



EXERCISE EQUINOX

21st to 22nd September 2010

POST EXERCISE REPORT



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Exercise Equinox

Post Exercise Report

Exercise Name: Equinox
Year: 2010 **Quarter:** 3
Dates: 21st to 22nd September

The document is structured on the following lines.

1. Introduction
2. Executive Summary
3. Basic details
4. Evaluation section
5. Acknowledgements
6. Other documentation references
7. Abbreviations used in the exercise and report



Contents

1	Introduction	5
2	Executive Summary of Recommendations	5
	Top-line issues and recommendations	5
3	Basic details.....	8
3.1	Brief Overview	8
3.2	Aim.....	8
3.3	Objectives	8
3.4	Scope:.....	8
	Key arrangements and plans in focus.....	8
	Functions in focus (* relates to Day 1 only).....	9
3.5	Key hazard references.....	9
4	Evaluation section.....	10
4.1	Assessment of overall objectives	10
	General Objectives.....	10
	Shared Specific Objectives.....	11
	Agency-Specific Objectives	16
4.2	Operational Lessons learned & recommendations for action.....	19
	1. Command and Control Issues	19
	2. Inter-Agency and Operational Communication Issues	27
	3. Public Information Issues.....	31
	4. Care for People Issues	33
	5. Scientific and Technical Issues.....	36
	6. Other Issues	37
4.3	Exercise planning & delivery – Lessons Learned	38
	1. Exercise Sponsorship and Ownership	38
	2. Aim and Objective Setting	38
	3. Exercise Administration	38
	4. Scenario Development	39
	5. Participant Buy-In / Perceptions.....	40
	6. Exercise Play / Dynamics	40
	7. Exercise Control (Day 1 only).....	41
	8. Evaluation and Debriefing Procedures	42
5	Acknowledgements.....	43
6	Other documentation references.....	44
6.1	Exercise Planning.....	44
6.2	Umpire reports	44
6.3	Risk assessment	44
6.4	Exercise finance	45
6.5	DVD/Photographic Material	45
7	Abbreviations used in the exercise and report	46

1 Introduction

Exercise Equinox was a two day multi-agency exercise aimed to test the resilience of key organisations in dealing with a major maritime incident off the coast of Dumfries and Galloway and its far-reaching consequences. It was the culmination of a 4-year Dumfries and Galloway SCG exercise programme and part of the MCA's national exercise programme.

With over 500 people involved, the Day 1 exercise to assess the first 8 hours of the emergency response was the biggest live emergency exercise to take place in the region since 1994. The Day 2 table-top exercise explored the medium term response and longer term recovery issues and involved approximately 100 delegates and Directing Staff.

The exercise was an overall success in terms of presenting realistic challenges to participants and a valuable opportunity to assess existing arrangements across a broad range of capabilities.

As with every exercise there are learning points to address in order to enhance resilience in future. The Executive Summary of Recommendations below highlights the most important learning points to address. The body of the report provides further details of the nature, scope and content of the exercise followed by post-exercise feedback, findings and recommendations.

2 Executive Summary of Recommendations

Top-line issues and recommendations

1. Different centres of operation – Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG), Salvage Control Unit (SCU), Tactical Support Group (TSG), Incident Control Post (ICP) etc. – were unable to gain a sufficiently up-to-date common information picture regarding unfolding events and associated decision-making.

Recommendation 1a:

Partner organisations must explore options for a common information-sharing framework that better supports multi-centre command and control. More vigorous pursuit of NRE implementation could make a significant contribution to enhancing effectiveness in this regard.

Recommendation 1b:

Local Category 1 partners should explore options for providing responding staff with facilities for accessing home organisation systems when people are operating from locations away from normal base.

2. The decision to locate SCG and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell (STAC) close to each other proved beneficial in terms of facilitating linkage between them. However, communication facilities for both were recognised to be in need of considerable enhancement and use of Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) HQ Conference Room also impacted adversely on the FRS's own strategic management of the incident.

Recommendation 2:

While recognising the need for flexibility, SCG and STAC should continue to be located adjacent to each other whenever practical but within a facility that has far greater communications connectivity, the ability to link with remote centres through video/teleconferencing and that allows members to work effectively between SCG / STAC meetings.

3. It was identified that links between SCG and SCU were less frequent than desirable.

Recommendation 3:

While recognising that location and type of incident will entail retaining appropriate flexibility, to explore options for enhancing links through:

- specific liaison responsibilities between the respective groups (and representation on each that helps achieve this)
- introduction of appropriate ICT provision (video-conferencing, common rolling log, use of NRE)

4. The relationship and respective roles and responsibilities of STAC and the national Environment Group (EG) on Day 1 (Equinox A) were unclear, and communication between them not sufficiently joined up – separation of environmental from other scientific & technical issues is an obstacle to providing rounded advice to SCG and SCU alike; the joint working on Day 2 in respect of considering longer term issues was seen to be beneficial. The national impetus behind the creation of STAC as a concept was the need to balance considerations from different areas of expertise.

Recommendation 4:

Further exploration is needed of how environmental considerations relating to a maritime incident can be effectively integrated with other scientific and technical considerations to enable SCG and SCU to base priority decisions on expert advice distilled from all angles that has been considered jointly in a balanced manner.

5. The response to the media was effective once established but was very slow getting off the ground, and related expertise was spread very thinly, with some key points of contact having to multi-task to an undesirable level.

Recommendation 5a:

Better resourcing of MES media response is required, both in terms of media-handling expertise and adequate support staff. This is particularly the case for situations where multi-centre response to the media is needed and further training is required so that **all** staff recognise how soon the media will become involved and the importance of a continuing timely and effective response from the very outset.

Recommendation 5b:

Explore mutual aid options in respect of the MES media response (neighbouring expertise, COI etc.) to provide both more resilience and greater sustainability of response for protracted emergencies.

Recommendation 5c:

Explore the potential for greater use of pre-prepared generic material and / or templates that will facilitate the early release of appropriate information.

6. The decision for the TSG to encompass the functions required of a Shoreline Response Centre (ShRC) was seen to be successful.

Recommendation 6:

Consolidate the learning as appropriate and endorse through discussion with Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) for consideration of adoption by other areas.

7. National organisations occasionally have understandable difficulties in providing the levels of resource / support to multiple SCGs. This applies in two respects:
- Resolving resource conflicts for local working groups and exercises
 - Simultaneously resourcing various groups / locations during a real event, particularly where a situation cuts across more than one SCG.

Recommendation 7:

In recognising the pressures arising from downsizing public services at local level, raise the issue at national level through appropriate channels / fora with a view to:

- exploring options for central assistance and enhancement of mutual aid/support to achieve greater resilience
 - exploring opportunities for making appropriate use of technology to overcome barriers to liaison
 - investigating options for redistribution of resources
 - pursuing greater cohesion between national and local exercise programmes to reduce conflicts of resource for both planning and delivery of exercises.
8. The refusal to allow a ship into a port with people at risk on board was inconvenient to the desired progression of the exercise, but more importantly prompted calls for greater clarity regarding the respective authority of the SOSREP, SCG Chair and Harbourmaster, and more prompt dissemination of information about the way in which such decisions are reached and the advice on which they are based.

Recommendation 8:

The decision-making process needs to be explored to establish any lessons that can be learned and any related guidance that needs to be issued for potential situations of this kind, particularly with regard to the information flow between harbourmaster, SOSREP and SCG Chair.

9. There are no guidelines currently in place regarding the point at which the SCG chairing organisation should change as a result of recovery issues beginning to taking precedence.

Recommendation 9:

Partner organisations that are most likely to chair the SCG (Police, Council, Health Board) should consider the pros and cons of any declaration about moving from 'response' to 'recovery' with a view to clarifying any associated protocols that are required for inclusion in MES documented procedures

3 **Basic details**

3.1 **Brief Overview**

Exercise Equinox was a 2-day major multi-agency exercise within the MCA and D&G SCG exercise programmes comprising a live exercise on day 1 (21st September 2010) and table-top on day 2 (22nd September 2010).

Day 1 (Equinox A) embraced short term response for the first 8 to 9 hours of an incident involving a ferry and a container vessel. The names of the vessels for the purpose of the exercise were P&O European Mariner and Happy Valley respectively. Key elements were Search and Rescue, handling survivors, counter pollution and public information.

Day 2 (Equinox B) was a major multi-agency table top exercise within the MCA and D&G SCG exercise programmes. It followed on from the live exercise to embrace ongoing response issues and medium to longer term recovery issues. Key elements in the exercise were ongoing humanitarian assistance, counter pollution and salvage, public information, investigations and other recovery issues.

