

Chapter 14: Media Briefing Centre User Guide

SUMMARY

This report presents a proposed Co-ordinated National Media Emergency Plan for UK civil nuclear sites and RADSAFE events. The plan is based on the recommendations presented in an earlier scoping study (NT/P348/R164) produced by Nuclear Technologies plc.

The content of this plan is drawn from a number of sources including:

- Guidance from the UK Nuclear Emergency Planning Liaison Group (NEPLG);
- Guidance from the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO);
- Guidance on the Civil Contingencies Act;
- Gloucestershire Major Incident Media Plan.

Full details of the source materials can be found in 'Production of a Co-ordinated National Media Emergency Plan' (NT/ P348/R168) produced by Nuclear Technologies plc.

Further input and comment based on Issue 1 has been incorporated into Issue 2. These comments came from Lancashire Police Emergency Planning, Lancashire Police Corporate Communications, and Lancashire County Council Emergency Planning.

GLOSSARY

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
CCA	Civil Contingencies Act (2004)
DTi	Department for Trade and Industry
EA	Environment Agency
GICS	Government Information Communications Service
GNN	Government News Network
GTA	Government Technical Advisor
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
REPPiR	Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations (2001)
RMEF	Regional Media Emergency Forum
LEC	Local Emergency Centre (former name for SCC)
MBC	Media Briefing Centre
NCC	News Co-ordination Centre
NEPLG	Nuclear Emergency Planning Liaison Group
OSF	Off-Site Facility (former name for SCC)
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SGLR	Senior Government Liaison Representative
SCC	Strategic Co-ordination Centre
SEER	Scottish Executive Emergency RoomSUMMARY

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In the event of a nuclear emergency¹ at a civil nuclear power station in the UK, it is expected that:

The public:

- will seek direct advice and reassurance from whoever they can contact, particularly from those within the affected area.
- will demand information from the media, websites and through telephone enquiries to response organisations in and beyond the affected areas.

The media:

- will be present in very large numbers including international news organisations from an early stage of a nuclear emergency, arriving locally within hours, and seeking information probably before the emergency services co-ordinated response is operational.
- will attempt to get as close to the site as possible, in search of information and images.
- will be equipped with up-to-date communications technology seeking information for immediate broadcast and to reporting deadlines.
- will most importantly, likely to be the most effective and resilient method of quickly reaching large numbers of people.

During the very early stages, inquiries are likely to be handled by the police and the Operator's press officers only.

The Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001 (REPPPIR) provide the legal basis for the supply of information to the public in response to a nuclear emergency. These place a duty on the Operator to supply prior information to members of the public in an area which could be affected, and a duty on the local authority to supply information to the public in the event of an emergency (reg. 17 - see Appendix 1).

The key objectives of this plan are to ensure that those individuals and organisations with responsibilities for media aspects of the response to a nuclear emergency do so in a timely and effective manner, and in line with the REPPPIR regulations. In particular, the media plan aims to ensure:

Preparedness

- Emergency Responders are aware of the media briefing arrangements that would come into effect.
- Facilities are available to accommodate the demands of the media.
- Prior information supplied to the public forms a foundation for information supplied during an event.
- Provide a co-ordinated national approach based on good practice.

¹This plan also applies to events where there has been an accident involving the transport of radioactive material where the UK national RADSAFE arrangements are invoked. (For further details see Appendix 6).

Response

- Make available to the media a timely and accurate flow of information about the course of the accident, the resulting off-site situation and actions being taken to ensure public safety. This is in order to inform the public in a timely and accurate manner of:
 - o the on-going situation
 - o actions required of the public
 - o actions being taken to protect the public
- Co-ordinate agreed, authoritative statements for the media to aid reassurance and to avoid the circulation of contradictory statements to the public.
- Provide a set of common standards for establishing a Media Briefing Centre (MBC) at or near the Strategic Co-ordination Centre (SCC) to act as the primary local source of authoritative information for media representatives.

The media would be essential in conveying to the public key messages about any emergency at a civil nuclear site. It is vital that there are established contingency arrangements to ensure the media are quickly and accurately briefed with timely and consistent information.

1.2 WHO IS THE PLAN FOR?

This plan provides:

- **Advisory** guidance to Emergency Planners within responding organisations on the media response arrangements for a civil nuclear emergency;
- **Advisory** guidance to Media Managers within responding organisations on the media response arrangements for a civil nuclear emergency;
- Role Summaries and Key Actions for personnel with a dedicated media response role, as identified in this plan;
- Awareness of the overall media response arrangements for a civil nuclear emergency for emergency response personnel who do not have a dedicated media response role as identified in this plan.
- Awareness of the overall media response arrangements for a civil nuclear emergency for other interested parties including the general public.

1.3 FORMAL STATUS OF THE PLAN

The formal status of this plan is as national guidance from the DTi sponsored Nuclear Emergency Planning Liaison Group (NEPLG).

2 ADMINISTRATION OF THE PLAN

2.1 DOCUMENT CONTROL

This plan is not issued as a controlled document. Amendments will be notified via NEPLG representatives and placed on the DTi's NEPLG webpages:

http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/nuclear/safety/neplg_guide.shtml

2.2 REVISION PROCEDURE

This plan will be reviewed annually by the NEPLG. Any amendments will take account of experience gained from exercises and/ or actual incidents, changes in risk, operations and legislation. Amendments will be incorporated via a complete re-issue of the plan.

Issue No.	Date	Amended by	Signature	Description of Changes

3 PRINCIPLES, LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND CONCEPTS

There are a number of principles that run through this plan; the different stages of the public communication process, the MBC concept, legal and regulatory requirements, key definitions, and command and control requirements.

3.1 PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Communicating with the public can be broken down into three distinct stages:

1. Public Awareness (pre-event):

Informing and educating the public about risks and preparedness. This is a requirement of the REPIR regulations that is placed on the Operator. This stage is not covered by the co-ordinated media emergency plan.

2. Public Warning (*at the time of an event or when one is likely*):

Alerting by all appropriate means the members of a community whose immediate safety is at risk. This stage is part of normal emergency arrangements and is not covered by the co-ordinated media emergency plan. (The REPIR regulations place a responsibility on the relevant local authority to have arrangements for providing the public with specific information relating to the emergency, and the behaviour which should be adopted).

3. Informing And Advising The Public (*immediate and long-term post-event*):

Providing relevant and timely information about the nature of the unfolding event;

- o immediate actions being taken by responders to minimise the risk to human or animal health and welfare, the environment or property,
- o actions being taken by responders to assist the recovery phase,
- o advice to, and actions that, the public themselves can take to minimise the impact of the emergency,
- o how further information can be obtained,
- o end of emergency and return to normal arrangements.

The specific information required by REPIR (Schedule 10) to be given to members of the public is listed in Appendix 7.

This final stage of public communications is the main focus of the co-ordinated media emergency plan.

