Improving civil contingencies planning

AUDIT SCOTLAND

Auditor General for Scotland

The Accounts Commission

Contents

Summary

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 has reinforced multi-agency working and organisations are making progress in meeting their duties, although there are a number of areas that could be improved.

1. Disruptive events, such as flooding or pandemic illness, pose significant social, economic and environmental risks to local communities and to the continued delivery of vital public services. Over the last ten years for example, the attacks of 11 September 2001 in the United States increased awareness across the world of the threat from terrorism, the Indian Ocean tsunami in December 2004 highlighted the threat to people and the environment from natural disasters, and currently people around the world are experiencing a flu pandemic.

2. Recent events in Scotland include the Glasgow airport terrorist attack (2007), the potential fuel shortage and risks to safety caused by the industrial dispute at the Grangemouth petro-chemical refinery (2008), having the first confirmed cases in the UK of the Influenza A H1N1 virus – or swine flu (2009), and numerous floods. These have all highlighted the importance of effective arrangements being in place to prepare for, respond to and recover from major emergencies. They illustrate two important features of civil contingencies planning; first, that a wide range of different events can cause significant disruption, and second, that dealing with and recovering from such events requires public sector organisations to work together, alongside the private and voluntary sectors.

3. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (referred to as 'the Act') established a new legislative framework for civil protection across the UK. The Contingency Planning (Scotland) Regulations 2005 describe how the provisions of the UK Act are to be implemented in Scotland. Part 1 of the Act imposes new duties on public sector and other relevant organisations to ensure that effective arrangements are in place for planning for, responding to and recovering from emergencies, and for the continued delivery of services in the event of disruption. Part 2 of the Act deals specifically with emergency powers and relates to matters reserved to the UK Parliament and has not been included within our study.

About this study

4. The Civil Contingencies Act was passed in 2004 and our study looked at what progress has been made to date, assessed the pace of change and identified ways in which improvements can be made. Implementation of the Act is ongoing, and we recognise that some of its provisions have not yet been fully implemented or matured. Our findings reflect the position at the time of our main audit work during 2008 and further progress may have been made since then.

5. The emphasis of our study was on the requirement under the Act for organisations to work together. We examined co-operation between key stakeholders generally, as well as specifically in relation to risk assessment, emergency and business continuity planning, training and exercising, and learning lessons. We also looked at the resources and financial and performance management processes that support these activities.

6. The study did not attempt to make judgements on how individual emergencies have been dealt with, the adequacy of plans in place or the level of preparedness of any individual organisation, sector or Scotland as a whole.

7. In carrying out this study, we collected information through:

- a survey of 64 organisations named in legislation as the main responding agencies to emergencies in Scotland (known as 'Category 1 responders').[1]

- interviews with representatives of some of the main responding agencies and other relevant organisations, covering both devolved and reserved matters. We also interviewed the chairs and coordinators of the eight Strategic Coordinating Groups (SCGs), which are the focal

point for local multi-agency civil contingencies planning

- a survey of SCG coordinators

- focus groups with emergency planning officers from local authorities and the NHS

- observation of meetings, training events and exercises

- a review of documentation, including minutes of meetings, emergency and business continuity plans, exercise debrief reports and performance reports.

8. We have used aspects of the response to an industrial dispute at the Grangemouth petro-chemical refinery in 2008 as a case study throughout the report to illustrate a range of issues within civil contingencies planning.

9. At the time of writing our report, there was a worldwide outbreak of the Influenza A H1N1 virus and, where possible, we have used the preparation and response to this outbreak in Scotland as a further case study. This pandemic was ongoing when our report went to print.

10. This report primarily relates to organisations responsible for matters devolved to the Scottish Parliament for which the Auditor General or the Accounts Commission has audit responsibilities. However, we also refer to some organisations operating in Scotland in areas of reserved responsibility (such as British Transport Police and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency), as well as the UK government, and the private and voluntary sectors.

11. This report includes a self-assessment checklist for Category 1 responders to support improvement and the implementation of our recommendations (Appendix 2). In addition to this report, we have produced the following, which can be found at: www.audit-scotland.gov.uk

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1   These are the organisations most likely to engage in the response to or recovery from emergencies. Our survey included all police forces, fire and rescue services, local authorities, territorial NHS boards, the Scottish Ambulance Service and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.

- a key messages summary

- additional material on our website, intended for use by those directly involved in civil contingencies planning.

The overall picture

12. Overall, the Act has reinforced multi-agency working, with organisations generally co-operating well and making progress towards meeting their main duties under the Act. However, further improvements could be made and the pace of change accelerated in certain areas.

13. The Act introduced a new approach to civil contingencies planning. These new arrangements emphasise the need for flexible and adaptable arrangements to support an effective response to disruptive events that affect our communities. This is a more holistic approach than that taken traditionally. Instead of emergency planning being an isolated activity, it should be part of a wider process, embedded across organisations. Although progress has been made, traditional aspects of civil contingencies planning – such as response arrangements – still tend to dominate activity. So far, less attention has been given to arrangements that ensure the continued delivery of services to local people and the effective recovery of communities after an incident.

14. Improved joint working between agencies in the public, private and voluntary sectors was a key aim of the Act and this is an area where progress is being made, particularly through the eight SCGs. However, as with multi-agency working across the public sector more generally, we found a number of issues that limit its effectiveness. These include limited joint working across geographic boundaries, different approaches to information sharing, and difficulties in ensuring effective representation at SCG level.

15. The arrangements for civil contingencies planning are increasingly complex, involving a range of organisations, procedures and processes. There is a lack of clarity about some roles, leadership and accountabilities and this carries a risk of confusion, duplication or omission. The potential for a clearer and more streamlined approach should be explored. More could be done to engage with elected members at a national and local level to ensure they are aware of, and supported in, their role in civil contingencies planning.

16. The Scottish Government has been active in supporting multi-agency working and the implementation of the Act in Scotland. However, at a local level, organisations can find it difficult to keep pace with the demands placed on them. It is important that the Scottish Government fully considers local delivery and capacity issues when initiating new developments.

17. Assessing the likelihood and impact of risks is an area of continuing development. There is a UK-wide National Risk Register, but this has not yet been supplemented by a Scottish-level risk assessment. While all SCGs have published a Community Risk Register (CRR), these have not always been used effectively to inform planning at local and national levels. The Scottish Government is developing materials to raise awareness and promote understanding among the public of the risks we face and the likelihood of different events happening.

18. Business continuity arrangements ensure organisations continue to deliver services in the event of disruption. Local authorities are required to provide business continuity advice and assistance to local businesses and voluntary organisations but not all are doing so. This reflects our finding that the Act has so far had less impact on business continuity than emergency planning arrangements.

19. Training and exercising are essential for effective civil contingencies planning, and it is vital that any shortcomings identified lead to improvements in systems and procedures. Local organisations work within a complex and demanding training and exercising landscape, and some find it difficult to take up these opportunities. Despite the significant demands, nearly all Category 1 responders with an agreed generic emergency plan have met their duty to exercise it. However, not all business continuity management plans have been tested. There is also limited testing of cross-border and cross-boundary arrangements and lessons identified from exercises are not always shared widely or implemented systematically.

20. Best Value requires a proper balance between the costs and quality of services delivered, and all public bodies should monitor how they perform and what they achieve. However, there is no clear information on how much is spent on civil contingencies planning across Scotland and performance management at a local, regional and national level has been limited. There is potential for more efficient use of resources through joint working arrangements, for example by formalising mutual aid agreements and more effective sharing of resources.

Summary of key messages

21. Our key messages can be summarised as follows:

- Overall, key organisations work well together, particularly through SCGs, but there are still barriers to joint working.

- The Scottish Government has taken an active role in implementing the Act and this increased priority has placed greater demands on local responders.

- Governance and accountability arrangements for multi-agency working in civil contingencies planning are unclear.

- All SCGs have produced and published a CRR but these have made a limited contribution to informing civil contingencies planning at a local or national level.

- Most Category 1 responders have a generic emergency plan in place and have been involved in developing multi-agency arrangements for their SCG area. However, planning for business continuity management and recovery are not yet well developed.

- Complex training and exercising requirements place significant demands on local responders, making participation and effective coordination difficult.

- Lessons from incidents and exercises are not shared widely or systematically put into practice.

- There is no clear information on how much is spent overall on civil contingencies planning across Scotland.

- There is potential for more collaboration between organisations to increase capacity and make more effective use of resources.

Recommendations

22. We make a number of recommendations for the Scottish and UK governments and the main responding agencies in Scotland, both as individual organisations and as members of their SCGs. These identify how things can improve, and are as follows:

Working together

- The Scottish Government and SCG partners should agree a standard approach to the sharing of civil contingencies planning information across Scotland.

- SCGs should review their membership to ensure key organisations are represented appropriately, and work to maximise the benefits of effective joint working, including across SCG boundaries.

- The Scottish Government should review how it engages with those individuals who have day-to-day responsibility for civil contingencies planning, and ensure that it provides clear and consistent information.

- In consultation with SCG partners, the Scottish Government should clarify the governance and accountability arrangements for decisions made by the SCGs and for its own role during an emergency.

- Councils, police forces and fire and rescue services should ensure elected members are aware of their role in an emergency and of developments in civil contingencies planning.

Planning for a resilient Scotland

- SCG partners and the Scottish Government should work together to ensure that the full potential of CRRs in informing risk assessment and planning at local and national levels is realised.

- The UK and Scottish governments, SCGs and individual organisations should work together to improve cross-border and cross-boundary planning.

- Local responders should ensure that they have up-to-date emergency and business continuity plans and recovery arrangements, and that staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities.

- Local authorities must ensure they are providing business continuity management advice and assistance to local businesses and voluntary organisations. SCG partners should consider how they could add value to this process.

- Scottish Government and local responders should work together to improve public awareness of the risks we face and to ensure effective communication procedures are in place during and after an incident.

Learning lessons from training, exercises and incidents

- SCG partners and the Scottish Government should work together to ensure the effective targeting and coordination of exercises and training.

- Category 1 responders must ensure they are meeting the statutory requirement to exercise all of their emergency and business continuity plans.

- SCG partners and the Scottish and UK governments should ensure that lessons learned from training and exercising activities are systematically shared and that monitoring arrangements are in place to ensure their effective implementation.

Costs, capacity and performance

• SCG partners and the Scottish Government should work together to develop and apply a consistent framework for managing and reporting expenditure to demonstrate value for money, and seek to deliver increased efficiencies and improved resilience through further partnership working.

• Category 1 and 2 responders should develop formal mutual aid agreements. These agreements should take account of cross-border and cross-boundary arrangements, and the voluntary and private sectors.

• Local responders, SCGs and the Scottish Government should develop arrangements for managing, monitoring and reporting their performance.

Part 1. Setting the scene

The Act imposes legal duties on relevant organisations to ensure that effective arrangements are in place to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 seeks to minimise disruption in the event of an emergency

23. Civil emergencies (such as flooding, outbreaks of disease, loss of power or terrorist attacks) pose significant risks to local communities and the delivery of public services. Dealing with major incidents and emergencies requires a multi-agency response, not only involving various public organisations but also the voluntary and private sectors.

24. The Act was introduced primarily to ensure that the UK is better prepared to deal with a range of emergencies. The Act defines an emergency as an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare (for example, loss of life, illness or disruption to food, money or energy supplies), the environment (for example, contamination of land, water or air), or security of the UK (for example, war or terrorism). We use this definition when referring to emergencies throughout this report.

25. The Act imposes specific duties on two categories of 'responders':

- Category 1 responders – those public sector organisations providing vital services in an emergency (for example, the police, fire and rescue services, local authorities and the NHS). The majority of Category 1 responders in Scotland operate exclusively within its borders, although there are three organisations whose responsibilities cover the whole of the UK (British Transport Police, the Health Protection Agency and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency).

- Category 2 responders – those public and private sector organisations providing key infrastructure services (for example, gas and electricity companies, transport operators, telecommunications providers and Scottish Water).

Exhibit 1
Civil Contingencies Act 2004 – the seven main duties

Duty to share information	Category 1 and 2 responders are required to share information freely with each other, except some sensitive information (for example, relating to national security, public safety, commercial confidentiality and personal information). See Part 2 of this report.
Duty to co-operate	Category 1 and 2 responders within a police force boundary must co-operate with each other in the performance of their duties, both directly and through establishing multi-agency SCGs. See Part 2 of this report.
Duty to assess risk	Category 1 responders are required to assess the risk of emergencies occurring in their area, and to work with their SCG partners to produce and publish a shared Community Risk Register. See Part 3 of this report.
Duty to maintain emergency plans	Category 1 responders must maintain emergency plans for the purpose of preventing or limiting the effects of an emergency, and should consider whether risk assessments or guidance make it necessary to modify a plan. The Regulations also state that plans should include arrangements for exercises and training. See Parts 3 and 4 of this report.
Duty to maintain business continuity plans	Category 1 responders must maintain business continuity plans to ensure that they are able to perform their functions, as far as possible, during an emergency. They should consider whether risk assessments or guidance make it necessary to modify a plan. The Regulations also state that plans should include arrangements for exercises and training. See Parts 3 and 4 of this report.
Duty to communicate with the public	Category 1 responders should arrange for the publication of all or part of their risk assessments and emergency and business continuity management plans. Category 1 responders should maintain arrangements to warn the public, and to provide information and advice to the public, if an emergency is likely to occur or has occurred. See Part 3 of this report.
Duty to promote business continuity	Local authorities have a duty to provide advice and assistance on business continuity management to local businesses and voluntary organisations. See Part 3 of this report.

Source: Audit Scotland, based on the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the Contingency Planning (Scotland) Regulations 2005.

26. There are seven main duties under Part 1 of the Act and these provide a framework for our audit (Exhibit 1). The duties aim to ensure effective arrangements are in place for planning for and responding to emergencies and for the continued delivery of services. The Contingency Planning (Scotland) Regulations 2005 describe how these duties are to be implemented in Scotland and the Scottish Government's document *Preparing Scotland* contains statutory guidance on the implementation of the Regulations.[2]

Civil contingencies planning is undertaken in a complex political, organisational and legislative environment

27. While most civil protection issues are devolved to the Scottish Parliament, and therefore the responsibility of Scottish ministers, some key issues (for example, counter-terrorism and energy policy) remain the responsibility of the UK Parliament and are subject to separate regulations and guidance issued

2   Prior to September 2007, the Scottish Government was previously known as the 'Scottish Executive' and although this was the case when the Act was implemented, we use the term Scottish Government throughout the report to refer to the Scottish Administration.

by UK ministers. In 2006, the UK government and Scottish ministers signed a civil contingencies concordat to establish an agreed framework for co-operation on the application of the Act in Scotland and to ensure consistency across the UK.

28. Local responders usually manage the response to major emergencies in Scotland, with central government coordination provided by a lead department in the Scottish or UK government if necessary. If such an emergency only affects Scotland, the Scottish Government will normally take the lead unless the incident falls within a reserved policy area. In that case, the Cabinet Office or another nominated UK government department may take the lead. Some cross-border incidents require a combined and coordinated government response (Exhibit 2).

29. Within the Scottish Government, and on behalf of ministers, the Director General for Justice and Communities has overall responsibility for civil contingencies. Scottish Resilience, which is part of the Justice and Communities Directorate, was established to work with frontline organisations to prepare for and, where necessary, respond to emergencies. The role of Scottish Resilience includes providing funding, support and guidance to bodies involved in emergency planning, response and recovery; identifying national risks; as well as coordinating the Scottish Government's response to major emergencies through the Scottish Government Resilience Room (SGoRR). At the time of our audit, Scottish Resilience had a Civil Contingencies Unit to deliver these functions. However, following a restructuring exercise, these functions have now been integrated with other parts of Scottish Resilience.

30. While the Act places duties on Category 1 and 2 responders, it also emphasises the importance of other organisations, such as the voluntary sector and businesses, in achieving a successful multi-agency approach to civil contingencies (Exhibit 3, overleaf).