3.2 **Aim**

To evaluate the inter-agency response and recovery (medium and longer term) in relation to a major maritime incident affecting Dumfries and Galloway in order to capture and incorporate potential local or national enhancements to planning, training and resourcing for similar incidents within a safe learning environment.

3.3 **Objectives**

The objectives are addressed in section 4.1 and divided into:

- General objectives
- Shared specific objectives
- Agency-specific objectives.

General objectives for both days are broadly similar however * identifies objectives specific to Day 1 only with ** identifying those specific to Day 2 only.

Agency-specific objectives relate to Day 1 of the exercise only.

3.4 **Scope:**

Key arrangements and plans in focus

The exercise embraced the following core areas:

- SCG management
- Tactical co-ordination
- Integration of Offshore/Onshore Management
- Counter pollution and salvage
- Humanitarian assistance
- Public information
- Inter-agency communication.

In addition Day 1 and Day 2 focussed on the following core areas:

Day 1

- Search and rescue
- Ship-to shore evacuation and transfer
- Handling fatalities and casualties

Day 2

- Business continuity and economic recovery
- Investigations

Functions in focus (* relates to Day 1 only)

Management teams	Activities	Centres / units
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategic Co-ordinating Group	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Activation / alerting*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council Emergency Centre
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Incident Control(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Warning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Force Communications Centre*
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Control(s)*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fire Control*
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tactical Support Group	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Media	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ambulance Control*
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comms team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sheltering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maritime Rescue and Co-ordination Centre*
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Care for People team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evacuation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hospital
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Logistics team	<input type="checkbox"/> Decontamination	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rest centre
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Operations team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site clearance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Friends/relatives centre
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Investigation/ Identification*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Access control	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survivor reception centre
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scientific & Technical Advice cell (STAC)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Casualty processing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Media briefing centre*
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Search and Rescue*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian Assistance Centre
<p>Other (advisory cells, specialist activities, specialist units) :</p> <p>Shoreline Response Centre functions to be embedded within SCG / TSG</p> <p>Salvage Control Unit</p> <p>Marine Response Centre (notional on Day 1)*</p> <p>On-board decision support systems*</p> <p>(MRCC at Greenock to include associated liaison arrangements with relevant Strathclyde SCG Cat 1 orgs)*</p> <p>Environment Group (Scotland)*</p>		

3.5 Key hazard references

<p>H15 – Maritime pollution</p> <p>HL34 – Fire flooding stranding or collision involving a passenger vessel in or close to UK waters – evacuation</p> <p>HL8 - Fire flooding stranding or collision involving a passenger vessel in or close to UK waters or on inland waterways</p> <p>(Originally specified and replaced by HL34 / HL8: DG2 – Major passenger ship fire requiring partial or complete evacuation / abandonment)</p>

4 Evaluation section

4.1 Assessment of overall objectives

(As detailed by Players, Observers, Umpires, Directing and Planning Staff)

	OBJECTIVE	Main Players/ Agencies	3=Fully met 2=Largely met 1=Partly met 0=Not Met	Comments
<p>General Objectives To assess:</p>				
1.	The joint working of D&G MES partners and participating national organisations with regard to major incident command and control arising from a maritime emergency.	All Cat 1 organisations Commercial operators Advisory organisations	2	<p>Within each individual group (SCG, TSG, SCU, ICP, FCPs etc) agencies on the whole worked well together.</p> <p>Some difficulties arose in establishing and maintaining good communication flow between the different groups due to the distances between them.</p>
2.	The working of the D&G SCG in relation to an incident remote from Dumfries.	All Cat 1 organisations Commercial operators Advisory organisations	2	<p>The SCG was an effective and focussed element of the D&G MES. The strength of the existing close working relationship between the public agencies in D&G was very evident and was commented upon by national agencies</p> <p>Chairing was effective, leadership was first class and decisions were achieved by consensus.</p> <p>Some difficulties were encountered in establishing and maintaining effective working with Stranraer-based groups and are addressed in Section 4.2. Locating the incident away from Dumfries was therefore valuable in helping to identify a number of resource challenges.</p>
3.	Awareness of key roles and responsibilities in the setting up of a maritime emergency response.	All Cat 1 organisations Commercial operators Advisory organisations SOSREP	2	<p>Key organisations worked well in respect of awareness of respective remits, ownership of issues and response management structures.</p> <p>Key groups were established appropriately – SCG, SCU, ICP, TSG/ShRC – but adequate representation from individual organisations not always achieved.</p> <p>Organisations with a maritime focus and those with a landside focus were</p>

	OBJECTIVE	Main Players/ Agencies	3=Fully met 2=Largely met 1=Partly met 0=Not Met	Comments
				<p>not always mutually aware of their respective key response groups and related responsibilities. Communication links between them were not always successful.</p> <p>Some Liaison Managers and representatives within the TSG revealed a certain lack of awareness of roles and sources of expertise available; the need for ongoing related training is noted.</p>
<p>Shared Specific Objectives To assess:</p>				
4.	* Alerting and response procedures	All	2	<p>Alerting arrangements within organisations generally worked well but difficulties arose in certain areas with regard to alerting between organisations, with some key organisations not being notified appropriately.</p> <p>A Major Incident was declared without difficulty but some lack of clarity was noted regarding activation of MES.</p>
5.	* Incident Control Post functionality	All Cat 1s	2	<p>Comms within ICP amongst organisations worked well with regular meetings and well-organised, informative and structured briefing. Some key organisations were either not represented or inappropriately represented.</p> <p>Well-maintained tactical decision log and on-going situation reports made hand-over at the end of the day relatively straightforward.</p>
6.	Tactical level response integration in relation to different centre of operation and between Incident Control Post and Tactical Support Group.	All Cat 1s	1	<p>Links were established between ICP and TSG but not well understood. Liaison Managers did not seem to have up to date reports (or much contact) from ICP.</p> <p>Basing the incident in Stranraer helped identify a number of resourcing issues for some agencies.</p>
7.	Communication procedures and protocols between emergency services,	All Cat 1s, SAR assets, commercial	2	<p>Internal links were tested and generally worked well but various recommendations in section 4.2 relate</p>

	OBJECTIVE	Main Players/ Agencies	3=Fully met 2=Largely met 1=Partly met 0=Not Met	Comments
	relevant authorities and commercial operators.	operators		to the need to enhance inter-agency links.
8.	Co-ordination of public information provision.	MCA, Police, Council, P&O	1	Public information was largely related to media aspects during the exercise, apart from the provision of valuable public information statements to the public in the care for people centres that were opened. Where preparation of public information statements took place within mixed groups it gave an appreciation of other people's perspectives.
9.	Management of the response to media demands. 	MCA, Police, Council, P&O	2	The simulated media outputs, presence of actor journalists and simulated press conference brought an appreciable degree of realism that put pressure on public information staff to engage in good examples of notional play and proactive approach to responding. New MES public information arrangements were in place for the exercise and brought identifiable improvements Insufficient resources were available to deal with Public Information related issues in an emergency involving a response requirement in both Stranraer and Dumfries.
10. *	Communication interoperability.	All Cat 1s, SAR assets, commercial operators	1	Email, blackberry and laptop communication used effectively. Potential for inter-service use of Airwave not fully exploited. Lack of interoperable computer-based information exchange readily apparent
11.	Co-ordination of the response and deployment of assets to a major Search and Rescue Incident.	MCA, SAR flights, ARCC, MIRG	3	SAR went relatively smoothly, with effective MRCC tasking of SAR assets and evidence of good communication in the co-ordination of the ongoing response in conjunction with MIRG, Gannet and ARCC.