3.2 THE MBC CONCEPT

The key feature of the response facilities to deal with a civil nuclear emergency is the early establishment of a Media Briefing Centre (MBC) as the main source of information to the media. The MBC would usually, but not exclusively, be set up near to the SCC for the affected site. If the MBC is not located somewhere that meets the needs of the media, they will not use it. They will select their own site, which may not be convenient for other organisations.

The MBC brings together media representatives of the key organisations involved in the response to the emergency in the Media Co-ordination Centre (MCC).

The MBC also provides facilities for relevant spokespeople to provide regular briefings and interviews to the media, and provide the media with a base to work from and office facilities.

To make the MBC attractive to the media there should be clarity over when press conferences are to be held, and a steady flow of information between press conferences. Hence the MBC might include less formal briefings with representatives of organisations on specific issues and provide, where possible, visual material. Further background information will also be made available.

Press releases from the various organisations should be displayed at one focal point in the MBC.

A table of SCC/ MBC locations for UK civil nuclear licensed sites is presented in Appendix 2.

3.3 LEGAL AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

3.3.1 REPIR

The Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001, known as REPIR, provide the legal basis for the supply of information to the public about a nuclear emergency. These place a duty on the Operator to supply prior information to members of the public in an area which could be affected, and a duty on the local authority to have arrangements for the provision of information to the public in the event of nuclear emergency (see Appendix 1).

The HSE (Health and Safety Executive) have published detailed guidance on the application of REPIR in 2002, and this guidance has been used in the production of this plan (Ref. 2).

3.3.2 Civil Contingencies Act

For emergencies at non-nuclear sites, there is a separate legal requirement under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) to provide information to the public. While this legislation is not directly applicable to the nuclear industry due to the provisions of REPIR, the plans and rehearsed responses of emergency services, local authorities, and other agencies, for non-nuclear incidents, are based on the requirements of the CCA (Civil Contingencies Act).

Two guidance documents have been prepared by the Government. 'Emergency Preparedness' (Ref. 4) provides guidance on communicating with the public, and 'Emergency Response and Recovery' (Ref. 5) provides guidance on information and the media.

To ensure consistency across all emergency arrangements, the CCA guidance and terminology has been used in the production of this plan where appropriate, while retaining the primacy of REPIR in civil nuclear emergency arrangements.

3.4 KEY DEFINITIONS

Gold (Strategic) Command

The Gold (or Strategic) Commander is a senior police officer who, in liaison with other agencies, establishes strategic objectives and co-ordinates the response to the emergency phase of the incident from the SCC. The Gold Commander leads the Strategic Co-ordinating Group at the SCC – this group is made up of senior officers from appropriate organisations, and aims to achieve effective inter-agency coordination at a strategic level.

Local Emergency Centre (LEC)

LEC is another term historically used for Strategic Co-ordination Centre (SCC).

Media Briefing Centre (MBC)

Central location for media interviews and briefings, and access to responding organisation personnel. The MBC would be staffed by spokespersons from all the principal services/ organisations responding. The MBC is usually, but not exclusively, located close to the SCC.

Forward Media Briefing Point

The police may identify an appropriate location for a Forward Media Briefing Point. This is partly dependant on health and safety issues, and also how close the MBC is located to the incident scene. The location should offer easy access from public areas and be close to the incident scene. If possible it will include a media vantage point for photographs and filming at the scene.

Strategic Co-ordination Centre

Purpose-designed and equipped control centre for the co-ordination of the response to a nuclear emergency at a civil nuclear power station. (Also known historically as Off-Site Facility (OSF) or Local Emergency Centre (LEC).

Operator

The organisation that is legally responsible for operations at the civil nuclear licensed site where the emergency is taking place.

Silver Control

Silver Control is one level below Gold Command and is replicated across all responding organisations. It is at this level that plans for delivering the goals of the strategic group are implemented. Silver control specifically refers to the Police tactical control level which is located closer to the event than the strategic command.

A full list of acronyms is available in the glossary.

3.5 MEDIA MANAGEMENT

The Gold Commander, through the Gold Media Adviser, has overall responsibility for the co-ordinated management of the Media Briefing Centre (MBC), which forms the working/ briefing area for the media. This responsibility is discharged through the MBC Manager who is usually a Police Press Officer.

The Gold Commander, through the Gold Media Adviser, also has overall responsibility for the co-ordinated management of the Forward Media Briefing Point. This responsibility is discharged through the Forward Media Briefing Point Manager who is usually a Police Press Officer.

4 ORGANISATION OF MEDIA RESPONSE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The main media response is focused around the MBC, while an additional local response may also be provided at the Forward Media Briefing Point. Other possible media response locations include an additional MBC at the operator’s offices (not the affected site), Government response from the DTi or Scottish Executive, and longer-term at the incident site itself.

4.2 OUTLINE OF THE OVERALL PLAN

Figure 1 below presents the organisational structure for the roles contained in this media emergency plan, and their physical location .³

