

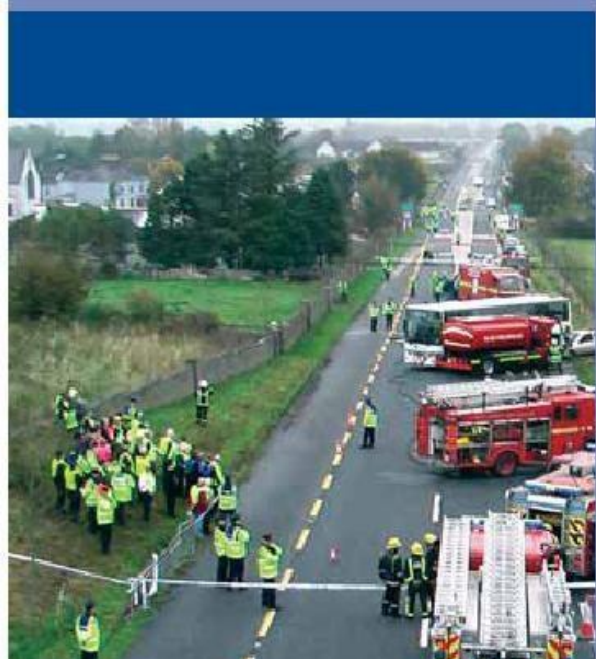


A FRAMEWORK FOR MAJOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

GUIDANCE DOCUMENT 6

A GUIDE TO MANAGING EVACUATION
& REST CENTRES

Version 2
October 2015



INTRODUCTION TO A GUIDE TO MANAGING EVACUATION & REST CENTRES

'A Framework for Major Emergency Management' (2006) sets out the arrangements, by which the Principal Response Agencies work together in the management of large-scale incidents.

This *Guide to Managing Evacuation & Rest Centres* is intended to support the Framework text and to provide additional guidance to Principal Response Agencies on evacuation. The guidance document has been amended to further align the guide with international good practice.

This document, like others in the guidance series, is subject to regular review and, for that reason, it is requested that any comments and/or insights that arise during its implementation are fed back to the national level. Comments should be addressed to:

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SECTION A

1 Introduction

This guidance updates *A Framework for Major Emergency Management Guidance Document 6 - A Guide to Evacuation (2008)* for use by the Principal Response Agencies (PRA's) and associated Voluntary Emergency Services (VES). This guide is intended to help PRA's to develop flexible plans for evacuation and shelter. It also builds on the good practice that has been implemented across the country in recent years during evacuation events and in evacuation planning.

1.1 The purpose of evacuation and shelter

Evacuation is a process of moving people from a place where there is immediate or anticipated danger to a place of relative safety; shelter is a place where evacuees can stay and receive support. There are various events, such as flooding, that may call for evacuation, and the different nature and severity of those events will determine the level of support that evacuated people require during and after the evacuation process.

However, evacuation is a complex and difficult process with its own problems and dangers, especially if large numbers of people are required to leave an area all at once, or evacuees are already ill or infirm and, therefore, would be adversely affected by being moved.

Before any evacuation decision is taken, the question of whether the evacuation will expose people in transit to more danger than if they had "sheltered-in-place" from the danger must be rigorously considered.

In many emergency situations shelter-in-place is the better option, where suitable buildings give good shelter from threats such as smoke or hazardous materials.

In particular shelter-in-place is usually the better option where

- There is no time to undertake a safe evacuation
- Moving people would expose them to greater danger
- The immediate risk is unclear

1.2 Relationship between an emergency event and an evacuation

In considering the relationship between an emergency event and an associated evacuation, three observations can be made:

- An evacuation is not a stand-alone incident. An evacuation only occurs because something else has happened, is happening or will happen. The nature and effects of the causative event will define the parameters of the evacuation (when, where, how big, how long, etc).

- An evacuation is not simply a sub-set of the response to the causative event. Whilst the parameters of an evacuation are defined by the event, most of the evacuation activities proceed independently of the direct response to the event (fire-fighting, rescue, chemical response, etc), and involve a different set of responders and co-ordination arrangements.
- An evacuation is not a single unified activity. It is made up of many individual activities and groups of activities, undertaken by a wide range of organisations.

If a decision to evacuate is made, then the evacuation tasks will have to be undertaken simultaneously with other emergency response activities, such as rescue, fire-fighting and casualty treatment. Evacuation, like other tasks associated with major emergency management, requires inter-agency co-ordination. As outlined within the Framework, the Generic Information Management System is the cornerstone of effective co-ordination, and, as such, it should be utilised to support the evacuation process and to supply information on it to the overall co-ordination effort.

It is important to recognise the difference between evacuation and rescue in the context of an emergency. Where there is insufficient time for an evacuation and where sheltering-in-place is deemed unsafe, persons at risk will require rescue. Rescues will usually be undertaken by the Fire Service with the assistance of other Principal Emergency Services and/or Voluntary Emergency Services.

Section A of this guide deals principally with evacuation and is not appropriate for use in circumstances where rescue is required. However, Rest Centres may be required in situations where persons are either evacuated or rescued and, in this regard, the guidance on Rest Centres in Section B is deemed appropriate to both circumstance.

1.3 Variables associated with evacuation

There are many variables associated with evacuation:

Size- An evacuation can involve anything from one person up to hundreds, and in extreme cases, thousands. Whilst the level and type of response will vary according to the number of people and size of area evacuated, the principles of planning and response are applicable across the full range of evacuations.

Location- It is almost impossible to predict where an emergency which would require evacuation might occur. There are some areas that are exposed to specific risks, for example, from flooding or industrial activity. Urban areas have higher risk concentrations and therefore it is more common to have to evacuate an urban area; however situations can arise that could require the evacuation of a rural area.

Property Type- Evacuation may be required of any property type including commercial and industrial premises, hospitals, sporting venues and domestic properties.

Timescale- Evacuations can be required on a variety of time scales:

- Immediate evacuation in response to an imminent or existing threat. In this situation little or no pre-planning is possible.
- Evacuation within a short timeframe - probably within hours - either in response to an imminent threat or as a precaution against escalation of an existing situation. Some basic planning may be possible, e.g., arranging transport and Rest Centres.
- Evacuation is required but the timing is negotiable within a period of days or weeks. Detailed planning is possible.
- Evacuation in response to long-term hazards. There may be a long period of research and consultation, during which time it should be possible to prepare contingency plans. Once the decision is taken to evacuate, the process ought to be able to go ahead with minimal delay.
- In some cases, the first indication the public services may have that an emergency exists is when people begin to self-evacuate in response to a perceived or actual threat. In such circumstances, the possibility of a full evacuation should be considered by the emergency services.

Duration- Most evacuations do not extend beyond a few hours after which evacuees can return to their properties. However, it is possible that the evacuation period may extend overnight or even longer. In some cases, the hazard or threat may pass but it will have resulted in damage to buildings or infrastructure that will take time to clean or repair.

1.4 Structure of an evacuation response

Figure 1 below sets out a model for the structure of an evacuation. The figure depicts the main division of functions and the key relationships between them. Within each functional group there may be further breakdowns possible, with each sub-unit also requiring specific management and co-ordination arrangements.

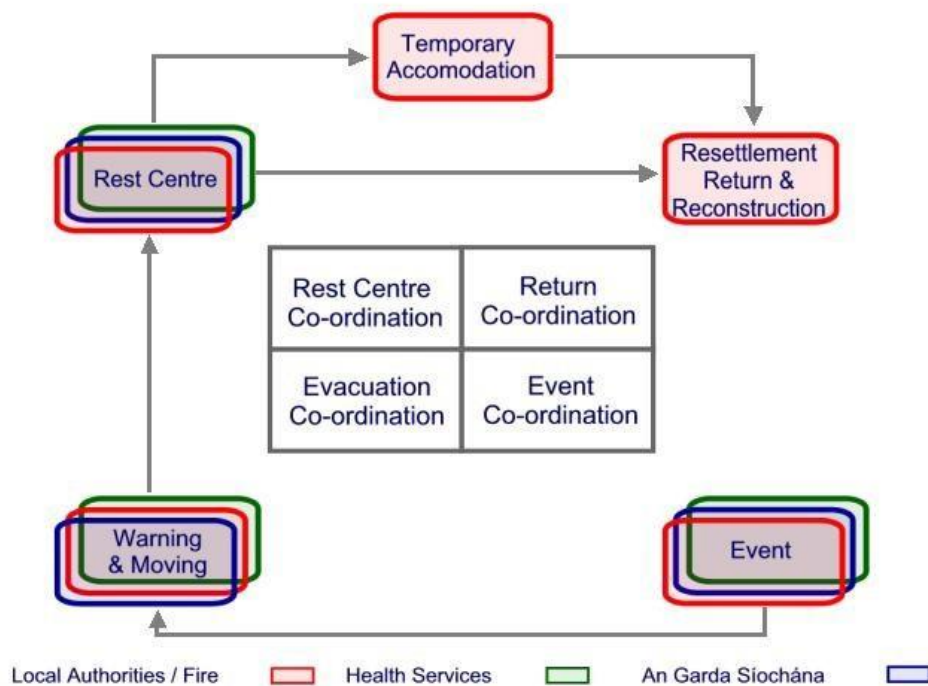


Figure 1: Structure of an evacuation response

An evacuation situation divides into four functional areas:

The event- The event defines the parameters of the evacuation, the limits of the danger zone, who should be evacuated, for how long, and what problems are likely to be encountered by individuals returning after the evacuation.

Warning and Moving- The process of warning and moving is a complex one. It involves transmitting the warning information, identifying safe areas and providing some help for people to reach those areas. An Garda Síochána will warn and inform the identified population and co-ordinate their movements to the appropriate Evacuation Assembly Point(s). The Local Authority will be required to provide onward transport to Rest Centres for evacuees where this is required.

Rest Centres- Rest Centres are premises where persons evacuated during an emergency are provided with appropriate welfare and shelter. Local Authorities have been assigned the function of providing Rest Centres in the event of an evacuation associated with a major emergency.

Resettlement, Return and Reconstruction- Most evacuations are short-lived and have few if any long-term consequences enabling evacuees to return to their properties within hours. However, in some situations the evacuation may last overnight or for a few days, in which case it would be helpful to find evacuees more comfortable temporary accommodation than the Rest Centre. For some

people, the evacuation may be permanent. The main tasks of resettlement, return and reconstruction falls within the remit of the Local Authority with the support of the other agencies.

2 Risk-based approach

To prepare effectively to deal with potential emergencies, it is necessary to have regard to the specific risks faced by a community. Evacuation and shelter planning should be proportionate to the risk identified locally. These will range from small-scale local events to risks that have regional/ national consequences and that require large-scale evacuation and shelter.

2.1 Local, Regional & National Risk Assessments

Local & Regional Risk Assessments have been undertaken in accordance with the Framework for Major Emergency Management. The need for evacuation and shelter is a common consequence of the realisation of a range of identified risks. Mitigation measures for a range of risks may include preparedness and planning for evacuation.

The most likely risks to require an evacuation in Ireland that have been identified in the risk assessment process are fire, flooding, incidents involving hazardous materials and explosive dangers. Further guidance on risk assessment is contained in ["A Guide to Risk Assessment in Major Emergency Management \(2010\)"](#)

[A National Risk Assessment \(NRA\) for Ireland](#) was published in December 2013 which outlines the current assessment of relative risk for the key hazards in Ireland. The NRA should be used to guide mitigation, planning and preparedness activities at national and regional levels and to inform local risk assessment.

Principal Response Agencies should have due regard to the outcome of the local, regional and national risk assessments in order to ensure an appropriate level of planning and preparedness for major emergencies where evacuation may be necessary.