Exhibit 2
Central government civil contingencies planning arrangements
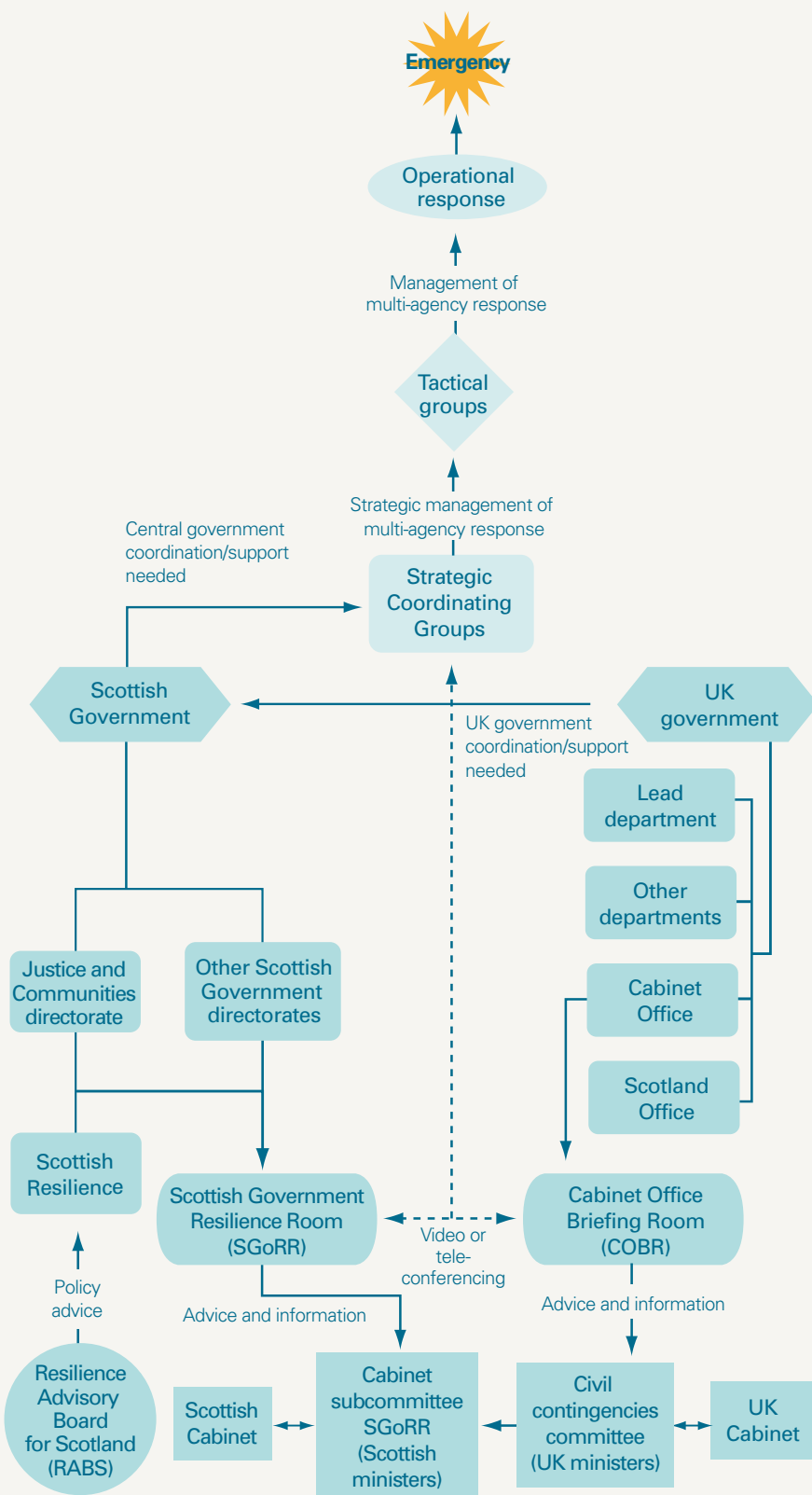
Source: Audit Scotland

In Scotland, responders and other relevant organisations, co-operate primarily through eight SCGs[3] which correspond to police force boundaries – Central Scotland; Dumfries and Galloway; Fife; Grampian; Highlands and Islands[4]; Lothian and Borders; Tayside; and Strathclyde. SCGs are not statutory bodies, but they are intended to be the focal point for local multi-agency civil contingencies planning and decision-making.

31. In addition to the complexities caused by the number of bodies involved and the varying administrative boundaries, many of the organisations active in civil contingencies planning are also subject to other legislation and regulations that impose additional duties relating to specific types of risks, accidents and major emergencies.

Civil contingencies planning in Scotland is taking place within an evolving policy environment
32. Wider developments in the local and national political landscape continue to affect the civil contingencies environment. Some examples are:

- the concordat signed in 2007 by the Scottish Government and COSLA

- the 2009 Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) between individual Community Planning Partnerships and the Scottish Government

- national legislation and policy reviews around specific risk areas, such as the Flood Risk Management Act (2009) and the current review of water rescue services

- the current review of the Act by the Cabinet Office (the 'Civil Contingencies Act Enhancement Programme')

- the internal restructuring of Scottish Resilience and its work to measure preparedness across Scotland

- the development of counter-terrorism strategies in England and Wales (Contest 2) and Scotland (Insight).

33. Both the UK and Scottish governments are monitoring implementation of the Act. The Wales Audit Office is currently reviewing civil contingencies planning, and the Northern Ireland Audit Office is researching the need for such a review.

Exhibit 3
Key organisations involved in civil contingencies planning in Scotland

Scope of organisation	Category 1 responders	Category 2 responders	Others
Devolved	• Fire and rescue services • Local authorities (including port health authorities) • NHS boards • Police forces • Scottish Ambulance Service • Scottish Environment Protection Agency	• NHS National Services Scotland • Public sector airport operators • Scottish Water • Public sector harbour authorities	• Animal Health[5] • Procurator Fiscal Service • Health Protection Scotland • NHS 24
Reserved	• British Transport Police • Health Protection Agency • Maritime and Coastguard Agency	• Health and Safety Executive	• Armed forces • Foods Standards Agency • Met Office
Non-public sector organisations with either Scotland or UK-wide remit		• Electricity distributors • Gas distributors • Private sector harbour authorities • Private sector airport operators • Railway operators • Telecommunications companies	• Businesses • Voluntary sector organisations

Source: Audit Scotland

3   In England and Wales the equivalent groups are known as Local Resilience Forums (LRFs).
4   Highlands and Islands SCG covers the same geographical area as Northern Constabulary.
5   Animal Health's functions are devolved to Scotland but its budget is not. The budget is retained by the UK government Department of environment, food and rural affairs (Defra), which funds Animal Health's activities in Scotland.

Part 2. Working together

Overall, key organisations co-operate well, particularly through their SCGs, but the effectiveness of joint working is limited by a number of issues.

Key messages

- Organisations co-operate well with each other, but the lack of a consistent approach to information sharing could limit effective joint working both within and outwith SCG areas.

- The SCGs have added value as forums for joint working in their areas but have still to fully address some key issues and they could work together better across boundaries.

- Ensuring that all key organisations are effectively involved in multi-agency planning is a challenge. Member organisations do not always attend SCG meetings and are not always represented at a level that allows effective participation.

- The Scottish Government has been active in supporting the implementation of the Act, but the increased priority given to this at a national level has placed greater demands on local responders.

- Governance and accountability arrangements for multi-agency civil contingencies planning are unclear.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 has formalised multi-agency arrangements, and organisations generally co-operate well with each other

34. Although there is a long history of organisations working together in emergency situations, particularly among the emergency services, the Act has formalised multi-agency arrangements. The Act gives a collective responsibility to SCG members to ensure that those duties that should be undertaken in a multi-agency environment are achieved.

35. Information from our Grangemouth case study illustrates a multi-agency response to an incident (Grangemouth case study:1).

36. Overall, our survey of Category 1 responders found there is a high level of co-operation between key organisations, with over 90 per cent reporting that they receive appropriate levels of co-operation from NHS boards, councils, fire and rescue services, Scottish Ambulance Service, SEPA, Scottish Water, Animal Health, Scottish Resilience and voluntary organisations, for example. However, the level of co-operation from Category 2 responders and those organisations with a UK-wide remit was, in general, viewed less positively.

37. A successful approach to civil contingencies depends on effective information sharing within and between individual organisations during the key stages of planning, response and recovery. Category 1 responders reported that they are generally kept well informed about the civil contingencies work being undertaken by others, although less so by Category 2 than other Category 1 responders (Exhibit 4). We found some variation within types of responders. For example, while most Category 1 responders viewed each other positively, less than half reported that the Health Protection Agency and British Transport Police (both of which cover reserved matters) kept them well informed. In addition, among the utility companies, Scottish Water was viewed more positively than the gas and electricity companies (which may or may not be based in Scotland).

Grangemouth case study
(1) The multi-agency response

An industrial dispute at Grangemouth petro-chemical refinery, resulted in safety concerns and a potential fuel shortage. Shutting down the refinery took five days and involved closing a major North Sea oil pipeline. The petro-chemical industry predicted that this could result in the loss of £50 million per day to the economy. As the pipeline and refinery had never been shut down before, there were fears that restarting them might be problematic, and that any fuel shortage might outlive the strike action.

All SCGs across Scotland met to make sure that multi-agency procedures were in place to implement the National Emergency Plan – Fuel (NEP-F) if the situation escalated. The NEP-F includes arrangements to enforce maximum purchase schemes to limit the amount of fuel consumers can buy, and a designated filling station (DFS) scheme, which allows access to only essential emergency or utility vehicles at some filling stations. There were discussions at SCG meetings across Scotland to decide which vehicles would be included in a DFS scheme, and how essential staff (such as police and doctors) could still get to and from work during a fuel crisis.

A multi-agency approach was important in ensuring that: the public received consistent and accurate information; SCG member organisations were kept informed by the Scottish Government; the NEP-F would be applied consistently across police force areas; and that in the event of a fuel shortage, key organisations would work together to ensure that fuel supply would be prioritised to those vehicles essential to service delivery.

Source: Audit Scotland

Exhibit 4
Category 1 responders' views on how well other organisations keep them informed
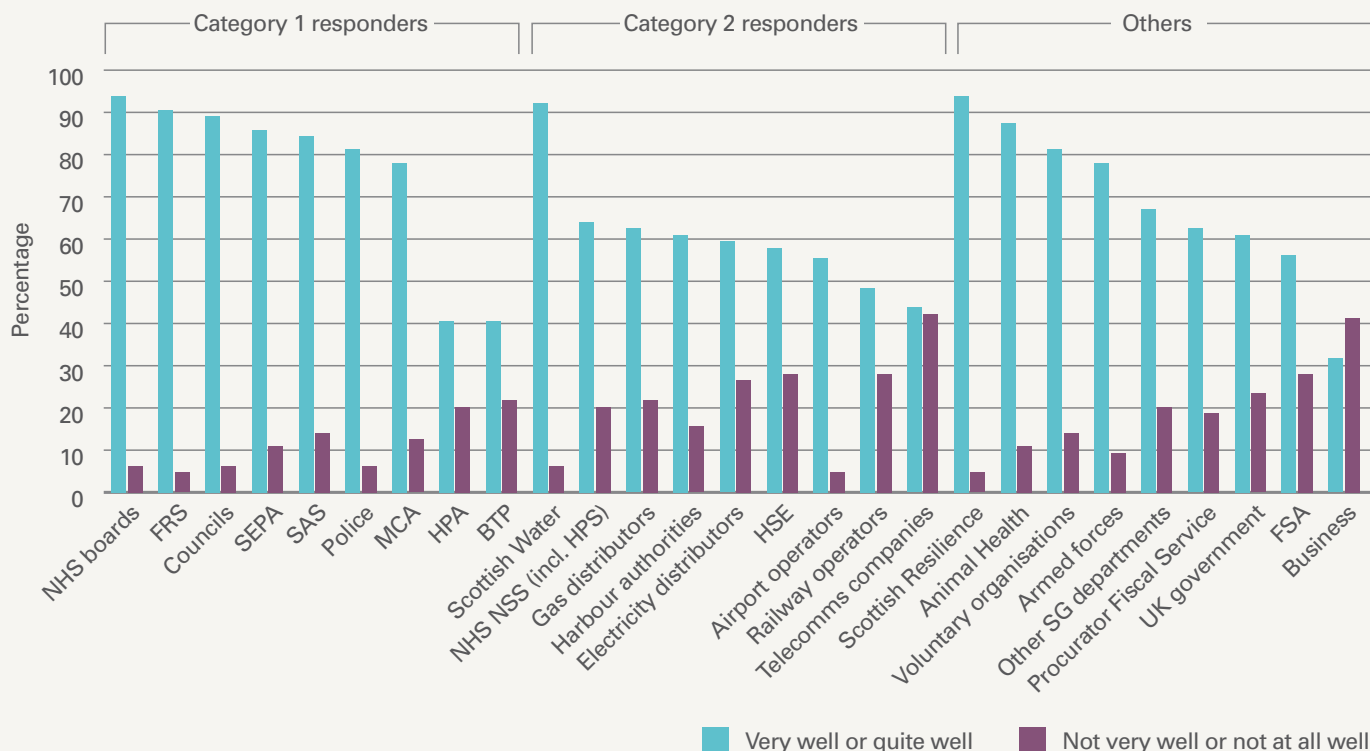
Source: Audit Scotland survey

There are still some barriers to effective information sharing between key organisations

38. We found some barriers to effective information sharing:

- Different definitions exist as to what an 'emergency' is. Although there is a definition of what constitutes an emergency within the Act and in *Preparing Scotland*, those used by individual organisations sometimes differ. In addition, a single organisation or even document may use more than one definition. Certain actions, such as the convening of an SCG to respond to an incident, are dependent on whether the circumstances fit the definition of an emergency and so this lack of clarity has the potential to complicate and delay a multi-agency response.

- Different document security systems are in use. For example, all police forces use the Government Protective Marking Scheme (GPMS), which classifies documents under five headings of 'not protectively marked', 'restricted', 'confidential', 'secret', and 'top secret'. Only 21 per cent of other Category 1 responders use this scheme (although another nine per cent intend to do so in the future).

- There is no national protocol for information sharing, although the Scottish and UK governments are working together to address some information sharing problems (for example, through the development of a secure computer system – the National Resilience Extranet – that will allow the exchange of information up to and including 'restricted' level). In addition, there is limited use of formal information sharing

policies or protocols among Category 1 responders (with only 38 per cent having one in place and a further nine per cent developing one).

- Not all Category 1 responders operate secure email systems. For example, while the police, Scottish Government and the NHS boards operate such systems, some local authorities and fire and rescue services do not. This can lead to delays in receiving what can be critical information and limit the sharing of information, such as exercise or incident evaluations that identify areas for improvement.

- Organisations have different approaches to vetting, or security clearing, staff and some are unwilling to share information with other organisations whose staff have not been security cleared.

- The variety of sources of civil contingencies-related information can result in information overload, duplication and contradiction, causing confusion among responders. For example, NHS boards receive information from Scottish Resilience, the NHS Health Emergency Planning Team, the Scottish Ambulance Service, NHS 24, the Chief Medical Officer, and Health Protection Scotland, as well as information from the UK government's health department and other bodies with a UK-wide remit, such as the Health Protection Agency.

39. Incidents and exercises have highlighted some of these issues. For example, during the 2008 industrial dispute at Grangemouth, Scottish Resilience adopted a new document labelling convention, marking documents as 'releasable', without an explanation of what this meant. Debrief reports often highlight problems related to technical difficulties with communications equipment as well as weaknesses in communication procedures generally.

SCGs have broadly similar structures but what they do and how they do it varies

40. Although the guidance in *Preparing Scotland* is not prescriptive, allowing the eight SCGs to develop structures that take account of local priorities and risks, they have developed in broadly similar ways. All SCGs have a senior strategic group to consider how to take forward their collective responsibilities under the Act, as well as providing the strategic coordination and consequence management of an emergency response. In 2008, due to its large size, Strathclyde created an additional executive group that can operate on behalf of other members. It meets between full SCG meetings to consider urgent matters.

41. Each strategic level group is supported by a tactical group and various task specific subgroups. The overall roles and responsibilities of these different groups vary depending on whether they are engaged in the day-to-day planning and preparation for incidents, or actively responding to or recovering from an emergency (Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5
Overview of strategic coordinating structures and roles

Planning phase
Roles and responsibilities:

Response phase
Roles and responsibilities:

Strategic decisions
Members at CEO level

Strategic group

Consequence management
- 'thinking'
- considering 'what ifs'
- strategic decisions
- sometimes known as 'gold' command

Tactical work streams are taken forward by task specific subgroups, for example:

Public communications group

Training and exercising group

Welfare group

Acts on SCG decisions

Members at middle to senior management level

Tactical group

Information

Information management
- 'planning'
- identifying 'what ifs'
- information gathering
- information sharing, eg with Scottish Government
- procurement
- sometimes known as 'silver' command

Implements SCG decisions
Practitioner level

Operational level

Information

Incident management
- 'doing'
- sometimes known as 'bronze' command

Source: Audit Scotland

42. At the time of our study, seven of the eight SCGs were chaired by chief officers – four chief constables, two council chief executives and one by the council chief executive and chief constable jointly. The remaining SCG was chaired by an assistant chief constable.

