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**Record of Issues and Amendments**

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## Section 1 - Introduction to Plan

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### 1.1 Foreword by County Manager (and or Chair of County Councillors)

The context of the new Major Emergency Plan is the decision by Government in May 2006 to implement a new Framework for Major Emergency Management. A national steering group was also established to oversee the implementation of the programme.

The Framework defines a universal structure for the co-ordination of the response of An Garda Síochána, The Health Services Executive and the principal Local Authorities and introduces a number of specific “tools” to support the co-ordination functions.

The completion of the Galway County Council Major Emergency Plan today, 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008 is the culmination of almost two years of hard work and preparation.

It is effective as and from 12 noon on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

I wish to thank the Chief Fire Officer, Mr. Michael Raftery, his staff in the Galway Fire Service and the staff of Galway County Council who contributed to and participated in the preparation of this plan and who will implement it in the event of a major emergency being declared.

**Martina Maloney,  
County Manager.**

## 1.2 Background.

This Major Emergency Plan is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Government Decision of May 2006 and is consistent with 'A Framework for Emergency Management' (2006). It applies to the functional area of Galway County Council and the functional area of Ballinasloe Town Council.

A **Major Emergency** is defined as;

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

Galway County Council is responsible for the systems approach to Major Emergency Management within the county based on the Five Stage Emergency Management Paradigm (See Diagram 1), which are:

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



Diagram 1

## 1.3 Objectives of the Major Emergency Plan

The objectives of Galway County Council's Major Emergency Plan are:

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

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

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

#### **1.5 The Relationship/Inter-operability of this Plan with other Emergency Plans.**

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

#### **1.6 Terminology of the Plan**

In situations where different organisations are working together, they need a common vocabulary to enable them to communicate effectively. Therefore, this plan provides for the common terminology and a full set of relevant terms is provided in *Appendix 2*

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

Copies of the plan will be distributed to all departments of Galway County Council, appropriate Heads of Service, Emergency Planning Team members, and emergency services. The distribution list is given in *Appendix 1*

#### **1.8 Status of the Plan**

This plan will be reviewed in September 2009. It will be appraised and updated annually, and following any incident or training exercise, by the Mayo County Council Major Emergency Development committee.

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

An abridged copy of the Emergency Management Plan, with contact telephone numbers and other personal information removed, is available on the Council's website [www.galway.ie/en/AboutYourCouncil/MajorEmergencyPlan/](http://www.galway.ie/en/AboutYourCouncil/MajorEmergencyPlan/) . This will be made available to the public.

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## **Section 2 - Galway County Council and its Functional Area**

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### **2.1 Role of Galway County Council During a Major Emergency.**

The functional area of this plan is the administrative County of Galway. The Local Authorities in the administrative area of County Galway incorporates Galway County Council and Ballinasloe town Council. It excludes however the administrative area of Galway City Council. Galway City Council has prepared its own Major Emergency Plan for its own administrative area.

In the event of a major emergency the role of Galway County Council is to ensure life safety by providing an effective emergency service in the form of the Fire service and Civil Defence. Other sections of the County Council will also be required to ensure business continuity and ensure the general needs of the community are addressed to the best of their ability in an emergency situation. Galway 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, use its resources to mitigate the effects of the emergency and co-ordination of the voluntary organisations. In the 'recovery' phase the County Council will be responsible for leading and co-ordinating the rehabilitation of the community and the restoration of the environment.

### **2.2 Boundaries and Characteristics of County Galway.**

Galway County is located on Ireland's West coast and is administratively part of the West Regional Authority. It is the second largest County in Ireland with a geographical area of 6148. Square kilometres. It has a coastline of 689 kilometres, a public road network of 6616 kilometres and 69 kilometres of passenger rail. The County is generally flat with the exception of the Western district which is particularly mountainous. The County has an abundance of rivers, the main one being the Corrib which leads to a large lake known as Lough Corrib in the centre of the County. Galway is bounded by County Mayo to the North, Counties Roscommon, Offaly and North Tipperary to the East, county Clare to the South and the Atlantic Ocean to the West. According to the Census of Population 2006, County Galway has a population of 159,256. Of this number 3575 people live on the inhabited islands.

#### **2.3.1 Partner Principal Response Agencies (PRA)**

The other Principal Response Agencies responsible for Emergency Services in the Galway County administrative area are:-

- Health Service Executive – Western Region
- Galway Garda Division
- Roscommon Garda Division (part of)

### **2.3.2 Principal Emergency Services (PES)**

The Principal Emergency Services for the area are as follows;

- Fire Service
- Ambulance Service
- An Garda Síochána.

Galway Fire and Rescue Service is the Local Authority Principle Emergency Service for both the County and the City.

The Fire Service H.Q. is located in Galway City and is a mixture of full-time and retained (Part-time) fire service personnel. The service in the county is organised in fire brigade units located at Galway City, Athenry, Loughrea, Ballinasloe, Portumna, Tuam, Gort, Mountbellew, Clifden and Inis Mór. All county stations are operated by retained (part-time) fire fighters.

### **2.4 Regional Preparedness**

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

- County Galway
- County Roscommon
- County Mayo
- Galway City

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. The Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination has been prepared in accordance with the Project Initiation Document by the Regional Working Group and has been approved by the Regional Steering Group.



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## Section 3 - Risk Assessment for the Area

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### 3.1 History of Emergency Events.

Major emergencies in their very nature are few and far between, and, Co Galway has experienced very few emergency events over the last 30 years. Below is a list of events that has occurred;

- Severe Weather - Christmas Eve 1997, widespread damage caused.
- Flood Event - Gort 1995.
- Galway County Fire & Rescue Service attends an average of 20 - 30 large building fires annually.
- Cryptosporidium Water Contamination – 2007
- Bridge Collapse – Lenane 2007

### 3.2 Main risks.

The following is a list of potential Major Emergency scenarios. It is by no means an exhaustive list. A Risk Assessment has been conducted by Galway County Council on all risks that fit into the category of Major Emergency Management and these Risk Assessments are held at Galway County Council offices. A Copy of the Risk Assessment s for Galway County are available on the Galway County Council Intranet site.

#### 3.2.1 Hazardous Sites Emergencies:

The European Communities Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substance Regulations, 2000, apply to one site in the functional area of this plan. Depending on the quantities of specified dangerous substances present, these sites (SEVESO II Sites) are classified as upper tier and lower tier.

There is no SEVESO II site in Galway County Council functional area. However, there is one SEVESO II upper tier in the Galway City Council functional area located in the Galway Harbour Enterprise Park. This is;

SEVESO	Upper Tier	EN WEST :Bulk storage of Petroleum products
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#### 3.2.2 Critical Infrastructure/Transport Emergencies:

- National Primary route N6, N17 & N18
- Iarnród Éireann: Galway – Athlone, Galway – Ennis rail lines
- Galway and Connemara Airports and associated Island Airports
- Galway Harbour
- Rossaveel Harbour

- Offshore Inhabited Island Ferries

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

- Galway County Council functional Area

### 3.2.4 Utility company emergencies:

- Bord Gáis
- E.S.B
- Eircom

### 3.3 Sample Risk Assessment Scenarios on which Preparedness is based.

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

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

Through risk assessment it is possible to identify the risks posed together with mitigation measures and risk reduction strategies.

Risk assessment comprises of four stages:

- Establish the context
- Hazard identification
- Risk assessment
- Record potential hazards on the risk matrix

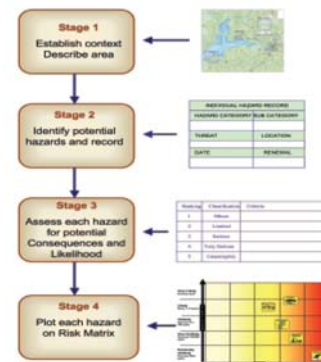


Diagram 4: Risk Assessment

A list of plans has been identified as a result of the Risk Analysis on each of the hazards identified in the risk assessment process. It is noted that a number of these plans were previously in place.

Each Section of Galway County Council has plans in place pertaining to their individual section responsibilities. These plans are attached to the end of this document as appendices.

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

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

- Galway Aviation Major Incident Plan
- Galway Harbour Major Incident Plan
- External Emergency Plan – EN WEST – (SEVESO)
- Galway Plan for Marine Pollution.

These plans are available on the Galway County Council Intranet site.

#### **3.5.1 External Specific Emergency Plans**

A number of site specific external Emergency Plans are also in place for the following;

- Galway Regional Airport
- Connemara Airport, Inverin and associated Island Airports
- Galway Harbour Emergency Plan
- Rossaveal Harbour Plan
- Coillte Forestry Emergency Plans

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## Section 4 - Resources for Emergency Response

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### 4.1 Structure / Resources / Services of Galway County Council.

The local authorities within the administrative area of County Galway incorporates Galway County Council and Ballinasloe Town Council. It is governed by the Local Government Acts, the most recent of which Local Government Act 2001. Each section of the council reports to the County Manager. The County Manager is responsible for supervising government operations and implementing the policies adopted by the council.

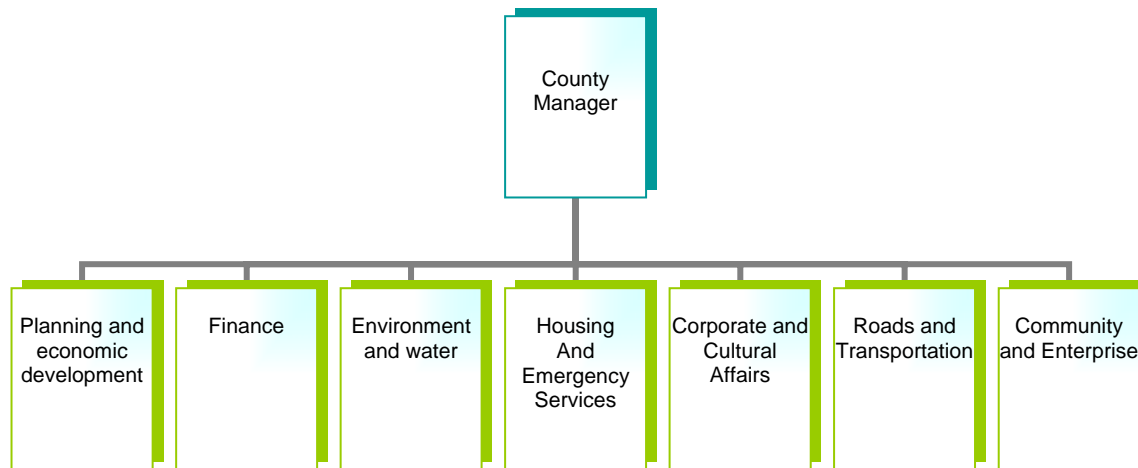
Galway County Council is composed of the elected members and the executive members. The elected members of the council are elected by the public and are responsible for the development and adoption of policies to be implemented by the executive. The executive are the management team, led by the county manager employed by Galway County Council.