3 Planning & Preparedness

3.1 Multi-agency planning

Multi-agency co-operation is a guiding principle of emergency preparedness, and evacuation planning is no exception. It is recommended that, in order to prepare effectively for evacuation, each Major Emergency Management (MEM) Region should establish an Evacuation Working Group. The Working Group should be tasked to prepare a generic evacuation and shelter plan for the region (and site-specific evacuation and shelter plans where these are deemed necessary).

The typical membership of the Working Group would include some or all of the following:

- An Garda Síochána (to act as chairperson by agreement)
- Local Authority
- Health Service Executive
- Voluntary Emergency Services e.g. Civil Defence, Irish Red Cross Society etc.
- Voluntary & Community Groups (where appropriate)
- Others as deemed appropriate

The plan(s) should be submitted to the RSG/RWG for approval and when approved should be appended to each PRA Major Emergency Plan.

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to provide Rest Centres for evacuated populations. A significant proportion of the preparatory work will be the identification and pre-planning for the operation of Rest Centres. It is envisaged that this work will be undertaken by Local Authority in tandem with the generic evacuation and site-specific planning undertaken by the Evacuation Working Group. It is recommended that the Housing section take the lead within the Local Authority for the identification and pre-planning of Rest Centre(s) supported by relevant emergency management personnel. A full list of Rest Centres and Rest Centre Plans shall be included in each Regions Generic Evacuation and Shelter Plan(s) as prepared by the Evacuation Working Group.

3.2 Generic evacuation and shelter plans

A generic evacuation and shelter plan should be relevant for a range of risks, including:

- natural hazards: flooding, storms
- industrial accidents: fires or explosions, radiological, biological or chemical releases
- transport accidents
- terrorist attacks and
- unforeseen events

It is not necessary to develop a plan for every risk or eventuality. Generic plans – based on the worst risk that could reasonably be expected to arise in a local area – should be scalable in order to manage the range of risks identified locally. For some risks there may be characteristics that are unique to that event and that

require specific plans, alongside generic ones. Plans should reflect such variables as:

- the notice period before the risk is realised;
- the time of day;
- the merits of evacuation against shelter in place;
- the number of people to be evacuated, dispersed or sheltered;
- complex sites such as hospitals and educational establishments;
- the distance to a place of safety;
- the duration of the incident during which support is required;
- the resilience of local infrastructure;
- existing site emergency plans;
- the readiness of the public; and
- understanding of the evacuation zone.

3.3 Site Specific evacuation and shelter plans

Planning should be considered for specific risks that have unique consequences or where the location of the risk impact area has been identified in advance. Generic evacuation and shelter plans should reference risk-specific arrangements if detailed plans have been prepared or if a specific response is required. Examples would include:

- Evacuation and shelter zones in the vicinity of Upper Tier SEVESO sites (arrangements contained in PRA External Emergency Plans)
- Evacuation and shelter zones of high-risk flooding locations (arrangements contained in Local Authority Flood Emergency Plans)

Sports stadiums and large concert venues will have specific emergency and evacuation plans in place for their premises. PRA's should consider the impact of an evacuation of these venues on the 'wider community' and incorporate any arrangements deemed necessary into PRA Evacuation & Shelter Plans.

3.4 Training & Exercises

3.4.1 Training

Training is a key element of risk-based planning. It is recommended that each individual PRA shall undertake sufficient training under its major emergency management training programme to fulfil the roles and responsibilities listed in this guide.

In addition, it is recommended that inter-agency training take place on a regional basis following the preparation of the generic evacuation and shelter plan for the region. This training shall be co-ordinated by the relevant RSG/RWG and involve all agencies that are listed to a role in the evacuation plan.

3.4.2 Exercises

It is recognised that full-scale evacuation exercises are difficult and expensive to arrange. Practically, it may be useful to exercise components of evacuation plans or to incorporate some elements of evacuation into large exercises. Table-top or

'walkthrough' exercises can also be useful for testing evacuation plans. Examples of a number of walkthrough scenarios are listed in Section 7.4. Where evacuation plans are exercised, it is recommended that the full range of agencies that may be involved in an evacuation are invited to participate.

4 Implementing the Response

4.1 Roles & responsibilities

4.1.1 The Lead Agency role and response co-ordination

Successful evacuation and shelter requires a well co-ordinated multi-agency response. Where large numbers of people require evacuation, it is envisaged that the Principal Response Agencies will respond in accordance with the procedures and protocols contained in the major emergency plan, whether or not a major emergency has been declared

The Framework provides that one of three Principal Response Agencies will be designated as the 'lead agency' for the emergency and thereby assume responsibility for leading co-ordination. The designation of 'lead agency' will determine which one of three Controllers of Operation will undertake the role of On-Site Co-ordinator and which agency will chair the Local Co-ordination Group.

In circumstances where an evacuation is being considered, the On-Site Co-ordinator will take the decision on how best to protect a threatened population, in consultation with the other Controllers of Operations. The decision should be based on all available information and incorporating advice from appropriate experts. Ideally, the Local Co-ordination Group should be consulted before a final decision on evacuation or shelter-in-place is taken, if sufficient time allows.

The following are the key functions of the multi-agency response in an evacuation:

4.1.2 Local Authority

The responsibilities of the Local Authority in an evacuation include:

- Assess the situation and decide on whether to evacuate or shelter-in-place in consultation with other PRA's.
- Rescue of persons at immediate risk and/or assist in the evacuation of persons unable to self-evacuate
- Communicate advice and guidance to evacuees/displaced persons
- Provision of transport for evacuees to Rest Centre(s)
- Registration of all evacuees at Assembly Points or during transportation to Rest Centre(s) (see Section 4.5.2.5)

Responsibilities of the Local Authority in relation to Rest Centres are listed in Section 6.3.1.1

4.1.3 An Garda Síochána

The responsibilities of An Garda Síochána in an evacuation include:

- Assess the situation and decide on whether to evacuate or shelter-in-place in consultation with other PRA's.
- Maintain public order and provide for the security of evacuated properties
- Coordinate arrangements for the evacuation of persons from the affected areas
- Issue of public warnings during the response phase
- Communicate advice and guidance to evacuees/displaced persons

- Management of traffic access and egress from affected areas
- The diversion of traffic and provision of alternative traffic management arrangements
- Provision of air support to undertake aerial reconnaissance of the evacuated areas

Responsibilities of An Garda Síochána in relation to Rest Centres are listed in Section 6.3.1.2

4.1.4 Health Service Executive

The responsibilities of the Health Service Executive in an evacuation include:

- Assess the situation and decide on whether to evacuate or shelter-in-place in consultation with other PRA's.
- Provision of public health advice and services if required.
- Provision of pre-hospital care services and co-ordination of any Voluntary Ambulance Services mobilised
- Provision of medical aid & psychosocial support to evacuees
- Where required arranging for the transfer of patients from hospitals and care homes in at risk locations to alternative accommodation
- Coordinating arrangements for the evacuation of vulnerable persons from the affected areas

Responsibilities of the HSE in relation to Rest Centres are listed in Section 6.3.1.3

4.1.5 Department of Social Protection

From 1st October 2011 the Community Welfare Service formally transferred to the Department of Social Protection. The Department of Social Protection administers a number of welfare schemes that evacuees may be eligible for including:

- Exceptional Needs Payment
- Urgent Needs Payment
- Humanitarian Assistance Scheme

Eligibility is usually determined by a means-test and other qualifying criteria. Further information is available through the Department of Social Protection's representative (formerly known as the Community Welfare Officer) at local community welfare offices. Further information is available at www.welfare.ie

4.1.6 Civil Defence

The Civil Defence service of the Local Authority can provide a range of services, trained personnel and specialist equipment to support the PRA's with an evacuation. The following functions may be provided by the Civil Defence in support of the PRA's:

- Establishment and management of evacuation assembly points
- Assist in evacuation, including warning and informing and arranging for the transport of displaced persons to temporary rest centres

Possible roles for the Civil Defence in relation to Rest Centres are listed in Section 6.3.1.4

4.1.7 Voluntary Emergency Services

The voluntary emergency services sector provides a significant potential resource to assist the PRA's in major emergency response including evacuation. They may provide a pool of persons with relevant skills, vehicles and useful equipment and facilities.

Organisations such as the Irish Red Cross, the Order of Malta and St. John Ambulance Service can play a significant role during an evacuation in transporting evacuees and providing humanitarian assistance.

The Framework makes provision for each volunteer organisation to be 'linked' with one of the PRA's. Where Voluntary Emergency Services are requested to assist the PRA's with evacuation, they should operate under the control of the designated Controller of Operations of that 'linked' agency (see [A Guide to Working with the Voluntary Emergency Services](#))

4.1.8 Community organisations & voluntary sector

Community organisations and the voluntary sector, as well as individuals (or "community volunteers") will also likely be involved in supporting the affected community.

This support can range from accommodating their neighbours and friends temporarily in their own homes, to provision of food, water, clothing or bedding and may often take place in advance of formal welfare arrangements. This kind of community resilience is characteristic of emergencies where homes have been damaged or destroyed or where people are stranded following a transportation accident. PRA's should be aware that these kind of arrangements are being put in place and that there is no need for PRA's to control or co-ordinate this activity unless a particular safety issue is identified. It is well recognised that communities that are empowered to be part of the response to a disaster, rather than allowing themselves to be simply victims of it, are more likely to recover quickly and restore normality.

4.2 The Event

A range of different events may result in an evacuation to protect the public from a hazard. However, evacuations should not be undertaken lightly, as they are difficult to organise and carry through effectively. Organisations responding to an event should consider whether there are other options, such as sheltering, which would provide as good or better public protection, and whether the considerable material and social costs of evacuation can be justified by the level of risk.

Evacuation can result in considerable stress to evacuees, loss of business, disruption to personal and work routines and a risk of accidents occurring during the process. These factors should be taken into account in deciding whether and when to evacuate.

Evacuation can happen as a result of a range of different events:

- A sudden event, happening in a specific area – most evacuation situations will fall into this category, including fires, floods and chemical incidents.

- A planned event which creates a danger zone around it, such as a large demolition project.
- A 'silent' emergency where responders are unaware of a situation until people begin to self-evacuate in response to a perceived or actual threat, for example in response to civil unrest or threats, or industrial activities which people believe to be posing an unacceptable level of risk.
- A long-term situation where there is a threat of future danger or where long-term exposure to a low-level hazard would be injurious to health, for example where properties are found to be over unstable mine workings, or where there is environmental pollution for which no effective remedial action is available.

The first three of these will be responsible for almost all evacuations, although the possibility of the fourth should always be kept in mind.

4.3 Deciding whether to evacuate or shelter-in-place

The factors that influence the evacuate/shelter-in-place decision are complex and often difficult to quantify. Among other things, the issues that should be considered include

- The nature, numbers and distribution of the population involved,
- The projected or actual exposure to the hazard (e.g., a toxic substance),
- The estimated time required for evacuation
- The availability of adequate resources to effect the evacuation in a timely and safe fashion,
- The availability of appropriate shelters to which evacuees can be brought

A decision to evacuate must be based on a reasonable assessment that removing people from the affected area is in the best interest of their health and safety and exposes them to minimal risk, or at very least to a risk which is lower than the risk of sheltering-in-place where they are.

In deciding whether evacuation is necessary, the appropriate co-ordination group should take advice from all available sources. Those with information and/or expertise that could be relevant to making a decision to evacuate include:

- The Fire Service, who can advise on the possible spread of fire or the effects of chemicals involved in an incident;
- Property owners and operators, especially where hazardous or explosive chemicals are involved;
- Drivers, operators, owners and chemical companies, in the event of an incident involving the transport of hazardous materials;
- A Defence Forces Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team, where explosive devices are involved or old ordnance is discovered;
- Public Health doctors, who can provide information on the effects of chemicals on public health;
- Environmental Health Officers;
- Met Éireann, which can supply information on expected wind speed and direction, rainfall, etc., which can help determine the potential spread of pollution, smoke, etc.;

- The Health and Safety Authority (HSA)/ Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) who may have access to chemical information and some knowledge of particular sites
- Other Government and academic organisations with specialist knowledge of pollution, flooding and other hazards.

