

RECOVERING FROM EMERGENCIES

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Recovering from emergencies

Summary

- Recovery is a complex and long running process that will involve many more agencies and participants than the response phase ([paragraph 5.1.2](#)).
- Recovery is defined as the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency, but it is more than simply the replacement of what has been destroyed and the rehabilitation of those affected ([paragraph 5.1.3](#)).
- Local communities may also look upon an emergency as an opportunity to regenerate an area. Regeneration is about transformation and revitalisation ([paragraph 5.1.4](#)).
- The chapter sets out:
 - key principles of planning for and undertaking recovery ([paragraph 5.1.9](#));
 - the scope of recovery capability and activity ([paragraph 5.1.8 and 5.1.14](#));
 - a framework for recovery ([paragraphs 5.1.12 to 5.1.13](#));
 - roles and responsibilities for various agencies and groups engaged in planning for and recovering from emergencies ([paragraphs 5.2.1 to 5.2.9](#));
 - suggested structures for those involved in managing recovery ([paragraphs 5.3.1 to 5.3.4](#));

- processes for managing and co-ordinating the recovery phase ([paragraphs 5.4.1 to 5.4.21](#));
- the transition between the response and recovery phase ([paragraphs 5.4.7 and 5.4.19 to 5.4.21](#));
- the role and operation of the Recovery Co-ordinating Group ([paragraphs 5.3.1 to 5.3.4 and 5.4.1 to 5.4.21](#));
- guidance on recovery funding ([paragraphs 5.5.1 to 5.5.12](#));
- guidance on recovery reporting ([box 1](#)); and
- the evaluation and debrief process ([paragraphs 5.6.1 to 5.6.10](#)).

5.1 Recovery overview

- 5.1.1. Roles and responsibilities in the response phase of emergencies are well known, understood and rehearsed. However, experience has shown that the recovery phase and the structures, processes and relationships that underpin it are harder to get right.
- 5.1.2. Recovery is a complex and long running process that will involve many more agencies and participants than the response phase. It will certainly be more costly in terms of resources, and it will undoubtedly be subject to close scrutiny from the community, the media and politicians alike. It is therefore essential for the process to be based on well thought out and tested structures and procedures for it to work in an efficient and orderly manner.
- 5.1.3. **Recovery is defined as the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency, but it is more than simply the replacement of what has been destroyed and the rehabilitation of those affected.** It is a complex social and developmental process rather than just a remedial process. The manner in which recovery processes are undertaken is critical to their success. Recovery is best achieved when the affected community is able to exercise a high degree of self-determination.
- 5.1.4. Local communities may also look upon an emergency as an opportunity to regenerate an area. This regeneration phase may overlap with the recovery phase, with regeneration being defined as:

Regeneration is about transformation and revitalisation - both visual and psychological. This transformation can be physical, social and economic, achieved through building new homes or commercial buildings, raising aspirations, improving skills and improving the environment whilst introducing new people and dynamism to an area.

- 5.1.5. The recovery phase should begin at the earliest opportunity following the onset of an emergency, running in tandem with the response to the emergency. It continues until the disruption has been rectified, demands on services have returned to normal levels, and the needs of those affected (directly and indirectly) have been met. While the response phase to an emergency can be relatively short, the recovery phase may last for months, years or even decades.

Recovery guidance

- 5.1.6. In response to the need for information on preparing for, and undertaking recovery following emergencies, the Cabinet Office published the [National Recovery Guidance](#) on the Cabinet Office UK Resilience website. The guidance provides a single point of reference for local responders dealing with the recovery phase of an emergency. It comprises:

- **Topic Sheets** on a wide range of recovery issues, which are intended to be used as guidance during the planning phase, and as a quick reference note on an as-required basis during an emergency.
- **A Recovery Plan Guidance Template**, which can be tailored to local circumstances and used as a basis for recovery planning (and during the recovery phase of an incident if no plan is in place).

- **Over 70 Case Studies** from incidents and exercises, going back to the Aberfan disaster of 1966, and the 7/7 bomb attacks, so that lessons previously identified can be shared.

5.1.7. The following text summarises the key principles of planning for, and undertaking recovery, as described by the [National Recovery Guidance](#).

Purpose of Recovery

5.1.8. The purpose of providing recovery support is to assist the affected community towards management of its own recovery. It is recognised that where a community experiences a significant emergency, there is a need to supplement the personal, family and community structures which have been disrupted.

Recovery Principles

5.1.9. The principles of recovering from emergencies are:

- Recovery is an enabling and supportive process, which allows individuals, families and communities to attain a proper level of functioning through the provision of information, specialist services and resources.
- Effective recovery requires the establishment of planning and management arrangements, which are accepted and understood by recovery agencies, the community and armed forces (if deployed).
- Recovery management arrangements are most effective when they recognise the complex, dynamic and protracted nature of recovery processes and the changing needs of affected individuals, families and groups within the community over time.

