

LONDON RESILIENCE



preparing for emergencies

LONDON REGIONAL RESILIENCE FORUM

TWENTY-FIRST MEETING

19 OCTOBER 2006

GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR LONDON

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

- 1.1 The Minister welcomed everyone to the twenty-first meeting of the London Regional Resilience Forum.
- 1.2 Apologies were received and noted.
- 1.3 The Chair reminded the Forum that, to comply with the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act, the minutes of the Forum would be marked 'unrestricted' and would be made available to all Category one and two responders and published on the London Prepared website.
- 1.4 The Chair thanked all those involved in the publication of the 7/7 report
- 1.5 The Chair asked the Forum to note that the London Prepared website (www.londonprepared.gov.uk) was relaunched on 22 September 2006. He said it was an important source of information and all the latest plans and minutes of the forum would be published on it. He asked all partners to promote the awareness of the website in their own organisations.
- 1.6 The Chair informed the Forum that the Director, London Resilience Team (LRT) had been taken ill while on holiday but that fortunately he is now making a good recovery. The Deputy Director, LRT, is standing in during his absence.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

- 2.1 The Minutes of the 20th London Regional Resilience Forum, held on 13 July 2006 were agreed and accepted as an accurate record. Actions were all complete, or would be covered during the meeting.

3. THREAT & HORIZON SCAN

- 3.1 The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) gave a detailed update on the current position and threat levels.
- 3.2 The Chair thanked the MPS and invited the Cabinet Office to provide the horizon scan.
- 3.3 The Cabinet Office explained that the main priorities were Pandemic Flu, Avian Flu, Water Shortage and Gas supply disruption.
- 3.4 **Pandemic Flu**
The Cabinet Office reported that the threat level from a human pandemic flu was 'medium'.
- 3.5 **Avian Flu**
The threat from Avian Flu was still present and the forthcoming migratory season meant that it remained a constant risk. DEFRA are

continuing to assess the situation. However, the risk of it spreading to humans remained 'very low'.

3.6 **Water Shortage**

The forecast suggests a winter within normal ranges, with no extremes of temperature or rainfall. The risk of Water Shortage, therefore, continues.

3.7 **Gas Supply Disruption**

The Langed gas pipeline was on-stream and had improved the supply of gas to the U.K. greatly. The risk of Gas disruption was 'low' and declining.

3.8 The Chair thanked the Cabinet Office. There were no questions or comments.

4. **EXERCISE SAFER CITY**

4.1 The Chair invited LFEPA to give an update on Exercise Safer City, which took place on 18 October.

4.2 LFEPA explained that Exercise Safer City was an exercise to test London's local authority arrangements - the London Local Authority Gold (LLAG) arrangements - for their combined response to an emergency in London. These arrangements have been agreed and put into place by all of London's 33 local authorities. Chief Executives from 3 London boroughs and representatives from partner agencies were involved in the exercise.

4.3 LFEPA explained that they were planning a thorough evaluation of the exercise and a full written report would be available in January, which he would aim to bring to the January Forum. Initial feedback from the event was positive; it has shown that the central element of the structure operates well and that there is a clear commitment to the arrangements among the local authorities and partner agencies.

4.4 LFEPA explained that there is a growing realisation among emergency planners of the essential role that Local Authorities can provide in an emergency situation. This has led to an increasing commitment for the inclusion of Local Authorities in emergency planning, and in turn has led to an increasing enthusiasm among Local Authorities about the importance of this work.

4.5 LFEPA thanked all representatives from Agencies who were involved in the exercise.

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

5. **STRATEGIC CO-ORDINATION CENTRE (SCC) UPDATE - (LRRF (06) 34)**

- 5.1 The Chair invited the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to update the group and give a background briefing to the paper LRRF (06) 34
- 5.2 The MPS updated the group on progress of the development of the Strategic Co-ordination Centre. The Command and Control Working Group, chaired by the MPS, has been scoping the functionality of the SCC.
- 5.3 MPS recommended that the next steps be for the Command and Control Working Group to continue its work on detailing the functionality of the SCC and for discussions led by the MPS to continue around location and funding.
- 5.4 The Chair thanked the MPS and asked the Forum members if they were content. The Forum noted and accepted the paper. There were no further questions or comments.

