

LRP Humanitarian Assistance Framework

Version 6.2

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LONDON RESILIENCE GROUP

The London Resilience Group is jointly funded and governed by the Greater London Authority, London Local Authorities and the London Fire Commissioner. We are hosted by the London Fire Brigade. Our work, and that of the London Resilience Partnership, is overseen by the London Resilience Forum.

Version Control		
Version	Date	Change
5	April 2017	
6	January 2021	<p>Part 1: The Summary or Quick Use Guide (Part 1) has been added for alignment with the standard LRP format for Frameworks.</p> <p>Added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five essential elements of Humanitarian Assistance. • Prompts relating to the key lessons from the incidents of 2017, including Grenfell tower fire. • Revised detail on the possible structure of sub-groups of the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group. <p>Part 2: The Guidance section is largely the content of the April 2017 Framework with updates regarding: Risk Register Impact Assessment Helplines and websites Working with the Police HALO role and Humanitarian Assistance Steering Groups Emergency Centres</p> <p>Further Updates There are ongoing projects within the Local authority Panel Humanitarian Assistance Programme which will lead to a further review later in 2021 to include reviewed and new guidance/ signposting for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officers • Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group • Management of donations • Management of spontaneous volunteers • Tributes, memorials & anniversaries • Emergency Centres • The provision of comprehensive care and support to critically affected people • Community engagement & resilience • Responder welfare
6.2	February 2021	<p>Updates following partner consultation and LRPB comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone helpline(s) • NHS England (London) changed to NHS England and NHS Improvement (London) • Definition of 5 Essential Elements • Donations, including the London Emergencies Trust • Revised language and guidance for volunteers, tributes, support groups & longer term assistance centre • London Strategic Coordination arrangement, including figure 1

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1 About this Framework

Aim

The purpose of this Framework is to support the delivery of effective, person-centred humanitarian care to meet the needs of people affected by major incidents or emergencies.

Objectives

- To provide effective management structures for the multi-agency humanitarian response;
- To provide a set of response options that can be adapted flexibly to suit the nature and scale of the incident;
- To provide guidance and links to other reference material to support planning and the development of Humanitarian Assistance capability;
- To promote the effective sharing of resources and information between all partners responding to the incident.

Scope

This Framework covers a range of types and scales of incident.

It can be used flexibly for local incidents in a single Local authority or for larger incidents affecting multiple Local Authorities. It can also be used to support the response to smaller incidents where some of the Framework's structures and capabilities may not be needed.

The Framework can be used for all types of major incident requiring a Humanitarian response. However, there are individual features within it that only apply to certain types of incident, such as terrorism.

Audience

- Local Authorities
- Other Category One Responders
- Category Two Responders
- Voluntary and Faith sectors and relevant Panels

Links to other plans

The following relevant plans are publicly available on the [London Resilience Partnership website](#):

- London Risk Register
- London Strategic Coordination Protocol
- London Emergency services Liaison Panel (LESLP) Major Incident Procedures
- LRP Recovery Coordination Framework
- London Voluntary Sector Capabilities Document
- London Mass Evacuation Framework
- London Mass Casualty Framework
- London Mass Shelter Framework

The below plans and the following are securely stored on the [London Resilience Partnership Resilience Direct pages](#): London Mass Fatality Framework

The Major Incident Plans of Category One and Category Two responders are held by their respective organisation.

How to use this Framework

The Introduction and Part 1 together form an Executive Summary of the whole Humanitarian Assistance Framework.

[Part 1](#) can also be used as a Quick Use Guide in an actual incident. However, see the note below about adding local information.

[Part 2](#) contains more detailed guidance to support each element of the Humanitarian Assistance capability.

Throughout the Framework there are references and links to other helpful guidance documents, which are listed in [Annex 5](#).

Part 1: Executive Summary and Quick Use Guide

General Principles of Humanitarian Assistance

Definition

Humanitarian Assistance includes:

“Those activities aimed at addressing the needs of people affected by emergencies; the provision of psychological and social aftercare and support in the short, medium and long term.”

Eyre et al. 2007

People need timely, practical support with a sympathetic and understanding approach to enable them to recover both practically and psychologically. Their needs are individual and varied and change significantly over time. The road to recovery is both personal and individual, but also collective and shared by communities.

Five essential elements to support wellbeing and resilience

The components of an effective humanitarian response to a major incident will vary with the type of emergency. They might include rehabilitation and psychological support, housing, educational, financial and information services and less formal self-help or community activities.

Regardless of the type of incident, researchers have identified five essential elements that support individual and community wellbeing and resilience. They recommend that the following should be promoted in the response and recovery phases (see Annex 5 for reference).

1. Safety

Promoting safety, and the feeling of safety, is particularly important in the immediate aftermath of an incident. It depends on the ability of the Police, Local authority and other partners to establish safe shelter in Survivor Reception Centres or other locations. The ability to deploy trained staff rapidly to such locations is a major factor in creating environments that are secure and feel safe. Regular and accurate information updates are also fundamental to promoting people's sense of safety and reassurance. It is of course essential that responders should also feel safe and confident in their roles.

2. Calm

High levels of stress, anxiety and uncertainty are common in the immediate aftermath of a major incident. Responders from all agencies should cooperate to establish coordinated support which is well organised and calmly delivered as soon as possible. Training and exercising of response staff before incidents and effective briefing/debriefing when they are deployed is vital. It will help them to deliver a measured, responsive and flexible approach, particularly in the first few hours while all the structures and routines in this Framework are being established.

3. Self-efficacy and collective efficacy

At every stage, from the immediate response through to long term support, people should be enabled to regain control of their lives. Together with effective services they should be given opportunities to help themselves and help each other. Timely and accurate information about the incident and available support, including natural support networks, is a vital part of this.

4. Connectedness

Reunification with loved ones and being well connected with effective sources of social support is another vital part of recovery. People need to be connected to the 'natural' support provided by family, friends, neighbours or work colleagues. It is important to provide links with the peer support and understanding available from other bereaved people or survivors from the same or similar incidents. Access to the local and emergent support of community groups and to formal health or social care services should be also be provided.

Humanitarian responses should promote the widest possible opportunities for such relationships and provide effective pathways to the forms of support that best suit each individual. There should be strenuous efforts from the outset to identify people most at risk of isolation and ensure they have access to information and support.

5. Hope

Major incidents involving traumatic experiences can disrupt and impair individuals' confidence, sense of purpose and optimism. The goal of humanitarian assistance is to reflect hopefulness by being helpful. All forms of assistance, from individual acts of kindness through to organised and collective services, can play a positive role in this. Feeling supported at the hardest time helps people make sense of negative experiences, offers them hopefulness in humanity and strengthens their prospects of finding a new normality.

Activation & Action Checklist

Trigger for the use of this document

This Humanitarian Assistance Framework should be used for any incident where there are substantial welfare impacts on communities. This could include a significant number of fatalities and casualties, potentially traumatised survivors, or significant impacts on people's homes or community life.

Local authorities may also choose to use the Framework for smaller incidents affecting the welfare of their residents or businesses, scaling down its provisions and structures according to the impact of the incident.

See here for the [full Activation](#).

Action checklist

The following list is intended to give HALOs and HASGs a strategic overview of the things they may need to consider. It should not be treated as a comprehensive checklist of actions until it has been amended to reflect local circumstances, resources and procedures.

For a more detailed list, see the [Menu of Options](#) in the [Part 2: Guidance](#).

Immediate / Short Term Considerations			Date / time completed
No.	Action	Comment	
1	Assess the impact of the incident	This is an ongoing process. The impact assessment will need to be reviewed and the response adapted periodically.	
2	Decide initial messaging to staff	This should include safety checks and instructions as well as requests for help.	
3	Deploy response staff	This could be to a variety of emergency support locations (Survivor Reception Centre, Rest Centre, Hospital A&E Dept., centres set up by community groups, Family and Friends Reception Centre, etc.)	
4	Begin the process of identifying vulnerable people	This will be an ongoing process as more becomes know about the impact and different agencies contribute information about people affected	
5	Prompt the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) to initiate a Helpline	See Section 13 within Part 2. There is a national partnership (NESL) with capacity to set up a fully functional support line immediately. It is very helpful to people affected by the incident if this is done straight away rather than waiting for the HASG to be convened.	
6	Activate the Humanitarian Assistance Framework / borough Plan	See Section 6 within Part 2.	
7	Appoint the Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO)	See Section 6 within Part 2.	
8	Identify a Humanitarian Assistance Advisor to the HALO	If there is no one in the Local authority has sufficient expertise it may be help to invite advice from other local authorities via the LLACC.	
9	Convene the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG)	See Section 6 and Section 8 within Part 2.	
10	Set a strategy	See Section 6 and Section 7 within Part 2	
11	Decide on the structure of any sub-groups of the HASG	See Section 4 within Part 2	

12	Initiate a comprehensive Impact Assessment of the incident involving all partners	This needs to be coordinated with the SCG's or RCG's Impact Assessment. See Annex 2 .	
13	Consider how to collate information about people affected, their needs and the support provided	See Section 10 within Part 2	
14	Establish a Humanitarian Assistance Risk Register to support the planning and monitoring of activity	This should cover the management of risks to affected people, the wider community, responders and their agencies.	
15	Decide how to cooperate with any spontaneous community response to the incident	This could mean cooperation with informal emergency centres set up in the community or coordinating donations in cash or kind.	
16	Decide how an incident website will be provided	See Section 13 within Part 2	
17	Consider how best to provide comprehensive, person-centred individual support to critically affected people and families	See Section 13 and 14 within Part 2	
18	Consider how to identify and reach out to everyone affected by the incident	See Section 13 and 14 within Part 2	
19	Consider how to support affected people who are visitors to the area and have returned to their homes in other local authorities or countries	See Section 13 and 14 within Part 2	
20	Establish cooperation with the Police Family Liaison and Witness Coordinator	The Police Witness Coordinator will have contact details of witnesses and may be able to give limited information on the people most closely involved in the incident. Data sharing between relevant parties is permitted in emergency situations under current legislation, however ongoing reviews of data sharing protocols will be required as the incident progresses.	
21	Establish communication with the Mass Fatalities Coordination Group if one has been set up	See Section 8 within Part 2	
22	Consider what sort of Humanitarian or Community Assistance Centre is needed and set up a group to manage this	See Section 13 within Part 2	
23	Consider how to support responders	See Section 8 within Part 2	

24	Consider how to support public expressions of grief or support (floral tributes, vigils, etc.)	See Section 13 and 14 within Part 2	
25	Consider how self-help might be promoted	See Section 13 , 14 and 15 within Part 2	
26	Consider how to coordinate charitable giving	See Section 4 and Section 13 within Part 2	
27	In all of the above, consider the need for mutual aid from other local authorities	Via the HASG	
28	Begin to plan for mental health outreach	See Medium Term Considerations below	
29	Establish effective Information Sharing between agencies	This may require active negotiation with the Police and NHS who will typically hold sensitive information about individuals. See the Guidance in Part 2	
30	Begin to consider exit strategies	See Section 8 in Part 2	
Medium Term Considerations			Date / time completed
No.	Action	Comment	
31	Cooperate with Mental Health services and all partners to establish effective outreach and screening activities	Via HASG and health sub group	
32	Cooperate with organisers of memorial events	Events might be initiated by victims or local faith / community groups, or the HASG might initiate them. See Guidance	
33	Review and update the Impact Assessment	See Guidance in Part 2	
34	Review the nature and scale of the Humanitarian / Community Assistance Centre	See Section 13 within Part 2	
35	Facilitate Support Groups	See Section 12 , Section 13 , Section 14 within Part 2	
36	Maintain outreach to affected people in different communities	See Section 14 within Part 2	
37	Promote the effective support by other local authorities or countries of their residents affected by the incident	See Section 14 within Part 2	
38	Contribute to an ongoing Information Campaign – newsletter, website, leaflets	See Section 14 within Part 2	

Long Term Considerations			Date / time completed
No.	Action	Comment	
39	Promote the self-sufficiency of any self-help networks	See Section 14 and Section 15 within Part 2	
40	Promote the transition to mainstream services of people receiving professional support within the humanitarian response	See Section 15	
41	Provide support for people during Inquests.	See Section 15	
42	Support tributes, memorial and anniversary events	See Section 14 and Section 15 within Part 2	
43	Implement exit strategies	See Section 15	

Part 2: Humanitarian Assistance Guidance

Structure and Sub-groups

Structure of the humanitarian assistance response

It is important that the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG) maintains an effective strategic oversight of the response. It may therefore be helpful to establish sub-groups to work on the detail of different parts of the response to avoid the HASG meetings being too long and cumbersome.

