

Galway County Council

Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe



MAJOR EMERGENCY PLAN

2004

MAJOR EMERGENCY PLAN

LOCAL AUTHORITY: Galway County Council

PAGE: 1 of 84

ISSUED: November, 2004

VALID: Until Revised

COPY NO.

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DEFINITIONS

1. Following are the definitions of terms used in this plan:

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

beyond the normal capabilities of the Gardai, Galway County Council and the Western Health Board.

CONTROLLER OF OPERATIONS: is defined in paragraphs 15 to 17; page 13. His functions are outlined in paragraph 18; pages 13 & 14.

References throughout this plan to Controller of Operations shall, unless otherwise stated, refer to the County Council Controller of Operations.

PROCUREMENT TEAM: is defined in paragraph 21(a) Page 15. The team will assist the Controller of Operations in procuring Personnel, Equipment, Vehicles and Materials.

CO - ORDINATING GROUP: is defined in paragraph 24 - page 17, and its functions are outlined in paragraph 26 - page 17. The Group shall be located at the Garda Headquarters, Mill St., Galway.

HOLDING AREA: (see Appendix 14 - Page 81) is the area to which each Service is assigned on arrival at the site of the emergency and from which they will be deployed. It will be located inside the perimeter of the incident site as secured by the Gardai and should be well upwind of the incident. Each emergency service will have its own Holding area.

CONTROL AREA: (see Appendix 14 - Page 81) is the place at the site of emergency from which the Controller of Operations discharges his functions.

It will be located as close to the incident as safety permits, taking account of the nature the incident, communication facilities, terrain, etc. Each emergency service will have its own Control Area.

DANGER AREA: (see Appendix 14 - Page 81) arises where there is a definite risk to rescue personnel because, for example, of the need for special equipment such as breathing apparatus, protective clothing etc.

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DEFINITIONS (cont'd)

DANGER AREA:

The need for and extent of such an area will be decided upon by the senior fire brigade officer present, following consultation with the various controllers and will depend on the nature of the incident. In view of the danger, the activities of all agencies in the Danger Area will be under the overall control and direction of the designated Fire Brigade Officer, subject only to the persons in charge of those agencies continuing to exercise operational control over their own activities.

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PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

2. The purpose of this plan which is the Galway County Council element of the Major Emergency Plan is, in the event of such an emergency;

(a) to outline generally the procedures to be followed and functions to be undertaken by the County Council services.

and

(b) to co-ordinate the procedures to be followed and functions to be undertaken by the County Council, with those of the Health Board, Gardai and any other agencies responding to the emergency.

The total provision for major emergency planning is the combined co-ordinated plans of Galway County Council, Western Health Board and Gardai in the area where the emergency occurs.

INITIATIVE

3. 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.

SCOPE OF PLAN

4. The Plan provides for a co-ordinated response to major emergencies arising, for example, from fires, explosions, gas releases, transportation accidents, spillages of dangerous substances, etc. The types of emergency normally resulting from oil supply crises, E.S.B. blackouts, industrial disputes etc. are of a different nature and are not catered for in this Plan. It is recognised, however, that such emergencies could result in a situation, such as a major gas explosion, requiring activation of the Major Emergency Plan.

This Plan shall consist of three distinct parts:-

- the plan proper which outlines the procedures in relation to the activation of the plan, control of operations, allocation of functions etc.
- the Appendices, which are attached to this Plan.

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SCOPE OF PLAN

Contd...

- the pre-determined arrangements of each Local Authority Service (fire, sanitary services, environmental control etc.) in relation to specific incidents or hazards that shall form part of and be consistent with the Plan.

This Plan complies with the European Communities (Major Accident Hazards of Certain Industrial Activities), Regulations, 1985.

Galway City Council will continue to operate its “Operational Procedures for Contingencies” in respect of incidents not assuming the proportions of a major emergency.

AREA OF OPERATION OF PLAN

5. This Plan applies to the functional area of Galway County Council, and Ballinasloe Town Council.
- 5A. Galway City Council has its own Major Emergency Plan.
6. The other agencies responsible for emergency services in this area are:
 - (a) Western Health Board
 - (b) Galway Garda Division
 - (c) Roscommon Garda Division (Part of)

Other public agencies also have specific emergency plans which apply to particular premises or locations. These are listed in Appendix 8 - page 72. The procedures for activation of the Major Emergency Plan is set out in paragraph 10 - page 9.

