



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government



Guidance No. NSE 141

# Planning for Major Water and Wastewater Incidents in England and Wales :

## GENERIC GUIDANCE

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## ABBREVIATIONS

CCA	Civil Contingencies Act 2004
CCC	Civil Contingencies Committee
CCC(O)	Civil Contingencies Committee (Official)
COBR	Cabinet Office Briefing Room
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DWI	Drinking Water Inspectorate
EA	Environment Agency
IMRG	Incident Management Recovery Group
LRF	Local Resilience Forum
MACC	Military Aid to Civil Community
MACP	Military Aid to Civil Power
Ofwat	Water Services Regulation Authority
RAT	Regional Advisory Team
RCCC	Regional Civil Contingencies Committees
RRT	Government Office Regional Resilience Team
SEMD	Security and Emergency Measures Directions
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WaSC	Water and Sewerage Company.

<sup>1</sup> "local authority" means -  
(i) the City of London, the Common Council for the City of London;  
(ii) an area in the rest of London, the London Borough Council for that area;  
(iii) an area in the rest of England, the district council for that area or where there is no district council for that area, the county council for that area;  
(iv) an area in Wales, the county council or the county borough council for that area;

## **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for water companies (in England & Wales), central and regional Government and local responders, including Category 1 and 2 organisations in preparing plans to deal with Major Incidents (water and wastewater), as defined by guidance issued by the Security Service. This guidance is issued jointly by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), and the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG).

Major incident(s) will be of a size greater than the response capability of the water company concerned, even with assistance from other water companies in the form of mutual aid (see section 5 on Security & Emergency Measures Directions.)

This document should be read in conjunction with other documents, including:

- The Security & Emergency Measures Directions (under the Water Industry Act 1991), and
- Civil Contingencies Act – ‘Emergency Preparedness’ and ‘Emergency Response & Recovery’, as statutory regulations and non-statutory guidance.

## **2. Aim & Objectives**

The aim of this planning guidance document is to provide a framework for a multi-agency response in the event of severe service disruptions resulting from major water and wastewater incidents. The guidance will be additional to, and support any existing national, regional and local generic command and control protocols. It does not replace any such documentation.

Guidance objectives include:

- An explanation of the regulatory and legal framework within which water and wastewater services are provided in England & Wales;
- Description of typical major water and wastewater incident scenarios and their impacts;
- Description of the roles and responsibilities of organisations who are likely to be involved in the responses;
- Provision of a framework for a coordinated multi-agency response; and,
- Clarification of communication protocols to ensure that the incident is managed effectively and that the public are provided with relevant information and reassurance.

### **3. Background**

In England and Wales, public water and wastewater services are delivered by privatised water and wastewater companies, appointed under the terms of the Water Industry Act 1991, and by companies who are licensed to have access to water companies supply systems under that Act (licensees.)

There are two types of company:

- water and sewerage companies, and
- water supply only companies.  
(Refer to map on page 26.)

Amongst other duties, water and sewerage companies have a statutory duty to provide wholesome water at all times and to receive, treat and dispose of sewage/wastewaters. Disposal of sewage effluent and recycling of bio solids must comply with prevailing legislation governing environmental discharges.

Water supply only companies have a statutory duty to provide wholesome water at all times, with the sewerage/wastewater function in their area being undertaken by a water and sewerage company.

For the purpose of this generic guidance, the legal term of undertakers and licensees, are collectively called water companies. 'Wastewater' is also a broader term to include both sewerage, and the flooding that may arise from a failure of the water/sewerage networks.

### **4. Regulators**

Key regulators of the Water Industry in England and Wales are:

- Defra/WAG - lead respective government departments for major water/wastewater incidents;
- The Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) - responsible for assessing the quality of drinking water in public water supplies, taking enforcement action if standards are not met, and appropriate action when water is unfit for human consumption;
- Environment Agency (EA) – responsible for protecting and improving the water environment. The EA has roles in taking appropriate action if controlled waters are polluted, in water abstraction (licensing and quality issues), reservoir safety enforcement, and consenting and regulating the discharge of wastewater into the environment;
- Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat) - the economic regulator for the Water Industry.

## 5. Security & Emergency Measures Directions

The Security & Emergency Measures Direction (SEMD) is a statutory document produced under the provisions of Section 208 of the Water Industry Act 1991. It places upon Water Companies the requirement to:

*‘keep under review and revise such plans as it considers necessary to ensure the provisions of essential water supply ...and wastewater services at all times’.*

Planning shall include the provision of:

- trained and experienced personnel;
- stockpiles of contingency equipment;
- dedicated communications;
- command & control facilities;
- security;
- analytical services;
- structures for notification of events to regulators and other stakeholders.
- In addition that priority will be given to the domestic needs of the sick, the elderly, the disabled, hospitals, schools, and other vulnerable sectors of the population; and,
- that regard is had for the needs of non-domestic as well as domestic users.

Should the piped water supply fail, domestic customers must receive a **minimum of 10 litres/head/day\*** of potable alternative water. Some water companies may have difficulties in identifying details about people in the vulnerable sectors. However, they should make plans and arrangements with other bodies, such as local authorities and health authorities, to secure, as far as possible, information available to these bodies about vulnerable people. When considering the non-domestic users, each water company needs to look at its own area to identify the nature of non-domestic users, in particular livestock and essential food industries, and give due regard to their requirements.

*\*It should be noted that this requirement is only suitable for a relatively limited time and is provided until the piped water supply is restored.*

The SEMD requires that all Water Company contingency plans are independently audited annually, with a copy of the auditors report provided to Defra/WAG.

The SEMD covers all scales and types of incident. However, a particular focus is the provision of alternative water to large numbers of people should the piped supply fail. Guidance to the SEMD refers to CONFIDENTIAL guidance issued by the security service, which separates contingency planning into two parts in respect of population sizes affected:

**Part 1** – a water incident of a size such that the response is within the capability of the Water Company together with any mutual aid from other water companies.

