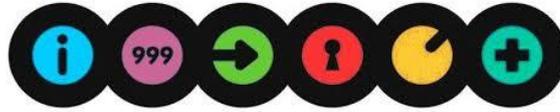


PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES



IN THE WEST MIDLANDS

Working Together

A Framework guide to Multi-Agency incident
response in Birmingham

Prepared by the

Birmingham Resilience Team

on behalf of

● ● ● — — — ● ● ●
Birmingham
resilience group

Version 6: August 2017

Preface

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA), created a single and up to date framework for civil protection in the UK. The Act places a legal obligation on a range of agencies involved in the management of emergencies to plan and work together in dealing with potential risks and hazards. The primary mechanism for promoting this environment is the Local Resilience Forum (LRF).

In October 2013 the Government initiated the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP), to improve joint working between the three emergency services primarily but all multi-agency Category 1 and 2 partners to enhance the collective ability to save lives and reduce harm. Major and complex incidents do not happen very often but when they do there is a need to ensure that the most efficient, effective and most importantly joined-up response is possible.

Birmingham is part of the West Midlands Conurbation LRF and is the largest of seven local authorities within the conurbation. The LRF has a structure whereby local authority area groups take responsibility for assessing various risks within the Forum’s Community Risk Register and developing best practice working methods for each of the others to choose to follow. In Birmingham, the area group is referred to as the Birmingham Resilience Group (BRG).

The BRG includes officers from Birmingham City Council, the Emergency Services, key agencies within the NHS and a range of other agencies named under the CCA. The BRG will strengthen both community and agency resilience within Birmingham through appropriate planning and exercising.

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Document Control

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Distribution List

Recipients / Target Audience
Birmingham Resilience Group
Organisations with a specific role in the framework
Category 1 & 2 responders within Birmingham

This document can be cascaded as felt appropriate by individuals and organisations listed above.

Version History / Amendment Record

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6	August 2017	BRG Approval	10/08/17

Validation and Review

This document is not a plan. Its purpose is to provide a guide or framework illustrating how emergency response agencies work together in Birmingham. The plans of individual agencies are regularly validated and improved, either through exercising or through live incidents and there will consequently be occasions when the assumptions within this framework need to be revised. Therefore "Working Together" will be reviewed as necessary in the light of any learning from incidents and exercises as well as in changes in Government policies or legislative procedure.

The document will be reviewed at least biennial or as and when appropriate in the light of changing circumstances.

The next biennial review is due in August 2019.

The contents of this document have been drafted in accordance with the latest agreed procedures of the Association of Chief Police Officers, (ACPO), and the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), the Ambulance Service Association (ASA), Birmingham City Council and the members of the Birmingham Resilience Group. Consultation has also been undertaken with many agencies throughout the region.

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1. Introduction

In the event of a major incident the response procedures adopted by each agency will vary dependent upon the role of the service concerned, the incident type, location and extent.

This document is intended to promote a greater understanding of how agencies work together a coordinated way in the event of a major incident.

Many serious and protracted incidents do not meet the criteria for a major incident but still require a coordinated response from the agencies involved in managing the incident. The definitions and procedures described in this document are applicable for dealing with all emergencies, as the principle of maintaining a coordinated approach brings clear benefits irrespective of the scale of that emergency.

It is critical that responding agencies quickly seek to restore a sense of order and control over an incident with a view to restoring normality at the earliest possibility. Agencies will be relying on their staff to remain calm and professional when all around them could be in disarray. Partner Agencies managers and supervisors will lead by example, providing clear instructions and guidance to all those involved in the incident, including colleagues, partners, communities and the media.

This guide sets out best practice how partner agencies should work together during a major incident and sets out the agreed procedures and arrangements for effective coordination across all agencies in achieving this.

The document includes references to the roles and responsibilities of a number of non-emergency service agencies. However, the list of agencies is not exhaustive and it is recognised that a wide range of agencies and organisations are likely to be involved in supporting the response led by the emergency services.

Every major incident is different and has its own unique features. Therefore, this document simply demonstrates a framework within which agencies responsible for the successful resolution of the incident are able to work together with maximum efficiency.

This document should complement the existing plans of all partner agencies. It is recognised that other agencies and organisations prepare and maintain their own plans which are specific to that organisations' needs. These are the plans that should be referenced in the event of an incident to provide more detailed procedures.

As part of JESIP (Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme), ***The Joint Doctrine: Interoperability Framework*** was published which provides guidance specifically to the three emergency services. The principles contained within it are also applicable to multi-agency Category 1 and 2 partners. The Joint Doctrine sets out guidance on what emergency responders should do and how they should do it in a multi-agency environment. The Joint Doctrine does not constitute a set of rules to be applied, but rather seeks to guide, explain and inform. It has therefore been cited as a reference document to ‘Working Together’.

2. Major Incident

2.1 Definition

- 2.1.1 A major incident is any incident that requires the implementation of special arrangements by one or more of the emergency services and will generally include the involvement, either directly or indirectly, of large numbers of people. For example:
- the rescue, treatment and transportation of a large number of casualties
 - the large scale combined resources of the Police, Fire and Ambulance services
 - the mobilisation and organisation of the emergency services and support services
 - the handling of a large number of enquiries likely to be generated both from the public and the news media; and
 - where the capacity of an organisation’s resources to respond is compromised, i.e. Business Continuity Management (BCM).
- 2.1.2 For the NHS a major incident is defined as the following:
- when the number or type of casualties overwhelms or threatens to overwhelm normal services, special arrangements are required;
 - when an incident may pose a threat to the health of the community; and
 - the Health Service itself may suffer serious internal disruption.
- 2.1.3 The Civil Contingencies Act defines emergency as;
- ‘An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK, the environment of a place in the UK, or war or terrorism which threatens serious damage to the security of the UK’.*

2.2 Declaration of a major incident and the use of “Major Incident Standby”

- 2.2.1 “Major Incidents” are defined above and can be declared by any member of the emergency services and other agencies, who considers that any of the criteria outlined is satisfied. For example, an incident such as flooding, Birmingham City Council may declare a major incident. Each agency will have its own threshold for determining the point where normal business switches to major incident. When this threshold is imminent, partner agencies required to assist should be notified at the earliest opportunity. This notification should be regarded as a major incident standby message.
- 2.2.2 Should an escalating incident require the formation of an SCG, the lead agency will take responsibility for placing partner agencies on standby to attend an SCG at the earliest opportunity. The criteria for determining this is similar to that used above and is outlined in the West Midland Conurbation LRF’s “Tactical and Strategic Co-ordination Groups” document (Jan 2017).

2.3 Stages

- 2.3.1 Most major incidents can be considered to have four stages:
- the initial response;
 - the consolidation phase;
 - the recovery phase; and
 - the restoration of normality.

The final three phases need to link with a recovery plan. (See paragraph 3.14.7)

2.3.2 An investigation into the cause of the incident, together with the attendant hearings, may continue throughout all four stages of an incident e.g. future public enquiries, trials etc. Therefore it is important to maintain evidence and logs throughout the incident.

2.4 Principals for Joint Working

2.4.1 The public expects that the emergency services will work together, particularly in the initial response, in order to preserve life and reduce harm at any emergency. The purpose of clear, simple principles is to help commanders to take action under pressure to achieve successful outcomes. This simplicity is of paramount importance in the early stages of an incident or emergency, when clear, robust decisions and actions need to be taken with minimum delay in an often rapidly changing environment. At the scene, the expected sequence of actions would comprise the first meeting of police, fire and ambulance commanders (co-location); a joint assessment of the situation and prevailing risks (communication, joint risk assessment and shared situational awareness); and a co-ordinated plan for action.

2.4.2 Co-location

Co-location of commanders is essential and allows those commanders to perform the functions of command, control and co-ordination, face to face, at a single and easily identified location. This is known as the Forward Command Post (FCP), which is a location near to the scene, where the response by the emergency services is managed.

2.4.3 Communication

Communication is the passage of clear, unambiguous and timely information relevant to an emergency situation. Meaningful and effective communication underpins effective joint working. The sharing of information, free of acronyms, across service boundaries is essential to operational success. This starts through pre-planning and between Control Rooms prior to deployment of resources.

Communication is the capability to exchange reliable and accurate information i.e. critical Information about hazards, risks and threats, as well as understanding each organisation's responsibilities and capabilities. The understanding of any information shared ensures the achievement of shared situational awareness which underpins the best possible outcomes of an incident. Common symbols and terminology should be used to communicate common meaning amongst all responders

2.4.3 Co-ordination

Co-ordination involves the integration of the priorities, resources, decision making and response activities of each emergency service in order to avoid potential conflicts, prevent duplication of effort, minimise risk and promote successful outcomes. Effective co-ordination generally requires one service to act in a "lead" capacity, such as chairing co-ordination meetings and ensuring an effective response. The lead service will usually be the Police Service. However, in certain circumstances other services/agencies may be a more appropriate choice, depending upon the nature of the emergency, the phase of the response and the capabilities required.

2.4.4 Joint understanding of risk

Risk arises from threats and/or hazards which will be seen, understood and treated differently by different emergency services. In the context of a joint response, sharing information and understanding about the likelihood and potential impact of risks and the availability and implications of potential control measures will ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that the agreed aim and objectives are not compromised. This will include ensuring the safety of responders and mitigating the impact of risks on members of the public, infrastructure and the environment.

2.4.5 **Shared situational awareness**

This is a common understanding of the circumstances and immediate consequences of the emergency, together with an appreciation of the available capabilities and emergency services' priorities. Achieving shared situational awareness is essential for effective interoperability in the emergency response.

2.4.6 National Inter-Agency Liaison Officers (NILO) There are also a network of National Inter-Agency Liaison Officers (NILOs) who are trained and qualified to provide advice as part of the Command Support Team.

2.5 **Joint Decision Making Model**

2.5.1 The Joint Decision Making Model (JDM) has been developed as one way of bringing together the available information, reconcile objectives and then make effective decisions together.

2.5.2 The JDM is organised around three primary considerations:

Situation: what is happening, what are the impacts, what are the risks, what might happen and what is being done about it? Situational awareness is having an appropriate knowledge of these factors.

Direction: what end state is desired, what are the aims and objectives of the emergency response and what overarching values and priorities will inform and guide this?

Action: what needs to be decided and what needs to be done to resolve the situation and achieve the desired end state?



3. Main Functions, Roles & Responsibilities of the Emergency Services and other Agencies

3.1 General

3.1.1 Responding to incidents will most frequently be the initial prime function required of the emergency services. Responsibility for the rescue of survivors lies with the West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS). The treatment, triage and transportation of casualties to an appropriate facility are the responsibility of the West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS). In addition, during the response and mitigation to an actual or suspected CBRN event, WMAS will be responsible in cooperation with WMFS for the decontamination of casualties. West Midlands Police (WMP) will work closely with other partner agencies to ensure a coordinated response to the incident.

3.2 West Midlands Police

3.2.1 The primary areas of police responsibility during a major incident are:

- the saving of lives (with the other emergency services)
- the coordination of the emergency services, local authorities and other organisations in close liaison with them
- to secure, and preserve the scene as necessary and appropriate
- manage the public as necessary and appropriate
- the investigation of the incident and obtaining and securing of evidence in conjunction with other investigative bodies where applicable
- the collection and distribution of casualty information
- the identification of the deceased on behalf of Her Majesty's (HM) Coroner
- the prevention of crime
- family liaison

It is crucial that the initial officers attending pass appropriate information to their control room.

3.2.2 The officer should then:

- consider whether to declare a major incident
- take interim charge until relieved by a more senior officer
- maintain contact with their control room; and
- establish and maintain direct liaison with emergency service partner.

3.2.3 The first officer on the scene should not get personally involved in rescue work in order to fulfil the functions listed above.

3.3 West Midlands Fire Service

3.3.1 The primary areas of WMFS responsibility at a major incident are:

- life-saving through search and rescue
- fire fighting and fire prevention
- detection, identification, monitoring and management of hazardous materials and protecting the environment
- provision of qualified scientific advice in relation to HAZMAT incidents via their scientific advisor
- salvage and damage control; and
- safety management within the inner cordon

3.3.2 Since the initial call to the Fire Service may not carry sufficient information to identify the call as a major incident, the Incident Commander will assess the situation and may include the phrase ‘MAJOR INCIDENT’ to Fire Control.