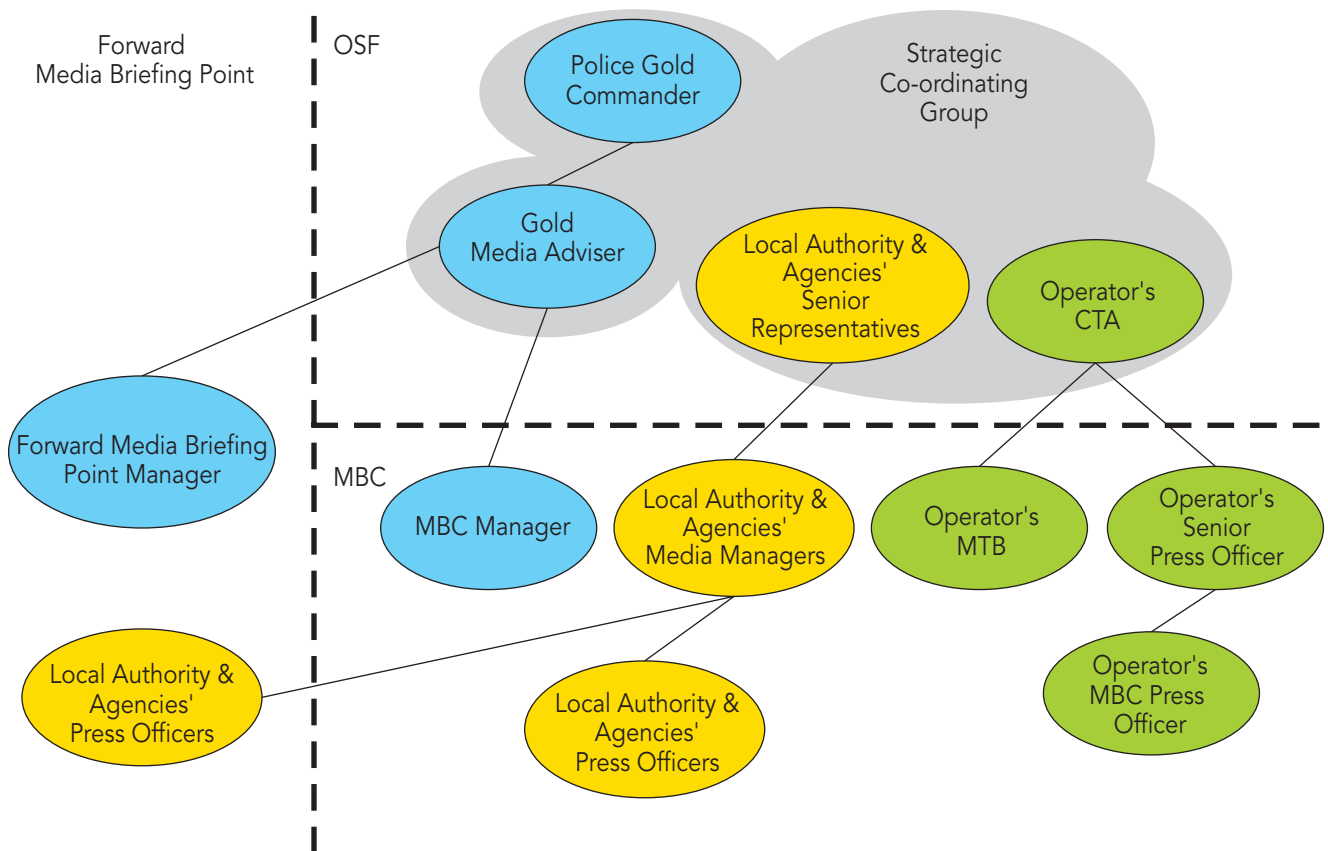


Figure 1: Diagram of the various locations and key roles at each.

The media response plan is in place to provide information to the media. It embodies the following features:

³ Note that spokespersons are not covered in this plan, and hence are not shown on the diagram. They are managed in and around the MBC by the other roles shown here.

- how communications between the SCC and MBC are established and maintained.
- how information is agreed between interested parties and provided to the MBC.
- who will chair the formal press conferences at each stage of the emergency.
- how press conferences are arranged and which spokespersons and experts will be made available.
- management responsibility, including the appointment of the MBC Manager, would normally fall to the police during the accident phase, and the local authority during the recovery phase.

4.2.1 MBC Operations

- a. Organisations with executive responsibilities for off-site actions to protect the public are also expected to play a key role in media briefing on their own areas of responsibility through the MBC.
- b. A Government Technical Adviser (GTA) will provide authoritative statements on behalf of Government on the course of the emergency and measures to protect the public. These statements need to be produced and agreed quickly in order to be timely.
- c. An MBC Manager should be appointed and all media representatives from the organisations operating within the SCC will be expected to work as part of a co-ordinated team from the Media Co-ordination Centre (MCC), which is located close to or within the MBC.

A media strategy should be developed to provide a clear framework for press officers and reporters detailing the regularity of press conferences, briefings, locations etc

- d. Press releases from the various organisations should be shared and agreed prior to issue, and should be displayed at one focal point within the MBC and also within the SCC.
- e. Efforts should be made to provide a steady stream of information (with spokespersons being available as appropriate) in order to recognise the needs of the broadcast media, particularly those with 24 hour rolling news opportunities.
- f. All media representatives should be directed to the MBC and issued with passes by the Police. (Media representatives must have appropriate professional identification in order to gain access to the MBC).
- g. Updated information should be placed on the organisations' websites or, where established, the multi-agency major incident website should be 'switched on'.

4.2.2 Press Conferences/ Media Briefings

- a. The timing of press conferences and media briefings will be agreed between the Gold Commander and the GTA who should take into consideration the views of the other response agencies. A minimum frequency of every 2 hours is recommended for formal press conferences, with more frequent, less formal (and not live) media briefings if events are changing rapidly.

- b. Gold will nominate a dedicated police press spokesperson according to the status of the emergency (and may take on that role personally when necessary). This will be facilitated through the Gold Media Adviser.
- c. Membership of the 'top table' at press conferences will be kept to a minimum. Spokespersons will be agreed in advance by Gold and the GTA, as appropriate in the light of developments and the interests of the media and taking into consideration the views of the other agencies. The 'Core Attendance' will be;
 - Police
 - Operator's MTB (replaced by GTA when present)
 - Local Authority

Other organisations should be on hand to join the 'top table' as the need arises, these would include the;

 - Food Standards Agency/ Food Standards Agency Scotland
 - Environment Agency/ Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
 - Local NHS Trust or Regional NHS representative
 - Health Protection Agency/ Health Protection Scotland
 - Fire Service (if heavily involved on-site)
- d. Advice from the Civil Contingencies Act guidance documents on the various audiences for information briefings, and their needs is provided in Appendix 7.

4.2.3 Communication Links

- a. Close liaison will be necessary between the MBC and the SCC, as well as other organisational information/ control centres such as the lead Government department's emergency room, and other organisations and their enquiry points in respect of the incident, statements, media enquiries and media reports. The Gold Media Adviser is responsible for sharing such media updates with the Gold Commander.
- b. Robust communications should be provided between the SCC and the MBC, particularly when they are on separate sites. (Set-up instructions for each MBC provide these requirements).
- c. Close liaison will be necessary between the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI) Emergency Room/ Scottish Executive Emergency Room (SEER); the SCC and the MBC; and between organisations and their own enquiry points, to ensure consistency of information.

4.2.4 Command

- a. During the Emergency Phase, the Gold Commander, through the Gold Media Adviser, will have overall responsibility for the management of the MBC which will form the working/ briefing area for the media. Should the MBC be required in the Recovery Phase, this role will pass to the Local Authority (see Appendix 4).

- b. Whilst the co-ordinating role will pass at some stage to the local authority, the MBC would normally continue to be available for as long as necessary, and organisations should have arrangements in place to provide the appropriate resources.

4.2.5 Authorisation of Briefings/ Press Statements

- a. Organisations must share their proposed media statements with Gold Command, through the Gold Media Adviser prior to them being issued. Gold Media Advisor is to approve statements providing both countermeasures and general advice to the public. The Gold Media Advisor should not restrict the Operator from issuing statements on technical/ company issues unless they conflict with advice to the public.
- b. The Police Gold Commander and the GTA must be informed beforehand of the timing and content of any media statements.
- c. An Initial Press Statement giving basic information on the event is likely to have been issued by the Operator prior to the SCC being established. This statement will not have been approved by the Gold Media Advisor.

