



Cumbria
PREPARED

Cumbria Local Resilience Forum Multi Agency Response



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1 Introduction

1.1 Aim

This document outlines the arrangements for responding to a Major Incident in Cumbria to ensure that a coordinated response is provided by all those agencies involved.

1.2 Objectives

The main objectives of this document are to:

- act as a straightforward reference document
- define why we plan for Major Incidents and the types of incidents that we plan for
- outline the coordination arrangements for a typical incident
- act as a sign post to other sources of information



2 Why Plan for Emergencies

The structure for managing the local multi-agency response to emergencies is based upon the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and associated guidance. The Act broadly sets out a framework for civil protection within the UK and distinguishes between two types of responders; Category 1 and Category 2 Responders, each with their own set of statutory duties.

2.1 Civil Contingencies Act (2004)

The Act is supported by two sets of guidance:

1. Emergency Preparedness which deals with the pre-emergency (planning) phase.
2. Emergency Response & Recovery which describes the multi-agency framework for responding to and recovering from emergencies in the UK.

Category 1 and 2 responders must give due regard to the voluntary sector organisations when planning for and responding to emergencies. The roles and responsibilities of Category 1 and 2 responders are listed in the Roles and Responsibilities Section of the Cumbria Emergency Plan at www.cumbriaprepared.org.uk

2.2 Category 1 Responders

Category 1 responders are at the core of the response to most emergencies and are required to:

1. Assess the risk of emergencies occurring.
2. Ensure emergency plans are put in place.
3. Put in place business continuity management arrangements.
4. Make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency.
5. Share information with other local responders to enhance coordination.

6. Cooperate with other local responders to enhance coordination and efficiency.
7. Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management Civil Protection (local authorities only).

2.3 Category 2 Responders

These are cooperating responders who are less likely to be involved in the heart of multi-agency planning work but will be heavily involved in preparing for incidents affecting their sectors.

The Act requires them to:

1. Cooperate with Category 1 and 2 responders.
2. Share relevant information with Category 1 and 2 responders.

2.4 Cumbria Local Resilience Forum

Cumbria Local Resilience Forum is a multi-agency partnership made up of representatives from Category 1 and 2 responders.

Cumbria Local Resilience Forum aim is to plan and prepare for localised incidents and emergencies. They identify potential risks and produce emergency plans to either prevent or mitigate the impact of any incident on their local communities. The geographical area Cumbria Local Resilience Forum covers is based on Cumbria Constabulary force area.

Cumbria Local Resilience Forum also works with other partners in the military and voluntary sectors who provide a valuable contribution to Local Resilience Forum work in emergency preparedness.



3 Definition of an Emergency and Major Incident

3.1 Emergency

Defined within the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 as:

- an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the United Kingdom
- an event or situation which threatens serious damage to the environment of a place in the United Kingdom
- war, or terrorism, which threatens serious damage to the security of the United Kingdom

3.2 Major Incident

Defined within the Cabinet Office, UK Civil Protection Lexicon as:

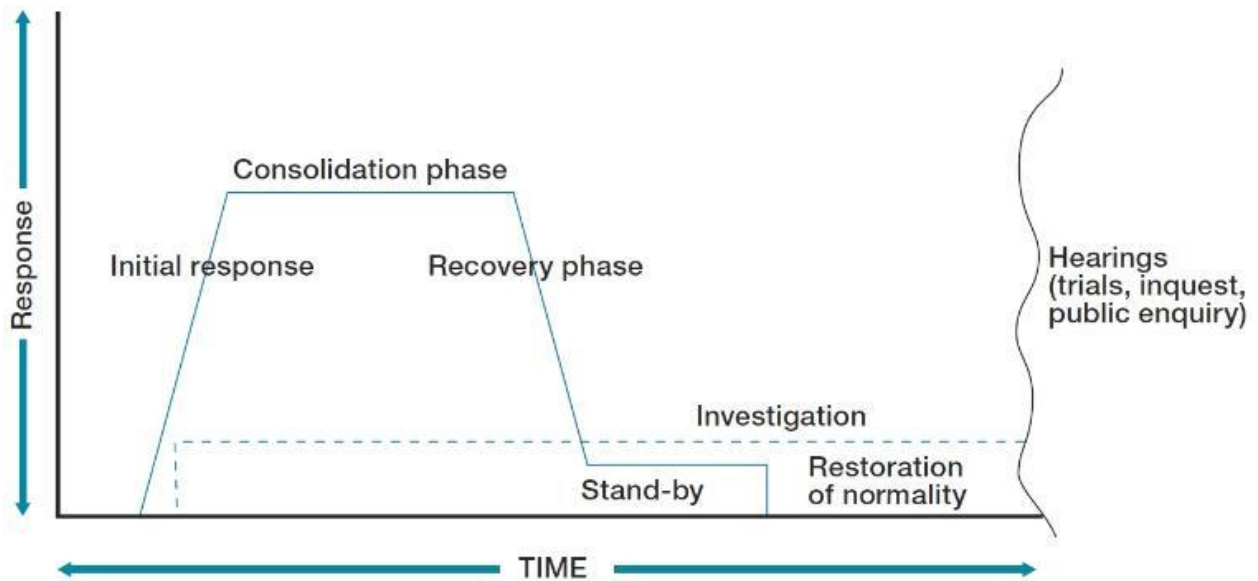
A severe event or situation, with a range of significant impacts, which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder organisation.