3.4 West Midlands Ambulance Service

3.4.1 The primary areas of responsibility for the ambulance service at a major incident may be summarised as:

- To save life together with the other emergency services
- To provide treatment, stabilisation and care of those injured at the scene
- To provide appropriate transport, medical staff, equipment and resources
- To establish an effective triage sieve and triage sort system to determine the priority evacuation needs of those injured and to establish a safe location for casualty clearing, i.e. triage sort area
- To provide a focal point at the incident for all National Health Service (NHS) and other medical resources
- To provide communication facilities for NHS resources at the scene, with direct radio links to hospitals, control facilities and any other agency as required
- To nominate and alert the receiving hospitals from the official list of hospitals to receive those injured and inform other agencies
- To arrange the most appropriate means of transporting those injured to the receiving and specialist hospitals
- To provide decontamination provision for CBRN injured casualties at scene in conjunction with WMFS
- To maintain emergency cover

3.4.2 The first member of the ambulance staff will undertake the function of the Ambulance Incident Officer (AIO) prior to the arrival of a senior WMAS officer, Ambulance Incident Commander (AIC). The early establishment of Command and Control, parking systems, and the application of triage is essential during the response phase. The following procedures should be adopted, in line with national and regional guidance:

- report arrival on scene to WMAS Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)
- confirm and/or declare a major incident
- liaise with other emergency service incident officers
- provide EOC with a detailed situation report (using the **METHANE** mnemonic)
- request additional resources as appropriate; and
- ensure the early request and deployment of a suitable doctor as Medical Incident Officer (MIO) to support the Ambulance Incident Commander

‘Methane Mnemonic’

- | | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| Major | – | major incident declared and by whom |
| Exact | – | exact location of the incident |
| Type | – | the type of incident with brief details of type and numbers of vehicles, trains, buildings, aircraft, etc. |
| Hazard | – | hazards, present and potential |
| Access | – | access – routes that are safe to use and suitable provisional rendezvous points (RVPs) |
| Numbers | – | approximate numbers of casualties (including type/severity) |
| Emergency | – | emergency services present and those required. |

- 3.4.3 Vehicles designated a management function by the AIO/AIC must not be used for patient treatment/transport.
- 3.4.4 In the event of a large scale major emergency (particularly of a CBRN nature), WMAS will mobilise national reserve stocks of equipment as appropriate.
- WMAS has the capability to establish and maintain a Casualty Clearance Station at scene, to stabilise if appropriate casualties prior to conveyance to definitive Hospital care or treat and discharge at scene
- 3.4.5 WMAS has access to four Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) aircraft, which may be deployed to scene should the situation dictate. The command and control of these aircraft rests with EOC WMAS, in cooperation with Air Traffic Control Birmingham international Airport (BHX).
- 3.4.6 In the event of a CBRN event, decontamination may be required of the injured and non-injured, under such circumstances, portable decontamination facilities will be established by WMFS in cooperation with WMAS.

3.5 Medical Incident Officer (MIO)

- 3.5.1 This role is undertaken by a senior clinician with appropriate experience and training. The MIO will usually attend scene using a private (appropriately marked) vehicle, or may be transported by WMAS. The MIO is not part of the Mobile Emergency Response Incident Team (MERIT) and should not get personally involved in rescue work.
- 3.5.2 The MIO has managerial responsibility for the deployment of medical and nursing staff at the scene and will liaise closely with the AIC to ensure effective management of resources.
- 3.5.3 Mobilisation of the MIO is the sole responsibility of the Ambulance Service. WMAS retains a number of trained medical personnel to undertake this role available 24/7 mobilised by pager.

3.6 Medical Emergency Response Incident Team (MERIT)

- 3.6.1 MERIT provides WMAS a 24/7 356 advanced medical care on scene at a range of emergency incidents, up to and including major and mass casualty incidents, consisting of a highly skilled Immediate Care doctor and a MERIT Paramedic. This may include provision of advanced airway procedures surgical interventions, and critical care over and above current levels of ambulance clinical practice. It will also include provision of advice and support to emergency services staff already on scene. The MERIT response will interface with a number of other agencies and personnel on scene. This will include the conventional ambulance response, and where applicable, the ambulance Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) personnel including Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) requiring further specialised training and exercising to ensure the ability to understand specialist roles and operate accordingly.

3.7 Hazardous Area Response Teams (HART)

- 3.7.1 HART are comprised of specially recruited and trained personnel who provide the ambulance response to particularly hazardous or challenging incidents and in some cases where there is a mass casualty incident. HART are trained in the following PPE: Extended Duration Breathing Apparatus (EDBA), Civilian Responder One (CR1), Powered Respirator Protective Suit (PRPS). HART are able to enter the inner cordon of an incident, and working with the Fire Service, are able to triage, treat and evacuate

patients to a Casualty Collection Point, CCP, for handover to Trust staff for onward treatment and transport to a receiving hospital.

- 3.7.2 HART can enter areas of gross contamination or oxygen reduced atmospheres. Whilst operating in these areas they utilise Detection Identification and Monitoring Equipment (DIM). This equipment consists of Honeywell Quattro, Neotronics XT, Electronic Personal Dosimeters and RAM Gene. This allows the team to monitor Oxygen content and assess for a wide range of chemical substances such as Chlorine and Hydrogen Sulphide.
- 3.7.3 HART also operate in Urban Search & Rescue (USAR), environments which consist of rescues at height, at depth and collapsed structures. HART are able to operate in areas of flooding and also provide rescue to a single casualty if FRS are not present. This is known as Inland Water Operations.

3.8 Public Health England (PHE)

- 3.8.1 Public Health England (PHE) provides an integrated approach to protecting UK public health through the provision of public health support and advice to the NHS, local authorities, emergency services, other arms-length bodies, the Department of Health and Devolved Administrations. Specialist advice areas include infectious diseases, outbreak surveillance, chemical, biological and radiation hazards.
- 3.8.2 Public Health England is responsible for providing public health Emergency Preparedness Resilience and Response leadership and scientific and technical advice at all organisational levels, working in partnership with other organisations to protect the public.

In fulfilling these responsibilities PHE will:

- Provide national leadership and coordination for the public health elements of the emergency preparedness, resilience and response system
- Provide health protection services, expertise and advice and co-ordinate the PHE response to major incidents
- Provide risk analysis and assessment of emerging diseases, natural extreme events, Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) threats to inform the Department of Health and other government departments and agencies, health and multi-agency EPRR
- Ensure provision of high quality and timely public health data to the Secretary of State and NHS Commissioning Board, local authorities and across Government, in preparedness and response
- Communicate with Devolved Administrations to coordinate investigation and management of cross-border public health incidents
- 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

3.9 Scientific Technical Advisory Cell (STAC)

- 3.9.1 The STAC is a temporary advisory group, composed of representatives from a range of organisations to give expert and where possible consensual advice on the health aspects of an incident to the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG).

3.9.2 The STAC would be activated by the SCG (or TCG) Commander through the cell lead or relevant duty officer. However, the Public Health England Director may recommend to the SCG (or TCG) Commander that a STAC needs to be established due to the potential impact on the health of the local population from an actual or evolving incident.

3.10 The National Health Service

Major Incident Response Arrangements

3.10.1 With effect from 1 April 2014 NHS England – West Midlands assumed the strategic responsibility of NHS Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response (EPRR) for NHS organisations across its area of responsibility.

3.10.2 The health services within Birmingham have key roles relating to incident scene and hospital health care services, as well as the provision for evacuating a range of NHS premises. In such circumstances, Birmingham health services may require mutual aid support from outside the area. For this reason, the control of the health services response will be through the existing command, control and coordination arrangements.

3.10.3 Furthermore, the NHS Major Incident Response Arrangements are coordinated by the Birmingham, Solihull and Black Country Locality and activated by a single call. Depending on the size and scale of the incident NHS England – West Midlands would take full responsibility for alerting all appropriate NHS agencies and other partner organisations through WMAS Emergency Operations Centre.

3.10.4 With effect from 1 April 2013 Public Health England (PHE) are responsible for dealing with Public Health Incidents and Emergencies. PHE, work in collaboration with other Health Service organisations through the Local Health Resilience Partnership in the planning for such events.

3.10.5 The NHS Major Incident Response Arrangements are divided into 3 levels of response and is capable of dynamic escalation or de-escalation of activities in support of NHS organisations responding to Significant or Major Incidents. This means that the Birmingham, Solihull and the Black Country Locality Major Incident Response Arrangements will always be part of any major incident involving an NHS response and that the level of activity will match the need to respond.

3.11 NHS Trusts

3.11.1 NHS trusts offer a general range of traditional services to meet most people’s needs – either in hospitals or community settings. Some trusts also act as regional or national centres of expertise for more specialised care, while some are attached to Universities to help train health professionals.

3.11.2 Birmingham is served by three acute trusts (which deliver emergency care):

- *Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust* – City Hospital in Birmingham and Sandwell General Hospital in West Bromwich.
- *Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust* – Heartlands Hospital and Good Hope Hospitals in Birmingham and Solihull Hospital in Solihull.
- *University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust* – Queen Elizabeth Hospitals in Birmingham.

In addition, specialist treatment is available at other NHS trusts including; Birmingham Women’s Healthcare Trust, Birmingham Children’s Hospital Foundation Trust, Birmingham Community Health Care, Royal Orthopaedic Foundation Trust and Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Trust.

3.12 Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG)

3.12.1 Clinical Commissioning Groups are responsible for commissioning the majority of health services, emergency care, elective hospital care, maternity services and community mental health services. Birmingham is covered by three CCGs, Birmingham Cross City, Birmingham South Central and Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG. CCGs are Category 2 responders.

3.13 The Environment Agency (EA)

3.13.1 The Environment Agency will assess, and respond as appropriate on a 24hour/365 day basis, to all incidents of which it is notified, that fall within its remit, and have caused harm to the natural environment (air, land and water), human health or the built environment. These responsibilities cover direct action to:

- prevent or deal with the effects of an incident to people, property and the environment
- maintain and operate strategic flood defences on certain specified rivers
- provide specialist advice e.g. pollution, river levels and flood etc.
- issue flood warnings to the public, professional partners (Cat 1 and 2 responders) and the media
- monitor the environmental effects of an incident; and
- investigate the cause of the incident and collect evidence for future enforcement or cost recovery

3.14 Birmingham City Council

From 1 April 2013 Birmingham City Council took over responsibility for Public Health, this entails Health protection work including infectious disease management, environmental hazards and emergency preparedness.

3.14.1 As with all local authorities Birmingham City Council has a statutory duty to have arrangements in place to respond effectively to an emergency, although it is recognised that the Council may also activate procedures for a non-emergency incident. The Council's role includes:

- providing support for the emergency services;
- providing support and care for the local and wider community;
- using resources to mitigate the effects of an emergency; and
- leading the recovery stage.

3.14.2 Within the City Council, the Birmingham Resilience Team (BRT) is responsible for emergency planning and the initiation and coordination of a local authority response.

3.14.3 During an incident the City Council will endeavour to maintain its normal day-to-day services to the local community.

Notification and immediate response

3.14.4 The City Council has a dedicated 24-hour contact number through which response is initiated and relevant staff deployed.

3.14.5 The City Council will deploy staff to multi-agency strategic and tactical level meetings as necessary as well as to the scene of the incident if required and appropriate. When necessary, the Council will activate its Council Emergency Coordinating Centre (CECC) to co-ordinate or support all aspects of its own response.

Functions

3.14.6 The City Council’s involvement may be required early in the response phase through to the later stages of an incident (the recovery period and return to normality) where its involvement may be prolonged and extensive. The services and staff that the City Council would provide are based upon a wide range of skills and resources drawn from its day-to-day operations and other statutory obligations: These Include:

Professional services such as:

- technical and engineering advice
- building control
- highways services; and
- public health and environmental issues

Physical resources such as

- provision of rest and reception centres
- road diversion barriers and signs
- those required to meet certain housing and accommodation needs
- temporary mortuary facilities; and
- transport

Caring support such as

- social care
- psychosocial support
- help lines; and
- welfare and financial needs

Recovery

3.14.7 The Birmingham Recovery Plan is owned by the Birmingham Resilience Group and maintained by Birmingham City Council. The purpose of the plan is to provide a framework for officers who are involved in contributing to the recovery phase of an emergency. The plan incorporates national guidance.

The BRG Recovery Plan includes:

- Guidance on the development of a “Recovery Strategy”
- Guidance on the impact of emergencies to inform the production of an “impact assessment”

The BRG Recovery Plan is activated by Head of Resilience and Local Engineering or nominated Council Management Team (CMT) Officer, based on impacts and consequences of an emergency or at the request of a Strategic Co-ordination Group, convened as part of the multi-agency response.

The Recovery Co-ordination Group (RCG) establishes sub-groups to progress specific issues (e.g. economic, health, welfare, communications and media, etc.) depending on the circumstances and impact of the emergency.

The Chair of the Recovery Co-ordination Group, in discussion with the RCG members will decide when it is appropriate to stand down the group. The needs of the community will be a key factor to the decision.

The length of time that the RCG is required to continue meeting will vary according to the nature and scale of the emergency. Some emergencies may have long term issues to consider, such as health monitoring. The RCG will be closed once there is no longer the need for regular multi-agency co-ordination and the remaining issues can be dealt with by individual agencies as part of their normal business. Depending on the recovery issues being addressed, it may be possible for some of the RCG sub-groups to close prior to the main RCG standing down.

3.15 Department of Communities & Local Government: Resilience and Emergency Directorate (RED)

3.15.1 The role of the DCLG RED in responding to, and recovering from, a local and/or regional emergency is to provide an interface between local responders and central government and Ministers, to assist in the activities across the LRF areas. Key roles and responsibilities include:

- supporting the local response and providing a channel for the exchange of information between central and local tiers
- monitoring the wider impacts of an emergency and advising on consequence management issues
- supporting the coordination of the response where the emergency affects a number of localities
- brokerage of mutual aid outside of the LRF area
- attend and provide the support function to RCCC (Regional Civil Contingencies Committee), or similar multi-LRF meetings as required; and
- assist in the coordination of recovery

3.16 British Transport Police (BTP)

3.16.1 British Transport Police (BTP) is the national Police Service for the railways. Officers are based at Birmingham New Street Railway Station which is part of C Division Midlands Sub Division, BTP Sub Divisional Headquarters is situated at The Axis, 10 Holliday Street, Birmingham, and their Force Headquarters are in London.