43. Each SCG is supported by a full-time coordinator, with the exception of Strathclyde which, because of its size, has two posts. These posts are funded by the Scottish Government to provide administrative support to the SCG, liaise with Scottish and UK governments and other relevant bodies, and develop the SCG's work programme, and monitor and report to the SCG on its progress.

44. While an outline job description was issued by the Scottish Government, individual SCGs and their coordinators have been allowed to develop the role according to local needs. For example, during emergencies some coordinators have an advisory role, some a liaison role and others have no role at all. These differences mean that organisations outwith the relevant area may not be aware of the responsibilities of an SCG coordinator, which could make cross-border or cross-boundary working more difficult. Additionally, there is no deputising system in place to cover coordinator absences or to provide 24-hour coverage during incidents.

45. The coordinator posts are valued by SCG chairs, who see them as giving extra capacity to the SCGs and supporting working relationships between individual member organisations and Scottish Resilience, which uses them as a single point of contact for all SCG member organisations. However, some local responders feel that this 'gatekeeper' role has resulted in individual organisations having less direct contact with the Scottish Government and have concerns that there could be delays or omissions in receiving important communications.

46. SCG activity during an incident can be illustrated with our case study of the Grangemouth industrial dispute in April 2008, which involved a multi-agency response to the potential interruption to fuel supplies (Grangemouth case study: 2).

47. Although SCGs receive funding from the Scottish Government for their coordinators (at a cost of £445,000 in 2008/09 for nine posts) and they can bid for central government funding for specific initiatives, they do not receive any routine, formal funding from the Scottish Government or from SCG member organisations. Activity is usually funded through contributions from the main partner agencies (such as the police and local authorities) but there is no clear system to formalise these arrangements.

SCGs have added value in supporting joint working between organisations, but cross-boundary working has been limited

48. Since implementation of the Act, all SCG work programmes have prioritised their immediate legislative responsibilities around preparing for and responding to emergencies, and establishing stronger relationships between key organisations within their area.

49. Almost all Category 1 responders reported that SCGs are making an effective contribution to facilitating multi-agency working. Nearly all consider their SCG to be effective in providing an information sharing function, ensuring individual organisations can contribute to joint plans and facilitating co-operation between Category 1

Grangemouth case study
(2) SCG activity

Scotland's SCGs were convened in response to the industrial dispute and threatening fuel crisis. The issues considered included:

- the need to assess the existing fuel stock in their area

- the need for each SCG member organisation to review its business continuity management arrangements to ensure continuation of services during a fuel shortage

- confirmation of the police role in dealing with public disorder issues, for example to deal with any issues resulting from implementation of a maximum purchase scheme at fuel stations

- updating arrangements for designated fuelling stations, to allow access to emergency vehicles and other vehicles considered necessary for the continuation of public services

- ensuring that communications arrangements were in place to deliver consistent messages to the public from each SCG member organisation, and avoid public alarm.

SCG coordinators collected information from member organisations on developments in their area in response to daily requests by the Scottish Government and distributed the situation reports received from the Scottish Government. Most SCGs met daily to take part in teleconferences with Scottish Government Resilience Room (SGoRR) and BERR[6], which were viewed positively as an opportunity to gather information from a single source.

Source: Audit Scotland

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6   UK Government Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform – responsibility for energy has since been transferred to the Department of Energy and Climate Change.

and 2 responders. Fewer Category 1 responders consider their SCG effective at sharing outcomes of exercises and lessons learned from outwith their SCG area or discussing business continuity management issues (Exhibit 6).

50. In relation to the key areas listed in Exhibit 6, we collated the views of Category 1 responders within SCG areas and created an effectiveness score for each SCG. With a maximum possible score of 22, results ranged from five in Strathclyde to 19 in Dumfries and Galloway (Exhibit 7).[7] Strathclyde's score may reflect the difficulties it has had in engaging with a large number of Category 1 responders over an extensive geographical area.

51. SCGs are now taking a more proactive strategic approach and are strengthening their business planning processes, as well as spending increasing time considering training, exercising and reviewing lessons learned. However, we also found a number of key areas that have not yet been fully addressed by SCGs, such as warning and informing the public about risks and developing arrangements to recover from emergencies.

52. Despite addressing comparable issues and having similar activities within their work programmes, there has been limited cross-border working or sharing of good practice information between SCGs. Work in some key areas, such as the development of Community Risk Registers (CRRs) and generic emergency plans (see Part 3), has been carried out in isolation within each individual SCG. This reduces the opportunity to share good practice, risks duplication and results in the inefficient use of skills and expertise.

Exhibit 6
Category 1 responders' views of the effectiveness of particular aspects of their SCG

Source: Audit Scotland survey
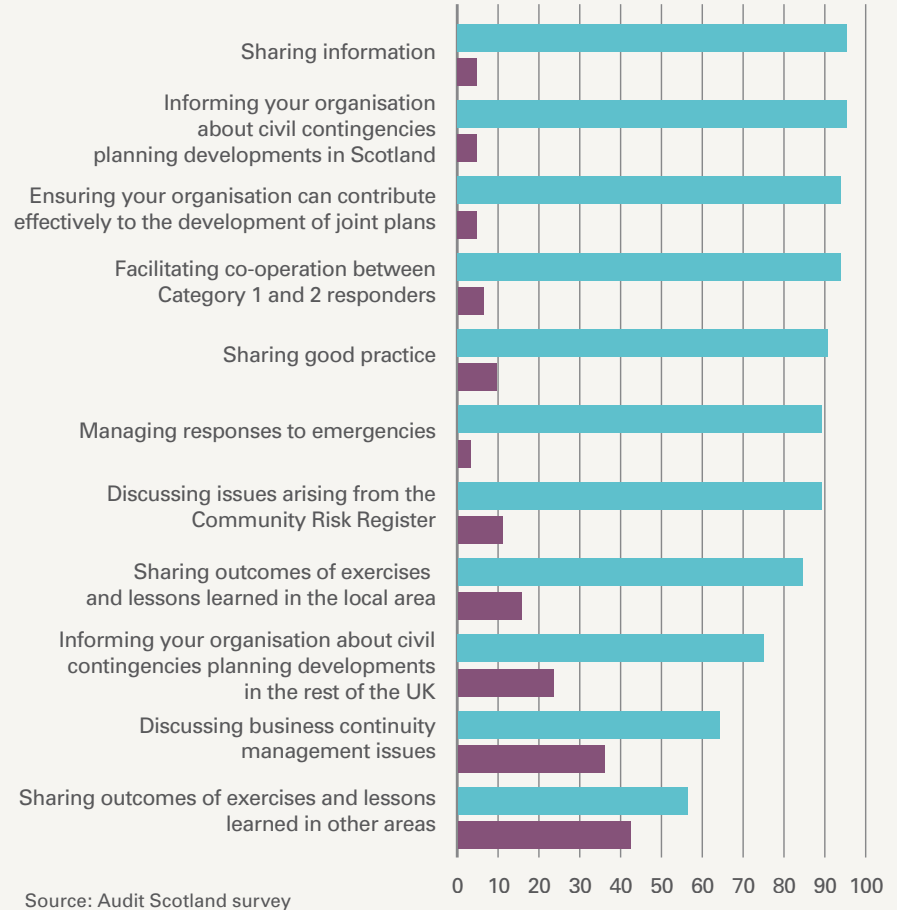
Exhibit 7
Overall effectiveness scores of SCGs from views of Category 1 responders[8]

Source: Audit Scotland survey
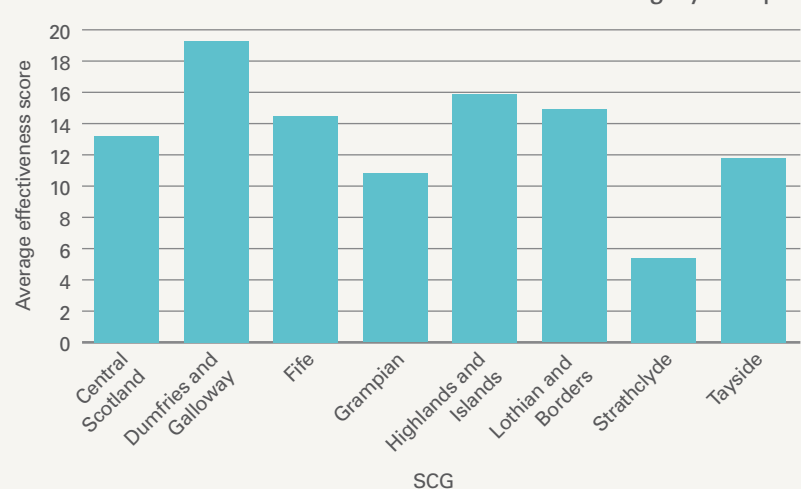
7   A rating scale of +2 to -2 was applied to the responses given by each responder for each aspect asked about. A total score for each was calculated by adding the numbers for each aspect. The total scores for organisations within the same SCG were then added together and then divided by the number of responders surveyed in each SCG area, to give an SCG level effectiveness rating.
8   NHS Highland falls into two SCG areas (Highlands and Islands and Strathclyde) but for the purpose of analysis, and following consultation with the board, their responses have been included in the Highlands and Islands SCG figures only. SEPA and SAS have not been included in the analysis as they sit on all eight SCGs.

53. We did find some examples of individual SCGs taking the lead in developing a particular area and then sharing the outcomes with the other SCGs. These include Grampian's development of an SCG-level information sharing protocol, Lothian and Borders' local authority mutual aid agreement and Dumfries and Galloway's public information development project. Such approaches have potential to improve efficiency and reduce duplication.

Ensuring all key organisations are effectively involved in multi-agency planning is a challenge

54. A response to an emergency can be quicker and more effective when the main responders are known to each other and are familiar with local and regional structures, procedures and practices. One of the challenges SCGs face is ensuring that all the organisations involved in dealing with incidents are effectively included in planning for them, while still maintaining effective strategic decision-making.

55. According to the Regulations, all Scottish Category 1 responders should be represented on SCGs – and we found that this is the case – but overall membership can be determined by each SCG itself. We found some variation across Scotland in representation of UK-wide Category 1 responders, for example British Transport Police is a member of only two SCGs. We also found variation among other organisations that are relevant but not named in the Act, as well as limited involvement of Category 2 responders.

56. The voluntary sector is not represented on any strategic level SCG, although it is represented on subgroups within some SCG areas. The Resilience Advisory Board for Scotland (RABS), which provides strategic advice to ministers and the civil contingencies community, has recently approved proposals to improve engagement with the voluntary sector, including the

development of a scheme through which Category 1 responders can represent a named voluntary organisation at SCG meetings. An example of how the voluntary sector can boost capacity in relation to civil contingencies planning activity is given in Exhibit 8 below.

57. If SCGs decide not to include key organisations within their core membership, it is important that alternative arrangements are in place to ensure effective engagement with relevant non-members on civil contingencies planning issues.

58. We found some evidence of confusion among responders as to the status of some bodies involved in multi-agency planning. For example, although NHS 24 is not named within the Act, some responders assumed it has Category 1 or 2 responder status because of the key role it can play in preparing for and responding to an emergency (as highlighted during

the outbreak of Influenza A H1N1 in 2009). Similarly, we found confusion as to the status of Health Protection Scotland, which is not classified as a responder, although it sits within NHS National Services Scotland, which is a Category 2 responder.

Member bodies do not always attend SCG meetings and not all representatives attending are of the appropriate level

59. We found attendance levels at SCG meetings varied among members. During 2007 and 2008, the police and fire and rescue services were the only member organisations represented at all 43 SCG meetings. Dumfries and Galloway was the only SCG with full member attendance at all of its meetings in these years. The lowest levels of attendance were found in Strathclyde and Highlands and Islands SCGs, the largest groups geographically. Some organisations with a Scotland or UK-wide remit are members of all eight SCGs across

Exhibit 8
Working with the voluntary sector

As part of a review of Falkirk Council's emergency planning arrangements, following the 2004 Act, a joint survey of all council-owned premises deemed suitable for use as potential rest centres was undertaken by representatives from the council's Housing, Social Work and Community Services departments and the voluntary sector (which included the WRVS, Red Cross, Salvation Army, the local council for voluntary sector (CVS) and the St Andrews Ambulance Service).

The group set out criteria required for a rest centre, including a detailed risk assessment of premises that could be used in each electoral ward. Once agreed, a programme of inspection visits was carried out between August and December 2008. The results of this were collated into a list of 35 suitable premises, with identified capacities and supporting facilities.

Although the voluntary sector has traditionally been associated with the council's emergency response procedures, it was felt that these could improve. The involvement of the voluntary sector in the early stages of planning produced encouraging results, such as a strengthening of team spirit and partnership working, and allowing voluntary organisations to familiarise themselves with council premises and equipment and assess their suitability. Future work will include training and awareness for the successful operation of rest centres and wider consideration of issues around emergency evacuation.

Source: Falkirk Council

Scotland and they find it particularly difficult to send a representative to all meetings.

60. According to *Preparing Scotland,* those attending strategic level SCG meetings should be officers with appropriate seniority, expertise and decision-making powers. In 2008, further guidance was issued stating that 'chief officers' (those with ultimate responsibility for meeting their organisation's obligations) should attend. In their occasional absence, they must be effectively represented so that, for example, any member could be asked to lead a multi-agency response in the event of an emergency.

61. Due to the structures and competing demands of some organisations, again particularly those with Scottish and UK-wide responsibilities, some members (for example, SEPA) find it difficult to send their chief officer to SCG meetings because of resource demands and some feel their chief officer is not necessarily the right person to attend. For example, the MCA considers it more appropriate that local senior officers responsible for emergency response attend SCG meetings.

62. We found that across all SCG meetings in 2007 and 2008, chief officers attended on less than half of the total possible occasions. Chief officers from SAS, SEPA and MCA, all of whom have either a Scotland or UK-wide remit, did not attend any of the SCG meetings.

63. Attendance of chief officers varied between SCG areas. For example, in Fife there was 100 per cent attendance from police, fire, local authority and NHS chief officers in 2007, and 92 per cent attendance in 2008; whereas in Tayside there was only 11 per cent attendance in 2007 and in 2008 no chief officers attended any of the SCG meetings (Exhibit 9).[9]

Exhibit 9
Level of attendance at SCG strategic level meetings by police, fire, NHS and local authority chief officers
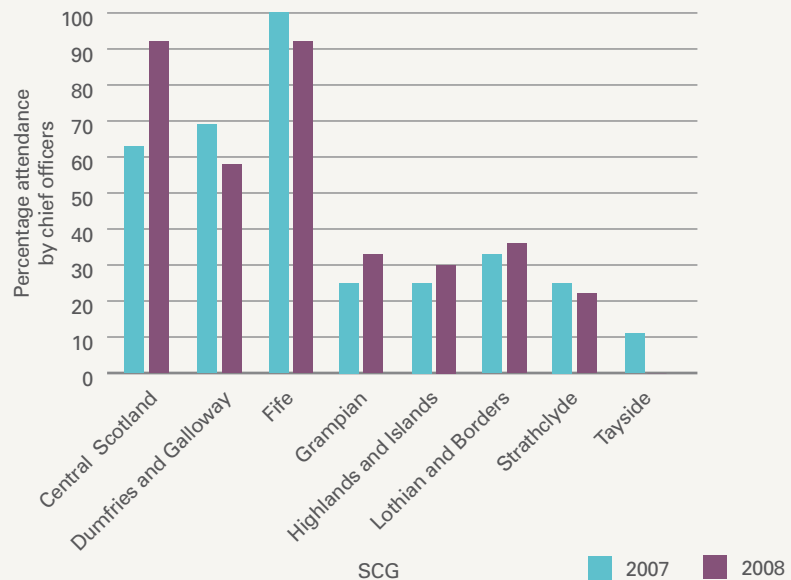
Source: Audit Scotland review of minutes from all eight SCGs, 2007 and 2008

Despite the guidance, some chief officers were represented by staff, such as departmental heads or emergency planning officers, who do not have appropriate authority. These issues raise questions about whether some SCG members are sufficiently engaged in the process, as well as the effectiveness of decision-making processes.

The Scottish Government has taken an active role in implementing the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and supporting SCGs

64. Between 2004 and 2008, the Scottish Government's Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU) grew from a staff of four to around 25, reflecting the increased priority given to civil contingencies planning and the wide range of associated work streams (Exhibit 10). The Unit's expenditure for the financial year 2008/09 was £4 million, a 28 per cent increase on the previous year. The Unit's expenditure has now been integrated with other

parts of Scottish Resilience (see paragraph 29).

