

**LONDON REGIONAL RESILIENCE FORUM
TWENTIETH MEETING**

15:00 – 17:00 13th JULY 2006

MINUTES

Those attending included the Minister for Local Government and Community Cohesion, as Chair, in addition to senior representatives from the following organisations:

British Telecom
British Transport Police
Cabinet Office
City of London Police
Department for Communities and Local Government
Environment Agency
Government Office for London
Greater London Authority
Health Protection Agency
Home Office
LFEPA
London Ambulance Service
London Borough of Croydon
London Councils
London District (Army)
London Fire Brigade
London First
London Resilience Team, GoL
London Underground
Metropolitan Police Service
Network Rail
NHS London
Port of London Authority
Resilience Team, Government Office, East of England
St Johns Ambulance
Transport for London

Observers

Minister's Private Secretary, DCLG
NHS London
O2

1. MINISTER'S INTRODUCTION

The Minister welcomed everyone to the twentieth meeting of the London Regional Resilience Forum.

Apologies

Apologies were received and noted.

The Chair asked the Forum to note that, to comply with the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act, in future the minutes of the Forum would no longer be marked 'Restricted' and would be made available to all Category one and two responders and asked if everyone was content with this approach. The Forum agreed that the minutes should be unrestricted and made available to responders.

The Chair noted that the Anniversary of the London Bombings had taken place the previous week and that the acts of remembrance, private services and commemoration events passed smoothly and without incident. He thanked everyone for their work in enabling this to happen.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the 19th London Regional Resilience Forum, held on 10th May 2006 were agreed and accepted as an accurate record. Actions were all complete, or would be covered during the meeting.

3. THREAT & HORIZON SCAN

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) gave a detailed update on the current position and threat levels.

The Chair thanked the MPS and invited the Cabinet Office to provide the horizon scan.

The Cabinet Office said that the main priorities were Flu and Drought.

Bird Flu

DEFRA reported that there was likely to be an increased risk of bird flu in the early autumn as migration took place. He stated that whilst the risk to birds would temporarily increase, the risk of it spreading to humans remained 'very low'.

Human Flu

The Cabinet Office reported that the threat from a human flu pandemic was 'medium'.

Drought

The latest Met Office forecast was for a warmer and drier summer than average, but one that was not as hot as 1976. A milder, wetter winter was now predicted for 06/07 and the possibility of drought conditions next summer remained. Preparedness planning for a drought next year should continue in case of a winter of low rainfall.

The Chair thanked The Cabinet Office and invited The London Resilience Team (LRT) to provide an update on the NHS Heatwave Plan.

Speaking to Paper LRRF (06) 21, LRT said that the Heatwave Plan was originally launched in July 2005 and was relaunched this year in anticipation of Heatwave conditions and Paper LRRF (06) 21 set out the arrangements for the activation of the Heatwave Plan. LRT explained that the 'Heat – Health Watch System' comprised 4 levels of response and would be triggered when the Met Office confirmed that threshold temperatures had been reached; as part of this, there was a role for Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) to address Heatwave Planning as part of their preparations.

The Chair thanked LRT. There were no questions or comments.

4. Flu Pandemic – Paper LRRF (06) 22

The chair invited The Cabinet Office to provide the background briefing on the Flu Pandemic.

The Cabinet Office explained there would need to be a 24/7 Gold operation; operating a three shift system which was resilient to flu affecting the people within the Gold command.

The Chair thanked The Cabinet Office and invited LRT to introduce Paper LRRF (06) 22.

LRT explained that the paper was before the Forum to discharge an action point from the last meeting, which was to provide an RCCC response structure for a flu pandemic. LRT also commented that the paper provided a note on the London Flu Pandemic Exercise which would take place in November.

LRT commented that an Exercise Steering Group, drawn from the membership of the Infectious Diseases Working Group and the London Health Pandemic Influenza Planning Group would be involved in identifying the aims and objectives of the Flu Exercise. LRT asked the Forum to note the contents of the paper.

The Chair thanked LRT for the paper and asked the Forum members if they were content. The Forum noted and accepted the paper.

5. Mass Fatalities Plan progress report.

The Chair invited LRT to give an oral update.

LRT explained that the Mass Fatalities Plan had been activated by the Coroners in response to the July Bombings. At the subsequent multi-agency debrief, it was agreed that the Mass Fatalities Plan would be revised to incorporate lessons learnt. Until the revised Plan was accepted and endorsed by the Forum, Version 1 would remain valid and fit for purpose.

