



Churches Together

in the Merseyside Region

(CTMR is a registered charity, No 519061)

MERSEYSIDE CHURCHES

MAJOR INCIDENT PLAN

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FIRST ISSUED: SEPTEMBER 1993
REVISED: DECEMBER 2014

MERSEYSIDE CHURCHES MAJOR INCIDENT PLAN

The aim of this Plan is to provide a planned and co-ordinated approach by the Churches in response to a major incident by giving spiritual and moral support to those directly affected. Following concerns after disasters such as those at Hillsborough and Lockerbie it was felt that such a plan would be needed.

A small group set up by the Merseyside and Region Churches Ecumenical Assembly first produced the Plan in 1993 which has been revised on various occasions. This is the most significant revision, taking into account:

- a) the changed responsibilities following the implementation of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004;*
- b) the review of the faith sector response following the London Bombings of July 2005.*

The Plan attempts to combine the need for a swift response involving the minimum of procedure with a wish to have effective co-ordination between the denominations and with the Category One responding agencies in the aftermath of a disaster.

The major change in this revision is that The Salvation Army, with its wide experience in dealing with emergencies and its specially trained staff, becomes the ecumenical lead body, responsible for calling out and deploying faith community representatives.

The Plan is intended for use within the five district councils of Merseyside, these being Liverpool City, St Helens MBC, Knowsley MBC, Wirral MBC and Sefton MBC.

It needs to be emphasised that this Plan is to enable the Churches to respond effectively when requested. It does not suggest that the Churches have the right to intervene, however compassionate may be their intention.

Any comments, questions and suggestions which affect the Plan should be sent to:

*Major Incidents Group
Churches Together in the Merseyside Region
Quaker Meeting House
22 School Lane
Liverpool
L1 3BT
Tel: 0151 709 0125
e-mail: office@ctmr.org.uk*

MERSEYSIDE CHURCHES MAJOR INCIDENT PLAN

1 INTRODUCTION

For the purposes of this plan, the term 'Clergy' includes ministers of all Christian denominations and full-time lay-workers.

1.1 Definition of a Major Incident

A Major Incident is defined as any emergency that requires the implementation of special arrangements by one or all of the 'Category One' responders under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. These include:

- The Emergency Services
- Local Authorities
- NHS Trusts

A Major Incident may necessitate:

- The rescue and transport of a large number of casualties.
- The involvement either directly or indirectly of large numbers of people.
- The transport, shelter and care of large numbers of people.
- The recovery, examination and identification of a large number of deceased victims.
- The handling of a large number of enquiries likely to be generated both from the public and the news media usually to the Police.
- Any incident that requires the large scale combined resources of the Category One responders.
- The mobilisation and organisation of the Category One responders.

1.2 Faith Community Involvement

The involvement of the faith communities in response to Major Incidents is widely valued, but needs to be well-organised and highly disciplined to be of the greatest help.

With the backing of the Merseyside Church leaders and the CTMR Management Council, The Salvation Army will act as the lead agency for the faith communities on the grounds of:

- Their experience over many years in dealing with emergencies.
- Their training of staff as Forward Control Officers.
- Their on-call Crisis Management Team.
- Their Emergency Base and Forward Control Vehicle provision.

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1.3 The Role of the Clergy

By agreement with, and request from, Category One responders, the clergy will attend:

- a) At the scene of a Major Incident, providing a 'spiritual' presence to victims and responders.
- b) At the rest centres, offering support and, in cases of long-term stay, providing appropriate religious services and rites.
- c) At the hospitals designated as Receiving Hospitals (at the request of Hospital Chaplains).
- d) At the Family & Friends Reception Centre, providing a spiritual presence, offering advice to Responders and bereaved families concerning death rites and other religious necessities, and providing contact numbers and links to 'home' faith communities.
- e) At the Humanitarian Assistance Centre.
- f) At the emergency mortuary, comforting families after viewing mortal remains.

You may be called out to minister at any of these locations. **IF YOU CANNOT COMPLY, FOR WHATEVER REASON, SAY SO IMMEDIATELY.** Know your limitations.

If you are put on alert, familiarise yourself with Section 3 of this Plan, making any necessary preparations.

The role of the clergy is **NOT** counselling. This will be provided by mental health care professionals and trained local authority staff under other emergency plans.