65. Following the introduction of the Act, a number of steps were taken by the Scottish Government to develop civil contingencies planning to deal with disruptive events, whether they affect local communities or Scotland as a whole. It has:

- published overarching guidance, *Preparing Scotland*, to support responders and SCGs in meeting their duties under the Act, along with more specific guidance (eg, *Pandemic Flu: A Scottish framework for responding to an influenza pandemic*, November 2007)

- established the Scottish Resilience Development Service (ScoRDS) to coordinate national exercises and workshops, deliver training and support the sharing of knowledge and good practice

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9   These figures were calculated by dividing the actual number of attendances by chief officers at all SCG meetings in 2007 and 2008 by the possible number of attendances.

Exhibit 10
Civil Contingencies Unit priority work streams for 2008/09

- Business continuity
- CBRNE (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives)
- Communication with the public
- Counter-terrorism
- Environment (including extreme weather)
- Exercising
- Front-line support services
- Governance
- Learning lessons from emergencies

- Mass fatalities
- Pandemic flu
- Performance management
- Scottish Government and emergency response arrangements
- Stakeholder communications and sharing of information
- Strategy, planning and resourcing
- Support for SCGs and *Preparing Scotland*
- Training

Source: *Civil Contingencies Unit Business Plan 2008/09*, Scottish Government

- supported the establishment of SCGs through the funding of the coordinator, training officer and Regional Resilience Adviser posts, and the establishment of forums for SCG chairs and coordinators to allow discussion at a national level

- sent nominated government representatives to attend SCG meetings to maintain direct contact between the Scottish Government and a range of individual organisations, enabling SCGs to clarify government-provided information, as well as allowing the government to hear directly from SCG members about key issues

- set up the RABS to provide strategic advice to ministers. In 2008, this replaced the Scottish Emergencies Coordinating Committee Core (SECC Core), and has resulted in some SECC members losing their direct input to government. For example, the utility companies are no longer represented at the strategic level, even though utilities failure is recognised as a key risk for Scotland.

66. Despite these government initiatives, some of those who deliver civil contingencies planning as part of their day-to-day role within local organisations feel that they have limited opportunities for discussion with the Scottish Government, yet much of the detailed knowledge, skills and expertise exists at this less strategic level.

67. The *Preparing Scotland* guidance is deliberately non-prescriptive to allow for flexible implementation of the Act at local levels. While most Category 1 responders have found it and the subsequent supplementary guidance helpful, some feel that the lack of a common approach across Scotland has led to inefficiency and duplication. The Scottish Government is currently undertaking a review of *Preparing Scotland* to look at the future format and presentation of the document.

68. Delays in the provision of Scottish Government guidance on some specific issues have impacted on the pace of change within SCGs. For example, some have delayed

addressing communicating with the public, and others have developed their own communications systems in isolation from work being undertaken at Scottish or UK level, because of a lack of guidance.

The increased priority given to civil contingencies planning at the national level has increased demands on local responders
69. Category 1 responders reported that it has been difficult to keep up to date at a local level with the increased activity within the Scottish Government. The growth in resources within the government's Civil Contingencies Unit does not appear to have been matched across Category 1 responders.

70. While civil contingencies planning should now be embedded across organisations, at a local level it is still specialist staff (such as those with an emergency and business continuity planning role) who deal with most of the central government driven activity. In 2008, there were, on average, 1.9 full-time equivalent (FTE) civil contingencies staff per council and 1.2 per NHS board. The Scottish Government needs to consider fully local capacity issues when initiating new developments.

71. Decisions on staffing and resources are the responsibility of senior management and, where relevant, elected members within individual organisations, and these have to take account of wider competing organisational priorities. We found variation in civil contingencies staffing levels within local authorities and health boards. For example, while most councils have one or two FTE staff dedicated to civil contingencies planning work[10], Dumfries and Galloway has eight, Highland has six, Fife has four and Glasgow City Council has three. Similarly within NHS boards, staffing levels vary from none to three. This does not necessarily reflect overall

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10   Full-time equivalent staff that spend a minimum of 80 per cent of their time on civil contingencies planning.

capacity, as the figures available do not include the level of involvement of other staff across the organisation, and consequently the extent to which civil contingencies planning has been embedded.

The way in which parts of the government work together could be improved

72. Legislation requires UK and Scottish ministers to consult each other when making provisions affecting civil contingencies planning. This is reinforced by the civil contingencies concordat, signed by the Scottish and UK governments. Scottish Government directorates and parts of Westminster (such as the Department of Energy and Climate Change, and the Cabinet Office) have established formal links. Their representatives, along with others from Wales and Northern Ireland, meet on a regular basis.

73. However, a more cohesive approach could be taken by the Scottish and UK governments. For example, although the UK government has issued extensive guidance for organisations involved in civil contingencies planning, it is not always clear how relevant this is to responders in Scotland, or how it relates to Scottish guidance. The Scottish Government is not always clear in its advice about whether to adopt the UK guidance, and if not, why not. This can result in responders following guidance that has not been prepared with their needs in mind and can cause confusion for those organisations whose remit crosses over national borders.

74. Exercises and incidents, such as the Cellardyke avian influenza incident in April 2006, have highlighted the need for stronger definitions of the roles and responsibilities of the various parts of the Scottish and UK governments. This is particularly important when the lead responder delivers services in Scotland but falls within a reserved competence (such as the Maritime and Coastguard

Agency, British Transport Police or Health and Safety Executive).

The governance and accountability arrangements for multi-agency working are unclear

75. There are a number of issues relating to governance and accountability arrangements that should be addressed. This reflects the findings of Audit Scotland's 2006 report on community planning partnerships, which found that implementing the principles of good governance and accountability in partnerships is more challenging than in individual organisations. The examples we discuss here relate to SCGs, the Scottish Government's role and the involvement of elected members in civil contingencies planning.

76. Although SCGs were established by the Act and given effect by the Contingency Planning (Scotland) Regulations 2005, they are not statutory bodies and have no binding decision-making powers. The chair of an SCG has no power to direct other members and the SCG cannot be the subject of legal proceedings.[11]

77. While SCG members generally work well together, with consensus decision-making, it is not clear who the SCG chair is accountable to or how the SCG can be held to account for delivering effective local resilience. This lack of clarity around accountability for decisions made at the strategic level raises questions around what might happen when things do not run smoothly (for example, when key partners are in disagreement about a course of action) and the potential civil and criminal liability for staff if decisions result in personal injury, death or damage to property (for example, through the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007).

78. Scottish ministers see themselves as taking the strategic lead in civil contingencies planning and this is

reflected in the level of government activity and initiatives to support the implementation of the Act. Scottish Government activity in the early stages of the Influenza A H1N1 outbreak in April 2009 is illustrated in Influenza case study: 1.

79. However, there is a lack of clarity among local responders as to the Scottish Government's role and accountability during an emergency and around the status of the Scottish Government's relationship with the SCGs. There are concerns among local responders about the extent to which the Scottish Government can direct and deliver local civil contingencies planning activity, and potentially interfere with those duties placed upon individual Category 1 and 2 responders. In 2008, for example, the Scottish Government offered to fund 'Regional Resilience Adviser' (RRA) posts within the SCGs, to strengthen the arrangements at a strategic level and facilitate the use of multi-agency resources within the SCG area. In 2009, Strathclyde and Grampian SCGs established RRA posts on a three-year pilot basis. The RRAs are accountable to the SCG chairs but have a direct relationship with the Scottish Government. For some, this relationship makes accountability arrangements for these individuals unclear and their role in relation to local responders potentially confusing.

Local elected members currently have limited involvement in civil contingencies planning.

80. Elected members of local authorities, including joint boards for police and fire and rescue services, have demanding and varied roles with many responsibilities.[12] As both ward councillors and members of corporate bodies, they represent local people and communities and, as such, have an important role to play. Before an emergency, their role includes scrutinising their organisation's emergency planning processes, ensuring that appropriate resources

11   *The Legality of an SCG*, Scottish Resilience Civil Contingencies Unit, 2008.
12   *Overview of local authority audits 2008*, Audit Scotland, February 2009.

Influenza case study
(1) The role of the Scottish Government in the early stages of the outbreak

Influenza A H1N1 became headline news in Scotland during the weekend of 25 April 2009. The SGoRR was convened on 26 April 2009 to address the outbreak. On the same day, the US government reported 20 laboratory confirmed cases and the Mexican government reported 18. Investigations were still under way to clarify the spread and severity of the disease. The virus was described as a new strain of H1N1 influenza, which had not previously circulated in humans.

The first two cases of Influenza A H1N1 were confirmed in Scotland on 27 April. Between this day and 8 May, daily teleconferences took place between the Scottish Government and SCGs to gather local information and answer queries. When the infection appeared to be under control, the teleconferences were reduced to twice a week. Daily situation reports, frequent communication updates and templates for gathering information and queries were distributed to SCGs by the Scottish Government.

The Scottish and UK governments worked closely to communicate consistent messages to the public. The Scottish Government assured the public that pandemic influenza plans were in place, and that planning for such an event had been ongoing for a number of years.

Source: Audit Scotland

day-to-day responsibility for civil contingencies planning, and ensure that it provides clear and consistent information.

- In consultation with SCG partners, the Scottish Government should clarify the governance and accountability arrangements for decisions made by the SCGs and for its own role during an emergency.

- Councils, police forces and fire and rescue services should ensure elected members are aware of their role in an emergency and of developments in civil contingencies planning.

are available and considering reports on emergency planning topics. During and after an emergency, elected members may be responsible for providing leadership and assurance to local communities and ensuring that lessons learned are incorporated into future plans. The public may also use elected members as a way of communicating their views on how an emergency is being dealt with and the impact on their local area.

81. We found limited evidence of engagement with elected members in civil contingencies planning. Only 14 councils reported that any elected members had undertaken formal training in preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies within the last two years. One police force and four fire and rescue services reported that they provided elected members with some form of training. Five local authorities have developed and distributed a booklet to elected members, specifically covering their role in emergencies. However, to date, there has been no evaluation of the impact of this.

82. Given the growing interest in civil contingencies planning among politicians and the range of events that can have a significant impact on communities, organisations need to engage with elected members at both local and national levels to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities and are supported to play an effective role.

Recommendations

- The Scottish Government and SCG partners should agree a standard approach to the sharing of civil contingencies planning information across Scotland.

- SCGs should review their membership to ensure key organisations are represented appropriately, and work to maximise the benefits of effective joint working, including across SCG boundaries.

- The Scottish Government should review how it engages with those individuals who have

Part 3. Planning for a resilient Scotland

Most organisations have multi-agency risk assessments and generic emergency plans. However, arrangements for business continuity, recovery and informing the public could be better.

Key messages

- There is no comprehensive risk assessment process or risk register at a Scottish level.

- All SCGs have produced and published a Community Risk Register (CRR) but the contribution these make to national risk assessments and local civil contingencies planning has been limited.

- Most Category 1 responders have developed generic emergency plans, but there is variation in how guidance about content has been adopted.

- Most Category 1 responders are involved in multi-agency planning, but joint plans and cross-boundary working could be improved.

- Planning for business continuity management and recovery are not yet well developed.

- The public are generally not well informed about risks and not all Category 1 responders have arrangements in place for informing the public during an emergency.

83. Exhibit 11 illustrates the continuous and integrated nature of planning for emergencies and the continued delivery of services. This cycle is undertaken at national levels (both UK and Scotland), regional levels through SCGs and locally within individual organisations. There are several linked stages. This part of the report reviews the first two of these interdependent stages of planning – assessing risks and preparing plans. Exercising plans and learning lessons are discussed in Part 4.

There is no comprehensive risk assessment process or risk register at a Scottish level

84. Risks are potential events or situations that could have a significant impact on communities should they occur. *Preparing Scotland* states that there are two main types of risk:

- Hazards – natural or unintentional risks (for example, severe weather or industrial accidents).

- Threats – malicious or deliberately made risks (for example, terrorist attacks).

85. Risk assessment should provide a rational basis for prioritising strategic objectives, work programmes and resource allocation. At the UK level, risk assessment activity is coordinated by the Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat, and supported by the Scottish Government.

Exhibit 11
Civil contingencies planning cycle

Source: Audit Scotland
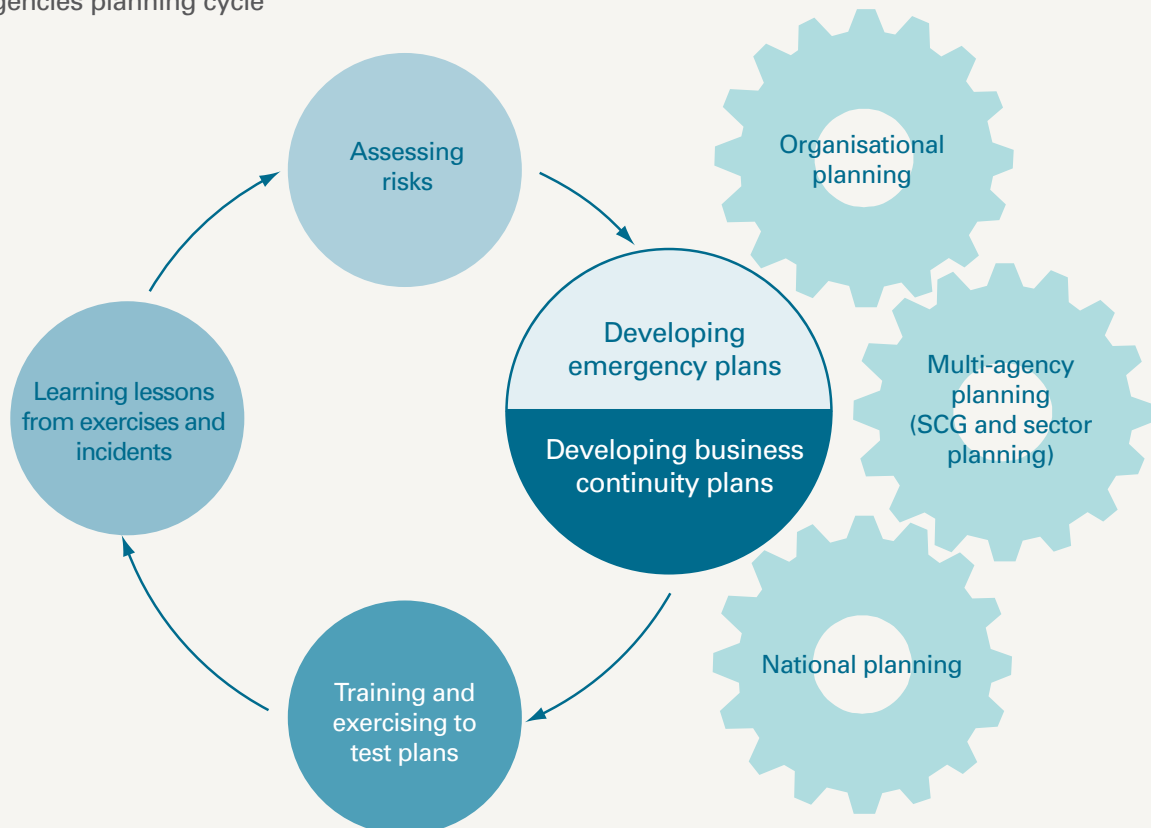
In November 2008, the Cabinet Office published a National Risk Register identifying the main risks that are relatively likely to occur within the next five years and which could have a serious impact on the UK (Exhibit 12). Although the National Risk Register is intended to cover the whole of the UK, the Scottish Government was only consulted at a late stage in its development.

86. During 2008, four main risks were identified for the UK – pandemic flu, avian flu, flooding and foot and mouth disease.[13] These were different to those shown in Scottish Government communications, which were pandemic flu, severe weather, utilities failure and terrorism. The presentation of different key risks could potentially cause confusion among the public, and impact on the prioritisation of work programmes by local organisations.

87. There is no comprehensive Scottish-level risk assessment process or risk register document. However, the Scottish Government is now considering how the UK National Risk Assessments and National Planning Assumptions, along with the regional CRRs, might be reviewed to develop a Scottish addendum to the National Risk Register that would more accurately reflect the risks faced in Scotland.

88. Influenza case study: 2 illustrates the preparation and planning undertaken by the Scottish Government for this particular risk.