### 4.2 Special Staff Arrangements for Call-in of Off Duty Staff

The actions to be taken by Galway County Council personnel when a major emergency is declared are given in the Action Plans for each service as outlined in *Appendix 3* to this document. All County Council staff requested to carry out functions in relation to a Major Emergency will be acting on a voluntary basis with the exception of specific Council staff such as the Rostered Senior Fire Officer and Fire Fighters. In addition to the resources that have been mentioned the Civil Defence, under the Authority of Galway County Council can be called upon to assist in the event of an emergency.

### 4.3 Resources and Functions of Galway County Council.

Galway County Council is divided up into different directorates under the control of Directors of Service that are responsible for the functioning of sections within the council. The Directors of Service report directly to the County Manager. These sections are;



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

- Fire and Rescue Service
- Civil Defence
- Housing Section
- Water Services
- Roads Section
- Environment Section
- Corporate Services
- I.T. Section
- Finance Section
- Community & Enterprise Section

#### 4.4 Other Organisations that May Assist.

There are a number of organisations and agencies, which may be called on to assist the principal response agencies in responding to major emergencies.

The organisations may be grouped as follows:

- Irish Coast Guard
- Civil Defence
- Defence Forces
- The Irish Red Cross
- Voluntary Emergency Service (Mountain Rescue, 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, Irish Rail, Eircom etc)
- Private contractors

*(See Appendix 21H- Galway Voluntary Agencies).*

#### 4.4.1 Civil Defence

Galway Civil Defence as a second line Emergency Service, services Galway City and County under the direction of the Civil Defence Officer. It is a body of trained volunteers in the disciplines of First Aid, Fire and Rescue, Welfare, water based activities, search and recovery. There are currently 160 registered members in Galway. Call out system is in place in the event of an emergency however it is worth considering that a response is completely subject to the availability of Volunteers.

Civil Defence will be available to help with any area assigned to them in order to assist Galway County Council or other Statutory Service, subject to the availability of volunteers. *(See Appendix 21H- Galway Voluntary Agencies).*

#### 4.4.2 The Defence Forces

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

It is recognised that assistance requested from the Defence Forces should be either in Aid to the Civil Power (An Garda Síochána), primarily an armed response or in Aid to the Civil Authority (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 MOUs and SLAs. *(See Appendix 21E)*

#### 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 support An Garda Síochána and the Irish Coast Guard. The Irish Red Cross Regional Office covers Galway City and the Majority of Galway County. The Irish Red Cross Regional Office in Claremorris, Co. Mayo covers the area of Connemara. *(See Appendix 21H- Galway Voluntary Agencies).*

#### 4.4.4 Voluntary Emergency Services Sector

Other Voluntary Emergency Services in the Galway area include *(See Appendix 21H- Galway Voluntary Agencies).*

- Mountain Rescue Association
- Corrib River Rescue
- Search and Rescue Dog Association

- Order of Malta ambulance Corps
- Irish Cave Rescue Organization

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

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

At an early stage the On-Site Co-ordinator, in association with the other Controllers, should determine if ongoing assistance is required from “casual volunteers” within the community, so that An Garda Síochána cordoning arrangements can take account of this. Where the On-Site Co-ordinator determines that casual volunteers should be integrated into the response, it is recommended that the service tasking them, or confirming them in tasks on which they are engaged, should request volunteers to form teams of three to five persons, depending on the tasks, with one of their number as team leader. 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 principal response agencies in making situations safe. They may also be directly involved in restoring their own services, for example, electricity supply in the aftermath of a storm. It is important that there is close co-ordination between the principal response agencies and utilities involved in or affected by an emergency. Utilities operate under their own legislative and regulatory frameworks but, during the response to an emergency, they need to liaise with the On-Site Co-ordinator. It is also recommended that representatives of individual utilities on site should be invited to provide a representative for the On-Site Co-ordination Group. It is recommended that individual utilities be invited to attend and participate in relevant work of Local Co-ordination Groups (*See Appendix 21G- Resource Contact Personnel and Telephone Numbers*).

#### **4.4.7 Private Sector**

Private sector organisations may be involved in a major emergency situation in two ways. They may be involved through, for example, ownership of the site where the emergency has occurred or through ownership of some element involved in the emergency e.g. an aircraft, bus, factory, etc. They may also be called on to assist in the response to a major emergency by providing specialist services and equipment, which would not normally be held or available within the principal, response agencies. (*See Appendix 21J*)

### **4.5 Mutual Aid from Neighbouring Counties**

Galway County Council will ensure that, where its resources do not appear to be sufficient to bring a situation under control, or the duration of an incident is extended, support is obtained via mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring Local Authorities.

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

- Western Regional Control Centre
- Crisis Management Team
- Neighbouring counties emergency plans / pre-determined arrangements.

Support can be obtained from:

- Mayo Council
- Roscommon County Council
- Clare County Council
- North Tipperary County Council
- Offaly County Council
- Galway City Council
- Athlone Town Council

#### **4.6 Regional Level Emergencies**

Galway County Council belongs to the Western Region. Local response to an emergency may be scaled up to a regional emergency as follows:

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may declare a regional level emergency and activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination. The key provision in ensuring co-ordination of the extended response is the activation of a "Regional Coordination Group". The primary function of the Regional Co-ordination Group is to maintain co-ordination of the principal response agencies involved from the extended "response region". The boundaries of the actual "region" for response purposes should be determined by the lead agency, which has declared the regional level emergency, in light of the circumstances prevailing, or likely to develop. The regions for response purposes need not coincide necessarily with the pre-determined regions for preparedness.

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

The method of operation of a Regional Co-ordination Centre will be similar to that of the Local Co-ordination Centre. *(See Appendix 6 to this document)*

#### **4.7 National / International Assistance.**

In the event that the scale of the emergency becomes to large, complex or long in duration a request can be made to seek assistance from outside the Western Region. This decision should be made by the lead agency, in association with the other principal response agencies, at the Regional Coordination Centre. The Regional Co-ordination Group should identify and dimension the level/type of assistance likely to be required and its duration. It should also seek to identify the possible options for sourcing such assistance, be that from neighbouring regions, elsewhere in the state, from Northern Ireland, the rest of the United Kingdom or from other EU member states.

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

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

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## Section 5 - Preparedness for Major Emergency Response

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### 5.1 Inclusion of Major Emergency Management in Galway County Council's Corporate Plan.

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

### 5.2 Responsibility for Leading Major Emergency Management Preparedness.

The County Manager for Galway County Council is responsible for the county 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. An Assistant Chief Fire Officer with specific responsibility for major emergency management and working under the direction of the Chief Fire Officer is responsible for the development and updating of Major Emergency Plans.

### 5.3 Major Emergency Development Programme.

The Galway County Council Director of Services, Housing and Emergency Services, as Chair of the Major Emergency Development Committee, has responsibility to ensure compatibility and interoperability between this plan and the other elements developed by the remaining principal response agencies.

### 5.4 Key Roles in Major Emergency Response.

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

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

Galway County Council has nominated appropriate individuals and alternates to the key roles (*Appendix 3C*) to enable the Council to function in accordance with the common arrangements set out in its Major Emergency Plan. The mandates for the Key Roles are contained in *Appendix 8* to this document.

**5.5 Support Teams and operational Protocols**

The Crisis Management Team will provide support to the On-Site Controller of Operations and the Local Co-Ordination Group. The mandate for the Crisis Management Team is in *Appendix 8D*.

**5.6 Staff Development Programme.**

The provisions of the Framework and the tasks arising from the major emergency management arrangements involve a significant level of development activity, both within Galway County Council and with the other principal response agencies.

Galway County Council is committed to developing its staff through major emergency exercises, workshops, seminars, etc. to both enable it to respond to a major emergency incident in an efficient and effective manner and also to discharge the functions assigned to it in the Framework.

**5.7 Training Schedule.**

All personnel nominated for key roles together with their respective support teams will undergo training specifically designed to develop and enhance their skills and abilities necessary to fulfil the roles assigned to them. Internal exercises will be used to raise awareness, educate individuals with regard to the roles of others, promote cooperation and coordination of resources as well as validating plans systems and procedures.

**5.8 Internal Exercise Programme.**

Exercises will be used to raise awareness, educate individuals on their roles and the roles of others and promote co-ordination and co-operation, as well as validating plans, systems and procedures. Exercises will be conducted on a three yearly cycle .

**5.9 Joint Inter-Agency Training and Exercise Programme.**

All relevant personnel will be required to partake in inter-agency exercises, both at local and regional level, in order to ensure effective co-operation between agencies during a major emergency.

**5.10 Resource and Budget for Preparedness.**

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

### **5.11 Procurement Process**

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: Part 12: Section 104'.

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

Plans will be reviewed after all emergencies and exercises and updated accordingly. An annual internal appraisal of preparedness for major emergency responses will also be carried out by Galway County Council. This appraisal will be documented and forwarded to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for external appraisal.

### **5.13 Public Information**

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

The Local Co-ordination group will take over the task of co-ordinating the provision of information to the public as soon as it meets. This activity should be co-ordinated by the lead agency. The Local Co-ordination group may establish a sub-group for this purpose and use all available channels to make concise and accurate information available. This may include the use of dedicated "Help-lines", web-pages, Aertel, Automatic Text Messaging as well as through liaison with the media.

Current information with regard Major Emergency Planning is available on the following websites.

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

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

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

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## **Section 6 - The Generic Command, Control and Co-ordination Systems**

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### **6.1 Command Arrangements.**

Galway County Council will exercise control over its own resources in accordance with its normal organisational structure and arrangements.

Galway County Council shall appoint a Controller of Operations at the site (or at each site) of the emergency. The officer in command of the initial response of Galway County Councils emergency service should be Controller of Operations until relieved through the Councils pre-determined process. In certain circumstances e.g. where an emergency affects an extensive area or occurs near the borders of two local authorities, there may be response from more than one local authority. In this circumstance there should be only one controller of operations from the local authorities and it will be necessary to determine from which local authority the controller of operations should come.

#### **6.1.1 Services within the Council.**

The senior person from each of the County Councils services on site will exercise command over the personnel in his/her section/service. This person will report to and liaise with the Controller of Operations. The Controller of operations will direct the operations of all Galway County Council services on site.

