



CabinetOffice

**Government Response to the Public
Consultation on the Revised Guidance on the**

**Role of the Voluntary Sector under the
Civil Contingencies Act 2004**

Introduction

1. As part of the Civil Contingencies Act Enhancement Programme (CCAEP) a number of projects aimed at better supporting responders to fulfil their duties under the *Civil Contingencies Act 2004* (CCA) have been undertaken. These projects were taken forward as part of Phase 2 of the CCAEP.
2. Chapter 14 has not been substantially amended. A new emphasis has been given to the need to 'have regard to the voluntary sector' and involve these organisations all the way through the planning cycle, so that they can be effectively used at the response and recovery stage.
3. The consultation, which ran from Tuesday 7th December 2010 to Monday 14th March 2011, was announced on the CCS Gateway and made available on the CCS website. Of the 57 stakeholders who responded, 10 expressed no opinion of this chapter. Details of the other 47 are shown below.

Table 1: Responses to the consultation by CCA category

CCA Category	Class	Number
Category 1 responders	Environment Agency	1
	Maritime and Coastguard Agency	1
	Fire and Rescue Services	4
	Local Authority	13
	NHS	3
	Police Forces	5
Category 2 responders	Transport organisations	1
Other	Associations	3
	Voluntary Organisations	8
	Local Resilience Forums	8

The detailed list of respondents is shown in Annex A.

Table 2: Responses to the Consultation

No.	Question	Content %	Not content %	No opinion/Don't Know %
1	Do you agree with the new emphasis on inclusion of the voluntary sector at the earliest stages of the planning process?	74	2	25
2	In your opinion, will early, and continuing involvement of the voluntary sector at every stage of the planning, testing and exercise process be helpful to your ability to respond positively to emergencies?	74	0	26
3	Is the meaning of the phrase 'have regard to' in the requirement that 'Category 1 responders must have regard to those voluntary sector bodies which carry out activities in the geographical area for which the responder is responsible' sufficiently clear?	51	18	31

Summary

- 66 per cent of those that responded to the consultation gave a positive response.
- The new emphasis on the inclusion of the voluntary sector at the earliest stages of the planning process was received positively by those that responded. Many indicated that they felt this inclusion to be essential to emergency preparedness.
- All indicated that the involvement of the voluntary sector at every stage of planning, testing and the exercise process would be helpful to their ability to respond positively to emergencies. However many highlighted the importance

of ensuring that the voluntary sector are not over burdened and that clear guidance is created by responders and the voluntary sector on what is expected from volunteer agencies/individuals.

- The majority of the respondents indicated that they felt the phrase '*have regard to*' in the requirement that '*Category 1 responders must have regard to those voluntary sector bodies which carry out activities in the geographical area for which the responder is responsible*' was clear. Some suggested changes to the wording to enable understanding further.
- Other comments mainly focussed on minor changes to the wording of sentences.

Detailed Responses

Question 1

- It was highlighted that the voluntary sector is often already included at the earliest stages of planning; however, more consideration should be given to the complex legal issues surrounding the use of volunteers, particularly around the delivery of services on behalf of an organisation without prior agreement of a legal framework or memorandum of understanding.
- A respondent felt that only a major change in UK society and the voluntary sector would allow for a clear volunteer capability to support community response and recovery from emergencies. The State Emergency Service (SES) or the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) programme in the USA should be considered.
- The point was raised that whilst it is important to actively involve the voluntary sector in planning from the beginning, this would create a lot of additional work for Category 1 responders in meetings, events, testing, workshops, discussions, audits, etc. Category 1 responders facing difficult financial decisions may find it difficult to carry out this work, which may result in local authorities being unable to be comply with the additional guidance.

We have reviewed all comments made and, in light of the comments received we have slightly amended the text in paragraph 14.1 to read: *'may also enable them to support the development of community resilience activities.'*

Paragraphs 14.9 and 14.13 have also been reworded to reflect respondents' comments.

