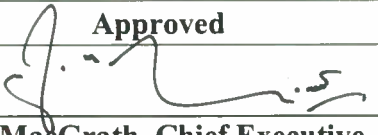# Tipperary County Council

MAJOR EMERGENCY PLAN

2014

Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council

Title:	Major Emergency Plan
Version:	No. 1
Status:	Approved
Approved By:	Joe MacGrath, Chief Executive, Tipperary County Council
Date:	1st June 2014

Record of Issues and Amendments

Amendment No.	Version No.	Date	Section Amended	Amended By
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Foreword

The importance of an effectively managed and co-ordinated response when dealing with a major emergency cannot be over-emphasised and the development of this Plan for dealing with major emergencies in Tipperary has been the focus of our attention since the Government decision in July 2011 to establish a unified County Council in Tipperary. It is anticipated that this Plan will enable Tipperary County Council to fulfil its commitments locally, regionally and nationally in Major Emergency Management.

The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Government approved document '*A Framework for Emergency Management*' (2006). It is issued for the guidance of local authority staff involved in responding to a major emergency and it sets out the basis for a structured response to any major emergency that may occur in County Tipperary.

In recognising the need for effective inter-agency co-operation during the response phase, the Plan integrates with the Plans of the other Principal Response Agencies, namely An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive.

The key elements in addressing a major emergency are to:

- be prepared to respond quickly,
- restore order and normality,
- learn from the experience and
- promote confidence both within the local authority and amongst the general public.

This Plan comes into effect from the 1st June 2014 and it will be continually reviewed to keep pace with the changing and dynamic times we live in and to ensure we learn from other events in Ireland and overseas.

Joe MacGrath,
Chief Executive,
Tipperary County Council.

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Reference should also be made to the mem website: www.mem.ie for national guidance

Section 1

Introduction to Plan

1.1   An introduction to the Plan

A Major Emergency is any event which, usually with little or no warning, causes or threatens death or injury, serious disruption of essential services or damage to property, the environment or infrastructure beyond the normal capabilities of the 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.

1.2   Background

In 2006 the government approved a two-year Major Emergency Development Programme 2006-2008 (MEDP) to allow for the structured migration from current arrangements to an enhanced level of preparedness via the new emergency management process. The purpose of this Plan is to put in place arrangements that will enable the three principle emergency response agencies, An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and the Local Authorities to co-ordinate their efforts whenever a major emergency occurs.

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

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

Fig 1.1: Five Stage Emergency Management Paradigm

1.3   The objectives

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

1.4 The scope of the Major Emergency Plan

The scope of the Major Emergency Plan is such that it provides for a co-ordinated inter-agency response to major emergencies beyond the normal capabilities of the principal emergency services. Emergencies that severely impact on the day to day operation of the local authority or the welfare of the community may require the activation of the Major Emergency Plan.

1.5 The relationship / inter-operability of the Major Emergency Plan with other emergency plans.

An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and Tipperary County Council are the Principle Response Agencies (PRA's) charged with managing the response to emergency situations which arise at a local level.

In certain circumstances, the local response to a major emergency may be scaled up to a regional level, activating the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination. If this is activated, the PRA's are An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and Mid West Region Local Authorities (Tipperary, Clare, Limerick), members of which all sit on the Regional Steering Committee.

1.6 The language / terminology of the Plan;

In situations where different organisations are working together, there is a need for common vocabulary to enable them to communicate effectively. This is particularly the case where the principal emergency services and a range of other bodies are working together under the pressures that a major emergency brings. Therefore a full set of relevant terms and acronyms are provided in *Appendix A1*, which should be used by **all** agencies.

1.7 The distribution of the Plan

Copies of the Plan will be distributed to all Sections of Tipperary County Council, appropriate Heads of Service, Emergency Planning Team members, each Principal Response Agency, neighbouring local authorities and other bodies as determined by the Major Emergency Management Committee. A complete Distribution List for the plan is provided in *Appendix A4.*

1.8 The status of the Plan and when and how it will be reviewed / updated

The Plan is an amalgamation of the North and South Tipperary Plans and has been approved by the Council's Major Emergency Development Committee. It will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis and also following any exercises or incidents.
- Plan Implementation Date: 1st June 2014
- Plan Review Date: May 2015 every year thereafter.

1.9   Public access to the Plan

The Plan is available for inspection at the following offices of Tipperary County Council:

- The Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary or
- County Hall, Emmet Street, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary

The Plan is also available on the Council's website (www.tipperarycoco.ie).

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

Tipperary County Council and its Functional Area

2.1   Role of Tipperary County Council

The functional area of this Plan is the administrative county of Tipperary. Tipperary County Council incorporates the Tipperary Municipal Districts of Templemore-Thurles, Nenagh, Cashel-Tipperary, Clonmel and Carrick-on-Suir.

In the event of a major emergency the role of Tipperary County Council is to ensure life safety by providing a top class emergency service in the form of the Fire Service and Civil Defence. Other sections of the Local Authority will also be required to manage business continuity and ensure that the general needs of the community are addressed to the best of their ability in an emergency situation. Tipperary County Council will ensure that danger areas 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, and the use of its resources to mitigate the effects of the emergency and co-ordination of the voluntary organisations. In the 'recovery' phase the local authority will be responsible to lead and co-ordinate the rehabilitation of the community and the restoration of the environment.

2.2   Boundaries and characteristics of area.

Tipperary is a landlocked county bordering the counties of Laois, Offaly, Galway, Clare, Limerick, Cork, Waterford and Kilkenny.

Tipperary has a population of 156,000. The important urban centres include Clonmel, Nenagh, Thurles, Roscrea, Carrick-on-Suir, Cashel, Cahir, and Tipperary Town. (*See Appendix B1- Tipperary Risk Assessment for a more detailed assessment of the characteristics of the area).*

2.3   Partner principal response agencies

Other agencies responsible for Emergency Services in this area are: -
  (a)   Health Service Executive: South region comprising of counties Kerry, Cork, Waterford, Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny and Tipperary South
         Health Service Executive: West region comprising of counties Galway, Limerick Clare and Tipperary North.
  (b)   An Garda Síochána: Tipperary Division.

2.4   Regional Preparedness

Under certain specific circumstances regional level major emergencies may be declared, with a Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination activated. This will provide for mutual aid,

support and co-ordination facilities to be activated in a region, the boundaries of which are determined to suit the exigencies of the particular emergency. There are eight regions in total that have been created for Major Emergency purposes. The regions are indicated in Figure 2.1 below.
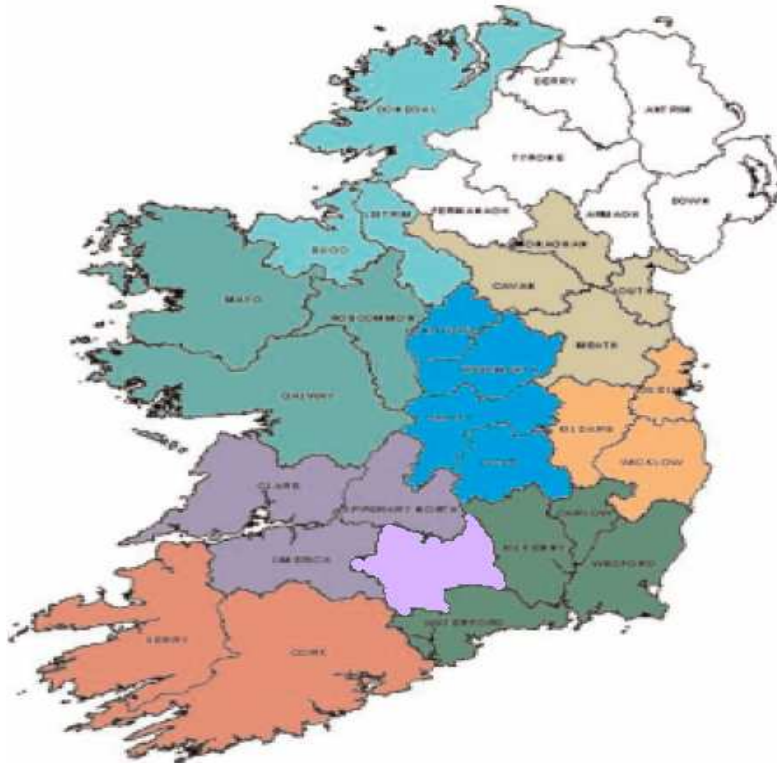

Figure 2.1: Map of the Major Emergency Management Regions

Tipperary County Council belongs to the Mid-West MEM region.   This region incorporates the following counties;

- Tipperary
- Limerick
- Clare

An inter-agency Regional Steering Group is in place for the Mid-West Major Emergency Region with representatives of senior management from each of the Principal Response Agencies (PRAs).

A Regional Working Group on Major Emergency Management has also been established to support and progress major emergency management in the Mid-West Region.

Section 3

Risk Assessment for the Area

3.1   History of area in terms of emergency events.

To prepare effectively to deal with potential emergencies it is necessary to have regard to specific risks faced by a community. Risk Assessment is a process by which the hazards facing a particular community are identified and assessed in terms of the risk which they pose. *(See Appendix B1 for detailed Risk Assessments)*

Major emergencies by their very nature are relatively rare. A major emergency has, to date, never been declared in Tipperary. However, the county has experienced a number of emergency events over the years:

- Contamination of the drinking water supply in the Clonmel Area (2007)
- 5-car pile up on N8 near Cahir (2004)
- Large scale urban flooding in Clonmel (2004/2009/2010)
- Severe weather (2010/2011/2014) – leading to shortage of water supplies within the county
- Large gorse fires in Clonmel and Cahir areas (2007)

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

A number of risk holdings were identified and risk assessments have been carried out on these premises/areas. The risk assessment groups can be broken into the following areas;

1) Hazardous Sites Emergencies:
The European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substance) Regulations, 2006, apply to sites that hold certain quantities of specified dangerous substances. These are classified as upper tier and lower tier.