### **6.2 Control Arrangements.**

Galway County Council will exercise control over its own services at the site and other services (other than other principle response agencies), which it mobilises to the site. Control of the County Councils services of the emergency will be exercised by the Controller of Operations.

#### **6.2.1 Control of Council Services.**

##### **6.2.1.1 Controller of Operation**

The Controller of Operations is empowered to make all decisions relating to its agency's functions having due regard to the decisions of the On-Site Co-Ordination Group. The Rostered Senior Fire Officer from Galway fire Service will be the initial Controller of Operations for Galway County Council on mobilisation of Galway Fire Service. *See Appendix 8A for Controller of Operations MANDATE*

##### **6.2.1.2 On-Site Co-Ordinator**

As soon as the Controllers of Operations from each Principal Response Agency meet they shall determine which is the Lead Agency. (*see Section 7.6/Appendix 9*). The Controller of Operations from the Lead Agency then becomes the On-site Co-ordinator. The Galway County Councils Controller of Operations will be the On-site Co-ordinator when it is determined the Council is the lead agency.

The Onsite Co-Ordinator is empowered to make decisions in accordance with its mandate (*See Appendix 8B*). The views of other colleagues/controllers of operations in the other PRAs must be taken into account together with the use of the Information Management System as part of the decision making process.

In general, the group is to provide tactical level management for the immediate, medium and long term consequences of the incident. (*See Sect 7.4 / Appendix 8B*)

#### **6.2.1.3 Local Co-ordinating Group**

The Local Co-Ordination Group will comprise of representatives from the three PRAs in the Galway County Council functional Area, an Information Management Officer, A Media Liaison Officer, together with officers and specialists as deemed appropriate. The representative from the Lead Agency will Chair the Local Co-ordinating Group. The Local Co-ordination Group will meet in the Local Co-ordination Centre (LCC) which is located at Aras an Chontae, Galway County Council.

In general, the group is to provide strategic level management for the immediate, medium and long term consequences of the incident. (*See Sect 7.4 / Appendix 8C*)

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

The Crisis Management Team is a strategic level management group within each PRA. The Galway County Council Crisis Management Team will meet at Aras an Chontae and provide support to their respective representatives on the Local Co-Ordination Group and the Controller of Operations On-site as well as maintaining the normal day-to-day services that the community requires. *See Appendix 3D for membership and Appendix 8D for Mandate of Galway County Council Crisis Management Team.*

### **6.2.2 External Agencies and Organisations Arriving On-Site**

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

At the site of an emergency, Galway County Council will exercise control over not only its own services but any additional services (other than the principle response agencies) which it mobilises to the site. On arrival all external agencies and organisations must report to the Holding Area where they will receive further instructions from the Controller of operations.

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

Both the representatives on the Local Co-Ordination Group and the On-site Controller of Operations are supported by the Crisis management Team.

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

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

#### **6.3.1 The Lead Agency**

The Lead Agency must be identified at the start of the Emergency. The lead agency has responsibility for the co-ordination function. The determination of the lead agency is based on the criteria set out in *Section 7.6 and Appendix 9 of this document*.

#### **6.3.2 On-Site Co-ordination**

The Controllers of Operations from each of the principle response agencies will form the onsite Co-ordination Centre. This is the location from which the operations of the principle response agencies will be directed on-site in a co-ordinated manner. (*see Appendix 6 and Appendix 8B*)

#### **6.3.3 Local/Regional Co-ordination Centres**

The Local Co-ordination Centre for County Galway is located in Aras and Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway. Oranmore Garda Station has been designated as a reserve Local Co-ordination Centre should Aras and Chontae be deemed to be unsuitable for a particular emergency. As part of the MEP mobilisation procedures, the Local Co-ordination group representatives from all agencies will be informed, with a time for the first meeting. The lead agency representative 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 Co-ordination Group will comprise representatives of the other two PRA's, an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer, an Action Management Officer (where considered appropriate), representatives of other agencies and specialists, as appropriate.

The Chair of the Local Co-ordination Group (*see Appendix 8C*) may declare a regional level emergency and activate the Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination and in doing so the activation of a "Regional Coordination Group" to maintain co-ordination of the principal response agencies involved from the extended "response region".

Any one of the nominated Local Co-ordination Centres may be used as a Regional Coordination Centre, or a specific Regional Centre may be designated for this purpose. The choice of location will be determined in each situation by the Chair of the Local Coordinating Group declaring the regional level emergency and will depend on the location and nature of the emergency and any associated infrastructural damage. A Regional Co-ordination Group may request assistance from Government. National resources will be available in the event of a major emergency at local or regional level. Requests for assistance should be developed at local or regional co-ordination level and directed by the lead agency to the lead Government Department.

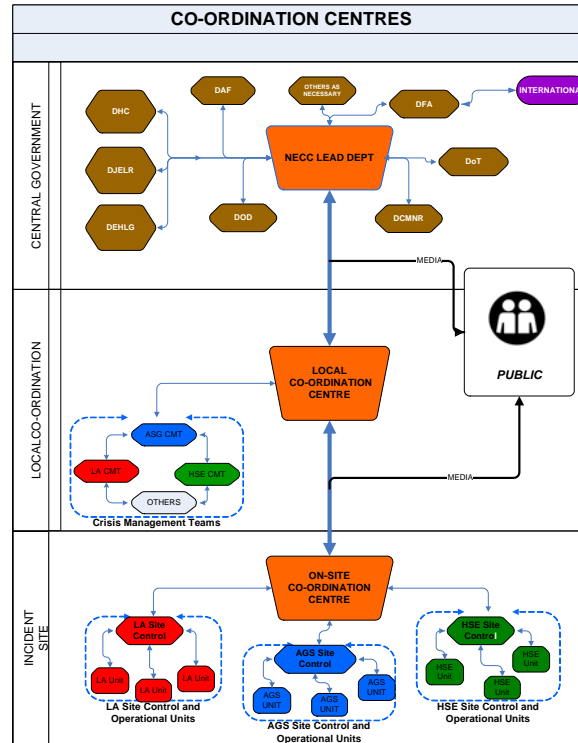


Fig 6.1: Hierarchy Of Control

### 6.3.4 Co-ordination in Other Circumstances

#### 6.3.4.1 Mutual aid and Regional level co-ordination

The Galway County Council Controller of Operations should ensure that, where its resources do not appear to be sufficient to bring a situation under control, or the duration of an incident is extended, support is requested from neighbouring local authorities. Local Authorities will support each other on a mutual aid basis.

#### 6.3.4.2 Incidents Occurring on the County Boundaries

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

In the case of Local Authorities, which are statutorily empowered in respect of their functional areas, procedures for resolving such issues may already be set out in what are referred to as Section 85 agreements. Where they are not so covered and the issue cannot be resolved quickly in discussion between the responding officers of the different units of those services, the Local Authority Controller of Operations should be the designated person from the Local Authority whose rostered senior fire officer was first to attend the incident.

### 6.3.4.3 Multi-Site or Wide Area Emergencies

In a situation where a major Emergency occurs within the functional area of Galway County Council but is spread over a wide area and may be spread over a number of sites, there may be a requirement for multiple on-site co-ordination Centres reporting into the Local Co-ordination Centre.

### 6.3.4.4 Links with National Emergency Plans

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

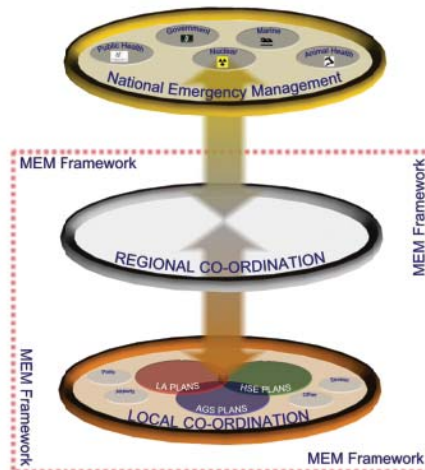


Figure 6: Linking Major Emergency Plans with National Plans and Other Plans

### 6.3.4.5 Links with National Government.

In every situation where a Major Emergency is declared, Galway County Council will inform the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government of the declaration, as part of its mobilisation procedure via the **Telephone Number 1800 303 063** in accordance with Circular Letter 05/08. *(As per format in Appendix 30)* The three parent Departments, in their role as members of the National Steering Group, will consult and agree, on the basis of available information, which Government Department will be designated as lead Department, in keeping with the Department of Defence's Strategic Emergency Planning Guidance.

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.

The Lead Government may decide to activate one of the National Emergency Plans. *See Section 10 Links with National Emergency Plans.*

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## **Section 7 - The Common Elements of Response**

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

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## Section 7.1 - Declaring a Major Emergency

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The Major Emergency Plan should be activated by whichever of the following agencies first becomes aware of the major emergency in County Galway.

- Galway County Council
- An Garda Síochána
- Health Service Executive

### 7.1.1 Arrangements for Declaring a Major Emergency

The highest ranking member of Galway County Council's initial response to an emergency will conduct a detailed appraisal of the situation in order to enable him/her decide whether or not to declare a Major Emergency. Once the decision to activate the Major Emergency Plan is made then the Procedure for Activating Major Emergency Plan (*Appendix 3A*) should be implemented with the following typical message relayed back to the West Regional Control Centre (WRCC) in Castlebar.

**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 mobilisations arrangements in the Galway County**  
**Council Major Emergency Plan.**

If the caller is on the Galway County Council list of persons authorised to activate the Major Emergency Plan, then the Emergency Control Operator will activate the Galway County Council Major Emergency Plan procedures (*See Appendix 3A*).

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

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

### 7.1.2 Information Message Format ‘METHANE’

After the declaration of a Major Emergency 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.

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## Section 7.2 - Initial Mobilisation

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### 7.2.1 Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure

Galway County Council Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure will be implemented immediately on notification of the declaration of a major emergency. The mobilisation Procedure is implemented by WRCC. WRCC may use the SADIAN Text Messaging System to initiate the Mobilisation Procedure. When this procedure has been activated, each County Council service requested shall respond in accordance with pre-determined arrangements. (*see Appendix 3*)

In some situations, there may be an early warning of an impending emergency. Mobilisation within Galway 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 principal response agencies will be required (*See Section 7.10*). 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.

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## Section 7.3 - Command, Control and Communication Centres

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### 7.3.1 Command, Control and Communications Centres

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

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

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

The three Controllers of Operations, Chaired by the lead agency (Onsite-Co-Coordinator) will exercise overall command and control at the site of the emergency.