The nature of the hazard and the time available for consultation will determine the relevant organisations that need to be contacted. Ideally, a meeting of all parties with information to contribute should be held and a risk analysis made. In situations where the danger is a long-term one, there will often be more time to analyse the risks and benefits of evacuation. In such situations it may be appropriate to consult the people involved on the level of risk they are willing to tolerate and to provide information to enable them to make their own decisions on evacuation.

Factors, which may influence the decision on whether or not to evacuate, include:

- **Whether buildings would provide protection for the period the hazard is expected to last.** In most chemical emergency situations the preferred method of ensuring public safety would be to advise everyone to go indoors, close doors and windows and listen to the media for further information – the “Go in, Stay in, Tune in” approach. Evacuation would only be advised where buildings did not give adequate protection, and there was a reasonable chance of evacuating people without exposing them to unacceptable danger levels. In the past it was considered that an explosive hazard should always lead to evacuation, but experience has shown that in some circumstances it may be safer to retreat to a strong area of a building, such as a stairwell.
- **Whether the evacuation can be carried out without exposing people to more danger than if they had stayed indoors.** The risk has to be assessed of the event reaching a critical stage, or escalating, while people are in the open and most exposed to danger. Evacuation can itself be a hazardous process. With many people moving at once, there is a danger of crushing or traffic accidents. The old, the young and the infirm may be adversely affected by having to move.
- **Whether the evacuation can be carried out without exposing responding staff to an unacceptable degree of danger.** Each organisation has a statutory responsibility for the health and safety of its staff. This requires them to assess the risks faced by their staff and to take all possible steps to mitigate them. This may involve ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate protective clothing or deciding that an area poses too great a threat to allow staff to enter.
- **Whether a situation currently not requiring evacuation has potential to reach a point where evacuation would be necessary.** Foresight permits forward planning, and thus facilitates an effective and safe evacuation. A precautionary evacuation may be considered desirable in order to protect people from the escalation of the incident.
- **If precautionary evacuation is considered, whether the economic and social cost is justified by circumstances.** Evacuation disrupts people’s lives, shuts down businesses and interrupts the delivery of essential

services. Moving and accommodating the evacuees can be expensive. If time is available to plan an evacuation, opportunities for minimising the costs should be explored, e.g., where the date of the evacuation can be set; a weekend is likely to cause less disruption to business and working lives, but more to personal and family lives.

A useful checklist for the On-Site Co-ordinator / Controller is included in Section 7.1 (Checklist 1 – Deciding to evacuate).

4.4 Implementing the decision

4.4.1 Deciding how to evacuate

It is acknowledged that evacuation is a very resource intensive and time-consuming activity. Nevertheless, once a decision has been taken to evacuate, a series of further decisions have to be taken as to how the process will be carried out. The activities required to put decisions into effect are:

- Decide when the evacuation should take place – immediately, within hours, on an agreed date, etc.;
- Identify the exact geographical area to be evacuated. Printed or digital maps are helpful;
- Decide how information about the evacuation will be communicated to people within the time frame available.
- Alert people to the need to evacuate, being specific about the streets or areas to be involved; what personal arrangements they need to make, such as bringing medicines with them and what to do with pets / livestock;
- Inform people of any Assembly Points or Rest Centres which have been established. If more than one Rest Centre has been established, people should be told a specific Centre to attend (e.g. on a geographical basis) to ensure that appropriate numbers arrive at each;
- Consider how people will be enabled to carry out the instruction to evacuate, especially those without their own transport or those with restricted mobility and whether special arrangements will be required for transporting or accommodating some or all of the people;
- Ensure that, as far as possible in the time available, these messages can be received and understood by people with special communication needs;
- Arrange the provision of transport, if required, especially for those with mobility difficulties; and
- Where appropriate, provide evacuation staff to the area to assist people evacuate, provide information, give directions, keep traffic moving, and, as far as possible, ensure that the whole area has been evacuated.
- Consider what arrangements, if any, should be made to record who has been evacuated, where they have gone to, and how they can be contacted during the evacuation; and
- What resources will be required, or will realistically be available, for the evacuation process and how they will be accessed.

Clearly, An Garda Síochána is unlikely to have all of the resources necessary to carry out all these activities, and will need input from a range of organisations.

Where self-evacuation of an area occurs by a section of its population then a reassessment of risk should be undertaken to assess whether the hazard warrants a formal evacuation of the entire population of that area.

Since it takes a very strong sense of danger to persuade people to leave their homes, businesses or entertainment venues, it is unlikely that most self-evacuees could be persuaded to return in the short term, even if an objective risk assessment indicated that evacuation was unnecessary. Arrangements should therefore be made to provide for their immediate needs.

4.4.2 When to move and where to

The decision on when and where to evacuate will largely depend on the nature of the event or threat that precipitates the evacuation. In many cases there will be no difficulty making a decision on timing: people will need to be moved immediately. Wherever possible, the aim should be to evacuate before the hazard becomes critical, so that evacuees and the staff of responding organisations are not put at risk. However, this strategy carries with it the risk that the evacuation will prove to have been unnecessary. The Co-ordination Group making the decision to evacuate should weigh up the respective implications of evacuating or waiting to see how the situation develops. However, the costs, and implications, of failure to take an opportunity for safe evacuation should not be under-estimated.

Where people should be evacuated from and to will be determined by the likely spread of the hazard, as determined by the PRA's involved in the response to the event or in accordance with any expert advice received. In order to avoid having to expand the evacuation zone and possibly having to re-evacuate some people, reasonable allowance should be made for the event to escalate. In particular, Assembly Points and Rest Centres should be chosen to be accessible from the evacuated area, but not likely to be overtaken by an escalating event.

A useful checklist for the On-Site Co-ordinator / Controller is included in Section 7.1 (Checklist 2 – Implementing the decision).

4.5 Warning and Moving

4.5.1 Warning

The first step towards moving people to a place of safety is to alert them to the danger and give them the information they need to make an appropriate response.

There are two types of information that need to be communicated to potential evacuees:

- Key information on who and which areas are being evacuated, why, and when.
- Associated information on how the evacuation is to be carried out, what assistance is available, where people should evacuate to, what they need

to bring with them (or leave behind), what arrangements should be made for pets and where further help and advice can be found.

The alert message should be clear and concise and should contain the 'who, where and when' information necessary to enable people to take appropriate action. The amount of associated information that can be got across will depend on the time available. The aim should be to get across, at a minimum, information on where people could go for shelter and what essential supplies they should take with them.

There is a range of people with an interest in information on any evacuation:

- Potential evacuees, i.e. those living inside the evacuation zone;
- Nursing homes, hospitals, health centres, sheltered accommodation, etc, in the evacuation zone – for which special instructions and arrangements may be necessary;
- Schools, which will need to be advised on how best to protect pupils and re-unite them with parents/guardians;
- Transport operators with buses, trains, taxis etc in the affected area – both so that they know how to protect passengers and as resources for transporting evacuees;
- Owners of premises pre-designated for use as Rest Centres, so that they can be prepared;
- Industrial premises and large employers, both inside and outside the evacuation zone. Inside, so that employees can be safely evacuated, and outside, so that employers can give information to their staff and allow for any unable to get to work;
- Friends and relatives of evacuees, who will be concerned about their safety, and may be able to offer temporary shelter; and
- The media, who will be keen to get the story, but will also be a vital resource for information dissemination.

Where site-specific evacuation and shelter plans exist, alerting the public will follow pre-planned notification arrangements. In the majority of cases, site-specific evacuation plans will not exist and alerting the public of the need to evacuate is a difficult process. The methods used will be dictated by:

- The urgency of the situation;
- The size and type of area involved – residential, industrial, retail, urban, rural;
- The time of day – working hours, evening, night;
- The population profile – schoolchildren, working adults, retired people, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, etc.; and
- The resources available.

Traditionally, **door-to-door calling and use of loudhailers** have been used for evacuation alerts. However, these methods have significant drawbacks. Door-to-door calling is a time-and-resource demanding process, especially if the area to be evacuated is a large one. The effectiveness of loudhailers is limited by the generally poor quality of sound reproduction, and the prevalence of double-glazing. If the threat to safety is immediate, staff delivering the message may be

exposed to an unacceptable level of risk. However, where conditions are favourable, these probably remain the most effective methods of getting a message across.

Television and Radio – arrangements exist whereby emergency announcements may be made on television and radio channels. Any organisation wishing to have an emergency broadcast made should contact its own press office, which will have the necessary contact details for the broadcasting organisations. At certain times of day, the broadcast media can reach a large part of the population, although the proliferation of satellite and cable channels dilutes the audience. However, at other times the number of people listening or watching can be small. Depending on the time of day, broadcasters may include unscheduled news bulletins or interviews with key people, which can be used to get information across to audiences. Organisational press offices will have appropriate contacts and be able to advise on how to get emergency messages across on the media.

PRA websites & social media sites – The internet is an excellent resource for communication with the public. It is recommended that all evacuation information shall be posted to the relevant PRA websites (where time permits). It is important that this advice is updated at regular intervals. However, a significant proportion of the population does not use the internet or the internet may not be available or may be disrupted by the emergency, so it cannot be relied on as the principle method of communication.

Information for the public on the evacuation should also be posted to PRA social media sites where these are provided. Social media offer a useful way of getting information direct to people. However, they can also be a source of user-generated content that may contradict or confuse official information and consideration should be given to how to mitigate this.

PRA text alert notifications – Some PRA's have developed text alert notifications for communications with registered users. Where practical the use of such services in an evacuation shall be considered although the usefulness of this method of communication is limited due to the requirement for pre-registration.

Other communication methods, which should be considered, include:

- **Leaflet Drop** – not as immediate as previous methods, but can guarantee a high degree of coverage and can accommodate a range of languages and special communication needs, such as Braille and large print.
- **Organisational PA and e-mail systems**, which can reach a large number of staff quickly.
- **Industrial Sirens** – some industrial sites have emergency sirens or signals, primarily for warning their own staff. These could be used as a warning to neighbours also, but only if neighbours have been educated to distinguish between routine and emergency signals and instructed in what to do on hearing an emergency alert.

4.5.1.1 Barriers to communication

The problems associated with different means of communicating the evacuation message have already been discussed. In addition to these, other barriers exist to effective communication of key information:

- Language – in any community there may be a number of people whose first language is not English. They may have no English, or insufficient to manage in an emergency situation. In some households the only English speakers will be children.
- Disability – some people will have a limited ability to hear, see or comprehend information.
- Authority – there is a natural reluctance to accept instructions - especially where people are being asked to do something unusual and difficult – without verifying the authenticity and authority of the message and its bearer. It can help if the message is conveyed by an organisation or figure of accepted authority, such as RTÉ or a member of the emergency services in uniform, but many people will want to confirm the message by speaking directly to someone or seeking alternative sources of information. While engaged in this verification process, they may not pay much attention to the contents of the message.
- Vulnerable persons – Patients in hospitals, nursing homes and other residential care facilities are a particularly vulnerable group to consider. These facilities would only be evacuated in exceptional circumstances, as the danger to patients from moving is nearly always greater than the danger from which others are being evacuated. Suitable sheltering arrangements may be best for them, but they need to receive the necessary information to make an informed decision on this. Similarly, elderly and infirm residents may not be able to evacuate using the preferred means, and may require specific information on how they can receive help.
- System Failures – the emergency event necessitating the evacuation may cause physical damage to power and communications systems, resulting in fewer people than normal having access to television, radio, the internet and telephones.