LRT said that where previously the London Mass Fatalities Plan relied upon the company De Boer to supply the mortuary equipment, the Home Office had now, entered into a new national contract with another supplier, Kellogg, Root

& Brown and had introduced the National Emergency Mortuary Arrangements (NEMA).

Work was underway to identify further suitable sites for the Temporary Mortuaries and the LRT Mass Fatalities Team was working closely with the police and local authority Emergency Planning Officers in this work and to survey the identified sites.

A decommissioning element would now be added to the Plan. The intention was to send out the Plan for consultation in the summer in order to present it to the Forum in October for endorsement.

HM Coroner Service noted that whilst the Mass Fatalities Plan had worked successfully in the past, coroners would like to see the new arrangements being tested at the earliest opportunity.

LRT stated that the cost of exercising would be substantial and the Home Office were therefore planning to exercise the new supplier in 2007/08.

LRT suggested that a way forward would be to undertake a tabletop familiarization exercise with supplier in autumn 2006, prior to a full scale exercise in 2007. This would enable the coroners, police and local authorities to familiarize themselves with the supplier and make for a better subsequent full exercise; The Cabinet Office agreed. The Forum agreed that this was an ideal solution to the exercising issue and asked LRT and the Home Office to work with partners to deliver an autumn tabletop familiarization with the National Emergency Mortuary Arrangements and new Home Office supplier.

The Chair thanked LRT for the update. There were no further questions or comments.

6. London Assistance Centre Plan.

The Chair asked LRT to present the London Assistance Centre Plan.

LRT explained that prior to the London Bombings, there was no plan for an Assistance Centre; however one was quickly and effectively established. Draft national guidance had been issued in September 2005 and a specific London interim guidance document (taking on board the lessons learnt) had been issued in February 2006.

The preparation of a London 'Assistance Centre Plan' had been commissioned by the Forum meeting on 12 October 2005. A multi-agency London Assistance Centre Working Group had been formed to work with LRT on the development of the Plan. Each of the six LRFs was represented on the Group by an Emergency Planning Officer.

A copy of the draft Plan was provided to Forum members and they were asked to provide comments by the 31st August 2006. Comments would be considered and taken on board and a finalized plan would be brought to the Forum in October for formal endorsement.

The Chair thanked LRT for the paper and asked the Forum to provide comments by 31st August. There were no questions or comments.

[Action Point: All members to consider the London Assistance Centre Plan and to provide comments to the team by 31st August 2006].

7. Gold Standard. LRRF Paper (06) 23

The Chair invited The Cabinet Office to give a background briefing to the Gold Standard paper.

The Cabinet Office stated that the Gold Standard had been developed to enhance resilience and was aimed at training leaders for multi agency Gold groups, defining the competencies of the leaders and ensuring that their abilities matched competencies. Leaders at all levels, from COBR to multi agency Silvers, would benefit from this training support system.

The Minister thanked The Cabinet Office and invited The Emergency Planning College to present LRRF Paper (06) 23.

The Emergency Planning College said that Gold Standard was targeted at joint multi-agency commands, up to COBR and down to Silver. He said it was envisaged to be a team training support system, covering a mixture of people, technologies and procedures.

The project and procurement was managed by the MOD Procurement Agency, which was the best placed Agency with relevant experience in acquiring command training systems.

The Emergency Planning College explained that there had been a 12 month national assessment, aimed at base-lining the requirements of the package. This included interviews with practitioners and experts; shadowing two Gold Teams running major operations and running two national focus groups. He said the first exercise under Gold Standard was likely to be in the West Yorkshire LRF in June 2007.

London Fire Brigade (LFB) noted that LFEPa had a statutory role to deliver exercising and training in London and asked about the implications for the London Regional Resilience Forum as a result of this pilot.

The Emergency Planning College replied that Gold Standard is not mandatory and Forums could evaluate the pilot and choose whether or not to use it. He said that Gold Standard training was a variable and adaptable product and that each exercise was a bespoke event.

LRT stated that the item was brought to the Forum to enable the Forum to consider how this might best be utilised in London. LRT recommended that the Forum ask the Exercise Working Group to look at Gold Standard and consider its potential for assisting multi-agency training and exercising for London.

[Action point: Exercise Working Group to look at Gold Standard and assess its potential for use to provide training and exercises for London, and report back to the October Forum]

The Chair thanked The Emergency Planning College for the paper.

8. Training for the role of Gold – Paper LRRF (06) 24

The Chair asked LRT to present this paper.

LRT said that training for the role of Gold at a Gold Coordinating Group or Regional Civil Contingencies Committee had been identified as a requirement of both the CIMIC review of Strategic Coordination Centre arrangements in London and an LRRF paper from an earlier Forum, which assessed the actions arising from the London Bombings.