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

Senior representatives from the three PRAs will meet at an agreed time in Galway at the Local coordination will be located at Aras and Chontae on Prospect Hill, Galway City. The Garda Station on Oranmore is designated as the reserve Local Coordination Centre. The function of the Local Co-ordination Group is to provide strategic level management for the immediate, medium and long-term consequences of the incident. See *Appendix 8C* for the Mandate of the Chair of the Local Co-Ordination Group.

#### **West Regional Communications Centre WRCC**

West Regional Communications Centre, based in Castlebar is the Fire Services Communication Centre for Mayo, Galway, Roscommon, Sligo, Leitrim, and Donegal. The centre will mobilise, support and monitor the initial turnout.

#### **Crisis Management Team**

The Crisis Management Team for Galway County Council will be located in Aras an Chontae. The Crisis Management Team provides support to the Galway County Councils 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. See *Appendix 8D* for the Mandate of the Crisis Management Team. Once the Crisis management team is established, it will take over the responsibility for mobilising all resources (both internal and external) required in response to the emergency, from WRCC.

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## Section 7.4 - Co-ordination Centres

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### 7.4.1 On-Site Co-ordination Centre.

An Onsite Co-Ordination Centre will be developed at a suitable location adjacent to the incident site in the event of a major emergency to facilitate On-Site Co-Ordination. This may be a tent, a building or a vehicle that will accommodate the Principle Reponses Agencies. The Galway County Council Controller of Operations will be supported by other senior personnel from Galway County Council. Galway County Council has procured a trailer which contains all the equipment required to establish the On-site Co-ordination Centre.

### 7.4.2 Crisis Management Team.

The Crisis Management Team is a strategic level management group that has been established within Galway County Council. It provides support to the principal response agency's representative at the Local Co-ordination Group, supports their own Controller of Operations on site and maintains the agency's normal day-to-day services that the community requires. The Crisis management Team will meet in Àras an Chontae, Galway City. This Group consists of senior managers & senior technical personnel. Details of the members and chair of this Group are contained in *Appendix 8D*.

The functions of the Crisis Management Group during a major emergency are to:

- Manage, control and co-ordinate Galway County Council's overall response to the situation;
- Provide support to the Galway County Council Controller of Operations on site and mobilise resources from within the agency or externally as required;
- Ensure appropriate participation by Galway County Council in the inter-agency co-ordination structures at both the and Regional (if required)) Co-ordination Groups.
- Maintain Galway County Council's normal day to day services that the community requires.

### 7.4.3 Local Co-ordination Centres.

Once an emergency has been declared a Local Co-ordination Center must be established. An Garda Síochána, Health Services Executive West along with Galway County Council have agreed that the Centre will be based in Aras an Chontae, Galway.

Strategic level co-ordination is exercised at the Local Co-ordination Centre. The Council buildings have the capacity to facilitate the effective working of the Local Co-ordination Group & Crisis Management Team. The centre set-up will have the following;

- A spacious dedicated main area, where co-ordination activity takes place, i.e. where the relevant co-ordination group meet and work;
- An adjacent communications space (not a room with communications equipment), through which most communications in and out of the centre are routed;
- A range of adjacent meeting areas, one of which should be large;

The generic layout and equipment provided in the Co-Ordination Centre are contained in *Appendix 6*. Galway County Council will provide centre support as required. This may include Catering, Security, I.T. Support, Facilities Support.

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

#### **7.4.4 Regional Co-ordination Centre.**

The chair of the Local Co-ordination Group may declare a Regional Level Emergency. Again the lead agency concept will come into play. It will be chaired by the chair of the Local Co-Ordination Group and will meet at either of the following pre-determined centres;

- Áras an Chontae, Galway
- Áras an Chontae, Castlebar
- Fire Station, Roscommon Town

The goal of Regional Co-Ordination may be achieved by using;

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

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

#### **7.4.5 Information Management**

##### **Information Management Officer/Team**

This role will be assigned to senior managers. The function of the information management team will be to interrogate, test, process, analyze and present all incoming information required for the decision making process

##### **Information Management Display**

A crucial element should be readily visible to everyone, and certainly to individuals that have a discussion making or advisory role. This is a prime source of information for both operational co-ordination and communications to the public and media.

### Action Management Officer / Team

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

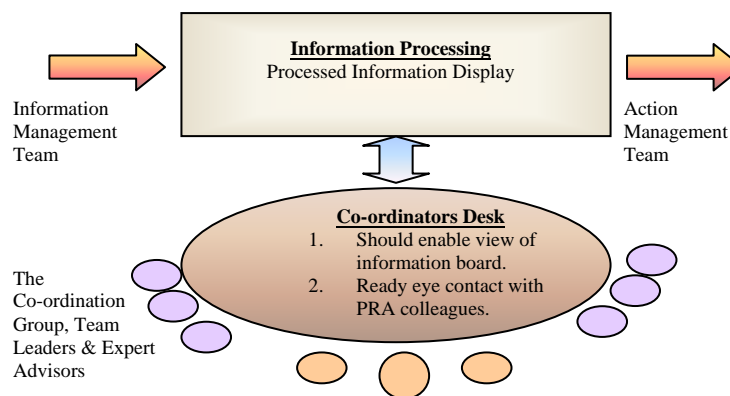
### Team Leaders and Expert Advisors:

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

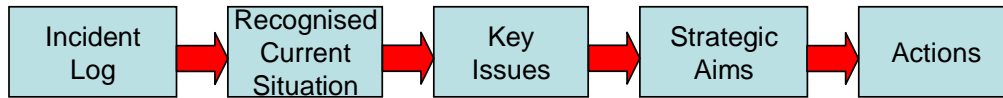
### Support Teams:

Galway County Council has put support teams in place for key roles and is preparing Operational Protocols setting out the arrangements which will enable the agency's support to be mobilised and function in accordance with this MEP.

All Co-Ordination Centres will follow a generic model of operation. The Co-ordination centres will also incorporate the Generic Information Management System approach. This system will involve 4 white boards that will have information coming in on, key issues, strategic aim and actions to be carried out by Galway County Council.



**Figure 7.1 - A Schematic of a Generic Co-ordination Centre.**



(All information and decisions must be noted in the information Log)

**Figure 7.2 - A Schematic of Generic Information Management System.**

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## Section 7.5 - Communications Facilities

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### 7.5.1 Galway County Council Communications Systems.

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

The specific communication systems used in each element are as follows:

#### **Galway County Council**

- Fixed Lines
- Mobile phones
- Fax
- Email
- Satellite Phones

#### **Fire Service**

Specific systems in addition to the Galway County Council list above include:

- VHF mobile radio systems on all fire appliances, vehicles and RSFO cars.
- VHF fixed mobile radios in all stations.
- UHF handheld personal radios issued to fire personnel.
- Mobile repeater systems fitted to command vehicles and the Emergency Tender located at Galway Fire Station to facilitate communication between incident site (UHF over VHF) to central control centre.

#### **Civil Defence**

Specific systems in addition to the above include:

- VHF mobile radios on all vehicles
- UHF hand portable radios

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

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

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

Details on the Fire Service County Identification signs, senior officer signs, station identification signs and appliance identification signs are provided in *Appendix 21B*.

**7.5.2 Inter-Agency Communication**

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 a set of hand-portable radios, for distribution to the Controllers of Operations dedicated specifically to inter-agency communication, on the site.**

**7.5.3 Communication Between Site and Local Co-ordination Centre.**

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

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

### 7.6.1 Determination of Lead Agency.

It is important that there is rapid determination of the lead agency in each emergency situation, as this determines which one of the three Controllers of Operations is to act as the On-Site Co-ordinator. When this determination is made, the person assuming the role of On-Site Co-ordinator should note the time and that the determination was made in the presence of the two other controllers on site. This should then be communicated by the On-Site Co-ordinator to all the parties involved in the response, and the On-Site Co-ordinator should begin to undertake that role. Two mechanisms are envisaged to determine the lead agency for any emergency.

- The first is by pre-nomination. See table below, this should be the primary basis for determining the lead agency.
- The second is a default arrangement where the categorisations in the table do not seem to apply and the lead agency is not obvious. In these situations, which should be rare, the Local Authorities will be the default lead agency.

**Table 7.1: Pre-nominated Lead Agencies for Different Categories of Emergency**

Emergency Incident Type	Initial Pre-nominated Lead Agency	Likely change
Road Traffic Accident <sup>(1)</sup>	An Garda Síochána	To Local Authorities when involving Hazardous Materials
Hazardous Material	Local Authorities <sup>(2)</sup>	
Fire	Local Authorities	
Train Crash	Local Authorities	To An Garda Síochána when rescue phase complete
Aircraft Incident	Local Authorities	To An Garda Síochána when fire-fighting / rescue phase complete
Rescue	Local Authorities	
Weather Related	Local Authorities	
Biological Incident	Health Services	
Open Country Search and Rescue (low land)	An Garda Síochána	
Open Country Search and Rescue (high land)	An Garda Síochána <sup>(3)</sup>	

Public order / Crowd Events	An Garda Síochána	
CCBRN <sup>(4)</sup> Conventional <sup>(5)</sup> Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear <sup>(6)</sup>	An Garda Síochána	Local Authorities Health Service Ex. Local Authorities Local Authorities
Accidental Explosions / Building Collapse		To An Garda Síochána to investigate when search and rescue completed
Environmental / Pollution	Local Authorities	
Marine Emergency impacting on shore	Local Authorities <sup>(7)</sup>	
Water Rescue inland	An Garda Síochána <sup>(8)</sup>	

**Notes:**

<sup>(1)</sup> Road traffic accident in this context excludes Road Traffic accidents involving Hazardous Materials (other than fuel in vehicles).

<sup>(2)</sup> As its principal emergency service, the fire service is assigned initial responsibility for each category where the Local Authorities is designated as lead agency, as it is likely to be the first attendance of that agency at the site. This may become a broader Local Authorities function at a later stage of the major emergency.

<sup>(3)</sup> An Garda Síochána may be assisted by specialist groups, such as Mountain Rescue teams.

<sup>(4)</sup> Where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána should assume the lead role, regardless of the agent. Should it subsequently transpire that there is no terrorist involvement; the lead agency may change as indicated above.

<sup>(5)</sup> The Defence Forces, when requested, will assist An Garda Síochána, in an Aid to the Civil Power role, with Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams, at suspected terrorist incidents. Additional Defence Forces support in an Aid to the Civil Power role may be sought, if required.

<sup>(6)</sup> It is envisaged that Local/Regional involvement would arise only on foot of activation under the National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents (NEPNA).