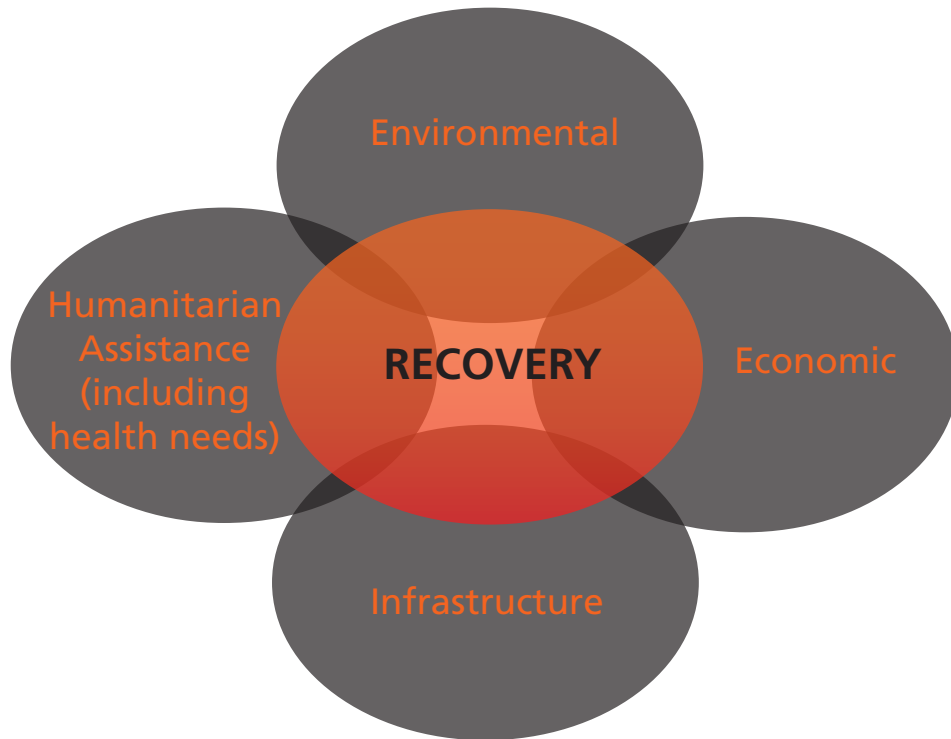
- The management of recovery is best approached from a community development perspective. It is most effective when conducted at the local level with the active participation of the affected community and a strong reliance on local capacities and expertise. Recovery is not just a matter for the statutory agencies - the private sector and the wider community will play a crucial role.
- Recovery management is most effective when agencies involved in human welfare have a major role in all levels of decision-making which may influence the well being and recovery of the affected community.
- Recovery is best achieved where the recovery process begins from the moment the emergency begins. It is recommended that if resources allow, the Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG) is set up on the first day of the emergency.
- Recovery planning and management arrangements are most effective where they are supported by training programmes and exercises which ensure that the agencies and groups involved in the recovery process are properly prepared for their role.
- Recovery is most effective where recovery management arrangements provide a comprehensive and integrated framework for managing all potential emergencies and where assistance measures are provided in a timely, fair and equitable manner and are sufficiently flexible to respond to a diversity of community needs.

Impacts of Emergencies – the Recovery Phase

- 5.1.10. Emergencies affect communities in a wide variety of ways. To understand what recovery comprises, one first needs to map out who is affected and how the emergency has affected them.
- 5.1.11. The impact of emergencies goes well beyond those directly affected by an emergency (e.g. through injury, loss of property, evacuation). Emergencies affect, for example, onlookers, family and friends of fatalities or survivors, response and recovery workers, and the wider community, as well as the economy and businesses, physical infrastructure, and the environment.
- 5.1.12. To understand how emergencies affect individuals and their communities – and thus prioritise and scope the recovery effort – it is important to understand how emergencies impact upon the environment they live and work in.
- 5.1.13. Below is a framework for understanding these impacts and the steps that may need to be taken to mitigate them. There are four interlinked categories of impact that individuals and communities will need to recover from. The nature of the impacts – and whether and at what level action needs to be taken – will depend in large part on the nature, scale and severity of the emergency itself.

Figure 5.1

Framework for understanding the impact of emergencies



- 5.1.14. Although the scope for recovery activities is very broad, by planning in advance, recovery capability can be built around four key themes: humanitarian, economic, environmental and infrastructure.
- 5.1.15. The [National Recovery Guidance](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience/response/recovery_guidance.aspx) includes topic sheets on each of these four themes, plus on generic recovery issues (see Table 5.1). This guidance is regularly updated and can be found at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience/response/recovery_guidance.aspx. Each topic sheet also has links to case studies from numerous incidents and exercises, highlighting how these issues were addressed and what lessons were identified from this process.

