



**MALTA**

**PANDEMIC INFLUENZA**

**RESPONSE**

**PLAN**

**Pandemic Preparedness Committee**  
**Office of the Prime Minister**  
**July 2007**

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**Abbreviations**

AG	-	Attorney General
CHEG	-	Communications and Health Education Group
DoI	-	Department of Information
EC	-	European Commission
ECDC	-	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
FO	-	Field Operations
LAT	-	Legal Advisory Team
MEU	-	Management Efficiency Unit
MEYE	-	Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment
MFIN	-	Ministry of Finance
MHEC	-	Ministry of Health, Elderly and Community Care
MIIT	-	Ministry for Investment, Industry and Information Technology
MJHA	-	Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs
MRAE	-	Ministry for Rural Affairs and the Environment
MoG	-	Ministry for Gozo
MPIRP	-	Malta Pandemic Influenza Response Plan
NGOs	-	Non-Governmental Organisations
NM	-	National Matrix
OPM	-	Office of the Prime Minister
PPC	-	Pandemic Preparedness Committee
PPS	-	Principal Permanent Secretary
SLT		Sectoral Logistics Teams
SPCG	-	Strategy [Planning and Coordination] Group
WHO	-	World Health Organisation

## **Disclaimer**

Pandemic influenza related information is current as at the time of publication. Consequently, changes, deletions, additions and / or other amendments may be made to this document without prior notice to reflect the new developments on this issue. Users should regularly seek to adjourn themselves with the latest information obtainable from the health authorities or on the government web sites at <http://www.health.gov.mt> and <http://www.pandemic.gov.mt>

## Preface

The *National Influenza Pandemic Response Plan* comprehensively addresses the threat of pandemic influenza and highlights the strategies and actions to be taken in preparedness and during the response of a potential pandemic outbreak.

Government has invested in the preparedness for this eventuality with the main objectives aimed at safe-guarding the health of the nation and reducing the socio-economic impact that such a societal calamity is expected to bring about. Critical investments were channeled, in particular, to our national Health Care Services in preparation of the national medical infrastructure [including pharmaceuticals] to meet the surge in health care demands and to other critical infrastructural areas to ensure sustainability of service delivery for the longest time possible during the *Response* phase.

The national *Plan* primarily focuses on the *preparedness* and *response* phases of a potential pandemic influenza outbreak and explains the roles and responsibilities of government, the non-governmental organisations together with the private sector, and also provides preparedness guidelines for society in general. The *Plan* encompasses the following key elements:

- The Command and control structure
- The national *Emergency Management Cycle Model*
- The national *Action Plan*
- The national *Health Plan*
- Business continuity
- Societal preparedness
- A socio-economic impact assessment for Malta

## **Executive Summary**

The 'Malta Influenza Pandemic Response Plan' underlines Government's initiative and commitment towards national preparedness and response in the event of a pandemic influenza outbreak. The intent of this Plan is to prepare the nation to minimize, as much as possible, the impact of a potential outbreak and expedite its recovery process.

National emergency planning demands preparedness for events and / or incidents that go beyond the normal day-to-day competence as each particular calamity – be physical, natural or health-centric – can be overwhelming in its own right. Indeed, the widespread of the H5N1 virus and its negative affect on the human population have heightened international concern over the potential mutation of this virus, which may give rise to an influenza pandemic outbreak.

In light of this scenario, the Plan provides sound national contingency preparedness planning to facilitate, guide and respond to a pandemic influenza eventuality.

### **Part I**

**The Pandemic Threat** - Delineates the three influenza pandemic epidemics that occurred during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and highlights the negative socio-economic implications that such an eventuality is expected to have on the nation today.

The section outlines the national strategic approach towards pandemic planning, preparedness and recovery and accentuates the scope of the *emergency planning cycle model*, the four colour-alert code escalation processes and the command and control structure during each respective phase.

Furthermore, it draws on the ethos behind the strategic framework, the structure of the Pandemic Preparedness Committee [PPC] and its various key stakeholders. The framework focuses on the mechanisms for coordination and, the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder in preparedness and response planning prior to, during and after the event of a pandemic outbreak.

## **Part II**

**The National Action Plan** -- Emphasises the importance of coordinated collaboration and commitment of all the key stakeholders and, describes the two-pronged approach adopted by the PPC to achieve the national Plan's matrix. This section also introduces the eleven national critical areas, and outlines how each respective area is addressed through the national matrix framework.

## **Part III**

**National Health Plan** – This section reflects 'The Health Division Influenza Pandemic Contingency Plan', which document outlines the procedures that the various departments within the Health Division will adopt during the said pandemic. It is based on the early detection and containment of the disease in Malta and Gozo. Other than the Non-pharmaceutical measures, the Health Division will maintain the Primary Health Care setting as the main responder, with the hospital catering for secondary referrals. Antivirals and the pandemic vaccine will be used to limit the progression of disease.

#### **Part IV**

**Business Continuity** - This section briefly outlines the purpose and contents of the *Guidelines for Business Continuity* document. The document is meant as a general reference to business entities / organisations and is based on criteria, which focuses on the provision of essential operations / services for as long as possible, on the expedition of disaster recovery and on the resumption of normal operations post pandemic.

#### **Part V**

**Societal Preparedness** - This section refers to ethos behind the *Guidelines for the Wellbeing of You and Your Family* document. This document aims to provide specific and comprehensive guidance on avian influenza and pandemic influenza preparedness to ensure that the general public is adequately prepared for such an eventuality.

#### **Part VI**

**Pandemic Influenza: A Socio-Economic Impact Assessment for Malta** - The objectives of this study are to project the possible impact an influenza pandemic outbreak would have on the national economy and, to help the local policymakers to plan and prepare for such an eventuality.

#### **Part VII**

**Additional Information** - This section lists all the publications produced by the PPC in terms of pandemic influenza preparedness and the national web link.

It also provides the web sites of other national and international organisations that can provide information on avian influenza [bird flu] and pandemic influenza.

## **Part I**

### **1.0 The Pandemic Threat**

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were three pandemic influenza virus epidemics; the first outbreak occurred in 1918, when the Spanish Flu claimed around 40 million lives worldwide. This was followed by another two outbreaks in 1957 [with 1 to 2 million deaths world wide] and in 1968 [with 700,000 deaths world wide] respectively.

In recent years, a new threat concerning the H5N1 or avian influenza virus has re-emerged, with Hong Kong recording its first human case infected with the H5N1 virus [avian flu] in 1997. Although, to-date [March 2007] avian influenza [bird flu] has rapidly spread across Asia, Europe and Africa it is still considered mainly to be an animal disease, in view of the fact that the reported human infected cases were generally associated with individuals who came into direct contact with infected birds. However, should the virus develop the ability for sustained, efficient, human to human transmission, it could well possibly mean the beginning of the next influenza pandemic and, which could easily and rapidly spread around the world.

Pandemic influenza has no boundaries. Considering our size and geographic position, it is likely that in the event of an outbreak, the disease will spread nation-wide in a very short time once it reaches our shores. Furthermore, it is also possible that our surrounding neighbouring countries will also be experiencing the same negative pandemic impact, and therefore we may also suffer severe consequences which may arise from this scenario.

Pandemic is also expected to bring about substantial economic and societal disruption due to its unique characteristics. Pandemic differs from any physical or natural disaster -- where any interruption to business continuity is usually hardware-related [such as power-cuts, communications' isolation etc]. In the event of a pandemic outbreak, the interruption to business operations' is anticipated to be predominantly human-resource centric. Absenteeism across the various sectors, as a consequence of either personal illness, illness in family members, concern of infection, or public health measures introduced to restrict social gathering or movement, could jeopardise the performance of key infrastructural areas, the movement and delivery of goods and services and the operations of institutions and organisations such as schools, banks, transport etc. It is expected that staff levels will fluctuate considerably, with absenteeism reaching up to 50% at the height of a severe pandemic wave, for about two weeks on either side of the pandemic wave. Consequently, a pandemic outbreak will have significant negative implications on the national economy, national security and the basic functioning of society.

It is estimated that overall, a pandemic wave may last for about 8 weeks. Pandemics usually follow a wave-pattern, which may span over different periods of time. The waves will not be short, sharp events leading to an immediate recovery process -- as each pandemic phase may be different from the other in terms of duration and severity. Moreover, the recovery process will depend on a number of factors related to the extent of the actual impact of each separate pandemic wave.

Considering the present avian flu trajectory, it is likely that the information regarding the actual pandemic patterns will reach Malta prior to the pandemic influenza itself reach our shores. However, it could also be possible that the actual lull will also be relatively short.

In response to this threat and in line with the parameters established by the World Health Organisation in the 2005 WHO Global Influenza Preparedness Plan, Government is publishing the *National Influenza Pandemic Response Plan* which incorporates a detailed multifaceted overview of the national strategies and action plan. This *Plan*, acknowledges Government's commitment to use all its national power to address the pandemic threat and to make every reasonable effort to delay the introduction of a pandemic virus to the Maltese Islands.

### **1.01 The Pandemic Phases as classified by the World Health Organisation**

The WHO has classified the next pandemic influenza outbreak into six phases – which basically are subdivided into four distinct, yet could develop to be highly interlinked scenarios, which include the *interpandemic period*, the *pandemic alert period*, the *pandemic period* and the *post-pandemic period* [vide Table 1]. These phases and scenarios reflect the possible distinctive characteristics of a new influenza virus and its spread amongst the world's population. Consequently, it is considered of utmost importance to link our national preparedness and response plan and actions to these criteria.

**Table 1 – The WHO Phases of a Pandemic Influenza**

<b>Interpandemic Period</b>	
<b>1</b>	No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. An influenza subtype that has caused human infection may be present in animals. If present in animals the risk of human infection or disease is considered to be low.
<b>2</b>	No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. However, a circulating animal influenza virus subtype poses a substantial risk of human disease.
<b>Pandemic Alert Period</b>	
<b>3</b>	Human infection[s] with a new subtype, but no human to human spread, or at most rare instances of spread to a close contact.
<b>4.</b>	Small clusters[s] with limited human to human transmission but spread is highly localised, suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans.
<b>5.</b>	Large cluster[s] but human-to-human spread still localised, suggesting that the new virus is becoming increasingly better adapted to humans, but may not yet be fully transmissible [substantial pandemic risk].
<b>Pandemic Period</b>	
<b>6</b>	Pandemic: Increased and sustained transmission in general population.
<b>Post-pandemic Period</b>	
	Return to inter-pandemic period.

### 1.02 European Union Alert Levels in Pandemic Phase 6

The EU also established the alert levels in the event of pandemic influenza outbreak to safe-guard its member states. The EU alert level address, in particular, Pandemic Period Phase 6 of the WHO Phase as outlined hereunder in Table 2.

**Table 2. EU Alert levels in Pandemic Phase 6**

<b>European Union – Alert Levels in Pandemic Period Phase 6 of WHO</b>	
<b>1</b>	No confirmed human cases infected with the pandemic virus in any EU Member State.
<b>2</b>	One or more confirmed human cases infected with the pandemic virus in any EU Member State.
<b>3</b>	A confirmed outbreak [transmission] with the pandemic virus in any EU Member State.
<b>4</b>	Widespread transmission in EU Member States

**1.03 National Alert Levels in Pandemic Period Phase 6**

Table 3 outlines the established national alert levels applicable during Pandemic Period Phase 6 of the WHO.

**Table 3. National Alert Levels in Pandemic Period Phase 6**

<b>National Alert Levels in Pandemic Period Phase 6</b>	
<b>Level 0</b>	Pandemic declared by WHO but <b>NO</b> cases diagnosed in Malta.
<b>1</b>	First outbreaks [clusters] identified in Malta.
<b>2</b>	Increased transmission of influenza pandemic in the general population in Malta.
<b>3</b>	Widespread transmission of influenza pandemic in the general population in Malta.

## **1.1 Strategic Aims**

Due to the numerous reservations and uncertainties surrounding the rate of progression of the pandemic threat -- including the amount of time left to prepare for it and the availability of anti-viral vaccines – it is felt that the ‘best-fit’ approach is to adopt a combination of measures that will address the immediate critical issues and have a sustained positive effect on the short and medium term problems.

In line with international strategic recommendations, namely the WHO and the ECDC, and given our small-island-state’s national scenario, our aims primarily focus on safe guarding the health of the nation by preventing, delaying or curbing the spread of the pandemic virus to the Maltese Islands, minimising the negative socio-economic impact and sustaining service delivery and the functioning of society for the longest time possible. Hence, the national strategic aims are centered on a four-tier model, namely the Emergency Cycle Management Model [Fig. 3] which mainly includes the:

- i. Mitigation Phase
- ii. Planning and Preparedness Phase
- iii. Response Phase
- iv. Re-evaluation and recovery Phase

The aim behind this four-phased approach is intended to facilitate the efficient and effective transition from one phase to another with the least possible disruption to the daily functioning of society.

