



## Berkshire Major Incident Protocol



# **BERKSHIRE MAJOR INCIDENT PROTOCOL**

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## SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

The procedures adopted by each of the Emergency Services and any other agencies in response to a Major Incident are understandably devoted to the role of the Service concerned. The purpose of this document is to describe the agreed procedures and arrangements for the effective co-ordination of their joint efforts. In this way the overall response of the Emergency Services will be greater than the sum of their individual efforts, to the benefit of the public.

This document provides summaries of the responses and responsibilities of each of the Emergency Services at a Major Incident, as well as an outline of the support role offered by Unitary Authorities. We hope it will offer better understanding to the individual specialists involved in working with each other in a co-ordinated way.

It has been prepared for the information and guidance of the Emergency Services and Unitary Authorities but may be used by any other responsible organisation that may have to respond to a Major Incident.

The authors of this document recognise that every Major Incident is different and has its own unique features. They wish to stress that the advice contained within it should only be regarded as a **guide**. It is designed to offer a framework within which those who are responsible for the successful resolution of the incident are able to work together with maximum efficiency.

Experience has taught that there are many seemingly innocuous sets of circumstances that can, if not dealt with speedily, escalate to the level of a Major Incident.

### PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE.

No one will be criticised for treating an incident as serious in the first instance even if events later prove it not to be.

## **SECTION 2                      MAJOR INCIDENTS**

### **2.1      Definition**

A Major Incident is any emergency that requires the implementation of special arrangements by one or all of the Emergency Services and Unitary Authority agencies for:

- a) the rescue, treatment and transportation of a large number of casualties,
- b) the involvement either directly or indirectly of large numbers of people,
- c) the handling of a large number of inquiries likely to be generated both from the public and the news media.
- d) the need for the large scale combined resources of two or more of the Emergency Services,
- e) the mobilisation and organisation of the Emergency Services and Unitary Authority agencies in response to the threat of death, serious injury or homelessness to a large number of people.

In addition, the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) defines the term 'emergency' as:

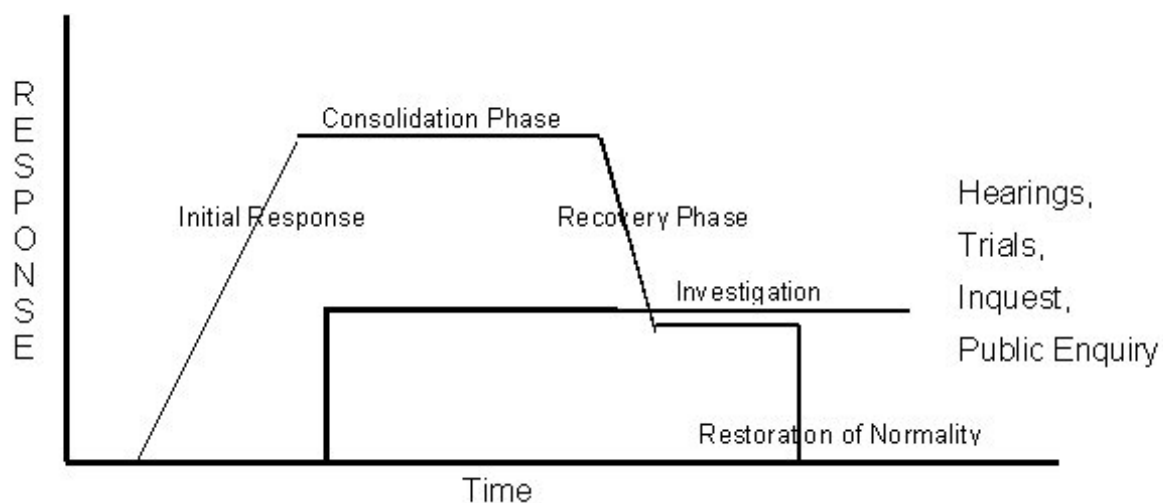
An event or situation, which threatens serious damage to;

- a) Human welfare in a place in the United Kingdom (UK).
- b) The environment of a place in the UK, or.
- c) The security of the UK, or a place in the UK.

However, it should be borne in mind when comparing the above criteria that not every major incident that occurs in Berkshire would be regarded as an 'emergency' under the CCA.

### **2.2      Stages**

Most Major Incidents can be considered to have four stages: the initial response, the consolidation phase, the recovery phase and the restoration of normality. Any investigation into the cause of the incident may impose itself across all four stages.



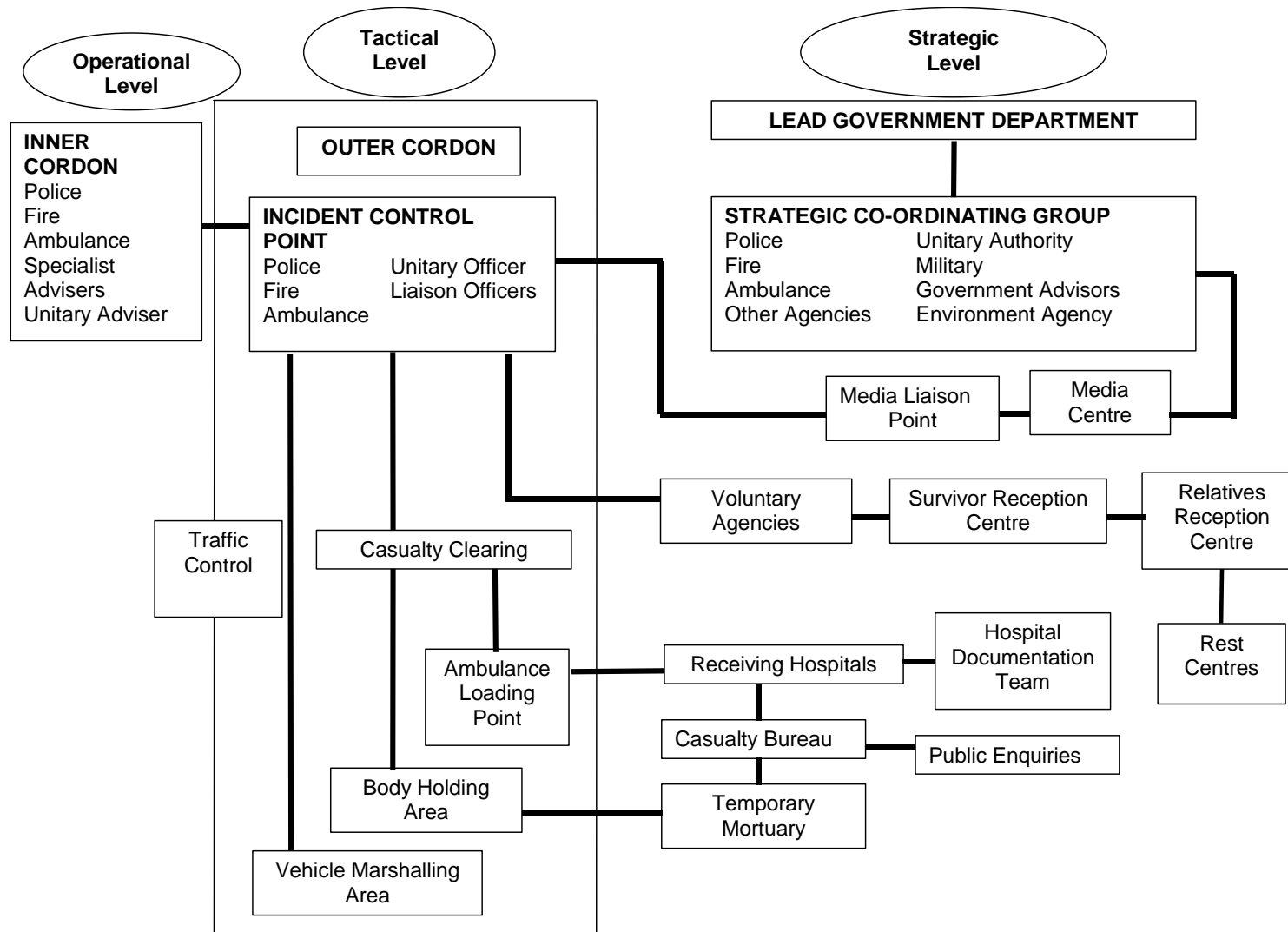
### 2.3 Declaration

A Major Incident may be declared by any Officer of the Emergency Services who considers that any of the criteria outlined in Section 2.1 (Definition) have been satisfied. An incident defined as a Major Incident to one of the Emergency Services may not be so to another. If one Service declares a Major Incident, the other appropriate Services must be prepared to initiate a Major Incident response.

### 2.4 Major Incident Diagram

See Diagram on next page





## **SECTION 3                      MAIN FUNCTIONS OF THE EMERGENCY SERVICES**

### **3.1      General**

Rescue will most frequently be the prime function required of the Emergency services. The Ambulance and Fire Services jointly manage the rescue of survivors, whereas the extinction of fire and the rescue of casualties from hazardous substances is the responsibility of the Fire Service. The care and transportation of casualties to hospital is the responsibility of the Ambulance Service. Police will facilitate these operations by co-ordinating the emergency services, local authorities and other agencies.

### **3.2      Thames Valley Police**

The primary areas of Police responsibility at a Major Incident are:

- a) the saving of life in conjunction with the other Emergency Services;
- b) the co-ordination of the Emergency Services, Unitary Authorities, and other organisations acting in support at the scene of the incident;
- c) to secure, protect and preserve the scene, and to control sightseers and traffic through the use of traffic control and cordons;
- d) the investigation of the Incident and obtaining and securing of evidence in conjunction with other investigative bodies where applicable;
- e) the collation and dissemination of casualty information;
- f) primary responsibility for recovery of the dead and identification of the dead on behalf of HM Coroner;
- g) short-term measures to restore normality after all necessary actions have been taken.
- h) co-ordination of media output.
- i) liaison with relatives and family (with other services) by Family Liaison Officers,
- j) protection of property.

