

# Civil Contingencies Act (2004)

## *Duty to Communicate with the Public*

### The Ten Step Cycle - an informal guidance note

The following Ten Step Cycle has been designed by practitioners, for practitioners to help your LRF implement the Communicating with the Public duty, as laid down in the Civil Contingencies Act (2004). For those of you who don't remember the intricacies of the text, here's a quick reminder.

The CCA states that Category 1 responders should:

- ⇒ *maintain arrangements to warn, and provide information and advice to, the public if an emergency is likely to occur or has occurred;*
- ⇒ *put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters.*

The Ten Step Cycle<sup>1</sup> has been designed by practitioners from the National Steering Committee for Warning and Informing the Public (NSCWIP) in conjunction with the Practitioners' Group on Warning and Informing the Public led by the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS). It is currently being road-tested by a number of LRFs, with feedback helping to fine-tune the process.

And that's a key point - this is very much a 'growth' project. If, as your LRF follows the cycle, you find ways of improving the process or want to share ideas and good practice, and even the pitfalls, please do not hesitate to contact the Civil Contingencies Secretariat to let them know - it will add benefit to future editions of the cycle - this is only the beginning!

So how does the 10 Step Cycle work? Well, work through it step-by-step, in the same way your LRF approached the Risk Assessment duty. Each step has some narrative to accompany it, and where appropriate, examples of how some LRFs have gone about completing that component.

Where you come up against a significant obstacle, or are unsure about how best to proceed, raise the issue through your Regional Resilience Forum (RRF). It is our intention that the RRF will act as a conduit for future information, so that good practice can be identified and shared, and advice and resolutions sought.

Ultimately, you will reach the final step, and your LRF will have taken a big stride towards implementing a full set of warning and informing arrangements, which are fit for purpose, and in line with the risks set out in your Community Risk Register (CRR). This process will help your communities better understand the risks they face, and the actions they need to take in the event of an emergency. At that stage, as in all aspects of emergency planning, you will find yourselves back at the beginning, and following a review of the work carried out previously, will be ready to start the Ten Step Cycle once more.

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<sup>1</sup> **IMPORTANT NOTE:** The '*Ten Step Cycle*' should be used in conjunction with the existing statutory guidance, *Emergency Preparedness*. The '*Ten Step Cycle*' should be considered as a supporting guidance paper, not a replacement of the formal guidance.

# The Ten Step Cycle for Communicating with the Public

## Step 1

### **a) Establish a Public Warning Task Group as a subgroup of your General Working Group.**

You will need to set up a multi-agency task group to take this work forward. Ensure that it has a representative from all Category 1 responders - the duty applies to all of them. You should consider inviting emergency planning officers, communications professionals, members of local and regional media, as well as appropriate Category 2 responders. Not only will this enhance partnership working and governance, but will allow your LRF to explore all possible solutions in making recommendations on possible control measures in this area.

### **b) Establish an audit process - rationale for decisions made**

This is obviously important with any emergency planning process but you should establish an auditing process to log all decisions that are taken, and processes followed throughout this cycle - it will help you to review progress, as well as helping you to answer FOI enquiries and any queries from the LRF and help to support any post-incident reviews.

## Step 2

### **Use the Community Risk Register as your starting point:**

- ⇒ **What is the Emergency Risk Management Context for your area?**  
Is your area urban or rural in nature? Consider the geographical profile of the landscape in your area. What hazards do you need to manage - are there main rivers prone to slow-onset riverine flooding, for example, or streams that are prone to flash flooding? What is the infrastructure like - motorways or B-roads? Do you have large international communities where English may not be the first language? (For example, Cheshire has one of the largest Polish speaking communities outside of London and future public awareness campaigns in that area may include a Polish version of emergency preparedness material to cater for that community). Asking such questions about your Emergency Risk Management Context will enable you to set the background against which your task group will work and allow you to identify the most appropriate control measures for your area, hazards, and publics.
- ⇒ **What are the timescales and impact for each risk?**  
Assess the warning and informing timescales for each hazard, using the outcome descriptions from your CRR as a guide - what are the warning periods for each, or does the hazard have no-notice characteristics? Identifying these factors will also assist your group to identify the most appropriate control measures against each hazard.
- ⇒ **What are the priorities identified within your CRR?**  
As a group, familiarise yourselves with those hazards which require the most urgent risk treatment to be carried out on them in relation to warning and informing control measures. This will obviously have a bearing on any future recommendations to your LRF regarding proposed control measures.