4.2.6 Establishing a Forward Media Briefing Point (FMBP)

- a. The Gold Media Adviser should discuss with Gold and Silver Command whether it is appropriate to establish a Forward Media Briefing Point and, if it is deemed appropriate, where the location should be and who the dedicated police spokesperson should be. Forward Media Briefing Points are often pre-planned, and should be large enough to accommodate a number of media representatives, have an appropriate secure access route, and where possible have a vantage point of the affected site. A Police Press Officer will be deployed as the co-ordinator for the FMBP.
- b. All members of the media attending the Forward Media Briefing Point must have appropriate professional identification.

Officers working at the Forward Media Briefing Point should ensure that their key messages are agreed through the Gold Media Adviser to ensure consistency and accuracy, particularly during the early stages of the incident.

4.2.7 Media organisations visiting the affected site

- a. Media organisations visiting the affected site might be advantageous in providing public reassurance, and enable the Police, the Operator and other responding organisations to convey accurate messages to the public and other media.
- b. If such a visit can be safely arranged, then consideration should be given to asking a crew to pool footage with other media organisations, given that the number of such visits would probably need to be strictly limited.
- c. Any such visits would be arranged and facilitated by the Operator, where practicable.
- d. Any such visits must be agreed with the Police Gold Media Adviser.

- e. It is possible that the media will decide to approach the affected the site of their own choice. An operational response to this eventuality would be determined by the SCG based on the specific circumstances of the event.

4.2.8 Media Monitoring

Monitoring the media coverage during and after a major incident is a crucial part of the response (in many SCCs, this task will be managed by the Police, with assessments being made by the Gold Media Advisor and media representatives from other agencies). Monitoring of the media is necessary to ensure:

- a. The emergency services and other agencies are using the media to allay public fears, and reassure the community that the situation is under control.
- b. The gathering of intelligence from the media.
- c. That all agencies involved in the response are doing so in a co-ordinated manner and not contradicting each other.
- d. A response is prepared to counter unwarranted, and inaccurate or misleading information that is being broadcast to the public.
- e. Maintenance of a full record of media coverage in the event of a possible investigation and inquiry into the management of the event.
- f. Information and intelligence gathered through the media monitoring process is fed back into the Strategic Co-ordinating Group by the Gold Media Advisor to ensure any issues arising are being addressed.

4.2.9 Briefing Beyond the MBC

- a. Responding organisations, both local and national, might additionally brief the media on their own areas of responsibility from their own headquarters and emergency centres, although the main focus of media attention and resources will be the MBC co-ordinated through the Police. It is important that the content of these briefings is shared or captured by Gold Command.
- b. Responding organisations will use identified and trained spokespersons who can make authoritative statements on behalf of their organisation.
- c. The Operator's corporate media response is discussed in Appendix 5.
- d. As an emergency progresses, each organisation should endeavour to place its own key statements and background information on its own web-site or, where developed, the multi-agency major incident website. This should include a description of what it is doing in response to the emergency and why this is the case. They should also provide links to the www.ukresilience.info web-site, which will act as a portal for all the available information being produced by individual bodies.

4.2.10 Telephone Enquiries from the Public

The mechanisms for handling telephone enquiries and updating web-sites are known and understood by all the organisations involved in the response, and they also appreciate the limitations on what resources are likely to be available for the task.

While no integrated telephone service would be practicable or feasible, organisations should endeavour to run telephone enquiry points to seek to answer questions in their area of responsibility, and the plans of responding organisations should ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for this to be the case.

Relevant organisations should also provide information to those with particular needs including, where appropriate, telephone enquiry points to deal with specific aspects of the emergency.

Organisations may employ call centres to assist them in this task. It is expected that, as a minimum for a major emergency, the Police will establish a call centre.

It is important that any information given out over the telephone entirely matches the information being released to the media.

4.2.11 Government Briefing

- a. A DTi minister, in the case of an emergency in England or Wales, would be expected to make a statement about the course of the emergency to the Westminster Parliament, or Scottish Executive minister, in the case of Scotland, would make a statement to the Scottish Parliament. These ministers might also be expected to speak directly to the media and visit the site of the emergency when it was safe to do so.
- b. The lead Government department (i.e. DTi or Scottish Executive) would need to ensure its own media briefing arrangements were suitably adapted to meet the circumstances of an emergency at a civil nuclear site. The following points would be relevant:
 - o The demand for information would be very significant. It is likely that in these circumstances the media will look to the lead department's ministers and press office as a major source of information. The department's emergency room (Nuclear Emergency Briefing Room in the case of DTi or Scottish Executive Emergency Room for the Scottish Executive) would need to maintain close liaison with the SCC and MBC to ensure consistency of information.
 - o Key statements originating from the lead department or its ministers should be checked with the GTA. This would be responsibility of the Senior Government Liaison Representative (SGLR) and his/her team located at the SCC.
 - o The lead department's press office would need to send one of its officers to the MBC to support the GTA at press conferences and on media matters generally.
 - o The lead department's press office would need to work in close liaison with the staff in its emergency room to ensure to ensure key statements are produced on time and in good order, and are published on the DTi or Scottish Executive web-site.

4.2.12 News Co-Ordination Centre

For any major emergency, a News Co-ordination Centre would be established to ensure public information messages, particularly cross cutting messages, were coordinated across

government and other key stakeholders. The News Co-ordination Centre (NCC) of the Government Information Communications Service (GICS) would ensure that at the national level appropriate steps were being taken to ensure that the media was appropriately and adequately briefed.

The following considerations would be relevant:

- o Invoke the Media Protocol on Public Warnings During a Catastrophe or Major National Emergency if appropriate (see Appendix 3).
- o The NCC would work with the lead department's press office and other government press offices to ensure there was adequate management and resourcing of the government's response, and that the delivery arrangements were appropriate and adequate and timely.
- o The NCC would additionally consider the wider, longer term, media issues and what action was necessary in the light of those issues.
- o The ukresilience web-site contains a nuclear section. The NCC would update this ensuring cross-Government co-ordination of updates and links.
- o It would be essential there was an adequate flow of information to and from the regions. The NCC would work in close liaison with the Government News Network (GNN) and keep them up to date on all policy developments. They would take account of the arrangements and contacts established through the Regional Media Emergency Forums (RMEFs), which have an ongoing planning role bringing together government, the emergency services and the media.

4.2.13 Recovery Phase

Arrangements are already in place for the handover of control of the off-site response from the Police to the Local Authority as the event moves into the Recovery Phase. These existing arrangements contained within Operator/ Emergency Services/ Agencies Emergency Plans apply equally to the media response and should be referred to at this point. Further details on media-specific aspects of the handover process are included in Appendix 4.

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 OVERVIEW

While responsibilities for dealing with the media are contained within many emergency response roles, there are a number of roles that are solely focused on media response aspects of the emergency. This section of the plan details those roles dedicated to media response, namely:

- Police Gold Media Advisor
- Police MBC Manager
- Police Forward Media Briefing Point Manager
- Operator's Senior Press Officer
- Operator's MBC Press Officer
- Operator's Media Technical Briefer
- Local Authority Media Manager
- Local Authority Press Officer
- Agencies' Media Managers
- Agencies' Press Officers

In addition, the most important media aspects of the role of **Government Technical Advisor** are also covered.