## 1.2 The Strategic Framework

*A priori*, and in order to ensure that the national strategy achieves the desired level of commitment and outcome, this plan brings into perspective the following key elements:

1. The structures to facilitate the implementation of the MPIRP
2. The roles and responsibilities of all key stakeholders
3. The command and control structure during the *response phase*
4. The communications strategy
5. The action plan

### 1.2.1 Organisation and Structure

#### a. Set up and Composition

The Pandemic Preparedness Committee [PPC] is the national committee Set up by government to develop the national strategy and action plan for response in the event of an influenza pandemic outbreak. The PPC is chaired by the Principal Permanent Secretary [PPS] at the Office of the Prime Minister and its members include an Opposition representative, top government inter-ministerial key players, inter-sectoral representatives and their respective working groups [Table 4]. The PPS is answerable to the Cabinet of Ministers.

The PPS will, in turn, draw on the expertise of the Attorney General [Legal Advisory Team] on legislative issues unique to pandemic if and when the need arises.

**Table 4** The Composition of the Pandemic Preparedness Committee

<i>Chairperson:</i>	Principal Permanent Secretary
<i>Deputy Chairperson:</i>	Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Health, the Elderly and Community Care
<i>Members:</i>	Opposition Representative
	Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Rural Affairs and the Environment
	Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Information Technology and Investment
	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment
	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance
	Civil Protection Council representative
	Health Division representative
	Veterinary Services representative
	Management and Personnel Office, OPM representative

#### b. Command and Control Structure

A three-tier command and control structure has been Set up by the PPC to facilitate an interactive matrix approach when addressing the internal and external organisational environment perspectives during this turbulent<sup>1</sup> period as outlined in **Fig. 1** and **Fig 2** respectively. The three-tier command and control structure consists of the gold, silver and bronze level of command and is outlined at **Table 5** below:

<sup>1</sup> Turbulent – in terms of dynamic.

**Table 5. Three-Tiered Command and Control Structure**

<i>Command Structure</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Gold	- Endorsement and final overall direction
Silver	- Co-ordination and direction of operations
Bronze	- Field operations

c. **Special Support Groups**

The PPC has set up specific special support groups to compliment the three tier command and control structure and to assist in the development and implementation of the MPIRP. These *groups* and their composition are outlined hereunder:

- **The Strategy Planning and Coordination Group [SPCG]**

The SPCG is composed of the representatives from the following Ministries:

- MHEC
- MFIN
- MIIT

- **The Communication and Health Education Group [CHEG]**

The CHEG is chaired by MEYE, and its members include representatives from the following Ministries, Government departments / entities: The Department of Information [DoI] will be used as the official broadcasting medium.

- MEYE [**Chair**]
  - MHEC [Health Promotion Department, Public Health Department and Primary Health Care Department]
  - MRAE
  - SPCG representative
  - MEU
- **The Sectoral Logistics Teams [SLT]**  
The SLTs forms the *silver* tier of the command and control structure and its composition of the SLT is outlined in Fig 2.
- **Field Operations [FO]**  
The FO is the *bronze* tier of the command and control structure and it encompass all the units working hands-on at service / operations level within the organisations / entities. These will be answerable to directions from the gold and silver command tiers throughout all phases of pandemic.

Fig. 1 - The PPC and the chain of command structure for the 4 Phases

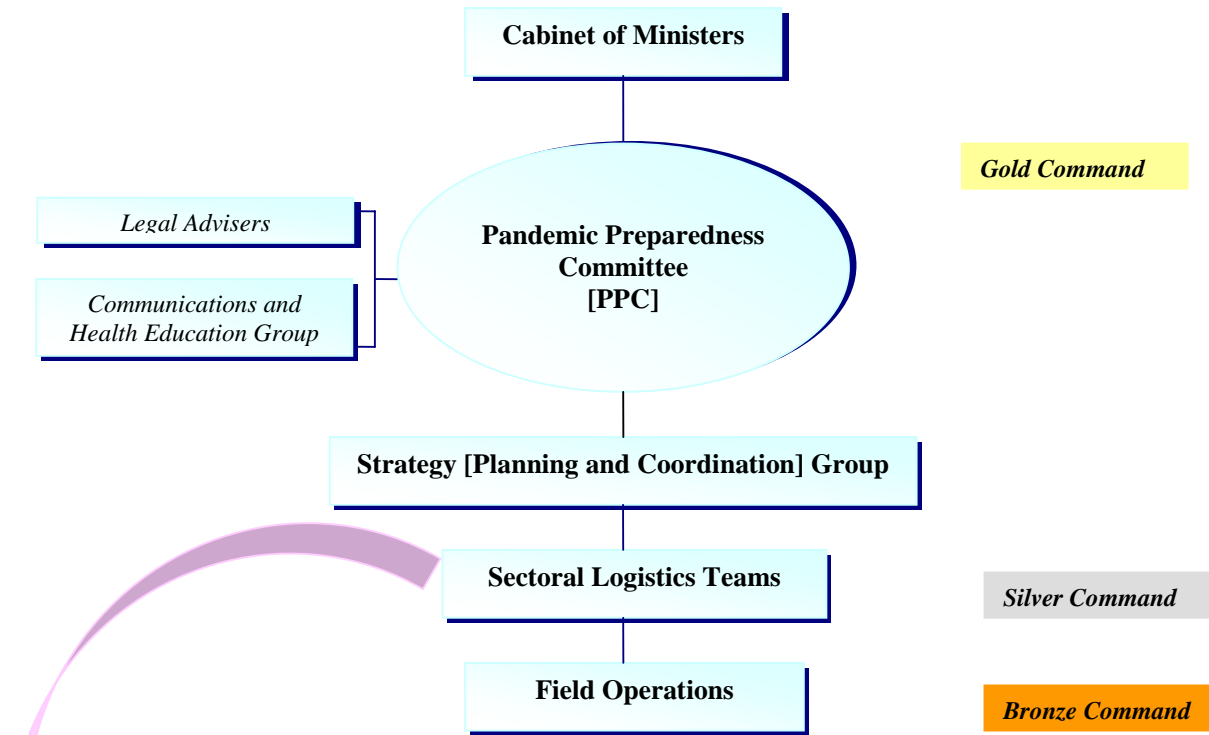
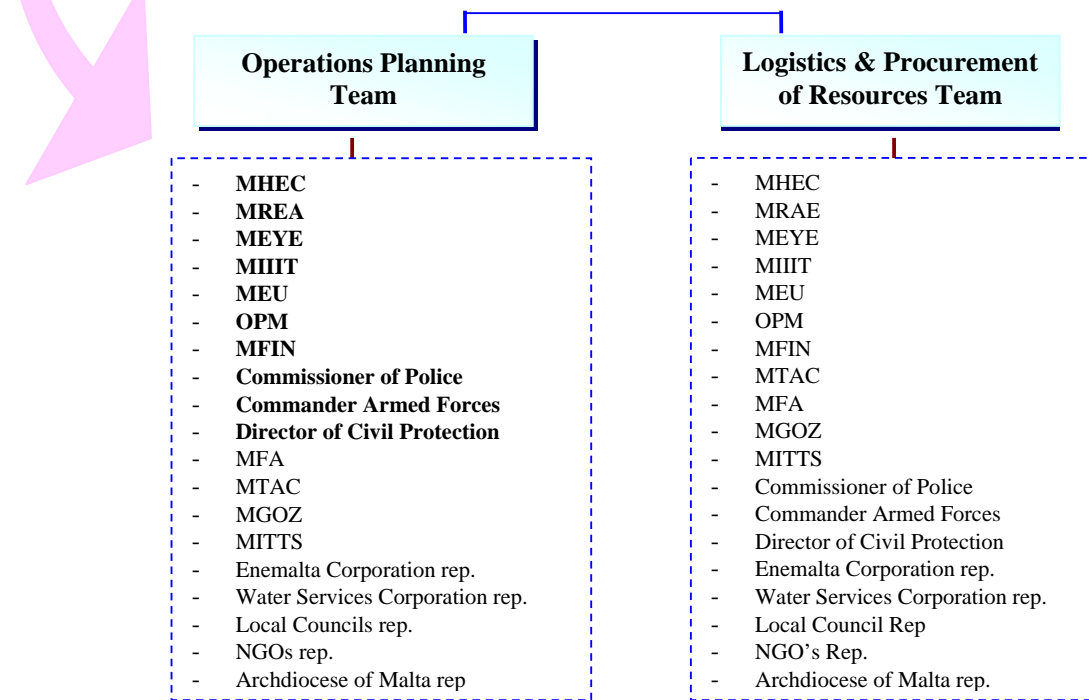


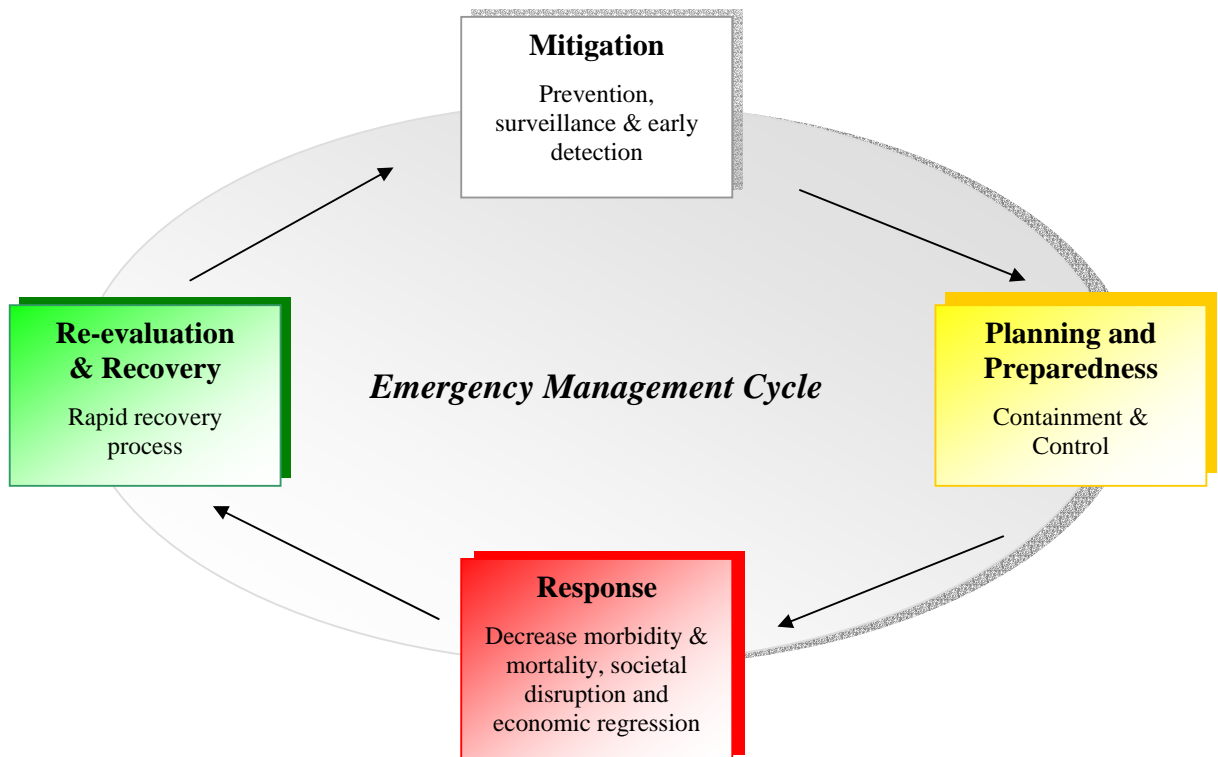
Fig 2 - The Components of the Silver Command Structure



### 1.3. Emergency Planning and Management

The *National Influenza Pandemic Response Plan* will follow the general principles of the *Emergency Management Cycle* planning model as outlined in **Fig. 3**. This methodology assumes a four-phase-centric approach in terms of escalating levels of alert and corresponding actions, which change according to the epidemiological indicators of increased threat.

**Fig. 3** - *Emergency Management Cycle Model*



The *Emergency Management Cycle* Model aims to achieve efficient collective alignment amongst **all** the key stakeholders and, establish defined lines of co-ordination and interdependence. This approach is considered as the key distinctive determinant to achieve holistic organisational effectiveness and immediate response.

The *Emergency Management Cycle* Model is also centered on a four-colour *alert codes* system -- **Fig. 4**. Each particular pandemic influenza phase will be delineated and communicated through this *alert-code* system, where each colour will signal specific shifts and developments from one phase to the next. The colour coded *alert system* is intended to facilitate immediate nationwide comprehension and response.

**Fig. 4 - Four-colour-alert code system**



Moves from Code White to Yellow, and Yellow to Red [i.e. the escalation steps] will be declared by MHEC in line with WHO directives.