### Step 3

#### Identify and agree your Lead Responders

⇒ See 'Choosing your Lead Responders - an easy-to-follow guide'.

### Step 4

**What systems and arrangements are already in place in your area? What level of capability is in place already and what are the limitations? Where are the gaps?**

To develop effective plans and deliver suitable warning and informing arrangements, it is important to assess the existing capabilities and limitations for communicating with the public against the risks that have been identified in your LRF area. By obtaining this information you will be able to establish a baseline set of existing measures to compare against the risks identified in your CRR which can then be built upon further into this cycle.

One way of doing this would be to follow the approach taken in Cheshire. Its Public Warning Task Group wrote to all:

- i) Category 1 and 2 responders;
- ii) COMAH (top and lower tier) and REPPiR / PSR operators;
- iii) Shopping centre complexes and sports stadia; and
- iv) Relevant voluntary organisations.

Each organisation was asked to complete a survey questionnaire (see attached examples from the Cheshire, Halton & Warrington LRF in Annexes A-E).

Remember, you will need to consider both technical and non-technical systems in your survey - for example, are there any existing Neighbourhood Watch or Warden schemes in the LRF area? These initiatives are just as essential for communicating information to the public, especially to vulnerable people.

The next step will involve assessing the results of this survey, by:

- i) plotting locations of existing arrangements, their range and direction of coverage, and their suitability for the risk that they have been deployed to control;
- ii) deciding whether any of the existing or proposed systems can be used to address any of the other risks identified in your CRR (i.e. above and beyond their original purpose); and
- iii) assessing the limitations of each system.

Finally, together as a group, make a considered judgement as to the gaps in your control measures for warning and informing the public against the risks identified in your CRR - this will be reassessed following Step 5.

## Step 5

Identify your target audiences. Where are they located? Identify vulnerable groups. Has the gap analysis changed as a result?

At this stage you should have completed the following:

- ⇒ Consideration and agreement of emergency management risk context;
- ⇒ Selection of Lead Responders against all risks identified in the CRR; and
- ⇒ A gap analysis of all existing and proposed warning, informing, and education arrangements in the LRF area.

So, what's next? You will now need to identify your target audiences against each risk in the CRR. Who are they? Where are they? Will your chosen method of communication change depending on the time of day or night? What safety action do they need to take for each risk, according to the risk characteristics and timescales outlined in Step 2?

What about vulnerable groups and people in your LRF area? Are there any residential care homes or schools? Are there any members of the community with hearing or sight impairments? How will you engage vulnerable people? These groups, and their warning and informing requirements, need to be addressed not only from a site specific perspective, but generically as well.

You now need to re-assess your gap analysis by adding your target audiences into the equation. How effective are the existing systems in the light of this re-assessment? Where are the gaps now against each risk in the CRR?

## Step 6

Consult the public in your area, discuss your work with neighbouring LRF and seek out examples of good practice.

Your task group will now be approaching the stage where it will need to consider making recommendations to your LRF in order to fill the gaps in your warning, informing, and education arrangements to meet with both elements of the communicating with the public duty established in the Civil Contingencies Act (2004).

Before you do, there are a few more actions that you need to take:

### **a) Consult the public in your area**

What do your communities want to see put in place? What problems have they faced in previous incidents? For example, could they hear the off-site sirens? Do they understand the meaning of various siren tones? How would they like to be kept informed? Consultation could be carried out through door-to-door or postal surveys, public meetings, or setting up a stall in the local supermarket or shopping centre.

### **b) Talk to your neighbouring LRFs and other practitioners**

What arrangements do your neighbouring LRFs have in place? Talk to each other, and come to an understanding about the best way forward for the whole community. There are obvious advantages to partnership working. Joined-up arrangements across administrative boundaries can enhance the resilience of your arrangements and can help to improve the effectiveness of what would otherwise be 'stand-alone' arrangements.

