Major Incident Declaration Protocol

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1. Information

This protocol is for the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum Major Incident activation. It defines a Major Incident and Civil Emergency and details the activation plan.

Major Incident
A major incident is any emergency that requires the implementation of special arrangements by one or all of the emergency services, the NHS or the local authority for one or more of the following:

• The rescue and transportation of a large number of casualties:
• The involvement either directly or indirectly of large numbers of people;
• The handling of a large number of enquiries likely to be generated from the public and the news media, usually to the police;
• The mobilisation and organisation of the emergency services and supporting organisations, e.g. local authorities, to cater for the threat of death, serious injury or homelessness to a large number of people.
• The large-scale deployment of the combined resources of the emergency services;

Civil Emergency
Local Resilience Forum defines an emergency in accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA 2004). An emergency is defined in the Act as:

• An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK;
• An event or situation which threatens serious damage to the environment of a place in the UK; or
• War or terrorism which threatens serious damage to the security of the UK.
Additionally to constitute an emergency, an event or situation must also pose a considerable test for an organisation’s ability to perform its functions. The two tests detailed in the guidance to Part 1 of the CCA 2004 ‘Emergency Preparedness’ are:

• Where the emergency would be likely to seriously obstruct the organisations ability to perform its functions.

• Where the Category 1 responder would consider it necessary or desirable to act to prevent, reduce, control or mitigate the emergency’s effects, or otherwise take action; and

• Would be unable to act without changing the deployment of its resources or acquiring additional resources.
2. Intention

This protocol details the definition of Major Incident or Civil Emergency and actions that should be taken by agencies declaring these incidents.

The protocol also details the activation process and how a Major Incident can be escalated to a Multi Agency Major Incident.
3. Method

Declaration
There is a three phase declaration procedure as follows:

**Major Incident Standby**
When an incident occurs which has the potential to escalate into a major incident, or which may require large scale local authority involvement, a Major Incident Standby should be declared.

**Major Incident Implement**
In some cases, Major Incident Implement will be declared immediately, without a Major Incident Standby being given first.

**Major Incident Stand Down**
The decision to move to this phase signifies that the incident has been contained or that there is no longer the possibility of further escalation.

**Activation**
A Major Incident can be declared by any Category 1 responder who considers that the criteria detailed in the definition in section 1 have been met.

A Major Incident to one Category 1 responder may not be so to another. However it is important that all responding agencies are made aware of such incidents to enable them to be put on stand by or to provide an appropriate supporting response, even if not directly involved.
**Notification**

The Agency declaring the major incident or major incident standby should contact a Northumbria Police Force Incident Manager (FIM - Force Control Room Inspector) and inform them that a major incident or standby has been declared. The declaring agency should provide basic information about the incident using the CHALETS principle as a guide (Appendix D). A joint decision will be made between the notifying agency and FIM on the appropriate command and control structure to manage the incident.

Northumbria Police will contact the appropriate Category 1 responders and relevant Category 2 responders to inform them of the declaration, as per the Northumbria Police Major Incident Plan. Contact will be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but will be appropriately prioritised. It is important that all LRF agencies are informed even if they are not directly involved in the incident. A List of Category one and two responders can be found in Appendix A.

When contacting Category 1 and 2 responders Northumbria police will usually:

- Inform each responder’s nominated contact that a declared emergency has been triggered and obtain that agency’s current status.
- Provide basic information about the incident, in particular, the geographical area and the extent of the declared incident.
- Advise on the command and control structure and establish that agency’s own structure and response.
- Ask the agency for an information update around current actions and threats. Details of current resource commitments and ongoing incidents which may impact on the major incident.
**Command and Control**
An appropriate coordination structure will be determined by police and reporting agency. The following coordinating options are available.

**Command Rooms**
Single agency command rooms – each agency stands up independently with support from local policing resources where necessary
Local Authority Emergency rooms with multi agency representation – typically when transport is difficult such as in flooding
Multi agency Silver/Tactical room agencies co located at tactical level often at police premises
Multi agency Gold / Strategic Room agencies co located at strategic level often at police premises
Strategic Coordination Centre similar to multi agency gold rooms but involving larger numbers typically in response to terrorist incidents

The location of incident command rooms may vary between incidents and therefore should be confirmed during the notification process.

