

LONDON RESILIENCE



preparing for emergencies

LONDON REGIONAL RESILIENCE FORUM

THIRTIETH MEETING

10 FEBRUARY 2009

MINUTES

Those attending included the Minister for Local Government, the Minister for London and senior representatives from the following organisations:

Army HQ London
BAA
British Transport Police
Cabinet Office
Chair of Business Sector Panel
Chair of Faith Sector Panel
Chair of Local Authorities Panel
Chair of Voluntary Sector Panel
City of London Police
Civil Contingencies Secretariat
Communities & Local Government
DfT Transec
Environment Agency
Government Office for London
Greater London Authority
Health Protection Agency
London Ambulance Service
London Councils
London Fire Brigade
London Resilience Team
London Underground
LRF Representative
LRT
Met Office
Metropolitan Police Service
Network Rail
NHS London
Olympic Security Directorate
Port of London Authority
Transport for London

1. CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the thirtieth meeting of the London Regional Resilience Forum (LRRF).

- 1.2 Apologies were received and noted.
- 1.3 The Chair noted that the Minister for London was due to Chair this LRRF but, due to Ministerial commitments, would be delayed. The Minister for Local Government would therefore Chair until his arrival.
- 1.4 The Chair reminded Forum members that the LRRF was being observed over a CCTV link.

2. MINUTES AND ACTIONS OF THE LAST MEETING

- 2.1 The Minutes of the 29th London Regional Resilience Forum, held on 23 October 2008, were agreed and accepted as an accurate record.
- 2.2 All actions from the previous minutes had been completed or were underway.

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 MPS and invited the Cabinet Office to provide the horizon scan.
- 3.3 The Cabinet Office explained that the outlook was currently considered to be benign and that electricity and gas resilience was not thought to be a cause for concern. The Cabinet Office would continue to monitor significant issues with the severe weather, including the distribution of salt stocks as well as maintaining oversight on industrial action.
- 3.4 The Chair thanked the Cabinet Office.

4. SEVERE WEATHER LESSONS LEARNT

- 4.1 The Chair invited the London Resilience Team to open the discussion on initial lessons learnt from the recent severe weather and said that, although the snowfall had been an extreme event, he felt there were still lessons for London responders.
- 4.2 The London Resilience Team (LRT) said that an initial London Resilience Partnership debrief had taken place on Wednesday 4 February. The main issue raised at that meeting had been the lack of a multi-agency co-ordinated response on Sunday 1 February, gritting and transport availability.
- 4.3 LRT said that excellent co-operation had taken place between the London Local Authority Control Centre (LLACC) and Transport for London (TfL) to facilitate mutual aid to ensure that stocks of salt were

distributed where they were needed most and also praised the Meteorological Service for their prompt and accurate severe weather warnings.

- 4.4 The GLA thought that the problems were compounded by shortcomings in equipment and pointed out that, in Canada, snowblades are bolted onto the front of existing vehicles which can then be used as snowploughs. Consideration could also be undertaken to enter into contracts with specific companies to provide road clearing services in the event of future extreme weather events.
- 4.5 London Councils said that the Local Authorities were out gritting the roads and did well from Monday onwards when stocks of salt were moving around freely between Boroughs. London Councils also thought that there were problems regarding communications and highlighted that differing messages were coming from different people and organisations.
- 4.6 TfL said that within two hours of the scheduled start of service, 60% of London Underground services were running, rising to 80% after four hours. This was caused by staff not being able to get to work as, under normal circumstances, staff taxis would be used to bring certain staff into work from 4am onwards but this service was hampered by the severe weather. Sleet trains ran through the night maintaining service on clear lines and assessments were continually made in order to progressively reinstate services as soon as possible.
- 4.7 The Chair asked LRT to produce a partnership debrief report for the next Forum.
- 4.8 The Government Office for London (GoL) thought that individual organisations had performed well but welcomed the need for a report, in particular covering communications and co-ordination and also whether existing plans should be amended in light of lessons learnt.
- 4.9 The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) noted an increase in calls to the Police but the severe weather had not been a classic major event in police terms.
- 4.10 The GLA said that London was good at responding to a catastrophic event but as the severe weather might be termed a 'normal event' the resilience measures that would have been triggered by a catastrophic event did not kick in.
- 4.11 TfL explained that bus services were progressively withdrawn as the weather worsened and that the decision to withdraw service completely was taken after midnight on Sunday 1 February following a large amount of feedback from bus drivers. Most roads were impassable and the bus network was eventually overwhelmed by the volume of snow. A

Network Co-ordination Centre was set up and communication between the LLACC and TfL was good.

