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Major Incidents

Consequence Management including the application of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) Joint Doctrine



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1. Introduction

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 designates the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) as a Category 1 Responder and places certain duties on it as a result.

The PSNI is committed to training, equipping and exercising officers and staff to respond effectively and safely at strategic, tactical and operational levels to Major Incidents.

A Major Incident is defined as:

‘Any emergency which requires the implementation of special arrangements by one or more of the emergency services.’

Special arrangements include;

- The initial treatment, rescue and transport of a large number of casualties;
- The involvement either directly or indirectly of large numbers of people;
- The handling of large numbers of enquiries likely to be generated both from the public and the news media usually to the police;

- The need for the large scale combined resources of two or more emergency services;
- The mobilisation and organisation of the emergency services and supporting organisations.

Any incident meeting one or more of these criteria should be formerly declared a **MAJOR INCIDENT**.

2. Aim

Police officers and staff must be able to recognise Major Incidents and understand how to respond to them.

Major Incidents generally have three distinct police response requirements:

- **Resolution** – actions to bring the cause of the incident to an end;
- **Consequence Management** – the management of impact of a major Incident throughout the response and recovery phases.
- **Investigation** – the investigation of any alleged criminality associated with the incident;

All police officers and staff should be familiar with the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) Joint Doctrine for response to Major Incidents. Specifically:

- Understanding the mnemonic M/ETHANE for major incident reporting;
- The Joint Operating Principles; and
- The Joint Decision Model (JDM).

The Joint Doctrine of JESIP was developed to support Major Incident response. The principles can be equally applied to any incident in which multi-agency partners work together.

This Service Instruction focuses on the management of the consequences of a Major Incident and is primarily guidance for:

- First Responders;
- Police Incident Commanders; and
- Police Commanders and Control Rooms.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and HM Coastguard in Northern Ireland all have Major Incident Plans. The content of this document supports and

enables not only the PSNI's response, but also that of our partner agencies.

3. Outline

Major Incidents are rarely declared. They can be classified as natural or human generated incidents. Human generated incidents generally arise from transport incidents, industrial accidents and mass gathering events or terrorist attacks.

Where a Major Incident is declared which only affects one of the partner services the PSNI will usually continue business as usual.

The primary aim of all responding agencies initially is to work together to save lives.

This document is guided by Authorised Professional Practice from the College of Policing. Specifically:

- [Civil Emergencies](#); and
- [Command and Control](#).

4. Initial Report to Police

Notification of an event which may be declared a Major Incident can occur in three ways:

- A call from a member of the public to a Contact Management Centre;
- A report from an Officer; on scene at the incident; or
- A report from the Control Room of a multi-agency partner.

In all circumstances where a Major Incident is notified or declared the Incident Co-ordination Centre must be immediately notified.

5. Initial Police Response

On arrival at the scene an initial report to Contact Management Centre will be required using the M/ETHANE mnemonic (see [Appendix A](#)). This report must be recorded, using the mnemonic, on the Command and Control system.

The initial Police response will be guided by Section 32 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 and will be delivered in line with the principles of JESIP.

Initial actions in response to a Major Incident will focus on life saving. Control in this phase will most likely be held by the Fire or Ambulance Service.

Once the rescue phase is complete other strategic priorities will become more prominent.

6. Police Incident Commander

As soon as possible the Duty Inspector from the relevant District should be tasked to attend the incident and perform the role of Police Incident Commander.

The Police Incident Commanders' response will be guided by Section 32 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 and will be delivered in line with the principles of JESIP.

The Police Incident Commander has two roles:

1. To oversee the delivery of the Police agreed actions in support of the multi-agency partnership.
2. To oversee the implementation of the Police Silver strategy when agreed

The Officer will be supported by a number of on scene roles.

7. The Role of the Incident Co-ordination Centre

Initial Command for all Major Incidents will be undertaken by the Incident Co-ordination Centre (ICC).

As soon as a Major Incident is declared by any Officer the Incident Co-ordination Centre will undertake a series of set actions outlined in an action card held at that location.

ICC will assume the role of Silver Command during a Major Incident until the relevant Area Tier Silver Control Room is opened and a Silver Commander is in place.

8. Silver Command (Consequence Management)

A Police Silver Control room should be set up in the relevant District or Area Tier in which the incident takes place as soon as

possible. This will require the appointment of a Silver Commander for the Major Incident. This officer should formerly accept command for consequence management activities from ICC as soon as they are in a position to do so.

Their role is to command and coordinate the overall tactical response (ultimately in conjunction with the Gold Commander's strategy once this is in place). To achieve this, the Police Silver Commander should develop a Tactical Plan in liaison with the Police Incident Commander.

In addition the Silver Commander will be supported by:

1. Liaison Officers from Investigation and Resolution functions;
2. Bronze Commanders;
3. Liaison officers from blue light partner organisations; and
4. Representatives from the local Emergency Preparedness Group.

Throughout the incident close liaison will be required between the Silver Commander tasked with Consequence Management and colleagues tasked with investigation and resolution.

9. Response to recovery

During the early stages of any Major Incident response Gold Command will instigate a Recovery Working Group.

This group focuses on the post event return to 'new normality'. During the recovery phase Gold Command will generally move to a new lead agency.

UK wide a formal Joint Organisational Learning (JOL) programme is in place to enable emergency services and other responder agencies to use a single consistent and accountable mechanism to ensure lessons identified are acted on to become lessons learnt.

Further details can be found on the national JESIP website at www.jesip.org.uk

10. Training

Training to support the capability outlined in this document is being carried out at Operational; Tactical and Strategic levels across the PSNI.

11. Joint Organisational Learning (JOL)

Following a Major Incident the lessons identified from debriefing can deliver key changes in policy and practice. These lessons, successfully acted upon, can improve effective joint working.

Appendix A M/ETHANE report

In the initial stages pass information between emergency responders and Control Rooms using the METHANE mnemonic.

Shared Situational Awareness

M	MAJOR INCIDENT	Has a major incident or standby been declared? (Yes / No - if no, then complete ETHANE message)
E	EXACT LOCATION	What is the exact location or geographical area of the incident?
T	TYPE OF INCIDENT	What kind of incident is it?
H	HAZARDS	What hazards or potential hazards can be identified?
A	ACCESS	What are the best routes for access and egress?
N	NUMBER OF CASUALTIES	How many casualties are there, and what condition are they in?
E	EMERGENCY SERVICES	Which and how many, emergency responder assets/personnel are required or are already on-scene?

Appendix B The Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles

CO-LOCATE

Co-locate with commanders as soon as practicably possible at a single, safe and easily identified location near to the scene.

COMMUNICATE

Communicate clearly using plain English.

CO-ORDINATE

Co-ordinate by agreeing the lead service. Identify priorities, resources and capabilities for an effective response, including the timing of further meetings.

JOINTLY UNDERSTAND RISK

Jointly understand risk by sharing information about the likelihood and potential impact of threats and hazards to agree potential control measures.

SHARED SITUATION AWARENESS

Shared Situational Awareness established by using METHANE and the Joint Decision Model.

Appendix C The Joint Decision Model (JDM)



Appendix D Contact Us

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