In an emergency evacuation, there will be a limit to what can be done to overcome barriers to communication. A range of communication methods should be used where possible to reinforce and confirm the message. Steps that could be taken include:

- Include in the alert message a request to ensure that neighbours are aware of the situation, especially those with communication difficulties.
- For known high-risk areas, residents with special communication needs can be identified, and possible solutions to problems discussed with them.
- Involve prominent members of the local community at the earliest possible stage, for example local elected representatives, senior Gardaí and local doctors. People are likely to contact them for verification, so it is important that they are briefed.
- For known risk areas, prepare generic warning messages and instructions in languages appropriate to the locality and in large print, Braille and on

tape. If door-to-door calling or local announcements are used, staff should be equipped with supplies of these.

- As a matter of good practice, owners and managers of accommodation for sick, elderly or vulnerable people should have evacuation plans that have been discussed and agreed with the relevant Principal Response Agency.

4.5.2 Moving

4.5.2.1 Personal choice

There are very few circumstances where someone who is not causing an obstruction or breaking any laws can be compelled to evacuate premises. However, every effort should be made to ensure that people understand the risks, the reason they are being recommended to evacuate and the possible consequences of not evacuating.

There can be a number of reasons for people refusing to evacuate, including:

- Concern over the safety of property.
- Unwillingness to leave familiar surroundings.
- Disbelief that the danger exists.
- Desire to wait for the return of family members who are away from home.
- Complacency resulting from experiences of hoaxes and false alarms.
- Complacency from having sat out similar emergencies in the past.
- Unwillingness to close down a business or lose working time.
- Unwillingness to leave animals/pets that cannot be located or are not easily transported, e.g. ponies, cats, exotic pets

Where there is opportunity, information issued to the public should take account of people's likely concerns, try to emphasise the seriousness of the situation, and reassure them that security arrangements will be made for the evacuated area, accommodation and help will be available for evacuees, and that care will be taken of those evacuated from other places, including schools.

If people, having been given and having understood this information, still refuse to evacuate, little can be done beyond advising them of steps they should take to protect themselves. Those refusing to evacuate should be reminded of the phone number for the emergency services in case the situation deteriorates or a sudden emergency occurs. If appropriate, people should be advised that they may be putting emergency responders at risk by delaying to evacuate immediately. People should also be advised that while the emergency services will always try to respond to emergency calls, there may be high demands on the resources of the emergency services should the situation deteriorate that may impact on the capacity of the emergency services to respond.

Many people may accept the need to evacuate but may not want to go to a public Rest Centre. If the evacuation is likely to be short lived, or if they are being evacuated from work or an entertainment venue and can get transport home, most people will manage for themselves. Particularly in a close-knit community, shelter will be sought among friends and family in the locality. In longer evacuations, many people will stay with friends and relatives, probably spread

across the country, and some may choose to go to a hotel. There is no basis for compelling people to go to a Rest Centre. It would be useful for those involved in casualty bureau/ missing person inquiries, Rest Centres and organising the return, to have names, addresses and a contact telephone number for evacuees making their own arrangements, but in most cases the collection of this information is impractical.

4.5.2.2 Transport

In an emergency evacuation, most people will leave the danger area on foot or by private vehicle. This may cause problems, with traffic jams and crushes a possibility, if large numbers of people are involved.

There will be a number of people who do not have the ability or resources to make their own way out of the danger zone. Where the situation is urgent, whatever vehicles are available will have to be used: private cars, emergency service vehicles and public transport vehicles.

When more time is available, it may be possible to develop a transport strategy that will take account of the range of needs that people will have for transport. Most people will still use their own private transport, but arrangements should be made for those without access to private transport, or for whom it would be inappropriate.

It may be necessary to direct evacuees to Assembly Points on the periphery of the evacuation zone, where they can meet up with friends and relatives, receive further information and be provided with directions or transport to a Rest Centre. These Assembly Points will be ad hoc arrangements, probably established by An Garda Síochána. For short evacuations, people may be content to wait at an Assembly Point or to return there at intervals for news. Assembly Points should, ideally, offer some form of shelter to evacuees who are waiting to return or for transport, but this will depend on the availability of suitable facilities at the time. Depending on the nature of the incident, it may be useful to have first aid personnel at the Assembly Points to deal with any minor injuries. It would also be useful to try to make a record of those present at the Assembly Point and their onward destination and contact details, but this will depend on the numbers of evacuees involved and the resources available to responders.

Some transport will be needed throughout the evacuation period, even after the area has been cleared. Evacuees may need transport between the Rest Centre and hospital, to visit injured friends or to attend outpatients' clinics. Transport would also be required for those returning evacuees who have no personal transport.

Buses are the most available and flexible means of transporting large numbers of people. Many modern buses have low floors for easy access and space for wheelchairs and prams, making them suitable for most people with some mobility.

Midi-and mini-buses can get into tighter spaces than full size ones, which may be important in built-up areas. Many organisations own vehicles of this type that are

especially adapted for use by people with disabilities, having, for example, wheelchair hoists.

Emergency ambulances will not usually be available for transporting evacuees during an evacuation, as they have to be available to respond to 999/112 calls. However, should a hospital or nursing home have to be evacuated, ambulances may be required to move seriously ill patients. The Voluntary Emergency Services (VES) may be in a position to supply these vehicles and, they may also have minibus-style vehicles that could be used in a general evacuation. VES organisations that may be called upon in an emergency should be fully involved in the planning process, and should be included in Rest Centre exercises and training. Further guidance on working with the Voluntary Emergency Services can be found in “A Guide to Working with the Voluntary Emergency Services”.

Taxis and volunteer drivers using their own cars are potential sources of additional transport, and may be appropriate for people with specific needs which could not be met by public transport vehicles. However, issues surrounding safety, security, insurance and payment would need to be discussed and agreed in advance.

Helicopters have a specialised use in evacuating people from places without road access, including ships at sea, areas where the road system has been damaged, and sites best approached from above.

Boats may be necessary to evacuate island populations or may be a useful transport method where coastal, riverside or lakeside populations are more easily reached from the water. A number of resources would be potentially available, including ferries, private craft, vessels owned by the emergency services and other public bodies, and lifeboats. An Garda Síochána should liaise with the Irish Coastguard over the co-ordination of any water-based evacuation.

Other possible means of transport that could be considered include trains or large aircraft depending on the suitability and availability of such resources.

4.5.2.3 Traffic control

In any evacuation, arrangements should be made to try to keep traffic moving, at least along key routes. Information on the route to be used by evacuees should be included in the instructions for evacuation that are given to the public. Traffic movements will be particularly difficult in very built-up areas such as housing estates, and in rural areas with narrow roads. An Garda Síochána units will probably be the main resources used for traffic control, employing a mixture of officers and signed diversions, but where time is available, the Local Authority roads section (or NRA Motorway Maintenance Contractors in the case of motorways/dual carriageways) may be able to help with signage and manpower.

Efforts should be made to devise and maintain separate routes for emergency vehicles going to the event site and for traffic evacuating the area.

4.5.2.4 Pets & Animals

Some people will evacuate with their pets, and arrangements to care for animals need to be considered. There is a risk that pet owners will be reluctant to evacuate without their pets. Only in the most extreme circumstances is it realistic to expect evacuees to leave their pets behind. For public health and sanitation reasons, animals should not be sheltered in the same area of a Rest Centre as people. Separate arrangements for pets will need to be considered and may include:

- Boarding of pets in kennels or with households in unaffected areas
- Provision of pet shelters at Rest Centres
- System to register & track pets
- Capacity to transport pets
- Animal welfare issues

For practical reasons, farm livestock will generally be left behind in an evacuation and animal keepers must therefore take every practical measure to ensure their survival and to safeguard their welfare. If time permits, livestock could be moved to safety (higher ground or indoors) and provision made for fodder and water. Most events will not require a lengthy evacuation, but for those that do, the various options for attending to livestock (such as allowing farmers back into the area for short durations) should be considered.

4.5.2.5 Accounting for evacuees

One of the most difficult aspects of evacuation, especially emergency or short-notice evacuation, is keeping track of evacuees. There are a number of reasons why it is desirable to do so:

- To check that everyone is accounted for and that no one has been missed in the evacuation.
- To help families trace missing members and to answer queries on the whereabouts of individuals. If more than one Rest Centre is established, families split between different Rest Centres will need to be identified and re-united.
- To eliminate from enquiries people reported as missing who turn up safe at Rest Centres, especially where there have been casualties or fatalities and where An Garda Síochána has established a Casualty Bureau.
- To make sure that everyone is receiving the assistance they require.
- To avoid annoying people by repeatedly asking for the same information or offering the same services.
- To keep people informed of progress of the incident and arrangements for returning.
- To maintain accounting and anti-fraud measures.
- If follow-up is required, for example, research into long-term effects of exposure to chemicals, information would be needed on those involved in the evacuation.

There are a number of opportunities for gathering information:

- Prior to a planned evacuation, all affected households can be approached, registered, and their intended destination recorded.

- Where appropriate, basic registration details (name, address and mobile phone number) could be recorded at Assembly Points or during transport to Rest Centres. The most efficient way of recording this information is for a self-registration sheet to be circulated to evacuees during transportation.
- Information can be gathered from those attending Rest Centres.
- Evacuees who have made their own arrangements can be asked (usually via the media) to contact a specific telephone number or a helpline set up for the purpose.
- Once the evacuation is over, information can be gathered through door-to-door calling or distribution of questionnaires.

In theory, gathering information is best done during the warning and moving phase, before people disperse. It will usually not be possible to account for persons by noting details of evacuated buildings whether these are homes or businesses. In reality, it may only be possible to register people at Evacuation Assembly Points, during transportation to the Rest Centre(s) or at the Rest Centre(s). It will also be difficult to account for people who self-evacuate and who do not attend Rest Centre(s). The effectiveness of registration at Rest Centres will depend on the proportion of evacuees who attend.

4.5.2.6 Security

The evacuated area is at risk, not only from the effects of the event, but from thieves and looters. This is unlikely to be a major problem in most situations, but, in order to provide reassurance to evacuees, An Garda Síochána will take steps to control access to the evacuated area and to monitor the evacuation zone for any unauthorised activity.

The area should also be monitored for any occupants who may have missed the evacuation message and be unaware of the situation.

A useful checklist for the On-Site Co-ordinator / Controller is included in Section 7.1 (Checklist 3 – Warning & Moving).

4.6 Rest Centres

Further guidance and information is included in *Section B (Part 6)*.

5 Resettlement, return & recovery

Many evacuations last just a few hours and have no long-term consequences. The evacuees return home and normality is resumed. Some evacuations will result in people being away from their homes for extended periods and the resettlement, return and reconstruction will take considerable planning and investment.

Before evacuees are permitted to return to their homes or premises the Local Authority needs to ensure that the area is safe. Damage to the infrastructure of an area: utilities, shops, banks, transport facilities, may require the services of public bodies, private companies and voluntary organisations to support returning evacuees. People returning after an evacuation may need practical and psychological support to enable them to repair and clean their properties and to resume normal life. Possible long-term consequences of the event should be considered and measures put in place to assess and respond to them.

5.1 Resettlement

Some people may be unable to return to their original homes, for physical or psychological reasons. These could include:

- Vulnerable people, who were only just coping prior to the event.
- People who lack the resources required to repair and restore their properties.
- People who do not wish to return to their original home area, because of civil disorder.
- Those whose homes are unsafe, or perceived to be unsafe, owing to long-term risk factors.

In these circumstances, evacuees should be helped to find suitable alternative accommodation. Addressing this situation will require a multi-sectoral approach involving a range of public and private agencies at both national and local level. The issue of who will fund such a programme lies beyond the scope of this guidance document and will form part of a future piece of work.

Some people will be able to eventually return to their properties after a delay of weeks or months. While they are waiting for clearance, they will need very similar support to those who are permanently displaced, and they will also possibly need help with re-occupation when the time comes.

