Cross Border Emergency Management Group

Presentation to Annual MEM Conference – October 2021

Finian Joyce CFO Leitrim - Joint Chair

Joan McCaffrey, Regional Officer, Local Government Civil Contingencies, Northern Ireland – Joint Chair
Presentation

• Background and Recent Developments
• Overview of Emergency Management in RoI and NI
• Membership, Aims and Terms of Reference of the Cross Border Emergency Management Group
• Dealing with a Cross Border Major Emergency
• Cross Border Emergency Management Groups:
  o Risk Assessment
  o Notification Protocol
  o Operational Plan
• Forthcoming Launch and Exercise
Background - Existing Cooperation

- Individual emergency services meet their counterparts on a regular basis
- Regular single service cross border meetings
- Existing MoU’s / Cross Border Agreements
- Little contact between MEM regional groups in RoI (except at National level)
- Little inter-agency contact between emergency services North and South
- Joint participation in Major emergency exercises is limited
Background: Recent Developments

Good Friday Agreement 1998 – 6 high level areas of cooperation identified including emergency planning

Review of 2006 MEM Framework

Review of HSE and An Garda Siochana MEM structures

Local Government Reform (Northern Ireland) 2015

Review of NI Civil Contingencies Framework 2021

Joint paper on Emergency Management
Increasing trend towards cross border cooperation in fields of policing and emergency planning in Europe

Mutual aid agreements in place for emergency management between neighbouring regions / countries

Update of Civil Protection Mechanism

Role of ERCC

Coordinated Response to natural disasters in Europe

e.g. Recent floods in Belgium, Germany
BRIEF OVERVIEW OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN REPUBLIC OF IRELAND
A Framework enabling An Garda Síochána, the Health Services Executive and Local Authorities to prepare for and make a co-ordinated response to major emergencies resulting from local and regional events, such as fires, transport accidents, hazardous substances incidents and severe weather.
The Framework for Major Emergency Management 2006

- ‘Lead agency’ concept
- Coordination arrangements (Onsite and offsite)
- Organisational structures – (local, regional, national)
- Planning and Preparedness – Risk Assessments, Plans, Contact lists
- Exercising / training – local, regional, national
- Appraisal
- Currently under review
The HSE has four Regional Health Forums, which includes representatives from the city and county councils within that area. You can find out more about our areas of work by choosing from the options and departments listed on the left.
HSE Emergency Management Function

HSE has one National Office and Three Regional Offices

- East
- West
- South

Two of these regions border with Northern Ireland
Garda Siochana

Regional Command Structure

- 4 Regions with an Assistant Commissioner
- Only one region borders with Northern Ireland
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>An Garda Síochána Regional Control Centres</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Western Region</strong></td>
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<td>GALWAY</td>
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<td><strong>Garda Divisions</strong></td>
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<td>021 4522000</td>
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8 Local Authority MEM Regions

2 regions border with Northern Ireland
- North West
- North East
BRIEF OVERVIEW OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND
Civil Contingencies Resilience Strategy for Northern Ireland 2020-2025

Building Resilience Together

NI Civil Contingencies Framework
To prepare, respond and recover from emergencies, we must all work together to support our communities. We need to be ready for a wide range of situations which could have an adverse impact on our day to day life.

Risks that could affect us include the following:

- Cyber Attacks
- Severe Weather
- Malicious Attacks
- Industrial & Transport Accidents
- Social Disruption
- Systems & Utilities Failure
- Human & Animal Disease

An all hazards, all partners approach
Legislative Context

- Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- NI Civil Contingencies Framework 2021: Building Resilience Together
- No secondary legislation
- No legal onus on Lead Government Departments
- Devolved and Reserved matters
- Emergency Preparedness Groups instead of Local Resilience Forums (England and Wales), Local Resilience Partnerships (Scotland)
LOCAL
Sub-regional and local responders can facilitate the response and recovery

REGIONAL
NI Executive co-ordination for response and recovery - centralised Government response

NATIONAL
UK Government led four Nations approach to response and recovery
Classification of Scale of Emergencies
Based on Cabinet Office Guidance
4 Levels –
Local Level

LEVEL 01
SIGNIFICANT EMERGENCY
Requires central government control but usually at Lead Government Department or Local Government level

LEVEL 02
SERIOUS EMERGENCY
Has or threatens a wide and/or prolonged impact requiring sustained NI Executive co-ordination

LEVEL 03
CATASTROPHIC EMERGENCY
Exceptionally high and potentially widespread impact and requires immediate UK Government direction and support
Northern Ireland Local Level Resilience Structures
CROSS BORDER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GROUP
To identify and adopt the compatible key strategic best practice elements of Civil Protection and Emergency Management that can be applied on a Cross Border basis in the areas of risk management, mitigation, preparedness and response.