In meeting this, each Water Company has agreed with Defra/WAG a maximum population figure. The figure is determined by the size of the company concerned and total population it supplies. (The value varies, but is within a range of 8,000 to 50,000 people, dependant upon individual companies and whether predominantly urban or rural population, and cover durations of 24 and 72 hours.) These values constitute the ‘Water Company Local Response Plan’.

**Part 2** – a major water or sewage incident of a size that is greater than the response capability of the Water Company even with any mutual aid and the planning and response required is likely to involve a number of agencies. At the upper end of the scale, a major water or sewage incident may be declared, thus implementing arrangements described in the Civil Contingencies Act and its associated guidance.

**This generic guidance addresses ‘Part 2’, and requires water companies to plan for such an incident in collaboration with other Category 1 and 2 responders.**

**It adopts a value for up to 200,000 people without a piped water supply for a week, or three days without power** as a planning threshold. (This threshold was advised to all Water Company Emergency officers in England and Wales, and Regional Resilience Teams by letter from Defra, dated 6 September 2005.)

## **6. Key Scenarios**

There are many scenarios that can lead to a water or wastewater service supply disruption, including:

- Raw water contaminated – accidental or deliberate;
- Treated water contamination – accidental or deliberate;
- Failure of treatment process/assets – including reservoirs, water and wastewater treatment works, pumping stations etc.;
- Disruption to the transmission network (treated water or wastewater);
- Disruption to part of supply chain – losses of power/personnel etc.,
- Insufficient raw water e.g. quality and/or quantity; and,
- Extreme weather, e.g. rainfall and flooding, snow.

These scenarios will deliver differing scales and impacts of incident according to the size of infrastructure involved, population served, scale of disruption, ease of repair, interconnectivity and options for alternative supply e.g. rezoning, etc.



## 7. Example Impacts

### PRIMARY:

- Domestic, industrial, commercial and agricultural premises without piped water supply;
- Disruption or suspension of services at hospitals, doctors/dental surgeries, schools, etc – particularly those without on-site storage;
- Public health concerns, especially for vulnerable groups – personal hygiene, food preparation, etc;
- Home dialysis patients unable to be treated at home;
- Lack of water for fire-fighting, fire suppression systems, air conditioning, computer coolants etc; and,
- Flooding – water and/or wastewater with associated hazards, including disease and environmental contamination/pollution.

### SECONDARY:

- Public and business need for information and advice;
- Public order issues at alternative water distribution points and personnel safety issues;
- Panic buying of bottled water and other drinks from supermarkets, etc;
- Reduced output or closure of many businesses including food production or preparation facilities, laundries, etc;
- Disruption for other employers and leisure facilities;
- Media interest, and
- Reputation and commercial damage to the water company resulting from such an incident.

## 8. Routine Reporting And Liaison Requirements

There are routine reporting and liaison requirements that water companies are obliged to meet in respect of operational incidents. These include:

- To DWI - *The Water Undertakers (Information) Direction 2004, paragraph 7; for those water companies operating wholly or mainly in Wales, paragraph 7 of the draft Water Undertakers (Information)(Wales) Direction 2004*, where there is an actual or potential effect on the quality or sufficiency of water supplied, or a significant risk to the health of persons to whom the water is supplied; and,
- To DWI, health authorities and Consumer Council for Water and relevant Local Authorities (Environmental Health Departments) - *Regulation 35 of the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2000; , for those water companies operating wholly or mainly in Wales, Regulation 35 of the Water Supply (Water Quality)Regulations 2001*. Incidents relating to the supply of water which in opinion of the company is:
  - of national significance;
  - likely to, or has actually, attracted significant local or national publicity;
  - causes, or is likely to cause significant risk to the health of the persons to whom the water is supplied; and,
  - any reports of disease in the community, which might possibly be associated with a water supply.

DWI are notified as soon as possible, normally by telephone, followed up in writing within 3 working days. Within 20 working days of the notification, or longer if agreed, the water company must submit a more detailed report.

- To the Environment Agency - if an incident occurs that impacts, or might impact, upon the environment, a water company will liaise with the Environment Agency and co-operate in the management of the incident to mitigate the impact on the environment.
- To the police if there has been a criminal act (including suspected terrorism).
  
- To Defra/WAG who must be notified of incidents that may have security implications and/or are of interest to their respective Governments.

These reporting requirements continue even when other agencies become involved as an incident escalates in scale.

## **9. General Response Structures**

This describes the structures that can be put in place at company, local, regional and national level. It covers water company arrangements and the local, regional, and national response structures that can be activated in an incident. It describes the arrangements for coordination, activating the various response levels, and standing down at the end of the incident.

All Water Companies have contingency response plans or equivalents in place. These plans detail company response structures and escalation procedures.

This 'generic plan' is designed to initiate the joint planning process with other bodies in the event of a major incident. Thus, in the event of an incident each party, and category 1 responders in particular, will be aware of what the water company is striving to deliver.

In rapid onset incidents within a limited geographical area, the first response is likely to be delivered through the water companies internal contingency response structures. Escalation of an incident, either in severity or geographical extent, may require some degree of involvement of external organisations. These organisations may work through the water company structures or through the formal establishment at the local level of a multi-agency Strategic Co-ordination Centre (Gold). Further escalation may result in the activation of regional and national structures. Where an incident is of sufficient magnitude it may be necessary to activate all levels simultaneously.

### **9.1 Typical Water Company Arrangements**

This generic guidance is provided to ensure that in the planning for major incidents all relationships are in place. For all incidents, a person of the appropriate seniority relative to the scale of the incident will be appointed.