7. Assistance may be provided, where required, by other agencies, such as the Defence Forces, Civil Defence, Red Cross, etc. (see Appendix 6/6A - pages 53 - 56). Where army assistance is necessary contact should be made with Orderly Officer, Dun Ui Mhaoiliosa Renmore, Galway. The procedure for requesting the assistance of the Defence Forces is outlined in Appendix 6A - Page 56.
8. Installations subject to the European Communities (Major Accident Hazards of Certain Industrial Activities) Regulations, 1985, and to which this Plan applies are listed in Appendix 8A - Page 73, together with particular information (including reference to the location of specific procedures, arrangements and requirements) relating to an emergency in each of the installations listed. Other hazardous installations covered by the Plan are listed in Appendix 8B - Page 74.

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ACTIVATION OF THE MAJOR EMERGENCY PLAN

9. The Major Emergency Plan should be activated by whichever of the following agencies first becomes aware of the major emergency:-
- Galway County Council
 - Gardai
 - Western Health Board
10. All messages shall begin with the following statement:-
‘THIS IS (Give name and service)
A MAJOR EMERGENCY HAS OCCURRED / IS IMMINENT AT
(Give location)
THE MAJOR EMERGENCY PLAN IS NOW IN OPERATION”.

The procedure for standing down the Plan is outlined in paragraphs 27-28 - Page 18.

11. When reporting a major emergency or notifying the County Council service and other agencies that the Plan is being activated, all available, essential and relevant information should be provided. Appendix 9 - Page 75 contains a guide which should be consulted.

ACTIVATION OF PLAN BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

12. The Plan is activated by telephoning 999 or 112 and ask for Fire Station and instructing the senior person in attendance to do the following:
1. Dispatch necessary Fire Service assistance to the incident
 2. Inform the Chief Fire Officer or his Deputy of the incident
 3. Alert Garda Síochána for the area (see page 25 - 26)
 4. Alert Western Health Board (see page 26)
 5. Alert Controller of Operations (see page 13)
 6. Alert County Manager or the person acting in this capacity (see page 27)
 7. Alert Director of Services (Mr. T. Kavanagh) or any of the Director of Services (see page 27)
 8. Alert the Senior Engineer, Environment Section, or the person acting in this capacity (see page 27 and 28)
 9. Alert No. 1 on the Procurement Team. In the event of No. 1 not being available next member should be alerted in descending numerical order (see paragraph 21a - page 15.
Appendices 2,3,3A,4,5,5A,5B,5C,6,6A &7 and pages 25 - 71 should be used. A list of persons/ officers who are authorised to activate the plan is given in Appendix 1 - Pages 23 - 24.
13. When this Plan has been activated, each County Council service requested shall respond in accordance with pre-determined arrangements.

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FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL AUTHORITY, GARDAI AND HEALTH BOARD

14. The functions of the Local Authority, the Gardai and Health Board in the event of a major emergency are in accordance with those set out in the agreed Framework for Co-Ordinated Response to Major Emergency issued by the inter-Departmental Committee on emergency Preparations and are outlined below. The functions of other agencies are outlined in Appendix 10 - Page 76.

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

14A.

1. Each of the County Council services shall carry out their functions in accordance with the provisions of this Plan. In addition, the Fire Brigade shall operate in accordance with the Brigade orders and other County Council services in accordance with their operational instructions.

2. The County Council shall carry out the following functions:-
 1. Activation of the Plan.
 2. Extinction of fires.
 3. Containment, neutralisation and clearance of chemical spills and emissions
 4. Protection and rescue of persons and property
 5. Maintenance of County Council services (e.g. roads fire cover, protection of water supplies) during the emergency
 6. Provisions of access to the site of the emergency (securing the site and control of access is a function of the Gardai)
 7. Support for Gardai
 8. Advice on evacuation
 9. Render assistance to other agencies *
 10. Site clearance, demolition, clean-up operations, removal and disposal of debris **
 11. Provisions of food and rest facilities for personnel responding to the emergency.
 12. Control and direction of activities of all agencies within the "Danger Area" at an emergency (see paragraph 20 - Page 14)
 13. Participation in the Co-ordinating Group (see paragraph 24 - Page 17)

* The Council will assist to the extent possible the agencies responsible for accommodation and welfare of evacuees.