	OBJECTIVE	Main Players/ Agencies	3=Fully met 2=Largely met 1=Partly met 0=Not Met	Comments
12.	<p>Local implementation of the MCA National Contingency Plan in response to an actual occurrence of or threat of coastal oil pollution MCA, Police, Council.</p> 		2	<p>SCU was set up in an appropriate time frame.</p> <p>There was clear identification of expectations by MCA and partner organisations.</p> <p>As far as the timescale allowed, ShRC functionality was successfully integrated within the TSG's remit in accordance with local arrangements. Further exploration of how ShRC functions are covered by TSG and Functional Teams in the longer term would be beneficial.</p> <p>It was recognised that there is a need to brief harbour masters regarding their role in a multi-agency response, especially on communication, media and health & safety.</p> <p>(A conscious planning decision was taken not to include the setting up of a Marine Response Cell within the scope of the exercise.)</p>
13.	The interface between SOSREP (and SCU) and local SCG.	SOSREP, MCA, Police	1	<p>There was significant delay in establishing contact between SOSREP and SCG and only one conversation between them. The length of SCU meetings was perceived as a contributory factor as SOSREP was unavailable for long periods.</p> <p>Strategic intentions were agreed by both SCU and SCG but not disseminated to all who needed them. The benefits to participants gaining insight into the workings of the SCU were noted but there is still a need for landside organisations to have better awareness of the role and powers of SOSREP.</p>
14.	The callout, response and operation of a STAC / EG in relation to a maritime incident.	NHS, MCA, SEPA, FRS	1	<p>Some uncertainty was apparent with regard to the mechanisms by which a STAC would be called.</p> <p>The core STAC members were assembled within a reasonable time frame once the decision to activate a STAC was made.</p>

	OBJECTIVE	Main Players/ Agencies	3=Fully met 2=Largely met 1=Partly met 0=Not Met	Comments
				<p>The close proximity of SCG and STAC helped communication of advice to the SCG. Other groups which would benefit from scientific and technical information did not receive it.</p> <p>It was agreed that there should be more integration between the STAC and EG. The distance between them on Day 1 was problematic. Their co-location on Day 2 for the tabletop showed the benefits of joint working.</p>
15.	<p>Humanitarian assistance arrangements for significant numbers of survivors and casualties arising from evacuation of a passenger vessel.</p>	<p>NHS D&G, SAS, Council, voluntary organisations</p>	1	<p>A community sensitive approach was apparent throughout. It was a strength of the discussion observed between SCG members and underpinned by the work of the Care for People Team (CfP) within the Council Emergency Centre (CEC) and at the humanitarian assistance centres established.</p> <p>CfP Team work within the CEC was excellent and briefings from TSG kept everyone up to date with current information and possible scenarios Both a Survivor Reception Centre (SuRC) and a Family and Friends Reception Centre (FFRC) were set up. Arrangements were hampered by ICT problems, but staff were largely successful in overcoming setbacks through utilisation of fall-back procedures.</p> <p>The respective roles of Police and Council within the centres were not properly understood.</p>
16.	<p>The channels for obtaining professional and technical advice available from multi agency groups.</p>	<p>All orgs</p>	2	<p>The learning from expert advice and input available was beneficial. There was a great deal of inter-agency discussion and engagement by participants.</p>
17.	<p>Ferry port emergency plans.</p>	<p>Stena, P&O, MCA, Council, Police,</p>	2	<p>Good Care for People provision was established by both shipping companies at their respective terminals.</p> <p>There was good liaison between statutory responders and commercial</p>



	OBJECTIVE	Main Players/ Agencies	3=Fully met 2=Largely met 1=Partly met 0=Not Met	Comments
				<p>operators at forward controls (but no representation of ferry operators at tactical level or at SuRC).</p> <p>Ports own plan and involvement in incident control and site control and casualty bureau worked well .</p> <p>Facilities and access for arriving responders largely successful but conflicts arose over location of SCU and parts of FCP functionality.</p> <p>Location of the rendezvous point at Cairnryan Hall car park was good, but its management needs to be improved.</p>
18. *	Contingency plans of participating ferry companies.	Stena, P&O, MCA		Reception facilities for arriving evacuees were generally successful at Stranraer and Cairnryan ports.
19.	Off-shore fire and rescue service command, control, liaison and deployment. 	MIRG, MCA, SAR flights	1	Once an initial delay in the arrival of MIRG had been overcome, fire-fighters were deployed effectively by helicopter onto the Mariner.
20. *	Off-shore to land-based handover arrangements.	MCA, Police, MIRG, D&G FRS, P&O	1	This was severely constrained by an unexpected decision to stop the ship coming into port at the expected time. The available window for the target activity was too compressed for it all to take place but a good handover document was produced and passed to the exercise management team.
21.	Multiple agency investigation of incident causes and consequences.	MAIB, FRS, SIO	1	<p>Good inputs from specialists in evidence from MAIB, FRS, SIO.</p> <p>The early appointment of SIO and SIM was noted as excellent practice. The Inv Cell went on to be a crucial element in ensuring the responding community had a firm grip on casualty information and investigative</p>

	OBJECTIVE	Main Players/ Agencies	3=Fully met 2=Largely met 1=Partly met 0=Not Met	Comments
				<p>processes.</p> <p>The SCG should consider further learning events based on multiple casualty scenarios, in order to develop all agencies' understanding of investigative roles within major incident response.</p> <p>Consider more fully the requirements for defensible decision making process (public interest basis).</p>
<p>Agency-Specific Objectives To assess:</p>				
22. *	Operational level co-ordination via Police Incident Officer (PIO) role.	Police	2	<p>Excellent element of the exercise, exploring multi-agency operational command issues comprehensively.</p> <p>Different agencies noted good communication at FCP on the whole once initial chaos overcome and meetings between partners established. Most partners present from early on.</p> <p>Difficulties obtaining wider picture of what was happening, but logs and situation reports well-used.</p>
23. *	<p>Force Communication Centre (FCC) in relation to initial co-ordination role</p> 	Police	2	<p>Some resource/accommodation and communication issues identified.</p> <p>Some difficulties occurred in respect of handover processes between FCC and ICP and with regard to clarity over how the initial management of a major incident will be structured with FCC / Police Command Room.</p>
24. *	The SAS Special Operations Response Team and Emergency Medical Dispatch Centre on the arrangements and response to a maritime emergency with potential	Ambulance	N/A	EMDC did not participate therefore Excon had to facilitate this part of the exercise play.

	OBJECTIVE	Main Players/ Agencies	3=Fully met 2=Largely met 1=Partly met 0=Not Met	Comments
	decontamination implications.			
25. *	Communication flow with other agencies and the EMDC.	Ambulance	N/A	As above
26. *	Staff awareness of their key roles and responsibilities within a maritime incident.	Ambulance	3	All Staff and managers worked well and utilised Scene Management Kit to good effect.
27. *	The professional and technical advice available from multi agency groups.	Ambulance	3	Sharing of Information, PIO and Tactical meetings worked well.
28. *	Understanding of practices, routines and preparedness.	Ambulance	2	A maritime incident is not normal business: lessons were learned re use of Liaison Manager at Greenock MRCC.
29. *	Liaison, commonality and procedural understanding in relation to a multi agency response.	Ambulance	2	Good integration with partners agencies, although very resource intensive.
30. *	GCH major incident control arrangements.	NHS	3	<p>There was very positive feedback all round regarding the plan at GCH being fully tested within the exercise scenario parameters and working well, with everyone involved (around 70 NHS players) understanding their role and remit within the plan.</p> <p>The hospital control centre was established efficiently and managed well. Communications between key players were good. Establishing 'zoning' for patients in the hospital was managed particularly well with staff appropriately taking lead of the particular areas.</p> <p>The response arrangements and staff worked in a positive and flexible way to ensure the best care and outcomes for the casualties.</p>
31. *	Exercise Triage arrangements.	NHS	3	<p>Triage was carried out effectively.</p> <p>The established triage arrangements worked well and positive comments were provided by the casualties highlighting the efficient and professional manner in which staff carried out their duties.</p>



	OBJECTIVE	Main Players/ Agencies	3=Fully met 2=Largely met 1=Partly met 0=Not Met	Comments
32. *	Exercise the Emergency Department Information System (EDIS) major incident procedures.	NHS	2	The EDIS system is well established in some areas and has been a recent development in others, including the GCH in emergency response mode. Some minor adjustments were needed on the day but satisfactory outcomes were obtained. A number of training requirements were identified and these will be addressed in the near future.
33. *	Call-out, response and operation of the NHS Major Incident Medical Management and Support team (MIMMS).	NHS	2	Exercise Equinox was the first opportunity to test the MIMMS team arrangements, and this was apparent in the assessment of how these arrangements work and fit with other existing arrangements. Much learning and benefit will be drawn from experience of Exercise Equinox in regard to MIMMS.
34. *	Liaison arrangements between SEPA and other members of the multi agency response and the flow of important information.	SEPA	2	SEPA developed and delivered all salient information in relation to the exercise. A single point of contact was used to control information flow between SEPA officers and this worked well. Interface with external partners was at times difficult.
35. *	Awareness of key roles and responsibilities in the context of a maritime emergency response.	SEPA	3	All SEPA staff were pre briefed and were aware of the anticipated roles of other agencies.
36. *	Response to an actual occurrence of or threat of coastal oil pollution.	SEPA	2	The lack of an appropriate alerting cascade hindered the initial response for some exercise players.
37. *	Involvement in the established structures of Integrated Emergency Management and Command and Control.	SEPA	3	SEPA was effectively represented at all the relevant groups during the exercise.
38. *	Benefits of practical experience and familiarisation with internal and external procedures.	SEPA	3	SEPA personnel found the exercise to be of benefit, working with a well developed exercise scenario in a multi agency setting.

