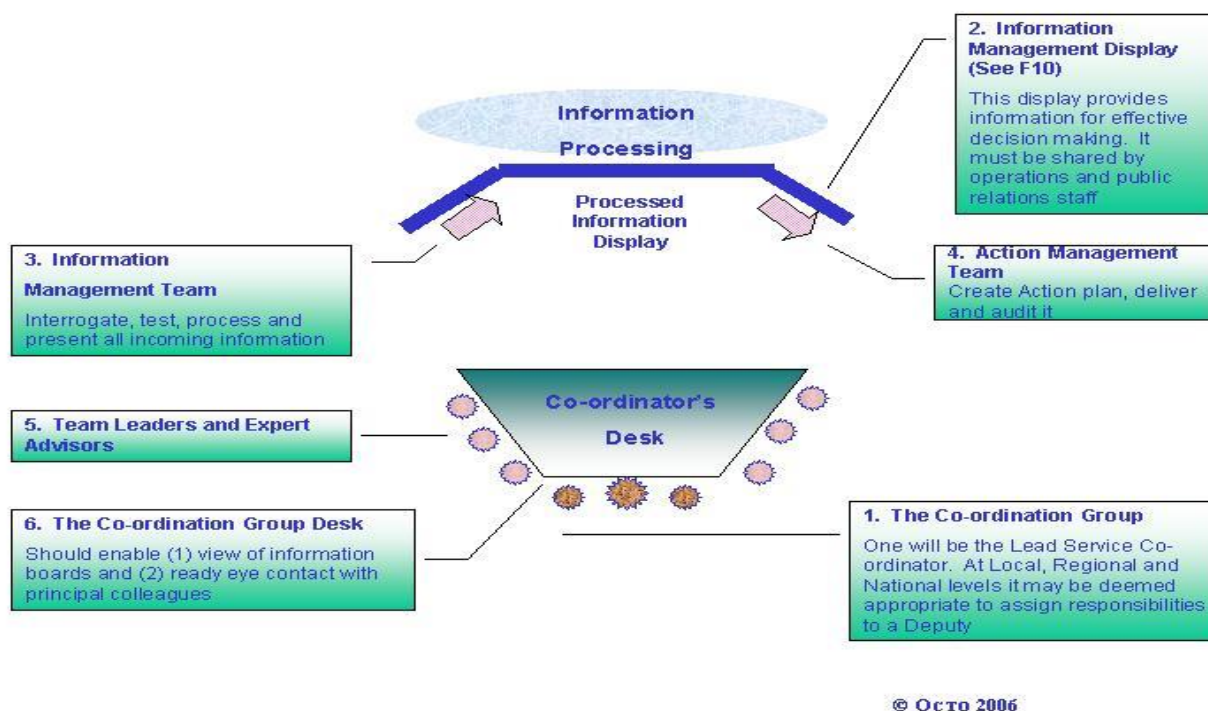
Once an emergency has been declared a Local Coordination Centre must be established. An Garda Síochána, the Health Services Executive along with Roscommon County Council has agreed that the Centre will be based in the Loughnenane Suite, Aras an Chontae, Roscommon. The centre set-up has the following:

- A spacious dedicated main area, where co-ordination activity takes place, i.e. where the relevant co-ordination group meet and work.
- Adjacent "Support Rooms" for each of the P.R.A.'s (and one for the Departmental Representative / 3<sup>rd</sup> party Representative), through which most communications in and out of the centre are routed. These rooms will be equipped with Phone Landline points and access to the Internet. They will also have additional furniture (table & chairs) to accommodate the personnel occupying the rooms.
- A range of adjacent meeting areas, one of which should be large.
- A refreshment area.
- An area which may be used for briefing the Media

The Local Coordination Group will be established to ensure Strategic Level Coordination. The representative of the Lead Agency will chair this group and will

exercise the mandates associated with this position. (In the case of Roscommon County Council, please refer to [Appendix 6.4](#)).

The Local Coordination Group will comprise representatives of the other two principle response agencies, an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer, An Action Management Officer and representatives of other agencies and specialists, as appropriate. Further details on each of these groups may be found in [Appendix A10 \(3\)](#). All coordination centers will follow a generic model of operation. The generic centre illustrated below in [Figure 7.1](#), has the following characteristics.



**Figure 7.1 Generic Coordination Centre**

Details on the resources, equipment and hardware required for a Coordination centre set-up are provided in [Appendices A10 & C9](#).

Also see [Section 7.4.5](#) below for details on the Generic Information Management Process, which takes place in “Information Processing” area of diagram.

#### **7.4.4 Regional Coordination Centre(s)**

The chair of the Local Coordination Group may declare a regional emergency (See [Section 4.6](#)). Again the Lead Agency concept will come into play. The alternative locations of the Regional Coordination Centres within the Western Region are:

- Castlebar County Council Offices
- Aras an Chontae, Galway

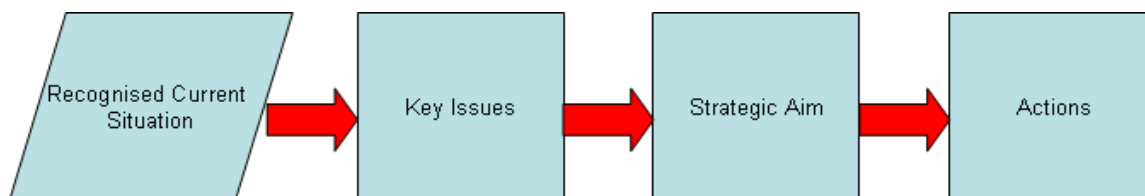
The goal of Regional Coordination may be achieved by using;

- A single Regional Coordination Centre
- A Regional Coordination Centre supported by one or more Local Coordination Centres

The method of operation of a Regional Coordination Centre will be similar to the Local Coordination Centre.

#### 7.4.5 Information Managers and support arrangements

Each Co-ordination Centre will also incorporate a Generic Information Management System approach. This system will involve four white boards that will have information coming in on key issues, strategic aim and actions to be carried out by Roscommon County Council, as seen below.



**Figure 7.2 A Schematic of Generic Information Management System that will be incorporated by Roscommon County Council.**

Roscommon County Council will have trained Information Management Officers at the scene to support the work of the On-Site Coordinator. Additionally, Information Management Officers will be at the Coordination Centres, to support the crisis management team and the chairs of the Local and Regional Coordination Groups. The Information Management Officer provides the principal conduit of information exchange between co-ordination centers and between these centres and the outside world. This role is key to the success of the Information Management process. Information Managers for Roscommon County Council are listed in *Appendix A4.2*.

A common Information Management system will be used by all Coordination Centers, from on-site upwards, through Local and Regional and on to National Co-ordination levels, where appropriate.

For further details on the Information Management System, please refer to *Appendix A11* of this Document.



## **Section 7.5 - Communications Facilities**

### **7.5.1 Communications systems (including protocols and procedures).**

Roscommon County Council relies on technical communication facilities to enable it to function and for different units to communicate, both at the site and between the site and its command, control or communications centre. Radio and other communications facilities are vital tools for the Local Authority.

Roscommon County Council Emergency Services communication facilities:

- Main appliance radio system - VHF
- Handheld portable radio sets - UHF
- Mobile Phone
- Fixed Lines
- Fax Systems
- 'TETRA' Digital Phones508

Messages should be carefully composed, preferably written down if circumstances allow, before transmission to ensure that no time wasted in delivering the message, or inclusion of unnecessary phrases. Delivery of speech should be deliberate, at a pace that is slightly slower than normal.

Details on the Fire Service County Identification signs, Senior Officer Signs, station identification signs and appliance identification signs are provided for in *Appendix B9*. Also included are the Call Signs for each of the Coordination Centres, i.e.:

**On Site** Coordinating Centre – **Romeo November Tango Three** (RN T3)

**Local** Coordinating Centre – **Romeo November Tango One** (RN T1)

**Crisis Management Team** Centre – **Romeo November Tango Two** (RN T2)

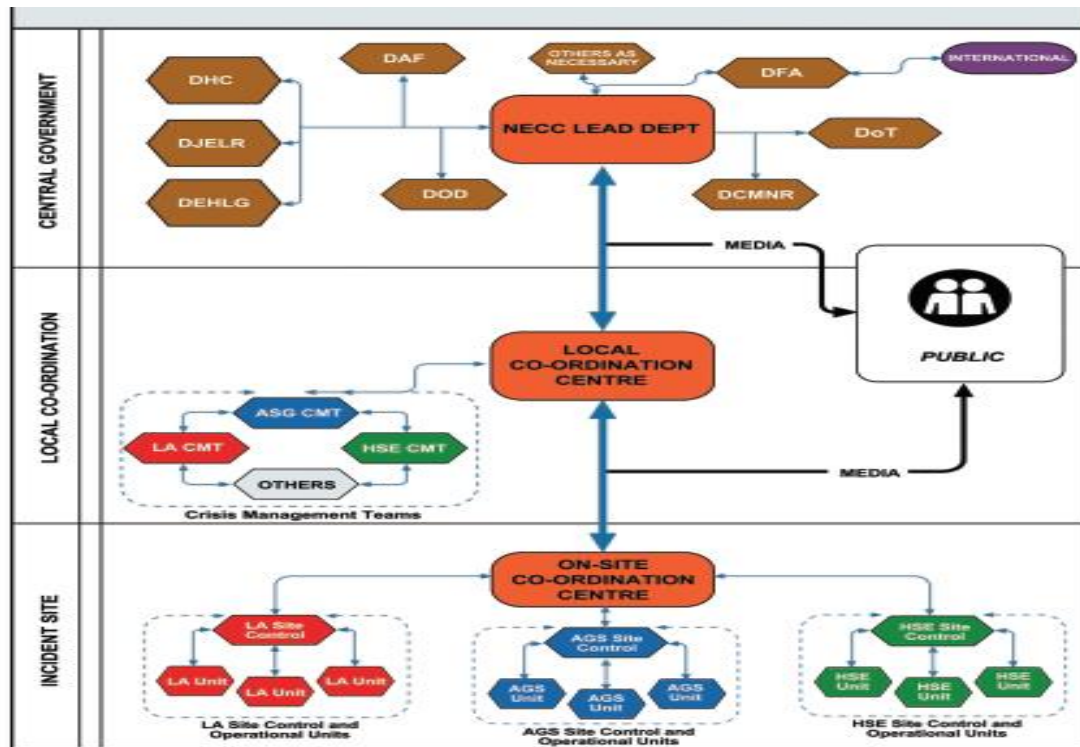
No communications system is secure from eavesdroppers. Radio scanners capable of receiving Garda, Fire Brigade, Ambulance and Local Authority radio transmissions are readily available. This should be borne in mind when wording any transmission, including cellular telephone conversations, which may contain sensitive information.

### **7.5.2 Inter-agency communication on site, including protocols and procedures.**

Communication systems serve command structures within services and it is neither necessary nor desirable that there is inter-agency radio communication at all levels. However, it is essential that robust arrangements for inter-agency communication on site(s) are provided for at Controller of Operations level.

### 7.5.3 Communications between site and coordination centres.

It is essential that radio traffic is minimised to ensure fullest availability for emergency use. All communication between On-site Co-ordination and the Off-site Co-ordination shall pass between the Controller of Operations / On-site Co-ordinator to the Local Co-Ordination Group. There will also be a communication link between the Crisis Management Team and the Off-Site communication teams.



**Figure 7.3: Communication Routes**

#### Civil Defence

Communication equipment can also be supplied by the Civil Defence. The Civil Defence uses both private mobile radio (VHF) for communications between vehicles and communication centres, and hand held portable radios (UHF) for communications on site.

#### Fire Service

All front line appliances are equipped with TETRA radios and have the ability to communicate within the functional area of County Roscommon. The Fire Service also has hand held UHF radios (*used exclusively for Fire Service Operations*), available on all its appliances, which are also equipped with mobile phones.

Both the Fire Service and Civil Defence has their own communication protocols and these will be followed in the event of an emergency.