Establishing sub-groups may also allow a wider group of people from different agencies and community groups to be meaningfully involved in the response without making the HASG meeting itself too big to be effective.

It will be necessary to negotiate the exact structure of Humanitarian Assistance sub-groups with the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) or Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) as there is such an overlap between recovery activity and humanitarian assistance.

The following are the different elements of the humanitarian response that might have separate sub-groups, either individually or in clusters:

Themes for possible sub-groups

Theme	
Helpline(s)	Health and wellbeing
Website	Self-help groups
Communications	Community activity
Emergency centre management	Housing / temporary accommodation
Information sharing	Mental health outreach and screening
Ongoing impact assessment	

Resources and support available to sub-groups

Resource / Support	Comment
Survivor Reception Centres, Family & Friends Reception Centres	The police will be responsible for establishing these centres and may be able to find the venues. The police may ask the local authority to assist with finding suitable venues.
Helpline(s)	Victim Support will provide an immediately available support line for victims of major criminal incidents. Local authorities can consider making this the main helpline for such incidents and sharing information with Victim Support accordingly. Similarly, the British Red Cross (BRC) has the capacity to establish a helpline rapidly in other kinds of major incident and Local authorities can consider working with the BRC as the main helpline provider.
Website	In terrorist incidents the Government Victims of Terrorism Unit (VTU) will immediately dedicate a website to information about the incident and the sources of support available. Local Authorities can refer to this website as the authoritative source.

Support for critically affected people	Key-working by local authority social workers is one way of providing coordinated care to individuals. However, befriending and advocacy provided by members of the person's community, family or friends can also be made very effective if it is recognised and supported by the HASG with the provision of information about and access to resources.
Charitable donations	The act of donating has a therapeutic effect for those who are distressed about what has happened, and who wish to help and show solidarity with directly affected people. This is further described in Section 13 as different organisations will be involved.
Mental health support	The local mental health trust will provide pathways to screening and clinical support for any lasting psychological disturbance.
Memorials, anniversaries, tributes, etc.	A number of local authorities have experience and should be approached for their best practice.
Those affected by acts of terrorism	The Government's Victims of Terrorism Unit (VTU) are able to provide guidance for incidents of acts of terror.

Background Information

Types of incident

There are many potential risks that may trigger the need for a humanitarian response. These are likely to be incidents entailing significant numbers of casualties and/or fatalities. However, other events may be traumatic if they entail an extreme impact on the homes or livelihood of affected individuals. Some of the possible risks and threats that are likely to require a humanitarian response are outlined in table one below.

Incident types	Localised examples
Industrial incidents	Fire/explosion at gas terminal/ LPG/LNG gas storage site Accidental radioactive release Biological pathogen release Explosion at natural gas pipeline Large toxic Chemical Release
Transport incidents	Aviation accident Rail/tram accident Accident on the road network involving multiple casualties Transport accident involving hazardous chemicals / fuel / explosives
Severe weather	Widespread fluvial or coastal flooding
Structural failure	Building, bridge or tunnel collapse Reservoir dam collapse
Threats	Terrorist incident Violent disorder

Table 1: Possible risks and threats requiring a humanitarian assistance response.

What is humanitarian assistance?

Further to the definition of humanitarian assistance in Section 2, Table 2 gives an overview of some of the activities that may be required to ensure an effective humanitarian response, based on the changing needs of affected people.

It is important to appreciate that short-term emotional reactions to extreme events are likely to form part of the natural recovery process. They do not require a formal psychological intervention (such as counselling) and it would be potentially harmful to provide this in the first few weeks after an incident. Much support can be provided informally through existing support networks such as family and friends, supported with good information.

More formal mental health interventions may be appropriate later if natural readjustment and recovery does not occur and should be provided by those with a good understanding of post-traumatic psychological effects.

People may often be reluctant to seek support, for various reasons. Therefore need may be hidden, but will often worsen if not addressed. The needs of specific groups should be considered (especially protected groups as defined in the Equalities Act).

It is important to appreciate that there can be an outward 'ripple effect' from an incident, with people affected in different ways.

The psychological impact of responding to a traumatic incident should not be forgotten: it will be appropriate to consider what provision for emergency services personnel and other frontline responders is needed.

Scale of response

The scale of the capability required has been based on the London Risk Register, the National Resilience Planning Assumptions and the Local Risk Assessment Guidance.

Responders should appreciate the possibility of an incident that is confined in scope to a single location and therefore would be primarily dealt with by a single borough response; and larger incidents requiring mutual aid or being characterised by simultaneous incidents in multiple locations.

The numbers of people needing support could be (a) the families of fatalities – which could include 100s of people, for example in a severe terrorist attack; (b) traumatised survivors – which again might be hundreds of people – e.g. in a transport-related incident; (c) people who have been displaced from their homes or suffered a loss of livelihood – which could number thousands of people in widespread flooding, for example.

Phase		Psychological and Emotional Reactions	Needs of People	Frontline/Operational Responders	Tactical Responders	Strategic Responders
Impact/immediate post impact: first few hours	Heroic phase	Shock, physical & emotional injury	Physical rescue & first aid; Shelter & safety; Information; psychological first aid	Response to alerts/call out; Delivery of physical & psychological support at designated centres/sites such as FFRCs, SuRCs, rest centres etc.	Manage callout & deployment; Ongoing co-ordination & liaison in relation to humanitarian service provision	Liaison & coordination with other strategic level responders; promotion & representation of humanitarian issues
Following hours/ first few days	Tunnel Vision phase	Searching & activity focused behaviour	Continuing safety, shelter, psychological first aid; Reconciliation with family/friends; Information updates	Delivery of support services (e.g. through outreach & one stop shops Helplines and websites) Reconciliation Family liaison Organised site visits Personalised support/advocacy Information e.g. leaflets, briefings, newsletters Compensation/disaster funds	Management of support services; Supervision & support of staff; Liaison with operational & strategic level responders; Implementation of proactive outreach & community strategies	Strategic coordination of humanitarian support services; cross-government & multi agency liaison; Ongoing liaison & support of tactical level responders in managing humanitarian response
	Honeymoon phase	Normal post-traumatic reactions which usually diminish over time; Grief & mourning				Ongoing leadership & participation in strategic decision making forums relating to issues such as funding, communications, & commemorative activities
Medium - longer term	Disillusion through to adjustment, acceptance, recovery	Acknowledgment Adjustment Acceptance; Responses to trigger events & anniversary reactions	Ongoing access to support services & opportunities & choices to participate in support networks via family, social &/or disaster related community activities	Funerals Return of property Memorials Inquests Reviews & inquiries Trials	Managing transition processes (e.g. from reception to assistance centres); Coordination between 'home' and 'away' services (e.g. site-based & outreach teams)	
Longer - longer Term	(note the ups & downs of this process)	Growth/PTSD	PTSD - referral to specialist treatment	Activating exit strategies; Facilitating contacts & bolstering natural support & disaster related networks, including support groups & social media networks	Managing exit strategies & transition to ongoing support networks	Coordination of & participation in review & evaluation processes; strategic coordination of transition processes & decisions concerning longer term support strategies

Table 2: Model of Phased Provision (After Eyre, A. 2006)

Document Activation

Trigger for the use of this document

The London Humanitarian Assistance Framework should be considered for any incident, where there are substantial welfare impacts on communities.

It is likely to be appropriate to activate the formal arrangements for any incidents with a significant number of fatalities, potentially traumatised survivors, or significant impacts on community life (e.g. in widespread flooding). Local authorities will make that assessment, gathering information from partners (particularly the police and NHS).

This may be carried out using the Humanitarian Assistance Impact Assessment – see Annex 2.

Alert procedures

There are well established procedures for alerting Category One and Two and voluntary sector and faith responders about major incidents in London.

At the point where local authorities have determined that a humanitarian assistance response is likely to be needed, they will communicate that to partners, with the support of the London Local authority Coordination Centre (LLACC).

Standby procedures

The standby procedure may be required either where a major incident is anticipated but has not yet occurred; or in the early stages in an incident where the trigger criteria above seems likely to have been met, but it is not yet confirmed.

Local authorities will prepare to respond to the humanitarian need by:

- Identifying a senior officer to lead the humanitarian response (usually a director with responsibility for adult social care) – hereafter described as the Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO);
- Putting on standby/mobilising operational staff and assets (e.g. activating local emergency centre plans)¹ ;
- Contacting other partner agencies to request their assistance;
- Maintaining contact with the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) if there is one or Gold Commanders for incident and strategy updates.
- Providing public safety advice through “warning and informing”.

Activation procedures

Local authorities will appoint a HALO, as follows:

- If it is a single borough incident without wider ramifications, the incident borough may decide to appoint the HALO without outside assistance;
- If escalated to London Local authority Gold (LLAG), LLAG will be responsible for ensuring an appointment is made.

¹ In Counter Terrorist Incidents, police advice should be sought prior to HA deployments.

Local authorities will confirm the identity of the HALO to the Strategic Coordinating Group.

The HALO will call the first meeting of Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG), with support as needed from the LLACC.

The HALO will nominate from within their borough two key officers (an Emergency Planning Officer, and a Support Officer), who will prepare for the first meeting with support from the LLACC.

Section 7 below, and Annexes 1 – 3 provide guidance for the HALO in establishing the HASG, setting a strategy and implementing humanitarian assistance activities.

Setting a Working Strategy

The Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG) should develop, adopt and review a simple working strategy for how support will be provided to people. This should be kept under review, as the incident develops.

The following suggested strategy is provided as a starting point:

Support and care for all those affected will be provided by:

- Providing appropriate support at an early stage through emergency centres and outreach to reduce future suffering and distress;
- Applying the principles of psychological first aid during the response phase of the incident;
- Respecting every individual's rights to privacy and dignity, empowering people to regain control as soon as they are ready.
- Enabling voluntary sector and faith responders to provide support to individuals and families in a way that enhances community resilience;

Annexes 1 – 3 provide further guidance.

Management Arrangements

Management arrangements for dealing with the humanitarian aspects of a major incident in London are part of the overall command and control structures.

As the humanitarian assistance response commences at a very early stage of an incident but may continue for weeks, months or years, crossing across the response, consolidation and recovery phases of an incident, the arrangements in this document also closely link to both the LRP Strategic Coordination Protocol and LRP Recovery Coordination Framework.

The key grouping established by this framework is the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG) which will be significant in the strategic intent in relation to humanitarian assistance, but also in the tactical delivery and oversight of humanitarian assistance activity

Figure 1 below is a simple demonstration of the interaction of the different groups and incident phases how this develops between response and recovery, and the operational elements of the response that the humanitarian response relates to.