Merck Sharpe & Dohme (MSD), Ballydine is the only upper-tier site in Tipperary County Council functional area. These regulations require MSD to have Internal and External Emergency Plans, which will be linked to the MEP. The plans have identified credible scenarios *(see Appendix B1)* and the plans will be tested through various exercises, on an ongoing basis.

2) Critical Infrastructure Emergencies:
1. National Primary Roads e.g. N24, N7/M7 and N8/M8.
2. Iarnród Éireann: Main Cork-Dublin rail line running through the county.
3. Tipperary General Hospital, Clonmel.

3) Flooding /Pollution/Animal disease emergencies:
1. Tipperary County Council
2. Water supply contamination

4) Utility company emergencies:
1. Bord Gáis   2. E.S.B   3. Eircom

5) Aviation & CBRN emergencies:
Following international terrorist incidents in recent years, a number of Government Departments are involved in planning for emergencies on a national level for emergencies that involve aviation and CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological & Nuclear agents). Aviation emergencies such as collisions have also been identified in the risk assessment process.

6) Civil Hazards
• Civil disorder / disturbance
• Major crowd safety – nightclub / event
• Mass shooting
• Food situation crisis
• Oil shortage
• Epidemics and pandemic
• Financial crisis

3.3   Scenarios

The following have been selected as exemplars on which preparedness for Tipperary has been based *(See Appendix B1, for detailed Risk Assessment)*

* Urban Flooding

* Aircraft Collision / Loss

* Water Contamination

* Credible scenario incidents at Merck Sharp & Dohme

* Fire / Major Crowd Safety and Civil Disorder

* Major RTA (Road Traffic Accident) / Hazardous Material (Hazmat)

* Natural Gas Explosion along the main Cork-Dublin Gas Line

* Loss of Critical IT Infrastructure

* Rail Incident

3.4   Risk management / mitigation / risk reduction strategies

There are several risk prevention and mitigation strategies in place in relation to the potential hazards listed above, through the day-to-day functions of the Local Authority and relevant stakeholders as well as various regulations in place. Information on these strategies is provided in Tipperary County Council's Risk Assessment Document, contained in *Appendix C1* to this plan.

3.5   Associated Plans and their compatibility with the Major Emergency Plan.

Associated with this Plan are Section Plans for: *(see Appendix A2):*
Fire Service
Civil Defence
Housing
Roads Section
Environment Section
Water Services
Community & Entreprise
Municipal District Plans

A separate appendix deals with the External Emergency Plan for Merck Sharpe & Dohme in accordance with the European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substance) Regulations, 2006 *(Appendix A3)*. The credible scenarios recognised for this site have been considered in the Tipperary Risk Assessment *(Appendix B1).*

Other such plans linked to Tipperary's Major Emergency Plan include 'Emergency Plan for Blizzard Conditions', 'Plan for the protection of Public Water Supplies' and the 'Flood Response Plan' *(Appendix A2)*.

This major emergency plan will take supremacy over <u>any</u> conflict with the existing plans. It is the responsibility of the relevant Sections to ensure that the existing plans are updated to ensure compatibility with this plan.

National Guidelines for generic incidents will be issued on an on-going basis on the national major emergency website: www.mem.ie

Section 4

Resources for Emergency Response

4.1   Structure / resources / services of the Council

The organisational structure of Tipperary County Council consists of the Elected Members (of which there are 40) and the County Manager and his/her staff. Details of these can be found on the Tipperary County Council website (www.tipperarycoco.ie).

The Fire and Rescue Service of Tipperary County Council maintains fire brigades at the following 12 locations:

Borrisokane
Cahir
Carrick-on-Suir
Cashel
Clonmel
Cloughjordan
Nenagh
Newport
Roscrea
Templemore
Thurles
Tipperary Town

The Fire Service in Tipperary is a Retained Fire Service. Additionally, two Senior Fire Officers are rostered on call at all times to assist in the management of emergency incidents.

4.2   Special staffing arrangements during a Major Emergency

Any Tipperary County Council staff requested to carry out functions in relation to a Major Emergency will be mobilised in accordance with pre-determined procedures. In addition, Civil Defence, under the Authority of Tipperary County Council can be mobilised through pre-determiners arrangements.

4.3   How resources of the Council are matched to the functions assigned to it

Tipperary County Council has identified, matched and formally nominated competent individuals and alternates to the key roles to enable the Council to function in accordance with the common arrangements set out in this plan.
Support teams have been put in place for key roles, and operational protocols have been established setting out the arrangements which enable the Council's support teams

mobilise and operate. *(see Appendix C2 also see Appendix F5 of the document 'A Framework for Major Emergency Management)*

4.4   Other organisations / agencies that may be mobilised to assist

There are a number of organisations and agencies, which may be called upon to assist the principal response agencies in responding to major emergencies in addition to specialist national and local organisations. These organisations are:
- Civil Defence
- Defence Forces
- Irish Coast Guard
- Irish Red Cross
- Voluntary Emergency Services (SEMRA (South Eastern Mountain Rescue Association), River Rescue, SRDA (Search and Rescue Dog Association), I.C.R.O. (Irish Cave Rescue Organization), Order of Malta).
- Community Volunteers
- Utility companies (ESB, Bord Gáis, Bus Éireann etc.)
- Private contractors

(See Appendix C1- Tipperary Voluntary Emergency Resources).

4.4.1   Civil Defence

Civil Defence, which is part of the Local Authority, is a body of trained volunteers in the disciplines of first aid, rescue, firefighting, welfare, water based activities, search and recovery. There are currently 236 registered active members in Tipperary. A call out system is in place in the event of an emergency. Civil Defence is 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 C1)*

4.4.2   The Defence Forces

The Defence Forces can provide significant support in a major emergency response. However, these capabilities are primarily deployed in a military role at home and in peace support operations overseas and their deployment in a major emergency situation may require a lead in time to facilitate redeployment. Provision of Defence Forces capabilities is dependent on the exigencies of other demands and on prior agreed arrangements through Memorandums of Understanding and Service Level Agreements between the Department of Defence, the Defence Forces and relevant Government Departments.
It is recognised that assistance requested from the Defence Forces should be either in Aid to the Civil Power (An Garda Síochána), primarily an armed response or in Aid to the Civil Authority (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 (DFHQ) in accordance with the relevant MOUs or SLAs.

4.4.3 The Irish Red Cross

The Irish Red Cross is established and regulated under the Red Cross Acts, 1938-54. These statutes define a role for the Irish Red Cross as an auxiliary to the state authorities in time of emergency and also provide a specific mandate to assist the medical services of the Irish Defence Forces in time of armed conflict. 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 also support An Garda Síochána and the Irish Coast Guard. *(See Appendix C1)*

4.4.4 Voluntary Emergency Services Sector

The normal range of voluntary emergency services includes the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps, St. John's Ambulance Service, Lake Rescue Units (Lough Derg), RNLI, South Eastern Mountain Rescue Association, Carrick-on-Suir River Rescue, Search and dog Association, Cahir River Rescue/Diving Unit, Irish Cave Organization etc. Their ongoing service to the public includes attendance at public events, as well as searches for missing persons and rescue of persons in distress. The majority of these voluntary services are linked to the principal response agencies of An Garda Síochána and the HSE. The Civil Defence is the main voluntary emergency service linked to Tipperary County Council. *(See Appendix C1)*

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. Where available, orange armbands emblazoned with the word 'Volunteer' or suitable abbreviation, e.g. 'VOL', will be issued by Civil Defence, with whom they will be offered a temporary volunteer status.

4.4.6 Utilities

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

It is important that there is close co-ordination between the PRAs and utilities involved in or affected by an emergency. Utilities operate under their own legislative and regulatory frameworks but, during the response to an emergency, they need to liaise with the On-Site Co-ordinator. It is also recommended that representatives of individual utilities on site should be invited to provide a representative for the On-Site Co-ordination Group. It is recommended that individual utilities be invited to attend and participate in relevant work of Local Co-ordination Groups *(See Appendix C2- Resource Contact Personnel and Telephone Numbers)*.

4.4.7 Private Sector

Private sector organisations may be involved in a major emergency situation in a number of ways, 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 PRAs. *(See Appendix C2)*

4.5   How mutual-aid will be sought from neighbours

The Local Co-ordination Group may request assistance via mutual aid arrangements from a neighbouring county. Such support is not equivalent to the activation of the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination and will often precede the activation of the regional plan. Support is most likely to be requested initially from the bordering counties: Clare, Galway, Limerick, Offaly, Laois, Cork, Waterford and Kilkenny.

4.6   Regional level of co-ordinated response

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

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

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

The method of operation of a Regional Co-ordination Centre will be similar to that of a Local Co-ordination Centre. *(See Section 9 of this document)*

4.7	National / international assistance

The Mid-West 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, the United Kingdom or from other EU member states.

The Mid-West 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. The chair of the Tipperary Local Coordination Group or the Mid-West Regional Coordination Group should make requests for such assistance to the National Liaison Officer at the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

Section 5

Preparedness for Major Emergency Response

5.1 The incorporation of major emergency management into the Council's business planning process

The development of the Tipperary County Council Major Emergency Plan is part of an emergency management programme which was developed to ensure that all necessary arrangements; systems, people and resources are in place to discharge the functions assigned to it. The plan therefore does not stand-alone but is in fact incorporated into the Council's management programme. This management programme is designed to maintain a continuous level of preparedness within the county.

5.2 Assignment of responsibility

The implementation of the Major Emergency Management Programme within Tipperary County Council has been assigned to the Director of Services with responsibility for Emergency Services supported by the Chief Fire Officer and staff members within the fire services. All sections within the Local Authority are involved in preparing the Plan and a Major Emergency Development Committee consisting of senior local authority staff meets on a regular basis.

5.3 Documentation of a major emergency development programme

Documentation of the major emergency development programme is held in the Tipperary Fire & Rescue Headquarters, Fire Station, Limerick Road, Nenagh.