3.16.2 Within the Birmingham Resilience Group area, BTP are responsible for the policing arrangements of not only the mainline railway, stations and associated facilities but also the Midland Metro light transit system.

3.16.3 BTP's primary areas of responsibility at a railway related major incident are akin to that of West Midlands Police.

3.16.4 A National Policing Protocol exists between BTP and local Police Forces specifying the areas of responsibility and accountability between each force. It makes provision for consultation and cooperation with the aim of delivering the best policing on the ground.

3.17 Military

3.17.1 Military resources are not specifically set aside for assisting in an emergency, so any assistance will depend on what assets are available at the time. Involvement by the military requires the approval of the Ministry of Defence in almost all circumstances.

3.17.2 In the event of a Military Aid to the Civil Community (MACC) Category A event – emergency assistance, the Brigadier commanding the Birmingham area, has the authority to deploy personnel under their command immediately without reference to higher command if they can be immediately helpful in alleviating distress and preservation and safeguarding of lives and property.

3.17.3 Other niche and generalist military assets are available through the military liaison officers who will be based at Gold and Silver within 2 hours of a major incident being declared.

3.18 Highways England (HE)

3.18.1 As an Executive Agency of the Department for Transport, Highways England (HE) is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the strategic road network (SRN) in England on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport. The SRN includes motorways and designated trunk roads. In Birmingham this includes the M6.

3.18.2 During a major incident the HE will liaise with Cat 1 and 2 Responders to best manage the SRN to ensure the safe movement of the public around any scene or from an evacuated area and provide necessary access for emergency responders so they may execute their duties. The HE will support Cat 1 responders provide Emergency Customer Welfare but will not take primacy for arranging.

3.18.3 The HE Regional Control Centre (RCC) has the ability to communicate with the travelling public through the use of Variable Message Signs, local and national media and for those about to travel, through internet access to CCTV on motorways. Operating in collaboration with the National Traffic Control Centre (NTCC), public media messages can be distributed beyond the boundaries of the region.

3.18.4 The Highways England operate a Gold, Silver, Bronze command structure and may implement, or engage in a multi-agency structure, commensurate with the prevailing circumstances.

3.18.5 The Highways England has primacy for planning and activating recovery plans for the SRN.

3.19 Network Rail and Train/ Freight Operating Companies

3.19.1 Network Rail is responsible for the rail infrastructure. The train services and the passengers are the responsibility of the relevant train operating company. Network Rail Control (based in Birmingham) will ensure that all appropriate parties are contacted in the event of an incident including stations, train operators and responding personnel.

3.20 Canal and River Trust

3.20.1 The Canal and River Trust (formally British Waterways) will offer support and assistance to the emergency services in the closure of towpaths and the canal network and assist in the removal of property, where appropriate. They will monitor these control measures and communicate these actions to customers.

3.21 Centro

3.21.1 Centro is the organisation responsible for providing the public transport in the West Midlands and will ensure provision of appropriate management of bus interchanges and park and ride facilities in consultation with the Police. Public transport information will be disseminated via Centro's travel information points. Centro will liaise with Birmingham bus companies as required.

3.22 National Express West Midlands

3.22.1 National Express West Midlands operates the largest bus network in Birmingham and will:

- implement and manage any required Bus Re-routing Procedures
- ensure information on affected services is communicated to appropriate parties for dissemination to the public; and
- if requested, provide buses to transport people from the incident location to rest centre, hospitals or onward transit points

3.23 Metro

3.23.1 Metro is owned by Centro and is operated by Travel Metro who is part of National Express Group. The tram operating company will manage the Metro tram services as appropriate in consultation with the police and will provide Metro service information via their information and help points located at all stations. If appropriate, the tram operating company will arrange for normal services to be suspended and special services to be put in place.

3.24 National Express Coach Station

3.24.1 National Express is responsible for the evacuation of the coach station and diversion of coaches to alternative pick up / drop off points. National Express Limited will liaise with other travel operating companies and Birmingham City Council in relation to any humanitarian issues that arise.

3.25 Voluntary organisations (VO) (the third sector)

3.25.1 There are numerous VO which can contribute towards the successful outcome of an incident. Their support can often alleviate some pressure on the statutory bodies by providing humanitarian services.

3.25.2 Examples of voluntary organisations are:

- **CRUSE Bereavement Care** – can provide counselling and support to people who have been affected by death
- **British Red Cross** – can provide medical and welfare support; they have trained volunteers available for all aspects involved in evacuation centres up to and including rest centre management. Their volunteers are trained to provide support with documentation and information recording. They also have the facilities to provide emergency feeding both in evacuation centres and to personnel deployed to the incident itself
- **Salvation Army** – can assist with welfare services and offer social and psychological aftercare
- **Samaritans** – can provide people with confidential emotional support
- **St John Ambulance** – can provide medical and welfare support
- **Victim Support** – can help provide confidential support and to help people cope with the effects of crime
- **RVS (Royal Voluntary Service)** – has trained volunteers available for all aspects involved in evacuation centres up to and including rest centre management. Their volunteers are trained to provide support with documentation and information recording. They also have the facilities to provide emergency feeding both in evacuation centres and to personnel deployed to the incident itself; and
- **SARA (Severn Area Rescue Association)** – provides a waterborne search and rescue facility on both rivers and canals

3.25.3 Individual organisations have a combination of formal and informal arrangements (contracts, Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) etc.), that can be activated. The capabilities and financial arrangements are maintained locally between initiating and providing agencies.

3.26 Multi-Faith Issues

3.26.1 Dependant on the nature or type of incident, it may be impractical or impossible for multi-faith representatives to physically attend at the incident, due to scene management issues as well as health and safety. It is therefore advisable that the focus of multi-faith support be in hospitals, Friends and Family Reception Centre (FFRC), Humanitarian Assistance Centres, Recovery Coordination Group and through arrangements for dealing with the bereaved.

3.26.2 Faith groups can be called upon to offer advice and guidance about religious and ethnic groups. Examples of support that can be offered include translators and interpreters, religious requirements relating to medical treatment, hygiene, diet and places of prayer. There may be concerns about how bodies are handled and when funeral arrangements can be made.

3.27 Utility companies

3.27.1 The utility companies providing gas, electricity, water and telecommunications can be mobilised by any of the emergency services to assist in areas involving their core functions and will normally be coordinated by police in the first instance.

4. Scene Management

4.1 Cordons

4.1.1 Cordons are established for the following reasons:

- to guard the scene
- to protect the public
- to protect those working within the cordon
- to control unauthorised access
- to prevent unauthorised interference with the investigation scene, people involved and affected premises within the cordons; and
- to facilitate emergency services operations

4.1.2 It should be noted that unauthorised access to the site of any incident could jeopardise both the rescue and investigation. Access authority can be sought through Police Silver Control or rendezvous points (RVPs).

4.1.3 Four cordons will be established by the most appropriate organisation in consultation with other agencies.

- inner cordon – encloses the scene of the incident and contains any area of hazard or contamination and protects scenes of crime
- outer cordon – seals off an extensive area around the inner cordon to provide a safe working area for responding agencies
- traffic cordon – set up at or beyond the outer cordon to prevent unauthorised vehicle access to the area surrounding the scene; and
- fourth cordon – not generally marked out but known as the air exclusion zone, a zone within which aircraft may not enter

4.2 Legal Issues

4.2.1 The only statutory provision to allow the police to impose and enforce a cordon is contained within Sections 33 to 36 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

4.2.2 In non-terrorist incidents, the authority for the Police to set up and regulate a cordon is governed by common law. In general, the Police are justified in cordoning an area in order to protect public safety, keep the peace and protect a crime scene or at the request of and with the consent of the land owner. Any person failing to comply with the directions of a Police Officer deployed to enforce a cordon may commit an offence (e.g., for obstructing a police officer).

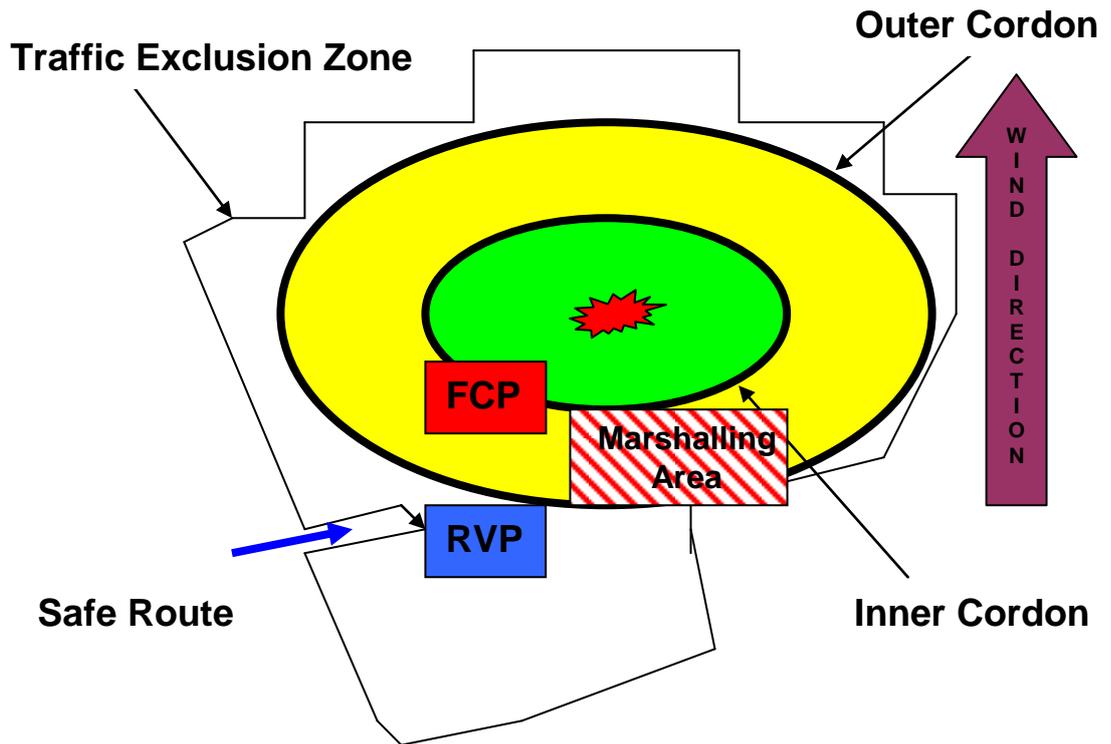
4.2.3 For all known or suspected terrorist incidents all personnel should be aware of the possibility of secondary devices.

4.3 Inner cordon

4.3.1 The initial control of the inner cordon, until deemed safe, will be the responsibility of WMFS.

4.3.2 WMP will monitor all access and egress to and from the inner cordon through a cordon control point and this will be managed by a cordons officer. The emergency services will verify their own service personnel entering the inner cordon; however it will remain the responsibility of WMP to log the details of these representatives.

- 4.3.3 Once WMFS have declared that the area within the inner cordon is safe, WMP will have overall responsibility for the control of the inner cordon and for the safety management of all personnel within the inner cordon.
- 4.3.4 When cordons are set, persons who do not have a role, or who are wearing inappropriate clothing, will be directed to leave the cordon.



Note: The Marshalling area and RVP could well be in different locations from those shown above.
The location of Marshalling areas and RVP's will be dictated by the circumstances at the time.
The above represents a "best case" scenario which may not always be applicable to every incident.

4.4 Outer cordon

- 4.4.1 WMP will work in close liaison with partner agencies to manage the access and egress to and from the outer cordon.
- 4.4.2 The command/control vehicles of the emergency services should be positioned between the inner and outer cordons.

4.5 Traffic cordon

- 4.5.1 The traffic cordon is established to restrict vehicle access and egress to the area surrounding the scene.

4.5.2 Immediate action must be taken to ensure the free passage of emergency traffic to and from the scene of the incident and to prevent congestion at and around the scene. This will be coordinated by WMP in consultation with BCC. In support of the Police, BCC can assist with implementing road diversions, placing barriers and monitoring CCTV to facilitate the movement of traffic around the affected area. As a Highways Authority, BCC should be notified when roads are damaged, closed and when these are reopened.

4.6 Logistical support

4.6.1 The level of response to a major incident will be dependent on the nature, size and potential duration of the incident. Allocation and commitment of resources from responding agencies will therefore be scalable, depending on requirements. As such, arrangements for logistical support and resources management will vary accordingly.

4.6.2 The following generic definitions describe areas/locations used to support logistical/resource management at major incidents.

4.7 Rendezvous point (RVP)

4.7.1 The RVP is a point to which in the first instance all emergency and specialist services may be directed prior to deployment to the scene of operations or to a designated marshalling area.

4.7.2 This will normally be established within the outer cordon and likely to be under the control of the police. On the arrival of organisations at RVPs responders should present their agency ID card and verbally confirm their name and organisation they are representing to the RVP control officer.

4.8 Marshalling Area

4.8.1 A marshalling area, controlled by WMP with the assistance of the WMFS who wear appropriate reflective tabards, should be established between the RVP and the scene. The actual location will be agreed after consultation between the police and fire silver (tactical) officers.

WMAS would not usually be included within a marshalling area due to the arrival and departure of ambulance resources through ambulance parking and loading areas.

4.8.2 The marshalling area is for resources not immediately required at the scene or which, having served their purpose, are being held for future use. It should, therefore, be an area suitable for accommodating large numbers of vehicles.