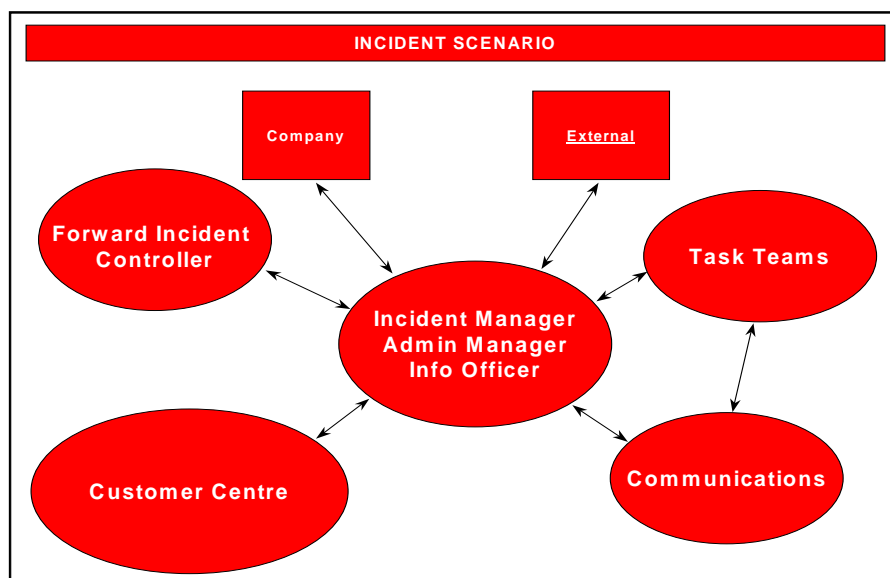
This person will be responsible for assessing the incident and establishing the necessary response structure to deliver the tasks described below:

- Affected Area Assessment;
- Delivering the technical repair
- Re-zoning;
- Alternative Water Supplies;
- Use restriction – i.e. Boil; Do Not Drink; Do Not Use; All Clear, notifications;
- Communications;
- Customer Care (vulnerable/business);
- Sampling and analysis;
- Local Authority / Health sector liaison; and,
- Quality Regulation.

(For the agreed outline responsibilities, please refer to Section 10.)

An example of a typical generic incident structure is shown below:

(Please note that this is intended as ‘guidance’ and each company may tailor and/or substitute to ensure effective dialogue in developing their Major Incident Plan.)



If an incident overwhelms the company's response arrangements the company may:

- Activate agreed mutual aid arrangements with other water companies;
- Engage with some external partners without the need for the structures described overleaf to be activated; and/or,
- Activate, in consultation with local and regional partners, local and regional contingency response structures as described overleaf.

Even at relatively low levels of severity/impact, the companies have legal obligations to notify some agencies, for example the DWI, Local Authority Environmental Health Officers and health sectors.

Further information on company contingency response structures can be found by **contacting the relevant water company.**

## 9.2 Local Arrangements

If the incident requires the formal engagement of wider partners, this will be delivered within the nationally agreed framework for managing the local response to, and recovery from, incidents.

In this framework, the management of the contingency response and recovery effort is undertaken at one or more of three ascending levels that are defined by their differing functions:

- Bronze – operational level
- Silver – tactical level
- Gold – strategic level

Agencies that may be involved in contingency response and recovery at the local level all work to the following set of common objectives.

- Saving and protecting life;
- Relieving suffering;
- Containing the incident;
- Providing the public with warnings, advice and information;
- Protecting the health and safety of personnel;
- Safeguarding the environment;
- Protecting property;
- Maintaining or restoring critical services;
- Maintaining normal services at an appropriate level;
- Promoting and facilitating self-help in the community;
- Facilitating investigations and inquiries;
- Facilitating the physical, social, economic and psychological; recovery of the community; and,
- Evaluating the response and recovery effort and identifying lessons to be learned

At the Gold level a Strategic Co-ordinating Group can be established comprising Gold Commanders from relevant organisations. The SCG co-ordinates the multi-agency response – it does not take control of other organisations resources or take on their responsibilities. It establishes the prioritisation of tasks and allocation of resources that take overall responsibility for the multi-agency management of the incident, and establishes the policy and strategic framework within which Silver and Bronze groups can work.

Details on the roles and responsibilities of the main agencies and sectors that are likely to be engaged in the response to and recovery from incidents at the local level can be found in the Civil Contingencies Act documents **Emergency Response and Recovery**. Further information on local response arrangements can be obtained through the relevant **Local Resilience Forum**, or <http://www.ukresilience.info/ccact/errpdfs/index.shtml>.

### 9.3 Regional Arrangements

Local responders at a local level deal with most incidents. This is, and continues to be, the norm for responding to incidents. However, recent experience has shown that there may be some circumstances when the response to an incident would benefit from co-ordination at a regional level. Such circumstances could include the situation where the local response is overwhelmed, or where the incident affects the majority of localities within a region. This is most likely to arise during incidents that do not have a definable scene. The possibility of a regional response to an incident is simply another option available to Government and local responders.

Regional Civil Contingencies Committees (RCCCs) are the key body for delivering the co-ordination of response at a regional level. The precise role of the RCCC will vary depending on the nature of the incident but, generic aspects of the role are likely to include:

- Collating and maintaining a strategic picture of the evolving situation within the region;
- Assessing whether there are any issues that cannot be resolved at a local level;
- Facilitating mutual aid arrangements within or between regions;
- Ensuring an effective flow of communication between the local, regional and national levels;
- Raising, to a national level, any issues that cannot be resolved at a local or regional level;
- Ensuring the national input to response and recovery is co-ordinated with the local and regional response effort;
- Guiding the deployment of scarce resources across the region by identifying regional priorities; and,
- Implementing any special legislative measures.