**Meetings**
Teleconference
Tactical Coordination Group
Strategic Coordination Group – Appendix B

**Stand Down**
Once the incident is contained or there is no further possibility of escalation, the major incident stand down should be declared. It is important that all agencies are informed of the stand down. The Police will normally undertake this role in consultation with other agencies. A handover document can found at Appendix C
Recovery
As the incident moves from the response phase into the recovery phase it is appropriate for the Local Authority to become the lead agency. Handover is usually agreed between the Police Commander and the Local Authority lead. A generic handover document can be found at Appendix C. A local police contact will be identified to maintain liaison with the Local Authority where necessary.

Debrief
It is good practice that a debrief will be held following a major incident. The Northumbria LRF Debrief protocol should be followed.
Full list of Category 1 and 2 responders in Northumbria LRF Appendix A

Category 1 responders ("core responders")

Emergency services
- Northumbria Police
- British Transport Police
- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue
- Northumberland Fire and Rescue
- North East Ambulance Service
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Local authorities
- Sunderland City Council
- South Tyneside Council
- Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
- Newcastle City Council
- Northumberland County Council
- North Tyneside Council
- Port Health Authorities, Port of Tyne, Port of Blyth, Port of Sunderland.

Health bodies
- Foundation Trusts
- NHS England
- Public Health England

Government agencies
- Environment Agency
Category 2 responders ("co-operating responders")

Utilities
- Northern Power Grid
- Northern Gas Networks
- National Grid
- Northumbria Water
- BT
- Cable and Wireless
- Virgin Media

Transport
- Network Rail
- Nexus (will coordinate all bus and metro services)
- Newcastle International Airport
- Port of Sunderland
- Port of Tyne, Port of Blyth
- Highways Agency
- A One

Health bodies
- Strategic Health authorities

Government agencies
- Health and Safety Executive
Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG)
The establishment of a Gold Command is not exclusive to the Police Service - any organisation can set up their own internal strategic command structure (sometimes referred to as Corporate or Crisis Management).

Some incidents will require a multi-agency response at the strategic level in order to provide a resolution. In such incidents a Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) should be established to formulate policy between the emergency services and other organisations involved directly in the incident. Tactical decisions are not the responsibility of the SCG.

It is accepted practice that the Police will take responsibility at a major incident to initially co-ordinate the strategic response of all the emergency services and other organisations involved. However it is recognised that due to the nature of certain incidents this co-ordination role may be handed over at some stage to another more appropriate service or agency. Teleconference facilities are available should it be determined that the SCG need to meet remotely. The host and dial in codes will be confirmed during the notification process.

Activation of the SCG
The Police Gold Commander will be responsible for determining if and when a SCG should be established, although this may sometimes occur following the request of another agency.

Once this decision is made it should be passed to the Gold Room Co-ordinator who will task the FIM to notify the relevant personnel. If at Headquarters, the Security Officers will need to be advised of those who will be attending and to where they are to report.
The Gold Room Co-ordinator should appoint a SCG Co-ordinator to manage the SCG. In the event of a large number of people attending the SCG consideration should be given to appointing an assistant.

**Membership of the SCG**

The composition of the SCG will include representation from each of the agencies involved in responding to the incident. This list will depend on the scale and nature of the incident. For example:

- Fire and Rescue (Tyne and Wear and / or Northumberland).
- North East Ambulance Service.
- Affected local authority / authorities.
- NHS England Northern Area Team
- Environment Agency.
- Met Office.
- Science and Technical Advisory Group (STAC).
- LRF representative identified by Chair.
- Any other category 1 and 2 LRF responders as require listed in Appendix A

Those agency representatives nominated to attend the SCG should be senior personnel empowered to make executive decisions concerning resources within their remit and have the authority to seek the aid of other agencies in support of their role if required so as to avoid any unnecessary delays. They may be accompanied by support personnel from their own individual agency if required.

At all times the personnel and resources of each agency will remain under the command of their respective senior managers.

