



Civil Contingencies Act 2004

2004 CHAPTER 36

PART 1

LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR CIVIL PROTECTION

Introductory

1 Meaning of “emergency”

- (1) In this Part “emergency” means—
 - (a) an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the United Kingdom,
 - (b) an event or situation which threatens serious damage to the environment of a place in the United Kingdom, or
 - (c) war, or terrorism, which threatens serious damage to the security of the United Kingdom.
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(a) an event or situation threatens damage to human welfare only if it involves, causes or may cause—
 - (a) loss of human life,
 - (b) human illness or injury,
 - (c) homelessness,
 - (d) damage to property,
 - (e) disruption of a supply of money, food, water, energy or fuel,
 - (f) disruption of a system of communication,
 - (g) disruption of facilities for transport, or
 - (h) disruption of services relating to health.
- (3) For the purposes of subsection (1)(b) an event or situation threatens damage to the environment only if it involves, causes or may cause—
 - (a) contamination of land, water or air with biological, chemical or radio-active matter, or

Changes to legislation: Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Cross Heading: Introductory is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 06 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- (b) disruption or destruction of plant life or animal life.
- (4) A Minister of the Crown, or, in relation to Scotland, the Scottish Ministers, may by order—
- (a) provide that a specified event or situation, or class of event or situation, is to be treated as falling, or as not falling, within any of paragraphs (a) to (c) of subsection (1);
 - (b) amend subsection (2) so as to provide that in so far as an event or situation involves or causes disruption of a specified supply, system, facility or service—
 - (i) it is to be treated as threatening damage to human welfare, or
 - (ii) it is no longer to be treated as threatening damage to human welfare.
- [^{F1}(4A) In relation to Northern Ireland, the power to make orders—
- (a) under subsection (4)(a) in relation to subsection (1)(a) or (b), and
 - (b) under subsection (4)(b),
- is exercisable by the Department of Justice in Northern Ireland (and not by a Minister of the Crown).]
- (5) The event or situation mentioned in subsection (1) may occur or be inside or outside the United Kingdom.

Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 1(4A) inserted (12.4.2010) by [The Northern Ireland Act 1998 \(Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions\) Order 2010 \(S.I. 2010/976\)](#), arts. 1(2), 5, **Sch. 3 para. 95(2)** (with arts. 28-31, Sch. 3 para. 110)

Commencement Information

- I1** S. 1 wholly in force at 14.11.2005; s. 1 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 34; s. 1(1)-(3)(5) in force at 14.11.2005 by [S.I. 2005/2040](#), **art. 3(a)**; s. 1(4) in force at 14.11.2005 by [S.I. 2005/2040](#), **art. 3(a)** and [S.S.I. 2005/493](#), **art. 4(a)**

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- Sch. 1 para. 11A inserted by [2006 c. 16 Sch. 11 para. 174](#) (Sch. 11 para. 174 repealed (12.1.2010) without ever being in force by 2009 c. 23, Sch. 22 Pt. 8; S.I. 2009/3345, art. 2, Sch. para 27(d))
- Sch. 1 para. 19(2)(d) and word inserted by [2023 c. 52 Sch. 17 para. 15\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- Sch. 1 para. 30(2)(d) and word inserted by [2023 c. 52 Sch. 17 para. 15\(3\)\(b\)](#)