Where there is a major incident with water and/or wastewater implications, the relevant water company(s) will be represented at the RCCC meeting and will provide representatives to work as part of the Regional Advisory Team to the RCCC.

Further information on regional response arrangements including structures and activation are detailed in **generic Regional Response Plans** that have been developed by and are owned by the Regional Resilience Forums in each of the Regions. Further details on the role of the RCCC and Emergency Powers can be found in the Civil Contingencies Act Guidance document **Emergency Response and Recovery**.

## 9.4 National Structures

Defra is the lead Government Department for water and wastewater incidents in England. The Scottish Executive takes the lead in Scotland, and the Welsh Assembly the lead in Wales.

### **England**

National incidents may inevitably affect more than one Government department. The lead department is responsible for coordinating the Government response. It does NOT take on the responsibility of other departments. The Cabinet Office supports Ministers collectively and the lead department's Minister in particular. It ensures a co-ordinated Government response to incidents, identifying issues requiring collective discussion and agreement by Ministers, and recording, promulgating and following up agreed actions.

The Central Government Concept of Operations, commonly referred to as 'CONOPS', identifies three levels of response:

- Level 1, Significant is where the national response to the incident is managed by the lead Government Department within its facilities.
- Level 2, Serious is where the national response is managed by the lead Government Department from Cabinet Office Briefing Room (COBR).
- Level 3, Catastrophic is where the response is managed by Cabinet Office/ No. 10 from COBR.

For each level a national strategic co-ordinating committee known as the Civil Contingencies Committee (CCC) will meet at official (CCC(O)) or Ministerial level (CCC) as follows. In COBR, Defra will be the Lead Government Department.

- Level 1 – chaired by Defra senior official or Minister with secretariat provided by Defra;
- Level 2 – chaired by Defra senior official or Minister with secretariat provided by Cabinet Office; and,
- Level 3 – chaired by Cabinet Office at official level, or by the Prime Minister or Home Secretary at Ministerial level with secretariat provided by Cabinet Office.

The COBR/ CCC is supported by the Impact Management Recovery Group (IMRG), which includes those departments not included in the initial response. The purpose of this group is to consider the strategy for recovery.

### **Wales**

In Wales, the response is governed by the Pan-Wales Response Plan which links into the CONOPs structure. The Wales Civil Contingencies Committee will convene at various levels of the emergency. The Emergency Co-ordination Centre (Wales) based at the Welsh Assembly Government will link into COBR where an incident is UK-wide and requires the involvement of Wales.

- Level 1 – Level One meetings would be convened in the phase prior to an emergency, where prior warning is available. The meeting would be held to review the situation and update local stakeholders. Under Level 1 the Emergency Co-ordination Centre (Wales) [ECC(W)] will remain on stand-by and arrangements put in place to activate the Centre should the emergency escalate within Wales, or should it affect Wales to a sufficient extent;
- Level 2 – Level Two meetings would be convened in the event of the incident causing a wide area disruptive challenge in Wales or if specifically required by a Strategic Co-ordinating Group. For Level 2 emergencies the nominated Lead Official will activate the ECC(W) which can be linked with all Strategic Co-ordinating Groups, and the central government crisis management machinery facilitated by Cabinet Office; and,
- Level 3 – Level Three meetings would only be called once an emergency arises which requires the making of emergency regulations under Part 2 of the Civil Contingencies Act. It will be chaired by the nominated Wales Emergency Co-ordinator.

If the emergency is UK-wide and COBR is activated under CONOPs the senior Assembly official chairing the WCCC will attend CCC(O) meetings normally via video link. CCC meetings will be attended by the Minister for Environment, Countryside and Planning.

The role of the ECC(W) will be to:

- co-ordinate the gathering and dissemination of information across Wales;
- ensure an effective flow of communication between local, pan-Wales and UK levels, including the co-ordination of reports to the UK level on the response and recovery effort;
- brief the Lead Official and WCCC;
- ensure that the UK input to response is co-ordinated with the local and pan-Wales efforts;
- provide media and community relations support through the Strategy and Communication Group;
- assist in the determination of potential consequences of the emergency and recovery planning;
- facilitate mutual aid arrangements within Wales and where necessary, between Wales and the border areas of England; and
- raise to a UK level any issues that cannot be resolved at a local or Wales level.

In water and wastewater incidents where the emergency is confined to Wales the ECC(W) and WCCC will report directly to the Minister for Environment, Countryside and Planning who will lead the response at the political level. The ECC(W) will report routinely to DEFRA and Cabinet Office and contact will be maintained at Ministerial level between the Minister for Environment, Countryside and Planning and DEFRA.

## **9.5 Coordination and Communications between company, local, regional and national structures**

Where the scale of the incident warrants it, the local response would be co-ordinated from Gold Command by the most appropriate authority, in accordance with strategic, tactical and operational levels of incident management. In England, Defra's interests will be represented at the Strategic Coordination Group by a Government Liaison Officer/Team who will be a member of the Government Office. In Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government would fulfil this role. The Defra/WAG representation may be augmented through the presence of an Inspector from DWI who, whilst forming part of the Government/WAG Liaison Team, will also retain a regulatory role. The Government Office/WAG would also provide a regional overview of the response activities for the relevant central Government Departments, and Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat.

There will be a coordinated media response between Defra/WAG, the water company(s) and local and regional responders to ensure consistent and effective messaging to the media.

If an emergency occurred only in Wales, the pan-Wales Response Plan creates a structure whereby information from across Wales will be assessed and analysed by the ECC(W). It will provide a pan-Wales picture of the impact of the emergency which can be used to advise decisions on the strategic management of the situation. The plan also allows the cascading of information to agencies on the ground in Wales. The plan sets out co-ordination arrangements rather than a pan-Wales command structure.

Major emergencies are likely to occur in single LRF areas where the relevant Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) will manage the response through its multi-agency response plan. In such instances, situation reports to the ECC(W) – if established – will be provided by an Assembly Liaison Officer deployed at the SCG.