**Role of the SCG**

The ACPO Emergency Procedures Guidance (2009) states the SCG should maintain a strategic overview of the whole incident and meet on a regular basis to:

- Agree strategic aims and objectives in responding to the incident;
• Determine policy for implementation by Silver Commander(s);
• Assess and arrange for adequate resources;
• Prioritise allocation of resources to Silver Commander(s);
• Implement adequate financial controls;
• Act as an interface with national government;
• Liaise with neighbouring police forces or regional partner agencies;
• Coordinate communications internally and to the public;
• Provide liaison with the media at a strategic level.

In the initial stages these meetings will usually be chaired by the Police Gold Commander. Meetings of this group are to be recorded including the decisions and agreed actions for future reference. The secretariat for the Police Chair will be arranged after discussion with Gold.

Whilst the police will maintain written records of the deliberations of the SCG, it is recommended all member agencies of the group should ensure proper records of the incident are maintained from their own perspective.

The SCG will also look at the impact the incident is having on their agencies as a whole and try to ensure normal service is maintained.

If members are absent for any reason they must appoint a substitute from within their agency who has full authority to discharge the strategic function.

In a long running incident it will be necessary for personnel to hand over to a colleague. It is preferable for agencies to stagger these handovers in order to maintain expertise as new members ‘come up to speed’.

As the incident develops there should be regular evaluation of the need and purpose of the group.
### Proposed SCG Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Lead Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction of attendees, roles and responsibilities</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Declaration of items for urgent attention</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 a</td>
<td>Decision on items for urgent attention</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BREAK OUT TIME TO ACTION URGENT ITEMS AS AGreed ABOVE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Review and agree minutes of previous meeting</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Update on strategic situation</td>
<td>Police Gold Staff Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Review and agree strategic aims and objectives</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Review outstanding actions</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Update from working groups / cells / attendees (by exception)</td>
<td>Cell Chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Discuss and agree on strategic decisions.</td>
<td>All members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confirmation and allocation of actions required.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agreed decisions and actions to be minuted and circulated to all members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Date and time of next meeting</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closure of meeting</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Media

The SCG Chair should liaise with the Police Media Manager to ensure any requirement for press conferences are arranged and that the media are provided with suitable accommodation, services and facilities (with access to, and/or an overview of, the scene if possible). A suitable spokesperson from each agency should be identified and made available to talk to the media on specific agency issues.
In relation to ………………………………………… (name of incident) at
…………………… (location) on ………………….. (date) at ……………… (time)
the following areas have been considered by Police Commander and Local Authority lead:

- Risk to life from the incident
- Public order relating to the incident
- Crime relating to the incident
- Council preparedness for co-ordination
- Fire and Rescue Service operations
- Ambulance Service operations
- Police operations
- Other agencies operations
- Current and expected levels of involvement from emergency services
- The need for police lead in the co-ordination of multi-agency response
- Media issues
- Health issues

Having considered the above it has been determined that the emergency response phase of the incident is concluding and that the incident is moving into a recovery phase. Therefore it is more appropriate that the Local Authority become the lead agency in this phase. As such the control of the incident is hereby handed over from the police to the Local Authority.

Signed: …………………………………… Northumbria Police
Rank, name & number: …………………………………………………………………………
Date: ……………………. Time: …………………

Signed: …………………………………….. _________________ Council
Name: …………………………………… Position: ……………………………
Date: …………………….. Time: ……………………. 
Survey the scene from a distance having regard to your own personal safety.

Assess the incident. Be aware that evidence may be gathered from debris, skid marks or other damage found some considerable distance either side of the point of impact or from the final positions of any vehicle or persons involved. There may be multi-scenes.

Disseminate the information below to the Force Communications Centre (FCC) and others as necessary.

Casualties – approximate number of casualties (fatal, injured and not injured).

Hazards – present and potential e.g. fuel spillage, debris, weather and road conditions, terrain, gas, chemicals, fire or danger of explosions.

Access – identify best routes for emergency vehicles, including police in order to preserve scene, identify suitable RVP.

Location – exact location (road junction or map reference to pin point scene).

Emergency services – present and required.

Type and time scales – type of incident with details of type and numbers of people, vehicles etc. involved. Ensure that any scene involved remains in its original state until such time the Force have had the opportunity to gather all available evidence.

Safety of personnel, Start log.