#### Roscommon County Council

All Senior Personnel within Roscommon County Council are equipped with mobile phones.

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

### **7.6.1 Specify How the Lead Service is to be Determined**

It is important that there is rapid determination of the lead agency in each emergency situation, as this determines which one of the three Controllers of Operations is to act as the On-Site Co-ordinator, 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 co-operation belongs specifically to one of the three principal response agencies. The lead agency has both the responsibility and mandate for the co-ordination function.

When the Lead Agency determination is made, the person assuming the role of On-Site Co-ordinator should note the time and that the determination was made in the presence of the two other controllers on site. This should then be communicated by the On-Site Co-ordinator to all the parties involved in the response, and the On-Site Coordinator should begin to undertake that role.

The mechanisms for determining and designating the lead agency in any situation are set out below. Two mechanisms, which should be applied in sequence by the three Controllers of Operations at the site, are envisaged to determine the lead agency for any emergency.

- The first is by pre-nomination whereby pre-nominated lead agencies for common incident types are presented in Table-form and this should be the primary basis for determining the lead agency.
- The second is a default arrangement, where the categorisations in the Table do not seem to apply and the lead agency is not obvious. In these situations, which should be rare, the Local Authority will be the “default” lead agency.

For full details regarding the determination of the Lead Agency, please refer to *Appendix A7* of this Document.

### **7.6.2 Specify how the Lead Agency nomination is to be reviewed and transferred, if appropriate.**

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

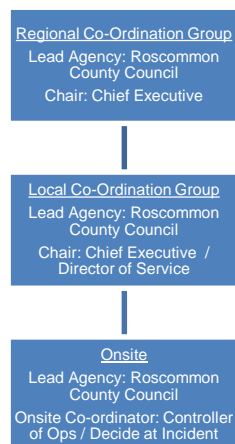
For full details regarding the determination of the Lead Agency, please refer to *Appendix A7* of this Document.

### 7.6.3 Specify how the Council will organise and deliver the co-ordination function during Major emergencies where it is the “Lead Agency”

In the event of Roscommon County Council having been assigned the Lead Agency role, (mandates of the lead agency are outlined below), it will be assigned the responsibility for the co-ordination function (in addition to its own functions) and it should lead all the co-ordination activity associated with the emergency both on-site and off-site, and make every effort to achieve a high level of co-ordination.

The function / mandates of the lead agency for any emergency are outlined below:

- 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.



**Figure 7.4: An example schematic showing the co-ordination roles of Roscommon County Council at on-site, local and regional centres, when it is the Lead Agency.**

## **Section 7.7 - Public Information**

### **7.7.1 Early warning and special public warning arrangements**

There are circumstances when it may be necessary to protect members of the public who are in the vicinity of an emergency event. This protection is usually achieved by moving people temporarily to a safe area, by evacuation where appropriate or feasible, or by advising affected individuals to take shelter in an appropriate place. The On-Site Co-ordinator will take the decision on how best to protect a threatened population, after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations.

In any emergency where public health issues may be a factor, particularly where there is significant pollution, release of chemical, radioactive, biological agents, contamination of food and water or where there are significant levels of casualties, 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. Public health doctors can provide advice, information and reassurance, where appropriate to exposed communities via a public information system.

In conjunction with other emergency responders, Roscommon County Council will make arrangements to:

- Provide advice before emergencies occur.
- Warn the public if an emergency is likely to occur or has occurred.
- Provide information and advice for the public if an emergency is likely to occur or has occurred.

### **7.7.2 Provision of telephone / help line / information line contact numbers, and handling of contacts with dedicated telephone lines**

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

- Roscommon County Council's internet service – useful for posting more information than would be communicable by emergency calls or broadcasts.
- Local broadcasters will also be called upon to broadcast messages on behalf of Roscommon County Council.
- Roscommon County Council's Emergency Helpline Service – an emergency helpline may be set up, which will be advertised through the media

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

- Television and radio – arrangements exist whereby emergency announcements may be made on RTE television and radio channels.
- Television text services – not for emergency alerts, but useful for posting more information than would be communicable by emergency calls or broadcasts.

### **7.7.3 Specify how warnings are to be disseminated.**

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

- Door to door
- Radio and television broadcasting
- Local helpline / information line
- Web services and internet services
- Automated Text services
- Establish Site Specific Warning Systems

(Please refer to *Appendix B8* for further information. Also, in the case of Flooding, Severe Weather, etc., please refer to *Appendix B2* and *Appendix B3* for further information).

## **Section 7.8 - The Media**

### **7.8.1 Liaison with the Media.**

In the event of a local emergency within the functional area of Roscommon, a Media Liaison Officer will be appointed for both the On-site and Off-site co-ordination centres. The position of Media Liaison Officer has been pre-designated.

The Media Liaison Officer may be required to act as a channel between Roscommon County Council and the public.

The Media Liaison Officer must keep accurate and timely information about the emergency so that he/she:

- Can be the point of contact for all media enquiries.
- Can provide approved information to queries from the general public.
- Can obtain and provide approved information from / to rest centres, other agencies, press officers, local radio, press, etc.
- Will be responsible for setting up an information helpline.
- Should liaise with other Liaison Officers.

All On-Site statements should be cleared / approved with the On-Site Co-ordinator or with the Media Liaison Officer. All statements to the media at Local (off-site) level should be cleared / approved with the chairperson of the Local Co-ordination Group.

Details of the name and contact number for the Media Liaison Officer is provided in the *Appendix A4.2*.

A “Dealing with the Media” Sub Plan has been provided in *Appendix B8*, which outlines in greater detail the Mandate for the Media Liaison Officer.

### **7.8.2 Arrangements for media on-site.**

The media will respond quickly to a large scale incident and this media presence may be extended into days or weeks.

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.

Depending on the location of the incident, the On-Site media centre may be a building close to the site of the incident or it may be any one of the following:

- Courthouse
- Local public building
- Local church

As a Major Emergency can be a prolonged event, it is important that facilities are put in place to accommodate media personnel at both on site and off site areas. These facilities should include:

- Refreshment area
- Sanitary area
- List of accommodation
- Communication facilities (off site)

### **7.8.3 Media at Local and/or Regional Co-ordination centres.**

The Local / Regional Co-ordination Group should take the lead in terms of working with the media, away from the site, during a Major Emergency. As with arrangements at the site, each Principal Response Agency should designate a Media Liaison Officer at the Local / Regional Coordination Centre and the activities of the Media Liaison Officers should be co-ordinated by the Media Liaison Officer of the Lead Agency. All statements to the media at this level should be cleared with the chair of the Local / Regional Co-ordination Group.

### **7.8.4 Media at, or adjacent to, other locations associated with the major emergency**

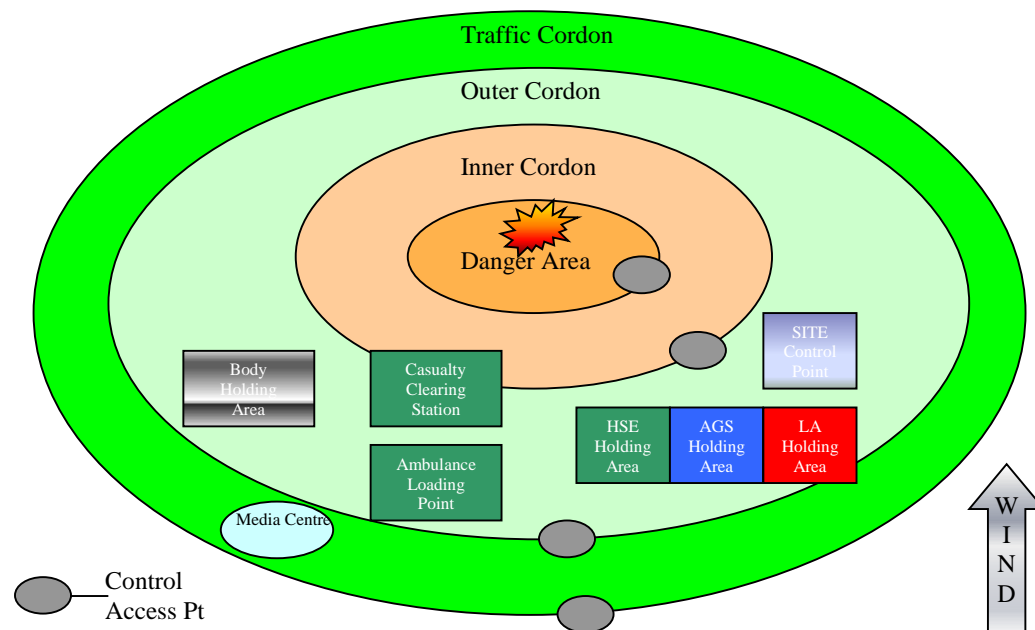
In many situations media attention will move quickly away from the site to other locations, including the Local Co-ordination Centre, hospitals and mortuaries, etc. The Local Co-ordination Group should take the lead in terms of working with the media, away from the site. As with arrangements at the site, each PRA should designate a Media Liaison Officer at the Local Coordination Centre and the activities of these officers should be coordinated 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.



## Section 7.9 - Site Management Arrangements

### 7.9.1 Development of a Site Management Plan

The highest ranking officer of the first attendance team from Roscommon County Council will, de facto, have the role of Controller of Operations at the scene until relieved by either the nominated Controller of Operations or alternate. The initial important task of the Controller of Operations in association with the other two Controllers is the development of a Site Management Plan. Once agreed, the resulting site plan should be implemented and disseminated to all responding groups.



**Figure 7.5: Idealised Scene Management Arrangements.**

Cordons should 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.
- To protect evidence and facilitate evidence recovery at the site.

Three cordons will be established, along with access cordon points. The Cordons will be implemented by An Garda Síochána after a decision by and agreement with the On-Site Co-ordination Group consisting of representatives from Roscommon County

Council and the Health Service Executive. An Garda Síochána will control the Cordon Access Points to the Traffic and the Outer Cordons while the Lead Agency will control the Cordon Access points to the Inner Cordon and the Danger Area.

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.

The main components of a typical Site Plan should contain some or all of the following:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ▪ Inner, outer and traffic cordons         | ▪ On-site Co-ordination Centre           |
| ▪ A danger area if appropriate             | ▪ Casualty clearing station              |
| ▪ Cordon and danger area access points     | ▪ Ambulance loading area                 |
| ▪ Rendezvous point                         | ▪ Body holding area                      |
| ▪ Site access routes                       | ▪ Survivor reception centre              |
| ▪ Holding areas for the different services | ▪ Friends and relatives reception Centre |
| ▪ Principal response agency control points | ▪ Media Centre                           |
| ▪ Site control point                       |  |

For a detailed analysis of each of these Site Plan Areas / Cordons, please refer to *Appendix A12* of this Document.

### **7.9.2 Control of access and identification at the various locations associated with the Emergency.**

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

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

When the lead agency has been determined, the On-Site Co-ordinator should wear a distinctive bib with the words On-Site Co-Ordinator clearly visible front and back.

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

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



**Figure 7.6: An example of how the bibs should look for each of the responding agencies.**

### 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.

Air support can only be requested by the On-Site Coordinator after consultation with the other Controller of Operations. All requests must be directed through An Garda Síochána.

## **Section 7.10 - Mobilising Additional Resources**

### **7.10.1 The arrangements for mobilizing organizations that may carry out/ provide support to the Council**

There are a number of organisations and agencies, which may be called on to assist the principal response agencies in responding to major emergencies. The arrangements for this assistance should be agreed with each agency (or confirmed in the case of pre-agreement) and set out in each principal response agency's Major Emergency Plan.

A list of contact details for each of these organisations are contained in *Appendix B6, Appendices C5, C6, C7 & C10*.

Voluntary Emergency Services will link to the Principal response Agencies in accordance with Table below.