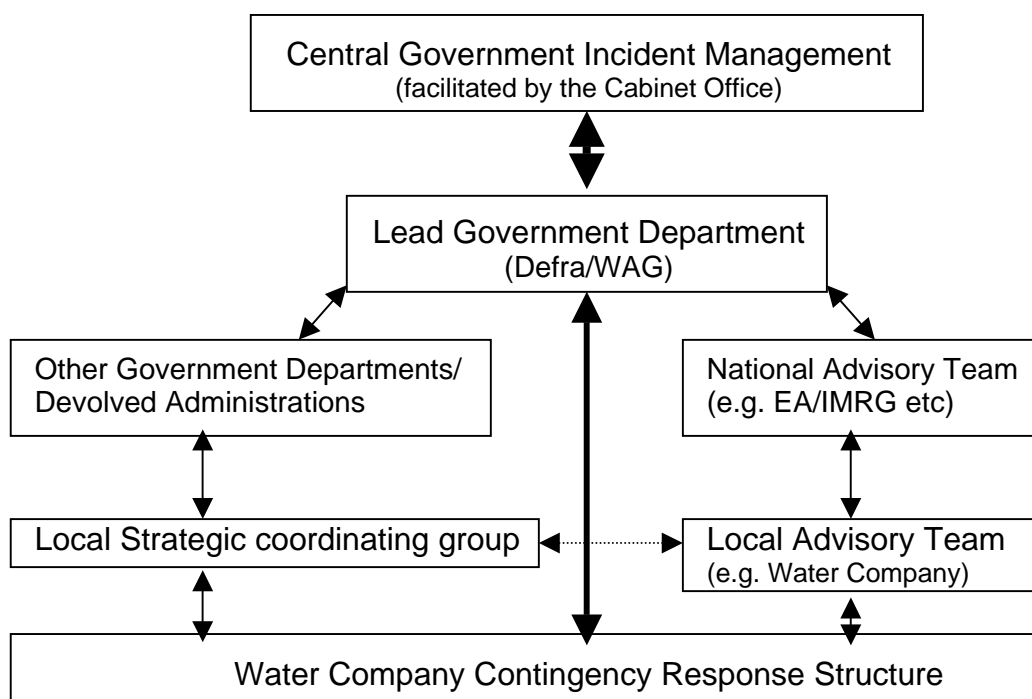
Water Companies would co-ordinate their response activities with local responders through the deployment of a representative at the SCG, the Regional Civil Contingencies Committee/Wales Civil Contingencies Committee and on the Regional Advisory Team where this is established.

A Water Company representative would also provide situation reports to Water Supply and Regulation Division in Defra/WAG on the course of events and the actions being taken to remedy the situation.

The diagram overleaf shows the lines of communication between the local and national levels when local and national response structures have been activated. It is a simplification and is not intended to demonstrate exhaustively the full range of communications between individual organisations, and is subject to local arrangements in London.

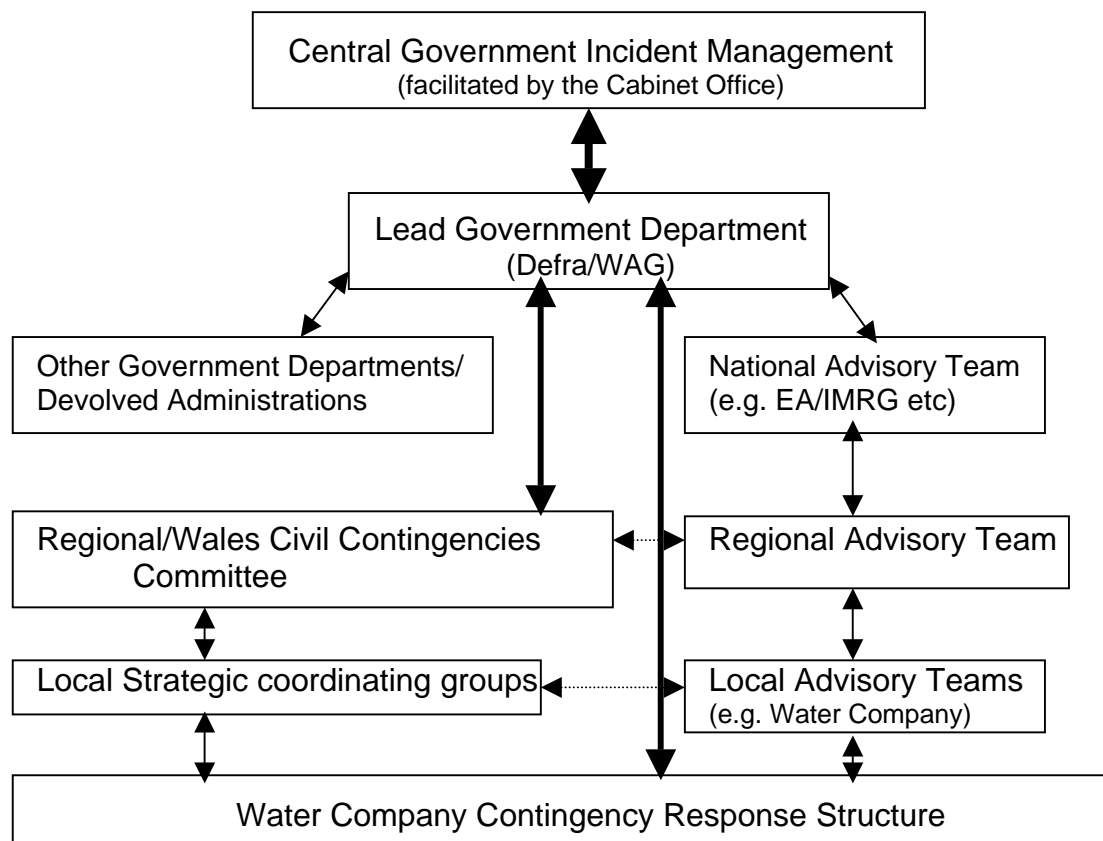


**Response Structures: Local and National Tiers Activated:**



In the event of a major water/wastewater incident the Water Company’s Local Response Plan will be exceeded. This will require other agencies to become involved in many areas, such as assisting with the distribution and security of alternative water supplies, through to the evacuation of people/animals. The diagram overleaf shows the lines of communication when local, regional and national response structures have been activated. It is a simplification and is not intended to demonstrate exhaustively the full range of communications between individual organisations.