LRT explained that Paper LRRF (06) 24 set out the arrangements currently in place in individual agencies and said that further work was required in order to identify gaps in the Gold Training arrangements and encourage greater consistency within partner agencies. The Forum was asked to agree that LRT should undertake a review of these arrangements.

The Chair asked if all members were content for the London Resilience Team to undertake a review and report back to the Forum. LRT was concerned that this should only proceed if it had the support of the emergency services. The Metropolitan Police Service welcomed it. The Forum agreed that LRT should undertake the review.

[Action point: London Resilience Team to review the provision of Gold Training across partner organizations and report back, with recommendations, to the October Forum].

9. National Capabilities Survey

The Chair invited LRT to give a presentation on the National Capabilities Survey.

LRT said that the National Capabilities Survey covered local responders; essential service providers and central government. It gave the most comprehensive picture yet captured of current preparedness. A questionnaire was sent to every Police Force, Fire Brigade, Local Authority and Coroner in the country. There was a 90% response rate for the London Local Responder Survey.

The purpose of the Survey was to:

- Provide Lead Government Departments with data on the status of capabilities at a local level.
- Provide evidence to inform policy/spending priorities.

- Provide Local and Regional Resilience Forums with information regarding gaps.
- Identify and promulgate best practice.

The results of the survey had been weighted in order to provide a scoring system that recognized the most important issues and this helped to provide consistency to compare geographical results.

The initial findings indicated that there was little regional variation in capability, however, some responses failed to take into account regional plans. The results indicated that the resilience structure was well developed but that training, exercising and communications issues needed to be addressed.

LRT said that when Ministers had had an opportunity to consider the results they would be made available to the LRRF. The Forum may need to review its priorities after a detailed analysis of the results.

The Corporation of London commented that it was essential to share information and best practice across the LRFs.

The Forum agreed that the results from each of the LRFs could be made available across the partnership.

The Chair thanked LRT for the presentation. There were no further questions or comments.

10. London Prepared Website -

The Chair invited LRT to present Paper LRRF (06) 25.

LRT said that the London Prepared Website had been significantly redesigned in preparation for a relaunch at the end of July. LRT said that the Website was intended to be a vehicle for the whole partnership.

Previously the London Prepared had been hosted by the Cabinet Office, but recently it had been temporarily hosted by Government Office for London. The redesigned website was intended to be more accessible, user friendly and fit for purpose. LRT explained that the website would be a useful tool for warning and informing the public and thus help the partnership meet a key requirement of the Civil Contingencies Act.

The redesigned, relaunched website would increase the visibility of the partnership and was designed to ensure that it ranked highly in Google/Yahoo etc searches.

LRT then gave an on line demonstration of the Website.

City of London Police asked how visitors to London would know about the website.

LRT explained that the launch of the website was critical and it was important to ensure that marketing continued after the launch. Finally it was important to ensure that search engines continued to show the site at the high up the search results.

LRT said that the website was a partnership effort jointly funded by the Government Office for London, LFEPA and the Association of London Government, and would now sit on the Greater London Authority's server, and be serviced by the GLA. LRT would retain editorial control on behalf of the partnership. The local authorities were already using it to host the business continuity planning material they had developed to help meet their new duty to promote BCP to local businesses.

The Chair asked about the protocol for editorial decisions. LRT said that a protocol will be presented to the October Forum.

The Chair thanked LRT for the presentation. There were no further questions or comments.

11. Extranet Progress Report – Paper LRRF (06) 26

The Chair asked LRT to present this item as The ALG were unable to attend the meeting.

LRT said that the paper provided the Forum with an update on the Extranet. The Cabinet Office had undertaken to provide funding for the capital element of a national Extranet, provided local authorities and other responders met the revenue cost. The Department for Communities and Local Government were in the process of procuring a national version and that this should be well underway by the October Forum.

The Cabinet Office said that they felt it was important for them to support the National Extranet by providing funding as it was recognized that it would be a key vehicle for getting information from COBR to command and control teams across the country.

The Chair thanked LRT for the update. He said this was an important project which provided the main communication platform for resilience partnerships, therefore it was important to get the project right and in place as soon as possible.

There were no questions or comments.

12. Fuel – Paper LRRF (06) 27

The Chair invited LRT to introduce this paper.

LRT explained that Paper LRRF (06) 27 provided the Forum with an update on the progress towards the work that had taken place in implementing the DTI's Downstream Oil Emergency Response Plan, which required Local Authorities to make plans for a fuel Priority Use Scheme (PUS) in the event of

a fuel crisis. A Working Group had also been set up to consider the multi-agency aspects, including Command and Control, and the DTI had run an exercise, "Exercise Gemini", which had exercised the Priority Users Scheme.