<sup>(7)</sup> The Irish Coast Guard has responsibility for co-ordinating response to marine emergencies at sea. The Irish Coast Guard may, in certain circumstances, request the principal emergency services to assist them offshore. When the Irish Coast Guard request the declaration of a major emergency, as provided for in Section 4.2, where casualties are being brought ashore (or pollution is coming, or threatening to come ashore), the onshore response will be co-ordinated by the Local Authorities.

<sup>(8)</sup> The Irish Coast Guard has responsibility for receiving 999/112 calls and the mobilising of resources to Inland Waterway emergencies. The Framework provides that An Garda Síochána should be the principal response agency to undertake initial co-ordination at inland waterway emergencies. After the initial response, this role may be re-assigned, following consultation between the Irish Coast Guard and An Garda Síochána.

**7.6.2 Review of Lead Agency.**

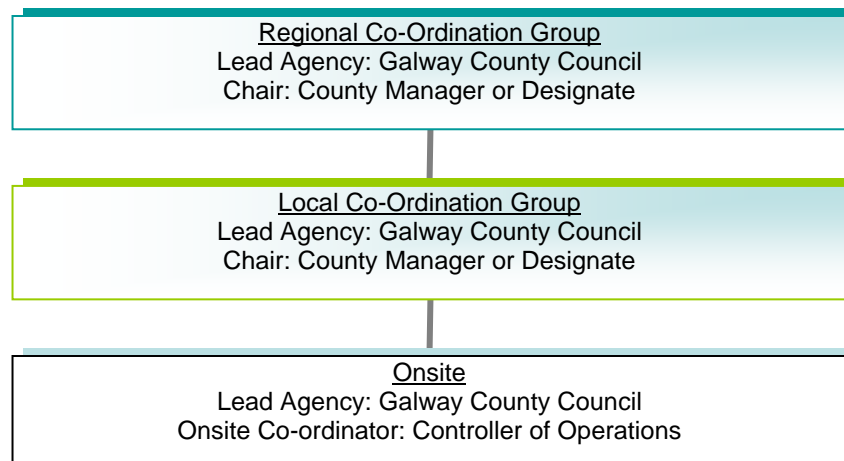
The lead agency role may change over time, to reflect the changing circumstances of the major emergency. Ownership of the lead agency mantle should be reviewed at appropriate stages of the major emergency. All changes in lead agency designation emanating from the site, and the timing thereof, will be by agreement of the three

Controllers of Operations, and should be recorded and communicated as per the initial determination. 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 Councils' Co-ordination Function as 'Lead Agency'

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



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## Section 7.7 - Public Information

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### 7.7.1 Role of Galway County Council for Early Warning and Special Public Warnings.

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

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

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.

### 7.7.2 Methods of Communication

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

- Galway County Council internet service - useful for posting more information than would be communicable by emergency calls or broadcasts.
- Local broadcasters may also be called upon to broadcast messages on behalf of Galway County Council.
- Galway County Council emergency helpline service – Galway County Council will establish an emergency helpline and mobilise a telephonist to deal with requests for information from the public.

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

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

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## Section 7.8 - The Media

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### 7.8.1 Liaison with the Media. *(See Appendix 17- Managing the Media Sub Plan)*

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

In the event of an emergency in county Galway, Galway County Council will appoint a Media Liaison Officer for both the On-site and Local Co-Ordination Centres. The Media Liaison Officers will be responsible for acting as a sole channel between Galway County Council and the Public. The Media Liaison Officers must keep accurate and timely information on the emergency so that:

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

All On-site statements should be cleared with the On-Site Co-ordinator or with the Media Liaison Officer. All statements to the media at local (off-site) level should be cleared with the chair of the Local Co-Ordination Group. Details of the names and contact numbers for the Media Liaison Officers both on and off site are provided in the *Appendix 3C*.

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

Galway County Council will designate a Media Liaison Officer at the site and the activities of the Media Liaison Officers on site will be co-ordinated by the Media Liaison Officer of the lead agency. All statements to the media should be cleared with the On-Site Co-ordinator or his/her Media Liaison Officer.

The Media Liaison Officer must keep accurate and timely information on the emergency so that in consultation with the local Co-ordination Groups:

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

**7.8.3 Media at Local/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, Galway County Council has designated a Media Liaison Officer at the Local Coordination Centre in Aras an Chontae and the activities of the Media Liaison Officers should be co-ordinated by the Media Liaison Officer of the lead agency. All statements to the media at this level should be cleared with the chair of the Local/Regional Co-ordination Group.

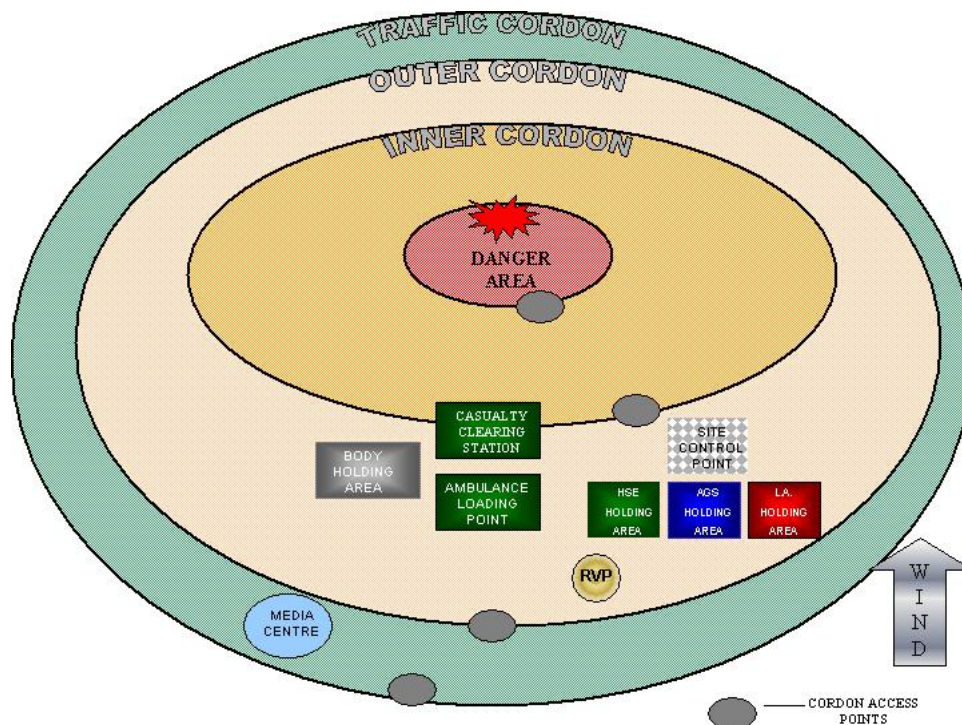
**7.8.4 Arrangements for media at other locations associated with the emergency.**

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

## Section 7.9 - Site Management Arrangements

### 7.9.1 Site Management.

The highest ranking Fire Officer (RSFO) of Galway Fire and Rescue Service will, de facto, have the role of Controller of Operations for Galway County Council at the scene until relieved. 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. See Figure below for Idealised Site Management Arrangement



**Figure 7.2: Idealised Scene Management Arrangements**

The main components of a typical Site Plan should contain some or all of the following *(for more information see Site Management Plan – Appendix 10)*:

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

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

### 7.9.2 Control of Access / Identification of Personnel and Council Services

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

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

Three cordons will be established. An Inner, Outer and Traffic Cordon, along with access cordon points (*see Appendix 10 for detailed information*). The Cordons will be implemented by An Garda Síochána after a decision by and agreement with the On-site Co-Ordination Group. An Garda Síochána will control the Cordon Access Points to the Traffic and the Outer Cordons while the Lead Agency will control the Cordon Access points to the Inner Cordon and the Danger Area.

A **Danger Area** may also be declared by a Fire Officer of Galway Fire service where there is a definite risk to rescue personnel, over and above that which would normally pertain at emergency operations. (*see Appendix 10 for detailed information*)

### 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.



Figure 7.3: Bib Colours for responding Agencies

**Non-Uniformed Personnel**

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

**7.9.3 Air Support and Air Exclusion Zones.**

Aerial support can only be requested by the On-site Controller after consultation with the other Controller of Operations. All requests must be channelled through An Garda Síochána.

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.

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## Section 7.10 - Mobilising Additional Resources

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### 7.10.1 Mobilising External Organisations

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

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

The contact details of the above organisation are available in *Appendix 21H*

The Voluntary Agency linked to Galway County Council is Civil Defence.

All personnel and equipment mobilised to site must report to the Holding Area. They cannot enter the Inner Cordon, until authorised to do so by the Onsite Co-Ordinator.

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

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

- Scope and scale of the tasks to be assigned to the responding organisations is clear.
- A Liaison Officer is appointed for each organisation to the support team of the relevant Controller of Operations or the On-Site Co-Ordination Group. The liaison officers should maintain the closest possible contact between their own organisations and the relevant team or group and be changed or rotated only to the minimum extent necessary;
- Communication is established between the external agency and the lead agency or the principal response agency which mobilised it.
- Regular feedback is provided to the On-site Co-Ordination Centre.

### 7.10.1.1 Mobilisation of Civil Defence (Appendix 3N )

The Civil Defence shall mobilise at the request of the On-site Co-ordinator after consultation with the other Controller of Operations. All requests for Civil Defence assistance should be channelled through Galway County Council Controller of Operations. In turn he/she will contact the Civil Defence Officer who in turn will mobilise the Civil Defence.

On arrival at the scene the CDO shall report to the On-site Co-ordinator at the On-Site Co-Ordination Centre where he / she shall be detailed a task. As the situation changes the Onsite Co-ordinator may decide to re-allocate the Civil Defence resources;

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

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

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

A summary of the assistance Mayo Civil Defence can provide to the PRAs is listed in the Table below.

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

### **7.10.1.2 Mobilisation of Defence Forces (*Appendix 21E*)**

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

In the event of a major emergency, the Defence Forces will operate under the provisions of the Defence Acts 1954 to 1998, as amended, and in accordance with agreed Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) and Service Level Agreements (SLAs).

The Defence Forces should be mobilised at the request of the highest-level co-ordination group convened (On-Site, Local, Regional or National Co-Ordination Group) in order to avoid multiple and competing requests. All requests for Defence Forces assistance must be channelled through An Garda Síochána to Defence Forces Headquarters (DFHQ).

An agreed callout procedure for Defence Force assistance and support is found in the Emergency Mobilisation Procedure of An Garda Síochána. The Defence Forces will operate under their own command and control structure.