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

**Table 7.2: Assistance available to P.R.A.'s by Voluntary Services**

Each Principal Response Agency with a linked Voluntary Emergency Services is responsible for the mobilisation of that service and their integration into the overall response. The internal command of volunteer organisations resides with that organisation

### 7.10.1.1 Mobilisation of Civil Defence

The Civil Defence shall mobilise at the request of the On-Site Co-ordinator after consultation with the other Controller of Operations. All requests for Civil Defence assistance should be directed through Roscommon County Council's Controller of Operations. In turn they will contact the Civil Defence Officer who in turn will mobilise the Civil Defence.

On arrival at the scene the Civil Defence Officer shall report to the On-site Controller of Operations at the on-site co-ordination centre where he shall be detailed a task. Any requests from An Garda Síochána and Health Service Executive for Civil Defence assistance must be made to the Local Authority Controller who, in consultation with the On-Site Co-ordinator and the Controllers of Operations of An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive, will determine the tasks to be assigned to the Civil Defence resources and for the re-allocation of those resources as the situation requires:

- The Civil Defence service will only be stood down from the site by the County Council's Controller of Operations as the situation warrants.
- The Civil Defence service will use its own communications system for internal command purposes and for the Officer in Command of the Civil Defence service to communicate effectively with and provide such reports as are requested to the Officer on site to whom he/she is directed to report.
- The Officer in Command will provide an operational debriefing and reporting of all activity undertaken by the Civil Defence services.

Roscommon Civil Defence service also has the capability to undertake specific functions, including:

- the operation of reception centres for evacuees / displaced persons, including logging information, in cooperation with An Garda Síochána;
- the operation of temporary accommodation for evacuees, including the provision of food, bedding, welfare etc.; and
- the provision of food / catering for all personnel at the site of a major emergency.

Local Authority	Fire fighting Provision of Transport Rescue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Country</li> <li>• Building and Transport</li> <li>• Water</li> </ul>
An Garda Síochána	Traffic and Crowd Control Search Evacuation
Health Service Executive	First Aid Casualty Evacuation

**Table 7.3: Assistance available to the P.R.A.'s by the Civil Defence**

(For additional information on Civil Defence, please refer to *Appendices A6.9 & B12*)

#### **7.10.1.2 Mobilisation of Defence Forces**

Roscommon County Council recognises that assistance requested from the Defence Forces should be either in Aid to the Civil Power (An Garda Síochána) or in Aid to the Civil Authority (Local Authority or Health Service Executive).

In the event of a major emergency, the Defence Forces will operate under the provisions of the Defence Acts.

The Defence Forces may be mobilised at the request of the On-Site Co-ordinator after consultation with the other Controller of Operations. All requests for Defence Forces assistance should be made by a principal response agency and directed through An Garda Síochána to Defence Forces Headquarters.

Any provision for request for Defence Force assistance should be made from the highest level co-ordination group convened (Local, Regional or National Co-ordination Group) in order to avoid multiple and competing requests.

An agreed call out procedure for Defence Force assistance and support is found in the Emergency Mobilisation Procedure of An Garda Síochána.

The Defence Forces will operate under their own command and control structure.

On foot of a request for Aid to either Civil Power or Civil Authority, the Defence Forces will:

- Determine if the Defence Forces can accede to the request.
- Determine which of the particular requested tasks the Defence Forces are in a position to undertake
- Provide a Liaison Officer to the On-Site Co-ordination Group.

The role of the **Defence Forces Liaison Officer** is to:

- Assist in the process of determining which tasks the Defence Forces will undertake
- Provide technical advice where necessary
- Act as a conduit between the Defence Forces and the On-Site Co-ordination Group.

The On-Site Co-ordinator should, in consultation with the other Controllers of Operations:

- Determine the requirements to be requested, in terms of Defence Forces resources, for site response and once Defence Forces resources have been committed, the tasks to be requested and the procedures for the altering of such requirements or tasks as the situation requires.
- Determine where and to whom the Defence Forces will report and also determine communication links for ongoing reporting on the status of the Defence Forces response.

- Provide for the Defence Forces being stood down from the site as the situation warrants
- Request as appropriate operational debriefing and reporting of all activity undertaken by the Defence Forces (See Request Form in *Appendix C6*)

#### **7.10.1.3 The Irish Red Cross**

The main relationship with the principal response agencies in major emergency response is an auxiliary resource to the ambulance service. The Irish Red Cross has the capability to provide search and rescue and in-shore rescue support to both An Garda Síochána and the Irish Coast Guard.

The Red Cross shall mobilise at the request of the On-Site Co-Ordinator after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. In turn the Irish Red Cross will report to the On-site Controller who in turn assigns the task for the Red Cross under the directions from the Health Service Executive Controller of Operations. A list of contact details for this service is supplied in *Appendices B12, C5 (t)* and *Appendix C10*.

#### **7.10.1.4 Mobilisation of Voluntary Emergency Services (VES)**

The Voluntary Emergency Services Sector will mobilise at the request of the On-site Co-ordinator after consultation with the other Controller of Operations. All Head of Voluntary Services will report to the On-site Control Centre and await instructions to assigned tasks.

The normal range of voluntary emergency services includes the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps, St. John's Ambulance Service, Mountain Rescue Teams, Cave Rescue Teams, Search and Rescue Dog Associations, River Rescue Units, Community Inshore Rescue Units, Sub Aqua Units, etc. (See also *Appendix B12* and *Appendix C10* for further details of these services).

#### **7.10.1.5 Mobilisation of Utilities**

Utilities are frequently involved in the response to emergencies, usually to assist the principal response agencies in making situations safe. It is important that there is close co-ordination between the principal response agencies and utilities involved in/affected by an emergency. Utilities operate under their own legislative and regulatory frameworks but, during the response to an emergency, they must liaise with the On-site Co-ordinator.

Representatives of individual utilities on sites should provide a representative for the On-Site Co-Ordination Group. It is also recommended that individual utilities be invited to attend and participate in relevant work of Local Co-Ordination Groups.

A list of contact details for Utilities is supplied in *Appendix C5*.

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

Private Sector response will be mobilised at the request of the On-site Controller in consultation with the other Controller of Operations. Representatives of these companies should provide assistance to the Local Co-ordination Group if required.

All private sector heads of services will report to the On-site Control Centre and await instructions to assigned tasks. It is the function of each of the Controller of Operations to determine if any private sector service is required to provide support at the site or at any other locations associated with the emergency.

Examples of Private Sector companies may be in the form of Risk Holders or specialist equipment companies.

A list of contact numbers for useful utilities is supplied in *Appendices C5 & C7*.

#### **7.10.2 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 are identified, and that the request for support is passed to the Local Co-ordination Centre who will arrange to obtain the support through the Crisis Management Team via mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring authorities.

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

All uniformed voluntary emergency services, members of the private sector and Utilities personnel responding to the site of the Major Emergency should wear the prescribed uniform, including high visibility and safety clothing, issued by their organisation. Individual members of voluntary emergency services should carry a form of photo identification. The organisation's markings on this clothing should be made known in advance to the other organisations that may be involved in the response.

The vehicles of these services responding to a Major Emergency should be readily identifiable.

Third party personnel can only be mobilised to a site by command from the On-site Co-ordinator after consultation with the other Controller of Operations.



### **7.10.3 Specify arrangements for liaison with utilities;**

Utility companies are frequently involved in the response to emergencies, usually to assist the Principal Response Agencies in making situations safe. They may also be directly involved in restoring their own services, for example, electricity supply in the aftermath of a storm. Utilities operate under their own legislative and regulatory frameworks but, during the response to an emergency, it is important that they are involved in the co-ordination arrangements. Utilities may be requested to provide representatives and/or experts to the On-Site Co-ordination Group, the Local Coordination Group and/or the Regional Co-ordination Group, as appropriate. A list of utilities and their emergency / out of hours contact arrangements are listed in *Appendix C5*.

(See also *Section 4.4.6* of this Document)

### **7.10.4 Specify arrangements for integration of casual volunteers as appropriate**

Roscommon Co. co. will only consider the use of ‘Casual Volunteers’ outside the Cordon of the Emergency Site.

Such ‘Casual Volunteers’ will report to Civil Defence.

(See also *Section 4.4.5* of this Document)

### **7.10.5 Command, control, co-ordination 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 the mobilisation of the external resource has responsibility for managing and integrating the contribution of these resources to the tasks identified in the response. The On-site Controller should ensure that:

- Scope and scale of the tasks to be assigned to the responding organisations is clear.
- Liaison Officer is appointed for each organisation to 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 organisations and the relevant team or group and be changed or rotated only to the minimum extent necessary.
- On Site Communications are established.
- Regular feedback is provided to the On-site Co-ordination centre.

(See also *Section 4.4.1* to *4.4.7* of this Document).

#### **7.10.6 Specify how mutual aid arrangements are to operate;**

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.

Local Authorities will support each other on a mutual aid basis.

(See also **Section 4.5** of this Document).

#### **7.10.7 Requests for out-of-region assistance**

The decision to seek assistance from outside the region will be made by the Lead Agency, in association with the other principal response agencies, at the Local / Regional Co-ordination Centre.

(See also **Section 4.7** of this Document).

#### **7.10.8 International assistance**

The decision to seek international assistance will be made by the lead agency, in association with the other principal response agencies, at the Local / Regional Co-ordination Centre.

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.

## **Section 7.11 - Casualty and Survivor Arrangements**

### **7.11.1 General**

The primary objective of any response to a major emergency is to provide effective arrangements for the rescue, care, treatment and rehabilitation of all of the individuals who are affected by the emergency. These individuals may be divided into two main categories – Casualties and Survivors (see **Section 7.11.1.1** below).

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 some or all of these individuals.

#### **7.11.1.1 Care of all Casualties and Survivors**

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

Individuals may be divided into two main categories as follows:

- Casualties - including persons who are killed or injured.
- Survivors - these include all those individuals who are caught up in an emergency but not injured, such as, uninjured passengers from a transport accident or evacuees.

### **7.11.2 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 Council's role in the triage, treatment and transport to hospital of all injured persons.**

Roscommon County Council will assist An Garda Síochána and HSE West with any available resources.

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, helicopter, etc.

#### **Triage Cards Priority Description Colour**

1. Immediate (**Red**)
2. Urgent (**Yellow**)
3. Delayed (**Green**)
4. Expectant (**Blue**)
5. Dead or Deceased (**White**)

#### **7.11.2.2 Casualty Clearing Station, Ambulance Loading Point, the designation of receiving hospitals and the distribution of injured casualties.**

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

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

#### **7.11.3 Fatalities**

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

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

#### **7.11.3.1 Specify the Coroners role and how the Council supports this.**

A Coroner will be called in to examine all fatalities. 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.

At the scene of a major emergency the coroner may need the facilities of a temporary mortuary. If there is no building suitable for the purpose in the area it will be the responsibility of Roscommon County Council to provide a temporary mortuary facility.

#### **7.11.3.2 Council’s role in dealing with fatalities, both on and off-site, including Body Holding Areas and Temporary Mortuaries.**

##### **Body Holding Area**

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

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

##### **Temporary Mortuary**

It is the responsibility of Roscommon County Council to provide a Temporary Mortuary, if required, in consultation with the District Coroner and Health Service Pathologists in its area (regarding the options, arrangements and plan for Temporary Mortuaries).

The likely commissioning time for a Temporary Mortuary is of the order of twenty four hours, and this may be extended to forty eight hours when victim numbers are extensive. It should be noted that a Temporary Mortuary may be required to operate for weeks or months after the incident.

It is envisaged that in the event of mass amounts of casualties, Temporary Mortuaries may be used in the format of refrigeration trailers for storage of large amounts of bodies. Roscommon County Council has identified that a number of facilities will be a suitable for mass storage of casualties in *Appendix B6*. A list of Coroners can be found in *Appendix B5*.

#### **7.11.3.3 Council's role in Identification of the Deceased.**

Roscommon County Council will assist the Coroner, (who has overall responsibility for the identification of bodies and remains and is entitled to exclusive possession and control of a deceased person until the facts about their death have been established), with the assistance of An Garda Síochána.

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 Coroner's Agent for this purpose.

Viewing facilities may be required for large scale major emergencies. This will be conducted under the supervision of An Garda Síochána.

