COMHAIRLE CHONTAE MHUINEACHÁIN

Monaghan County Council

Title:	Major Emergency Plan
Version:	1.12
Implementation Date:	September 2008
Latest Revision Date:	October 2023
Status	Final
Prepared By:	Monaghan County Council

Contents

Records of Issues & Amendments

Amendment No.	Version No.	Date	Section Amended	Amended By
1.	1.1	March 2010	Table of Contents	A.C.FO.
2.	1.2	September 2010	Section 4 & 6	A.C.F.O.
3.	1.3	May 2011	Amend staff titles	A.C.F.O.
4.	1.4	May 2013	Amend website address & table of contents	A.C.F.O.
5.	1.5	Jan 2014	Amend staff titles	A.C.F.O.
6.	1.6	Aug 2014	Amend staff titles & organisational charts	A.C.F.O.
7.	1.7	June 2017	Table 2.1 update.	S.A.C.F.O.
8.	1.8	January 2018	Section 4.1 & 6.11	A.C.F.O.
9.	1.9	January 2020	Section 4.1 & 6.1.1	A.S.O.
10.	1.10	February 2020	Amend format	A.S.O.
11.	1.11	January 2023	Amend CE, Flow Charts, Statistics, Communications, Cross Border Emergencies	A.S.O.
12.	1.12	October 2023	Amend CE, Flow Chart	C.O.
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				

Glossary of Terms

Ambulance Loading Point	An area, close to the Casualty Clearing Station, where casualties are transferred to ambulances for transport to hospital.
Body Holding Area	An area, under the control of An Garda Síochána, where the dead can be held temporarily until transferred to a Mortuary or Temporary Mortuary.
Business Continuity	The processes and procedures an organisation puts in place to ensure that essential functions can continue during and after an adverse event.
Casualty	Any person killed or injured during the event. (For the purpose of the Casualty Bureau it also includes survivors, missing persons and evacuees).
Casualty Bureau / Casualty Information Centre	Central contact and information point, operated by An Garda Síochána, for all those seeking or providing information about individuals who may have been involved.
Casualty Clearing Station	The area established at the site by the ambulance service, where casualties are collected, triaged, treated and prepared for evacuation.
Casualty Form	A standard form completed in respect of each casualty and collated in the Casualty Bureau.
Civil Protection	The term used in the European Union to describe the collective approach to protecting populations from a wide range of hazards.
Collaboration	Working jointly on an activity.
Command	The process of directing the operations of all or part of a particular service (or group of services) by giving direct orders.
Control	The process of influencing the activity of a service or group of services, by setting tasks, objectives or targets, without necessarily having the authority to give direct orders.
Controller of Operations	The person who is given authority by a principal response agency to control all elements of its activities at and about the site.
Co-operation	Working together towards the same end.
Co-ordination	Bringing the different elements of a complex activity or organisation into an efficient relationship through a negotiated process.
Cordons	The designated perimeters of an emergency site, with an Outer Cordon, an Inner Cordon, a Traffic Cordon and a Danger Area Cordon, as appropriate.
Crisis Management Team	A strategic level management group, which consists of senior managers from within the principal response agency, which is assembled to manage a crisis and deal with issues arising for the agency both during the emergency and the subsequent recovery phase.

Danger Area	An area where there is a definite risk to rescue personnel, over and above that which would normally pertain at emergency operations.
Decision Making Mandate	Establishes the envelopes of empowered activity and decision-making to be expected, without references to higher authorities.
Decontamination	A procedure employed to remove hazardous materials from people and equipment.
Emergency Response	The short-term measures taken to respond to situations which have occurred.
Evacuation	The process whereby people are directed away from an area where there is danger, whether immediate or anticipated.
Evacuation Assembly Point	A building or area to which evacuees are directed for onward transportation.
Friends and Relatives Reception Centre	A secure area, operated by AGS, for the use of friends and relatives arriving at or near the site of the emergency.
Garda Code Instructions	A document containing instructions, legislation, processes and procedures in respect of the day-to-day management of An Garda Síochána.
Hazard	Any phenomenon with the potential to cause direct harm to members of the community, the environment or physical infrastructure, or being potentially damaging to the economic and social infrastructure.
Hazard Identification	A stage in the Risk Assessment process where potential hazards are identified and recorded.
Hazard Analysis	A process by which the hazards facing a particular community, region or country are analysed and assessed in terms of the threat/risk which they pose.
Holding Area	An area at the site, to which resources and personnel, which are not immediately required, are directed to await deployment.
Hospital Casualty Officer	The Member of An Garda Síochána responsible for collecting all information on casualties arriving at a receiving hospital.
Impact	The consequences of a hazardous event being realised, expressed in terms of a negative impact on human welfare, damage to the environment or the physical infrastructure or other negative consequences.
Information Management Officer	A designated member of the support team of a principal response agency who has competency/training in the area of information management.

Information Management System	A system for the gathering, handling, use and dissemination of information.
Investigating Agencies	Those organisations with a legal duty to investigate the causes of an event.
Lead Agency	The principal response agency that is assigned the responsibility and mandate for the coordination function.
Likelihood	The probability or chance of an event occurring.
Local Coordination Centre	A pre-nominated building, typically at county or sub-county level, with support arrangements in place, and used for meetings of the Local Coordination Group.
Local Coordination Group	A group of senior representatives from the three principal response agencies (An Garda Síochána, HSE and Local Authority) whose function is to facilitate strategic level coordination, make policy decisions, liaise with regional/national level coordination centres, if appropriate, and facilitate the distribution of information to the media and the public.
Major Emergency Management	The range of measures taken under the five stages of the emergency management paradigm.
Major Emergency Plan	A plan prepared by one of the Principal Response Agencies.
Major Emergency	Any event which, usually with little or no warning, causes or threatens death or injury, serious disruption of essential services, or damage to property, the environment or infrastructure beyond the normal capabilities of the principal emergency services in the area in which the event occurs, and requiring the activation of specific additional procedures to ensure effective, co-ordinated response.
Media Centre	A building/area specifically designated for use by the media, and for liaison between the media and the principal response agencies.
Media Holding Statements	Statements that contain generic information that has been assembled in advance, along with preliminary incident information that can be released in the early stages of the emergency.
Mitigation	Apart of risk management and includes all actions taken to eliminate or reduce the risk to people, property and the environment from the hazards which threaten them.
Mutual Aid	The provision of services and assistance by one organisation to another.
National Emergency Coordination Centre	A centre designated for inter-departmental coordination purposes.

On-Site Coordinator	The person from the lead agency with the role of coordinating the activities of all agencies responding to an emergency.
On-Site Coordination Centre	Specific area/facility at the Site Control Point where the On-Site Coordinator is located and the On-Site Coordination Group meet.
On-Site Coordination Group	Group that includes the On-Site Coordinator and the Controllers of Operations of the other two agencies, an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer and others as appropriate.
Operational Level	The level at which the management of hands-on work is undertaken at the incident site(s) or associated areas.
Principal Emergency Services (PES)	The services which respond to normal emergencies in Ireland, namely An Garda Síochána, the Ambulance Service and the Fire Service.
Principal Response Agencies (PRA)	The agencies designated by the Government to respond to Major Emergencies i.e. An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and the Local Authorities.
Protocol	A set of standard procedures for carrying out a task or managing a specific situation.
Receiving Hospital	A hospital designated by the Health Service Executive to be a principal location to which major emergency casualties are directed.
Recovery	The process of restoring and rebuilding communities, infrastructure, buildings and services.
Regional Coordination Centre	A pre-nominated building, typically at regional level, with support arrangements in place and used by the Regional Coordination Group.
Regional Coordination Group	A group of senior representatives of all relevant principal response agencies, whose function is to facilitate strategic level coordination at regional level.
Rendezvous Point (RVP)	The Rendezvous Point is the location to which all resources responding to the emergency site are directed in the first instance. An Garda Síochána will organise the Rendezvous Point. Other services may have one of their officer's present to direct responding vehicles into action or to that service's Holding Area.
Response	The actions taken immediately before, during and/or directly after an emergency.
Resilience	The term used to describe the inherent capacity of communities, services and infrastructure to withstand the consequences of an incident, and to recover/restore normality.

Rest Centre	Premises where persons evacuated during an emergency are provided with appropriate welfare and shelter.
Risk	The combination of the likelihood of a hazardous event and its potential impact.
Risk Assessment	A systematic process of identifying and evaluating, either qualitatively or quantitatively, the risk resulting from specific hazards.
Risk Holders	Organisations and companies, which own and/or operate facilities and/or services where relevant hazards are found, such as Airlines, Chemical Manufacturers, etc.
Risk Management	Actions taken to reduce the probability of an event occurring or to mitigate its consequences.
Risk Matrix	A matrix of likelihood and impact on which the results of a risk assessment are plotted.
Risk Regulators	Bodies with statutory responsibility for the regulation of activities where there are associated risks, such as the Health and Safety Authority, the Irish Aviation Authority, etc.
Scenario	A hypothetical sequence of events, usually based on real experiences or on a projection of the consequences of hazards identified during the risk assessment process.
SEVESO sites	Industrial sites that, because of the presence of dangerous substances in sufficient quantities, are regulated under Council Directives 96/82/EC and 2003/105/EC, commonly referred to as the Seveso II Directive.
Site Casualty Officer	The Member of An Garda Síochána with responsibility for collecting all information on casualties at the site.
Site Control Point	The place at a major emergency site from which the Controllers of Operations control, direct and co-ordinate their organisation's response to the emergency.
Site Medical Officer	The medical officer with overall medical responsibility at the site, who will liaise with the health service Controller of Operations on all issues related to the treatment of casualties.
Site Medical Team	A team drawn from a pre-arranged complement of doctors and nurses, with relevant experience and training, which will be sent to the site, if required.
Site Management Plan	The arrangement of the elements of a typical major emergency site, matched to the terrain of the emergency, as determined by the On-Site Coordination Group.

Standard Operating Procedures	Sets of instructions, covering those features of an operation that lend themselves to a definite or standardised procedure, without loss of effectiveness.
Support Team	A pre-designated group formed to support and assist individuals operating in key roles, such as On-Site Coordinator, Chair of Local Coordination Group, etc.
Strategic Level	The level of management that is concerned with the broader and long-term implications of the emergency and which establishes the policies and framework within which decisions at the tactical level are taken.
Survivor Reception Centre	Secure location to which survivors, not requiring hospital treatment, can be taken for shelter, first aid, interview and documentation.
Tactical Level	The level at which the emergency is managed, including issues such as, allocation of resources, the procurement of additional resources, if required, and the planning and coordination of ongoing operations.
Temporary Mortuary	A building or vehicle adapted for temporary use as a mortuary in which post mortem examinations can take place.
Triage	A process of assessing casualties and deciding the priority of their treatment and/or evacuation.

Glossary of Acronyms

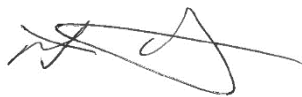|	
AAIU	Air Accident Investigation Unit
CCBRN	Conventional Explosive, Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear
CMT	Crisis Management Team
EOD	Explosives Ordnance Disposal
ICG	Irish Coast Guard
METHANE	**M**ajor Emergency Declared
	Exact Location of the emergency
	Type of Emergency (Transport, Chemical etc)
	Hazards present and potential
	Access/egress routes
	Number and Types of Casualties
	Emergency services present and required
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEPNA	National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents
NOTAM	Notice to Airmen
PDF	Permanent Defence Forces
PES	Principal Emergency Services
PRA	Principal Response Agency
RVP	Rendezvous Point
SAR	Search and Rescue
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
VIP	Very Important Person
MCC	Monaghan County Council

Section 1: Introduction to Plan

Foreword

Monaghan County Council is committed to providing an effective major emergency management service, in line with the Framework for Major Emergency Management 2006, for the benefit of everyone living in, working in, or visiting Co. Monaghan. Monaghan County Council will endeavour to do everything we can to protect people, property and the environment, in conjunction with An Garda Síochána, Health Service Executive and all other relevant stakeholders. This is to be achieved through effective major emergency management, involving risk mitigation, effective response to any major incident and endeavouring to continue local authority services while returning the situation to normality as speedily as possible.

This Major Emergency Plan has been developed to assist Monaghan County Council to respond effectively and efficiently to major incidents. Any such response can potentially include close collaboration with An Garda Síochána, The Health Service Executive, Government Departments and Agencies, Voluntary Agencies, Community Groups, Utility Companies and Private Sector interests. Therefore, the key to success is a co-ordinated and integrated response, which is why it is essential that all of us read this plan carefully, familiarise ourselves with its contents and recognise our own roles as part of the team responding to the incident.

It is also important to note the role of the community in response to an emergency incident. Monaghan County Council is to the fore in working with community groups and organisations for the betterment of all and a particular emphasis is given to the protection of the most vulnerable in society.

By its nature, emergency planning is a dynamic process, and all who have a part to play are continually seeking to learn lessons from the past and develop improved arrangements for the future. This plan, therefore, will be kept under constant review.

I extend my sincere thanks to our staff who have worked on compiling the plan, and to all who have responded and continue to respond professionally to incidents, both major and minor.

_____

Robert Burns
Chief Executive

Monaghan County Council

1.1 Background of plan

In 2006 the government approved a two-year Major Emergency Development Programme 2006-2008 (MEDP) to allow for the structured migration from current arrangements to an enhanced level of preparedness via the new emergency management process. The purpose of this plan is to put in place arrangements that will enable the three principal emergency response agencies, An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and Monaghan County Council to co-ordinate their efforts whenever a major emergency occurs within the functional area of County Monaghan and/or the North-East region. The Principal Response Agencies (PRA) are charged with managing the response to emergency situations which arise either locally or regionally.

This document replaces the *Framework for Coordinated Response to Major Emergency*, which has underpinned major emergency preparedness and response capability since 1984. The new Framework was prepared under the aegis of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Major Emergencies and has been approved by Government decision. The framework defines a Major Emergency as;

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

1.2 The objectives of this plan

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

- Protection and care of the public at times of vulnerability.
- Clear leadership in times of crisis.
- Early and appropriate response.
- Efficient, coordinated 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.