The development and maintenance of procedures for notification, activation, data and information sharing, and ongoing communications during a major emergency event in the border region.

The development of ongoing cross border joint training and exercise programmes.

Participation in cross border projects as appropriate with a view to improving sustainable cross border emergency management.
CROSS BORDER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GROUP (CBEMG)

NORTHERN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GROUP (NEPG)

NORTHERN IRELAND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GROUP (NIEPG)

SOUTHERN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GROUP (SEPG)

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES GROUP (CCG (NI))

NORTH WESTERN MAJOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GROUP (NW MEM)

NORTH EASTERN MAJOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GROUP (NE MEM)

NATIONAL WORKING GROUP (NWG)

NATIONAL STEERING GROUP (NSC)

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CROSS BORDER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GROUP
Membership of CBEMG
Membership of CBEMG

Northern Ireland
From Northern Ireland, there are representatives from areas within both the Northern and Southern Emergency Preparedness Groups which straddle the border corridor. These include the following local government areas:
- Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council,
- Derry City and Strabane District Council,
- Fermanagh and Omagh District Council,
- Mid Ulster District Council and
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

• Police Service of Northern Ireland
• Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
• Public Health Agency & Health Social Care Trusts (Western & Southern Trust)
• Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service
• Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Membership of CBEMG

Republic of Ireland
From the Republic of Ireland representation is primarily from the North West MEM Regional Working Group (representing Sligo, Leitrim, and Donegal) and from the North East MEM Regional Working Group (representing Cavan, Monaghan, Louth and Meath).

The following PRAs are represented:
• An Garda Síochána
• Local Authorities (including Fire Service)
• Health Service Executive (including National Ambulance Service)

The following organisation is also represented:
• Irish Coast Guard

Other members may be co-opted to the group on a temporary basis to compliment the strategic objectives as stipulated within the Terms of Reference.
Dealing with a Cross Border Major Emergency

• NI Civil Contingencies Framework states:
  • “NI departments and other public sector bodies ....will have formal and informal civil contingencies liaison arrangements in place as necessary with counterpart department and agencies in RoI”
  • “CCPB and OEP are prepared to act as facilitators in the development of such relationships on a cross border basis where they may have proven difficult to establish”

• Northern Ireland Standards in Civil Protection states:
  • Organisations ‘should ensure that their liaison activities cover all relevant parties’ including on a cross border basis ‘where incidents are likely to have widespread effects’

• A Guide to Emergency Planning Arrangements in Northern Ireland
  • indicates that the existing arrangements for sharing information on emergency planning and response on a cross border basis are ‘outside the scope’ of the protocol
Dealing with a Cross Border Major Emergency

- MEM Framework – RoI (p78 / 79)
  - ‘Where Regional Coordination Groups identify the need for assistance from neighbouring regions, including from Northern Ireland, requests should be made directly on a ‘mutual aid basis’.

- Individual emergency services can unilaterally activate their pre-existing arrangements initially with their counterparts in Northern Ireland while informing their Local / Regional Coordination Centre.

- Where a Local / Regional Coordination Group determines that a higher level of assistance is required from NI, the request should be made through An Garda Siochana to the PSNI.

- Where appropriate, representatives of the principal response agencies in NI should be invited to participate in the Local / Regional Coordination Groups.
Conclusions

• Good liaison and working arrangements have been established at an operational level between all cross border agencies through the CBEMG

• Resilience Direct UK is facilitating the sharing of necessary information on a cross border basis

• Existing guidance in both jurisdictions in terms of procedures/ protocols and roles / responsibilities for dealing with a cross border major incident / emergency is not sufficient
  • e.g. Procedures for alerting cross border agencies or informing them of an impending major incident / emergency or requests for assistance

