# Major Incident Declaration Protocol

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## Appendices

## 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.

### 1.1. 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;

### 1.2. 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.

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• 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

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

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

## 3. METHOD

### 3.1. Declaration

Where Northumbria Police or any other agency considers that there may be a need for a multi – agency response then they should consider the use of a Teleconference to aid initial discussion. This may be more appropriate if travelling to a silver room is not practical for some or all partners, or it is considered more appropriate to the situation e.g. discussion of a developing threat. The request for the police to coordinate such a response can be made by contacting the Force Operations Manager on 01661 869770.

Where the need to declare a major incident is unambiguous and requires an immediate response, 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.

### 3.2. Activation

A Major Incident can be declared by any LRF partner agency who considers that the criteria detailed in the definition in section 1 have been met, or by a COMAH site or Major Accident Hazard Pipeline or port.

A Major Incident to one LRF partner agency 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.

### 3.3. Notification

The Agency declaring the major incident or major incident standby should contact a Northumbria Police Force Operations Manager (FOM-) and inform them that a major incident or standby has been declared. The declaring agency should provide basic information about the incident using the METHANE principle as a guide (Appendix D). A joint decision will be made between the notifying agency and FOM on the appropriate command and control structure to manage the incident. Where Northumbria Police take the lead in coordinating a multi-agency response, a tactical Coordinating Group will be called.

Northumbria Police will endeavour to contact all agencies to inform them of the declaration as per the Northumbria Police Major Incident Plan. These agencies can include the Military, Department of Communities and Local Government, Met Office, etc.; however those directly affected will be prioritised.  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 agencies 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 agencies 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.

### 3.4. 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 at Police Premises.
- Multi agency Gold / Strategic Room agencies co located at strategic level at Police Premises.
- Strategic Coordination Centre similar to multi agency gold / strategic rooms but involving larger numbers typically in response to terrorist incidents; typically at Police premises.

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

*Meetings*

Teleconference – All agencies have the ability to join a teleconference but only a small number have the facility to host one.

Silver / Tactical Coordination Group (TCG) – these will usually be meetings held within a multi-agency Silver /tactical environment and are generally led/chaired by Northumbria Police but can be led/chaired by any Category 1 organisation. A draft TCG agenda can be found at Appendix E.

Strategic Coordination Group – these will usually be meetings held within a multi-agency environment and within Northumbria are normally chaired by Northumbria Police but can be led by any Category 1 organisation.  See Appendix B

### 3.5. Stand Down

Once the incident is contained or there is no further possibility of escalation, then major incident stand down should be declared. It is important that all agencies are informed of the stand down. The Police Gold (Strategic) Commander will authorise this in consultation with the Local Authority who will take on the lead role for Recovery. More detail on procedures after stand down are in 3.6.

### 3.6. 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 agreed between the Police Commander and the Local Authority lead.
An example of a generic handover document can be found at Appendix C.
Appropriate representatives from the other LRF partner agencies will be identified to maintain liaison with the Local Authority where necessary

### 3.7. Debrief

It is good practice that a debrief will be held following a major incident. The Northumbria LRF Debrief protocol should be followed.

**Appendix A**

**Full list of Category 1 and 2 responders in Northumbria LRF**

**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 at 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
- Northumbrian 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
- Clinical Commissioning Groups

Government agencies
- Health and Safety Executive

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<div align="right">**Appendix B**</div>

## STRATEGIC COORDINATING GROUP PROTOCOL

### Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG)

The establishment of a Gold / Strategic 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.

### Activation of the SCG

The Police Gold / Strategic 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 /Strategic Room Manager who will task the FOM to notify the relevant personnel. If at Northumbria Police Force Command centre the Room Manager will need to be advised of those who will be attending and to where they are to report.

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The Gold Room Manager 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:

- Police Strategic Commander
- 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
- Military Liaison Officer
- Government Liaison Officer (DCLG RED)
- 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 / Tactical Commander(s);
- Assess and arrange for adequate resources;
- Prioritise allocation of resources to Silver / Tactical 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 /Strategic 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 / Strategic.

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**

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

**Media**

The SCG Chair should liaise with the Police Media Manager to ensure any requirements 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.

**Incident Handover Document**

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: …………………..

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**METHANE**

| M | Major Incident | Standby or Implement |
|---|---|---|
| E | Exact Location | Exact location of incident, where possible map reference |
| T | Type Of Incident | Chemical, Explosion, Road Traffic Collision (RTC) |
| H | Hazards | Present and potential |
| A | Access | Best routes for access and egress to scene and RVP |
| N | Number of Casualties | Approximate number and types of casualties |
| E | Emergency Services | Report on Services already on site and if any further services are required |

### JESIP - Principles for Joint Working

The principles must be applied by responders when they are determining an appropriate course of action. They should be reflected in Joint or standard operating procedures for joint working in the response to and co-ordination of an emergency.