1.3 The Scope of this plan

The procedures adopted by each of the PRA's in response to a major incident are understandably devoted to the role of the service concerned. The scope of this plan is to put in place arrangements that will enable the three principal emergency response agencies, Monaghan County Council, An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive to co-ordinate their efforts whenever a major emergency occurs. It is the foundation block for the development of a new generation of emergency plans by these agencies.

1.4 The plan and it's interoperability with other emergency plans

The Major Emergency process is the combined and co-ordinated plans of Monaghan County Council (MCC), Health Service Executive (HSE) and An Garda Síochána (AGS) in the area where the Emergency occurs. This plan will outline generally the procedure to be followed and the functions to be undertaken by MCC and to coordinate the procedures to be followed and functions to be undertaken by MCC with those of the HSE, AGS and any other agencies responding to the emergency.

Where the Regional Fire Service Communications Centre receives notification of a Major Emergency from either An Garda Síochána or the HSE, the Regional Fire Service Controller on duty, as part of pre-set actions, will inform the on duty RSFO of the declaration. The RSFO will decide if it is necessary to activate the Major Emergency Plan for Monaghan County Council. If a Major Emergency is declared, then the Regional Fire Service Communications Centre will confirm to the other two Principal Response Agencies involved that Monaghan County Council Major Emergency Plan has been activated.

The Plan provides for a coordinated response to major emergencies arising, for example, from fires, explosions, gas releases, transportation accidents, spillages of dangerous substances, and severe weather emergencies. The types of emergency normally resulting from oil supply crises, ESB blackouts, industrial disputes etc. are of a different nature and are not catered for in this Plan. It is recognised, however, that such emergencies could result in a situation, such as a major gas explosion, requiring activation of the Major Emergency Plan. This document recognises that every major emergency is different and has its own unique features; therefore, the advice in this guidance should only be regarded as guidance. It provides summaries of the responses and responsibilities of each of the PRA's at a major incident and it is designed to offer a framework within which those who are responsible for the successful resolution of the incident are able to work together with maximum efficiency.

1.5 Terminology of this plan

In situations where different organisations are working together, they need a common vocabulary to enable them to communicate effectively. This is particularly the case where the principal emergency services and a range of other bodies need to work together under the pressures that a major emergency will bring. Differences in terminologies and nomenclatures used by responders from various agencies or diverse technical disciplines can seriously impede the achievement of coordinated and safe emergency management. The plan, therefore, provides for the use of common terminology.

1.6 The Distribution of the plan

Copies of the plan will be distributed to all departments of Monaghan County Council, appropriate Heads of Service, Emergency Planning Team members, and Emergency services. The distribution list is given in Table 1.1.

1.7 The implementation of the plan

The Major Emergency Plan for Monaghan County Council was implemented on 30th September 2008. The plan is reviewed internally and updated on an annual basis in accordance with Section 14.3.

1.8 Public access to the plan

An edited copy of the Emergency Management Plan is available for public viewing on the council's website at www.monaghan.ie.

Distribution list	
Name / Organisation	**Number of Copies**
Monaghan County Council • Chief Executive • Directors of Services • Chief Fire Officer • SACFO • ACFO • Civil Defence • Crisis Management Team	1
Other Local Authorities • Louth • Cavan • Meath	1
An Garda Síochána • Monaghan / Cavan Division • Louth Division • Meath Division	1
Health Service Executive • Emergency Planning Office	1
Defence Forces • Dundalk	1
N.I.F.R.S.	1
Eastern Regional Control Centre	1
D.H.P.L.G.	1

Section 2: Monaghan County Council and its Functional Area

2.1   The role of Monaghan County Council

The functional area of this plan in the case of Monaghan County Council is the administrative County of Monaghan. Monaghan County Council incorporates the municipal districts of Ballybay/Clones, Carrickmacross/Castleblayney & Monaghan.

In the event of a major emergency the primary role of Monaghan County Council is to ensure life safety by providing an emergency service in the form of the Monaghan Fire & Civil Protection. Monaghan 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 of its resources to mitigate the effects of the emergency and coordination of the voluntary organisations. In the 'recovery' phase MCC will be responsible to lead and co-ordinate the rehabilitation of the community and the restoration of the environment.

2.2   County Monaghan and its surrounding area

County Monaghan is located in the North-East region of Ireland (Figure 2.1), on the border with Northern Ireland. It is one of three counties situated in the province of Ulster which are in the Republic of Ireland. The county borders Tyrone (Northern Ireland) to the North, County Armagh (NI) to the east, County Louth (Republic of Ireland) to the South East, County Meath (ROI) to the South, County Cavan (ROI) to the southwest and County Fermanagh (NI) to the west. County Monaghan has a total area of 1,294km^2. The county town is Monaghan, which is also the largest town in the county. Other major population centres include Ballybay, Castleblayney, Carrickmacross and Clones. The overall population of Co. Monaghan is approx 61,386 people. A breakdown of the population centres is given Table 2.1.

Population-Location	Population	Demography Summary
Co. Monaghan	65,288	- Disability 11.04%
		- Elderly (>65yrs) 14.18%
Municipal Districts		- Children (>20yrs) 55.18%
Monaghan	23,398	- Children (10yrs – 19yrs) 14.6%
Castleblayney/Carrickmacross	23,469	- Children (<10yrs) 14.02%
Clones / Ballybay	18,421	- Non-Irish Nationals 11.35%
		Based on Census report 2022

Table 2.1:   Population and demography breakdown of the Monaghan region, reference Central statistics Office Ireland 2016

2.3   Partner principal response agencies

The other agencies responsible for Emergency Services in this area are:-

- <u>Health Service Executive</u>: Dublin North East region comprising of counties Cavan, Louth, Meath, Monaghan and North Dublin.
- <u>An Garda Síochána</u>: Louth, Meath & Cavan / Monaghan Division.

2.4   Regional Preparedness

Under certain specific circumstances regional level major emergencies may be declared, with a Plan for Regional Level Coordination activated. This will provide for mutual aid, support and coordination facilities to be activated in the region, the boundaries of which are determined to suit the exigencies of the particular emergency.

Monaghan County Council is part of the North-East Region. This region incorporates the following counties;
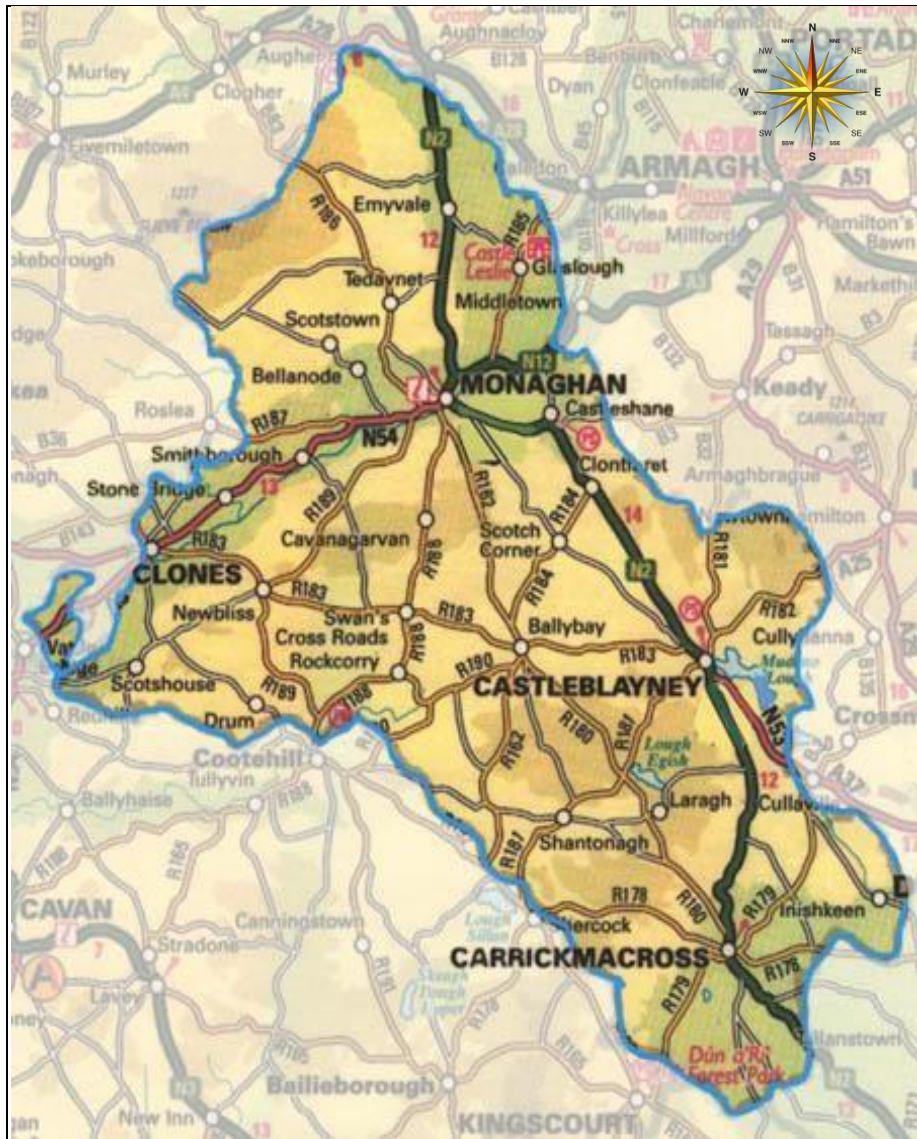
- Co. Cavan
- Co. Louth
- Co. Meath
- Co. Monaghan

Figure 2.1: Map of County Monaghan

Section 3: Risk Assessment for County Monaghan

3.1   History of Emergency events in Co. Monaghan

Major emergencies in their very nature do not occur frequently. A major emergency has never been declared in Co. Monaghan under the framework; however, Co Monaghan has experienced its share of emergency events over the last 30 years. Below is a list of events that has occurred;

- Monaghan bombing: 17th May 1974. 7 people killed.
- Castleblayney bombing: 7th March 1976. 1 person killed, 17 injured.
- Nationwide snow Blizzards 1982.
- Foot & Mouth Spring 2001.
- Hurricane Ophelia 2017
- Storm Emma 2018

3.2   Risks that may be faced locally & regionally

The generic threats that exist locally and regionally generally fall into four commonly used categories:

- Natural: Incidents involving severe weather, geological issues such as earthquakes, landslides etc.
- Transportation: Incidents involving aircraft, shipping, road and rail.
- Technological: Incidents at industrial premises and installations containing hazardous material, large building fires, building collapses etc.
- Civil: Terrorism, civil disorder, CCBRN, Diseases, etc

3.3 Scenarios

The following scenarios were identified as creditable risks that pose a hazard to both life and the environment in the functional area of County Monaghan. A full detailed breakdown of the risk assessments carried out can be viewed in the document,

'Monaghan County Council Risk Register 2009-2010.'

Hazard	Hazard Location
Boat Incident	Any River / lake in Co. Monaghan
Rail Incident	N/A in Co. Monaghan, however, rail in NE region. Intercity Line between Belfast- Dublin
RTA	Motorway, Primary, secondary roads. e.g. M1 & N2
Aviation Incident	Anywhere within North East region
Petrochemical Explosion	Petrol stations, Fuel depots, Industrial sites anywhere in Co. Monaghan
Industrial Explosion	Industrial sites, building sites
Serious Haz-chem Incident	Industrial premises, Roads, Ports
Building Collapse	Nightclub, Public House, restaurant, cinema, community centres, shopping centres etc
Large Building Fire	Nightclub, Public House, restaurant, cinema, community centres, shopping centres etc
Pollution	Coastal, inland waterway, land based
Infrastructure failure	Bridges, roads, electricity failure
Public Assembly	Ulster Final, Slane Concert
Animal Diseases	Nationwide
Pandemic Flu	Nationwide
Severe Weather	Nationwide

3.4 Risk assessment process in Co. Monaghan

The risk assessment process is the first step in the emergency planning process in order to identify the risks applicable to County Monaghan and then plan according to the priorities identified. The aim of this process is to identify the main hazards threatening the functional area of County Monaghan and to assess the potential risk of each scenario in order to achieve a state of preparedness, and/or implement mitigating actions, which will reduce the impact of them. The risk assessment process comprises four stages;

1.   Establishing the context

2.   Hazard Identification

3.   Risk assessment

4.   Recording the hazards

Risk management starts with an examination of the potential impact of the hazards identified and the likelihood of the hazard occurring within Co. Monaghan. The resulting judgement is recorded on a risk matrix for each event (Figure 3.1). The risk assessment provides a sound basis for determining a range of steps at the later stages of the emergency management cycle; especially in the Mitigation and the Planning and Preparedness stages.

Mitigation includes any actions which are taken in advance of the occurrence of an emergency to reduce the probability of that event happening. The most effective form of mitigation is total elimination of the hazard concerned.

In general responsibility for the mitigation of specific hazards lies with the organisations and companies which own and operate the facilities and services where the relevant hazards are found, such as airlines, railway companies, chemical manufactures etc. These organisations are referred to as "risk holders". The risk assessment process was carried out in accordance with the guidance document, '*A Guide to Risk Assessment in Major Emergency Management.'*
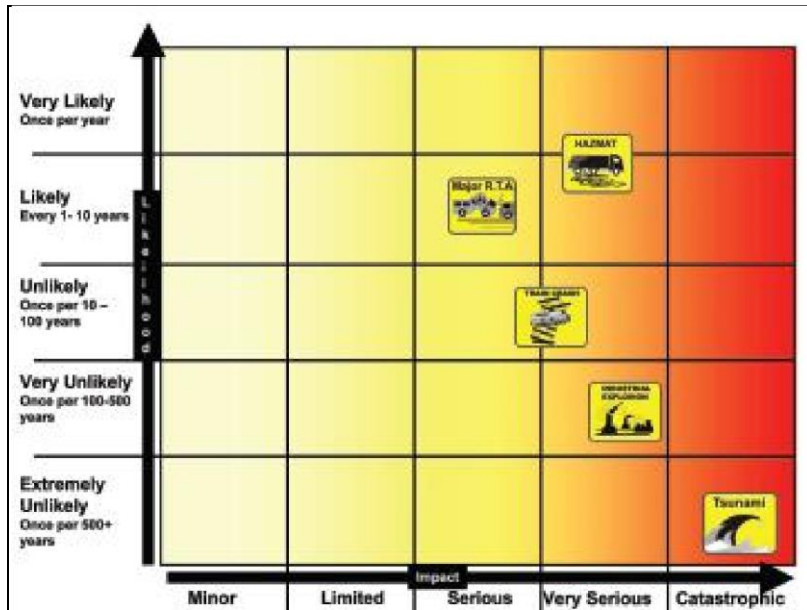

**Figure 3.1: A risk matrix used in the risk management process**

3.5   Associated Plans and their compatibility with the MCC Emergency Plan
Separate emergency plans (e.g. severe weather plans) are maintained by Monaghan County Council to respond to specific emergency conditions. Please refer to Section 28 of this Plan.