4.2 Operational Lessons learned & recommendations for action

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
1. Command and Control Issues					
1.	Following the request to establish an SCG there were delays in some organisations being called to attend and some were never notified.	Review alerting and callout arrangements specific to establishing SCG meetings.	SCG Secretariat	June 2011	
2.	MCA, Police and Council liaison.	There is a need for those organisations with a maritime focus and those with a landside focus to continue to develop mutual awareness of key response groups, the roles and responsibilities within them and to further enhance the communication links between them.	MCA / Police / Council	Ongoing	
3.	<p>SCG strategic objectives were largely implicit rather than explicit. Strategic issues emerged as matters of discussion and action from the SCG meetings but were not agreed from the outset of the first meeting, nor were they recorded in the Minutes or other document of record.</p> <p>Standard SCG/TSG agendas worked well.</p>	<p>Need to establish effective Situation Assessment mechanisms which address the three strategic stages WHAT, NOW WHAT, SO WHAT, with consequent benefits for formulation and dissemination of strategic intentions (overall, public information, investigation etc.).</p> <p>Adjust focus of SCG record keeping to reduce the need for detailed 'Sit Rep' content of the Minutes and to improve the recording of decisions and the rationale for any decision.</p> <p>Convene appropriate working group to develop templates.</p>	<p>Police, SCG PC</p> <p>SCG PC</p>	<p>June 2011</p> <p>June 2011</p>	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
4.	Administrative support for the SCG was limited and contributed to the fact that circulation of information was inadequate.	<p>Formalise the means by which strategic intentions and decisions (along with rationale) can be adequately recorded and disseminated to all who need them (e.g. ICP, TSG, SCU).</p> <p>Explore the need for enhancing administration and communication provision to the SCG.</p> <p>Convene appropriate working group to develop templates.</p>	Police, SCG PC	June 2011	
5.	The use of the FRS Conference room was not an appropriate facility for the SCG; senior officers had inadequate links to their own communication frameworks and staff and no available office space for use between meetings. It also left FRS without recourse to their normal facilities for strategic management of their own service.	To look at a dedicated facility for the SCG.	D&G Constabulary	June 2011	
6.	Links between SCG and TSG were good. Physical links and three minute briefings significantly speeded up TSG meetings.	Embed procedures used within MES documentation.	SCG PC	June 2011	
7.	Command and Control information did not always filter down to operational level.	Explore communication chain between different levels and use of appropriate technology.	All organisations	June 2011	
8.	While a Major Incident within the police service was declared without difficulty there was some confusion surrounding the means by which the MES should be activated.	SCG partners should review their formal alerting relating to major incident and MES activation, with a view to achieving simplicity & resilience 24/7.	FCC and partner organisations	June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
9.	<p>ICP was set up fairly quickly and good relationships were apparent. There was real willingness to work together.</p> <p>Most partner agencies were represented at meetings, but the absence of MCA for the first two was problematic given some of the key issues involved. The eventual presence of an MCA press officer only partly resolved this. The ferry operator was also unable to send a representative to Tactical co-ordination meetings.</p> <p>Good inputs from specialists in ICP is crucial, as evidenced by the value provided by MAIB, FRS, SAS, SIO situation reports in ICP.</p>	<p>D&G MES partners (the D&G SCG) seek every opportunity to maximise the benefits of well-developed relationships through simulation, especially at tactical & operational levels.</p> <p>MCA to explore the means of achieving early liaison with shore-side responders at tactical level to ensure preparations for receiving people being brought ashore are managed in an integrated manner.</p> <p>SCG to explore the potential for ferry operators to become more fully integrated within command levels, bearing in mind the risks articulated within the D&G Community Risk Register.</p>	<p>TEL group</p> <p>MCA and partner organisations</p> <p>MCA / Police / Council / Stena / P&O</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>TBD March 2011</p> <p>June 2011</p>	
10.	<p>Keeping on top of incoming information at the ICP was problematic with information coming into individual areas in live time, and speaking to partners was difficult. Chaos for the first couple of hours, but meetings eventually began to work.</p>	<p>The SCG to review the technical means of communication between centres of operation across a major incident response as part of its resilient telecommunications strategy and embed that strategy through learning events.</p>	<p>Comms Team</p>	<p>June 2011</p> <p>Dec 2011</p>	
11.	<p>Logs and situation reports at the ICP kept people informed and provided the basis for a relatively straightforward handover at the end of the day.</p>	<p>The SCG should capitalise on this example in considering good practice. Situational awareness is a challenge during every major incident and the prerequisite for appropriate situational assessment.</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<p>Green</p>