4.8.3 Marshalling areas may also be used to provide briefing/debriefing areas and recuperation for personnel involved in arduous work at the scene.

4.8.4 As the event is scaled down, the utilities and other contractors may need to maintain the marshalling area for the duration of the recovery phase.

4.9 Tactical Holding Area

4.9.1 Should the scale and nature of the incident be that assistance is required from outside the immediate locality, a number of tactical holding areas have been identified across the conurbation for use. These will enable resources to be gathered from their relative localities to be fully briefed away from the incident location and facilitate other logistical issues.

4.10 Forward Control Point (FCP)

- 4.10.1 The first emergency services vehicle to the scene, will form the focal point for other vehicles attending the location and will be known as the Forward Control Point (FCP). This location will be determined by the nature of the incident and is likely to be at a position on or near the inner cordon. Once established, it will facilitate all entry and egress to the scene.
- 4.10.2 The emergency services (excluding the Police) and other responding agencies are likely to deploy command vehicles to the FCP to assist incident management. This facilitates incident officers responding at the scene to exercise their service authority in a coordinated manner.
- 4.10.3 The importance of this joint control function should not be underestimated. The experience of previous major incidents has demonstrated the benefits derived by the establishment of close contact between the emergency services and other agencies involved in the management of the incident. It is therefore critical that an appropriate liaison officer is deployed to the command vehicles to facilitate inter service operability.
- 4.10.4 Whilst it is appreciated that not all agencies have the luxury of a command vehicle, this should not be a bar to relevant response officers attending at the FCP.

The WMP Silver Commander will typically operate from within a local police station, establishing a Silver Control from that location. It will be beneficial for a representative or liaison officer from other agencies to attend at this location for continuity.

4.11 Location of vehicles

- 4.11.1 The officer in charge of the first command/control vehicle on scene should make allowance for the siting of other emergency service and agency command vehicles.
- 4.11.2 The site should:
- have enough space to accommodate all anticipated agency controls
 - be away from the hazards of the scene, but close enough to maintain control over it; and
 - be chosen carefully as relocation may prove extremely difficult
- 4.11.3 Ideally the site would be served with good access, lighting and toilets (although these can be portable and delivered to scene). Realistically this will be unusual in operational terms. A wide thoroughfare or surface car park may be used as a FCP in the absence of anything more suitable.
- 4.11.4 The advice of the WMFS on matters of fire safety will be sought by the other emergency services prior to the placement of the FCP. This advice may well be changed if the incident subsequently proves to involve chemicals or other hazardous materials. The choice of site would then be influenced by wind direction, strength and gradients. In this event, the WMFS Hazardous Materials/Substance (HAZMAT) advisor (and if available on site, safety personnel) will advise on the most suitable location for the FCP. The WMFS geographic information system is available on command vehicles and may also be used to determine a suitable site.
- 4.11.5 If a service mobilises more than one control/command vehicle to the scene, only one of these should perform the control function at the FCP.
- 4.11.6 To aid identification, the blue, red or green identifying lights on each of the main control vehicles of the emergency services will be switched on. The identifying lights on all

other vehicles must be switched off, except during incidents on open motorways or elsewhere where they are necessary to avoid accidents.

4.12 Scene Access Control Point (SACP)

- 4.12.1 A SACP must be established outside the outer cordon, if possible in an area adjacent to the RVP. The SACP, which will be under police command, must be clearly identifiable to those wishing to gain entry through the outer cordon. If necessary, an approach route should be established and clearly signed.
- 4.12.2 At the SACP the authenticity of non-emergency service personnel, whose presence is required at the scene, will be checked. Such persons should be directed to the SACP in the first instance by the authority requesting their attendance. It should also be borne in mind that many responding blue light agencies will use plain vehicles. It is therefore essential that the Blue Light Register on the PNC (Police National Computer) is maintained. Consideration must be given to ensuring that common sense is applied when restricting access to non-blue light equipped personnel with a specific role at any emergency.
- 4.12.3 A record will be maintained of all persons reporting to the SACP who need to gain scene access and will need to establish a link with the FCP for this purpose at an early stage. If possible, the SACP will establish communication links with the ICP by way of telephone, radio and fax.
- 4.12.4 Once satisfied as to their credentials the SACP staff will, where appropriate, escort them to the RVP.
- 4.12.5 The SACP facilitates entry through the **outer** cordon by non-emergency service personnel whose presence is required. It does not replace the arrangements in place in relation to control of and entry to the **inner** cordon.

4.13 Traffic Management

- 4.13.1 The movement of traffic external of any incident is critical for the continuance of normality.

In close liaison with partner agencies West Midlands Police will:

- identify, arrange and enforce appropriate road closures
- liaise with the City Council's 24 hour Highway's Control Centre (Lancaster Circus) for road
- closures, traffic management and monitoring via CCTV
- liaise with the City Council to identify and maintain emergency service access routes
- consider imposing a (wider) traffic exclusion zone and clear routes. Seek additional help from the City Council and the Highways Agency when considering traffic management on motorways and designated trunk roads; and
- liaise with all traffic management agencies and transport companies, as required

4.14 Highways England - Traffic Management Response:

- 4.14.1 In the event of an incident resulting in major road closures, WMP will advise the Regional Control Centre (RCC) and National Traffic Control Centre (NTCC) as to the nature of the incident.
- 4.14.2 In liaison with WMP, the RCC will agree motorway diversions if appropriate and any messages that will be displayed on the Variable Message Signs. WMP/RCC will also

consider safe routes to rendezvous points/cordons for the emergency services should this involve the motorway network.

4.14.3 NTCC will consider the need for strategic diversions or information signs on the Variable Message Signs further away from the incident.

4.14.4 Highways England Traffic Officers will consider the use of emergency turn-around points and crossover gates for motorists that may be trapped between motorway junctions.

4.15 Birmingham City Council – Traffic Management Response

4.15.1 The City Council has various traffic management responsibilities and facilities which can be deployed some through AMEY to assist West Midlands Police in the event of an emergency. These include:

- establishing diversion routes and providing information to motorists. Use of City Council variable message signs and liaison with the Highways England to utilise motorway variable message signs on the surrounding motorway network
- assisting emergency service vehicle access. Monitor congestion on key routes. Implement green wave traffic signal configuration if appropriate
- monitoring CCTV cameras and alerting WMP to any serious problems; and
- updating traffic management information on West Midlands Information Transfer Gateway during office hours in conjunction with the WMP

4.15.2 Green Wave

'Green Wave' is a City Council system which allows key traffic lights to be configured to aid quick movement along a specific route way. Facilities exist for pre-planned Green Waves to be set up and stored for emergency vehicles and convoy management.

4.16 Public transport and transport companies

National Express West Midlands (NEWM):

4.16.1 The NEWM on-call officer will be notified of an incident by the Police via phone and will establish an internal Gold/Silver/Bronze command structure. NEWM will communicate details of the affected areas with all their buses by radio. NEWM will advise Police Gold/Silver Command of any changes to travel services for further dissemination to the public.

4.16.2 Bus Inspectors will be strategically placed on the diversions to assist drivers and inform passengers throughout the duration of the incident.

4.16.3 Diversion routes will be put in place to minimise disruption to normal services.

4.16.4 Transport to rest centres, if required, can be provided by NEWM.

4.17 Canal and River Trust (CRT):

4.17.1 Canal and River Trust (formally British Waterways) will be notified by WMP of any incident affecting the Canal Network through their 24 hour emergency line. This is a free 0800 number that the public and stakeholders can use to gain access to CRT's out of hours emergency teams. The Canal & River Trust will endeavour to assist in the evacuation and closing of the canal network as quickly and efficiently as their limited resources allow. CRT will be able to offer help and assistance in the evacuation under the following criteria:

- assistance is restricted to CRT owned and operated land
- specific to their customers

- under the direction and instruction of the emergency services
- assistance is limited to the resources available
- CRT are unable to react immediately (especially out of hours) as they do not always have staff working in the area. Out of hours the response time could be up to 2 hours; and
- CRT will not put their staff at risk by attending an emergency

The CRT can also provide the following support and assistance:

- assistance in closure of towpaths through fencing and signage
- where appropriate, padlock structures to boats moving into the evacuated area
- (given time) close off areas by blocking the canal with their working fleet
- monitor these measures over the course of the emergency and install remedial measures should problems occur
- assist in the movement of boats from the danger area to safe locations as well as contact individuals to get property and persons removed; and
- communicate the control measures to their customers

5. Shelter and Welfare

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The City Council has a responsibility to provide shelter and welfare to people who have been evacuated. Where practicable, the council ensure that such provision is appropriate and proportionate to the incident and has detailed internal plans to meet their statutory requirements.

5.1.2 If the need for an evacuation arises, the City Council will take the lead in ensuring that the welfare of evacuees - particularly those with special needs - is addressed. In order to do this, it is necessary to have an understanding of the types of people who may become evacuees, identify any issues specifically relating to those people and identify what reasonable steps need to be taken to accommodate them.

Note: For the evacuation of hospitals and similar medical facilities see paragraph 6.4.7

5.2 Rest Centres

5.2.1 A Rest Centre is a facility where persons displaced by an incident of any size are provided with shelter, support and sustenance as appropriate. The City Council has a comprehensive Rest Centre procedure and has detailed planning arrangements for a number of centres throughout the city. Rest Centres will be staffed by the City Council as appropriate (other agencies, including the voluntary sector, may also provide staff and services as required). Services provided will include welfare, communication, catering and medical advice and facilities.

5.2.2 When it becomes necessary to open a Rest Centre, the City Council will:

- nominate and set-up Rest Centre(s) to cater for evacuees short-term welfare needs;
- facilitate transport to Rest Centre(s);
- where appropriate arrange for temporary accommodation (i.e. re-housing of residents).

5.2.3 Police Major Incident Documentation Teams (MIDT) may attend a Rest Centre to aid in supplying information to the Casualty Bureau / Incident Information Communication Centre. BCC will liaise with the NHS health services for the provision of medical support, as required. MIDT will also attend hospitals as necessary.

5.3 Reception Centres

5.3.1 There are two distinct types of Reception Centres:

- Survivor Reception Centre; and
- Family and Friends Reception Centre.

5.3.2 Occasionally, WMP may immediately establish a Reception Centre close to the incident providing immediate shelter for those directly affected and keeping them together. Once established, WMP may request the City Council to assume the management of the reception centre to provide welfare needs in line with its formal rest centre protocol. In such cases the City Council will take control of the site once a formal police handover has been agreed.

5.3.3 In order to more readily identify and facilitate the opening of a reception centre, the Birmingham City Council has built up a profile of possible sites across the city and has arrangements in place for their activation at any time of the day. Reception Centres

differ to Rest Centres in that the former are open for shorter timescales and are not necessarily suitable for sleeping arrangements.

5.4 Survivor Reception Centre (SRC)

5.4.1 Survivors and witnesses who have been involved in the incident may be able to provide important information and/or evidence in relation to the event. Where practicable, these people should be directed to the Survivor Reception Centre. Here investigators can begin to interview witnesses and collect evidence. The SRC also enables health professionals to monitor survivors for delayed health impacts, provide suitable advice and treatment.

However in the early stages of an incident, where those involved are leaving the scene, it may not be practicable to establish an SRC because of other more pressing primary responsibilities, e.g. lifesaving.

WMP have an activation guide for SRCs.

5.5 Family and Friends Reception Centre (FFRC)

5.5.1 Immediate to the response activation and where demand and practicality warrants it, consideration should be given to establishing a secure, comfortable area where friends and relatives of casualties and missing persons can be directed for information.

5.5.2 The size and scale of the incident, number of fatalities and possibly the area of destruction will affect any decisions made. Within the area to be set aside for the FFRC, consideration should be given to locating the relevant agencies whose advice and assistance may be called upon.

5.5.3 There will be a need to ensure that the resources of all those working towards the needs of family and friends are coordinated and that there are regular briefings to ensure a cohesive approach is established.