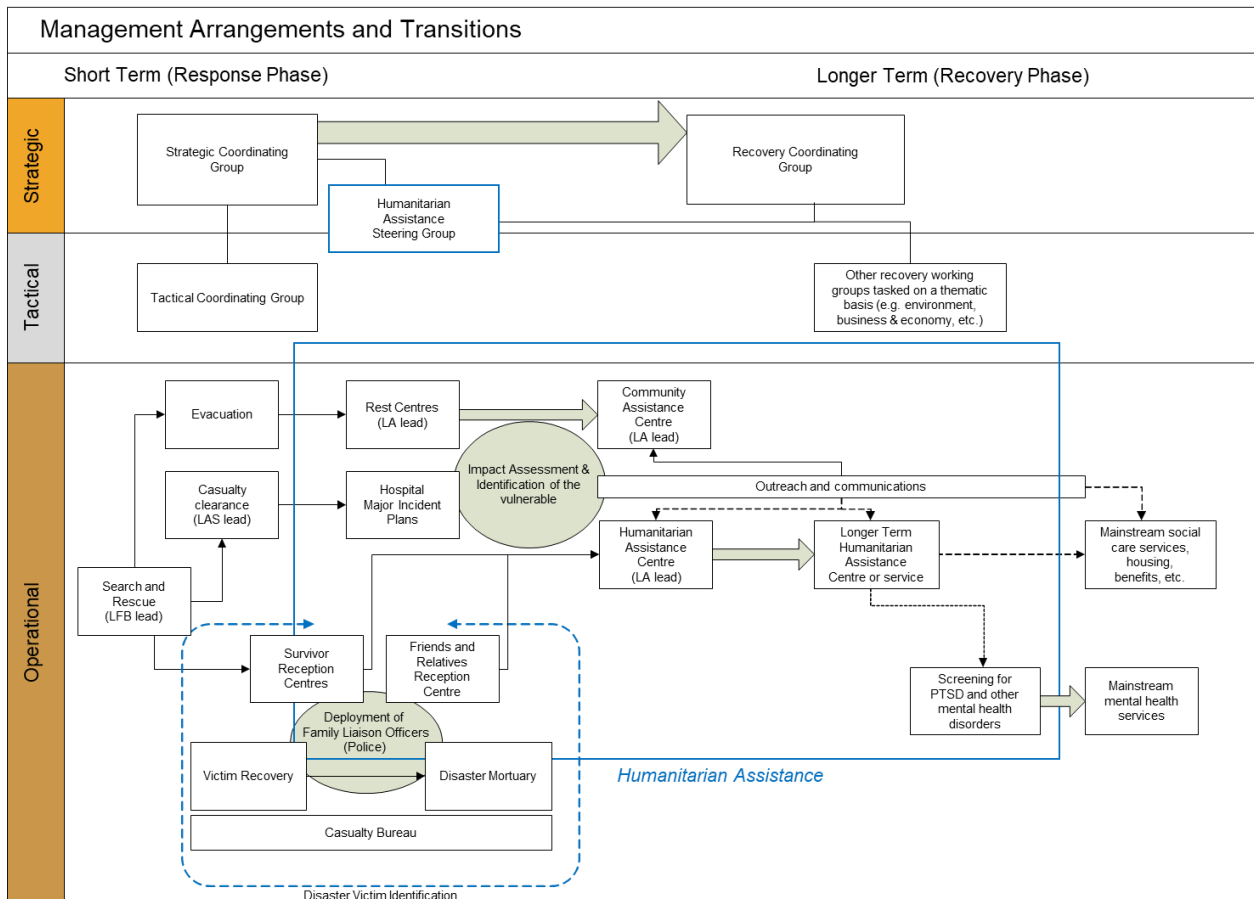


Figure 1: Transitions between response and recovery

Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG)

Overall strategic control of the response phase to a major incident will be directed by the SCG. Within the SCG, responsibility for the humanitarian response is local authorities. For pan-London major incidents the London Local authority Gold (LLAG) will represent local authorities and if a Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG) has been established, the Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO) will likely join.

SCG responsibilities include:

- Agreeing the overarching strategy for response, taking account of future recovery needs (possibly supported by a Recovery Coordinating Group).
- Making the decision to deploy key capabilities (e.g. Humanitarian Assistance Centre).
- Agreeing the overall communications strategy.

The SCG will hand over leadership to a Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) at an appropriate time led by a local authority representative.

Key groups supporting the Strategic Coordinating Group:

- A **Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG)** may be convened to make early recommendations and decisions to support the recovery process in advance of the transition to the formal recovery phase led by the local authority. It will be important for the HALO to have clarity of reporting lines should both SCG and RCG be operating at the same time.

- The **Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell (STAC)** will provide a single point of scientific advice to the Gold/SCG on the scientific, technical, environmental and public health consequences of the incident.
- **London Resilience Communication Group (LRCG)**: ensures that mechanisms and structures are in place to share key messages with a particular audience and the wider public.
- The Strategic Coordination Protocol outlines a number of other groups that may be established during the response to an incident, of which the HALO and HASG will need to liaise with, such as Mass Fatalities Coordination Group or the Transport Sector Cell.

Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO)

A HALO will be nominated by local authorities to lead the humanitarian response. This will typically be a director responsible for adult social care.

The HALO will chair the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG), and ensure the attendance of appropriate multi-agency representation, and ensure an appropriate humanitarian assistance strategy is put in place.

They will also ensure that local authorities and other partners work together to ensure that vulnerable people (both individuals, care settings and closed communities) that may be disproportionately affected are identified, and that actions are taken to ensure their safety.

The HALO should ensure that linkages are made to each of the groups noted above (and others as required).

Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG)

The purpose of the HASG is to determine the direction of the humanitarian assistance response, and to ensure coordination of the activities of the responders involved.

Officers attending the HASG should be senior officers able to make resourcing decisions on behalf of their organisation.

Annexes 1- 3 include suggested terms of reference, impact assessment template and first meeting agenda. The suggested terms of reference provides guidance on expected focus points as well as administrative activity such as meeting frequency.

The HASG should focus on providing direction to the overall humanitarian response, in line with the strategic direction from the SCG. In practice this should focus on:

- Understanding who has been affected and how, and what their needs are now, and how they may develop.
- Initiating actions to meet people's needs and monitoring outcomes.
- Coordinating between agencies to provide a coherent response.
- Transitioning between phases.
- Ensuring appropriate communications are in place, as part of the wider multi-agency communications response to the incident.

In addition the following key considerations are likely to be applicable for the HASG to address in most incidents:

- Assessing what centres have been established, the take up of services and forward planning what types of centres will be required in the next stage of the response.
- What other methods of support have been set up? E.g. website, helpline.

- Devising a clear communications, media and marketing strategy to promote the services available.
- Support available to persons living outside of London – can support be accessed through local services?
- Considering the impact on vulnerable people and protected groups.

HALO Support Officer

The Chair of the HASG will be responsible for appointing an officer to provide support, who will act as the secretariat for the meetings.

Information Management Officer

An Information Management Officer should be appointed by the HALO to oversee the collation, storage, maintenance and sharing of data about affected people.

It may also be appropriate for this officer to report on the numbers of people accessing services provided by the humanitarian response.

This officer would normally be an officer responsible for information management within adult social care services.

Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC)

The function of the BECC is to provide a hub for local authority decision-making (command) and information management (control).

Directly affected boroughs will operate their BECCs to respond to a major incident, and boroughs supporting affected boroughs are also likely to do so.

BECCs would normally expect to remain operational whilst initial responses are ongoing.

The BECC Manager must ensure production and dissemination of an appropriate and timely situation update to the HALO prior to the first meeting of the HASG. This should take the form of a Humanitarian Assistance Impact Assessment (see the template at Annex 2).

BECCs will continue to operate until such time as medium to long term capabilities are able to function without its support.

Coordination of local authority welfare operations:

Most local authorities will have a BECC Officer who is responsible for coordinating welfare operations. This officer will be responsible for supporting the coordination of local humanitarian assistance activities.

Communications to other local authorities

An emergency in London may well affect people from well away from the area of the incident, particularly if it occurs in central London.

Communications with governments and families of foreign nationals would be led by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).

The HASG must take a lead in ensuring effective communications with other local authorities whose residents may have been affected.

The London Resilience Group can support this communication requirement, linking to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government - Resilience and Emergencies Division (MHCLG - RED).

As information is gathered about affected people, it will be important to notify the appropriate local authorities, to enable the appropriate provision of services. An appropriate lead officer within that authority should be sought to maintain on-going communication.

Once these linkages have been established, information should be shared by both sides on a regular basis about services available.

Recovery management

At an appropriate point, often a number of days after the incident, a transition will be agreed, such that the Strategic Coordinating Group (likely led by the police) will hand the incident to a Recovery Coordinating Group (under local authority leadership).

Details of this process are contained in the LRP Recovery Coordination Framework. The HASG is likely to be retained as a sub-group though the HALO should liaise with the chair of the Recovery Coordinating Group and/or London Local authority Gold to agree an appropriate arrangement, such as:

- The Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group assumes the full responsibilities of Health and Welfare Recovery Sub-Group;
- A separation of responsibilities (for example with the Health and Welfare Recovery Group focusing on recovery of health services, public health messages etc.).

It may be appropriate for the HASG to remain operational in some form to provide leadership and governance for the longer term interventions, beyond the point when formal Recovery Management structures have ceased to operate.

Transition and exit strategies

Key areas for the HASG to manage are the transition between different capabilities (e.g. emergency centres), and the exit strategy for the response as a whole. This is critical to ensure that affected people are not 'lost' as the shape of response changes, and to ensure the response does not become open-ended.

An exit strategy for the humanitarian response as a whole is an early priority, particularly where the response is likely to be prolonged. A key element of the exit strategy is likely to be the transition to mainstream services, or the commissioning of a specialist support intervention with its own governance arrangements.

Roles and Responsibilities of Partner Agencies

The responsibilities outlined below are specifically focussed upon humanitarian assistance.

These are based on the, Humanitarian Assistance in Emergencies: non-statutory guidance on establishing Humanitarian Assistance Centres and Voluntary Sector Capabilities Document.

Local Authorities

- Deal with the implications of any school closures or school children that have been affected by the emergency.
- Co-ordinate the support from the voluntary agencies.
- Provide alternative accommodation for displaced persons.
- May provide financial assistance for food, clothing, toiletries etc.
- May arrange and, where appropriate, pay for child or elderly care.

- Will work closely with health agencies and other relevant organisations in planning the response.
- Will assess the medium and longer term social and emotional impact on the community affected and consider what long term response is required.
- Ensure that services meet the emotional needs, including those of children.
- Provide practical advice and guidance, for example with accommodation and financial issues.
- Refer on to appropriate social care, health, housing and other services.
- Specific responsibilities within a Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) include:
 - Establish and meet the costs of implementing and running a HAC.
 - Identify suitable and fit-for-purpose venues for the HAC.
 - Manage the day-to-day running of the HAC.
 - Prepare communications strategy to publicise venue including street signage.

London Local authority Coordination Centre (LLACC) via London Resilience Group (LRG)

- Maintain contact details for regional HASG partners.
- Support the HALO in inviting partners to the HASG meeting as required.
- Distribute HASG Minutes and other relevant information to local authority BECCs/EP teams as required.

National Health Service (NHS)

NHS England and NHS Improvement (London) will:

- Co-ordinate the provision of immediate health care.
- Through a range of providers, facilitate care and advice to evacuees, survivors and relatives. Co-ordinate the primary care, community and mental health role during the recovery stage, including replacement medication.
- Establish with local authority facilities for mass distribution of counter- measures, for example vaccinations and antibiotics.
- Liaise with local GP and hospital services across UK.
- Signpost other practical help and/or advice as appropriate (e.g. prosthetic limbs; etc.).
- Provide guidance on best practice and sources of information.

Mental health trusts will:

- Co-ordinate and inform primary care services and anticipate presentation/demand on mental health services in the immediate aftermath.
- Provide information and reassurance.
- Co-ordinate resources to respond to acute reactions to trauma, escalation of mental illness in existing client group and monitor longer term trauma responses in people affected by the event.

Public Health England (PHE)

PHE will:

- Provide leadership and coordination for the public health elements of the emergency response.
- Provide health protection services, expertise and advice.
- Ensure provision of high quality and timely public health data to the multi-agency response.
- Provide guidance to professionals in health and local government and other sectors.
- Communicate with the public by providing information and advice relevant to PHE's responsibilities.
- Coroner's Officer
- Provide advice and information to bereaved.
- Liaise with FLOs.
- Liaise with other organisations.

Police Service (Metropolitan Police Service, City of London Police, British Transport Police)

The Police will, in line with their core responsibilities:

- Provide guidance and information to the HASG with regards to:
 - Recovery of the bodies of deceased persons, identification and forensic examinations.
 - Security updates.
 - Traffic management or public order at related events (funerals, memorial services, etc.).
- If required, mortuary facilities at Dedicated Disaster Mortuaries (DDM) may be enhanced to deal with increased demand. Should this occur a Family Liaison Manager (FLM) or Family Liaison Coordinator (FLC) may join the HASG or they should be liaised with.
- Where required, and at the direction of the Police Command Team, may deploy to any HAC that is established.
- If a Family Liaison Officer (FLO) is deployed, a FLM or FLC (depending on the scale of the incident) may join the RCG in order to liaise closely with them regarding investigative and individual recovery issues.

The FLO's responsibilities include:

- Working to the strategy written by the Police Family Liaison Co-ordinator/Manager (FLC/FLM) and agreed by the SIO/SIM. The FLO will remain the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) between the SIO/SIM and the family.
- Gathering ante mortem data and evidence in a compassionate manner from family members and friends regarding the details of potential victims (to contribute and enable the earliest possible identification).
- Providing a means of communication between the investigation team and family. They will offer help, advice and updates in respect of any investigation (where appropriate) and the criminal justice system.
- Signpost families to relevant support services.
- Provide guidance with regard to repatriation and the coronial process.
- Keeping a record of all contacts with the family, the reasons for the contacts and the outcomes in the FLO log.
- Establishing close liaison with other relevant agencies and partners within the HAC.

Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS)

There is a wide range of support available by organisations such as British Red Cross, Cruse Bereavement, The Salvation Army, Samaritans, St John Ambulance, Victim Support and others.

