



Public Health
England

Scientific and Technical Advice Cell Activation Plan for PHE Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex

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For use by	:	PHE Centres LHRPs and LRF
For use for	:	Coordination of Scientific and Technical Advice
Document owner	:	PHE Centre Director, Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex, Public Health England
Status	:	Version 5
Author(s)	:	Marc Beveridge, Strategic Emergency Preparedness Manager Gaynor Marshall, Supra Regional Emergency Preparedness Manager/National Support Sarah Webb, Supra Regional Emergency Preparedness Manager Dr Karen Reddin, Corporate Resilience Team Operations Manager
Other Contributors	:	Enda Dowd, Emergency Preparedness Manager, PHE Centre Anglia and Essex, Andy Robinson, Emergency Preparedness Manager, PHE Centre LLND
Accreditation and Endorsement	:	Dr Paul Cosford, Director of Health Protection Richard Gleave, Chief Operating Officer
Issue No and Date	:	Version 5.0 Issue
File Name	:	Scientific and Technical Advice Cell Activation Plan PHE NSCE
Supersedes	:	All previous Arrangements
Additional Information	:	

Page No	Description of Amendment	Date	Signature/Post Holder
4 & 8	Amendment to PHE telephone numbers in and out of hours	3 rd March	Enda Dowd EMP
4 & 8	Amendment to PHE telephone numbers	21 st July 2014	Enda Dowd EMP

Amendments

Review Dates	Completed	Reviewed By	Accredited By
20131001			

Review and Governance

STAC ACTIVATION Numbers

County	In hours	Out of hours
Norfolk Suffolk Cambridgeshire	0344 225 3546	01603 481221
Essex	0345 155 0069	01245 444417

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Foreword By Dr Gina Radford,

Public Health England Centre Director for Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge and Essex

This plan has been developed to ensure the timely provision of Scientific and Technical Advice to support decision making during an emergency. It is important that all strategic, tactical and operational staff of the Local Resilience Forum understand this plan and are aware of their specific roles and responsibilities.

I am satisfied this plan ensures that the NSCE Public Health England Centre has effective arrangements in place to provide the required specialist advice in response to an incident.

Signed

Dr. Gina Radford,

**Public Centre Director for
Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge and Essex**

1. Introduction

1.1 Coordinating an emergency response at the strategic level often requires expert advice on a range of public health, environmental, scientific and technical issues in order to deal effectively with the immediate and longer term consequences.

Advice is always available from individual agencies through the normal channels however in complex situations it may be necessary to provide a single, accurate source of information to inform strategic decision making is provided through the formation of a scientific and technical advice cell (STAC).

2. Aim

2.1 This plan details how scientific and technical advice will be coordinated and delivered to responders during an emergency.

3. Objectives

3.1 The objectives of this plan are to:

- a. Identify activation procedures
- b. Detail roles and responsibilities
- c. Provide templates to support STAC operations

4. Role of the STAC

4.1 The role of the STAC is to ensure timely coordinated scientific, technical, environmental and public health advice to the SCG during the response to an emergency. It will:

- Provide a single point of scientific advice to the Gold Commander and other members of the SCG on the scientific, technical, environmental and public health consequences of the incident via a nominated STAC representative
- Monitor and corral the responding science and technical community to deliver SCG high-level objectives
- Agree any divergence from agreed arrangements for providing science and technical input
- Pool available information and arrive, as far as possible, at a common view on the scientific and technical merits of different courses of action
- Provide a common brief to the technical lead from each agency represented in the cell on the extent of the evidence base available, and how the situation might develop, what this means, and the likely affects of various mitigation strategies
- Agree with the SCG Chair on the advice to be given to the public on the health aspects of the incident and advice on actions to protect the public, including the consequences of any evacuation or containment policies.

- Provide clarification on advice provided to the SCG, to a single, nominated, point of contact within a multi-agency TCG
- The provision of advice may continue into the recovery phase of an incident

5. Provision of initial Public Health, Environmental and Scientific Advice

5.1 Prior to the formal activation of the STAC, scientific, environmental and public health advice is available to responders by individual organisations through existing channels.

5.2 For potential/confirmed CBRN Incidents, initial advice will also be provided by the Emergency Coordination of Scientific Advice (ECOSA) System (if activated).