**Response Structures: Local, Regional and National Tiers Activated:**



\* Please note, that where a water incident is the consequence of a wider event or terrorist threat, Defra/WAG may not be the respective lead Government Department.

With all incidents, there will be a number of organisations that are required to report to central Government Departments on aspects of the incident. Those organisations concerned should establish dialogue at the outset to ensure that the reports are co-ordinated and consistent. With water incidents this will include (but not exclusively) the Water Company, the Regional Resilience Teams and the DWI.

**9.6 Typical Activation Arrangements for Water and Wastewater Incidents**

***Water Company***

Each water company can be contacted on a 24/7 basis, and will assemble an incident management team as required. Various trigger levels exist to identify incidents and an assessment is undertaken to determine the potential for escalation. Typically, each incident is categorised against prescribed assessment criteria.

Water companies dealing with a significant incident with wider implications for other water companies adopt a 'Cascade' system of communication. This is in addition to the routine reporting identified in Section 8, and adopts a linear pattern of communication, informing Defra/WAG as part of this process. The water companies, Defra/WAG, Government Offices and certain other nominated organisations also share a common Emergency Telephone Directory, which is maintained by Defra.

Water Companies do not expect to be the lead body in any form of major incident. The industry will be looking to its core competencies and SEMD requirements, providing an engineering solution, customer information and contingency support within the Category 1 command structure.

For an effective response, experience has shown that it is essential that the water company has a presence in the senior command structure during a major incident, regionally or nationally.

Prior to a strategic coordination group meeting being called, the Water Company will contact the Agencies it feels it must inform of the incident. Once a Gold meeting has been convened, the Water company will expect to manage its inter agency communications at this meeting. Appendix A identifies the agencies a Water Company will communicate with and the preferred method of contact.

**NOTE** - The Water companies will be providing detailed updates to Defra/WAG and DWI, at agreed intervals. This communication will specifically relate to the water incident and the Gold meeting will be briefed of this requirement and content. All water related external communications are cleared through Defra/WAG.

Appendix A indicates an overview of the various interactivities between specific water companies, Government offices and other relevant bodies in taking forward this generic guidance in planning for major water and wastewater incidents.

### ***Local and Regional Structures***

In the event of a major incident, a wider partner base may require companies to have enhanced incident management procedures. Generically, the water industry will activate these wider partners in line with procedures agreed at the local (LRF) levels. The industry will activate regional partners in line with procedures detailed in their generic Regional Response Plans.

## **9.7 Typical Activation Arrangements for Water and Wastewater Incidents initiated by actions outside of the water industry**

### ***Water Company***

Where a water incident is the consequence of a wider issue, then it is likely that the water company will be informed by the lead response bodies (usually the police for local incidents and the relevant Government Office Regional Resilience Team for regional incidents) in line with pre-agreed procedures which have been developed and agreed for major incidents.

### ***Local and Regional Structures***

Locally, decisions will be made in line with locally agreed procedures. Regionally, activation will be in accordance with procedures outlined in generic Regional Response Plans.

### ***National Structures***

Activation will be in accordance with procedures outlined in Lead Government Department Plans and CONOPs.

## **9.8 Stand-down arrangements**

The recovery phase would be led by the following responses:

### ***National response***

Government Departments may begin to scale down their involvement in the response when Ministers are satisfied that policy and regulatory requirements have been fulfilled and it is prudent to do so.

Where Defra/WAG is in the lead, it will consult closely with all stakeholders to determine at what stage the response may be scaled down or closed. The following criteria would be applied:

- a recovery plan prepared and agreed by relevant organisations together with a communications strategy to keep all stakeholders informed of development; and,
- where local resources are considered to be adequate to manage the situation.

### ***Regional response***

Stand-down will be in accordance with procedures outlined in generic Regional Response Plans.

### ***Local response***

Stand-down will be in accordance with procedures agreed at Local Resilience Forum level.

### ***Water Company Response***

Stand-down will be in accordance with procedures detailed in company incident management procedures.

## **9.9 General Incidents (initially not water related)**

In an event that is not a water incident but does have an impact on the Water Company's operation, the Water Company will have its own arrangements in place to manage the incident. During such times, the Water Company will inform Defra/WAG of its problem and actions it is taking. If the incident is stretching the Company's capabilities, it will inform the local Gold command.

## **9.10 Public Notification**

Some incidents might require that the public are notified about the reduced availability of water and/or its use. If an incident requires restriction on the use of water, the Water Company will issue boil water/do not drink/do not use/all clear notices to the affected parties as soon as possible. This is likely to be before any Gold meeting, but would be done with the agreement of Health Protection bodies.

No other Category 1 or Category 2 responder can issue such a notice.

Removal of the notice will be planned and agreed with the relevant public health professional once the Water Company is confident about the quality of the water.

When a notice is issued or removed, a Gold meeting will be informed as soon as practicable.