5.4 Key roles identified in the Major Emergency Plan

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

5.5 Support teams for key roles

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

5.6 Staff development programme

The provisions of the Framework and the tasks arising from the new major emergency management arrangements involve a significant level of development activity, both within Tipperary County Council and jointly with our regional partners.
In parallel with risk assessment and mitigation processes and the preparation of the Major Emergency Plan, Tipperary County Council will initiate 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 PRA's through continued training and inter-agency exercises. To achieve this on a national level, personnel from each of the PRAs within a region will be appropriately trained and these trainers will deliver training at both local and regional level. Inter-agency exercises will also be held on a regular basis, allowing each of the agencies to develop working relationship prior to the declaration of a Major Emergency, should one arise.

5.7 Training programme

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

5.8 Internal exercises

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

5.9 Joint / inter-agency training and exercise

Joint inter-agency training will be provided at both local and regional level, co-ordinated by the Mid-West Regional Working Group. Exercises will help to develop competence in tandem with this training in order to improve awareness and educate all involved in the roles and functions of the PRA's in the event of an emergency. Exercises will be undertaken on a three-yearly cycle.

5.10 The allocation of specific resources including a budget for preparedness.

Tipperary County Council and the Mid-West Regional Steering Group will put the necessary arrangements in place to provide resources including 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.

5.11 Procurement Procedures

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

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

5.12 Annual appraisal of preparedness

Tipperary County Council will carry out and document an annual internal appraisal of its preparedness for major emergency response, and will appraise and update this Plan annually or as required. On completion, an appraisal report shall then be sent to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government in accordance with the Appraisal Document.

An annual appraisal of the Mid-West Regional level preparedness shall also be documented in accordance with the Appraisal Document.

5.13 Steps taken to inform the public as to what action they should take in the event of an emergency.

There may be situations where it will be necessary for Tipperary 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 that 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 will be co-ordinated by the lead agency. The Local Co-ordination Group may establish a sub-group for this purpose and use all available channels to make concise and accurate information available. This may include the use of dedicated "help-lines", web-pages, Aertel, automatic text messaging, as well as through liaison with the media.

Section 6

The Command, Control and Co-ordination Systems

6.1 Command arrangements

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

6.1.1 Within individual services belonging to the Council.

Tipperary County Council will exercise command over its own services in accordance with its normal command structure. At the site of an emergency, it will exercise control over not only its own services but also any additional services (other than the PRA's) which the Council mobilises to the site. The Controller of Operations will exercise control of the Local Authority services at the site of the Emergency.

6.2 Control arrangements

Tipperary County Council will appoint a Controller of Operations at the site (or at each site) of the emergency. The officer in command of the initial response of each Principal Emergency Service should be the PRA's Controller of Operations until relieved through the agency's pre-determined process.
Please see section 6.3.4.2 for arrangements where an emergency affects an extensive area or occurs near the Council's borders.

6.2.1 Control of all services / sections of the Council which respond

Controller of services/sections and Controller of Operations
The Controller of Operations is empowered to make all decisions relating to his/her agency's functions, but must take account of decisions of the On-Site Co-ordination Group in so doing.
The role of the Controller of Operations is set out below:
- To make such decisions as are appropriate to the role of controlling the activities of the Council's services at the site (controlling in this context may mean setting priority objectives for individual services; command of each service should remain with the officers of that service);
- To meet with the other two Controllers and determine the lead agency;
- To undertake the role of On-Site Co-ordinator, when the Council is identified as the lead agency;
- To participate fully in the site co-ordination activity, including the establishment of a Site Management Plan;

- Where another service is the lead agency, to ensure that the Council's operations are co-ordinated with the other PRAs, including ensuring secure communications with all agencies responding to the major emergency at the site;
- To decide and request the attendance of such services as s/he determines are needed;
- To exercise control over such services as s/he has requested to attend;
- To operate a Holding Area to which personnel from the Council will report on arrival at the site of the major emergency and from which they will be deployed;
- To requisition any equipment s/he deems necessary to deal with the incident;
- To seek such advice as s/he requires;
- To maintain a log of the Council's activities at the incident site and decisions made;
- To contribute to and ensure information management systems operate effectively;
- To liaise with the Council's Crisis Management Team on the handling of the major emergency.

On-Site Co-ordinator

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

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

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

Local co-ordination Group:
Once the Local Co-ordination Group has been activated their mandate is as follows:
- To establish high level objectives for the situation, and give strategic direction to the response;
- To determine and disseminate the overall architecture of response co-ordination;
- To anticipate issues arising;
- To provide support for the on-site response;
- To resolve issues arising from the site;
- To ensure the generic information management system is operated;
- To take over the task of co-ordinating the provision of information for the public as soon as it meets and to use all available channels to make concise and accurate information available;

- To decide and to take action to manage public perceptions of the risks involved, as well as managing the risks, during emergencies that threaten the public;
- To co-ordinate and manage all matters relating to the media, other than on-site;
- To establish and maintain links with the Regional Co-ordination Centre (if involved);
- To establish and maintain links with the lead Government Department/National Emergency Co-ordination Centre;
- To ensure co-ordination of the response activity, other than the on-site element;
- To decide on resource and financial provision; and
- To take whatever steps are necessary to plan for recovery.

Crisis Management Team

The Council's Crisis Management Team is a strategic level management group which is assembled during a major emergency to:
- Manage, control and co-ordinate the Council's overall response to the situation;
- Provide support to the Council's Controller of Operations on site and mobilise resources from within the Council or externally as required;
- Liaise with relevant Government Departments on strategic issues; and
- Ensure appropriate participation of the Council in the inter-agency co-ordination structures.

The members of the Crisis Management Team as designated in *Appendix C2,* will meet at the new Fire Training and Development Building, Heywood Road, Clonmel in the case of major emergencies occurring in South Tipperary, or at the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh in the case of major emergencies in North Tipperary. The use of the Crisis Management Team facilitates the mobilisation of senior staff to deal with the crisis, in light of the evolving situation, rather than leaving multiple roles to a small number of individuals who hold key positions. In this way, the objectives of prioritising and managing a protracted crisis can be dealt with effectively, while keeping the day-to-day business running.

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

6.2.2 Control of external organisations / agencies mobilised to assist the Council during the response.

There are a number of organisations and agencies, which may be called on to assist the council in responding to major emergencies. At the site of an emergency, Tipperary County Council will exercise control over not only its own services but also any additional services (other than the PRAs), which the Local Authority mobilises to the site.

6.2.3 Support arrangements for the Control function.

Tipperary County Council staff will respond to any major emergency in accordance with pre-determined agreements. The Crisis Management Team will control all Council personnel that respond to the emergency.

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.

6.3.1 Lead Agency

The concept of the Lead Agency is accepted as the method for establishing which PRA has initial responsibility for the coordination of all services at the various levels of response to a Major Emergency. The pre-determined and default lead agencies for different types of emergencies are set out in *Appendix D1*.

6.3.2 On Site Co-ordination function, including arrangements for support teams

The On-Site Controller of Operations and the On-Site Co-ordination Group facilitate on-site Co-ordination. The rolls of the On-site Co-ordinator and the On-Site Co-ordination Group have been outlined in *section 6.2.1 of this document*.

6.3.3 Co-ordination function at the Local/Regional Co-ordination Centres

When a major emergency has been declared and the lead agency determined, the relevant personnel of the lead agency should implement a Local Co-ordination Group mobilisation procedure. The representative of the lead agency will chair the Local Co-ordination Group, located in the Local Co-ordination centre, and will exercise the mandates associated with this position. The Local Coordination Group will comprise representatives of the other two PRA's, an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer, an Action Management Officer (where considered necessary), and representatives of other agencies and specialists, as appropriate.
The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may declare a regional level emergency and activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination.
Any one of the nominated Local Co-ordination Centres may be used as a Regional Coordination Centre, or a specific Regional Centre may be designated for this purpose. The choice of location will be determined in each situation by the Chair of the Local Coordinating Group declaring the regional level emergency and will depend on the location and nature of the emergency and any associated infrastructural damage.

6.3.4 Co-ordination in other specific circumstances

In order to achieve co-ordination in other specific circumstances, if considered appropriate representatives from other agencies and specialists will be invited to participate in the co-ordination process.

6.3.4.1 Mutual aid and regional level co-ordination

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 PRAs. As national organisations, the Crisis Management Teams of the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána should arrange to provide the additional support required. Local Authorities will support each other on a mutual aid basis. *See section 4.5 and 4.6 of this document.*

6.3.4.2 Incidents occurring on the Council boundaries

Attendance at emergency incidents by the Fire Service is determined by Pre-Determined Attendance procedures (PDA's) in operation through the Minster Regional Communications Centre (MRCC). As such, incidents on the Council boundaries will be dealt with through these procedures.

6.3.4.3 Multi-site or wide area emergencies

Multi-site or wide area emergencies may require the setting up of multiple Local Co-Ordination Groups. During such an emergency each Local Co-ordination 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 co-ordination Groups should be co-ordinated via a Regional co-ordination Centre or via the lead Government Department will be taken in light of the prevailing circumstances.

6.3.4.4 Links with National Emergency Plans

Links with National Emergency Plans are shown in figure 6 with further detail provided in Section 10.