6. Activation

6.1 The STAC may be activated at the request of the Strategic Coordinating Group Chair/Gold or at the request of Public Health England Centre Director for the Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex.

6.2 STAC arrangements for Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex (NSCE) are activated by Public Health England Centre Director for the NSCE, or the PHE On Call Consultant in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC). Resources across the region are such that there is a mutual aid on call arrangement in place.

County	In hours	Out of hours
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6.3 A detailed activation process is contained at Annex A to this plan.

7.0 STAC Membership

7.1 The core team is made up as follows

Role	Organisation	Sourced by
Chair ¹	PHE/LA	PHE Centre Director of CCDC on Call
Deputy Chair	PHE/LA	STAC Chair
Support Team Manager	PHE	STAC Chair
Loggist	PHE	Support Team Manager
Relevant risk/consequence assessment specialists	PHE and/or other relevant agencies	STAC Chair
Support	PHE	PHE Support Team Manager

Local Authority Directors of Public Health possessing the required STAC competencies may also perform the role of STAC Chair/Deputy Chair under local secondment agreement from Public Health England expected of STAC chairs. (see section 13)

Roles and responsibilities for core members are located in Annexes B to G.

¹ Staff may be drawn from other organisations [e.g. local government] subject to local agreements and secondment being in place.

7.2 Additional members will be drawn from a range of agencies dependant on the nature of the incident and specialism required. The list below is a guide and should not be regarded as exhaustive.

Government Decontamination Service	Police Liaison Officer
Relevant emergency service technical advisers	Government Technical Adviser (in the event of a civilian nuclear site accident)
Environment Agency	Food Standards Agency
Health and Safety Executive	Local Authority Environmental Health Rep
Met Office	COMAH/ Nuclear Site Operator;
Other agencies invited to address sector specific issues, such as the Utilities or transport operators	Operational partners of the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
Responding agencies occupational health advisors	Communications Manager

8. Location of STAC

8.1 The location of STAC will be determined by the nature of the Command, Control and Coordination required to provide strategic leadership for the incident. Adjacency to SCG is critically important where possible. A virtual or remote system of working is likely to be used in many instances particularly in the early stages. Locations likely to be used by this PHE Centre are **Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex Constabulary Head Quarters or PHE Units in Thetford, Norfolk and Witham, Essex.**

9. STAC Teleconferences/Meetings

9.1 The STAC Chair will co-ordinate the STAC teleconferences/meetings and will represent the STAC on the strategic co-ordinating group or equivalent. Given the large geographical areas covered by some centres the STAC may be required to provide advice remotely for a period of time.

9.2 The STAC Chair will be responsible for ensuring that the STAC functions effectively and provides the necessary advice to support the effective management of the emergency.

9.4 A model agenda for STAC meetings is provided (see Annex I [initial meeting] and J [follow on meetings]).

9.3 The STAC Chair will brief the other STAC members on the role and remit of the STAC and should set out "ground rules" of operation at the initial meeting and thereafter as often as required (see Annex K for list of briefing issues and ground rules).

9.5 Meetings should be short, regular and decision focussed. Decisions will be made on the best possible information available at the time and not delayed unduly until the "ideal" information becomes available. Decisions will be recorded in the Decisions Log located at Annex M.

9.6 Meetings will be timed to occur between meetings of the SCG or equivalent to enable the STAC Chair (or alternatively another designated STAC representative) to attend SCG meetings.

9.7 Meetings to have accurate minutes taken to record decisions made and actions agreed, with a rapid turnaround to incorporate new actions in a running action log for review at each subsequent meeting.

9.8 New STAC members or staff rotating into STAC due to shift arrangements should be briefed adequately by their colleagues so that STAC meeting time is not wasted by repetitious updating of new members.

9.9 Teleconference numbers will be provided on the day from existing PHE Centre numbers.

10. Briefing the SCG

10.1 The briefing delivered to the SCG will be captured in the science and technical SITREP located at Annex O.

11. Link with Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE)

11.1 If SAGE has been established, the STAC Chair will act as the link between STAC and SAGE. STAC will be expected to defer to SAGE advice unless there is extremely good reason otherwise, which would need to be discussed with relevant national leads, carefully recorded and defensible.

11.2 Further details concerning the relationship between STAC and SAGE can be located in the Cabinet Office "[Enhanced SAGE Guidance, A strategic framework for the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies \(SAGE\)](#)".

