

Emergency Response Plan

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Summary of Key Plan Elements

Plan Aim:

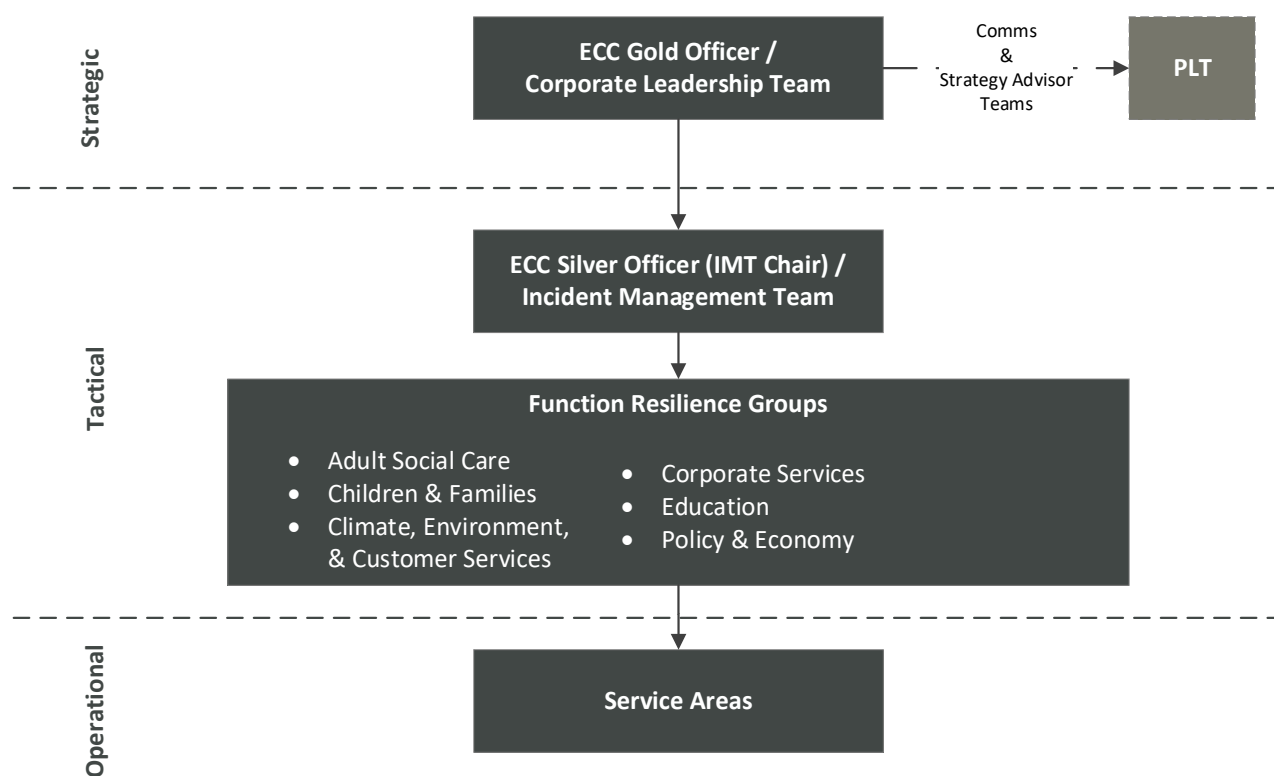
The ECC Emergency Response Plan provides a framework to manage and coordinate Essex County Councils (ECC) response to a major incident or emergency.

Incident Levels:

Level	Description	Determining Factors (Triggers)	Managed by
1	Emergency Planning Duty Officer only	- No requirement for ECC services - Alerted for information only - Require passing on information to other partners	EP&R
2	Emergency Planning Duty Officer and requested services	- Action required by a very limited number of ECC Services - Incident not complex and unlikely to be protracted	EP&R or Lead Service Area
3	Coordinated Tactical Response	- Major incident declaration/standby - Action required from a number of ECC Services - Tactical Coordinating Group called - ECC activity requires tactical-level cross-Function coordination	Silver Officer / IMT
4	Coordinated Strategic Response	- Major incident declaration/standby - Action required from a large number of ECC Services - Strategic Coordinating Group called - ECC activity requires strategic-level cross-Function coordination - Incident is complex and protracted	Gold Officer / CLT

Command Structure:

Group	Focus	Incident Levels
Corporate Leadership Team	Strategic	4
Incident Management Team	Tactical (cross-organisation)	3-4
Function Resilience Groups	Tactical	2-4
Services / Teams	Operational	1-4



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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

As a Category 1 responder ECC is subject to the full suite of duties outlined within the Civil Contingencies Act (2004). This Emergency Response Plan satisfies the duty to plan for an emergency. It provides a framework and guidance for managing and coordinating ECC's response to a major incident, or emergency, the scale of which cannot be consumed in 'business as usual' or requires ECC resources to form part of a multi-agency response.

1.2 Plan Aim

The ECC Emergency Response Plan provides a framework to manage and coordinate Essex County Councils response following a major incident or emergency.

1.3 Plan Objectives

The objectives of this plan are:

- To describe the arrangements in place for activating ECC's emergency response
- To define the command structures of ECC in the response phase of an emergency
- To define the roles and responsibilities of ECC staff (Officers and Members) in the response and recovery phases of an emergency
- To outline the formal transition from response to recovery, and recovery command structures

1.4 Plan Ownership

This plan is managed and maintained by the Emergency Planning & Resilience Team (EP&R) on behalf of ECC.

The plan is approved by ECC's Operational Leadership Team (OLT).

1.5 Scope

This plan relates only to ECC's response to a major incident or emergency. This plan does not cover multi-agency response structures or roles and responsibilities, except where included to cover how ECC engages in those structures. For information on multi-agency emergency response refer to the [Essex Resilience Forum \(ERF\) Response and Recovery Framework](#).

The [Corporate Business Continuity Plan](#) should be referred to for responding to business disruptions, which may be simultaneous to the emergency response.

1.6 Plan Maintenance & Review

This plan will be reviewed:

- Every three years, or
- When learning from an incident/exercise, or organisational change, requires a more urgent update

1.7 Key Definitions

1.7.1 Incident

“An event or situation that requires a response from Essex County Council as an emergency responder.”

Not all incidents may have consequences meeting the definition of an emergency (see below) or a major incident (see below), however they may still need a response to be taken.

1.7.2 Emergency

“An event, situation or incident which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK, the environment of a place in the UK, or the security of the UK or of a place in the UK.”