Question 2

- The issue of financial arrangements for voluntary organisations was raised in the feedback and this has now been addressed in Chapter 14

Question 3

- One concern raised focussed on the potential of personal political concerns preventing the robust integration of the voluntary sector. It was suggested that this could be dealt with through the peer review arrangements referred to in the Cabinet Office document - *The role of a Local Resilience Forum: A reference guide*.
- It was indicated that volunteers from the voluntary sector should be trained and supported by responder organisations. There was some concern that this would be an issue for all Category 1 responders, as there could be an increase in demand for combined training.

Paragraphs 14.3, 14.5 and 14.7 have had additional text added to reflect comments made by respondents

Other

Consultation respondents were also given the opportunity to give feedback on anything else they wished to raise. Below is a summary of changes made as a consequence:

The sentence *'in London, the London Air Ambulance provides an emergency service'* was added to paragraph 14.16;

Paragraph 14.19 was reworded to: 'Agencies working with voluntary sector organisations will need to consider the health and safety of volunteers. They may wish to use a Service Level Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding or some other form of protocol to establish arrangements to identify the level of insurance cover provided by the voluntary organisations, the training provided to voluntary sector personnel, or the use of Personal Protective Equipment. Further information on establishing these protocols can be found in the Voluntary Sector Engagement Guidance Note at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/engaging_voluntarysector.pdf.';

Paragraph 14.21 has had additional text added;

Paragraph 12.22 was reworded to: *'Plans should include effective procedures for alerting or calling out voluntary organisations, or putting volunteers and organisations on standby (and ensuring stand down) to ensure the optimum response. Early alert is desirable because of the lead time needed for contacting and assembling teams in organisations other than the emergency services. Contingency arrangements should reflect this. It is usually the responsibility of the voluntary sector to organise the initial call-out and briefing of volunteers such as setting out points of contact and how voluntary agency staff might liaise with volunteers and Category 1 or 2 responders. These roles should be reflected in the plans.'*;

Similarly paragraph 14.23 was reworded to: A Memorandum of Understanding should be in place describing any bilateral or multilateral agreement between responders, including financial arrangements. For example, consideration should be given to arrangements for payment of petrol costs to 4x4 drivers in emergency situations such as heavy snow fall. There should be agreement and effective plans on the use of volunteers, the decision-making process leading to their call-out and the method of call-out. Plans should determine who will organise, manage and brief volunteers. Debriefing should be included as part of plan maintenance procedures. Planners also need to establish that volunteers receive refreshment and are appropriately clothed, identified and equipped; and

Annex 14A has also been amended slightly to reflect comments from the public consultation.

ANNEX A

List of Respondents

NHS North East

Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations

Cumbria Constabulary

Torfaen Voluntary Alliance Wales

NHS Coventry

London Borough of Bexley

Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Stockport Council

NHS Nottinghamshire County

Telford and Wrekin Council

Civil Nuclear Constabulary

Lichfield District Council

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service

Rotherham MBC

Emergency Planning Society – West Midlands Branch

West Midlands Police

Sheffield City Council

Northants LRF

Suffolk Resilience Forum

IAEM Europe

Cleveland LRF

Cleveland Emergency Planning Joint Committee

Bedfordshire and Luton LRF

Manchester City Council

St John Ambulance National HQ

British Red Cross

South East Regional Resilience Forum Voluntary Sector Sub-Group

Essex Fire and Rescue Service

West Yorkshire Resilience Forum

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service

Norfolk Resilience Forum

Institute of Civil Protection and Emergency Management

Worcestershire County Council

The Radio Amateur's Emergency Network

Lancashire County Council
Northumbria Police
Environment Agency
Transport for London
Community Resilience UK
British Red Cross and Voluntary Sector Civil Protection Forum
London Borough of Newham
Strathclyde Police
Hertfordshire Resilience
North Yorkshire County Council
London Borough of Hillingdon
Cheshire LRF
Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service