

PROTOCOL FOR THE PROVISION OF MUTUAL AID ARRANGEMENTS DURING AN EMERGENCY

The purpose of this protocol is to provide a framework by which local authorities may call upon each other for support during an emergency.

STATUS:

“In order to facilitate co-operation...responders may enter into protocols with each other.”

Regulation 7.1, The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) Regulations 2005

“A Protocol is a formal agreement between Category 1 responders detailing how they will undertake or allocate responsibilities to deliver a task. Protocols may cover matters of broad agreement or detailed procedures for working together, including how to hand over tasks or obtain additional resources. Protocols may or may not be legally binding, depending on the nature of the agreement reached between the parties.”

Paragraph 2.29, Emergency Preparedness (Guidance on Part 1 of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, its associated Regulations and non-statutory arrangements)

N.B. The protocol does not imply any obligation on the part of any local authority to make a request for support, nor to provide same.

DEFINITIONS:

Mutual Aid:

“An agreement between Category 1 and 2 responders and other organisations not covered by the Act, within the same sector or across sectors and across boundaries, to provide assistance with additional resource during an emergency, which may overwhelm the resources of an individual organisation.”

Glossary, Emergency Response and Recovery (Non-statutory guidance to complement ‘Emergency Preparedness’)

Requesting Authority:

“Any local authority in need of assistance during the management of an emergency. They will be liable for negligent acts committed by any staff while so loaned and should ensure that there is adequate public and employers liability insurance in place in respect of them.”

Supporting Authority:

“Any local authority supplying resources to a Requesting Authority during an emergency.”

PROCEDURE FOR ACTIVATING THE ARRANGEMENTS

The Chief Executive or any officer acting on his or her behalf may make a request to the Chief Executive or any officer acting on his or her behalf of any other local authority for assistance, such request to be formalised in writing if so required by either party.

The mutual aid requested could include staff for all or any of the following functions:-

- Emergency Planning Officers
- Environmental Health
- Engineers
- Building Control/Structural engineering
- Media/Public Relations
- Emergency Centre
- Rest Centres
- Beach cleaning
- Family Liaison Team
- Such other purposes as may prove to be useful.

The mutual aid requested might also take the form of the Supporting Authority releasing a contractor from routine obligations in order to provide additional support to a Requesting Authority.

Personnel loaned to a Requesting Authority will:-

- Remain employees of their own authority
- Operate under the overall management of the Requesting Authority
- Be included in the Requesting Authority's Health & Safety procedures, practice and policy

Equipment loaned to a Requesting Authority will:-

- Be covered by the Supporting Authority's insurance if supporting operatives are also provided
- Be covered by the Requesting Authority's insurance if supporting operatives are not provided

Financial Arrangements: Requesting Authorities will need to have in place adequate insurance cover to include any staff, vehicle and/or equipment.

All costs incurred by a Supporting Authority, i.e. salary, pension payments, income tax, national insurance, V.A.T., maintenance, insurance and other costs etc. incurred as a direct result of the loan, (i.e. the cost of the actual person(s) or equipment loaned) shall be met by the Requesting Authority.

Agreed by all Category One local authorities in Sussex. 5.10.05.