Table 5.1

National Recovery Guidance Topic Sheets

Generic Issues	Recovery structures and processes
	Training and exercising
	Data protection and sharing
	Mutual aid
	Military aid
	Working with the media
	VIP visits and involvement
	Impacts on local authority performance targets
	Inquiries
	Investigations and prosecutions
	Coroner's Inquests
	Inquiries into deaths in Scotland
	Recovery evaluation and lessons identified processes
	Impact assessments
Humanitarian aspects	Needs of people - health
	Needs of people – non-health
	Financial support for individuals
	Displaced communities
	UK residents affected by overseas incidents
	Non-resident UK nationals returning from overseas incidents
	Foreign nationals
	Mass fatalities
	Community engagement
	Commemoration
	Community cohesion
Environmental Issues	Environmental pollution and decontamination
	Dealing with waste
	Animal health and welfare
Economic Issues	Economic and business recovery
	Financial impact on local authorities
Infrastructure Issues	Access to and security of sites
	Utilities
	Repairs to domestic properties
	Historic environment
	Site clearance
	Dealing with insurance issues
	Damaged school buildings
	Transport

- 5.1.16. More information on carrying out an impact assessment can be found in the [National Recovery Guidance](#).
- 5.1.17. Elected Local Authority Members and Parish Councillors can play a critical role in the impact assessment process, identifying problems and vulnerabilities in their community that may require priority attention and feeding them back to the relevant recovery group. They also have an important role in disseminating credible information and advice back to the community, assisting to maintain community cohesion and providing public reassurance. Further information on the role of Elected Members in the recovery process can be found in the [Recovery Plan Guidance Template](#).
- 5.1.18. It is vital that following the impact assessment process (which will be an iterative process occurring throughout the recovery phase), any resulting actions are accurately captured and progress monitored. A suggested template for a Recovery Action Plan is shown in the [Recovery Plan Guidance Template](#).

5.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Emergencies within one Local Authority's Boundaries

- 5.2.1 The Local Authority is the agency responsible for planning for the recovery of the community following any major emergency, supported by other local and regional partners via the Local and Regional/Wales Resilience Forums. In most cases, it will be sensible for top tier local authorities to lead but all local authorities and Category 1 responders should input. If there is more than one top tier local authority in the LRF, they should work together to co-ordinate recovery planning.

5.2.2 Following an emergency, local authorities will usually co-ordinate the multi-agency recovery process, including chairing and providing the secretariat for the Recovery Co-ordinating Group, with support from the full range of multi-agency partners as necessary. [Recovery Plan Guidance Template](#) provides details of those other multi-agency partners who should be involved in recovery and outlines their roles and responsibilities.

Emergencies Crossing Local Authority Boundaries in England

5.2.3 When carrying out their recovery planning, local authorities, along with their Local and Regional Resilience Forum partners, need to agree how they would co-ordinate the recovery from emergencies that cross local authority boundaries. The agreed arrangements need to be detailed in the relevant local and regional plans.

5.2.4 Where the emergency crosses a local authority boundary but remains within one LRF area, the affected Authorities will need to decide whether to establish one Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG) at the LRF level, or whether to operate separate RCGs in each local authority area. To ensure there is consistency of approach, no duplication of effort, and to reduce the burden on agencies that cover more than one local authority area, the recommended approach would be to have one RCG to cover all affected communities within the LRF area. In this instance, it would be sensible for the affected local authorities to designate a Lead local authority that would provide the RCG Chair and Secretariat. Other local authorities could then provide Deputy Chairs as necessary.

5.2.5 Where the emergency crosses LRF boundaries, consideration should be given to the potential assistance that the Regional Co-ordinating Group (RegCG) or Regional Civil Contingencies Committee (RCCC) (see [chapter 9](#)) could provide in ensuring

consistency of approach, reducing duplication of effort, minimising the burden on responders, and facilitating the sharing of information, support and mutual aid. Reference should be made to the relevant Generic Regional Response Plan for details of how local and regional responders are represented at RegCG or RCCC meetings.

Lead Government Department

5.2.6 In an event requiring national level recovery structures to be activated, the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (Cabinet Office) will confirm the Lead Government Department (LGD), based on the type of emergency and informed by the list of Lead Government Department responsibilities published on the Cabinet Office UK Resilience website (http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/211520/lead_gov_dept090521.pdf). Where required, the relevant LGD will consider activating the National Recovery Group (further information can be found in [*Central Government Arrangements for Responding to an Emergency: Concept of Operations*](#)).

5.2.7 The relevant Government Office will provide the conduit for communication between local and regional responders and the nominated Lead Government Department.

Other Government Involvement

5.2.8 Other Government involvement in the recovery phase will depend upon the nature of the emergency. The topic sheets in the [*National Recovery Guidance*](#) outline the role of Government Departments and Agencies in dealing with specific recovery issues.

Devolved Administrations

- 5.2.9 Where emergencies cross constitutional boundaries within the UK, it is clearly still vital that recovery efforts are co-ordinated. However, it should be recognised that different legislation and funding streams, as well as different structures, may be in place in the Devolved Administrations. These differences are highlighted in the appropriate sections within the [National Recovery Guidance](#). Areas that border Devolved Administrations should, in the planning phase, agree how recovery would be co-ordinated in cross-government boundary incidents and record this in the relevant local and regional plans.