Section 4: Resources for Emergency Response within Co. Monaghan

4.1   Structure and resources in Monaghan County Council

Monaghan County Council is divided up into different directorates that are responsible for the functioning of sections within the council. Each section may be called upon in the event of an emergency. Each Director reports to the Chief Executive who is responsible for the operations of the Council.
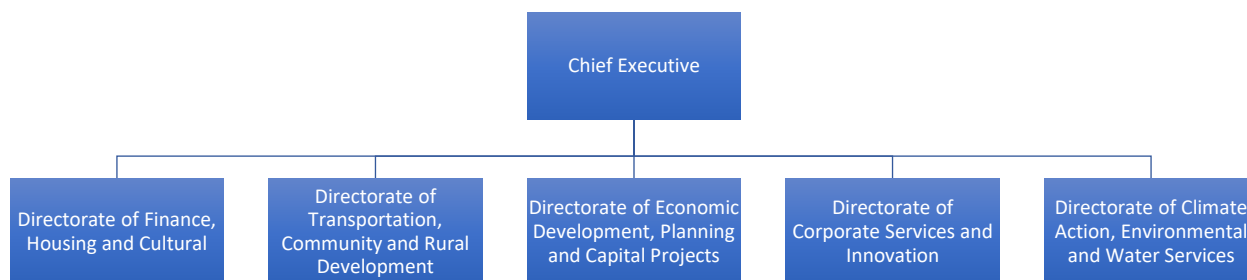
4.2   Staffing arrangements during a Major Emergency

The actions to be taken by Monaghan County Council (MCC) personnel when a major emergency is declared are set out in the Action Plans for each service. All Local Authority staff requested to carry out functions in relation to a Major Emergency will be mobilised in accordance with the pre-determined procedures. In addition the Civil Defence, under the authority of Monaghan County Council operate a call out system and their response is completely subject to the availability of volunteers. Monaghan County Council shall carry out its functions in accordance with the provisions of this plan.

4.3   Resources during a Major Emergency

Monaghan County Council has identified, matched and formally nominated individuals and their alternates to key role positions to enable the agency to function in accordance with the common arrangements set out in its Major Emergency Plan, *see section 5.4*. Support teams will be put in place for key roles and Operational Protocols setting out the arrangements which will enable support teams to be mobilised and function in accordance with the arrangements set out in the Major Emergency Plan. The following emergency service resources are at the disposal of Monaghan County Council:

4.3.1 Fire Service

The fire service within County Monaghan consists of 5 retained stations. In addition to the individual fire brigades, there is a Rostered Senior Fire Officer on call at all times.

4.3.2 Civil Defence

The main disciplines within Civil Defence could broadly be described as First-Aid/Casualty Care, Search and Rescue, Fire Fighting, Boating Techniques, Radiation Monitoring, Radio Communications, and Welfare.

4.4   Organisations that may be mobilised to assist

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

- Defence Forces
- Civil Defence (From within the North-East region)
- Voluntary Emergency Services Sector
- Community Volunteers
- Utility Companies
- Private Sector

4.5   Mutual Aid assistance

The Controller of Operations should ensure that, where the resources of Monaghan County Council do not appear to be sufficient in bringing a situation under control support will be obtained via mutual aid arrangements with neighbouring local authorities within the North-East region. Monaghan County Council through the Local Coordination Centre will request aid if needed. Mutual aid can be requested from the following neighbouring counties in the North-East region;

1.   Cavan County Council
2.   Meath County Council
3.   Louth County Council

4.6   Regional Level Emergencies

A regional emergency may be declared within the North-East region by any of the local authorities where the nature of the emergency is such that;

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

The procedure for determining and declaring a regional emergency is outlined in Section 7.10.4 & 7.10.5.

4.7 National & International Emergencies

The North East Regional Coordination 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 coordination level and directed by the lead agency to the lead Government Department.

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

4.8 Cross border Emergencies

Because of County Monaghan's close proximity with Northern Ireland, a Northeast Regional response may be scaled up and assistance may be required from Northern Ireland.

A Cross Border Notification Protocol was developed for the statutory agencies in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland should a Major Emergency/Major Incident occur or be anticipated in the border area.

The aim of this Protocol is to ensure that, in the event of, or in anticipation of an actual Major Emergency/Major Incident being declared in either jurisdiction, agencies in the other jurisdiction will be informed initially at an appropriate co-ordinating level, so that they can carry out an assessment of any possible impacts and that preparations can be implemented to provide assistance if required.

Clear protocols are in place both in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland to provide guidance on the co-ordination of response and recovery during Major Emergencies/Major incidents.

The 'Multi-Agency Protocol for Cross Border Notification' is in the Appendix to this Plan.

Section 5: Preparedness for Major Emergency Response within Co. Monaghan

5.1   Business planning process

Monaghan County Council has prepared a *'Proposal in Draft' (PID)*. This document highlights the individuals and groups that are involved at national, regional and local level in developing the Major Emergency Programme. It outlines the necessary arrangements; systems, people and resources in place to discharge the functions assigned to it by the Framework and set out in its Major Emergency Plan. In addition to the PID, the plan will be incorporated into the council's business continuity plan. Depending on the type of major emergency it may impact on the day to day activities of the Local Authority in the provision of its services. As such the Business Planning Process has taken account of this. The Monaghan County Council Business Continuity Plan outlines how and to what degree Local Authority services are to be maintained in the event of a Major Emergency.

5.2   Assignment of Responsibility

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

5.3   Documentation of Major Emergency Development Programme

The responsibility for overseeing the Major Emergency Plan within Monaghan County Council is assigned to Monaghan Fire & Civil Protection, with each section having responsibility for their own action plan.

5.4   Key roles in the Major Emergency Plan

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

- Controller of Operations
- On-Site Coordinator
- Chair of Crisis Management Team
- Chair of Local Coordination Group
- Chair of Regional Coordination Group
- Information Management Officers
- Media Liaison Officers
- Action Management Officers

5.5   Support teams for key roles

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

5.6   Staff Development Programme:

The development of staff for the major emergency response function is critical to the goal of effective and coordinated response. The development cycle includes creating awareness, providing, appropriate training, assessing competencies and matching individuals with roles appropriate to their strengths, exercising to enhance and assess capability, and reviewing and revising staff assignments and training programmes. Given the turnover of personnel, MCC will need to assess the situation at regular intervals. The requirements and activity in this area should be documented as part of the normal business planning process.

5.7 Training for Major Emergency Planning

Training is a key element in the development of preparedness for Monaghan County Council so as to ensure that they can provide an effective, coordinated response to major emergencies when required. There are many levels of training, ranging from general awareness of the major emergency management arrangements to equipping people with knowledge and skills to perform key roles.

5.8 Internal Exercises

Internal exercises will be conducted within Monaghan County Council. This will be used to raise awareness, educate individuals on their roles and the roles of others and promote coordination and cooperation, as well as validating plans, systems and procedures.

5.9 Joint interagency training & exercise

Joint interagency training is a requirement and will be provided at a Regional level. Exercises will follow on from this training to improve awareness and educate all involved in the roles and functions of the PRA's in the event of an emergency. Exercises will be performed on a three yearly cycle.

5.10 Major emergency budget

Monaghan County Council will provide a budget for major emergency preparedness for 2007 and beyond. This will reflect the expenditure required to meet the costs of implementing the council's internal preparedness, as well as its contribution to the regional level inter-agency preparedness.

5.11 Procurement procedures

The arrangement to authorise procurement and use of resources (including engaging third parties) to assist in response to major emergencies is outlined in Section 7.10.

5.12 Annual appraisal of preparedness

Monaghan County Council will carry out and document a local annual appraisal of its preparedness for major emergency response when the Framework is in operation. In addition, it will take part in an interagency appraisal of the North East at a Regional level.

5.13 Informing the public in the event of a Major Emergency

There may be situations whereby Monaghan County Council will be required to inform the public of an emergency event. Local radio and television stations will be used to assist the Local Coordination Centre

in brining urgent instructions to the attention of the public including actions to be taken by the public for their own safety, protection and welfare.

Section 6: The Generic Command, Control & Coordination Systems

6.1   Command Control & Coordination terms in Major Emergency Management

The phrases command, control, and coordination are used to describe the hierarchy of relationships, and to establish decision making arrangements. While these terms may have different uses in different settings, terms in the Major Emergency Plan have the meanings assigned as follows.

6.1.1 Command arrangements within the principal response agencies

The relevant Chief Superintendent of each Division of An Garda Síochána, the designated Senior Manager in each Health Service Executive Area and the Chief Executive of Monaghan County Council are responsible for the principal response agency's major emergency management arrangements and preparedness, as well as for the effectiveness of the agency's response to any major emergency which occurs in its functional area.
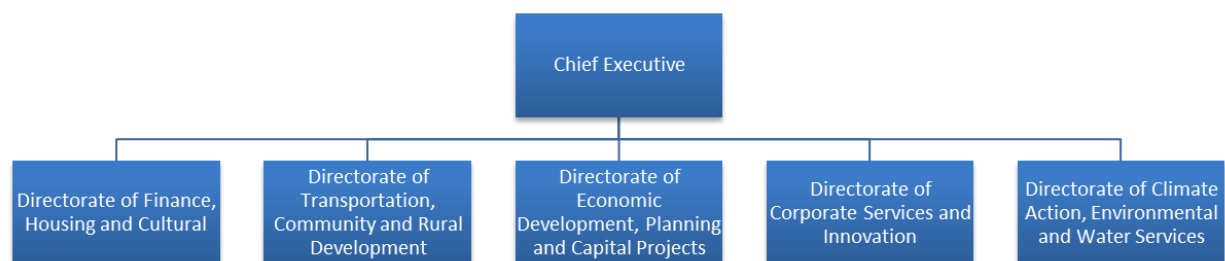

Figure 6.1: Management Structure within Monaghan County Council.

6.2   Control arrangements within a Major Emergency

Monaghan County Council will exercise control over its own resources in accordance with its normal management structure. Monaghan County Council will appoint a Controller of Operations at the site or if the incident is spread over a large area a controller of operations may be appointed at each site of the emergency. In addition to the Controller of Operations an Onsite Coordinator will be appointed through the lead agency concept.

6.2.1 Controller of Operations

The controller of operations is empowered to make all decisions relating to his/her agency's functions but must take account of decisions of the On-site Coordination Group in so doing. Monaghan County Council has delegated personnel to fulfil the role of Controller of Operations & alternatives to take charge at the site (or at various sites) of the emergency. The control of local authority services at the site of the emergency shall be exercised by the Rostered Senior Fire Officer or a designated alternate. Pending the arrival of the Controller of Operations at the site of the emergency, the functions shall be exercised by;

a.   The most senior rostered fire officer present and/or

b.   The most senior council official present at the initial response

The transfer of the function of Controller of Operations shall be accompanied by a formal statement e.g. **"You are now in control of local authority operations"** and the time of transfer shall be logged by both the person relinquishing control and the person assuming control.

Monaghan County Council through the Controller of Operations will exercise command and have control over its own resources in accordance with its normal command structure, command systems and arrangements i.e. he/she shall have control over all council services. The onsite controller will be supported in his role by senior members from MCC. Support will be provided from the Onsite Coordination centre and the Offsite Coordination centre. The coordination of the efforts of all services is recognised as a vital element in successfully responding to major emergencies, so that the combined result is greater than the sum of their individual efforts. The controller of Operations will also exercise coordination over other services (other than MCC) which are mobilised to the site at the request of Monaghan County Council through the lead agency concept. The mandate for the Controller of Operations will be found in Appendix titled *'Functions of Key Personnel in an Emergency'*.

In certain situations, e.g. where the emergency affects a large area or occurs near the borders of the local authority there may be a response from multiple units of different local authorities. Where the issue of which responding officer should assume the role of local authority Controller of Operations cannot be resolved quickly 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. In the absence of any local authority response, the senior Garda present will exercise certain local authority functions. This follows the logic of Section 27 of the Fire Services Act, 1981.

6.2.2 On-site Coordinator

The Department of Defence "*Strategic Emergency Planning Guidance*" (2004) introduced the concept of assigning lead roles to Government Departments in emergency planning in Ireland. This extends that concept to the principal response agencies and provides that the lead agency should be quickly identified / designated once a major emergency has been declared and assigned responsibility for the coordination function. This determines which one of the three Controllers of Operations is to act as the On-Site Coordinator. Two mechanisms are envisaged to determine the lead agency for any emergency please

refer to Section 7.6. The role of the On-site Coordinator is outlined in Appendix titled '*Functions of Key Personnel in an Emergency'*.

The Chair of the On-Site Coordination Group will be the On-Site Coordinator. While the On-Site Coordinator is empowered to make decisions, these decisions should be arrived at generally by the consensus of the On-Site Co-ordinating Group. Where consensus is not possible, the On-Site Coordinator should only make decisions after hearing and considering the views of the other two Controllers.

6.2.3   Chair of Crisis Management Team

In addition to the controller of Operations a Crisis Management team will also be established at Local Coordination level to provide assistance for the Local (and Regional if required) Coordination Group. The Chair of the Crisis Management Team will initially be the Chief Executive; however, this may change to a senior member of staff within Monaghan County Council. The crisis management team will be made of up of senior members of Monaghan County Council. They will meet at the coordination centre where they will support both the On-site and off-site coordination centres and maintain the agency's normal day to day services that the community requires. The mandate for the crisis management team can be found in Appendix titled *'Crisis Management Team Action Plan'*.

6.2.4   Chair of Local Coordination Centre

The representative of the lead agency will chair the Local Coordination group, located in the Local Coordination Centre, and will exercise the mandates associated with this position. The Chief Executive will chair the Local Coordination Group when Monaghan County Council is designated the lead agency in an emergency.