### **c) Seek out and take advantage of examples of good practice**

There are 47 LRFs in England and Wales, the key members of which are required to carry out this duty. As a result, there is already a range of good working practice in this area. Seek it out and let your RRF and neighbouring LRFs know about the ideas that your task group has developed. Be prepared to be influenced also. As we say in emergency planning, "don't re-invent the wheel" - if you see a good idea working in another LRF, adopt it for your LRF, and pass it on.

## **Step 7**

### **a) LRF to decide what is sufficient - set your standard.**

You are now at the stage where your Task Group needs to develop and agree recommendations to present to your LRF, on the basis on the work above. When doing so, consider the the following factors:

- i) **Ensure that you have consulted with all stakeholders, including other LRF task groups - be inclusive.**
- ii) **Address resilience issues in your recommendations:** what resilience does your package of proposals have? For example, are you recommending any back-up systems should loss of power be experienced? Could your package be affected by staff shortages?
- iii) **Is your recommended package multi-layered?** It is very unlikely that one system will be sufficient to provide coverage for all 'at-risk' communities. Consider how you would communicate with the public (i) at different times of the day (or night) and (ii) who are living and working in different locations. Take this into account when designing your solutions package. Remember to design adaptability into the package, so that it can be enhanced in the future, be that as a result of changes to Public Information Zones around COMAH sites, or changes to a particular risk's characteristics.
- iv) **What are the risks that need the most urgent attention from a Communicating with the Public duty perspective?** This may influence your recommendations.
- v) **Give the LRF a number of options to consider, including your favoured package.** Additionally, avoid recommending only a 'deluxe' option - be expansive, and provide a variety of solutions, with supporting business cases where necessary. All options should have community safety and resilience at the forefront.

Present your Task Group's recommendations to your LRF. The LRF will now need to decide which of your recommendations it is prepared to endorse, in line with the duties members have as Category 1 responders under the Civil Contingencies Act

(2004). This will probably require resourcing (both financial and human), initiation of large projects, and time.

The LRF will need to decide what level of control measures it is willing to implement against the risks presented in the CRR. Throughout its deliberations, the LRF should focus on the legislative duties, and a duty to keep their communities safe.

#### **b) Implement LRF agreed control measures**

Devise and initiate a work programme to implement those recommendations approved by LRF.

### Step 8

**Implement a comprehensive training and exercising regime, to test your warning and informing arrangements.**

When discussing this element as a Task Group, you need to ask yourself the following questions?

- i) How will you ensure the warning and informing arrangements of your multi-agency plans are effective?
- ii) How will you test systems to ensure that they deliver what they are designed to deliver while at the same time avoiding alarming the public unnecessarily?
- iii) How will you train and maintain the required skills of key staff? What training needs exist?

This is an area that has proved difficult for a number of LRFs in the past, so please ensure that if you know of good practice, or have good ideas, pass these onto your RRF and neighbouring LRFs.

### Step 9

**Ensure that all stakeholder communities are informed on a continuous basis through the design and implementation of a regularly updated education and awareness raising campaign.**

Recommendations for a comprehensive education programme need to be presented to the LRF in conjunction with the proposed package of warning and informing solutions.

These recommendations should address not only the issues of required safety actions and details of how the public will be warned and informed, but should also inform them of the risks they face, and how they can help to mitigate, prepare for, and respond to those risks also.

Recommendations should also provide a focus for annual, site-, and subject-specific risk awareness raising programmes.

## Step 10

Measure the effectiveness of your implemented control measures, review, and adjust as appropriate.

As with any emergency planning process, it is important that all arrangements are reviewed on an annual basis (or in line with agreed CRR priorities) to assess and monitor their effectiveness. These reviews should include not only internal LRF assessments and technical analysis, but also community perspectives; are the arrangements working for them? Could they be improved? All results should help improve the arrangements for the future, and in doing so help keep your LRF's communities safe and minimise the impact of emergencies.