5.6 Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC)

5.6.1 The HAC, if required, will be established as early as possible but can be between 48 – 72 hrs after the incident and act as a focal point for information and assistance to bereaved families and friends of those missing, injured or killed, survivors, and to all those directly affected by, or involved in, the emergency. The HAC will be opened and managed by the City Council in cooperation with other agencies as appropriate. The HAC will:

- enable those affected to benefit from appropriate information and assistance in a timely, coordinated manner
- where necessary, facilitate the gathering of forensic samples in a timely, coordinated manner, in order to assist the identification process
- offer access to and guidance on a range of agencies and services, allowing people to make informed choices according to needs. e.g. support groups; and
- ensure a seamless multi agency approach to humanitarian assistance in emergencies that should minimise duplication and avoid gaps

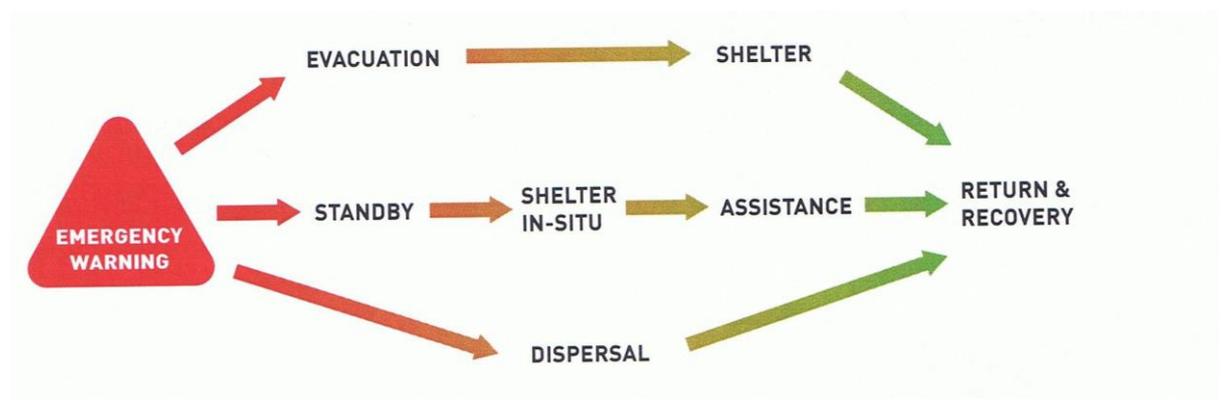
6. Evacuation and Return

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 This chapter outlines; the evacuation process including considerations when undertaking a dynamic risk assessment, alternative response activities and notification process.
- 6.1.2 Although the Police may recommend an evacuation, no evacuation is enforceable by law unless it is declared due to an act of terrorism or due to an infection/disease as defined under Public Health Act (1984) meaning unless this is the case, people cannot be forced to leave the property and access to evacuated area cannot be enforced
- 6.1.3 Whilst emergency responders will always endeavour to meet the religious and cultural needs of a community during an emergency, their priority is to save life, and protect the health, safety and welfare of those affected.
- 6.1.4 In the Birmingham area, emergency responders and partner agencies consider the evacuation process in five stages:
- Phase 1: Initiating an evacuation/shelter in-situ
 - Phase 2: Alerting the population
 - Phase 3: Moving the population
 - Phase 4: Shelter and welfare arrangements
 - Phase 5: Return and recovery
- 6.1.5 Emergency responders will follow Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) (See paragraph 2.4), identifying a Lead Agency to manage the emergency response and to consider the need for an evacuation.

6.2 Phase 1: Initiating an Evacuation/Shelter In-Situ

- 6.2.1 Evacuation is a strategy to mitigate the effects of an incident on a community by the managed movement of people from an area at risk to a safer location. Evacuation will only be considered when the benefits of leaving an area significantly outweigh the risks of sheltering in-situ. The diagram below provides an overview of potential evacuation activities in response to an emergency warning.



- 6.2.2 **Standby:** In the event that an evacuation is not needed imminently, but may be required in a matter of hours, the lead agency may issue a standby message to place organisations on standby and advise them to await further information or updates.
- 6.2.3 **Shelter In-Situ:** Depending on the nature of the hazard, taking shelter and employing measures such as closing windows, isolating air conditioning units and listening to radio

and/or TV for information may be the safest response. ‘Go in, Stay in, and Tune in’. If in doubt the advice should always be to take appropriate shelter if at all possible.

6.2.4 The Lead Agency will identify if an evacuation is required by conducting a risk assessment in consultation with partner agencies, which will consider whether the incident requires an immediate evacuation, or may give rise to an evacuation in the near future. If a terrorist incident is suspected or has already occurred the decision to evacuate may be taken by WMP without consultation.

6.2.5 The risk assessment will address a number of key issues, including but not limited to:

- Type of threat and estimated impact
- Evacuation v shelter in-situ
- Potential risk to evacuees during movement
- Safety of emergency workers
- Provision of safe egress
- Maintenance of emergency services access
- Available lead time
- Ability to effectively warn the public
- Type and resilience of property and infrastructure
- Numbers of people involved
- Availability of resources

6.2.6 In support of an evacuation, the Lead Agency will liaise with partners to:

- Notify and maintain liaison between partner agencies
- Define the cordon area
- Assess need for and decide on evacuation and/or ‘shelter in-situ’
- Determine evacuation routes out (via Foot; Vehicle; Public Transport etc.) in liaison WMP, BTP and BCC)
- Determine need for evacuee Assembly Points; Survivor Reception Centres and Rest Centre Provision
- Task WMP with implementing evacuee assembly points and/or reception centre arrangements
- Task BCC with Rest Centre and evacuee transportation arrangements
- Implement media arrangements (See chapter 13)
- Identifying and coordinate appropriate methods for warning the public

6.2.7 Should an evacuation be required, if not already activated, the Lead Agency may consider activating a Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) (See paragraph 7.10).

6.3 Phase 2: Alerting the Public (Communications/Media)

6.3.1 It is important that emergency responders and partners provide clear and direct information. The speed of social media unfortunately means that at times of crisis, inaccurate and unhelpful information may be in circulation and it is vital that credible sources of factual information are quickly established (See chapter 13: Media Liaison). Emergency responders and partner agencies will work together to ensure that members of the public and the media will know:

- What happened
- What action is being taken

- Important advice
- When updates will be available
- Contact numbers for helplines etc.

6.3.2 In addition to media and press briefings, arrangements are in place to distribute information through a number of sources, including but not limited to:

- Partner messaging boards, websites and social media channels
- Police helicopter, using 'sky shout' (sky based public address system)
- Multi-media messaging systems such as Birmingham Community Alert and VC Relay
- Public address systems within business premises/shopping centres
- Loudhailers and door knocking
- Business to business via a number of Business Improvement Districts
- Council Helplines
- Highways signage etc.

6.3.3 As far as is reasonably practicable, attempts will be made to contact all affected premises, however, due to the nature and scope of some emergencies it may not always be safe to do so.

6.4 Phase 3: Moving Evacuees

6.4.1 The movement of evacuees from a cordoned area requires the establishment of:

- Traffic management arrangements to maintain, as far as is possible, free movement.
- Priority Routes for emergency services access/egress
- Reception Centres
- Evacuee Assembly Points
- Evacuee transport plan

Note: Cordons, traffic management and emergency services access are described in Chapter 4: Scene Management. Reception Centres are described in Chapter 5: Shelter and Welfare.

6.4.2 An 'Assembly Point' will normally be identified within walking distance from an affected area, from where transport to a rest centre can be facilitated. Depending on the situation, it may be possible to identify and direct people to this from the outset of an evacuation. However, during an evacuation where time is critical, the priority will be to direct the Public away from the risk to an area of safety outside the outer cordon.

6.4.3 Tactical Commanders will decide the location of suitable assembly points for the public, based on a dynamic risk assessment and communicate this to BCC as soon as possible. However, it can be expected that most members of the public will disperse to their own homes if outside of the cordoned area, or to friends and family if their homes are within a cordon area.

6.4.4 It is important to remember that where large areas are evacuated the management of people at assembly areas may become complex. Whilst every effort will be made to transport people to a rest centre as quickly as possible, evacuees may remain at the assembly point for some time. The following welfare issues requiring consideration:

- inclement weather

- toilet facilities
- access to food/drink
- medical assistance
- crowd safety issues; and
- provision of information

- 6.4.5 BCC have arrangements in place with a number of transport organisations and providers allowing a number of options to be called upon to safely move evacuees to rest centres. The options chosen will be based on the nature and location of the incident and the anticipated number of evacuees.
- 6.4.6 Any decision to evacuate or close a railway station or to cease train operations will be made by Network Rail in conjunction with BTP. BTP and their partner agencies will only act following an assessment of the threat and all relevant information.
- 6.4.7 NHS England take responsibility for co-ordinating any decision to evacuate health service premises. Any decision to evacuate sick patients will present real dilemmas and will require rigorous risk assessments and early engagement with WMP to discuss the risks of moving patients or keeping patients in situ.
- 6.4.8 Whilst undertaking the initial risk assessment, Tactical Commanders should identify vulnerable establishments and people in the area to be evacuated and liaise with appropriate care agencies and other responders to make specific arrangements.
- 6.4.9 The definition of a vulnerable person is:
‘An Individual who physically; psychologically or socially requires personal; professional or community support in their daily life
Or,
A person who would not normally fulfil the preceding criteria, but following an emergency or incident becomes susceptible to harm as an individual or part of a community affected by that emergency or incident”
- 6.4.10 The welfare of vulnerable people is the legal responsibility of the agency that provides support and services to that individual. In most cases this will be BCC, Birmingham Community Health Care or Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust, who have detailed internal plans to take account of their needs. Where appropriate this will be supplemented by the other agencies and the voluntary sector.
- 6.4.11 Should a person become vulnerable by the actions of a responder, the responders are legally responsible for the provisions of support. In the event, the incident itself causes the vulnerability i.e. transport based Major incident the agency/agencies responsible for the infrastructure provision have a legal duty to support the vulnerable e.g., Rail Accident Incident Teams etc.

6.5 Phase 4: Shelter and Welfare Arrangements

- 6.5.1 Dependent on need, there are a number of options available to assist those displaced by an incident (For full details, see Chapter 5: Shelter and Welfare).
- 6.5.2 Evacuees will normally prefer to find temporary accommodation with friends and family. Where this is not possible, a number of options may be made available, including:
- **Survivor Reception Centres** provide a secure place outside of the inner and outer cordon where evacuees may congregate in the short-term.

- **Rest Centres** provide overnight accommodation (Usually for one or two nights).
- **Family and Friends Reception Centres** provide a secure environment for relevant documentation processes to be undertaken.
- **Humanitarian Assistance Centres** provide access to a variety of services/agencies to assist with their recovery and return to a sense of normality.

6.6 Phase 5: Return and Recovery

- 6.6.1 A managed process of re-opening affected areas including the re-establishment of the transport networks, businesses and return of evacuees from rest centres to their homes is important. This stage may be initiated after the risk has passed or after an incident has occurred and the immediate consequences managed.
- 6.6.2 Cordons may need to be maintained for a considerable time after the event. However, it is likely that the area contained within the cordon will be reduced as the risk and incident impact is reassessed.
- Note:** This guide does not outline the long-term recovery activities required to return a community affected by a major emergency to normality. For information on recovery planning please refer to the Birmingham Resilience Group (BRG) Recovery Plan.
- 6.6.3 In consultation with their partner agencies at the Strategic Coordination Group (SCG), WMP will initiate the implementation of the 'All Clear' process. This will require a large Police presence on the streets. The SCG will identify the priority groups required for the initial stage of the return. These may include access for rail, bus and highways representatives, retail security and health services personnel. Once these amenities are secure and up and running, WMP will allow a controlled return of evacuated workers and owners to properties and affected parts.
- 6.6.4 Rest centre staff will be kept up-to-date on the evacuation and return process through the BCC Emergency Coordinating Centre (CECC). Transport from rest centres will need to be provided once an 'all clear' message is declared. This transport will be facilitated by BCC.
- 6.6.5 In close liaison with partner agencies WMP will take the decision to declare an 'All Clear' on advice from the appropriate partner agencies. This message will be disseminated by WMP to all partner agencies and the media with any specific information that is deemed necessary in line with their strategy for a controlled re-entry to the affected area(s).
- 6.6.6 The following factors will be considered as a part of the return process:
- the return of people will be phased and controlled to avoid traffic chaos
 - confirmation will be given to transport organisations and travel providers that the area is safe to enter
 - the timescales for removing control measures will be affected by the timing of the "all clear" notice and by the resources available
 - normal transport services will be resumed as soon as possible;
 - during re-entry to the area, empty properties should remain secure
 - establishment of transport networks
 - road safety inspections
 - safety of buildings and structures
 - provision of transport from rest centres; and
 - messages to public (following consultation with all agencies media officers)

7. Command, Control and Coordination

7.1 Initial Control

- 7.1.1 It is important to distinguish between the respective functions of single-agency and multi-agency groups. ‘Gold’ and ‘Silver’ refer to the single-agency levels of command and they should be clearly distinguished from the multi-agency co-ordinating groups that exist at the corresponding levels, known as the Strategic Coordinating Group and Tactical Coordinating Group.
- 7.1.2 It is possible that early on in the incident members of one service will spontaneously carry out tasks normally the responsibility of another. As soon as sufficient staff arrive, each service can be expected to establish unequivocal command and control of functions for which it is normally responsible.
- 7.1.2 It should be understood that the titles do not convey seniority of service or rank, but depict the function carried out by that particular person. From the outset it is important that the senior officers of each service at the scene liaise with each other. This will be the foundation upon which later meetings will be based.

7.2 Strategic, Tactical and Operational

- 7.2.1 ‘Strategic’, ‘Tactical’ and ‘Operational’ are titles of functions adopted by each of the emergency services (replicated by other responding agencies) and are role related, not rank related. These functions are equivalent to those described as ‘Gold’, ‘Silver’ and ‘Bronze’ in this and other documents about emergency procedures. A summary of the roles of each is described below.

7.3 Single – agency Strategic (Gold)

- 7.3.1 Gold officers are responsible for formulating their overall agency strategy for the incident. Where a number of Gold Officers from the same organisation are involved in response to an incident, these may be known collectively as the ‘Gold Group’ or ‘Gold Control’. The lead Gold officer may be termed as the ‘Gold Commander’. Gold delegates tactical decisions to Silver.
- 7.3.2 At the outset of the incident, the Gold Group will determine the strategy and record a strategy statement. This will need to be monitored and subject to on-going review.

7.4 Single-agency Tactical (Silver)

- 7.4.1 The Silver Commanders will be responsible for formulating the organisations tactics to be adopted by their service to achieve the strategy set by their gold officers. Silver Commanders should not become personally involved with activities close to the incident but remain detached. Silver Commanders will work out of their separate agency Silver Control locations.