5.2 GOLD MEDIA ADVISOR

Location: Strategic Co-ordinating Group at the SCC

Accountable to: Gold Commander

Responsible for: Advising members of the Strategic Co-ordinating Group at Gold level on current and future press issues and preparing a media strategy for dealing with the incident. Collating press statements from partner organisations and tasking police press officers in key roles, particularly the MBC and FMBP managers.

Role Summary:

The Police Gold Media Adviser will advise the Gold Commander on the appropriate strategy for dealing with press and public information issues in relation to the incident. This will be carried out in consultation with media advisers from other organisations.

Key Actions:

- Attend Strategic Co-ordinating Group meetings to advise on media policy and a communications strategy.
- Feed into the Strategic Co-ordinating Group any media issues arising and discuss a strategy for dealing with future areas of media interest.
- Prepare response statements on behalf of the Strategic Co-ordinating Group and collate and share prepared statements from partner organizations
- Authorise the release of new information on approval from the Strategic Co-ordinating Group.
- Liaise with MBC Manager, FMBP Manager and satellite Press Offices to ensure the effective distribution of information.
- Feed into the Gold Strategic Co-ordinating Group media monitoring information requiring policy decisions, expert or specific responses, clarification or correction of misleading reports.

5.3 POLICE MBC MANAGER

Location: Media Briefing Centre

Accountable to: Gold Media Adviser

Responsible for: Management of the Media Briefing Centre, including co-ordination of press conferences and briefings.

Role Summary:

The Police Service will co-ordinate the Media Briefing Centre and the Manager will be an experienced police press officer. They will be supported by police press officers and staff with media expertise from other agencies in order to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the centre.

Key Actions:

Close liaison with the Gold Media Adviser regarding media enquiries, reporting and development of key messages / statements.

- Close liaison with the dedicated Police press spokesperson who will have been identified and deployed to the MBC by Gold Command, ensuring they are fully briefed at all times.
- Close liaison with press officer representatives working within the Media Co-ordination Centre, including the collation of media statements for sharing with Gold.
- Arranging press conferences and briefings, ensuring that appropriate spokespeople are available and in place in good time and that the dedicated police spokesperson is fully briefed on the current issues, potential questions and key messages from Gold.

Arranging internal briefings with press officer colleagues within the MCC to ensure representatives are fully briefed on information coming from Gold.

Management and deployment of Police Press Office staff within the MBC.

- Keep the Gold Media Adviser advised of any matters which may require their advice or which may affect decisions of the Gold Commander.
- Ensure the security of the Media Briefing Centre and specific sections within it.
- Ensure that as far as possible basic needs of the media are catered for by the Media Briefing Centre, i.e. toilets, catering, interview areas, parking and access to the centre.

5.4 POLICE FORWARD MEDIA BRIEFING POINT MANAGER

Location: A suitable location close to the scene of the incident

Accountable to: Gold Media Adviser

Responsible for: Establishing and managing a Forward Media Briefing Point

Role Summary:

The Gold Commander and the Gold Media Adviser will decide whether it is appropriate to establish a Forward Media Briefing Point. This will be dependant on health and safety issues as well as on the location of the MBC. The Gold Media Adviser will appoint a Forward Media Briefing Point manager who will be an experienced police press officer, and a dedicated police spokesperson will be identified and deployed.

The Forward Media Briefing Point should offer easy access from public areas and be close to the incident scene. If possible it will include a media vantage point for photographs and filming at the scene. Alternatively, the Forward Media Briefing Point should establish a media pool and facilitate access to a suitable vantage point.

Key Actions:

- Act as the central liaison point between all agencies and media attending the scene.
- Ensure this area has suitable access control and sufficient security arrangements.
- Lead any police Press Officers and agency Press Officers operating from the Forward Media Briefing Point.
- Ensure that requests for interviews are discussed with Gold through the Gold Media Adviser.
- Identify within the Forward Media Briefing Point a suitable location for such interviews to take place.
- Ensure the police spokesperson is fully briefed on agreed key messages issued from Gold.
- Ensure close liaison with the Gold Media Adviser on press attendance at the scene, any issues arising and questions being posed.
- Manage the Forward Media Briefing Point in order that the needs of the media are met but that the operational requirements to deal with the incident itself are not hampered by the media's presence.
- Ensure the media is warned regarding the dangers existing outside the authorised areas and are clearly informed of where they are permitted to go. This advice will be provided to the Forward Media Briefing Point Manager by Police Silver Control.

5.5 OPERATOR'S SENIOR PRESS OFFICER

Location: MBC

Accountable to: Company Technical Advisor

Responsible for: Interfacing between emergency services/ agencies' press officers at the MBC, and briefing the MTB.

Role Summary:

The Operator's Senior Press Officer acts as the Operator's media specialist at the SCC, and interfaces with the company representatives at the MBC, other agencies' PR representatives in the Joint Press Office, the Company Press Office, and the CESC.

Key Actions:

- Liaise with the Company Technical Adviser and give PR advice regarding press conferences and media briefings
- Form a close, proactive relationship with other organisations via the MCC and brief them on events when appropriate
- Ensure that all the press statements [the Company and others] are faxed to the Company Press Office.
- Liaise regularly with the MTB and the MBC Manager.
- Keep the CESC Press Officer up to date with media issues arising at the SCC/ MBC

5.6 OPERATOR'S MBC PRESS OFFICER

Location: Media Briefing Centre⁴

Accountable to: Operator's Senior Press Officer

Responsible for: Interfacing between emergency services/ agencies' press officers at the MBC, and briefing the MTB.

Role Summary:

The Operator's MBC Press Officer acts as the Operator's primary point of contact at the MBC, and interface with the Company Technical Advisor, other agencies' PR representatives, and the MTB at the MBC.

The Operator's MBC Press Officer also provides briefing to the MTB prior to interviews.

Key Actions:

- Liaise with the Company Senior Press Officer and give PR advice regarding press conferences and media briefings
- Form a close, proactive relationship with the media at the MBC and brief them on events when appropriate, following agreement of messages by Gold.
- Form a close, proactive relationship with all the press officers at the MBC, especially the Police.
- Liaise regularly with the MTB at the MBC

⁴ Where resources permit, an additional Press Officer in the SCC is seen as good practice.

5.7 OPERATOR'S MEDIA TECHNICAL BRIEFER

Location: Media Briefing Centre

Accountable to: Operator's Company Technical Advisor

Responsible for: Presenting to the media the Operator's perspective of technical aspects of the event, the on-site response, and the plant prognosis.