### **3.3      Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service**

The primary areas of Fire Service responsibility at a major incident are:

- a) the saving of life in conjunction with the other Emergency Services.
- b) in the event of a major fire to assume control of the incident
- c) rescue of trapped casualties.
- d) prevention of further escalation of the incident, by tackling fires, dealing with released chemicals, other hazardous situations and public decontamination, where required,

- e) the gathering of information and hazard assessment to give to the Police on the need to evacuate members of the public.
- f) liaison with the police regarding the establishment of an inner cordon and subsequent control of that inner cordon.
- g) sectorisation of the incident and to effectively define and relay this information to the Police, Ambulance Service and other agencies attending.
- h) the safety of all personnel involved in rescue work. This includes ensuring that all non-fire service personnel entering the inner cordon are aware of and conform to fire service safety procedures and, in particular the use of the evacuation system and nominal roll procedures.
- i) consideration of the effect and actions to minimise any dangers to the environment.
- j) body recovery, in conjunction with the police as required. Participation in investigations and preparation of reports with supporting evidence for subsequent inquiries.
- k) standing by during the non-emergency/recovery phase as appropriate.

### **3.4 Royal Berkshire Ambulance NHS Trust**

The primary areas of RBAT responsibility during a Major Incident are:

- a) the Medical Assessment of the Incident.
- b) the saving of life in conjunction with other Emergency Services.
- c) the provision of a Command Structure and personnel sufficient to deal with the Incident and to ensure representation at all levels of co-ordinated (i.e. Operational, Tactical and Strategic) command, for medical matters.
- d) the treatment and care of those injured at the scene, either directly or in conjunction with other medical personnel. This is achieved by the establishment at the scene of the Ambulance Casualty Clearing Point and Ambulance Casualty Loading Point(s).
- e) the prioritisation of the evacuation needs of the injured, either directly or in conjunction with other medical personnel.
- f) the provision of a focal point at the incident for all NHS/Medical resources, by the establishment of the Ambulance Control Point and Ambulance Marshalling/Parking Point(s).
- g) the determination of the Hospital(s) to be used for the receipt of those injured (the "Receiving" Hospitals). Each Hospital will then be provided with an Ambulance Liaison Officer.
- h) to alert the following organisations:
  - Police
  - Fire and Rescue
  - Unitary Authorities
  - Neighbouring Ambulance Trusts

Primary Care Trusts and the Strategic Health Authority

Voluntary Aid Societies

Blood Transfusion Services

Nominated Occupational Health Services

- i) the arrangement of the most appropriate means of transporting those injured to Receiving Hospitals.
- j) the provision of adequate personnel and support equipment to the scene by:
  - i requesting “Mutual Aid” support from neighbouring Ambulance Trusts.
  - ii determination of the need and alerting the relevant Duty Officers of the Voluntary Aid Societies, such as British Red Cross, St John Ambulance and Women’s Royal Voluntary Service, in support of RBAT’s response to the Incident or in support of RBAT’s normal operations, and the co-ordination of those activities.
  - iii determination of the need and appointment of a suitably qualified Doctor to become the Medical Incident Officer.
  - iv determination of the need, in conjunction with the Medical Incident Officer, alerting the relevant hospitals and providing transportation to the scene, for Mobile Medical Teams.
- k) to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all medical personnel at the scene by the appointment of an Ambulance Safety Officer. This role will require effective liaison with the Fire Service to ensure up to date hazard information.
- l) the provision of communications facilities for NHS and co-ordination of communications for medical resources at the scene.
- m) the appointment of an Ambulance Press Officer to represent the medical services at the Combined Media Centre.
- n) the continuing provision of “normal services” to the remainder of the Operational Cover area and the restoration to normality at the earliest opportunity.
- o) the production of, and participation in, post incident reports, debriefs, reviews, investigation and enquiry, including Internal, External and Legal/Judicial, as may be required.

## **SECTION 4                      ACTIONS BY FIRST OFFICERS AT THE SCENE**

### **4.1     Police**

The immediate responsibility of the first Police Officer to arrive at the scene is to assume interim command and charge of police resources. The first Police Officer will ensure that the other Emergency Services are informed if not already in attendance. The priority is to assess and inform and not to get personally involved in rescue work.

The first Police Officer must pass the following information by radio to their control room without delay. The mnemonic '**CHALET**' has been devised to help them:

<b>CASUALTIES</b>	approximate numbers of casualties-dead, injured and uninjured.
<b>HAZARDS</b>	present and potential.
<b>ACCESS</b>	best access routes for emergency vehicles and suitable provisional rendezvous points.
<b>LOCATION</b>	the exact location of the incident, using map references if possible.
<b>EMERGENCY</b>	those Emergency Services present and required.
<b>TYPE</b>	the type of incident with brief details of types and numbers of vehicles, trains, buildings, aircraft etc.

The officer must maintain radio contact with the Control Room to co-ordinate the response of the police and other emergency services until relieved.

### **4.2     Fire Service**

The first officer to arrive must not become personally involved in rescue or fire fighting efforts. The primary function of that officer is:

- a) to determine the size, scope and nature of the emergency and convey that information to Fire Service Control using the mnemonic '**CHALET**'.
- b) declare the incident appears to be a Major Incident.
- c) Formulate a plan of action to deal with the developing situation.
- d) Take effective action to implement the plan of action.
- e) Establish as soon as possible effective communications and liaison with the other Emergency Services.

General management of the incident will be in accordance the nationally adopted Fire Service Incident Command System.

### 4.3 Ambulance

The first Ambulance or Response Unit may arrive on scene before the Ambulance Incident Officer (AIO). The role is initially one of assessment and to inform. The following procedures will be adopted:

The Attendant will:

- a) Reconnoitre the scene and give a situation report to Ambulance EMCC using the mnemonic '**CHALET**'.
- b) Declare the incident appears to be a Major Incident.
- c) Establish control and liaise with other Emergency Services to establish  
Ambulance Control Point  
Casualty Clearing Station  
Rendezvous and Marshalling Point
- d) Request ambulance/medical resources required pending arrival of the Ambulance Incident Officer.

The first vehicle attendant should continue to act as AIO until relieved by a Senior Officer and will prepare a brief for that Officer.

#### Ambulance Incident Officer (Medic Silver)

The AIO has the responsibility for tactical decisions and activity of RBAT at the scene of a Major Incident, and in conjunction with the MIO has responsibility for the effective use of all Medical/Paramedical resources at the Site. The role of AIO should be undertaken by an appropriate Officer, having the ability to liaise directly with the MIO, "Silver" Officers of the other Emergency Services, and representatives of other agencies and the Military, if appropriate.

- a) Assume Command and responsibility for all Ambulance operations on Site.
- b) Establish and maintain regular liaison with the MIO, "Silver" Officers of other Emergency Services, representatives of other agencies and, where appropriate, the Military, by attending designated Silver Control or by deployment of a Silver Liaison Officer.
- c) Allocate staff to "Bronze" roles as appropriate.
- d) Make the Tactical decisions necessary to:  
Implement the Strategy determined by the Ambulance Incident Commander/Strategic Co-ordinating Team.  
Manage the Ambulance Resources at the Site.
- e) Ensure that adequate communications are available for all medical agencies.
- f) Confirm with other Emergency Services, site access/egress points.

- g) Assess the need for support aid from neighbouring Trusts and arrange through EMCC for support, where required.
- h) Determine the need for any VAS support, arrange via EMCC and direct as required. Liaise with the Unitary Authority Officer present to achieve a co-ordinated approach.
- i) Appoint a media representative, liaise with the Police Service Press Officer on Site and be present, when required, to respond specifically to the appropriate professional issues.

#### **4.4 Medical Incident Officer (MIO)**

In Berkshire, a Doctor who is a member of the BASICS Organisation (see below) will usually undertake this role. However, all listed hospitals have plans for their individual response to major incidents. Each plan provides for the designation of a Medical Incident Officer (MIO). This role is undertaken by senior clinician with appropriate experience and training. The MIO is taken to the scene by ambulance, but is not part of the mobile medical team and should not get personally involved in rescue work

The MIO has managerial responsibility for the deployment of medical and nursing staff at the scene, and will liaise closely with the Ambulance Incident Officer (Medic Silver) to ensure effective management of resources.

#### **4.5 British Association for Immediate Care Schemes (BASICS)**

Doctors from the British Association for Immediate Care Schemes (BASICS), a registered charity, will be called by the Emergency Medical Communications Centre. They are medical practitioners who voluntarily undergo training in the pre-hospital care of victims of trauma and are suitably equipped for this purpose. Many have undergone additional training, for the management of major incidents.

## **SECTION 5                      SCENE MANAGEMENT**

### **5.1      Rendezvous Points**

The following actions and key rendezvous points will be utilised by the Emergency Services in order to coordinate resource deployment effectively and ensure all personnel are fully briefed as to their role and to highlight safety issues.

#### **Routes to the Scene**

At an early stage the Emergency Services should be notified of the routes to be used by incoming and outgoing (especially important to the Ambulance Service) emergency vehicles. This must take into account any hazards arising from the incident, especially wind related. A one-way system should be introduced for all vehicles attending in order to reduce the risk of blockages leading to delays. A Police Officer of the rank of Inspector will act as Traffic Manager.

#### **Marshalling Point (Outer Rendezvous Point)**

Marshalling points should be designated for all emergency and support service vehicles that are not required as the scene. They should be located beyond the outer cordon if possible and ideally have suitable hard standing for heavy vehicles and have no height or width restrictions. It should have facilities for feeding and briefing staff waiting to be deployed e.g. local fire or ambulance station, local authority car park with shelter. Suitable personnel will be appointed to manage these locations and serve as liaison officers.