The public expects that the emergency services will work together, particularly in the initial response, in order to preserve life and reduce harm at any emergency. The purpose of clear, simple principles is to help commanders to take action under pressure that will enable the achievement of successful outcomes. This simplicity is of paramount importance in the early stages of an incident or emergency, when clear, robust decisions and actions need to be taken with minimum delay in an often rapidly changing environment. At the scene, the expected sequence of actions would comprise the first meeting of police, fire and ambulance commanders (co-location); a joint assessment of the situation and prevailing risks (communication, joint risk assessment and shared situational awareness); and a co-ordinated plan for action.

### Co-location

Co-location of commanders is essential and allows those commanders to perform the functions of command, control and co-ordination, face to face, at a single and easily identified location. This is known as the Forward Command Post (FCP), which is a location near to the scene, where the response by the emergency services is managed.

### Communication

Communication is the passage of clear, unambiguous and timely information relevant to an emergency situation. Meaningful and effective communication underpins

effective joint working.  The sharing of information, free of acronyms, across service boundaries is essential to operational success. This starts through pre-planning and between Control Rooms prior to deployment of resources.

Communication is the capability to exchange reliable and accurate information i.e. critical information about hazards, risks and threats, as well as understanding each organisation's responsibilities and capabilities. The understanding of any information shared ensures the achievement of shared situational awareness which underpins the best possible outcomes of an incident. Common symbols and terminology should be used to communicate common meaning amongst all responders.

### Co-ordination

Co-ordination involves the integration of the priorities, resources, decision making and response activities of each emergency service in order to avoid potential conflicts, prevent duplication of effort, minimise risk and promote successful outcomes.  Effective co-ordination generally requires one service to act in a "lead" capacity, such as chairing co-ordination meetings and ensuring an effective response. The lead service will usually be the Police Service. However, in certain circumstances other services/agencies may be a more appropriate choice, depending upon the nature of the emergency, the phase of the response and the capabilities required.

### Joint understanding of risk

Risk arises from threats and/or hazards which will be seen, understood and treated differently by different emergency services. In the context of a joint response, sharing information and understanding about the likelihood and potential impact of risks and the availability and implications of potential control measures will ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that the agreed aim and objectives are not compromised. This will include ensuring the safety of responders and mitigating the impact of risks on members of the public, infrastructure and the environment. Further information on the joint assessment of risk can be found in Part 2 – Ways of Working.

### Shared situational awareness

This is a common understanding of the circumstances and immediate consequences of the emergency, together with an appreciation of the available capabilities and emergency services' priorities. Achieving shared situational awareness is essential for effective interoperability in the emergency response and can be achieved by using the Joint Decision Model (JDM) found in Part 2 – Ways of Working. Shared situational awareness relates not only to a common understanding between incident commanders, but also between control rooms and all tiers of the command structure
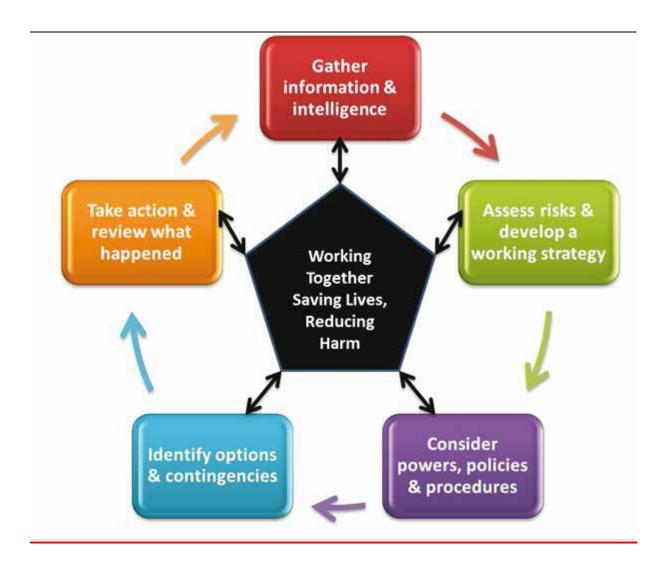
Appendix E

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**Draft TCG agenda**

| Item No. | Description | Lead Person |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Introduction of attendees, roles and responsibilities | Chair |
| 2 | Declaration of items for urgent attention | Chair |
| 2 a | Decision on items for urgent attention | Chair |
| | BREAK OUT TIME TO ACTION URGENT ITEMS AS AGREED ABOVE | |
| 3 | Review and agree minutes of previous meeting | Chair |
| 4 | Update on tactical situation:<br>• Headlines<br>• Specifics by agency. | Chair<br>All members |
| 5 | Review and agree tactical aims and objectives | Chair |
| 6 | Review outstanding actions | Chair |
| 7 | Tasking to agencies and roles. | Chair |
| 8 | Date and time of next meeting | Chair |
| | | |

**Appendix F**

The Joint Decision Model provides a common framework for decision making at incidents attended by multiple agencies. It establishes a common language to ensure that decisions are reached in a structured way and in a manner understood by all, i.e. What do we know? What do we need to do and the associated risks? What are the enabling or constraining powers, policies or procedures? What options are appropriate? Take action and check it is working?

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