6. NATIONAL CAPABILITIES SURVEY

- 6.1 The Chair invited the London Resilience Team (LRT) to present the findings of the National Capability Survey.
- 6.2 LRT explained that the National Capabilities survey built upon an earlier regional capability mapping exercise in 2003, which London did not take part in, due to planning already being underway in the Capital at the time. The National Capabilities survey was completed in April 2006 and was intended to give a comprehensive picture of current preparedness.
- 6.3 LRT then presented the results of the survey.

7 THE LONDON MASS FATALITIES PLAN - (LRRF (06) 35)

- 7.1 The Chair invited the London Resilience Team (LRT) to present this paper and the draft plan.
- 7.2 LRT updated the group that work has now been completed on the London Mass Fatality Plan Version 2 to take into account:
 - Lessons learned from 7/7
 - The new National Emergency Mortuary Arrangements (NEMA)
 - The new UK-DVI (Disaster Victim Identification) Team
 - The Human Tissue Authority
 - New London Mortuary sitesLRT explained that the new version of the plan has been approved by the Mass Fatalities Working Group and so it was now ready to be issued to stakeholders for a period of final consultation.
- 7.3 LRT explained that the intention was for the period of consultation to be short and so, if the plan was cleared through consultation before the January Forum she would write to the forum to seek approval for

publication. Otherwise, the final version will be brought to the Forum in January.

7.4 The Chair thanked LRT and asked the Forum members if they were content. The Forum noted and accepted the paper. There were no further questions or comments.

8. THE LONDON HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE CENTRE PLAN - (LRRF (06) 36)

8.1 The Chair invited LRT to present this paper.

8.2 LRT explained that The London Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) Plan was complete and sought the Forum's approval for publication.

8.3 The Chair thanked LRT and asked the Forum members if they were content for the HAC Plan to be published. The Forum noted and accepted the plan. There were no further questions or comments.

9. THE LONDON COMMUNICATIONS ALERT PROTOCOL - (LRRF (06) 37)

9.1 The Chair invited the Cabinet Office to introduce this paper.

9.2 The Cabinet Office explained to the group that this paper had been brought to the Forum to avoid confusion. They clarified that the London Communications Alert Protocol had been revised following lessons learnt from the Power Outage and the Terror Alert over the summer. The remit of the protocol was communications specific and was designed to ensure that everyone gets an early and ongoing flow of the information, and to enable the co-ordination of communications.

9.3 The Metropolitan Police Service highlighted that this was a communications protocol aimed at providing information quickly not a protocol designed to alert agencies for action.

9.4 The Chair thanked the Cabinet Office. There were no further questions or comments.

10. WATER SHORTAGE PLAN UPDATE - (LRRF (06) 38)

10.1 The Chair invited the London Resilience Team (LRT) to introduce this paper.

10.2 LRT explained that, following the Forum in May 2006, the Water Shortage Working Group had been developing a London plan in preparation for a possible third dry winter. The plan was being constructed to include early consultation with the water companies in the period leading up to an emergency drought order, it will include the roles and responsibilities of the lead Government department, the water companies and the London Resilience Partner Agencies. The

aim was to mitigate the impact of an Emergency Drought Order, using Command and Control arrangements for a rising tide event. The plan would be submitted to the January Forum for approval.

- 10.3 The Chair thanked LRT and asked if there were any comments or questions.
- 10.4 The Cabinet Office thanked those involved in this work and stated that it had important implications for National planning.
- 10.5 The Environment Agency commented that it was important to ensure there was a correlation between the plan and each water company's individual water shortage plans.
- 10.6 The Chair stated that he thought in any potential water shortage situation it was important to have a robust media strategy. The Media could be strong allies in this by providing information and encouragement to the public but they needed to have confidence that there were clear, workable plans in place.