#### **Rendezvous Points (Inner)**

A rendezvous point should be agreed by the Emergency Services and notified to incoming resources as soon as possible. Ideally, it should be located between the inner and outer cordons, within walking distance to the scene and have adequate parking space, lighting and shelter, if possible, where personnel can be briefed. Again specific personnel will be appointed to manage this area e.g. Rendezvous Point Officer (Police), Marshalling Officer (Fire Service).

#### **Forward Control Point**

A forward control point will be established in a safe, strategic location, ideally within site of the scene. Emergency services should set up in close proximity to each other and all resources required at the scene of operations will report to this point for deployment. The forward control point will be denoted by designated emergency vehicles displaying their flashing lights.

#### **Fire Service Equipment Point/Ambulance Loading Point**

In consultation with the Police Incident Commander, the Fire Service Incident Commander will agree the location of, and security for, a fire service equipment point. The Fire Service Incident Commander will also agree a suitable location (RVP's or forward control point) to brief non-emergency



service personnel in emergency evacuation procedures from the inner cordon (see Section 13).

Likewise, in consultation with the Ambulance Incident Officer, the Police Incident Commander will agree the siting for the Ambulance Parking/Marshalling Point, the Triage/Casualty Clearing Station, Ambulance Loading Point and Equipment Point.

## **5.2 Control/Command Units**

The main police, fire and ambulance service control/command units will form the focus from which the major incident scene will be managed. These units, together with those of the public utilities and Unitary Authority, will be located close to one another. The choice of the site would be influenced by wind direction, gradient and the risk potential of the hazard from the incident.

The importance of this joint control function should not be underestimated. The experience of other disasters 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.

To avoid confusion, command/control vehicles should be clearly distinguishable from other emergency vehicles, this is achieved by them being the only vehicles displaying their flashing lights. In addition, dedicated command/control vehicles have specific colour flashing lights to use at the incident to denote which service they are (see Section 5.4 Identification).

It should be noted that although the above command/control vehicles are sited at the incident the Police may undertake their tactical management of the incident using a local Police Station.

### **Siting of Units**

The officer in charge of the first control/command unit on scene should make allowance for the siting of the other Emergency Services' command units. The site should take the following matters into consideration:

- a) have sufficient space to accommodate all anticipated agency controls;
- b) be away from the hazards of the scene but close enough to maintain control over it; and
- c) be able to re-locate quickly should the hazard increase.

Points (b) and (c) are most important. Convenience of access must be secondary to safety.

Units should be positioned close enough to ensure efficient liaison and co-ordination, their proximity must not impair good radio communications (about 10 metres separation is ideal). This does not apply to the Police which operates a digital communications system called Airwave.

## **5.3 Arrival of Senior Officers/Transfer of Command**

Senior officers arriving at their respective control/command units are to establish contact with their Incident Commanders and should also make

contact with the other Emergency Service Incident Commanders in order to notify them of any transfer of command.

#### **5.4 Identification**

To aid identification, the blue, red or green identifying lights on each of the main control units of the emergency services and the amber lights of the Unitary Authority Officer, will be switched ON unless to do so would be dangerous, or there is an overriding operational reason not to. The blue lights of all other vehicles must be SWITCHED OFF, unless deemed to be necessary to avoid accidents.

#### **5.5 Provision of Liaison Officers between Emergency Services**

Emergency Service Liaison Officers will be appointed at the earliest possible stage to ensure effective and efficient coordination of resources at the incident . Great care must be taken to avoid duplication of Liaison Officers due to the confusion it can cause.

#### **5.6 Sectorisation**

##### **Inner Cordon**

The Fire Service will be responsible for defining sectors within the inner cordon and will, when defined, disseminate this information to the other emergency services and attending agencies.

##### **Outer Cordon**

The Police will be responsible for defining sectors within the outer cordon. They in turn will disseminate this information to the other emergency services and attending agencies.

#### **5.7 Local Authority Liaison Officer**

The nominated local authority will provide a suitable member of personnel to represent the Authority at the scene of the incident, to give advice and liaise with the emergency services and to manage any of the Authorities deployed assets. In addition, other organisations involved should also have a nominated liaison officer, or point of contact.

## **SECTION 6                      UNITARY AUTHORITY ASSISTANCE**

### **6.1      Response**

The main functions of a Local Authority during a major emergency are to support the emergency services, provide essential services to survivors and evacuees, and to also co-ordinate the recovery process.

The six Berkshire Unitary Authorities each employ at least one officer who is solely responsible for emergency planning, resilience and contingencies. One of their functions is the preparation and maintenance of the Emergency Response Plan for their Unitary.

Following the declaration of a major incident, the Unitary Authority within which the incident falls will initially act in support of the emergency services, as a category 1 responder (under the CCA) and then may take the leading role in the recovery phase. Their response will be flexible and commensurate with the resources available to them at the time.

When there is any doubt about which unitary authority is to assume the lead role due to the nature or location of the incident, the lead Unitary Authority will be determined by the chief executives in whose area the incident has occurred.

The authority will be alerted directly by one of the emergency services, (normally the police) and will be asked to initiate Major Incident Procedures. Key unitary authority staff will then implement the Emergency Response Plan.

### **6.2      Notification**

Each Authority maintains a 24 hour emergency contact facility. Unitary Authority resources however are not on a 24 hour standby and therefore it is essential that they are notified as soon as possible. Unitary authorities need to be updated constantly as the incident progresses in order that their response is measured and appropriate.

Good liaison between the emergency services and the unitaries, particularly at the scene, is essential and will be enhanced by the presence of a Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO) located at Tactical (Silver) and/or Operational (Bronze) control points.

A senior unitary officer will be requested to attend Strategic Command (Gold).

### **6.3      Other Assistance from Unitary Authorities**

Unitary Authorities can resource the following:

- a) the provision of technical advice and resources, e.g. structural advice
- b) environmental health management
- c) logistical support through Local Authority contract or other resources
- d) premises for temporary mortuaries, reception, rest and media centres.
- e) long term management of recovery phase

- f) building control advise and waste management services
- g) highway road closures and diversions
- h) co-ordination of human aspects and support
- i) translation services
- j) co-ordination of voluntary agencies
- k) provision of public information e.g. information telephone lines

#### **6.4 Mutual Aid (from the Military)**

The request for military aid to the civilian authority (see Section 15 Other Assistance), should be channelled through the Strategic Co-ordinating Group (Gold) by the Gold Representative from the unitary authority within whose area the incident has occurred.

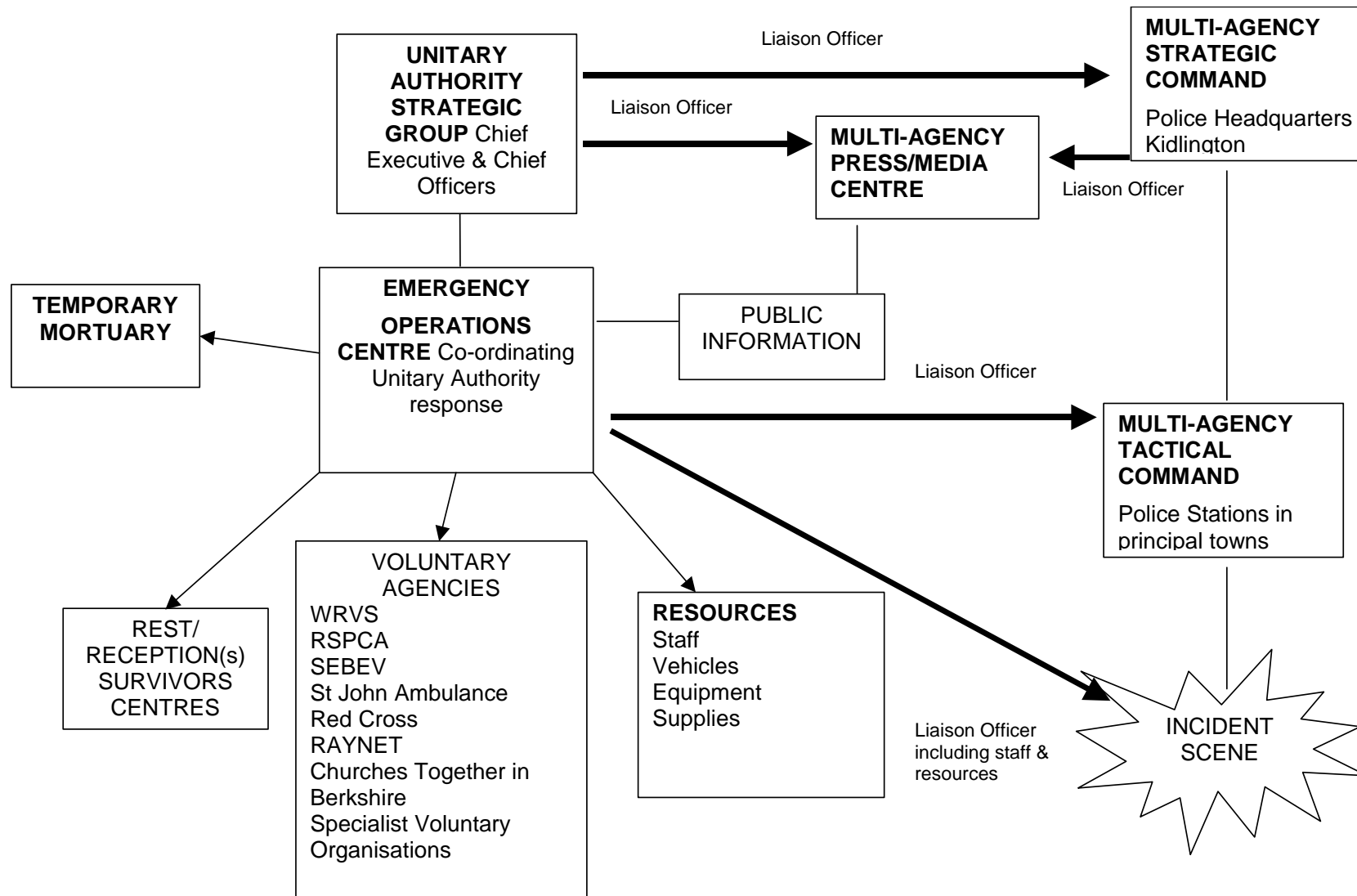
#### **6.5 Involvement**

The unitary authority involvement during the recovery phase and return may be prolonged and extensive. It may include:-

- a) Co-ordinating, psychological support services (in conjunction with the local primary care and healthcare trusts), emergency housing, further technical and specialised advice and resources and many other areas.
- b) Continuing contact between the emergency services, voluntary agencies and the Unitary Authorities is vital before, during and after incidents to establish liaison. Recognition of the individual roles each organisation fulfils is not only recommended, but essential to a successful and professional return to normality.