All SCGs have published a CRR but the contribution they have made to civil contingencies planning so far has been limited

89. The Scottish Regulations require responders within each SCG area to collaborate in producing a shared CRR. A CRR should identify hazards and threats, rate these according to the likelihood of occurrence and the impact they may have, and list the arrangements in place both to respond to an incident, and to manage the risk. A CRR should take account of local as well as national risks and form the basis of multi-agency planning in the SCG area, as well as contributing towards a Scottish-level risk assessment.

Exhibit 12
High-consequence risks facing the United Kingdom
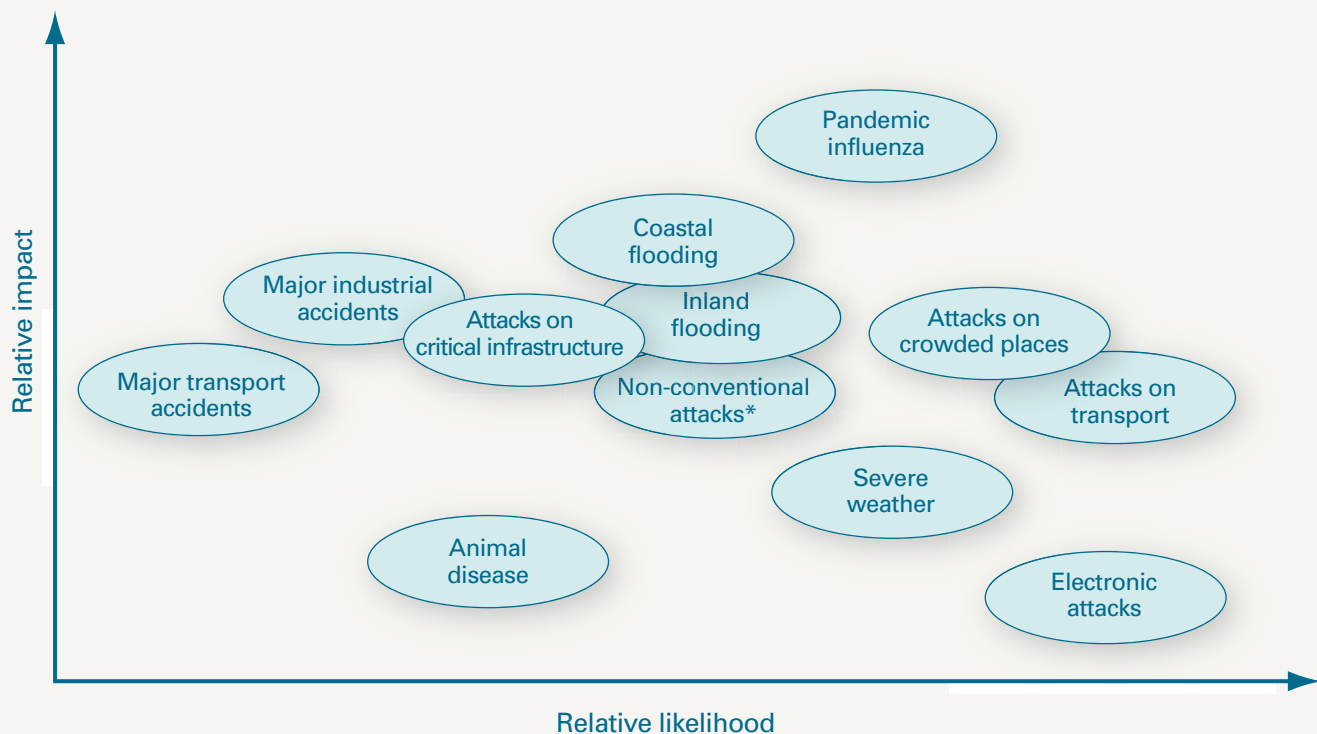
Note* The use of some chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) materials has the potential to have very serious and widespread consequences. An example would be the use of a nuclear device. There is no historical precedent for this type of terrorist attack, which is excluded from the non-conventional grouping on the diagram.

Source: Cabinet Office National Risk Register 2008

Influenza case study
(2) Scottish Government planning

An outbreak of pandemic flu has been rated as 'high risk' in the UK for a number of years. The Scottish Government published *A Scottish framework for responding to an influenza pandemic* in 2007 (which updated the 2005 plan). This is the key pandemic flu document for use by Scottish planners in the NHS and other organisations. The framework sets out the Scottish Government's strategic approach to dealing with an influenza pandemic, and provides information on potential impact and planning assumptions. Accompanying guidance on specific issues has also been published.

In addition, the Scottish Government has been taking practical measures for a number of years, including:

* training NHS staff in how to manage services during a pandemic and cope with the demands that are likely to be placed on them
* building up stocks of:
  – antiviral drugs (during the outbreak the Scottish Government announced that stocks were being procured to cover 75-80 per cent of the population)
  – antibiotics
  – surgical facemasks (at the start of the outbreak the Scottish Government announced it had a stockpile of 9.3 million facemasks)
  – respirators to be used to treat those most at risk of serious illness
* planning for public information announcements through newspapers, radio and TV, giving advice on the best course of action to take including simple hygiene measures and treatment
* taking steps to ensure vaccine manufacture takes place as rapidly as possible when a pandemic virus is identified.

Source: Audit Scotland

90. All SCGs have fulfilled their duty to develop and publish a CRR. Although *Preparing Scotland* provides guidance on their development and includes an example CRR, there are significant variations in the presentation and type of information included.

91. In addition, although all CRRs use the same risk rating definitions[14], how they are applied differs. Some risk ratings inevitably vary because of local circumstances (for example, some geographic areas are more prone to flooding than others and so have a higher risk rating) but we also found variation where a more consistent rating might be expected (for example, failure of the electricity network) (Exhibit 13).

92. There is generally a high level of consistency between SCGs in terms of the responders named as taking the lead on specific risks. For example, SEPA is usually the lead responder for flooding and the Scottish Government Health Directorate for pandemic flu, which is identified as a 'very high risk' by all SCGs.

Exhibit 13
Examples of variation in classification of risks included in CRRs

SCG	Year CRR published	Risk rating			
		Significant local river flooding due to prolonged rainfall	Influenza type disease (pandemic)	Technical failure of electricity network (Scotland)	Non-zoontoic notifiable disease (eg, foot and mouth)
CS	2007	High	Very high	High	Medium
D&G	2008	High	Very high	High	Medium
Fife	2008	High	Very high	High	High
Grampian	2008	High	Very high	Very high	High
H&I	2008	High	Very high	Not rated	Low to high
L&B	2008	High	Very high	Very high	High
Strathclyde	2006	Very high	Very high	High	Medium
Tayside	2008	High	Very high	Medium	High

Source: Audit Scotland's review of current CRRs

14   'Very high risk' – primary and critical risks that require immediate attention, which may or may not be highly likely to occur but the potential impact is so great that they must be treated as a priority. 'High risk' – significant risks that irrespective of the likelihood of occurrence would have serious consequences. 'Medium risk' – less significant and their impact may cause some upset and inconvenience. 'Low risk' – unlikely to occur and not significant in their impact. *Preparing Scotland.*

93. However, for a small number of risks different lead responders are identified in the CRR. For example, for failure of the electricity network, local authorities, the Scottish Government, the Department of Energy and Climate Change at Westminster[15] and the Energy Networks Association [16] are named as lead responders in different SCG areas.

94. Although all SCGs submitted their CRRs to the Scottish Government for review in 2006, the quality and variation between them meant it was not possible to collate the information to inform a Scottish-level risk assessment. However, it is widely acknowledged within the civil contingencies community that the first round of CRR risk assessments was not sufficiently robust or comprehensive, partly as a result of the short six-month timeframe set by the government for their completion. Although the second round of CRRs have shown improvements, a more standardised approach, with some flexibility to take account of local differences, would allow for more effective use of the CRRs. This is currently being reviewed by the Scottish Government with an aim to provide a more comprehensive risk assessment process.

95. CRRs are not always used to inform emergency and business continuity planning. Around three-quarters of Category 1 responders use their SCG CRR to inform their emergency planning process, although we found variation between sectors. For example, while all police forces use their CRRs, only two-thirds of councils do so. CRRs are used even less often to inform business continuity planning, with only 58 per cent of Category 1 responders doing so.

96. Some Category 1 responders also use CRRs for prioritising training and exercising and raising awareness of risks among the public and senior managers. CRRs are sometimes used to support an organisation's proposals for new equipment or procedures.

97. Although all SCGs have made a public version of their CRR available online, most do not routinely or actively share their CRRs with organisations outwith their own area. There is a risk that this approach could limit the contribution CRRs make to cross-border and cross-boundary arrangements for preparing for and responding to emergencies.

Most Category 1 responders have developed generic emergency plans, but there is variation in the extent to which the guidance has been adopted

98. Category 1 responders have a duty to maintain plans that relate to planning for and responding to a wide range of emergencies, irrespective of the cause.

These are known as generic plans. Most Category 1 responders (80 per cent) have now produced their own generic emergency plan. The remaining organisations (seven councils, four fire and rescue services, one police force and one NHS board) were in the process of developing them at the time of our survey.

99. Although *Preparing Scotland* provides guidance on what should be included in generic emergency plans, there is variation in the extent to which this has been followed by Category 1 responders (Exhibit 14). We found variation between sectors. For example, while nearly all NHS boards and councils include contact details of key personnel in their generic emergency plans, only three

Exhibit 14
The extent to which *Preparing Scotland* guidance on generic emergency plan contents has been adopted by Category 1 responders
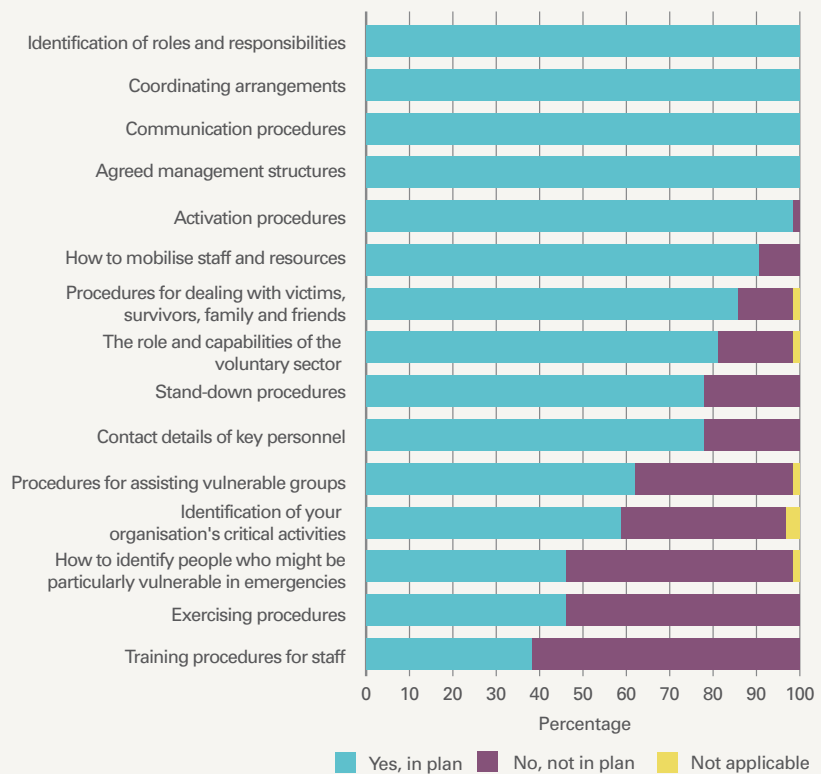
Note: Base = 63. These figures include those responders with plans still in development, with the exception of Grampian FRS, which considered it could not answer the questions asked. Some organisations gave a 'not applicable response' to the above, reflecting differences in actual or perceived remit or information being included in other plans, for example.
Source: Audit Scotland survey

15   Previously the responsibility of, and noted in the CRRs as, the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform.
16   The Energy Networks Association is the industry body for UK energy transmission and distribution licence holders and operators, acting in the interest of its members in the energy 'wires and pipes' sectors.

of the eight Scottish police forces do so. We also found differences within sectors. For example, only two of the eight fire and rescue services include details of how to identify who might be vulnerable in an emergency.

100. Some of the key elements omitted from plans often mirror those issues identified as areas for improvement in incident debrief reports (for example, maintenance of contact details, dealing with victims, survivors, family and friends, and procedures for resuming normal activity). Incident debrief reports also highlight a lack of staff training procedures as an issue. The Regulations state that all plans must include arrangements for exercising plans and training relevant staff in their roles, but less than half of Category 1 responders' generic plans do so.

101. *Preparing Scotland* also recommends a number of key local capabilities are included in plans. We found most contain details of control centre arrangements, communication equipment to be used and welfare arrangements, but only about half contain details of evacuation procedures and how to deal with mass fatalities. These inconsistencies could present risks to dealing with emergencies effectively if set procedures have not been agreed prior to an emergency occurring.

Most Category 1 responders are involved in multi-agency planning, but joint plans and cross-boundary working could be improved

102. With the exception of West Dunbartonshire Council, all Category 1 responders have had some input into developing joint, formal civil contingencies arrangements within their SCG area, such as

generic or specific plans, mutual aid agreements, or training and exercising programmes.

103. For this study, seven SCGs were able to submit a multi-agency generic emergency plan for their area (five final and two in draft form), and the remaining SCG was at an early stage of plan development. However, there was confusion among some Category 1 responders as to whether or not a generic emergency plan was in place or being developed for their SCG area.

104. We also found that the SCG generic emergency plans could be improved:

- Some plans have not been reviewed or updated regularly or routinely.

- It is not always clear within plans how the roles and responsibilities of the SCG, Category 1 and other responders link together and dovetail with other plans.

- None of the SCG generic plans include information on the process of determining if an emergency has occurred, who is responsible for formally declaring this, and what procedures should be adopted (although 81 per cent of Category 1 responders said they had formally agreed this with their SCG).

- None of the plans contain detailed arrangements for dealing with vulnerable groups or diverse communities. Three mention the needs of these groups but do not refer to processes to take account of their needs.

- Capabilities of voluntary organisations are only included to a significant degree in two SCG

generic emergency plans (Central and Lothian and Borders).

105. The development of joint arrangements across SCG boundaries is at an early stage. Our survey found that just over half of Category 1 responders[17] have had some input into developing joint, formal arrangements with responders in other SCG areas.

Planning for recovery is not well developed

106. While the process of restoring, rebuilding and supporting communities in the aftermath of an emergency – known as 'recovery' – is not covered directly in the Act, Regulations or *Preparing Scotland*, it is an important part of effective civil contingencies planning, and recent incidents (such as floods) have shown that it can be a challenging process. While the UK Civil Contingencies Secretariat has produced guidance on recovery, the Scottish Government has advised responders in Scotland not to use this because recovery is handled differently in Scotland to the rest of the UK. Alternative guidance is due to be issued for Scotland during 2009.

107. All except three Category 1 responders reported having formally agreed recovery arrangements in place.[18] Exhibit 15, overleaf illustrates the variation in content of recovery arrangements. Five Category 1 responders reported their recovery arrangements do not address any of these aspects.[19] More work needs to be done to ensure effective arrangements are in place so that local people and communities recover from disruptive events as quickly and as easily as possible.

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17   This figure excludes SEPA and the Scottish Ambulance Service as they sit on all eight SCGs.
18   Those with no recovery arrangements in place at the time of our audit work were East Dunbartonshire Council, West Dunbartonshire Council and NHS Western Isles.
19   Those with none of the elements of recovery listed in Exhibit 15 in their plans include three councils – Eilean Siar, Inverclyde, Orkney Islands and two NHS boards – Fife and Orkney.

Exhibit 15
Examples of types of recovery arrangements in place among Category 1 responders

Contact details of key personnel within organisations who may be involved in recovery

Handover processes from response to recovery

Roles and responsibilities of those organisations which may be involved in recovery

Recovery structures (including terms of reference and likely membership)

Recovery debrief process

Resource requirements for resumption of critical activities

Likely recovery issues based on risks identified in local or regional risk assessments

Estimated recovery time for critical activities

Procedures for testing the recovery arrangements

How to coordinate recovery across SCG boundaries

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Percentage of Category 1 responders

Source: Audit Scotland survey

108. Recovery has traditionally been seen as a local authority responsibility and we found it was included in 72 per cent of their generic emergency plans. However, a multi-agency approach is likely to restore services and rebuild communities in a more efficient and effective way. We found that SEPA and the Scottish Ambulance Service both include recovery in their generic emergency plans, as do just over half of NHS boards and almost two-thirds of police forces and fire and rescue services.

