

Chapter 15

Sectors not covered by the Act

Summary

- A principal aim of the Act is to bring into a single statutory framework those organisations which are most likely to be involved in most emergencies. However, not every organisation that may need to be involved in emergencies is covered by the Act (paragraphs 15.1–15.2).
- The fact that civil protection has a statutory basis should not be a reason to exclude organisations which do not have a duty under the Act (paragraph 15.3).
- Category 1 responders should encourage organisations which are not covered by Part 1 of the Act to co-operate in planning arrangements (paragraphs 15.4–15.17).

15.1 A principal aim of the Act is to bring into a single statutory framework those organisations which are most likely to be involved in most emergencies (Category 1) and those likely to be heavily involved in some emergencies (Category 2).

15.2 However, it was not appropriate to capture in the Act every organisation that may have some involvement in emergencies. For a variety of reasons, particular organisations with an important role to play – such as the armed forces, the broadcasting media and the insurance industry – have not been included in Schedule 1.

15.3 Even so, organisations which are not required to participate under the Act should be encouraged to take part in forums and co-operate in planning arrangements wherever this is appropriate. The statutory nature of the framework is not a consideration which in itself should imply their exclusion.

15.4 There are many organisations which fall into this category, including:

- the armed forces;
- retail companies, including supermarkets;
- insurance companies;
- bus and road haulage companies;
- taxi firms;
- airlines;
- shipping companies and ferries;
- media companies;
- private communications networks dedicated to public safety users;
- offshore oil and gas industry;
- security firms;
- internal drainage boards; and
- general practitioners and chemists.

15.5 The armed forces: Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA) can be sought to support the civil authorities when they have an urgent need for help to deal with an emergency arising from a natural disaster or a major incident. However, assistance is provided on an availability basis and the armed forces cannot make a commitment that guarantees assistance to meet specific emergencies. It is therefore essential that Category 1 and 2 responders do not base plans and organise exercises on the assumption of military assistance. The local

Regional Brigade Headquarters will be able to give advice and should be contacted in the first instance.

15.6 Retail companies, including supermarkets: Food stocks and other goods held by private retail companies are sometimes not seen as resources likely to be called upon in emergencies. However, in widespread and prolonged emergencies, where shortages of foodstuffs occur, Category 1 responders may turn to the private sector, such as supermarkets, for practical and logistical assistance, and some will build this into their planning arrangements. More common are agreements with wholesale firms for the provision of, for example, building materials, and the identification of suitable private sector buildings as rest centres.

15.7 Insurance: There is a strong case for building the insurance industry into planning arrangements. Often insurance staff, such as loss adjusters, will attend at the scene of an emergency as quickly as journalists. The Association of British Insurers provides insurance information and advice to members of the public who have suffered loss or damage as a result of an emergency. They have the capability to set up an advice service close to the scene of an emergency.

15.8 Bus and road haulage companies: Bus companies may be included in plans to assist with evacuations. Arrangements for diverting and maintaining bus services in the event of a major central area evacuation may also require planning. Accidents involving the movement of chemicals by road are a key hazard which require specialist knowledge and equipment. The Fire and Rescue Service is greatly assisted in response to such incidents by the Chemical Industries Association.

15.9 Taxi firms: In some areas, and where local authority social services and NHS ambulances are unable to manage the movement of all people with walking difficulties in an emergency, agreements have been reached with local taxi firms to assist in the movement of these people.

15.10 Airlines: The Act brings airports into a formal arrangement as Category 2 responders to co-operate with the emergency services and other Category 1 responders in preparing for emergencies. But plans for responding effectively to the needs of distressed

friends and relatives at the terminal building require the co-operation, too, of airline companies. It is usual to invite their representatives to play a part in these arrangements.¹

15.11 Shipping companies and ferries: As with airports, harbour authorities are included as Category 2 responders under the Act.² Planning for emergencies at sea and in ports is likely to include the main shipping and ferry companies, which are not covered by the Act.

15.12 Media companies: Media companies are not included in the Act, partly because it is accepted that their independence as reporting organisations should not be compromised. However, they have a key role in providing information to the public and are likely to be heavily involved in communications planning, which is dealt with in Chapter 7.

15.13 Private communications networks dedicated to public safety users: The emergency services and other public safety agencies may rely upon private communications networks in order to carry out their duties. These organisations will want to ensure that the relevant communications providers are included in multi-agency planning for incidents.

15.14 Offshore oil and gas industry: The MCA and the Health and Safety Executive work closely with these companies and will want to ensure that they are included in multi-agency planning for incidents at sea or at oil and gas terminals. They will also be involved in planning for fuel shortages.

15.15 Security firms: Security firms have staff protecting premises of all types who are contactable by the police and may be useful during emergencies. They have a particular role in evacuations from shopping centres and sports grounds.

15.16 Internal drainage boards: Internal drainage boards have powers to undertake works on defined watercourses within their geographical area. These may include operating pumps and other structures to alleviate the effects of flooding. They may be involved in the response to an emergency and should be included, where relevant, in emergency plans.

15.17 General practitioners and chemists: General practitioners may be called to the scene of an emergency to provide direct medical assistance or to certify deaths. Access to medication and medical services may be required for people displaced by an incident. In addition, during periods of disruption, such as severe weather, access for the public to general practitioners and chemists may be required. Considerations such as these need to be included in Category 1 responders' planning arrangements.

¹Schedule 1 paragraph 26

²Schedule 1 paragraph 27