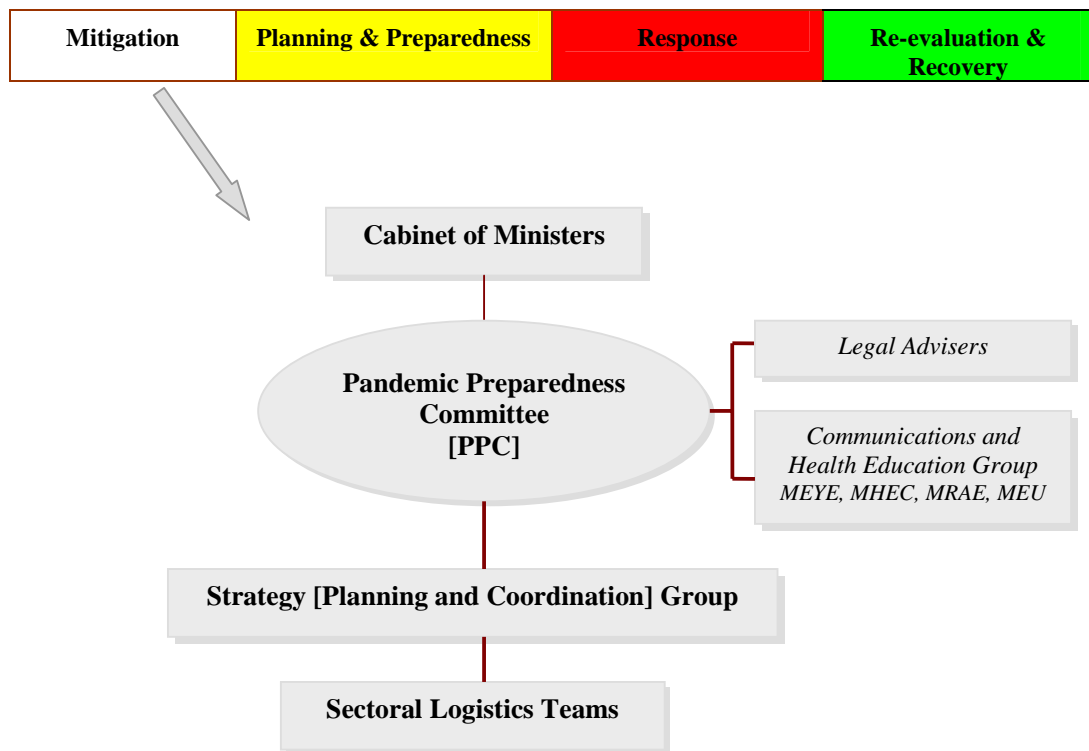
### **1.3.1 Alert-Codes - Perceptive and Respective Command and Control Structure**

i. **Alert Code WHITE -- Mitigation** [*Phase One*]

The objective of the *Mitigation Phase* is to continuously monitor and assess the present international scenario in terms of the avian flu trajectory and the pandemic outbreak possibility issues and, quantify their individual and collective subsequent impact on the national environment.

During this phase, the key focus will also be to strengthen pandemic preparedness at national level in terms of prevention, surveillance and early detection practices of the virus in animals and humans in order to minimise the possibilities / opportunities for a pandemic virus to emerge on the local front. This exercise will mainly involve the collaborative input of the MRAE, the MHEC and the MEYE. Fig. 5 outlines the command structure to be adhered to by the *Communications and Health Education Group* during the Mitigation Phase.

Fig. 5. Command and Control Structure during the *Mitigation Phase*



ii. **Alert Code YELLOW --Planning and Preparedness** [*Phase Two*]

The objective behind *phase two* is to identify the *best-fit* preventive and preparedness protocols at the *micro* and *macro* levels targeted to reduce societal disruption and, to simultaneously preserve the local socio-economic environment in the event of an avian flu outbreak and subsequent influenza pandemic outbreak. For this purpose, the main criterion during this *phase* is split into two specific, yet interlinked scenarios.

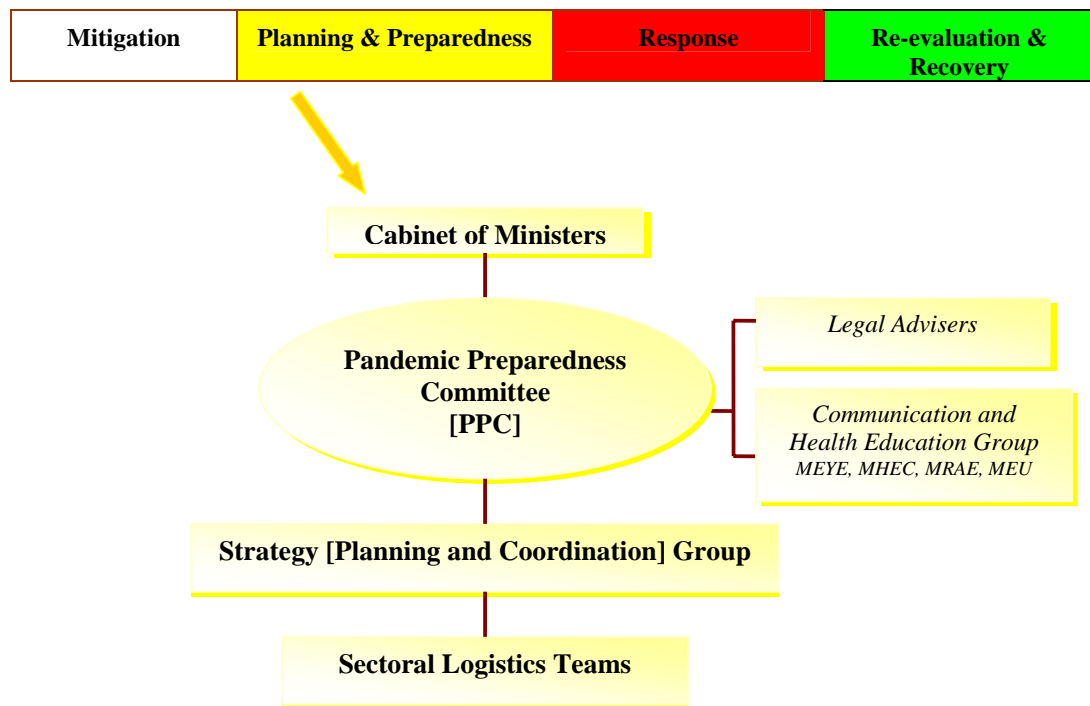
First, this phase draws on the preparatory work and strengths of the prevention, surveillance and early detection practices established during *phase-one*. This is quintessential in order to sustain and, continuously reinforce the planning protocols at the micro level.

Second, during this phase **all stakeholders** will be aligned and synchronised to collectively prepare the nation and its workforce for the pandemic influenza impact.

Hence, while emphasis will remain centred on containment and control of the avian flu at the micro level, concurrently, all the necessary mechanisms will be in place and on stand-by alert to, immediately, meet and address the various multifaceted exigencies that may arise during the actual pandemic influenza outbreak. This course of action will be in line with the *response* action plan as outlined in *phase-three* below. **Fig. 6** delineates the command and control structure to be followed during the *Planning and Preparedness Phase*.

All communications [broadcasted transmissions / press releases] will be led by the designated spokes-person/s from the *Communications and Health Education Group* within and under the aegis of the PPC. Prior to transmission, all messages must be sanctioned by Director General Public Health Regulation as the Superintendent of Public Health [or his representative]. This is necessary to ensure that effective timely, clear, coordinated messages are delivered to the whole nation at all times.

Fig.6 **Command and Control Structure during the *Planning and Preparedness Phase***



iii. **Alert Code RED** -- Response [*Phase-three*]

**This phase is entered into in line with WHO directives.**

The main objective behind the *Response Phase* focuses on decreasing morbidity and mortality, and minimising societal disruption and economic regression. *Phase-three* will convert the MPIRP into tangible action, fully engaging nationwide integrated planning across all government and the private sector [vide Part II – National Action Plan].

Consequently, *Phase-three* triggers into action **all** levels of responsibility and accountability within the *gold, silver and bronze command* structure. Indeed, our national endurance and survival during the pandemic alert status will depend on the efficient and effective co-ordination, collaboration and synchronisation of **all** the key stakeholders.

In the instant that a pandemic alert state is declared by the WHO, the Director General Public Health Regulation<sup>2</sup> -- in terms of the current national legislation<sup>3</sup> -- will assume the overall command of the *Response Phase*. Specifically for the duration of *phase-three*, decision taking in terms of safe-guarding national health will become the onus of the Director General Public Health Regulation, who in turn will inform the PPS accordingly. Throughout this *phase*, the Director General Public Health Regulation, will be supported by four key groups which include, the *National Security Group* representative, the *Public Health Group* representative, the *Communications Group* representative and the *Psycho-social Group* representative. The *Strategic Coordination Group* will also be responsible to the Director General Public Health Regulation.

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<sup>2</sup> As the Superintendent of Public Health

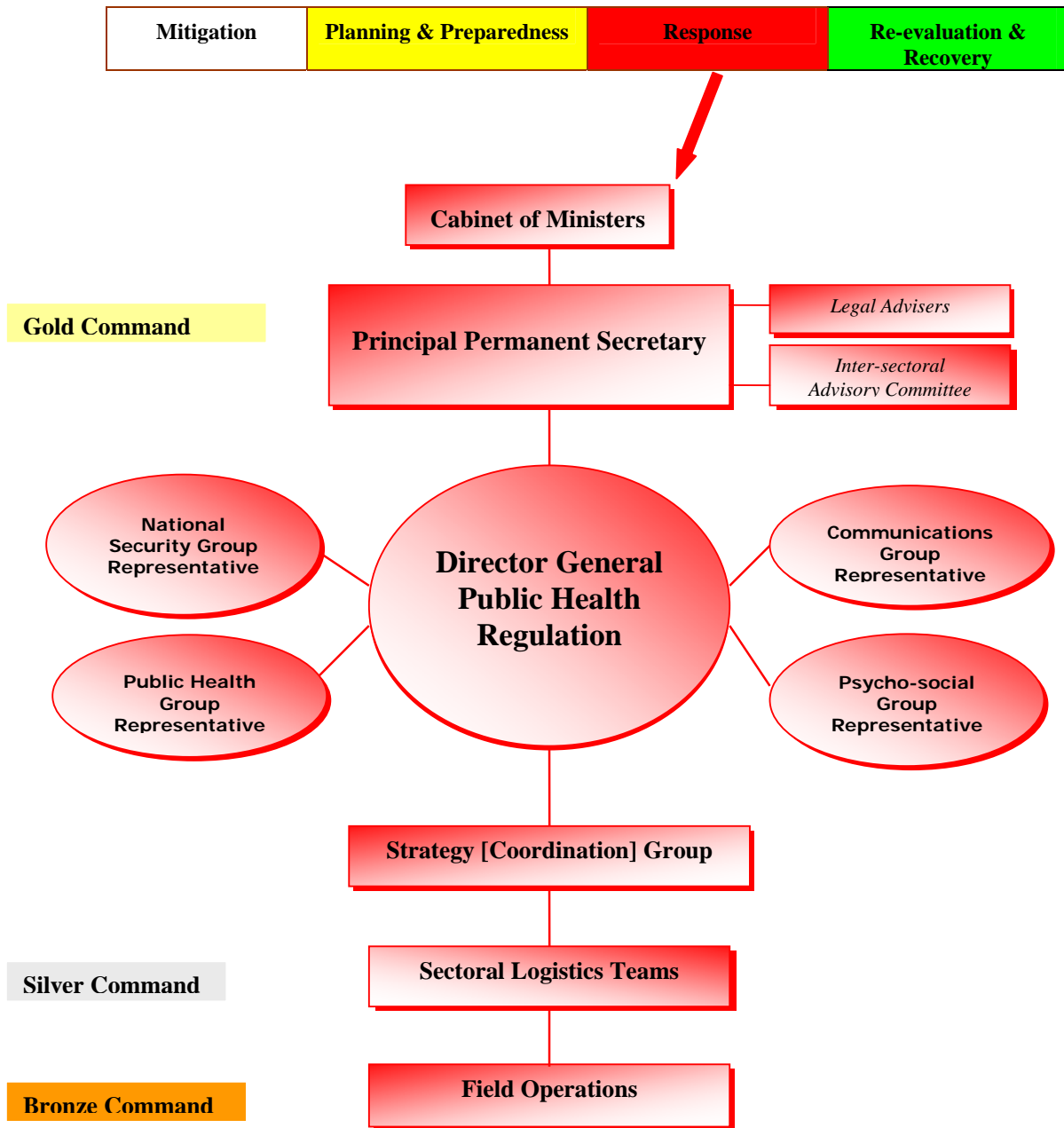
<sup>3</sup> Department of Health [Constitution] Ordinance Act - Chapter 94, Part III, Art. 16 – 19  
Civil Protection Act - Chapter 411, Art. 6

The *National Security Group* is made-up of the Commissioner of Police, the Commander Armed Forces and the Director of Civil Protection. The *Public Health Group* is composed of high officials from the MHEC responsible for the execution of the Health Plan. The *Communications Group* is the PPC's unit presently for all the public awareness campaigns and communication on pandemic issues. This Group shall maintain its function throughout all phases of pandemic. The *Psycho-social Group* encompasses all entities and organisations providing psychological, counseling and social support to pandemic stricken members of society.