6.3.4.5 Links with National Government

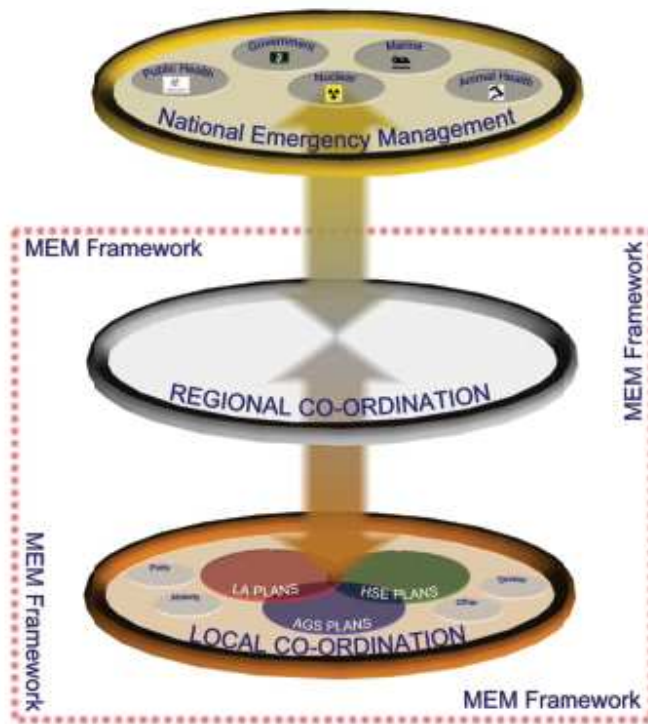Contact with the Government will be made through the Local Coordination Group.

**Figure 6: Linking Major Emergency Plans with
National Plans and Other Plans**

Section 7

The Common Elements of Response

7.0   Sub-sections containing common elements of the response to any major emergency

    7.1   Declaring a Major Emergency

    7.2   Initial Mobilisation

    7.3   Command, Control and Communication Centres

    7.4   Co-ordination Centres

    7.5   Communications Facilities

    7.6   Exercising the Lead Agency's Co-ordination Roles

    7.7   Public Information

    7.8   The Media

    7.9   Site Management Arrangements

    7.10   Mobilising Additional Resources

    7.11   Casualty and Survivor Arrangements

    7.12   Emergencies involving Hazardous Materials

    7.13   Protecting Threatened Populations

    7.14   Early and Public Warning Systems

    7.15   Emergencies arising on Inland Waterways

    7.16   Safety, Health and Welfare Considerations

    7.17   Logistical Issues/ Protracted Incidents

    7.18   Investigations

    7.19   Community/ VIPs/ Observers

    7.20   Standing-Down the Major Emergency

Section 7.1

Declaring a Major Emergency

7.1.1   Declaring a Major Emergency

The Major Emergency Plan should be activated by whichever of the following agencies first becomes aware of the major emergency:-
Tipperary County Council *(see Appendix E1 for persons authorised to activate plan)*
An Garda Síochána
Health Service Executive
A typical message to declare a major emergency should be in the following format:

This is ……………….. (Name, rank and service) ……………..
A ….....… (Type of incident) ….....… has occurred/is imminent at ……
(Location) ……........................……
As an authorised officer I declare that a major emergency exists.
Please activate the mobilisation arrangements in the ……….. (Agency) ………..
Major Emergency Plan.

7.1.2   Standard format of the information message

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

M	**Major Emergency Declared**
E	**Exact location of the emergency**
T	**Type of Emergency (Transport, Chemical, etc.)**
H	**Hazards, present and potential**
A	**Access / egress routes**
N	**Number and type of Casualties**
E	**Emergency service present and required**

Section 7.2

Initial Mobilisation

7.2.1 Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure

Tipperary 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 Council service requested shall respond in accordance with pre-determined arrangements. *See Appendix E1*

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

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

Command, Control and Communication Centres

7.3.1 Command, control and communication centre(s) to be used

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

After the declaration of a major emergency and the setting up of co-ordination centres and teams, communication with the MRCC will come from the Local Authority Crisis Management Team (located off site), with On-site Co-ordination personnel reporting to the Local Co-ordination Centre and their relevant Crisis Management Teams, as detailed in Figure 7
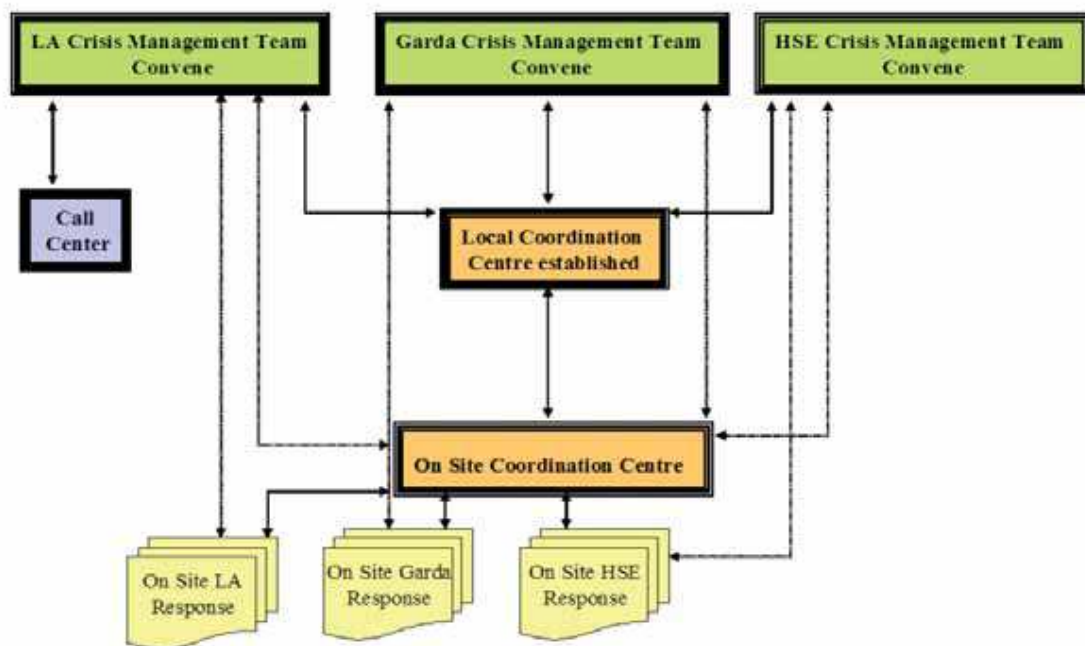

Figure 7. Communication Structure in a Major Emergency

Section 7.4

Co-ordination Centres

7.4.1   On-Site Co-ordination

An onsite co-ordination centre will be deployed in the event of a major emergency for onsite operational command and support. This may be a dedicated MEM vehicle, tent or an adjacent building that will accommodate all PRA's.

7.4.2   Crisis Management Team

The Crisis Management Team is a strategic level management group within each PRA, which is assembled during a major emergency. It provides support to the PRA's representative at the Local Co-ordination Group, supports their own Controller of Operations on site and maintains the agency's normal day-to-day services that the community requires.
Please refer to Section 6.2.1 of this document for further details.

7.4.3   Location of pre-determined Local Co-ordination Centres

PRA's within Tipperary have identified the following locations as suitable for the Local Co-ordination Centre for strategic level co-ordination;
- Tipperary Fire Service New Training Building, Heywood Rd, Clonmel, or
- Civic Offices, Nenagh, depending on the location of the emergency.

These buildings have been chosen to facilitate the effective working of the Local Co-ordination Group and Local Authority Crisis Management Team. *Please refer to (1) Section 6 of this document, (2) 'Guidance to setting up a Co-ordination Centre' on www.mem.ie, and (3) Appendix C2 for further details.*

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

The Local Co-ordination Centre will have the capacity to act as a Regional Co-ordination Centre, should the major emergency be scaled up to a regional level.

7.4.5   Information management

Information Management Officers will be assigned to facilitate the gathering, sharing, processing and use of information arising from the major emergency through the use of a generic Information Management System outlined in Appendix F10 of 'A Framework for Major Emergency Management' and through the training they have received.

Section 7.5

Communications Facilities

7.5.1 Communications systems

Generally, all Tipperary County Council personnel that are may be required to respond to a major emergency carry mobile phones. In addition, the following communications systems are available:

- Fire service
  All front line appliances are equipped with radios (VHF) and have the ability to communicate within the functional area of Tipperary. There are also hand-held UHF radios UHF available for on-site communications. A number of satellite phone are also available for use through the fire service in the event of a major emergency
- Civil Defence
  Civil Defence operates both mobile radio (VHF) for communication between vehicles and communication centres and hand-portable radio (UHF) for communication on site. A digital multi-line phone and fax service is also available at Civil Defence Headquarters. There are also a number of handheld and fixed Marine VHF radios (held in the North of the County) allowing communication with the Irish Coast Guard.

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 critical that robust arrangements for inter-agency communication on site(s) are provided for at Controller of Operations level as a minimum. For this purpose, the fire service will bring hand-portable radios and satellite phones, dedicated specifically to inter-agency communication, to the site of the emergency.

It is also crucial that there are appropriate communication links between different elements of the site management, as described in Section 7.9.

7.5.3 Communications between site and coordination centres

All communication between On-site Co-ordination and the Local Co-ordination will pass between the Controller of Operations/On-site Co-ordinator to the Local Co-Ordination group, supported by the work of trained Information Management Officers at the co-ordination centres. Communications between the site and the Co-ordination Centre will be facilitated by way of radio/phone/fax/e-mail systems available to relevant personnel at

the time. Resilient communication may also be achieved by used of satellite telephones at each co-ordination centre. Further guidance is contained in the Communications Plan (see *Appendix G7).*

Section 7.6

Exercising the Lead Agency's Co-ordination Roles

7.6.1   Lead Agency

One of the three PRA's will be designated as the lead agency for any emergency and will assume responsibility for leading co-ordination. *See Section 6.3.1 of this Document.*

7.6.2   Review and transfer of the Lead Agency

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

7.6.3   Council's co-ordination function as a "Lead Agency"

In the event of Tipperary County Council being assigned the Lead Agency role, 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 of the lead agency for any emergency includes ensuring:

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

Section 7.7

Public Information

7.7.1   Early warning / 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.

The Local Co-ordination Group should manage 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.

7.7.2   Public Notices

Early warning and special public notices will be relayed in the event of an emergency. The Public can be kept informed by use of the following;
- Internet service (www.tipperarycoco.ie);
- Local broadcasters;
- Emergency helpline service.

On a national level the public can be informed by use of Television and Radio. Arrangements exist whereby emergency announcements may be made on RTÉ television and radio channels.