• CBEMG has worked to address these deficiencies
Cross Border Risk Assessment

Based on
Northern Ireland Risk Assessment 2013
A National Risk Assessment Ireland 2017
### Table 3.3 Risk Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Hazard/Threat</th>
<th>Likelihood</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Risk Matrix Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Storm/Gale</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>4 x 3 = 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Flooding (Coastal/Inland)</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>4 x 3 = 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Snow and Ice Freezing Conditions</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>4 x 3 = 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>Major Car or Bus Accident</td>
<td>Very Unlikely</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>3 x 4 = 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>Train (passenger/freight) Crash</td>
<td>Very Unlikely</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>2 x 4 = 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Technological</td>
<td>Seveso (COMAH) Incident in Adjoining Jurisdiction (Hazmat/Chemical)</td>
<td>Very Unlikely</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>2 x 5 = 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Civil</td>
<td>Infectious Disease</td>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>3 x 4 = 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3.4 Risk Matrix

![Risk Matrix Diagram](image)

**Likelihood**
- A = Storm
- B = Flooding
- C = Snow
- D = Road Traffic Collision
- E = Rail Collision
- F = Industrial Hazmat Incident
- G = Infectious Disease
Multi-Agency Protocol for Cross Border Notification of an anticipated or confirmed Major Emergency/Major Incident in the Border Area between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland

Prepared by the Cross Border Emergency Management Group
Final Version July 2021
Aim of the protocol

Enable statutory agencies to instigate communications to

• Warn and inform
• Enable shared situational awareness
• Initiate joint multi-agency responses or summon assistance where appropriate

This Protocol **DOES NOT:**

• Replace the operational protocols that may already be in place between individual Emergency Services to manage the initial response to emergencies;
• Replace existing inter-departmental protocols at governmental levels between jurisdictions;
• Replace single agency protocols for cross border partner communication and engagement during emergencies;
• Replace protocols for requesting international assistance.
Agreed Points of Contact

One point of contact in each jurisdiction

- In RoI – **CAMP West**
- In NI – **PSNI ICC**
Flowchart 1 – Cross Border Notification Protocol

Republic of Ireland ➔ Northern Ireland

Major Emergency Declared or Anticipated in the Republic of Ireland

An Anticipated or Declared emergency situation in the border area of the Republic of Ireland

Principal Response Agencies Convene (Local Co-ordination Group – LCG)
Parent Government Department informed

An Authorised Officer of the LCG contacts CAMP WEST, delivers the (M)ETHANE Message and requests that Appendix D Section A of this Protocol is activated

As per the Action Card in Appendix D Section A
CAMP WEST will contact PSNI Incident Co-ordination Centre and relay the (M)ETHANE Message

As per the Action Card in Appendix E Section B PSNI ICC will contact relevant agencies in NI
Flowchart 2 – Cross Border Notification Protocol

Northern Ireland ➔ Republic of Ireland

Major Emergency Declared or Anticipated in the Northern Ireland

An Anticipated or Declared emergency situation in the border area of Northern Ireland

Tactical/Strategic Co-ordination Groups Convene

Representative from Tactical/Strategic Co-ordination Group contact ICC with (M)ETHANE Message

As per the Action Card in Appendix E Section B PSNI ICC will contact CAMP West requesting this Protocol is activated
Cross Border Emergency Management Group (CBEMG)

Operational Plan 2021-2024

“...essential to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies that may occur along the border corridor...”
STRENGTHEN
Strengthening & Embedding the role of the CBEMG
CBEMG will work to further strengthen and embed emergency management and civil protection provisions across its geographical area and engage with a wider range of stakeholders.

IMPROVE
Improving Training & Exercising
Promote an improved cross border training and exercising programme into the work programme of existing multi-agency emergency management groups.

COMMUNICATIONS
Improving Communications and Information Sharing
Ensure effective communication and information sharing mechanisms are developed both between members of the CBEMG, and the CBEMG and external stakeholders.

IMPLEMENT
Implementing Cross Border Emergency Management Arrangements
Continue to strengthen and coordinate effective cross border emergency management arrangements in the areas of risk assessment, prevention, preparedness, mitigation and response.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
Each of the strategic priorities and the key areas for actions will be subject to a suitable review period dictated by a specified passage of time, specific incident or emergent organisational change of any group member.

A scheme for prioritisation of key action areas was devised by the group. Priority for these areas was determined on a short, medium and a long term basis, with the parameters for these time periods agreed as:

- **12 MONTHS**
  - Short Term
  - Up to 12 months

- **24 MONTHS**
  - Medium Term
  - Up to 24 months

- **36 MONTHS**
  - Long Term
  - Up to 36 months

These priorities will be embedded into an annual work programme which will be used as a basis for monitoring progress and review.
Launch of Operational Plan & Desk Top Exercise
Questions?