Consequently, during *phase-three*, the PPC will depart from Preparedness Planning and assume the role of an *Inter-sectoral Advisory Committee, responsible to the PPS* within the gold command structure. The PPS will remain responsible and accountable to the Cabinet of Ministers. **Fig. 7** outlines the changes that will occur in the Gold Command Structure in event of a pandemic influenza outbreak alert status.

All communications [broadcasted transmission / press releases] during this phase will be led by the Director General Public Health Regulation with appropriate input from the other members of the *Gold Command Structure* as necessary. This is important to ensure that effective timely, clear, coordinated messages are delivered to the whole population at all times.

Fig. 7 - Command and Control Structure during the *Response Phase*



iv. **Alert Code GREEN -- Re-evaluation & Recovery** [*Phase Four*]

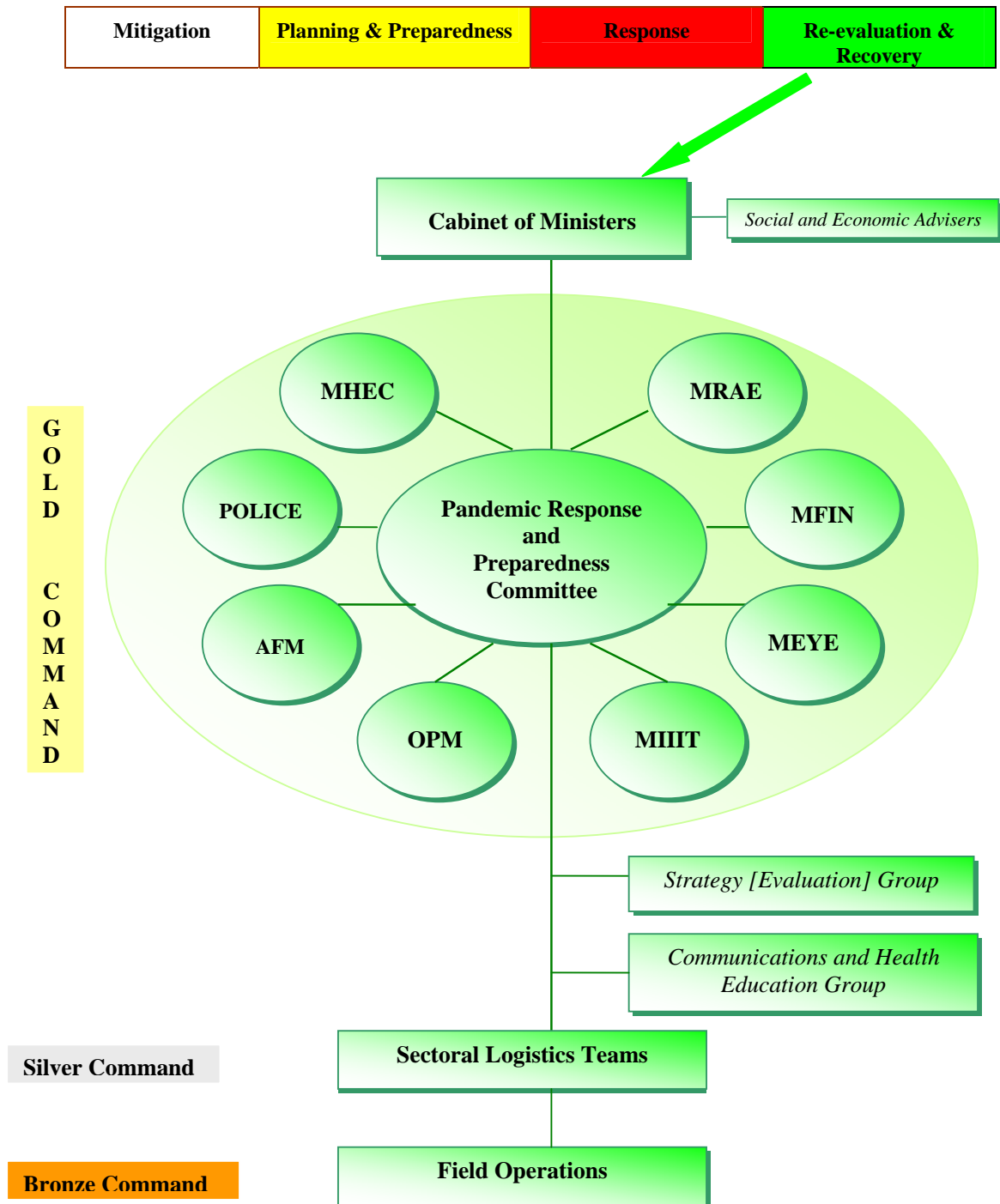
This *phase* organises and expedites a rapid nationwide recovery process from the first [or previous] pandemic influenza wave. *Phase-four* re-evaluates and re-assesses the outcome of the response plan to the first [or previous] pandemic wave together with its impact, and modifies previous action plans accordingly in preparation for the eventual next and further pandemic waves.

Moreover, as this *Phase* is also considered as the *post-pandemic phase*, strict surveillance will, nevertheless, be maintained to timely detect re-emergence of the *second* [or next] pandemic influenza wave. Simultaneously, actions will also be taken to step-down and reverse those measures that have been established in response to the *first* [or previous] pandemic influenza wave.

The Command and Control structure will revert to its original function with the PPC as the central point of direction and management. At this stage, a *Social and Economic Advisers Group* will also be Set up to assist the PPC in its endeavours to resume national essential functions in the shortest time possible. **Fig. 8** outlines the Command Structure during *phase-four* of the pandemic.

All communications [broadcasted transmissions / press releases] during this phase will be led by the PPS with appropriate input from the other members of the *Gold Command Structure* as necessary. This is important to ensure that effective timely, clear, coordinated messages are delivered to the whole population at all times.

Fig. 8 Command and Control Structure during the *Re-evaluation & Recovery Phase*



## **1.4. Roles and Responsibilities**

Preparedness and response planning for a pandemic influenza outbreak is diverse from that of any other physical and / or natural disaster [such as terrorist attack, earthquake etc], as its calamity will not be localised but spread nationwide, and moreover, the damages will be primarily human-centric. This state-of-fact will heavily impinge on the mobilisation of available resources and on the provision of physical and material support, as usually happens in times of physical and natural disasters.

The MPIRP specifically outlines the national mechanisms for the coordination of preparedness and response planning prior to, during and after the event of a pandemic influenza as follows:

### **1.4.1 Government of Malta**

The MPIRP is Government's main mechanism for preparedness and action planning, and will form the basis for the coordination of the response plan in the event of an influenza pandemic outbreak.

In no way does the MPIRP alter or obstruct the authority of Government, the private sector and other entities / organisations to function according to their specific duties or execute their responsibilities in terms of all applicable laws and legal directives. Individual departments, non-government organisations and other entities also have responsibilities within the MPIRP for influenza pandemic preparedness and response, as described hereunder:

#### **1.4.2 The Principal Permanent Secretary**

The *PPS* is responsible for the overall coordination of national preparedness actions for pandemic. The PPC will be answerable directly to the PPS during the *Mitigation Phase, Planning & Preparedness Phase* and *Re-evaluation & Recovery Phase*. During the *Response Phase* the Director General Public Health Regulation, will lead the command and control structure and inform the PPS accordingly.

During **all** phases of pandemic planning the PPS will, whenever necessary, seek to expedite:

- Endorsement and / or decision making by the Cabinet of Ministers
- Budget allocation
- Dissemination of information to the general public
- High level co-ordination of matters that may arise during any one of the pandemic phases
- Legal advice / direction from the Attorney General on matters and implications unique to pandemic, such as labour issues, emergency measures and revision of legislation.

#### **1.4.3 The Pandemic Preparedness Committee [PPC]**

The composition of the PPC is as outlined in Table 3 [pg. 15] and will be, amongst others, responsible to:

- Establish the Command and Control Structure [gold, silver and bronze] in preparedness and during the response of a pandemic influenza outbreak.

- Establish the lead of the Command and Control Structure during the *four-phases* of pandemic in terms of non-medical and medical preparedness and response [that is, *Mitigation Phase, Planning and Preparedness Phase, Response Phase* and *Re-evaluation and Recovery Phase*] and, the devolution of authority and responsibility accordingly.
- Establish the process for efficient recovery and reconstitution after a pandemic outbreak to expedite the return to normal of essential services and operations in the shortest time possible.
- Establish reporting requirements and on-going lines of communication before, during and after the event of a pandemic outbreak.
- Develop the national strategy and action plan that will serve as Government's main guiding mechanism during pandemic influenza response.
- Implement the national plan as outlined in the MPIRP.
- Identify and address national critical areas in order to ensure sustainability of key infrastructural resources, essential services and the economy, for as long as possible during a pandemic influenza outbreak [eg. supply-chain impact, just-in-time delivery, warehousing and logistical issues].
- Establish efficient and effective nationwide protocols and guidelines for the sustainability of key infrastructural resources and essential services.

- Ensure that all key stakeholders will have sound business continuity pandemic preparedness plans to timely and effectively respond to a pandemic outbreak.
- Ensure a sufficient stockpile of antivirals and protective clothing in line with EC /WHO/ ECDC regulations and directives, and that these items are kept in an adequately secure area.
- Ensure nationwide response by establishing efficient collective alignment amongst all key stakeholders [private sector and other entities / organisations] together with lines of coordination and interdependence.
- Ensure that the local population is well informed, educated and prepared to be individually responsible to manage themselves and their families during all phases of pandemic and to limit the spread of disease.
- Establish guidelines for business continuity and societal wellbeing to safeguard human health and ensure minimal economic disruption and regression in the event of and after a pandemic influenza outbreak.
- Ensure that equitable support measures are provided in protecting human health throughout all the phases of pandemic planning, response and recovery.
- Ensure that all decisions and actions are based on the best scientific data available at the time.

- Identify opinion leaders and medical experts to act as spokespersons and effectively communicate important and informative information to the public during the pandemic alert phase.
- Communicate the escalation of pandemic stages on the advice of the Director General Public Health Regulation.
- Seek direction and authorisation from the Cabinet of Ministers on policy / legislative / monetary issues which cannot be resolved at PPC level.
- Establish communication / links with the international community to ensure that Malta will not be isolated at any time in the event of an outbreak.
- Adhere to international regulations and directives [e.g. EC /WHO/ ECDC] in terms of pandemic influenza related issues.
- Establish working cooperation with neighbouring countries of the Mediterranean basin, to ensure that countries which are at risk have built sufficient capacity to address aspects of avian influenza associated with human and animal health.

#### **1.4.4 The Strategic Planning and Coordination Group [SPCG]**

The SPCG forms part of the *gold command structure* and acts as a technical support and liaison body to the PPC. Amongst others, the SPCG is responsible to:

- Provide advice, expertise and recommendations on the development, maintenance, testing and evaluation of the MPIRP through available expertise in the field.
- Ensure dissemination of the plans and technical knowledge amongst all stakeholders participating in the pandemic response effort.
- Draw-up plans, guidelines, protocols and other relative documentation on pandemic preparedness, response and recovery planning for businesses in the private sector and for the public in general, as part of the national awareness and educational campaign.
- Assess the financial implications and procurement requirements to implement the MPIRP.
- Ensure the dovetailing of the business continuity plans of the identified national critical infrastructural areas so as to sustain the provision of essential services for as long as possible during pandemic [eg. supply-chain impact, just-in-time delivery, warehousing and logistical issues].
- Assist entities / organisations in developing and improving their influenza pandemic business continuity plans.
- Maintain liaison with the international field [e.g. WHO, ECDC] on pandemic related issues.
- Develop protection/security procedures to be communicated to the nation and to specific working groups.

#### 1.4.5 The Sectoral Logistics Teams [SLT]

The SLTs have an executive function and follow direct orders from the PPC throughout all *phases* of pandemic preparedness planning, implementation, response and recovery. The SLTs will become answerable to the Director General Public Health Regulation during the pandemic alert state – that is, *Phase-Three [Response]*. The composition of the SLT is delineated in Fig. 2 [pg. 18] and, amongst others, it will be responsible to:

- Channel directives to **all** relevant levels within their area of responsibility.
- Estimate the cost of pandemic preparedness and implementation plan within their area of responsibility.
- Ensure procurement and timely replenishment of stock levels of essential emergency supplies for the various pandemic waves.
- Mobilise all available resources nationwide, and ensure equity of distribution.
- Provide resources as necessary to support the PPC's and the command and control's requirements for the implementation MPIRP.
- Develop plans for the utilisation of sick leave and vacation leave of their respective workplace.
- Facilitate alternative working practices [e.g. teleworking] amongst the workforce.
- Distribute protective equipment and supplies within their respective units of responsibility.