5.3 Recovery Structures and Organisations¹¹

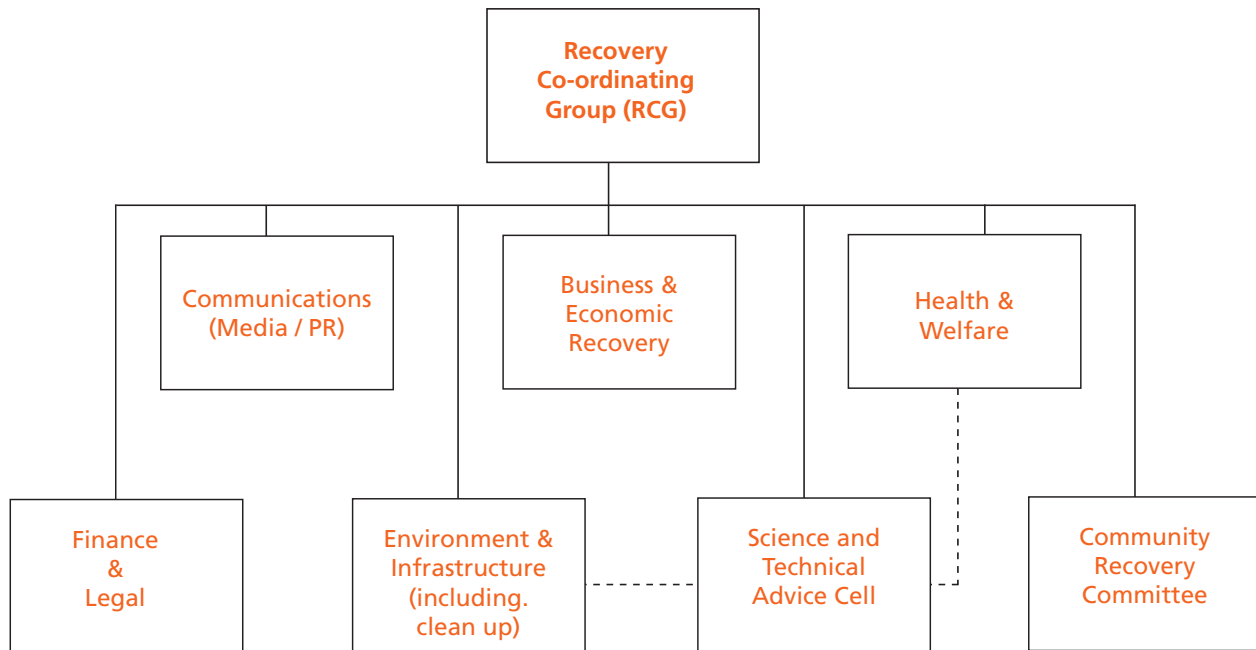
- 5.3.1 The local authority will usually lead the recovery process and chair the RCG, however they will need strong support from a wide range of multi-agency local and regional responders. A suggested structure for managing the recovery and co-ordinating these responders is shown in figure 5.2. These structures are for guidance only. It is a matter for the organisations concerned to decide what structure best suits them for their particular situation. It may not be necessary to establish all the sub-groups shown, depending on the nature of the emergency.
- 5.3.2 Detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) for these Groups, including guidance on membership and issues that may arise, is provided in the [Recovery Plan Guidance Template](#). The chair and secretariat shown are suggestions; it is a matter for the local authority, in consultation with others, to decide who should most appropriately perform these roles.

¹¹ The recovery structures and organisations described in this section are different in Wales. The equivalent arrangements in Wales are summarised in [chapter 11](#).

- 5.3.3 In the initial stages of the emergency, it is advisable to 'start big and then scale down'. An early assessment should be made of the responding organisations' capacity and resources, and mutual aid agreements activated as required. In the event that co-ordination is required at the regional level, contact should be made with the relevant Regional Resilience Team to discuss how this may best be delivered. This discussion should consider whether establishing a Regional Co-ordinating Group (RegCG)/ Regional Civil Contingencies Committee (RCCC) (or maintaining the RegCG / RCCC if used in the response phase) would be beneficial. In Wales, contact should be made via the Welsh Assembly Government and consideration should be given to establishing a Civil Contingencies Group or Wales Civil Contingencies Committee (see [chapter 11](#)).
- 5.3.4 In light of the cross-cutting nature of recovery, the range of participants during the recovery phase often goes beyond the usual responding bodies and may include organisations such as Regional Development Agencies, Tourist Boards, Chambers of Commerce, Natural England, or English Heritage (and devolved equivalents in devolved areas), as well as community groups and faith leaders, and possibly individual businesses. Similarly, other wider representatives from Category 1 and 2 organisations, such as Social Services and Elected Members from local authorities, should be involved.

Figure 5.2

Recovery Structures and Organisations



5.4 Management and Co-ordination of the Recovery Phase

Activation of the Recovery Co-ordinating Group

- 5.4.1 Activation of the Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG) is initiated by the local authority, usually following a request by or agreement with the Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG). An important part of the work of the RCG during the response phase of an emergency is to develop a recovery strategy (see paragraph 5.4.4) and inform the SCG of this strategy to ensure decisions made by the SCG do not compromise medium to long term recovery. The RCG reports into the SCG until the SCG is stood down.

5.4.2 Membership of the RCG will be decided by the local authority based on the type of emergency, but likely membership is illustrated in the RCG Terms of Reference in the [Recovery Plan Guidance Template](#).