As well as these large national voluntary organisations there will be local voluntary, community, and faith groups who may have a vital part to play in individual and community recovery. The nature, range and scale of services offered by the voluntary sector may alter depending upon the context of the emergency situation at the time. The voluntary sector can provide support in a number of generic areas specifically:

- Welfare
- Social and psychological aftercare
- Medical support
- Transport
- Communications
- Practical support
- Documentation

Full details on the support available from each organisation and contact details can be found in the London Voluntary Sector Capabilities Document which is available on the London Prepared website.

Faith Sector

Subject to the specific beliefs and practice within faith communities, faith sector groups and representatives are likely to have a role in:

- Recognising the spiritual dimension of life and death
- A ministry of care and comfort to relatives and others caught up in the disaster
- To support others as requested by police Family Liaison Officers
- Providing a ministry with hospital chaplains in hospitals
- Providing a ministry at temporary mortuary facilities
- To organise local church services as required by the community
- To assist with the organisation of memorial services
- Engage with partner agencies to support community cohesion work.

Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO)

- Provide consular assistance to British nationals overseas following an incident abroad.
- Deploy a rapid deployment team to assist consular staff and assist evacuation of British nationals where required.
- Provide a central contact and information point for all records and data relating to persons who have or are believed to have been involved in an incident overseas.
- Liaise with the police Casualty Bureau (where opened) to ensure joined up information sharing on those affected.
- Lead in the repatriation of deceased British nationals following deaths overseas.

Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

MHCLG's Government Liaison Team will:

- Liaise with central government departments in relation to the incident.

- Provide advice and support to local responders during the recovery phase, including assisting with the co-ordination of recovery from a regional/ widespread incident if required.
- Provide links to central government coordination of media relations.

National Rail and Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) (Rail Incident Care Teams)

- Will provide information and practical assistance to those involved and those affected by the incident.
- Will work alongside and seek to complement the efforts of other responding agencies. Primary among these will be relevant police force FLOs, with whom early and close contact will be established, along with hospital staff, local authorities and voluntary sector and faith communities.
- Will support communication infrastructure with family and friends of those involved in the incident (by the provision of telephones and generally providing communication support, internet access, phone calls etc.).
- Will make arrangements and, where appropriate, pay for travel for family and friends, including taxi fares, overseas flights etc.
- Will arrange and, where appropriate, pay for accommodation for family and friends.
- May provide financial assistance for food, clothing, toiletries etc.
- Will arrange to meet family and friends from locations within the transport infrastructure.
- Will assist in the tracing of luggage and other items of property lost as a result of incidents.
- Will respond to any other needs and concerns which become apparent and generally attempt to help out wherever possible.
- Transport company staff will not provide any form of counselling services but would help to put individuals in contact with the appropriate specialist agency where appropriate.

Transport for London (TFL) Care Teams

TFL care teams will provide the full services as described above for the Rail Care Team if the incident involves Transport for London customers/staff/infrastructure.

If the incident involves other transport providers, then Transport for London care teams will give support under existing agreements.

For any other incident, Transport for London care teams will provide support as required under agreements with the relevant police force Family Liaison Co-ordinator.

UK Airlines

Following an aviation incident in the UK that involves UK airlines, they:

- Will provide information and practical assistance to those involved and those affected by the incident.
- Establish a telephone helpline for the relatives of those that may be affected.
- Will establish and maintain close contact with police Family Liaison Officers.
- Will support communication infrastructure with family and friends of those involved in the incident (by the provision of telephones and generally providing communication support, internet access, phone calls etc.).

- Provide representatives to attend Strategic Coordinating Group meetings.
- Assist in the establishment and operation of a Humanitarian Assistance Centre (where required).
- Will make arrangements and, where appropriate, pay for travel for family and friends, including taxi fares, overseas flights etc.
- Will arrange and, where appropriate, pay for accommodation for family and friends.
- May provide financial assistance for food, clothing.

Insurance industry

Following an emergency, the insurance industry will provide the following through the Association of British Insurers (ABI):

- Facts and figures about who and what is covered by household and business insurance.
- Specific guidance on the issues likely to arise after a flood or terrorist event.
- Details of the protocol between the insurance industry, the police and other emergency responders on communication and co-operation after a major event.
- Key contact details of the organisations that represent the insurance industry.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority

Provide advice and information with regard to claims.

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

The CAB will provide free information and advice to help people resolve their legal, monetary and other problems.

The agencies listed below should be consulted in incidents where there has been a significant impact upon local businesses in the community, particularly to support small and medium size enterprises.

Chamber of Commerce

The British Chamber of Commerce is a private organisation with a paid membership. It is not, therefore, a recognised responder.

However, members of the Chamber of Commerce can receive the following support:

- Making new business contacts
- Legal Expenses
- Insurance
- Business Helpline
- HR Advice
- Health & Safety service
- Payment services
- Risk Insurance.

Information Management

Information Gathering

Information about affected people will be gathered at various stages of the response. Large amounts of 'raw' data will be collected in the initial response, and this is very likely to be incomplete, and to contain errors and inaccuracies. Problems have been experienced in past emergencies from information gathered from people who are in shock at the time, or when responders are managing a very fast-moving and uncertain situation.

As the incident stabilises and moves towards the recovery stage, the likelihood is that data collection about affected people is likely to be easier to organise and conduct effectively.

Information may be gathered by:

- The police via witness statements, Casualty Bureau and during victim identification.
- Hospitals, as people are admitted, and as friends and family members visit.
- Local authorities staffing emergency reception centres.
- Agencies providing helplines and other support, including transport operators, insurance companies, employers etc.

Wherever possible, sufficient information for identification of and subsequent contact with the affected person should be recorded. **Care must be taken to ensure accuracy of all data recorded, and to gain explicit consent in relation to what their information will be used for.**

The following consent statement (to be used by responders): "The information collected will be used to help us and our emergency response partner agencies investigate the cause of this incident, or to provide support services to you. It may also be used to help us learn and improve services for the future. Your information will be managed securely and will not be used for any unrelated purposes."

Information storage and management

The local authority should establish a master list of affected people that services may need to be provided to. Initially, this may just be very basic details (name, address, date of birth, contact details etc.).

Information about affected people should be treated as highly confidential. Information security must be a primary consideration throughout.

It should be recognised that information gathered in the response phase may be inaccurate or incomplete. Where reasonably possible, and subject to relevant legislation, the local authority should work to ensure the accuracy of the information.

Over time, and subject to need, there may be benefit in developing more detailed information about the "case history" of services provided, concerns and issues.

A range of solutions may be appropriate to the circumstances, from a simple spreadsheet list, to creating records on the local authority's social care database. Where affected people have substantial / long-term needs it is recommended that local authorities use their existing social care databases as the principle tool for managing information about affected people and sharing this with partners, in line with local Information Sharing Protocols.

It is very important to ensure that information provided by affected people is kept up to date, to avoid repetition of questions as people access services over time.

As the Data Controller, the local authority must respond to Subject Access Requests from any affected person, in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation.

Information sharing

Sharing information about affected people will be vital to a number of aspects of the response:

- Criminal investigation
- Victim identification
- Humanitarian assistance.

Information should be shared appropriately between those agencies represented at the HASG. All partners should recognise that the risk of not providing effective support because information is not shared will very often outweigh the risks of sharing. Therefore, there should be a presumption to share, rather than the reverse.

The sharing of personal data should fall under the specified reasons provided to data subjects at the time of collection, and for which consent has been given. In addition to consent, or in situations where consent has not been sought or provided, consideration should be given to the alternative processing conditions detailed at schedules 2 and 3 of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Naturally there may be a need to redact or withhold certain data to protect individual privacy or particularly sensitive matters.

For further information on this point, refer to Data Protection and Sharing – Guidance for Emergency Planners and Responders (HM Government 2007: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-protection-and-sharing-guidance-for-emergency-planners-and-responders>).

The sharing of information must be undertaken as securely as reasonably possible. There are a number of options that may be considered. In the short term, secure email systems are available which can be used to share data files between responders. Alternatively a data store might be established on Resilience Direct.

Agencies should establish what information they will need, and how frequently this should be updated. The HALO should assign an Information Management Officer to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to store and pass information between agencies.

Local partnerships should review Information Sharing Protocols to ensure they enable the sharing of information in a timely manner between appropriate partners.

Data identifying people affected by the incident and their needs should be passed to the local authority at the earliest reasonable opportunity, subject to genuine operational constraints.

PHE may compile a Major Incident Public Health Register based on data capture by the local authorities and others to support assessing the longer-term health impacts of the incident.

ResilienceDirect

The Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group may wish to consider if ResilienceDirect will facilitate sharing of data. This will depend on sign-up of agencies and may not be consistent across all agencies and all boroughs.

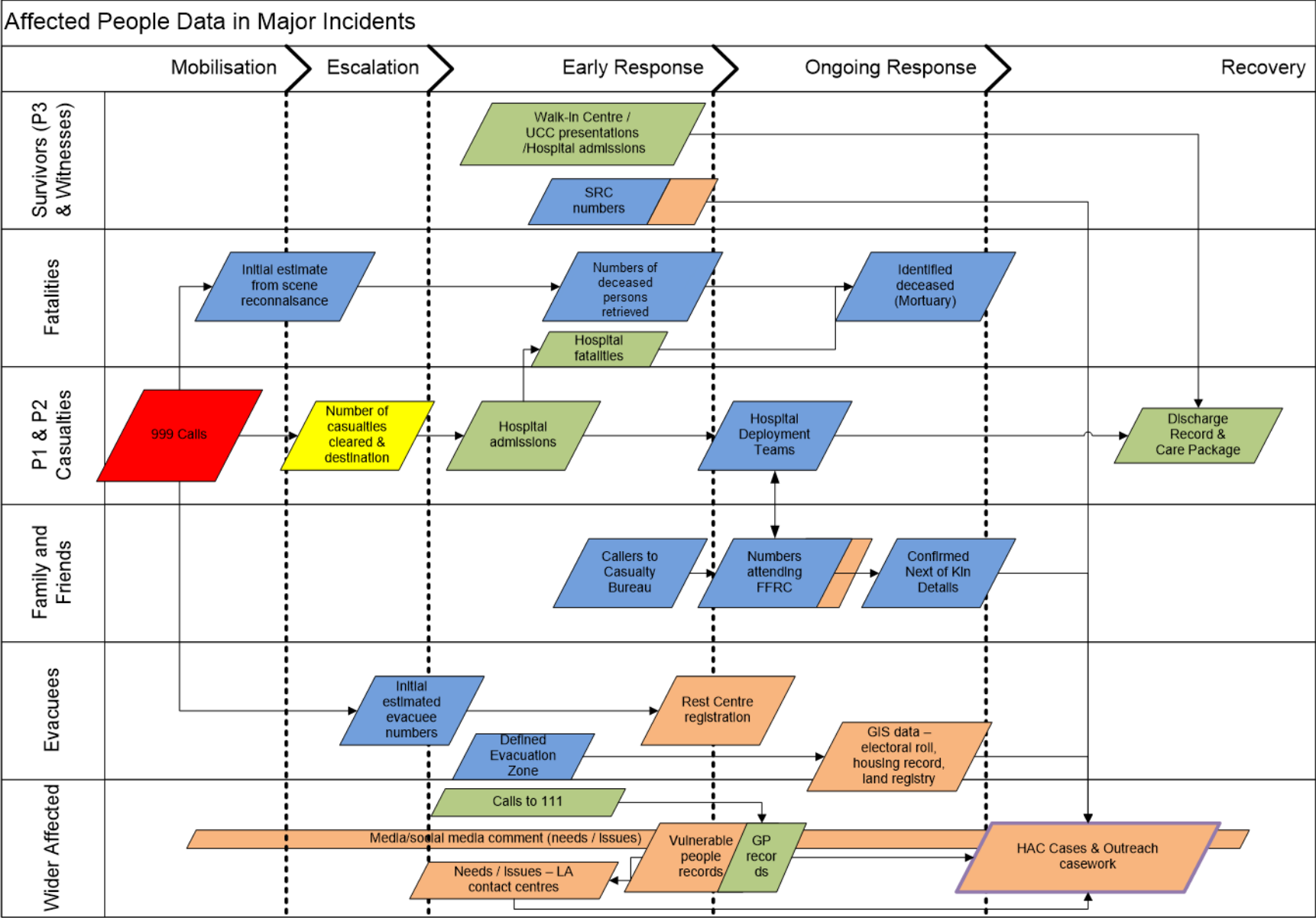


Figure 2: Information sources

Menu of options for implementing humanitarian assistance

Overview

As the phased model of provision demonstrates, people's needs change as time goes on and therefore the response needs to adapt. There is no single answer as to what should be provided; there are a variety of options and decisions will need to be made at the time of the incident about which options needed to be activated, based on the circumstances.