The Act has yet to make a significant impact on business continuity management

109. Business continuity management is the process whereby organisations of all types ensure they can continue to deliver services during any kind of disruption. For example, when front-line staff are diverted to managing an emergency response, or large numbers are absent due to a health emergency, essential local services still need to be delivered (such as home care for

older people and responding to 999 calls). Business continuity management should be built into an organisation's everyday activities.

110. Under the Act, Category 1 responders must maintain business continuity plans. Despite severe weather and utilities failure being identified as key risks in Scotland, the Act does not place an equivalent duty on Category 2 responders (which include utility companies, telecommunications companies and transport operators) or other organisations that provide vital services (for example, major food suppliers).

111. We found only 47 per cent of Category 1 responders had a corporate business continuity management plan in place, although the same proportion had one in development. A small number of organisations reported that they relied on departmental business continuity management plans rather than an overall corporate plan.

112. Most but not all of these plans include key information such as which personnel have the necessary skills, knowledge and authority to take control in an emergency, what an organisation's critical activities are, the arrangements for relocation of these functions and personnel, and estimated recovery times.

113. Many public sector organisations now rely on commercial and voluntary organisations to deliver some services, so how these organisations manage business continuity is also important. However, only a quarter of Category 1 responders require evidence of business continuity planning among key suppliers and service providers, and just over half encourage such planning.

114. There is now a business continuity management British Standard (BS 25999) and our survey found 14 per cent of Category 1 responders are planning to require evidence of compliance with this among their key suppliers in the future. Scottish Borders Council was the first council in the UK to achieve BS 25999 and is currently the only Category 1 responder in Scotland to require certification against the standard from key suppliers and service providers.

115. The Act and *Preparing Scotland* place an emphasis on the integration of emergency and business continuity planning within the civil contingencies process. While some Category 1 responders view business continuity management as integral to emergency planning, others view it as a separate matter, primarily related to their organisation's internal structures. Business continuity management is often primarily driven from the perspective of information and communications technology services because of the role these systems play in ensuring continued service delivery and the far-reaching consequences of a technological systems failure.

116. Responsibility for business continuity management sometimes falls within the remit of emergency planning staff, but this is not always

a formal arrangement. We found that less than half of Category 1 responders (28) always included business continuity management in the job description of managers with business continuity, civil contingencies or emergency planning responsibilities. Two-thirds (42) reported that it never formed part of these managers' training. More could be done by organisations to raise awareness among their staff of corporate business continuity plans.

117. Local authorities have an additional duty to work with local partners to provide business continuity management advice and assistance to commercial and voluntary organisations in their area. Only seven local authorities have developed a strategy document that describes how they will meet this duty.

118. Most local authorities provide general advice and assistance to local businesses *and* the voluntary sector. However, two (East Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire) only provide it to businesses and six (Argyll and Bute, Inverclyde, Moray, North Lanarkshire, Orkney Islands and South Ayrshire) do not provide any at all.

119. Business continuity management advice is most often provided by local authorities through publication of general information on websites; there is little targeted advice for individual types of organisations. Around half of local authorities have hosted ad hoc seminars or events for local businesses and voluntary organisations and less than half have held training events, established forums or produced leaflets.

120. Our survey found that almost two-thirds of the local authorities in Scotland have worked with other councils to provide business continuity management advice and assistance to local businesses, and half have done so for voluntary sector organisations. However, the involvement of organisations from other sectors has been slower to develop, with only 11 other Category

1 responders having worked with local authorities in connection with providing business continuity management advice or assistance.

121. Our focus groups with local authority emergency planning officers highlighted how activity to promote business continuity management can be influenced by factors such as: a lack of interest among local businesses and voluntary sector organisations; local authority staff concerns about a lack of expertise; liability issues; and concerns about not being able to meet demand. Almost half of local authorities reported that the *Preparing Scotland* guidance on business continuity management promotion, and the supplementary guidance on this, were not helpful and most (84 per cent) indicated that further guidance would be useful.

122. Better use could be made of SCGs as a mechanism for organisations to share business continuity management expertise, from both the public and private sectors. This could add value to the development of plans and the

advice provided by local authorities to commercial and voluntary sector organisations, so contributing to improved resilience within Scotland.

More could be done to inform the public about the risks we face

123. A well-informed public is better equipped to respond to, and recover from, an emergency. Category 1 responders have a duty to maintain arrangements to warn the public if an emergency is likely to occur and provide information and advice if one does occur (commonly referred to as 'warning and informing'). Responders use a variety of means to inform the public of the risks of emergencies before they occur, most commonly through websites (Exhibit 16). However, it is not clear how effective individual methods are and there may be a tendency to use methods that are easiest to implement rather than those that will have the greatest impact.

124. A Scottish Government survey (2008) found that the public think they are unlikely to be affected by major incidents. Despite pandemic

Exhibit 16
Methods used by Category 1 responders to inform the public of risks
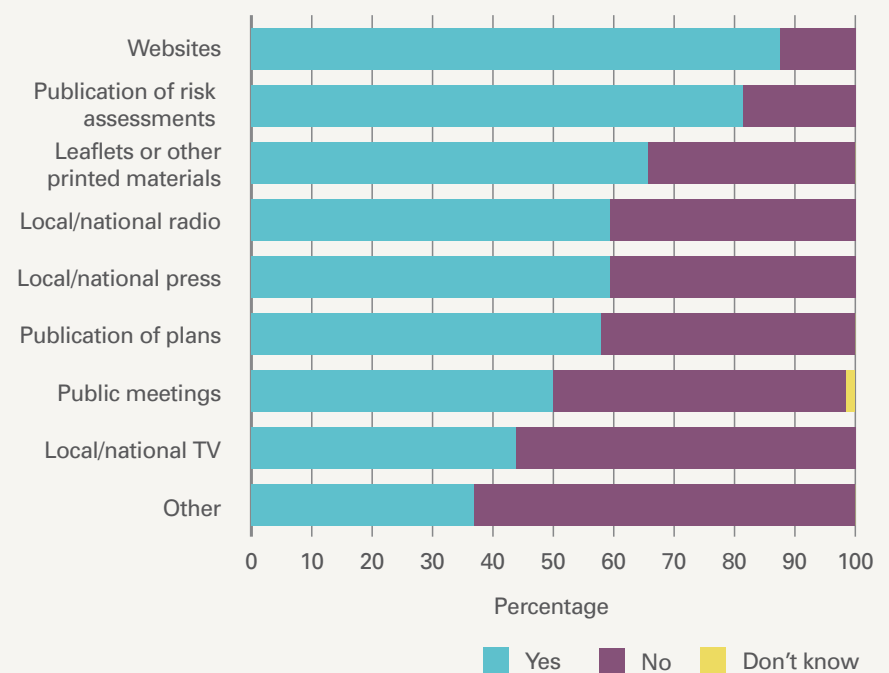
Source: Audit Scotland survey

flu being rated as a 'very high' risk by all SCGs, the majority of respondents thought a health-related emergency was the least likely to occur in Scotland. In response to this gap in public knowledge, the Scottish Government is developing materials to provide consistent information to raise awareness and promote understanding of risks.

125. Central government can also play a key role in providing and coordinating information about risks and incidents that are likely to be large scale and that may cross boundaries or borders. Influenza case study: 3 provides an example of central government undertaking a national communications exercise to inform the public about the risks and how to minimise the spread of the virus.

Not all Category 1 responders have arrangements in place for informing the public during an emergency

126. Despite the importance of communication with the public, we found that 11 per cent of Category 1 responders do not have arrangements in place to ensure citizens are warned at the time of an emergency or provided with advice and information as it progresses. In addition, 36 per cent do not include arrangements for communicating with vulnerable groups. Although defining vulnerable groups can be difficult, as different people become vulnerable in different types and stages of emergencies, some groups are already known to service providers (for example, nursing home residents). Groups that may be vulnerable should not be overlooked in communications before or during emergencies, as specific action may be needed to reach them.

127. Most Category 1 responders (88 per cent) have agreed within their SCG which organisation will take the lead on informing the public in particular types of emergencies, to avoid providing duplicate or inconsistent information to the public. Almost all Category 1

Influenza case study
(3) Informing the public

On 30 April 2009, in response to eight confirmed cases of Influenza A in the UK (two in Scotland), and the spread of the virus to 11 countries worldwide, a mass UK public health campaign was launched. The campaign included print, TV and radio adverts, designed to increase awareness about respiratory hygiene, emphasise the importance of personal hygiene and indicate what individuals could do to protect themselves and prevent the spread of the virus. The message strapline was: 'Catch it. Bin it. Kill it.' There was also a free Influenza A H1N1 phone number, which was designed to give people regularly updated recorded information about the virus.

As well as adverts, there was additional television coverage on mainstream and satellite news channels, and a government information leaflet was distributed to every household in the UK. The media and government continue to report new cases and provide information through a variety of media.

Source: Audit Scotland

responders (97 per cent) have a process in place for liaising with lead responders in a multi-agency response.

128. Utility companies also have duties under their own regulatory frameworks to provide information and advice to the public when their services are disrupted. To avoid duplication generally, but also in relation to communicating with vulnerable groups in particular, it is important that there is effective integration of information provided by suppliers and other organisations involved in the response to an emergency. This was highlighted during the multi-agency response to a power supply failure in Kelso in 2008.

129. *Preparing Scotland* recommends that organisations should be familiar with media organisations in their area. Nearly all Category 1 responders have a formally agreed process for liaising with the media during major incidents, and of these, nearly all have tested their arrangements. Almost two-thirds of those that had tested their media liaison process reported that this resulted in improvements to their procedures.

Recommendations

- SCG partners and the Scottish Government should work together to ensure that the full potential of CRRs in informing risk assessment and planning at local and national levels is realised.

- The UK and Scottish governments, SCGs and individual organisations should work together to improve cross-border and cross-boundary planning.

- Local responders should ensure that they have up-to-date emergency and business continuity plans and recovery arrangements, and that staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities.

- Local authorities must ensure they are providing business continuity management advice and assistance to local businesses and voluntary organisations. SCG partners should consider how they could add value to this process.

- Scottish Government and local responders should work together to improve public awareness of the risks we face and to ensure effective communication procedures are in place during and after an incident.

Part 4. Learning lessons from training, exercises and incidents

There is a lot of training and exercising activity in Scotland, but lessons learned are not always shared widely or implemented systematically.

Key messages

- A complex training and exercising landscape places significant resource demands on key organisations, making participation and effective coordination difficult.

- There is limited testing of cross-border or cross-boundary arrangements.

- All Category 1 responders with generic emergency plans have tested them, but this is not the case for business continuity plans.

- Lessons learned from incidents and exercises are not always shared widely or systematically put into practice.
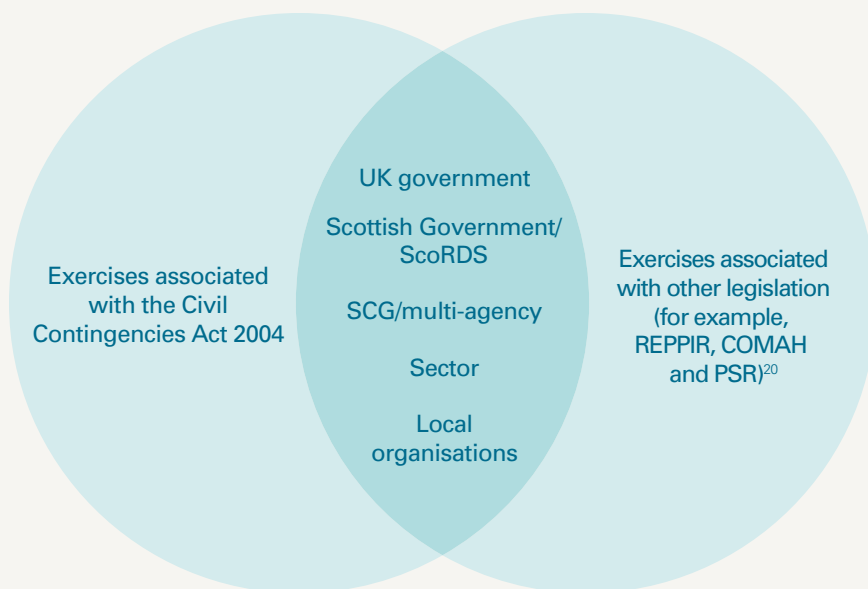
A complex training and exercising landscape places significant demands on organisations, making participation and coordination difficult

130. There is a variety of sources of training and exercising in relation to civil contingencies planning (Exhibit 17). There are Scottish and UK government national training programmes and SCG training groups, as well as training organised by individual organisations.

131. The Scottish Regulations relating to the Act require Category 1 responders to have arrangements in place to train staff and exercise their emergency plans. There are also similar duties under other legislation (including that overseen by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Civil Aviation Authority) relating to specific risk areas. In recognition of this complex environment, the Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Act Enhancement Programme (CCAEP) is looking at the relationship between the Act and other legislation to ensure consistency in planning and response arrangements.

Exhibit 17
Training and exercising landscape for civil contingencies planning

Exercises associated with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004

UK government

Scottish Government/ ScoRDS

SCG/multi-agency

Sector

Local organisations

Exercises associated with other legislation (for example, REPPIR, COMAH and PSR)[20]

Source: Audit Scotland

132. The Cabinet Office and other UK government departments organise exercises, as well as providing training through the Emergency Planning College in North Yorkshire. The Scottish Government runs its own programme of training and exercises, through the Scottish Resilience Development Service (ScoRDS). Examples of central government exercises are:

- Winter Willow (2007) – a pandemic flu exercise led by the Department of Health, the Cabinet Office and the Health Protection Agency. It involved over 5,000 government, industry and voluntary sector staff. This was due to be followed by exercise Cauld Craw, which began on the 24 April 2009, but was suspended the next day due to the Influenza A H1N1 outbreak.

- Claret Castle (2008) – a ScoRDS decontamination and recovery exercise attended by representatives from the public, private and voluntary sectors.

- Ancient Mariner (2009) – a ScoRDS severe weather exercise testing interruptions to the national water supply.

133. ScoRDS's work has to reflect national as well as local priorities and its work programme is informed by the RABS training and exercising subgroup, which includes representatives of key organisations. Some local authority and NHS practitioners feel that ScoRDS events do not always meet local needs and expectations, or take adequate account of the scheduling of local or regional events. To address this and contribute to a sense of common ownership in multi-agency training and exercising, ScoRDS has established a national exercise information source (NExIS), where all training and exercising events taking place across Scotland should be recorded by local responders.

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20   Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001 (REPPIR); Control of Major Hazards Regulations 1999 (COMAH); Pipelines Safety Regulations 1996 (PSR)

134. At SCG level, training and exercising programmes are usually developed by a dedicated training and exercising subgroup that assesses needs across the SCG. Seven of the eight SCGs use this structure, but Highlands and Islands SCG addresses training and exercising needs on a more compartmentalised basis, with each of the other subgroups (such as risk assessment and recovery) responsible for developing training relevant to its particular needs.

135. Grampian and Strathclyde SCGs have each established a training post to support their training and exercising programme. In Strathclyde, this post also contributes to national learning and development priorities and is funded by the Scottish Government. In Grampian, the post was created to administer the local learning and development programme and it is funded jointly by the Scottish Government and local SCG members (the councils, police force, fire and rescue service and NHS board).

136. Some incidents cross over national borders or SCG boundaries, and it is important that training and exercising programmes include events to test arrangements for how these are dealt with. However, SCG training programmes usually focus on their own area and there is little evidence of training or exercising involving neighbouring SCGs. A more joined-up approach between SCGs and Category 1 responders could reduce duplication and workloads, and make better use of resources.

137. Individual organisations can find it difficult to participate in some events because of the volume and scheduling of training and exercising. Although gaps in attendance are sometimes filled by the voluntary sector (for example, providing medical staff, equipment and volunteers), the benefits are limited if key organisations do not participate. This is a particular problem for Scotland or UK-wide organisations which may be invited to participate in numerous

training and exercising events across the country (for example, similar events being run separately in each of the SCG areas).

Most Category 1 responders with generic emergency plans have exercised them, but this is not the case for business continuity plans

138. The Scottish Regulations state that Category 1 responders must test their own emergency and business continuity plans, as well as those multi-agency plans they are signed up to, to ensure that they are workable and fit for purpose, and that staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

139. Our survey found that of those Category 1 responders with a generic emergency plan (51), most (48) had tested it within the last two years.

However, about a quarter (seven) of formally agreed corporate business continuity plans had never been tested by either an exercise or an incident.