#### **6.6 Command and Control Structure**

The following diagram details, in principle, the command and control structure within each Authority.



## **SECTION 7**

## **COMMAND AND CONTROL**

### **7.1 Strategic (Gold), Tactical (Silver), Operational (Bronze)**

Gold, Silver and Bronze are titles of functions adopted by the Police and Ambulance services. Although this terminology is not used within the Fire Service, it operates a compatible command structure. In summary, the roles of each designated officer can be described thus:

#### **GOLD - Strategic**

Gold is the Commander in overall charge of each service, responsible for formulating the strategy for the incident. The Gold Commander establishes the strategic objectives and overall management framework for the incident and ensures long-term resourcing and access to expertise. Each Gold is in direct command of the resources of their own service, but delegates tactical decisions to their respective Silver. Each service Gold will liaise with central government and other bodies, provide additional resources for the scene; and maintain a strategic overview of its own operation. A Strategic Co-ordinating Group will be formed at Police Gold Command, which is usually situated at Police Headquarters. Here, all of the key services, local authority and agencies involved will be represented by a nominated person. These individuals must be able to make executive decisions about the organisation's resources without the need to refer back, as well as having the authority to seek aid from others to support their efforts and role in the incident.

#### **SILVER – Tactical**

The Tactical or Silver Commander will be responsible for deploying personnel and equipment on the incident ground in order to achieve the strategic aims of Gold Command, they should not become personally involved with operations at the incident ground. Depending upon the circumstances of the incident the Tactical Command may be co-ordinated at the scene, or a nearby building. On most occasions this will be at a nearby police station which has facilities designated for this function. It should be noted that the Fire Service locate their tactical command at the incident scene but will send a suitable liaison officer to the inter agency Silver Command. When more than one agency is operating at the tactical level there must be consultation and co-operation between the various Silver Commanders. In order to effect co-ordination, Tactical Co-ordinating Group meetings should be held at regular intervals attended by each Silver Commander and the equivalent Unitary Authority Officer. The Police will co-ordinate the meetings and maintain a written record.

#### **BRONZE – Operational**

Bronze Commanders will control and deploy the resources within a geographical sector, or functional role to implement the tactics defined by the Silver Commander.

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. At the

outset, and before this formal structure is established, it is imperative that the senior officers of each service on scene liaise with each other. This will be the foundation upon which all later meetings will be based.

The emergency services will appoint a number of "Bronze" officers who will perform various supervisory functions depending on the areas of operation designated by "Silver".

As the incident progresses, and more resources attend the RVP, the level of supervision will increase in proportion. As senior managers arrive they will be assigned functions within the Gold - Silver - Bronze structure. Within the Police service, the officer who began the role should remain with his supervisor to maintain continuity of policy and to act as Staff Officer. The fire service will invariably re-deploy that Officer to other duties. It is important that the title holder wears a uniquely identifiable tabard and passes it on to their successor.

By the use of this universal structure the emergency services will be better able to communicate with each other and understand each other's functions and authority.

## **7.2 Inter-Agency Resources**

Any service may request the temporary assistance of personnel and equipment of another. In these circumstances, while the supporting service will relinquish the immediate control of those resources to the other service for the duration of the task, it will nevertheless retain overall command of its personnel and equipment at all times.

Personnel from one service who assist another in this way should only be given tasks for which they are trained and not simply to supplement the other service in a potentially dangerous situation. For instance, Police officers may be directed to implement cordons or local authority staff to become stretcher bearers in order to release firefighters for rescue work. They should not undertake hazardous rescue work themselves.

## **SECTION 8                      THE STRATEGIC CO-ORDINATING GROUP (SCG)**

### **8.1      General**

The purpose of the strategic level of management is to establish a framework of policy within which the tactical commanders (Silver) will work. They give consideration to the provision of resources and prioritisation of demands from the tactical commanders.

The requirement for strategic management may be confined to a single agency. Certain incidents require a multi-agency response at the Gold level and a Strategic Co-ordinating Group may be formed of nominated senior members of each key organisation involved with the response.

Each representative must be able to make executive decision concerning the resources of their agency and have the authority to seek the aid of other agencies in support of their role.

The Strategic Co-ordinating Group will take into account the features of an incident and may assign control of specific functions to one or more of the agencies. In extreme circumstances, such as a terrorist attack, it may be necessary for the Police to take executive action in respect of the total incident.

### **8.2      Representatives**

Typically, the Co-ordinating Group consists of :-

#### **Police (who will usually chair the meeting)**

- Senior Police Officer (Gold Commander)

- Staff Officer

- Senior Investigating Officer (SIO)

- Minute taker

- Media Officer

- Various Officers depending on the agenda of the specific meeting, such as casualty bureau, etc

#### **Fire**

- Principal Fire Officer (Gold Fire) and Staff Officer

#### **Ambulance**

- Senior Ambulance Officer (Medic Gold)

#### **Unitary Authority**

- Senior Unitary Authority Officer



**Other**

Additional representation will depend on the particular incident, eg HSE Inspectors, senior Railtrack safety staff and Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB).

**Media Strategy**

Thames Valley Police will provide a Senior Press Officer to act as Press Advisor to the Strategic Co-ordinating Group, who will be responsible for formulating the press strategy for the group in compliance with the procedures agreed in the Joint Berkshire Media Strategy.

**Co-ordination of Press Releases**

In any major incident it is vital that any information given to the media is accurate, timely and consistent. Thames Valley Police will take on the responsibility of co-ordinating the media output. This is not to prevent any agency involved in the response to an incident from dealing with the media directly rather, the intention is that consistent and agreed messages are given out.

**Media Briefing Centres**

The responsibility for finding suitable accommodation for a media briefing centre, should one be required for a major incident, will lie with the Unitary Authority in whose area the incident has occurred.

**8.3 Location of Meetings**

The Police will establish the machinery to co-ordinate and organise the appropriate facilities for the SCG. For incidents in the Thames Valley area, the co-ordination meetings will normally be held at Police Headquarters at Kidlington.

The Police will also be responsible for co-ordinating facilities available to the media and the opportunity for press conferences should these be necessary outside of the Media Briefing Centre sourced by the Unitary Authority. Information should only be released to the media after consultation with the media representatives of all members of the Co-ordinating Group. The press officers from each of the agencies will consult closely and ensure a co-ordinated approach is made to the media.

**8.4 Frequency of Meetings**

The Police Gold Commander will call an initial meeting of the Co-ordinating Group at the earliest reasonable opportunity. Subsequent meetings can be arranged at this first meeting or called by the Police Gold Commander at the request of another member of the group.

In general, the nature and difficulties of the operation will govern the frequency of meetings. The aim will be to ensure a smooth transition from the first operational stages of the incident to the later recovery stage.

## **8.5 Situation Reports**

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

## **8.6 Priorities**

Priorities are essential to create a cohesive joint strategy. This will indicate how the resources available can be deployed in the most effective and efficient manner.

Each service 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-service difficulties may be avoided and each may concentrate upon those actions, which contribute most to the success of the operation. In some instances the group may be very complex and include other expertise such as the Chair of the Joint Health Advisory Cell, or the Health Protection Agencies Radiation Protection Division etc.

## **8.7 Future Developments**

Consideration should be given to the requirements of later phases of the operation, including the identification of actions which need to be taken in advance: eg if heavy lifting equipment is expected to be needed, it may be necessary to identify and secure roads to the scene, widening access and strengthening surfaces, etc.

In the latter stages thinking ahead may be particularly important to the Recovery Working Group whose task will be to manage the aftermath of the incident, through to normality.

## **8.8 Minutes**

Minutes, or a "Policy Log", must be kept of all meetings of the SCG. It is also essential that individual members of the group make their own notes of meetings. Minutes, "Policy Logs" and personal logs, should provide an aide memoir of the continuing overall progress of the operation. They will provide a perspective against which decisions on priorities can be made.

A major incident will necessarily result in an investigation as to its cause and, quite possibly, a formal inquest, inquiry, criminal trial or increasingly civil litigation. The actions of the senior officers of the emergency services will be of considerable interest. Notes of meetings will be made available in subsequent proceedings.

## **SECTION 9**

## **COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS**

### **9.1 General**

Within Berkshire, each of the emergency services has entirely independent systems of radio communications. That is not to say they are totally incompatible, but certain procedures need to be adopted to achieve mutual communication. It is useful to be aware of the various types of communications employed by each constituent member.

### **9.2 Thames Valley Police (TVP)**

Thames Valley Police operates a force-wide networked command and control system with the capability to communicate with all officers. Computerised logs are maintained on all resources and incidents.