#### **7.11.4 Survivors**

It is the responsibility of the Roscommon County Council to establish and run the Survivor Reception Centre. A Survivor Reception Centre should 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. Transport from the Survivor Reception Centre to home / meet relatives / safe place will be arranged as soon as it is practicable. Roscommon County Council has identified the following as suitable buildings for setting up a survivor centre:

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

##### **7.11.4.1 Arrangements for dealing with survivors requiring support, including the designation and operation of Survivor Reception Centres.**

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

The assistance of voluntary 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.

Transport from the Survivor Reception Centre to home / meet relatives / safe place will be arranged as soon as it is practicable.

#### **7.11.4.2 Vulnerable Persons**

Roscommon County Council should be particularly aware of the needs of those individuals who, because of dependency or disability, are particularly vulnerable during emergencies.

Vulnerable persons can include children in schools, nurseries and child care centres as well as persons whose movement is inhibited either by reason of age, illness (including mental illness), or disability or who are deaf, blind, visually impaired or hearing impaired. Particular attention is required when an emergency involves or threatens a community hospital, residential home or day centre, where such individuals reside or are present for part of the day.

#### **7.11.5 Casualty Information**

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.

##### **7.11.5.1 The Casualty Bureau will be operated by An Garda Síochána.**

To facilitate this process, a Liaison / Casualty Officer will normally be sent by An Garda Síochána to each hospital where casualties are being treated.

##### **7.11.5.2 Council's role in the Collection of Casualty Information**

Roscommon County Council may assist in the collection and collation of casualty data. Any information collected on any casualty is transferred via An Garda Síochána to the Casualty Bureau, who will generally set up an information hot line, in order that concerned family and friend may inquire about 'loved ones'.

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

A building used as a Friends' and Relatives' Reception Centre should be secure from media intrusion and contain sufficient room to afford privacy to families receiving information about relatives. There will also be a need for a reliable process to establish the credentials of friends and relatives. It is the responsibility of Roscommon County Council to provide welfare facilities for 'friends and relatives' located at this reception centre.

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

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

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

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

Roscommon County Council may incorporate a foreign language communication resource. Details can be obtained from the Department of Foreign Affairs - See *Appendix C4 (i)*. There is also a list of the main embassies in *Appendix C5 (y)*.

#### **7.11.8 Pastoral and Psycho-social Care**

Pastoral and psycho-social support arrangements for casualties and other affected members of the public are the responsibility of the Health Service Executive.

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



## **Section 7.12 - Emergencies involving Hazardous Materials**

### **7.12.1 Council's role in dealing with Hazardous Materials incidents**

Roscommon County Council will be designated the lead agency for response to normal hazardous materials incidents, with the exception of those involving biological agents within County Roscommon. In cases where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána will act as the lead agency. (See *Appendix A7*).

The Defence Forces, when requested, will assist An Garda Síochána in an Aid to the Civil Power role with Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams. Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a CBRN incident are contained in the Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Suspect Chemical and Biological Agents arising from terrorist activity

### **7.12.2 Council's role in dealing with CBRN incidents.**

*(Conventional Explosives, Chemical Substances, Biological Agents, Nuclear Materials)*

The initial pre-nominated agency will be An Garda Síochána. Where terrorism involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána will assume the lead role, regardless of the agent. Should it transpire that there is no terrorism involvement, the lead agency may change as indicated in *Section 7.6*.

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a CCBRN event are detailed in the document – “*A Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Radiological-Nuclear Emergencies*”, available at [www.mem.ie](http://www.mem.ie). Other issues relating to managing the response to CCBRN incidents are set out in two protocols for dealing with suspected chemical and biological agents (*Refer to Protocols on Websites listed overleaf*). 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. The National Poisons Information Centre is located in Beaumont Hospital, Dublin while the National Virus Reference Laboratory is located in U.C.D. Where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána will act as the lead agency. (See *Appendix B13*).

#### **7.12.3 Link between Plan and Sub-Plan / Protocol / Code Instruction for dealing with 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, (To be undertaken by National Steering Group at time of printing of this document). Attention is also drawn to the recent CoVid-19 Pandemic, and the subsequent National Guidance, provided at the following website:

- <https://www.hpsc.ie> ;
- <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus> ; and
- [www.coronavirus.ie](http://www.coronavirus.ie) .

#### **7.12.4 Link between Plan and Sub-Plan on response to 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 link to the National Plan as outlined by the Government. Roscommon County Council will provide assistance under the command of the lead Government Department.

See National Public Health Emergency Plan

<http://www.ndsc.ie/hpsc/A-Z/EmergencyPlanning/PublicHealthEmergencyPlan>

#### **7.12.5 Link between Plan and Sub-Plan on response to activation of the National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents;**

For Nuclear Accidents there will be a link to the National Plan as outlined by the Government. 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, available at [www.mem.ie](http://www.mem.ie). Also refer to link below.

<http://www.environ.ie/en/Environment/EnvironmentalRadiation/PublicationsDocuments/FileDownload,1323,en.pdf>

Roscommon County Council will provide assistance under the command of the lead Government Department. (See *Appendices B13 & B14*).

#### 7.12.6 Decontamination

Additional issues in relation to decontamination of the public may arise at some hazardous materials incidents. Decontamination in this context refers to a range of procedures employed to remove hazardous materials from people and equipment. It includes terms such as:

- **Clinical Decontamination**, meaning medical treatment by health professionals of patients affected by, or contaminated with, hazardous materials;
- **Emergency Decontamination**, when time does not allow for the deployment of specialist resources, and it is judged imperative that decontamination of people is carried out as soon as possible;
- **Personnel Decontamination**, meaning the decontamination of uninjured exposed persons;
- **Mass Decontamination**, is the procedure deployed where significant numbers of persons are deemed to require decontamination, beyond the normal decontamination capacity; and
- **Equipment Decontamination**, is the procedure used to clean the specialist equipment / protective suits which personnel use in dealing with hazardous material incidents.

The need for decontamination of individuals will be established by the On-Site Co-Ordinator, in association with the other Controllers of Operations.

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 has responsibility for decontamination where required to protect health service facilities, such as hospitals, from secondary contamination.

Where emergency decontamination of the public is required, the fire service may use its fire-fighter decontamination facilities, or improvised equipment may be used prior to the arrival of dedicated equipment.

Where persons have to undergo this practice it should be carried out under the guidance of medical personnel. It should be noted that emergency contamination carries risks for vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and the injured.

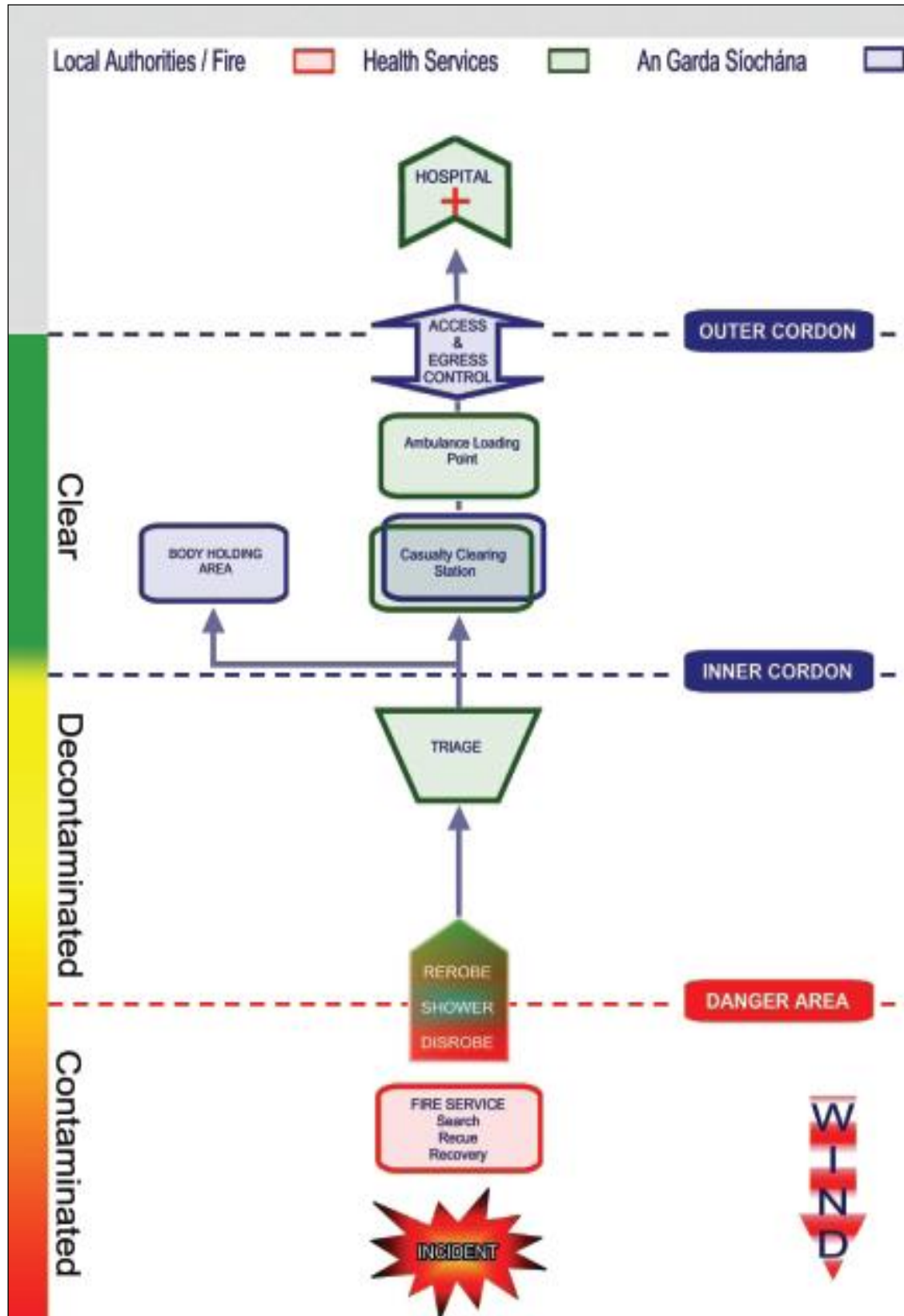


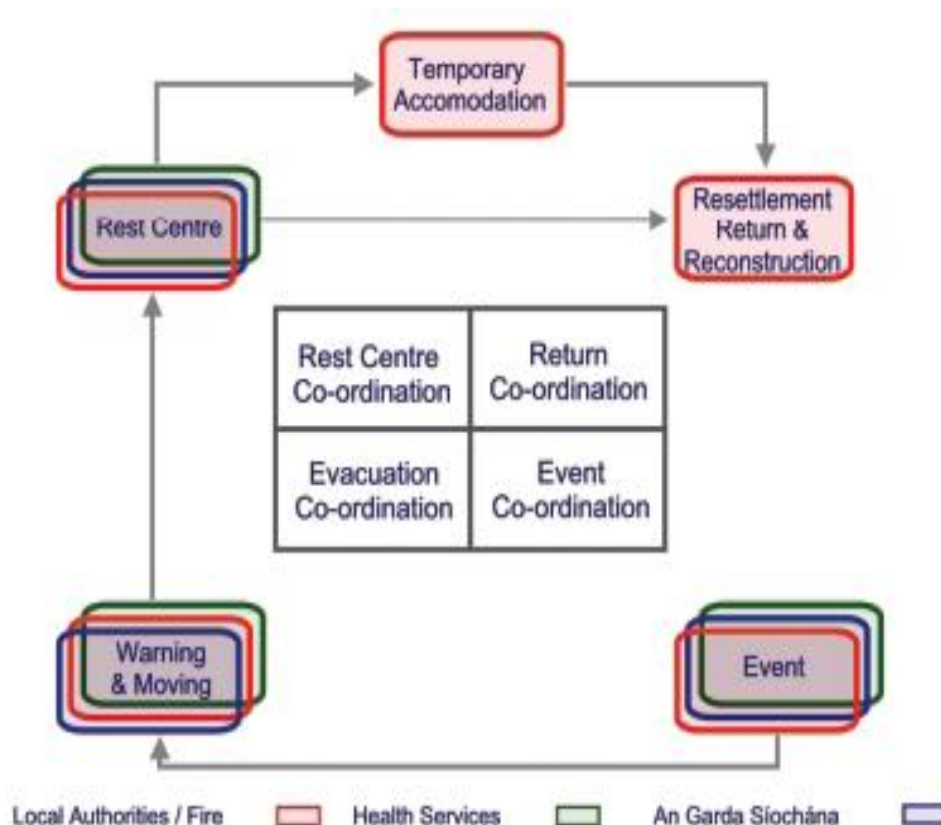
Figure 7.7: Managing Hazardous Materials

## Section 7.13 - Protecting Threatened Populations

### 7.13.1 Evacuation

Some emergencies may require the evacuation of a large surrounding area because of the danger to life from environmental or structural hazards. Care must be taken to ensure that evacuation does not place those concerned in greater danger. This protection is usually achieved by moving people temporarily to a safe area, by evacuation where appropriate or feasible, or by advising affected individuals to take shelter in an appropriate place.

