



Key Communities, Key Resources

**Engaging the capacity and capabilities of faith communities
in Civil Resilience**



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faith communities in Civil Resilience**

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Foreword

Faith communities are increasingly recognised as significant partners in working for the common good in their localities. Research has demonstrated that faith communities instinctively respond to the needs of their neighbours in times of crisis. They have the resources in terms of both buildings and volunteers to do so. This document attempts to ensure that both emergency planners and faith communities themselves recognise their potential.

The possibility of a future flu pandemic is currently causing concern. Statutory support services will be stretched. Faith communities have a major contribution to make when 'victims' and 'survivors' live alongside each other across wide areas. Forward planning will ensure that rather than working in parallel, or even in competition, faith communities and statutory providers work in partnership.

In times of crisis, faith communities also have a role to play in terms of victim support. Large scale fatalities raise specific issues for faith communities that need to be addressed. Strong leadership from faith communities has a key role to play when large scale incidents trigger concerns about social cohesion.

This document is intended to help emergency planners and faith communities through that process. It deals with principles and provides tools and a roadmap for good practice. Worst case predictions may never materialise. Nevertheless, this document is intended as an encouragement to those within statutory services and faith communities who already appreciate the value of forward planning and partnership working as well as to those who are only just beginning.

Thanks are due to the working group set up by the Faith Communities Consultative Council under the chair of Monsignor John Devine of the Catholic Bishops' Conference along with Rev David Emison from the Methodist Church, David Williams from the Church of England, Simon Goulden from the Agency for Jewish Education, Khurshid Ahmed from the British Muslim Forum, Suraj Sehgal from the Hindu Council UK, Harmander Singh from the Sikhs in England and Brian Pearce of the Interfaith Network for the UK.

The text was drafted by Jim McManus on behalf of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales in consultation with Major Muriel McClenahan of the Salvation Army and officials from the Home Office, the Department of Health and Communities and Local Government.

Executive Summary

This document is about why and how faith communities should be engaged in civil resilience. It doesn't deal with the issues which will apply in a local emergency plan (eg location of stretchers, supply and mutual aid contracts, etc) because these will vary from area to area and make the document unnecessarily lengthy

Within its pages we:

- illustrate the importance of the partnership between emergency planners and faith communities; and
- demonstrate the principles and provide the tools of good practice for civil resilience.

Faith communities can help both Category 1 and Category 2 responders discharge their responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

They are an integral group in UK society, and are at work in every community. Seventy-seven per cent of the UK's population¹ identifies as having some kind of religious faith or link to a religious tradition. The concentration of faith communities varies. In some areas, most faiths are represented (eg London, core cities) while in other areas (mainly rural) the faith may be predominantly Christian with small representation from others.

While those who actually practice their faith will be less in number than those who identify as having a faith, there are still thousands of active participants in faith communities across the country. They have in excess of 11,000 leaders² who can co-ordinate their communities and have an infrastructure of plant, buildings and networks (communications, logistics, volunteers and paid staff) with a unique mix of competencies, which include skills in providing support to people in times of crisis and its aftermath. The case for engaging them in civil resilience is strong. They can make particular contributions to the work of Regional and Local Resilience Fora and provide important capacities and capabilities in supporting Category 1 and 2 Responders in planning, response and recovery phases of their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

Faith communities should be regarded as key communities and a crucial resource for emergency planners, and government, to engage with in civil resilience. There are several reasons for this:

- Their size and distribution across the UK
- Existing networks of people, resources, equipment and competencies
- Networks of employed and volunteer skilled staff
- Networks which are already CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checked
- Networks used to dealing with people in crisis
- Networks which will be there for the long term and have a natural ability to aid people in recovery from crisis.

Faith community leaders offer a unique mix of competencies that can add value to civil emergency planning and response:

- They are embedded in the local community and are able to reach the people that statutory planners cannot
- They have established leaders within their community, with local knowledge and networks
- They can have an important role in promoting social cohesion and preventing unrest and disorder in the aftermath of a major incident.
- They have a trusted position of guidance and re-assurance
- They have access to channels of communication to cross sections of the local community which emergency planners cannot readily access
- They have access to a range of voluntary social care agencies (The Catholic Church alone has 6,500 employed staff, 35,000 volunteers and a turnover of £97 million in its dedicated social care agencies.)
- They are an accepted provider of counselling and advice during a crisis, particularly in the areas of emotional and spiritual care of the sick and dying, carer support, and bereavement counselling
- They have networks of trained and accredited counsellors and therapists
- They can have a long term, sustaining presence during re-construction
- They have networks of personal contacts across the faith communities.

This demonstrates that faith communities, through their leaders, can help reach vulnerable communities which emergency planners may not be able to (refugees and asylum seekers may attend religious services and events but may not be known to statutory agencies).

It also follows that faith community leaders are key leaders to engage with, if the resources and capabilities of faith communities are to be harnessed for civil resilience work.

In planning for a flu pandemic, the role of faith communities might become particularly important. Faith communities could perform essential monitoring roles for vulnerable people (if appropriately checked and screened) and may even be able to distribute anti-viral drugs and essential supplies and food to people at home who have no one else to help. These are important tasks and those who undertake them should be valued accordingly.

Emergency planners need to bear in mind the importance of the role of faith communities in rites of passage for substantial numbers of the population and particularly with respect to funerals. This goes well beyond the concept of pastoral care, in providing an important means for an entire community or population to make sense of, heal and obtain resolution from a major traumatic event. This is shown, for example, in memorial and other rites following the Paddington and other rail disasters. The engagement of faith communities in such rites is a significant factor and should be specifically considered.

The particular, concerns of faith communities in relation to the dying, death and disposal, and in particular with respect to funerals, burial and cremation, which faith communities have a major involvement with, needs to be approached sensitively. It is important that emergency planners should approach this issue proactively, before the event, if possible.

1. The Context of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Understanding the Act is a first stage for everyone

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004, and a range of guidance documents arising from it, provides an important context for all emergency planning work in the United Kingdom. As such, Emergency Planners will be aware of the Act, and faith communities need to have a familiarity with the Act and its requirements.

This guide is intended to help Emergency Planners and Faith Communities work together in implementing the Act, and in protecting civil society.

Local authorities (LA) have the key role of providing for the welfare of communities in the aftermath of a major incident. Faith communities and their capabilities fit well with this welfare commitment, it therefore makes sense that in many areas their initial key link is with the LA.

There will also be areas where Primary Care Trusts and NHS Provider Trusts can and should work with faith communities to fulfil their duties under the NHS Emergency Planning Guidance 2005 and for the spiritual care of NHS patients.

Local Resilience Fora (LRFs) are multi-agency, and the increasing culture of multi-agency work means that faith communities will, in reality, work with a number of agencies. This cultural aspect of working is important to reflect in any training for faith communities.

Main provisions of the Act

The Act provides a single framework for all civil protection, and is divided into two parts.

- **Part 1** defines an emergency. It identifies the kinds of agencies who will plan for and respond to an emergency, and provides a set of roles and responsibilities for those responders
- **Part 2**, is concerned with the provisions enabling government to enact temporary emergency legislation to help deal with the most serious emergencies. In essence the Act updates the 1920 Emergency Powers Act. This document will focus on Part 1 of the Act.

An Emergency is defined by the Act as *“An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK, the environment of a place in the UK, or war or terrorism which threatens serious damage to the security of the UK”*

The Act also has an extensive range of supporting regulations and guidance. Emergency Planners for each different agency given responsibilities under the Act will be familiar with this.

The Act seeks to ensure that at local (and national) level the UK assesses the risks of an emergency happening and has thought-through and tested plans to:

- Assess any possible emergencies and make plans for dealing with them (*Risk Assessment and Planning*)
- Mitigate the risk of them happening (*Risk Treatment*)
- Deal quickly with any emergencies and immediate issues (*Response*)
- Return to “business as usual” after dealing with the emergency (*Recovery*)
- Ensure the core functions of agencies charged with responding under the Act can be carried out even when dealing with an Emergency (*Business Continuity Management*).