5.2 Return

In preparing to return evacuees to their properties, the following issues need to be considered:

- The area may be a crime scene and any forensic or Garda investigations which need to be carried out before the area is re-occupied. In this respect consultation with An Garda An Garda Síochána is required.
- A damage survey and risk assessment should be carried out to identify hazards to the public, and any remedial action should be taken.

- Delays in allowing people to return can result in additional losses to property owners, for example through weather damage and loss of business. A realistic balance, therefore, needs to be struck between safety requirements and the need to facilitate people in getting their lives back to normal.
- Key infrastructure services (water, electricity, telecommunications etc.) should be available before, or soon after, re-occupation.
- Plans should be made for a controlled, safe and secure return to evacuated premises.
- An information campaign may be necessary to inform dispersed evacuees of return arrangements and any actions they need to take to protect their own health and safety on return. Information should be distributed through Rest Centres, the media and leaflet distribution.

5.3 Recovery

The issues of Recovery are addressed in Section 6 of the Framework for Major Emergency Management.

A useful checklist for the Local Co-ordination Group is included in Section 7.1 (Checklist 5 – Resettlement, Return & Recovery).

SECTION B

6 Rest Centres

Rest Centres are places where people evacuated from premises (including residential, industrial, commercial, entertainment and education properties) can go to receive appropriate shelter and welfare care until they can return to the evacuated area, or be otherwise accommodated.

Whilst informal accommodation of evacuees in commercial, catering or entertainment venues can be acceptable for some very short-term evacuations, it is more usual to provide evacuees with Rest Centre accommodation better suited to their needs. Pre-identification of potential Rest Centres, planning for their operation, training staff in Rest Centre procedures and exercising plans to test their effectiveness, can ensure that appropriate premises are chosen and facilities can be established quickly in emergency situations.

A number of useful checklists for Rest Centres are included in Section 7.1

- *Checklist 4A – Rest Centres (Key actions for On-Site Co-ordinator / Controllers)*
- *Checklist 4B - Rest Centres (Key actions for the Local Co-ordination Group)*
- *Checklist 4C – Rest Centre (Key actions for the Rest Centre Manager / Support staff)*

6.1 Risk based approach

Planning for Rest Centres should be based on the outcome of Local / Regional Risk Assessment. However, as a general guide, Local Authorities should plan for a Rest Centre that could accommodate fifty people in rural areas and up to one hundred people in an urban area. Large Cities should plan for multiple centres each capable of accommodating one hundred evacuated persons.

Using the information from the Risk Assessment, it may be necessary to adjust these numbers upwards to plan for the response to a specific risk or on the basis of historical evidence of the necessity for evacuation. Whereas there are no fixed rules about the optimum functional size of a Rest Centre, from a resilient planning perspective it may be better to have six or eight Rest Centres capable of taking one hundred people each rather than two, each capable of taking five hundred.

6.2 Planning & Preparedness

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure that arrangements are in place to provide Rest Centre accommodation, and the necessary welfare services, for evacuees. To facilitate this, a comprehensive list of potential Rest Centres should be collated and maintained. At Regional Level, key information about Rest Centres in Local Authority areas should be recorded and maintained to facilitate mutual aid, both within and external to the planning region.

6.2.1 Rest Centre identification and assessment

In planning for, and establishing, Rest Centres, the issues to be addressed include:

- Convenience of buildings to known areas at risk.
- Even spread across an area, to allow for general risks.
- Availability, given that evacuations can occur at any time of the day or night.
- Facilities, staff and equipment required for effective operation of a Rest Centre.
- Management arrangements.
- Provision of physical and welfare help which is appropriate to the situation and to the social/religious/cultural/physical/financial needs of evacuees.
- Keeping records.
- Safety of evacuees, staff and building contents.
- Triggers and mechanisms for identifying the need for a Rest Centre and initiating action to establish one.
- Preparation and integration of plans, including establishing understandings on roles, responsibilities and resources.

An example of a Rest Centre assessment sheet is included in Section 7.3

6.2.1.1 Location

Pre-identifying potential Rest Centres allows for the suitability of facilities to be assessed and operating procedures to be drawn up, thus saving time in an emergency evacuation. In places where there is a known risk, for example close to major industrial hazard sites or in areas prone to flooding, it should be possible to identify suitable Rest Centres in adjacent, but safe, areas and to incorporate these in response plans. However, there should also be a number of general-purpose Rest Centres identified across an area, for use in less predictable emergencies.

Possible Rest Centre properties include:

- Leisure centres, arts centres, community centres, civic buildings.
- Schools.
- Church and other halls (e.g. GAA, Community Group, Youth Organisation etc).

6.2.1.2 Layout

It is desirable that a Rest Centre should have a range of rooms of different sizes, or be capable of being partitioned to provide different areas for different activities or different groups of evacuees. Areas should be set aside for watching TV, for games and exercise and for quiet areas. It would normally be advisable to separate children from elderly people, or to give individual families their own areas. The number of evacuees and their religious and cultural needs will dictate how best to organise the space within the Rest Centre. Some options are:

- Keep everyone together – only possible in very short evacuations.
- Group people in families.
- Group people by age.
- Create male and female areas.

Where some social, religious or cultural groups will not mix, consider providing them with separate spaces. Where it is necessary to provide separate facilities, either on one site or separate sites, each area or site should have the same services provided.

Where the evacuation has resulted in injury or loss of life, and a separate Friends and Relatives centre is not established, it may be necessary to give some evacuees their own space to wait for news or to come to terms with the situation.

6.2.1.3 Health and Safety

In pre-planning Rest Centre locations, a risk assessment must be carried out on any building considered for use. Where hazards are identified which may pose safety problems, for example, swimming pools, school science laboratories and stages in assembly halls, consideration should be given as to how evacuees could be protected from them, and the appropriate measures incorporated in the building's Rest Centre plan. Steps to remove or mitigate risks could include locking doors of individual rooms and approach corridors (providing they are not fire escape routes) to prevent access, or erecting warning signs and barriers. If it is not possible to adequately protect evacuees, the building should not be included in the Rest Centre list.

Care should be taken to ensure that the number of people in the Rest Centre does not exceed the maximum safe capacity of the building.

Fire & Emergency Evacuation procedures must be provided at each Rest Centre. Where sleeping accommodation is being provided in an area of a building not usually used for this purpose, a Fire Warden, with appropriate training, should be appointed by the Local Authority at the Rest Centre.

Kitchens or other areas where food is being prepared should meet relevant hygiene and health and safety requirements. Staff working with food must have appropriate training.

Pets should not be allowed in the same accommodation as people. Arrangements should be made to keep domestic animals in a secure area.

6.2.1.4 Communications

Evacuees will want to contact friends and relatives to confirm that they are safe and to arrange alternative accommodation. It would be useful to have available chargers and sockets where mobile phones can be safely charged or to provide some pay-as-you-go mobiles for public use. There should be Rest Centre rules on where mobile phones can be switched on and used, to avoid annoying people. Access to email and the internet would also be beneficial to evacuees.

6.2.2 Planning for Rest Centres

6.2.2.1 Rest Centre Plans

In order to plan and respond effectively, organisations involved in the activation and use of Rest Centres will require:

- An understanding and acceptance of the roles and responsibilities of different organisations and agencies.
- A co-ordinated list of potential Rest Centres, including information on access and setting up.
- An agreed plan for receiving an alert that a Rest Centre may be needed, taking a decision on whether and where to open a Rest Centre, and communicating this information within and between organisations.
- An agreed plan for the setting up and operation of each potential Rest Centre, including its overall management.
- Alert and callout arrangements for staffing each Rest Centre.

A Local/Area plan for Rest Centres should consist of two sections:

- A generic section, setting out responsibilities for deciding to open a Rest Centre, communication arrangements between organisations, the location of, and access arrangements for, pre-identified Rest Centres (and key actions for establishing ad hoc ones), overall management arrangements, and agreed roles, resources, capabilities and responsibilities. Call-out lists for key management staff should be included.
- Individual operating plans for each pre-identified venue, which should include layout, health and safety information, information on the operation of essential pieces of equipment, and staffing arrangements, including call-out lists.

These plans should be agreed by the Principal Response Agencies and others with an interest in Rest Centres. They should be made widely available, at least in summary form, and kept up-to-date by regular review. They should be underpinned by internal organisational plans for staffing, management and communications, including how services to evacuees would be maintained over a period of time and how essential everyday activities can be maintained when resources are diverted to running a Rest Centre.

Changes to the structure, accessibility or use of buildings should be immediately reflected in the Rest Centre plans. Buildings pre-identified as Rest Centres should each have a detailed plan kept on the premises, containing both the generic Rest Centre management plan and a detailed operating procedure for the building. Details of how any equipment or resources required, but not readily available in-house, could be procured, should be included.

6.2.2.2 Staffing arrangements for Rest Centres

The Local Authority shall appoint a Rest Centre Manager and support staff to each nominated Rest Centre. The On-Site Co-ordination Group / Local Co-ordinating Group will need to provide the Rest Centre Manager with the following information:

- How many people are likely to be evacuated and some idea of demographics – families, schoolchildren, elderly people, tourists or travellers.
- When the evacuation will take place.
- Approximately how long it is likely to last
- Whether evacuees are likely to have any particular needs, for example if they will be wet and will require a change of clothes.
- Any known groups with special needs, for example residents of nursing homes or sheltered accommodation.

The amount of information available to Rest Centre Managers, and the opportunities for communicating it, will vary according to how much advance warning of the evacuation is available. In some situations the priority may be to get people into shelter, in which case a suitable building should be opened and the Local Co-ordination Group should be informed of the evacuees' location as soon as possible. To allow for such situations, it is essential that lists of potential local Rest Centre, and some basic information on how to select suitable premises, are available.

Staffing arrangements for Rest Centres should be planned and agreed, as this will enable arrangements to be activated at short notice. Some staff will be required wherever the Rest Centre is, others will be venue-specific. There will therefore need to be separate call-out lists for each pre-planned venue.

In planning for a Rest Centre, thought should be given to the make-up of the local community and any particular needs residents may have. For example, information signs may need to be in more than one language, and refreshments offered should meet people's cultural, religious and medical requirements.

6.2.2.3 Children First: National Guidance

The aim of the *Children First: National Guidance* is to promote the safety and well-being of children. It is recognised that both adults and children will need to be accommodated in difficult circumstances in Rest Centres. While parents and guardians have the primary responsibility for the care and protection of children, it is important that all PRA personnel deployed to Rest Centres have received training in Child Protection and Welfare measures. It is a matter for each individual PRA to determine how best to implement this measure.

There may also be circumstances where unaccompanied minors are evacuated to Rest Centres. An Garda Síochána and the HSE should be immediately notified of any unaccompanied minors present as specific arrangements will need to be put in place to ensure their needs are met.

Effective Child Protection depends on the skills, knowledge and values of personnel working with children and families, as well as cooperation between agencies. Relevant training is an essential prerequisite for achieving this. All agencies involved with children have a responsibility to ensure that such training is available on an on-going basis.

For voluntary organisations and community groups, regard should be had to *Our Duty to Care: The principles of good practice for the protection of children and young people* (Department of Health and Children, 2002) in the provision of Child Protection training for staff and volunteers.

