

Have you got what it takes?

Police, risk and resilience

archived



Have you got what it takes?

Police, risk and resilience

Important facts

The strategic policing requirement reminds police and crime commissioners (PCCs) of the responsibilities chief constables have under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA). <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/police/pcc/roles-and-responsibilities/national-policing-response?view=Binary>

These responsibilities include participation in the Local Resilience Forum (LRF). Many other emergency planning organisations are involved in the LRF. Working together through the LRF they provide multi-agency strategic direction to civil protection planning to ensure local preparedness for emergencies.

In the response to an emergency the LRF can take on the role of the Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG).

The LRF is based on the same geographical footprint as the police force in most areas, and in some areas the police chair the LRF.

The police have duties under the CCA to assess risk, put in place plans for an emergency, including business continuity plans, and to co-operate and share information with other emergency planning and response organisations.

Background

In 2004, the CCA placed duties on 'emergency responders' to ensure they worked together to address local risks to UK resilience.

Fulfilment of these duties is needed to ensure the UK is resilient to the full range of threats and hazards. The implications of insufficient planning can be enormous. Major emergencies can happen anywhere. Co-operation is essential to reduce the impact on communities.

Enquiries into major incidents have concluded that all the agencies involved in responding to emergencies should co-operate at a local level at the planning stage, including sharing information, training and exercising together.

The police play a vital role within the LRF. Other members of the LRF include the other emergency services, local authorities and the Environment Agency.

Some emergencies may cover a wide area and require co-operation across police force and LRF areas.

Working together

Local partners and LRFs work together to agree how they can best co-operate and find shared solutions. The Department for Communities and Local Government's Resilience and Emergencies Division (RED) works with the 38 English LRFs, and groups of LRFs, to help them assess, plan, and build the capacity of partners to respond to major emergencies. The Welsh Government plays a similar role in Wales for its four LRFs.

Central government also undertakes national level planning to coordinate the government's response to major disruptive challenges. This work is co-ordinated by the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS) in the Cabinet Office, and the Home Office liaises with police forces.

For the majority of emergencies where a national response might be needed there is a pre-designated lead government department (LGD) responsible for planning and activating central government support arrangements. In Wales, the Welsh Government acts as the LGD in areas of devolved responsibility and leads on consequence management and recovery issues.

The Central Government Concept of Operations (CONOPS) sets out UK arrangements for responding to and recovering from emergencies requiring co-ordinated central government action. In Wales, the Pan-Wales Response Plan sets out the emergency co-ordination arrangements across the four LRF areas and links into CONOPS.

Risk and resilience

Priorities for emergency planning at the national level are determined by the National Risk Assessment (NRA), which identifies the main risks facing the UK and assesses their relative likelihood and potential impact. The NRA is classified as secret and is held on behalf of the LRF by the police. It is used to guide LRF members in the development of Local Risk Assessments.

The common consequences of the risks in the NRA are distilled in the National Resilience Planning Assumptions. These indicate the most extreme level of each common consequence to inform government contingency planning for civil emergencies. The NRA also acts as guidance for local planners on the types of common consequences that they should consider.

The public need to be engaged in the building of UK resilience, so the NRA is summarised in a public-facing National Risk Register (NRR) [<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/national-risk-register>].

In addition to the NRR, under the Act, the LRF has a duty to compile and publish a Community Risk Register. It is important that communities should be aware of the risks they face and the plans that are in place to address them. The NRR can be used as a guide to what can be said publicly about local risks in the Community Risk Register.

Statutory guidance

Emergency Preparedness supports the CCA and provides guidance on the police's duties. It contains chapters on risk (chapter 4) and communicating with the public (chapter 7).

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/emergency-preparedness>

More information

Copies of the Local Risk Assessment Guidance, the NRPA and guidance on how to interpret these locally are held by the police.

The orange book provides a set of principles, tips and tools for carrying out risk assessment. The National Risk Assessment is based on these principles.

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/orange_book.htm

The guide to central government response operations is available at:

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/conops-2010.pdf>

Further information on emergency planning and resilience work in Wales:

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience>

<http://walesresilience.gov.uk/?lang=en>

Further reading

Reports into major incidents include:

The Coroner's Inquests into the London Bombings of the 7 July 2005
<http://7julyinquests.independent.gov.uk/>

The Buncefield Investigation
http://www.buncefieldrecommendations.co.uk/recommendations.asp#_Recovery_Recommendation_10

The Pitt Review – Learning Lessons from the 2007 Floods
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100807034701/http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/pittreview/the-pitt-review.html>