Centrally based mobile communications vehicles are available for deployment to scene and can be utilised as control vehicles.

TVP operates a single digital radio scheme called Airwave, a secure digital radio network dedicated for the exclusive use of the UK's emergency and public safety services. This means that every officer can effectively communicate with any other officer via specific talk groups. Airwave provides as many talk groups as are needed. Being an encrypted network, Airwave communications cannot be scanned or monitored by outsiders.

As no other service is using Airwave at this time, TVP will provide liaison officers with Airwave radios to the other services at the scene to ensure effective inter-agency communication.

### **9.3 British Transport Police (BTP)**

The British Transport Police use UHF hand held radios. These are compatible with the force main RT that has numerous channels to cater for the national coverage that BTP provides.

BTP can also mobilise an incident control vehicle similarly equipped to the other force command vehicles.

### **9.4 Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS)**

The command and mobilising system for RBFRS is situated at its Reading Headquarters and is able to despatch fire service units by the use of its computer mobilising system using VHF radios, paging and telephone systems as appropriate.

All fire service front-line appliances are equipped with VHF radios and mobile phones and have the ability to communicate with the Fire Service Control from anywhere in the county. UHF personal radios are also held on all its front line appliances, together with an additional supply on the incident command units for command purposes.

The RBFRS initial contact point at an incident will normally consist of the first appliance or service vehicle in attendance. This will subsequently be

replaced by a stipulated appliance and personnel acting as a dedicated control point and a purpose built incident control unit, with enhanced command and control facilities. .

### 9.5 Royal Berkshire Ambulance NHS Trust (RBAT)

RBAT have a variety of communications systems. The emergency vehicles are fitted with VHF radios channelled into the EMCC at Ambulance Trust Headquarters, Wokingham.

The EMCC uses a satellite positioning system to assist in the determination of best resource deployment. A digital messaging system is also used to pass information to the vehicles. The Paramedic Response Units are similarly equipped, and many Officers have a cellular telephone.

The Ambulance Mobile Control Vehicle has a supply of hand-held UHF radios and full VHF and UHF communications. It will be used as a separate control for the incident only, allowing the EMCC to continue functioning.

### 9.6 Unitary Authority Communications

Many Unitary Authorities are provided with their own integral radio communications systems, however these may not be compatible between boroughs or with the Emergency Services. **Unitary Authorities will be equipped with Airwave radios which will ensure a radio link with the emergency services and between each Authority.**

### 9.7 Warning

Airwave is the only system that is secure from casual eavesdroppers. Radio scanners capable of receiving UHF and VHF transmissions are readily available. Similarly, fax scanners can be quickly brought to the scene to intercept information transmitted between the services and agencies. This should be borne in mind when wording any transmission, including cellular telephone conversations, which may contain sensitive information.

### 9.8 Access overload Control (ACCOLC)

The ACCOLC system is a Government authorised scheme whereby the major mobile telephone companies (Cellnet, Vodaphone, Orange etc) can reserve exclusive use of available channels for the emergency services and local authorities at the scene of a major incident. It allows for calls to be made without being interrupted by overloaded radio telephone networks.

This facility is not expensive to implement but can cause inconvenience to normal subscribers. Therefore it should only be initiated after careful deliberation and on the authority of Police Gold who has raised the matter with the Senior Co-ordinating Group.

## **9.9 British Telecom Assistance**

British Telecom is able to offer the Emergency Services certain specialist communication equipment for use in a major incident.

## **9.10 Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network (RAYNET)**

RAYNET is a nation-wide voluntary group of qualified radio amateurs who are able to provide emergency radio communications to the emergency services, local authorities and central government departments. They have pledged that their time and equipment will be made available to provide voice and data communications at very short notice.

The assistance of RAYNET should be sought from the relevant Unitary Authority. The Unitary Authorities have RAYNET aerial facilities within their emergency operations centres to facilitate its use, when required.

## **SECTION 10                      THE CARE AND TREATMENT OF DISASTER VICTIMS**

### **10.1    Categories**

A primary responsibility of the Emergency Services at a Major Incident is the recovery, treatment and documentation of disaster victims, who fall into one of four categories:

- Uninjured;
- Injured;
- Dead; and
- Evacuees.

### **10.2    Uninjured**

These people will have been involved in the Incident, but will not necessarily require medical attention. They must be removed from the hazard to a safe area.

The Unitary Authorities, in liaison with the Emergency Services, are responsible for the provision and organisation of premises suitable for use as Survivor Reception Centres. Here the Local Authority supported by voluntary agencies can supply support to those involved. It may be that survivors can make telephone calls to family and friends and investigators can interview witnesses. The centre needs to provide shelter, first aid treatment, basic welfare needs, communications and documentation.

By the nature of the incident, all survivors may be witnesses, and as such Thames Valley Police may need to interview and document the details of all persons. The Police Tactical Commander will decide upon the level of documentation and provide security and documentation teams to the Centre. The details will be collated for the benefit of the Senior Investigating Officer and the Casualty Bureau.

### **10.3    Injured**

These people need to be rescued from the scene as quickly and safely as possible. RBAT and RBFRS will work together to remove casualties from the scene. RBFRS has a specialised role in removing casualties from fire and hazardous substance situations. RBAT will initiate pre-hospital care and the transport of patients to the receiving hospitals.

### **Casualty Triage and Documentation**

To work an effective triage system on scene, and to minimise delay in evacuation by lengthy documentation, it is essential that all casualties are prioritised and labelled in accordance with the nationally accepted Casualty Triage Label. This will be achieved by RBAT as follows –

The standard prioritisation of patients covers four categories:-

P1 - Immediate First Priority – Orange/Red;

P2 - Urgent Second Priority - Yellow;

P3 - Delayed Third Priority - Green; and

P4 - Deceased - White.

### **Documentation**

Each casualty will be documented by RBAT. Medical observations and treatment given at the scene or during transfer to hospital will be documented on the Standard Patient Report Form. Each patient will also be labelled with a Triage Label as above. Patients will be logged leaving the Casualty Clearing Station and also on arrival at hospitals to ensure that all patients can be accounted for. This will be achieved by the Hospital Ambulance Liaison Officer (HALO) at the Receiving Hospital.

In addition, TVP will need to record the names and details of the injured and the hospital they are being sent to, for onward transmission to the Casualty Bureau. There will be a number of Police Officers at the Accident and Emergency Department performing the role of Hospital Documentation Team working closely with the Hospital Ambulance Liaison Officer. TVP maintain Hospital Documentation Boxes at the main hospitals in their area.

### **Casualty Bureau**

If needed Thames Valley Police will open a Casualty Bureau at Police Headquarters which is the only place that will accurately collate details of dead, surviving and evacuated persons. It is imperative that the Casualty Bureau alone provides casualty information to the media.

The purpose of the Casualty Bureau is to provide a central contact and information point for all records and data relating to persons who have, or are believed to have been involved in an incident. It has three fundamental tasks:

- To obtain relevant information on the persons involved, or potentially involved.
- To process that information.
- To provide accurate information to relatives and friends, the investigating officer and HM Coroner.

This will involve:

- Receiving enquiries from the general public and recoding “missing persons” reports.
- Recording details of survivors, evacuees, the injured and deceased, including their whereabouts.
- Formulating a comprehensive list of missing persons.
- Collating data to assist in the identification of all persons involved.
- Liaising with the Ante Mortem Team.
- Informing enquirers (by most appropriate method) of the condition and location of these persons.



The bureau does not close until all the casualties have been identified, all next of kin have been informed, and telephone enquiries have diminished to a level where they can be dealt with by the normal police switchboard.

#### **10.4 Deceased**

The deceased persons or body parts should not be moved unless that is the only way of reaching a live casualty, or if the dead body is likely to deteriorate due to environmental hazards such as fire. Dead bodies must otherwise be left in situ until the evidence gathering stage begins.

All the emergency services have a legal obligation to HM Coroner to provide evidential continuity of the handling of a dead body from its location at the incident through its recovery, to the post mortem examination.

If only one officer has handled the corpse then continuity is simple to establish. If several officers, perhaps from different services, have handled the corpse then they must provide statements and continuity evidence regarding that corpse.

Once recovered, bodies will probably be removed in the first instance to a body holding area where they will be stored before transfer to the temporary mortuary facility, normally established under Local Authority arrangements. At the temporary mortuary teams of Police officers work with the pathologist and other specialists to ascertain the identity and cause of death of the deceased, and provide security.

Berkshire has a preferred temporary mortuary location which is maintained by the Unitary Authorities. There is a generic plan for use with other locations when circumstances dictate that the preferred site cannot be used.

#### **10.5 Evacuees**

Some emergencies may require the evacuation of a large area because of the danger to life resulting from an incident. The decision to evacuate lies with the Police Incident Commander and is usually undertaken on the advice of the Fire Incident Commander, but circumstances may dictate that personnel from all of the services are included. Evacuation Assembly Point(s) from where evacuees may be transported to a rest centre may need to be set up within easy reach of the evacuation area.

Emergency accommodation in the form of a Rest Centre and transport can be provided by the Unitary Authority. Transport and personnel for the rest centre may be provided by local authority personnel and/or voluntary agencies. It will need to provide security, welfare, communication, catering and medical facilities. Evacuees will need to be documented in order that Casualty Bureau may be informed. The Police will appoint a Liaison Officer for the Rest Centre.

Liaison between the Police, Ambulance and Unitary Authority Officers will be necessary to co-ordinate the evacuation, taking into account any special needs, e.g. disabled and elderly people.



## **10.6 Family and Friends**

Any family and friends of the dead, or survivors should be directed to the Family and Friends Reception Centre where Police will provide a secure environment for the necessary information handling. The location of this Centre will be identified by Police with assistance from the Unitary Authority, and will be staffed by Police and Unitary Authority personnel assisted where necessary by the voluntary aid societies.