4.12 The Meteorological Office said that, although the press had been deeming this as a 1 in 18 year extreme weather event, the likelihood is that it is more like a 1 in 10 year event. The event was caused by cold air drawn in from the east causing persistent snow showers. Warnings highlighting potential issues were sent out using all available communication methods on Sunday 1 February. Regarding the general outlook, the rest of the winter was thought to be colder than usual but there were no more signs of snow at present.

4.13 At this point in the meeting the Minister for Local Government passed the Chair to the Minister for London.

5. PROGRESS AGAINST THE REGIONAL DELIVERY PLAN - REPORT FROM LONDON RESILIENCE PROGRAMME BOARD (LRPB)

5.1 The Chair invited LRT to present LRRF Paper (09) 01 to the Forum.

5.2 LRT updated the Forum on progress against the 2008/2009 Regional Delivery Plan, which included updates on a number of key deliverables and activities which had been completed in the first half of the business plan year. LRT also brought several issues to the attention of the Forum which were running behind schedule but still making progress.

5.3 It was noted that the London Regional Resilience Programme Board was now signing off plans on the behalf of the London Regional Resilience Forum.

5.4 The Chair noted that significant work had been undertaken on the Regional Delivery Plan and asked the partnership to draw their attention to the risk elements covered in Paper LRRF (09) 01.

5.5 There were no further comments or questions.

6. CIVIL CONTINGENCIES ACT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME: RENEWING CCA ARRANGEMENTS FOR LONDON

6.1 The Chair invited the Cabinet Office to present paper LRRF (09) 02 to the Forum.

6.2 The Cabinet Office recognised that London is a complex and therefore vulnerable city so it needs special arrangements regarding civil contingencies which are different to the rest of the UK. Successful Local Resilience Fora initiatives outside of London should be mirrored in the Capital and the best way to ensure see that this happens was to ensure that local agencies come together to do local planning.

- 6.3 London Councils pointed out that London was different to the rest of the country and that a special arrangement reflecting this difference was required. Flexibility was the key and there was still scope for maintaining a sub-regional structure. Any initiative which stimulated joint working should be considered as beneficial, as long as it was not a resource burden and promoted streamlining over bureaucracy.
- 6.4 There was agreement around the table that the preferred option would be to continue with the sub-regional structure; although this should be reshaped to reflect the different levels at which emergency planning is delivered in London.
- 6.5 MPS understood how partners got value out of the sub-regional tier and welcomed the review of the Civil Contingencies Act and although they were broadly happy, wondered if there was scope for the number of LRF meetings to be reduced.
- 6.6 The London Fire Brigade also supported the MPS comments on the sub-regional tier.
- 6.7 The Cabinet Office stated that there was a need for accountability in structure, particularly surrounding the roles and responsibilities of different bodies which they would be looking to clarify with the London Regional Resilience Forum.
- 6.8 The Chair thanked the Cabinet Office and there were no further questions or comments.

7. PITT REVIEW

- 7.1 The Chair invited the Cabinet Office to present paper LRRF (09) 03 to the Forum.
- 7.2 The Cabinet Office stated that the Government Response to the Pitt Review was published on 17 December 2008 and that the response was project led by Defra.
- 7.3 Almost a third of the 92 recommendations raised in the report were resilience focused and covered good practice, accepted practice to be confirmed in a revision of the guidance, recommendations which would link into the Civil Contingencies Act enhancement programme and further recommendations which require more substantial work.
- 7.4 The key developments for the Civil Contingencies Secretariat as a result of Pitt include:
- National Flood Water Rescue Capability Enhancement Project,
 - logistics operations,

- establishing a systematic programme to protect Critical National Infrastructure from Natural Hazards,
- dam inundation,
- community resilience,
- Cabinet Committee on Flooding,
- National Resilience Forum; and
- the National Flood Emergency Framework (Urgent Recommendations from the Pitt Interim Report) & Multi Agency Flood Plans.