Category 1 and 2 Responders and their responsibilities

Part 1 of the Act defines two categories of responders. Schedules to the Act establish the different agencies belonging in each Category, see below.

| Category 1 Responders (England) <i>Plan, Collaborate, Respond</i> | Category 2 Responders (England) <i>Collaborate with Category 1 Responders</i> |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authorities • Police (including British Transport Police) • Fire & Rescue Service • Ambulance Services • National Health Service Trusts including NHS Foundation Trusts • Primary Care Trusts • Health Protection Agency • Port Health Authorities • The Environment Agency • Secretary of State’s agencies for maritime and coastal emergencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Railway Operators (including London Underground and Transport for London) • Airport Operators • Harbour Authorities • Highways Authority • Health & Safety Executive • Utilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Electric – Gas – Water – Phone (Voice & Data) |

Category 1 and Category 2 responders have a range of different responsibilities under the Act. The Civil Contingencies Act is not the only Act giving agencies civil protection duties in the UK. There are many others specific to Transport, Postage, Utility, Food and other sectors of civil society.

The most onerous duties are for Category 1 responders, but that does not mean that faith communities will not work with Category 2 responders. In severe cases of utility disruption, faith communities may find themselves working alongside Category 1 and 2 responders to reach those who are vulnerable.

| Responsibilities of Category 1 Responders (England) <i>Plan, Collaborate, Respond (text courtesy of the Emergency Planning College)</i> | Responsibilities of Category 2 Responders (England) <i>Collaborate with Category 1 Responders</i> |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Conduct risk assessment, in conjunction with others, to assess the range of emergencies faced and the risk of those emergencies making it necessary for the organisation to respond on the basis of its existing functions. • Planning Arrangements – In light of the risk assessment, draw up and maintain plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To prevent the emergency occurring – Reduce, control and mitigate its effects – To refine plans in the light of ongoing risk assessment – For responding to and recovering from an emergency – To publish risk assessments and plans – To include the provision for exercise and training of staff. • Business Continuity Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Plans must be in place to enable the organisation to deliver those functions which may be required in an emergency. • Warning and Informing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Maintain arrangements for warning and informing the public if an emergency is likely to occur or has occurred and for providing them with advice. • Sharing Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide information to partner organisations so that they can complete risk assessments and plans. • Co-operation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cat 1 and 2 responders to co-operate with each other both within and beyond the context of multi agency groups. • Promotion of Business Continuity Management (Local Authorities only) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide advice and assistance to the public in relation to the continuance of commercial activity in the event of an emergency. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most Category 2 responders are already subject to sector-specific civil protection duties • Their duties under the Act are mainly to co-operate and share information with Category 1 responders in order to enable them to inform multi-agency planning frameworks, and discharge their responsibilities effectively. |

The Local Resilience Forum

Category 1 and 2 organisations tend to come together to form Local Resilience Fora (LRF). Each forum takes a different size but is usually based on a police area or divisional command areas. (In London they tend to cover several boroughs, outside London they may cover half a county, a whole county or a whole unitary authority.) These fora help co-ordination and co-operation between responders at the local level.

The constitution has a core membership prescribed by regulation, but additional involvement is usually agreed by the Forum to suit its particular needs. Therefore in some areas key partners such as voluntary agencies (Red Cross, St John Ambulance, WRVS) may form part of the forum. In some cases faith communities are members of the LRF, while in other areas faith communities themselves come together with other agencies (eg voluntary agencies) in a forum which is based on the same geographical area as the LRF.

Integrated Emergency Management

The Act is important in itself, but is increasingly being seen as an enabler of *Integrated Emergency Management* (IEM). IEM seeks to ensure that plans are in place which helps an organisation deal effectively with emergencies, small or major, foreseen or not. These include co-ordination with other agencies. IEM is often seen as an important means to deliver what the Civil Contingencies Act requires, and indeed to go beyond it, because statutory responders may not have all the capabilities needed. Faith communities can be hugely important in delivering an IEM approach, and it may well be easier for faith communities to approach collaboration from an IEM perspective than a Civil Contingencies Act perspective.

The basic concepts of IEM are given below³. Each of these can be applied to engaging faith communities:

- The principal emphasis in the development of any plan must be on the response to the incident and not its cause. Plans should be sufficiently flexible to allow them to be applied irrespective of time or place. Faith communities have capabilities to support this
- Organisations should plan to deliver in emergency situations the services/ expertise/products which they normally provide on a day to day basis, or extensions of these
- Emergency management arrangements should be integrated into an organisation's everyday working structures. Emergency plans must build on routine arrangements
- The activities of different divisions/units within an organisation should be integrated
- Emergency arrangements need to be co-ordinated with those of other authorities and organisations
- Plans should include the capacity to extend the level of response, up to that required for the outcome of a 'worst case scenario'.

2. Why Engage Faith Communities?

This document makes the case that faith communities have an important contribution to make in civil resilience work, assisting not only local Category 1 and Category 2 responders, but supporting Regional and National Resilience and Civil Contingencies Committees, if properly engaged.

They should be regarded as key communities for emergency planners, and government, to engage with in matters of civil resilience.

As mentioned earlier, in the preparation for a pandemic, or in recovery from a major incident, faith communities can use their networks and competencies to ease pressure on statutory services, build community confidence and resilience, and promote social cohesion. Faith communities as key communities can help build resilient communities.

Size and nature of faith communities in the UK

It is often assumed that religious belief, and active engagement with organised religion, is confined to a small proportion of the population. This is not true.

Faith communities are an important part of and are at work in every local community across the UK. Some 44,073, 919 people, or 77 per cent of the UK population, identify as belonging to a faith community. Even though this may not reflect the percentage of those who actively and regularly take part in their local faith communities, it represents the endurance of religious belief, and every local area has active, organised communities of faith.

The English Church Census⁴ demonstrated that all major Christian denominations have started new churches in the last ten years, and a total of 1,000 new Churches (three per week) in England have been founded since 1998. 3.6 million people attend Church regularly in England, and 3.5 million are members⁵, indicating they are active in their local churches. Just over 6 per cent of the population therefore has a commitment to support and engage in their local Christian faith community.

Non-Christian faith communities, according to the 2001 Census, make up 3,059,000 people or 5.36 per cent⁶ of the population. While there is less detailed data on these communities at present, recent research suggests that non-Christian faith communities have, on average, a higher proportion of adherents attending and being involved in the community than Christian churches⁷. This figure has not given rise to numerical projections in the way that Christian commitment has, but even a conservative estimate by applying the 6 per cent Christian commitment to other faith communities gives 183,540 people with infrastructures, networks and capabilities. While there is not yet as much research information on non-Christian communities' size, structure and memberships, what there is confirms that the non-Christian faith

communities are committed, and have their own infrastructures. They are therefore important for Emergency Planners.

It is important to remember that the geographic distribution of faith communities varies too. In some areas, most faiths are represented (eg London, core cities) while in other areas (very rural areas) the faiths may be predominantly Christian with small representation from others.

Faith communities in the UK therefore represent a significant portion of the population, who are socially and economically active. English Churches' income passed £2 billion in 2005⁸.