Role Summary:

The Media Technical Briefer role is filled by a Station Director or Senior Manager from an unaffected site and they will have PR support also drawn from an unaffected site. The MTB provides a senior company presence in front of the media.

Key Actions:

- Represent the company during press conference held at the Media Briefing Centre.
- Pass on background information to the public and media on company and technical issues.
- Present information on the incident, as agreed at the Strategic Co-ordination meeting via a brief provided by the Corporate Communications representative.
- Provide technical information to other agencies, as requested at the Media briefing Centre.
- Maintain overall appreciation of information being given to the media and public and its significance to the event; provide feedback via corporate communications to the CESC.

5.8 LOCAL AUTHORITY MEDIA MANAGER

Location: MBC

Accountable to: Senior Local Authority Representative at SCC

Responsible for: Managing Local Authority media response.

Role Summary:

Interfaces with the Local Authority staff in the SCC, other agencies' PR representatives in the MCC, and Local Authority Press Officer at the MBC.

Key Actions:

- Liaise with the Local Authority Team in the SCC and give PR advice regarding press conferences and media briefings
- Ensure that information contained in press statements is in line with prior information given to the public under the requirements of the REPPiR Regulations.
- Form a close, proactive relationship with all the press officers in the MCC
- Ensure that all the press statements are faxed to the Local Authority Press Office, and are agreed by Gold.
- Liaise regularly with the Local Authority Press Officer at the MBC
- Keep the Local Authority Press Office up to date with media issues arising at the SCC / MBC

5.9 LOCAL AUTHORITY PRESS OFFICER

Location: Media Briefing Centre ⁵

Accountable to: Local Authority Media Manager

Responsible for: Interfacing between emergency services/ operator/ agencies' press officers at the MBC, liaising with Local Authority Media Manager, and briefing Local Authority spokesperson prior to interview.

Role Summary:

The Local Authority Press Officer acts as the Local Authority's primary point of contact at the MBC, interfaces with other agencies' PR representatives, and the Local Authority spokesperson* at the MBC.

The Local Authority Press Officer also provides briefings to the Local Authority spokesperson at the MBC prior to interviews.

Key Actions:

- Liaise with the Local Authority Media Manager in the Joint Press Office and give PR advice regarding press conferences and media briefings
- Ensure that information contained in press statements is in line with prior information given to the public under the requirements of the REPPiR Regulations.
- Form a close, proactive relationship with the media at the MBC and brief them on events when appropriate and with agreement from Gold.
- Form a close, proactive relationship with all the press officers at the MCC, especially the Police
- Liaise regularly with the Local Authority spokesperson at the MBC

⁵ Where resources permit, an additional Press Officer in the SCC is seen as good practice.

* The 'Local Authority Spokesperson' may be the same individual as the 'Senior Local Authority Representative'.

5.10 AGENCIES' MEDIA MANAGERS

Location: MBC

Accountable to: Senior Agency Representative at SCC

Responsible for: Managing respective agency's media response.

Role Summary:

Interfaces with the Local Authority staff in the SCC, other agencies' PR representatives in the MCC, and Local Authority Press Officer at the MBC.

Key Actions:

- Liaise with the agency's team in the SCC and give PR advice regarding press conferences and media briefings
- Form a close, proactive relationship with all the press officers in the MCC, especially the Police
- Ensure that all the press statements are faxed to the respective agency's Press Office and to Gold.
- Liaise regularly with the respective agency's Press Officer at the MBC
- Keep the respective agency's Press Office up to date with media issues arising at the SCC/ MBC

5.11 AGENCIES' PRESS OFFICERS

Location: Media Briefing Centre ⁶

Accountable to: Respective agency's Media Manager.

Responsible for: Interfacing between emergency services/ operator/ agencies' press officers at the MBC, and briefing respective agency's spokesperson[†] prior to interview.

Role Summary:

Agencies' Press Officers act as each agency's primary point of contact at the MBC, and interface with their agency's Media Manager in the MCC, other agencies' PR representatives, and their agency's spokesperson at the MBC.

Agencies' Press Officers also provide briefings to their agency's spokesperson at the MBC prior to interviews.

Key Actions:

- Liaise with respective agency's Media Manager in the Joint Press Office and give PR advice regarding press conferences and media briefings.
- Form a close, proactive relationship with the media at the MBC and brief them on events when appropriate and in agreement with Gold.
- Form a close, proactive relationship with all the press officers at the MCC, especially the Police.
- Liaise regularly with respective agency's spokesperson at the MBC.

⁶ Where resources permit, an additional Press Officer in the SCC is seen as good practice.

[†] The 'Agency Spokesperson' may be the same individual as the 'Agency Senior Representative'.

5.12 GOVERNMENT TECHNICAL ADVISOR ⁷

Location: Media Briefing Centre

Accountable to: HM Government/ Scottish Executive

Responsible for: Providing authoritative statements on behalf of Government on the course of the emergency and measures to protect the public.

Role Summary:

The Government Technical Advisor role is filled by a senior member of HM NII, who has been chosen to operate on behalf of HMG/ Scottish Executive. In addition to their strategic role in the SCC, the GTA provides the authoritative voice of HM Government/ Scottish Executive at the MBC.

Key Actions:

- Represent HM Government/ Scottish Executive during press conference held at the Media Briefing Centre.
- Pass on background information to the public and media on company and technical issues.
- Present information on the incident, as agreed at the Strategic Co-ordination meeting via a brief provided by the MBC
- Provide technical information to other agencies, as requested at the Media briefing Centre.
- Maintain overall appreciation of information being given to the media and public and its significance to the event; provide feedback via the SGLR Team at the SCC to the lead Government Department.

⁷ This section covers only the media aspects of the GTA's role.

6 REFERENCES

1	The Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001. HMSO. Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 2975. 2001.
2	A Guide to the Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001. Health & Safety Executive. ISBN 0 7176 2240 1. 2002.
3	Civil Contingencies Act (2004). 2004 Chapter 36. ISBN 0 10 543604 6. HMSO. 2004.
4	Emergency Preparedness: Guidance on Part 1 of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, its associated Regulations and non-statutory arrangements. HM Government. http://www.ukresilience.info/ccact/emergprepfinal.pdf
5	Emergency Response and Recovery: Non-statutory guidance to complement Emergency Preparedness. HM Government. http://www.ukresilience.info/ccact/emergresponse.pdf
6	Civil Nuclear Emergency Planning: Consolidated Guidance: Chapter 13 - Media Briefing Centres. DTi. November 2004. http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/nuclear/safety/neplg13.pdf
7	NEPLG Guidance. Nuclear Emergency Planning Liaison Group. Department for Trade and Industry. March 2004.
8	ACC Alan Goodwin. Local Emergency Centres Good Practice Guide. Association of Chief Police Officers of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. 13 May 2004.
9	Central Emergency Support Centre and Local Emergency Centre Handbook. British Energy. BEG/SPEC/OPSV/EPG/004 Rev 001. June 2004.
10	Joint Procedures Manual. Gloucestershire Major Incidents Co-ordinating Group. Revised Nov 2004.