6.2.5   Control of External Organisations

There are a number of organisations and agencies, which may be called upon to assist Monaghan County Council in an emergency. The arrangements of assistance must be agreed among the three controllers of operations. Monaghan County Council will exercise control over agencies that it mobilises to a site.

6.3   Coordination Arrangements

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

In certain situations, e.g. where an emergency affects an extensive area or occurs near the borders of Divisions of An Garda Síochána or areas of the Health Service Executive or of the Local Authorities, there

may be response from multiple units of the principal response agencies. There should be only one Controller of Operations for each of the three principal response agencies and it is necessary to determine from which unit of the principal response agency the Controller of Operations should come.

An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive are national organisations, and issues relating to identifying the Controller of Operations for those services will be determined internally between the responding officers of the different units of those services, or by referring the question to a higher level. In the case of Local Authorities (within the North East region), 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 81 agreements. Where they are not so covered and the issue cannot be resolved quickly in discussion between the responding officers of the different units of those services, the Local Authority Controller of Operations should be the designated person from the Local Authority whose rostered senior fire officer was first to attend the incident.

6.3.1 Lead Agency
The concept of the lead agency is accepted as a method for establishing which of the agencies has the initial responsibility for Coordination of all the services on the site of an emergency. The Department of Defence "*Strategic Emergency Planning Guidance*" (2004) introduced the concept of assigning lead roles to Government Departments in emergency planning in Ireland. This extends that concept to the principal response agencies and provides that the lead agency should be quickly identified / designated once a major emergency has been declared and assigned responsibility for the coordination function. Two mechanisms are envisaged to determine the lead agency for any emergency, refer to Section 7.6 and Appendix titled *'Determining the Lead Agency'*. In the event that Monaghan County Council is assigned the role of Lead Agency, it will carry out the function of co-ordinating the incident (in addition to its own functions) and it will lead all the coordination activity associated with the emergency both on-site and off-site, ensuring that a high level of coordination is achieved throughout the duration of the incident.

6.3.2 Multi-site emergencies
Not all emergencies are site specific and in the event of an incident over a wide area or multi site, the controller of operations for the Local Authority must ensure the agency is represented on the Controllers support team. Monaghan County Council will continue to exercise command over its own services across all areas of the emergency.

6.3.3 Links with Government Departments
In every situation where a Major Emergency is declared, each principal response agency will inform its parent Department of the declaration, as part of that agency's mobilisation procedure. This will be the function of the Crisis Management Team for Monaghan County Council. 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.
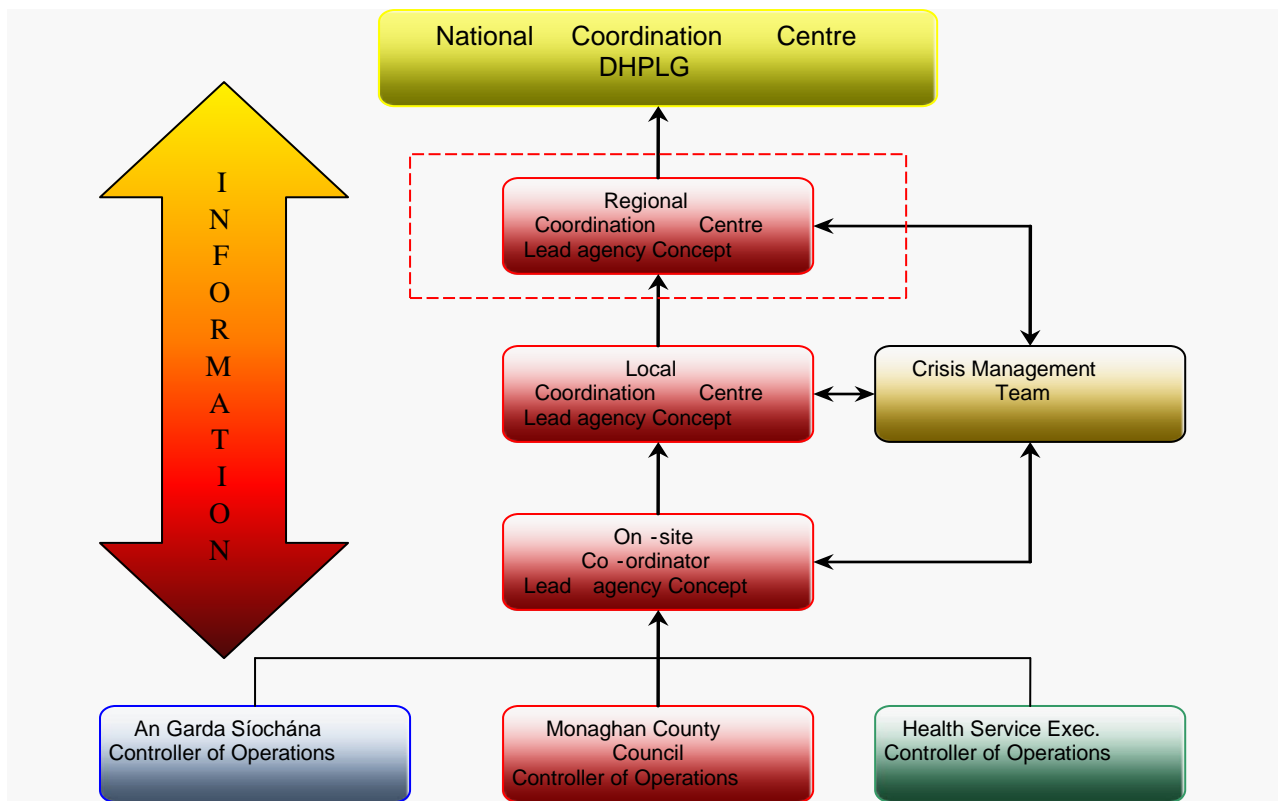
Figure 6.2: Schematic diagram illustrating the Onsite, Local, Regional and National command and coordination structure that will be employed by Principal Response Agencies.

Section 7: The Common Elements of Response

Section 7.1: Declaring a Major Emergency

7.1.1   Declaring a Major Emergency

The Major Emergency Plan should be activated by whichever one of the following agencies first becomes aware of the major emergency;

*   Monaghan County Council

*   An Garda Síochána

*   Health Service Executive

Whichever service from Monaghan County Council is the first to become aware that a Major Emergency has occurred or is imminent; the most senior officer of this service on duty shall immediately inform one of the persons nominated to activate the Major Emergency plan. A list of persons/Officers who are authorised to activate the plan is detailed in Appendix 1.

He/she who activates the plan must arrange for immediate notification of all services for Monaghan County Council, An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive.

To activate the Major Emergency Plan the following message must be declared shall be in the following format:

> **This is ……………….. (Name, rank and service) ……………..**
> **A ……… (Type of incident) …..… has occurred/is imminent at ……… (Location) ....……**
> **As an authorised officer I declare that a Major Emergency exists/ is imminent.**

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

M	**M**ajor Emergency Declared
E	**E**xact Location of the emergency
T	**T**ype of Emergency (Transport, Chemical, etc.)
H	**H**azards, present and potential
A	**A**ccess/egress routes
N	**N**umber and types of Casualties
E	**E**mergency services present and required

Section 7.2: Initial Mobilisation

7.2.1   The initial mobilisation of Monaghan County Council's resources will be facilitated through the Eastern Region Control Centre.

Monaghan County Council's Major Emergency Mobilisation Procedure will be implemented immediately on notification of the declaration of a major emergency. When this Plan has been activated, each section from Monaghan County Council shall respond in accordance with its pre-determined arrangements. Please refer to Monaghan County Council Action Plans.

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

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

No third party will respond to the site of a major emergency unless mobilised by one of the principal response agencies through an agreed procedure.

Section 7.3: Command, Control & Communication Centres

7.3.1   Command, Control & Communication Centre to be used by M.C.C.

Initial contact will be made through the fire control centre via the Eastern Region Control Centre located at Dublin Fire Brigade HQ in Townsend Street, Dublin 2. The control centre will mobilise, support and monitor the fire service and other services requested/ required by Monaghan County Council

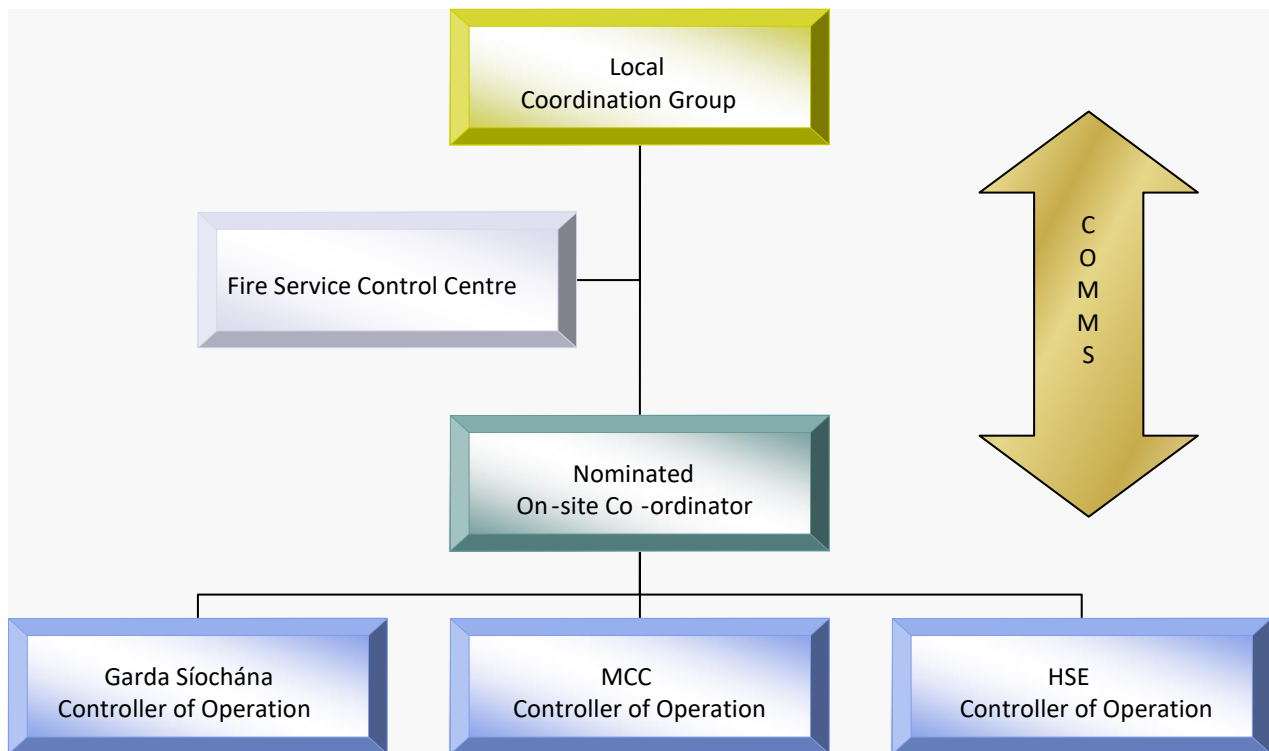Contact details for ERCC can be found in the Appendix, '*Procedure for Declaring a Major Emergency*'.

```
                    ┌──────────────────────┐
                    │        Local         │                    ▲
                    │ Coordination Group   │                    │
                    └──────────┬───────────┘                    C
                               │                                O
   ┌────────────────────┐      │                                M
   │ Fire Service       │──────┤                                M
   │ Control Centre     │      │                                S
   └────────────────────┘      │                                │
                    ┌──────────┴───────────┐                    ▼
                    │     Nominated        │
                    │ On-site Co-ordinator │
                    └──────────┬───────────┘
          ┌────────────────────┼────────────────────┐
 ┌────────┴────────┐  ┌────────┴────────┐  ┌─────────┴────────┐
 │ Garda Síochána  │  │      MCC        │  │       HSE        │
 │ Controller of   │  │ Controller of   │  │  Controller of   │
 │ Operation       │  │ Operation       │  │  Operation       │
 └─────────────────┘  └─────────────────┘  └──────────────────┘
```

Figure 7.1: Example of Command structure at scene of incident.

Section 7.4: Coordination Centres

7.4.1   On-site Co-ordination
An onsite coordination centre may be setup in the event of a major emergency for onsite operational support and command. This will be a dedicated vehicle control unit supplied by Monaghan Fire & Civil Protection, or alternatively a tent or an adjacent building that will accommodate all Principal Reponses Agencies.

Where regional support is requested, a Regional Mobile I.C.S. Unit may be deployed at the request of the Controller of Operations from Monaghan Local Authorities. This unit will be located at Monaghan Fire Station, Co. Monaghan when available.

7.4.2   Crisis Management Team
Both the on-site and off-site coordination centres will be supported by a Crisis Management Team. This team will report to the Local Coordination Centre i.e. a predetermined centre upon notification of a major emergency. The Crisis Management Team is a strategic level management group that has been established within Monaghan County Council. This Group consists of senior managers & senior officers.

The Crisis Management Team is a strategic level management group that has been established within Monaghan County Council. The function of the Crisis Management Team during a major emergency is to:

•   Manage, control and co-ordinate the Local Authorities overall response to the situation;

•   Provide support to the Local Authorities Controller of Operations on site and mobilise resources from within the agency or externally as required;

•   Ensure appropriate participation of the Local Authorities in the inter-agency coordination structures at both the Local and Regional Coordination Groups.

•   Maintain the Local Authorities normal day to day services that the community requires.

7.4.3   Local Coordination Centre location
Once an emergency has been declared a Local Coordination Centre will be established by Monaghan County Council and this will become an inter-agency assembly point.

Monaghan County Council has identified Monaghan Fire Station as a building to hold the Local Coordination Centre. This centre will be used for the strategic level coordination in the event of an emergency.

All coordination centres will follow a generic model of operation. Details on the layout of Off-Site Coordination centre will be found in the Appendix, *'Setting Up The Local Coordination Centre'*.

7.4.4 Regional Coordination Centre location

The chair of the Local Coordination Group may declare a regional Emergency (See Section 4.6). A regional Command Support unit will be deployed for onsite assistance. When available this unit will be located at Carrickmacross Fire Station because of its central location within the North East region. The Local Coordination Centre will have the capacity to act as a regional centre. In the event that the larger facilities are required, the Regional Group may decide to move to any of the pre-determined coordination centres within the North-East region. The locations of the additional Offsite coordination centres within the North East region are;

- Cavan Court House
- Meath County Hall
- Louth County Hall

7.4.5 Who will be present within the Coordination centre

A generic information management system shall be used by all coordination centres from on-site upwards, through local and regional and on to national coordination levels where appropriate. The Local Coordination Group will comprise representatives of the other two principal response agencies, Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer, An Action Management Officer, and representatives of other agencies and specialists, as appropriate.