7.5 Single-agency Operational (Bronze)

- 7.5.1 Bronze officers will control and deploy the resources of their respective service within a specific role and will implement the tactics defined by their agency Silver Commander.
- 7.5.2 As the incident progresses and more resources attend the RVP, the level of supervision will increase in proportion.
- 7.5.3 Responding agencies will operate under this command structure which ensures they will be able to communicate with each other at the right level and understand each other’s functions and authority.

7.6 Inter agency resources

- 7.6.1 An agency may request the temporary assistance of personnel and equipment from another. In these circumstances, while the supporting agency may relinquish the immediate control of their resources to the requesting agency for the duration of the task, it will nevertheless keep overall command of its personnel and equipment at all times.
- 7.6.2 Personnel from a supporting agency helping another in this way should only be given tasks for which they are trained and not simply supplement the other agency in a potentially dangerous situation. They should not undertake hazardous rescue work themselves.

7.7 Strategic and Tactical Coordinating Groups

- 7.7.1 The formation of both Strategic and Tactical Coordinating Groups has been of great value at all major incidents. The supervising officers of each agency will initially be fully occupied with their own sphere of activity and there will, inevitably, be some delay in a coordinating group being set up. This delay should be kept to a minimum.

The first supervising officers on the scene from each responding agency must liaise closely with each other at the earliest opportunity.

- 7.7.2 These officers may be invited to the first tactical coordinating meeting to describe their initial decisions or they will pre-brief their TCG representative.
- 7.7.3 When agencies send a representative to either a Strategic or a Tactical Coordinating Group that person must have the authority to guarantee that any facilities offered will be delivered.
- 7.7.4 Ideally, each agency should send one senior manager (to help keep meetings manageable). However many agencies may seek multiple representation to ensure any sub-groups or cells are fit for purpose.
- 7.7.5 Minutes and decision logs must be kept of all co-ordinating group meetings and shared with other organisations. Individual members of the group should also make their own notes of meetings. These notes will provide an *aide-mémoire* of the continuing overall progress of the operation and provide a perspective against which future decisions or priorities can be made.
- 7.7.6 A major incident will involve an investigation into its cause and quite possibly a formal inquest, inquiry or criminal trial. The actions of the senior officers of the emergency services will be of considerable interest. Therefore notes will be invaluable and will, insofar as they are relevant, be disclosable; that is, made available to subsequent proceedings.

7.8 Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG)

- 7.8.1 Should an incident require a multi-agency strategic response, then an initial Strategic Coordinating Group will usually consist primarily of the ‘blue light’ emergency services. Additional strategic level representation from other agencies will be dependent upon the requirements of the incident (e.g. nature, scale and dynamics). It may also be appropriate that local authorities beyond the scene of the incident are invited or may wish to attend.

7.8.2 It may be appropriate to convene an immediate and full SCG with full representation from the West Midlands Conurbation Resilience Forum – particularly if it is apparent that prolonged and significant input from all partner agencies is required. This level of strategic coordination is facilitated through opening a Strategic Coordination Centre (SCC). Representation is likely to be similar to that of the WMCLRF (refer to WMCLRF “Tactical and Strategic Co-ordination Group” document (Jan 2017) for further details).

7.8.3 A number of sub-groups may be convened at the request of the chair of the SCG e.g. Air Pollution Cell. These usually include a Recovery Co-ordinating Group, led by the relevant local authority, to prepare for the recovery phase and advise the SCG on response decisions that can potentially affect longer-term recovery activity, and a Science and Technical Advisory Cell (STAC), led by the relevant expert organisation with representation from other leading scientific and technical organisations.

7.8.4 Each agency will, on request, provide liaison officers to the Strategic Coordination Group.

7.8.5 Location of Meetings

The SCG will normally meet at a location considered appropriate by the convening agency, completely detached from the scene with suitable communications and meeting facilities.

7.8.6 Frequency of Meetings

In general the nature and difficulties of the incident govern the frequency of SCG meetings.

7.8.7 Tasks

Whilst draft agendas exist, the required agenda for the SCG meetings will be decided by the group at the time and will depend upon the type and scale of the incident. At the outset, agency representatives at SCG will determine the strategic issues relevant to the incident. In addition, the group may provide liaison with central government and other bodies, ensure that sufficient support and resources are available at the incident and maintain a strategic overview. It is also critical that a recovery cell be established as soon as possible and that a press strategy is determined. Police Gold will undertake the planning and liaison roles for VIP visits with assistance from DCLG RED.

7.9 Tactical Coordination Centre (TCC)

7.9.1 The Police Events Control Suite (ECS) may be used as the Tactical Coordination Centre for a major incident within Birmingham and includes facilities for use by emergency services and other responder agencies. Facilities include radio and communications systems, meeting and rest rooms.

7.10 Tactical Coordination Group (TCG)

7.10.1 A Tactical Co-ordination Group will address an incident within the broad strategy set by the SCG and utilising the resources identified/allocated by the SCG and by individual agencies. If the emergency does not warrant the formation of an SCG, consideration of tactics becomes the responsibility of the TCG and resource allocation, that of individual agencies on the TCG.

7.10.2 It should adopt a formal agenda to monitor the progress of agreed actions.

7.10.3 Representation will depend upon the scale and nature of the incident. It may be necessary to have an inner core of permanent members and an outer group of advisors, specialists and others who could be called upon to attend as necessary.

7.10.4 Depending on the nature of the incident and the industry affected, specialist knowledge and expertise may be made available from the private and voluntary sector to assist the TCG.

7.10.5 Location of TCG meetings

Depending on the size and complexity of the incident, a police led major tactical response is likely to be controlled from the Event Control Suite (unless circumstances dictate otherwise). Some TCGs may be conducted initially close to the scene, perhaps later moving to premises better suited as an operation progresses.

7.10.6 An additional facility is a portable field facility known as the Multi Agency Response Command Unit Structure; (MARCUS) deployed by the military.

7.10.7 Frequency of TCG meetings

The Silver Commander of the agency (usually Police) leading the response will call an initial meeting of the TCG at the earliest available opportunity. Depending on the incident, regular subsequent meetings of this group are advisable and can be arranged at this first meeting or may be called by the Silver Commander at the request of another member of the group. Alternatively, it may be appropriate for officers from the relevant agencies to work permanently from the Tactical Co-ordination Centre throughout the period of the incident response.

7.10.8 Safety

At incidents concerned with fire, the danger of fire or involving rescue, WMFS will provide the TCG with professional advice on matters of safety. Whilst WMFS will give advice on safety, overall responsibility for their own staff health and safety rests with each emergency service/agency. Consideration should be given to the advice and expertise that may be available from industries directly involved with the incident. Also, the Health and Safety Executive, as well as being the investigative body, is able to give advice on safety matters.

7.10.9 Situation reports

Each agency should briefly describe the situation as it affects its own operations and, if necessary, mention those matters for which it requires assistance or cooperation of others.

7.10.10 Priorities

In order to create a cohesive joint strategy it will be essential to identify priorities. This will indicate how the resources available can be deployed in the most effective manner. Each agency will have objectives to meet within its own area of responsibility. It is important to establish which of these should have priority at the particular stage the incident has reached. In that way, inter-agency difficulties may be avoided and each may concentrate upon those actions which contribute most to the success of the operation.

7.10.11 Future Developments

In the absence of an SCG, the TCG should give consideration to the requirements of the later phases of the operation, including the establishment of the Recovery Coordination Group and identification of actions for the recovery phase.

8. Communications Systems

8.1 General

8.1.1 The majority of agencies are introducing airwave based radios with joint communications interoperability. The intention is to work towards its full implementation. It is, however, useful to be aware of the various types of communications employed by each responding agency that currently remain in place.

8.2 Warning

8.2.1 No communications system is secure from eavesdroppers. This should be borne in mind when wording any transmission, including telephone conversations, which may contain sensitive information or information that is restricted or above. To communicate restricted or above information a secure line i.e., HITS should be used.

8.3 Terrorism

8.3.1 At known or suspected terrorist incidents, radios should be kept on. The obvious benefits in being able to communicate at a major incident far outweigh the remote risk of activating a device through radio transmission. When a suspect explosive device has been located personnel should withdraw to a safe distance from the device (determined by a dynamic risk assessment) before transmitting on personal radios. The distance should be increased when vehicle-based radios are used.

8.3.2 Consideration should be given to the location of staff and the necessity to send radio messages at all.

8.3.3 It should be borne in mind that GSM (Global System for Mobile communications) digital telephones and some trunk radio systems permanently transmit as part of their normal operating procedure. When a device is discovered these items should be disconnected and not activated until they are outside any danger zone.

8.4 Airwave: West Midlands Police (WMP)

8.4.1 The West Midlands Police communication system uses TETRA Airwave radio. These are fitted to vehicles and issued to individual officers. Differing talk groups are used for LPUs and Force Specialist Units, but all can communicate with each other if required. A helicopter from the Central Regional Air Support Unit can provide live footage of an incident which can be downloaded to the Force Control Centre (FCC), Gold Control, Events Control Suite and certain other sites, if applicable. There is also the capability for these pictures to be broadcast to mobile sites with the use of additional equipment.

8.3.4 There are also a number of Police Silver Command Suites situated at strategic locations around Birmingham. These may house the Police Silver Commander if there is a need for them to be remote, but will provide the main communications and coordination facility during any incident.

8.3.5 All airwave terminals can access the interoperability Emergency Service Talk Groups.

8.3.6 Airwave Interoperability Scheme is operated by the Police whereby Airwave radio handsets can be provided to Birmingham City Council during an incident to trained officers to aide communication with the emergency services.

8.5 British Transport Police (BTP)

8.5.1 Uses TETRA Airwave radio, also access the interoperability Emergency Services Talk Groups. Also manage the response to incidents across the railway in England, Scotland and Wales via two control rooms – one in Birmingham and one in London. During pre-

planned events or major incidents Silver Event Control Rooms maybe operate from BTP FHG building, Force Control Room London or Force Control Room Birmingham.

8.6 West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS)

- 8.6.1 All WMFS front-line appliances are equipped with VHF radios (both speech and data channels) and have the ability to communicate with the WMFS control at Headquarters from anywhere in the Birmingham area. The WMFS carry hand-held UHF radios available on all its front-line appliances together with an additional supply on command vehicles for command purposes. These radios are compatible with 'leaky-feeder' and repeater systems at certain locations.
- 8.6.2 As well as main VHF radio, WMFS command support vehicles (CSV) also carry the following communication facilities:
- U.H.F radios;
 - mobile phones;
 - data transmission facility; and
 - FAX.
- 8.6.3 All command vehicles are equipped with computers and interactive white boards which display a wide range of information, e.g. incident logs, internet, fire service intranet, mapping, free view television etc.

8.7 West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS)

- 8.7.1 WMAS emergency ambulances, response cars and other vehicles are fitted with airwave radios,) Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and an Automatic Vehicle Location System (AVLS) through mobile data terminals on each vehicle.
- 8.7.2 WMAS have two Mobile Emergency Operations Centres (MEOC). They also have a facility to link into British Telecom phone lines. A range of communications is available in each vehicle, including Airwave radio with a Multi-Agency Interoperability airwave Talk Group for use by Silver Officers at major incident.
- 8.7.3 WMAS maintain Incident Control facilities for use during serious and major incidents. WMAS are responsible for overall control of all Health assets at the incident, communication with hospitals, regional capacity management, HPA and primary logging duties, instruction procedures and the strategic overview of the incident and to ensure the continuity of normal operations during the incident so far as is reasonably practicable.

8.7 Inter-Agency Command Channel

- 8.8.1 The WMAS and WMFS command vehicles that attend the scene are each equipped with a number of hand-held multi-channel radios. Until all emergency services are equipped with Airwave terminals, WMP will be able to supply a number of hand held airwave terminals to both emergency service and other responders. These radios are intended for command use only by the respective service Silvers for liaison purposes and not for general inter-service use. These radios have been purchased by the Government, however the WMP are responsible for issuing the radios to the other services at the scene.

8.9 Birmingham City Council Communications

- 8.9.1 Birmingham City Council owns a city wide UHF communication network. In an emergency, BCC will deploy its emergency response vehicle which is equipped with the radio system and a number of handheld radios.
- 8.9.1 BCC has two Council Emergency Coordinating Centres (CECC). Both have dedicated telephone lines, fax facilities and access to the internet. Both have a UHF base station and spare handheld radios. The UHF radio system also links to the Highway’s Control Centre Council and Retail Radio Network (used by local business security staff and Street Wardens).
- 8.9.2 The BCC emergency response vehicle has a computer link via 3G to the CECC allowing the Council’s incident management software to record activities at the scene and be relayed to the coordinating centre. The emergency response vehicle also has a PA system and has four permanently charged mobile phones.

8.10 Central Government

- 8.10.1 Through Central Government’s resilient telecommunications strategy, local authorities, primary care trusts, West Midlands Ambulance Service, Public Health England, NHS Birmingham Solihull and Black Country Area Team, Clinical Commissioning Groups were given the provision for satellite phones to provide increased resilience within control room locations.

8.11 Telecom Assistance

- 8.11.1 Telecommunication utility companies have a range of alternative communication systems for use by the emergency services. Charges may be incurred.