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

- determine if the Defence Forces can accede to the request;
- determine which of the particular requested tasks the Defence Forces are in a position to undertake; and
- provide a liaison officer to the On-Site Co-Ordination Group.

The role of the Defence Forces Liaison Officer is to:

- assist in the process of determining which tasks the Defence Forces will undertake;
- provide technical advice where necessary; and
- act as a conduit between the Defence Forces and the On-Site Co-Ordination Group.

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

- determine the requirements to be requested, in terms of Defence Forces resources, for the site response and, once Defence Forces resources have been committed, the tasks to be requested and the procedures for the altering of such requirements or tasks as the situation requires;
- determine where and to whom the Defence Forces will report and also determine communication links for ongoing reporting on the status of the Defence Forces response;
- include for the provision to the Defence Forces commander of a communication system, to enable effective communications and the provision of reports as requested;
- provide for the Defence Forces being stood down from the site as the situation warrants; and
- include procedures for requesting operational debriefing and reporting of all activity undertaken by the Defence Forces.

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

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

The Red Cross shall mobilise at the request of the On-site Co-ordinator after consultation with the other Controller of Operations. In turn the Irish Red Cross will report to the On-site Controller who in turn assigns the task for the Red Cross.

### **7.10.1.4 Mobilisation of Voluntary Emergency Services**

The normal range of voluntary emergency services includes

- the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps,
- St John's Ambulance Service,
- Mountain Rescue Teams,
- Cave Rescue Teams,
- Search and Rescue Dog Associations,
- River Rescue Units,
- Community Inshore Rescue Units,
- RNLi, Sub-Aqua Units, etc.

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

### **7.10.1.5 Mobilisation of Utilities**

Utilities are frequently involved in the response to emergencies, usually to assist the PRA's in making situations safe. They may also be directly involved in restoring their own services, for example, electricity supply in the aftermath of a storm. It is important that there is close co-ordination between the principal response agencies and utilities involved in or affected by an emergency. A list of contact details for Utilities is supplied in *Appendix 21G*.

### **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, train, 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 XX**

**7.10.2 Arrangements for identifying and mobilising additional organisations.**

The Galway County Council Controller of Operations should ensure that, where the resources of the Council 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 Councils 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 4.6 of this document, details also given in [Appendix 21G](#).*

**7.10.4 Arrangements for Integration of Community Volunteers as Appropriate**

*Please refer to section 4.4.5 of this document.*

**7.10.5 Command, Control and Co-ordination of Additional Resources**

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

*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**

*Please refer to section 4.5 of this document.*

**7.10.7 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 International Assistance.**

The decision to seek international assistance will be recommended to government by the lead agency, in association with the other principal response agencies, at the Local/Regional Coordination Centre.

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

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

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### **7.11.1 General**

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

As well as making provision for casualties and survivors, the principal response agencies should also make arrangements for the reception, facilitation and support of the friends and relatives of some or all of these individuals.

#### **7.11.1.1 Casualties and Survivors and Galway County Councils role in this.**

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

Individuals may be divided into two main categories as follows:

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

### **7.11.2 Injured**

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

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

#### **7.11.2.1 Arrangements for the Triage**

Once injured casualties have been rescued or found, they should be assessed or triaged as quickly as possible. Casualties are often found some distance from the primary site and

search teams, co-ordinated by An Garda Síochána, should be established where it is considered that this may be necessary.

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

#### **7.11.2.2 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 Galway County Council – resources permitting, some casualties may leave the site by other means and may arrive at the designated Receiving Hospital(s), or other hospitals, in cars, buses, etc.

#### **7.11.2.3 Casualty Clearing Stations.**

Patients must be moved to the Casualty clearing station. The Casualty clearing station will be established by the ambulance service, in consultation with the Health Service Executive. After initial triage casualties will be brought to the casualty clearing station. 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**

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

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

*Please refer to Appendix 18 Mass Fatalities, for further information.*

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

*Please refer to Appendix 18 Mass Fatality Plan, for further information.*

### **7.11.3.2 Arrangements for dealing with fatalities, both on and off-site, including Body Holding Areas and Temporary Mortuaries.**

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 Galway County Council to provide a Temporary Mortuary. 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.

### **7.11.3.3 Identification of Deceased – See Mass Fatality Sub-Plan (*Appendix 18*)**

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.

**Viewing of Bereaved** - See Mass Fatality Sub-Plan (*Appendix 18*)

#### **7.11.4 Survivors**

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 the Galway County Council to establish and run this centre. Transport from the Survivor Reception Centre to home/meet relatives/safe place will be arranged as soon as it is practicable. This responsibility will lie with Galway County Council.

##### **7.11.4.1 Uninjured Survivors**

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

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

Transport from the Survivor Reception Centre to home/meet relatives/safe place should be arranged as soon as it is practicable and is the responsibility of Galway County Council.

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

To facilitate this process, a liaison/casualty officer will normally be sent by An Garda Síochána to each hospital where casualties are being treated. Galway County Council 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 and friend may inquire about 'loved ones'.

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

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

The purpose of a reception centre is to provide a comfortable area where friends and relatives of those involved in the incident (primarily the casualties and survivors) can be directed for information. A building used as a Friends' and Relatives' Reception Centre should be secure from media intrusion and contain sufficient room to afford privacy to families receiving information about relatives. There will also be a need for a reliable process to establish the credentials of friends and relatives. It is the responsibility of Galway County Council to provide welfare facilities for 'friends and relatives' located at this reception centre.

#### **7.11.6.1 How friends and relatives of casualties are to be provided for.**

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. *See section 7.11.6.*

### **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.

#### **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 21G.*

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

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

**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.

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## Section 7.12 - Emergencies involving Hazardous Materials

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### 7.12.1 Major Hazardous Material Incidents.

Galway County Council will be designated the lead agency for response to major hazardous materials incidents, with the exception of those involving biological agents within Co. Galway. In cases where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána will act as the lead agency. (*See Appendix 9*).

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

### 7.12.2 Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Incidents.

Other issues relating to managing the response to CCBRN incidents are set out in two protocols for dealing with suspected chemical and biological agents.. These protocols deal with a range of matters relevant to managing such incidents, including the identification of the materials involved. They also provide for involvement of the National Poisons Information Centre and the National Virus Reference Laboratory. The National Poisons Information Centre is located in Beaumont Hospital, Dublin while the National Virus Reference Laboratory is located in U.C.D. Where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána will act as the lead agency.

### 7.12.3 Plan for Biological Incidents

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

### 7.12.4 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. Galway County Council will provide assistance under the command of the lead government department.

See National Public Health Emergency Plan

[http://www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/public\\_health\\_emergency.pdf?direct=1](http://www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/public_health_emergency.pdf?direct=1)

### **7.12.5 Plan for Nuclear Accidents**

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

*(See also Appendix 14)*

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

### **7.12.6 Decontamination**

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

The fire services have responsibility for providing forms (other than clinical) of physical decontamination of persons at the site. Galway County Fire Service will provide Decontamination Facilities for the functional area of County Galway using Mobile Decontamination Unit.

The Health Service Executive has responsibility for providing clinical decontamination and medical treatment to casualties affected by hazardous materials. 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 fire service may use its fire-fighter decontamination facilities, or improvised equipment may be used prior to the arrival of dedicated equipment. Where persons have to undergo this practice it should be carried out under the guidance of medical personnel. It should be noted that emergency contamination carries risks for vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and the injured.

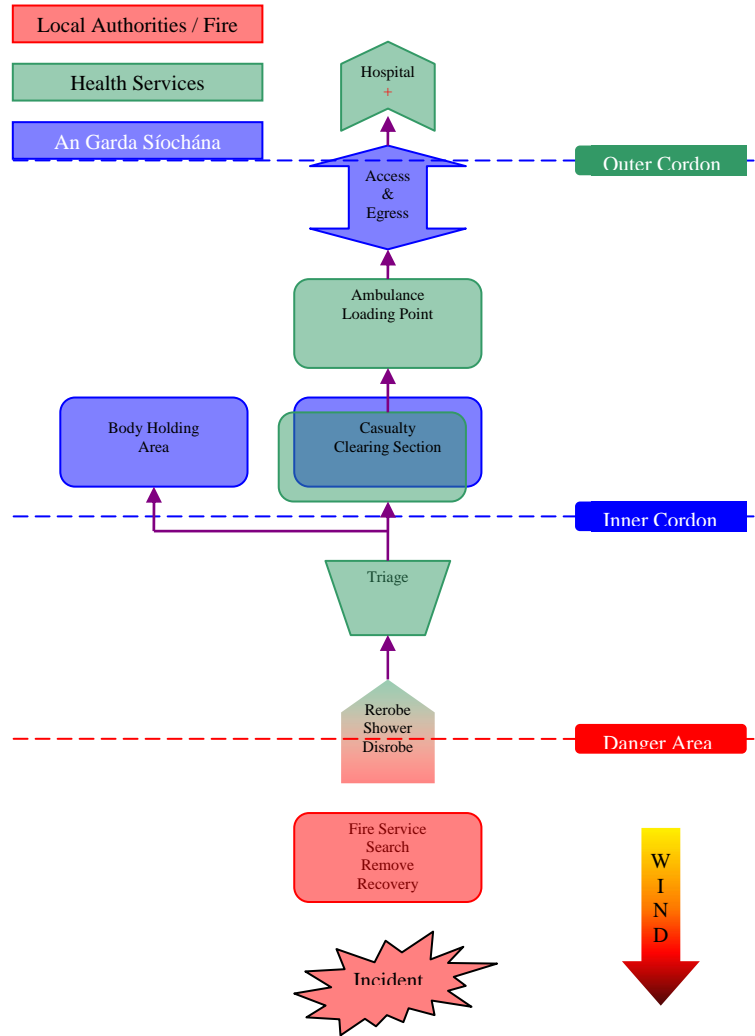


Diagram 13: Managing Hazardous Materials

## Section 7.13 - Protecting Threatened Populations

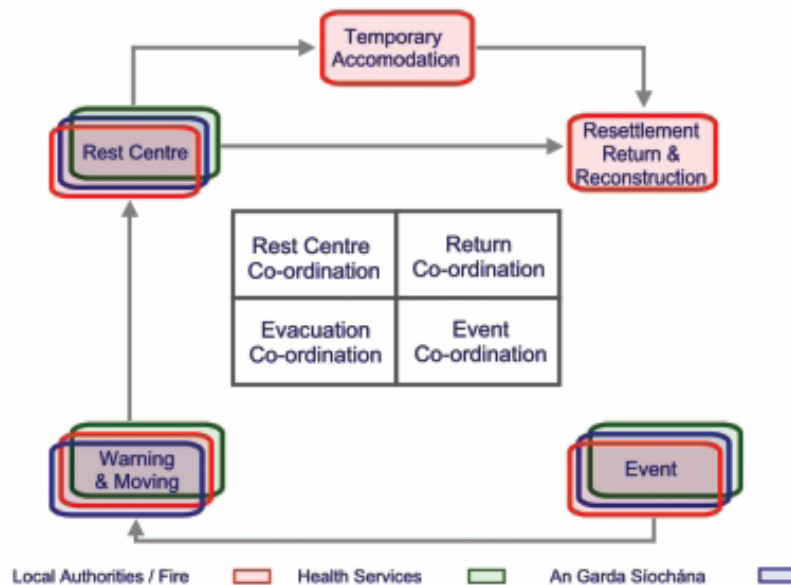
### 7.13.1 Threatened Population

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

### 7.13.2 Evacuation Arrangements *(See Appendix 15)*

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 Fire Service or Health Service Executive. Where decided upon, the process of evacuation will be undertaken by An Garda Síochána, with the assistance of the other services. In some circumstances, personnel from all services may have to assist in carrying it out. A suitable evacuation assembly point will need to be established and rest centres set up by Galway County Council. Personnel from the Galway County Council and from voluntary agencies will staff rest centres. The centres will provide security, welfare, communication, catering and medical facilities. Evacuees should be documented and basic details passed to the casualty bureau. Galway County Council will assist in this role.