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/ amber/ green
12.	There was a lack of a common perspective rolling log in some centres (STAC, SCG, SCU, ICP). Distance between different centres is always problematic and the lack of access to a rolling log was an issue in respect of Command and Control.	Explore ways of providing a common information picture through a shared log which is accessible across the various command centres and support cells.	Comms Team	June 2011 Dec 2011	
13.	The Tactical Commander provided a briefing to the SCG Chair prior to the first SCG meeting. However, SCG did not subsequently provide the Tactical Commander with a statement of strategic objectives within which to operate.	The requirement for mutual information exchange between SCG / ICP / TSG should be formalised and the means provided for achieving it effectively through appropriate communication facilities.	SCG Secretariat	June 2011	
14.	Neither the SCG focus on the situation nor the Tactical Groups' reports were an adequate 'Situation Assessment'. Rather they were a comprehensive tactical situation report – missing was a strategic assessment of what the emerging situation meant for the strategic direction of the operations.	In terms of the Scotland approach to Situation Awareness the 'What' and 'So What' were confined to individuals' contributions to discussion; conduct of meetings needs to address the 'Now What' to a greater extent. Incorporate appropriate material in agendas / checklists.	Response Group Chairs /secretariats	June 2011	
15.	Regular meetings at the ICP generated confidence but the Tactical Commander required an environment with adequate space for the full complement of agencies, away from the noise. The Investigation Cell was co-located with other parts within the ICP.	Setting up of an ICP needs to consider the needs of the Tactical Command, ongoing response management activity and the Investigation Cell.	Police	June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
16.	<p>There were conflicting views about the location of the Fire Tactical Commander (even within comments from FRS personnel).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Fire Tactical Commander was initially drawn into FCP, which took him away from managing the incident, and sent a subordinate officer to the ICP, with the latter initially reluctant to exert authority within the group. This indicates a possible need for an extra person. The situation rectified itself when the Fire Tactical Commander arrived at the ICP shortly later. Fire Service Silver Commander needs to be based around FCP/ICU rather than be in Silver Command. An FRS rep can attend silver for the whole period with FRS Silver Commander attending briefings as necessary. <p>Similar differences of opinion were expressed about who liaises at ICP from the ambulance service.</p>	<p>It is recognised that not all responding agencies deal with command and control in the same way, but D&G SCG should consider the need to establish shared expectations and a commonly understood approach for multi-agency co-ordination and representation when the need arises. Levels of authority are a key component of effective decision-making.</p>	First Responder Group	June 2011	
17.	<p>Because the FCP had been set up at the point designated for the SCU this resulted in FCP being relocated.</p>	<p>Allocation of port facilities in such a situation to be reviewed and circulated to response organisations.</p>	P&O, Stena	June 2011	
18.	<p>The communication flow between SOSREP, SCU, SCG, EG, STAC and Harbour Master left much to be desired in relation to the entry of the ship into port. The dynamics, the</p>	<p>Explore the communication flow and dynamics between the parties concerned with a view to ensuring all are fully aware of which responsibilities reside</p>	MCA, SOSREP, Police, NHS, Harbour authorities	June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(s)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
	decision-making processes and respective roles and responsibilities involved were not clear to everyone and related information not circulated in a timely manner.	where and so that key information is circulated in a timely manner to all interested parties within and beyond these groups. Summarise and circulate roles and responsibilities.			
19.	Confusion over the Mariner's entry into port prevented MIRG being able to hand over to D&G FRS for fire fighting and rescue activity, thereby frustrating FRS objectives to save life and put the fire out.	Further exercise opportunity to be sought to look at handover of fire fighting responsibilities to D&G FRS.	Strathclyde FRS / D&G FRS	June 2011	
20.	Having the STAC and SCG located close to each other was beneficial in terms of reducing time overheads and providing a quicker flow of information. It was noted that STAC is an advisory cell and not a decision-making group.	The close proximity between SCG and STAC should be embedded within future arrangements. Further related training. Clarification of roles and responsibilities within core documentation.	Police / NHS TEL group SCG PC	June 2011	
21.	Information flow between STAC and groups other than SCG (TSG, SCU, EG) was not effective.	Pursue greater clarity of the relationship and communication between STAC and TSG.	NHS / TSG Chair	June 2011	
22.	There are only a small number of Coastguard personnel within D&G. Therefore there was an identified need for liaison officers within the MRCC from the blue light services. The police representative being the only blue light liaison officer remaining within the MRCC by early afternoon.	Firm arrangements need to be embedded regarding appropriate representation of other services at MRCCs covering D&G coastline (Greenock / Liverpool) and associated communication links between MRCC and D&G centres of operation.	Police, FRS, SAS, Council, HM Coastguard	June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
23.	The nature of the incident meant that a considerable number of different groups needed to meet and work together. Not all agencies were adequately represented within some meetings either through them not being invited or through inadequate resources.	<p>Check lists to be in place to ensure that core members of each group (e.g. SCG, SCU, STAC) are alerted.</p> <p>Agencies should review their arrangements for response staff representation at key functions and to explore options for remote communications to be used where physical deployment proves difficult.</p>	Group secretariats	June 2011	
24.	The timing of meetings often clashed or left inadequate space for consideration or action between meetings for people who needed to attend different ones. Control was lost during parts of the exercise due to level and depth of multi tasking of those involved.	<p>Greater consideration to be given to establish an appropriate 'battle rhythm' between different meetings, though a prerequisite for achieving this is a better information sharing framework.</p> <p>To be covered in future exercises. Appropriate references to be included in core documentation.</p>	TEL SCG PC	Included in exercise schedule	
25.	Handover from FCC to ICP wasn't clear, resulting in continuing operation by both.	Examine handover processes between FCC and ICP to ensure proper demarcation between respective functions during an emergency.	Police	June 2011	
26.	A number of transitional and practical issues as well as matters of resourcing were not adequately considered in moving from response into recovery.	<p>The Chair of the Recovery Group should be involved in the TSG from the very early stages of any incident and play a more active part in the dialogue about the transition from response to recovery.</p> <p>Explore whether a more formal transition is required or not and the implication of any associated protocols</p>	Council Recovery Working Group	June 2011 June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(s)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
		<p>Pursue better understanding of what costs might be recovered by various agencies and role of insurers.</p> <p>Revise Recovery document in light of lessons learned.</p>			
27.	Liaison between police and hospital did not make any mention of whether casualties might potentially be witnesses to a criminal investigation or crime scene.	Ensure training covers this issue.	Police, NHS, TEL group	June 2011	
28.	<p>The GCH Plan specifies how to manage the hospital's helipad. Personnel from the MCA embarked on controlling the Helipad area in a manner that was not routine practice, nor part of the hospital plan. The coastguard team did not report to command at the hospital at the hospital and respective roles were not clearly defined.</p>	<p>Clarify and agree the role of MCA on site.</p> 	NHS, MCA, RAF, RN	June 2011	
29.	The RN Rescue Helicopter circled over Stranraer Academy before landing at GCH. It was established that the helicopter had co-ordinates of the former landing site.	Correct landing site information.	RN, NHS	Dec 2010	Complete
30.	Communication difficulties were experienced by MIMMS team and their leader and some confusion arose over their deployment. There was a lack of awareness of the role of MIMMS generally and no specific guidelines for their role in the event that they are requested by the hospital controller to provide support in the Emergency Department.	<p>Incorporate MIMMS procedures into Major Incident Plan.</p> <p>Clarify and disseminate the role of MIMMS.</p>	NHS, SAS	June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
31.	Having salvors and insurers involved in the exercise was beneficial in raising awareness of their role in this type of scenario.	Continue to promote the interface between salvors/insurers etc with multi agency response groups. Pursue better understanding of what costs might be recovered by various agencies. MCA to provide D&G Council with copy of cost recovery arrangements.	To be noted MCA	Feb 2011	Green
2. Inter-Agency and Operational Communication Issues					
32.	Various locations had poor signal on airwave and mobile phones (FCP, Port and SuRC).	There is a need in an emergency to ensure comms coverage for specific service providers. Consider implications of electronic communication not being available (power failure, no mobile reception, internal recipients not have mobile/email etc).	Comms ICT	June 2011	
33.	Many examples of good inter-agency communication over distance media were enhanced by the use of Blackberrys, Laptops, Airwave etc.	Wider use to be considered.	To be noted		Green
					