12. Communications

12.1 The STAC will be linked-in to the main communications and media team for the emergency (e.g. the SCG Public Communication Group) so all public information is co-ordinated by the main co-ordinating group. STAC will maintain communications with the incident management team overseeing the health response to an incident, and via this to any national co-ordinating centre established for an incident.

13. Training

13.1 Core STAC members will have received the appropriate training for their intended role in this plan in line with Skills for Health/Skills for Justice National Occupational Standards (Civil Contingencies)

13.2 Roles with specific training requirements have been identified as:

- a. STAC Chair

- b. STAC Deputy Chair
- c. STAC Support Team Manager
- d. Loggist
- e. STAC Support
- f. STAC Member

13.3 Training requirements should be identified and documented in professional development plans/job plans.

14. Testing of this Plan

14.1 This plan will be exercised as part of the LRF/LHRP Resilience Training and Exercise programs.

15. Plan Review

15.1 This plan is to be reviewed/revised annually and/or post activation.

Glossary of Acronyms

CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear
COMAH	Control of Major Accident Hazards
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
CRIP	Common Recognised Information Picture
DEFRA	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
DH	Department of Health
DSTL	Defence Science and Technology Laboratory
EA	Environment Agency
ECOSA	Emergency Coordination of Scientific Advice
EPRR	Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response
NSCE	Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex
NHS	National Health Service
NHSCB	NHS Commissioning Board
PHE	Public Health England
PHEC	Public Health England Centre
SAGE	Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies
SCG	Strategic Coordinating Group (Gold Command)
SITREP	Situation Report
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
STAC	Scientific and Technical Advice Cell
TCG	Tactical Coordination Group

Activation of STAC

1. STAC will be activated by PHE Anglia and Essex Health Protection teams in and out of hours.
2. On receipt of a request to activate STAC, PHE Anglia and Essex Health Protection teams will;
 - a. Complete an INITIAL INFORMATION GATHERING FORM report for the incident (Annex H).
 - b. Contact the on call STAC Chair and brief them.
 1. Confirm if physical STAC needs to be convened
 2. Confirm of virtual STAC needs to be convened by Teleconference
 - c. Alert NHS Area Team (info only).
 - d. Activate STAC (Teleconference or Physical).
 1. Contact required participants
 2. If physical STAC inform them of location.
 3. If virtual STAC issue teleconference details.
 - e. Inform PHE Emergency Response Department Duty Officer.

**Annex B to
Scientific and Technical Advice Activation Plan**

STAC CHAIR

Role

To provide leadership, to direct and chair STAC meetings and to act as the co-ordinator of advice to main co-ordinating group, e.g. SCG.

Immediate Actions for STAC chair

- Brief STAC Deputy Chair
- Consider STAC membership and call in other members as required
- Brief STAC members on ground rules and SCC/ STAC organisational arrangements
- Deliver " STAC Initial Briefing" (Annex K)
- Brief team members on roles and responsibilities including the STAC Support Team
- Limit STAC meetings to core or essential members with others "in support"
- Use the Model STAC Meeting Agendas (Annex I & J), emphasise timelines of action
- Agree with STAC members on critical issues for action by STAC agencies and for action via the SCG
- Carry out a 'Health Risk Analysis' (See Annex L) covering:
 - Risk Assessment
 - Risk Management
 - Risk Communication
- Agree action required based on the above analysis
- Request any additional information on nature/extent/severity of hazard for updating the risk assessment
- Delegate tasks to STAC members
- Agree who will link with SCG and any sub-groups (e.g. Crisis/Consequence groups)
- Ensure that a STAC Decision and rolling Action List are maintained (e.g. use whiteboard)
- Record all major decisions and the reasons for those decisions
- Manage group dynamics
- Minimise discussion time at STAC meetings by advising members to discuss and formulate options off-table
- Note lessons as emergency progresses for debriefing and subsequent

evaluation

- Ensure smooth handover briefings between Chairs and direct other members to do likewise.

**Annex C to
Scientific and Technical Advice Activation Plan**

DEPUTY STAC CHAIR

Role

To deputise for and assist the STAC Chair.