3.3 Stages of a Major Incident

A major incident is generally recognised to have four stages:

- the initial response
- the consolidation phase
- the recovery phase
- the restoration of a new normality

Stages of a Major Incident



Reference - EMI Paper: Prototype Model for Mega Cities - Scientific Figure on ResearchGate. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/incident-relative-time-frames_fig2_276936419 [accessed 5 Mar 2025]

An investigation into the cause of the incident will normally be part of the overall process.



4 Status Descriptions

Status	Description
<p>Major Incident</p>	<p>Response required to an event or situation which has a range of serious consequences which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agencies.</p> <p>A Major Incident is declared in the initiating M/ETHANE message.</p> <p>The multi-agency Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) will be established to lead the response to the Major Incident.</p>
<p>Major Incident Standby</p>	<p>This is an event or situation which could lead to a range of serious consequences requiring the implementation of special arrangements by one or more emergency agencies.</p> <p>A Major Incident Standby may be declared in an initiating M/ETHANE message, if there is potential for the incident to escalate to a Major Incident.</p> <p>The multi-agency Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) will be established to lead the response to the Major Incident Standby.</p>
<p>Incident (Requiring additional coordination)</p>	<p>This is a multi-agency incident that requires tactical coordination but falls below the threshold for a Major Incident declaration.</p> <p>An M/ETHANE message provides the initial information for the Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG).</p> <p>The multi-agency Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) will be established to lead the response.</p>
<p>Potential Incident</p>	<p>This is forward planning for an event or situation (identified through horizon scanning), providing shared situational awareness in preparation for multi-agency coordination.</p> <p>A Multi-Agency Assessment Team (MAAT) will be established to share information and assess in partnership.</p>



5 Declaration

5.1 Major Incident

In most cases, it is the emergency services who are the first to respond to an emergency and declare a major incident. However, ANY officer of a Category 1 or 2 responder organisation, i.e. one of the emergency services, health, local authorities, Environment Agency, NHS trusts, can declare a Major Incident. Whilst what constitutes a major incident for one organisation may be business as usual for another, joint working dictates that if any responding agency declares a major incident, the other responding agencies should automatically accept / work to that status.

Cumbria Constabulary use a telephone tree system to inform members of the Cumbria Local Resilience Forum of the incident, and the need for them to either dial in to a teleconference or to attend a physical meeting of a Tactical or Strategic Coordinating Group.

5.2 Ongoing incident

The emergency services deal with emergencies everyday which are not Major Incidents but normal business as usual. However, there are incidents which may initially appear to be business as usual, but which have the potential to escalate to a Major Incident, although during their initial response this might have been uncertain or unclear.

ANY officer of a Category 1 or 2 responder organisations (detailed above) can declare a Major Incident Stand By. Cumbria Constabulary use a telephone tree system to inform members of the Cumbria Local Resilience Forum of a potential incident or an incident, and the need for them to dial in to a teleconference.