As a result of a DTI review, Exercise Gemini and the work of the local authorities, a number of issues had been raised on which further guidance was needed. LRT therefore recommended to the Forum that the work be put on hold until the DTI were able to give a clearer understanding of what was expected from the local authorities.

LRT also said that work had taken place on revising the Designated Filling Station list for London which was now up to date and with the DTI.

The Forum agreed that the work should be put on hold.

The Chair thanked LRT for the update. There were no questions or comments.

[Action: Work on the London Fuel Plan to be put on hold until DTI provide clearer guidance]

13. London Bombings Issues update and the LRRF review of the London Bombings – Papers LRRF (06) 28 and LRRF (06) 33.

The Chair invited LRT to present these papers.

LRT explained that Paper LRRF (06) 33 was the regular update on the post 7/7 workstreams agreed at the Forum on 12th October 2005.

Paper LRRF (06) 28 was the Forum's draft report on the lessons learned from the July Bombings. This was the third version that had been circulated for partner's comments. Annex A to the report set out progress since July 2005. This had also been circulated for comment. LRT was grateful for the many contributions they had received and was in the process of taking them on board.

The intention was for the Forum's report to be published in tandem with the Government report to be issued by the Home Secretary. The Government report would set out the 7/7 lessons and action from a national and central government perspective while the Forum's report would address these issues from the perspective of London responders.

The draft report drew together the main findings, lessons and recommendations from the multi-agency debriefing commissioned by the Forum at its meeting on 14 July 2005 and considered on 12 October 2005. It was essentially a compilation of the papers presented to the Forum on 12 October, supplemented by more in depth material from the debriefing meetings, and by points and issues identified in discussion at the two Forum meetings.

LRT went through the paper explaining the structure, and how it addressed the key issues last year's debrief had identified and the work programme that

had been set in hand in October. The report also dealt with the partnership's consideration of the London Assembly's 7 July Review Committee's report. Analyses had been shared by partners following the latter's publication and many would be responding individually to the Assembly Committee. The Forum's report drew together partners' responses to the key issues raised by the Assembly. The consensus among partners was that while there was much that was valuable in the Assembly report, most of the key issues had been identified by the multi-agency debrief last year and were already being addressed. There were also concerns about misunderstandings in the report, its lack of balance and negative tone, and its failure to recognise responders' openness over lessons learnt.

The Cabinet Office said that the report was consistent with the national lessons learned. A release date had yet to be agreed.

The Chair asked the Forum if they were content with the approach taken in the Forum 7/7 report. He said that the policy and philosophy of the Forum should be to invite criticism in order to learn and improve preparedness. He said that the down side of this was the impact upon the morale of the people who make the plans and deliver the response. He said it was important to highlight any failings, put them into context and use them to be better prepared for future events. The key message of the report should be what we are doing for the future resilience of the capital.

The Chair of the London Local Authorities Emergency Planning Sub-Committee (LLAEPSC) said that they endorsed the approach. NHS London felt that the report would provide an opportunity to get some key messages out to the public about how to behave and what they should expect in an emergency. It was also necessary to deal with misunderstandings, such as over the role of non-emergency hospitals, such as Great Ormond Street Hospital

The Chair thanked LRT for his paper. The Forum endorsed the approach taken by the 7/7 lessons report.

14. TETRA – Paper LRRF (06) 32

The Chair invited LRT to present this paper.

LRT explained that the paper informed the Telecoms review which the Cabinet Office had asked each region to undertake. The May Forum had asked the Greater London Authority to convene a meeting of partners to look at the proposal for the use of a TETRA system to provide an additional channel for strategic communication (between Golds) in an emergency, thus increasing the diversity and resilience of telecoms. The LRT had chaired a meeting on 29 June. The meeting had confirmed that the proposed approach could add significantly to the resilience of telecoms between Golds, and recommended that the Command & Control Working Group be commissioned to take forward further examination of the proposal and the development of the protocols and training that would be required.

The Chair thanked LRT for the paper and the Forum agreed that the Command and Control Working Group should take forward this work.

[Action Point: The Command & Control Working Group to undertake a detailed further examination of the TETRA emergency telecommunications system and development of a suitable protocol and training and report back to the Forum].

15. Local Resilience Forum Update – Paper LRRF (06) 29

The Chair asked LFEPA to introduce this paper.