8.12 Mobile Telecommunications Privileged Access Scheme (MTPAS)

- 8.12.1 Public cellular mobile telephony has played an important role in responding to recent emergencies. But the networks can become overwhelmed when presented with a high concentration of calls such as those that occur immediately after a major incident. Privileged access to mobile networks is available for organisations that have a role in responding to, or recovering from, an emergency. Access is achieved by installing a special SIM into a mobile telephone handset. Activation of the scheme is initiated by the Police Gold Commander.

8.13 Radio Amateurs’ Emergency Network (RAYNET)

- 8.13.1 RAYNET is a nationwide voluntary group of United Kingdom government-licensed radio operators who are able to provide emergency radio communications to the emergency services, local authorities and central government departments. Their radio communications equipment is specifically designated for use in emergencies.
- 8.13.1 West Midlands RAYNET (Zone 9), has its own county controller and committee and can provide specialist VHF/UHF radio communications assistance across Birmingham and beyond, into neighbouring local authorities, operating upon a mutual aid basis. The facilities are provided by members with their own equipment. Additional assets are available, such as portable masts, antennae and generators if required. National and international radio communications can also be provided if requested.
- 8.13.2 As members are on a voluntary basis, early consideration for activation would assist in any call out procedure, or in putting groups on standby.

8.13.3 RAYNET can be activated via Birmingham City Council Emergency Planning Duty Officer or any of the Emergency Services.

8.14 West Midlands Information Transfer Gateway WMITG (formally MATTISSE):

8.14.1 WMITG is a real time traffic and travel information system operational in the Midlands Region. A number of organisations have access for inputting up-to-date information on travel issues. The WMITG system manages data from sources in local authority urban traffic control centres, police commands, public transport operators (e.g. National Express West Midlands) and the Highways England.

8.14.2 Public access to travel information is via www.Help2Travel.co.uk website which provides information on bus, train, metro, plane, road travel, cycle routes, car parks and air quality.

8.14.3 BCC Highways do not maintain 24 hour access to WMITG. WMP will have responsibility for managing road network messages on WMITG in the event of a major incident. Amey / Urban Traffic Control are able to access and update the system. WMITG will not usually show the extent of road closures or diversions if they are complex. National Express West Midlands will update bus related messages on WMITG.

9. Casualties

9.1 Categories

9.1.1 The care and identification of casualties is a primary responsibility of the emergency services at a major incident. Casualties fall into one of two categories:

- injured;
- dead

9.1.2 Casualties may be witnesses/victims or even suspects and carry evidence or hazards on their clothing and therefore processes are in place to facilitate an appropriate response.

9.2 Injured

9.2.1 The injured need to be rescued from the scene and cared for as quickly and safely as possible by the rescuers, who must be mindful of the requirements of the ambulance and medical teams on site. Ambulance paramedics and technicians then need to be able to administer pre-hospital treatment before the patients are taken to the receiving hospitals.

9.2.2 WMAS aim at any multiple casualty incidents is to ensure the largest number of survivors. Triage is a dynamic continuous process. WMAS has a responsibility to ensure that at every stage of the incident, patients are continually assessed to ensure that changes in the condition of the patient are reflected in the patient’s triage category.

9.2.3 During an incident WMAS will use two levels of triage – these are referred to as ‘triage sieve’ and ‘triage sort’. Both triage systems use algorithms to determine which priority group a patient falls into. The priority groups are as follows:

Priority	Description	Colour
1.	Immediate	Red
2.	Urgent	Yellow
3.	Delayed	Green
4.	Expectant	Red
5.	Dead or Deceased	White or Black

9.2.4 Triage Sieve

This triage sieve quickly sorts out casualties into priority groups. Using the algorithm card WMAS will systematically work through patients, triaging and labelling them. WMAS will not get involved in substantive patient treatment during a triage sieve.

9.2.5 Triage Sort

On the arrival of further resources patients will be moved to a place of safety, usually the casualty clearing station. At this location they can be re-triaged using a triage sort process. This process is a more thorough clinical triage than the sieve.

9.2.6 The same triage card is used throughout the sieve and sort process updating a patient’s triage category by refolding the card as necessary.

9.2.7 Paediatric Triage

During most major incidents WMAS triages paediatrics using the adult triage sieve – this over prioritises but is a safe option. During a multiple casualty incident involving mainly paediatric patients WMAS will instigate the use of the paediatric triage process. The system uses similar algorithms to that of the adult triage.

9.2.8 **Expectant category**

The expectant category (which requires large amount of resource to achieve a 5% survival rate), for WMAS is only used with the authority of the WMAS Gold Commander with advice from the MIO. This situation would arise when there are such large numbers of patients that the ability of WMAS to respond to the clinical needs of every individual and potentially unsurvivable injury would be to the detriment of other patients.

9.2.9 Expectant patients must be triage labelled as ‘immediate priority 1’, which is red, though with a blue flash corner folded back from the rear of the immediate priority 1 card.

9.2.10 **Casualty clearing station and ambulance loading point**

The casualty clearing station is a place of relative safety to which casualties are conveyed from the incident site. Triage sort, assessment, treatment and stabilisation are carried out by WMAS staff together with any mobile medical teams at the scene. The casualty clearing station is coordinated by WMAS Bronze Clearing Officer.

9.2.11 A suitable area or building between the inner and outer cordons near to the site may be identified for use as a casualty clearing station.

9.2.12 **Hospital**

Once the patient arrives at the hospital the patient will be re-triaged by hospital staff.

9.2.13 **Labelling and documentation**

Documentation of patients must start as soon as possible. Triage labels must be attached to patients in the initial stages of the incident even if there is no opportunity to collect personal details. Details of each patient should be collected as soon as possible.

9.2.14 It may not always be possible for ambulance crews to record usual details of patients carried on the patient report forms. Ambulances should not be delayed at the scene in order to obtain personal details of individual casualties, which will be obtained by the police at the receiving hospitals. In all circumstances the triage label must be completed.

9.2.15 Police instructions refer to the attaching of nationally and recommended identification labels to deceased persons for identity and evidential purposes. Ambulance service personnel should note that these identity and evidential labels are NOT to be used in place of the medical triage labels.

9.2.16 WMP should liaise with WMAS to maintain a count of all persons processed with details of hospitals to which they have been taken.

9.2.17 Police Officers will be deployed to the casualty departments of these hospitals to provide documentation teams, assist with forensic issues and provide security advice.

9.3 **Management of the deceased**

9.3.1 The Birmingham and Solihull Emergency Mortuary Plan sets out the establishment of an emergency mortuary for the forensic examination of bodies (normally including body storage and post-mortem facilities). This is a multi-agency plan, developed by West Midlands Police, Birmingham City Council and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.

9.3.2 Investigating the cause of the incident is a Police responsibility, as is body recovery. Responsibility for establishing cause of death lies with the HM Coroner in whose district the victims are found. In this he/she will be assisted by the Police. HM Coroner for Birmingham and Solihull is appointed by Birmingham City Council.

- 9.3.3 The Overall Incident Commander (Gold) will provide initial strategic, overall incident command for Police/emergency services led incidents, in consultation with local authorities and other Category One or Two Responders, adopting the single-agency Gold, Silver and Bronze levels of command and establishing multi-agency TCG and SCG as required. In the case of a mass fatality incident it would be normal for the Incident Gold Commander (in a criminal case the Chief Constable or nominee) to establish and chair a Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG). The collective role of the SCG is to advise strategy.
- 9.3.4 It is anticipated that, in the event of a mass fatality incident, the local authority within which the incident(s) takes place (or both Birmingham and Solihull if applicable), will activate its own major emergency management structure, which will complement multi-agency arrangements at a local authority or conurbation level.
- 9.3.5 Once HM Coroner has been fully briefed by the Police Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) and Senior Identification Manager (SIM) and has determined that existing mortuary arrangements are not suitable, the Police SIM will then co-ordinate the establishment of the Emergency Mortuary Co-ordination Group (EMCG), on behalf of the Coroner. Police SIM support contacts other EMCG stakeholders.
- 9.3.6 EMCG will report to Police led SCG (which would initially have started as Police Gold). EMCG will also liaise with BCC Gold and any thematic Silver Groups established by Birmingham City Council, e.g. financial authorisation, highways, deployment of Council resources not maintained specifically within HMC / Regulatory Services remit.
- 9.3.7 Presently, the pre-identified mortuaries / sites are a combination of BCC owned existing facilities; a private mortuary within the Birmingham boundary; an identified site in a neighbouring authority. In addition to this BCC maintains a rolling stock of mortuary consumables and equipment and a preferred suppliers list. These arrangements are further supported by a contract with a private mortuary logistics company.
- 9.3.8 The Police operations within the emergency mortuary will play a central role in collecting evidence to establish the cause of death and the identity of the victim. The mortuary staff will work in close liaison with the casualty bureau and ante-mortem teams to confirm identity, and where appropriate with the Forensic Matching Unit (FMU). The National Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) Team supports the local response providing specially trained Police and forensic personnel.
- 9.3.9 The plan does not make provision for contaminated bodies, as this is planned for at a national level by the Home Office. Locally, a Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell (STAC) would be activated to liaise with the Home Office and would provide advice on the management of contaminated bodies.
- 9.3.10 The costs of additional mortuary provision for a mass fatalities incident will be met as part of existing arrangements between Birmingham and Solihull Councils. West Midlands Police is responsible for some activities (e.g. body holding at scene, police security, Forensic Pathologists).

9.4 Casualty Bureau

- 9.4.1 WMP may establish a Casualty Bureau if they are the host Force for an incident. Details of all dead, casualties, survivors, and missing persons/persons thought to be involved will be collated. This centre may also take telephone enquiries from the friends and relatives of people, who are believed to be involved in the incident, or they may be supported by other Forces' in managing these calls but they will always use a nationally supplied incident telephone number.

- 9.4.2 Casualty Bureau staff aim to support the tracing of those persons involved in incident, and any subsequent investigation.
- 9.4.3 Where a match is made by Casualty Bureau appropriate information gathering and contact will be made with the enquirer, subject to policy made by the SIM (Senior Identification Manager) or when there is a criminal investigation the SIO (Senior Investigating Officer).
- 9.4.4 The Casualty Bureau will not close until all the casualties have been identified, all the next-of-kin have been informed and telephone enquiries have diminished to a level where they can be dealt with by other local police resources.
- 9.4.5 To avoid discrepancies in casualty figures, all information must be routed through the casualty bureau, which will be the sole source of this information. Casualty figures must only be released following consultation with Police Gold or their press officers to ensure information is accurately and appropriately shared between all relevant agencies. Casualty bureau staff will attend at all nominated casualty receiving hospitals, and ideally at all reception centres and rest centres as appropriate to facilitate this data collection.
- 9.4.6 Where injuries are fatal or serious, contact should be made with the Force Family Liaison Officer Coordinator to discuss his/her Family Liaison Officer deployment strategy for the incident.

10. Helicopters

10.1 Introduction

Helicopters can provide the following support facilities:

- immediate overview of the scene, including the size of the affected area and ancillary factors
- casualty search/assessment of numbers involved
- identification of present or potential hazards
- weather conditions, including wind direction at scene
- area containment, including cordon deployment/infringement
- traffic management/route planning schemes
- evidential imagery of scene, including photographs, video, thermal imaging and detailed target analysis
- specialist personnel transport
- casualty evacuation (single casualty) and
- Caution must be exercised when responding to a CBRN incident and the use of helicopters as the down draft will increase the spread of contamination

10.2 Emergency flying restrictions

10.2.1 West Midlands Police have the facility, via the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), to request the imposition of temporary emergency flying restrictions over the scene of an incident under certain circumstances. The most likely reason would be the safety of those in the air or on the ground. Requests for temporary emergency flying restrictions should be made through WMP, who will review the necessity for such restrictions at regular intervals.

10.3 Police helicopter

10.3.1 West Midlands Police (WMP) has access to a regional helicopter resource from which a helicopter can be requested during times of emergency. On occasions when this is out of service, a mutual aid agreement is in place with other local forces, that if available their helicopter can be deployed within the West Midlands region. The aircraft has the following equipment:

- comprehensive radio communications, including air traffic control waveband to ease communications with other emergency response aircraft
- visual and thermal imaging equipment, effective day and night
- a searchlight ('Nitesun') capable of illuminating a wide area for the immediate rescue needs, operating at 800 feet for minimal ground disturbance
- a public address system ('Sky shout') capable of broadcasting messages at a lower operating height
- video transmission equipment to ground-based receiving stations across WMP Force area. Mobile receivers are also available which can be loaned to other responding agencies and can be delivered close to the scene by the aircraft or can be collected from their base at Birmingham International Airport Cargo; and
- digital photography

10.4 Military helicopters

10.4.1 RAF Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopters are available to respond to civil incidents and could, for example, assist in the transfer of urgent casualties to hospitals, if necessary. These helicopters are equipped with winch equipment and can carry several

stretcher cases. They can also conduct searches visually and by using radar and infra-red equipment.

10.6 Air Ambulance (Helicopter Emergency Medical Supplies HEMS)

10.5.1 Where an incident occurs which involves a very high number of casualties it may be necessary for some to be taken to a hospital some distance from the scene. In such cases ambulance control will liaise with the Air Ambulance and have the facility to deploy one of four aircraft to the area. In certain circumstances it may be necessary for them to liaise with the Military.

10.5.2 The Air Ambulance may also be mobilised to any casualty requiring advanced trauma life support from the on-board doctor and paramedic(s).