APPENDIX 1

MBC SPECIFICATIONS

The following list outlines the minimum standards for an MBC:

- MBC located within a few hundred metres of the SCC. (If a remote location must be used, transport should be provided, and the MBC permanently staffed at a sufficiently senior level);
- Registration desk (to increase security, and minimise overcrowding);
- MBC Co-ordinator role (or similar);
- Access to phones, fax, and power sockets for members of the media;
- Photocopier;
- Parking;
- Conference facility;
- One to one briefing rooms;
- Toilets.

Pre-prepared 'Media Packs' will be available, including photos of the affected station, factual details and other general information. These will be distributed to members of the media at the MBC by the Police. These packs should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Information boards containing diagrams of the station, station site layout and maps showing the general area and the evacuation zones will be laid out at the MBC. These boards will be regularly updated with information by the Police.

The following good practice standards are recommended:

- Designated 'Forward Briefing Centre';
- Access to modem lines for members of the media;
- Parking to include sufficient space for media satellite trucks;
- Catering.

APPENDIX 2

MBC LOCATIONS FOR UK NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS/ DECOMMISSIONING SITES

AFFECTED SITE	OPERATOR	SCC LOCATION	MBC LOCATION	SCC SUPPORT TEAM
Berkeley Licensed Site	British Nuclear Group	Gloucester	Adjacent to SCC.	Oldbury
Bradwell	British Nuclear Group	Chelmsford	Adjacent to SCC.	Sizewell A
Chaplecross	British Nuclear Group	Dumfries	Loreburn Hall, Dumfries (300m)	Sellafield
Dungeness A	British Nuclear Group	Maidstone	Adjacent to SCC.	Bradwell
Dungeness B	British Energy	Maidstone	Adjacent to SCC.	Sizewell B
Hartlepool	British Energy	Middlesbrough	Adjacent to SCC.	Heysham 1
Heysham 1	British Energy	Preston	Adjacent to SCC.	Hartlepool
Heysham 2	British Energy	Preston	Adjacent to SCC.	Hartlepool
Hinkley Point A	British Nuclear Group	Taunton		Oldbury
Hinkley Point B	British Energy	Taunton		Heysham 2
Hunterston A	British Nuclear Group	Irvine	Greenwood Academy, Dreghorn (3 miles)	Chaplecross
Hunterston B	British Energy	Irvine	Greenwood Academy, Dreghorn (3 miles)	Torness
Oldbury	British Nuclear Group	Portishead		Hinkley Point A
Sizewell A	British Nuclear Group	Martlesham	Adjacent to SCC.	Bradwell
Sizewell B	British Energy	Martlesham	Adjacent to SCC.	Dungeness B
Trawsfynydd	British Nuclear Group	Colwyn Bay	Adjacent to SCC.	Wylfa
Torness	British Energy	Cockenzie	Port Seton Community Centre (1.5 miles)	Hunterston B
Wylfa	British Nuclear Group	Colwyn Bay	Adjacent to SCC.	Trawsfynydd

APPENDIX 3

MEDIA PROTOCOL ON PUBLIC WARNINGS DURING A CATASTROPHE OR MAJOR NATIONAL EMERGENCY

Introduction

This protocol has been agreed between the Government and principal media organisations in the UK. In the event of a catastrophe or major national emergency, the protocol is intended to facilitate effective communication of vital information to the public.

The circumstances in which it is invoked would be truly exceptional and of such magnitude that the national response was being led by Cabinet Ministers, with information being channelled through a special News Co-ordination Centre. The term "catastrophe or major national emergency" may cover:

- events causing, or with the potential to cause, mass casualties
- terrorist release of CBRN material
- toxic or radiological contamination of a wide area
- multiple terrorist attacks

During a catastrophe or major national emergency, the Government's overriding aims will be to save life, minimise casualties, limit damage and restore normality. To achieve these aims it will probably be necessary to give the public safety information and advice, tailored to the specific incident, without delay.

People in the immediate vicinity of the incident will receive instructions from the emergency services onsite. Many more, however, are likely to be out of the emergency services' reach, yet still at risk. Depending on the hazard, it may be necessary to advise people in the affected area either to stay indoors (shelter) and watch TV or listen to the radio for updated information, or to prepare for evacuation. In most scenarios the government will be able to provide practical instructions and advice which will help people keep themselves and their families safe.

Other members of the public may need simply to be told that they are not in danger. To avoid obstructing the work of the emergency services, the Government may need to tell these people not to enter the affected area or not to overload the telephone and mobile networks with calls.

The co-operation offered in advance by media signatories to this protocol (who retain complete editorial control) is that during an officially designated catastrophe or major national emergency, they will broadcast and publish without delay the Government's announcements, instructions and advice to the public.

The Government will use the provisions of this protocol only to disseminate information to the public about the specific hazard faced, safety advice, and instructions or requests which are intended to assist the emergency services in their work.

Signatories

Jon Williams, BBC News

Derval Fitzsimons, ITV News

Simon Bucks, Sky News

Malcolm Douglas, GMTV

John Perkins, IRN

Jonathan Grun, Press Association

Mike Granatt, Government Information & Communication Service (GICS)

(Date)

Preparation

Each signatory media organisation will nominate an editor and two deputies, who will be familiar with the protocol, and whose full contact details will be kept by Government solely for this purpose.

Every 3 months the GICS will circulate to these nominated individuals a code word, which would be used to authenticate official communications in the event of a catastrophe or major national emergency. The code word should only ever be relayed verbally - never in print or by email. Each time GICS staff circulate a new code word to a signatory organisation, they will also check that the contact details held for its three nominees are up-to-date. In the event that a code word becomes known outside this very small group of nominees, the organisation concerned should notify GICS, and a new one will be issued. GICS should also be informed without delay if there are changes to an organisation's list of nominees, or to their contact details.

Activation

The decision that an incident required a government announcement on public safety, and that this protocol should therefore be invoked, would be taken by the Director General of the GICS (or post-Phillis review equivalent), in consultation with Ministers.

Activation of the protocol would be notified by telephone to the nominated editor at each media organisation. This call would alert the organisation that a public safety announcement was imminent. It would specify the proposed means (email, fax, etc) by which the text is to be delivered, and agree with the organisation's nominated contact -- who at this point might well not be at work -- which email address, fax or phone number would be the most appropriate.

This activation call would also allow an organisation to alert relevant staff to begin preparations immediately - for instance warning the relevant output departments, calling up graphics for TV, alerting newscasters (if not already on air), etc.