34.	Both over-use and unavailability of mobile phones were problematic in different ways. Mobile phone over-use in ICP was disruptive. Lack of mobile phone signal in CEC was an obstacle for partner agencies.	Explore adequate provision where a signal is required and develop protocols for use of mobile phones in command centres.	Comms ICT	June 2011	
35.	Airwave handout handsets worked. Multi agency handsets were handed out with limited use.	Further inter-agency training and development of appropriate Airwave protocols required.	Comms ICT / TEL	June 2011	
36.	Allocation of Airwave talk groups during the exercise was problematic.	Further consideration to be given once national Airwave protocols in place.	Comms ICT / TEL	June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
37.	SCU had issues with laptops not working within the building, which affected information distribution.	MCA to explore issues of remote access.	MCA	June 2011	
38.	Members of command centres were multi-tasking and this caused a loss of information and some misinformation.	Further consideration needs to be given to Command Centres having a dedicated resource for managing and supporting communications.	Comms Team, Emergency Services	June 2011	
39.	The lack of a multi agency information-sharing platform accessible from any location was an obstacle to effective communication and obtaining a common information picture.	All partners to explore options such as NRE for overcoming these difficulties and enhancing the sharing of information across all organisations.	Comms ICT	June 2011	
40.	The inability of some organisations to access home systems from key command centres caused difficulties.	Each organisation to pursue options for accessing home systems remotely especially within centres that they are likely to work from.	All Orgs, Comms Team	June 2011	
41.	The Frontworks system at the Survivor Reception Centre (SuRC) and Family and Friends Reception Centre (FFRC) did not work. The manual fall-back procedures did work well	<p>More regular training is required for staff in these centres to maintain awareness through frequent use of both the live and the training systems.</p> <p>The provider needs to advise the end users of any disruption to either the live or training system.</p>	Care for People Team	June 2011	Amber
42.	The involvement of local Elected Members and exploration of political dimension was only covered superficially.	Local Elected Members should be more fully involved in exercises of this kind.	Council EP	June 2011	
43.	No use was of made of GIS with regard to obtaining an overall perspective, e.g. the location of vessels, deployment of resources, centres being utilised and distribution of contamination.	Raise awareness of the availability of GIS capability within the Council for use by other organisations.	Comms / Logistics	June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
44.	High noise levels were an obstacle to communication within CEC.	Comms Team to explore ways of improving working environment with regards to noise with appropriate use of headsets, use of sound reduction screens etc.	Comms Team	June 2011	
45.	As a result of every specialist Emergency Planning/MES resource being based within Excon, issues were faced by individual agencies in them knowing who to contact to activate the MES. Although this was as a result of the exercise with so few EP specialists it is not unrealistic that an agency would not have an adviser available for a particular event.	Each agency should consider its resilience requirements for the absence of EP professionals and ensure that responder training is provided to appropriate levels.	All orgs	June 2011	
46.	There was an inadequate awareness of the communication framework within the CEC and an overall perception that the framework itself was cumbersome.	There should be a multi agency review of information flow within the CEC. More frequent training opportunities and familiarisation events would be beneficial and enhance understanding of roles and systems.	Comms Team	June 2011	
47.	There were inadequate links between the Incident Commander and strategic level.	Two way information flow between the Tactical Commander and the SCG chair should be enhanced by the provision of appropriate communication links such as video conferencing/ teleconferencing.	Police	June 2011	
48.	There were some difficulties in managing the scale of the incident in the Police Command Room and the relationship between this and routine business.	Undertake review of initial incident management within the FCC, exploring options for normal business being managed from command room and large scale incidents being managed from main police FCC.	Police	June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(s)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
49.	Information that STAC was given about the developing incident was sometimes conflicting or inaccurate, with the potential for serious errors of prioritisation / decision / action.	STAC needs to develop appropriate arrangements for validating information.	NHS	June 2011	
50.	Casualty lists and next of kin lists were generated from the EDIS system. These were used to formulate situation reports. Lists were generated for the Police Liaison Officer for the Casualty Bureau; it was apparent that the Liaison Officer was unfamiliar with procedures to communicate these.	Clarify Police Liaison Officer role and communication link to Casualty Bureau and produce crib sheet with appropriate training to be given to police liaison managers to make them aware of EDIS and its relevance to transfer of information.	NHS, Police	June 2011	
51.	Control room staff were not able to display all patients registered on EDIS. Some information requirement is not addressed by the Major Incident patient report.	<p>The procedure to guide control room staff in the operation of EDIS requires minor amendment to allow the display of all patients registered.</p> <p>The Major Incident patient report requires some additional fields created, e.g. gender and patient location.</p>	NHS	June 2011	
52.	Advance information regarding 'inbound' casualties to SAS and hospital could have been better	MCA to review dissemination of incident information, to include consideration of casualty info.	MCA	June 2011	
53.	SAS communication between FCP and ICP inadequate.	<p>SAS to review related liaison and communication.</p> 	SAS	June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
54.	Good briefing by comms manager in CEC to CEC staff.	Embed arrangements for briefings.	To be noted		Green
3. Public Information Issues					
55.	<p>The SCG was not presented with a clear draft media strategy by the joint agency public information group from the outset. Dissemination was also limited.</p> <p>Public Information response was far too slow at outset.</p> <p>Inadequate liaison and clarity of roles with local non Category 1 organisations.</p>	<p>Ensure that multi-agency procedures are in place to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Draft and agree public Information/Media Strategy from the outset b) Make contact with key responders to set up relationships at early stage of incident c) Engage resources from beyond local Category 1 responder organisations <p>Ensure MES Warning and Informing document is reviewed.</p>	Comms PI	June 2011	
56.	<p>The press conference at Stranraer was good (but way overdue). There were issues with the media attending other venues where there were no dedicated media professionals. The co-ordination was not evident to those being confronted by the media.</p>	<p>MES Warning and Informing documentation to reflect importance of ensuring early provision of 'Talking Heads'.</p> <p>PI Team to note the availability of the video recording of the conference as being of benefit for future training purposes.</p>	Comms PI	June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
57.	PIC role was inadequately supported. The involvement of the PIC at a large number of meetings prohibited him from taking forward specific actions. The exercise emphasised how essential this specific role is within the MES structure.	MES Public Information Sub-group to explore options for providing greater support and resilience to the role of PIC.	Comms PI	June 2011	
58.	There were insufficient staff to deal with Public Information related issues in an emergency involving two sites (Stranraer and Dumfries).	Ensure that multi-agency procedures are in place to deploy adequate resources to the most appropriate locations with minimum delay.	Comms PI	June 2011	
59.	There was insufficient IT (computers and phones) between the communications group and the media cell.	MES ICT sub-group to examine IT provision within the CEC on behalf of the communications team.	Comms ICT / PI	June 2011	
60.	The MRCC issued an initial media release without referring it to other agencies. This is normally out within 30 minutes and will not refer to partner agencies and will only report on the search and rescue facts of the MRCC. Following that they will liaise with other agencies.	MES Warning and Informing documentation to reflect this potential occurrence.	Comms PI	June 2011	
61.	Some confusion perceived on how MCA, SCG and SOSREP would co-ordinate and issue media communications.	Clarification required on interface between lead media organisation and partner media submissions. Follow up on how MCA and SCG media functions can be made compatible.	Comms PI / MCA	June 2011	
62.	Public information regarding where people should go for a SuRC/Rest Centre/FFRC/MBC etc. was lacking.	Public Information Sub Group to action appropriate template and formats in collaboration with Care for People Team.	Comms PI / CfP Teams	June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
4. Care for People Issues					
63.	<p>P&O and Stena staff dealt with survivors at their respective reception areas extremely well, looking after people and moving them on quickly. However, neither company had representatives at the SuRC.</p> <p>The medical team turned up quite late at Cairnryan.</p>	<p>Companies should discuss the need for and potential benefits of their representatives attending the SuRC and/or FFRC to provide support to clients and responders.</p> <p>Medical care provision and arrangements with relevant responders should be reviewed at the respective terminals.</p>	P&O, Stena, CfP Team	June 2011	
64.	<p>As casualty numbers & information began to arrive at ICP, the matter of reception centres became pressing. Some confusion was apparent around the distinct types of centre and respective leads and roles within different centres.</p>	<p>Arrangements regarding the nature of different types of centre and the respective roles within them should be clarified. The D&G SCG should consider further learning opportunities for police & local authority managers around this capability & the significance of related information flows.</p>	Police, Council, TEL group	June 2011	
65.	<p>The SuRC Manager was aware of his role, where the rest centre box was and the actions required. He briefed the (few) staff and volunteers he had available properly.</p>	<p>Some difficulties were directly attributable to the level of resourcing afforded by the exercise and to the school being open as normal. However, the following should be reviewed to ensure that they will be fit for purpose in a real event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staffing levels • communication facilities • representation. 	CfP Team / Comms ICT	Dec 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
	<p>The SuRC had no catering facilities and toilet arrangements were restricted due to the school being open as normal. Mobile phone coverage within the SuRC was minimal and caused communication difficulties.</p> <p>The manager and staff acted sensitively in dealing with survivors but were hampered by lack of personnel.</p>				
66.	The emergency planning box had really good supplies and resources, especially when IT failed and there was a need to revert to manual recording.	Consolidate use of 'battle boxes' and consider extending to other areas of functionality if appropriate.	To be noted	June 2011	Green
67.	Apart from registering survivors at the SuRC there was little evidence of the logging of activity. It was not apparent that appropriate communication was taking place with other centres of activity (FFRC, ICP, TSG etc).	Provide appropriate logging tools / documentation and related training so that activity within the centre and communication with other centres is recorded properly,	CfP Team	June 2011	
68.	There was considerable confusion surrounding respective roles of Police and Council at the FFRC. This gradually improved.	Arrangements regarding the nature of the FFRC and respective roles within it should be clarified. There should be further learning opportunities for police & local authority managers around this capability & the significance of related information flows (to SuRC, ICP, Casualty Bureau etc.).	Police / Council	June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
69.	<p>There was evidence of a lack of consideration of the importance of privacy in a number of respects – Council and Police representatives speaking to each other in front of relatives / friends. There was limited privacy for gathering personal information by the staff and no evidence of provision of discrete reuniting areas if reuniting had occurred at this venue.</p>	<p>Arrangements should be reviewed to assure privacy, and further training opportunities provided to reinforce its importance.</p>	<p>Police, Council</p>	<p>June 2011</p>	
70.	<p>A patient suffering a cardiac arrest meant that the exercise was suspended for a 10 minute period in line with exercise protocols. Staff managed this situation well and the exercise recommenced.</p>	<p>Consolidate use of 'Safeguard' procedure within future exercise briefing arrangements.</p>	<p>To be noted</p>	<p>June 2011</p>	<p>Green</p>

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(s)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
5. Scientific and Technical Issues					
71.	<p>Two key aspects of the MCA National Contingency Plan were consciously excluded from the scope of the exercise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine Response Cell for management of off-shore pollution issues and logistics of movement of equipment. • Receiver of Wreck, who has powers with regard to pilfering and can empower police in certain respects <p>This meant that certain areas in which logistics and operations functional teams would become involved were not explored during the exercise.</p>	Explore opportunities for assessing this aspect of NCP in future exercises.	MCA	June 2011	
72.	<p>The relationship and respective roles and responsibilities of STAC and the national EG were unclear on Day 1, and communication between them not sufficiently joined up. Having separate STAC and EG 75 miles apart was an obstacle to providing rounded advice to SCG and SCU alike on Day 1. The joint working on Day 2 in respect of considering longer term issues was seen to be beneficial.</p>	<p>Scientific and technical issues need to be considered holistically to enable SCG and SCU to base priority decisions on expert advice distilled from all angles.</p> <p>Opportunities for better integration of scientific and technical advice need to be explored in this context and formalised at both local and national level within SCG and in relation to MCA NCP arrangements.</p>	MCA, NHS, Health Protection Agency	June 2011	
73.	<p>Membership of STAC and EG is diverse and spread out, meaning that earlier discussions may have to take place over distance media.</p>	Explore requirements for better remote communication between experts able to provide technical and scientific advice.	MCA, NHS	June 2011	

ACTION REF	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION ORG(S)	TARGET DATE / MILESTONES	PROGRESS Red/amber/green
74.	More information from harbour master was needed by landside agencies.	Engage in appropriate dialogue with harbour masters and port authorities regarding their operational role and seek means of optimising communication links and liaison with other organisations.	MCA, Harbour Master, Council, FRS	June 2011	
6. Other Issues					
75.	Recommendations from MAIB in respect of Loch Ryan still not acted upon.	SCG to obtain clarification of Harbour Authority responsibilities and role in respect of Loch Ryan.	MCA, Council, MAIB	June 2011	

4.3 Exercise planning & delivery – Lessons Learned

The take-up of learning points and recommendations in this section will be addressed by appropriate organisations committing to further action under the auspices of the D&G SCG Training, Exercising and Learning sub-group. Details of action organisations, target dates and progress are therefore not listed here.