In the event of an emergency impacting Essex, it is possible that a major incident (see below) may be declared by one or more emergency responders.

1.7.3 Major Incident

“An event or situation with a range of serious consequences which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agency.”

A major incident is beyond the scope of business-as-usual operations, and is likely to involve serious harm, damage, disruption or risk to human life or welfare, essential services, the environment, or national security.

A major incident may involve a single-agency response, although it is more likely to require a multi-agency response, which may be in the form of multi-agency support to a lead responder. The severity of the consequences associated with a major incident are likely to constrain or complicate the ability of responders to resource and manage the incident, although a major incident is unlikely to affect all responders equally.

2 Emergency Response Plans

2.1 Accessing Emergency Plans

Emergency plans are held within the following plans database locations.

- [MS Teams Virtual Incident Response Centre : Plans Database Channel](#)
- [ECC ResilienceDirect Plans Database](#) (accessible to those with ResilienceDirect accounts)
- [EP&R Shared File area](#) (only accessible to EP&R Team)

2.2 ECC Emergency Response Plan

This plan provides a framework to manage and coordinate Essex County Councils (ECC) response following a major incident or emergency, setting out the overarching command and control structures, roles and responsibilities.

The main body of the plan is supported by a number of Annexes.

2.2.1 ECC Emergency Response Plan Annexes

To support this document, the following annexes provide specific procedural information and guidance:

- Annex 1 – ECC Gold Officer and CLT Pack
- Annex 2 – ECC Silver Officer and IMT Chair Pack
- Annex 3 – Guide for ECC Staff Attending an Emergency
- Annex 4 – Log Keeping
- Annex 5 – ECC Elected Members Emergency Response Information & Guidance
- *Annex 6 – Removed, no longer required, replaced by EP&R Duty Officer Dashboard.*
- Annex 7 – Emergency Response Centre and Support Team Procedures
- Annex 8 – Emergency Financial Protocols

2.3 ECC Recovery Framework¹

Sitting in parallel with the ECC Emergency Response Plan, the ECC Recovery Framework identifies recovery-specific roles and responsibilities, describes the ECC recovery command structures, outlines the methodology for recovery impact assessments and the process for designing a recovery action plan.

¹ In development

2.4 Hazard/Consequence-Specific Emergency Plans

To meet specific statutory requirements, or based upon risk, a range of hazard/consequence-specific plans are available:

- Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) External Emergency Plans for Essex-located COMAH sites (x5)
- ECC Animal Health Response Plan
- ECC Extreme Temperatures Response Plan
- ECC Human Aspects in Emergencies Framework
- ECC Multi-Service Flood and Adverse Weather Plan
- Joint Major Accident Hazards Pipelines Emergency Response Plan (ECC / Thurrock Council)

2.5 Function Emergency Response Plans

Function Emergency Plans provide specific plans for each of ECC's Functions; identifying their arrangements for emergency prevention, mitigation, response and recovery. These plans document the response/recovery capabilities of each Function, including their availability and capacity. These plans also identify Service-specific emergency plans, maintained by the Function.

2.6 Service Area Emergency Plans

These are plans developed by Services/Teams which have particular roles/capabilities in emergency response.

2.7 Multi-Agency Plans

Whilst individual organisations carry the legal duty to prepare emergency plans (under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004), the supporting Regulations permit organisations to collaborate in the creation of multi-agency plans, where it is agreed that a formal set of procedures governing all responders is needed for a successful combined response.

ECC collaborates with other emergency responders through the Essex Resilience Forum in the creation of multi-agency plans, which can be found in our Plans Database locations, and through ResilienceDirect.

3 Activation of Emergency Response Plans

3.1 Notification

ECC has a dedicated 24/7 Emergency Planning Duty Officer System that runs parallel to a Gold (Strategic) and Silver (Tactical) Officer rota. Formal notification of an incident will be received by the Emergency Planning Duty Officer from Category 1 and 2 responders and other partner agencies.

Any Service that becomes aware of an incident that may require an emergency response from ECC should inform the Emergency Planning Team.

3.2 Incident Levels

There are different levels of response in place which allow ECC to provide a sufficient and appropriate reaction to any incidents that occur which require ECC's support.

The table below details the different levels of response available to ECC, what the determining factors are that would trigger that level of response, who needs to be informed, and whether this plan is activated.

The determining factors in the table are not an exhaustive list.

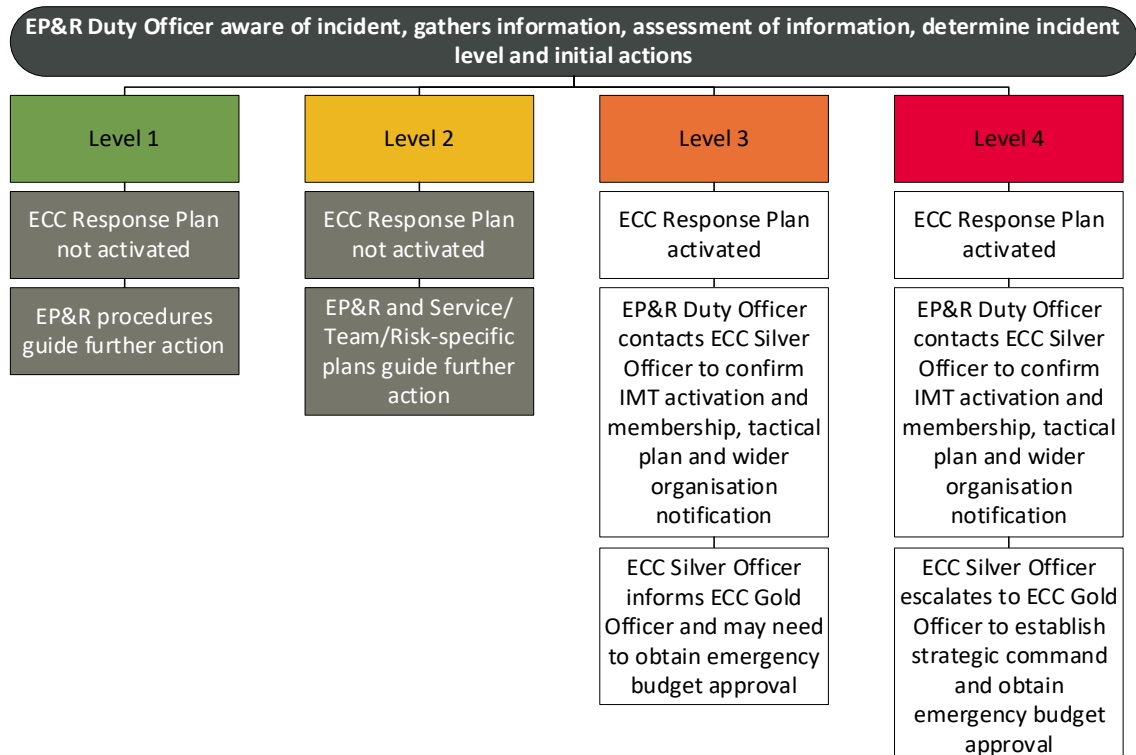
Level	Description	Determining Factors (Triggers)
1	Emergency Planning Duty Officer only	- No requirement for ECC services - Alerted for information only - Require passing on information to other partners
2	Emergency Planning Duty Officer and requested services	- Action required by a very limited number of ECC Services - Incident not complex and unlikely to be protracted
3	Coordinated Tactical Response	- Major incident declaration/standby - Action required from a number of ECC Services - Tactical Coordinating Group called - ECC activity requires tactical-level cross-Function coordination