Coordination Group: The lead agency will chair the proceedings of the Coordination Group. In the case of Monaghan County Council this shall be chaired by the Chief Executive or the designated alternate. The key task of the chair – in consultation with the other PRA's, is to set and develop strategic aims of the group and the key issues that must be addressed to deliver the aim.

- 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 and present all incoming information required for the decision making process.

- 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 task to the Coordination 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 seats at the Coordination 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 the debate in a broader context.
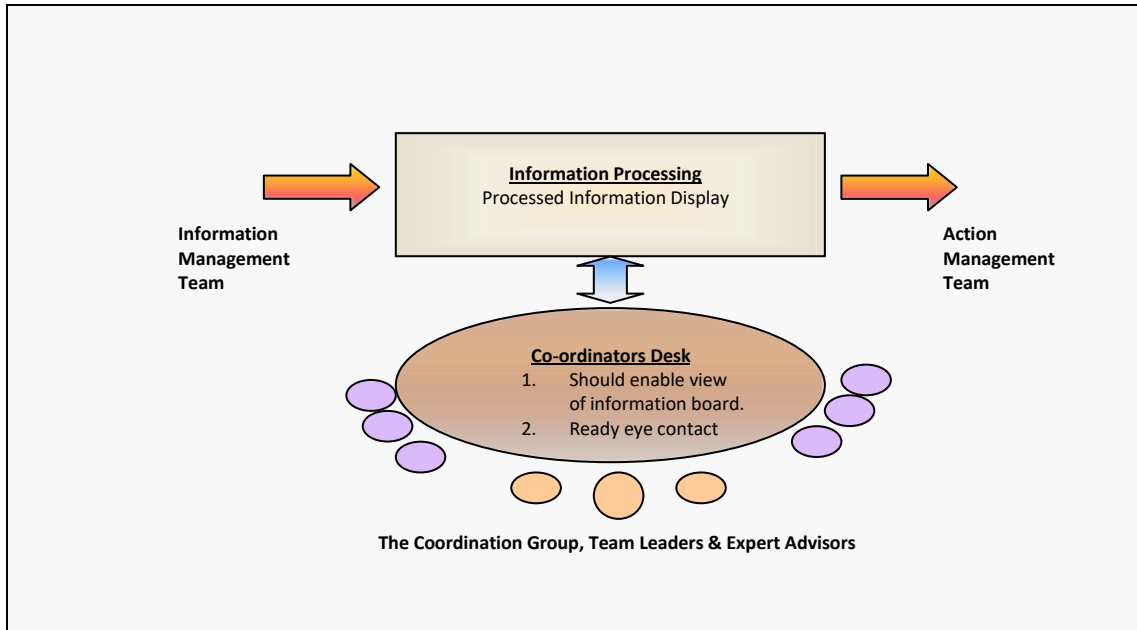
Figure 7.2: A schematic of a Local Authority Generic Coordination Centre.

Section 7.5: Communications Facilities

7.5.1   Communication during times of an emergency

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

The radio network(s) that will be used by Monaghan County Council operate on frequencies allocated to both the fire service and Civil Defence.

• **Fire Service:** All front-line appliances are equipped with Tetra radios and have the ability to communicate within the functional area of Co Monaghan. Also, the fire service has hand held UHF radios available on all its appliances. All front-line appliances are equipped with mobile phones. In addition to these there is a command vehicle that is stationed in Monaghan Fire Station. This vehicle will be mobilised to large scale incidents and will communicate from area of the incident to the control room based in E.R.C.C., Tara Street and the Local Coordination Centre. Both the fire service and the Civil Defence have their own communication protocols, and these will be followed in the event of an emergency.

• **Monaghan County Council:** Normal communication is by mobile phone. Tetra radios are located in all council lorries and vans.

• **Civil Defence:** Communication equipment can also be supplied by the Civil Defence. The Civil Defence uses both private mobile radio (Tetra) for communication between vehicles and communication centres and hand-portable radio (UHF) for communication on site.

• **CH10** will be used to communicate between all sections of the council. The fire service will use its own radio channels in accordance with Fire-fighting handbook.

7.5.2   Communication between the emergency services

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, dedicated specifically to interagency communication, to the site. Radio and other communications facilities such as radios & mobile phones are vital modes of communication between the emergency services present at an incident.

7.5.3   Communication between on-site and Local Coordination Centre

It is essential that traffic is minimised to ensure fullest availability for emergency use. All communication between On-site Coordination and the Offsite Coordination shall pass between the Controller of Operations / On-site Coordinator to the Local Coordination Group. There will also be a communication link between the Crisis Management Team and the On-Site and Off-site communication teams. No communications system is secure from eavesdroppers. Radio scanners capable of receiving Garda, Fire Brigade, Ambulance and Local Authority radio transmissions are readily available. This should be borne in mind when wording any transmission, including cellular telephone conversations, which may contain sensitive information.
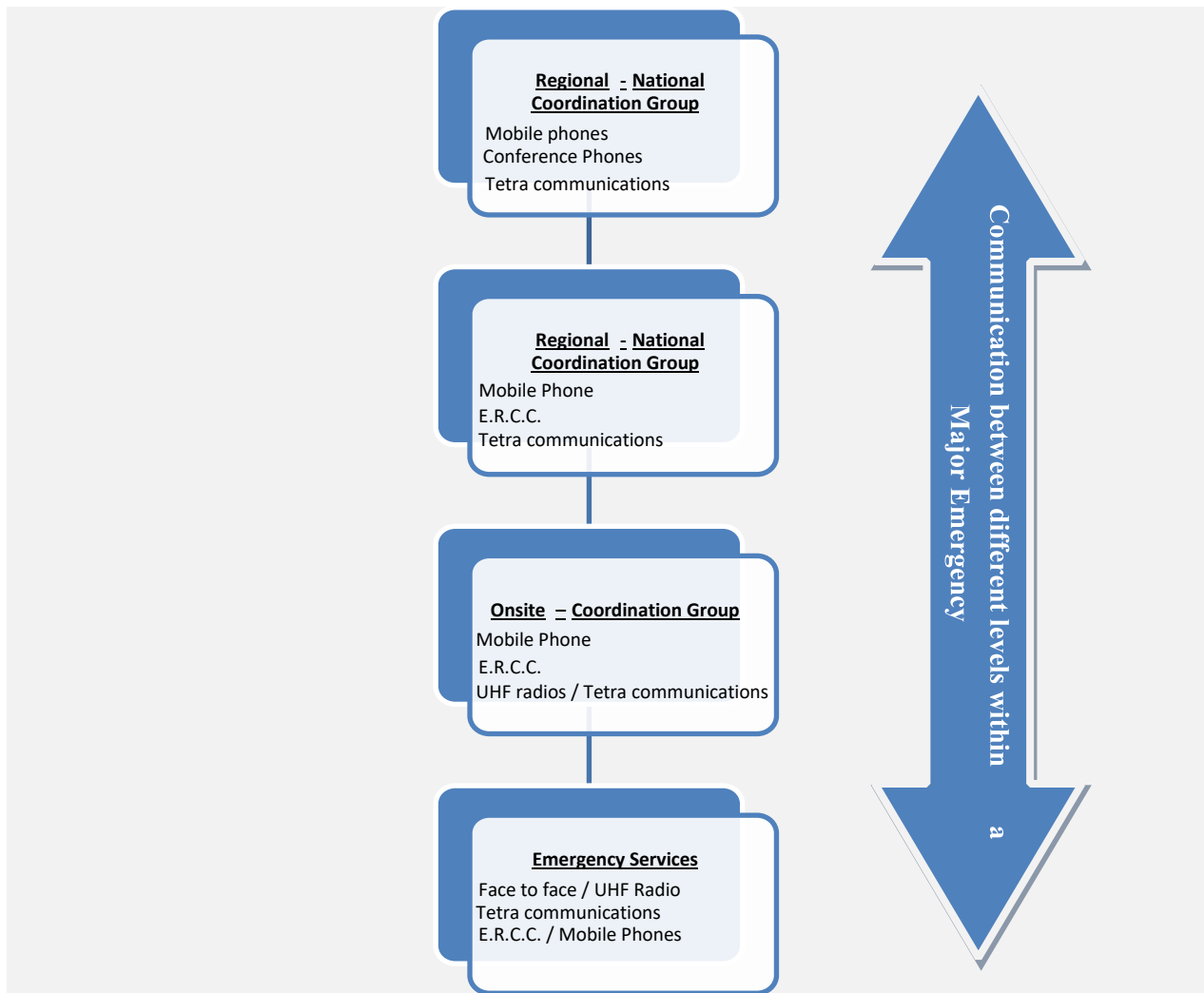
Figure 7.3: Modes of communication that may be incorporated into the Major Emergency Plan.

Section 7.6: Exercising the Lead Agency's Coordination Roles

7.6.1 Lead Agency

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

Two mechanisms, which should be applied in sequence by the three Controllers of Operations at the site, are envisaged to determine the lead agency for any emergency.

• The first is by pre-nomination. Details are outlined in Appendix, *'Determining the Lead Agency in an Emergency'*.

• The second is a default arrangement, where the categorisations in the Table do not seem to apply and the lead agency is not obvious. In these situations, which should be rare, the Local Authority will be the "default" lead agency.

7.6.2 Review and transfer of the Lead Agency

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

7.6.3 Role of the lead agency

In the event that Monaghan County Council are assigned the Lead Agency role, it will be assigned the responsibility for the coordination function (in addition to its own functions) and it should lead all the coordination activity associated with the emergency both on-site and off-site, and make every effort to achieve a high level of co-ordination.
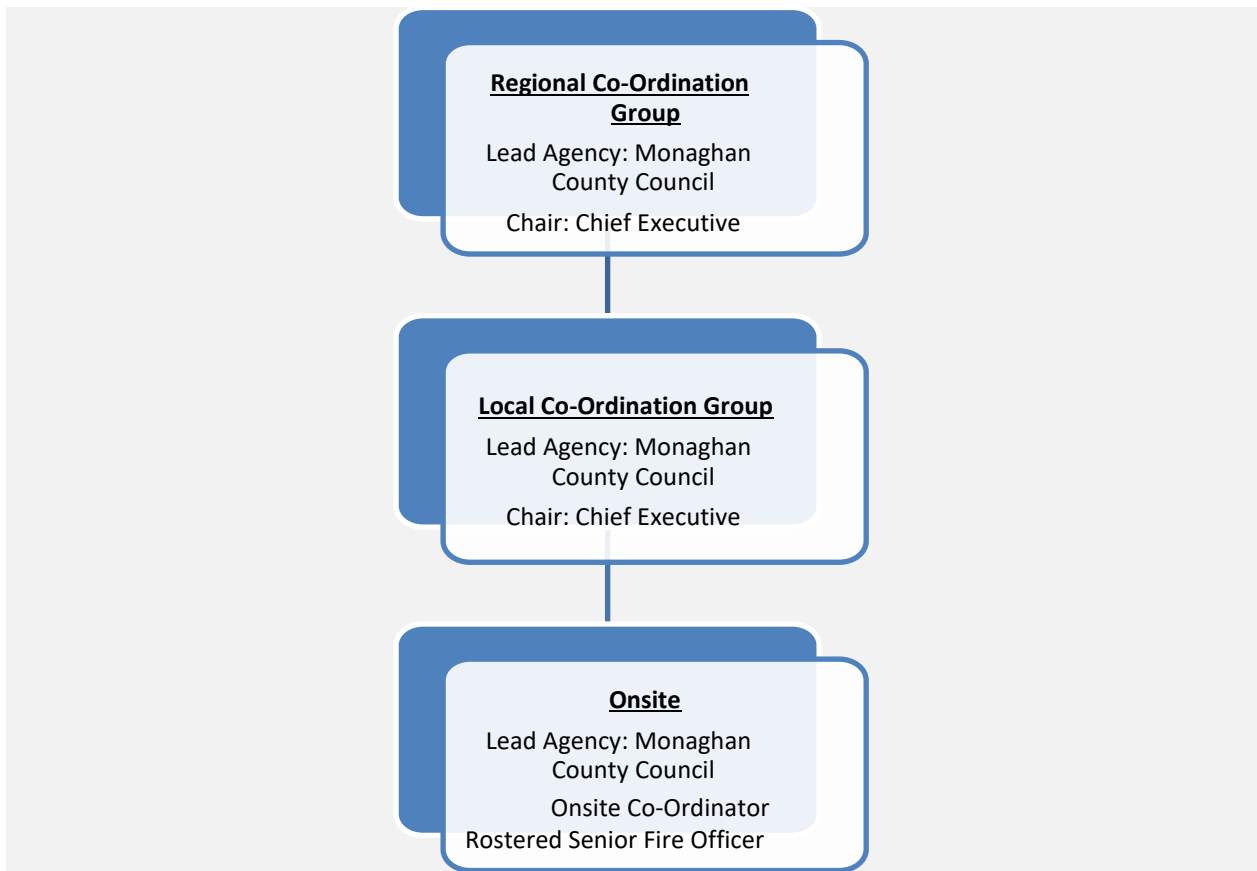
Figure 7.4: An example schematic showing the coordination roles of Monaghan County Council at onsite, local and regional centres;

Section 7.7: Public Information

7.7.1   Councils role in situations where warning arrangements are needed

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 Coordinator will take the decision on how best to protect a threatened population, after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. The Local Coordinating Group will take responsibility in informing the public of any dangers as a result of the emergency.

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

*   Warn the public if an emergency is likely to occur or has occurred.

*   Provide information and advice for the public if an emergency is likely to occur or has occurred.

7.7.2   Modes of communication for public notices

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;

* Monaghan County Council internet service - useful for posting more information than would be communicable by emergency calls or broadcasts including social media.

* Local broadcasters will also be called upon to broadcast messages on behalf of the local Authorities.

* Monaghan County Council emergency helpline service – An emergency LO-CALL helpline will be set up.

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 national television and radio channels.