5.4.3 A suggested agenda for the first meeting of the RCG is included in the [Recovery Plan Guidance Template](#).

Strategy of the Recovery Co-ordinating Group

5.4.4 At the start of the recovery process, a clear recovery strategy should be developed and agreed by the RCG. The recovery strategy could cover some, or all, of the following:

- an Impact Assessment (covering impacts on residents, businesses, infrastructure, environment, etc) is carried out as soon as possible and is regularly updated;
- determining at an early stage if there is an opportunity for longer term regeneration and economic development as part of the recovery process;
- determining at an early stage if there is an opportunity to enhance the resilience of the area (physical and social);
- a concise, balanced, affordable recovery action plan is developed that can be quickly implemented, involves all agencies, and fits the needs of the emergency;
- fully involving the community in the recovery process;

- ensuring all agencies work closely with the community and those directly affected, including the monitoring and protection of public health;
- bringing utilities (e.g. gas, water and sewerage) and transport networks back into use as soon as practicable;
- having a pro-active and integrated framework of support to businesses is established;
- ensuring all affected areas are restored to an agreed standard so that they are 'suitable for use' for their defined future purposes;
- co-ordinating environmental protection and recovery issues;
- co-ordinating the information and media management of the recovery process; and
- having effective protocols for political involvement and liaison (Parish, District / County / Unitary and Parliamentary) are established.

5.4.5 As part of the recovery strategy, it is recommended that various targets / milestones for the recovery are established and agreed. The community should be involved in establishing these targets. These targets provide a means of measuring progress with the recovery process, and may assist in deciding when specific recovery activities can be scaled down. Targets / milestones could include:

- demands on public services returned to normal levels (including health);

- utilities are again fully functional;
- transport infrastructure is running normally;
- local businesses are trading normally; and
- tourism in the area has been re-established.

5.4.6 The targets (particularly involving businesses and tourism for example) have to be balanced against external market drivers and changes in the wider economy which may mean that it is not possible for the area to fully recover to its pre-incident levels.

Handover from Response Phase to Recovery Phase

5.4.7 In order to ensure that all agencies are aware of the implications and arrangements for handover from the response to recovery phase, it is suggested a formal meeting is held within a few days of the start of the emergency. Membership at this meeting should, as a minimum, include the Strategic Co-ordinating Group Chair and the affected local authorities, and should consider:

- the criteria to be used to assess when the handover can take place from the Strategic Co-ordinating Group (usually chaired by the Police) to the Recovery Co-ordinating Group (usually chaired by the local authority). Suggested criteria are shown in the [Recovery Plan Guidance Template](#);
- the process for the handover - it is recommended that a formal handover process is followed and a suggested handover certificate is shown in the

Recovery Plan Guidance Template. As part of the handover process, consideration needs to be given to how information collated as part of the response phase is effectively, efficiently, and securely handed over to those responsible for managing the recovery phase; and

- communications to other responding agencies and the community about the handover.

Location and Operation of the Recovery Co-ordinating Group

- 5.4.8 In the early part of the recovery phase (both when the Recovery Co-ordinating Group is running in parallel with the Strategic Co-ordinating Group, and after the lead is handed over from the SCG chair to the RCG chair), there is much merit in agencies being (and remaining) co-located, if possible, to establish communication links and ensure ready interaction between agencies can be maintained.
- 5.4.9 Once individuals return to their desks, the demand to return to the 'day job' and catch up may become irresistible and the recovery process may falter. If the Strategic Co-ordination Centre (SCC) is not available, then alternative (probably local authority premises) should be found.
- 5.4.10 That said, some agencies necessary to the recovery process may not have been involved in the response phase and will need to be integrated into the process.
- 5.4.11 The lead recovery officer from the local authority needs to manage this progression carefully and instil the importance of agencies being closely allied, especially in the early stages of recovery.

- 5.4.12 The frequency of RCG meetings will be determined by the group on a case-by-case basis. In the early stages, the group may meet two or three times a day, but this is likely to reduce over time, maybe to once or twice a week.
- 5.4.13 The need for accurate record keeping is of paramount importance. The responses to issues will be on public view, there will be a requirement to prepare reports, and there is also the potential for subsequent inquiries or litigation. There needs to be clear audit trails with comprehensive records of timings, notifications, decisions, actions and expenditure. It would therefore be beneficial to use the same information management system used in the response phase for the recovery phase.

Recovery Reporting

- 5.4.14 A reporting framework for recovery has been introduced to ensure that there is a common understanding between Government departments, the Government Offices/devolved administrations, and local responders, about what will be expected in terms of reporting during the recovery phase.
- 5.4.15 The recovery reporting framework will enable local authorities to undertake a degree of planning to ensure they have the resources at their disposal to collate the information required, during and after an incident. It will also ensure that central government has a recognised system by which it can collect recovery information from localities. This will help to inform decisions as to what central government support may be required. The recovery reporting framework is only intended to be activated in the event of a wide area emergency requiring central government co-ordination of the recovery phase.