6.2.3 Facilities & Equipment

6.2.3.1 Facilities

All nominated Rest Centres will require a range of facilities. Exactly what is demanded of a Rest Centre will vary according to the length of the evacuation and the needs of the evacuees. Where a range of potential Rest Centre properties are available, those with the most facilities should be chosen since it is easier to scale down than to scale up. Facilities required include:

- Good access for vehicles, including buses and emergency service vehicles. Adequate turning, parking, set-down and pick-up facilities.
- Available at any time. Consideration should be given to what would happen to the regular occupants of the building if it is required during normal operating hours: adults can usually leave a leisure centre quickly and without difficulty, but schools would have to keep pupils in until safe alternative arrangements were made.
- Suitable access and facilities for both adults and children
- A variety of rooms, so that different groups (children, old people, families etc) can have their own areas.
- Heating systems that can be switched on outside their normal hours.
- Toilet / hygiene facilities, preferably including separate male/female facilities and washing facilities, such as showers. Baby changing and nursing areas would also be desirable. The actual requirement will vary according to the length of the evacuation and its cause.
- Catering facilities that meet food hygiene and health and safety requirements. Minimum requirement would be the facility to prepare hot drinks and light snacks, but full kitchen facilities would be better.
- Seating adequate for the needs of evacuees. Soft, lounge-style chairs are preferable to hard, upright ones. Primary schools may have difficulty mustering sufficient adult-sized furniture (and toilet facilities).
- Some form of entertainment, usually at least one television. Also a radio to follow local news bulletins.
- Mobile phone chargers and sockets where mobile phones can be safely charged or the provision of some pay-as-you-go mobiles for public use.
- E-mail and Internet access would be useful.
- Free from serious safety risks, or capable of having dangerous areas, e.g. swimming pools, isolated or locked up. Buildings should meet appropriate health and safety and fire safety standards.
- Reasonable access control, for the safety of evacuees, their property and Rest Centre property.
- Accommodation for pets which enables them to be safe but separate from evacuees, for hygiene and safety reasons. Enclosed outdoor tennis / basketball courts make acceptable dog pounds, providing the weather is reasonable. In cold or wet conditions, some shelter will be required for

pets. Animal welfare charities could be invited to become involved in planning for providing assistance with pets, as could owners of commercial boarding kennels. Farming organisations may be in a position to help with accommodation for larger animals, such as horses.

- Sleeping facilities – comfortable chairs, exercise mats or camp beds and sufficient rooms to give a reasonable degree of privacy.
- First aid facilities for people who take ill. Contact arrangements for local G.P.'s should be provided and in some cases the presence of a public health nurse may be necessary.
- Large open spaces, indoors or out, where evacuees can get some exercise and children can let off steam safely.
- Quiet areas, especially for the elderly, the very young, the sick and anyone distressed by events.
- Entertainment areas, with access to TV, radio, magazines, books, board games, etc.

There will be some cases, especially in rural areas, where locations with limited facilities have to be accepted. In such situations, critical factors, such as availability of heating and toilet facilities, safety and security and provision of catering, should still be considered.

It will often be the case that Rest Centres receive the most vulnerable evacuees. These will include families with young children, the elderly, people with disabilities and socially excluded people. Venues and facilities should be assessed with this in mind, to ensure that they provide suitable accommodation for the needs that these people will have.

Some evacuees, such as hospital patients or the residents of nursing homes, will require more specialised accommodation than any Rest Centre can provide. The Health Service Executive may be in a position to find suitable alternative accommodation for such evacuees.

6.2.3.2 Equipment

Rest Centres require a range of equipment, not all of which would normally be available on-site. Items which may be required include:

- Signs for outside the building, to identify it as the Rest Centre.
- Labels for corridors, doors and rooms within the building, to help people find their way about. Safety signage for any particular hazards such as swimming pools or raised stages.
- Identity badges, armbands or tabards for Rest Centre staff, with information on personal name (where appropriate), organisation, and role.
- Forms for gathering information on evacuees.
- Food and drinks (non-alcoholic), either pre-prepared or for use in on-site kitchens. These should be appropriate to the physical, cultural and religious needs of evacuees.
- Blankets, for warmth and if people have to stay overnight.
- A pre-printed information sheet for evacuees, giving information on the organisations involved and their roles, facilities available, where to ask for

assistance and some contact numbers for welfare agencies, to keep when they return home.

- Extra televisions, video players/DVD players and radios, if necessary. Videotapes/DVDs suitable for family viewing. Magazines and books.
- Clean, dry, clothes, appropriate to the weather conditions, for people who need a change. Charity shops, local manufacturers and chain stores are good sources.
- Toiletries.
- Nappies and children's food.

It may be possible to pre-prepare and store some items, for example direction signs and room labels, on-site. Other articles, such as identity badges and forms for recording personal details may be best kept centrally, but available in a 'grab bag' for immediate use in an emergency. A third category of article would be bulky and/or expensive to store. These, including food, toiletries, clothing and blankets, are best sourced as required through pre-planned contacts and supply arrangements.

6.3 Responding to the activation of a Rest Centre

6.3.1 Roles and responsibilities

Rest Centres represent a complex, multi-agency response to the needs of evacuees. The organisations potentially involved include the Local Authority, An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive, the Civil Defence and other voluntary emergency services, welfare and advice organisations, other public service organisations and the building owner, which can provide help, advice and support, and private companies, such as catering firms, and transport operators. Elected representatives, friends and relatives of evacuees and the media will also have an interest in what is going on in a Rest Centre.

Often Rest Centres will have to be set up at short notice, outside normal office hours and under adverse conditions. The range of circumstances in which a Rest Centre can be required, the number of organisations potentially involved, and the short notice often given of the need for a Rest Centre, means that effective delivery of Rest Centre services can only be assured by advance planning, training and exercising.

Running an effective Rest Centre requires a partnership approach from a range of organisations. No one organisation will have all of the facilities, staff and skills necessary to carry out all of the tasks associated with a Rest Centre. The key organisations, and their main roles, would be:

6.3.1.1 Local Authority

The responsibilities of the Local Authority in the operation of a Rest Centre include:

- Provision of a Rest Centre(s)
- Provision of a Rest Centre Manager and support staff to each Rest Centre

- Registration of all evacuees at Rest Centre
- Ensuring that the facilities and equipment available at the Rest Centre are suitable to meet the physical needs of the evacuees
- Provisions of welfare services to evacuees at Rest Centre(s) e.g. dry clothing, food, water, toiletries etc.
- Request voluntary organisations to provide support services at the Rest Centre; e.g. Civil Defence, Irish Red Cross Society, etc.
- Liaise with the Department of Social Protection in relation to the provision of Community Welfare services to evacuees
- Close down Rest Centres, return the facility to normal service and inform the Local Co-ordination Group / On-Site Co-ordination Group as appropriate.
- Account for all Local Authority costs associated with the Rest Centre
- Provision of medium to long term accommodation of the homeless/ displaced as a result of the emergency.

6.3.1.2 An Garda Síochána

The responsibilities of An Garda Síochána in the operation of a Rest Centre include:

- Maintain public order and the protection of Life and Property
- Communicate advice and guidance to evacuees/displaced persons
- Provision of translators for non-English speaking individuals
- Provision of Casualty Bureau officers (where necessary)
- Documentation of displaced persons

6.3.1.3 Health Service Executive

The responsibilities of the Health Service Executive in the operation of a Rest Centre include:

- Provision of general medical services at the Rest Centre(s) for
 - Persons with predisposing medical conditions
 - Persons who, due to change of routine, will exaggerate their predisposed medical condition
- Provision of advice and assistance to persons with short-term pharmacy requirements
- Provision of psychosocial support

6.3.1.4 Civil Defence

The following functions may be provided by the Civil Defence at Rest Centres in support of the PRA's:

- Assist the Local Authority in the operation and running of Rest Centre(s)
- Provision of short term catering and welfare services to members of the public accommodated in temporary rest centres
- Registration of evacuees at Rest Centre(s)
- Provision of first aid

6.3.1.5 Voluntary Emergency Services

Organisations such as the Irish Red Cross, the Order of Malta and St. John Ambulance Service can play a significant role at Rest Centres in the provision of first aid and humanitarian assistance.

6.3.1.6 Community organisations & voluntary sector

Local Authorities have established links with community & voluntary groups through the Community & Enterprise section and these links could be utilised to organise assistance during an evacuation, particularly at Rest Centre(s).

In many situations, individual community volunteers may offer their services or evacuees may themselves volunteer to help with Rest Centre activities. While extra pairs of hands are often welcome, Rest Centre plans should not depend on ad hoc volunteers for staff. If community volunteers are to be used, the following points should be considered:

- Safety and security, especially of children and valuables.
- Hygiene and Health and Safety issues with untrained volunteers in hazardous locations, such as kitchens.
- Financial or legal liability, if ad hoc volunteers are injured (physically or psychologically) or if activities under their control experience problems.
- Management and supervision arrangements, including debriefing afterwards.

In general, it may be better to sensitively refuse offers of help. However, where extra people are needed, or if some evacuees would benefit from having something to occupy their minds, an experienced person should be appointed as Volunteer Manager, to deploy and manage casual volunteers, keeping in mind the issues above.

6.3.2 Opening a Rest Centre

6.3.2.1 Initial Actions

Acting on information from the site, the Local Authority shall identify the most suitable Rest Centre(s) in close proximity to the site, suitable to accommodate the estimated number of evacuees. The Local Authority shall then make contact with the building owner / occupier and request that the building be made available. Preliminary costings for the use of the facility should be agreed at this time. Additionally, it is recommended that the Local Authority notify the Council's insurers that the building is being made available to the Local Authority as a Rest Centre and request the Council's Public Indemnity insurance be extended to cover the building as a Rest Centre (if deemed necessary).

Each PRA shall nominate a representative to initially attend at the Rest Centre. The Local Authority shall provide the Rest Centre Manager and sufficient support staff. Assistance from the Voluntary Emergency Services and local community associations & voluntary groups shall be requested as necessary.

When the Rest Centre is ready to receive evacuees, the Rest Centre Manager shall notify the On-Site Co-ordinator.

6.3.2.2 Records

The registration of evacuees at Rest Centres is necessary. The longer the evacuation is likely to last, the more important it is to know who is present and what their needs are. How the registration is to be carried out should be part of the generic Rest Centre plan. Some guidelines are:

- Use a pre-prepared evacuee registration form, which will prompt staff to record all necessary information. If more than one organisation needs information from or about evacuees, the registration process should be co-ordinated, so that evacuees are not repeatedly asked for information by different people.
- Don't try to gather information at the front door: queues will form outside. The priority is to get everyone under cover and settled comfortably.
- Everyone should be registered, even infants. Parents/guardians should fill in forms on behalf of children.
- Some way of easily checking who has been registered should be devised. Cloakroom tickets have been found useful as a way of keeping track of evacuees, but beware of people perceiving that they are being treated as 'just numbers'. Other methods which have been used include identifying evacuees already registered by giving them labels for their clothes or hospital-type arm-bands, to so as to avoid duplication.
- Information should be collected sensitively, especially if people are distressed. Staff collecting information should try to identify particular physical or psychological needs, so that evacuees can be referred on for special help.
- The requirements of the data protection legislation should be understood and met.

In a Rest Centre, there are additional reasons for wanting to know who is present:

- To ensure that the number accommodated is within the safe capacity of the venue.
- To plan the delivery of services, such as catering.
- To respond to people who enquire directly to the Rest Centre about friends or relatives.
- As a record, in case evacuees wish to claim in the future for loss or injury incurred in the Rest Centre.
- To ensure that people attending the Rest Centre are genuine evacuees.

6.3.2.3 Security

Some form of access control should be exercised. New arrivals should be welcomed, given information on the Centre and directed to relevant services.

Names and forwarding address/telephone number of people leaving to take up offers of shelter elsewhere should be recorded, so that they can be taken off Rest Centre records and enquiries re-directed.

Some evacuees will bring valuables with them, which will be difficult to protect in communal areas. Rest Centre plans need to consider whether there is secure storage available, and, if so, where liability would fall for anything put in safe storage that subsequently is reported missing.

It is desirable to have a Garda presence at the Rest Centre, to:

- Gather any information needed for the Casualty Bureau or other investigations.
- Provide liaison with An Garda Síochána activities in relation to the overall incident.
- To ensure law and order and the protection of life and property

Where a nominated Rest Centre building already has its own security arrangements, the plan should include how, if at all, private security guards should be used, and how they should interact with An Garda Síochána.

