



TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
EMERGENCY PLANNING UNIT

Committee Report

Meeting : CIVIL CONTINGENCIES COMMITTEE : 5 July 2010

Subject : MILITARY AID TO THE CIVIL COMMUNITY UPDATE AND HMS
BULWARK MARITIME RESILIENCE DEMONSTRATION

Report of the Chief Emergency Planning Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Civil Authorities can seek assistance/support from the Armed Forces in the event of an emergency where the supply and distribution of life essentials are threatened.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of recent updates to the guidance document for requests for Military Aid; and of a recent demonstration of Royal Naval maritime capability given during a recent visit by HMS Bulwark to this region.

2. Background

- 2.1 Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA 04) neither the Armed Forces nor the wider Ministry of Defence are designated Category 1 or 2 Responders. Therefore military support is provided on an assistance basis and is known as Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA). There are no standing forces for MACA tasks thus support cannot be guaranteed and, where it is provided, is likely to incur a charge.
- 2.2 Certain incidents/events that occur in the United Kingdom require a response outside the capability of Civil Authorities and their supporting organisations. These events/incidents can fall under each of the following categories:
- natural events e.g. flooding and snow
 - deliberate actions e.g. terrorism
 - accidental e.g. Buncefield oil depot
- 2.3 Should an incident fall within any of the above categories or be so severe that the Civil Authorities are unable to effectively manage the incident, then military support can be sought. This has to be in extreme circumstances, where all avenues of normal emergency support have been exhausted and there is likely to be a detrimental affect on human welfare and the economics of an area.
- 2.4 In February 2010, the Ministry of Defence simplified its explanatory documents relating to the accessibility of Military Aid to The Civil

Community (MACC). This was achieved by the issue of an Addendum to Joint Doctrine Publication 02 (JDP 02); 'The Defence Contribution to Resilience'.

2.5 The Addendum recognises that much of JDP02 contains considerable and complex detail on calling on support from the Armed Services in support of counter terrorist operations in addition to other requests for military aid to the wider Civil Community. The criteria apply equally to all three Armed Services.

2.6 The Addendum states that requests do need to be made in the first instance through the Joint Resilience Liaison Officer at 15 Brigade, York. Wherever possible, requests need to be made in good time; and consideration needs to be given to the effect the Civil Responder wishes to achieve rather than the military assets they think defence should provide.

An example may be, "move 2 tonnes of sandbags from location A to location B by a set time, "instead of "2 helicopters to move sandbags as soon as possible." This gives Defence greater scope for selecting the most appropriate assets increasing the likelihood of success.

2.7 All three Armed Services have limited assets and should only be requested as a final resort; in all cases, the JRLO will scrutinise the request. Unless there is an immediate threat to life, it is likely that the requesting authority will incur either full or some costs to Defence.

3 The Role of MACA

3.1 MACA brings a vast array of benefits that can assist in the coordination and management of a major emergency. These benefits are largely interlinked to the Armed Forces national structure, which enables them to draw on a large pool of resources (i.e. skills, equipment, training etc) within a short timescale. These can then be used to assist in filling Civil Authorities' capability gaps within their operations.

3.2 It must be understood that the Armed Forces are funded for defence purposes and the responsibility for dealing with civil emergencies lies with the Civil Authorities, however the following specialist capabilities are available under existing standing arrangements:

- Search and Rescue
- Explosive Ordnance Disposal

3.2 In addition, other capabilities may be made available when there is a threat to life or when the community is in danger of being deprived of the essentials of life. The provision of MACA is guided by 3 principles:

1. Military Aid should always be the last resort. The use of mutual aid, other law enforcement agencies, and the private sector must be insufficient or be unsuitable

2. The Civil Authority lacks the required level of capability and it is unreasonable to expect it to develop one
3. The Civil Authority has a capability, but the need to act is urgent and there is an immediate lack of available resources, such as emergency organisation / coordination; equipment; skills; and training.

4 Types of Military Aid

4.1 The Military Aid provided through MACA, consists of three different types of operations. The diagram in **Appendix A** features the position of MACA within UK Military Operations, and describes the differing operations performed under it.