11. PANDEMIC FLU UPDATE - (LRRF (06) 39)

- 11.1 The Chair invited the London Resilience Team (LRT) to introduce this paper.
- 11.2 LRT updated the group on the latest developments with the London Flu Pandemic Plan and current exercising arrangements. They explained that the current plan which was approved at the May '06 LRRF was being updated to reflect changes in National Guidance, and following the recent merger of London's five Strategic Health Authorities. The revised plan will be submitted to the January 2007 LRRF.
- 11.3 LRT outlined the current flu exercising provision and explained that there were currently 3 planned exercises:
 - Exercise Coldplay, a health led exercise, in the form of a one day seminar taking place on 15 November. This would look at preparedness of Influenza Pandemic Committees by walking through the new NHS London pandemic response plan.
 - Exercise Athena, organised by the HPA, in the form of a desktop exercise to be held in January 2007 (date tbc). It would allow a full exercise of the NHS London pandemic response plan, as well as testing the revised LRRF Flu Pandemic Plan.
 - Exercise Winter Willow, a two part HPA led national exercise, aims to enhance the UK's ability to manage the effects of an influenza pandemic. The exercise would be split into 2 parts; the first part on the 30 Jan would be a tabletop exercise involving a meeting of the CCC; the second part on the 19, 20 Feb would be a full national and regional exercise and for the London region would involve meetings of the RCCC.

- 11.4 LRT recommended to the Forum that, in order to manage the pandemic flu exercise programme in London effectively, they agree to a time-bound Executive Exercise Steering Group for Pandemic Flu, reporting to the LRRF IDWG, be established to oversee this work.
- 11.5 The Chair urged colleagues to ensure that their agencies were fully involved in Exercise Winter Willow where necessary.
- 11.6 The Chair thanked LRT and asked the Forum members if they were content for the Executive Exercise Steering Group for Pandemic Flu to be convened. The Forum noted and accepted the proposal. There were no further questions or comments.

12. LONDON MULTI-AGENCY FLOOD RESPONSE PLAN UPDATE - (LRRF (06) 40)

- 12.1 The Chair invited the London Resilience Team (LRT) to introduce this paper.
- 12.2 LRT updated the group on progress with the London multi-agency flood response plan. He explained that flooding, along with Pandemic Flu, was regarded as high risk. The proposed London flood response plan would look beyond local flood plans, include spatial planning issues, develop understandings and coordinate resources to optimize response capabilities.
- 12.3 LRT recommended that the Forum noted the intention to produce a London multi-agency flood response plan, with the aim to submit a first draft to the January Forum, and that the Forum agrees that a Working Group be set up to take this forward.
- 12.4 The Chair thanked LRT and asked if there were any comments or questions.
- 12.5 The Environment Agency endorsed the proposal and added that it was important to consider the way in which local flood plans were shared. There needed to be joined up plans to consider long term recovery and clean up as well as protocols in place to facilitate the sharing of equipment and communications systems in a flood situation. He emphasised the need for a Multi Agency response and that LRFs should be fully involved.

13. LRF UPDATE - (LRRF (06) 41)

- 13.1 The Chair asked LFEPA to introduce his paper
- 13.2 LFEPA updated the forum on the latest developments from the Local Resilience Forums. Five of the six LRFs met for the fourth time in July (the SW LRF had previously met in June). The LRFs discussed the London Pandemic Flu plan and the work going on locally (following the LRF report to the March meeting of the Infectious Diseases Working

Group), the London Prepared website, Community Risk Registers, Humanitarian Assistance Centre planning and Resilience Mortuary planning work at the LRF level.