4	Coordinated Strategic Response	• Major incident declaration/standby • Action required from a large number of ECC Services • Strategic Coordinating Group called • ECC activity requires strategic-level cross-Function coordination • Incident is complex and protracted
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3.3 Activating Emergency Response Plans

Once aware, the Emergency Planning Duty Officer will gather and assess information, determine the incident level, take initial required actions, including escalating to ECC Silver/Gold and activating ECC's response arrangements / capabilities. To assist the Emergency Planning Duty Officer, procedures and guidance are available with the **EP&R Duty Officer Dashboard**.

Depending on the severity of the incident, the Emergency Planning Duty Officer will provide a briefing to the ECC Silver Officer and, in consultation with them, will determine whether to activate this plan. This consultation will also determine whether any other plans should be activated and if there are any immediate tactical or strategic level considerations. Level 1 and 2 incidents may require the use of information/procedures within specific Annexes of this plan, and may also activate Service/Team/Risk-specific emergency plans, however they are unlikely to require the full activation of the ECC Emergency Response Plan. Level 3 and 4 incidents will activate the ECC Emergency Response Plan.



3.4 Determining When to Declare a Major Incident

Activation of any level of emergency response, including Level 4 – Coordinated Strategic Response, does not automatically require ECC to declare a major incident. Neither does the declaration of a major incident by another responder.

Declaring a major incident is not required to enable any action, capability, or decision within the arrangements of this plan or supporting emergency plans. However, some emergency actions and decisions will fall within scope of formal decision making / the Scheme of Delegations contained within [ECC's Constitution](#), provision is made within the Constitution for the event of emergency. Declaration of a major incident by ECC may be beneficial in reflecting significant impact to any of the features below and reinforce the need for action, capabilities, or decisions:

- **Resource Requirements:** The need for significant organisational resources, or being unable to meet the resource needs, requiring mutual aid or Government assistance.
- **Service Disruption:** Significant disruption to service delivery, either directly impacted by the emergency, or due to reallocation of organisational resources.
- **Duration and Recovery:** The expected duration of the emergency and the time required for recovery and renewal is expected to be significant.
- **Human, Environmental, Infrastructure and/or Security Impacts:** The potential or actual serious harm to life, health, and/or safety of the population, the environment, infrastructure, and/or security of Essex.
- **Economic Impact:** The significant financial cost of the emergency, including damage to businesses, loss of income, and the economic burden on the community and/or ECC finances.

The decision for ECC to declare a major incident can only be made by an ECC Gold Officer. If a major incident is declared it must be communicated to all emergency responder partner agencies using the M/ETHANE format².

3.5 Escalation

The incident level, and corresponding ECC response, will be kept under review by those involved. The response to an incident can be escalated up ECC's response levels if greater levels of coordination are necessary.

3.6 Lowest Level of Command

ECC's emergency response will adopt the principal of subsidiarity. Decisions should be taken at the lowest appropriate level, with coordination at the highest necessary level. ECC's responding Teams and individuals are the building blocks of any emergency response.

² M/ETHANE model is an established reporting framework between emergency responders, providing a common structured message for responders to share incident information.

3.7 Emergencies & Business Continuity Incidents

Emergency response is focused on the impacts to the communities and place of Essex, and emergency plans cover how that response is delivered. However, those same impacts may also disrupt the provision of ECC's services; therefore, concurrent activation of both emergency response and business continuity plans may be required. The command and control arrangements for ECC's emergency and business continuity response are aligned, enabling simultaneous management of both, through the same structures.

4 Essex County Council Responsibilities

During an emergency, the overarching responsibilities and priorities of ECC are:

Community support and humanitarian assistance	Meeting the immediate, short, medium, and longer-term needs of those affected.
Communications	Providing public information, in line with agreed comms strategy.
Coordinate voluntary sector	Where numerous organisations are involved
Partner agency support	Working in partnership with wider responders, ensuring a joined-up response
Coordinate local authority response	Where an incident affects multiple Lower Tier Local Authorities, ECC may play a coordinating role
Lead the recovery	Coordinating longer-term recovery and renewal, including supporting communities to become more resilient.
Service-specific priorities	Activities required by legislation, e.g., mortuary capability, safeguarding, investigation and enforcement, public health.

5 Command, Control & Coordination

5.1 Response Arrangements

This section of the plan outlines response arrangements should this plan be implemented.

The structure identified in sections below is designed to be flexible and scalable. Additional elements can be added to the response structure if deemed necessary, whilst only portions of the structure need to be activated to manage the response to an incident.