The following section provides options that should be considered for use in developing the humanitarian response. Consideration of which option will be informed by the numbers of people affected, the severity of the incident, spatial and demographic considerations (where people live, the type of people affected etc.), and possibly a number of other factors.

Immediate/first few hours

Option	Trigger	Decision	Lead	Secondary	Other reference
Survivor Reception Centre	Significant number of survivors/ walking wounded	Police Tactical Commander	Police	Local authority Voluntary agencies Transport industry care teams (where applicable)	See also: LESPL Manual / LA Emergency Centre Plan
Rest Centre	Significant number of displaced people	LA Tactical Commander	LA	Voluntary agencies	See also: LESPL Manual / LA Emergency Centre Plan
Family and Friends Reception Centre	Large numbers of calls to casualty bureau. 'Searching behaviour'	Police Tactical Commander	Police / Local authority	Voluntary agencies Transport industry care teams (where applicable)	See also: LESPL Manual / LA Emergency Centre Plan
Deployment of staff to A&E	Significant numbers of hospitalised survivors	Police Tactical Commander	Police	Local authority social care teams	See also: Acute Trust Major Incident Plans Mass Casualty Plans

Table 3: Menu of options - immediate response

What is psychological first aid?²

According to Sphere (2011) and IASC (2007), psychological first aid (PFA) describes a humane, supportive response to a fellow human being who is suffering and who may need support. PFA involves the following themes:

- providing practical care and support, which does not intrude;
- assessing needs and concerns;
- helping people to address basic needs (for example, food and water, information);
- listening to people, but not pressuring them to talk;
- comforting people and helping them to feel calm;
- helping people connect to information, services and social supports;
- protecting people from further harm.

It is also important to understand what PFA is not:

- it is not something that only professionals can do.
- it is not professional counselling.
- it is not “psychological debriefing” in that PFA does not necessarily involve a detailed discussion of the event that caused the distress.
- It is not asking someone to analyse what happened to them or to put time and events in order.
- Although PFA involves being available to listen to people’s stories, it is not about pressuring people to tell you their feelings and reactions to an event.

Next few days

Option	Trigger	Decision	Lead	Secondary	Other Reference
Humanitarian Assistance Centre	Mass fatality incident	SCG / Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group	Local authority	Police Voluntary Agencies Transport industry care teams (where applicable) Others as required	LA Emergency Centre Plan
Mortuary visit support	Multiple fatalities	Mass Fatality Coordination Group	Police	Voluntary Agencies / Local authority	London Mass Fatality Plan Emergency Mortuary Plans

² “Psychological First Aid: A Guide for Field Worker” published by the World Health Organisation (2011).

Option	Trigger	Decision	Lead	Secondary	Other Reference
Community Assistance Centres	Incident with significant community impact, not requiring HAC	Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group	Local authority	Voluntary agencies, Other responders as required	
Information campaign – newsletter, website, leaflets.	All incidents	Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group	Local authority	Other responders as required	
Helplines	Large numbers of calls / enquiries anticipated	Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group	British Red Cross/ Local authority	Voluntary agencies	
Work in partnership with police FLOs	Large-scale FLO deployment and long-term needs	Police	Police	Local authority, voluntary agencies, Incident Care Teams	
Managing messages of condolences and floral tributes	Significant numbers of tributes being left or similar	Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group / Strategic Coordination Group	Local authority	Faith sector Police Voluntary agencies	
Managing donations	Any indication that people wish to donate	Local authority	Local authority	Voluntary sector Faith sector	London Emergencies Trust (LET)
Managing offers of support from volunteers	Spontaneous volunteering (particularly from outside the immediate area)	Local authority	Local authority	Voluntary sector Faith sector	National Cabinet Office guidance

Table 4: Menu of options – next few days

Medium Term (next few weeks)

Option	Trigger	Decision	Lead	Secondary	Other Reference
Consultation / engagement	Commencement of Recovery Phase	HASG	Local authority	HASG	
Transitioning to longer term assistance centre	Recommendation of HAC Manager	HASG	Local authority	NHS	

Option	Trigger	Decision	Lead	Secondary	Other Reference
Facilitating support groups	Initiative of affected people	HASG	Local authority		
Outreach workers	Indications of difficulties with accessing support	HASG	Local authority	NHS	
Ongoing information campaign – newsletter, website, leaflets.	Will continue as long as necessary	HASG	Local authority	Other agencies	
Acts of remembrance	Initiative of community and faith leaders	HASG	Faith leaders	Other agencies	
Development of referral pathways	Reduction in demand for incident-specific services	HASG	NHS	Local authority	

Table 5: Menu of options – next few weeks

Longer term (many months)

Option	Trigger	Decision	Lead	Secondary	Further Reference
Transition to mainstream services	Wind down of HA response	HASG	Local authority / mental health trust	NHS	
Inquest support	Dates of Inquests are set	Police	Police	LA	
Memorials and anniversaries	Wishes of directly affected people	HALO	Local authority	Police	
Implementing exit strategies	Sustainable strategies in place	HASG	Local authority	NHS	

Table 6: Menu of options - longer term

Procedural Notes: Immediate/first few hours

Overview

It can be assumed that the Humanitarian Assistance offered in the first few hours of an incident will be activated before the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group has been established. Decisions about whether to establish a Rest Centre, a Survivors Reception Centre and deploy staff to A&E will be made by the Tactical Coordinating Group.

Existing Plans / Arrangements in Place:

- Local authority Emergency Centre Plans
- Potential locations for Survivor Reception Centres and Family and Friends Reception Centres identified by the Police and Local authority

- Police procedures for Survivor Reception Centres, Family and Friends Reception Centres and the deployment of documentation teams to A&E.

Following is a summary of what will have been put in place if the option has been activated.

Survivor Reception Centre

Overview

A Survivor Reception Centre (SuRC) may be set up immediately following a major incident. Depending on the location of the major incident, it may be either a pre-determined venue or whatever is suitable and available. Its function is to provide survivors who do not require hospital treatment a place they can be met by responding agencies to obtain information and support, and provide evidence and accounts of the incident to Police.

In some incidents it may not be practicable to establish a SuRC immediately because of other more pressing activities such as lifesaving or removing the public from danger.

Purpose

The purpose of a Survivor Reception Centre is:

- To collect information relevant to the investigation
- To provide immediate shelter for persons who have been directly involved in an emergency
- To allow documentation of the survivors
- To enable the identification of potential witnesses by the police
- To provide first aid to those in need of it and not requiring hospitalisation
- To provide initial care and welfare support to survivors
- To organise onward travel where appropriate
- To provide information to survivors

A SuRC is a temporary but secure area at a location determined by the Police at the time of the incident and will be situated between the inner and outer cordon. While the Police are responsible for opening a SuRC they may request the assistance of the Local authority in finding a suitable venue in accordance with arrangements in the London Emergency Services Liaison Panel (LESLP) manual.

The Police will pass on details gathered from survivors to the Casualty Bureau via an online platform called the Major Incident Public Portal (MIPP). It is possible for survivors and witnesses to enter their own details and information directly onto MIPP and survivors at a SuRC may be assisted to do that as an alternative to being interviewed personally by a Police Officer. Additional Police resources may also be deployed to provide reassurance and manage any potential public order issues at a SuRC.

It is highly desirable that welfare staff from the Local authority or voluntary organisations should be present to support the Police in the provision of care and practical assistance to survivors in the SuRC. This not only provides support to survivors at the time but also establishes valuable contacts with people who might need ongoing help. Voluntary organisations, particularly the British Red Cross, might be called to assist at the SuRC. It is also likely that the staff of the venue will provide welfare support. Local authority responders will need to be ready to share the welfare response with a range of people from voluntary organisations, local business and other spontaneous first responders.

The logistics of getting Local authority staff to the SuRC rapidly may be challenging so it is vital to hear about the location of the SuRC as soon as possible. The Local authority's control centre (BECC) should ask the police for this information.

Within the SuRC persons should be provided with whatever 'psychological first aid' is appropriate to the situation. This is likely to include providing calm and reassurance alongside practical support such as access to telephones to inform loved ones that they are safe and well and help with onward travel arrangements.

The SuRC, although Police activated, may be required for a protracted period, and should this occur, it will be handed over to the Local authority to manage as a Rest Centre once Police involvement has concluded.

Rest Centre

The purpose of a Rest Centre is:

- To provide immediate shelter for persons who have been evacuated from an area or are otherwise in need of emergency accommodation following an incident.
- To provide initial light refreshments for evacuees.
- To enable details of evacuees to be maintained in the centre for reference.
- To provide for the wellbeing of the evacuees and to offer support services and information on a wide range of welfare related subjects.
- To provide evacuees and survivors with updated information about the incident and its possible effects upon them directly.

A Rest Centre serves as a place of safety for those who are uninjured and not directly affected by the incident but who have been evacuated from their home, work or other place or who are unable to return to that place after being away.

The responsibility for the set-up and running of Rest Centres lies with the local authority (supported by voluntary agencies) who would activate arrangements as outlined in their Emergency (Rest) Centre Plan. The decision to set up a Rest Centre(s) will be made by the local authority, often at the request of the police or fire brigade.

A Rest Centre is likely to be established further away from the incident site than a SuRC, in a building such as a sports centre, and may take up to 2-3 hours to set up. Local authorities maintain a list of suitable buildings to be used as Rest Centres although these may not always be available or be the most suitable building to use at the time of the emergency. In prolonged incidents it is possible that evacuees may need to sleep overnight in the Rest Centre if they are unable to find alternative accommodation such as hotels or make their own arrangements to stay with family and friends.

Family and Friends Reception Centre

The purpose of a Family and Friends Reception Centre (FFRC) is:

- To help reunite friends and relatives with survivors.
- To provide a place for the Police to record missing persons enquiries and to collect information that may aid their investigation.
- To provide friends and relatives with a safe area to gather, away from media attention.
- To provide friends and relatives with up-to-date and accurate information on the response arrangements that have been put in place.
- To provide access to practical and emotional support to those friends and relatives affected.

Past emergencies have shown that in the immediate aftermath of an incident, many people will travel to the scene in order to find family and friends that they believe to be involved. If large

numbers of people are converging on the scene, the Police may decide that it is necessary to have a separate area where family and friends can gather to receive information as it becomes available.

A FFRC should be located outside the outer cordon, but in proximity to the SuRC. They may also be set up outside hospitals to provide a focal point for families to attend.

It is the responsibility of the police to determine the need to set up a FFRC as part of the wider Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) process, in consultation with local authorities. It would be usual for the police to assign an officer to lead on this until the management of the facility can be handed over to the local authority.

A FFRC is likely to be set up as soon as practicable after an incident occurs and should be a safe place for friends and relatives to gather where they can receive up-to-date information about the situation and response.

Local authorities will have a key role in the providing for the immediate practical and emotional needs for friends and family members.

NB: In the event of an aviation incident, airlines may set up a “Friends and Relatives Reception Centre” (FRRC) which serves a similar purpose. It will be staffed and supported by the airline industry with police support.

Deployment of staff to hospitals and A&E

As part of the response and investigation, Police will deploy to hospitals receiving casualties. They will obtain casualty details to enable the information to be added to Casualty Bureau records, implement the set forensic strategy and prevent any public order issues that may arise.

The Police Officer coordinating this will be referred to as the Hospital Bronze. The attendance of Local authority staff at A&E to support bereaved or anxious relatives should be negotiated with the Hospital Bronze and A&E managers.

During larger or complex incidents where casualties end up at multiple hospitals, the Police may activate a Bronze Hospital Coordinator to manage all the individual Hospital Bronzes.

All hospitals have major incident plans and these are likely to be activated following any incident in London that involves a large number of casualties and/or fatalities. Hospitals will also have detailed arrangements for supporting friends and relatives of those that have been admitted.

Depending on the SIM/SIO's strategy, FLOs may be deployed to hospital to victims who have received life changing or life threatening injuries.

Police deployed in hospitals should also liaise with hospital managers on whether areas should be evacuated, locked down etc.

Many social care services will have teams based at hospitals that may provide support. This may include provision of emotional and practical support to casualties and their families.

However, it may be necessary for these hospital social care teams to concentrate on the safe discharge of existing patients to clear beds for the casualties from the incident. It should therefore not be assumed that these social workers can support the Police Hospital Bronze and social workers from other community teams might need to be deployed.

