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**ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE
GREENWICH**



NAFC

NUCLEAR WEAPON ACCIDENT

ORGANISATION

**DEPARTMENT
OF
NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

RESTRICTED

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NUCLEAR ACCIDENT PROCEDURES COURSE
WEAPON ACCIDENT/INCIDENT
RESPONSIBILITIES, REPORTING PROCEDURES,
COMMAND AND CONTROL

THIS MATERIAL IS FOR TRAINING PURPOSES ONLY

JUNE 1992

PLCH/31.WM

1
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NUCLEAR ACCIDENT PROCEDURES COURSE
WEAPON ACCIDENT/INCIDENT
RESPONSIBILITIES, REPORTING PROCEDURES,
COMMAND AND CONTROL

Reference: BR 4022 - Naval Nuclear Weapon Accident Procedures.

1. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Inter Service

The responsibility for UK weapons lies with the RN or the RAF. Broadly speaking the RN takes military command and control of all accidents/incidents below the high water mark and the RAF military command and control of accidents/incidents above it, regardless of who owns the weapon. However, the RN retains command and control in:

- (1) HM Naval Bases
- (2) RN Armament Depots

The Service owning the weapon will always provide such advice and assistance as may be required by the Service having command and control.

b. International

If the accident is contained within the perimeter of a base occupied by a foreign country then that country has responsibility for military command and control and render safe. However, the UK would send a small team from MOD London or AWE Aldermaston to ensure that no action is taken that may be hazardous to the UK.

Should the effects of the accident spread outside that base or the accident occur off base a joint military command and control would be set up between the foreign country and the UK. The UK would have civil command and control. The foreign country would remain responsible for render safe.

2. NUCLEAR WEAPON ACCIDENT REPORTING

The signal format is in BR 4022.

The initial signal should be given a FLASH precedence for both action and information addressees and only a few of the paragraphs need to be completed. It is essential that this signal be despatched without delay. Amplifying signals should then be sent as more information becomes available and updates should be made at a maximum of 30 minute intervals in the early stages.

The BR gives guidance on classification and addressees according to the circumstances.

3. NUCLEAR WEAPON ACCIDENT CATEGORIES

A nuclear weapon accident is defined as any unplanned occurrence involving loss (other than by theft) or destruction of, or damage or suspected damage to nuclear weapons, nuclear components or nuclear materials which has resulted in actual or potential hazard to life or property or which may have impaired nuclear safety.

a. There are two categories of nuclear weapon accident:

(1) A Category One nuclear weapon accident is one in which there are reasonable grounds for concluding that no radioactive release has occurred.

(2) A Category Two nuclear weapon accident is one in which radioactive contamination has been detected, or the nature of severity of the occurrence is such that the possibility of a radioactive release cannot be excluded.

4. NUCLEAR WEAPON INCIDENTS

A nuclear weapon incident is defined as any unplanned occurrence involving nuclear weapons, nuclear components or nuclear materials, which does not constitute a nuclear weapon accident but which needs to be reported in the interests of safety or because it is likely to attract the attention of the public or the media.

The signal format is in BR 4022.

The initial signal should be given an IMMEDIATE precedence for both action and information addressees and only a few of the paragraphs need be completed. This signal should be sent without delay and an amplifying signal sent as more information becomes available.

The BR gives guidance on classification and addressees according to circumstances.

5. COMMAND AND CONTROLa. Incident Commander (IC)

The IC is responsible for the control and management of all forces assembled to deal with the accident/incident. He is 'looking inwards' and is responsible for all actions at the accident/incident site.

BR 4022 Chapter 3 Annex A details who is to be the IC depending on the accident situation.

He must work in close collaboration with the Police, MOD or Civil. Contact with the Civil Police is normally through the MCA.

b. Alerting Authority (AA)

The Director of Naval Operations (DNO) is the Naval Alerting Authority. On receipt of the reporting signal he alerts the MOD Nuclear Accident Response Organisation, the RAF and numerous RN organisations.

c. Military Co-ordinating Authority

This is normally the Area Flag Officer for accidents ashore or the Flag Officer Having Operational Control (OPCON) for accidents at sea.

His task is to 'look outwards' and liaise with all the outside Authorities such as the Nuclear Accident Response Organisation in MOD London, Local Civil Authorities, Local Police and Emergency Services, MAFF, DOE and the press locally. In this way he relieves the IC of all outside pressures so that the latter is able to concentrate on the task at the accident site.

The MCA must send a liaison officer to the Local Accident HQ as full co-operation and understanding in this area is essential. It is possible that the LAHQ may also send a liaison officer to the MCA.

He co-ordinates the arrival of the specialist teams in accordance with the requirements of the IC.

In this task the MCA is supported by a number of specialists in addition to those on his own staff. These include:

Weapon specialists from Bath

Health Physicists from the Defence Radiological Protection Service

A liaison officer from the Nuclear Accident Response Organisation in MOD London.