Population of Great Britain: by religion, April 2001

| Great Britain | Total population | | Non-Christian religious population |
|---|------------------|-------------|------------------------------------|
| | Numbers | Percentages | Percentages |
| Christian | 41,014,811 | 71.82 | – |
| Muslim | 1,588,890 | 2.78 | 51.94 |
| Hindu | 558,342 | 0.98 | 18.25 |
| Sikh | 336,179 | 0.59 | 10.99 |
| Jewish | 267,373 | 0.47 | 8.74 |
| Buddhist | 149,157 | 0.26 | 4.88 |
| Any other religion | 159,167 | 0.28 | 5.20 |
| All non-Christian religious population ¹ | 3,059,108 | 5.36 | 100.00 |
| No religion | 8,596,488 | 15.05 | – |
| Religion not stated | 4,433,520 | 7.76 | – |
| Total population claiming a religion | | 77.19 | – |
| All population | 57,103,927 | 100.00 | |

¹ Excludes Christians, people who had no religion and those who did not state their religion.
Source: Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics; Census, April 2001, General Register Office for Scotland

Case Study:

The Metropolitan Police and Hindu Emergency Responders

The Metropolitan Police in one borough in London has worked with local faith communities to develop awareness of roles in civil emergencies. In particular, they worked with Hindu communities to develop a network to support the large Hindu community and mobilise emergency responders both to minimise the impact of religious and racially motivated crimes, and to work with the community, especially vulnerable people, in the event of any major incident.

Infrastructure and impact of faith communities

Faith communities have an infrastructure of buildings, plant (equipment) and human resources (professional and voluntary) which can be mobilised to support response to major civil resilience challenges to the UK, such as an influenza pandemic.

The economic impact of faith communities is beginning to be studied in much more detail. Current research suggests that local and central public sector agencies continue to overlook the economic impact of faith communities in assessing their role in civil society^{9,10}. The economic resources and impact of faith communities could be put to use in recovery from major incidents and/or a pandemic. Furthermore, the network of volunteers active in faith communities could have a significant role in supporting the response to a widespread emergency such as a pandemic.

A recent independent assessment¹¹ of the economic value attributed to faith communities in the North West was prepared by DTZ Pinda Consulting for the North West Regional Development Agency (NWRDA). It estimated that 45,667 faith volunteers in the North West of England, work in activities other than worship and generate between £60.6 million and £64.4 million per annum. These communities could present a significant contribution to recovery from a widespread major civil emergency, such as an influenza pandemic, in the North West. Moreover, this work could be applied across the UK to identify the resources of faith communities which can support civil resilience work.

Faith communities have in excess of 11,000 skilled and appointed leaders¹² who can co-ordinate their communities and have an infrastructure of equipment, buildings and networks (communications, logistics, volunteers and paid staff) with skills in providing support to people in crisis and its aftermath. The case for engaging them in civil resilience is strong. They can make particular contributions to the work of Regional and Local Resilience Fora and provide important capacities and capabilities in supporting Category 1 and 2 Responders in planning, response and recovery phases of their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

Growing evidence of impact and importance

Government policy in recent years has been to identify faith communities as sources of social capital.¹³ The LGA document *Faith and Community* (2002) and the Home Office Faith Communities Unit report *Working Together* (2004) signalled that rather than being viewed with suspicion faith communities should be recognised as significant stakeholders. Recent research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation identified that faith communities have an important contribution to make.

Faith communities contribute substantial and distinctive bridging and linking social capital through their co-presence in urban areas, their connecting frameworks, the use of their buildings, the spaces that their associational networks open up, their engagement in governance, and their work across boundaries with others in the public domain¹⁴.

The research concluded that faith communities can make links with those in Civil Society whom Government cannot reach. Faith Communities can also build networks across a range of statutory and non statutory bodies. Similar research has included that engaging faith communities in economic and physical regeneration can bring substantial benefits¹⁵. They also bring “*distinctive and strong motivations for social action, their long-term local presence, the provision of informal settings and activities, and a commitment to listening to local people.*”¹⁶

If faith communities contribute economic capital, human capital and social capital to UK plc, it is evident that this capital could, and should, be harnessed for appropriate use in civil resilience.

A growing number of Civil Contingencies Act Category 1 responders are becoming aware of this and actively engaging faith communities.¹⁷ There are some notable examples of good practice¹⁸ with faith communities in Surrey, parts of London, the North West, Yorkshire and South West developing or having already emergency plans where the capabilities of faith communities are aligned to the needs of local Category 1 Responders. In Hampshire a faith communities document framework exists alongside other frameworks¹⁹.

Case Study:

The Society of St Vincent De Paul in the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton

The Roman Catholic Church has a voluntary sector with over 35,000 volunteers, all of whom have been, or are being, CRB checked where appropriate.

Within this, the Society of St Vincent de Paul is present in every Diocese of England and Wales, and in Scotland. It works through local councils of CRB checked volunteers to provide practical assistance to people in need. It has a national and local infrastructure.

In one diocese (Arundel and Brighton, covering Sussex and Surrey) the Society made 33,569 visits to people in need in 2005–2006 including 8,600 cases of practical assistance given. This includes 3209 cases where food was given, 21 cases of fuel, 3784 cases of transport and 889 cases of clothing being made available. The Society runs a furniture scheme, soup runs, caravan respite holiday accommodation and a furniture scheme. All of this work is supported by voluntary donations from the Church, and the time given by volunteers.

The role of the Society in monitoring ill people, elderly and housebound people in the event of a pandemic or aftermath of a major incident could significantly ease pressure on statutory services.

3. Capabilities of Faith Communities in Civil Resilience

Faith communities have a track record of engagement

Where work has been undertaken in the UK and elsewhere²⁰, the experience of many emergency planners has been that faith communities bring with them a range of capabilities to engage in a major incident or civil emergency, and the capacity to deliver this. Almost all faith communities have some kind of leadership, paid or unpaid, who have training and also the experience of co-ordinating their community and its networks. These co-ordinators or leaders are key to ensuring the capabilities of faith communities are understood and used effectively.

Particular examples of capability among faith communities in the UK have been given by the Salvation Army, who run a range of emergency services and have expertise in emergency planning. Similarly, Jewish Emergency Support Services have a range of plans for responding to the needs of Jewish communities, including a flu pandemic.

In 2005 the Home Office and Cabinet Office published guidelines on Faith Communities and Emergency Planning²¹. This document, along with other work previously published and recent research²², makes it clear that faith communities have a range of capabilities. These can be organised schematically as follows:

Schema of roles of faith communities

| Capability | Role | Phase |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Faith Communities are at different stages in understanding how they may engage with this. They may need some training and help</p> <p>Co-ordination (Faith leaders and paid staff managing and co-ordinating their networks).</p> | <p>Agreeing to enable their logistics, supply chain or buildings/practical support to be used</p> <p>Reaching members of their community to warn and inform.</p> | <p>Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for an emergency • Consulting communities • Compiling Community Risk Register • Identifying vulnerable people. |
| <p>Crisis support</p> <p>Plant & Equipment</p> <p>Logistics</p> <p>Networks of Volunteers</p> <p>Buildings</p> <p>Reaching hard to reach members (warning and informing duties)</p> <p>Reassuring public and maintaining confidence.</p> | <p>Providing chaplains and emotional support</p> <p>Helping people contact relatives</p> <p>Providing rest centres</p> <p>Providing volunteers</p> <p>Identifying and reaching vulnerable people</p> <p>Shelter, food and practical assistance</p> <p>Transport of non injured people</p> <p>Monitoring of people in their homes and alerting welfare services as needed</p> <p>Providing surge support.</p> | <p>Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The immediate and short term response to an incident. |
| <p>Ongoing emotional and practical support</p> <p>Monitoring people</p> <p>Providing practical assistance through volunteers and care networks.</p> | <p>Providing emotional support</p> <p>Providing practical support and volunteers to help recovery</p> <p>Befriending</p> <p>Helping people make sense of what has happened</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring of peoples' welfare</p> <p>Hosting public services or other functions.</p> | <p>Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The short to medium term response to an incident. <p>Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returning to business as usual and dealing with the aftermath. |
| <p>Organising networks of volunteers to provide practical support and care.</p> | <p>Volunteers, social networks</p> <p>Informal care, monitoring of people in their homes (good neighbour roles in major incidents)</p> <p>Providing carers during flu pandemics.</p> | <p>Business Continuity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back up premises and venues • Supplies of volunteers • Logistics networks • Premises • Equipment. |

Case studies of faith community capabilities

There are a range of useful examples which illustrate the capacity and capabilities of faith communities. Examples are provided here, each of which illustrates the range and diversity of civil resilience capabilities that faith communities can bring to bear in a major emergency. Some of these are immediate, others are longer term. All of them could be applied meaningfully in a situation like a 'flu pandemic (national level) or a situation like Buncefield (regional level) as well as being applied at local level in many areas.