- Forecast the potential impact of an influenza pandemic on the workforce within their entity / organisation.
- Estimate their entity's / organisation's ability to maintain essential functions during a pandemic outbreak.
- Calculate potential disruptions to their services in the event of a pandemic.
- Coordinate and synchronise efforts amongst the various team members to ensure an efficient and effective outcome

#### **1.4.6 The Communication and Health Education Group [CHEG]**

The CHEG is the PPC's medium to ensure effective, timely, clear, coordinated messages are delivered to the nation during all phases of pandemic. Its composition is outlined in pg. 16, and amongst others, it is responsible to:

- Develop a risk communication strategic process to discretely and effectively introduce and sustain the pandemic influenza subject-matter to the general public.
- Designate and train a cadre of spokespersons who will act as the PPC's official link with the media and, who will be responsible to provide up-to-date information and guidance on pandemic related issues to the general public throughout all phases of pandemic.
- Establish an intra-unit to administer the pandemic web-site.

- Establish protocols and guidelines for the local media to ensure nationwide alignment on effective communication on pandemic related issues.
- Develop, introduce and sustain an up-to-date nationwide educational and informative campaign to increase pandemic preparedness awareness amongst the population [e.g. using billboards, printed material, broadcasting media etc].
- Develop, introduce and sustain an up-to-date nationwide educational and informative campaign within all schools to step-up hygiene awareness and its benefits.
- Establish links with the local media to expedite transmission / publication of pandemic related information.
- Establish clear and continuous communication channels with the public throughout all phases pandemic.
- Establish and maintain public credibility and confidence to minimise speculation and mitigate panic situations.
- Establish and maintain public credibility and confidence to generate public trust and co-operation and to timely address public concerns and anxiety.

## **Part II**

### **2.0 The National Action Plan**

A pandemic influenza outbreak presents unique challenges to the coordination and organization of the MPIRP, as it goes beyond the traditional response procedures normally activated during natural or physical disasters. Pandemic influenza necessitates a shift in response planning and support methodology as its impact is entirely human resource centric, with considerable nationwide toll on morbidity and mortality. Moreover, this scenario also impinges on the continuity of national critical infrastructural operations, with serious negative consequences to the national economy, national security and the basic function of society.

Indeed, the national level of pandemic preparedness, together with its subsequent response and success, does not solely rest with government's level of commitment, involvement and responsibility, but it also involves nationwide input, collaboration and ownership. This joint and coordinated effort between and among the various public and private sectors / entities / organisations primarily focuses on a two-pronged approach, that is the:

- i. **Micro level** – where each individual unit / organisation **prepares itself** to meet and respond to the demands which may arise during the pandemic within its respective business operational environment.

- ii. **Macro level** – where the PPC develops and consolidates a **nationwide preparedness, response and recovery plan** [MPIRP], with the principal ambit to safeguard public health and concurrently sustain the national critical infrastructural resources, the delivery of essential services and mitigate socio-economic disruption for as long as possible in time of pandemic.

## 2.1 The National Critical Areas

Following the micro-level exercise, the PPC has identified eleven critical areas of national importance. These distinctive, yet interdependent areas are addressed in the MPIRP in a matrix approach. The matrix draws on the coordinated efforts, collaboration and commitment of all key stakeholders to ensure the best-fit utilization of resources, together with timely and synchronized response throughout the four-phases of pandemic. The eleven national critical areas in terms of *measures* and *actions* include:

- i. Health care issues
- ii. Animal and bird surveillance
- iii. Communications and health education
- iv. Multi-sectoral business continuity awareness programme
- v. Psycho- social support
- vi. National security
- vii. Critical infrastructure, key resources and supplies<sup>4</sup>
- viii. Legal implications and provisions
- ix. Financial and procurement implications
- x. Policies, guidelines and protocols
- xi. Response command and control structure

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<sup>4</sup> Critical Infrastructure and key resources includes: agriculture and food, energy distribution and storage, water treatment plants and drinking water distribution systems, telecommunications, information technology, transportation [aviation, maritime, public transport and co-op transport], banking and finance, and commercial facilities.

## 2.2 The Plan's Framework

The NAP is the tool whereby national preparedness is translated into tangible action based on a set of 'measures'. The NAP's framework abides by the WHO and ECDC pandemic parameters and follows the national four-colour-alert code system [vide Fig. 4], where each colour represents the escalation pattern of the pandemic phases as outlined in the national *emergency management cycle model* [vide Fig. 3, pg. 19].

The four-colour-code phases of the pandemic are repeated throughout the NAP framework. The *measures* emanating from each critical area, are systematically repeated in all the four the phases of pandemic [that is, in the white, yellow, red and green phases] except for a few particular *measures* in the white-code, where the main emphasis during this *phase* centres on prevention, surveillance and early detection.

The *actions* to be implemented in each phase escalate in performance and in the nature of response magnitude according to the specific colour-alert-code phase.

## 2.3 The National Plan's Matrix

The four-colour-coded matrix framework presented in this section will serve as the tool for the multi-sectoral / organisational national action planning for pandemic.

The matrix outlines and addresses the key determinant factors of each one of the eleven national critical areas throughout all the phases of pandemic. It identifies and addresses the preparedness, response and recovery escalation approach through the implementation of specific *measures* and *actions* to protect public health, support specific infrastructural areas of national significance and, safeguard the national socio- economic milieu. Moreover, each *action* also establishes the unit / organisation responsible to develop the strategy and manage the specific implementation preparedness plan in anticipation of the *response phase*, as follows:

<b>Interpandemic Period -</b>		
<b>WHO</b>	<i>Phase 1</i>	- <i>No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. An influenza virus subtype that has caused human infection may be present in animals overseas. If present in animals, the risk of human infection or disease is considered to be low</i>
	<i>Phase 2</i>	- <i>No new influenza virus subtypes have been detected in humans. However, a circulating animal influenza virus subtype poses a substantial risk of human disease</i>

<b>MITIGATION - CODE WHITE</b>			
<b>- Prevention, surveillance and early detection</b>			
<b>NATIONAL PLAN MATRIX</b>			
<b>Measures</b>		<b>Activities to achieve measures</b>	<b>Responsible Ministry / Unit</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Animal / bird Surveillance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assess possibility of local animal / bird infection</li> <li>▪ Establish importation restrictions of animals/birds and animal products originating from infected countries/areas as necessary</li> <li>▪ Surveillance of border and Maltese territorial waters as necessary</li> <li>▪ Give public advice on preventive measures to limit risk of transmission from infected animals</li> <li>▪ Offer appropriate protection and training for animal workers and for individuals who are exposed to poultry [&amp; pigs] – in line with WHO guidelines</li> <li>▪ Provide guidelines for in-coming and out going travellers</li> </ul>	MRAE, MHEC, Police, AFM

<p><b>2.0</b></p>	<p>2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4.</p>	<p><b>Health Care Issues</b></p> <p><b>Vaccine and Antiviral Medication</b></p> <p>i. Seasonal vaccine</p> <p>ii. Antiviral [Tamiflu etc]</p> <p>iii. Pandemic vaccine</p> <p><b>Laboratory Services / Tests</b></p> <p><b>Protective Personal Equipment [PPE]</b></p> <p><b>Health care professionals</b></p>	<p>As detailed in the National Health Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish plans / policies regarding the procurement, stockpiling and mechanisms for vaccine / antiviral administration</li> <li>▪ Establish management of laboratory services / tests [public and private hospitals / clinics]</li> <li>▪ Establish plans / policies for procurement, allocation, storage and usage of PPE'</li> <li>▪ Train first responders to use PPE's efficiently and effectively</li> <li>▪ Ensure training and preparation of health care professionals</li> <li>▪ Prepare Health Care Centres and other health sites for any emergency eventualities</li> <li>▪ Train back-up resources [retired personnel etc]</li> </ul>	<p>MHEC</p> <p>MHEC</p> <p>MHEC</p> <p>MHEC</p>
<p><b>3.0</b></p>		<p><b>Communications and Health Education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continuous liaison with MHEC / EC /WHO/ ECDC and other related fora</li> <li>▪ Set up a <i>Communications Team</i></li> <li>▪ Identify key spokes person/s</li> <li>▪ Build public awareness on the importance of hygiene through national educational campaigns</li> <li>▪ Establish media and communications protocols</li> <li>▪ Establish communications links with local journalists / media units to ensure timely and accurate reporting</li> <li>▪ Initiate an educational campaign to encourage volunteers to enrol and assist in the response plan in areas facing workforce shortages during pandemic</li> <li>▪ Launch a Help the Community awareness programme / initiative to augment national response and timely back-up</li> </ul>	<p>MHEC [DG office, DIH, PH]</p> <p>PPC</p> <p>MEYE</p> <p>MHEC [Health promotion]</p> <p>Local Media</p> <p>Archdiocese Support</p> <p>Logistics / Operations Team Leaders -- PPC</p>

4.0		<b>National Security</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Surveillance of border and Maltese territorial waters</li> <li>▪ Surveillance at all points of entry [ports, airports etc]</li> <li>▪ Ensure proper protection and training for first responders assisting the irregular immigrants</li> <li>▪ Give health advice on preventive measures to limit risk of disease transmission</li> <li>▪ Provide MHEC prevention guidelines</li> <li>▪ Provide guidance, training and essential exercises to the law enforcement officers to prepare them for any eventualities that may arise during an influenza pandemic outbreak</li> </ul>	<p>Police</p> <p>AFM, CPD</p> <p>Traffic Wardens</p> <p>MHEC</p>
5.0		<b>Command and Control Site for PPC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify a site to be used by the PPC as the Command and Control base as from Level 4 and Level 5 of the pandemic phase</li> </ul>	<p>PPC</p> <p>MITTS</p>
6.0		<b>Multi-Sectoral Business Continuity awareness programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish sound communications channels with Trade Unions, Constituted Bodies, Regulatory Bodies, Employees Association to ensure national coverage at all times</li> <li>▪ Foster awareness on the importance of a business continuity plan amongst the business community</li> <li>▪ Provide guidance to the business community to develop their respective contingency and response plan</li> <li>▪ OHS&amp;A and Trade Unions to draw-up guidelines for a healthy and safe workplace environment</li> </ul>	<p>PPC</p> <p>MFIN</p> <p>AG</p> <p>Trade Unions</p> <p>Constituted Bodies</p> <p>Regulatory Bodies</p> <p>Employers Assoc.</p> <p>MCESD</p>
7.0		<b>Financial &amp; Procurement Implications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mitigate the economic impact from pandemic</li> <li>▪ Promote awareness for a rapid economic recovery</li> <li>▪ Identify specific national issues with significant / fiscal implications</li> </ul>	<p>MFIN</p> <p>MHEC</p> <p>PPC</p>

<b>Pandemic Alert Period -</b>			
<b>WHO</b>	Phase 3	-	Human infection[s] with a new subtype, but no human-to-human spread, or at most rare instances of spread to a close contact
	Phase 4	-	Small cluster[s] with limited human-to-human transmission but spread is highly localised, suggesting that the virus is not well adapted to humans
	Phase 5	-	Larger cluster[s] but human-to-human spread is still localised, suggesting that the virus is becoming increasingly better adapted to humans, but may not yet be fully transmissible [substantial pandemic risk].
		-	

<b>PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS – CODE YELLOW</b>				
<b>- Containment and Control: Best-fit preventive and preparedness protocols at micro and macro level to safeguard the nation during the influenza pandemic impact</b>				
<b>NATIONAL PLAN MATRIX</b>				
<b>Measures</b>		<b>Activities to achieve measures</b>		<b>Responsible Ministry / Units</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Animal / Bird Surveillance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustain assessment of possibility of animal/bird infection</li> <li>▪ Increase national surveillance as necessary</li> <li>▪ Sustain importation restrictions of animals/birds, animal products originating from infected countries/areas as necessary</li> <li>▪ Increase surveillance of border and Maltese territorial waters</li> <li>▪ Provide guidelines for in-coming and out going travellers</li> </ul>	MRAE MHEC MFIN [CUSTOMS] PORTS	

<b>2.0</b>		<b>Health Care Issues</b>	<b><i>As detailed in the National Health Plan</i></b>	
	2.1	Vaccine and Antiviral Medication		MHEC
		iv. Seasonal vaccine v. Antiviral [Tamiflu etc] vi. Pandemic vaccine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Plans / policies regarding the procurement, stockpiling and mechanisms for vaccine / antiviral administration</li> </ul>	MHEC
	2.2.	Laboratory Services / Tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Management of laboratory services / test [public and private hospitals / clinics]</li> </ul>	MHEC,
	2.3	Protective Personal Equipment [PPE]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Plans / policies for procurement, allocation, storage, distribution and usage of</li> </ul>	
	2.3	Transportation of Vaccine / Antiviral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Security escort during transportation of transportation</li> </ul>	MHEC, Police, AFM
2.4	Health care professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training and preparation of health care professionals</li> </ul>	MHEC	
2.5	Monitoring and Surveillance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preparation of Health Care Centres and other health sites for any emergency eventualities</li> <li>▪ Train back-up resources [retired personnel etc</li> <li>▪ Set up IT system to facilitate staff sickness surveillance and reporting practices</li> <li>▪ Set up IT system to facilitate [public and private] laboratory surveillance and reporting</li> <li>▪ Set up IT system for real-time epidemiological data analysis</li> </ul>		