Existing support mechanisms may be insufficient in a mass casualty incident, and additional resources may be triggered through the HASG (or via the local authority) making use of:

- Voluntary sector support
- Faith responders
- Transport sector incident care teams
- Additional LA staff.

Procedural Notes: Next Few Days

Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC)

Overview

A HAC has the following objectives:

- Act as a focal point for humanitarian assistance to bereaved individuals and families, survivors and impacted communities.
- Enable individuals and families to gain as much information as is currently available about family members and friends involved in the incident.
- Enable the gathering of mass forensic samples in a timely manner, in order to enhance the ability to identify loved ones quickly.
- Offer access to a range of facilities that will allow individuals, families and survivors to make informed choices according to their needs.
- Provide a coherent multi-agency approach to humanitarian assistance in emergencies that will minimise duplication.

It is the responsibility of local authorities to set up and run a HAC with support from the Police and other agencies following a request from the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG).

While Rest Centres, Survivor Reception Centre (SuRC) or Family & Friends Reception Centres (FFRC) are established in the immediate aftermath of an incident with specific purposes, an HAC provides broader support over a longer period for all those affected whilst investigation and recovery operations are taking place. The HAC should not interfere with the function of these or other initial support areas but should be complementary.

A HAC is unlikely to be fit for purpose and open for use until up to 72 hours after the incident. It should be set up with the primary aim of providing a focal point in which information and humanitarian support can be provided to bereaved families, survivors and other persons affected by a major incident. The centre may also be used to enable investigating officers to obtain information and forensic samples from those directly involved to aid the identification process.

Although the local authority will be responsible for chairing the HAC Management Group and running the centre, there will be a range of other organisations (e.g. police, voluntary agencies, NHS, and private sector organisations) present that can provide information and support for survivors and their relatives. This will include practical advice such as compensation, benefits support, travel assistance and information on the investigation process. It will also provide psychological first aid and listening services (offered by Local Authorities and voluntary agencies) that will enable those who wish to access further support the signposting to access these services.

All staff deployed to the HAC should be properly trained and briefed on their role within the centre and that of others working alongside them. This should include awareness of their remit and avoid attempting to provide support for which they are not trained e.g. avoid formal counselling which is not appropriate immediately after the incident.

There will be different groups of local authority staff deployed to the HAC – main groups will be emergency centre staff and staff such as benefits advisors who are carrying out their normal job in an unusual environment. Both groups will need to be thoroughly briefed before working in the centre and should be conscious of the need to treat relatives, friends and survivors with compassion and dignity throughout.

The HAC will remain open for as long its services are required. This is likely to be a number of weeks or possibly months. The HAC management group should consider the exit strategy for the centre from the outset.

The HAC will be supported by other means of support for survivors and relatives who are unable or do not wish to access the HAC itself. This should include a website and telephone helpline that are able to signpost to the range of organisations and services that are available to support those affected by the incident.

HALO Actions for HAC Activation:

1. Confer with the LLAG if an HAC is recommended.
2. Appoint an HAC Build Manager. The HAC Build Manager will be responsible for converting the identified building into an HAC.
3. Appoint an HAC Manager. The HAC Manager will be responsible for delivery of the service within the HAC.
4. Ensure the HAC Manager is appropriately briefed. Consider:
 - Latest information about the incident;
 - The HAC role, and the CAC Managers responsibilities;
 - What other support is available to affected people;
 - Routes for accessing logistical support (typically via the BECC);
 - Which other agencies should be asked to attend.
5. Establish the hours of operation. Initially these may need to be extended hours (e.g. 6am to 10pm). As the recovery progresses these can be reviewed.
6. Request / agree a level of support from other agencies.

Mortuary visit support

In a major incident involving large numbers of fatalities, capacity at existing Dedicated Disaster Mortuaries (DDM) will be increased.

Mortuary visits should be avoided wherever possible and should be by exception. The Police will identify the deceased so repatriation to the family can be made following authorisation by the Coroner. The family will then be able arrange their own viewing through their undertaker.

It may also help to identify the needs of the people that work in the DDM, and the delivery of appropriate support services.

Community Assistance Centres (CAC)

The purpose of a Community Assistance Centre (CAC) is to provide advice and support to people affected by a major incident, and to support the recovery of the community in a local setting.

CACs may be considered particularly where a Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) has not been activated. It may be appropriate particularly when:

- The impact is concentrated in a particular area. If a number of areas are affected several such centres may be considered.
- People are affected significantly, and need advice and support, but the intensity of the impact is of a lower order (for example, there are not mass fatalities) and/or the number of people affected is smaller than would trigger an HAC.

Caution should be exercised before triggering both CACs and an HAC because of the potential for dilution of resources.

Establishing a CAC is a local authority responsibility, accessing such support as is needed from other responding organisations.

A CAC should be located in an appropriate publicly accessible building within easy reach of the affected people. It may be appropriate to transition from Rest Centres or SuRCs directly, as the response develops; or it may be sensible to identify an alternative building.

Besides the Local authority, there are a number of agencies who may be appropriate to attend, depending on circumstances:

- NHS staff, if health monitoring is needed.
- Voluntary agencies and faith responders may need to attend to provide emotional support and care.
- Insurance companies.
- Benefits agency.
- Registered social landlords, if social housing stock has been affected.
- The Police, if investigations are still ongoing.

In some cases, CACs may be an appropriate setting for public meetings, for community engagement and consultation.

Consideration should be given at the outset to how the CAC will operate and long it may remain open. This should be considered within the HASG.

Information campaign / website

Incident website/page - Following a major incident it is likely that a support website will be needed which details all the information and contact details for members of the public requiring further support. Local authorities will lead on ensuring this is delivered.

The website's primary function will be to act as a signposting facility, so that persons affected can either visit any centre that has been set up, or alternatively use the links provided to access support remotely / locally or via the telephone support line.

The type of information that the site contains will be determined by the nature of the incident and the needs of the community. This is likely to include a variety of practical advice (e.g. financial assistance) and signposting to emotional support (e.g. Survivors / Bereaved Support Groups). The site should have links to other useful websites, for example, the Local authority, local police, Disaster Action and other statutory and voluntary bodies.

In some cases, it may suffice to offer online support through the web pages of Local Authorities for as long as required. In other instances, it may be necessary to migrate website information to a designated webpage for the incident, containing detailed signposting information and a professionally designed layout. Links should be made with regional and national government agencies to provide assistance in hosting the website where possible. In terrorist incidents the Government's Victims of Terrorism Unit (VTU) will immediately update its website with details of the incident and sources of support. There should be clear links between the VTU website and any website set up by the Local authority or other partners.

Attached in Annex 4 is a template site map for the type of information and structure that the webpage/site should adopt.

Information leaflets: Following a major incident, information leaflets will be a useful tool to provide information and signposting to further support. They should contain information about normal reactions, when to seek further help, tips on dealing with crisis, and useful contact details.

As well as assisting the public, the addition of local information such as telephone numbers will aid a range of practitioners in providing timely advice. The guidance will most likely be used by health and social care agencies but can be distributed by anyone who finds it helpful.

When leaflets are issued the following issues need to be considered:

- Who is the target audience? – i.e. where most of those affected commuters or children or football fans – this will influence where the best place is to make information available
- How will vulnerable communities be reached?
- Format – does the information need to be available in large print, Braille or different languages.

There are a number of options for leaflets and written material for people to access, and these should be considered within the HASG to be sure there is enough of the required information available to those affected. A good standing leaflet is this [NHS Coping with Stress Following a Major Incident](#) leaflet.

Telephone helpline(s)

It is important for a helpline to be established and publicised within hours of an incident. It is also important for the different organisations who might set up a helpline to communicate with each other so that there is a clear and agreed source of information and support for people affected by and responding to the incident. These organisations could include the local authority where the incident happens, Transport for London's Sarah Hope Line (for incidents on TfL's services), and other transport providers, Victim Support, the British Red Cross and the Samaritans.

The British Red Cross, Victim Support and Samaritans are partners in the National Emergency Support Line which can provide an immediate, co-ordinated response to a major incident of any kind nationwide.

The National Emergency Support Line (NESL)

Victim Support, the British Red Cross and the Samaritans are partners in the National Emergency Support Line which can provide an immediate, co-ordinated response to a major incident of any kind nationwide. The NESL would only be activated for incidents that are of such a scale and national significance that a collaborative approach by NESL partner organisations is required. It would not be activated in major incidents where a helpline could be provided effectively by just one of the partner organisations.

The NESL is based on the following principles:

- The ability to activate the support line immediately.
- The capacity to deploy trained staff and/or volunteers immediately to provide a 24/7/365 availability.
- The availability of one number for all those affected to call in the immediate aftermath of an event (people directly affected, witnesses, family members and professionals). The number will be publicised to public and professionals in the event of a major incident by the member organisations and statutory services/national media.
- A close working relationship with relevant services and the ability to set up "warm transfers" to the services people need. This means the NESL call handler would stay on the phone until the person has been successfully transferred to other services, such as the Casualty Bureau or Local authority Services.
- A coordinated, multi-disciplinary response centred around the needs of the individual person, providing a single point of access for a wide range of needs which will vary over time.

- A flexible approach that can be adapted to a wide range of incidents and locations and services.

In the event of a major incident NESL will;

- Answer all calls.
- Provide reassurance and support to those traumatised.
- Provide accurate up to date information to callers.
- Assess callers' needs and either provide an immediate response or refer to another relevant organisation for specialist help, through warm transfer if possible or using the Inter-agency Referral Form.
- Safeguard vulnerable callers.
- Provide psychological first aid, where required/appropriate.
- Seek consent to share data where appropriate.
- Refer callers who want to make donations to established donations channels such as British Red Cross donation line or the London Emergencies Trust.

Activation criteria and process

The National Emergency Support Line (NESL) is for any type of major incident requiring a humanitarian response that is beyond the scope of business-as-usual operations and where a partnership response is required.

It may be necessary to activate the support line before the first meeting of the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group is convened. The decision to request activation of the NESL should be taken by the Strategic Coordination Group (SCG). The British Red Cross or Victim Support may contact the SCG to recommend activation of the NESL.

Following the SCG decision the Local Authority can call the NESL on the number hosted by Victim Support 24/7/365:-

0808 281 0000

Alternatively, the Local Authority could use their normal 24/7 contact details for the British Red Cross to request the activation of the NESL. The British Red Cross will then liaise with Victim Support.

Victim Support's Support Line

In major criminal incidents, including terrorism or civil disorder, the Support Line operated 24/7/365 by Victim Support will be immediately available for people affected by the incident. In terrorist incidents, the Government's Victim of Terrorism Unit (VTU) will rapidly update its website to include information on the incident with a link to Victim Support's Support Line. In these types of incident the local authority should liaise closely with Victim Support and with the VTU to coordinate the information about all sources of support that is available to people.

In major criminal or terrorist incidents Victims Support may provide its services through its own Support Line or it may operate in partnership with the British Red Cross through the NESL.

Whoever provides the telephone helpline / support line the Local authority will need to ensure effective coordination between all statutory and voluntary services and the support line and ensure that the support line provider is immediately updated with details of services as they develop.

The local authority should also use information of support line activity to identify any gaps in services.

Support to Families with Police Family Liaison Officers

The involvement of Police Family Liaison Officers (FLO) will depend on the nature and extent of the incident and the decision on whether or not to deploy them rests with the Senior Investigation Officer (SIO)/Senior Identification Manager (SIM). The FLO's responsibilities include:

- Working to the strategy written by the Police Family Liaison Co-ordinator/Manager (FLC/FLM) and agreed by the SIO/SIM. The FLO will remain the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) between the SIO/SIM and the family.
- Gathering ante mortem data and evidence in a compassionate manner from family members and friends regarding the details of potential victims (to contribute and enable the earliest possible identification).
- Providing a means of communication between the investigation team and family. They will offer help, advice and updates in respect of any investigation (where appropriate) and the criminal justice system.
- Signpost families to relevant support services.
- Provide guidance with regard to repatriation and the coronial process.
- Keeping a record of all contacts with the family, the reasons for the contacts and the outcomes in the FLO log.
- Establishing close liaison with other relevant agencies and partners within the HAC.

The Police Family Liaison Co-ordinator, in consultation with the SIO/SIM will define and develop a strategy, taking into consideration the needs of the family; if necessary involving the activation of Local Authorities, voluntary agencies, and other partners (such as transport sector incident care teams).