LFEPA said that the six LRFs had been in existence since November 2005 and had met three times each. LFEPA said that an exercise would now be undertaken, concluded by the end of the year, which looked at the options for identifying and sharing best practices, adding value and strengthening links between the six. LFEPA said that this will be followed by a 'health check'. LFEPA sought agreement that the Forum was content with this approach.

The Forum welcomed and agreed this approach.

The Chair thanked LFEPA for the paper. There were no questions or comments.

16. Reports from the LRRF Sub Committees – Paper LRRF (06) 30

The Forum heard reports from the Chairs or representatives of the Sub Committees on progress made and the key issues facing each Sub Committee (as set out in Paper LRRF (06) 30):

Business Sub Committee

LRT reported that the Sub committee was making good progress and was looking at the Communication network across businesses to agree how to inform the business community of key decisions made a Gold Command during incidents.

Local Authorities Emergency Planning Sub Committee (LLAEPSC)

The Chair of LLAEPSC reported that the Local Authorities were developing local level flu response plans and they were represented by the Local Government Association on the Ministerial Committee considering national pandemic flu planning.

He added that LFEPA were in the process of developing Exercise Safer City which was scheduled to take place on 18th October 2006. Exercise Safer City is designed to exercise and evaluate the arrangements for Local Authority co-ordination and communication within the London Local Authority Gold structure.

Utilities Sub Committee

The Chair of the Utilities Sub Committee reported that at the Utilities Sub-committee's behest, a National Utilities Workshop had taken place on 30th

June, organized by LRT and chaired by DCLG. This had involved utilities and regional resilience teams from across the country and concentrated on how utilities could most effectively contribute to regional and local emergency planning. The Chair of the Utilities Sub Committee said that the outcomes of the workshop would be looked at by central government.

The Chair of the Utilities Sub Committee added that the Utilities Sub Committee was working on scenario development with the Exercises Working Group.

Blue Lights Sub Committee

MPS reported the Sub Committee was considering the Blue Lights issues raised by the London Assembly review Committee report into the London Bombings.

The Sub Committee was also developing a coordinated approach to a large scale deployment of London emergency services resources outside the capital.

Health Sub Committee

NHS London said there were no specific issues for the Forum to consider.

Transport Sub Committee

Transport for London reported that a particular issue for the Sub Committee was that of protective masks for staff and travellers. He said that there was concern that alarm could be caused by people wearing them.

The Cabinet Office added that the Department of Health was developing guidance on masks; they were looking at who needed them; how many are needed and who is considered to be high risk. He said that advice would be made available over the summer.

Voluntary Sub Committee

The Chair of the Voluntary Sub Committee reported that the London Voluntary Sector Funding Protocol had been formally signed off by the representatives of the organizations involved in its creation and by the Minister, Phil Woolas MP.

The Sub Committee was also looking at how the voluntary sector could link into the Command & Control Protocol and be represented at Gold.

Communications Sub Committee

The Cabinet Office reported that the Communications Sub Committee had been involved in preparing for the July Bombings response and dealing with the media interest from the London Assembly Review of the July Bombings. The Cabinet Office said that they were arranging a series of workshops for Communications Officers to inform them of their duty to warn and inform the public.

17. Reports from LRRF Working Group Chairs – Paper LRRF (06) 31

The Forum heard reports from the Chairs of the Working Groups on progress made and the key issues facing each working group. Due to time constraints, reports were only taken from Chairs with specific items to report. The Chair was called away from the meeting by a division bell in the House of Commons and the chair was taken by the Deputy Chair.

Water Saving Working Group

LRT reported that the first meeting of the Water Saving Working Group had taken place on 13th June, when the terms of reference were established. The main areas of work were: identifying vulnerable groups; identifying heavy water users and identifying critical functions which would need to be maintained during any interruption in supply. This discharged an action from the 10 May Forum meeting.

Exercises Working Group

MPS reported that the Exercises Working Group was currently producing a database of exercises and working with the Cabinet Office to obtain the national exercise database.

CBRN Working Group

LRT reported that the review of CBRN workstreams was complete. The Working Group was in discussion about the exercising opportunities this year. London Ambulance Service (LAS) confirmed that the LAS Hot Zone Pilot was expected to commence in December.

Faith Working Group

LFEPA reported that the Working Group had been developing a training package and also working to produce a Faith Plan.

Command & Control Working Group

MPS reported that the Command & Control Working Group was continuing to work on inter-regional planning and had produced a scoping document for a Strategic Co-ordination Centre.

17. Any other Business

- None.

15. Date of next meeting

The next London Regional Resilience Forum will take place on Thursday 19th October 2006, 10:00 to 12:00.