The structure identified aligns with the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principals (JESIP) command levels of strategic, tactical and operational:

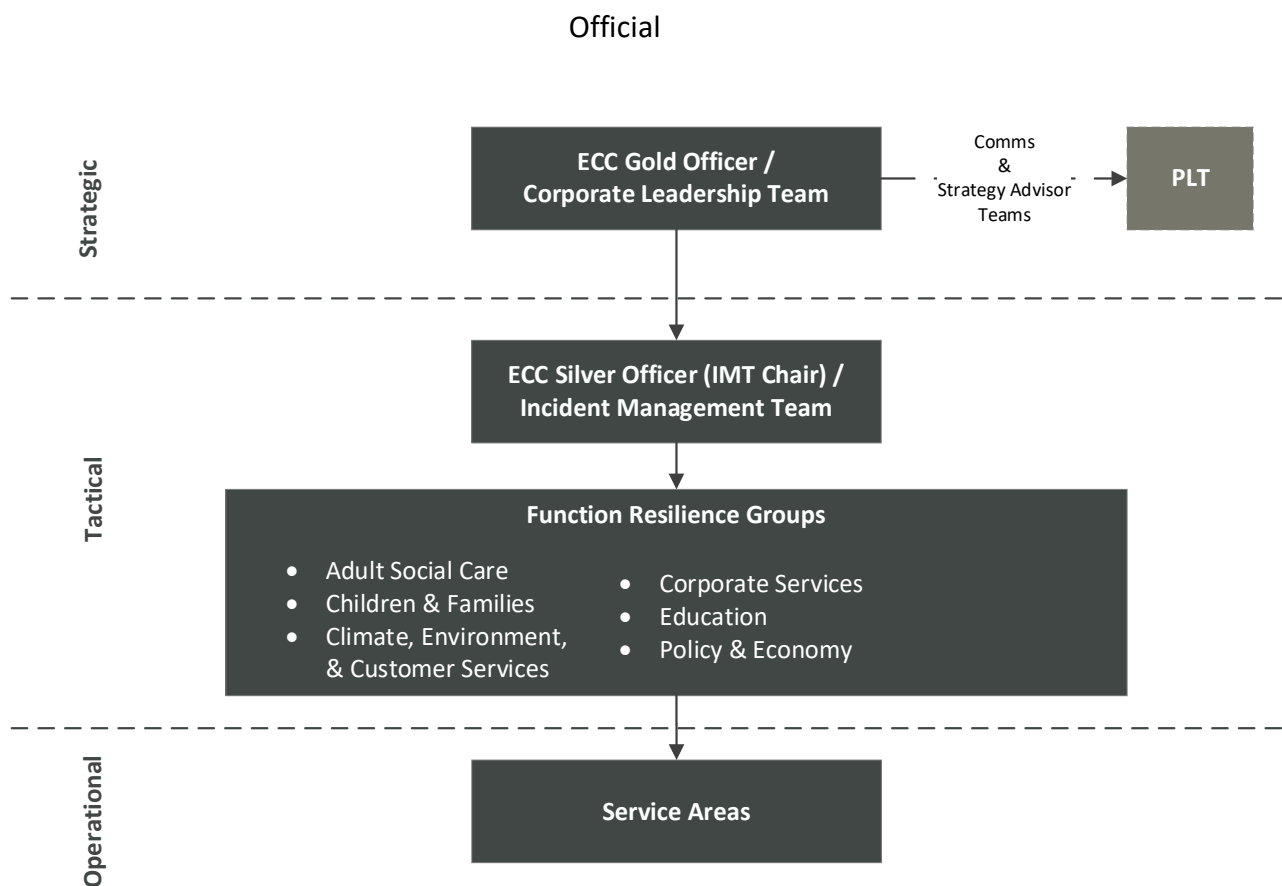
Strategic	Sets strategic direction Coordinates responders Prioritises resources
Tactical	Interprets strategic direction Develops tactical plan Coordinates activities and assets
Operational	Executes tactical plan Commands single-service response Coordinates actions

5.2 Command Structure

The diagram below shows the command structure should all levels be activated to manage and coordinate the response to an incident.

The strategic element of this structure may not be activated when responding to a level 3 incident. Incidents of level 2 and below are managed at the operational level only.

The diagram does not show the multi-agency structures, which will be operating concurrently and follow the similar strategic, tactical, and operational format.



5.3 Determining When to Activate Incident Management Team

ECC's Silver Officer determines the need to activate Incident Management Team (IMT), with advice from EP&R. IMT should be considered for incident level's 3 and 4. The decision will be informed by considering the following factors:

- **Incident Severity:** The actual/potential impact to people, environment, and infrastructure.
- **Resource Availability:** The current/anticipated resource capacity/capability to manage the incident.
- **Communication and Information Flow:** The effectiveness of existing channels and the need to implement greater centralisation/coordination.
- **Cross-cutting Impacts/Coordination Requirements:** The complexity of impacts across multiple Functions/Service Areas, the need to effectively coordinate action/communications across Functions.

5.4 Determining When to Activate Function Resilience Groups

Each Function's IMT representative will determine the need to activate their own Function Resilience Group (FRG), with advice from EP&R and their own Function Leadership. The decision will be informed by considering similar factors to those included in the IMT section above, but considered through the lens of an individual Function.

Activation of a single Function's FRGs may be considered for incident level 2 if needed their own involvement in an emergency, even in the absence of IMT, reporting directly to the Silver Officer. FRGs will be considered by all Functions for incident levels 3 and 4, however they won't always be needed across all Functions, depending on the factors listed above.

5.5 Emergency Response Centres

Main information contained within ***Annex 7 – Emergency Response Centre and Support Team Procedures***

To support a coordinated response to emergencies (and/or business disruptions), particularly for incidents of level 3 and greater, ECC's emergency response centres (ERC) provide areas for collaboration, information sharing and contributing to shared situational awareness.

These response centre environments are for ECC's internal incident coordination. Multi-agency response centre environments are not included in these procedures.

A hierarchy of emergency response centre options exist:

1. **Virtual Incident Response Centre (VIRC).** A virtual space in Microsoft Teams that enables responders to coordinate remotely. It will also support hybrid working for responders that have co-located. All response plans are stored in this space and incident information can also be stored there.
2. **Physical response centre locations.** These may be required for two potential scenarios:
 - a. Virtual/hybrid incident coordination has proved ineffective and co-locating has been requested to improve coordination. In this scenario, a hybrid meeting room will likely still be preferred.
 - b. Technology failure (e.g., power failure or cyber-attack scenarios) – co-locating may be necessary. In this situation, emphasis is on providing an environment to get information into the real world (whiteboards etc.) as use of technology for managing incident information will be limited initially. The County Emergency Response Centre (CERC) in Seax House basement is maintained for this situation.

5.6 Information Management

Management of information is required to ensure the successful response to emergencies, facilitate shared situational awareness, and to act as a record for any future debrief or inquiry. Everyone has a responsibility for managing information with due care in emergencies, ensuring information is shared appropriately during the response and retained correctly.