Many Faith Community Emergency Plans have been updated to take into account increasing levels of diversity in every part of the country, even in traditionally rural areas.

Case Study: Civil Resilience capabilities within the Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich

Working on behalf of Church Leaders in Suffolk, the Anglican Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich has issued a guide for clergy on their Emergency Plan (2005). An overall Clergy Co-ordinator at diocesan level liaises directly with Suffolk County Council's Emergency Planning team. Clergy are divided into teams based on local authority areas under the leadership of a Clergy Team Leader. Each local authority area has at least one CTL who retains contact details of the clergy in his/her area. Each team has been assigned a representative who can call upon leaders of minority faith groups if required. These inter faith contacts are listed in the guide along with a basic summary of the traditions and cultures of each major world faith in order to ensure an understanding of the sensitivities of both victims and their families in the event of an emergency.

Their plans also reflect first hand experience in dealing with the changing nature of emergencies that will become more frequent in the future.

Case Study: Responding to diverse emergencies in Cumbria. Same Capabilities, different situations

In the Carlisle floods, faith communities opened their centres to provide rest centres and hosted the emergency control centre in one of their buildings. Their response was immediate and functioned overnight. The communities also helped identify vulnerable people known to them and contacted them or provided the emergency services with information needed to aid evacuation. Contacting relatives was also helpful during the response phase. In the recovery phase, faith communities helped with cleanup, and alleviated hardship through provision of clothing, furniture and food parcels to some vulnerable people.

During the most recent Foot and Mouth epidemic, faith communities provided a range of support to local farming communities. Faith communities:

- helped alleviate hardship through the provision of practical support (collecting food and supplies and delivering it to quarantined farms, even making grants of food and supplies until government help could be organised)
- provided crisis and ongoing emotional support and befriending, preventing cases of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- provided ongoing monitoring of farming communities' emotional needs, spotting the signs of depression and PTSD and signposting people to services
- helped keep people in touch with communities
- helped people make sense of what had happened, and think through plans for recovery.

- In the London bombings, the most visible role of faith communities was to provide chaplaincy support at bomb sites and hospitals. But there was much more faith communities did which in the short and longer term:
 - provided a means for survivors and others caught up in the problems to contact relatives and friends outside London through using faith community networks
 - opened buildings to provide shelter and refreshment
 - provided opportunities for space, reflection and also acts of worship, helping people deal with the shock and make sense of what had happened
 - provided support for the bereaved in initial and ongoing stages (and this happened across the country, not just in London)
 - provided practical support to those stranded
 - ensured people who had an ongoing disability or injury had a support network after the event
 - organised quiet days and weekend retreats for emergency services personnel engaged in the response, to help them move on from the incident

- provided important social and support functions for people whose first language is not English. This included not just Muslim, Sikh, Hindu or Jewish communities but the increasing number of Eastern European Catholics and also many Chinese Christians as well as Russian and Greek Orthodox. London's diverse communities were supported by their diverse faith communities in response to 7/7.

Case Study: Immediate response to the London bombings

Almost every faith community near the bombings in London was mobilised on or after 7th July. Here are just a few examples:

Muslim Communities: Mosques were opened near bomb sites to accommodate and shelter those caught up. The mosques stayed open and provided people with shelter and refreshment. Muslim Chaplains were on hand in hospitals. Muslim communities provided support not just to their own communities but to anyone caught up in the bombings. Communications networks between mosques became an important way of ensuring families knew their loved ones were safe, especially where English was not the first language.

Christian Communities: Chaplains were on site at bomb sites and at major hospitals. Churches opened for quiet but also to provide shelter. Some specific Christian agencies (eg Salvation Army) took on specific support roles.

Jewish Communities: Jewish social care agencies were mobilised and Jewish faith leaders engaged in supporting victims, their relatives and those worried about them. Jewish Emergency Support Services (JESS) were involved in response. This service, set up in 1989 by the Jewish community offers counselling and support to members of the community who were affected in anyway with trauma or bereavement. Working in association with the MIYAD (National Jewish Crisis) helpline, JESS provided counselling for bereaved family members and friends, as well as for family members and friends of those who were missing and those who had witnessed the attacks.

Faith Leaders of many faiths came together to make public statements informing the public and showing leadership in an attempt to reduce tensions and calm the public.

The London Bombings showed clearly that most faith communities have ready formed networks of logistics and care which could, with proper training and support – take on civil resilience responsibilities as part of a local, regional or national emergency plan. There are other examples:

- Many faith communities have agencies which employ skilled and professional social work staff. Jewish Care is one such agency, which provides for the needs of vulnerable people among Jewish communities

- Analogous agencies to these exist in many Christian denominations and in some Muslim, Sikh and Hindu communities.

Increasingly, where faith communities are engaged in civil resilience, the leaders or co-ordinators of those communities form cells, in the same way that there is a health cell or a welfare cell in a major incident. This is felt by emergency planners who have experience of this to be valuable and important in ensuring faith communities respond effectively in their roles.

These examples show a range of capabilities which faith communities can deliver, ranging from maintaining public reassurance and confidence to providing logistics services to deliver food, clean up of vulnerable peoples' homes after floods, and monitor people over the response and recovery phase. The traditional chaplaincy role in civil emergencies, while important and valuable, does not begin to encompass what faith communities can actually do.

It is evident from this that faith communities can and do work across all phases of the Civil Contingencies Act. Effective engagement of them, and use of their capabilities, even where some developmental input is needed is a major and underused asset.

4. Good Practice in Engaging Faith Communities

Getting the basics right

This chapter provides some basic principles of good practice in working with faith communities. These principles have been developed from work done in other fields, from existing good practice in this field, and from a snapshot survey of what emergency planners and faith communities are doing across the country.

The first question to consider is **why a Category 1 Responder would want to or need to work with faith communities?** The principal reason is that they can make a contribution to emergency planning which we need or want them to make, in order for Category 1 or Category 2 responders to be as effective as possible. The table above should provide sufficient rationale for this.

The second question to consider is **what justification or powers a Category 1 Responder has to work with faith communities?**

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 provides sufficient justification for any Category 1 or Category 2 responder to consider and start working with faith communities.

For local authorities and for the Greater London Authority the wellbeing powers in the Local Government Act 2000 and the public health powers under section 36 of the Greater London Authority Act 1998 respectively, should also prove useful. Furthermore, local authorities have powers under charity law to bring together charities in their areas to co-ordinate and enable them to work together. The NHS, Primary Care Trusts and NHS Trusts should be mindful not only of the powers under the Health Act 1977, but also of the recommended good practice under the *NHS Emergency Planning Guidance 2005*.

For most agencies, the need to engage faith communities or not will become evident when they go through the process below. Likewise, for most agencies, the justification that they are collaborating in achieving duties under the Civil Contingencies Act will be sufficient. Local authorities, NHS Primary Care Trusts (England) and the Police may also have legal empowerments to engage and work with them, and provide support in cash or in kind to enable them to do so.

Developing a plan: Stages and principles

Some emergency planners are anxious about engaging faith communities. They may not understand the culture or practices of the community, and do not want to cause offence or exclude people. This issue has previously been faced by community safety professionals, and this document, along with a previous document *Strangers*

or Friends: Engaging Faith Communities, have proved useful when used in a pilot emergency planning training event on faith communities.