5.3 Potential Incident

Some emergencies can be slow to develop as opposed to no notice, sudden onset incidents. In these circumstances where there is the potential a Major Incident

may be declared, there is a need to coordinate understanding of the potential risk and share any available information.

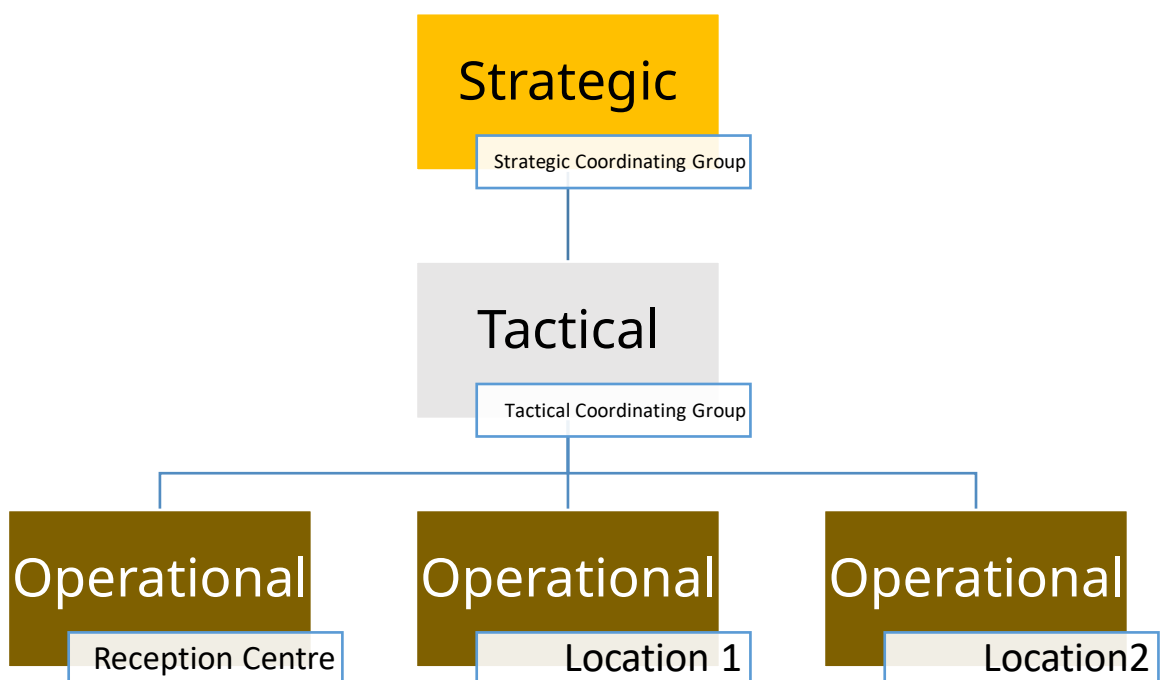
In the event of a potential incident status, partners hold a Multi-Agency Assessment Group to identify any gaps in preparedness ahead of a predicted incident, such as a forecast disruptive weather event or period of planned industrial action. These Multi Agency Assessment Teleconferences can be requested by any member agency of the Cumbria Local Resilience Forum.

Cumbria Constabulary use a telephone tree system to inform members of the Cumbria Local Resilience Forum of the holding of a Multi-Agency Assessment Group, this allows operational responders to agree roles and responsibilities if contingencies such as road closures, flood barriers etc. need to be established in specific geographic areas.



6 Coordination

Generally, three levels of coordination can be applied across agencies; strategic, tactical, and operational. This structure provides a framework for delivering a strategic, tactical, and operational response to an incident or operation. It allows processes to be established that facilitate the flow of information and ensures decisions are made at each level.





The titles do not convey seniority of service or rank, but depict the function carried out by that person.

Strategic Objectives:

- save life
- prevent the incident from getting worse
- relieve suffering
- protect the environment
- protect property
- help with any criminal or other technical investigation
- promote self-help and recovery
- restore normality as soon as is practicable

6.1 Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG)

The purpose of the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) is to take overall responsibility for the multi-agency management of the emergency and to establish the policy and strategic framework within which lower tier command and coordinating groups will work. The Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) will:

1. Determine a clear strategic aim and objectives and review them regularly.
2. Establish a policy framework for the overall management of the event or situation.