10.5.3 The Air Ambulance is available to land at a suitable location and provide at least one doctor and trained paramedic to the scene. The helicopter can also be used to ferry additional doctors and resources as well as evacuate single casualties.

10.5.4 The emergency services will consult prior to an Air Ambulance deployment and a suitable landing site at or near scene will need to be identified and communicated.

10.6 HM Coastguard search and rescue helicopters

10.6.1 HM Coastguard SAR helicopters may also be called upon to assist in rescue incidents in the Birmingham area. Coastguard helicopters are equipped to winch people from water and can carry seated and stretcher casualties. They are fitted with infrared equipment to assist location of casualties in poor visibility and at night.

11. Investigation

11.1 Evidence

11.1.1 Most major incidents will be the subject of an investigation/inquiry, whether for the HM Coroner, a public enquiry, or civil or criminal court proceedings, therefore evidence collected should be of the best possible quality.

11.1.2 In order to gather such evidence the scene must be secured as soon as possible and anything which can be reasonably anticipated to be required as evidence should be preserved and not damaged, moved or disposed of without reference to the leading investigator.

11.1.3 Depending upon the nature of the incident several different agencies may carry out independent investigation. Protocols and the framework for effective liaison have been agreed with the following bodies:

- Air Accident Investigation Branch;
- Rail Accident Investigation Branch; and
- Health and Safety Executive.

Note: They require the early notification of an incident in order to co-ordinate their response. The list of agencies is not exhaustive and the type of incident will dictate those agencies that may well have an investigative input.

11.1.4 Aerial photography, both video and stills, can help in recording the scene for evidential purposes, as will any photographic evidence available.

11.2 Police responsibilities

11.2.1 In all suspected terrorist related incidents the West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit, under the direction of the Metropolitan Police Counter Terrorist Command, SO15, will lead.

11.2.2 British Transport Police (BTP) has a capability to investigate homicide offences. Resources will be subject to discussion and agreement between senior offices of both forces. In all other circumstances, BTP will be responsible for the investigation.

12. Safety

12.1 Health and safety

12.1.1 The responsibility for health and safety of staff at a major incident rests with each agency. The West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) is responsible for safety management within the inner cordon and advice given must be acted on by all emergency services.

12.2 Factories and other industrial sites

12.2.1 These locations have a range of potential hazards including substances that are flammable, reactive, explosive or toxic. Sometimes the hazards are multiple (for example flammable and toxic) and may involve corrosive or radioactive materials. For some sites there are specific emergency plans made under the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Regulations 1999.

12.2.2 Specific COMAH sites have on and off site emergency plans in place in response to incidents that may occur.

12.2.3 Enforcing authorities, including the Health and Safety Executive, will need access to such locations following major accidents and may need to gather evidence.

12.3 Fire Brigade 'HAZMAT' officers

12.3.1 'HAZMAT' officers are mobilised to all confirmed chemical incidents. They will liaise with the WMFS scientific advisor. When in attendance at radiation incidents, HAZMAT officers will carry out the role of radiation protection supervisors, with the WMFS HAZMAT advisor carrying out the role of radiation protection advisor in accordance with the Ionising Radiation Regulations 1985.

12.4 Rail incidents – safe systems of work

12.4.1 The safety of personnel is paramount when working on or near the track. To ensure an effective response to an incident on the rail network the industry can provide input on:

- safety of personnel;
- general site safety;
- specialist information on rolling stock and infrastructure (tunnels, services, etc.);
- specialist input to investigation; and
- recovery equipment either owned or under contract.

12.4.2 With rail accidents, Network Rail has key responsibility in terms of site safety and should interact with the BTP and other emergency services.

12.4.3 Any incident on or concerning a railway should be notified to the Network Rail Control and BTP Control Room

12.4.4 Personnel must always wear high-visibility clothing when working on or near the track. The number of personnel working at the scene should be kept to a minimum.

12.4.5 There are many potential dangers when working in a rail environment. Emergency Services should not go on or near the line except in an emergency and prior permission with a member of Network Rail. Services should follow existing agreements with railway operators and BTP Police.

12.4.6 It may be necessary for trains to be stopped, if this is the case, the reason must be clearly identified, e.g. Incident at COMAH site where any plume may affect passengers, it should also specify the area concerned. However if the emergency services require

trains to be stopped in order to access the lines then the agreed emergency service protocol should be followed. This is with the Network Rail.

12.4.7 It should be noted that a request to turn off overhead cables does not make them safe until cables are isolated. In addition trains 'running at caution' may not necessarily be travelling slower.

12.4.8 As soon as the power is turned off trains operated by electricity will coast to the nearest station, should the signalling allow. Diesel powered trains are not dependent on electric power and often run on the same track as electrified trains.

12.4.9 A request for trains stopped and/or power off should be passed through the appropriate rail infrastructure control via the emergency services' control rooms or the Rail Incident Officer (RIO) on site. This same control will confirm that the request has been carried out.

12.4.7 Network Rail controls the infrastructure of the railway and will be the lead authority for the rail industry at rail incidents and will protect the scene in consultation with the emergency services. The rail representative on site is the RIO.

12.4.8 Generally, one, or all, of the following three levels of control can be introduced as protection for the site:

- level I – slowing trains by running them at caution
- level II – stopping trains by use of signals; and
- level III – switching off electricity supply and providing emergency isolation.

12.4.9 Within Birmingham there are two railway operating systems:

- Network Rail / train and freight operating companies:-
 - Virgin
 - Cross Country
 - Chilton
 - London Midland
 - Arriva; and
- Midland Metro

It is therefore essential that those attending incidents are aware which of the systems they are attending.

13. Media Liaison

13.1 Introduction

- 13.1.1 A major incident involving the joint work of the emergency services will inevitably attract significant and sustained interest from the media.
- 13.1.2 It is important that in dealing with the demands of the media, press officers from the emergency services and other agencies involved, liaise at the earliest opportunity and consult effectively with each other whilst respecting the differing roles of their individual services/agencies.
- 13.1.3 The media can be a useful mechanism to communicate essential advice to the public about how the incident could affect them and what actions they can take.

13.2 Holding statements

- 13.2.1 Once a major incident has been declared all of the emergency services involved will be under pressure to provide an immediate statement. At the earliest opportunity a holding statement will be agreed amongst responding agencies and disseminated by the lead agency press officer. It is recognised that in the majority of incidents this is likely to be West Midlands Police.
- 13.2.2 The lead agency press office should make their counterparts in the other emergency services/responders press offices aware of the content of the statement and in turn be made aware of the information press officers/staff are releasing to the media. Care should be taken that the statements are not contradictory and do not impinge upon or undermine the actions of the other services/agencies. Consideration should be given to a single statement for use on all recorded media lines.
- 13.2.3 In the effort to avoid press speculation, information should be provided to the news media as soon as possible in relation to a terrorist incident but the authority of the West Midlands Police Counter Terrorism Unit should be sought.

13.3 Liaison on scene

- 13.3.1 Press officers attending the scene of the incident should seek out their counterparts at the earliest opportunity and establish regular liaison so that contentious or conflicting information can be clarified before release to the media. This information should then be passed to their individual press offices.

13.4 Strategic and Tactical Coordination Group meetings

- 13.4.1 The lead agency press officer will attend both Strategic and Tactical Coordination Group meetings. These Groups are likely to establish a media cell to co-ordinate information flow to the media. Consequently, it will be necessary for senior public affairs or media and communications personnel from the other emergency services/responders to attend SCG meetings. It is likely that WMP, WMAS, WMFS and BCC press officers will also attend the TCG meetings and work to guidelines of the LRF Media Strategy.
- 13.4.2 The lead media communications officer will take the lead on the content of subsequent media statements about the incident as a whole. However, it is important that each emergency service/responder has the opportunity to ensure that the media are aware of their front line staff's activities.

13.5 Casualty figures

- 13.5.1 Confirmed casualty figures may be released only after consultation with the lead agency Gold Commander. It is important that only one set of casualty figures should be

released at one time. If the number of casualties involved in an incident rises over a period of time then all the services’ press officers should refrain from giving updated figures until authorised by Police Gold.

13.5.2 WMAS press officers may confirm the general nature of types of injuries – unless police specifically request them not to – and the hospitals to which they are taken, but the numbers of fatalities and those seriously injured should only be given when cleared by Police Gold.

13.5.3 There may be circumstances when police specifically request WMAS not to release the name and location of the hospital(s) to which casualties have been taken. Although unusual, this could arise in relation to alleged criminals/suspects and potential witnesses.

13.6 Joint press office

13.6.1 If the incident is of a sufficiently serious nature, i.e. involving a high number of casualties and/or continuing rescue operations and it is likely to run beyond 12 hours, then consideration will be given to setting up a joint press office.

13.7 Joint press briefings

13.7.1 If the relevant agency press officers consider it beneficial to hold a joint press briefing the lead agency press officer at the scene will liaise with the relevant Silver officers and their press officers to agree a suitable format and identify any contentious issues and how they can be dealt with.

13.7.2 The following division of areas of responsibility is suggested for the briefing.

- **WMP** – Overall response to the incident; the number of casualties; how the emergency services coped/are coping; casualty bureau telephone number (if issued); any criminal investigations; local disruption (past and continuing); recognition for local people who may have assisted in rescue operations; heroic actions by police officers.
- **WMFS** – The rescue operation; how many people were trapped and in what circumstances; the level of response in terms of appliances and personnel; what equipment was needed to free people and (where relevant) specific information related to flooding, fires or chemical incidents; heroic actions by fire officers.
- **WMAS** – The level and seriousness of injuries; where casualties were taken; how many ambulances and medical staff were involved; whether air ambulances was used; heroic actions by ambulance personnel and other specialised assets used.
- **BCC** – Changes to normal services and special arrangements, recovery and rehabilitation of the community, public reassurance
- **BTP** (incidents on railway only) – Details of any criminal investigation; disruption to the railway; details about potential public inquiries; heroic actions by BTP and railway staff.

13.8 Media centres

13.8.1 If the incident is on a large scale and is likely to attract a significant media presence for days or even weeks, press officers should consider whether it would be beneficial to establish a media centre near the scene.

13.8.2 Such a centre gives journalists a base to operate from, shelter from the elements and (ideally) provides toilet and refreshment facilities. The advantages to the emergency

services include improved communications and speedy organisation of briefings and interviews. A suitable viewing area for the press should be designated wherever possible to allow filming etc.

- 13.8.3 BCC will try and assist in identifying a suitable venue, preferably with a large exterior area where heavy equipment such as outside broadcasting units can be parked.

13.9 Press debrief

- 13.9.1 Heads of the emergency services/responders media departments will decide if the incident warrants a post-incident debrief with the relevant press officers who were involved. If such a debrief is held, representatives from the various press offices should consider producing a briefing note for their colleagues, evaluating media coverage and identifying best practice and any lessons that have been learned which could assist press officers attending similar incidents in the future.

13.10 West Midlands Conurbation LRF Media Strategy

A West Midlands Conurbation LRF Media Strategy is in place which contains further detail and guidance.

14. Debriefing

- 14.1.1 When the incident has ended, each of the emergency services and other agencies involved in the incident will hold a series of operational debriefs. Initially these will be confined to each particular service, but later a multi-agency debrief will be held and lessons learned will be incorporated into this document and other service manuals, as appropriate.
- 14.1.2 Multi agency debriefs should consider the contribution provided by other, non-emergency service agencies to expand the knowledge and learning process that debriefs should collate. This is notwithstanding the potential conflict of interest that may result in later investigations. This aspect should be considered when inviting agencies other than category 1 responders to attend any debrief. The Local Resilience Forum Proforma should be used to disseminate information and lessons learned.
- 14.1.3 The thrust of any such debriefs would be to identify areas for improvement in procedures, equipment and systems. They should not be forums for criticising the performance of others.
- 14.1.4 Debriefs should not interfere with or comment on investigations into the incident carried out by investigative or judicial authorities.
- 14.1.5 It is important to realise that such debriefs and related documents would be disclosable to individuals involved in legal proceedings.
- 14.1.6 Operational debriefs should not be confused with diffusing welfare sessions for staff, which should form part of the trauma support programmes arranged by individual organisations.
- 14.1.7 It is recognised that each agency will have differing timeframes for debriefing such events. The timeliness of such debriefs are such as to ensure the appropriate representation and content. It is therefore suggested that a multi-agency debrief should be arranged within 28 days of the incident closure.

15. Welfare of Responders

- 15.1.1 Welfare and trauma support should be made available to staff of organisations deployed in major incident scenarios. This support should be available from the early stages of the incident where required and if requested by individual organisations. The responsibility for identifying the need for welfare support rests jointly with the individuals, their managers and the department within each organisation responsible for staff welfare.
- 15.1.2 Those that are particularly traumatised will require skilled professional help. Arrangements for this must be made in a way that ensures confidentiality. These facilities should also be made available to support staff, even if they are not directly involved at the scene, e.g. administration staff, drivers and communications staff.
- 15.1.3 **Welfare of Emergency Services at the Scene**
A number of High Street chains have made formal arrangements for emergency services, Local Authorities or voluntary organisations to access Emergency Disaster Assistance in the form of welfare resources. Upon proof of identification at participating businesses, emergency responders are enabled to obtain appropriate goods from stores whilst deferring the payment. A note of the goods supplied will be taken, signed by both representatives of the store and the organisation, and retained by the store, in order for payment to be made at a later stage.