Figure 7.2: Structure of Evacuation



**7.13.3 Arrangements for the involvement of The Public Health service.**

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

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## Section 7.14 - Early and Public Warning Systems

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### 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. *See Section 11.1 and Appendix 19.*

Other such warning systems are in place for Flooding, detailed in the Flood Response Plan, Water contamination etc which are available on the Galway County Council Intranet Site

### 7.14.2 How warnings are to be disseminated.

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

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

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## Section 7.15 - Emergencies Arising on Inland Waterways

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### 7.15.1 Liaison with the Irish Coast Guard

An Garda Síochána are be the principal response agency to undertake initial co-ordination at inland waterway emergencies. After the initial response, this role may be re-assigned, following consultation between the Irish Coast Guard and An Garda Síochána.

Galway County Council can provide assistance in the form of the Galway Fire and Rescue and Civil Defence for water rescue / recovery. There are also some inland water rescue volunteer organisations that may be ask to provide assistance such as the RNLI and River Rescue.

### 7.15.2 Receiving 999/112 Calls and the 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.

The functional area of Galway County is served by two different coast guards – Valentia Coast Guard and the Donegal Coast Guard.

See *Appendix 21G* for Contact Details of the Irish Coast Guard.

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## Section 7.16 - Safety, Health and Welfare Considerations

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### 7.16.1 Safety, Health and Welfare of Staff. *(See Appendix 20)*

Galway County Council 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 the Galway County Council Safety Statement for further information*

### 7.16.2 Support Arrangements of Safety of Council Rescue Personnel.

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

### 7.16.3 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)

The Council Controller of Operations will ensure that appropriate rest and refreshment facilities are provided for all response personnel at the site. *See Section 7.17.3 and Appendix 16.*

**7.16.6 Psycho-Social Support for Personnel.**

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

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

Those who are particularly traumatized by the events of a Major emergency may require skilled professional help, this is will be provided by Galway County Council. Currently a careline exists which enables employees and their immediate family to access confidential advice and support 24 hours a day 365 days a year. This type of service ensures confidentiality and overcomes the cultural resistance in the emergency services to such a step. These facilities should also be made available to support staff, even if they are not directly involved at the scene, e.g. administration staff, drivers and communications staff.

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

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### **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 Galway County Council Safety, Health and Welfare arrangements. Crews from the West Region may be called upon to assist and support the emergency.

### **7.17.2 Re-Organising Normal Emergency And Other Services Cover**

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

### **7.17.3 Arrangements for Ongoing Welfare of Field Staff. *(See Appendix 16)***

Galway County Councils Controller should ensure that appropriate rest and refreshment facilities are provided for response personnel at the site, as well as for survivors. Staff welfare will be considered at all times. Civil Defence may be called upon to provide or aid in the administration of such needs. Welfare facilities such as toilets etc may also be required and supplied by Galway County Council. Galway County Council will strive and endeavour to provide meals at all meal times to field staff or every 4/5 hours during an incident.

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## Section 7.18 - Investigations

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### 7.18.1 Investigations Arising from the Emergency

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

### 7.18.2 Preservation 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. 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),
- the Marine Casualty Investigation Unit, and
- the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), amongst others.

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.

Please refer to *Appendix 21G* for contact details of Government Departments and National Bodies.

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## **Section 7.19 - Community / VIPs / Observers**

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### **17.19.1 Links Established 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 in the community.

### **17.19.2 Arrangements for Receiving VIPs Who Wish to Visit;**

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.

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

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

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## **Section 7.20 - Standing-Down the Major Emergency**

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### **7.20.1 Standing-Down of the Major Emergency.**

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

The plan may be stood down generally following agreement by the three principle response agencies responding to the emergency or in respect of all or certain Galway County Council services following consultation with the other principle response agencies.

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.

### **7.20.2 Operational Debriefing and Reporting of Activity.**

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

A multi-agency debrief will then be held and lessons learned will be incorporated into a revised Major Emergency Plan. This review should be hosted by the lead agency and involve all services which were part of the response. The purpose of the review should be to formulate the lessons learned from the incident in relation to co-ordination and to document these.

Multi-agency debriefs should consider the contribution provided by other, non-emergency service agencies to expand the knowledge and learning process that debriefs should collate. This is notwithstanding the potential conflict of interest that may result in later investigations. This aspect should be considered when inviting agencies other than emergency services to the debrief.

Operational debriefs should identify areas for improvement in procedures, equipment and systems. They should not be forums for criticising the performance of others. Debriefs should not interfere with or comment on investigations into the incident carried out by investigative or judicial authorities. It is important to realise that such debriefs and related documents would be disclosed to individuals involved in legal proceedings.

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## Section 8 - Agency Specific Elements and Sub-Plans

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When planning and preparing for a Major Emergency it is important that all Major Emergency Plans tie in with the functions of the other Principal Response Agencies. A summary of functions of each Principal Response Agency is included in the Appendix.

- Mayo County Council *Appendix 12*
- An Garda Síochána *Appendix 12*
- HSE West *Appendix 12*

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

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

The following Sub-Plans exist within Galway County Council

- Dealing with Media Sub Plan
- Mass Fatalities Sub-Plan
- Evacuation Sub Plan
- Severe weather Sub Plan
- On site welfare Sub Plan
- External Emergency Plan – EN WEST Tank Farm
- Major Incident Plan – Aviation
- Major Incident Plan – Galway Docks
- Offshore Oil Pollution Plan

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## Section 9 - Plan for Regional Level Co-ordination

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### *See Plan For Regional Level Co-ordination*

#### **9.1 Regional Level Major Emergency.**

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

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

- Galway
- Mayo
- Roscommon
- Galway City

#### **Declaring a Regional Level Major Emergency**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Any of the nominated Local Co-ordination Centres may be used as a Regional Coordination Centre, or a specific Regional Centre may be designated for this purpose.

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## Section 10 - Links with National Emergency Plans

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### 10.1 Activation of the Plan in response to National Emergencies:

Each principal response agency should provide for working with appropriate national bodies and responding to and activating appropriate aspects of their Major Emergency Plan following requests arising from national emergency situations. *Please refer to section 6.3.4.4/ 6.3.4.5 of this document for further details.*

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

#### 10.1.1 National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents

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

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

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

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

[http://www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/public\\_health\\_emergency.pdf?direct=1](http://www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/public_health_emergency.pdf?direct=1)

#### 10.1.3 Animal Health Plan

Galway County Council has appointed a Local Authority Veterinary Inspector (LAVI) to provide advice and assistance in the event of an outbreak of an infectious animal disease within Co. Galway. In addition to this a number of guidance documents have been prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food which provide guidance on the role of Galway County Council during an outbreak. A Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) Operations Manual is currently in circulation and has been distributed to all Local Authorities. This manual contains information on how a response should be conducted on both National and Local level and the role of Galway County Council during an outbreak of FMD.

[http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/index.jsp?file=publicat/fmd\\_manual/index.xml](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/index.jsp?file=publicat/fmd_manual/index.xml)

A list of contingency measures has been drawn up by the Department of Agriculture in relation to an Avian Flu Outbreak in Ireland. In addition to this guidance has been released and distributed to all Local Authorities on whole House Gassing of Poultry in response to an Outbreak of Avian Influenza and the role which the fire service will conduct during an outbreak. All relevant Fire Services Personnel have received vaccinations as required by the Avian Flu Protocol.

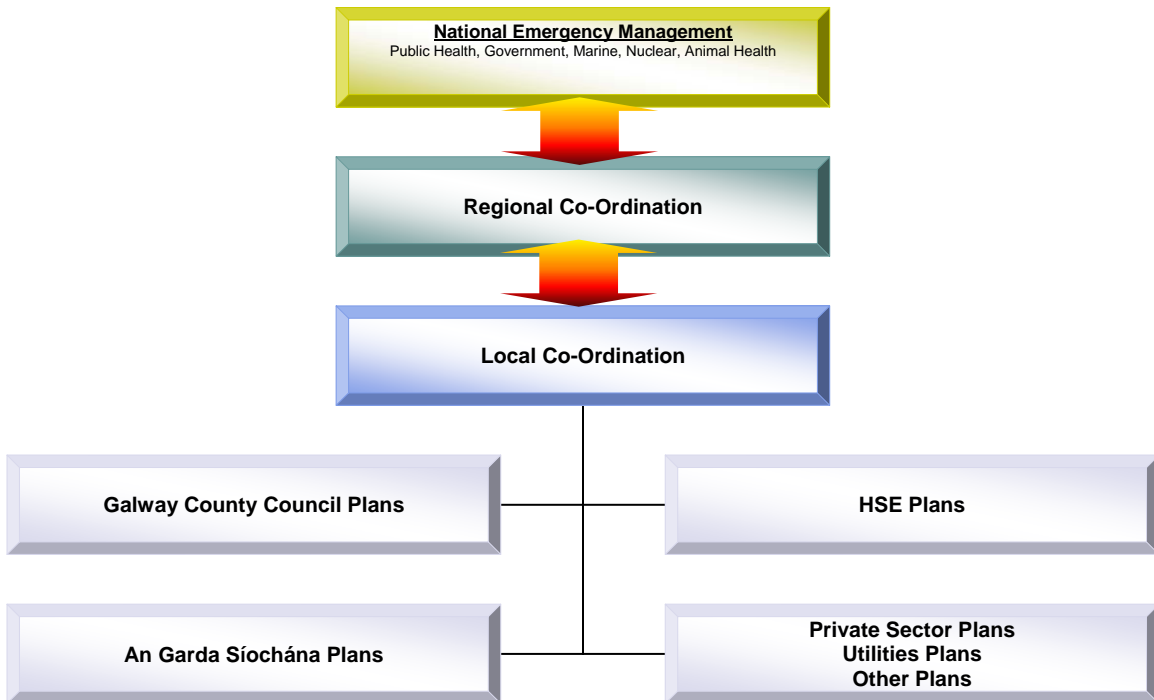
[http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/index.jsp?file=animal\\_health/avian\\_influenza/index.xml](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/index.jsp?file=animal_health/avian_influenza/index.xml)

**10.2 Activation of the Plan on Request of the Irish Coast Guard.**

This Major Emergency Plan may be activated by Galway County Council in response to a request from the Irish Coast Guard as Galway has a very long Atlantic Coastline, following a threatened or actual emergency in the Irish Maritime Search and Rescue Region.