The On-Site Co-Ordinator will take the decision on how best to protect a threatened population, after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. Evacuation is usually undertaken on the advice of the 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 Roscommon County Council. Please refer to **Figure 7.8** below.



**Figure 7.8: Structure of Evacuation**

Personnel from the County Council and from voluntary agencies will staff rest centres. The centres will provide security, welfare, communication, catering and medical facilities. Evacuees should be documented and basic details passed to the casualty bureau. The County Council will assist in this role.

Roscommon County Council has identified that rest centres can take the form of:

- Local Community Centres
- Local Schools
- Local Public Halls

A full list of possible rest centres are contained in *Appendix B6*.

#### **7.13.2 Arrangements for the involvement of The Public Health Service**

It is the responsibility of the Health Service Executive to make arrangements for the involvement of The Public Health Service. Where an emergency results in a real or perceived threat to public health by, for example, the release of chemical, radioactive or biological agents, the contamination of water or food supplies, or the spread of contaminated flood water, it can be anticipated that there will be considerable concern among both the persons immediately affected and the wider public. In such situations, the Health Service Executive Controller 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.

Attention is also drawn to the recent CoVid-19 Pandemic, and the subsequent National Guidance, provided at the following websites:

- <https://www.hpsc.ie> ;
- <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus> ; and
- [www.coronavirus.ie](http://www.coronavirus.ie) .

## **Section 7.14 - Emergencies arising on Inland Waterways**

### **7.14.1 Liaison with the Irish Coast Guard**

An Garda Síochána are the initial Lead Agency at an inland waterway emergency. This role may be re-assigned, following consultation between the Irish Coast Guard and An Garda Síochána.

Roscommon County Council can provide assistance in the form of the Roscommon Fire and Rescue and Civil Defence.

Please refer to *Appendix C5 (n)* for further information and contact details for the Irish Coast Guard.

### **7.14.2 Mobilisation and Responsibilities of The Irish Coast Guard.**

The Irish Coast Guard has responsibility for receiving 999/112 calls and the mobilising of resources to Inland Waterway emergencies. An Garda Síochána are 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. There are also some inland water rescue volunteer organisations that may be asked to provide assistance such as the Sub Aqua Clubs within the functional area of County Roscommon.

Please refer to *Appendices C5 (w)* and *C10* for further details regarding the Sub Aqua Clubs within Co. Roscommon.

## **Section 7.15 - Safety, Health and Welfare Considerations**

### **7.15.1 Liaison with the Irish Coast Guard**

Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 Roscommon County Council is responsible so far as reasonably practicable for the safety, health and welfare of its staff. Roscommon County Council has prepared safety statements and additional ancillary safety statements, which sets out the approach the Council adopts in relation to managing safety and meeting its Statutory requirements under Section 20 of the 2005 Act.

Please refer to the ‘[Roscommon County Council Parent Safety Statement, Revision 005](#)’ for further information.

### **7.15.2 Council’s command support arrangements for rescue personnel.**

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 rescue personnel. All other relevant officers will continue to exercise command over their own personnel working in the area.

### **7.15.3 Safety of Council’s staff when operating within the ‘Danger Area’.**

Roscommon County Council should establish from the On-Site Co-Ordinator if a Danger Area (See [Section 13](#) of this document) has been defined as part of site management arrangements. 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. Where it is necessary that services continue to operate in a Danger Area, it will apply their normal incident and safety management arrangements and relevant officers will continue to exercise command over their own personnel working in a Danger Area. The Council is responsible for the health and safety of its staff when they operate within the ‘Danger Area’.

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

### **7.15.5 Physical welfare of responders (food, shelter, toilets)**

The Controller of Operations should ensure that appropriate rest and refreshment facilities are provided for response personnel at the on-site and off-site locations. Please refer to [Section 7.17.3](#) of this document.



#### **7.15.6 Psycho-social support for Council personnel.**

The demands of a major emergency will impact heavily on the resources, both human and material, of the responding agencies.

Recent incidents have shown that welfare and trauma support should be made available to staff of organisations deployed in major incident scenarios. This support should be available from the very outset and early stages of the incident where required, and if requested by individual organisations. The responsibility for identifying the need for welfare support rests jointly with the individuals, their managers and the department within each organisation with responsibility for staff welfare.

Those who are particularly traumatised will require skilled professional help and this will be provided by Roscommon County Council. Arrangements for this must be made in a way that ensures confidentiality and overcomes the cultural resistance in the emergency services to such a step. These facilities should also be made available to support staff, even if they are not directly involved at the scene, e.g. administration staff, drivers and communication staff.

The Fire Service in Roscommon Co. Co. is aware that certain incidents encountered can be particularly difficult, stressful and traumatic. The Critical Incident Stress Management (C.I.S.M.) Programme has been specially introduced to provide ongoing practical support to each of the Fire Service Personnel.

The Fire Service has retained 'Inspire Wellbeing', an organisation specialising in C.I.S.M., to work with in developing the service, provide educational and training initiatives and to provide both Group C.I.S. debriefing and individual counselling as required.

Currently, a care line exists (contactable at 1800 937 761), which enables employees and their immediate family to access confidential advice and support 24h hours a day, 365 days a year. (*updated March 2021*).

## **Section 7.16 - Logistical Issues / Protracted Incidents**

### **7.16.1      Rotation of front line rescue / field staff**

Front line rescue / field staff will be relieved at protracted incidents in accordance with the Local Authority Safety, Health and Welfare arrangements. Fire crews are relieved at protracted incidents in accordance with agreements. Crews from the adjoining counties / regions may be called upon to assist Roscommon Fire Services. In the past, fire appliances from Counties Mayo, Leitrim, Sligo, Galway, Longford, Westmeath, etc. have been deployed to assist Roscommon County Fire Service at emergency incidents where required.

### **7.16.2 Re-organising normal emergency services cover in areas depleted by commitments to the major emergency.**

CAMP West RCC would be responsible for re-organizing emergency cover if required. Crews from the surrounding region may be called upon to assist and support the emergency. These extra resources shall be deployed to assist Roscommon County Council fire crews in their normal day to day operational activities until the major emergency has been stood down.

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. They can be as critical to the organisation's response as those involved at the 'coalface'

### **7.16.3      Initial and Ongoing Welfare for Field Staff**

The Local Authority 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 Roscommon County Council. The Local Authority will strive and endeavour to provide meals at all meal times to field staff or every 4 / 5 hours during an incident

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. They can be as critical to the organisation's response as those involved at the incident.

## **Section 7.17 - Investigations**

### **7.17.1 Council's role in supporting An Garda Síochána's investigations**

The scene of a suspected crime will be preserved, in as far as is possible, until a complete and thorough examination has been made. An Garda Síochána, in as far as practicable, 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 the members of the County Council staff on their involvement.

### **7.17.2 Council's role in minimising disruption of evidence, and how personnel will provide information / chain of evidence for An Garda Síochána**

#### **The priority of the response remains the protection of life.**

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. 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's investigative role.

Roscommon County 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.

### **7.17.3 Statutory investigations and liaison with An Garda Síochána e.g. Air Accident Investigation Unit, Health and Safety Authority, etc.**

Depending on the nature of the Major Emergency, agencies other than An Garda Síochána may require access to the site for the purposes of carrying out an investigation. These agencies include the Health and Safety Authority, the Air Accident Investigation Unit and the Environmental Protection Agency. An Garda Síochána is responsible for carrying out criminal investigations.

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

## **Section 7.18 - Community / VIPs / Observers**

### **7.18.1 Establishing links to communities affected by an emergency.**

Where communities are affected by major emergency efforts should be made to establish contacts / links with a community utilising established links such as Community Groups/ Public Representatives and Community Liaison Officers within the community.

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 Roscommon County Council locations should be referred to the County Council Management. Public representatives and other dignitaries may wish to attend the site of the emergency, as well as associated facilities, such as hospitals, to express sympathy on behalf of the public to the injured and bereaved and to support the emergency response workers.

### **7.18.2 VIPs who wish to visit;**

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.

### **7.18.3 National / international observers**

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

## **Section 7.19 - Standing down the Major Emergency**

### **7.19.1 Standing down the Emergency and the various Services of Roscommon County Council.**

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. 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.

As the situation is brought under control the County Council's Controller of Operations should review the resources on site and reduce/stand down services in light of the changing situation. The On-site Co-ordinator should be consulted before a decision is made to stand down any service. Where organisations other than the principal response agencies have responded, they should be informed of the decision to stand them down by the Controller of Operations of the agency which mobilised them. Services operating at other locations should be stood down in a similar manner.

### **7.19.2 Operational debriefing and reporting**

When the incident has ended, Roscommon County Council will be obliged to give a debrief to the members of its service that are involved in the emergency. In addition, the other two agencies involved in the incident will hold a series of operational debriefs. Roscommon County Council will review the inter agency co-ordination aspects of the response after every declaration of a major emergency.

A multi-agency debrief will then be held and lessons learned will be incorporated into this manual. 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.

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 the emergency services to the debrief.

Operational debriefs should not be confused with diffusing welfare sessions for staff, which should form part of the trauma support programmes arranged by individual organisations.

The thrust of any such debriefs would be to identify areas for improvement in procedures, equipment and systems. They should not be forums for criticising the performance of others.

Debriefs should not interfere with or comment on investigations into the incident carried out by investigative or judicial authorities. It is important to realise that such debriefs and related documents would be disclosed to individuals involved in legal proceedings.

## Section 8

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### Agency-specific Elements and Sub-Plans

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Roscommon County Council will respond to an emergency in accordance with its own predetermined arrangements, and with the assumption that other services are doing likewise. The principal response agencies may make arrangements with others to assist them in undertaking functions, but responsibility for the functions remains with the principal response agency.

Arising from the risk assessment process described in **Section 3**, Roscommon Local Authority's Major Emergency Plan has identified where specific plans/ arrangements exist for responding to emergencies. These include the following;

The following Sub-Plans exist within Roscommon County Council

- Communication Sub Plan
- Decontamination Sub-Plan
- Dealing with Media Sub Plan
- Mass Fatalities Sub-Plan
- Evacuation Sub Plan
- Severe weather Sub Plan
- On site welfare Sub Plan
- Animal Health Sub Plan
- Multi Agency Response to Radiological / Nuclear Incidents Sub Plan
- Multi Agency Response to Rail Related Emergencies Sub Plan
- M6 Motorway Guidance Document

See **Appendix B1 to Appendix B14** for further details of each Sub-Plan.

## Section 9

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### Plan for Regional-level Coordination

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#### 9.1 Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination for a Regional Major Emergency

Each P.R.A. has participated in the preparation of a Plan for Regional Level Co - Ordination, which sets out arrangement to respond when regional level Regional level major emergencies may be declared, with a Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination activated. This will provide for mutual aid, support and co-ordination facilities to be activated in a region, the boundaries of which are determined to suit the exigencies of the emergency.