Please refer to a 'Guide to working with the Media' for further information (see www.mem.ie). See Appendix C3 for useful phone numbers.

Section 7.8

The Media

7.8.1   Arrangements for liaison with the media.

The media will respond quickly to a large-scale incident and this media presence may extend into days or weeks. It is the responsibility of the lead agency to establish a Media Centre at or near the site of the emergency for use by the PRA's in dealing with the media at the site. The Local Co-ordination Group will be responsible for official media statements and press releases off/on-site. *Please refer to a 'Guide to working with the Media' for further information (www.mem.ie). See Appendix A2 Sub-plans - Inter-Agency Public Communication Plan: Media Liaison*

7.8.2   Arrangements for media on-site

A Media Liaison Officer will be appointed at both the On-site and Local Co-ordination Centres. The Media Liaison Officer must keep accurate and timely information on the emergency so that, in consultation with the local Co-ordination Groups, h/she should:
- Be the point of contact for all media enquiries.
- Answer information queries from the general public.
- Obtain and provide information from/to Rest Centres, other agencies, press officers, local radio, press etc.
- Be responsible for setting up an information helpline.
- Liaise with other Media Liaison Officers.

7.8.3   Arrangements for media at Local and /or Regional Co-ordination centres

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

7.8.4   Arrangements for media at other locations associated with the emergency.

In many situations media attention will move quickly away from the site to other locations, including the Local Co-ordination Centre, hospitals and mortuaries. The Local Co-ordination Group will take the lead in terms of working with the media and will hold media briefings in a designated area of the Local Coordination Centre. Media personnel attending other locations (hospitals etc.) should be directed to this location.

Section 7.9

Site Management Arrangements

Tipperary County Council will appoint a Controller of Operations at the site (or at each site) of the emergency, *see section 6.2 of this document.* The initial important task of the Controller of Operations in association with the other two Controllers is the development of a Site Management Plan. Once agreed, the resulting site plan should be implemented and communicated to all responding groups.
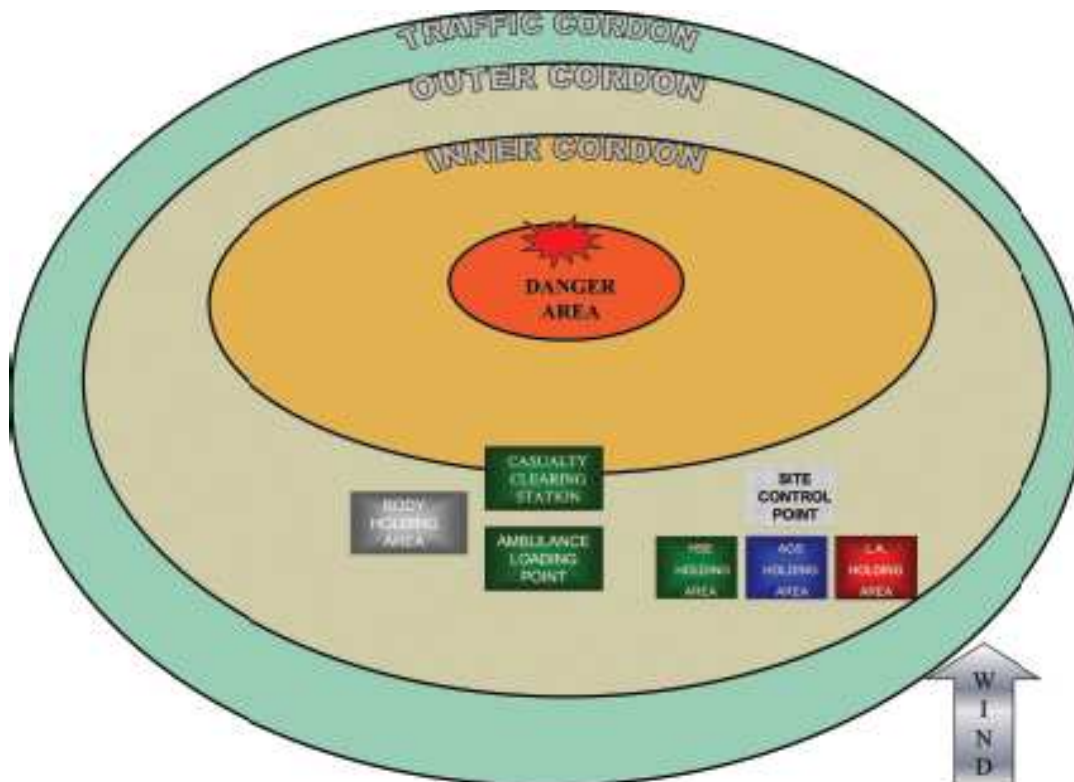

Figure 7.1: Idealised Scene Management Arrangements

The main components of a typical Site Plan should contain some or all of the following: *(See Appendix E2 for detailed information on Scene Management)*

- Inner, Outer and Traffic Cordons;
- A Danger Area, if appropriate;
- Cordon and Danger Area Access Points;
- Rendezvous Point;

- Body Holding Area;
- Survivor Reception Centre;
- Friends and Relative Reception Centre; and

- Site Access Routes;
- Holding Areas for the Different Services;
- Principal Response Agency Control Points;
- On-Site Co-ordination Centre;

- Media Centre.
- Ambulance Loading Area;
- Casualty Clearing Station;
- Site Control Point;

7.9.2 Control of access/identification of personnel and services of the Council

In order to control access to the site of a major emergency, an Inner, Outer and Traffic Cordon will be established along with access cordon points as quickly as possible *(see Appendix E2)*. This will be undertaken by An Garda Síochána after a decision by and agreement with the On-site Co-Ordination Group.

All personnel responding to the site of a major emergency should wear (or carry) the form of identification issued to them by their agency, and should ensure that their vehicles are adequately identified. Responding personnel should be aware that they will be requested to identify themselves at the Outer Cordon Access Point by An Garda Síochána, and may not be allowed through the Outer Cordon without such identification. Where identification is not permanently retained on the person or vehicle, it should be obtained from the relevant Holding Area or Control Point. The identification carried by key personnel should be of the 'photo id' type and should clearly identify their employer and job title.

Identification of Personnel at the Site of a Major Emergency

All uniformed personnel, responding to the site of a major emergency, should wear the prescribed uniform, including high visibility and safety clothing, issued by their agency. The service markings on this clothing should be made known in advance to the other organisations that may be involved in the response. Senior personnel who are acting in key roles, such as the On-Site Co-ordinator and the Controllers of Operations, should wear bibs designed and coordinated as follows:

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

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

Non-Uniformed Personnel

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

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 Authorities. 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 Authorities.

Section 7.10

Mobilising Additional Resources

7.10.1 Arrangements for mobilising organisations

The Voluntary Emergency Services sector can provide additional equipment and support in the event of a major emergency. Details of local Voluntary Emergency Services, the resources they can provide and their mobilisation procedure is outlined in *Appendix C1*. The Voluntary Emergency Services will link to the Principal response Agencies in accordance with Table below.

Principal Response Agency	**Linked Voluntary Emergency Service**
An Garda Siochána	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
Local Authority	Civil Defence

7.10.1.1 Mobilisation of Civil Defence

Please refer to section 4.4.1 of this document, details also given in Appendix C1

7.10.1.2   Mobilisation of Defence Forces

Please refer to section 4.4.2 of this document, details also given in Appendix C1

7.10.1.3   Mobilisation of The Irish Red Cross

Please refer to section 4.4.3 of this document, details also given in *Appendix C1*

7.10.1.4   Mobilisation of Voluntary Emergency Services

Each Principal Response Agency with a linked Voluntary Emergency Service 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.

7.10.1.5 Mobilisation of Utilities

Utilities are frequently involved in the response to emergencies, usually to assist the principal response agencies in making situations safe. They may also be directly involved in restoring their own services, for example, electricity supply in the aftermath of a storm. Utilities operate under their own legislative and regulatory frameworks but, during the response to an emergency, it is important that they are involved in the co-ordination arrangements. Utilities may be requested to provide representatives and/or experts to the On-Site Co-ordination Group, the Local 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 C3. Please refer to section 4.4.6 of this document for further details.*

7.10.1.6 Mobilisation of Private Sector

Private sector organisations may be involved in a major emergency through ownership of the site where the emergency has occurred or through ownership of some element involved in the emergency e.g. an aircraft, bus, factory, etc. They may also be called on to assist in the response to a major emergency, by providing specialist services and/or equipment. Private sector representatives and/or experts may be requested to support the work of the On-Site Co-ordination Group, the Local Co-ordination Group and/or the Regional Co-ordination Group, as appropriate. A list of experts and equipment within the private sector is detailed in *Appendix C3.*

7.10.2 Arrangements for identifying and mobilising additional organisations

The Local Authority Controller of Operations should ensure that, where the resources of the authority do not appear to be sufficient to bring a situation under control, or the duration of an incident is expected to be extended, the levels, types and duration of assistance/ support are identified, and that the request for support is passed to either the authority's Crisis Management Team or the Local Co-ordination Centre who will arrange to obtain the support via mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring authorities.
Where resources that are held at a national level are required, as part of the management of the incident, requests for those resources should be directed by the lead agency to the Lead Government Department.

7.10.3   Arrangements for liaison with utilities

Please refer to section 4.4.6 of this document, details also given in *Appendix C3.*

7.10.4 Arrangements for integration of casual volunteers as appropriate

Please refer to section 4.4.5 of this document.