**10.3 Activation of the Plan on Request of a Minister of Government.**

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



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## Section 11 - Severe Weather Plans

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### 11.1 Sub-Plans for Responding to Severe Weather Emergencies

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 when confidence is high. On Fridays before a holiday period it may be appropriate to issue a preliminary warning or weather watch to Local Authorities.

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

Galway County Council Severe Weather Sub-plan caters for Flooding Emergencies.

#### 11.1.2 Severe Weather Conditions (excluding Flooding Emergencies).

Galway County Council Severe Weather Sub-plan caters for weather related emergencies other than flooding.

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## **Section 12 - Site and Event Specific Arrangements and Plans**

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### **12.1 Site/Event Specific Emergency Plans.**

As a consequence of the Risk Assessment process detailed in Section 3 of this Plan a number of sites and events have been identified as requiring site and event specific plans. They are as follows:

- External Emergency Plan for Galway Harbour
- Major Incident Plan - Aviation
- Galway Races – Plan completed annually by the Galway Race Committee and submitted to the Fire Service for approval. PDA for incident at Race Course in place.
- Galway Air Show – Plan completed annually by the Air Show Committee and submitted to the Fire Service for approval. There is a PDA for an incident at the Air Show in place.
- Non-Routine Music Events – The Plan is completed prior to the event. Fire service personnel have an input into the planning of the event.

### **12.2 SEVESO Sites.**

With effect from Mid 2008 Galway will have one Upper Tier SEVESO site (EN West fuel Depot) which requires an External Emergency Plan. A Plan exist for the fuel storage sites on the docks and when construction of the new EN West is complete the existing plan will be amended to incorporate EN West. This planning process has begun.

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## Section 13 - The Recovery Phase

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### 13.1 Support for Individuals and Communities

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

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

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

A structured transition from response to recovery is critical for agencies, both collectively and individually. The recovery stage may be as demanding on Galway County 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 will have a serious effect on a community. The recovery phase should provide support and long term care for individuals involved in the incident and the communities affected by the incident.

It is imperative that Galway County Council restores its critical service to a pre-emergency state as quickly and efficiently as possible.

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

- Technical and engineering advice;
- Building control;

- Road services; and
- Public health and environmental issues.
- Provision of reception centres;
- Re-housing and accommodation needs; and
- Transport.
- Social services;
- Psychosocial support;
- Help lines; and
- Welfare and financial needs.

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

**Local Authority**

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

**An Garda Síochána**

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

**Health Service Executive**

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

**13.1.2 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 response stage to recovery stage. At a point when the issues on the agendas of Co-ordination Groups are largely recovery focussed, it may be appropriate to re-title the group as the Local, Regional or National Recovery Co-ordination Group. From the earliest stage, it may be appropriate also for the Local, Regional or National Co-ordination Group to appoint a Recovery Working Group to plan ahead.

It is recommended that Galway's County Councils Crisis Management Team will continue to function until the issues arising in the response phase are more appropriately dealt with by the agency's normal management processes. In future such aid will be

dispensed through established support networks under the guidance of the Department of Social and Family Affairs or the Health Authority.

## **13.2 Clean-Up**

In the aftermath of an emergency the clean-up operation has been assigned to the Local Authority. The removal of debris and contaminated waste is one of concern. Galway County Council in consultation with the EPA and specialist companies should commence clean up of a site as soon as possible but without hindering the investigation process. Careful consideration must be provided for the removal of decontaminated debris to locations that will not affect communities.

### **13.2.1 Clean up of Sites / Removal of Debris / Decontamination of Sites of Emergency and the Council's Role in this.**

Galway 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 shall 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 shall identify the hazards created as a result of the incident (both direct and indirect), all potential receptors and the possible interconnecting pathways. It shall 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 Galway County Council. The selection of remedial measures is dependent on the results of the quantitative risk assessment which will be site specific. It should be noted that prior to the risk assessment it shall be assumed that the waste material or polluting matter shall 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 Galway County Council at the outset.

## **13.3 Restoration of Infrastructure And Services.**

The County Council 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 Recovery Phase**

The co-ordination of emerging recovery issues may arise on the agendas of the Local, Regional or National Co-ordination Groups from the earliest stages of the response phase. For this reason, the arrangements for co-ordination of response should continue to operate during the transition from response stage to recovery stage. At a point when the issues on the agendas of Co-ordination Groups are largely recovery focused, it may be appropriate

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

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

### **13.3.2 Liaison with Utilities;**

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

### **13.3.3 Determining Priorities.**

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

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

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

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

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## Section 14 - Review of the Major Emergency Plan

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### 14.1 Annual Internal Review of the Major Emergency Plan.

An internal review of the Major Emergency Plan will be undertaken by Galway County Council on an annual basis, the review should be held every September or on the annual date of implementing the plan and also following any exercises or incidents. The review should include;

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

### 14.2 External Review of the Major Emergency Plan.

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

#### 14.2.1 Regional Level Review.

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

Each agency's appraisal should also be reviewed and validated by DoEHLG in the case of Galway County Council and by the national headquarters, in consultation with the parent Department, in the case of Divisions of An Garda Síochána and Health Service Executive Areas, in accordance with the normal appraisal/reporting relationships within that sector. Any issues arising from the review should be referred back to the principal response agency for appropriate action. In cases of disagreement between a principal response agency and a Regional Steering Group, the National Steering Group should be consulted and should decide on the issue.

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

**14.2.2 Review of the MEP by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.**

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

**14.3 Review after every Activation of the Plan.**

When the incident has ended, each of the services and sections of Galway County Council involved in the incident will hold a series of operational debriefs. Initially these will be confined to each particular service, but later a multi-section debrief will be held within Galway County Council and lessons learned will be incorporated into this Manual and other service manuals, as appropriate.

Multi-agency debriefs should consider the contribution provided by other, non-emergency service agencies to expand the knowledge and learning process that debriefs should collate. This is notwithstanding the potential conflict of interest that may result in later investigations. This aspect should be considered when inviting agencies other than emergency services to the debrief.

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## Section 15 - Appendices

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Below is the list of Appendices to Galway County Council Major Emergency Plan.

<b>Appendix</b>	<b>1</b>	Distribution List
	<b>2</b>	Glossary of Terms
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>3</b>	Activation of the Plan and Major Emergency Mobilisation Porcedures
	<b>3A</b>	Activation of this Major Emergency Plan
	<b>3B</b>	Galway County Council Key Roles Mobilisation Procedure
	<b>3C</b>	Key Roles Mobilisation List
	<b>3D</b>	Crisis Management Team Mobilisation Procedure
	<b>3E</b>	Local Co-ordination Group Mobilisation Procedure
	<b>3F</b>	Directorate of Housing Mobilisation Plan
	<b>3G</b>	Directorate of Roads and Transportation Mobilisation Plan
	<b>3H</b>	Directorate of Water and Environment Mobilisation Plan
	<b>3J</b>	Directorate of Cultural and Corporate Affairs Mobilisation Plan
	<b>3K</b>	Information Systems Mobilisation Plan
	<b>3L</b>	Directorate of Community and Enterprise Mobilisation Plan
	<b>3M</b>	Directorate of Planning and Economic Development Mobilisation Plan
	<b>3N</b>	Mobilisation Procedure for the Civil Defence
	<b>3O</b>	Proforma for Notification of DoEHLG
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>4</b>	Persons Authorised to Declare a Major Emergency
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>5</b>	Communication Plan
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>6</b>	Co-ordination Centres
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>7</b>	Information management system
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>8</b>	Key Roles and Decision Making Mandates
	<b>8A</b>	Mandate of the Controller of Operations
	<b>8B</b>	Mandate of the On-Site Co-ordinator
	<b>8C</b>	Mandate of the Local Co-ordination Group and Chair
	<b>8D</b>	Mandate of the Crisis Management Team and Chair
	<b>8E</b>	Mandate of the Regional Co-ordination Group and Chair
	<b>8F</b>	Mandate of the Information Management Officer/Team
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	<b>8H</b>	Mandate of the Action Management Officer
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>9</b>	Determination of the Lead Agency
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>10</b>	Site Management Plan / Arrangements
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>11</b>	Identification of Personnel at the Site of a Major Emergency
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<b>Appendix</b>	<b>13</b>	Hazardous Materials
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>14</b>	Countermeasures for Response to Nuclear Accidents
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>15</b>	Evacuation / Protecting Threatened Populations

<b>Appendix</b>	<b>16</b>	On site welfare
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>17</b>	Managing with Media Sub Plan
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>18</b>	Mass Fatalities
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>19</b>	Severe weather Sub Plan
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>20</b>	On site Health and Safety
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>21A</b>	Contact Officers in Galway County Council
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>21B</b>	Contact Officers in Galway Fire and Rescue Service
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>21C</b>	Contact Officers by Electoral/Engineering Areas in Galway County Council
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>21D</b>	Contact Water/Sewerage Scheme Caretakers in Galway County Council
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>21E</b>	Defence Forces Contact Numbers
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>21F</b>	Contact Officers In Principle Response Agencies
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>21G</b>	Contact Officers in Government Departments, State Agencies and Private Concerns
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>21H</b>	Contact Officers in Voluntary Agencies