Roscommon County Council belongs to the Western region. Building on good practice that has emerged over the years, the principal response agencies, within Western region, have worked together to coordinate the inter-agency aspects of major emergency preparedness and management. This region incorporates the following counties;

- Roscommon
- Mayo
- Galway County
- Galway City

#### 9.2 Activation of Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination

A Regional Level Major Emergency may be declared where the nature of an emergency is such that:

- the resources available in the functional area of County Roscommon 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 functional area; or
- the incident(s) is spread across more than one Local Authorities or Division of An Garda Síochána; or
- the incident occurs at or close to a boundary of several of the principal response agencies.



### 9.3 Response Regions

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may declare that a regional level major emergency exists 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.

### 9.4 Regional Co-ordination Group

The lead agency which has declared the regional level emergency will convene and chair the Regional Co-ordination Group.

Depending on the circumstances, the goal of regional co-ordination may be achieved by using:

- a single Regional Co-ordination Centre; or
- a Regional Co-ordination Centre supported by one or more Local Coordination Centres.

Any 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.

Please refer to **Section 6** of this document for a more in-depth look at a Regional Level Major Emergency Response and also '[A Guide to Regional Level Coordination](#)' - Guidance document 13: Section 9.

## Section 10

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### Links with National Emergency Plans

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#### 10.1 National Emergency Plans:

Arrangements involving Roscommon County Council in National Emergency Plans will be agreed in the first instance on their behalf through the National Steering Group. 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).

The Major Emergency Plan for Roscommon County Council may be activated by one of those agencies on request from a body acting under the provisions of one of the following National Emergency Plans:

- National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents,
- Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Emergency Plan,
- Animal Health Plan

National bodies, operating in accordance with National Emergency Plans, may call upon Roscommon County Council to assist in responding to, or to perform their normal functions/ roles arising from, a national level emergency. The envisaged roles can include:

- monitoring and/or reporting on the impact of the emergency in the functional area of the Council;
- undertaking pre-assigned roles in National Emergency Plans, such as coordinating/ implementing certain countermeasures in its functional area;
- undertaking relevant tasks following an emergency/crisis; or  
Acting as a communications and co-ordination conduit

#### 10.1.1 National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accident

Incidents and accidents at nuclear installations are classified from 1 to 7 on a scale known as the International Nuclear Event Scale (INES). Accidents that could have consequences for Ireland would be rated at 5 or higher on this scale.

The National Emergency Plan For Nuclear Accidents (**NEPNA**) has been prepared in accordance with Article 37 of SI 125 of 2000, Radiological Protection Act, 1991 (Ionising Radiation) Order under which the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government has the lead responsibility for coordinating the emergency response arrangements among Government Departments and Agencies.

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). See the link below for the *National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Emergencies*. (See also *Appendices B13 & B14*).

[http://www.rpii.ie/download/NEPNA\\_English\\_2004.pdf](http://www.rpii.ie/download/NEPNA_English_2004.pdf)

The **NEPNA** provides for the following functions relevant to Local Authorities:

### **Local Authorities**

- Monitor and report on the impact of the radiological emergency in their area as required in their Major Emergency Plans.
- Implement countermeasures under guidance from the ERCC and Government Departments.
- Ensure that local authority essential services fulfil their normal functions.

### **Civil Defence**

- Arrange with local authorities to have an effective Civil Defence Organisation available to undertake the various duties assigned to the force under the Emergency Plan.
- Train and equip Civil Defence personnel to undertake the following functions:-
  1. Monitoring of radiation levels, as required, throughout the country.
  2. Monitoring of radiation levels on ships, aircraft, vehicles, individuals and their personal effects at seaports and airports, as required.
  3. The collection of samples of soil, vegetation etc. for analysis.
  4. Assisting, where required, in implementation of control measures.

A key component of the response to such an incident will be the analysis of samples of vegetation, soils or other environmental substances collected from various parts of the country.

In addition, please refer to the Document “A Protocol for Multi Agency Response to Radiological / Nuclear Emergencies” on the website [www.mem.ie](http://www.mem.ie).

### 10.1.2 National Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Plan

This plan may be activated (depending on circumstances) in response to an outbreak of the following infectious diseases:

- Anthrax
- Smallpox
- Botulism
- Plague
- Tularaemia
- Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)
- Pandemic Flu
- Other as appropriate

Anthrax, smallpox, botulism, plague and tularaemia are biological agents and a major emergency incident is most likely to result due to an overt release of such an agent.

**The Health Service Executive should co-ordinate local aspects of the National Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Emergency Plan.**

Refer to the link below for the National Emergency Plan for Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Emergency Plan,

<http://www.ndsc.ie/hpsc/A-Z/EmergencyPlanning/PublicHealthEmergencyPlan>

Attention is also drawn to the recent CoVid-19 Pandemic, and the subsequent National Guidance, provided at the following websites:

- <https://www.hpsc.ie> ;
- <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus> ; and
- [www.coronavirus.ie](http://www.coronavirus.ie) .

In addition, please refer to the Document “A Protocol for Multi Agency Response to Emergencies arising from Infectious Diseases Pandemics” drawn up the H.S.E.

### 10.1.3 Animal Health Plan

This plan may be activated (depending on circumstances) in response to an outbreak of the following animal diseases:

- Foot and Mouth
- Avian Flu
- Classical Swine Fever
- Other as appropriate

For infectious diseases such as Avian Flu (The Department of Agriculture and Food: has an emergency plan designed to contain outbreaks of H5N1 avian influenza in poultry should the disease arrive in this country), National Pandemic Influenza Plan 2007, Foot and Mouth there will be a link to the National Plan as outlined by the government. Roscommon County Council will provide assistance under the command of the lead government department.

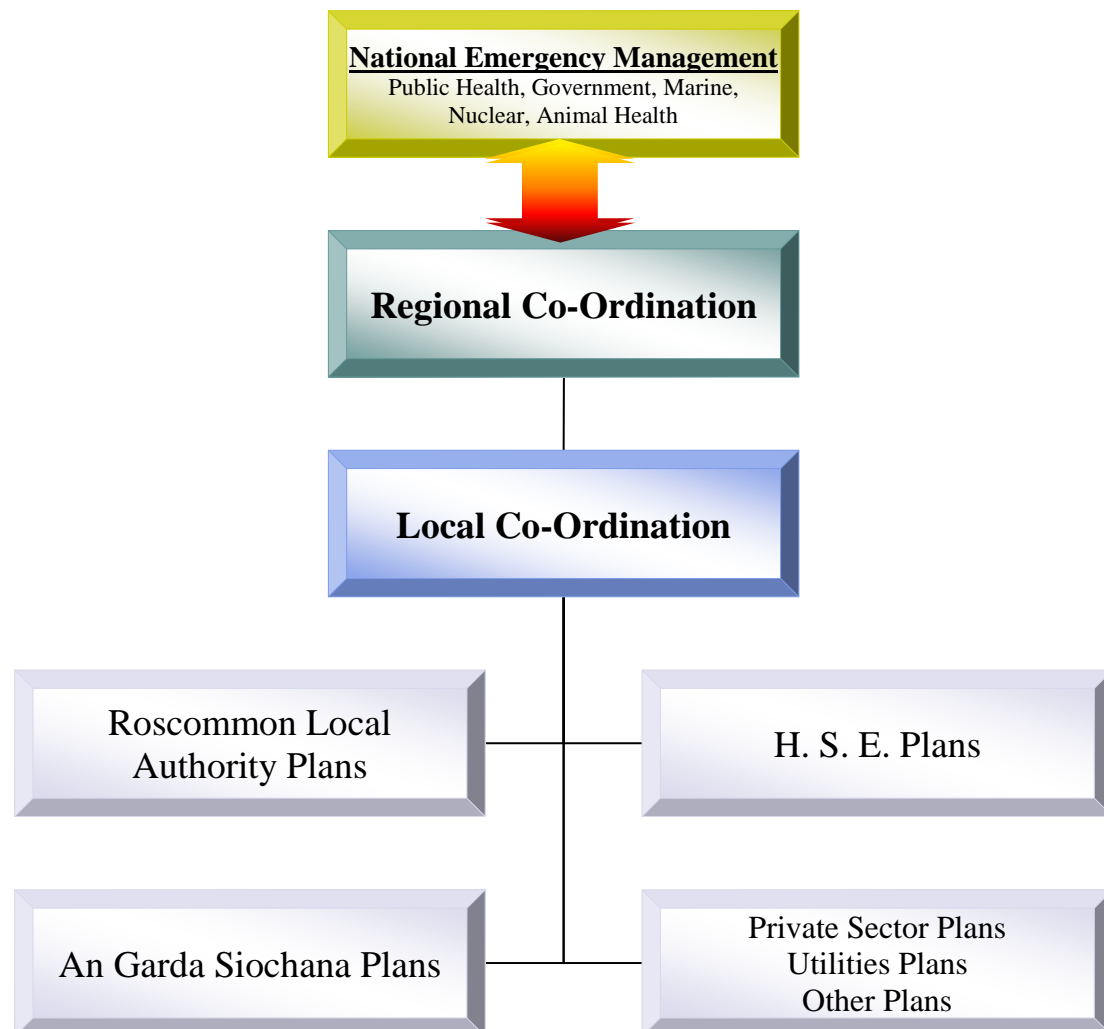
Upon the activation of certain Animal Health Plans the Local Authority will be required to carry out specified activities, such as is the case with Foot and Mouth and Avian Flu respectively. (See *Appendix B10*)

## 10.2 Activation of Plan by Irish Coast Guard

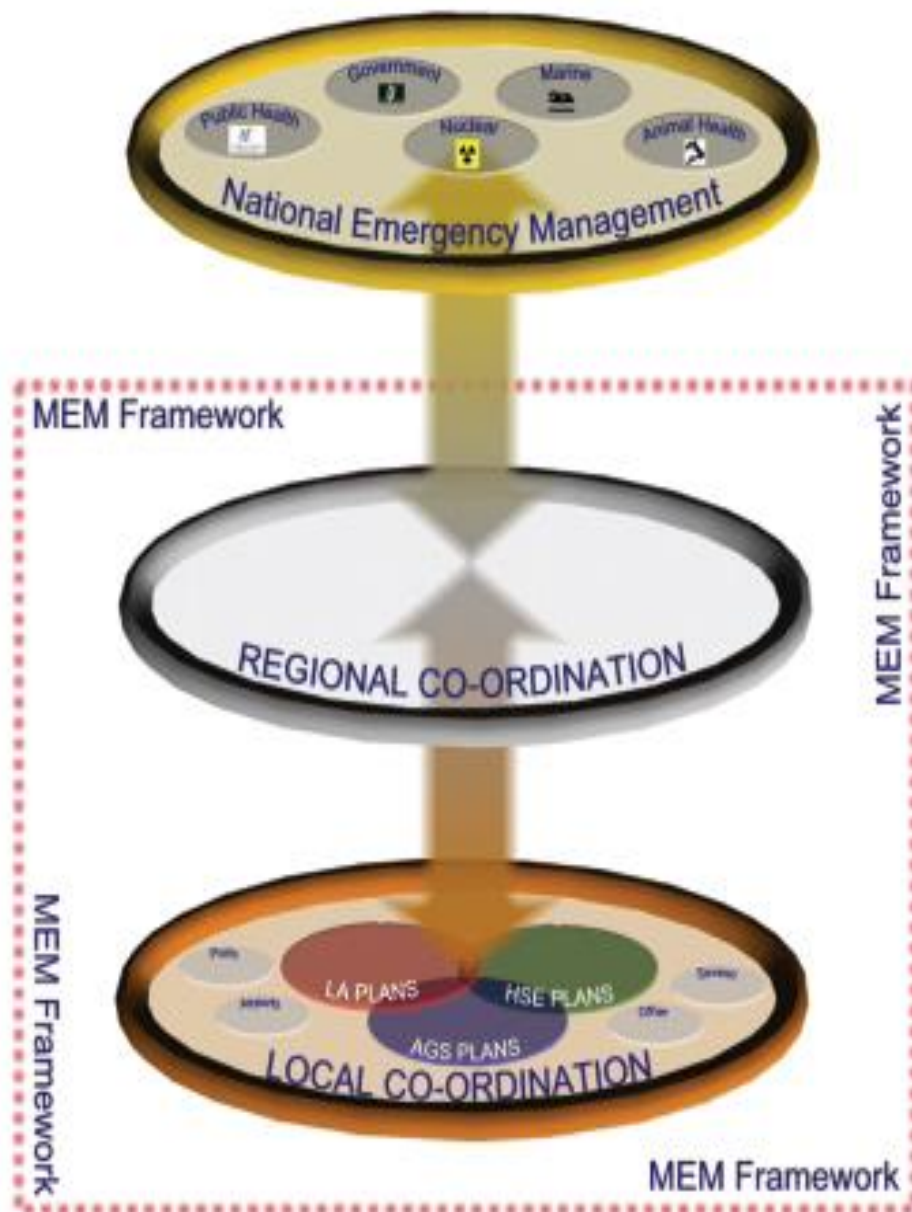
This Major Emergency Plan may also be activated by Roscommon County Council in response to a request by the Irish Coast Guard following a threatened or actual emergency in the Irish Maritime Search and Rescue region.

