



GOVERNMENT OFFICE
FOR LONDON

LONDON RESILIENCE TEAM

Riverwalk House, 157 – 161 Millbank, London, SW1P 4RR

To: London Cat 1 and 2 responders

SUMMARY BRIEFING – 17th meeting of the London Regional Resilience Forum on 12 October 2005.

Threat and horizon scan

1. An oral brief to the Forum by the MPS on current threat and CCS on recent and upcoming issues.

Severe weather – winter 2005/06

2. On current predictions there was a 60% chance of the UK experiencing a more severe winter than usual (This followed ten years of 'milder than usual' winters) . The Forum was reminded of the arrangements known as 'Operation Ringmain', for agencies to share information and take decisions on the appropriate response in the event of, or danger of, a 'significant incident' in London – such as severe weather.

Flooding

3. An oral update to the Forum on the threat from flooding in London and flood control planning for London. The Environment Agency (EA) had launched a campaign during October to raise public awareness of the threat from flooding. The Thames Barrier had come into service in 1983 and had been used on 92 occasions to prevent flooding over-topping the walls that lined the Thames Embankment in London. The Barrier would reach its life expectancy in 2030 and, although it would continue to provide a high level of protection, the EA had set up a 2100 project looking at flood risk and defences for the future – further information on www.environment-agency.gov.uk

July 2005 London Bombings

4. The Forum received reports setting out the findings from the comprehensive multi-agency debrief commissioned by the extra-ordinary meeting on 14 July. The Forum noted the success of the response which had clearly demonstrated the value of the last four years of planning and exercising, and thanked all those involved in both the response and planning. There was, however, no room for complacency and a number of lessons were identified and actions agreed.

5. Strategic Co-ordination Centre/Gold Group – this had worked well and benefited greatly from recent rehearsal in Exercise Atlantic Blue. Key issues to be resolved were location and whether more fit for purpose facilities could be achieved.

6. Telecomms – the debrief covered the strain on the network on 7 July, the action taken by the operators to sustain it (while users experienced difficulties the system did not crash), the importance of the mobile network for public reassurance, the need for pre-education for the public in use of mobiles in an emergency, the operation of ACCOLC, and a

number of areas where lessons had been identified.

7. The issue of a single emergency number for public information was also raised and would be discussed at the next meeting of the Forum in January 2006.

8. Family Assistance Centre - A paper was presented on the Family Assistance Centre (FAC). The rapid delivery of the FAC on 8 and 9 July had been an impressive example of multi-agency working, led by the MPS and Westminster City Council, with invaluable input from the voluntary organisations, the London Resilience Team and Civil Contingencies Secretariat. There was, however, an urgent need for the development of a London FAC plan and LRT had been commissioned to take this forward.

Flu Pandemic Planning for London

9. London's planning for a flu pandemic is ongoing in three areas: (i) the GLA's pandemic response plan (centred on deployment of the Mayor's stock of anti-viral drugs to essential GLA, police and TfL staff who develop symptoms); (ii) health response planning by the NHS, Primary Care Trusts and Hospital Trusts; and (iii) business continuity planning by all London responder organisations. A workshop was held on 3 October, attended by local authorities, the health sector, transport sector, emergency services, utilities and business. The workshop considered agencies' existing business continuity arrangements with the aim of helping them review and develop their plans to ensure they are able to maintain key services in the event of a flu pandemic. Work is ongoing on developing a regional flu pandemic response plan. This will be a brief document outlining special arrangements for dealing with pandemic influenza in London. The Health Protection Agency agreed to arrange an exercise in March to test the regional flu plan.

Local Resilience Forum Update

10. LFEPA have finalised consultation with Category 1 and 2 responders to determine the role of the Local Resilience Forums (LRF) and ensure appropriate representation at the LRRF. The Forum agreed that representatives of the 6 LRFs would, exceptionally, be invited to the next London Regional Resilience Forum to welcome them to the structure.

Civil Contingencies Act – LRF's Regional Risk Delivery Plans

11. The June LRRF commissioned work on updating the Regional Risk Assessment. Progress had been made but, at CCS's request, work had paused whilst work on the National Risk Assessment was being completed. National work had now been completed and Cabinet Office and ODPM were finalising the methodology for the 2005 risk assessment. LRT were asked to arrange a meeting to update the regional risk assessment as soon as this was available.

Extranet/Brokerage Centre Update

12. The ODPM funded pilot to develop an Extranet and Brokerage Centre expires at the end of March 2006. The concept had considerable support. If it were to proceed there was a need to move from the pilot stage to implementation. A demonstration was being arranged for the Chair and a number of key Forum members to enable informed decisions to be made.

Reports from the Forum sub-Committees

13. The Forum received reports from the following sub-Committees: Business; Local Authorities Emergency Planning; Utilities; Blue Lights; Health; Transport; Voluntary Sector.

Reports from the Forum Working Groups

14. The Forum received reports from the following Working Groups: Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear; Consequence and Recovery Management; Mass Fatality; Evacuation Working; Critical Infrastructure and Business Continuity; Faith Working Group; Command and Control; and Exercises.

LRT
November 2005