** This should be done in consultation with Gardai to avoid the possible unnecessary destruction of evidence.

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WESTERN HEALTH BOARD

14B

1. All Health Board Services shall carry out their functions in accordance with the provisions of the plan. In addition, they shall operate in accordance with their own operational instructions.
2. The Health Board shall carry out the following functions:
 1. Activation of the Plan (see paragraph 9 - Page 9)
 2. Provision of all health services
 3. Provisions of medical advice and assistance
 4. Assessment of casualties and determination of priorities for their evacuation
 5. Casualty evacuation and ambulance transport
 6. Certification of the dead, provision of forensic support for the Gardai
 7. Provision of first-aid, together with basic life support and treatment at the scene, if required
 8. Provision of hospital treatment, including psychiatric assistance
 9. Provision of community, medical and welfare services
 10. Participation in co-ordinating Group (see paragraph 24 - Page 17)

GARDA SIOCHÁNA

14C.

1. The Gardai shall carry out their functions in accordance with the provisions of the Plan. In addition, they shall operate in accordance with their own codified instructions.
2. The Gardai shall carry out the following functions:-
 1. Activation of the Plan (see paragraph 9 - Page 9)
 2. Maintenance of law and order
 3. Evacuation
 4. Traffic and crowd control
 5. Preservation of scene and collection of evidence * * *
 6. Arrangements in respect of the dead
 7. Provision of a casualty information service at the site
 8. Establishment at the site of an information centre for use by the agencies responding to the emergency
 9. Request Eircom to provide an emergency telephone service, if necessary, in accordance with pre-determined arrangements

* * * Precedence should only be given to this activity where it will not interfere with the activities of agencies responding to an emergency which are concerned with the protection of life and the prevention and treatment of casualties.

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GARDA SIOCHÁNA (Contd.)

14C

10. Securing the site and layout of same (see paragraph 19 - Page 14 and Appendix 14 - Page 81)
11. Exercise of certain local authority functions pending a local authority response to an emergency (see paragraph 23 - Page 16)
12. Informing the Public as necessary and on the advice of the competent authorities of actual or potential disasters arising from the emergency
13. Participation in Co-ordinating Group (see paragraph 24 - Page 17)

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CONTROLLER OF OPERATIONS

15. Control of Galway County Council services at the site of the emergency shall be exercised by the Director of Services, Roads & Transportation, or designated alternate * as indicated in Appendix 12 - Page 79 (see also paragraph 22 - Page 16).
If the Controller considers, because of the circumstances at a particular emergency, that some other person should have control at that emergency, he should, after agreement with the designated County Council representative on the Co-ordinating Group, transfer control accordingly.
16. The transfer of the function of Controller of Operations shall be accompanied by a formal statement, e.g. "You are now in control of County Council operations", and the time of transfer should be logged by both the person relinquishing control and the person assuming control.
17. The County Manager may designate some other person to be Controller of Operations or may order the transfer of this function from one person to another.
18. The functions of the Controller of Operations shall, subject to any direction of the County Manager, be :-
- (a) to provide overall control, direction and co-ordination of activities of all County Council services at the site of the emergency, subject to paragraphs 20 and 21 Page 14.
 - (b) to require the attendance of such County Council services as are needed.
 - (c) to arrange in conjunction with the controllers of other agencies if available, for the establishment of holding areas, where possible, to which the various services will report on arrival at the site of the emergency and from which they will be deployed, e.g. the County Council services will report to the Galway County Council holding area.
 - (d) to set up a control area, incorporating a communications centre * * at the site

* This will be a designated senior technical officer (the Controller of Operations).

* * This communication centre should not be confused with the information centre to be established by the Gardai (see paragraph 14 (C) Part 2 (8), Page 11).