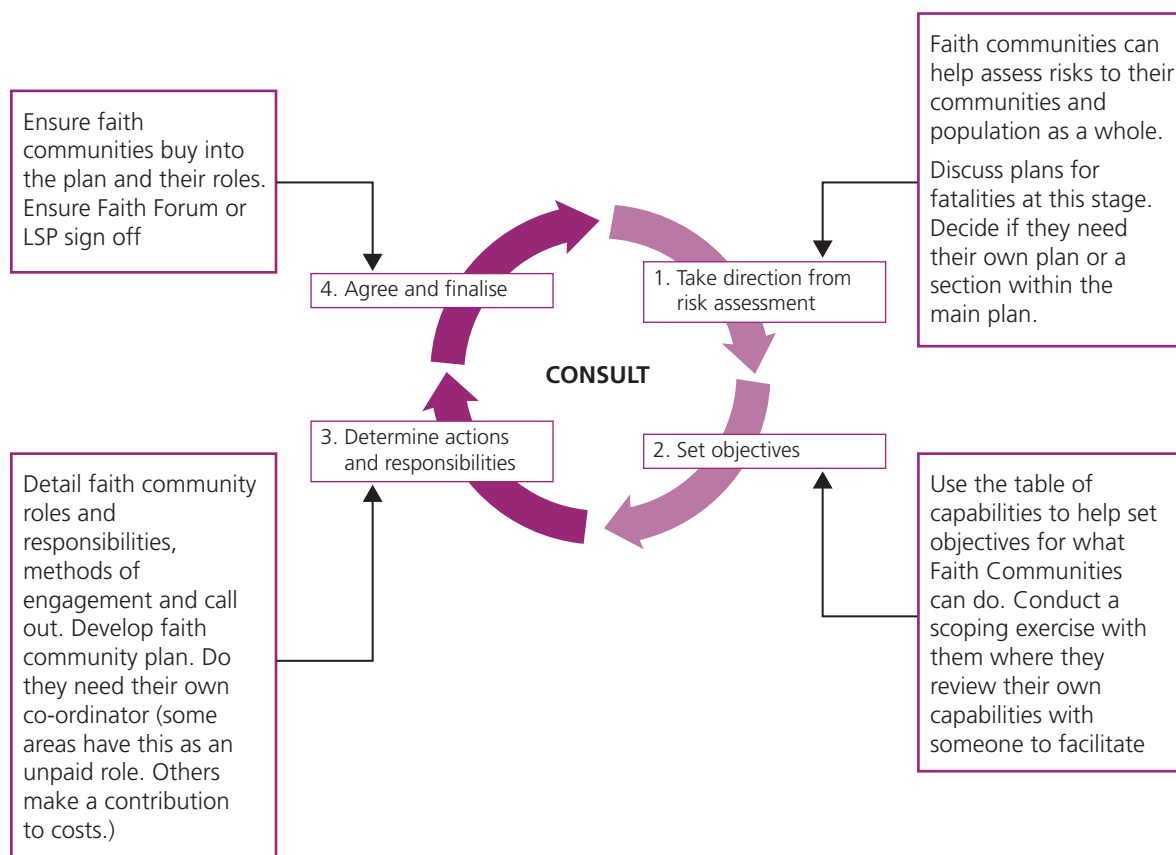
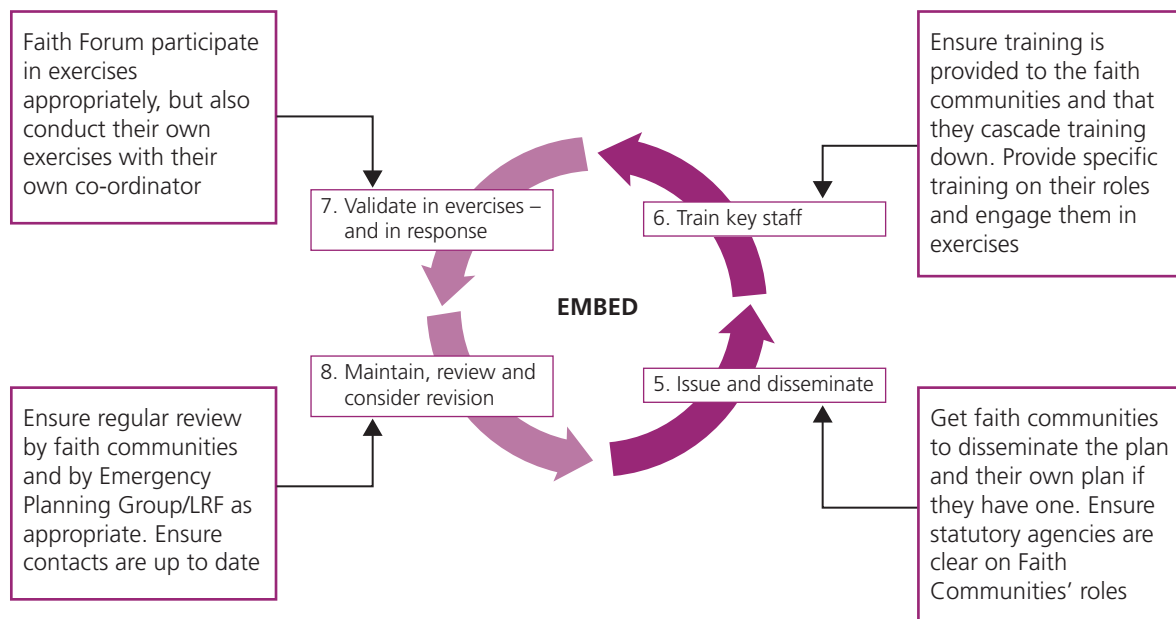
Working with faith communities has its challenges, but it also has many rewards. Even so, challenges are not insurmountable and there are many examples of inter-faith groups meeting up and down the country with emergency planners. There are some emergent principles for good practice for emergency planners to consider, and these are shown in the table below.

There are two key tools which can help Emergency Planners here. The first is the *Cycle of Emergency Planning*, which details what Planners can and should do. The second is a set of key principles which approaches how they should go about doing this.

The *Cycle of Emergency Planning*²³ is often used to help Emergency Planners conceptualise their roles and responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, in particular to help ensure they can be resilient to challenges. The capabilities of faith communities can be conceptualised in the same way, and Emergency Planners can use the *Cycle* to engage faith communities effectively across the whole system. This is shown in the diagram below.

This diagram can be used as a ready reckoner of what the key actions are at each stage.

The Cycle of Emergency Planning and faith communities



In terms of how engagement proceeds, there are some key principles in engaging with faith communities these have been outlined below.

Principles of good practice in working with faith communities

| Principle | Questions to consider |
|--|--|
| 1. Understand the size and nature of faith communities in an area. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census profile of faith from the local authority or public health data team • Identify local networks (eg Interfaith Network, Churches Together, County Ecumenical Officers, engagement in Community Partnership). |
| 2. Understand the rationale for engaging them before doing so. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore within the agency's own team why they want or need to engage them • Develop a clear rationale for doing so on paper • Develop a clear "map" or matrix of what they can do in planning, response and recovery. |
| 3. Identify and understand their key networks or best ways in. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there already a local Faith Forum? Is there already an Emergency planning network? Can the hospital chaplains help you reach out? • Ensure you do not reach just one faith and for Christianity ensure you do not just involve the Church of England • Try to do this in advance. Collaborating with faith communities in organising a conference or workshop to start the process may help build relationships and confidence. |
| 4. Get the etiquette right. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ensured every faith community can participate equally, even if you want some to take the lead? • Understand forms of greeting and dress and forms of respectful address (eg if you are meeting on a synagogue or mosque, you will be guided on etiquette.). |
| 5. Be open and honest about what you want to work with them on. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have at least an outline of what you think faith communities can do with you • Share with them your rationale • They may have important roles in dealing with fatalities. |
| <i>continued</i> | |