## **SECTION 11**

## **THE USE OF HELICOPTERS**

### **11.1 Thames Valley Air Ambulance/Thames Valley Police Helicopter**

#### **General**

Where an incident occurs which involves a very high number of casualties, it may be necessary for some of them to be conveyed to a hospital some distance from the scene. In such cases the Ambulance EMCC may deploy air ambulances from surrounding Ambulance Trusts and, in certain circumstances, the military. The paramount use for helicopters in the initial stages of an incident is to provide good assessments of the incident and information to the Control Units. Any helicopters requiring to land must do so safely, taking into account that there may be loose debris, etc, which may cause a hazard when blown about. The site may also be a scene of crime and it is vital that the down draught from helicopter rotors do not disturb the scene.

#### **Considerations**

The AIO, in consultation with the senior Police Officer present, will consider the following:-

- a the paramount type of injury;
- b the type of aircraft available;
- c the location and type of incident;
- d visibility and weather conditions;
- e flying time to the incident;
- f hazards present and potential;
- g staff resources at the receiving hospital to assist with transfer of patients.

### **11.2 Police Helicopters**

Thames Valley Police operate two helicopters over the whole of the Thames Valley area, plus Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire. The helicopters can, in some circumstances, provide a useful platform from which some key members of the Co-ordinating Group can obtain an overall view of the scene(s). The Police helicopter has a heli-tele capability back to Police Command Centres.

The Police helicopters have casualty evacuation capability and are equipped with Nite Sun. In addition they have public address systems.

### **11.3 Ambulance Helicopters**

The Thames Valley Air Ambulance operates in the Berkshire area and also is available to operate in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and surrounding areas. The helicopter is capable of carrying two stretcher patients and a number of passengers. TVAA is co-ordinated and mobilised by RBAT.

#### **11.4 Temporary Heli-pads**

Temporary heli-pads need to be identified with consideration for:-

- a safety of “crew” and aircraft from fire, etc;
- b safety of other aerial transport, and
- c availability of suitable landing sites adjacent to the Ambulance Loading Point and the receiving hospital; and
- d down-draught over the scene causing fire spread, undue disturbance of chemical release, the removal of evidence, or excessive noise.

#### **11.5 “Nite-sun”**

“Nite-sun” is a searchlight fitted to Police and some military helicopters which provides very powerful illumination over a wide area. Its use can often aid rescue work pending the arrival of conventional lighting.

#### **11.6 Emergency Landing Procedures**

To assist incoming helicopters, an officer from any of the emergency services should be appointed to provide a focal point for the pilot.

The officer, if requested, should:-

- a) direct the helicopter in for landing by standing with their back to the wind, and stretching out arms to indicate the landing area;
- b) approach or leave the helicopter in pilot’s field of frontal vision; and
- c) at night, indicate the landing zone by converging the headlights of two vehicles over the area and place the vehicles downwind to facilitate the helicopter landing into the wind. Night helicopter landings are extremely hazardous and will not be undertaken at unlicensed sites unless absolutely vital.
- d) The pilot of the helicopter will make the final decision regarding the landing and the site. The procedures above should only be viewed as a guide as Medical Helicopter Pilots are well used to suitable landing site recognition from the air.

#### **11.7 Emergency Flying Restrictions**

The Police have the facility, through the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to impose flying restrictions over the scene under certain circumstances. The most likely reason would be the safety of those in the air or on the ground. Requests should be made through the Police Gold Commander.

## **SECTION 12 INVESTIGATION**

### **12.1 Court action**

Every major incident will be the subject of an investigation whether for HM Coroner, a public inquiry, or civil or criminal court proceedings. Almost every major incident in the UK occurs as a result of human or mechanical fault; consequently every major incident is a potential crime scene, the most serious being homicide. The Police Incident Commander will immediately appoint a Senior Investigating Officer, to enquire into the circumstances as a major crime enquiry.

### **12.2 Retention of evidence**

These hearings will require evidence of the highest quality. This can only be gathered if the scene is secured as soon as possible and anything which can be reasonably anticipated to be required as evidence is preserved and not damaged, moved or disposed of without reference to the Senior Investigating Officer.

Depending upon the nature of the incident, several different agencies may carry out their own investigation. They may all attend the scene with video/photographic teams and technical experts.

### **12.3 Notes**

Each agency may have different criteria as to what is admissible evidence. The Police will need to obtain evidence of the highest standard for court and will require that all evidence is left in situ unless the threat to life prevents this. Accurate notes of what transpires at the scene need to be made. It is of major importance for all levels of command that all action and policy decisions are documented and logged, including all alternative ways of action and why they were not chosen at the time.

## **SECTION 13**

## **SAFETY**

### **13.1 Factories and Other Industrial Sites**

These locations have a range of potential hazards, including substances that are flammable, reactive, explosive or toxic. Sometimes the hazards are multiple (e.g. flammable and toxic) and may involve corrosive or radioactive materials.

Protective clothing and breathing apparatus may be necessary for personal safety. Some hazards are not detectable by human senses. For some sites there are specific emergency plans made under the regulations that control the site. These are held by the Emergency Services and other agencies involved.

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

### **13.2 Fire Service Hazardous Material Officers**

A number of Fire Officers have undergone specialist training in hazardous materials and as such will be mobilised to incidents involving asbestos, radiation, chemicals and/or biohazards. They will liaise with other relevant agencies and their own advisers to determine action to be taken in such an emergency.

### **13.3 Emergency Evacuation Signal**

At the outset, all three emergency services may be employed within the inner cordon (rescue zone). The Fire Service has an emergency evacuation signal which all personnel must be aware of and respond to if the area becomes hazardous. The Fire Service Safety Officer will blow several short sharp blasts on an Acme Thunderer whistle and declare a safe point to which personnel should withdraw.

### **13.4 Cordon Control Points**

Authorised personnel are logged in and out of the inner cordon by established systems.

As long as the Fire Service are in charge of the hazard zone within the inner cordon they are responsible for logging all personnel in and out of the inner cordon, including utility company personnel and required representatives from other organisations.

Police are responsible for logging their own personnel, as well as representatives of other agencies, within the Outer Cordon, including engineers from the utilities and other agencies.

The ultimate responsibility for the health and safety of personnel working within the inner cordon remains with individual agencies. This should ensure personnel arriving at the scene have appropriate personal protective

equipment and are adequately trained and briefed Health and safety issues will be addressed collectively at multi-agency meetings on the basis of risk assessment.

### **13.5 Environmental Health**

Unitary Authorities can mobilise their Environmental Health Officers to a scene where there is considered to be a risk from communicable diseases or environmental hazards (including incidents where chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear terrorism is suspected). They will be able to offer advice on precautionary measures and assist with the correct treatment of infected items, in liaison with the consultant in Communicable Disease Control.

RBAT is responsible for alerting the Area Health Authority via the consultant in Communicable Disease Control where public health issues are raised.

## **SECTION 14                      MANAGEMENT OF SPECIFIC INCIDENTS**

### **14.1 Incidents on Railways - Inter Service Co-operation**

The following section outlines an agreement that has been reached nationally between the British Transport Police (BTP) and all Home Department Police forces. It reiterates principles of responsibility which have worked well in the past, but which should be considered flexible as circumstances demand.

At incidents involving terrorism or murder, the responsibility for investigation will lie with the Thames Valley Police.

In other major incidents within the jurisdiction of British Transport Police, the overall responsibility will normally remain with British Transport Police unless the incident is of such a scale or there are special reasons for creating a joint investigating team. Other organisations will have an investigative role to perform including the Health & Safety Executive and the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB).

All officers arriving at the scene will report to the senior officer present. That officer, whether from BTP or Thames Valley Police, will perform the function of Silver Commander. Where the first supervisor to arrive is from Thames Valley Police, it is recommended that the first BTP officer to arrive be appointed as liaison officer where their specialist knowledge will prove useful.

It is essential that the Police response between Thames Valley and BTP is co-ordinated and concerted with no wasted resources or duplication of roles. The first officer from either force will assume the role of Silver Commander, taking responsibility for the initial co-ordination and deployment of resources from each force.

On arrival of their counterpart from the other force, they will work together forming a "Incident Officer Team", ensuring the resources, equipment and communications of both forces are utilised to the best effort.

In broad terms, the responsibility for each force is BTP on-site, Thames Valley Police off-site. The specific responsibilities overleaf are suggested as a guide and it is emphasised that just as each incident and the resources available will be different in each case so flexibility, discussion and mutual co-operation is essential to ensure the co-ordinated response discussed earlier.

When the Inner Cordon is established, it will be the responsibility of the Police, in conjunction with the Fire Service, to clear the area of unnecessary personnel (see also Section 13).

<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>FORCE</b>
<b>Gold Commanders</b>	Thames Valley Police with BTP senior officer working in conjunction advising on BTP/Railtrack matters and present at co-ordinating group meetings.
<b>Investigation</b>	Except in the case of terrorism or murder, BTP will be responsible for investigating the incident. Where

	<p>an incident is of such a magnitude or there are special reasons whereby a joint team should be formed, this will be done after discussions between senior officers of both forces.</p> <p>Any Police investigation would be carried out in conjunction with the RAIB.</p>
<b>Inner Cordon and matters on railway property</b>	BTP
<b>Outer Cordon</b>	Thames Valley Police.
<b>Removal of bodies</b>	The removal of all bodies from the scene must be co-ordinated by Thames Valley Police whichever service effects the removal.
<b>Mortuary, etc</b>	Thames Valley Police.
<b>Casualty Information Bureau and Identification</b>	Thames Valley Police.
<b>Property of deceased</b>	Thames Valley Police.
<b>Property from scene</b>	BTP.
<b>Press/media</b>	Joint response through co-ordinating group.
<b>Traffic (Road)</b>	Thames Valley Police.
<b>Hospital documentation</b>	Thames Valley Police with BTP assistance if necessary

## 14.2 Major Aircraft Incidents

Berkshire is directly under the flight line to and from Heathrow Airport. Due to the weight of air traffic within the County boundary there is a risk of a Major Air Crash occurring. In the event of such an incident the following support can be offered from the Emergency Services based at Heathrow:

### Fire

Heathrow Airport Fire Service provides a staged response depending upon the locality of the incident. If it occurs within the perimeter fence of the Airport they will provide a 100% attendance, ie every available resource deemed necessary to deal with the situation.