All requests to contact the family should initially go through the FLO as the first point of contact, following which, an agreement may be made with the family on how contact should be maintained thereafter.

The family may require support and assistance with a variety of issues, such as trauma of the bereavement, funeral arrangements, financial or legal advice, health or social services. Other agencies can work with FLOs to assist in providing these services and co-ordinate the referral of families to more long-term support services with already existing agencies.

A Family Liaison deployment may become protracted to ensure proper support is provided throughout any impending criminal, coronial or public proceedings.

The Police Family Liaison should be represented on the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG) as they will have substantial contact with some of the people most critically affected by the incident. For example, FLOs could be a useful channel of consultation with bereaved families in the process of deciding the most suitable form of memorial events. While the FLO representative will be able to make a valuable contribution to the strategic decisions of the HASG some of their insights will relate to the very personal and sensitive experiences of individuals. There should therefore be a more confidential channel of communication between the Local authority and the FLO outside of the HASG which can be a large meeting involving representatives from several organisations.

Managing Messages of Condolences, Floral Tributes and Vigils

Overview

In the aftermath of a major incident, particularly those with multiple fatalities, members of the public, VIPs, and a wide variety of organisations will wish to pay tribute, express their sympathy

and show their support. The management of these type of activities will likely sit with the local authority and delivered via the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG).

The HASG will need to pay attention to relevant public events (such as vigils), and in some incidents may be asked by the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) to take the lead in engaging with faith and community organisations on such events.

Well-wishers may want to send gifts or make donations to those people affected or offer messages of condolences and other tributes. This is an important means for the wider community to express their concern and grief. Arrangements need to be put in place to sensitively manage what is often a spontaneous process. Arrangements need to be kept under review in the early days of the response to the incident to ensure they are appropriate to the wishes of the community.

It is important to include in the communications strategy information about how people can pay tribute and express their sympathy. This can be important to avoid actions by members of the public which, however well-meaning, could be disruptive or burdensome to manage.

Floral tributes

Particularly in response to incidents with fatalities, it is likely that people will leave floral tributes in places that they feel have a connection with the incident that has occurred and may be very symbolic for the bereaved and the community. The management of floral tributes should be led by the local authority and will need to involve liaison with the landowners of the locations where tributes have been left as well as key stakeholders such as faith and community organisations. Sites of tributes can also be a focal point for visiting dignitaries, VIPs etc.

Consideration should be given early on to the establishment of a memorial garden (or similar space), as a central point for floral tributes. This can encourage tributes to be left in a better suited place for the support for those who leave them and the management of the tributes themselves.

Following acts of terrorism, tributes are photographed and kept by the police Forensic Management Team, with a view to restore later to families where appropriate.

Consideration for managing in-situ tributes

- Location (access; obstruction; landowner engagement).
- Impact of weather (temperature; moisture)
- Degradation, scene management (e.g. fallen leaves; litter)
- Communicating future plans for tributes (e.g. retention of written cards; preservation of non-perishables; archiving; memorial sites/ gardens etc.)
- Future occurrences for tributes – e.g. one month on, anniversaries, birthdays and cultural significant days/ times

Considerations for the moving or removal of tributes

- Being clear within the HASG why they are being moved or removed (length of time in place? Degradation? Safety?)
- When they will be removed (day; time of day - start / end of day is recommended)
- Who will remove them? (council officers; community organisation; those affected)
 - Consider how these people are presented at the scene, (e.g. dark suits rather than working clothes; how livered vehicles and equipment is placed etc.)
- If being removed, what will happen with the tributes?
 - Off-site sorting arrangements
 - Composting for floral tributes

- Non-perishable (written cards; memorabilia; etc.) cleaning and storage
- Considering who can support the local authority with this process. Community sector could be considered.
- Plan for returning, storing or archiving tributes.
- Communicating with those affected and the public (timings; what will happen to the tributes). Large Posters, press releases and information on websites may be appropriate
- Briefing of key staff and stakeholders to support communications and enquiries

Condolence books

Condolence books are very appropriate in any high profile incident where a number of lives have been lost. Local authorities should consider providing books of condolence in key public buildings. The details of where books of condolences are should be provided on the incident website. Online tribute books of condolence are also recommended.

The timing of how long to leave book of condolences open is a matter for judgement, but sufficient time should be allowed for people to pay tribute.

Consideration should also be given to how to compile different books of condolence and how they are later stored by the local authority such as in archives.

Donations – financial and physical

The act of donating has a therapeutic effect for those who are distressed about what has happened, and who wish to help and show solidarity with directly affected people. Donations often provide a much needed source of resources for those affected by an emergency. Donating may take a several forms (financial, physical) and it is important that the SCG and HASG establish effective coordination of these early to maximise support for those affected and minimise complications.

The local authority will generally play a key role in leading the coordination of donations. However, this will be determinate on the decision of the SCG and HASG as to which channels are established. Some options for financial appeals include British Red Cross and the London Emergencies Trust, in consultation with the GLA and other organisations. Other channels may be established and managed more locally, and these should in the first instance be agreed in partnership consultation with the SCG. However, it should also be noted that members of the community may set up their own online fundraising pages through crowdfunding platforms.

Monetary donations should be encouraged in lieu of physical donations. However, this is not always possible and physical donations may still be received. The receipt and management of physical donations by the public and organisations (clothing, food, and household goods) requires careful consideration and planning as it can be logistically challenging and emotive. Local authorities are best placed to lead this work collaboratively with sector partners such as faith and community groups.

In all instances, early and clear communication of the official donation channels for the public, as well as private and other organisations is essential to enable the swift sorting and distribution of donations to those affected.

Managing offers of support from volunteers

In larger incidents there is often a strong desire from people to volunteer to help. Spontaneous volunteering, particularly from individuals from outside the affected area(s) needs careful and sensitive management.

In dealing with such offers the following factors should be considered and balanced:

- Community involvement in the response may help to ensure it is sensitive to local need.
- Allowing people to take a role in the response supports their psychological recovery. Conversely, telling people they are “not needed” can be a very difficult message for people.
- Volunteers will come with a variety of skills, some of which may be useful. However, it may be difficult to verify these skills, and suitably trained and qualified people from known organisations may provide a better service to affected people.
- Certain tasks or roles would be unsuitable to give to volunteers. For example, allowing volunteers to work unsupervised with vulnerable people would be very ill-advised.
- It is preferable to accept volunteering offers where there is an organisation that is able to vouch for the person and their suitability – e.g. a local voluntary agency.
- There may be tasks in the wider response that are more suitable for people to undertake (e.g. clearing up debris from streets). Therefore, if there are large numbers of volunteering requests the issue may best be escalated via the HASG to the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG).

It is recommended that the local authority establishes a procedure for compiling offers of help, and the response provided. Even if there is no immediate task that the volunteer can help with, it may be possible to involve them at a later date. Active management and engagement may be required if volunteers have made their way to a scene or centre expecting to help out.

Organisations such as British Red Cross and RE:ACT have long-standing volunteer programmes and extensive expertise in the deployment and management of community volunteers and should be engaged alongside local community volunteer services in establishing channels for new volunteers too.

Procedural Notes: Next Few Weeks

Consultation and engagement

Consultation and engagement with affected people and the wider community can play a critical role in shaping an effective humanitarian response, as part of wider recovery management.

It would be mistaken to be prescriptive about how this should be carried out. However, sensitivity to the emotional state of affected people is a key consideration both in how consultation is carried out, and in assessing the feedback received.

Consideration could be given to:

- Public meetings, consultation meetings and/or focus groups;
- Seeking views and input from established support groups and via police Family Liaison Officers;
- Establishing an “unmet needs” group to identify gaps in service provision;
- Using the experience of front-line responders to identify problem areas;
- Questionnaires / feedback forms or suggestion boxes in key locations (e.g. in an HAC).

Transitioning to a longer-term assistance centre

The decision to transition from a Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) to a longer term assistance or community centre is a decision that should be regularly considered by the Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO) and Steering Group to be sure decisions are taken early enough and appropriate resource is sourced to identify the needs of the community, how the centre will operate and how best to manage the transition.

The HALO will need to identify a senior officer to lead the commissioning process and work in partnership with HASG members and the community for the most effective outcomes of any commissioning or contract management.

Facilitating support groups

Support groups can be an excellent of facilitating self-help amongst survivors, the bereaved, friends and relatives.

In general, the local authority, alongside partners, should play an enabling role to allow groups to establish themselves, where this is appropriate. Care should be taken to avoid any sense of pushing affected people towards self-support if this is not a spontaneous initiative, or if people are not yet ready. Once established, it is usually preferable to allow the group to become self-running as soon as possible.

Where possible, the HASG should maintain an overview of what groups are running, and gain a sense of how they are running, without intruding or attempting to direct the group. This will assist in guiding any support and new members in the right direction. It should also be noted that different support groups will provide support and advice for different parts of the affected community. For example, there may be different groups established for the bereaved, survivors, witnesses, or other demographics such as school children or a particular faith group.

1. Early community engagement led by the local authority and third sector partners is important in the establishment and assistance to support groups. Identify the need / desire for support groups. The initiative should come from affected people, rather than directed from above – though facilitation and engagement may be needed.
2. Identify what assistance is needed. This maybe:
 - Space for meetings – somewhere easily reached, conducive, informal.
 - Short-term funding for setting the group up.
 - Technical advice with setting up websites, particularly where discussion boards may need internet security. (However, social media tools for this sort of initiative are rapidly improving, and many people are becoming very familiar with them).
3. Provide a point of contact for ongoing liaison as the group develops.

Outreach workers

Outreach workers tasked with following up individuals with significant needs may be appropriate where there are indications that people are not able to engage with services effectively.

For example, if the incident affects populations who suffer from significant social exclusion, or if the impact on housing means that the community has been significantly dispersed, key workers who are able to make individual contact may be a useful intervention.

Outreach workers may be able to:

- Assess the current needs of affected people
- Signpost to the appropriate support services
- Provide support in claiming appropriate financial assistance, submitting insurance claims etc.

Ongoing information campaign – newsletter, website, leaflets.

It is likely to be particularly important to focus on continuing outreach to affected people, as the media interest turns away from the incident. It is likely to be necessary to take a low-key approach.

The key focus is to reach out to affected people, who may often not have made contact with the core responding agencies directly.

An important consideration will be to identify the agencies and service providers who affected may turn to in order to find support. These may include:

- GPs.
- Voluntary agencies such as Victim Support, Samaritans, CRUSE.
- Faith groups.
- Employers' occupation health departments.
- Schools education welfare advisers.

It is also likely that those most aware of an individual who is suffering 'invisibly' are the close friends and families of affected people.

It is important to ensure these sorts of groups have access to information, and that messages are targeted appropriately.

Where information has been directly captured by a responding agency, it may be appropriate to make direct contact. This could be done by letter, which would be the least intrusive method. Other means of contact should be undertaken with careful consideration. However, direct outreach by caseworkers may be appropriate to make contact with people who may have not come forward directly.

Acts of Remembrance

Acts of remembrance, such as memorial services are likely to be an important part of the recovery process.

The organisation of such events needs to be handled carefully bearing in mind:

- The faiths of those directly and indirectly affected – there is a need to be respectful and inclusive;
- The wishes of the bereaved are extremely important. However, acts of remembrance are also important to the wider community;
- The involvement of appropriate community leaders, VIPs etc. needs to be carefully managed;
- Different communities will react differently to different events, and over time. Some disasters are marked regularly over a very long period of time, other incidents may be followed by a desire, at some stage, to 'move on';
- Some acts of remembrance should be private and low-key, others will be large-scale.

Directly affected people are likely to need support during this time. Careful consideration of how this is best provided will be important. Consultation with individuals may be appropriate. Many people will be able to find the support they need from their own friends and family, or community.

Media interest may be high. Care should be taken with event planning to enable the media to satisfy the needs of the wider community without intruding on people who are traumatised and/or bereaved.

Development of referral pathways

Pathways should be developed to ensure that affected people can access particularly mental health, but also other support services. There may be a complex web of services that affected people may present to, in their personal journey to recovery. These include statutory and voluntary sector agencies, and faith and community organisations.

Key steps:

- Assessment of likely future needs;
- Establish the key long-term service providers;
- Develop a strategy for promoting key services;
- Managing and monitoring.

The key long-term service providers may include an assistance centre, a “Screen and Treat” service provided by mental health trusts or may be mainstream health and social care services.

It is recommended that the greater the needs of affected people the simpler the means of accessing help should be. Simplicity of referral pathways provides a greater chance that people will access the required help.