| Principle | Questions to consider |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 6. Understand their needs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will need to identify what their needs are in helping them to engage, and in response and recovery from a major incident • Develop a “ready reckoner” of faith community needs in emergency planning in your area • Provision of training may be important • For any biological/disease epidemic work, ensuring consideration is given to appropriate arrangements for prophylaxis (eg vaccine) for the key faith co-ordinators (ie those co-ordinating work, not necessarily those ordained). |
| 7. Find some key resources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage them to reflect within their own theology • Deliver some training on the CCA and Emergency Planning • Find a good emergency planner who will mentor faith communities. |
| 8. Develop a coherent plan. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a faith communities group, led by faith communities, with you • Develop a “ready reckoner” of capabilities and roles • Conduct a Training Needs Analysis • Deliver training on what the CCA is • Develop a faith community plan • Ensure the plan mirrors your local plan in structure and form • Test and exercise the plan as you would any plan • Incorporate and involve them in the main emergency plan, and include them • Ensure someone from the faith communities group attends the Local Resilience Forum or for the LA/NHS your Emergency Planning Team • Work with them to develop their own business continuity plans using a simple template. |
| <i>continued</i> | |

| Principle | Questions to consider |
|--|---|
| 9. Approach Equity using a capabilities model. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the capabilities of each community and work from this • Do find a community with the capabilities to lead the others with their agreement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Attitude – Skills – Time – Infrastructure – Respect from other communities • Do not work (other than initially) from one denomination or faith unless you have good reason (eg the size of a particular faith community or the community risk register indicates one community is most vulnerable to a particular risk) • Ensure no one faith excludes the others. |
| 10. Conduct an Equalities Impact Assessment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an important tool to help you understand if you have got it right. An equalities impact assessment will identify what you have done, and why, and what gaps you have left. You can then identify what needs to change. Doing this with the faith communities group or at least your diversity team is good practice. |

Who do we approach?

It is important for emergency planners to think through carefully who they are going to approach and how. The easiest place to start is to assess whether there is a local, effective, interfaith forum. The Interfaith Network nationally or the regional assembly can often help with this. Some areas have a forum specifically set up to help statutory bodies and faith communities work together. In most cases the local authority or Local Strategic Partnership will be a key link to this forum. In other places the forum may exist primarily to reflect on inter-faith issues not be as effective in engaging with statutory bodies. Emergency Planners would do well to take a few soundings from the Local Strategic Partnership about who to approach, and decide how to proceed to engagement from there.

An essential aspect of making this work is ensuring that the co-ordinators of faith communities are properly engaged and regarded as key leaders and stakeholders. It is important to remember that leaders may or may not be ordained and it is easy to assume that leaders of all faith communities are analogous to clergy in some Christian denominations. Quakers and Muslims may have a number of people undertaking leadership roles, and Catholics, Anglicans and Jews may have their ordained leader as well as lay people undertaking roles. The key person in the Mosque may not be the Imam but the mosque welfare co-ordinator, for example.

Providing training, even the provision of ID badges and inclusion at desktop exercises will be important. This is part of enabling faith communities to work and be engaged effectively.

For pandemic flu and any biological/disease epidemic work, it will be important to ensure that the infrastructure of the faith community can be effectively co-ordinated. For this reason, it is important to consider appropriate arrangements for access to prophylaxis or vaccine where these are available. In some communities (eg many Christian denominations) this key role may be performed by a minister of religion. But in many faiths, and in some Christian denominations, the key role is not performed by a person analogous to an ordained clergy person, but by a skilled member of the congregation.

Similarly, consideration of the needs of front line faith community volunteers and staff for Personal Protective Equipment appropriate to their role and level of risk needs to be included in PPE stockpile plans not just for a pandemic, but for other major emergencies and outbreaks/epidemics. The pastoral care of the very ill and dying necessarily involves close, multiple contacts with patients suffering from infectious diseases. Faith leaders will be used to this.

Planners don't need to know everything about every faith

Emergency Planners sometimes feel they have to understand the needs of every faith in order to work with them. This is not the case. You need to know enough to be courteous and respectful. You can do this by using some of the resources and contacts listed in at the end of this document, or by working with your local faith forum or the diversity team in your local authority or NHS Trust.

There are some basic simple rules:

1. Be sensitive about times and seasons. Do not organise multi-faith training or information events on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday, or during or immediately after main religious periods when people will be busy in ceremonies or tired from the extra work involved.
2. The Shap Working Party on World Religions produces each year a calendar of religious festivals which will help you to avoid running exercises at times which clash with important times for different faiths. A calendar of festivals can also be found on the BBC's website www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar/.
3. Obviously if an incident occurred, people who have signed up to respond need to, even if during a major religious festival. Ensure you agree boundaries about this in your plan.
4. Ensure that hospitality is acceptable to all (ie everyone can eat or drink at least some of what is available and food is clearly labelled so that nobody will be offended by accidentally picking up something which has the wrong ingredients for them).

5. Think about providing space in meetings or training for people to withdraw and worship or reflect if they need it (eg a quiet room).
6. You do not have to be hugely literate about other faiths, but you should ensure you are not dangerously illiterate. There are many good and simple guides to other faiths around (some of which are listed in the Key Documents section Half an hour's reading can spare months of distress).
7. Be equitable (eg neutral venues or moving round different communities for meetings).
8. Be sensitive to dress code. Some currently acceptable dress items for women and men may not be acceptable to some communities, and in fact may be perceived as deeply offensive.
9. Wearing your own religious symbol is fine, usually, but bear in mind the potential for misunderstanding. The swastika, for example, is a symbol of life and the holy for some ancient near eastern religions and many new age faiths; for Jews, it is a continual reminder of the Shoah, or holocaust, and wearing a swastika may be seen as a means of reinforcing the attempt to deny the Jewish people any right to identity.
10. The Inter Faith Guide (see Contacts and Resources at the end of this document) provides more guidance on some of these issues.

Case Study: Sharing good practice across communities

In one North London borough, the Catholic Churches have developed a network of emergency contacts based on the Dean. There is good working with the police and local authority and this was tested during the London bombings.

Following this, the three London Roman Catholic dioceses in collaboration with Barking & Dagenham Primary Care Trust are working together to develop a means of mobilising emergency responders, co-ordinated by local deans, when needed.

The Dioceses are developing a model which can be rolled out to faith communities.

Genuine and uncomfortable multi-faith approaches

A genuine multi-faith approach means that people come from their diverse belief backgrounds, in an atmosphere where they are joining together for some common aims. People are not asked to leave aside their faith traditions and understandings when they come to the table. Instead, they are asked to think through what, in their faith tradition, makes them want to engage with the emergency planning agenda and lend their skills and support.

Emergency planners need to avoid at all costs developing an approach which means faith communities cannot be open and honest about their faith and the reasons from which they are working.

There are some basic tenets for a genuine multi-faith approach:

1. An equality and diversity statement that everyone can sign up to is a really good idea, based around how they serve people they come across in an incident.
2. Do not assume you cannot welcome everybody to a religious festival (eg Christmas or Channukah or Diwali). You can, but you need to do it sensitively and inclusively. So Christmas greetings are fine if Eid greetings are done too. The multi-faith calendar helps you with this. You'll find that such festivals help to bond people
3. Encourage people to discuss and share with each other why they want to become involved from their tradition.
4. Ensure that a basic ground rule of the faith communities process is that we respect each others' traditions, and that we do not have to leave aside our own to join with others in working together.

Sometimes emergency planners may, from a sense of wishing to avoid offence or to be seen as being unequal, attempt to keep individual faith issues out of any process or meeting. Most faith communities will not be offended by talking about other faiths if they have a sense that the process and discussion is equitable and their faith will be included in discussion when appropriate. This might, for example, enable discussions around body processing as part of a mass fatality plan or influenza pandemic to be discussed more sensitively.

For this reason, the person from your emergency planning team leading work with Faith Communities needs to be comfortable in working with people of faith.

Case Study: From Community Safety to Community Responders

In one local authority the Community Safety Partnership has an already established Faith Network for community safety. The local authority and Fire Brigade are currently working with this Network to develop a network of trained community responders for emergency planning. The Faith Network organises events and venues for training and this ensures that all faiths participate and are represented.