Further information is available in ***Annex 4 – Log Keeping*** and ***Annex 7 – Emergency Response Centre and Support Team Procedures***

5.6.1 Types of Information

Below are some of the specific information products used to manage information during emergencies:

Information	Description	Responsible
Strategic Priorities	ECC's strategic priorities to direct all other response activity across the organisation (generic list included in Roles and Responsibilities section above). These will be aligned to any agreed multi-agency strategy.	CLT / ECC Gold Officer
Response Objectives	Identifies the objectives needing to be met, aligned to the strategic priorities.	IMT / ECC Silver Officer
Meeting Records	Record of incident management meetings should be taken. These may be in the form of written minutes, or meeting recordings may be made. For actions and decision, refer to Incident Log below.	All meeting chairs
Incident Log / Major Incident Log	Contains ECC's record of actions, decisions, and lessons (as a minimum). As an incident increases in complexity/duration, additional information will be recorded, including: risks & issues, milestones, resourcing, dependencies, stakeholders and comms.	CLT / IMT ECC Gold / ECC Silver Officers
Individual Logs	A record of an individual's involvement in the response. To include: communications, actions and decisions (not made as part of a group, which will be captured in the ECC Incident Log / Major Incident Log). This record can take the form of a specific written log, but will also include other information assets, such as: emails, MS Teams messages and recordings.	All involved individuals

Situation Reports (SITREPS)	Report outlining the current state and potential development of an incident and the response to it. Situation reports may be internal, or may be requested to inform multi-agency partners Refer to Appendix C: Situation Report Template	As requested between levels of incident command structure
Briefings	Exchanged between individuals and groups, briefings will enhance shared situational awareness. Example uses include new individuals joining the response, and at shift handovers. Refer to Appendix D: Briefing Template	All involved individuals
Other information / records created for the purpose of managing the emergency	A wide range of other information / records may be produced as required for the purpose of emergency response, such as those needed for determining/assessing incident impact, identifying/supporting vulnerable individuals/premises, aiding decision making, Cabinet Member Actions, and a wide range of other records that may be created as needed at the time.	All involved individuals

In addition to these internal information products, multi-agency-generated information products will be essential to the successful response to emergencies, and shared situational awareness. Where these are received, this information should be managed alongside ECC's internally generated information products.

5.6.2 Information Management Locations

Information management will be aligned to the emergency response centre option in use. Further information is contained within **Annex 7 – Emergency Response Centre and Support Team Procedures**

5.6.3 Information Management Support Resources

Whilst responsibility for the information products is with those managing the response, it will be necessary for supporting resources to help maintain them.

As the impact of an incident places more demands on ECC, the resourcing allocated to support the response will be increased. A scalable approach to these additional resources will be taken.

Information about this is contained within ***Annex 7 – Emergency Response Centre and Support Team Procedures***

5.7 Emergency Finances

Responding to emergencies will incur expenditure. These costs may be covered / recovered from a range of possible funding sources, and each is bound by specific procedures. Refer to ***Annex 8 – Emergency Financial Protocols***

5.8 Upward Reporting Arrangements

Situation reports should be provided up the chain of command on a frequent basis. Ideally these should be provided prior to each of the appropriate response team meetings.

5.9 Briefings

Regular briefings help ensure that information is shared amongst staff and that there is shared situational awareness. Regular briefings will be held between all activated parts of the ECC response structure.

Briefings should also be held between individuals at the end/beginning of each shift to ensure that the incoming counterpart has an understanding of the current picture and the actions they are required to continue/undertake.

Briefings are to be constructed using the IIMARCH structure, refer to ***Appendix D: Briefing Template***

5.10 Concurrent Incidents

In the event of another incident occurring concurrently with the initial one, the existing command structure established will be responsible for coordinating response to both. If necessary, additional elements can be added to the existing response structure.

5.11 Responder (Staff) Welfare

The impact upon staff of responding to emergencies should not be underestimated. It is important that, as part of the response, responder (staff) welfare is considered. This is embedded as a responsibility within key ECC command structure roles.

The following will improve staff welfare:

- Training and preparation
- Clear roles and boundaries
- Shifts, including signing on/off duty
- Briefings/debriefs to include welfare
- Seeking, listening, and responding to feedback
- Provision of refreshments

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- Provision of overnight accommodation (where appropriate)
- Access to emotional support
- Appropriate supervision of response activities (e.g., Team Leaders)
- Information about normal reactions to stress, and when to seek help (including signposting)
- Pre-deployment personal risk assessment, and the option to say no
- Monitoring of health impacts
- Appropriate messages of thanks

6 Roles & Responsibilities

6.1 Corporate Leadership Team

Comprising of the normal membership of CLT. The role and responsibilities of CLT in an emergency response are:

- Provide strategic direction and overview to ensure an effective response is being undertaken
- Aligned to agreed multi-agency communications strategy, establish, and maintain clear communication channels and provide briefings to the media and public (assisted by the Communication & marketing Team)
- Manage potential harm to the reputation of the Council
- Authorise expenditure
- Keep the Political Leadership Team (PLT) informed
- Receive and consider situation reports from the IMT
- Provide representation at any strategic level multi-agency meetings/groups
- Consider requesting assistance from other local authorities or partner agencies
- Plan and coordinate the recovery phase
- Maintain an accurate log of decisions made and actions taken

During emergency response, the normal membership of CLT may be enhanced with the addition of:

- ECC Gold Officer (if not routinely a member of CLT)
- ECC Silver Officer / Chair of the IMT
- Emergency Planning Team Advisor
- Loggist (to record actions and decisions)
- Others, as required

6.2 ECC Gold Officer

In an emergency when CLT have not been activated to provide strategic coordination as a group, the ECC Gold Officer will fulfil all the roles and responsibilities as listed for CLT.

The ECC Gold Officer will be the organisations representative at multi-agency Strategic Coordinating Group meetings.

The ECC Gold Officer also has specific roles and responsibilities identified within multi-agency plans, in particular leading the Recovery and Human Aspects Advisory Group in advance of transition from response to recovery, and nominating a Local Authority Human Aspects Lead Officer to lead the Human Aspects Steering Group.

These roles and responsibilities may be split between a primary Gold Officer and a Deputy.

Further information is available in ***Annex 1 – ECC Gold Officer Pack***

6.3 Incident Management Team

The Incident Management Team (IMT) is responsible for the tactical level coordination and decision making in relation to the incident; including determining and agreeing the objectives and identifying resources to support response. IMT will take direction and follow the strategy set by CLT/ECC's Gold Officer.

The IMT will provide regular information to CLT/ECC Gold Officer, which will include actions taken, progress and on-going impacts to service provision.

