



To: Management Authorities of Primary and Post-Primary Schools and Third Level Institutes

CONTINGENCY PLANNING IN THE CONTEXT OF A NATIONAL EMERGENCY

The Office of Emergency Planning is responsible for providing co-ordination and oversight in respect of all emergency plans at local, national and regional level. In the case of most emergency plans, including emergencies arising from industrial action in the emergency services and vital utilities, the Defence Forces and Civil Defence Branch are identified as key support agencies providing vital assets, personnel, skills and capabilities.

What has been done to date?

Local Authorities for each county have worked with relevant statutory bodies – Defence, Health Boards, Gardaí etc – to devise emergency plans appropriate for their own region.

A national or regional emergency – such as a major chemical spill – may occur without any notice. It is possible that such an event could occur at a time when schools/colleges are open or have students en-route to/from schools and colleges. The Department of Education and Science has been requested to advise schools/colleges of the need to become part of the emergency planning framework and to have a contingency plan in place in the event of a national or regional emergency.

What should each Management Authority do now?

Schools and Colleges vary in size from the smallest one teacher school in a rural setting to the largest third level institute with thousands of students attending daily and many staying overnight in campus accommodation. Emergency plans will therefore need to be tailored to meet the individual needs of each school/college.

You may have already been contacted by your Local Authority regarding the area emergency planning framework. If not, you are advised to contact your Local Authority County Manager, the Chief Executive Officer of your local Health Board and your local Garda Superintendent to see how best your school/college can become part of the area emergency planning framework.

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