## **10. OUTLINE RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **10.1 Defra/WAG**

1. Act as lead Government Department in water and sewerage related incidents;
2. Provide 24/7 point of contact for water companies in the event of incidents;
3. Liaise with other Government Departments as appropriate;
4. Keep Ministers informed of water specific issues relating to the incident, including the level of media interest;
5. Initiate the departments own emergency response when required;
6. Support the lead Government Department in other incidents where water and wastewater is affected; and
7. Provide information relating to water issues for joint press releases, and where Lead Government Department co-ordinate all media communications.

### **10.2 Water Companies**

1. Provide alternative drinking water supplies in line with the requirements of the Security & Emergency Measures Direction (SEMD)1998;
2. Provide a 24/7 point of contact for partner organisations;
3. Alert, or inform other organisations as agreed locally;
4. Manage the technical fix of the water infrastructure;
5. Provide advice on water and wastewater related issues to other agencies involved in the response to the incident;
6. Alert Defra/WAG, the DWI, the Environment Agency, the Consumer Council for Water, Local Authorities for the Local Resilience Forum, Health sector, other water companies and appropriate commercial partners;
7. Use all appropriate mechanisms, including local media to warn and inform the public, including the issuing of appropriate prohibition notices in conjunction with the health sector;
8. Provide a Liaison Officer at the Strategic Coordination Group and/or the Regional Civil Contingencies Committee as appropriate;
9. Provide local responders with all relevant information to the response including scale of problem, estimated timescales to repair and appropriate water quality information;
10. Liaise with health sector on appropriate measures to mitigate the risk to public health through the appropriate advisory team;
11. Provide analytical and scientific services;
12. Liaise with other water companies;
13. Ensure the prioritisation of vulnerable customers identified in company records and in consultation with other agencies; and,
14. Maintain customer support.

### **10.3 DWI**

1. Provide water companies with a 24/7 point of contact;
2. Provide appropriate scientific advice to water companies;
3. Provide technical advice to Ministers regarding drinking water quality;
4. Liaise with Government Departments as appropriate;
5. Liaise with local and health authorities in the area(s) affected; and,
6. Assess response in line with regulatory requirements.

### **10.4 Environment Agency**

1. Provide a 24/7 point of contact to receive reports of environmental incidents from partner organisations and the public;
2. Support Strategic and Tactical Co-ordination Centres with Liaison Officers as appropriate;
3. Assist in assessing the risk to the environment;
4. Provide advice related to regulatory roles, including waste disposal issues;
5. Notify/warn relevant stakeholders;
6. Prevent/control and monitor the input of pollutants to controlled waters;
7. Liaise with water companies on wastewater disposal options;
8. Investigate the cause of the incident and consider enforcement action;
9. Seek remediation, clean-up or restoration of the environment;
10. Issue flood warnings to those at risk;
11. Operate, maintain and monitor flood defence assets;
12. Take action if needed to remove or reduce the risk or to mitigate the effects of an escape of water in relation to reservoir failures or potential failures;
13. Establish the current and future state of water resources in a drought.

### **10.5 Government Offices**

1. Represent central Government during incidents and ensure effective communication between the local and national level, providing regular situation reports;
2. Provide advice on and coordinate Ministerial and other VIP visits;
3. Coordinate requests for central Government assistance; and,
4. Provide secretariat to the Regional Civil Contingencies Committee when convened.

### **10.6 Local Authorities**<sup>1</sup> (see page 4 for descriptions)

1. Provide a point of contact to receive alerts and warnings;
2. Assist water companies with the provision and coordination of information on vulnerable groups;
3. Maintain the proper management and direction of local authority activities;
4. Alert, or inform other organisations as agreed locally;

5. Take overall responsibility for coordination of local authority resources deployed in response to the incident;
6. Arrange for additional local authority resources as required;
7. Provide liaison officers to attend other incident centres or sites as appropriate;
8. Implement specific incident plans as required;
9. Liaise with other Local Authorities concerning mutual aid;
10. If agreed at the SCG request Military Aid to the Civil Community when required;
11. Consider the consequences of an incident for educational establishments and staff;
12. Set up and arrange for staffing of rest centres/evacuation centres;
13. Arrange where necessary for support for those affected by the incident who remain in their own homes;
14. Manage activities for any Social Services residential establishments affected by the incident;
15. Arrange to support other residential establishments involved in the crisis;
16. Liaise with the Health sector on behalf of the local authority and implement the activities required;
17. Ensure that highways issues are dealt with in coordination with water companies and Police;
18. Provide the organisation on behalf of the local authority for the co-ordination of matters relating to environmental health; and
19. Make arrangements for liaison and support between the local authority and appropriate organisations and voluntary organisations in respect of human and animal health matters.

## **10.7 Police**

1. Receive alerting calls and alert/inform other organisations as considered necessary;
2. Deal with public order issues;
3. Co-ordination of Emergency Services and other supporting organisations during an incident;
4. Protection and preservation of any crime scene;
5. Investigation of the incident, in conjunction with other investigative bodies where applicable;
6. Collation and dissemination of casualty information, and identification of any deceased on behalf of HM Coroner;
7. If agreed at the SCG, assist in the provision of support during alternative water distribution as considered necessary
8. If agreed at the SCG, assist in the provision of traffic control at designated sites as considered necessary; and,
9. Request Military Aid to the Civil Power as considered necessary.



### **10.8 Fire & Rescue Service**

1. Alert, or inform other organisations as agreed locally;
2. Provide support in dealing with contaminated water where appropriate;
3. Notify water company of identified resources to maintain fire fighting capability during major water incident;
4. Assist with the pumping of flood water where required; and
5. Provide assistance to water companies for hazardous incidents.