<p>3.0</p>	<p><b>Communications and Health Education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustain liaison with MHEC / EC /WHO/ ECDC and other related for a</li> <li>▪ Sustain and increase public awareness through routine national educational campaigns conveying key messages on:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personal hygiene and cough etiquette</li> <li>- Food preparation</li> <li>- Recommended list of Food supplies to keep at home</li> <li>- Information and Help-line numbers</li> <li>- Travel advice</li> <li>- Promote wide utilisation of IT infrastructure</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ a national pandemic web-site with links</li> <li>▪ Set up dedicated Information / Help line numbers and train operators / receptionists</li> <li>▪ Review media / communications' protocols</li> <li>▪ Identify prime TV / radio programmes and / newspaper /printed material to increase hygiene awareness</li> <li>▪ Regular briefing with local journalists / media units to ensure timely and accurate reporting on issues concerning:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Government's preparedness plans in response for influenza pandemic</li> <li>- The roles of key stakeholders during a pandemic outbreak</li> <li>- The projected impact of a pandemic on the Maltese islands</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Education campaign to enrol volunteers to assist with emergency response in areas facing workforce shortages</li> <li>▪ Promote the Help the Community awareness programme / initiative to augment national response and back-up</li> </ul>	<p>MHEC          Communications Team - PPC          Local Media          MITTS          MEYE          Archdiocese Support</p>
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<p>4.0</p>	<p>4.1</p>	<p><b>Legal implications and provisions to minimise the socio-economic disruption of critical Infrastructure and key resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Agriculture and Food</li> <li>ii. Energy distribution and Storage facilities</li> <li>iii. Water treatment plants and drinking water distribution systems</li> <li>iv. Telecommunications</li> <li>v. Information Technology</li> <li>vi. Transportation [aviation, maritime, public transport and co-op transport]</li> <li>vii. Banking and finance</li> <li>viii. Commercial facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish/develop a legal framework to enter into public private partnerships with the 3<sup>rd</sup> parties to secure collaboration with Government in the interest of securing national assets and business continuity</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify and review unique constitutional laws which may generate national exigencies during pandemic, such as             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work practices [leave/sick leave, flexible working hours, shifts etc]</li> <li>- Social security benefits [children allowances, pensions, etc</li> <li>- Burial permits</li> <li>- Insurance coverage [health / business]</li> <li>- Closure of borders [entry – exit]</li> <li>- Secure collaboration from those entities which are considered as national critical infrastructure and are owned and operated by the private sector</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>AG</p> <p>PPC [on behalf of govt]</p> <p>Regulatory Bodies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MFSA</li> <li>- MTA</li> <li>- MRA</li> <li>- MTA</li> <li>- MCA</li> <li>- MMA</li> <li>- Civil Aviation</li> </ul> <p>AG</p> <p>PPC</p> <p>MFSA</p> <p>Trade Unions</p> <p>Constituted Bodies</p>
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<p><b>5.0</b></p>	<p><b>Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Agriculture and Food</li> <li>ii. Energy distribution and Storage facilities</li> <li>iii. Water treatment plants and drinking water distribution systems</li> <li>iv. Telecommunications</li> <li>v. Information Technology</li> <li>vi. Transportation [aviation, maritime, public transport and co-op transport]</li> <li>vii. Banking and finance</li> <li>viii. Commercial facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure that each Unit develops, implements and maintains a sector-specific business continuity plan that includes [when privately owned and operated] collaboration with the Government of Malta and other relevant entities within the private sector</li> <li>▪ Provide teleworking / IT options to facilitate working away from the office</li> </ul>	<p>PPC MRAE MFIN MITTS Regulatory Bodies Trade Unions Constituted Bodies</p>
<p><b>5.01</b></p>	<p><b>Sustaining the critical Infrastructure, Key Services and the Economy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify the workforce [names and contact numbers] from the various Ministries / Departments for deployment during pandemic</li> <li>▪ Establish a mechanism to mobilise the above workforce according to need in time of pandemic</li> <li>▪ Maintain an updated register of names and contact numbers of the volunteers who are ready to assist with emergency response in areas facing workforce shortages</li> <li>▪ Intensify the Help the Community awareness programme / initiative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify the workforce [names and contact numbers] from the various Ministries / Departments for deployment during pandemic</li> <li>▪ Establish a mechanism to mobilise the above workforce according to need in time of pandemic</li> <li>▪ Maintain an updated register of names and contact numbers of the volunteers who are ready to assist with emergency response in areas facing workforce shortages</li> <li>▪ Intensify the Help the Community awareness programme / initiative</li> </ul>	<p>PPC's Logistics &amp; Operations Teams MFIN AG Logistics / Operations Team Leaders -- PPC Communications Team – PPC Media Archdiocese Support</p>

<p><b>6.0</b></p>		<p><b>National Policies, Guidelines and Protocols</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish national policies, guidelines and protocols unique to pandemic situations, such as:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Usage of PPE guidelines</li> <li>- Social distancing policy</li> <li>- Fuel storage facilities and availability levels policy</li> <li>- Stock level replenishment and replenishment [food / spare parts etc] policy</li> <li>- Bird hunting and Trapping policy</li> <li>- Search and Rescue at Sea policy</li> <li>- Cargo handling protocols</li> <li>- Inbound ships, yachts and fishing vessels</li> <li>- Arrival and Departure screening criteria and protocols for management of infected patients</li> <li>- Air-conditioning Usage guidelines</li> <li>- Healthy / safe workplace environment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>PPC MHEC MRAE MRA MTA OHSA Trade Unions MFIN AG</p>
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<p>7.0</p>		<p><b>National Security</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Surveillance of border and Maltese territorial water</li> <li>▪ Surveillance at all points of entry [ports, airports etc]</li> <li>▪ Operational procedures for travel and routing restrictions to countries which do not have a acceptable exit -screening policy</li> <li>▪ Implement polices that allow trade to continue for as long as possible</li> <li>▪ Identify an area to serve as a screening room of new arrivals during the <i>response phase</i></li> <li>▪ Ensure proper protection and training for exposed Police, AFM and medical Units assisting the illegal immigrants</li> <li>▪ Give health advice on preventive measures to limit risk of disease transmission</li> <li>▪ Provide MHEC prevention guidelines</li> <li>▪ Sustain guidance, training and essential exercises to the law enforcement officers to prepare them for any eventualities that may arise during an influenza pandemic outbreak with particular focus on containment measures</li> <li>▪ Procurement of additional resources to help with the increased burial demand [additional hearses]</li> </ul>	<p>AFM Police CPD MMA Civil Aviation MHEC Traffic Wardens MFIN [Customs]</p>
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<p>8.0</p>		<p><b>Command and Control Site for PPC</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appoint a <i>technical advisory sub-committee</i> to identify the logistical infrastructure [antennas, aerials etc] to be installed to render to Site operational during pandemic</li> <li>▪ Identify which IT hardware, furniture etc will be transferred to the Site</li> <li>▪ Identify quantities of basic ancillary [food, linen, gas, stationery etc] stocks to be utilised during pandemic for the members who will be staying at the Command site</li> <li>▪ Identify temporary storage facilities to hold the above stock items to be transferred to Site during <i>Response</i></li> <li>▪ Make arrangements for the engagement of cleaning / maintenance services of Site during <i>Response</i></li> </ul>	<p>PPC MITTS Police AFM CPD</p>
<p>9.0</p>		<p><b>Multi-Sectoral Business Continuity awareness programme</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengthen liaison with Trade Unions, Constituted Bodies, Regulatory Bodies, Employees Association &amp; MCESD to ensure pandemic preparedness at national [macro] and local [micro] levels</li> <li>▪ Persist in increasing awareness on the importance of a business continuity plan amongst the business community</li> <li>▪ Provide continuous support and guidance to the business community to assist them in developing their respective contingency and response plan</li> <li>▪ OHSa and Trade Unions to continuously update the guidelines for safety at the workplace according to international directives [WHO etc]</li> </ul>	<p>PPC MFIN AG Trade Unions Constituted Bodies Regulatory Bodies Employers Assoc. MCESD OHSa</p>

10.0		<p><b>Psychological / Counselling Support</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide social support services to help in problem solving, advocacy, provide comfort and encourage tranquillity</li> <li>▪ Provide counselling and psychological support to individuals experiencing family loss during and after pandemic</li> <li>▪ Involve the archdiocese to                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[a] reach and address all the population to collaborate and adhere with the national directives</li> <li>[b ] mobile their own support services</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>PPC MFSS [Appogg] Archdiocese Support NGO's Volunteer Groups</p>
11.0		<p><b>Financial &amp; Procurement Implications</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review the relative legal provisions to reduce the economic impact from pandemic</li> <li>▪ Review existing Government / EU Financial and Procurement Regulations to speed up Tender / Direct Order procurement processes on issues unique to pandemic</li> <li>▪ Identify specific national issues with significant / fiscal implications</li> <li>▪ Establish budgetary allocation quota to support pandemic preparedness implementation</li> </ul>	<p>MFIN MHEC PPC AG</p>
12.0		<p>Level 4 and Level 5</p> <p><u>Code Yellow</u> in Malta, possibly <u>Code Red</u> internationally</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ PPC to operate from Command and Control site</li> <li>▪ Increase vigilance in surveillance</li> <li>▪ Advice WHO of first case identified in Malta</li> </ul>	<p>PPC MHEC MHEC</p>

<b>Pandemic Period -</b>		
<b>WHO</b>	<i>Phase 6</i>	- <i>Increased and substantial transmission in the general population. Level 1 First Outbreaks [First clusters identified in Malta]- [Pandemic declared by WHO]</i>
		- <i>Wave decreasing; Detection of next wave</i>

**RESPONSE – CODE RED**

*-Decrease morbidity and mortality, societal disruption and economic regression*

NATIONAL PLAN MATRIX			
Measures		Activities to achieve measures	Responsible Ministry/Unit
<b>1.0</b>	<p><b>Animal / Bird Surveillance</b></p> <p>[N.B. -- Assuming a local scenario where only AVIAN Flu is present --Pandemic would still not have reached Malta yet. In this scenario we would need to step up our surveillance to keep pandemic away for as long as possible]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase animal surveillance in area[s] with human infected cases</li> <li>▪ Sustain and tighten importation restrictions of animals/birds, animal products originating from infected countries/areas as necessary</li> <li>▪ Increase surveillance of border and Maltese territorial waters</li> <li>▪ Enforce entry and exit for travellers</li> </ul>	<p>MRAE</p> <p>MHEC</p> <p>MFIN [CUSTOMS]</p> <p>PORTS</p>

2.0		<b>Health Care and Emergency Response</b>	<b>Full activation of the National Health Plan:</b>	<b>MHEC</b>
	2.1	Vaccine and Antiviral Medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Order pandemic vaccine following pandemic declaration by WHO</li> </ul>	MHEC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Antiviral [Tamiflu etc]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Release antivirals and administer accordingly</li> </ul>	MHEC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. Pandemic vaccine order</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fast and all inclusive vaccine upon arrival</li> </ul>	MHEC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii. Mass Pandemic vaccine programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Activate stock replenishment policies for PPE's as per National Health Plan</li> </ul>	MHEC
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Security escort during transportation of transportation as per National Health Plan</li> </ul>	MHEC,
	2.2	Protective Personal Equipment [PPE]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Activate policy of social distancing and restrictions of public gatherings according to need [ ex. closure of educational facilities]</li> </ul>	MEYE
	2.3	Transportation of Vaccine / Antiviral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduce enhanced staff sickness surveillance and reporting practices</li> </ul>	MHEC – PPC
2.4	Mass gatherings and Social distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase [public and private] laboratory surveillance and reporting</li> </ul>	MHEC	
2.5	Monitoring and Surveillance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Analyse real-time epidemiological data</li> </ul>	MHEC - PPC	
2.6	Alert all hospitals / Health Centres and medical personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vacate Karen Grech Hospital and converge into the Pandemic Flu Hospital.</li> </ul>		
2.7	Alert all medical staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deployment of Health Staff</li> </ul>		