- 13.3 LFEPA explained that at the request of the LRFs LFEPA had run a series of flood risk seminars. The turn out at these was very high – about 350 attendees including representatives from Businesses and Flood survivor groups. A report highlighting the key learning points from these seminars would inform the development of the London multi-agency flood response plan as well as being used by LRFs to take forward their work on risk treatment measures.
- 13.4 LFEPA also gave details of the work which the LRFs have been doing to develop their Community Risk Registers (CRRs). LFEPA have developed a paper on the development of CRRs which will assist LRFs when they begin the rolling programme of review of the CCRs which were due to begin this quarter. The paper would be reissued shortly taking onboard comments from the chairs of LRFs.
- 13.5 LFEPA asked the Forum to note that LFEPA have also produced a proposal paper for the future activity of LRFs. Initial feedback has been received from LRF Chairs and the issue has been discussed at LLAEPSC (London Local Authority Emergency Planning Sub Committee). LFEPA would continue to update the LRRF on progress.
- 13.6 LFEPA requested that members of the Forum look at Annex A of the CRR policy document and consider whether LFEPA are the most appropriate nominated lead assessor for those which they are listed. The London Fire Brigade expressed some concern over the proposals and agreed to meet LFEPA after the meeting to discuss further.
- 13.7 The Chair thanked LFEPA. There were no further questions or comments.

14. REPORTS FROM THE LRRF SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRS - (LRRF (06) 42)

- 14.1 The Forum heard reports from the Chairs or representatives of the Sub Committees on progress made and the key issues facing each Sub Committees (as set out in Paper LRRF (06) 42).

14.2 Business Sub Committee

The Chair of the Sub Committee reported that there has been a shift in emphasis in the work of the committee moving away from generic planning and focusing on a risk and issue specific agenda. Other work involved improving communications between Gold communications and the business community. He emphasised the need for businesses to be effectively involved in exercises and included in planning assumptions.

14.3 Local Authority Emergency Planning Sub Committee

The Chair of the Sub Committee reported that the sub-committee had been continuing work on developing the role of LRFs. There were now 6 Chief Executives active in chairing meetings and a lot of the Sub Committee work is now being done by the LRFs.

The Chair of the Sub Committee also highlighted a problem that had been raised by the group. He requested clarity about security clearance since there were disparate views about the correct level.

ACTION: DCLG to consider this and report back.

14.4 Utilities Sub Committee

The Chair of the Sub Committee reported that the Sub-Committee had been making progress on their work programme. Work is underway on notification arrangements between utilities companies and category 1 and 2 responders. A paper was being prepared on how utilities companies respond and it was planned to include communication arrangements within this.

14.5 Blue Lights Sub Committee

No actions to report this period

14.6 Health Sub Committee

The Chair of the Sub Committee introduced the Forum to an NHS London colleague who would be taking over the Chair of the Sub Committee and who would represent NHS London at future LRRF meetings.

14.7 Transport Sub Committee

The Chair of the Sub Committee reported that the Sub-Committee had been focusing on the risk programme and liaising with the Exercise Working Group to identify priority areas. He also explained that the issue of acetylene cylinders has been high on the list of priorities and many agencies have expressed concern about the extent of disruption caused by fire-related incidents involving these cylinders. There will be a seminar on the 2 November at City Hall to discuss this issue.

14.8 Voluntary Sub Committee

The Chair of the Sub Committee reported that the Sub-Committee had been looking at providing communications equipment to the voluntary sector for use in emergencies to ensure they have a robust link with the statutory services. Airwave is high on the agenda but its cost is a significant issue.

The Cabinet Office explained that this issue was being looked into but that there were also problems around capacity of the spectrum, training requirements and cryptographic material that all also need to be considered.

The LRRF Chair thanked the Chair of the Sub Committee noting that the Government greatly appreciated the work the voluntary sector does.

14.9 Communications Sub Committee

The Chair of the Sub Committee reported that the group was working on updating the media protocol and emphasised the use of the updated website as an important tool.

15. REPORTS FROM THE LRRF WORKING GROUP CHAIRS - (LRRF (06) 43)

15.1 The Forum heard reports from the Chairs of Working Groups on progress made and the key issues facing each group. Due to time constraints, reports were only taken from Chairs with specific items to report.

15.2 Consequence and Recovery Management Working Group

The Chair of the Working Group reported that the working group were considering re-running an exercise to ensure everyone is content with the systems in place.

15.3 Evacuation Working Group

The Chair of the Working Group reported that Operation Sassoon was under review and it was planned to have an overview document for the January Forum.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

16.1 The Chair thanked the out-going Chair of the Health Sub Committee for all her hard work on the Forum and wished her well for the future.