140. Where generic emergency plans had been tested in the last two years, more than half identified shortcomings (for example, in communications, recovery processes, training needs and resources) that led to improvements to their plans and preparations. However, there was variation in the aspects of generic emergency plans tested during exercises. Among the elements we asked about in our survey, within the last 12 months, contact lists and call-out procedures were the most tested, whereas procedures for dealing with vulnerable groups and cross-boundary and cross-border arrangements were tested least (Exhibit 18).

Exhibit 18
Aspects of Category 1 responders' generic emergency plans tested within the last 12 months
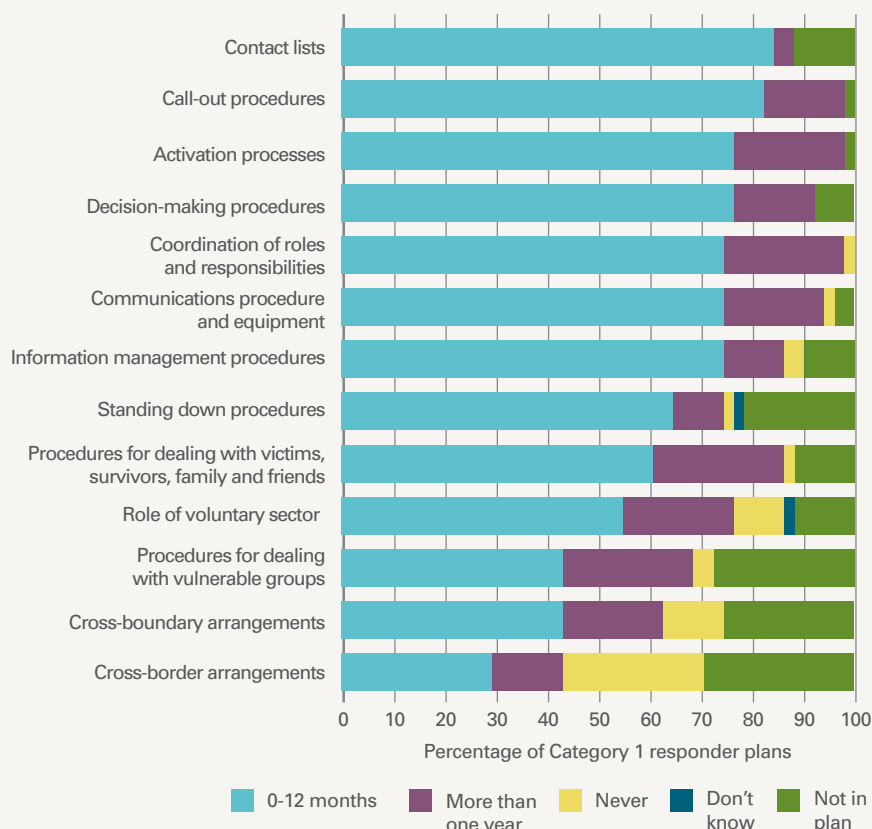
Base: Category 1 responders with generic emergency plans (51)
Source: Audit Scotland survey

141. Although the requirement to test plans is placed on Category 1 responders, Category 2 responders and other relevant organisations should co-operate to help them do this. Participation in training and exercising events provides these organisations with opportunities to train their own staff, make links with key organisations involved, raise awareness of their capabilities, and replicate the role they might play in a real incident. However, Category 2 responders and other relevant organisations are often not invited to events where they could make an important contribution.

The effectiveness of exercises could be improved by making sure that participants receive appropriate training beforehand

142. Training staff at all levels on preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies should be available to help embed civil contingencies planning within organisations. However, less than half (27) of all Category 1 responders have a system in place for reviewing training needs of key staff involved in civil contingencies planning.

143. Most Category 1 responders usually provide training for their staff before an organisational exercise (67 per cent), but staff are less likely to receive training prior to regional (50 per cent), Scottish (23 per cent) or UK-wide exercises (19 per cent).

144. Emergency services staff receive training in dealing with emergencies due to the nature of their day-to-day business. Among other Category 1 responders, we found that few provided training to all staff. For example, in the previous two years, only seven responders (six councils and SEPA) provided formal training to all senior managers, and only two (one council and one NHS board) to all middle managers. In organisations with formal generic emergency plans in place, three (one council and two health boards) had not trained any of the staff named in the plan in their specific role and a further 18 (12 councils, five health boards and one police force) had trained less than half of named staff.

145. To address some of these issues, in 2006 the UK government Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS) and the Emergency Planning Society initiated a project to develop a core competences framework (CCF). This aimed to enhance the skill-set of those employed in the field and establish a more formalised career structure. The CCF builds on the national occupational standards developed by Skills for Justice, in partnership with the Emergency Planning Society. While ScoRDS was involved in developing the framework and standards, it has also developed a separate Professional Development Award to help practitioners in Scotland gain academic recognition for their skills, knowledge and experience, and to support their further development.

Lessons identified from incidents and exercises are not always shared widely or systematically put into practice

146. Guidance recommends that a debriefing process should take place following the conclusion of an incident or training exercise, and should include representatives from all relevant organisations (for example, those that participated, as well as others that may be affected by any changes made to plans). Lessons identified in debriefing meetings should be prioritised and translated into actions, targeted at specific organisations, recorded (in terms of how they have been considered and implemented) and shared appropriately. Despite this guidance, most of the debrief reports we reviewed did not include a list of who they were distributed to or clearly link lessons to action points. Similarly, although most emergency plans contain a page for recording amendments, these are not routinely maintained.

147. Grangemouth case study: 3 describes the debrief process following the industrial dispute at the Grangemouth petro-chemical refinery.

148. Changes resulting from exercises should be carefully considered and managed through routine performance monitoring processes. An example of how lessons identified during exercises can be collected and shared is given in Exhibit 19.

149. Within SCG areas, information about exercise or incident evaluations is generally shared well. Almost all Category 1 responders (90 per cent) reported that they do this with their SCG partners all or most of the time. However, outwith their own SCG areas, just over a third (38 per cent) shared information about exercise or incident evaluations with other Category 1 responders and less than a quarter (23 per cent) with Category 2 responders. Debrief reports and lessons identified from multi-agency training exercises are often restricted to participating organisations. Exercise or incident evaluation information should be shared more routinely across SCG boundaries.

150. Organisations can submit and access debrief documents via the ScoRDS website. While this promotes better sharing of information between SCG members, its use has been limited, with few organisations routinely submitting information for inclusion.

151. The UK government recognises the need for a more systematic approach to identifying, sharing and implementing lessons learned from exercises and incidents. The Cabinet Office has established a working group to take this forward, with representatives from the Scottish Government, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and other UK government departments.

Grangemouth case study
(3) Debriefing and lessons identified

Following the industrial action, ScoRDS used written questionnaires and structured debrief meetings to collate the views of those organisations (including SCGs and Category 1 responders) involved with the Scottish Government's management of the response. The lessons identified from this were analysed, prioritised and translated into actions, which were assigned to individuals within the Scottish Government.

Actions focused on nine key areas: media and communications; information management; leadership and decision-making; working with responders; SGoRR administration; emergency support team; security; UK liaison and de-activation.

General feedback and the lessons identified were reported to Scottish ministers and relevant organisations. Issues relating to the National Emergency Plan for Fuel were taken forward as a separate project in partnership with the UK government. The Scottish Government recognised the value of committing resources to delivering debrief sessions and analysing the results, and made a commitment to continue to refine this process for future incidents.

Source: Audit Scotland

Recommendations

- SCG partners and the Scottish Government should work together to ensure the effective targeting and coordination of exercises and training.

- Category 1 responders must ensure they are meeting the statutory requirement to exercise all of their emergency and business continuity plans.

- SCG partners and Scottish and UK governments should ensure that lessons learned from training and exercising activities are systematically shared and that monitoring arrangements are in place to ensure their effective implementation.

Exhibit 19
Recording and sharing lessons identified from training exercises

In 2008, Grampian Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) Contingency Planning Department identified a need to capture multi-agency training and exercising and to share lessons learned throughout the organisation. An intranet-based system was introduced, where multi-agency activities could be recorded.

The system is now used to record multi-agency activities and internal exercises of significance (eg, three appliances or more). It allows operational managers to record details of an exercise including exercise briefs, debriefs and risk assessments by hyperlinks on the template. Users can search for specific information, such as incident type, location and the agencies involved. Information is available to all Grampian FRS personnel and can be forwarded to partner agencies to share lessons learned. The system is a valuable tool for managers when developing future exercises.

Grampian FRS considers the system simple but effective. It took about 12 months to get the system to its current format and takes minimal time to maintain, with operational managers inputting information as and when exercises are planned, carried out and debriefed. The system will be evaluated towards the end of 2009.

Source: Grampian Fire and Rescue Service

Part 5. Costs, capacity and performance

There is a lack of information on the costs of planning for civil contingencies, and performance management information is limited.

Key messages

- There is no clear information on how much is spent on civil contingencies planning across Scotland.

- There is potential for more effective use of resources and to increase capacity through closer collaboration between organisations, for example through formal mutual aid agreements and the sharing of resources.

- Performance management at national, regional and local levels is limited.

There is no clear information on how much is spent on civil contingencies planning across Scotland

152. Achieving best value requires that public bodies ensure an effective balance between the cost of delivering a service and the quality of that service in terms of its impact and outcomes. Organisations involved in civil contingencies planning also need to take account of the likelihood of particular events occurring and the potential impact of these on communities. Decisions always need to be taken in the context of other pressing demands for the use of resources. Therefore, it is important that organisations can demonstrate sound management and decision-making that is supported by good management information about the resources used and the results achieved.

153. Despite the requirements of Best Value, the higher profile of civil contingencies planning due to recent incidents and increased activity to implement the Act, we were unable to include details of current overall expenditure on civil contingencies planning in Scotland in this report. This is because there is a lack of

clear information available from the organisations involved. Costs are difficult to measure for a number of reasons:

- As the day-to-day function of the emergency services is to respond to emergencies, it is difficult for these organisations to disaggregate expenditure related specifically to civil contingencies.

- While most key organisations – such as local authorities, NHS boards and the Scottish Government – collect some financial information for those parts of their organisation with primary responsibility for emergency planning (for example, relating to an emergency planning unit or department), they do not routinely collect or collate information for civil contingencies activity taking place across the whole organisation, or the costs associated with individual incidents.

- Differences in definitions and recording systems between organisations make it difficult to ensure comparability of budget and expenditure figures (for example, some include business continuity management expenditure while others do not).

- Civil contingencies planning involves a wide range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations, not all of whom fall within public audit arrangements within Scotland.

154. In our survey, four fire and rescue services, one police force and one NHS board did not provide any revenue expenditure information for civil contingencies planning as it could not readily be extracted from other budget headings. Revenue expenditure on civil contingencies planning in 2007/08 by the other Category 1 responders was

around £6.9 million. However, this underestimates actual expenditure as organisations were unable to provide full information (for example, because they could not separate civil contingencies spending within some budgets).

155. The Scottish Government conducted its own analysis of expenditure on civil contingencies planning by police forces, fire and rescue services, local authorities and NHS boards in SCG areas. However, these figures did not match those submitted by the same organisations during our study. This may reflect inconsistencies in definitions and recording practices but underlines the difficulties in examining costs related to civil contingencies planning.

156. The costs of incidents are not routinely or systematically recorded by all individual organisations. Only 20 Category 1 responders (11 local authorities, four police forces, four NHS boards and one fire and rescue service) were able to provide information on the costs of emergencies.[21] Many Category 1 responders stated that costs are spread across different departments, making it difficult to calculate total costs of an incident to an organisation.

157. Although it is not clear how consistent the methods used for calculating costs are, from the 42 incidents for which cost information was submitted for this study, it is clear that the amounts are variable and can be significant. For example:

- While only four police forces provided any incident costs, of those that did, the largest reported figure was £1.7 million incurred by Strathclyde police for dealing with the terrorist attack on Glasgow Airport in 2007.

- Of the incident costs provided by local authorities, the five highest related to severe

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21 Some of these costs were estimated rather than actual costs.

weather incidents, and ranged from £50,000 spent by West Lothian Council (in response to the floods in Linlithgow in 1998) to £15 million by Eilean Siar (for the severe storms of 2005 that resulted in damage to infrastructure and a number of deaths). All other incidents had reported costs of less than £50,000.

- Among NHS boards, NHS Borders recorded the incident with the highest costs – an anthrax-related death in 2006 – at almost £500,000. Although this was a relatively isolated incident, the reported costs were significant due to the multi-agency response required and the need to follow specific protocols to minimise disruption and ensure lessons were learned for the future.[22]

158. The Scottish Government also provided some expenditure information (see paragraph 64) relating to its Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU) where, at the time of our audit, most civil contingencies activity within the Scottish Government took place. However, the quality of this information was poor. Although other parts of government have significant involvement in national civil contingencies planning activity, the Scottish Government does not routinely record, monitor or disaggregate these other costs, meaning its total spend is unclear.

159. Organisations, including the Scottish Government, should record robust information on activity, cost and performance in order to plan, demonstrate best value, achieve continuous improvement and assess whether funding levels are sufficient.

There is potential for more collaboration between organisations to increase capacity and make more effective use of resources

160. Dealing with and recovering from emergencies can place significant demands on the financial, human and physical resources of individual organisations. In addition, given the range of types of emergencies that may occur, some aspects of civil contingencies planning require considerable technical expertise. Improved partnership working has potential to deliver increases in efficiency and effectiveness.

161. In order to make best use of resources at local and regional levels (including better information and knowledge sharing, limiting duplication, increasing capacity and improving the ability to scale-up quickly in response to a major incident), a few organisations are now sharing emergency and business continuity planning expertise, through jointly funded teams or co-location of staff. For example:

- The Grampian Emergency Planning Unit has co-located emergency planning officers from Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray councils and is jointly funded by each.

- East, North and South Ayrshire councils have combined their services to form the 'Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team'.

- East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde councils have established a joint service model with a single civil contingencies service, based in Renfrewshire Council.

162. The emergency services across Scotland have jointly procured equipment (such as personal protective equipment) to achieve economies of scale and improve performance. Under the New Dimensions programme, the Scottish Government procured equipment (such as high volume pumps) to be used across all fire and rescue services in the event of flooding or a CBRNE[23] incident.

163. There are also some examples of a more joined-up approach at the SCG level:

- Lothian and Borders SCG member organisations have jointly procured 'Lothian and Borders Alert' – an internet-based computer system to facilitate communication between organisations, and with the public, within the SCG area.[24] This online site is live at all times and can be used to share information during and outwith emergencies.

- Lothian and Borders SCG has trialled an emergency rest centre management system, which is now being adopted across Scotland (Exhibit 20).

While organisations usually support each other in an emergency, formal mutual aid arrangements are not in place in all sectors

164. Mutual aid agreements formally set out arrangements between organisations to provide each other with assistance through the provision of additional resources during and after an emergency. These arrangements can be within the same or different sectors and across SCG boundaries or national

22 Our main audit work was conducted prior to the 2009 Influenza A H1N1 outbreak. We recognise there may have been significant costs for the NHS, as well as other organisations, as a result of this.
23 Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives (CBRNE).
24 www.lbalert.info

Exhibit 20
Joint working: the emergency rest centre management system

Scottish Borders Council worked closely with a private sector company to develop an emergency rest centre (ERC) management system, which is a secure web-based system allowing computerised 'registration' of evacuees to ensure that they receive the appropriate care in an ERC and that particular needs are efficiently and effectively processed. It allows for detailed individual histories to be maintained and could be used in any subsequent enquiry or complaint made by an evacuee. The system also helps an ERC manager to keep track of staff support by recording details of the incident, those on duty, hours worked, and those in the ERC at any time. The system can be accessed by those managing an incident from remote locations allowing access to up-to-date information off site.

Following a two-year training and exercising programme run by the Lothian and Borders SCG's Rest Centre Working Group, the system was developed further by five local authorities and the police. It was then demonstrated to all Scottish local authorities. Following the pilot exercise, the Scottish Government agreed to provide funding for two years (from April 2009) to roll out the system to the rest of Scotland.

Source: Lothian and Borders SCG

borders. Experience shows that organisations tend to offer each other support in the event of emergencies even without formal mutual aid agreements in place. However, these informal, reactive arrangements often rely on individual personalities and are at risk of breaking down when circumstances change (for example, when staff changes occur).

165. For mutual aid agreements to add value to the civil contingencies process, staff need to be aware of them and understand how to use them. However, our survey found confusion among some Category 1 responders as to whether they have mutual aid agreements in place, even among police forces and fire and rescue services who have long-standing mutual aid arrangements. Many organisations confused mutual aid agreements with more general memorandums of understanding (MOUs).