The roles and responsibilities of the IMT include:

- Manage the tactical response of ECC to the incident
- Determine the incident impact
- Identify the response objectives
- Liaise between and provide tactical advice to CLT and FRGs
- Coordinate actions taken to meet the response objectives
- Manage the ECC resourcing to multi-agency groups
- Provide messaging/information to staff

The membership of IMT will normally consist of:

- Chair of the IMT – for a no-notice incident this will normally be the on-call ECC Silver Officer/Deputy Silver, however in a planned response / long-duration response, a specific individual may be identified as the most appropriate Chair.
- Function Resilience Group representatives (normally FRG Chairs)
- Communications Team representative
- Emergency Planning Team Advisor
- Loggist (to record actions and decisions)
- Service-specific representative, to be identified as required for each incident, where they are best represented directly, rather than via FRG representatives

Refer to **Appendix A: Initial IMT Agenda** and **Appendix B: Ongoing IMT Agenda**

6.4 ECC Silver Officer

Coordinate ECC's tactical response to an incident, including chairing IMT. In an emergency when IMT have not been activated to provide tactical coordination as a group, the ECC Silver Officer will fulfil all the coordinating roles and responsibilities as listed for IMT.

The ECC Silver Officer will be the organisations representative at multi-agency Tactical Coordinating Group meetings. Early consideration of recovery and human aspects are important aspects to the ECC Silver Officers role, linked to ECCs overarching responsibilities.

These roles and responsibilities may be split between a primary Silver Officer and a Deputy. Further information is available in **Annex 2 – ECC Silver Officer Pack**

6.5 Function Resilience Groups

The Function Resilience Group (FRG) will implement and manage the response of their Function. The FRG of some Functions may closely align with their regular Function Leadership Team (FLT) membership, whilst others may differ; this is individual choice depending on each Function's needs. Close working between a Function's FRG and FLT will be required, should these differ in membership significantly. Whilst sitting at a tactical level in terms of the overarching organisational response structure, it is recognised that within the context of a single Function the FRG may also be strategic in nature; so long as the responsibilities below are met, this position is acceptable.

The FRG will be responsible for, but not limited to:

- Confirm the priorities of the Function, in response to established overarching response strategies and ECC IMT tactical objectives
- Identify key Function objectives, based on the priorities
- Directed by the Chair, coordinate the Function's response capabilities
- Ensure communication channels are set up with Services, Senior Management, staff, and other stakeholders
- Ensure FRG membership is maintained and appropriate, including shift rotas as required and suitable handovers undertaken between individuals
- Undertake the roles described within the Function Business Continuity Plan, to assess and manage any disruption to service delivery
- Ensure the welfare of responding staff, including the short, medium, and longer-term needs are met

The membership of FRGs will normally consist of:

- FRG Chair – this may be the Function's Executive Director, or another individual with delegated authority
- Directorate representatives (Directors or deputies)
- Specific Service representatives, where they are best represented directly, rather than via Directorate representatives
- Supporting Business Partner representatives as required (and subject to availability), i.e. Communications Team, People Services, Technology Services, and EP&R

Functions should refer to their individual ***Function Emergency Response Plan***

6.6 Directors / Service Representatives at FRG

Directors and Heads of Service (or those with delegated responsibility) will undertake their roles on FRG as described above.

As representatives of their respective areas on FRG, they should:

- Alert FRG of delivery issues within their area, either realised or anticipated
- Raise to FRG issues from Operational Teams requiring management action

- Ensure required FRG actions are carried out
- Identify support their area either requires or can offer

Reference should be made to ***Function Emergency Response Plans*** and any ***Service-specific Emergency Response Plans***

6.7 Services / Teams / Individuals

Services, Teams and/or individuals will be responsible for the operational delivery of the Function capabilities.

They should:

- Alert Management of delivery issues within their area, either realised or anticipated
- Report issues seen operationally which require management action
- Ensure actions are carried out as directed
- Identify support their area either requires or can offer

Reference should be made to ***Function Emergency Response Plans***, any ***Service-specific Emergency Response Plans***, and ***Annex 3 –Guide for ECC Staff Attending an Emergency***

6.8 Cabinet Members / Elected Members

Political members have a key part to play in the response to an emergency. While it is not the role of a councillor to get involved in the strategic, tactical, or operational coordination and delivery of response or recovery, they have an important role in providing a political lead.

Senior politicians, the Leader and Portfolio Holders are the public face of ECC and as such have an important role in both encouraging community resilience and in supporting the community during and after an emergency.

Councillors whose wards have been impacted by the emergency have a key role in supporting their communities.

6.8.1 Community and Civic Leadership

Be present and visible as the trusted local face of the council. Be a trusted conduit for reliable information. Identify needs and feed these into appropriate response and recovery coordination, via council officers. Assist with VIP visits, ensuring these are sensitive to community needs.

6.8.2 Political Leadership

Support and recognise the work of Officers. Seek assurance the council continues to deliver services. Make representations to Government for additional support as needed.

Further information is available in ***Annex 5 –Elected Members Emergency Response Information & Guidance***

7 Multi-Agency Coordinating Groups

ECCs response to an emergency will also require involvement with multi-agency coordinating groups, to ensure the most effective approach. The full information about the role and responsibilities of these groups can be found within relevant multi-agency plans, so is not repeated here.