### **10.9 Health Sector**

1. Provide a point of contact to receive from the Department of Health, Health Protection Agency, Police, local authority or other statutory bodies any assessment of risks, requiring health related preparatory measures, and to co-ordinate necessary action with due regard to the possible sensitivity of information;
2. Assess the implications of any incident relevant to health;
3. Provide additional and specialist support to health care facilities in their response to a major incident;
4. Liaise and co-ordinate with adjacent Health bodies on mutual support requirements, actual or potential, in response to an incident;
5. Provide advice and assistance as may be required to local authority Environmental Health Officers;
6. Provide advice to Category 1 and 2 Responders, and others as appropriate;
7. Assess the effect of any incident, or contingency measures invoked as a result of potential hazards, on special care groups, e.g. premature babies, dialysis patients etc., co-ordinating any immediate response required in liaison with the water company or companies involved;
8. For the relevant health care professional to agree with water companies the appropriate notification to the public; and
9. Alert, or inform other organisations as agreed locally.

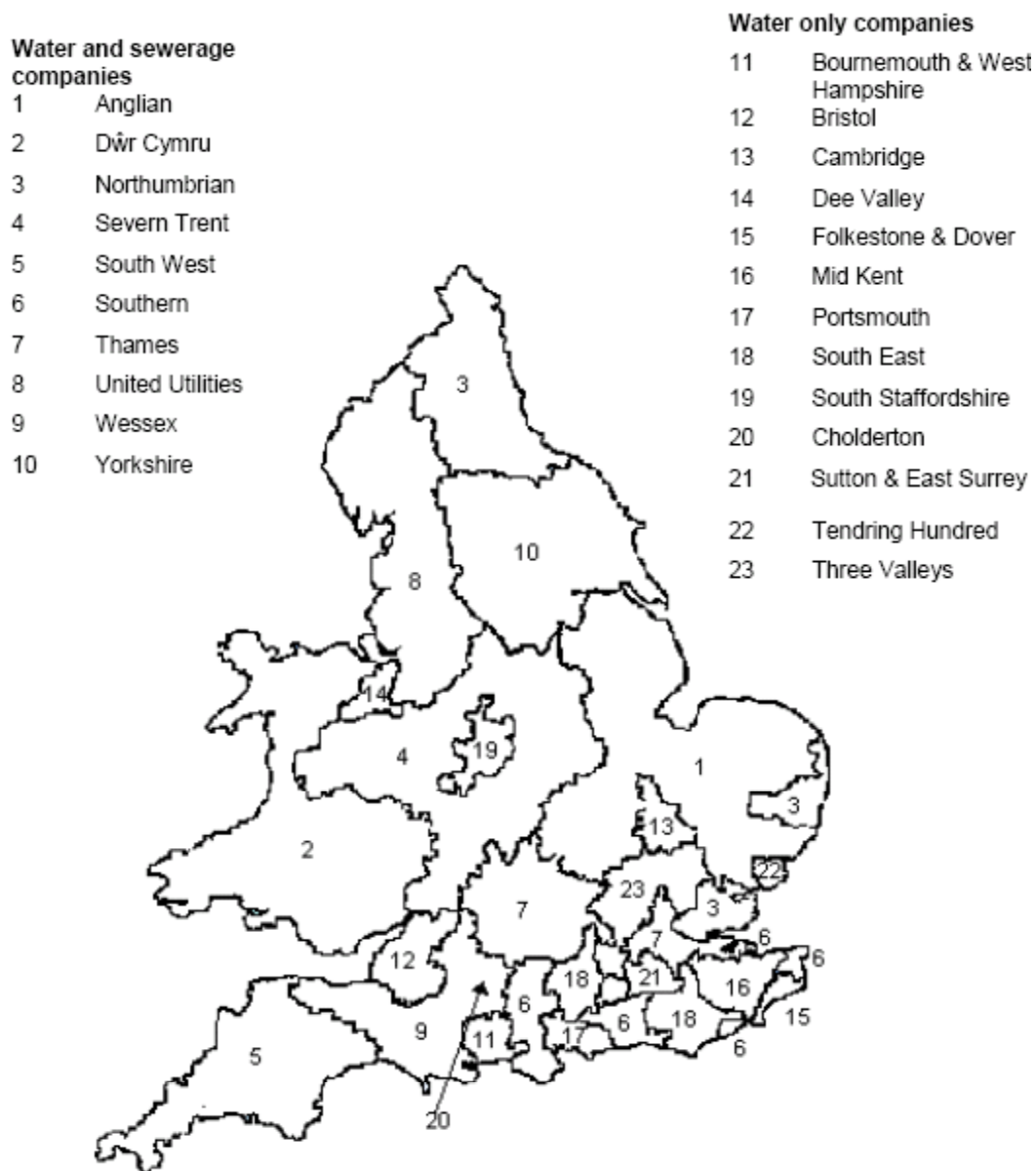
### **10.10 Military**

1. Provide 24/7 point of contact; and
2. Provide Military Aid to Civil Community, or Military Aid to Civil Power at the request of the initiating agency where appropriate.

## APPENDIX A - Water Company/Other Agencies Interactivity

The following map indicates the geographical service provided by the various water companies in England and Wales.

Note, this is correct as at November 2006, as certain companies report though other companies for the purposes of emergency planning.



The following table indicates an overview of the various interactivities between specific water companies, Government Offices and other relevant bodies.

In taking forward this generic guidance in planning for major water and wastewater incidents, this tabulation can be extended to include all relevant organisations.

<b>Water Co.</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Government Office</b>	<b>Local Resilience Forum</b>
WaSC	Water supply & wastewater treatment		
Water only company	Water Supply		

**Please note, the objective is to illustrate the geographical interdependencies in a major incident between water company, Government Office and Local Resilience Forum.**

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**This is a generic plan and the above is to be completed by each water company prior to release. An example format is as follows.**

<b>Water Co.</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Government Office</b>	<b>Local Resilience Forum</b>
Bournemouth and West Hampshire	Water supply	GOSE GOSW	Hampshire Dorset
Mid Kent	Water supply	GOSE	Kent Surrey