166. Developing and agreeing mutual aid agreements may highlight differences in approach to civil contingencies planning between organisations. For example, some local authority chief executives have concerns that committing resources to another local authority area may prevent them from fulfilling their duty of care to their own citizens. There may also be complex legal and health and safety issues around organisations providing staff to support the work of other organisations during an emergency, as the duty of care for staff remains with their employer.

167. The Scottish Government states that a *"fundamental purpose of the SCG is responders' co-operation and preparing for and responding to emergencies. Mutual aid and support lies at the heart of that co-operation."* [25] However, mutual aid at an SCG level is not well

developed. While Lothian and Borders SCG has a formally agreed regional level mutual aid agreement (January 2008), this only covers its local authorities (City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian). Highlands and Islands SCG has taken a more multi-agency approach, agreeing mutual aid at an SCG level in 2005 and revising this in 2008.

168. In January 2008, the Scottish Government ran a mutual aid workshop (Exhibit 21, overleaf). Following this, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) concluded that mutual aid arrangements across local authorities in Scotland were inconsistent, not always formal and perhaps would not be sustainable during a major emergency. COSLA identified a need for a Scotland-wide local authority mutual aid protocol and that it should work with local authorities and the Scottish Government to produce one.

169. Limited progress had been made in regard to developing this Scotland-wide local authority protocol by the time the Influenza A H1N1 virus reached Scotland in April 2009. In response to potential and actual difficulties of some organisations being able to cope with demand due to the clustered nature of the cases in Scotland, local authorities, SCGs and the Scottish Government are now involved in developing a public sector-wide mutual aid protocol.

25 *Preparing Scotland*, Scottish Government, 2007.

Exhibit 21
Developing mutual aid arrangements: ScoRDS mutual aid workshop

In January 2008, senior representatives from emergency responder organisations took part in a workshop to consider mutual aid in Scotland.

The aims of the workshop were to:

- confirm the management and mutual aid arrangements within and between organisations and boundaries in situations where adequate resources are not available to responders

- identify if current documentation is accurate and sufficient

- ensure that all relevant organisations have clear, generic mechanisms for setting priorities and for moving assets around to reflect them.

The findings from the day were analysed around five key themes:

- Coordination – local authorities and health boards need to consider formalising their mutual aid arrangements. Lothian and Border's local authority mutual aid framework agreement was considered as an example of a protocol currently being used by local authorities in an SCG and could be built on to develop an SCG mutual aid agreement.

- Information – organisations with existing agreements emphasised the crucial role of information management. It was important for all responders to have 'resource lists' which provide an overview of what is available and where. Local authorities do not generally have such lists and these should be developed.

- Leadership – Scottish ministers should have political leadership but this may be in co-operation with UK ministers. Central government should not make detailed decisions of an operational or tactical nature, including the direction of responders' resources. A 'National SCG' to lead on mutual aid for responders was discussed.

- Legislation – a review of responders' chief officers' statutory obligations together with Scottish ministers' powers was required. A question was raised about the legal basis for SCGs with regards to mutual aid management and coordination.

- Funding – the Scottish Government needs to work with responders on scoping the funding issues and the spread of costs for a large-scale incident with mutual aid implications.

Source: *ScoRDS National Exercise Programme: Mutual Aid Workshop Report*, March 2008

There are few examples of information systems detailing resources available to deal with emergencies

170. Overall, there is a lack of local, regional or national information systems to provide details of the resources available to respond to an emergency (for example, transport, digging or medical equipment, rest centres and temporary mortuaries).

171. Within their own sectors, the police, fire and rescue services and the Scottish Ambulance Service have addressed this issue through the Scottish Police National Information Coordination Centre (S-PICC), the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Information Coordination Centre (SFRICC) and the Scottish Ambulance Service Strategic Coordinating Centre (SAS-SCC). These help coordinate resources when an emergency escalates beyond local boundaries and capabilities. If UK resources are required then the Police National Information Coordination Centre (PNICC) or Fire and Rescue Service National Control Centre (FRSNCC) are activated. The ambulance services across the UK also have an agreement in place to provide mutual assistance on a national scale in the event of a major incident. These systems allow for effective co-operation between forces, fire and rescue and ambulance services within their own sectors, but they do not link up with other information about resources held by organisations in other sectors, which may be closer to home and easier to access.

172. There are no similar arrangements for sharing resources in place among local authorities or the territorial NHS boards. Having robust databases detailing the resources held by a range of organisations could help ensure a more effective coordinated response to, and recovery from, emergencies.

Performance management for civil contingencies planning is limited and inconsistent across all sectors

173. Since the implementation of the Act, individual organisations and SCGs have focused on complying with their main duties. Most have still to develop performance management and monitoring arrangements to assess the impact and outcomes of this work.

174. *Preparing Scotland* sets out guidance on audit and monitoring for local responders. This should form part of the existing internal audit and inspection regimes of these organisations. However, of the 64 Category 1 responders in our survey, only three (one police force and two councils) use the performance monitoring framework set out in *Preparing Scotland*. Most (44) use their organisation's own performance management system, although 12

reported that they do not currently assess their performance in relation to civil contingencies planning in any way.

175. *Preparing Scotland* also advises that SCG chairs should require regular reporting from the SCG secretariat on performance relating to its aims, objectives and programme of work for multi-agency aspects of co-operation and preparation. Although recommended by the guidance, assessment of performance against *Preparing Scotland's* performance monitoring guide is not a standing item on any SCG agendas.

176. Performance monitoring has been taken forward to varying degrees by the eight SCGs:

- Most SCG coordinators provide a verbal or written update at each SCG meeting. Since the beginning of 2008, this has become more formal in a number of SCGs (for example, Dumfries and Galloway, and Lothian and Borders SCGs now discuss progress on their business plans at each meeting, Grampian considers its progress against annual objectives and Tayside reviews its work plan).

- Three of the eight SCGs have produced annual reports. Dumfries and Galloway and Lothian and Borders' annual reports are aimed at keeping the public aware of what the SCG is doing in the field of civil contingencies, whereas Grampian's annual report is less public focused, stating progress against the seven duties of the Act and setting strategic and annual priorities.

- Fife SCG has developed a performance monitoring and compliance task sheet based upon *Preparing Scotland's* audit and monitoring guide.

177. With the exception of both internal and external evaluations of ScoRDS, at the time of our study Scottish Resilience had done little to measure its own performance. However, alongside responder organisations, it will participate in its own measuring preparedness work (see paragraph 179).

The Scottish Government is undertaking a programme of work to assess levels of preparedness in Scotland

178. Under the Act, Scottish ministers can request reports from the SCGs to monitor performance. To date, this has been limited to a quarterly return on progress against meeting the main duties, requesting specific reports on an ad hoc basis, and direct liaison with the SCGs (both by attending SCG meetings and through the coordinators' forum).

179. However, Scottish Resilience is currently developing a process to assess the level of preparedness within Scotland and provide assurance that Scotland has the capabilities to meet the risks we face. This aims to establish an evidence base that will enhance decision-making and promote continuous improvement. The Scottish Government, SCGs and some national responders will be covered by the 'measuring preparedness' programme, which includes:

- annual statements of preparedness to be completed by SCGs, some national responders and the Scottish Government

- a self-evaluation framework for use by SCGs, individual responders and the Scottish Government on a voluntary basis

- a capabilities survey to be completed by SCGs, some national responders and the Scottish Government every three years

- peer review visits to SCGs and the Scottish Government every three years

- guidance provided by the Scottish Government to support capability analysis.

180. The guidance to support capability analysis relates to the capacity needed to meet specific tasks. The Scottish Government is developing a model of capability for civil contingencies planning (based on that of the Ministry of Defence) indicating that overall capability is dependent on eight key enablers and that each of these needs to be considered before it can be assumed that a capability is in place (Exhibit 22, overleaf). The Scottish Government also recommends that organisations and SCGs examine four other aspects when assessing a capability – interoperability, interdependence, readiness and sustainability.

The UK government is also undertaking work to monitor the implementation of the Civil Contingencies Act and assess levels of preparedness

181. Since the Civil Contingencies Act was introduced in 2004, the UK government has undertaken a number of exercises to monitor and support implementation of the Act. These include:

- A survey of national capabilities in 2006 and 2008, which gathered information from organisations to assess national resilience. However, Category 1 responders and other public sector bodies in Scotland were not involved, as the Scottish Government chose not to take part.

Exhibit 22
A model of capability
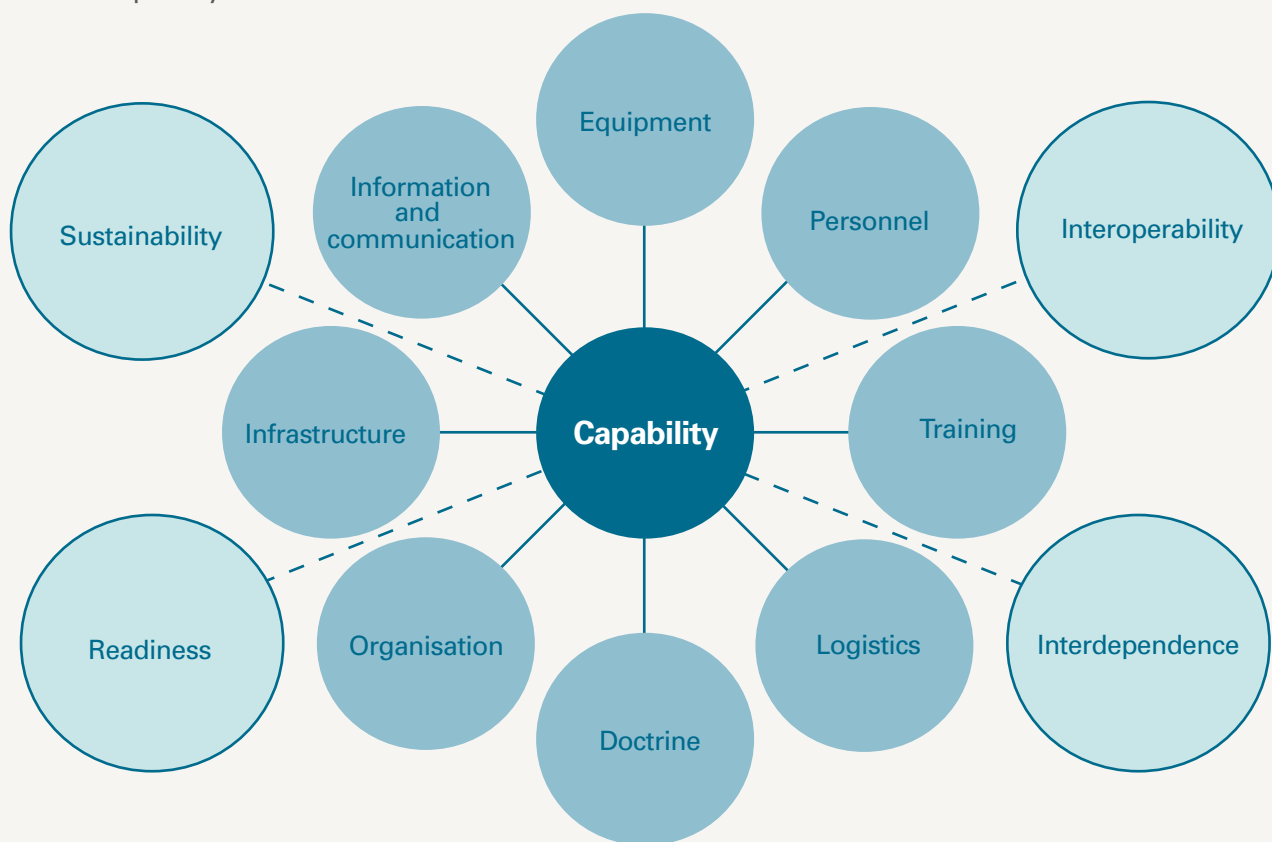
Source: Scottish Government, adapted from the Ministry of Defence

- The Civil Contingencies Act Enhancement Programme (CCAEP), led by the Cabinet Office. This is currently reviewing the Act to see if it needs to be strengthened or modified, to consider how good practice from its first three years of operation can be reflected and how to ensure its framework is aligned with other relevant legislation.

- The production of the Cabinet Office's 'Expectations and indicators of good practice set' (2008) to clarify what is expected of Category 1 and 2 responders in England and Wales in relation to the Act and its associated guidelines.

Recommendations

- SCG partners and the Scottish Government should work together to develop and apply a consistent framework for managing and reporting expenditure to demonstrate value for money, and seek to deliver increased efficiencies and improved resilience through further partnership working.

- Category 1 and 2 responders should develop formal mutual aid agreements. These agreements should take account of cross-border and cross-boundary arrangements, and the voluntary and private sectors.

- Local responders, SCGs and the Scottish Government should develop arrangements for managing, monitoring and reporting their performance.

Appendix 1.

Study advisory group

Advisory group members consist of professional and technical advisers, normally drawn from a wide cross-section of interested parties. Members sit on the group in a personal capacity, not as representatives of the organisations they come from. The group does not act as a steering group as such, and the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland retain responsibility for the conduct of studies and the content of final reports. For the civil contingencies planning study, the study advisory group comprised 13 members who served at various times:

Name	Organisation
Oliver Blatchford	Consultant in Public Health, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board
Alan Dorn	Head of Civil Contingencies Planning, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board
Catherine Harper	Scottish Continuity Group
Jon Harris	Strategic Director, COSLA
Bill Lyons	Head of Resilience, SEPA
Peter McCarthy	Operations Director, British Red Cross
Mary Pitcaithly	Chief Executive, Falkirk Council and SOLACE (Scotland)
Jacqui Semple	Chair, The Emergency Planning Society, Scottish Branch
Ewan Stewart	Assistant Chief Constable, Grampian Police and Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland
Ian Walford	Head of Scottish Resilience, Scottish Government
John Weston	Performance Specialist, Wales Audit Office
David Wynne	Chief Fire Officer, Dumfries and Galloway and CFOA(S)
Keith Yates	Former Chief Executive, Stirling Council and Chair of SOLACE (Scotland)

Appendix 2.

Self-assessment checklist for Category 1 responders involved in civil contingencies planning

	Assessment of current position				
	No progress to date	In development	In place but needs improvement	In place and working well	Not applicable
1. We, our SCG partners and the Scottish Government have agreed a standard approach to sharing information relevant to planning and responding to emergencies.					
2. With our SCG partners, we have reviewed the SCG membership to ensure all organisations key to civil contingencies planning are properly represented, and taken action as appropriate.					
For councils, police forces, and fire and rescue services only 3. Our organisation has developed materials to raise elected members' awareness of their role in an emergency and of civil contingencies planning generally, and have evaluated the impact of this work.					
4. With our SCG partners, we are working with the Scottish Government to ensure that our Community Risk Register can be used to its full potential, both locally and nationally.					
5. We, our SCG partners and organisations we share a boundary with are reviewing how our civil contingencies planning arrangements will work across geographic or administrative boundaries.					
6. We have up-to-date emergency and business continuity plans in place, which have been formally agreed.					
7. Emergency and business continuity planning are embedded across our organisation. All our staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to civil contingencies planning, are trained appropriately, and are aware of procedures.					
For councils only 8. Our council provides local businesses and voluntary organisations with BCM advice and assistance and we have evaluated the effectiveness of our approach.					

	Assessment of current position				
	No progress to date	In development	In place but needs improvement	In place and working well	Not applicable
For other organisations, excluding councils 9. Our organisation, together with SCG partners, has considered and taken action to help relevant councils deliver BCM advice to businesses and voluntary organisations.					
10. We have a structured approach and appropriate arrangements in place to improve public awareness of the risks we face and developments during and after an incident.					
11. With our SCG partners, we have considered how best to target and coordinate training and exercising activity in our area with national events, and how to increase efficiency and share good practice by working with organisations in neighbouring areas.					
12. All our emergency and business continuity plans are subject to regular and routine tests and exercises.					
13. With our SCG partners, and taking into account any national developments, we have ensured that we have a systematic process to share and implement improvements from the lessons identified during training and exercising activities or incidents. We have robust monitoring arrangements to demonstrate the effective implementation of lessons learned.					
14. With our SCG partners and the Scottish Government, we have developed a consistent framework for managing and reporting expenditure to demonstrate value for money and seek to deliver increased efficiencies and improved resilience through further partnership working.					
15. We have developed formal mutual aid agreements within our sector and SCG, taking account of cross-border arrangements, and the voluntary and private sectors.					
16. With our SCG partners, we have multi-agency arrangements in place for managing, monitoring and reporting our collective performance against the duties of the Civil Contingencies Act and the requirements of the Regulations and guidance.					

Improving civil contingencies planning

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