The role of the clergy is to provide spiritual care and support to victims and their families, under the guidance of (and with the permission of) the standing authorities (see note on Category One responders 1.1 above).

1.4 Church Leaders

The denominational leaders may be required to act as spokespersons regarding the Churches' response to the incident overall, without reference to individual cases, under the professional guidance of, and briefing by, press officers.

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2. ACTIVATION

2.1 Under the UNITY Protocol, the Activating Authorities (i.e. any Category One responder) will call the single point of contact at The Salvation Army.

2.2 The UNITY Co-ordinator at The Salvation Army, on advice from The Salvation Army Forward Control, will call out clergy as required, using the following format:

- THIS IS (name) FROM THE SALVATION ARMY.
- THE CHURCHES MAJOR INCIDENT PLAN HAS BEEN ACTIVATED.
- ARE YOU ABLE TO ATTEND THE INCIDENT? IF SO...
- PLEASE REPORT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE TO (TAKING WITH YOU THE MATERIALS LISTED IN SECTION 3.2)
- THE TIME IS NOW (use 24 hour clock).

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3. ACTION BY CLERGY

3.1 On receipt of a call from The Salvation Army:

- a) Write down the information given, the time you were contacted and who you are to report to at the incident.
- b) Attend the location required, which may be:
 - i) The scene of the Incident
(Report to The Salvation Army Forward Control, if present, otherwise the Local Authority Forward Control)
 - ii) The Rest Centre
(Report to the Rest Centre Manager, either from the Local Authority or the British Red Cross / RVS)
 - iii) A Hospital
(Report to the Chaplain)
 - iv) The Family & Friends Reception Centre
(Report to the Family Liaison Police Co-ordinator)
 - v) The Humanitarian Assistance Centre
(Report to the Local Authority Humanitarian Assistance Centre Co-ordinator)
 - vi) The Emergency Mortuary
(Report to the Emergency Mortuary Manager)

3.2 Remember to take:

- a) Photo ID e.g. passport/driving licence and wear your clerical collar, if possible
- b) a notebook
- c) suitable clothing (bearing in mind you may be in wet, muddy and windy conditions)
- d) your own medication (if appropriate)
- e) your spectacles (if appropriate)
- f) your mobile phone and its charger
- h) any items necessary for ministry, such as Bible, Prayer Book, Communion, Oil for the Sick, Leaflets, Prayer Cards.

3.3 The agency to whom you report will allocate you your task.

3.4 For queries connected with your Church or family responsibilities which require attention speak to The Salvation Army Forward Control.

3.5 On Stand Down, keep any notes made and retain it in a safe place.

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4. ACTION BY HOSPITAL CHAPLAINS

- 4.1 Hospital Chaplains should be aware of plans made by their hospital to cope with any major local incident and have their own plan integrated with this.
- 4.2 If Hospital Chaplains need additional clergy to help, contact The Salvation Army UNITY Co-ordinator with your request, asking for clergy resources, specifying:
 - a) Any particular denominations or faiths required;
 - b) Any particular need (e.g. to relieve Chaplains in wards, to staff a 'relatives room' or Hospital Family & Friends Reception Centre).

5. ACTION BY THE AIRPORT CHAPLAIN

- 5.1 The Airport Chaplain should be aware of plans made by the Airport to cope with any major local incident and have his / her own plan integrated with this.
- 5.2 If the Airport Chaplain needs additional clergy to help, contact The Salvation Army UNITY Co-ordinator with your request, asking for clergy resources, specifying:
 - a) Any particular denominations or faiths required;
 - b) Any particular need or skill required;
 - c) The location of the Family & Friends Reception Centre;
 - d) Any identification required, e.g. passport for access to non-public areas of the airport.

6. ACTION BY CHURCH PRESS OFFICERS

- 6.1 All Press & Media involvement needs to be integrated with the Multi Agency Press & Media arrangements which currently exist on Merseyside.

7. STAND-DOWN PROCEDURE

- 7.1 The Salvation Army Forward Control is responsible for standing down all those involved in the Churches Major Incident Plan.

MAJOR INCIDENT PLAN IN OPERATION

(AS IT AFFECTS THE FAITH COMMUNITIES)

Category One Responders



call up



The Salvation Army Base



who call out



Local Clergy



who go to the



Location as instructed



and report to



**The Salvation Army Forward Control
or other agencies as directed**