4.2 Different forms of Military Aid include:

- Military Aid to other Government Departments i.e. Fire Service Strike
- Military Aid to the Civil Power i.e. Counter - Terrorism
- Military Aid to the Civil Community i.e. Search and Rescue

4.3 Possible MACA tasks include reconnaissance, communications, mass evacuation, mass casualties, temporary accommodation, engineering tasks (e.g. flood prevention), water & feeding points, access control, search tasks, transport lift, limited operations in a contaminated environment.

4.4 Examples of MACA Deployment: MACA deployment is the exception rather than the rule and the deployment of the Armed Forces in recent times has been limited but effective. The following incidents are examples of where support has been provided under extreme circumstances:

1. Foot and Mouth
2. Carlisle Flooding
3. Fire Service Strikes
4. Gloucestershire Flooding

5 ROYAL NAVY CAPABILITY DEMONSTRATION: HMS BULWARK 29th JANUARY 2010

5.1 The Royal Navy is conducting an initiative to increase its capability profile in resilience response to the civil community. During a routine visit to Tyneside by HMS Bulwark, (a highly capable amphibious landing ship), category one responders were invited to visit the ship, which was berthed at Northumbrian Quay North Shields at 11.00am on Friday 29 January 2010, to gain an understanding of its potential capabilities in supporting the Civil Authority in a major incident.

5.2 Requests for military aid from civilian resilience responders during a major incident will still be coordinated by the Joint Resilience Liaison Officer based at Army 15 Brigade, York. It should be stressed that with

the exception of maritime counter terrorism or interdiction and only on direction from the Government (COBR), the RN contributes as part of the tri-service response under the overall command of the army.

- 5.3 The RN like the Army and RAF maintains core capabilities e.g. manpower, command & control facilities, mobility etc but by nature of their working environment possesses a number of capabilities which generally the Civic Authorities are not aware of. Routine tasks (which are carried out as day to day business) include Search and Rescue (SAR), Fishery protection, neutralising IEDs and surveying the UK's waters, portal rivers and estuaries.

Niche capabilities include specialist search, maritime counter-terrorist activity, diving and contraband interdiction; but what is sometimes not known is that all naval personnel are trained in fire-fighting, many ships have fully qualified medical staff onboard (the larger ships have operating theatres, surgeons etc) and have a comprehensive Command and Control capability. This latter aspect has been exercised with the Police (as a Silver Command) in the south-west of the UK in the recent past.

- 5.4 Equipment on HMS Bulwark includes advanced and deployable medical supplies and a small operating theatre, landing craft, heavy mobile excavation and bridge building plant, fire fighting and damage control equipment, helicopter capability and significant logistics, including bedding and emergency food. A particularly impressive and understated facility is the ability to provide complete air traffic control system for over 200 miles which could very quickly provide cover for a medium sized civilian airport should its own control systems fail.

- 5.5 All Royal Naval vessels are capable of 're- role' at extremely short notice from warships to disaster relief and shore support platforms. Examples include post Tsunami response, evacuation of British Nationals from the Lebanon and embarkation of stranded holidaymakers from Spain during the recent closure of European Airspace by volcanic ash.

- 5.6 Versatility of personnel is equally impressive. In addition to specialists within the ship's compliment, every sailor has highly trained and transferrable fire fighting and damage control skills which are exercised daily. This makes the crew of a warship, no matter what size, a considerable asset to military assistance to the civil authority if requested.

The only limiting factor is the actual presence of a warship in the region.

- 5.7 The RN is continuing to promote its resilience promotion nationwide and a future demonstration and practical exercise is likely within the next twelve months.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 MOD is a contributor to the wider Government responsibility for the safety and security of UK citizens. The level of that contribution is governed by the requirement and, crucially, on Defence's ability to undertake operations in support of the governments objectives.

- 6.2 Military Aid to the Civil Authorities can, however, make a significant contribution at times of crisis and the Armed Forces remain prepared to respond to a range of emergencies in the UK within the MACA construct. The updated guidance is a much shortened version of JDP 02 and is a handier aide-memoire for civil responders requesting military aid.
- 6.3 The Royal Navy demonstration of capability on HMS Bulwark was an extremely useful awareness raising session and demonstration of that capability.

7 Recommendations

- 7.1 Members are requested to note the contribution of the MOD to the civil community and recent updates to the MACA scheme.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

'The Defence Contribution To UK Resilience: A Guide For Civil Responders' JDP 02 - Addendum February 2010 (copy held in the EPU Offices)