Format Of Announcements

An announcement for public dissemination under this protocol would be sent to media organisations under the heading "Major Emergency Warning Protocol", with a sub-heading referring to the actual incident. It will state the date, time, name of the originator and contact details, and will request the organisation to call back for verification. To authenticate the announcement, recipient organisations should call GICS, refer to the communication they have received, and demand the code word. Having satisfied themselves that it is a genuine government message, organisations would then broadcast and/or publish the safety information as rapidly as possible across all available formats (TV, Radio, Web, Teletext), targeting particular regions as appropriate.

Failsafe

To help ensure that this arrangement will function even amid severely disrupted communications, the lead editor at each organisation should inform his/her newsdesk staff of the existence of the protocol. In the unlikely event that GICS is unable to contact any of the organisation's three nominees, it will approach each organisation's newsdesk direct, referring to the protocol. Were such a direct approach necessary, the prevailing circumstances would tend to reinforce the authenticity of the government's request. In the event of disruption to email and telephone networks, GICS might need to deliver the Government message on paper, by courier.

APPENDIX 4

HANDOVER OF COMMAND DURING RECOVERY

The Strategic Co-ordination Role in the Recovery Phase will pass to a senior representative of the relevant Local Authority. Handover criteria should be agreed in advance between the Police Strategic Commander (Gold) and the senior representative of the Local Authority, who will take on the Strategic Co-ordination Role.

The handover criteria chosen should be flexible, and will depend on the nature of the event, but are likely to include:

- Emergency service response on-site is terminated (does not include investigative actions);
- Affected site or location is returned to a safe condition as identified by the NII and fully implemented by the operator;
- Urgent countermeasures advice has been withdrawn (longer-term evacuation/ relocation may still be in place).

In addition to the above criteria, it would be inappropriate to handover command while a Police-run MBC was still active.

Once the handover criteria have been met, the Police Gold Commander will formally announce handover of the Strategic Co-ordination Role to the Local Authority. The handover will take place in a meeting of the Strategic Co-ordinating Group at the SCC, and will be formally recorded.

It is essential that during this handover process, where the Police take a step back from the event, that the Police Media Advisor within the Strategic Co-ordinating Group is replaced by a similarly competent individual from the Local Authority or one of the agencies.

APPENDIX 5

OPERATOR'S CORPORATE MEDIA RESPONSE

In addition to the media response associated directly with the event and managed through the Strategic Co-ordinating Group and the MBC, it is expected that the Operator will need to brief the media independently on corporate issues associated with the emergency.

It is recognised that the national media in London would have an expectation to be able to interview the Operator's Chief Executive. To ensure the public receives a consistent message, the Chief Executive will be briefed by either the Operator's duty press officer or their Media Technical Briefer prior to interview.

It should be noted that, during the urgent phase of an emergency, the remit of the Chief Executive's media role is strictly limited to issues concerning the company and its actions at a corporate level. Details of the operational response to the emergency, countermeasures being taken to protect the public, casualties, etc. must only be discussed with the media by the Media Technical Briefer at the SCC.

During the recovery phase of an emergency, it is likely that the Chief Executive will be called on to discuss the operational issues retrospectively following detailed briefing.

The Operator should consider establishing its own MBC close to a major corporate office in order to facilitate briefing of the media by the Chief Executive.

APPENDIX 6

MEDIA RESPONSE FOR RADSAFE EVENTS

The co-ordinated national media emergency plan also applies to events where there has been an accident involving the transport of radioactive material where the RADSAFE arrangements are invoked.

For RADSAFE events it is unlikely that an SCC will be established. However, the arrangements for establishing a Forward Media Briefing Point close to the event site should be followed; this includes putting in place the roles that would attend the Forward Media Briefing Point.

Due to the nature of RADSAFE events, it is likely that the Forward Media Briefing Point will be very close to the incident scene and may even afford a view of the scene directly.

APPENDIX 7

AUDIENCE GROUPINGS AND MESSAGES

Schedule 10 of REPPIR specifically requires the following information to be given to the public in the event of a radiation emergency;

1. Information on the type of Emergency which has occurred, and, where possible, its characteristics, for example, its origin, extent and probable development.
2. Advice on health protection measures, which, depending on the type of emergency, might include –
 - a) any restrictions on the consumption of certain foodstuffs and water supply likely to be contaminated;
 - b) any basic rules on hygiene and decontamination;
 - c) any recommendation to stay indoors;
 - d) the distribution and use of protective substances;
 - e) any evacuation arrangements;
 - f) special warnings for certain population groups.
3. Any announcements recommending co-operation with instructions or requests by the competent authorities.
4. Where an occurrence is likely to give rise to a release of radioactivity or ionising radiation has happened but no release has yet taken place, the information and advice should include the following –
 - a) an invitation to tune in to radio or television;
 - b) preparatory advice to establishments with particular collective responsibilities;
and;
 - c) recommendations to occupational groups particularly affected.
5. If time permits, information setting out the basic facts about radioactivity and its effects on persons and the environment.

In addition, the guidance to accompany the Civil Contingencies Act (Ref. 4) points out that the response organisation should plan to be able to meet the needs of many different audiences. The Guidance contains some advice on audience groupings and messages after an emergency, it breaks the general audience down into the following groupings;

- A Survivors,**
Those in the immediate vicinity and directly affected, possibly as wounded casualties.
- B Other Possible Victims,**
Those close by who may need to take action to avoid further harm.
- C Local People,**
Those in the area who may be disrupted by the consequences of the emergency and the clear-up process.
- D Friends and Relatives,**
Those who are not affected directly but know or are related to those who might be.
- E Wider Audience,**
Those who are not affected but are concerned, or alarmed about wider implications, or simply interested.
- F News Media.**

The guidance gives the following advice for these groupings;

Survivors (Group A) and other possible victims (Group B)

The needs of these two groups are the main focus of attention in the first hour of an incident and beyond.

Providing information to Group A is, in effect, an extension of the warning phase. Those at the scene are under direct instruction from the emergency services. Those in charge of operations are best placed to decide what advice or instructions are required, by whom and how quickly.

Similarly, Group B urgently need to know what they need to do immediately – countermeasures advice. Group B will also want to know why the advice is being given.

The emergency response organization is unlikely to be able to rely solely on the media to reach the Group B audience. The media may be used to provide reinforcement of the basic safety messages.

Local people (Group C), friends and relatives (Group D)

Local media can be particularly helpful in addressing Group C, providing general information about the emergency, information on how the public can help and advice on disruption in the area, e.g. traffic bulletins.

The use of message formats agreed with broadcasters in advance will avoid unnecessary questions of editorial control under pressure.

Group D will usually be alerted to an emergency through the national media. The most likely first response is to phone the people they know in the area, either to find out if they are safe or to get more information.

There is evidence from past disasters that the emotional impact of watching events unfold, which may be affecting a close relative or friend, can be very significant. Where people at a distance can be reasonably sure that a relative or friend is caught up in the incident they will be desperate for information. Media briefings must address this reality.