3. Prioritise the requirements of the tactical tier and allocate personnel and resources accordingly.
4. Formulate and implement media-handling and public communications plans, potentially delegating this to one responding agency.
5. Direct planning and operations beyond the immediate response to facilitate the recovery process.

A Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) will either be a virtual group via teleconference or will meet in person at a nominated Strategic Coordination Centre (see 5.7).

6.2 Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG)

The purpose of a Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) is to take overall responsibility for the multi-agency tactical coordination of the response to the event or situation by establishing a tactical framework that will:

1. Incorporate and deliver the strategic direction.
2. Determine priorities for allocating available resources.
3. Plan and coordinate how and when tasks will be undertaken.
4. Obtain additional resources if required.
5. Assess significant risks and use this to inform tasking of operational commanders to ensure the health and safety of the public and responders.
6. If a Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) has yet to convene, the Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) will assume some of the roles and responsibilities of the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG). The Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) does this to provide immediate direction to Operational Commanders.

A Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) will either be a virtual group via teleconference or will meet in person at a nominated tactical location.

6.3 Operational Response

Operational response manages the front-line response of the emergency services and other responding agencies. Each agency will choose an operational commander who will control the resources of his or her service within a specific area or to do a specific function as decided by tactical command.

The first officers at the scene from each service will liaise with each other to determine the best course of initial action.

6.4 Strategic Coordination Centres

In Cumbria, arrangements are in place to provide pre-identified physical locations for the management of major incidents, and the facilities that are required by the Strategic Coordinating Group are provided by collaborative arrangements between local authorities, emergency services, and industrial and commercial partners.

Cumbria has a primary Strategic Coordination Centre , together with back up facilities. These facilities are used for exercises and training to ensure continued development of the facilities and testing of systems.

6.5 Recovery Coordinating Group

The establishment of this group is crucial and should be considered early in the incident. The Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) should authorise the set-up of the Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) and establish the recovery lead.

The purpose of the group is:

1. To provide visible and strong leadership during the recovery phase.
2. To act as the strategic decision-making body for the recovery phase, able to give the broad overview and represent each agency's interests and statutory responsibilities.
3. To ensure the coordination and delivery of consistent messages to the public and media.
4. To decide the overall recovery strategy, including communications, clean up, health, welfare, economic and business recovery.

One of the first tasks of the Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) will be to assess community impacts which will provide useful guidance for establishing their priorities.

7 Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme

7.1 Principles for Joint Working

In the early stages of an incident, employees of one service may arrive before the employees of another, and as a result they may carry out tasks that are not normally their responsibility. If this happens, command and control arrangements for the relevant service should start as soon as the right personnel are in place in sufficient numbers.

Co-locate

Co-locate with other responders as soon as practicably possible at a single, safe and easily identified location.

Communicate

Communicate using language which is clear, and free from technical jargon and abbreviations.

Co-ordinate

Co-ordinate by agreeing the lead organisation. Identify priorities, resources, capabilities and limitations for an effective response, including the timing of further meetings.