### *Some final notes*

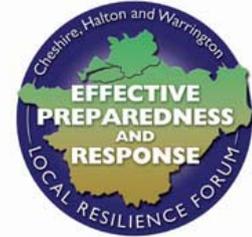
- ⇒ Don't rush this work. Consider all the possibilities, and talk to all relevant stakeholders. Put your recommendations together carefully - resourcing is likely to be an issue for all partners, so consider carefully and strive to get it right the first time.
- ⇒ Talk to your neighbouring LRF and your RRF, and share good practice! Also, remember that we would like to hear from you about your experiences in working through the 10 Step Cycle, and any ideas for improving it that you may have.

So, there you have it - the 10 Step Cycle for Communicating with the Public. Hopefully, you'll find it useful in helping to steer your LRF towards a successful implementation of the duty, and the initiation of a resilient and appropriate set of warning and informing arrangements for all LRF areas across England and Wales.

## Annex A

### Example of letter issued to assess existing Category 1 responder warning and informing arrangements (to support 'Step 4')

#### **CHESHIRE, HALTON AND WARRINGTON LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM (CHWLRF)**



[Date]

Dear Sir/ Madam,

#### **CIVIL CONTINGENCIES ACT (2004) - SURVEY OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED WARNING & INFORMING INFRASTRUCTURE**

I am writing to you today, in my capacity as Chair of the Cheshire, Halton, and Warrington Local resilience Forum (CHWLRF), to ask for your help in gathering key information regarding existing, and proposed, public warning & informing infrastructure in the Cheshire, Halton, and Warrington area, as required within the 'Communicating with the Public' duty under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004).

As you are aware, the responding agencies have a duty under the CCA, to ensure that all arrangements for warning and informing the public are adequate and resilient. To that end, we would be extremely grateful if you could please complete the attached questionnaire regarding any existing, and proposed, infrastructure that your organisation has in place for the provision of warnings and/ or information to the public, or any public education programmes in Cheshire. [NB: this request is made in line with the Information Sharing duty outlined in the Civil Contingencies Act (2004).]

The information that we receive from your organisation will be used to assess our current overall capabilities and limitations for warning and informing the public against all known risks in the Cheshire, Halton, and Warrington area (for further information, please see the Community Risk Register at: <http://www.cheshirefire.co.uk/>). By gaining the 'big picture', we will then be able to determine what new systems, protocols and educational programmes are required to ensure the safety of the local community in future years.

This work forms part of the larger national capability project taking place across England and Wales, and any guidance or advice received, that we feel may be of benefit to your organisation will, of course, be passed on through your LRF representatives.

Consequently, could I please ask that all forms (including nil returns) are returned by e-mail to the CHWLRF Secretariat by 17<sup>th</sup> November 2006, to: [*insert relevant contact details*]

Also, if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Chris Samuel (Chair, LRF Public Warning Task Group) on 01244-606720, or at: [chris.samuel@cheshire.gov.uk](mailto:chris.samuel@cheshire.gov.uk)

Many thanks for your help with this survey, and we look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

## Annex B

### Example of letter issued to assess existing Category 2 responder warning and informing arrangements (to support 'Step 4')

#### **CHESHIRE, HALTON AND WARRINGTON LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM (CHWLRF)**



[Date]

Dear Sir/ Madam,

#### **CIVIL CONTINGENCIES ACT (2004) - SURVEY OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED WARNING & INFORMING INFRASTRUCTURE**

I am writing to you today, in my capacity as Chair of the Cheshire, Halton, and Warrington Local resilience Forum (CHWLRF), to ask for your help in gathering key information regarding existing, and proposed, public warning & informing infrastructure in the Cheshire, Halton, and Warrington area, as required within the 'Communicating with the Public' duty under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004).

As you are aware, the responding agencies have a duty under the CCA, to ensure that all arrangements for warning and informing the public are adequate and resilient. To that end, we would be extremely grateful if you could please complete the attached questionnaire regarding any existing, and proposed, infrastructure that your organisation has in place for the provision of warnings and/ or information to the public, or any public education programmes in Cheshire. [NB: this request is made in line with the Information Sharing duty outlined in the Civil Contingencies Act (2004).]

The information that we receive from your organisation will be used to assess our current overall capabilities and limitations for warning and informing the public against all known risks in the Cheshire, Halton, and Warrington area (for further information, please see the Community Risk Register at: <http://www.cheshirefire.co.uk/>). By gaining the 'big picture', we will then be able to determine what new systems, protocols and educational programmes are required to ensure the safety of the local community in future years.