	LEARNING POINT	RECOMMENDATION
1. Exercise Sponsorship and Ownership		
a)	The extent of the work involved in planning and delivering such a large-scale live exercise was not fully appreciated.	More rigorous specification of the work involved is needed at the outset so that agencies involved can assess the time and resource commitment required against the potential benefits in relation to the duty to exercise arrangements.
b)	Staff with previous exercise experience were not sufficiently available within the core planning team.	Ensure an appropriate core of expertise is available within the planning team throughout and analyse requirements for exercise planning and development of appropriate training for less experienced members of the team.
c)	Participating agencies were not always able to commit to the desired attendance at regular planning meetings at tactical and strategic levels.	Ensure scheduled meeting plan is agreed and adhered to from the outset with key agencies represented.
2. Aim and Objective Setting		
a)	The overall aim was succinctly expressed and embraced the required scope envisaged.	Time spent on a clearly specified aim pays dividends in defining the scope of activity during planning and in assists joined up working towards a common goal.
b)	The initial list of exercise objectives was excessively lengthy; work on condensing them to a commonly agreed hierarchy of 'overall', 'shared' and 'agency-specific' reduced duplication between agencies.	Aim at a commonly agreed hierarchy of objectives, that will guide the planning team, focus efforts and provide a clear basis for an evaluation framework. Agency specific objectives should aim to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound)
3. Exercise Administration		
a)	Proper admin support for the exercise was not initially provided.	Experienced administrative support is essential and should be in place at the outset.
b)	The practical requirements for office space, staff, stationery, computer hardware, phones etc were not set out from the beginning; this resulted in the need for improvisation regarding which agencies would provide and finance resources, and meant that opportunities to include certain items in funding bids from external sources were not fully utilised.	Full consideration and assessment of all aspects of costs likely to be incurred need to be detailed to allow agencies to plan for the level of commitment required, their responsibilities to be agreed and understood, and all available sources of funding to be explored. Suitably equipped office space(s) should be identified early and available from the outset.

	LEARNING POINT	Recommendation
c)	Not all members of the core planning team could be co-located with each other all the time, leading to some difficulties with version control of material, ready access to information etc.	When co-location is not possible, explore appropriate avenues for facilitating communication between planning team members at an early stage and agree protocols with regard to information management. Use of a common platform with shared access would resolve many of the issues encountered.
d)	'Cut-off' dates and deadlines for inputs/amendments to the planning documentation were frequently not met, resulting in compression of time available for activities that of necessity come later in the planning process.	Firm control of time frames needs to be maintained. Key dates should be set and circulated with a firm commitment from management within each agency to ensure that their staff meet obligations and comply with deadlines
e)	The briefing packs could not be prepared and circulated early enough because of required information not being provided soon enough in advance of the exercise.	Ensure that all participating organisations appreciate that late submission of information has a particularly adverse effect on participants having sufficient time to prepare for the exercise.
f)	Various problems with the exercise directory meant delays in getting in touch with contacts. Some numbers were wrong and others either diverted or went to voice mail if someone was on the line. There was a degree of confusion over which contacts were 'live' players and which were notional responders from Exxon. Late submission of requested information compounded some of the above difficulties.	Ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the nature of an Exercise Directory for a live exercise is fully appreciated its importance to the success of the exercise emphasised the process of compiling it is properly resourced there is sufficient time left in advance of the exercise for testing and checking.
g)	The exercise alerting cascade system for call out purposes caused problems in contacting the correct people. The alerting process took longer due to the way that it was set up.	Two aspects need further exploration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The multi-agency aspects of the major emergency alerting process for real incidents The degree to which these need to be adjusted in an exercise in such a way as to avoid negative impact on normal business while achieving the necessary degree of realism and required 'activation'.
h)	Participants were not always clearly identified during the exercise.	Exercise badges in exercises should clearly display: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> name of individual agency represented role within exercise wherever practical.
4. Scenario Development		
a)	The eventual scenario was widely complimented as a realistic and with a sufficiently broad range of issues to provide an excellent opportunity to really test effectiveness and review both multi-agency and single agency aspects of arrangements, for both off-shore and on-shore aspects.	Recognise the benefit of engaging the necessary range of stakeholders in the planning and delivery of the exercise.

	LEARNING POINT	Recommendation
b)	Preparation of some of the 'consequence' aspects of the scenario were delayed through the envisaged earlier 'events' not being developed soon enough.	It is important for all members of the scenario development team to appreciate the scale of what is required overall and critical paths between the preparation of different stages. All must recognise the importance of developing earlier events in a scenario to a level of detail that allows those preparing material for later stages sufficient time to do so without undue pressure.
c)	The handling of the public information dimension of the scenario was challenging and preparation and delivery of simulated material, while of benefit and value, was achieved very late in the planning cycle.	<p>Ensure public information aspects of the scenario are well prepared and sufficiently in advance of the exercise for this aspect of exercise delivery to be achieved with less last-minute pressure.</p> <p>The innovative use of YouTube was a worthwhile initiative that should be utilised in future exercise so that different centres can access 'media' material simultaneously and in a relatively straightforward manner.</p>
5. Participant Buy-In / Perceptions		
a)	Commitment from senior level was viewed positively by participants. The appointment of the Deputy Chief Constable as Exercise Director was beneficial when it happened.	Senior level commitment must be secured from the outset and maintained throughout by the appointment of an Exercise Director of sufficient seniority to address and resolve risks to the success of the exercise promptly with partner agencies.
b)	The multi-agency element was important and getting key personnel from each agency together to form and support a planning team proved vital.	Ensure full and consistent membership within the planning team of key agencies with identified further support from other agencies available as required
c)	Sourcing suitable exercise venues from the outset – will network connections/telephony be problematic; is there a mobile signal on major networks?	Ensure key sites are fit for purpose and tested prior to committing them as exercise venues.
6. Exercise Play / Dynamics		
a)	Some Umpires commented that it was difficult to follow the Day 1 exercise.	Consider the need to extend umpire pre-briefing information and updating during the exercise. Pre-briefing should include sufficient detail of the scenario for them to be able to appreciate what may be happening on the wider front beyond the immediate location at which they are umpiring.
b)	Running the two days of live play and table top consecutively allowed consideration of response and consequence management issues beyond what would have been possible on a single day while maintaining the impetus of Day 1 for realistic contextualisation of the longer term response and recovery.	The split of live followed by table top proved to be a successful format that can be exploited in the future with scenarios that lend themselves to such treatment.