<p>3.0</p>		<p><b>Communications and Health Education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustain and intensify liaison with MHEC / EC /WHO/ ECDC and other related for a</li> <li>▪ Sustain and increase public awareness through continuous <b>national</b> educational messages on:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personal hygiene and cough etiquette</li> <li>- Food preparation</li> <li>- Information and Help-line contact numbers</li> <li>- Travel advice</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Activate Help Line</li> <li>▪ Timely broadcasting of new key messages reflecting health actions ex. on vaccine, isolation centres,</li> <li>▪ Constantly review and update the national pandemic web-site with latest pandemic related information</li> <li>▪ Increase frequency of media / communications' conference update</li> <li>▪ Monitor <i>call centres'</i> and web reports</li> <li>▪ Issue advice to limit travelling as much as possible</li> </ul>	<p>MHEC</p> <p>Communications Team PPC</p> <p>Local Media</p> <p>Archdiocese Support</p>
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<p><b>4.0</b></p>	<p><b>Legal implications and provisions to minimise the socio-economic disruption of critical Infrastructure and key resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Agriculture and Food</li> <li>ii. Energy distribution and Storage facilities</li> <li>iii. Water treatment plants and drinking water distribution systems</li> <li>iv. Telecommunications</li> <li>v. Information Technology</li> <li>vi. Transportation [aviation, maritime, public transport and co-op transport]</li> <li>vii. Banking and finance</li> <li>viii. Commercial facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Activate the PPP legal framework entered into with 3rd parties to secure collaboration with Government in the interest of securing national assets and business continuity</li> </ul>	<p>AG</p> <p>PPC [on behalf of govt]</p> <p>Regulatory Bodies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MFSA</li> <li>- MTA</li> <li>- MRA</li> <li>- MTA</li> <li>- Civil Aviation</li> <li>- MMA</li> <li>- MCA</li> <li>- Civil Aviation</li> </ul>
	<p><b>4.1.</b></p> <p><b>Legal implications and provisions to minimise the national socio-economic disruption</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Activate Legal Notice / Regulations review constitutional laws unique to pandemic situation, such as</li> <li>- Work practices [leave/sick leave, flexible working hours, shifts etc]</li> <li>- Social security benefits [children allowances, pensions, etc</li> <li>- Burial permits</li> <li>- Insurance coverage [health / business]</li> <li>- Closure of borders [entry – exit]</li> <li>- Implement a private public partner agreement to secure collaboration from those entities which are considered as national critical infrastructure and are owned and operated by the private sector</li> </ul>	<p>AG</p> <p>PPC</p> <p>MFSA</p> <p>Trade Unions</p> <p>Constituted Bodies</p>

<p>5.0</p>	<p><b>Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Agriculture and Food</li> <li>ii. Energy distribution and Storage facilities</li> <li>iii. Water treatment plants and drinking water distribution systems</li> <li>iv. Telecommunications</li> <li>v. Information Technology</li> <li>vi. Transportation [aviation, maritime, public transport and co-op transport]</li> <li>vii. Banking and finance</li> <li>viii. Commercial facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure that each Unit adheres to its sector-specific business continuity plan that includes and collaborates with the Government of Malta and other relevant entities within the private sector</li> <li>▪ Encourage teleworking practices</li> <li>▪ Intensify social distancing</li> <li>▪ Intensify cough etiquette / personal hygiene related measures</li> </ul>	<p>PPC MRAE MFIN MITTS Regulatory Bodies Trade Unions Constituted Bodies</p>
<p>5.01</p>	<p><b>Sustaining the critical Infrastructure, Key Services and the Economy</b></p>	<p></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Call in the workforce from the various Ministries / Departments and allocate them according to need</li> <li>▪ Timely coordinate allocation of workforce mobility according to need</li> <li>▪ Call in the volunteers to assist with emergency response in areas facing workforce shortage according to need</li> <li>▪ Keep-up the Help the Community awareness programme to timely cover emergency response in areas facing workforce shortages</li> <li>▪ Sustain enrolment of volunteers to assist with emergency response</li> </ul>	<p>PPC's Logistics &amp; Operations Teams MFIN AG Logistics / Operations Teams Communications Team – PPC Media Archdiocese Support</p>

<p><b>6.0</b></p>		<p><b>National Policies, Guidelines and Protocols</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Activate national policies, guidelines and protocols unique to pandemic situations, such as:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Usage of PPE guidelines</li> <li>- Social distancing policy</li> <li>- Fuel storage facilities and availability levels policy</li> <li>- Stock level replenishment and replenishment [food / spare parts etc] policy</li> <li>- Bird hunting policy</li> <li>- Search and Rescue at Sea policy</li> <li>- Cargo handling protocols</li> <li>- Inbound ships, yachts and fishing vessels policy</li> <li>- Arrival and Departure screening criteria and protocols for management of infected patients</li> <li>- Air-conditioning Usage Guidelines</li> <li>- Healthy / safe workplace environment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>PPC MHEC MRAE MRA MTA OHSA Trade Unions MFIN AG</p>
<p><b>7.0</b></p>		<p><b>National Security</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase surveillance of border and Maltese territorial waters and implement regulations accordingly</li> <li>▪ Increase tighter surveillance at all points of entry [ports, airports etc]</li> <li>▪ Enforce travel and routing restrictions to countries which do not have a acceptable exit - screening policy</li> <li>▪ Sustain polices that allow trade to continue for as long as possible</li> <li>▪ Operate a temporary centre to isolate infected new arrivals</li> <li>▪ Ensure proper protection for exposed Police, AFM and medical Units assisting the illegal immigrants</li> <li>▪ Sustain health advice on preventive measures to limit risk of disease transmission</li> <li>▪ Enforce MHEC prevention guidelines</li> <li>▪ Alert law enforcement officers on any eventualities that arise during the influenza pandemic outbreak -- with particular focus on containment measures to ensure public safety and security at all times</li> </ul>	<p>AFM Police CPD Traffic Wardens MHEC MMA Civil Aviation AG PPC - MEC Logistics / Operations Teams – PPC</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mobilise additional resources to help with the increased burial demand</li> <li>▪ Coordinate the national security policies / regulations – social distancing, mass gatherings etc</li> </ul>	
<b>8.0</b>		<b>Command and Control Site for PPC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>MOVE to SITE</b></li> <li>▪ Transfer IT hardware, furniture etc will be to Site</li> <li>▪ Transfer ancillary stocks to Site stores</li> <li>▪ Contact the cleaning / maintenance services</li> </ul>	PPC MITTS Police AFM CPD
<b>9.0</b>		<b>Multi-Sectoral Business Continuity awareness programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustain liaison with Trade Unions, Constituted Bodies, Regulatory Bodies, Employees Association &amp; MCESD to ensure nationwide activation of pandemic response plans</li> <li>▪ Sustain continuous support and guidance to the business community to assist them with their respective response plan</li> </ul>	PPC MFIN AG Trade Unions Constituted Bodies Regulatory Bodies Employers Assoc. MCESD OHSA
<b>10.0</b>		<b>Psychological / Counselling Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide social support services to help in problem solving, advocacy, provide comfort and encourage tranquillity</li> <li>▪ Provide counselling and psychological support to individuals experiencing family loss during and after pandemic</li> <li>▪ Involve the archdiocese to                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[a] reach and address all the population to collaborate and adhere with the national directives</li> <li>[b] mobile their own support services</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	PPC MFSS [Appogg] Archdiocese Support NGO's Volunteer Groups

<p><b>11.0</b></p>	<p><b>Financial &amp; Procurement Implications</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Activate the relative legal provisions to reduce the economic impact from pandemic</li> <li>▪ Activate Government / EU Financial and Procurement Emergency Regulations to speed up Tender / Direct Order procurement processes on issues unique to pandemic response</li> <li>▪ Monitor specific national issues with significant / fiscal implications</li> <li>▪ Liaise with Cabinet to augment budgetary allocation quota to support pandemic response accordingly</li> </ul>	<p>MFIN MHEC PPC AG OPM</p>
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<b>Post Pandemic Period -</b>		
<b>WHO</b>	<i>Phase 0</i>	- <i>Pandemic Over</i>
		- <i>Return to Interpandemic Period</i>

**RE-EVALUATION AND RECOVERY – CODE GREEN**

*Nation-wide Rapid recovery process – Modify previous plan according to evaluation outcome*

**NATIONAL PLAN MATRIX**

**This is the Post Pandemic Phase – Strict Surveillance must, nevertheless, be maintained to timely detect re-emergence of the 2<sup>nd</sup> pandemic influenza wave, while simultaneously actions are taken to step-down and reverse those measures that have been established in response to the 1<sup>st</sup> pandemic influenza wave.**

Measures		Activities to achieve measures	Responsible Ministry / Unit
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Animal / Bird Surveillance -- initiatives to be stepped-down according to WHO directives / guidelines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustain national surveillance as necessary</li> <li>▪ Sustain importation restrictions of animals/birds, animal products originating specific destinations</li> <li>▪ Sustain surveillance of border and Maltese territorial waters</li> <li>▪ Continue to provide guidelines for incoming and out going travellers</li> </ul>	MRAE MHEC MFIN [CUSTOMS] PORTS
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Health Care and Emergency Response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Call pandemic alert off</li> <li>▪ Initiate recovery process as per National Health Plan</li> <li>▪ Maintain surveillance protocols and procedures to ensure timely detection of resurgence</li> <li>▪ Lessons learned</li> <li>▪ Debriefing</li> </ul>	MHEC

<p>3.0</p>		<p><b>Communications and Health Education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustain liaison with MHEC / EC /WHO/ ECDC and other related for a</li> <li>▪ Terminate Pandemic media campaign</li> <li>▪ Review the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the communications strategy and fine-tune accordingly in anticipation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pandemic Wave, eg.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National educational campaign</li> <li>- Media coverage</li> <li>- Communications protocols, briefing and links</li> <li>- Broadcasted and published material</li> <li>- Web links and accessibility monitoring</li> <li>- Help line / Call Centres</li> <li>- Help the Community awareness programme / initiative</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Initiate a back to normal campaign</li> </ul>	<p>MHEC [DG office, DIH, PH] PPC MEYE MHEC [Health promotion] Local Media Archdiocese Support Logistics / Operations Team Leaders – PPC</p>
<p>4.0</p>		<p><b>Legal implications and provisions to minimise the socio-economic disruption of critical Infrastructure and key resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Agriculture and Food</li> <li>ii. Energy distribution and Storage facilities</li> <li>iii. Water treatment plants and drinking water distribution systems</li> <li>iv. Telecommunications</li> <li>v. Information Technology</li> <li>vi. Transportation [aviation, maritime, public transport and co-op transport]</li> <li>vii. Banking and finance</li> <li>viii. Commercial facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Initiate procedures to revert to normal operational procedures according to established legal arrangements</li> </ul>	<p>AG PPC [on behalf of govt] Regulatory Bodies - MFSA - MTA - MRA - MTA - MCA - MMA - Civil Aviation</p>

	4.1	<p><b>Legal implications and provisions to minimise the national socio-economic disruption</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Initiate procedures to revert to normal operational procedures according to established legal arrangements in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work practices [leave/sick leave, flexible working hours, shifts etc]</li> <li>- Social security benefits [children allowances, pensions, etc]</li> <li>- Burial permits</li> <li>- Insurance coverage [health / business]</li> <li>- Closure of borders [entry – exit]</li> <li>- Secure collaboration from those entities which are considered as national critical infrastructure and are owned and operated by the private sector</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	AG PPC MFSA Trade Unions Constituted Bodies
5.0	5.01	<p><b>Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Agriculture and Food</li> <li>ii. Energy distribution and Storage facilities</li> <li>iii. Water treatment plants and drinking water distribution systems</li> <li>iv. Telecommunications</li> <li>v. Information Technology</li> <li>vi. Transportation [aviation, maritime, public transport and co-op transport]</li> <li>vii. Banking and finance</li> <li>viii. Commercial facilities</li> </ul> <p><b>Sustaining the critical Infrastructure, Key Services and the Economy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluate the economic impact of pandemic on the various key infrastructural units</li> <li>▪ Ensure smooth recovery according to each units' contingency plan</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide assistance where necessary / when possible to help speed-up alignment</li> </ul>	PPC MRAE MFIN MITTS Regulatory Bodies Unions Constituted Bodies  Logistics & Operations Teams – PPC MFIN AG NGO's

<p>6.0</p>		<p><b>National Policies, Guidelines and Protocols</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assess socio-economic impact</li> <li>▪ Evaluate policies, guidelines and protocols in preparedness for Response to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave of the Pandemic</li> </ul>	<p>PPC MHEC MRAE MRA MTA OHSA Trade Unions MFIN AG</p>
<p>7.0</p>		<p><b>National Security – in line with WHO directives and guidelines</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustain surveillance of border and Maltese territorial water</li> <li>▪ Sustain surveillance at all points of entry [ports, airports etc]</li> <li>▪ Assess and review procedures / policies for trade, travel and routing restrictions</li> <li>▪ Evaluate the economic impact on border control initiatives -- trade</li> <li>▪ Sustain guidance, training and essential exercises to the law enforcement officers to prepare them for the 2<sup>nd</sup> influenza pandemic wave</li> <li>▪ Evaluate overall efficiency and effectiveness of initiatives</li> </ul>	<p>AFM Police CPD Traffic Wardens MMA Civil Aviation MHEC MFIN</p>
<p>8.0</p>		<p><b>Command and Control Site for PPC</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Continue to operate from SITE for as long as necessary</b></li> <li>▪ Initiate the transfer of IT hardware, furniture etc back to their original location</li> <li>▪ Replenish ancillary stocks in preparation for a second pandemic wave according to need and move back to temporary storage facilities</li> <li>▪ Ensure cleaning / maintenance services are carried-out to find SITE ready for any future eventuality</li> </ul>	<p>PPC MITTS Police AFM CPD</p>

<p>9.0</p>		<p><b>Multi-Sectoral Business Continuity awareness programme</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengthen liaison with Trade Unions, Constituted Bodies, Regulatory Bodies, Employees Association &amp; MCESD to ensure rapid socio-economic recovery at national [macro] and local [micro] levels</li> <li>▪ Promote an evaluation and adjustment exercise of the business continuity plan amongst the business community in preparedness of a 2<sup>nd</sup> pandemic wave</li> </ul>	<p>PPC MFIN AG Trade Unions Constituted Bodies Regulatory Bodies Employees Assoc. MCESD</p>
<p>10.0</p>		<p><b>Psychological / Counselling Support</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustain social support services to help in problem solving, advocacy, provide comfort and encourage tranquillity</li> <li>▪ Sustain counselling and psychological support to individuals experiencing family loss during and after pandemic</li> <li>▪ Involve the archdiocese to                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[a] reach and address all the population to collaborate and adhere with the national directives</li> <li>[b] mobile their own support services</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>PPC MFSS [Appogg] Archdiocese Support NGO's Volunteer Groups</p>
<p>11.0</p>		<p><b>Financial &amp; Procurement Implications</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Activate the relative legal provisions to reduce the economic impact from pandemic</li> <li>▪ Activate Government / EU Financial and Procurement Emergency Regulations to speed up Tender / Direct Order procurement processes on issues unique to pandemic response</li> <li>▪ Monitor specific national issues with significant / fiscal implications</li> <li>▪ Liaise with Cabinet to augment budgetary allocation quota to support pandemic response accordingly</li> </ul>	<p>MFIN MHEC PPC AG OPM</p>

## Part III

### 3.0 The National Health Plan

The Health Division of Malta has taken up the key role in spearheading the Influenza Pandemic Contingency Plans both at national level but more importantly within the Health sector, which plans are reflected in the document *The Health Division of Malta Influenza Pandemic Contingency Plan*.