This work forms part of the larger national capability project taking place across England and Wales, and any guidance or advice received, that we feel may be of benefit to your organisation will, of course, be passed on.

Consequently, could I please ask that all forms (including nil returns) are returned by e-mail to the CHWLRF Secretariat by 17<sup>th</sup> November 2006, to: [*insert relevant contact details*]

Also, if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Chris Samuel (Chair, LRF Public Warning Task Group) on 01244-606720, or at: [chris.samuel@cheshire.gov.uk](mailto:chris.samuel@cheshire.gov.uk)

Many thanks for your help with this survey, and we look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

## Annex C

### Example of letter issued to assess existing COMAH operator warning and informing arrangements (to support 'Step 4')

#### **CHESHIRE, HALTON AND WARRINGTON LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM (CHWLRF)**



[Date]

Dear Sir/ Madam,

#### **CIVIL CONTINGENCIES ACT (2004) - SURVEY OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED WARNING & INFORMING INFRASTRUCTURE**

I am writing to you today, in my capacity as Chair of the Cheshire, Halton, and Warrington Local resilience Forum (CHWLRF), to ask for your help in gathering key information regarding existing, and proposed, public warning & informing infrastructure in the Cheshire, Halton, and Warrington area, as required within the 'Communicating with the Public' duty under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004).

As you may be aware, the responding agencies have a duty under the CCA, to ensure that all arrangements for warning and informing the public are adequate and resilient. To that end, we would be extremely grateful if you could please complete the attached questionnaire regarding any existing, and proposed, infrastructure that your organisation has in place for the provision of warnings and/ or information to the public, or any public education programmes in Cheshire.

The information that we receive from your organisation will be used to assess our current overall capabilities and limitations for warning and informing the public against all known risks in the Cheshire, Halton, and Warrington area (for further information, please see the Community Risk Register at: <http://www.cheshirefire.co.uk/>). By gaining the 'big picture', we will then be able to determine what new systems, protocols and educational programmes are required to ensure the safety of the local community in future years. Indeed, your organisation may also find it beneficial in assisting your efforts to comply with regulations such as the Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) Regulations (1999)/ Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Regulations (REPPIR) (2001)/ Pipeline Safety Regulations (PSR) (1996).

This work forms part of the larger national capability project taking place across England and Wales, and any guidance or advice received, that we feel may be of benefit to your organisation will be passed on.

Consequently, could I please ask that all forms (including nil returns) are returned by e-mail to the CHWLRF Secretariat by 17<sup>th</sup> November 2006, to: [*insert relevant contact details*]

Also, if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Chris Samuel (Chair, LRF Public Warning Task Group) on 01244-606720, or at: [chris.samuel@cheshire.gov.uk](mailto:chris.samuel@cheshire.gov.uk)

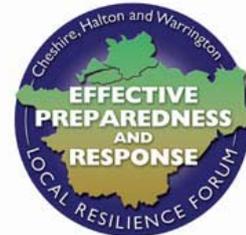
Many thanks for your help with this survey, and we look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

## Annex D

### Example of letter issued to assess existing warning and informing arrangements established by other organisations (to support 'Step 4')

#### **CHESHIRE, HALTON AND WARRINGTON LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM (CHWLR)**



[Date]

Dear Sir/ Madam,

#### **CIVIL CONTINGENCIES ACT (2004) - SURVEY OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED WARNING & INFORMING INFRASTRUCTURE**

I am writing to you today, in my capacity as Chair of the Cheshire, Halton, and Warrington Local Resilience Forum (CHWLR), to ask for your help in gathering key information regarding existing, and proposed, public warning & informing infrastructure in the Cheshire, Halton, and Warrington area, as required within the 'Communicating with the Public' duty under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004).

The emergency services, in Cheshire have a duty, under this new legislation, to ensure that all arrangements for warning and informing the public are adequate and resilient, and as your organisation engages with large numbers of the public, on a daily basis, we feel that your assistance could be of tremendous benefit in helping us to achieve this task. To that end, we would be extremely grateful if you could please complete the attached questionnaire regarding any existing and proposed infrastructure that your organisation has in place for the provision of warnings and/ or information to the public, or any public awareness raising campaigns.