Jointly Understand Risk

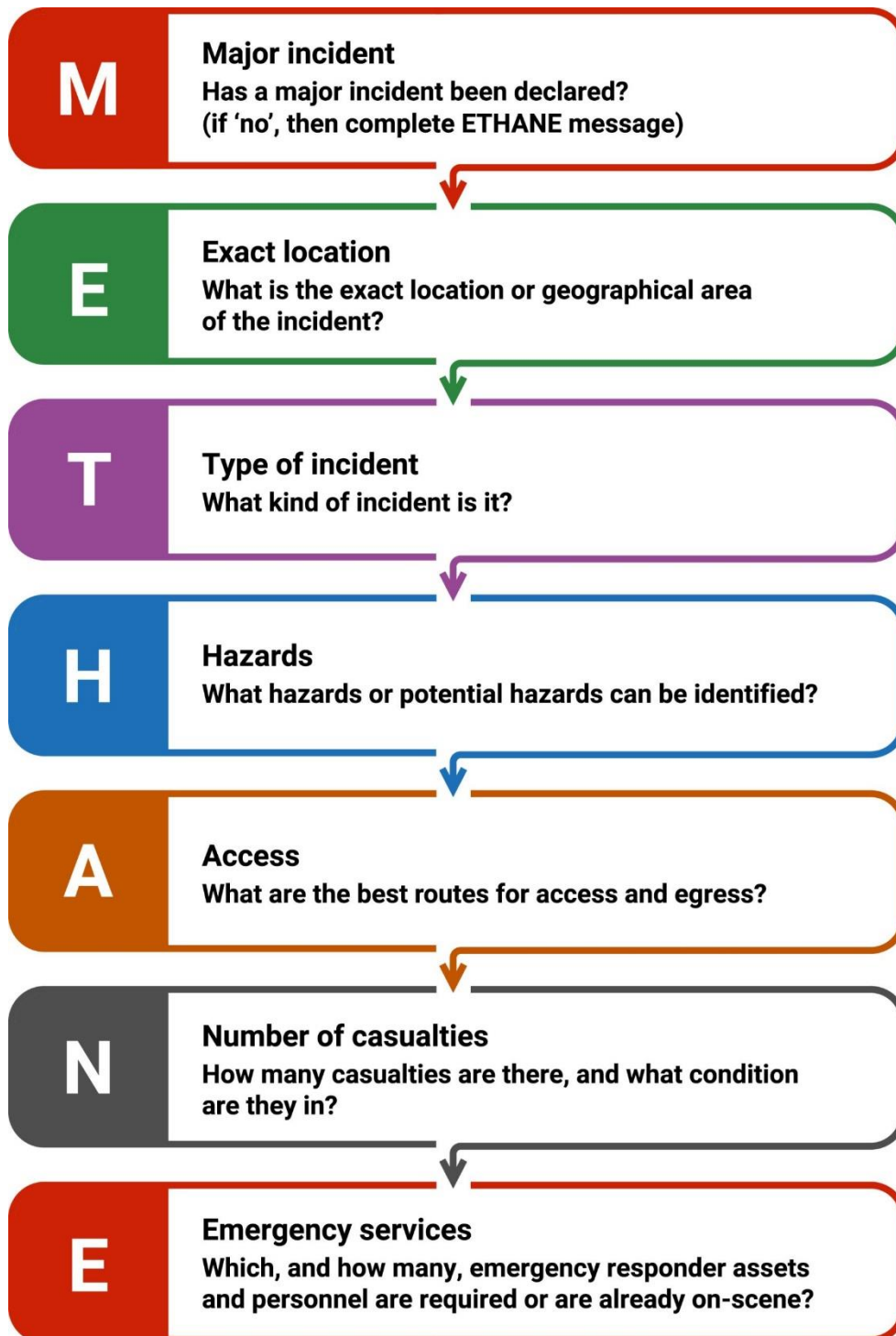
Jointly understand risk by sharing information about the likelihood and potential impact of threats and hazards, to agree appropriate control measures.

Shared Situational Awareness

Establish Situational Awareness by using METHANE and the Joint Decision Model.

7.2 Shared Situational Awareness

To help all agencies gather initial information about an incident in a consistent manner, a common approach is recommended. The 'METHANE' model brings structure and clarity to the initial stages of managing any multi-agency or major incident.



7.3 Joint Decision Model

Decision making in incident management follows a general pattern of:

1. Working out what's going on (situation).
2. Establishing what you need to achieve (direction).
3. Deciding what to do about it (action), all informed by a statement and understanding of overarching values and purpose.

Responder agencies may use various supporting processes and sources to provide commanders with information, including information on any planned intentions. This supports joint decision making.





8 Military Support

Military aid to civil authorities may include assistance provided by the armed forces to other government departments for urgent work of national importance, responding to emergencies or in maintaining supplies and essential services. Also, the armed forces may be asked to aid communities for special projects or events of significant value, or through the attachment of volunteers.

Military support may be provided to civil law enforcement agencies, such as the police or Border Force, in the maintenance of law, order and public safety using specialist capabilities or equipment beyond that of civil powers.

Training and logistic assistance may be provided to civil authorities, through the provision of the defence estate or facilities for either training or operational support to other agencies carrying out their duties. For example, allowing the police to use an army training centre to assemble and brief many police officers, even though military personnel or equipment might not be involved.