- 5.4.16 The recovery reporting framework sets out the likely data requirements from local responders and provides guidance as to what the information is likely to be used for. It will be made available through Government Offices and will be incorporated into the revised Response Situation Report template which will be published at a later date.
- 5.4.17 Local responders may find the recovery reporting framework helpful in training and exercising for larger scale emergencies. Flexibility about what data needs to be reported is important. The type of information required will depend on the particular nature of the incident and the operational needs of those responsible for recovery, particularly at the local level.
- 5.4.18 In order to ensure that these arrangements are as consistent and as straightforward for local responders to use as possible, they all operate according to a set of recovery reporting principles (see Box 1, below). These principles have been commonly agreed with all relevant government departments and give guidance as to how the reporting framework will be activated, and the processes in place to alert localities to its activation. It includes the procedure by which the information will be requested, and the process by which it will be collected, by central government.

Box 1: Cross-Government Principles on Recovery Reporting

- The recovery reporting framework allows local responders to be aware of the potential requirements for reporting recovery and, in the event of an emergency, will provide a strategy to co-ordinate central government requests for recovery information.
- The information requirements in the framework should be sufficiently generic to be useable in any type of emergency recovery situation, be it flooding, pandemic flu or a terrorist attack. That said, the framework will have the flexibility to allow for additional information needs depending on the situation being dealt with.
- The framework should only be activated when there is central government recovery co-ordination and a Lead Government Department role is initiated. Government will judge whether co-ordination is needed on a case by case basis.
- Government Departments will ask for information using the recovery reporting framework and using the principles set out. Only in exceptional circumstances should Government Departments ask for additional information not covered in the reporting framework.
- Information included in the framework should have a sound rationale for their inclusion and clear provenance of the data. Data requests should be kept at a minimum whilst still allowing Departments and Ministers sufficient information from affected areas to allow them to determine the scale of the recovery situation and make decisions about the type of support that may need to be offered.

- Information in the framework will also be used to monitor progress being made during the recovery process.
- The framework will be integrated as far as possible with the collection of information for the Emergency Response SitReps to make the reporting requirements as seamless as possible for Regional Resilience Teams /Welsh Assembly Government and local responders. The revised response SitRep template will be published at a later date on the Cabinet Office UK resilience website.
- Most recovery work in Wales will fall to the Welsh Assembly Government and there may not always be a requirement to report up to CCS or to other government departments if the emergency falls within devolved competence, or is not of a sufficient scale to require the UK Government involvement.
- Information included in the framework should include, as far as possible, information requests that would be needed in determining any additional funding from individual departments recovery funding schemes. However, it will not necessarily follow that activation of the recovery framework goes hand in hand with additional funding for local authorities.
- It is not possible to prescribe timescales for the duration for collection of this information but exit strategies should link to the completion of recovery objectives as set out in recovery plans. Timescales should, as far as possible, be consistent with those required by the funding streams so as to reduce the burden on local authorities collecting this information.

- All of the information required may not be available during the early stages of the recovery phase. There may be an incremental increase in the amount of information it is possible to gather.
- The information required will be collected as a function of the Recovery Co-ordinating Group. The information should be provided and disseminated as follows:



Stand-Down of the Recovery Co-ordinating Group

- 5.4.19 The Chair of the Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG), in discussion with the RCG members, will decide when it is appropriate to stand-down the group. The needs of the community will be key to this decision.
- 5.4.20 The length of time that the RCG is required to continue meeting will vary according to the nature and scale of the emergency. Some emergencies may have long term issues to consider, such as health monitoring. The RCG will be closed once there is no longer the need for regular multi-agency co-ordination and the remaining issues can be dealt with by individual agencies as a part of their normal business. Depending on the recovery issues being addressed, it may be possible for some of the RCG sub-groups to close prior to the main RCG standing down.
- 5.4.21 The decision to stand-down the RCG will be communicated to all affected agencies by the RCG Chair / Secretariat.

5.5 Funding for recovery¹³

5.5.1 The flooding incidents of summer 2007 were both widespread and exceptional in nature. In response, Government put together, for the first time, a financial package to assist affected local authorities with the costs of recovery, in addition to the support provided in the response phase through the existing [Bellwin](#) scheme in England. (see also [chapter 4](#)). The Bellwin scheme does not apply in the recovery phase. This section only covers Central Government Recovery funding arrangements.

5.5.2 Drawing on the lessons learned from summer 2007, and in response to Sir Michael Pitt's recommendation on recovery funding, Government has now put in place arrangements to manage future calls from local authorities for help with costs incurred in the recovery from exceptional emergencies.

5.5.3 In the event of an exceptional emergency, individual departments (CLG, DfT, Defra and DCSF), will consider providing financial support for various aspects of the recovery effort. DfT already had a scheme in place ([Emergency Capital Highway Maintenance scheme](#)). CLG, Defra and DCSF have now put in place their own arrangements. These are set out on the relevant departmental websites:

- www.communities.gov.uk
- www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/ltp/guidance/fltp/floodfundingguidance.pdf
- www.defra.gov.uk
- www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/230802/dcsf-funding-guidance.pdf

shows information on DCSF recovery funding arrangements.

¹³ The funding arrangements described in this section do not apply in Wales.