7.10.5 Arrangements for command, control, co-ordination and demobilisation of organisations mobilised to the site

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

Generally, all responding agencies should be made aware of the site management arrangements and should report as directed to the relevant Holding Area. Attempts should be made to assign external assistance units to tasks in a way that does not involve pooling or sharing equipment. Special attention may be required for both the welfare and safety needs of external agencies. External agencies should be made aware of and should comply with the principal response agencies' arrangements for liaising with the media. *Please refer to section 4.4.1 through 4.4.7 and section 7.10.1 of this document.*

7.10.6   Mutual aid arrangements

Tipperary County Council is supported by and supports neighbouring local authorities on a mutual aid basis. Requests for additional resources can be made through the Munster Regional Communications Centre. *Please refer to 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 Coordination Centre. *Please refer to section 4.7 of this document.*

7.10.8   Requests for international assistance

A Regional Co-ordination Group may also request assistance from Government. National resources will be available in the event of a major emergency at local or regional level. Requests for assistance should be developed at local or regional co-ordination level and directed by the lead agency to the lead Government Department. *Please refer to section 4.7 of this document.*

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 those who are affected by the emergency. As well as making provision for casualties and survivors, the PRA's should also make arrangements for the reception, facilitation and support of the friends and relatives of some or all of these individuals.
Please refer to a 'Guide to dealing with Mass Casualties', 'Guide to setting up a friends and relative centre', 'Guide to setting up a Survival Reception Centre', at www.mem.ie.

7.11.1.1 Casualties and Survivors and the Local Authority's role

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*, including 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 PRA's are to save life, prevent further injury, rescue those who are trapped or in danger, triage casualties, provide appropriate treatment and transport them to the appropriate hospital(s) where necessary.

7.11.2.1 Arrangements for the triage

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

7.11.2.2 Transporting lightly injured and uninjured persons from the site

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

7.11.2.3 Casualty Clearing

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

7.11.3 Fatalities

The 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 Local Authority can assist An Garda Síochána in this function. *Please refer to www.mem.ie for guidance on planning for Mass Fatalities.*

7.11.3.1 Coroners role

The Coroner is an independent judicial officer, who has responsibility for investigating all sudden, unexplained, violent or unnatural deaths. It is the task of the Coroner to establish the 'who, when, where and how' of unexplained death. All such deaths in Ireland are investigated under the Coroners' Act, 1962. The Local Authority will support the Coroner by establishing a Body Holding Area and/or a Temporary Mortuary where necessary, *Please refer to www.mem.ie for guidance on planning for Mass Fatalities.*

7.11.3.2 Arrangements for dealing with fatalities, both on and off-site

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

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 Mortuaries

It is the responsibility of the Local Authorities in consultation with the District Coroners and health service Pathologists to provide a Temporary Mortuary, if required.

The likely commissioning time for a Temporary Mortuary is of the order of twenty-four hours, and this may extend to forty-eight hours when victim numbers are extensive. It should be noted that a Temporary Mortuary might be required to operate for weeks or months after an incident. *Please refer to www.mem.ie for guidance on planning for Mass Fatalities.*

7.11.3.3   Identification of the deceased

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

7.11.4   Survivors

Survivor Reception Centre should be designated and established at the earliest possible opportunity. Transport from the Survivor Reception Centre to home/meet relatives/safe place will be arranged as soon as it is practicable. This responsibility will lie with Tipperary County Council. *Please refer to 'Guide to setting up a Survival Reception Centre' for further information. source www.mem.ie.*

7.11.4.1 Arrangements for dealing with uninjured survivors who require support

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. It is the responsibility of Tipperary County Council to establish and run this centre. Tipperary County Council has identified the following as generally suitable buildings for setting up a survivor centre:

- Recreation Centres
- Parish Halls
- Local Churches
- Local Schools
- Any other building that is large enough to accommodate large amounts of people.

All those who have survived the incident uninjured can be directed to the Survivor Centre, where their details will be documented and collated by An Garda Síochána. 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 Civil Defence and the voluntary emergency services may be required to provide a variety of services at the Survivor Reception Centre. The Survivor Reception Centre should be secure from any unauthorised access and provide the maximum possible privacy for survivors. *See Appendix E3, for Temporary Accommodation List.*

7.11.5   Casualty Information

Gathering of casualty information will be the responsibility of An Garda Síochána.

7.11.5.1 Casualty Bureau

In the event of a major emergency involving significant numbers of casualties, An Garda Síochána will establish a Casualty Bureau to collect and collate the details (including condition and location) of all casualties and survivors.

7.11.5.2   Provision of Casualty information

To facilitate this, the Casualty Bureau, a liaison/casualty officer will normally be sent by An Garda Síochána to each hospital, survivor reception centre and casualty reception centre where casualties are being treated. The local Authority may assist in the collection and collation of casualty data. This information may then be used to provide to family and friends. 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/friends may enquire about individuals.

7.11.6   Friends and Relatives Reception Centres

The purpose of a reception centre is to provide a comfortable area where friends and relatives of those involved in the incident (primarily the casualties and survivors) can be directed for information. The Local Co-ordination Group will determine the need for and arrange for the designation and operation/staffing of such centres.

A building used as a Reception Centre for relatives and friends 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. *Please refer to a 'Guide to setting up a friends and relative centre' for further information. Source www.mem.ie.*

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. *See Appendix C2 for contact numbers.*

7.11.7.1 Foreign language communication resources

Advice may be sought from An Garda Síochána as to the use of interpreters. Generally the local Garda Station will have a list of approved interpreters, which may be called upon in the event of an emergency. Advice may also be sought from the Department of Foreign Affairs. *See Appendix C2.*

7.11.8   Pastoral and Psycho-social Care

The On-Site Coordinator will ensure that, where appropriate, pastoral services are mobilised to the site and facilitated by the PRAs 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.

7.11.8.1 Responsibility of Pastoral and psycho-social support arrangements

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

It is the responsibility of each principal response agency to ensure that it has an appropriate structured programme in place to monitor and provide psychosocial support, as appropriate, to all members of staff who are involved in the emergency.

Section 7.12

Emergencies involving Hazardous Materials

7.12.1 Arrangements for dealing with major Hazardous Materials incidents

The Local Authority is the lead agency for response to hazardous materials incidents, with the exception of those involving biological agents. Where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána will act as the lead agency. The Defence Forces, when requested, will assist An Garda Síochána in an Aid to the Civil Power role with Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams. Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a CCBRN incident are contained in the '*Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Suspect Chemical and Biological Agents'* (*www.mem.ie.)*

7.12.2 CCBRN incidents

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

7.12.3 Biological incidents

Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a biological incident are detailed in the '*Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Suspect Chemical and Biological Agents'. (www.mem.ie.)*

7.12.4 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. Tipperary County Council will provide assistance under the command of the lead government department. Please refer to the '*National Flu Pandemic Plan'* (*www.mem.ie.)*

7.12.5 Nuclear Accidents

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

7.12.6 Decontamination

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

Where emergency decontamination of the public is required, the Local Authority fire service may use its fire-fighter decontamination facilities, or improvised equipment may be used prior to the arrival of dedicated equipment. Where it is decided that persons should undergo this practice, it should be carried out under the guidance of medical personnel. It should be noted that emergency decontamination carries risks for vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and the injured. It may be more appropriate in certain circumstances for outer clothing to be removed and blankets provided as a temporary measure to alleviate potential harm through surface contact with contaminants.
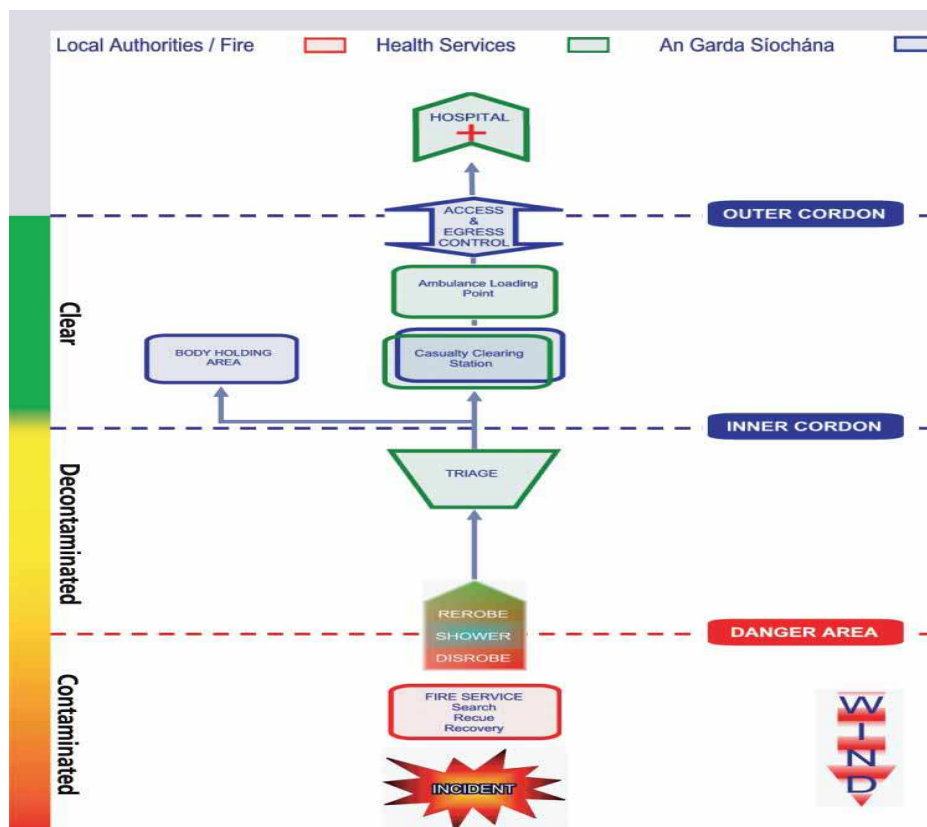