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CONTROLLER OF OPERATIONS (Cont'd)

- (e) to ensure secure communications with -
 - 1. County Council services at the site and
 - 2. Other agencies responding to the emergency at the site
 - (f) to arrange for the provision of food and rest facilities for all agencies responding to the emergency
 - (g) to requisition any equipment he deems necessary to deal with the incident, (see Appendices 5, 5A, 5B, 5C) - Pages 35 - 52, for lists of available plant, equipment and supplies)
 - (h) to seek such advice as he requires (Appendix 7 - Pages 57 - 71, lists possible sources of advice)
 - (i) to brief the designated County Council representative on the co-ordinating group on the handling of the emergency
 - (j) to maintain a log of the incident at the site
19. The recommended layout of the site of a major emergency will be in accordance with the layout in Appendix 14 (Page 81) or in accordance with an alternative layout agreed by the Controller of Operations with the Controllers of the other agencies. Arrangements for securing the perimeter of the site are the responsibility of the Gardai. The County Council services arriving at the perimeter of the site will be directed by the Gardai to the Galway County Council Holding Area to await deployment.
20. The activities of all agencies within the "Danger Area" shall be under the overall control and direction of the Chief Fire Officer, designated alternates, or the most Senior Fire Officer in attendance until arrival of designated person. However, the persons in charge of the activities of these agencies shall, subject to the above, continue to exercise operational control over their agencies' activities.
21. The head of each County Council service shall exercise operational control over his own service, subject to the overall control and direction of the Controller of Operations.

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CONTROLLER OF OPERATIONS (Cont'd)

- 21a. To assist the Controller of Operations in procuring personnel, signs, equipment, vehicles and materials, a Procurement Team shall be established immediately in the Director of Services, General & Cultural Office.

Data Unavailable as it contains personal details of personnel
on the Procurement Team

On being notified of a Major Emergency, No.1 on the Team shall instruct other members of the Procurement Team to come to the Director of Services Office (Mr. Jim Cullen) immediately. In the event of No.1 not being available, the next member should be contacted in descending numerical order who in turn will contact the other members of the Procurement Team to come to Mr. Cullen's Office immediately.

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CONTROLLER OF OPERATIONS (Cont'd)

22. Pending the arrival of the Controller of Operations (or alternates - See Appendix 12 – Page 79) at the site of the emergency, his functions will be exercised:-
- (a) where the Fire Brigade has responded, by the Senior Officer present to the extent that the Fire Brigade operations allow.
 - (b) where the Fire Brigade has not responded, but some other Local Authority service has responded, by the Senior Officer of that service present. If two Officers of the same senior rank are present, seniority is determined by length of service in the Local Authority.
23. In the absence of any Local Authority response, the senior Garda present will exercise certain local authority functions as outlined in paragraph 14C - Page 11 - 12, as may be agreed between the Chief Superintendent and the County Council.

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CO - ORDINATION

24. The Co-ordinating group shall comprise of the County Manager, for the time being, Galway County Council, the Chief Executive Officer, for the time being, Western Health Board Chief Superintendent, for the time being, Garda Siochána. The members of the Co-Ordinating Group shall come together immediately on being notified that the Plan has been activated. The Co-ordinating group may request the participation of representatives of other Agencies as appropriate. Once established, the Co-ordinating group shall be located at Garda Headquarters, Mill St., Galway.
25. The representatives on the Co-Ordinating Group are:-
The County Manager, for the time being, the Chief Executive Officer, Western Health Board, for the time being, the Chief Superintendent, Garda Siochána, for the time being. The County Council representative will be assisted in carrying out his functions by appropriate back-up staff as indicated in Appendix 13 - Page 80.
26. The functions of the Co-Ordinating Group (who would not get involved in the detailed on-site response to the emergency) shall be:-
- (a) to ensure that personnel and equipment are mobilised as per each agency's plan.
 - (b) to monitor the activities of the agencies responding to the emergency.
 - (c) to maintain the liaison between the agencies responding to the emergency, but excluding communications arrangements between agencies at the site of the emergency which are the function of the Controller of Operations.
 - (d) to advise on, assist in and arrange for the mobilisation of additional resources as required including relief crews, and to arrange as necessary back-up facilities for the agencies responding to the emergency.
 - (e) through the representatives of the agencies on the Group, to give directions and policy decisions, where considered necessary or when requested by agencies responding to the emergency.
 - (f) to establish effective communications with the site of the emergency.
 - (g) to inform Government Departments as appropriate.
 - (h) to facilitate the distribution of information to the news media and the general public.