Military aid to civil authorities considerations:

The provision of military assistance is governed by 4 principles. Military aid to civil authorities may be authorised when:

1. There is a definite need to act and the tasks the armed forces are being asked to perform are clear.
2. Other options, including mutual aid and commercial alternatives, have been discounted.
3. The civil authority lacks the necessary capability to fulfil the task and it is unreasonable or prohibitively expensive to expect it to develop one.
4. The civil authority has all or some capability, but it may not be available immediately, or to the required scale, and the urgency of the task requires rapid external support from MOD.

Notwithstanding the above, under exceptional circumstances, agreed usually at ministerial level, it may be necessary to waive temporarily the above criteria. This may include major events of national and international importance, or for an event that is catastrophic in nature.

As there are no standing military forces for these tasks, military support is not guaranteed. When military support is provided, the civil authorities normally must pay for it in line with HM Treasury rules.

9 Resilience Direct

Resilience Direct is a secure web-based platform for the resilience community to share information amongst all Category 1 and 2 responders and agencies for planning, response, and recovery.

All Cumbria Local Resilience Forum Plans are stored on Resilience Direct, and all sub groups upload their papers and agendas. All agency roles should have an active Resilience Direct account. During an incident, a response page is established on Resilience Direct where briefings, minutes, agency reports, situation reports, and key updates will be uploaded.



10 Debrief and Learning

A review of the response to a Major Incident is essential. This provides an opportunity to evaluate efficiency, to learn from experience gained and offers a source of information to assist in future planning, training, and exercising.

The debrief process can be best achieved by a series of debriefings at all levels (internal debriefing) within agencies involved and concluding with a multi-agency debrief.

All incidents should be the subject of a structured debrief so that lessons learnt can be implemented where appropriate and built into any relevant plans that agencies hold.



11 Training and Exercising

It is through the training and exercising programme that we embed the plans that are developed across the Cumbria Local Resilience Forum and build the skill sets to enable responders to be confident in their ability to respond to the wide variety of challenges they may face.

11.1 Training

Training is undertaken for a variety of reasons; it might be that a course is required to deliver a particular role, due to a change of system or changes to a plan which need embedding in an agency's response or action card.

Training is delivered by individual agencies, as a group of agencies or delivered from an external organisation. All training linked to Cumbria Local Resilience Forum is recorded as part of audit and assurance.

The EPC is the UK's leading centre for organisational resilience, delivering emergency and crisis management, business continuity, cyber resilience, event, and public safety training, exercising and consultancy services.

11.2 Exercises

An exercise cannot deliver all things to all organisations at once without being extremely complicated. Defining the scope of the exercise provides parameters for planners and participants; it enables limits to be placed on the exercise to ensure the aim is met and objectives achieved. It also helps to identify what is and isn't being tested via the exercise and may need to be validated elsewhere.

For example, Cumbria Local Resilience Forum may wish to test local preparedness arrangements through a live exercise. Time constraints may mean that the activation process/initial alerting of all agencies is considered "out of scope."

A realistic scenario should be developed to ensure that all participants will take the exercise seriously. It is important that the scenario is not overly detailed with

assumptions as it may result in the associated plan becoming too inflexible to deal with the unforeseen incidents of reality.

Types of Exercise:

Time-Lapse

A decision to be made at an early stage is whether the exercise will flow in real time and consists of 'snapshots' i.e. a series of descriptions of how the scenario has progressed over time.

Controlled or Free Play

In controlled exercises, the scenario and all events or incidents are pre-scripted. The evolution of the exercise is tightly managed.

Media

Dealing with the media is a major part of responding to any incident and therefore should be practised as often as possible.