- Support the STAC Chair in discharging their role
- Deputise for STAC Chair as required i.e. When STAC Chair briefs SCG
- Co-ordinate the "Health Risk Analysis" (see Annex L).
- Assess the information requirements for the hazard assessment, and any other additional investigations required to gather information
- Identify the options available for risk management
- Identify the key issues for inclusion in advice and in risk communication messages

**Annex D to
Scientific and Technical Advice Activation Plan**

STAC Risk/consequence assessment specialist

Role

To provide a link with the respective specialist service/science provider.

- To carry out consequence and risk assessments for radiation, chemical and environmental incident response
- To interpret environmental monitoring and modelling data to assist with public health risk assessment
- To prepare and co-ordinate the risk assessment and support the STAC Chair in incident response
- To assist with preparing appropriate briefings on public health protection for , STAC Chair

STAC SUPPORT TEAM MANAGER

Role

Manages the STAC room and facilities and ensures that appropriate support is provided to STAC. Ideally should be someone with control room experience, as nominated by STAC Chair

- Set up the STAC Room promptly
- Agree location of STAC facilities [fax machines, printers, telephones, etc] and display a list of these for group members [e.g., on whiteboard]
- Ensure all members have name badges
- Oversee the functioning of the STAC Room and supervise distribution of support team workloads
- Ensure main routes of communication [phones, pagers, etc] are agreed and established, including protocols for managing incoming calls
- Ensure that all telephone calls, messages, enquiries and actions are logged
- Maintain a list of all staff present and the organisations that they represent
- Set up and maintain events log from time of alert onwards
- Ensure that all internal and external contact details are listed on a whiteboard or flip chart, especially those of the other emergency co-ordination rooms
- Ensure recording of proceedings of STAC meetings, in liaison with Chair
- Ensure that a STAC Decision and Advice Log are established and that all major decisions are recorded, including the reasons for those decisions
- Set up a system for communicating significant decisions to other members of the team ("focus board" on whiteboard or flipchart) and delegate STAC Admin Officer to maintain this
- In liaison with the STAC chair/deputy/members ensure continuity of representation on STAC consistent with allowing shift changes of
- Ensure there is an adequate administrative resource to maintain support to the team, including backup for yourself as STAC Support Team Manager
- Arrange provision of food and drink
- Maintain a personal log
- Ensure all members of team are maintaining personal logs and recording incoming and outgoing communications

**Annex F to
Scientific and Technical Advice Activation Plan**

STAC SUPPORT TEAM - ADMIN OFFICER

Role

Provide administrative and clerical support to the STAC

- Proceed to Strategic or main Co-ordination Centre and report to STAC Support Team Manager
- Send and receive STAC messages by telephone, fax and e-mail, etc. Telephone Message Log Annex N
- Undertake specific tasks/roles as determined by the Support Team Manager including:
 - Maintaining "focus board" of key events, decisions and activities within STAC
 - Maintaining contact number list on white boards
 - Faxing and receiving documents
 - Making and receiving telephone calls
 - Keeping a log of messages received/sent
 - Other general admin/clerical tasks

**Annex G to
Scientific and Technical Advice Activation Plan**

STAC SUPPORT TEAM - LOGGING OFFICER

Role

Provide loggist support to the STAC.

- Proceed to Strategic or main Co-ordination Centre and report to STAC Support Team Manager
- Undertake specific tasks/roles as determined by the Support Team Manager including:
 - Maintaining logs
 - Typing and photocopying
 - Delivering messages/documents within the building
 - Other general admin/clerical tasks

**Annex H to
Scientific and Technical Advice Activation Plan**

INITIAL INFORMATION GATHERING FORM

"CHALET" is an Emergency Services acronym used to support first reports from the scene of an emergency.

Who called you:	
Name:	_____
Position:	_____
Organisation:	_____
Telephone:	_____
Fax:	_____
Mobile phone:	_____
Email:	_____
Date notified:	_____
Time notified:	_____
Casualties	
Hazards	
Access	
Location	
Emergency services present	
Type of emergency	

AGENDA FOR FIRST STAC MEETING

(Meeting should be maximum 20-30 minutes)