Fig 7.2: Managing Hazards Material Incidents

Section 7.13

Protecting Threatened Populations

7.13.1 Threatened Population

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

7.13.2 Evacuation arrangements

The On-Site Co-ordinator will take the decision on how best to protect a threatened population, after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. Evacuation is usually undertaken on the advice of the Local Authority or Health Service Executive. Where decided upon, An Garda Síochána will undertake the process of evacuation, 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 the establishment of rest centres will be the responsibility of Tipperary County Council.
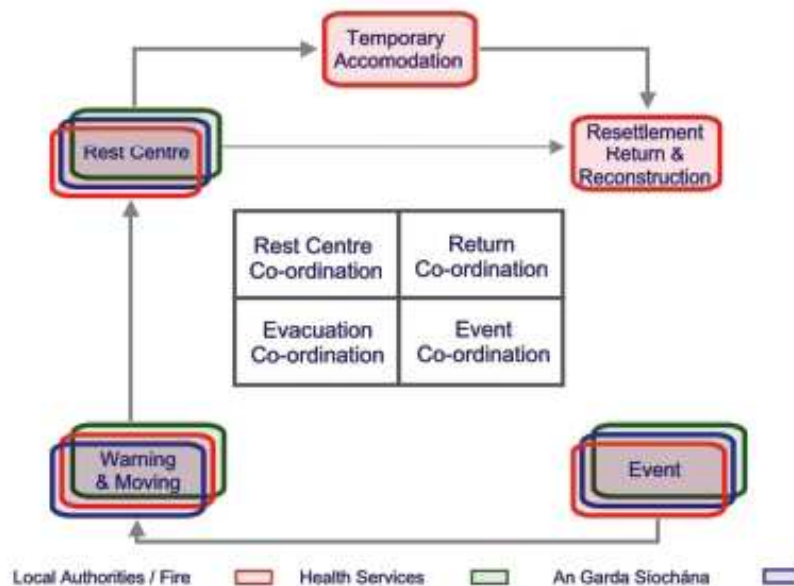

Figure 7.3: Structure of Evacuation

Personnel from the local authority 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 Local Authority will assist in this role.

Please see sections 7.11and 7.17.3 for further details on evacuee welfare, also refer to 'A Guidance to Mass Evacuation' (www.mem.ie) and Appendix A2 for Tipperary's Mass Evacuation Plan.

7.13.3 Arrangements for the involvement of the public health service

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

Section 7.14

Early and Public Warning Systems

7.14.1 Monitoring potentially hazardous situations

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

Other such warning systems are in place for flooding and water contamination etc., and detailed in the relevant Flood Response Plan, Water Contamination *(Appendix A2).*

7.14.2 How warnings are to be disseminated

The Local Co-ordination Group should take over the task of coordinating the provision of information to the public as soon as it meets. This activity should be coordinated by the lead agency. The Local Coordination 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' as well as through liaison with the media.

The lead agency may request the media to carry Public Information Notices during a major emergency to disseminate important messages, such as how individuals may help themselves and their neighbours in a particular situation. This will be facilitated by the Local Authority Media Liaison Officer as designated in the Local Authority Mobilisation Procedure in *Appendix A*.

Section 7.15

Emergencies arising on Inland Waterways

7.15.1 Liaison with the Irish Coast Guard

The Irish Coast Guard may be contacted through the Munster Regional Communications Centre.

Tipperary County Council can provide assistance in the form of the Civil Defence for water rescue/recovery. There are also some inland water rescue volunteer organisations that may be asked to provide assistance such as River Rescue. *Please refer to Appendix C1 for further details on resources.*

7.15.2 Mobilising of resources to inland waterway emergencies

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

Section 7.16

Safety, Health and Welfare Considerations

7.16.1 Safety, health and welfare of staff

Each PRA (and other responding organisation) is responsible for the Safety, Health and Welfare of its staff responding to emergencies and should operate its own safety (including personal protective equipment) and welfare management procedures. *Please refer to 'Local Authority Organisational Safety Statement' for further information.*

7.16.2 Safety of the Council's rescue personnel

When working in the environment of a Major Emergency the On-Site Coordinator will apply normal incident and safety management arrangements and a 'Safety Officer' will generally be appointed having responsibility for the oversight and management of the safety of the Council's rescue personnel. The Controller of Operations will ensure that any issues arising are addressed. However, it is the responsibility of every individual to assess any risks affecting them, to monitor their colleague's welfare, and to report any issues to the Controller of Operations. All other relevant officers will continue to exercise command over their own personnel working in the area.

7.16.3 Operating within the 'Danger Area'.

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. The Council is responsible for the health and safety of its staff when they operate within the 'Danger Area'.
Each service should establish from the On-Site Co-ordinator if a Danger Area has been defined (*see Section 7.9.1 of this document*) as part of site management arrangements and, if so, what particular safety provisions may apply.

7.16.4   Procedures and 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.

7.16.5 Physical welfare of responders (food, shelter, toilets)

Please refer to section 7.17.3 of this document. (Also see Appendix A2 Civil Defence Section Plan)

7.16.6 Psycho-social support for personnel

Council personnel who are traumatised by the events of a major emergency may require skilled professional help. This will be provided by Tipperary County Council.

Section 7.17

Logistical Issues/ Protracted Incidents

7.17.1   Arrangements for 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. Crews from the Mid-West region may be called upon to assist and support the emergency.

7.17.2 Re-organising normal emergency and other services cover

Tipperary County Council personnel not involved in the major emergency may be placed on standby in their station or area office in order to provide quick response to any normal emergencies occurring in any other part of the county. Where this is not possible, a request may be made to a neighboring authority through mutual aid procedures in order to place similar personnel on standby.

7.17.3 Arrangements for initial and ongoing welfare for field staff

The Local Authority Controller should ensure that appropriate rest and refreshment facilities are provided for all 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 Tipperary County Council.

Investigations

7.18.1 Investigations arising from the emergency

An Garda Síochána are the primary response agency when an investigation is required if a crime has been identified or suspected in a Major Emergency. An Garda Síochána will need to obtain evidence of the highest possible standard and will require that all evidence is left in situ, unless a threat to life or health prevents this. Statements may be required from the members of Local Authority staff on their involvement.

7.18.2 Minimise disruption of evidence

The preservation of the site of a major emergency, which results from criminal action, is of paramount importance and should receive a priority rating from the outset by all PRAs. 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 investigative role.

7.18.3 Other parties with statutory investigation roles

Depending on the nature of the Major Emergency, agencies other than An Garda Síochána may require access to the site for the purposes of carrying out an investigation. These agencies include the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), the Air Accident Investigation Unit (AAIU) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). An Garda Síochána is responsible for carrying out criminal investigations.
Any agency including the Local Authority, 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 7.19

Community / VIPs / Observers

7.19.1 Links with 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.

A major emergency could generate a substantial number of enquiries to the Local Authority, involving the issue of regular press statements, setting up Helplines, the co-ordination of resources and liaison with Rest Centres, the Emergency Services and other agencies. The need to inform the public will need to be balanced to ensure that the release of the information is well coordinated and to ensure that:

• *Public alarm is not caused;*
• *Undue stress is not caused to casualties or their relatives / friends;*
• *The public are discouraged from 'sight seeing' at the scene;*
• *Reliable information is given to the public;*

When necessary, information centres could be set up in essential locations e.g. libraries, community centres, and public halls, as a method of distributing information and advice to local residents. Co-ordination with other involved agencies is essential for the provision of accurate

7.19.2 Receiving visiting VIP's

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

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

7.19.3 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 7.20

Standing-Down a Major Emergency

7.20.1 Standing down the status of an emergency

A decision to stand down the major emergency status of the incident at the site should be taken by the On-Site Co-ordinator, in consultation with the other Controllers of Operations at the site and the Local Co-ordination Group. Where organisations other than the PRAs 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.

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

7.20.2 Operational debriefing and reporting of activity

Each principal response agency should carry out an operational debriefing of its involvement in the response to every declared major emergency and document this debriefing in a report. The three principal response agencies should review the inter-agency co-ordination aspects of the response after every declaration of a major emergency. This review should be hosted by the lead agency and involve all services which were part of the response. The purpose of the review should be to formulate the lessons learned from the incident in relation to coordination and to document these.

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

Section 8

Agency Specific Elements and Sub-Plans

When planning and preparing for a major emergency it is important that the Major Emergency Plan ties in with existing plans such as Tipperary's Flood Response Plan and Emergency Plan for Blizzard Conditions etc. *(See Appendix A2 and A3and D2). Please refer to 'A Guide to Agency Specific Plan Interoperability' (www.mem.ie) for further details.*

Arising from the risk assessment process described in *Section 3*, Tipperary County Council's Major Emergency Plan has identified where specific plans/arrangements exist for responding to emergencies. These include local/regional/national and utility plans and are outlined in Appendix A2/A3 and D2 of this document

The response arrangements set out in the *Section 7*, will govern the PRA's response to such sites/events, whether a major emergency is declared or not. *(See Appendix B1).*

Section 9

Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination

9.1 Regional Level Co-ordination

Each PRA has participated in the preparation of a Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination, which sets out arrangements to respond at regional level. In certain circumstances, the local response to a major emergency may be scaled up to a regional level. This may occur where the nature of an emergency is such that the:

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

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

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

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 Co-ordination'. Guidance document 13: Section 9 (www.mem.ie).

9.2 Decision to Scale Up to a Regional Level Response

The decision to scale up from a local to a regional level response will be taken by the chair of the Local Co-ordination Group, in consultation with the chair of the On-Site Co-coordinating Group and the other members of the Local Co-ordination Group. This consultation may occur at a meeting of the Local Co-ordination Group, where such a group is in session or, alternatively, by means of a telephone conference call.
This decision will, by definition, involve specifying those extra principal response agencies which are to be involved in the regional response. *(See also section 4.6 of this document)*

Note: In many Major Emergency situations, neighbouring Garda Divisions, HSE Areas and Local Authorities will provide support and resources to the Garda Division, HSE Area and Local Authority, which are primarily involved in the response. Such support is not equivalent to the activation of the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination and, in fact, will often precede the activation of the regional plan.

9.3 Response Region

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

Note: The response region for a regional level major emergency need not coincide (and in many cases will not coincide) with one of the predetermined Major Emergency Management Regions set out in Appendix F4 of the Framework.