12 Emergency Plans

The Cumbria Emergency Plan contains four sections:

- General Response Sections – plans detailing generic response to any Major Incident, for example, how responders coordinate the Multi Agency Response and impacts to the community
- Risk Specific Sections – plans for specific risks for example severe weather or a pandemic
- Site Specific Sections – plans for Sites falling under Statutory Regulations (see section 13) or plans for specific risks in specific locations, for example Commercial Passenger Vessels, Cumbria Lakes
- Capabilities Sections – plans detailing the capabilities to deal with consequences of an incident and a Directory of Contacts for Responders in Cumbria

Cumbria Emergency Plan

General
Response
Sections

Risk
Specific
Sections

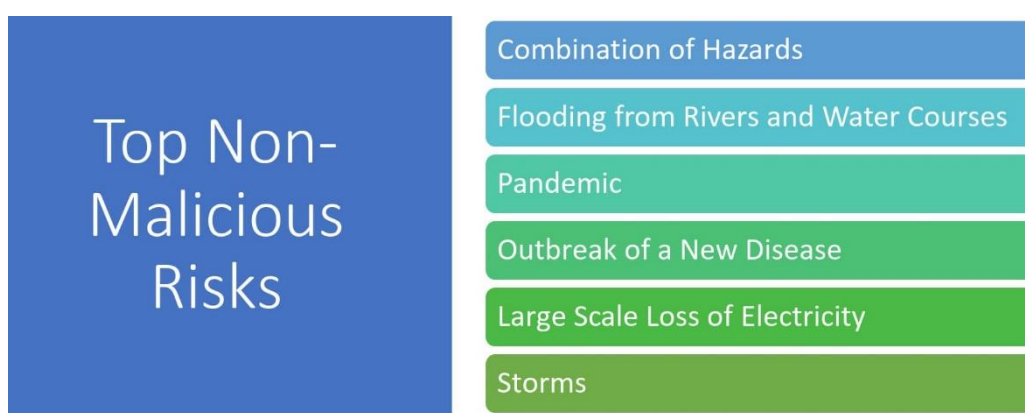
Site Specific
Sections

Capabilities
Sections



13 Cumbria Resilience Forum Community Risk Register

The need for the Community Risk Register arises from the duty under the Civil Contingencies Act, which requires emergency responders to assess the impact and likelihood of emergencies occurring, and to use those assessments to inform their emergency planning and business continuity planning arrangements.



The Register has been compiled using nationally prescribed templates, historical evidence, and input from all the partners listed below as well as Central Government departments to form a list of potential hazards, their likelihood, and the risks associated with them. A simple scoring system has been used to rank the various hazards, so that the impact to our local communities could be assessed using health, social, economic, and environmental aspects. This results in a risk rating which is a product of likelihood and impact. The Register is available at www.cumbriaprepared.org.uk

The inclusion of these hazards or outcome descriptions does not mean the Resilience Forum believes the hazard will materialise, or if it were to do so it would be at that scale. The likelihood assessments relate to the hazard occurring over a five-year period at the scale reflected in the outcome description.

The Cumbria Resilience Forum will ensure that the register is maintained and that the risk ratings derived from the register are used to prioritise the work that is done locally to plan, train and exercise the response to a particular incident.

Frequent Common Consequences

Food Supply Interruption

Disruption to Health Services

Financial Services Disruption

Loss of Communication

Impact on the Emergency Services

Effect on the Environment



14 Emergency Planning Legislation

In addition to the *Civil Contingencies Act 2004*, which is legislation which delivers a single framework for civil protection in the United Kingdom, there are other Statutory Regulations which have consequences for Emergency Planning in Cumbria.

These, together with the Cumbria Community Risk Register, help prioritise the Cumbria Local Resilience Forum activity.

The Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 2015 (COMAH)

The aim of the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Regulations 2015 is to prevent major accidents involving dangerous substances and limit the consequences to people and the environment of any accidents which do occur.

The Pipelines Safety Regulations 1996

PSR 1996 provide for the management of pipeline safety with a risk-based approach encompassing both onshore and offshore pipelines.

For major accident hazard pipelines, the Regulations cover major accident prevention and arrangements for emergency plans.

Major accident hazard pipelines are defined as having the potential to cause death or serious injury arising from a fire, explosion, or uncontrolled emission.

These types of pipelines typically contain flammable and/or toxic fluids or gases, such as butane, propane, or crude oils, above a certain pressure.

The Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Regulations 2001 (REPPIR)

The Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001 (REPPIR) establish a framework of emergency preparedness measures to ensure members of the public are:

- properly informed and prepared, in advance, about what to do in the unlikely event of a radiation emergency occurring
- provided with information if a radiation emergency actually occurs

A radiation emergency is defined as an event that is likely to result in a member of the public receiving an effective dose of five millisieverts during the year immediately following the emergency.