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DEMOBILISATION

27. This Plan may be stood down in any of the following ways depending on the particular circumstances:-
1. It may be stood down:-
 - (a) when an emergency which was imminent does not actually occur, by the person who activated the Plan in accordance with paragraphs 9 to 12 - Page 9.
 - (b) by the Controller of Operations in respect of activities at the site of the emergency or
 - (c) by the designated County Council representative on the co-ordinating group in respect of activities other than those at the site.
 2. The Plan may be stood down generally following agreement by the agencies responding to the emergency or in respect of all or certain County Council services following consultation with the other agencies.
 3. When a response is no longer required from any agency, service, contractor or individual requested to provide assistance by the County Council and following consultation with other agencies, where appropriate, the Controller of Operations (in respect of activities at the site) or the designated County Council representative on the co-ordinating group shall ensure that they are immediately informed.
28. The following additional provisions apply to demobilisation :-
- before standing down this Plan as provided in paragraph 27 - Page 18, the Controller of Operations shall advise the County Council representative on the co-ordinating group.
 - even after this Plan has been stood down, certain County Council services may be required to continue carrying out activities related to the emergency and in such circumstances full control shall revert to the heads of those services.

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COMMUNICATIONS

29. The following steps shall be taken to ensure good communications:-
- (a) at the site of a major emergency the communications centre * shall, where possible be located in the control area (see Appendix 14 - Page 81) .
 - (b) The Controller of Operations shall ensure secure communications with :-
 - (i) County Council services at the site, and
 - (ii) other agencies responding to the emergency at the site;
 - (c) The agencies responding to the emergency shall communicate in accordance with pre-arranged procedures.
 - (d) During a major emergency, the heads of each County Council service shall keep the Controller of Operations briefed on their activities and he shall brief the designated County Council representative on the co-ordinating group.

PRESS AND INFORMATION

30. To facilitate the dissemination of information to the news media and to the general public, Galway County Council have appointed
- (a) a County Council Information Officer (Emergency Site) ;
 - (b) a County Council Information Officer (Co-Ordinating Group headquarters) - Director of Services

The names, duties and responsibilities of the Information Officers in relation to a major emergency are detailed at Appendix 11 – Pages 77 & 78. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of the Information Officers are detailed in Appendix 3A - Page 30.

* *This communications centre should not be confused with the Information Centre which will be established by the Gardai to keep the relatives, the media and the general public informed.*

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IDENTIFICATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY PERSONNEL / VEHICLES:

31. All County Council personnel responding to an emergency will wear (or carry) the form of identification issued to them and shall ensure that their vehicles are adequately identified.

EXERCISES

32. Where an exercise to test the assumption of and procedures laid down in this Plan is held, messages activating the Plan (paragraph 10 - Page 9) shall be preceded by the statement:

“THIS IS AN EXERCISE”

APPRAISAL

33. This Plan was issued in November, 2004, and is valid until revised. The annual meeting of the County Council Emergency Planning Group to appraise and update this Plan will be held during October.

The Co-ordinating Group shall meet annually during the month of October each year, to review the co-ordination of emergency planning.

The designated local authority officer, the Senior Executive Officer, Environmental & Conservation Services, for the time being, shall be responsible for:-

- distribution of the Plan to all persons / agencies on the Distribution List
- receiving details of changes to the Appendices and notifying all persons /agencies on the Distribution List
- convening and servicing the annual meeting of the County Council emergency planning group to review the effectiveness of the Plan following its activation or following an exercise.
- convening the meetings of the Co-Ordinating Group to review the co-ordination of emergency planning (unless otherwise agreed locally) .

Any amendments to the appendices should be notified immediately to this designated officer.

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A P P E N D I C E S

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CHECK THE VALIDITY DATE TO ENSURE THAT YOU ARE USING THE CURRENT COPY.

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MAJOR EMERGENCY PLAN

LOCAL AUTHORITY: Galway County Council

PAGE: 23 of 84

ISSUED: November, 2004

VALID: Until Revised

Pages 23 – 84, inclusive,
are unavailable for viewing as they contain personal details of
personnel listed in the Plan,
which is not available to the general public

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