## 10.3 Activation of the Plan at the request of a Minister of Government in light of an emergency / crisis situation.

The Major Emergency Plan of Roscommon County Council may be activated in response to a request from a Minister of Government in light of an emergency / crisis situation.



**Figure 10.1: Linking Major Emergency Plans with National and other Plans**



**Figure 10.2: Linking Major Emergency Plans with National and other Plans (Alt. Diagram)**

## Section 11

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### Severe Weather Plans

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<b>11.1 Sub-Plans for responding to severe weather emergencies, whether major emergencies are declared or not. The Sub-Plan should include the Council's response plan for; Flooding Emergencies Severe Weather Conditions (Excluding Flooding Emergencies)</b>
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Roscommon County Council has, as a specific sub-plan to its Major Emergency Plan, a plan for responding to severe weather emergencies, whether a Major Emergency is declared or not. This sub-plan will contain the Council's response plan for Flooding Emergencies as well as Severe weather conditions (excluding flooding emergencies). 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. (Refer to *Appendices B2* and *B3* for Sub Plans).

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. Local Authorities should ensure that effective arrangements are in place to receive and respond promptly to public service severe weather warnings issued by Met Éireann.

Severe weather emergencies may involve significant threats to infrastructure and vulnerable sections of the community. Roscommon County Council is responsible for preparing a plan for severe weather events. In the event of a Major Emergency involving severe weather, Roscommon County Council will by default be designated as the lead agency. There is currently an arrangement that has been put in place by Met Éireann to issue public service severe weather warnings to the Local Authorities.

(Please refer to *Table 11.1* overleaf)

<b>11.1.1 Flooding Emergencies</b>
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(See *Appendix B2*)

<b>11.1.2 Severe Weather Emergencies (excluding Flooding Emergencies)</b>
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(See *Appendix B3*)

Weather Element	Criteria for Severe Weather Warnings
1. Wind	Gusts expected of 100km/hr (70mph) or greater
2. Rain	50mm or greater rainfall expected in any 24 hour period 40mm or greater rainfall in any 12 hour period 20mm or greater in any 6 hour period
3. Snow	Significant falls of snow likely to cause accumulations of 3cm or greater below 250m AMSL (Above Mean Sea Level)
4. Drifting Snow	When forecast
5. Thunder	Widespread electrical storms (at least affecting most of one province or equivalent area)
6. Fog	Widespread electrical storms (at least affecting most of one province or equivalent area)
7. Coastal Storm Surge	When significant resulting flooding is expected
8. Freezing rain, drizzle or ice pellets	When such precipitation is forecast

Table 11.1: Criteria for Severe Weather Warning

**Notes:**

- (i) The Warnings will only be issued when there is greater than a 50% chance of the above criteria being fulfilled.
- (ii) The appropriate terms are:  
Probable: 50-70% Likely: 70-90% Very Likely: > 90%
- (iii) The following terms of lower probability will be used in the message only to indicate more severe conditions than specified in the basic criteria.  
Risk: < 20% Possible: 20-50%
- (iv) 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 and on the last 'normal' working day before a holiday period it may be appropriate to issue a preliminary warning or weather watch to Local Authorities.



## Section 12

### Site and Event Specific Arrangements and Plans

#### 12.1 Introduction

In addition to the so called standard risks (e.g. house fires, road traffic accidents, etc.) there are a number of specific risks that are associated with the functional area of County Roscommon. These risks have been identified from the risk assessment process that was carried out by Roscommon County Council. The following is a list of site specific risks;

##### 12.1.1 Irish Rail

Iarnród Éireann has two intercity routes that go through County Roscommon. The Intercity routes are the Dublin / Westport / Ballina and the Dublin / Galway route. It is a high quality rail network for business people, tourists and other rail travellers. These new trains, capable of 90 mph. The geographical area taken into consideration as part of this risk assessment ranges from Ballinlough to Athlone and from Athlone to the outskirts of Ballinasloe.

Roscommon County Council will assume the lead agency role in the event of a Rail incident. However, this is likely to change to An Garda Síochána when the fire-fighting / rescue phase complete. The following type of Emergencies may occur on the rail lines;

- Train Collision
- Train derailment
- Fire Hazard
- Pollution as a result of leaking fuel.

Any emergency that will occur on this line will be raised by an individual or Iarnród Éireann employee dialling 999 or 112. Depending on the nature and complexity of the emergency the following organisations may be also be required to assist the Principal Response Agencies.

Principal Response Agencies	Responding Agencies
Roscommon Local Authorities	Civil Defence
An Garda Síochána	Environmental Protection Agency
Health Service Executive	Irish Red Cross
	Order of Malta
	Iarnród Éireann

**Table 12.1: Responding agencies that may be required to assist the Principal Response Agencies for an incident on the rail lines within County Roscommon.**

A specific Sub-Plan is provided in relation to Rail Incidents in *Appendix B1*. In addition, Contact Details for Irish Rail are supplied in *Appendix C5 (f)*.

*(Detailed information on Rail Maps will be incorporated in this Appendix at a future date, as this work has not yet been completed.)*

### 12.1.2 Industrial Accidents

It is hard to account for all Industrial Incidents whether it is a building collapse, fire or gaseous leak. The following type of Emergencies may occur on or close to an industrial site:

- Fire Hazard
- Hazmat Hazard
- Toxic cloud release
- Pollution

Any emergency that will occur on the premises of an industrial site will be raised by an individual dialling 999 or 112. Depending on the nature and complexity of the emergency the following organisations may be also be required to assist the Principal Response Agencies.

Principal Response Agencies	Responding Agencies
Roscommon Local Authorities	Civil Defence
An Garda Síochána	Environmental Protection Agency
Health Service Executive	Irish Red Cross
	Order of Malta
	Site Management

**Table 12.2: Responding agencies that may be required to assist the Principal Response Agencies for an Industrial Accident.**

Evacuation may be required to the residents situated either side an industrial plant. In the event of an evacuation being required, this process will be undertaken by An Garda Síochána with the assistance of the other services. It is the responsibility of the Roscommon County Council to provide Rest Centres for evacuated populations. Rest Centres have been identified in *Appendix B6* of this Document.

Industry	Location	Risk
Alexion	Monksland	Chemicals (various)
Alkermes	Monksland	Chemicals (various)
Aurivo	Ballaghaderreen	LNG Tank Farm

**Table 12.3: A list of some industries in County Roscommon and description on some Hazardous Materials associated with that industry**

### 12.1.3 Gas Lines

In the future, there *may* be an extensive and complex network of gas piping used within the county to distribute gas. Natural Gas may be available in all the major towns in Co. Roscommon. Two types of piping are generally used;

- Transmission: Operates at higher pressure, used to transport large supplies of gas from South to the North of the country. Also used to supply distribution lines.
- Distribution: Operates at low pressures. Used within town boundaries to supply business and homes.

Location	Material	Pipe depth	Pressure
Town / housing estates / Industry / North South pipe line / Transmission stations	- Polyethylene for distribution lines - Steel for transmission lines	600mm below footpath surface	Low < 100mBar
		750mm below road surface	Medium 100nBar- 4 bar
		1100mm agri	High > 4bar

Any emergency that will occur on the routes will be raised by an individual dialling 999 or 112. Depending on the nature and complexity of the emergency the following organisations may be also be required to assist the Principle Response Agencies

Further information is available in *Appendix C5 (v)* of this Document.

Principle Response Agencies	Responding agencies
Roscommon Local Authorities	Bord Gáis Red Cross Order of Malta Civil Defence
An Garda Síochána	
Health Service Executive	

**Table 12.3: Responding agencies that may be required to assist the Principle Response Agencies for an incident involving Natural Gas.**

*Detailed information on Gas Maps may be incorporated at a future date, as this work has not yet been completed at time of printing.*

#### 12.1.4 Aviation

Although there are no airports within the functional area of County Roscommon, the county is in close proximity to Knock Airport. In addition to this, major international flight paths run over the county on a daily basis. The actual path of these is hard to define as this depends on weather conditions at the time of flight. It is because of this reason that in the event of an emergency it is difficult to account for the exact location for an aviation incident. Serious aircraft accidents are relatively rare but when they do occur they can cause severe problems for the emergency services. The degree of severity of any aircraft accident will depend to a large extent on the location of the incident; e.g. in a town, remote countryside or at an airport, the size of the aircraft, the number of passengers on board and the nature of its cargo.

Depending on the nature and complexity of the emergency the following organisations may be also be required to assist the Principal Response Agencies.

Principal Response Agencies	Responding Agencies
Roscommon Local Authorities	Bord Gáis
An Garda Síochána	I.A.A
Health Service Executive	Coast Guard (aerial support, assist in water search and recovery)
	RNLI (assist in water search and recovery)
	Red Cross
	Order of Malta
	Civil Defence
	Environmental Protection Agency

**Table 12.4: Responding agencies that may be required to assist the Principal Response Agencies for an aviation incident.**

**12.2 The Major Emergency Plan should identify sites arising from the European Union (Control of Major Accident Hazard) Regulations, i.e. the ‘Seveso Regulations’, where specific plans / arrangements exist for responding to emergencies. The Major Emergency Plan should set out the generic arrangements governing the response to such sites / events and should contain reference to the specific plans for the site.**

**SEVESO Sites:** At present, there are no Upper or Lower Tier SEVESO sites within Roscommon County Council functional area. In the past, Elan pharmaceuticals based at Monksland was a Lower Tier SEVESO Site.

## Section 13

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### The Recovery Phase

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Following an emergency incident, assistance would be needed by the victims of the emergency – not only those directly affected, but also family and friends, who may suffer bereavement or the anxiety of not knowing what has happened. 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. Most importantly the Local Authority must restore its service to normal workings in the aftermath of an incident.

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

The recovery will typically include:

- assisting the physical and emotional recovery of victims
- providing support and services to persons affected by the emergency
- clean-up of damaged areas
- restoration of infrastructure and public services
- supporting the recovery of affected communities
- planning and managing community events related to the emergency
- investigations/inquiries into the events and/or the response
- restoring normal functioning to the principal response agencies
- managing economic consequences.

There are a number of requirements that will be expected from the Principal Response Agencies that have been involved in the emergency.

These requirements are:

**a. An Garda Síochána**

- i. Identification of fatalities
- ii. Preservation and gathering of evidence
- iii. Investigation and criminal issues
- iv. Dealing with survivors
- v. Dealing with relatives of the deceased and survivors
- vi. Provision of an appropriate response to the immediate public need

**b. Health Service Executive**

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

**c. Local Authority**

- i. Clean-up
- ii. Rebuilding the community and infrastructure
- iii. Supporting the recovery of affected communities
- iv. Responding to community welfare needs (e.g. housing)
- v. Restoration of services.