If the incident occurs within a 2 mile distance of either end of the runway, outside the perimeter fence, they will provide a 50% response. This will be half of the available resources at the time of the incident. The reasoning behind this is adequate fire cover must be maintained within the airport boundaries in order for the facility to continue functioning.

If an incident occurs beyond the areas referred to above, Senior Officers and any other available resource will be sent, but with the same restriction as with the 50% attendance.



The use of the facilities on offer should not be overlooked as they are specifically trained in aircraft incidents and procedures, in addition they have specialist equipment which can provide major foam attack capabilities, when resources permit.

### **Police**

The Police Service at Heathrow is an extension of the Metropolitan Police Service. It is funded by Heathrow Airport and as such the use of these Officers is specifically for airport duties.

If an incident occurs within the perimeter fence, they will take full control of all Police activities, as it is their Police Authority area. All functions performed will be in line with the Airport Incident Plans for such an emergency.

If the incident occurs outside the perimeter fence, they will not make an attendance unless requested to do so by the Police Authority within whose area the incident has occurred.

Any air related incident within the TVP area will be dealt with under the roles and responsibilities outlined in Sections 3 and 14 of this document. The principles of command and control outlined in this document will apply.

The investigation of an aircraft accident is the responsibility of the Air Aircraft Investigation Branch (AAIB), part of the Department for Transport. The AAIB investigation's purpose is to establish the circumstances and causes of an accident to ensure that safety is taken to prevent that accident occurring again. The police role is to establish whether there is sufficient evidence to justify criminal proceedings. After the initial emergency response phase, the accident site should be disturbed as little as possible until the arrival of the AAIB investigation team.

Overall responsibility for the safety at the incident will usually reside with the Authority in control, either the Fire service, Police, or AAIB. The same control of the inner and outer cordon applies.

### **Ambulance**

A private company, along with facilities provided by London Ambulance Service (LAS), represents the emergency medical provision within the Airport. The private company is contracted to provide a number of ambulances on the site at all times. Ambulances back-up this provision from LAS as needed. The Airport Authority pays for the provision of some transport and personnel provided by the LAS for airport duties.

The Airport can provide high reach recovery vehicles for casualty removal. These are available outside the site if requested in an emergency. A minimum level of medical cover must however be maintained at the Airport to continue with normal operations.

### **Mobilisation**

If any of the above support from the Airport is deemed necessary to assist with an incident, the request should be made to the relevant control room at the Airport. The response from that service will be dependent upon the available resources at the time of request and could vary from time to time.

However, all services have indicated that they will assist in whatever way they can.

### **14.3 Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB)**

The AAIB investigate all civil aircraft accidents that occur in the UK and help in the investigation of military accidents at the request of the Ministry of Defence. There are a number of statutory powers associated with this role through The Civil Aviation (Investigations of Accidents) regulations 1989. These regulations give the AAIB powers of investigation relating to the management of the scene. Close liaison between the AAIB investigators and the emergency services at the scene is essential at the earliest possible opportunity.

The initial AAIB response to a major air accident will consist of a small team of pilots and engineers who will work with RAF pathologists where necessary. The police investigation will be carried out in close co-operation with that of the AAIB. Police will be responsible for contacting the AAIB on being informed of an incident. The legal notification of an incident rests first with the commander of the aircraft, or if they are killed or incapacitated, the operator. In practice the first information usually reaches the AAIB from the police force dealing with the incident.

### **14.4 British Airways Emergency Procedures Information Centre (EPIC)**

EPIC acts as a central airline information co-ordinating point. It collates information from airline sources on a database, this is indicated as world-wide, including details of all passengers, crew and baggage. Most airlines operating through the UK subscribe to EPIC, which is situated at Heathrow. EPIC acts as an information centre following an incident and handles a large number of telephone calls that might otherwise be directed to the Police Casualty Bureau. EPIC documentation is identical to the National Casualty Bureau paperwork to ease enquiries.

### **14.5 Incidents on the River Thames**

#### **Background**

The River Thames is a major leisure amenity used by many thousands of people each year. Vessels on the river vary in size from commercial passenger boats carrying up to 250 people to small cabin cruisers of less than 20 feet long. The crews also vary from the totally inexperienced to professional crews whose working life is spent on the river.

For much of its length the river acts as administrative boundary between emergency service and local authority organisations.

Land based access to the river is constrained by buildings and private land on both banks. It can be difficult for the crew of a vessel to relate its location on the river to distinguishing marks suitable for responding emergency service resources to identify.

The navigation authority for the non-tidal River Thames is the Environment Agency. Unlike the tidal reaches of the river, there is no statutory search and rescue authority for the river above Teddington.

## **Response to Major Incidents on the River Thames**

### **Principles**

The response to a major incident on the River Thames will be based on each emergency service and Local Authority carrying out the roles and responsibilities outlined in Sections 3 and 14 of this document.

The principles of command and control outlined in this document will apply. Thames Valley Police will act as the search and rescue co-ordinating body.

It is recognised that the Environment Agency has information expertise and resources which can significantly affect the response to an incident and therefore they should be notified of an incident on the River as early as possible, and brought into the response.

Whichever emergency service or agency is first notified of a river-based incident will obtain as much information as possible, especially an accurate location of the incident, and pass the information to the other emergency services. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service will notify the relevant Unitary Authority.

In responding to a major incident on the river, the emergency services will ignore administrative boundaries until such time as the location is fixed and a senior officer of the relevant emergency service is present at the scene to take command.

### **Search and Rescue Plans**

Certain large passenger-carrying vessels are required by law to compile simple search and rescue plans. Copies of these plans are held in the Control Room at Thames Valley Police Headquarters. These will be made available by fax to any responding agency in the event of an incident involving one of these craft. In the event of the skipper, crew or passengers not being able to provide the emergency services with information about the vessel, contact should be made with the Environment Agency. They are the Licensing Authority for all vessels on the Thames.

### **Specialist Resources**

The following agencies each have launches and other specialist resources which are available to deal with incidents on the River Thames –

- a Thames Valley Police – Underwater Search Unit, Sulhamstead.
- b Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue – Water Rescue Unit and Boat.
- c Environment Agency – Various Locations

In addition, the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) should be considered as an investigative aid for any river accident involving a vessel where there has been a fatality, major injury, explosion, fire, or incident causing serious harm to the environment.

**Body Recovery**

Bodies recovered from the river present special problems. Thames Valley Police Underwater Search Unit is specially trained and equipped to deal with the retrieval of bodies from the water.

## **SECTION 15                      OTHER ASSISTANCE**

### **15.1 Berkshire Primary Care Organisations (PCO)**

In responding to a major incident Berkshire PCOs will:

- Co-ordinate the NHS response to a major incident at PCO level.
- Provide 24 hour emergency management and clinical response.
- Co-ordinate the primary care, community and mental health response.
- Provide appropriate clinical settings for the treatment of people with minor injuries and conditions such as reception centres, minor injury centres, walk-in centres, community hospitals and general practice.
- Provide care and advice to evacuees, survivors and relatives, including replacement medication.
- Assist acute trusts by providing staff where appropriate and supporting accelerated discharge.
- Co-ordinate community hospital bed capacity in liaison with local acute hospitals and any available local bed management system.
- Liaise with the Berkshire Unitary Authorities.
- Assess the effects of an incident on vulnerable care groups, such as children, dialysis patients, elderly, medically dependent, or physically or mentally disabled.
- Establish with Unitary Authority, facilities for mass distribution of counter-measures, for example, vaccinations and antibiotics.
- Administration of medications, prophylactics, vaccines and counter measures.
- Provide support, advice and leadership to the local community on the possible health aspects of an incident.
- Support screening, epidemiology and long-term assessment and management of the effects of an incident.
- Provide psychological and mental health support to staff, patients and relatives in conjunction with the appropriate provider.
- Proactively communicate information to all PCO staff and ensure relevant guidance and advice is available, including private facilities where appropriate.
- Continue to provide core business services.
- Maintain liaison with and co-ordinate the response with Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority (TVSHA).
- Work with the local authority(s) and community to support the recovery phase.

- Assess the medium term impact on the community and priorities for the restoration of normality.
- Consider the need for long-term monitoring.
- Preserve all plans and documentation used or produced during the course of an emergency response.
- Prepare a post-incident report for consolidation in the NHS. Report to be forwarded to the PCO Board, TVSHA or equivalent and other interested organisations.