Being a good corporate citizen to faith communities

Emergency planners often have a range of resources which can help faith communities engage with the process, and the basics of approach can be considered as coming within being a good corporate citizen. The following ways of engagement might be considered:

1. Can you provide secondments into the Emergency Planning team for members of faith communities so that they can learn, or observe your work?
2. Can you provide some basic training?

3. How can you link with other areas of your agency (eg volunteering co-ordinator, training unit, equalities team) to ensure that everyone's agenda is met and that the capabilities of faith communities are developed?
4. Develop some understanding of their needs in doing the work eg do bills need to be paid quickly or perhaps some funding agreed in advance?
5. Can you provide some basic funding to help the Faith Communities Group run?
6. Can you help link them to other people and resources in your agency that will help them deliver their role more effectively? (eg can you design and print the Faith Communities Emergency Plan for them? Can you link them to health and safety advice if they are providing rest centres? Can you help them get grants or support to upgrade premises if they are to be used as control rooms?)

Consider how you can, at no or relatively little cost, provide resources which may be out of the means of faith communities but can help them perform their role more effectively. Statutory bodies usually have infrastructures which can enable this. The fact that this is being done as part of collaboration under the Civil Contingencies Act is sufficient justification for you to do so.

Case Study: Building Capacity from the beginning

In one local authority there is a Faith Forum which is still developing. The local authority, Primary Care Trust, Police and Council for Voluntary Service have invested a great deal of time in building the Forum.

An attempt to find a faith community to lead on emergency planning found that none of the communities had the capacity to lead. The agencies have commissioned another faith community with established emergency planning expertise, outside the Borough, to develop a model for sharing knowledge and skills with the Faith Forum members, and develop their capacity this way. This approach was felt to be both respectful of the needs of communities and likely to produce an authentic model for development.

At the same time, the local Primary Care Trust developed a programme of awareness and vaccine uptake for seasonal flu, planning events in mosques, churches, the temple and the Gurdwara. The PCT used the seasonal flu issues to raise awareness among faith communities that they have a role in supporting elderly and vulnerable people in seasonal flu and found most faith communities have a means of supporting people in one way or another. The PCT then raised the issue of a flu pandemic with the Muslim, Sikh and Christian communities. These communities are currently planning a study event.

A grieving population: the contribution of faith communities

Most major incidents bring with them important consequences for the mental health, spiritual health and general well-being of those involved, directly or indirectly. The effects on survivors and workers, their loved ones and colleagues is well documented. The pastoral care role of faith communities in such circumstances is also well documented and well used by many areas.

With some incidents – such as the July 7th London Bombings, the Paddington Rail Crash and the Lockerbie plane bombing in December 1988 to name a few – the psychological and spiritual challenges spread far beyond even those indirectly involved to affecting entire populations. In such cases, the risks of future prolonged mental ill-health, tensions between communities and even populations moving away from what can be seen as a “tainted place” may be significant.

This goes well beyond the concept of pastoral care, to providing an important means for an entire community or population to make sense of, heal and obtain resolution from a major traumatic event. This is shown, for example, in memorial and other rites following the Paddington and other rail disasters. Making available public spaces (eg places of worship) for organised and informal public grieving can be hugely important in helping a community move on and foster social cohesion where there is a risk of blame and tension.

Emergency planners need to bear in mind and use the important skills and expertise among faith communities in organising and delivering – in a way which respects and protects participants – rites of passage for substantial numbers of the population and in particular memorial services, remembrance rites and individual and group funerals.

Care and disposal of those who have died: understanding the needs of faith communities

The particular concerns of faith communities in relation to dying, death and disposal, and in particular funerals, burial and cremation, in which the faith communities have a major involvement, needs to be approached sensitively. It is important that emergency planners should approach this proactively, before the event, if possible.

Ensuring that arrangements for those who have died are both effective in civil resilience terms and respectful of the beliefs and sensitivities of faiths has been a long-standing concern for both emergency planners and faith communities alike. In 2005 the Home Office and Cabinet Office produced *The Needs of Faith Communities in Major Emergencies: Some Guidelines*²⁴. This document emphasized the need for emergency planners to be aware of the specific needs of faith communities in terms of bereavement, loss and grieving:

It must be remembered that it will not only be survivors, casualties, deceased victims and bereaved families who will be affected by a major incident: the needs of workers, responders and affected communities should also be taken into

account. It is likely that a major incident will involve people from differing faiths, religious and cultural backgrounds. Responsible agencies must ensure, wherever it is possible to do so, that due consideration is given to the specific associated needs at the time.

In the aftermath of an incident, there will be many things to do. As has already been shown, faith communities can help in many of these. The issue of processing fatalities, however, needs to be considered carefully and approached sensitively. Emergency planners need to think through carefully where faith communities can contribute without compromising legal, forensic, infection control and health and safety demands.

Given the demands of the law, it is suggested that the first ethical duty which Emergency Planners have is around body disposal and discharging their legal function safely, effectively and promptly. A second ethical duty is to treat the dead with due respect and dignity. A third ethical duty is to be honest about what can and cannot be done with faith communities in relation to their specific needs and concerns. There is, it is suggested, no ethical duty to compromise the law to meet the needs of one faith or all.

When faced with the strength of emotion and pain from those who are bereaved, the emotional urge to seek to relieve someone else's pain can be enormous. It is important that emergency planners remain committed to these ethical duties, because promises on body disposal which cannot be kept will only create greater pain, grief, confusion and anger in the long run.

In discharging these ethical duties, emergency planners and faith Communities need to have a clear rationale for what can and cannot be done. Negotiating with faith communities in advance about any mass fatality plan, or the body disposal arrangements for even a comparatively small fatality incident, may stave off difficulties later.

It is important that emergency planners find a means of balancing the forensic, health and safety and public health requirements of the state and its concerns, and the faith communities and their concerns, in the aftermath of an incident. The state will have concerns ranging from detection of crime (hence the bombing sites after 7/7 became crime scenes and the bodies of the dead had to be processed accordingly) to public health (body disposal in a flu pandemic or disposal of contaminated bodies after a dirty bomb.)

The faith community will be concerned about the disposal of the dead and treatment with due dignity according to their religious practices and law.

Christians may be less likely to be concerned than some other faith communities about the practical impossibility, in certain circumstances, of adhering to particular customs with regard to the treatment of the body, but they are likely to be concerned that there will be a fitting funeral rite, wherever possible.

Most faith communities will expect, in all permissible circumstances that there should be provision for a simple funeral and committal.

In the UK, emergency workers and emergency planners are noted for the way in which fatality planning tries to balance the forensic, public health and logistic challenges of dealing with large numbers of bodies, while maintaining a relatively high standard of dignity for the dead and for relatives. To this extent, a foundational level of honouring and respecting the remains of a person exists. This needs to be clearly explained to faith communities and where appropriate this message needs to be given by local leaders.

Some communities including Jewish, Muslim and other faiths, will have specific laws and customs concerning the care of the dead. Washing, timing of funerals, means of disposal and so on are all important and may have varying levels of prescription. This is not just a concern for Muslim or Jewish communities. In the aftermath of an incident, all faith communities will be concerned about the treatment of the physical remains of their loved ones. All faith communities require that these be treated with a minimum of dignity and respect.