9.4 Activation of a Regional Response

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

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

9.5 Wide area Major Emergency

Some major emergency events (e.g. severe storms, extensive flooding and/or blizzards) may impact over a wide area and, in such a situation, a number of Local Co-ordination Groups may be activated. Where the chair of a Local Co-ordination Group, which has been activated in response to a major emergency, becomes aware that one or more other Local Co-ordination Groups have also been activated, contact should be made with the other chair(s) with a view to considering the establishment of a Regional Co-ordination Centre. Such a Regional Co-ordination Centre will normally be located at the Local Co-ordination Centre which, in the view of the chairs, is best positioned (in terms of resources, communications and geography) to co-ordinate the activity of the different Local Co-ordination Groups which are active. In such a situation, these Local Co-ordination Groups will continue to act as per standard arrangements and will communicate with the Regional Co-ordination Centre through their chairs.

Note: During a wide area major emergency, each Local Co-ordination Group will be in contact with the lead Government Department (in accordance with Section 5.4.5.5 of the

Framework) and, in such a situation, the decision on whether the activities of a number of Local Co-ordination Groups should be co-ordinate via a Regional Co-ordination Centre or via the lead Government Department will be taken in light of the prevailing circumstances.

Section 10

Links with National Emergency Plans

10.1 National Emergency Plans:

Each PRA 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 sections 6.3.4.4 and 6.3.4.5 for further details.*

10.1.1 National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents

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

10.1.2 National Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Plan

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

10.1.3 Animal Health Plan

For infectious diseases such as Avian Flu, the Department of Agriculture and Food have an emergency plan designed to contain outbreaks of H5N1 avian influenza in poultry should it occur. In the event of an avian influenza outbreak the fire service may be required to co-operate with the Department of Agriculture and Food in the whole house gassing of poultry. Interim guidance has been provided to outline additional procedures to be used in conjunction with standard fire service training to ensure the health and safety of fire service personnel should they be called upon to engage in this essential task.

10.2 Activated on request from Irish Coast Guard

The Tipperary Major Emergency Plan may also be activated by any PRA in response to a request from the Irish Coast Guard, following a threatened or actual emergency in the Irish Maritime Search and Rescue Region.

10.3 Activation on request from a Minister of Government

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

Section 11

Severe Weather Plans

Severe weather emergencies may involve significant threats to infrastructure and support may be required for vulnerable sections of the community. It has been pre-determined that Local Authorities are the lead agency for co-ordinating the response to severe weather events.

Arrangements have also been put in place by Met Éireann to issue public service severe weather warnings to the Local Authorities. The target time for the issuing of a warning is 24 hours before the start of the event, but a warning may be issued up to 48 hours in advance. On Fridays before a holiday period Met Éireann may deem it appropriate to issue a preliminary warning or weather watch to Local Authorities.

Not all severe weather events will be major emergencies, but the principles and arrangements for co-ordinated response to major emergencies should inform all response agencies to severe weather events. 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.

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

11.1.1 Flooding Emergencies

Tipperary County Council in conjunction with a multi-agency collaboration has produced a 'Flood Response Plan' *(see Appendix A2).*

11.1.2 Severe Weather Conditions (Excluding Flooding Emergencies)

Tipperary County Council has produced a comprehensive 'Emergency Plan for Severe Weather' *(see Appendix A2).*

Section 12

Site and Event Specific Arrangements and Plans

12.1 Site and Event Specific Emergency Plans

There are both legislative and procedural arrangements, which require that emergency plans be prepared for specific sites or events (e.g. SEVESO sites, airports, ports, major sports events, etc.).

12.2 Seveso Sites

The Merck Sharp & Dohme site has been identified in the Tipperary under the European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations, 2006 S.I. No. 74 of 2006, as a top tier site.

The response arrangements as set out in the site-specific External Emergency Plan and *Section 7*, will also govern the PRA's response to this site, whether a major emergency is declared or not. *(See Appendix B1).*

Please refer to 'Guidance for dealing with Seveso Offsite Sites' (www.mem.ie) for further details.

(Please refer to the risks identified in Appendix B1 and Merck, Sharp & Dohme's internal and external plans in Appendix A2).

Section 13

The Recovery Phase

13.1 Supports for Individuals and Communities

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 PRA and inter-agency level. The recovery phase can typically include:

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

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

13.1.1 Supporting individuals and communities affected by the emergency

Following an emergency incident, assistance may be required by the victims of the emergency – not only those directly affected, but also family and friends, who may suffer bereavement or anxiety. A major emergency can have a serious effect on a community. The recovery phase should provide support and long-term care for individuals involved in the incident and the communities affected by the incident. It is imperative that the Council restores its critical service to a pre-emergency state as quickly and efficiently as possible. The services and staff the Council may be able to provide are based upon a wide range of skills and resources drawn from its day-to-day operations.

There specific requirements for each PRA in the recovery process are:

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

An Garda Síochána
- Identification of fatalities;

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

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

13.1.2   Public appeals and external aid

There is a need for the co-ordination of emerging recovery issues, such as managing public appeals and external aid, from the earliest stages of the response phase. For this reason, the arrangements for co-ordination of response should continue to operate during the transition from the Response to Recovery stages.

13.2   Clean-Up

In the aftermath of an emergency, the clean-up operation and removal of debris and contaminated waste is assigned to the Local Authority. In consultation with the EPA and specialist companies Tipperary County Council will commence clean up of a site as soon as possible but without hindering the investigation process. Careful consideration must be provided for the removal of decontaminated debris to approved locations.

13.2.1 Arrangements for cleanup of sites / removal of debris / decontamination of sites of emergency and the Council's role

Tipperary County Council will ensure that the holder of waste material or polluting matter will be responsible for the clean-up of sites, the removal of debris and the decontamination of site. Following an incident, the holder of waste material or polluting matter will carry out a Risk Assessment in order to limit or prevent a risk to public health and safety and/or environmental pollution. The Risk Assessment will identify the hazards created as a result of the incident (both direct and indirect), all potential receptors and the possible interconnecting pathways. It will quantify the level of risk associated with the site (based on the significance of the hazard and the sensitivity of the identified receptors) and recommend remedial measures which shall be approved by Tipperary County Council.

The selection of remedial measures is dependent on the results of the quantitative risk assessment that will be site specific. It should be noted that prior to the risk assessment it is assumed that the waste material or polluting matter will be removed from the site unless it can be demonstrated that an alternative provides greater protection to public health and the environment. There are a number of Risk Assessment approaches and

tools available. Agreement on the most appropriate response shall be sought from Tipperary County Council at the outset.

13.3 Restoration of infrastructure and services and the Council's role

The Local Authority must ensure that its critical services are restored as quickly as possible. A Business Continuity Plan has been drawn up to meet these demands.

13.3.1 Procedures and arrangements for monitoring the situation

At a point when the issues on the agendas of Co-ordination Groups are largely recovery focussed, it may be appropriate to re-title the group as the Local, Regional or National Recovery Co-ordination Group. From the earliest stage, it may be appropriate also for the Local, Regional or National Co-ordination Group to appoint a Recovery Working Group to plan ahead. These groups will be responsible for the co-ordination of the recovery phase, managing resources and monitoring the situation until the issues arising are more appropriately dealt with by the normal management processes.

13.3.2 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 Local Authority ICT Section also has a role to play in the recovery phase and will need to liaise with utilities in order to bring services back on line, such as communication links etc.

13.3.3 Determining the order of priorities

It is the responsibility of the Local, Regional or National Recovery Co-ordination Group together with the Recovery Working Group to prioritise events during the recovery phase. It should be noted that staff welfare arrangements needs 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.

13.3.4 Protection measures against continuing hazards

Protection measures put in place against continuing hazards will be subject to a review of the response to a major emergency. Short term protection measures will be carried out by monitoring of the hazard by the appropriate Council services.

Review of the Major Emergency Plan

14.1 Internal Review Process

Tipperary County Council will undertake an internal review of the Major Emergency Plan on a yearly basis. The review should be held on the annual date of implementing the plan and also following any exercises or incidents. This will include:

- Reviewing current risk assessments and update as required.
- Incorporating any changes recommended from report on incident/exercises.
- Reviewing and updating the roles of individuals that hold key positions.
- Updating the risk holders within the functional area of Tipperary County Council
- Updating the list of names and contact details.

Please Refer to section 1.8 of this document.

14.2.1 External Review of the Plan (1) with the other PRA's

The Council's appraisal will be reviewed and validated by the Mid-West Regional Steering Group (RSG) on Major Emergency Management. The following general process will apply to this undertaking:

- The RSG should establish a programme for the completion of appraisals by each of the principal response agencies in the region and the return of the completed agency appraisal reports to the chair of the RSG;
- The completed agency appraisal reports should be reviewed, either by the entire RSG or, alternatively, by a specific sub-group, acting on behalf of the group, which will report to the full group;
- Any issues arising from the review should be returned to the principal response agency concerned for appropriate action;
- In case of disagreement between a principal response agency and a RSG, the National Steering Group should be consulted and should decide on the issue; and
- Subject to the above, the RSG should indicate to each principal response agency that its appraisal has been validated.

14.2.1 External Review of the Plan (2) by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government

The Council's appraisal shall be reviewed and validated by the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government. The following general process shall apply to the undertaking of a review within the Department:

- A person / team with appropriate background, knowledge and experience of emergency management should be nominated to undertake the review;

- Any issues arising from the review should be returned to the local authority concerned for appropriate action; and
- Subject to the above, the Department should indicate to each principal response agency that its appraisal has been validated

14.3.1 Major Emergency Plan review after every activation

Each principal response agency should carry out an operational debriefing of its involvement in the response to every declared major emergency and document this debriefing in a report.

14.3.2 External Reviewing and Reporting of the Co-ordination function

The three principal response agencies should review the inter-agency co-ordination aspects of the response after every declaration of a major emergency. This review should be hosted by the lead agency and involve all services which were part of the response. The purpose of the review should be to formulate the lessons learned from the incident in relation to coordination and to document these.

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