6.3.2.4 Finance issues

Rest Centre plans should include clear information on how the Local Authority will pay for supplies and equipment, both in advance and during an incident, and on financial responsibility for any minor work that may be needed to potential Rest Centre buildings to ensure their suitability.

Costs may also be incurred outside the Rest Centre, for example for evacuees in hotel or Bed and Breakfast accommodation, or in private nursing homes. There may also be costs incurred for keeping pets, if they are sent to kennels. Responsibility for these costs should be agreed at the planning stage, so as to avoid public disagreements over payments after an evacuation.

6.3.2.5 Voluntary donations in kind

Some events will cause loss or damage to evacuees' personal property, including clothing. For immediate welfare purposes, Rest Centre plans should include arrangements to supply evacuees with clean, dry clothes and toiletries. Broadcast appeals for donations in kind should not be made. Rather, if particular items are urgently required, commercial or voluntary sources should be individually approached. Charities that run shops can often supply a wide range of goods from warehouses and local premises. However, news reports of loss or damage, or of distress caused to children, will often result in offers of replacement goods, clothes, toys etc. In general, such offers should be tactfully discouraged, perhaps by messages in the media that all the evacuees' immediate needs are being met. It is impossible to be sure that donated goods meet legal safety standards, sorting and storage of donations is space-and time-consuming and it is difficult to achieve an equitable distribution.

If goods are donated, sorting and distribution of donations should not be allowed to interfere with the delivery of core welfare services. Many charitable organisations regularly receive and sort donations, either for charity shops or for distribution abroad, and they may be willing to undertake this role during an evacuation also. Some local charities also have experience of distributing donated goods to people in need in the community, and their expertise and local knowledge should not be overlooked.

6.3.3 Closing down

A Rest Centre should not be shut down until all evacuees are able to either return safely to their properties or be moved to more suitable temporary accommodation. The fact that an area is available for re-occupation may not mean that everyone can leave the Rest Centre. Where large numbers are evacuated, the return will have to be staged to prevent traffic problems and to ensure security of property. Properties may have been damaged and be unsuitable for immediate re-occupation, utilities may have been disrupted and people may need to have return transport arranged for them.

It may be of value to keep the Rest Centre open as a drop-in centre until properties are fit for occupation, essential utilities restored, and local support services resumed. Depending on its location and everyday function, the Rest Centre building may have a medium-and/or long-term role as a focus for the continued supply of welfare services and practical assistance to the affected community.

Once an evacuation is over, and the building no longer required, every effort should be made to leave the Rest Centre property in a clean and orderly state.

6.3.3.1 Debriefing

Following the use of any building as a Rest Centre, all the organisations involved should hold debriefing sessions to identify lessons learned from the experience which could be used to improve future performance, either on that particular site or with Rest Centres generally. A suitable critical incident debrief should be considered, where appropriate.

6.4 Use of buildings identified as Rest Centres for other purposes in a major emergency

Some incidents may warrant the establishment of a Survivor Reception Centre or Friends & Relatives Reception Centre at appropriate locations associated with the emergency.

6.4.1 Survivor Reception Centre

A Survivor Reception Centre is a secure location to which survivors of an emergency, not requiring hospital treatment, can be taken for shelter, first aid, interview and documentation. The On-Site Co-ordinator, in conjunction with the other Controllers, should determine if such a centre is to be established. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to establish and run this centre.

Facilities identified as Rest Centres may also be utilised as Survivor Reception Centres in appropriate circumstances.

The key difference between a Rest Centre and a Survivor Reception Centre is that Rest Centres are usually established for people evacuated from their homes in advance of the emergency and Survivor Reception Centres are established for people directly affected by the emergency after the emergency has occurred. Survivor Reception Centres will usually be required to be established within walking distance of the emergency and may often only be established for a short duration.

Another important consideration is that survivors of an emergency may not be necessarily displaced from their homes. The emergency may have occurred when people were at work or socialising or when they were travelling. However, they may need assistance in arranging transport to a safe location either to home, to their family or friends or to their intended destination if they were travelling.

It is important to note that buildings should not serve a dual purpose during an emergency. Evacuees and survivors should not be accommodated in the same building.

Further guidance on Survivor Reception Centres is outlined in Section 5.7.3 of the *Framework for Major Emergency Management*.

6.4.2 Friends & Relatives Reception Centre

A Friends and Relatives Reception Centre is a secure area, operated by An Garda Síochána, for the use of friends and relatives of casualties arriving at or near the site of an emergency (in addition to those provided at hospitals where the injured are being treated). The Local Co-ordination Group should determine the need for the designation and operation/staffing of such centres.

It is unlikely that buildings identified as Rest Centres will be utilised as a Friends and Relatives Reception Centre during an emergency. However, the Local Co-ordination Group may wish to consider the use of such facilities in certain circumstances.

Again, it is important to note that buildings should not serve a dual purpose during an emergency. Evacuees/ survivors should not be accommodated in the same building as a Friends and Relatives Reception Centre. Appropriate

arrangements should be put in place to reunite evacuees or survivors with friends and families in an orderly way.

Further guidance on Friends and Relatives Reception Centres is outlined in Section 5.7.5 of the *Framework for Major Emergency Management*.

SECTION C

7 List of Appendices

- 7.1 Useful Checklists
- 7.2 Outline of a generic Evacuation and Shelter Plan
- 7.3 Example of a Rest Centre Assessment sheet
- 7.4 Examples of 'walkthrough scenario' evacuation/shelter exercises
- 7.5 Glossary of Terms & Acronyms

7.1 Useful Checklists

Checklist 1 – Deciding to evacuate (Key actions for On-Site Co-ordinator / Controllers)

Checklist 2 – Implementing the decision (Key actions for On-Site Co-ordinator / Controllers)

Checklist 3 – Warning & Moving (Key actions for On-Site Co-ordinator / Controllers)

Checklist 4A – Rest Centres (Key actions for On-Site Co-ordinator / Controllers)

Checklist 4B – Rest Centres (Key actions for Local Co-ordination Group / Local Authority Crisis Management Team)

Checklist 4C – Rest Centres (Key actions for Rest Centre Manager / Support staff)

Checklist 5 – Resettlement, Return & Recovery

CHECKLIST 1 - DECIDING TO EVACUATE

KEY ACTIONS FOR ON-SITE CO-ORDINATION GROUP

PAGE 1 OF 1

#	Item	YES	NO
A	Can buildings provide protection for the period the hazard is expected to last?		
B	Or is evacuation necessary to ensure the health and safety of people in the affected area?		
C	Can the evacuation be carried out without exposing people to more danger than if they had stayed indoors?		
D	Can the evacuation be carried out without exposing responding staff to an unacceptable degree of danger?		
E	If the situation does not currently warrant evacuation, has the situation the potential to reach a point where evacuation will be necessary?		
F	If precautionary evacuation is considered, can the economic and social costs be justified?		
G	Consult with the Local Co-ordination Group and Crisis Management Teams if sufficient time allows		
H	Is there a necessity to consult with the HSE Public Health Department in respect of public safety?		

CHECKLIST 2 – IMPLEMENTING THE DECISION

KEY ACTIONS FOR ON-SITE CO-ORDINATION GROUP

PAGE 1 OF 2

#	Item	Comment
A	Identify the Evacuation Zone(s) (threatened population). Use a map or aerial photograph if possible.	
B	Identify high-risk locations within the evacuation zone e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitals / Nursing Homes: • Hotels / hostels / guesthouses: • Schools: • Colleges / universities: • Caravan / camping sites: • Major employers: Specify any special instructions for these premises?	
C	What resources are available for evacuation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Garda Síochána: _____ • Local Authority: _____ • HSE: _____ • Defence Forces: _____ • Voluntary Emergency Services: _____ • Others: _____ 	
D	Are these resources sufficient to conduct the evacuation safely in the time available or are further resources required?	
E	If further resources are required, can the evacuation be delayed until these resources are in place?	
F	Identify the Evacuation Assembly Point(s)	
G	Identify the Evacuation routes to the Assembly Points	

KEY ACTIONS FOR ON-SITE CO-ORDINATION GROUP

PAGE 2 OF 2

#	Item	Comment
H	Nominate the Rest Centre(s). Request assistance from the Local Co-ordination Group for staffing and supporting the operation of the Rest Centre(s).	
I	Arrange for suitable transportation from the Assembly Points to the Rest Centre. Request assistance from the Local Co-ordination Group if necessary.	
J	When will the evacuation take place?	
K	How will information about the evacuation be communicated to people? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Television• Radio• Website• Social media• Phone call• Text• Siren• Loud Hailer• Door-to-door Request assistance from the Local Co-ordination Group in communicating instructions to the public if necessary.	
L	Is there time to establish a public information hotline to provide further information to the public on evacuation issues? Refer this request to the Local Co-ordination Group as appropriate.	

CHECKLIST 3 - WARNING AND MOVING

KEY ACTIONS FOR ON-SITE CO-ORDINATION GROUP

PAGE 1 OF 1

#	Item	Comment
A	Notify the public in the affected area to evacuate. Be specific about streets or areas involved. Advise if evacuation on-foot or by car is appropriate. Advise people on what they may need to bring (e.g. medicines) or leave behind, advise on pets / livestock etc. Specify any special instructions for high-risk locations.	
B	Consider having ambulances on stand-by in case of injuries/accidents during the evacuation.	
C	Direct evacuees to the Assembly Points	
D	Assist with the evacuation of vulnerable persons e.g. people with disabilities, sick, elderly, children etc.	
E	Deploy a sufficient number of buses / mini-buses / taxis / emergency transport vehicles to the Assembly Points.	
F	Register all evacuees at the Assembly Point or during transport to the Rest Centre. If this is not practical, take a head count before each bus/transport departs and forward this information to the Rest Centre Manager for tally purposes.	
G	Direct all buses/transports to the appropriate Rest Centre(s) when the facility is ready.	
H	Notify the Rest Centre Manager of the number of evacuees assigned to the Rest Centre.	

CHECKLIST 4A - REST CENTRES

KEY ACTIONS FOR ON-SITE CO-ORDINATION GROUP

PAGE 1 OF 1

#	Item	Comment
A	Request the Local Co-ordination Group and/or LA Crisis Management Team to take over responsibility for the operation and management of the Rest Centre(s).	
B	If the Local Co-ordination Group / LA Crisis Management Team have not yet convened, see Section 4B & 4C for further instructions	

CHECKLIST 4B - REST CENTRES

KEY ACTIONS FOR LOCAL CO-ORDINATION GROUP

PAGE 1 OF 2

#	Item	Comment
A	Appoint a LA Rest Centre Manager & Support Staff to each designated Rest Centre	
B	Appoint a Garda Liaison Officer to each designated Rest Centre	
C	Appoint a HSE Liaison Officer to each designated Rest Centre	
D	Request assistance from the Civil Defence & Voluntary Emergency Services as appropriate	
E	Request assistance from local Community Groups and volunteers as appropriate	
F	<p>In consultation with the On-Site Co-ordination Group, establish the following:</p> <p>How many people are likely to be evacuated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Males: _____ • Females: _____ • Children: _____ • Total: _____ 	
G	When will the evacuation take place and where are the Assembly Points?	
H	Approximately how long it is likely to last?	
I	<p>Establish the likely immediate welfare needs of the people displaced e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry clothing needs: _____ • Food: _____ • Water: _____ • Hot drinks: _____ 	