- 5.5.4 To ensure that these arrangements are as consistent and as straightforward for local authorities to use as possible, they all operate according to a set of commonly agreed principles (see Box 2).

Box 2: Cross-Government Principles on Recovery Funding

- The appointment of a Lead Government Department (LGD) for recovery will not necessarily trigger the activation of recovery funding arrangements and vice versa.
- Costs of funding recovery in a particular sector will fall to the department responsible for that sector (e.g. DfT for transport issues), irrespective of which department is designated the LGD for recovery in that instance.
- Departments will not pay out for recovery costs that are insurable – with the exception of damage to roads (see below for more detail).
- The activation of any funding arrangements will be at Ministerial discretion. Activation will not be automatic, and activation by one department of its arrangements will not automatically trigger activation by other departments of their arrangements – this will depend on the impact of an emergency on a particular sector.
- Any funding provided by a department will depend on the impact of a particular emergency on the relevant sector, and the total resource which that department is able to make available at the time. This will need to be balanced against the requirements of existing programmes and other priorities which might be making demands on finite resources.

- There will be no automatic entitlement to financial assistance even if arrangements are activated. Local authorities will have to demonstrate need against criteria laid down by the department running a particular scheme.
- Government will not normally pay out against costs relating to areas where there is already a Government spending programme in place, or where existing programme spend can be re-prioritised. Local authorities will need to confirm that they are unable to claim funding for damage repairs from any other source.

Likely Circumstances for Activation of Recovery Funding Arrangements

5.5.5 As recognised in the Pitt Review, local authorities should make arrangements to bear the costs of recovery in all but the most exceptional circumstances. It is up to councils to assess their own risk and put in place the right mix of insurance, self insurance, and reserves, to provide both security and value for money for their communities. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy provides guidance for local authorities on the establishment and maintenance of local authority reserves and balances. The latest guidance can be found at www.cipfa.org.uk/pt/download/laap77.pdf.

5.5.6 However, Government may consider stepping in to provide support in exceptional circumstances. For the purposes of this guidance, this should be taken to mean major emergencies with the sort of impacts currently described as Significant (Level 4) or Catastrophic (Level 5) as set out in the Local Risk Assessment Guidance (see table 5.2 for examples).

5.5.7 Local authorities should be aware that the impacts set out in table 5.2 are purely indicative. The meeting of one, or more, of these indicators would not on its own trigger the provision of central government financial assistance for recovery and, as set out in the cross-government principles (box 2), activation of its funding arrangements by one department would not automatically trigger activation by other departments.

5.5.8 European Union Solidarity Fund

The EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF) was established in 2002 to provide financial assistance in the aftermath of major disasters to meet part of public expenditure costs in dealing with disasters.

5.5.9 The Fund is intended to contribute towards the costs of damages incurred where no other funding is available, including emergency relief and reconstruction operations. As such, it can be used to support the costs of emergency services, cleaning up and putting infrastructure back into working order. Regulations governing the grant state that the EUSF can only be spent on the following types of work:

- Immediate restoration to working order of infrastructure and plant in the fields of energy, water and waste water, telecommunications, transport, health and education (Note: in most circumstances, costs relating to energy, water, waste water and telecommunications will not be covered as these costs are borne by the private utilities companies).
- Providing temporary accommodation and funding rescue services to meet the immediate needs of the population concerned.

- Immediate securing of preventive infrastructures and measures of immediate protection of the cultural heritage.
- Immediate cleaning up of disaster-stricken areas, including natural zones.

5.5.10 In order to qualify for assistance in the case of a major disaster, the total cost of damages incurred by a EU Member State must exceed a certain amount. That is, the cost of all damage must exceed 3.2 billion Euros or 0.6% of the affected country's Gross National Income - whichever is the lower.

5.5.11 The assistance from the EUSF is apportioned progressively as follows:

- the portion of the damage exceeding the threshold gives rise to aid amounting to 6% of the total direct damage; and
- for the total direct damage under the threshold, the rate is 2.5%.

5.5.12 Therefore, even if the threshold is met, the total aid provided would still be only a small proportion of the total costs of damage - typically between 2.5% and 5% of the total damage suffered.

Table 5.2: Example of circumstances under which central recovery funding may be activated (from *Emergency Preparedness* Annex 4D: Likelihood and Impact Scoring Scales)

Level/Descriptor	Categories of Impact	Description of Impact
4 - Significant	Health	Significant number of people in affected area impacted with multiple fatalities, multiple serious or extensive injuries, significant hospitalisation and activation of MAJAX procedures across a number of hospitals.
	Social	Significant damage that requires support for local responders with external resources. 100 to 500 people in danger and displaced for longer than 1 week. Local responders require external resources to deliver personal support. Significant impact on and possible breakdown of delivery of some local community services.
	Economic	Significant impact on local economy with medium-term loss of production. Significant extra clean-up and recovery costs.
	Environment	Significant impact on environment with medium- to long-term effects.
5 - Catastrophic	Health	Very large numbers of people in affected area(s) impacted with significant numbers of fatalities, large number of people requiring hospitalisation with serious injuries with longer-term effects.
	Social	Extensive damage to properties and built environment in affected area requiring major demolition. General and widespread displacement of more than 500 people for prolonged duration and extensive personal support required. Serious damage to infrastructure causing significant disruption to, or loss of, key services for prolonged period. Community unable to function without significant support.
	Economic	Serious impact on local and regional economy with some long-term, potentially permanent, loss of production with some structural change. Extensive clean-up and recovery costs.
	Environment	Serious long-term impact on environment and/or permanent damage.