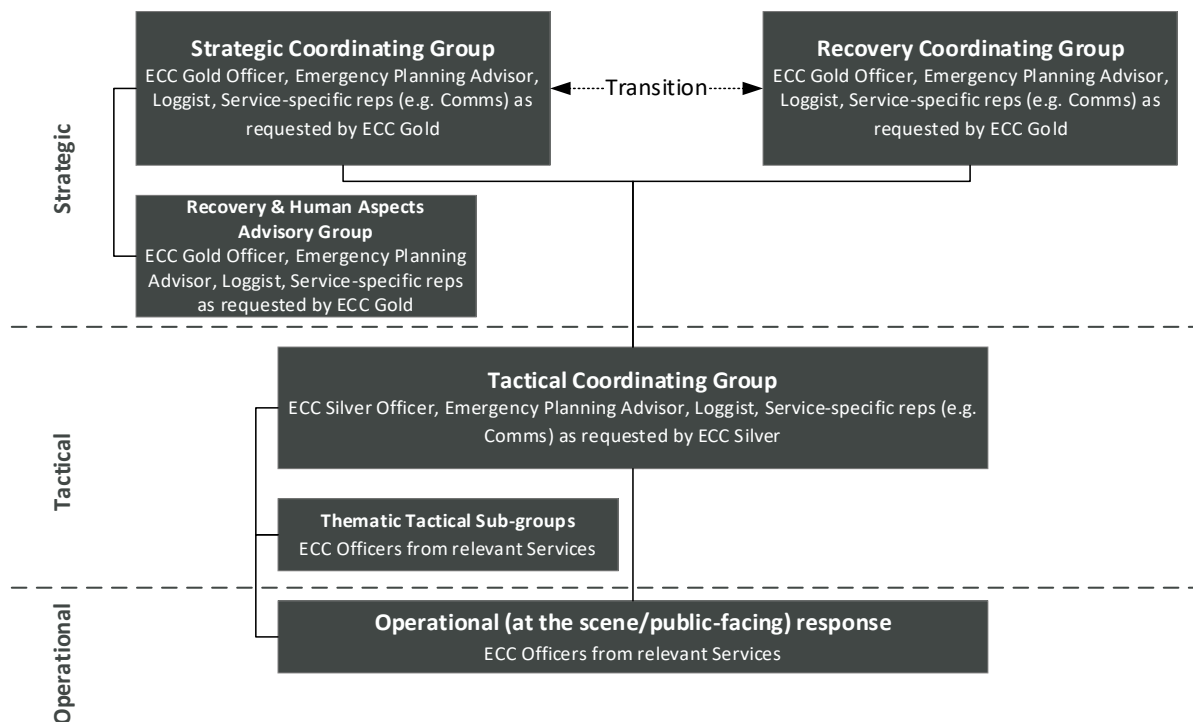
ECC's involvement within these groups may range from a participant to a lead for the group, depending on the nature/scale of the incident, phase of the emergency and agreed multi-agency plans.

If leading, common to all groups will be the responsibility to:

- Establish Terms of Reference for the group including the aim and objectives
- Ensure group meets at appropriate intervals
- Ensure appropriate group membership
- Ensure effective sharing of group information, including group action/decision logs
- Deliver the group-specific aspects linked to overarching strategies
- Provide reports to the overarching coordinating group, escalating issues as required

7.1 Multi-Agency Command Structure

The diagram below shows a typical multi-agency major incident command structure and ECC's involvement.



7.2 Strategic Coordinating Group

ECC may be required to participate within or lead multi-agency Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG). ECC requirements:

- Ensure appropriate attendance at SCG. This will normally be the ECC Gold Officer, with support from EP&R and a log keeper.
- Ensure attending with up-to-date situational awareness of the ECC picture / status
- Ensure updates are provided in a timely manner or when requested

7.3 Recovery and Human Aspects Advisory Group

ECC may be required to participate within or lead the multi-agency Recovery and Human Aspects Advisory Group (RHAG). In an incident affecting multiple Lower-Tier Local Authority areas, it is likely ECC will lead. ECC requirements:

- Ensure appropriate lead/attendance at RHAG. This will normally be the ECC Gold Officer, with support from EP&R and a log keeper.
- Ensure attending with up-to-date situational awareness of the ECC picture / status
- Ensure updates are provided in a timely manner or when requested

7.4 Recovery Coordinating Group

ECC may be required to participate within or lead the multi-agency Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG). In an incident affecting multiple Lower-Tier Local Authority areas, it is likely ECC will lead. ECC requirements:

- Ensure appropriate lead/attendance at RCG. This will normally be the ECC Gold Officer, with support from EP&R and a log keeper.
- Ensure attending with up-to-date situational awareness of the ECC picture / status
- Ensure updates are provided in a timely manner or when requested

7.5 Tactical Coordinating Groups

ECC may be required to participate within or lead multi-agency Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG). TCG's may also have a range of supporting sub-groups (refer to Thematic Sub-Groups section below). ECC requirements:

- Ensure appropriate attendance at TCG. This will normally be the ECC Silver Officer, with support from EP&R and a log keeper.
- Ensure attending with up-to-date situational awareness of the ECC picture / status
- Ensure updates are provided in a timely manner or when requested

7.6 Thematic Sub-Groups

ECC may be required to participate within or lead multi-agency thematic sub-group(s). These groups will bring partners together to coordinate the response to a specific theme of the response/recovery. Details of the range of sub-groups that may be required are found across multi-agency plans. Other sub-groups may be activated by overarching coordinating groups (TCG / SCG / RHAG / RCG) as required. Examples of thematic sub-groups include:

- Human Aspects Steering Group (HASG)
- Communications Sub-Group
- Mass Fatalities Coordination Group
- Multi-Agency Information Cell (MAIC)

ECC requirements:

- Ensure appropriate lead/attendance at sub-group. Relevant ECC representatives may be identified within multi-agency plans, or representation will be coordinated by IMT/ECC Silver Officer.
- Ensure attending with up-to-date situational awareness of the ECC picture / status
- Ensure updates are provided in a timely manner or when requested

8 Recovery & Renewal

8.1 Overview

ECC will play a key role in the recovery phase of any emergency, potentially a leading role amongst partner agencies.

This section provides an overview of recovery and how this is managed by ECC. Further information is contained within the **ERF Recovery Framework** and the **ECC Recovery Framework**.

8.2 Key Definitions

8.2.1 Recovery

Recovery is the process of rebuilding, restoring, and rehabilitating the community following an emergency. This phase takes place after the response to a disaster or incident has concluded, although it should be planned for and considered right at the beginning of any emergency. The typical recovery actions associated with this phase would be around making the site of a disaster safe again, cleaning up the environment, or removing debris with the goal of moving towards normality again.

8.2.2 Renewal

Renewal activities are part of recovery, but they are more strategic and longer-term with the aim of building stronger, more resilient and sustainable communities and systems. These activities are often more political and focus on broader policy changes with goals that are sometimes referred to as moving towards a 'new normal'.

8.3 Transition to Recovery

As stated, recovery will be planned and considered from the beginning of any emergency. However, a point will be reached when the emergency is contained and the focus shifts to recovery, rather than response, at this point formal handover to recovery coordinating groups will occur. As the lead agency for response and recovery will likely differ, the **ERF Recovery Framework** contains formal procedures for this handover.

8.4 Recovery Command, Control and Coordination

The IMT will continue to provide a focal point of the coordination; their focus shifting from response to recovery as the emergency progresses. IMT may activate a range of internally facing cross-organisation sub-groups, focussed on ECC-aspects of the recovery, including necessary organisational transformation. IMT will also coordinate ECC representation at multi-agency recovery coordinating groups / sub-groups.

Recognising the greater political focus of recovery and renewal, strategic direction will come from both CLT and ECC's Political Leadership.