* Television Text Services – not for emergency alerts, but useful for posting more information than would be communicable by emergency calls or broadcasts.

7.8.1   Media Liaison arrangements

The Local Coordination Centre will take the lead in terms of working with the media during a major emergency. As with arrangements at the site, each principal response agency will designate a media liaison officer at the Local Coordination Centre, and the activities of the media liaison officers should be co-ordinated by the media liaison officer of the lead agency. All statements to the media at this level will be cleared with the chair of the Local Coordination Group.

In the event of a local emergency within the functional area of Monaghan County Council a Media Liaison Officer will be appointed for both the On-site and Off-site coordination centres. The position of Media Liaison Officer has been pre-designated.

Off-site: Director of Service
On-site: Director of Service

7.8.2   On-site arrangements for media

The media liaison officer shall be responsible for acting as a sole channel between Monaghan County Council and the Public. The Media Liaison Officer must keep accurate and timely information on the emergency so that:

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

All On-site statements should be cleared with the On-Site Coordinator. All statements to the media at local (off-site) level should be cleared with the chair of the Local Coordination Group. Depending on the location of the incident the on-site media centre may be a building close to the site of the incident or it may be any one of the following;

- Local Town Hall
- Local Public building
- Local Church

7.8.3   Local & regional coordination arrangements for media

The location for the off-site media centre will be pre-designated by the Local Coordination Group. All statements from the local or regional coordination centres must be cleared by the chairs of the respective groups.

7.8.4 Media arrangements at other locations

In many situations media attention will move quickly away from the site to other locations, including HSE & Garda HQ, hospitals where casualties are being treated and mortuaries and, therefore, arrangements for the media at or adjacent to these locations will need to be provided.

7.8.5 Facilities for media

A Major Emergency can be a prolonged event it is important that facilities are put in place to accommodate media personnel at both onsite and offsite areas. These facilities should include;

* Refreshment area.
* Sanitary area.
* List of accommodation.
* Communication Facilities (Off-site).

7.9.1   Generic site management at an emergency

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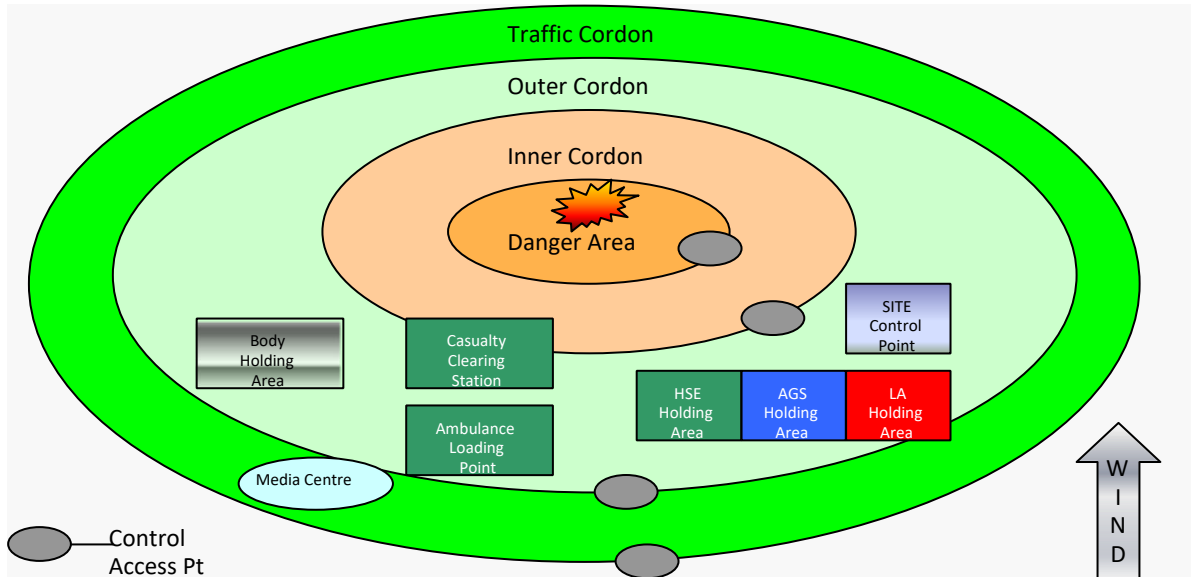

Figure 7.5: Scene Management Arrangements

7.9.2   Control of access to an emergency

Cordons should be established as quickly as possible at the site of a major emergency for the following reasons;

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

Three cordons will be established. This will be done by An Garda Síochána after a decision by and agreement with the On-site Coordination Group consisting of representatives from Monaghan County Council, An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive.

• Inner Cordon – provides immediate security of the hazard area and potential crime scene;
• Outer Cordon – Seals off an extensive area around the inner cordon;
• Traffic Cordon – Set up at or beyond the outer cordon to prevent unauthorised vehicle access to the area surrounding the scene.

 Further details on the layout are contained in Appendix, *'Setting up Site Plan in an Emergency'*.

7.9.3   Identification of personnel and services of the councils

All uniformed personnel, responding to the site of a major emergency, should wear the proscribed 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 Coordinator and the Controllers of Operations, should wear bibs designed and coordinated in the table below;

Non uniformed personnel from Monaghan County Council should attend the scene in high visibility jacket with the name Monaghan County Council and their job function clearly displayed. Where identification is not permanently retained on the person or vehicle, it should be obtained for the Local Authority Holding Area. Access beyond cordons will not be permitted in the absence of the appropriate identification.

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

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

7.9.4   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 Coordinator may request, through An Garda Síochána, that an Air Exclusion Zone be declared around the emergency site by the Irish Aviation Authority. When a restricted zone above and around the site is declared, it is promulgated by means of a "Notice to Airmen" - NOTAM - from the Irish Aviation Authority.

7.10.1 Mobilising additional resources

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;
- Voluntary Emergency Services;
- Utilities; and
- Private Sector

All organisations will **only** attend at the request of the On-site Coordinator after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. In turn the requested agency will report to the On-site Controller who in turn will assign it a task.

7.10.1.1 Mobilisation of the Defence Forces

The Defence Forces may be mobilised at the request of the On-site Coordinator after consultation with the other Controller of Operations. All requests for Defence Forces assistance should be made by a principal response agency and channelled through An Garda Síochána to Defence Forces Headquarters (DFHQ) in accordance with agreed Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) and Service Level Agreements (SLAs). 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).

7.10.1.2 Mobilisation of Civil Defence

The Civil Defence can provide essential emergency services for use in major incidents in support to the Principal Response Agencies. The Civil Defence is an organisation comprising almost entirely of volunteers. All requests for Civil Defence assistance will be channelled through the Controller of Operations for MCC. In turn he/she will contact the Civil Defence Officer who in turn will mobilise the Civil Defence.

7.10.1.3 Mobilisation of Voluntary Emergency Services

The Voluntary Emergency Services sector can provide additional equipment and support in the event of a major emergency. Voluntary Emergency Services will link to the Principal Response Agencies in accordance with Table below.

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

Each Principal Response Agency with a linked Voluntary Emergency Services is responsible for the mobilisation of that service and their integration into the overall response. The internal command of volunteer organisations resides within that organisation. All Head of Voluntary Services will report to the On-site Control Centre and await instructions to assigned tasks

7.10.1.4 Mobilisation of Utilities

Utilities operate under their own legislative and regulatory frameworks but, during the response to an emergency, they must liaise with the On-Site Coordinator. Where possible representatives of individual utilities on site should provide a representative for the On-Site Coordination Group. It is also recommended that individual utilities be invited to attend and participate in relevant work of Local Coordination Groups.

7.10.1.5 Mobilisation of Private Sector

Representatives of these companies should provide assistance to the Local Coordination Group if required. All private sector heads of services will report to the On-site Control Centre and await instructions to assigned tasks.

7.10.2 Identifying additional organisations

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

7.10.3 Arrangement for the integration of Casual Volunteers

Where the On-Site Coordinator 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.

7.10.4 Mutual Aid arrangements

Please refer to Section 4 of this plan.

7.10.5 Mobilisation of Regional 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.

7.10.6 Requesting International Assistance

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

A Regional Coordination 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 coordination level and directed by the lead agency to the lead Government Department. *Please refer to section 4.6 of this document.*

Section 7.11: Casualty and Survivor Arrangements

7.11.1 General

Monaghan County Council will 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 & Survivors

The On-Site Coordinator, 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:

• <u>Casualties:</u> including persons who are killed or injured.

• <u>Survivors</u>. 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

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 Triage

Once injured casualties have been rescued or found, they should be assessed or triaged as quickly as possible. Triage sieve quickly sorts out casualties into priority groups. Following initial triage, casualties will be labelled, using Triage Cards, and moved to a Casualty Clearing Station. Using the algorithm card this will systematically work through the patients, triaging and labelling them deciding the priority of their treatment. A standard card with the colours will be used:

• Red (Immediate)
• Yellow (Urgent)
• Green (Delayed)
• White (Dead) sections

7.11.2.2 Arrangements for transporting lightly injured and uninjured persons

Some casualties may leave the site by means other than HSE ambulances and may arrive at the Receiving Hospital(s), in cars, buses, etc.

7.11.2.3 Casualty Clearing

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 Controller and the Site Medical Officer. At this location the casualties are collected, further triaged, treated, as necessary, and prepared for transport to hospital. The Health Service Executive Controller will, in consultation with the Site Medical Officer and the designated receiving hospitals, decide on the hospital destination of casualties.

7.11.3 Fatalities

The bodies of casualties, which have been triaged as dead, should not be moved from the incident site unless this is necessary to affect the rescue of other casualties. The only other circumstance where bodies should be moved, before the Garda evidence collection process is complete, is if they are likely to be lost or damaged due to their location or the nature of the incident. Bodies to be moved should be photographed first and their original position clearly marked and recorded. The recovery of the dead and human remains is part of an evidence recovery process and, as such, is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána acting as agents of the Coroner. The Local Authority can assist An Garda Síochána in this function.

7.11.3.1 Coroners Role

 A coroner will be called in to examine all Fatalities. The Coroner is an independent judicial officer, who has responsibility for investigating all sudden, unexplained, violent or unnatural deaths. It is the task of the Coroner to establish the 'who, when, where and how' of unexplained death. All such deaths in Ireland are investigated under the Coroners' Act, 1962.

7.11.3.2 Body Holding Area

 The On-Site Coordinator, 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).

7.11.3.3 Temporary Mortuary

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to provide a Temporary Mortuary, if required Monaghan County Council should consult with the District Coroners and health service Pathologists in its area on the options/arrangements/plans for Temporary Mortuaries in preparing its Major Emergency Plan.

7.11.3.4 Viewing of the Bereaved

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

7.11.4 Survivors

A Survivor Reception Centre should be designated and established at the earliest possible opportunity. The On-Site Coordinator, 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 Monaghan County Council to establish and run this centre. 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. Monaghan County Council has identified the following as suitable buildings for setting up a survivor centres.

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

7.11.5 Casualty Information

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

7.11.6 Friends and Relative Reception Centres

The purpose of a reception centre is to provide a comfortable area where friends and relatives of those involved in the incident (primarily the casualties and survivors) can be directed for information. The Local Coordination Group will determine the need for and arrange for the designation and operation/staffing of such centres. A building used as a Friends' and Relatives' Reception Centre should be secure from media intrusion and contain sufficient room to afford privacy to families receiving information about relatives. There will also be a need for a reliable process to establish the credentials of friends and relatives.

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 Coordination 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. The Local Authority may decide to incorporate a foreign language communication resource. Details can be obtained from the Department of Foreign Affairs.

7.11.8 Pastoral and Psycho-social Care

It is the responsibility of the Health Service Executive to provide for the pastoral and psycho-social support arrangements of casualties and other affected members of the public.

The On-Site Coordinator will ensure that, where appropriate, pastoral services are mobilised to the site and facilitated by the PRA's in their work with casualties and survivors.

Section 7.12: Emergencies involving Hazardous Materials

7.12.1 Arrangements for dealing with major Hazardous Materials

Monaghan County Council will be designated the lead agency for response to normal hazardous materials incidents, with the exception of those involving biological agents within the county. In cases where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána will act as the lead agency. The Defence Forces, when requested, will assist An Garda Síochána in an Aid to the Civil Power role with Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams. Details of specific actions to be taken in the event of a CCBRN incident are contained in the Protocol for Multi-Agency Response to Suspect Chemical and Biological Agents arising from terrorist activity.

7.12.2 CCBRN

In the wake of a series of international terrorist attacks, there has been growing public concern about the threat of terrorist-related incidents, involving what are referred to collectively as CCBRN *(CCBRN meaning attacks involving C-conventional explosives; C – chemical substances; B – biological agents; R – radiological and N – nuclear material)* incidents.

In cases where terrorist involvement is suspected, An Garda Síochána will act as the lead agency. 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.

The Defence Forces, when requested, will assist An Garda Síochána in an Aid to the Civil Power role with Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams, where it is deemed appropriate, in accordance with current practice. Additional Defence Forces support in an Aid to the Civil Power role may be sought if required, including Naval and Air Corps assets.

7.12.3 Biological Incidents

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

7.12.4 Infectious Diseases

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. Monaghan County Council will provide assistance under the command of the lead government department. The Department of Agriculture and Food has contingency plans in place to deal with outbreaks of serious animal diseases, including Foot and Mouth Disease, Avian Influenza (Bird Flu), Newcastle Disease, Classical Swine Fever, and Bluetongue.

7.12.5 Nuclear Incidents

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.

The National Emergency Plan for Nuclear Accidents (NEPNA) provides a framework for the national response to a large-scale radiological incident. It is intended specifically to cater for a radiological emergency or crisis such as that arising from a major accident at a nuclear installation abroad with the potential to result in radioactive contamination reaching Ireland. **NEPNA** provides a basis for effective coordination so as to ensure that all State resources are distributed to good effect and that gaps in the response arrangements are not allowed to develop. In cases of terrorist attack An Garda Síochána shall be the lead agency (refer to Section 7.6) whereby Monaghan County Council shall provide assistance as requested.

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. 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.