5.6 Debriefing and Identifying Lessons

5.6.1 It is important to ensure that a continuous evaluation of the recovery phase takes place, and that any issues identified are captured and actioned as necessary. The formal debrief process (which may be repeated on a number of occasions at key milestones during a prolonged recovery phase) should identify issues from all partners involved in the recovery process. Consideration should also be given to obtaining views from the affected community (residents and businesses).

Recovery Debriefs

5.6.2 After an emergency, it is very important that thorough debriefs are carried out to capture issues identified, recommendations to be implemented, and planning assumptions to be reviewed. However, the processes required in order to share the issues identified are not always clear. Many responders look to the agencies affected by an emergency to provide them with information so they too can be prepared for a similar event.

5.6.3 The recovery phase of an emergency has additional complications as the time line is longer, and it potentially involves more stakeholders than the response phase. Typically, it has peaks of activity, such as around the time of an anniversary, as well as routine ongoing work to address the physical and psychological effects of the emergency.

5.6.4 For most emergencies, it is appropriate to carry out a number of debriefs at different stages in the recovery, when certain "recovery milestones" are achieved

or a certain period of time has elapsed. It may be a number of months since the emergency until the first recovery debrief can take place, but there should be a continual process for debriefs throughout the recovery phase.

5.6.5 In widespread emergencies involving the regional or national tier, debriefing at local level may feed into a regional or national level document. In these cases, the process and format may be steered by the regional or national tier in order to produce a consistent and comprehensive debrief.

5.6.6 As debriefing moves from response to recovery, it is increasingly important that the community (including businesses) is involved at all stages. Elected Members can play a key role in this, chairing public (and business) debrief meetings. They can also be useful for door-knocking rounds, bringing back issues that the community has identified, and providing a trusted point of contact for those with concerns.

5.6.7 The contents of debrief documents may be used as evidence in Public Inquiries - further details of which can be found in the Inquiries topic sheet within the [*National Recovery Guidance*](#).

5.6.8 There is currently no specific guidance on how to carry out recovery debriefs, but learning from those carried out following recent incidents shows that the following key points may be useful:

- Where a Recovery Co-ordinating Group is established to lead the recovery from an emergency, it would be sensible to hold a debrief session before the disbandment of the group (or any of its sub-groups). It is suggested that internal debriefs within an organisation are held first, with these thoughts then being brought together in a multi-agency debrief.

- A strategy for obtaining views from the community (residents, businesses, etc) should be developed and agreed with Elected Members and the Recovery Co-ordinating Group. Such a strategy might include the use of:
 - questionnaires;
 - focus groups;
 - websites; and
 - existing networks (eg. business networks, parish councils, community groups, etc).

- Obtaining views from the community is likely to require an extended debriefing programme (in terms of the time needed to issue questionnaires, collate responses, gather focus groups, etc), but the debrief still needs to be carried out in a timely fashion so issues are still fresh in peoples' minds. The use of an independent company or facilitator to take forward the public debrief programme should be considered to (1) demonstrate impartiality – particularly if the emergency has been contentious, and (2) because of the personnel resource such an exercise is likely to require:

- There is likely to be considerable pressure to release the recovery debrief report into the public domain, particularly if the community have been consulted. It is therefore recommended that a pro-active approach is taken to this issue, with an early statement being made about the consultation mechanisms, the fact that the report will be published (with details of how, e.g. on a website, etc), and with an indicative publication date being provided.

- Documents produced during the debrief process should be held for a suggested five years, but then reviewed in light of possible inquiry or investigation timelines prior to disposal. Everyone should maintain their own documents in case of an inquiry.

Identifying and learning lessons

5.6.9 The collation of lessons identified from the recovery phase of emergencies and exercises should be the same as those used for the response phase.

- National lessons identified can be fed via Regional Resilience Teams (or devolved equivalents) to the Civil Contingencies Secretariat in the Cabinet Office for collation and co-ordination of any subsequent actions by the relevant government departments.
- Regional lessons identified can be fed into Regional Resilience Teams for consideration and action by Regional Resilience Forums (this would be the Wales Resilience Forum in Wales).
- Local lessons identified can be collated for consideration and action by Local Resilience Forums.

5.6.10 Where lessons identified would be of interest to Local or Regional Resilience Forum members in other geographic areas, these can be flagged to the Regional Resilience Team / Welsh Assembly Government who will arrange for them to be disseminated via their networks. Consideration should also be given to producing case studies (with links to the full debrief report) for inclusion in the [National Recovery Guidance](#). Details of how to submit case studies, along with the case study template, can be found with the Guidance on the UK Resilience website¹⁴.

¹⁴ http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience/response/recovery_guidance.aspx