KEY ACTIONS FOR LOCAL CO-ORDINATION GROUP

PAGE 2 OF 2

#	Item	Comment
J	<p>Has a suitable Rest Centre been identified in close proximity to the emergency site?</p> <p>If no, identify a suitable location. Ensure that the Rest Centre can accommodate the estimated number of evacuees. If not, a larger or additional Rest Centres may be required.</p>	
K	<p>Make contact with the Building's Owner/occupier and request that the facility be made available to the Local Authority for use as a Rest Centre. Agree preliminary costings for the use of facility.</p>	
L	<p>Notify the Local Authority's insurers that the building is being made available to the Council for use as an Emergency Rest Centre and request that the Council's public indemnity insurance cover the use of the facility (if necessary).</p>	
M	<p>Arrange for the transportation of evacuees from the designated Evacuation Assembly Points at the incident site to the Rest Centre(s)</p>	
N	<p>Is bedding required?</p> <p>Camp beds: _____</p> <p>Sleeping bags / Blankets: _____</p> <p>Sleeping mats: _____</p>	
O	<p>Make contact with the Department of Social Protection Community Welfare Officer at an early stage to assist with emergency welfare payments to qualifying citizens.</p>	
P	<p>Consider arrangements for pets and animals</p>	
Q	<p>If the situation is likely to continue for some time, provide sufficient relief and shift working arrangements for staff assigned to the Rest Centre(s).</p>	

CHECKLIST 4C - REST CENTRES

KEY ACTIONS FOR LA REST CENTRE MANAGER / REST CENTRE SUPPORT

STAFF PAGE 1 OF 2

#	Item	Comment
A	Proceed to the designated Rest Centre. On arrival, make contact with the building owner/ occupier and An Garda Síochána, HSE & Civil Defence personnel assigned to the Rest Centre (if present).	
B	Don the appropriate hi-vis tabard labelled "Rest Centre Manager" or "Rest Centre Support Staff" as appropriate	
C	Notify the Local Authority Controller of Operations or Local Authority Crisis Management Team when the Rest Centre is ready to receive evacuees.	
D	Register all evacuees in attendance at the Rest Centre. Forward Registration list to An Garda Síochána.	
E	Request assistance from An Garda Síochána in providing protection to the occupants of the facility and to prevent unauthorised access.	
F	Request assistance from the HSE in relation to the health needs of evacuee's, medical aid, pharmacy needs, psycho-social support, etc	
G	Ensure there are sufficient tables / chairs for evacuees	
H	Arrange teas/ coffee / water /food for the immediate welfare needs of evacuees	

KEY ACTIONS FOR LA REST CENTRE MANAGER / REST CENTRE SUPPORT STAFF

PAGE 2 OF 2

#	Item	Comment
I	Arrange for dry clothing to be provided in circumstances where people are wet and cold. Request assistance from the Voluntary Emergency Services in this regard.	
J	Ensure the building is heated / ventilated to an appropriate temperature	
K	Ensure that toilet facilities are kept clean and well maintained	
L	Arrange for phone access to be provided to enable evacuees communicate with friends and relatives	
M	If possible provide access to TV/radio so that evacuees can be kept informed of developments in the emergency	
N	Assist evacuees who have means / insurance in sourcing alternative accommodation	
O	Arrange overnight accommodation for displaced persons who have no means / insurance or access to alternative accommodation	
P	Liaise with the Department of Social Protection Community Welfare Officer in relation to emergency welfare payments to qualifying citizens.	
Q	In consultation with the Local Co-ordination Group and On-Site Co-ordination Group, close down the Rest Centre when all evacuees can return safely to their properties or have been moved to more suitable temporary accommodation.	
R	Debrief Rest Centre staff and submit all records to the Local Co-ordination Group	

CHECKLIST 5 - RESETTLEMENT, RETURN AND RECOVERY

KEY ACTIONS FOR LOCAL CO-ORDINATION GROUP / LA CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM

PAGE 1 OF 2

#	Item	Comment
A	Establish how many people cannot return to their properties? Immediately: _____ Short term: _____ Long term: _____	
B	In association with the Department of Social Protection Community Welfare Officer, establish how many people have insufficient means / insurance to cover alternative accommodation costs?	
C	Consider the following options for evacuees unable to return to their properties and without means: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued operation of Rest Centre• Hotel / B&B• Sheltered accommodation• Alternative housing• Relatives & Friends	
D	Consult with the National Emergency Co-ordination Centre and/or relevant Government Departments in relation to the on-going costs associated with housing needs and/or Government aid programmes	

**KEY ACTIONS FOR LOCAL CO-ORDINATION GROUP / LA CRISIS
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

PAGE 2 OF 2

#	Item	Comment
E	Consider arrangements for receiving and distribution voluntary donations in kind. The Dept. of Social Protection and/or the Irish Red Cross may be the most appropriate channel to administer any fund.	
F	In preparing to return evacuees to their properties, consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the area safe? • Is the forensic or Garda investigation at the scene complete? • Have key infrastructure services (transport, water, electricity, telecommunications) been restored? • Has advice been given to evacuees on clean-up / emergency repairs and precautions to take with regard to their private property (in particular following severe weather or flooding)? 	
G	Consider assisting property owners with waste collection services in the interest of public health and public safety	
H	Liaise with HSE in relation to on-going psychological support services	

7.2 Outline of a generic Evacuation & Shelter Plan

The following provides a generic structure of an evacuation and shelter plan:

Control Version of the Plan (dated)

Overview

- Purpose of the plan
- Scope of the plan
- Key principles of the plan

Roles and Responsibilities

- An Garda Síochána
- Local Authority
- Health Service Executive
- Department of Social Protection
- Voluntary Emergency Services
- Community and Voluntary sector

Action plan

- Designation of 'Lead Agency' and 'On-site Co-ordinator'
- Decision to evacuate or shelter-in-place
- Support arrangements for shelter-in-place decisions
- Identification of evacuation zones and assembly points
- Warning & informing (public communications)
- Evacuation & transportation
- Rest Centres, welfare and refreshments

Decision to return

- Communicating 'All Clear' to the public
- Return and Recovery

Annexes

- Key contacts details (including numbers)
- Useful checklists
- Rest Centre Plans
- Distribution List
- Maps (where relevant)

7.3 Example of a Rest Centre Assessment sheet

Venue:	Assessor:
Address:	Date:
Contact name:	Alternative Contact:
Phone numbers:	Phone numbers:

Query	Yes	No	Description/Comments
Access / parking for vehicles			
Available at any time			
Number/Variety of rooms			
Accessibility and facilities			
Heating / ventilation			
Toilet / hygiene facilities			
Full kitchen facilities			
Hot drinks and light snacks			
Chairs/Seating			
TV/Radio			
Telephones/Internet			
Fire Safety Standards			
Security/Access control			
Facilities for pets			
Sleeping facilities			
First aid			
Children's play facilities			
Is the facility near a SEVESO site?			
Is the facility in a flood risk area?			

Other Comments:

Evacuee capacity:

Review by:	Date:
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7.4 Examples of 'walkthrough scenario' evacuation/shelter exercises

Scenario 1 – Flooding

A “Red Alert” severe weather warning has been issued by Met Éireann following an extended period of very wet weather. The weather warning is coinciding with high spring tides and a significant coastal storm surge is expected. Water levels are already extremely high in the river catchment and the ground is saturated from the recent bad weather.

The Local Authority has activated its Flood Emergency Plan in response to the threat. A large area of the town centre has been identified at being of risk of flooding. It is anticipated that the flooding will occur in approximately 12 hours. Properties at risk include approximately 100 residential units, 30 businesses, a primary school, a leisure centre and a small industrial estate. The last significant flood in the town was over 20 years ago when water levels reached over 1 meter in parts of the town centre. An On-Site Co-ordination Centre has been established at the local Council offices.

You are part of the inter-agency Co-ordination Group. What action do you take in relation to evacuation?

Scenario 2 – Industrial accident

A series of explosions resulting in a large fire has occurred at a pharmaceutical plant which is designated as an upper tier SEVESO establishment. Emergency Services have responded and are at the scene. Over twenty people have been injured during the initial explosions and a number of persons are still missing. The fire is in a 4-storey process building and there is significant damage to the roof and external walls. There is concern that the fire might spread to the nearby storage warehouse which contains some highly toxic and corrosive chemicals. A major emergency has been declared.

The site operator has sounded the community siren and the nearby community have been advised to shelter-in-place. The immediate surrounding area includes 12 residential properties, 2 businesses and a golf club. Beyond this, the wider area would include a further 50 residential properties, 12 businesses, 1 school and a local fishing port.

You are part of the inter-agency Co-ordination Group. What action do you take in relation to evacuation?

Scenario 3 – Transportation accident

An accident has occurred when a private touring bus company carrying mostly foreign nationals crashed in bad weather. The bus crashed through a barrier down an embankment, over-turned and burst into flames. Emergency Services are at the scene and a major emergency has been declared. There are significant injuries and fatalities. Miraculously, twenty-five persons escaped unhurt from the accident but have lost all their possessions in the collision / fire. The survivors are extremely

traumatised by the event. You have been unable to make contact with the Bus operator and the weather continues to deteriorate.

You are part of the inter-agency Co-ordination Group. What action do you take in relation to uninjured survivors?

7.5 Glossary of Terms & Acronyms

Glossary

Casualty	Any person killed or injured during the event. (For the purpose of the Casualty Bureau it also includes survivors, missing persons and evacuees).
Casualty Bureau	Central contact and information point, operated by An Garda Síochána, for all those seeking or providing information about individuals who may have been involved.
Controller of Operations	The person given authority by a Principal Response Agency to control all elements of its activities at and about the site.
Crisis Management Team	A strategic level management group, which consists of senior managers from within the Principal Response Agency, which is assembled to manage a crisis and deal with issues arising for the agency both during the emergency and the subsequent recovery phase.
Evacuation	The process whereby people are directed away from an area where there is danger, whether immediate or anticipated.
Evacuation Assembly Point	A building or area to which evacuees are directed for onward transportation.
Friends and Relatives Reception Centre	A secure area, operated by An Garda Síochána, for the use of friends and relatives arriving at or near the site of the emergency.
Information Management System	A system for the gathering, handling, use and dissemination of information.
Lead Agency	The Principal Response Agency that is assigned the responsibility and mandate for the coordination function.
Local Co-ordination Group	A group of senior representatives from the three Principal Response Agencies (An Garda Síochána, HSE and Local Authority) whose function is to facilitate strategic level co-ordination, make policy decisions, liaise with regional/national level coordination centres, if appropriate, and

facilitate the distribution of information to the media and the public.

On-Site Coordinator

The person from the lead agency with the role of coordinating the activities of all agencies responding to an emergency.

On-Site Co-ordination Group

Group that includes the On-Site Co-ordinator and the Controllers of Operations of the other two agencies, an Information Management Officer, a Media Liaison Officer and others as appropriate.

Principal Emergency Services (PES)

The services which respond to normal emergencies in Ireland, namely An Garda Síochána, the Ambulance Service and the Fire Service.

Principal Response Agencies (PRA)

The agencies designated by the Government to respond to Major Emergencies i.e. An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and the Local Authorities.

Rest Centre

Premises where persons evacuated during an emergency are provided with appropriate welfare and shelter.

SEVESO sites

Industrial sites that, because of the presence of dangerous substances in sufficient quantities, are regulated under Council Directives 96/82/EC and 2003/105/EC, commonly referred to as the Seveso II Directive.

Shelter

Taking refuge or cover from an actual or perceived danger

Shelter-in-place

Situation where the safest place to take refuge or cover from an actual or perceived danger is the person's current location such as their own home, business place or school

Survivor Reception Centre

Secure location to which survivors, not requiring hospital treatment, can be taken for shelter, first aid, interview and documentation.

Acronyms

AGS	An Garda Síochána
CMT	Crisis Management Team
EOD	Explosives Ordnance Disposal
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
GP	General Practitioner
HSA	Health & Safety Authority
HSE	Health Service Executive
LA	Local Authority
LCC	Local Co-ordination Centre
LCG	Local Co-ordination Group
MEM	Major Emergency Management
OSCC	On-Site Co-ordination Centre
PES	Principal Emergency Service
PRA	Principal Response Agency
RSG	Regional Steering Group
RWG	Regional Working Group
VES	Voluntary Emergency Service