Promotion of services should consider external publicity, which should be consistent across different channels (i.e. consistent wording and lists of providers across leaflets, websites etc.).

It is also important to identify all the services where affected people may seek help and ensure the mechanisms for referral exist. In addition to those working directly as part of the response (i.e. FLOs, assistance centre staff etc.), consider the following:

- Victim Support;
- Bereavement support charities and agencies, and similar;
- Faith organisations;
- Local authority customer services, and social services departments;
- Schools education welfare advisers;
- GPs and pharmacies;
- Occupational Health departments of affected departments.

Once links are established, it is also important to monitor who is being referred to each service, and where from. Once pathways are established, service providers should provide management information on numbers referred to and from their service to the HASG.

Development of referral pathways is likely to form a key element of the exit strategy for the response as a whole.

Procedural Notes: Longer term

Transition to mainstream services

It is likely that it will be necessary at some stage to mainstream the ongoing care of people affected by a major incident, if there are long term issues for the affected people. This should be anticipated and planned for in any incident causing mass fatalities or life-changing injuries.

A key consideration will be how to “hand over” cases from any centralised provision (especially Humanitarian Assistance Centres) to the local authority and local health partners.

It should be noted that different elements of service provision may transition at different times, according to need and circumstances.

It is of course the case that the individual has right not to access mainstream services. Care and sensitivity in how this transition is handled is critical.

Local authorities will be bound to consider each individual’s needs on a case-by-case basis, considering their eligibility for ongoing services in relation to the Fair Access to Care Services policy. Whilst this policy operates in similar fashion in all authorities, the actual services offered

can vary markedly according to local resources, and priorities. This may result in differences in provision between individuals with similar circumstances.

It will therefore be essential to consider carefully how to manage this transition. Actions may include:

- Communicating with partners at an early stage, and particularly to the local authorities whose residents are accessing central service provision;
- Developing a strategy for communicating with service users;
- Considering a 'wind-down' period where the service closes to new referrals prior to full exit;
- Updating web materials to sign-post people to their own local social care services.

Inquest support

In a major incident involving fatalities, an inquest will need to be held. The provision of support to bereaved family and friends may be appropriate. Those managing the venue where the inquest is being held may want to consider some practical issues, such as the need for quiet rooms.

Memorials and anniversaries

Anniversaries are likely to be a particularly difficult time for people affected by a Major Incident. Service providers should be aware of this and prepare for a surge in demand.

The desire for events to mark anniversaries is not straightforward to judge. There is likely to be a diversity of opinions – between those who feel strongly that the event should be marked, and those who wish to “move on”. Equally, some may wish for a low-key event, whilst others may feel that a higher profile marking of the anniversary is appropriate.

It is advisable to consult extensively (and sensitively) in the run up to anniversaries to gauge the opinion of those most directly affected.

It may be appropriate to consider a permanent tribute or memorial. Again, extensive consultation should take place before any initiative is taken.

It is possible that a desire to mark anniversaries may emerge or continue very long after formal management of the incident has ceased. Local Authorities, with their community leadership role, would expect to be key to identifying and responding to such needs. For very significant pan-London incidents it may be the case that regional and/or national tiers of government would take a leading role.

Implementing Exit Strategies

The HASG should consider formally standing down at the point where it has confidence that sustainable strategies are in place to meet any ongoing need, so that partnership arrangements to specifically oversee the humanitarian response are no longer required.

If still meeting, the Recovery Coordinating Group notified of this decision.

Annex 1: HASG Terms of Reference

Overall Purpose of the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG)

The purpose of the HASG is to determine the strategic direction of the Humanitarian Assistance response, and to ensure coordination of the activities of the responders involved.

The HASG should at all times review the needs of people affected and consider whether the current provision is sufficient to meet the need and take action to deal with identified gaps.

The Role of the HASG

Key responsibilities of the HASG include:

1. Ensuring that the needs of affected people are understood and met
2. Triggering the deployment of key capabilities comprising the welfare aspect of the response
3. Monitoring the performance of capabilities, and intervening to bolster the response where necessary
4. Initiating consultation with communities and individual to ensure the response is effective
5. Ensuring effective promotion of services to affected people and ensuring that effective pathways exist to enable people to find the support they require.
6. Ensuring effective mechanisms exist for sharing of information between relevant agencies.
7. Maintain financial control.

Suggested composition & membership:

Officers attending the HASG should be senior officers able to make resourcing decisions on behalf of their organisation.

- Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO) (Chair)
- Emergency Planning (Resilience) Adviser to the HALO (Local authority)
- Mental Health Practitioner (Mental Health Trust)
- Police Service (e.g. Family Liaison manager)
- NHS England and NHS Improvement (London) – Humanitarian Assistance Lead
- Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) (or their representative)
- Director of Children’s Services (DCS) (or their representative)
- Information Management Officer (Local authority)
- HAC Manager or representative (if activated)
- HM Coroners Officer
- Representative from the London Resilience Group (if required)
- Voluntary sector representative(s) – e.g. British Red Cross, Victim Support etc.
- Faith community representative(s) – e.g. Salvation Army, London Churches etc. as appropriate to the affected communities)
- Public Health England
- Transport operator or infrastructure owner (if appropriate to the incident)
- HM Government Victims of Terrorism Unit (VTU) [if an act of terror]

- London Resilience Communication Group (LRCG) representative
- Finance Officer (Local authority)
- HALO Support Officer (Minute-taker and meeting organiser).

HASG meetings

Frequency and timing

- The HASG would be expected to meet frequently in the immediate aftermath of an incident, but less often in later stages. In the initial stages meetings should be at least daily.
- Meetings should be timed with regard to the timings of SCG meetings to enable discharge of actions emanating from the SCG, and upward reporting.

Conduct and Focus

- Initial meetings should be brisk and action focused.
- Meetings should focus on providing direction to the overall humanitarian response, in line with the strategic direction from the SCG. In practice this should focus on:
 - Setting objectives and monitoring outcomes
 - Understanding needs
 - Coordinating between agencies to provide a coherent response
 - Transitioning between phases
- Ensuring appropriate communications are in place, as part of the wider multi-agency communications response to the incident.
- Key considerations:
 - Assessing what centres have been established, the take up of services and forward planning what types of centres will be required in the next stage of the response
 - What other methods of support have been set up? e.g. website, helpline
 - Devising a clear communications, media and marketing strategy to promote the services available
 - Is support accessible to all?
- Meetings should not be focussing on the detail of the operational response. This is the responsibility of tactical responders managing individual capabilities deployed. However, the meetings should be an opportunity to escalate issues, if needed.

Annex 2: HASG: Humanitarian Assistance Impact Assessment

Humanitarian Assistance Impact Assessment

Emergencies affect communities in a wide variety of ways. To understand what humanitarian assistance is required, one first needs to map out who is affected and how the emergency has affected them.

The impact of emergencies goes well beyond those directly affected by an emergency (e.g. through injury, loss of property, evacuation). Emergencies affect onlookers, family and friends of fatalities or survivors, response and recovery workers, and the wider community, as well as the economy and businesses, physical infrastructure, and the environment.

To understand how emergencies affect individuals and their communities – and thus prioritise and scope the humanitarian assistance effort – it is important to understand how emergencies impact upon the environment they live and work in. Below is a template which can assist in gathering the information to aid the understanding of these impacts and the steps that may need to be taken to mitigate them.

During an incident the type of humanitarian assistance will change and it is possible that the assessment may need to be refreshed to ensure the HASG is working with the most up-to-date and credible information.

NAME OF ORGANISATION			
TIME		DATE	
SERIAL NUMBER (sequential numbering)		(This may be a one-off doc so may not be relevant)	
1	OVERVIEW OF CURRENT HUMANITARIAN SITUATION		
	General Situation (Information to include status of incident and how it has or is developing)		
	Activities and issues (Describe actions that have been taken, resources deployed, issues for HASG and agency priorities)		
2	HORIZON SCAN (Short term, Medium term and Long-term humanitarian issues)		
3	Recommendations (List of proposals for the HASG to consider)		

IMPACT ASSESSMENT (Impact on those affected or involved in the incident)		
RED	Incident having significant impact with possible long-term consequences	
AMBER	Incident having a moderate impact with possible short to long term consequences	
GREEN	Limited or no impact	
N/A	Information is not available or applicable to organisation	
IMPACT AREA	RAG	COMMENTS (Please provide details to support the assessment of areas which have been identified as AMBER or RED. Any recommendations to address issues should be summarised in the recommendations box above)
4		Deaths (number of deaths and impact on community)
5		Community Displacement (impact of those moved from their homes)
6		Persons missing and unaccounted for (number missing and length of time missing)
7		Health Impacts (Including physical Impacts on individuals or collective health, wellbeing and quality of life and also longer term care for those disabled by the incident)
8		Psychological Impacts (short term and long-term issues)
9		Economic (encompassing the economic cost or losses to your organisation, businesses and individuals)
10		Wider social impacts (Including considerations surrounding faith and vulnerable persons)
11		Community response (any ad-hoc memorials, social network sites and initiatives organised by the local community)
12	OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION (Details that do not sit elsewhere in the report)	
13	Assessment completed by	
14	Authorised by	

Annex 3: HASG: Suggested First Meeting Agenda

1	Introductions and apologies	Chair
2	Terms of Reference	Chair
3	Overview of the incident (what's happening?)	Resilience Adviser
4	Assessment (see HA Impact Assessment): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has been affected and how? • HA support needed • HA supports available (which agency or service could provide these?) 	Resilience Adviser / NHS
5	Agreement on immediate priorities and actions	All
6	Communication Strategy- how will we let people know what is on offer?	All
7	Horizon scan for future issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exit strategy • Donations and Spontaneous Volunteering • Funding • Staff welfare 	All
8	AOB	All
9	Date, time and location of next meeting	Chair
10	Other attendees to be invited	Chair

Annex 4: Website Site Map Template

Home page

- Introductory message (the incident the website is for)
- Telephone support number (and available hours)
- HAC location and name (if applicable: note the location, travel details, opening hours)
- Links to the following headings below

Who are we?

- Outline who is running the website and which agencies are supporting it

How can we help?

- If HAC has been established, note the services being provided in the centre

Financial and legal help

- Summary of funds that have been established
- Links and phone numbers for suitable government agencies

Help coming to terms with the event

- Details of the telephone support number for persons who feel emotionally affected by the incident and may need professional counselling referral

Online resources

- Signposting for websites and support information provided by appropriate agencies
- Links to advice leaflets for persons affected by an incident

Contacting others affected

- Details of support groups established
- Information on how to set up your own support group (including links to Disaster Action)

Your questions answered

- Basic Q & As about what support is available and where it can be accessed

Memorials and condolence books

- Details of arranged memorial sessions / monuments, as appropriate
- Online book of condolence and details of location for actual book of condolence (if appropriate)

Annex 5: Humanitarian Assistance Reference Documents

“Five Essential Elements of Immediate and Mid-Term Mass Trauma Intervention: Empirical Evidence” Stevan F Hobfoll *et al.* Psychiatry 70(4) winter 2007

HM Government: Humanitarian Assistance in Emergencies: Non-statutory guidance on establishing Humanitarian Assistance Centres:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61221/hac_guidance.pdf

HM Government: Victims of Terrorism support: <https://victimsofterrorism.campaign.gov.uk/>

HM Government: Helplines and support: victims of terrorism

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/helplines-and-support-victims-of-terrorist-attacks/helplines-and-support-victims-of-terrorist-attacks>

National Emergencies Trust: <https://nationalemergenciestrust.org.uk/publications/>

NHS Pathways to Mental Health Support: <https://www.healthylondon.org/resource/london-incident-support-pathways/>

Transport for London Incident Support Service <https://tfl.gov.uk/campaign/incident-support-service>

In development, due summer 2021:

London Local authority Guidance on Tributes, Anniversaries, Memorials

London Local authority Guide to Donations Management

London Local authority Guide to Management of Spontaneous Volunteers

London Local authority Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer and Steering Group Toolkit

Practitioner toolkits:

- HM Government: Victims of Terrorism Unit, Toolkit for Local Authorities
- MoJ Toolkit: Support to Victims of Major Criminal Incidents
- <https://collaborate.resilience.gov.uk/RDSservice/home/178322/Framework-and-Guidance-Reference-Area> (Practitioners only)

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LONDON RESILIENCE GROUP

The London Resilience Group is jointly funded and governed by the Greater London Authority, London Local Authorities and the London Fire Commissioner. We are hosted by the London Fire Brigade. Our work, and that of the London Resilience Partnership, is overseen by the London Resilience Forum.