	LEARNING POINT	Recommendation
c)	The main facilitator on Day 2 was widely appreciated for his skills in maintaining pace and focus and engaging a broad spectrum of delegates and perspectives. One or two planning intentions were not met, but largely as a result of briefing omissions.	Regardless of the experience of an external facilitator, ensure comprehensive briefing with regard to the envisaged dynamics and weighting of target issues.
d)	The room for the table-top on Day 2 was too small for the desired numbers of attendees and table layout. Noise level during discussion sessions caused some people difficulties.	Ensure delegate numbers do not exceed desirable levels. Ensure room is adequate for desired layout and / or consider use of break-out rooms.
e)	Some felt that the table-top on Day 2 was rushed and overstretched.	View volume of material critically with a realistic eye on time frames. Consider using group facilitators to keep delegates focused and maximise use of time within groups.
7. Exercise Control (Day 1 only)		
a)	Briefing pack worked well in relation to suspension of play at the GCH when having to deal with a real casualty.	Consolidate learning from inclusion of Safeguard briefing and ensure this or similar procedures are included in future exercises.
b)	Excon for Day 1 was distributed between various rooms. While people within their various teams seemed to operate successfully, there were some problems for Exercise Director and Controllers in maintaining an overview of events and developments.	Consider carefully the location of Excon and the impact of environment and layout on successful co-ordination of the exercise.
c)	Achieving the required communication facilities for Excon proved to be very challenging and late resolution resulted in undesirable last minute pressures for the ExCon team	Relevant ITC staff need to be engaged from early in the planning process and their commitment to delivering exercise requirements understood and endorsed by their organisations.
d)	No running log of developments was available to Excon on Day 1 beyond the record of material injected. Reports from Umpires were patchy in some cases. Periodic updates from Teams to Ex Director were beneficial but limited in the amount of information they could provide.	The lack of a running log for Excon is a drawback and methods of providing ExCon with better means of keeping track of a live exercise should be considered in future.
e)	Moving all Emergency Planning Advisors to Excon was seen to be an issue, removing access to expertise. It was perceived as being very difficult having so many new people in the roles and nobody to ask advice from.	While it is recognised that this is a difficulty, it is also seen as a potentially realistic situation in an actual event, given the ever-reducing number of EP specialists. However, the issue must be considered in future exercise with a view to achieving a balance between exercise management and exercise play.

	LEARNING POINT	Recommendation
8. Evaluation and Debriefing Procedures		
a)	No ITC staff were present at the cold debriefs.	ITC feedback and availability of expertise in debriefs would be beneficial. Indeed it is required throughout the development of the exercise.
b)	Some locations went straight into a debrief when notified that exercise play was complete. Some players said they would have liked some discussion as to what each agency around the table would have continued to have done overnight into day 2.	Consider incorporating 'next steps' as a final element of live play exercise. Ensure that where this is specifically requested that it is actually carried out.
c)	The individual evaluation process proved difficult due to the format of evaluation feedback forms.	Further development needed on exercise feedback forms for future exercises linked to exercise objectives. Evaluation to be considered from the very outset of planning when formulating aim and objectives
d)	Good hot debrief at end of the day provided excellent table feedback for easy incorporation into the PXR.	To be noted for future exercises

5 Acknowledgements

Many agencies and individuals contributed to the successful planning of the exercise and provided support for its control and execution. Dumfries and Galloway SCG would like to record the essential contribution made by all staff and volunteers who contributed to these activities from the following organisations:

Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary
Dumfries and Galloway Council
Dumfries and Galloway Fire and Rescue Service
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
NHS Dumfries and Galloway
Scottish Ambulance Service
Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Scottish Government
P&O Ferries
Stena Line
Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Service
Cumbria Constabulary
Police Service of Northern Ireland
Larne Borough Council
Northumberland County Council
Ayr College
British Red Cross
Casualty Union
Salvation Army
WRVS
Aeronautical Rescue Co-ordination Centre
HMS Gannet SAR Flight.

A special note of thanks to P&O Ferries for the participation of the European Mariner and crew during the exercise and similarly to HMS Gannet SAR Flight helicopter and crew.

The SCG would also like to thank Scottish Resilience for the funding provided in support of the exercise and for practical support and encouragement provided by members of ScoRDS at various points in the planning.

6 Other documentation references

Documentation for the exercise is extensive. Key documents are listed below. For further advice on background material of interest, please address enquiries through the SCG Programme Co-ordinator at steve.hick@dumgal.gov.uk .

6.1 Exercise Planning

See following documents for key exercise planning (development) details

Exe 2010 Q3 Eq A d01 Equinox A Exercise planning document (v7).doc

Exe 2010 Q3 Eq A d02 (v12.1) Scenario MEL.doc

Exe 2010 Q3 Eq B d01 Equinox B Exercise planning document (v2).doc

6.2 Umpire reports

The umpire reports below provide underpinning detail for the report in relation to individual functions / locations. The reports can be made available upon request where there is a bona fide interest in the location concerned.

- Strategic Co-ordinating Group
- Council Emergency Centre / Tactical Support Group
- Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell
- P&O Mariner Ship (MIRG)
- MRCC
- Salvage Control Unit
- Force Communications Centre
- Incident Control Post
- Media Briefing Centre and Public Information Provision
- Forward Control Point – Stranraer / Cairnryan
- Survivor Reception Centre
- Family and Friends Reception Centre
- Galloway Community Hospital – Triage and Clinical Patient Management
- Galloway Community Hospital – Upstairs Day Surgery / Outpatients
- Galloway Community Hospital – Patient Recording (EDIS)
- Galloway Community Hospital – X-ray Department
- Investigation / Identification Cell
- P&O Customer Care
- Stena Customer Care.

6.3 Risk assessment

Risk assessments for Equinox A were carried out and submitted to the exercise planning team in relation to the functions and locations listed below:

- Dutch Barn
- Galloway Community Hospital
- Quayside No. 2
- Lower Car Deck
- Scottish Ambulance Service
- Survivor Reception Centre
- Terminal Training Room (SCU)
- Casualty
- Stranraer Fire Station
- Dumfries Fire Station
- Engine Room Fire
- Harbour.

The following document provides the risk assessment in relation to Equinox B:

Exe 2010 Q3 Eq B d03 Equinox B Risk Assessment.doc

6.4 Exercise finance

The exercise funding from Scottish Government was obtained in accordance with the following documents:

Funding bid to SG (as submitted 3 Dec 2009).doc
Scottish Resilience - Programme Expenditure - Funding Offer - DG - Exercise Equinox.doc

6.5 DVD/Photographic Material

Key areas of Equinox A were recorded photographically and on DVD. Footage and stills listed below are available upon request for bona fide civil contingencies training or exercising purposes:

Media Briefing Centre – Multi agency press conference;
News reports played intermittently throughout the day (10 reports);
A Reporter's Day – documented experiences of a reporter covering the incident;
Observer Briefing, Stranraer;
Exercise Control, Stranraer Fire Station;
Family and Friends Reception Centre, Ryan Centre, Stranraer;
Preparation and arrival of casualties at Galloway Community Hospital, Stranraer;
FCP meeting at Cairnryan;
Survivor Reception Centre, Stranraer Academy;
ICP and Quayside Responders including an environmental inspection;
Hot Debrief at Exercise Control, Stranraer Fire Station.

7 Abbreviations used in the exercise and report

ARCC	Aeronautical Rescue Co-ordination Centre
Cat 1s	Category 1 organisations as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act
CEC	Council Emergency Centre
CfP	Care for People (Team)
D&G	Dumfries and Galloway
EDIS	Emergency Department Information System (NHS D&G)
EG	Environment Group (national)
EMDC	Emergency Medical Dispatch Centre
EP	Emergency Planning
EXCON	Exercise Control
FCC	(Police) Force Communications Centre
FCP	Forward Control Point 1
FFRC	Family and Friends Reception Centre
FRS	D&G Fire and Rescue Service
Gannet	Gannet Search and Rescue helicopter
GCH	Galloway Community Hospital
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
ICP	Incident Control Post
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICU	Incident Command Unit
Inv cell	Investigation Cell
MAIB	Marine Accident Investigation Branch
Mariner	P&O European Mariner (acting as a ferry during the exercise)
MBC (D)	Media Briefing Centre (Dumfries)
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MES	Major Emergency Scheme (D&G)
MIMMS	Major Incident Medical Management and Support
MIRG	Maritime Incident Response Group (from Strathclyde FRS)
MRCC	Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre
NCP	National Contingency Plan (MCA)
NHS	National Health Service
NRE	National Resilience Extranet
P&O	P&O Ferries
PI	Public Information
PIC	Public Information Co-ordinator
PIO	Police Incident Officer
SAR	Search and Rescue
SAS	Scottish Ambulance Service
SCG	Strategic Co-ordinating Group
SCG PC	Strategic Co-ordinating Group Programme Co-Ordinator
SCU	Salvage Control Unit
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
ShRC	Shoreline Response Centre
SIO	Senior Investigating Officer's
SIM	Senior Identification Manager
SOSREP	Secretary of State's Representative
STAC	Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell
SuRC	Survivor Reception Centre
TEL	Training, Exercising and Learning working group
TSG	Tactical Support Group