
CHAPTER 4

The Three Tier System

4.1 As we have explained, it is essential to keep emergency command and communication systems as simple as possible, in order to provide an effective and efficient response to emergencies. Our system is designed to work with the minimum number of layers of command and control; for emergency duties to be directed by the emergency services as near to the scene of incident as possible; and for the emergency services to retain directly the responsibility and the authority necessary to respond to emergency situations within their departmental capabilities. Although more complex emergency situations will require support from other departments and agencies, especially during the response and recovery phase, it will normally be the emergency services, with the supporting agencies, which will respond to all aspects of an emergency situation. Only in extreme situations is there likely to be a need for direct overall Government involvement through the Emergency Monitoring and Support Centre (EMSC).

(A) Tier One Response (Emergency services)

4.2 The Tier 1 Response involves the emergency services operating entirely under the direction, monitoring and support of their own commands.

4.3 **Command and Control Centres (CCCs):** Emergency services departments, such as the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) and the Fire Services Department (FSD), have permanently manned command and control facilities which are able to receive, and respond to, calls for emergency assistance at any time. The usual means for the public to request emergency assistance, through 999 calls, will be received initially by these centres, which then assess the requirements of the situation and initiate the appropriate response.

4.4 **Police Headquarters Command and Control Centre (HQCCC) and Police Regional Higher Commands (RHCs):** The HQCCC is the primary command centre for the Police. It monitors incidents as they occur in the territory and keeps senior officers and the Security Bureau Duty Officer (SBDO) informed of major incidents as they develop (see para.4.6). It will co-ordinate the efforts of the six RHCs and the allocation of security services' personnel and resources. RHCs are the higher command facilities of the Police Regional Command and Control Centres through which Regional Commanders issue orders, within the framework of policy and directives received from the HQCCC.

4.5 **Fire Services Communication Centre (FSCC):** The FSCC is the centralised Command and Control Centre for the FSD. It is responsible for receiving emergency calls and despatching Fire Services resources to respond to incidents. Incident information is channelled through the 999 system to the FSCC, and requests for assistance will be dealt

with immediately. The FSCC monitors the development of incidents and disseminates incident messages (i) internally to Fire Services officers/units concerned, and (ii) externally to other Government departments and organisations, including the SBDO as required, in accordance with contingency plans and departmental instructions.

(B) Tier Two Response (SBDO and Emergency Support Unit (ESU))

4.6 There are standing instructions in the Police and FSD for alerting the SBDO about incidents which may need Government Secretariat's attention. At this stage, the Tier 2 Response will be activated. At this level, the Government Secretariat will closely monitor the unfolding of incidents through the ESU, which co-ordinates the activities of the SBDOs. Incidents coming under this category are those where the scale is likely to grow in terms of threats to life, property and security, and which may require a more complex emergency response operation. They are also likely to grow into situations which will generate significant media and community interest.

(C) Tier Three Response (EMSC)

4.7 In the event of a major incident involving widespread threats to life, property and security and where extensive Government emergency response operations are required, the Tier 3 Response will be activated. The EMSC will be activated upon the direction of the Secretary for Security or a designated senior Security Bureau official. Other security committees (e.g. the Chief Executive Security Committee and the Security Control Committee) may be convened as necessary (see paras 4.10 and 4.11 below). A flow chart describing the Government's graduated response to emergencies is provided at Annex 4.1.

4.8 **EMSC:** The EMSC is the Government Secretariat's main monitoring and support centre during a widespread or major emergency that may seriously affect life, property and security in Hong Kong. The EMSC itself is not an operational co-ordination or command centre. In discharging its monitoring role, it will work closely with other co-ordination centres such as the HQCCC and the FSCC on issues which require Government-wide attention; with the Information Services Department (ISD) on matters that have public relations and media implications; and with the Home Affairs Department (HAD) on the co-ordination of emergency relief efforts, with particular regard to facilitating victims' access to comprehensive assistance by different Government departments.

4.9 **Chief Secretary Steering Committee:** In the case of super typhoons (or other natural disasters of a substantial scale), a Steering Committee will be set up (if required) under the chair of the Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) with relevant Principal Officials as members, which will be responsible for overseeing the Government's emergency responses, as assisted by the relevant bureaux/departments (B/Ds). The Steering Committee will also be vested with the responsibilities of making recovery-related assessments (such as allowing more time for employees to return to work), according priorities in coordinating government-wide resources for clearance efforts, and making high-level policy decisions. The exact B/Ds to provide support to the Steering Committee at the recovery stage would depend on the nature

and degree of gravity of the issues to be addressed at the recovery stage. Moreover, depending on operational needs, problems encountered and circumstances involved, the Steering Committee will also be supported by the EMSC and other relevant Emergency Control/Command Centres.