A senior officer and health physicist from AWE Aldermaston who will act as a Radiation Protection Adviser with specialist plutonium knowledge.

If the vessel is directed to a port other than a Naval Base, the MCA should appoint a Shore Liaison Officer to act as his representative.

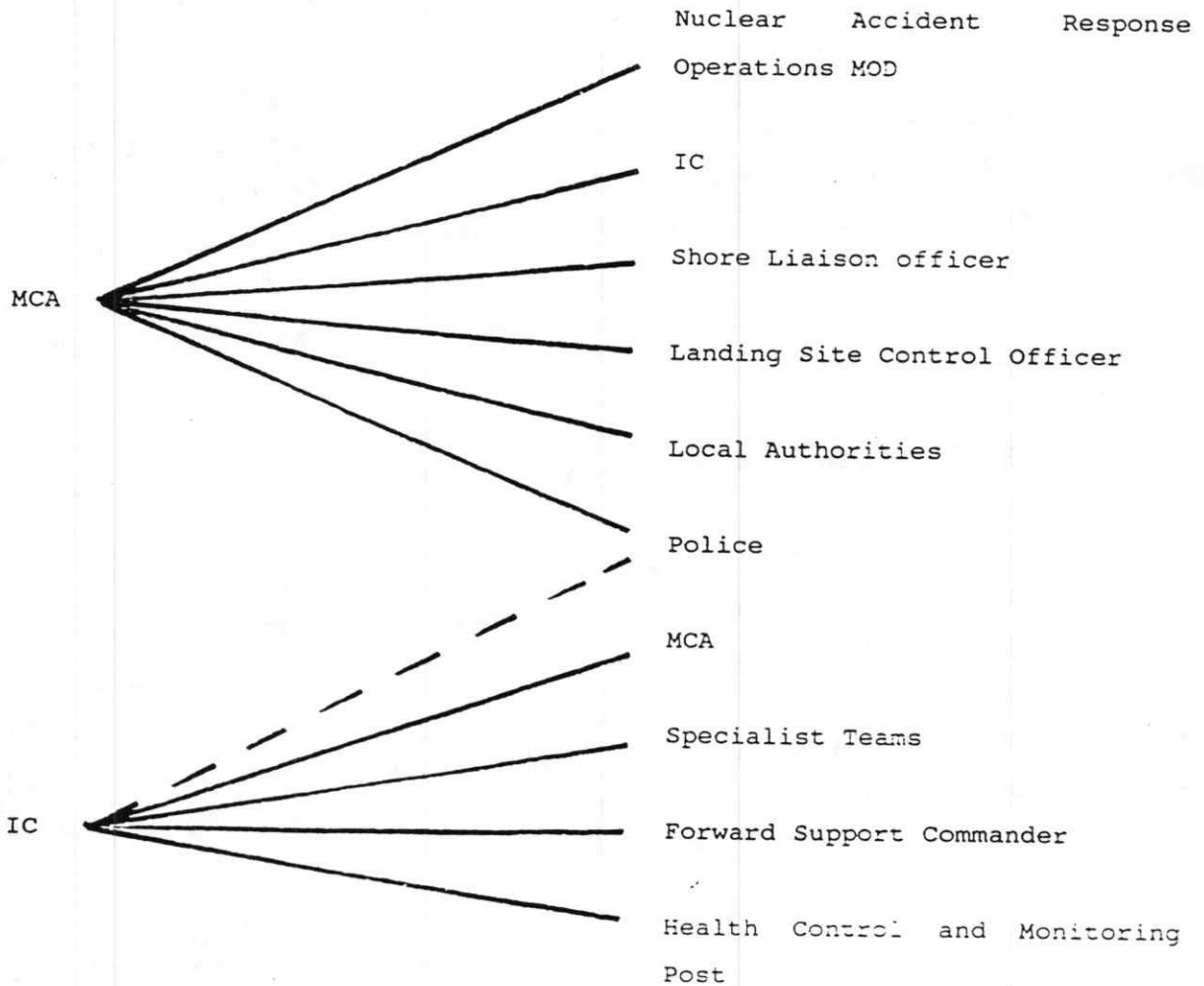
If the vessel remains at sea a Landing Site Control Officer must be appointed to take charge at each air and sea point of embarkation/disembarkation. His task is to organise all personnel going to and coming from the vessel in accordance with instructions from the MCA/Shore Liaison Officer.

6. LOCAL ORDERS

Appropriate Area Flag Officers have Nuclear Weapon Accident Orders (NUWACS) which amplify and apply the contents of BR 4022 for their particular area.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

Good communications are essential for the successful conduct of any nuclear weapon accident situation. This is especially important between the following:-



A secure Radio Teletype (RATT) facility exists in the Co-ordination Room at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Aldermaston which can be linked to any HM Ship or RFA. This system is primarily to enable the AWE Team Leader to obtain advice from Aldermaston. However, it may also be used by the Command to obtain advice before the arrival of the AWE team. The instructions for establishing this link are given in RNCP 1. (Communication Procedures).