ECC's internal coordination structures for managing the recovery to an emergency are described within the ***ECC Recovery Framework***.

8.5 Transition to Business-as-Usual

Recovery from emergencies may take some considerable time, potentially many years, both in terms of the humanitarian and environmental impacts. ECC's management of recovery aspects to an emergency may eventually conclude, with an organisational return to the pre-incident state, or there may be ongoing aspects that need to transition to business-as-usual services. This transition to business-as-usual may be absorbed into the current organisational structure, or there may need to be adaptation.

9 Stand Down

9.1 Overview

This section of the plan details what ECC needs to do once the response to the emergency concludes. Recovery & renewal may be continuing, as they may do for a prolonged period.

9.2 Retention of Incident Records

Retention of incident records is a legal requirement. Records may be required for inquiries, investigations, and debriefing. They may also provide the organisation and/or individuals with protection against litigation.

Annex 4 – Log Keeping provides more information on the records to be retained, legal basis, and retention periods.

9.3 Reset of Emergency Response Centres

Activated emergency response centres (virtual or physical) will be prepared by the EP&R Team for future emergency response. This will include:

- Retention of incident records (see above)
- Virtual / physical housekeeping of the environments to ensure the response centre is set for the next emergency (with all necessary consideration of the retention requirements)

9.4 Debriefing & Identifying Lessons

A formal debrief will be arranged by the Emergency Planning and Resilience Team, following the activation of this plan. The debrief will identify lessons and notable practice from the response.

Legal advice will be sought to inform the schedule of debriefs, should there be (or likely to be) legal processes linked to the emergency, such as police investigations or public inquiries.

Appendix A: Initial IMT Agenda

Item No.	Item	Lead
1	Introductions - Function representatives (whole Function) - Service-specific representatives	Chair
2	Incident Briefing - Situation - Response - Forward Look	EP&R
3	Impact Assessment - Impact to the community, environment and/or security of Essex - Impact to service delivery	Chair
4	Response Objectives - To support the community, environment and/or security of Essex - To support service delivery / mitigate disruption	Chair
5	Communications - External - Internal	Comms
6	Confirmation of Roles and Structure - Agree roles and responsibilities of staff - Agree response structure, identify any additional groups - Agree ECC representatives at multi-agency coordinating groups - Identify additional IMT representatives required - Consider deputies for resilience / shifts - Stand down members not required	Chair
7	AOB	Chair
8	Date/Time of Next Meeting	Chair

Appendix B: Ongoing IMT Agenda

Item No.	Item	Lead
1	Urgent Matters	Chair
2	Previous Actions Updates	Chair
3	Incident Update • Situation • Response • Forward Look	EP&R
4	Review Impact Assessment • Impact to the community, environment and/or security of Essex • Impact to service delivery	Chair
5	Review Response Objectives (Progress / Changes Required) • To support the community, environment and/or security of Essex • To support service delivery / mitigate disruption	Chair
6	Function Updates • Adult Social Care • Children & Families • Climate, Environment and Customer Services • Corporate Services • Education • Policy & Economy	Function Reps
7	Communications • External • Internal	Comms
8	Roles & Response Structure Review	Chair
9	AOB	Chair
10	Date/Time of Next Meeting	Chair

Appendix C: Situation Report Template

Event/incident	
Date & Time	
Agency Name	
SIREP Completed By	
Completed on Behalf Of	
Contact Details	

Situation Report (refer to guidance on next page)

RAG Status	
Situation	
Response	
Forward Look	

Escalation

Escalation to Tactical	
Escalation to Strategic	

Situation Report Guidance

Situation Reports should include summaries of:

- Direct and wider impacts
- The operational response
- Significant risks, emerging issues
- Assumptions and critical uncertainties
- Forward look
- Other resilience issues arising
- RAG status explanation
- Point of contact and time/date of last update/check of the information

The **escalation section** will be passed to tactical / strategic level, information passed to them should be appropriate to that level of reporting.

RAG status

- The RAG status is an honest and defensible appraisal of three dimensions of the emergency: a) the situation, b) the response to it and c) foreseeable developments.
- The three dimensions are separated but are combined into a single indicator, and in the absence of a prescribed method of doing so, the RAG status will reflect the collective judgement of the organisation.
- There is no merit in 'talking up' or taking an unrealistically optimistic view of where things stand and how they are projected to develop.
- The relevant text entry should adequately explain the RAG status given.
- Indicators of the three levels are defined as follows:

Status	Situation	Response	Forward Look
Red	Incident having a strategically significant impact; normal community business has been significantly affected	The response is at or has exceeded the limits of capacity or capability, and further resources are required	The situation is expected to either get worse or remain at this level for the short to medium term
Amber	Incident having a moderate impact with issues of strategic concern; normal community business has been affected, but the situation is being effectively managed	The response is being managed, at this time, within current resources and through the activation of local contingency plans and/or coordinated corrective action; mutual aid might be required in the short to medium term	The situation is not expected to get any worse in the short to medium term although some disruption will continue

Green	There is limited or no strategic impact from the incident; normal community business has largely returned or is continuing	Ongoing response is being managed locally, and within the capacity of pre-planned resources	The situation is expected to improve with residual disruption being managed
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Reporting provenance and quality

- The source/time and assessed quality of information should be clearly and prominently reported.
- Where critical uncertainties (i.e., factors that are unknown, but which have the potential to strategically alter the situation if they become known) exist they should be clearly identified, and associated risks set out.

Defining concepts and terms for common understanding

- Where common understanding of a concept or term is necessary for shared situational awareness it should be clearly explained.
- Common understanding of terms cannot be assumed – terms should be defined.
- Where agreed definitions exist, these should normally be adopted and explained.
- Acronyms and abbreviations should be minimised, and always explained at their first use in every issue of the Situation Report.

Appendix D: Briefing Template

I	Information What, where, when, how, how many, so what, what might? Timeline. M/ETHANE.	
I	Intent Why are we here, what are we trying to achieve? Strategic aim and objectives.	
M	Method How are we going to do it? Command, control, and coordination arrangements.	
A	Administration What is required for effective, efficient, and safe implementation? Identification of commanders, tasking, timing, decision logs, equipment, PPE, food, logistics	
R	Risk Assessment What are the relevant risks, and what measures are required to mitigate them?	
C	Communications How are we communicating with external partners, internally and with the public? Who are we communicating with, by what means and frequency? Inter-agency communications and media strategy.	
H	Humanitarian Issues What humanitarian assistance and human rights issues arise or may arise from this event and the response to it? Information sharing.	

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