Four scenarios are suggested in the table below for planning purposes, each of which presents different levels of challenge and increasing risk of social tension and adverse media coverage if not handled sensitively.

| Scenario | Salient Features | Issues | Suggested Action for EPOs |
|--|--|---|---|
| Business as usual or near business as usual with minimal delays. | Bodies are processed almost always in accordance with faith communities wishes. | Very Few. | Leave to funeral directors unless otherwise needed. |
| Struggling but coping. | The flow of bodies means the system slows down and struggles to cope | Can some bodies be prioritised for early disposal? Can the system be adjusted to cope? | Suggest EPOs have a fatality plan which encompasses this Possible short term extra capacity may relieve this, or agreeing with funeral directors that some of them will deal with specific faiths The coroner and mortuary could have someone liaising with faiths which need specific provision. |
| Mass fatality. | Usual system overwhelmed. | Faith communities specific needs around disposal are highly unlikely to be met Prioritising bodies of one faith above another would create significant social tension Forensic needs may mean lengthy delays. | Explain situation honestly and constraints Work with communities to find an accommodation (eg mortuary becomes holy place temporarily, worship space is provided for nearby, assure communities bodies are treated with dignity.) Consider what accommodation can be done (eg can post mortems be observed?). |
| Public Health Risk eg CBRN (dirty bomb) or other risk (a closed casket may be required, for example, where a faith usually disposes of the body in a shroud.). | The bodies cannot be disposed of through usual means and may require special disposal. | Faith communities specific needs around disposal are highly unlikely to be met. | Work with public health or health protection agency to explain the issues. See if NHS can get someone from same faith community to explain the health issues. Consider with faith community what can be done safely. |

There are some key principles for dealing with this:

1. It is important to be honest from the beginning. Explaining the situation and the constraints that places on dealing with the dead may help the faith communities to respond proactively. If the needs of a specific faith community are not going to be met in a particular type of incident (eg a dirty bomb) then it is vital to say this so that the communities can find ways of mourning and grieving. The psychological impact on a family and indeed a whole community where they feel the body has been withheld contrary to their sacred laws can be devastating.
2. Engage faith communities in the fatalities plan at a resilience forum level, or indeed at a regional level.
3. Begin from the perspective of showing dignity and respect to the remains of all those who have died.
 - a. Ensure that all those who will be engaged in this understand this. There are some specific common sense things which can be done, and in some cases may already be in place for forensic reasons:
 - i. Ensure no one eats, drinks, washes or goes to the toilet too near the site, even after it has ceased to be a crime scene or incident site.
 - ii. Work with the faith communities to create a worship space nearby with appropriate support.
 - iii. Consider whether the site can be publicly regarded as a sacred space even during the immediate recovery of bodies, working with faith communities. This can be done simply by the way the on-site Bronze control, and Gold and Silver deal with the media (eg actively saying in their condolence messages that the site is regarded as both sacred and a crime scene.) This need not disrupt the processing of the site, but may emphasise the dignity with which those who have died are treated.
 - iv. Should those handling bodies cover their heads if practical (eg by means of a skull cap or other covering)?
4. Develop a plan for fatalities which is shared and discussed, and explains the essential processes in the context of legal duty and obligations and of a fundamental level of respect for the dead.
5. Encourage faith communities to think **theologically** through the issues. It may be that their scholars can come to a position through study of their sacred scriptures and traditions which can, if not entirely accepting what must happen, at least seek to understand it. This is especially important for the “not business as usual” scenarios described above. Emergency Planners should also consider how they support faith communities in organising a theological seminar to deal with this.
6. Develop some understanding about limits of what can be done within the requirements of the agencies processing the incident site in advance or very quickly after an incident. This was so during the London Bombings, where great efforts were made to retrieve the body parts of the dead and ensure all parts belonging to a person were united²⁵.

- a. Develop some guidelines about what can and cannot be done.
 - b. Share these and consult with faith communities, making clear the parameters of responsibility.
 - c. Be honest about what can and cannot be done.
 - d. Encourage faith communities to discuss with each other the guidelines.
 - e. Where possible have suggested procedures standardised and written into operating procedures.
7. In some cases there may be a need for specific sensitivity. If a place of worship is an incident site, respecting the religious traditions may still be possible. It may be as simple as ensuring heads are covered while collecting body parts.

The importance of information cannot be underestimated. But it is equally important to avoid statements like “we cannot let you bury the bodies in the usual way because it is not hygienic.” This adds insult to injury. A much better way is to explain contamination or other obstacles which prevent the usual forms of burial, and then explain why, for reasons of contamination, a specific course of usual burial cannot be done and that this is so for public safety. Then describe what **will** be done towards meeting the faith community’s particular needs and concerns.

Ultimately, it may not be possible to do everything or even most things which a faith community expects. This may result in tension. But even if this is the case, following the principles above will ensure that the Emergency Planners have been honest and proactive, and have discharged their ethical duties to the faith communities in this regard.

5. Resources and Contacts

Contacts for emergency planners

These were checked at the time of writing.

The Faith Communities' Consultative Council

Department for Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU
t 020 7944 4400
f 020 7944 4101
www.communities.gov.uk

Key documents

Local Government Association (2002) ***Faith and Community: a good practice guide for local authorities***. www.lga.gov.uk

Home Office Faith Communities Unit (2004) ***Working Together: Co-operation between Government and Faith Communities***. www.communities.gov.uk

The Needs of Faith Communities in Major Emergencies (2005) Home Office and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
www.ukresilience.info/upload/assets/www.ukresilience.info/faith_communities.pdf

Contingency Planning and Disaster Recovery Guide

www.contingency-planning-disaster-recovery-guide.co.uk/

A guide for agencies wanting to recover from major incidents

A Guide to the Civil Contingencies Act

www.ukresilience.info/ccact/index.shtm

Resources for emergency planners

Church of England Diocese of Bath and Wells Major Incident Plan

www.bathwells.anglican.org/leadershipdigest/pages/major_incident.php

Catholics in Healthcare – Resources Page

www.catholicsinhealthcare.org.uk

Responding to Major Incidents: A note of reflection for the Church.

Produced by Jim McManus for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales

in response to the London Bombings. From jim.mcmanus@bdpct.nhs.uk or liz.taite@cbcew.org.uk

Surrey Churches Major Incident Plan

www.cofeguildford.org.uk/html/major%20incident%20plan%202002.pdf

Charities Disaster Recovery Network

Can help charities and voluntary groups plan for recovery from disasters and major incidents affecting their business

www.charitylogistics.org/cdrn/category_index.php?id=6

Luton Borough Council Emergency Plan Website

Has a useful explanation of emergency planning issues including a short section on clergy roles.

www.luton.gov.uk/internet/policing_and_public_safety/accidents_emergencies_and_safety/emergency_planning/Civil%20emergencies%20-%20Trauma%20Support%20Services#

BBC Religion Page

www.bbc.co.uk/religion/

BBC Multi Faith Calendar

www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar/

Religions in the UK 2007–10

Produced by the Multi-Faith Centre at the University of Derby.

From mfc@derby.ac.uk

Other key documents

*Northwest Regional Development Agency (2003) **Faith in England's Northwest: the contribution made by faith communities to civil society in the region***

www.nwda.co.uk

*Northwest Regional Development Agency with DTZ Piedad Consulting (2005) **Faith in England's Northwest: Economic Impact Assessment***

www.nwda.co.uk

*McManus, J (2001) **Friends or Strangers? Engaging Faith Communities in Community Safety**. London: Nacro. Available at*

www.crimereduction.gov.uk/partnerships34.pdf

*Church of England (1997) **Guidelines for Faith Communities when Dealing with Disasters Brodie Publishers 1997** £5.00 + £1.44p&p This can be ordered from the Emergency Planning College. For enquiries telephone 01347 825007.*

Looking After One Another: The safety and security of our faith communities, produced by the Inter Faith Network, in consultation with the Commission for Racial Equality, the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Chief Fire Officers' Association

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- 23 www.ukresilience.info/upload/assets/www.ukresilience.info/ep_chap_05.pdf
- 24 Home Office and Cabinet Office (2005) *The Needs of Faith Communities in Major Emergencies: Some Guidelines*. London: Home Office.
- 25 In some cases this may not have been possible. Very small parts of human tissue may have been attached to flying fragments and debris which, after penetrating one person, embedded themselves in tunnel walls or penetrated other people, bringing with it risk of blood or tissue borne infections. For this reason the post 7/7 public health register was set up, to identify survivors with penetrating injuries who may have been exposed to particles which had first penetrated other peoples' tissues. But it is still important to try as much as possible.

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