<b>13.1 Supports for Individuals and Communities</b>
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The Government has instituted hardship relief schemes, administrated by the Red Cross, in the aftermath of an emergency. The British Red Cross Disaster Appeals Scheme, inaugurated in 1991, is a comprehensive guide to setting up a post disaster appeal fund or funds with national level support, especially that of the retail banks and the Post Office. The function of public appeals will be to raise funds to assist the victims of a disaster. The Irish Red Cross will provide advice on how to set up public appeals.

Voluntary and community organisations should aim to develop a coherent ‘fundraising mix’ that takes into account long-term, medium-term and short-term needs and does not rely too heavily on one or two sources of funding.

Although the emergency response stage may have passed, the recovery stage is also important and includes consideration of many strategic issues, which need to be addressed, at both individual principal response agency and inter-agency level, during this phase. The recovery stage may also be the opportunity to issue Guidance and Advise on a National Level, as was the case during the CoVid-19 pandemic event of 2020/21, when Citizens Information provided advise on how to live with the virus at [https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/covid19/living\\_with\\_covid19\\_plan.html](https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/covid19/living_with_covid19_plan.html) .

There is also a need for the co-ordination of emerging recovery issues, such as managing public appeals and external aid, from the earliest stages of the response phase. For this reason, the arrangements for co-ordination of response should continue to operate during the transition from response stage to recovery stage. At a point when the issues on the agendas of Co-ordination Groups are largely recovery focussed, it may be appropriate to re-title the group as the Local, Regional or National Recovery Co-ordination Group. From the earliest stage, it may be appropriate also for the Local, Regional or National Co-ordination Group to appoint a Recovery Working Group to plan ahead.

It is recommended that Roscommon’s Local Authority 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. In future such aid will be dispensed through established support networks under the guidance of the Department of Social and Family Affairs or the Health Authority.

## **13.2 Clean-Up**

As the incident progresses towards the recovery phase, the emergency services will need to consider a formal handover to the local authority in order to facilitate the authority's leading role in the return to normality, the rehabilitation of the community and restoration of the environment.

It is in the later stages of a major incident (the recovery period and return to normality) that the County Council's involvement may be prolonged and extensive. The services and staff the County 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:

1. Technical and engineering advice
2. Building control
3. Road services
4. Public health and environmental issues
5. Provision of reception centres
6. Re-housing and accommodation needs
7. Transport
8. Social services
9. Psychosocial support
10. Help lines
11. Welfare and financial needs

### **13.2.1 Council's role in the clean-up of sites / removal of debris / decontamination of sites of emergency**

In the aftermath of an emergency the clean-up operation has been assigned to the Local Authority. The removal of debris and contaminated waste is one of concern. Roscommon County Council in consultation with the EPA and specialist companies should 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 Council's role Restoration of Infrastructure and Services.**

The Crisis Management Team will monitor the recovery Phase while ensuring that all Local Authority essential services (e.g. roads availability, fire and emergency operations cover, public water supply, waste water treatment, waste disposal) are maintained during the major emergency.

### **13.3.1 Procedures and arrangements for monitoring the situation;**

The co-ordination of emerging recovery issues may arise on the agendas of the Local, Regional or National Co-ordination Groups 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 focused, 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.

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

### **13.3.2 Procedure for liaison with utilities;**

The utility companies may need to be mobilised in the recovery phase in order to provide essential services such as gas, water and electrical supplies and communications facilities. The senior representative of the utilities companies will liaise directly with the controller of operations of Roscommon County Council who will remain in consultation with the on-site co-ordinator.

### **13.3.3 How the order of priorities are to be determined;**

Priorities will be decided by the On-site and Local Co-ordination Centres and The Crisis Management Team to ensure that the Critical Services are prioritised i.e. hospitals, water supply, food, communications, etc. Furthermore, the Crisis Management Team will ensure that all appropriate business continuity plans are implemented and key actions established.



#### **13.3.4 Protection Measures against Continuing Hazards.**

The Recovery phase of the emergency may extend for days or weeks after the Major Emergency has been stood down. This phase may involve Roscommon County Council staff working in the field on clean up or restoring council services to the affected areas. During this phase the senior staff member of each council section should be aware of hazards that arise as the situation changes and as such should periodically carry out a dynamic risk assessment to ensure the continuing safety of his/her and all council staff.

The Local Co-ordination Group and Crisis Management Team will ensure that adequate resources are deployed and managed to prevent further escalation of the emergency while restoring normality to the site or persons affected

The Crisis Management Team will continue to function until the issues arising in the response phase are more appropriately dealt with by the Local Authority's normal management processes.

#### **13.3.5 Impact on Resources**

The demands of a major emergency will impact heavily on resources, both human and material, of the responding agencies. Consideration needs to be given to managing the conflicting demands of the immediate emergency response, the longer term recovery and the maintenance of normal services.

## Section 14

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### Review of the Major Emergency Plan

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At some stage, when the incident has ended, each of the services and agencies involved in the incident will hold a series of operational debriefs. Initially these will be confined to each particular service, but later a multi-agency debrief will be held and lessons learned will be incorporated into this Manual and other service manuals, as appropriate.

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.

#### 14.1 Internal Annual review of Plan

An internal review of the Major Emergency Plan should be undertaken by Roscommon County Council on a yearly date. The review should be held every September or on the annual date of implementing the plan. The review should include;

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

It is the responsibility of the Section Heads to ensure the accuracy of the Roles and Contact details of their staff named in the Major Emergency Plan.

#### 14.2 External annual review of Plan

An external review of the Major Emergency Plan will be undertaken by Roscommon County Council in partnership with the other principle response agencies at a local level on an annual basis after the internal review has been completed. This review will then be validated by the Western Regional Steering Group. The review will be based on lessons learned from the internal review and also lessons learned arising from exercises held throughout the year.

#### **14.2.1 Review of Plan by Regional Major Emergency Group**

Each principal response agency's Major Emergency Plan should be reviewed and validated annually by the relevant Regional Steering Group on Major Emergency Management. This will include updating and amending the plans as mentioned in **Section 14.1** of this document and reporting on the co-ordination function of the agencies.

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 Review of Plan Government Departments**

The Roscommon County Council Major Emergency Plan Appraisal will be reviewed and validated by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Any issues arising from the review will be referred to Roscommon County Council for appropriate action.

#### **14.3 Review of Plan following Exercises / Activations.**

After every declaration of a major emergency and activation of the plan, and any associated exercises, the following aspects are to be reviewed and reported upon:

- The performance of Roscommon County Council in carrying out its functions. This is to be an internal review and report.
- The Co-ordination function. This review and report is to be external and in conjunction with the other principal response agencies.

If the plan has been activated, then once complete each of the services and agencies involved in the incident will hold a series of operational debriefs. Initially these will be confined to each particular service, but later a multi-agency debrief will be held and lessons learned will be incorporated into this Manual and other service manuals, as appropriate.

#### **14.3.1 Internal Roscommon County Council Report after Each Activation.**

The Major Emergency Plan for Roscommon County Council and the performance of the Local Authority as a principal response agency will be reviewed pursuing a major incident within the county / region or even national, as there are learnings to be gained. Should any new risks become apparent in the County, the plan will be reviewed to reflect this.

#### **14.3.2 How the co-ordination function will be reviewed and reported upon externally and jointly with other principal response agencies.**

Multi-agency reviews must also be conducted on an annual basis between the principle response agencies on both a local and regional level basis. This will include reviewing and reporting on the co-ordination function of the agencies. Multi-agency debriefs should also consider the contribution provided by non-emergency service agencies as well as each PRA. 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'.

## Section 15

## Appendices

Below is a list of Appendices to Roscommon County Council Major Emergency Plan.

<b>Initial Actions</b>	<b>Appendix i</b>	Glossary of Terms
	<b>Appendix ii</b>	Distribution List
	<b>Appendix A1</b>	Procedure taken by the Local Authority to Declare a Major Emergency
	<b>Appendix A2</b>	Persons Authorised to Declare a Major Emergency
	<b>Appendix A3</b>	Format for making the required notification to the Department when a Major Emergency is Declared
	<b>Appendix A4</b>	Initial Mobilisation of Roscommon Co.Co. Key Personnel & Contact Details
	<b>Appendix A5</b>	Crisis Management Team
	<b>Appendix A6</b>	Mobilisation Procedure and Action Plans for Individual Directorates and Sections of Roscommon Co. Co.
	<b>Appendix A7</b>	Determination of Lead Agency
	<b>Appendix A8</b>	Roles of the Three Principal Response Agencies
	<b>Appendix A9</b>	Identification of Personnel at the site of a Major Emergency
	<b>Appendix A10</b>	Co-ordination Centres
	<b>Appendix A11</b>	Key Roles & Decision Making Mandates
	<b>Appendix A12</b>	Information Management
	<b>Appendix A13</b>	On-site Arrangements and Welfare
	<b>Appendix A14</b>	Exercising the Lead Agency's Co-ordination Role
<b>Sub - Plans</b>	<b>Appendix B1</b>	Multi Agency Response to Rail-related Emergencies Sub Plan
	<b>Appendix B2</b>	Flooding Sub-Plan
	<b>Appendix B3</b>	Severe Weather Sub-Plan
	<b>Appendix B4</b>	M6 Motorway Guidance Sub-Plan
	<b>Appendix B5</b>	Mass Fatalities Sub-Plan
	<b>Appendix B6</b>	Evacuation Sub-Plan
	<b>Appendix B7</b>	Decontamination Sub-Plan
	<b>Appendix B8</b>	Media Sub-Plan
	<b>Appendix B9</b>	Communications & Call-signs Sub-Plan
	<b>Appendix B10</b>	Animal Health Sub-Plan
	<b>Appendix B11</b>	Health and Safety during a Major Emergency
	<b>Appendix B12</b>	Regional Voluntary Services Sub-Plan
	<b>Appendix B13</b>	Counter measures for Response to a Nuclear Attack Sub-Plan
	<b>Appendix B14</b>	Multi Agency Response to Radiological/ Nuclear Incident Sub-Plan
<b>Contact No.'s &amp; Miscell.</b>	<b>Appendix C1</b>	Roscommon Co. Co. Municipal Districts / Section Contact Details
	<b>Appendix C2</b>	Roscommon Emergency Service Contact Information
	<b>Appendix C3</b>	Adjoining Counties MEM Key Role Information
	<b>Appendix C4</b>	Government Departments Contact Information
	<b>Appendix C5</b>	State Agencies, Utilities, etc. Contact Information
	<b>Appendix C6</b>	Defence Forces Contact Details & Procedure for Requesting Assistance
	<b>Appendix C7</b>	Local Resources, Contractors, etc. Contact Details
	<b>Appendix C8</b>	Media Contact Information
	<b>Appendix C9</b>	Roscommon Co. Co. MEM Coordination Centre Contact Details
	<b>Appendix C10</b>	Voluntary Emergency and Search & Rescue Services

## Record of Issues and Amendments

<b>Amendment No.</b>	<b>Version No.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Section Amended</b>	<b>Amended By</b>
1.	2.0	22/09/09	Entire Document	Enda Kelly
2.	2.1	18/12/09	ii, A4, A5, A6, B3, B5, B9, C1, C2, C3, C4, C5	Majella Hunt / Enda Kelly
3.	2.2	10/02/10	B3, B5, B9,C2,C3	Majella Hunt / Enda Kelly
4.	2.3	04/01/11	ii, A4,A5, B15, B16, C6	Majella Hunt / Enda Kelly
5.	3.0	17/12/12	ii, A2, A4, A5, A6	Tommy Ryan / Norbert Ferguson / Enda Kelly
6.	3.1	24/07/15	ii, A2, A4, A5, A6, B5, B9, C1, C2, C3 C4, C5, C6	Majella Hunt, Enda Kelly
7.	4.0	22/08/16	ii,A2, A4, A5, A6, A10, B3, B5, B6, B12, B14, B16, C1, C2, C3, C5.	John Keane / Enda Kelly
8.	5.0	10/03/21	ii,A2, A4, A5, A6, A10, B2, B3, B5, B6, B8, B12, C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C7, C8, C9, C10.	Shane Tiernan / Caitlin Conneely /John Keane / Enda Kelly
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