The Health Service Executive has responsibility for providing clinical decontamination and medical treatment to casualties affected by hazardous materials. It will be responsible for decontamination where required to protect health service facilities, such as hospitals, from secondary contamination. There is a Regional HSE Decontamination unit available in Navan on request. The fire services have responsibility for providing other forms of physical decontamination of persons at the site. The Regional Decontamination Facilities for the North East area is based in Drogheda fire stations.
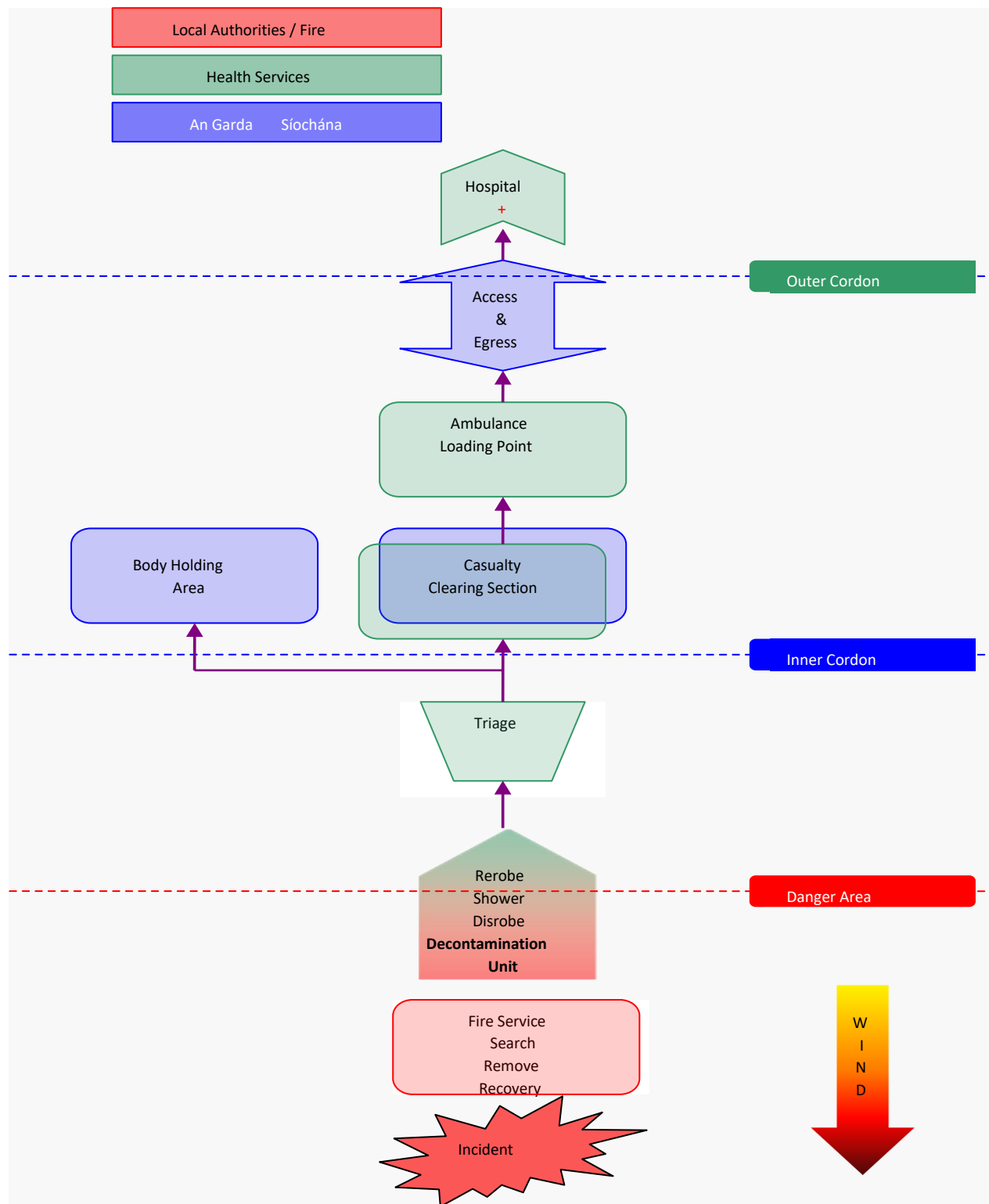
Figure 7.7: Managing Hazardous Materials on Site

Section 7.13: Protecting Threatened Populations

7.13.1   General

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.

7.13.2   Evacuation arrangements

Evacuation is usually undertaken on the advice of the Fire Service or Health Service Executive. The On-Site Coordinator will take the decision on how best to protect a threatened population, after consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. Where decided upon the process of evacuation will be undertaken by An Garda Síochána with the assistance of the other services. It is the responsibility of Monaghan County Council to provide rest centres for evacuated populations. National guidance on evacuation is provided in the associated document '*A Guide to Managing Evacuation'.*

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

7.13.3   Health Service Executive only

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 will 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.
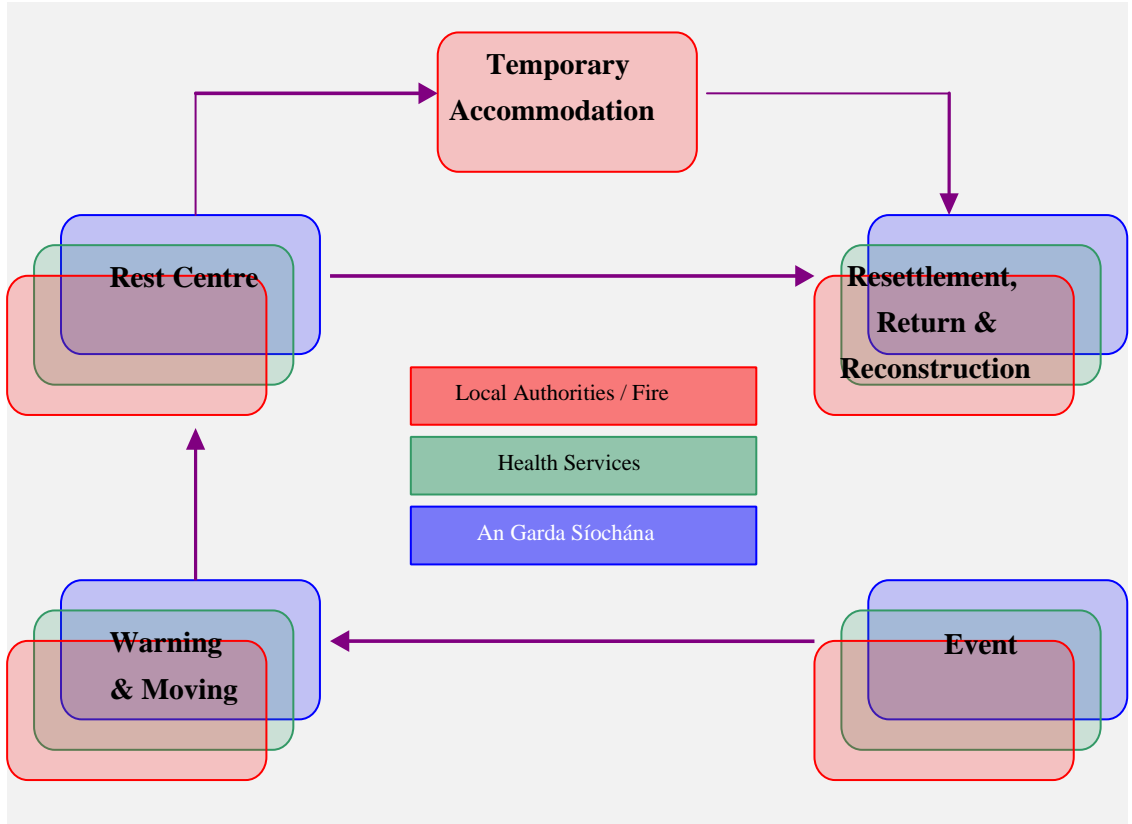
Figure 7.8: Structure of Evacuation carried out by Principal Response Agencies

Section 7.14: Early and Public Warning Systems

7.14.1 Early warning systems

Early warning systems are currently set in place for Severe Weather forecasts. This is a 24-hour service provided by Met Éireann. There may be a need to inform the public of the current situation or of possible evacuation. Please refer to Section 11 of this document.

7.14.2 Methods of disseminating warnings

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

- Door to Door
- Radio and T.V. broadcasting
- Local helpline / information line
- Web services and internet services including social media
- Mobile phone Applications
- Automated Text services

Section 7.15: Emergencies arising on Inland Waterways

7.15.1   Liaison with Irish Coast Guard

In the event of severe flooding the Civil Defence will provide assistance in water rescue & recovery. In addition to the Civil Defence, inland water rescue volunteer organisations may provide assistance if requested by the On-site Coordinator.

7.15.2   112/999 calls and mobilising resources

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

Section 7.16: Safety, Health and Welfare Considerations

7.16.1   Safety, health and welfare of its staff

Monaghan County Council operates under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. M.C.C. is responsible so far as reasonably practicable for the Safety, Health and Welfare of its staff during a major emergency. Monaghan County Council has prepared safety statements and in addition ancillary safety statements have been prepared for the Fire Service that is under the control of MCC. This Ancillary Safety Statement sets out the approach which this authority adopts in relation to managing safety and meeting its statutory requirements under Section 20 of the 2005 Act.

7.16.2   Safety of the Councils rescue personnel

It is the responsibility of the Controller of Operations for Monaghan County Council to appoint a safety officer during an emergency to ensure that all council operations are conducted in a safe working manner. At the emergency scene Monaghan County Council shall exercise command over its rescue personnel in accordance with its normal command structure, command systems and arrangements. Any other services mobilised by Monaghan Local Authority shall also be directed under the same command structure. Where it is necessary that services continue to operate in a Danger Area, it will apply their normal incident and safety management arrangements, and relevant officers will continue to exercise command over their own personnel working in a Danger Area.

7.16.3   Operating within the Danger Area

The On-site Coordinator should ensure that the safety and health of the Local Authority staff is not in danger. A Danger Area must be defined as part of site management arrangements by the On-Site Coordinator.

7.16.4   Procedures for evacuating from a '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

Monaghan County Council has special outdoor staff welfare units in place available on request. These facilities will include the provision of food and drink, rest facilities and sanitary facilities. The Local Authority Controller should ensure that appropriate rest and refreshment facilities are provided for response personnel at the on-site and off-site facilities.

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. Those who are particularly traumatised will require skilled professional help and

this is will be provided by Monaghan County Council. Arrangements for this must be made in a way that ensures confidentiality and overcomes the cultural resistance in the emergency services to such a step. These facilities should also be made available to support staff, even if they are not directly involved at the scene, e.g. administration staff, drivers and communications staff.

Section 7.17: Logistical Issues / Protracted Incidents

7.17.1   Arrangements for rotation of front-line rescue /field staff

Front line rescue / field staff will be relieved at protracted incidents in accordance with agreements for rest and recuperation. Fire crews from the North-East region may be called upon to assist and support the emergency. These extra resources shall be deployed to assist fire crews in their normal day to day operational activities until the major emergency has been stood down

7.17.2   Re-organising normal emergency cover and other services

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 staff welfare

The Crisis Management Team and the Local Coordination Group will 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. MCC outdoor staff welfare units are available if required, equipped with a small kitchen and toilet. Meals will be provided at a meal time to all members of Monaghan County Council staff or every 4-5 hours after an incident.

Section 7.18: Investigations

7.18.1 Investigation 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 Local Authority staff on their involvement.

7.18.2 Minimise the disruption of evidence

The preservation of the site of a major emergency, which results from criminal action, is of paramount importance and should receive a priority rating from the outset. The first member(s) of An Garda Síochána to arrive at the site of a major emergency where a suspected crime has been committed automatically incurs the responsibility of preserving the site. While the priority is the protection of life, the provisions of the Framework are intended to assist An Garda Síochána's investigative role.

7.18.3 Other parties with statutory investigation roles

Depending on the nature of the Major Emergency, agencies other than An Garda Síochána may require access to the site for the purposes of carrying out an investigation. These agencies include the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), the Air Accident Investigation Unit (AAIU) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). An Garda Síochána is responsible for carrying out criminal investigations. Subsequent investigations by An Garda Síochána will be carried out in accordance with best policies and Garda Code.

Any agency including the Local Authority, with an investigative mandate should liaise in the first instance with the On-Site Coordinator, who will direct them to the Controller of Operations of An Garda Síochána.

7.19.1   General

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

7.19.1.1 Arrangements for Foreign Nationals during an emergency

In some incidents an emergency may involve significant numbers of casualties from small communities such as non-nationals. If deemed necessary by the Controller of Operations, Community Liaison Officers shall be appointed and shall update these communities at regular intervals.

7.19.2   Arrangements for VIPs who wish to visit the site

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

7.19.3   Arrangements for National / 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 Coordination Group should make arrangements for any such observers.

Section 7.20: Standing-Down the Major Emergency

7.20.1 How an emergency will be stood down

A decision to stand down the major emergency status of the incident at the site should be taken by the On-Site Coordinator, in consultation with the other Controllers of Operations at the site and the Local Coordination Group. A great deal of activity may continue at locations other than the site (such as the hospitals, temporary mortuary, etc.) after the major emergency is stood down at the site. The Local, Regional or National Coordination Groups may need to continue their work after activities at the site have ceased.

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

7.20.2 Operational Debriefing and reporting of activity

When the incident has ended, Monaghan County Council will debrief 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. Monaghan County Council will review the inter-agency coordination aspects of the response after every declaration of a major emergency.

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

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 debrief.

Operational debriefs should not be confused with diffusing welfare sessions for staff, which should form part of the trauma support programmes arranged by individual organisations. The thrust of any such debriefs would be to identify areas for improvement in procedures, equipment and systems. They should not be forums for criticising the performance of others.

Section 8: Agency Specific Elements and Sub-Plans

8.1   Emergency Sub Plans within Monaghan County Council

When planning and preparing for a major emergency it is important that the Major Emergency Plan ties in with existing emergency plans within Monaghan County Council. Please refer to Monaghan County Councils Sub Plans.

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

•   Severe Weather Plan

•   Monaghan County Council Action Plans

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

Section 9: Plan for Regional Level Coordination

9.1   Regional Level Co-ordination

Regional level major emergencies may be declared, with a Plan for Regional Level Coordination activated. This will provide for mutual aid, support and coordination facilities to be activated in a region, the boundaries of which are determined to suit the urgent needs of the emergency.