7.5 The Government has agreed the need to introduce a systematic, co-ordinated, cross sector campaign to reduce the disruption caused by natural hazards to critical infrastructure and essential services by establishing a 'Natural Hazards Team' within the Cabinet Office. In the short term, this team will make an early assessment of the most vulnerable / most critical sites and in the long term will be building resilience into the system on an all hazards basis.

7.6 An outline of the National Flood Emergency Framework was published in July 2008 and a consultation document launched on 17 December. Workshops will be undertaken in each region with completion of the framework by June 2010 and the testing of response arrangements through national exercise by early 2011.

7.7 Further projects to note are the 'National Flood Emergency Framework London workshop' in March and 'Protecting CNI from Natural Hazards' – a pilot of the wider electricity outages work and a Community Resilience London workshop. The Government is also committed to publish six-monthly updates on progress with Pitt implementation with the first update due summer 2009.

7.8 The Environment Agency supported the recommendations and recognised that implementation of the recommendations would be a challenge and pointed out that funding might be an issue for the Local Authority implementation of the recommendations.

7.10 The Chair thanked the Cabinet Office for the presentation.

8. OLYMPICS UPDATE

8.1 The Chair invited the Home Office to provide an oral update to the Forum.

8.2 The Home Office had responsibility for delivering a safe and secure Olympics and was working with both the Cabinet Office and the London Resilience Team to take this work forward.

8.3 The revised Safety and Security Strategy for the Olympics is due to be delivered to Ministers and a Concept of Operations (CONOPS) is also

being developed to provide a platform and springboard for future work. Planning assumptions have also been written and the Home Office will be utilising existing resilience structures to plan for the Olympics.

8.4 A reorganisation is happening within the Home Office to enable the formation of a PREPARE team (a strand of the UK counter terrorism strategy – CONTEST) and the Home Office was working with the Department of Culture, Media & Sport to assess risks and hazards which could affect the continuity of the games. Risks will be measured against what the Olympic community wishes to achieve and additional planning and resource will be required.

8.6 The Chair thanked the Home Office. There were no further questions or comments.

9. STRATEGIC CO-ORDINATION CENTRE

9.1 The Chair invited the MPS to present paper LRRF (09) 04 to the Forum.

9.2 The MPS referred to the project delivery plan for the Strategic Co-ordination Centre (SCC) and was of the opinion that the timetable should be brought forward. The MPS would therefore be looking to bring the timelines for the project forward if possible.

9.3 The Chair thanked the MPS. There were no further questions or comments.

10. LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM UPDATE

10.1 The Chair invited the Local Resilience Forum Representative to present paper LRRF (09) 06 to the Forum.

10.2 The Local Resilience Forum Representative pointed out that a recent pilot to improve incident notification between London responders was underway and that he looked forward to reviewing the outcome.

10.3 The Chair thanked the Local Resilience Forum Representative. There were no further questions or comments.

11. REPORTS FROM THE LRRF PANEL CHAIRS

11.1 The Forum heard reports from the Chairs or representatives of Sector panels regarding progress made and the key issues facing each. Reports were only taken from Chairs with specific items to report.

11.2 Business Sector Panel

The Chair of the Business Sector Panel was pleased to see that the MPS were moving forward with piloting a system which will provide real time messages to the public and businesses.

11.3 Local Authorities Panel

The Local Authorities Panel Chair stated that there was nothing to report in addition to the LRRF paper.

11.4 Utilities Sector Panel

The Utilities Sector Panel Chair stated that there was nothing to report in addition to the LRRF paper.

11.5 Health Sector Panel

The Health Sector Panel Chair stated that there was nothing to report in addition to the LRRF paper.

11.6 Transport Sector Panel

The Transport Sector Panel Chair stated that there was nothing to report in addition to the LRRF paper.

11.7 Faith Sector Panel

The Faith Sector Panel Chair stated that there was nothing to report in addition to the LRRF paper.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 The Cabinet Office highlighted the current status of UK salt stocks in relation to the recent severe weather and stated that they had set up a team to co-ordinate salt supplies.

12.2 The Cabinet Office stated that most London Boroughs were prioritising supplies of salt but further controls regarding the amounts of salt that were being used would be appreciated. The Cabinet Office would not exit from co-ordination until Local Authorities had enough stocks of salt to cover until April 2009.