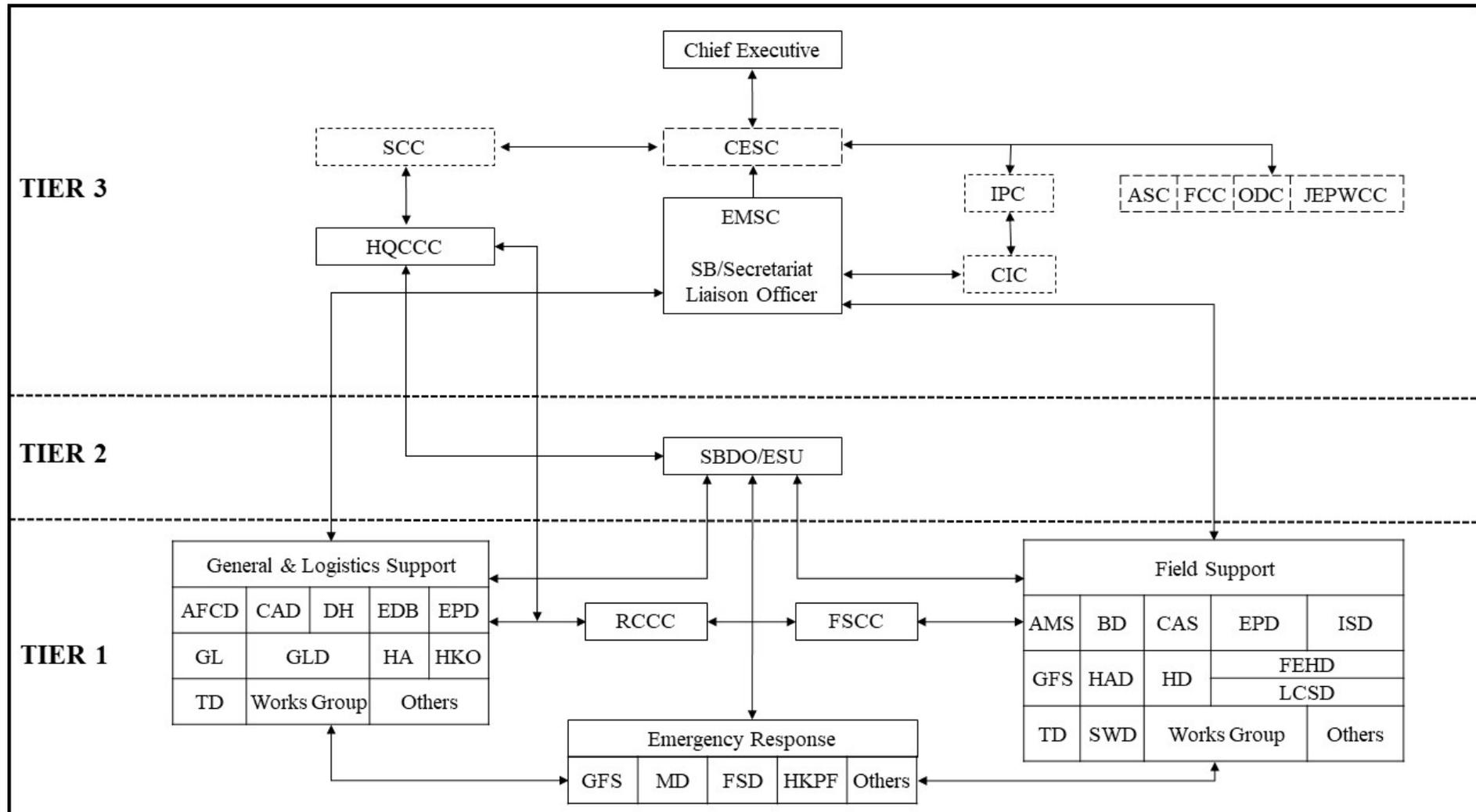
4.10 **Chief Executive Security Committee (CESC):** The CESC comprises the Chief Executive and his/her senior advisors from Government Secretariat and the Police. In the event of an extreme, prolonged and widespread emergency which seriously affects, or has the potential to seriously affect, the security of Hong Kong, the CESC will be convened to direct government security policy.

4.11 **The Security Control Committee (SCC) and the Regional Security Control Committees (RSCCs):** The CESC is advised and supported by the SCC, which is a committee comprising representatives of the Security Bureau and the Police. The SCC will advise the CESC on matters relating to the implementation of policy, and will serve as a link between the RSCCs and the CESC. The RSCCs, established at the regional level, are responsible to the SCC for the local planning, co-ordination, control and implementation of internal security and other emergency measures within their respective Regions. The RSCCs are composed of Regional Commanders of the Police and representatives of the HAD; other members may be co-opted as required.

4.12 **Civil Government Emergency Committees:** There are also a number of other emergency control committees to co-ordinate Government-wide planning and implementation of the security policy formulated by the CESC. Such committees will advise the CESC on matters relating to the implementation of security policy within their particular spheres of expertise and experience. They will act as a link between the departments, the public utilities and the CESC. These committees include the Information Policy Committee (IPC), the Aviation Security Committee (ASC), the Food Control Committee (FCC), the Oil Distribution Committee (ODC) and the Joint Emergency Public Works Co-ordinating Committee (JEPWCC). Other ad-hoc committees may be formed, on the direction of the CESC or the Chief Secretary for Administration, to deal with any major problems.

4.13 **Combined Information Centre (CIC):** The CIC, which is run by the ISD, acts as the central coordinator for the Government's information dissemination and media response efforts during a disaster. It works in close cooperation with the EMSC and with departmental Information Officers.

Flow Chart on Graduated Response to Emergencies



Note: Please also refer to the List of Abbreviation

Civil Government Emergency Committees

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Chairman</u>
Aviation Security Committee (ASC)	Deputy Secretary for Security
Food Control Committee (FCC)	Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)
Information Policy Committee (IPC)	Director of Information Services
Joint Emergency Public Works Co-ordinating Committee (JEPWCC)	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Oil Distribution Committee (ODC)	Director-General of Trade and Industry
Security Control Committee (SCC)	Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations)
Regional Security Control Committees (RSCCs)	Regional Commanders of the Police