There are eight regions for Major Emergency planning within the Irish Republic. Monaghan County Council belongs to the North East region. This region incorporates the following counties;

- Cavan
- Louth
- Monaghan
- Meath

9.2   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 Monaghan 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 Authority or Division of An Garda Síochána; or

- the incident occurs at or close to a boundary of several of the principal response agencies.

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

Any of the nominated Local Coordination Centres may be used as a Regional Coordination Centre, or a specific Regional Centre may be designated for this purpose. Furthermore, a mobile Command Unit for the North-East region should also be mobilised if required.

Figure 9.1: North East Region comprising of Cavan, Louth, Meath & Monaghan

Section 10: Links with National Emergency Plans

10.1   National Emergency Plans

National plans have been created for specific emergencies. These plans will require the assistance of the principal response agencies. The roles and functions of the PRA's are contained in these plans. Arrangements involving the principal response agencies in National Emergency Plans will be agreed in the first instance on their behalf through the National Steering Group. The Major Emergency Plan for Monaghan 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:

- Nuclear Emergency
- Public Health Infectious Diseases Emergency Plan
- Animal Diseases Plan
- Marine Emergency Plan

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

- monitoring and/or reporting on the impact of the emergency in the functional area of the agency;
- undertaking pre-assigned roles in National Emergency Plans, such as coordinating/ implementing certain countermeasures in their functional area;
- undertaking relevant tasks following an emergency/crisis; or
- acting as a communications and coordination conduit.

10.2   Activation on request from Irish Coast Guard

Although County Monaghan is not situated on the coast, its neighbouring counties Meath and Louth are. The major emergency plan may be activated by any Principal Response Agency in response to a request from the Irish Coast Guard, following a threatened or actual emergency in the Irish Maritime Search and Rescue Region.

10.3   Activation on request from a Minister of Government

The Major Emergency Plans of the principal response agencies may be activated by an agency in response to a request from a Minister of Government in light of an emergency/crisis situation.
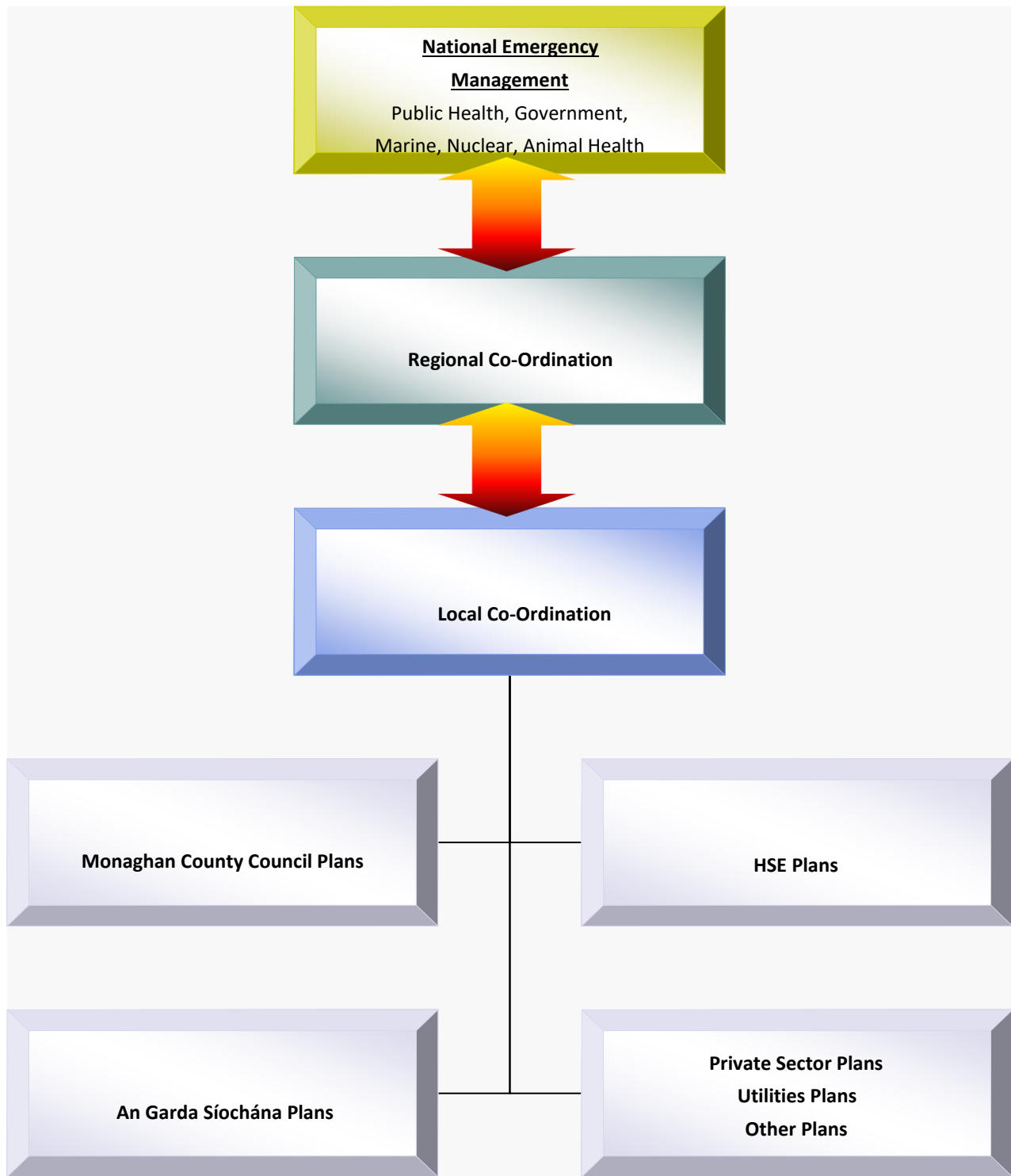
Figure 10.1: Linking Major Emergency Plans with National and other Plans

Section 11: Severe Weather Plans

11.1   Responding to severe weather emergencies

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

The target time for the issuing of a warning is 24 hours before the start of the event, but a warning may be issued up to 48 hours in advance when confidence is high. On Fridays and on the last 'normal' working day before a holiday period it may be appropriate to issue a preliminary warning or weather watch to Local Authorities.

Met Éireann introduced a system known as Public Service Severe Weather Warning and cover the meteorological conditions/elements – wind, rain, snow, fog, thunderstorm and coastal storm surge.

The emphasis is on warning of weather events that will cause significant disruption or constitute a significant risk for people where conditions meeting the criteria in the Table 11.1.

11.1.1 Flooding Emergencies

National Guidance is provided in the document, 'A Guide to Flooding Emergencies'.

11.1.2 Severe weather conditions

Monaghan County Council has a "Severe Weather Plan" in place to deal with severe weather conditions that may range from severe gusts to severe snow.

Weather Element	Criteria for Severe Weather warning
Wind	Gusts expected of 110km/hr (70mph), or greater - mention mean speeds and give forecast values in both units (rounded to the nearest 5mph or km/hr) - An isolated gust meeting the criteria would not normally warrant a warning
Rain	50mm or greater rainfall expected in any 24 hour period or 40mm or greater rainfall in any 12 hour period or 30mm or greater rainfall in any 6 hour period
Snow	Significant falls of snow likely to cause accumulations of 3cm or greater below 250m AMSL (Above Mean Sea Level)
Drifting snow	When forecast
Thunder	Widespread electrical storms (at least affecting most of one province or equivalent area)
Fog	Widespread and dense fog (at least affecting most of one province or equivalent area)
Costal Storm Surge	When significant resulting flooding is expected
Freezing rain, drizzle or ice pellets	When such precipitation is forecast

Table 11.1: Met Éireann weather warnings

Notes:

The Warnings will only be issued when there is greater than a 50% chance of the above criteria being fulfilled. The appropriate terms are:
Probable: 50-70% Likely: 70-90% Very Likely: > 90%

The following terms of lower probability will be used in the message only to indicate more severe conditions than specified in the basic criteria.
Risk: < 20% Possible: 20-50%

The target time for the issuing of a warning is 24 hours before the start of the event, but a warning may be issued up to 48 hours in advance when confidence is high. On Fridays and on the last 'normal' working day before a holiday period it may be appropriate to issue a preliminary warning or weather watch to Local Authorities.

Section 12: Site and Event Specific Arrangements and Plans

12.1 Site and Event Specific Arrangements and Plans

There are both legislative and procedural arrangements, which require that emergency plans be prepared for specific sites or events (e.g. SEVESO sites, airports, ports, major GAA events, Industrial etc). In addition to the so called standard risks (e.g. House fires, RTA's etc) there are a number of specific risks which were identified from the risk assessment process that was carried out by Monaghan County Council. These include the following;

- Severe weather incidents
- Aircraft collisions / loss
- Hazmat incidents
- Major RTA
- Natural Gas explosions
- Industrial fires

It is hard to account for all emergencies so depending on the nature and complexity of the emergency the following organisations may also be required to assist the Principal Response Agencies.

Principal Response Agencies	Responding agencies
Monaghan County Council	IAA
An Garda Síochána	Coast Guard (aerial support, assist in water search and recovery)
Health Service Executive	Voluntary Emergency Services Civil Defence
	EPA
	Private companies
	Utilities
	Site management (Industries)

Table 12.1: Responding agencies that may be required to assist the Principal Response Agencies during an emergency

12.2 Seveso Sites

The Seveso II Directive applies to some thousands of industrial establishments where dangerous substances are present in quantities exceeding the thresholds in the directive. There are currently no sites that reach Seveso thresholds in Co. Monaghan, however, a number of sites have been identified within the North East region. Under the European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations, 2000 S.I. No. 476 of 2000, a joint external emergency plan, involving the Local Authorities, An Garda Síochána, and the Health Service Executive must be put in place for each upper Seveso site.

Section 13: The Recovery Phase

13.1   Support for individuals and Communities

Following an emergency incident, assistance will be required by the victims of the emergency – not only those directly affected, but also family and friends, who may suffer bereavement or the anxiety of not knowing what has happened. A major emergency will have a serious effect on a community. The recovery phase should provide support and long-term care for individuals involved in the incident and the communities affected by the incident. Most importantly the Local Authority must restore its service to normal workings in the aftermath of an incident.

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

The recovery will typically include:

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

13.1.1 Supporting Individuals and communities affected by the emergency

As the incident progresses towards the recovery phase, the emergency services will need to consider a formal handover to the local authority in order to facilitate the authority's leading role in the return to normality, the rehabilitation of the community and restoration of the environment. The Local Authority must ensure that its critical services are restored as quickly as possible.

There are specific requirements that will be expected from 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).
- 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.
- 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.
- Restoration of health services.

13.1.2 Managing of public appeals and external aid

There is a need for the Coordination of emerging recovery issues, such as managing public appeals and external aid, from the earliest stages of the response phase. The function of public appeals will be to raise funds to assist the victims of a disaster. For this reason, the arrangements for Coordination of response should continue to operate during the transition from response stage to recovery stage. It is recommended that Local Authority Crisis Management Team will continue to function until the issues arising in the response phase are more appropriately dealt with by the agency's normal management processes.

Voluntary and community organisations may provide advice on how to set up public appeals. They should aim to develop a coherent 'fundraising mix' that takes into account long-term, medium-term and short-term needs and does not rely too heavily on one or two sources of funding. In future such aid will be dispensed through established support networks under the guidance of the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection or the Health Authority.

13.2   Clean-up arrangements

In the aftermath of an emergency the clean-up operation has been assigned to the Local Authority. It is in the later stages of a major incident (the recovery period and return to normality) that the local authority's involvement may be prolonged and extensive. The services and staff of the local authority 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
- Public health and environmental issues
- Provision of reception centres
- Re-housing and accommodation needs
- Transport
- Social services
- Psychosocial support
- Help lines
- Welfare and financial needs

The removal of debris and contaminated waste is one of concern. Monaghan County Council will in consultation with the EPA and specialist companies 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. Monaghan 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.

13.3   Restoration of Local Authority Services

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

13.3.1 Procedures and arrangements for monitoring the situation

The Coordination of emerging recovery issues may arise on the agendas of the Local, Regional or National Coordination Groups from the earliest stages of the response phase. For this reason, the arrangements for Coordination 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 Coordination Groups are largely recovery focused, it may be appropriate to re-title the group as the Local, Regional or National Recovery Coordination Group. From the earliest stage, it may be appropriate also for the Local, Regional or National Coordination Group to appoint a Recovery Working Group to plan ahead.

These groups will be responsible for the coordination of the recovery phase, managing resources and monitoring the situation until the issues arising are more appropriately dealt with by the normal management processes.

13.3.2   Arrangements for Utility companies
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.

13.3.3   How the order of priorities are to be determined
It is the responsibility of the Local, Regional or National Recovery Coordination Group together with the Recovery Working Group to prioritise events during the recovery phase. 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'.

Section 14: Review of the Major Emergency Plan

14.1   Internal review process

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

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

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

14.2   How the MEP is to be reviewed and amended externally

Monaghan County Councils appraisal will be reviewed and validated by the North-East Regional Steering Group on Major Emergency Management. This appraisal should also be reviewed and validated by the Department of the Housing, Planning and Local Government. Any issues arising from the review should be referred back to Monaghan County Council for appropriate action. In cases of disagreement between the Local Authority and the Regional Steering Group, the National Steering Group should be consulted and should decide on the issue.

14.2.1   Inter agency review process at the Regional Major Emergency Group

Multi agency reviews must also be conducted on an annual basis between the principal response agencies on both a local and regional level basis. This will include updating and amending the plans as mentioned in Section 14.1.

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

14.2.2   Review of the MEP by the DHPLG

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

14.3   Review and Report on Major Emergency Plan after every activation

The review process will be largely as per the Guidance Document, "*A Guide to Undertaking an Appraisal*". Once the Major Emergency Plan has been stood down, each of the services and agencies involved in the incident will hold a series of operational hot- debriefs. Initially these will be confined to each particular service, but later a multiagency cold-debrief will be held (Multi-agency debriefs should consider the contribution provided by other, non-emergency service) and lessons learned will be incorporated into this manual and other service manuals, as appropriate.

14.3.1   Internal review and report on Councils performance and its function

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

14.3.2   External review and report on coordination of functions of all agencies

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 debrief. Multi agency reviews must also be conducted on an annual basis between the principle response agencies on both a local and regional level basis. This will include reviewing and reporting on the coordination function of the agencies.