- 1. Introductions and apologies**
- 2. STAC Members' Introductory Briefing**
 - 2.1 Check membership - assess need for additional agency representation**
 - 2.2 Outline organisational context and describe STAC/ SCG operational procedures**
 - Role of SCG and STAC
 - Role of STAC Chair
 - Role of STAC Members
 - Ground rules for STAC
 - Main tasks - Health Risk Analysis
 - STAC/ SCG Procedures
 - Minutes/action tasks
 - Communications logging
 - Personal logging
 - Handover and personnel change-over procedure
- 3. Current emergency situation and any action taken to date (e.g. sheltering/evacuation)**
- 4. Initial Risk Analysis**
- 5. Review any other outstanding issues from members**
- 6. Agree items for action and allocate tasks**
- 7. Remind membership of timescales, shift requirements, role of STAC Support Team Manager, practical arrangements**
- 8. Shift hand-over arrangements**
- 9. Agree times when STAC will re-convene**
- 10. Any Other Confirmed Business**

AGENDA FOR SUBSEQUENT STAC MEETINGS

(Meetings should be maximum 20 - 30 minutes)

1. Introductions and apologies

1.1 Review introduction for new members and reminder of STAC role and organisational procedures

1.2 Review minutes and action from previous meeting

2. Situation update and feedback from SCG meetings

- Actions taken to limit hazard/protect public health

3. Review Health Risk Analysis and agree updated advice

- Risk Assessment
- Risk Management options
- Risk Communication messages

4. Review any other outstanding issues from members

5. Agree items for action and allocate tasks

6. Shift hand-over arrangements

7. Agree time when STAC will next convene

8. Any Other Confirmed Business

STAC MEMBERS' INTRODUCTORY BRIEFING

THE CHAIR OF STAC SHOULD:

1. Carry out this briefing at the first STAC Meeting and repeat for new STAC members as required
2. Explain roles of SCG, STAC and STAC Chair
3. Explain ground rules, main functions and tasks (see below). Distribute paper copies of Ground Rules (this page) to all STAC members
4. Advise STAC members that they may make brief contact with family members if desired but that they **MUST NOT** discuss details and specifics of where they are and for what purpose
5. Address roster arrangements (identify early on the resilience arrangements for all agencies to have staff rotate through the STAC). All members to contact own agency to arrange rota cover

STAC GROUND RULES

- Recognise the authority of the STAC Chair and respect the role of chair as co-ordinator of advice to the SCG or main co-ordinating group
- Respect the role of STAC as a team with task orientation
- Understand own role and responsibilities and those of others
- Only key STAC members are invited to attend STAC meetings
- Meetings to be time-limited and follow-up action taken off-table
- Decisions and options to be formulated off-table and reported back
- Members to take responsibility for advice they give and use best available evidence base
- All communications and decisions to be logged and details recorded
- Members encouraged to contribute but to keep contributions relevant and concise (no rambling discourses)
- Consensus is preferred but unanimous agreement may not always be possible - chair has final discretion on advice
- Any conflicts of interest/organisational problems to be declared to the STAC Chair
- No unauthorised external communication of advice or STAC proceedings
- STAC will be expected to defer to SAGE advice unless there is extremely good reason otherwise, which would need to be discussed with relevant national leads, carefully recorded and defensible.

HEALTH RISK ANALYSIS

A key STAC function is to conduct an assessment of the risk to public health associated with the emergency, to decide on advice regarding options for managing the risks and to agree on advice to be given out. Details of the steps in Health Risk Analysis are provided below. Health Risk Analysis incorporates:

- Risk Assessment (RA)
- Risk Management (RM)
- Risk Communication (RC)

Risk Assessment

- Identify and collate information on the nature, scope and scale of the threat or hazard
- Consider the information on the hazard and the expert advice required
- Assess the actual or potential risks to health associated with exposure to the threat or hazard
- Formulate conclusions and provide advice to the police commander/ SCG Chair on the health impact of the emergency
- Agree and advise on any additional information required for ongoing dynamic risk assessment (e.g. air quality or other environmental monitoring/analysis, plume modelling)

Risk Management

- Consider options for urgent control measures:
 - To prevent primary exposure of the public:
 - Sheltering
 - Evacuation
 - Action of water/food supplies
 - To prevent continuing exposure of casualties:
 - Decontamination
 - To minimise health impact of exposure:
 - Prophylaxis treatment
 - Personal Protective Equipment
 - Advice on delayed health effects

Risk Communication

- Agree with the SCG Chair, advice on the health aspects of the emergency to be provided:
- To the public (via media etc)

 - To the NHS:
 - Hospital services
 - Local Ambulance Service
 - NHS CB Local Area EPRR Team
 - To other agencies:

 - Local Authority departments as appropriate:
 - Cambridgeshire County Council
 - Essex County Council
 - Norfolk County Council
 - Suffolk County Council
 - District and Borough Councils in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex

**Annex M to
Scientific and Technical Advice Activation Plan**

STAC - DECISION LOG

Time:	Date:
Name:	
Recorded by:	
<u>PROBLEM:</u>	
<u>OPTIONS:</u>	
<u>A:</u>	
<u>B:</u>	
<u>C:</u>	
<u>D:</u>	
<u>OUTCOME/ACTIONS:</u>	
<u>RATIONALE:</u>	
SIGNATURE:	

**Annex N to
Scientific and Technical Advice Activation Plan**

TELEPHONE/MESSAGE LOG SHEET

Date:		Time:	
Call received by:			
Caller Information			
Name:		Phone No:	
Location:			
Message for:			
Message:			
Action Taken:			
Initials:		Time:	

**Annex O to
Scientific and Technical Advice Activation Plan**

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY SITREP

SITREP Number:	Date: (dd/mm/yy)
	Time: (24hr)
<u>Main Contact</u>	
Role: Name: Email: Tel: Fax:	
<u>Other Key Contacts</u>	
Role: Name: Email: Tel: Fax:	
Role: Name: Email: Tel: Fax:	
Role: Name: Email: Tel: Fax:	
<p>This Situation Report has been validated by the STAC participants (leads for each organisation identified above). This information can be disseminated to other agencies as necessary. Where clarification is required, the main contact should be contacted in the first instance.</p> <p>New information should be highlighted</p>	

1. Summary/Key Points

This section is used to highlight specific issues that the author believes should be reflected in the incident Common Recognised Information Picture (CRIP). This

section should also note if there are any restrictions on the report's distribution i.e. "for central government departments only".

- Advice given
- Advice considered

2. Current Situation

This section should cover key issues relating to the situation. It should describe the current situation in sufficient detail for, if necessary, decisions to be made. Suggested topics that should be covered can be found in Annex A

- Where we have got to/next advice

3. Context

Information collated to inform decision.

4. Operational Response

- Summary of what happened
- What next –

5. Resource and Readiness

Note which organisations and how many from each involved

6. Recovery

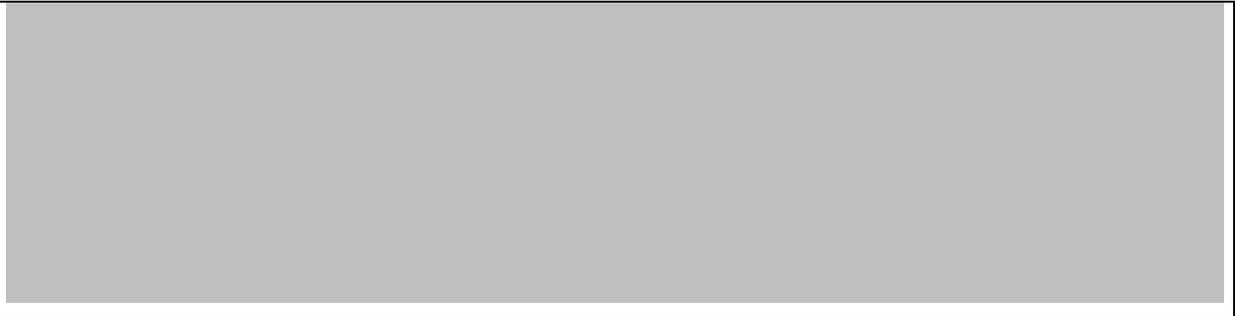
7. Media and Communications

This section is used to provide information covering key media and communications issues..

8. Other Issues not covered elsewhere

9. Information Requirements/Clarification

This section is used to seek information or clarification from Cabinet Office / COBR Situation Cell or other agencies. Where the information or clarification would be sourced from a specific agency this should be identified. This section does not negate the need to contact agencies directly but does provide a record of requested information or matters for clarification.



10. Distribution

Sets out who the completed SITREP should be sent to once cleared.

- COBR Situation Cell (ccscontrol@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk)
- STAC

If appropriate copy to:

- SAGE

11. Attached Tables, Maps etc

Sizeable maps and images should be provided as separate compressed files. All attachments should be uniquely identified (with a clear linkage to the relevant situation report) and listed to ensure that data is not lost.

- (a)
- (b)