The Health Division's strategy against the onset of the Influenza Pandemic has been initiated with widespread campaigns to increase the uptake of seasonal influenza vaccination by the general public, to those at an increased risk of avian influenza by nature of their occupation or because of chronic disease which predispose to greater morbidity. The Public Health Department has been responsible for carrying out yearly Influenza Surveillance both in the community and also in hospitals. This surveillance will be increased when the World Health Organisation increases the Influenza Pandemic Alert Phase. It will help detect the first cases of such an influenza pandemic in Malta.

Once the pandemic is established in Malta, all cases will be treated at Primary Health Care level within the community and antivirals will be immediately prescribed and dispensed within less than twenty four hours to minimise the risk of further disease complications. The Government Pharmaceutical Services of Malta has secured a stockpile of both Oseltamivir (Tamiflu) and Zanamivir (Relenza) to cater for more than a 25% attack rate. The antivirals

will be dispensed from the Government pharmacies against a doctor's prescription.

Once the pandemic is established in Malta, the antiviral dispensing database has been programmed to give an indirect evidence of the disease pattern in Malta. This information will be analysed by the Health Authorities on a daily basis and actions planned accordingly. The same database will help record potential adverse effects related to the antivirals

At hospital level, all hospitals in Malta and Gozo have drawn up their own contingency plans along the same lines of action as laid down by the Health Division Influenza Pandemic guidelines. Secluded areas have been designated to cohort all flu patients together. Triage will be done at hospital entrance to ensure that patients presenting to hospital do actually require hospital secondary assessment and further management. Various projects have been embarked upon to increase the oxygen supply and delivery capacities both within the hospital and community settings.

Projects have been initiated to improve the ventilation facilities in the designated flu hospitals to decrease the risk of disease transmission to Health Care workers. Procurement is also in progress to increase the stockpile of both pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical items and equipment needed for the anticipated increased health care demands.

Malta has finalised an agreement for the advanced procurement of the pandemic vaccine once this becomes available. If the vaccine reaches Malta during any of the pandemic waves, it will be given to all the population over two days, opening up vaccination clinics in all posts that usually serve as general election polling booths.

Since during the influenza pandemic, all non urgent hospital procedures will have been stopped, it is planned that in the recovery process after each pandemic wave, all efforts will be done to replenish depleted stockpiles within hospital and to pick up on any postponed or cancelled procedures.

The full text of the document *The Health Division of Malta Influenza Pandemic Contingency Plan* is available on-line on the government websites listed below:

<http://www.health.gov.mt>

<http://www.pandemic.gov.mt>

## **Part IV**

### **4.0 Business Continuity**

Government's commitment is to use all its available resources to keep the pandemic influenza virus away from our shores for as long as possible. Consequently, nationwide responsibility, accountability, coordination and alignment are essential in preparedness for every eventuality.

In view of the fact that pandemic influenza is neither a physical nor a natural disaster, but it is mainly a human resource centric calamity, its consequences are expected to have a considerable negative national socio-economic impact, both on the public and private sectors. Hence, protecting human health is the fundamental scope behind the national preparedness strategy and response plan, while all national projections reflect the overarching need to safeguard morbidity and mortality resulting from the eventual pandemic outbreak.

The private sector and all the other entities / organisations also have an important interdependent role and shared responsibility towards efficient and effective national preparedness planning, response and recovery. The private sector and all other entities / organisations will play a fundamental role in pandemic influenza, by protecting and providing for the health, safety and security of all their workforce, clients and customers, and by protecting and sustaining the running of critical infrastructure, essential services and the functioning of society.

It is of the essence that business continuity plans include measures and actions to reduce potential disruptions caused by the pandemic influenza outbreak. Organisations need to forecast the potential impact of an influenza pandemic on their workforce, estimate their organisation's ability to maintain essential functions and calculate potential disruptions to their services in a pandemic influenza scenario. Key consideration must be given to, amongst others, the:

- Devolution of control and direction.
- Staffing shortages due to self- sickness, sickness in the family, fear and / or death.
- Alternative operating facilities, suppliers and distributors.
- Alternative delivery procedures.
- Feasibility of establishing a co-op set up amongst same businesses.
- Effective communication.
- Cleaning of facilities and equipment at the workplace.
- Safety at the workplace [high risk personnel, infection control, protective equipment etc].
- Reconstitution

The *Guidelines for Business Continuity* published by the PPC, contemplates the above aspects, and can be used as a benchmarking tool in developing and / or improving organisational business continuity plans in the perspective of a potential pandemic outbreak. The *Guidelines* is meant as a general reference and its primary objective is threefold -- *first*, to maintain essential operations for a prolonged period of time and prevent service disruption, *secondly*, to expedite disaster recovery and restore basic business operations and *thirdly*, to resume normal operations post pandemic.

The *Guidelines* specifically focus and address five key risk organisational factors which include the:

- i. Employees
- ii. Business processes and functions
- iii. Business infrastructure
- iv. Stakeholders
- v. Communications

Businesses are encouraged to start planning and preparing now to ensure that their operations remain viable in the event of a pandemic influenza outbreak.

The full text of the document *Guidelines for Business Continuity* is available on-line on the government websites listed below:

<http://www.health.gov.mt>

<http://www.pandemic.gov.mt>

## Part V

### 5.0 Societal Preparedness

Until recently, very few had heard about avian or bird flu. Indeed, the World Health Organisation has showed great concern with the speed that the bird flu has spread to many parts of the world, as continent after continent registered the presence of the virus – which has mainly appeared in wild birds and poultry. While the threat to human health from the bird flu virus is currently very low [but not zero], many countries have already been affected and there were also occasional cases of people being infected and a number of people have also died from the illness.

Today awareness is high and countries around the world continue to prepare against the possibility of an influenza pandemic outbreak. This would only happen when the virus succeeds to incubate in the human body and therefore would be able to move from one human being to another. It is, therefore, important that the public in general will be aware of what is happening in the rest of the world, and be prepared for any eventuality.

Preparations are presently being undertaken by Government to safeguard the health of the nation, to minimise the socio-economic impact that an influenza pandemic will have on the nation, to maintain service delivery for as long as possible. However, it is equally important that the general populace will also be adequately prepared, as it is this nationwide *community effort* and

cooperation that will enable the country's to respond quickly and efficiently to such an outbreak.

As influenza pandemic can happen at any particular moment in time, and there is no way of how to predict this happening, it is best that every individual will prepare for any eventuality. In the *Guidelines for the Wellbeing of You and Your Family*, the PPC provides specific and comprehensible guidance on pandemic preparedness by addressing the following aspects:

- i. Information on Influenza Pandemic, Seasonal Flu and Avian Flu.
- ii. The current situation in Malta and the impact of a pandemic influenza will have our nation.
- iii. What precautions will every individual need to take to protect oneself at home and at the workplace against avian influenza and pandemic influenza
- iv. How to care of sick-family members at home
- v. When and where to seek medical care
- vi. How to protect others and minimise the risks of disease transmission

The full text of the document *Guidelines for the Wellbeing of You and Your Family* is available on-line on the government websites listed below:

<http://www.health.gov.mt>

<http://www.pandemic.gov.mt>

## Part VI

### 6.0 Pandemic Influenza: A Socio-Economic Impact Assessment for Malta

Predicting the social and economic impact of a pandemic influenza is very difficult, as it is difficult to forecast the scope and the severity of such an outbreak. This task becomes even more complex as only a few estimates on past flu epidemics exist and, SARS<sup>5</sup> - although it is a recent documented outbreak - is not always considered as the best relevant comparison for analysis. Nevertheless, the PPC provides a preliminary analysis of the possible impacts that a pandemic outbreak will have on our population given its density and geography in *Influenza Pandemic: A Socio-Economic Impact Assessment for Malta*.

The objectives of this study present a number of projections for the first-round impact of the influenza pandemic, which are based on past influenza pandemics and the SARS outbreak. The most important effects of the pandemic would be a:

- i. Surge in the demand for medical services;
- ii. Shrinking of the labour supply as workers become ill or stay home out of fear or to take care of others who are sick; and
- iii. Sharp decline in consumer demand as people avoid public places.

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<sup>5</sup> SARS – Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

The second-round effects, such as disruptions to the services industry (mainly tourism) and the locally oriented sector (such as restaurants and other entertainment establishment), are also considered in this study, but their impact is not quantified.

The illustrations of the potential impact of the influenza pandemic contained in this report are intended to help the Maltese policymaker in planning and preparing for the possibility of an influenza pandemic. Nevertheless, these projections should be treated as hypothetical illustrations of the possible effects that an influenza pandemic with an unknown probability of actual occurrence could bring to bear on the Maltese economy and are intended solely as a reference guide. In addition, prudence is required when attempting to express such a delicate event into monetary terms as the social aspect of such an outbreak should always be kept in mind.

The study looks into, amongst others, the following areas:

- The Demand for Hospital Resources
- Workdays Lost and Productivity Loss
- International Trade and Tourism
- Long-Term Effects

The full text of the document *Influenza Pandemic: A Socio-Economic Impact Assessment for Malta* is available on-line on the government websites listed below:

<http://www.health.gov.mt>

<http://www.pandemic.gov.mt>

## **Part VII**

### **7.0 Additional Information**

This document defines Government's national strategic mechanism for planning preparedness, implementing response and subsequent reconstitution in the event of a pandemic influenza outbreak. The document also clearly outlines the operational guidelines for all the key stakeholders involved in the national contingency planning. The national action plan [matrix] explicitly shows the involvement, coordination, collaboration and interlinking of all parties involved throughout the escalation of the pandemic phases.

The *National Influenza Pandemic Response Plan* is available on-line on the following official pandemic websites:

- Pandemic Preparedness Committee  
<http://www.pandemic.gov.mt>
- Ministry of Health, the Elderly and Community Care  
<http://www.health.gov.mt>

The document will be reviewed and updated as necessary and any additional information will also be available on the above mentioned websites.

The *Pandemic Preparedness Committee* has published a number of national plans and guidelines [hereunder] with the aim of continuously increasing public awareness on the avian influenza [bird flu] and pandemic influenza threats. These documents are also available on-line on the above websites.

- **Malta Pandemic Influenza Response Plan**
- **The Health Division of Malta Influenza Pandemic Contingency Plan**
- **Guidelines for Business Continuity**
- **Guidelines for the Wellbeing of You and Your Family**
- **Guidelines for the Wellbeing of You and Your Family – Leaflet**
- **Influenza Pandemic: A Socio-Economic Impact Assessment for Malta**
- **Educational Campaign Posters on Pandemic Influenza and Avian Flu**
- **A Media Guidebook**

Further information on avian influenza [bird flu] and pandemic influenza is available on the following websites:

European Commission

[http://www.ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_threats/com/influenza/influenza\\_en.htm](http://www.ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/com/influenza/influenza_en.htm)

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

<http://www.ecdc.eu.int>

[http://www.ecdc.eu.int/avian\\_influenza/occupational\\_exposure](http://www.ecdc.eu.int/avian_influenza/occupational_exposure)

Food and Agriculture Organisations of the United Nations

[http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/subject/en/health/disease-cards/special\\_avian.html](http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/subject/en/health/disease-cards/special_avian.html)

Ministry for Rural Affairs and the Environment

<http://www.mrae.gov.mt>

World Health Organisation

[http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/index.html)