The information that we receive from your organisation will be used to assess our current overall capabilities and limitations for warning and informing the public against all known risks in the Cheshire, Halton, and Warrington area (for further information, please see the Community Risk Register at: <http://www.cheshirefire.co.uk/>). By gaining the 'big picture', we will then be able to determine what new systems, protocols and educational programmes are required to ensure the safety of the local community in future years.

Consequently, could I please ask that all forms (including nil returns) are returned by e-mail to the CHWLR Secretariat by 17<sup>th</sup> November, to: [*insert relevant contact details*]

Also, if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Chris Samuel (Chair, LRF Public Warning Task Group) on 01244-606720, or at: [chris.samuel@cheshire.gov.uk](mailto:chris.samuel@cheshire.gov.uk)

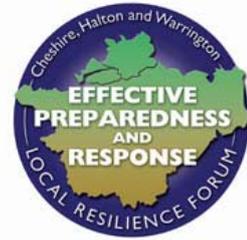
Many thanks for your help with this survey, and we look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

## Annex E

### Example of questionnaire issued to assess existing warning and informing arrangements (to support 'Step 4')

#### CHESHIRE, HALTON AND WARRINGTON LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM (CHWLR)



#### **CIVIL CONTINGENCIES ACT (2004) –SURVEY OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED WARNING & INFORMING INFRASTRUCTURE – QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. Organisation Name:

2. Location(s) of site(s) in Cheshire, Halton and Warrington:

#### 3. Existing Infrastructure

a) Do you have/ use any of the following systems (delete as appropriate)?

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| ▪ Sirens (voice)                                    | Yes / No |
| ▪ Sirens (tone)                                     | Yes / No |
| ▪ Public Address systems                            | Yes / No |
| ▪ Telephone Notification systems                    | Yes / No |
| ▪ Electronic signage                                | Yes / No |
| ▪ Use of broadcast media                            | Yes / No |
| ▪ Use of print media                                | Yes / No |
| ▪ Safety information delivered to homes/ businesses | Yes / No |
| ▪ Other (please state in the box below)             |          |

Please use the box below to provide additional information on system types, locations, areas of coverage, etc:

b) Please describe any enhancements you are planning to your system within the next 18 months, complete with timescales:

c) Would you like advice on stated projects?

Yes / No (delete as appropriate)

d) Do you deliver your warning and informing arrangements through a third party?

e) If YES please specify:

f) What is your criteria for activating your systems?

g) REPPIR / COMAH Operators – do you warn and inform outside the Public Information Zone?

Yes / No (delete as appropriate)

h) If YES, please provide details:

i) If you have NO systems in place, please state any reasons for this?

If you have NO systems in place please go to Question 6

#### 4. Effectiveness

a) Do you measure the effectiveness of your systems/ processes?

Yes / No (delete as appropriate)

b) If YES, how do you measure their effectiveness?

c) If YES, can you please provide information on the effectiveness of your systems/processes?

## 5. Testing

- a) Do you test your warning and informing systems/processes?

Yes / No (delete as appropriate)

- b) If YES, how and when do you test?

## 6. Public Awareness & Education

- a) Do you undertake any **public** awareness/ education campaigns?

Yes / No (delete as appropriate)

- b) If YES, how, when, where and how often do you carry this work out?

- c) Do you undertake any **staff** awareness/ education campaigns?

Yes / No (delete as appropriate)

- d) If YES, how, when, where and how often do you carry this work out?

- e) If the answer to question (a) or question (c) is NO are there any reasons for this?

## 7. Communications

Do you have any informal/ formal communication networks in place that could be utilised during a major emergency – for example, with fellow site operators, sports stadiums, shopping complexes? If so, please provide details.

8. **Additional Comments**

Do you have any additional comments/observations that you would like to make that you feel were not covered elsewhere in the survey.

9. **Point of Contact for the Future:**

Please provide contact details of the individual in charge of your warning and informing capability for future correspondence:

Name:  
Role:  
Email Address:  
Phone Number:  
Postal Address:

**Thank – you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.**

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