

Country Overview	
<h2>United Kingdom</h2>	
<p><i>Legislative framework for armed forces' use for civil protection</i></p>	<p><b>2004 Civil Contingencies Act</b></p> <p>According to the 2004 Civil Contingencies Act (CCA 04), the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence (MOD) had "no statutory responsibility [...] to plan and prepare for civil crises." This has changed in subsequent years, though, and the MOD now encourages close civil and military cooperation during periods of crisis or emergencies, noting though that the deployment of UK forces should take place under exceptional circumstances and in a supporting role, not assuming leadership of the overall response to the non-military emergency at hand.</p>
<p><i>Key civilian authority/ies</i></p>	<p><b>Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS)</b>  <b>Strategic Coordination Centre (SCC)</b>  <b>Regional Civil Contingencies Committee (RCCC)</b></p>
<p><i>Armed forces branch(es) primarily involved</i></p>	<p><b>UK Armed Forces</b>  <b>Military Aid to Civil Authorities (MACA)</b></p> <p>MACA is the official term to describe instances of UK armed forces supporting civil authorities. It can only be activated when there is a definite need to act because the competent civil authority does not have the required capability, or cannot mobilize it speedily enough, and alternatives like mutual aid or resort to commercial services cannot do the job or the cost is prohibitive.</p>
<p><i>Cases of use / Good practices</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Natural disaster response and management</b>            During the winter floods impacting Cumbria, Yorkshire, and Lancashire in 2015 and 2016 the army was mobilized. Due to the high flows and repeated flooding the civil authorities' capacities struggled to restore local basic infrastructure. With military assistance transport links could be rebuilt and clear-up operations were carried out.</li> <li>• <b>2010 Icelandic ash cloud that stranded UK travellers abroad</b>            When the Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull erupted, it caused five days of flight restrictions in the UK and large parts of Europe. In order to repatriate stranded British citizens and help mitigate risks for them overseas, the Royal Navy and Air Force were activated.</li> <li>• <b>National and international healthcare support, including extensive Covid-19 response operations</b>            The growing relationship between the UK Armed Forces and civil authorities was underscored during the Covid-19 pandemic, which is considered to be the largest peacetime resilience operation ever undertaken by the UK Armed Forces. As part of the Covid Support Force, over 5,000 military personnel were committed to Covid-19 related operations in order to support National Health Service (NHS) hospitals and community testing or vaccination centres. Moreover, armed forces assisted to set up seven NHS Nightingale hospitals, or temporary critical care facilities across the UK. Additional military support included the opening of additional Covid-19 wards and providing ambulance services in highly effected communities.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Follow-up questions / concerns</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do civilian authorities and the military cooperate in emergency situations in the UK? How are decisions made and which hierarchy prevails in case of disagreement? Are joint exercises organized to smoothen such cooperation and improve preparedness and response?</li> <li>• Is there specialized training carried out for the military divisions that are deployed in disaster-stricken areas?</li> <li>• Are there entities in place other than MACA that coordinate the military deployments in disaster situations and gather practical information for future events?</li> <li>• Are there any concerns about bringing the military into civilian activities? How does the public perceive the role of the military in civilian-related affairs?</li> <li>• What about cross border cooperation with other countries' military and civilian authorities for civil protection operations?</li> <li>• What about engagement in coordination via NATO, the UN or other mechanism, e.g. the EU?</li> </ul>

*Indicative Bibliography*

- *Joint Doctrine Publication 3-52 Disaster Relief Operations Overseas: The Military Contribution*. 2016. UK Ministry of Defence  
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