### **15.2 Berkshire Acute Trusts**

In responding to a major incident, the roles and responsibilities of Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust and The Royal Berkshire Hospital NHS Trust are to:

- Provide a safe and secure environment for the assessment and treatment of patients.
- Provide a safe and secure environment for staff that will ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff.
- Provide a clinical response including provision of general support and specific/specialist health care to all casualties, victims and responders.
- Liaise with the Royal Berkshire Ambulance Trust, TVSHA and the Berkshire PCOs including GPs, out-of-hours services, Minor Injuries Units and other primary care providers, other hospitals, independent sector providers, and other agencies in order to manage the impact of an incident.
- Ensure there is an operational response to provide medical cover on scene using, for example, BASICS and other immediate care teams where they exist.
- Ensure that the hospital reviews all its essential functions throughout an incident.
- Provide appropriate support to any designated receiving hospital or other neighbouring service that is substantially affected.
- Provide limited decontamination facilities and personal protective equipment to manage contaminated self-presenting casualties.
- Liaise with activated health emergency control centres and/or on call TVSHA/PCO officers as appropriate.
- Maintain communications with relatives and friends of existing patients and those from the incident, the Casualty Bureau, the local community, the media and VIPs.

### **15.3 Berkshire Community Hospitals**

It is recognised that Community Hospitals, or non-Acute Trusts, are not formally designated responders within the definitions of the Civil

Contingencies Act 2004. However, it is considered to be good practice for non Acute Trusts to comply with the requirements of the Act.

The responsibility is to plan for the response to a major incident with major consequences for health or health services in partnership with other parts of the NHS, the emergency services and the unitary authorities. Non Acute-Trusts should participate in appropriate planning groups and forums. Consideration should also be given to vulnerable groups of people including children.

Their potential contribution may include:

- Support of victims of an incident including NHS staff.
- Provision of staff.
- Provision of facilities.
- Provision of capacity.
- Provision of equipment.
- Appropriate arrangements should also be in place for business continuity including recovery and restoration.

Berkshire Mental Health Trust has specific responsibilities in the event of a major incident including:

- Linking with the Berkshire PCOs and other NHS services in co-ordinating services.
- Co-ordinate and directly provide the psychological and mental health support to staff, patients and relatives in conjunction with Social Services.
- Advise on the long-term effects of trauma on the casualties associated with the incident and recommend the appropriate level of psychological intervention required.
- Ensure that mental health patients caught up in an incident are discharged home with appropriate support in the community from Community Mental Health teams and Crisis Teams or their equivalent.

#### **15.4 Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority (TVSHA)**

Their key roles in response to a major incident are:

- Make provision for a 24 hour emergency response.
- Co-ordinate the local NHS response including the National Blood Service and NHS Direct.
- Co-ordinate the Berkshire public health and health protection response.
- Assess the ongoing situation and identify emerging issues.
- Maintain links with NHS Direct.
- Provide resources to support using mutual aid either locally or regionally.

- Liaise with the Department of Health (DH) to support the local effort using mutual aid nationally, or internationally.
- Liaise with the DH to support the response elsewhere regionally, nationally, or internationally.
- Support screening, epidemiology and long-term assessment and management of the effects of an incident.
- Liaise directly with the NHS delivery representative at the Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG).
- Liaise directly with the PCOs Emergency Control Rooms.
- Act as a conduit for information and instructions to the local NHS and the SCG.
- Act as the co-ordination point for health media strategy for the NHS.
- Act as a health focal point for liaison with other agencies and organisations.

### **Health Media Response**

The TVSHA Communications Lead should be included in the initial call out cascade following declaration of a major incident. TVSHA should provide adequate facilities for handling media interest that may continue for a considerable period of time. Facilities should include accommodation and resources for TVSHA's own staff.

TVSHA media staff should provide regular briefings, agreed with the appropriate command and control centres. These should include any public health advice considered relevant, co-ordinated with Thames Valley Police Gold Communications Officer along with all of the other Communications Officers from responding organisations involved in managing the response to an incident.

The PCOs media staff should provide regular briefings, agreed with the command and control centres in Reading and Slough. These should include any public health advice considered relevant, co-ordinated with the media officers from responding organisations involved in managing the response to the incident

Patient confidentiality and care comes first. Patients' consent must always be sought for the release of details, participation in interviews and for the taking of photographs.

### **15.5 Voluntary Aid Societies (VAS)**

There are several voluntary aid societies in Berkshire, including WRVS, British Red Cross, St John Ambulance, Churches together in Berkshire and RAYNET, who can provide essential support functions for any incident. They can be contacted through their respective emergency contact, or Duty Officer when required.

Their support at an incident can alleviate pressure on the statutory bodies by providing support functions. These groups have worked together to formulate



the Emergency Support Organisations policy document, which outlines their supporting roles and functions.

When activated, the relevant VAS should nominate a co-ordinator to report to the Responders Control Point at the scene, or rest centre (depending on their deployment and role) who will co-ordinate the work of the VAS members for that organisation. They will also provide a contact point for Statutory responders to make requests for action.. If the VAS group is acting in support of the Unitary Authority they should report to the Unitary Authority representative at the scene, or to the Unitary Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).

**Royal Berkshire Ambulance Trust will activate:**

British Association of Immediate Care Schemes (BASICS) Doctors

British Red Cross )

St John Ambulance ) In support of Ambulance Operations

WRVS )

Churches together in Berkshire

**Unitary Authority will activate:**

British Red Cross ) In support of Unitary Authority

St John Ambulance ) Operations eg Rest Centres

WRVS )

Churches together in Berkshire

Radio Amateur Emergency Network (RAYNET)

Other agencies as required

## **15.6 Public Utilities**

The public utilities can be mobilised by any of the emergency services and will normally be co-ordinated by Police in the first instance. They will be able to moderate or control gas, water and electrical supplies, and assist with communications issues. .

## **15.7 Military Aid to the Civil Authority (MACA)**

### **General Principles**

Military operations in the UK are placed under the umbrella title MACA, this is sub-divided further into Military Aid to other Government Departments (MAGD), Military Aid to the Civil Power (MACP) and Military Aid to the Civil Community (MACC). These operations are distinct from one another in having different legal bases and political and military implications.

The provision of MACA is guided by 3 principles:

- a) Military aid should always be the last resort. The use of mutual aid, other law enforcement agencies and the private sector must be insufficient, or be unsuitable.
- b) The Civil Authority lack the required level of capability and it is unreasonable to expect it to develop one.
- c) The Civil Authority has a capability but the need to act is urgent and there is an immediate lack of Civil Power resources.

### **Military Aid to the Civil Community**

MACA is an authorised military task, but it is not funded by the Defence Vote. This means that military resources must not be procured, earmarked, or placed on standby for MACA tasks. These are Treasury rules, not MOD procedures. The Treasury also insists that MOD resources must not be employed in preference to commercial organisations. Where they are used, military personnel will act in support of a civilian agency, but in organised bodies under military command.

### **Costs**

A consequence of these overall principles is that, in normal circumstances, Military Assistance must be paid for by the requesting agency. The most obvious exception is where human life is at immediate risk. In other circumstances, costs will depend upon the nature and duration of the incident. Assistance in time of emergency such as natural disasters or major incidents is classed as a high category aid. For charging purposes, this is sub-divided into three cases, reflecting the degree of danger to human life. The decision on the level of charges is the responsibility of MOD, applying Treasury guidelines, not the assisting unit.

### **Requesting Procedures**

Where life is at risk or where speed of response is critical, civilian agencies may approach any local or appropriate military unit, which may then act within its competence and resources without immediate reference to superior authority. In other circumstances, the requested unit will consult its commanding authority before agreeing to act. In the case of a national emergency, all requests except for immediate lifesaving will be relayed to MOD, in order to provide strategic control of limited assets. For agencies in the Berkshire region, the first point of contact should be the Commander or Duty Officer at the nearest units, or one of the following –

#### **Army or Tri-Service tasks:**

145 (Home Counties) Brigade, Aldershot

If no contact, HQ 4 Div, Aldershot

#### **RAF Only Tasks**

RAF Regional Liaison Officer

If no contact, then HQPTC, Gloucester

**Royal Navy (RN) Only Tasks**

In the unlikely event that specialist RN assets are needed, HQ 24 Brigade will act as the co-ordinating agency.

The rules and principles for any Military Aid are laid out in the Interim Joint Doctrine Publication 02: Operations in the UK: The Defence Contribution to Resilience

## **SECTION 16**

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **16.1 Debriefing**

At some stage, when the incident has concluded, each of the services and 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 any lessons learnt incorporated into this document and service manuals.

### **16.2 Welfare**

In the immediate aftermath of an incident it will be sufficient for most individuals to take part in close discussions with their peers, perhaps guided by their close supervisors, or trained staff at an informal team debrief. Opportunity must be allowed for this purpose as supervisors on scene are responsible for their teams' welfare.

However, for some people this may not be enough. Those who are particularly traumatised will require skilled professional help and this is now provided by all the services involved. Arrangements for this must be made in a way that ensures confidentiality and overcomes the cultural resistance in the emergency services to such a step.

### **16.3 Exercising**

Exercises are the acknowledged means by which plans and procedures may be validated. Of equal importance is the opportunity they provide for the development of liaison arrangements in a less stressful situation.

Exercises should not be treated lightly. The organisations involved expend large amounts of time, effort and resources, and invariably impact on the routine of the local community.

Whilst it is recognised that some organisations hold exercises to comply with statutory requirements or inquiry recommendations, they are most effective if they are intended to test current operational policy; to experiment with new tactics and equipment; and to identify and overcome hitherto unrecognised problems.

Exercises are, therefore, of most benefit if the person responsible for emergency planning of each organisation is consulted early in the exercise planning stage, and if the notes of any debrief are circulated to the other organisations.

## SECTION 17

## GLOSSARY

### AIO

Ambulance Incident Officer. The Tactical Commander of RBAT.

### AIRWAVE

Secure digital radio network dedicated for the exclusive use of the UK's emergency and public safety services.

### AMBULANCE CONTROL UNIT

An emergency mobile control vehicle, easily identifiable by a green flashing light, providing an "on-site" communications facility which may be at a distance from the incident. It is to this location that all NHS/medical resources should report. Ideally, the point should be in close proximity to the Police and Fire Service control/command vehicles, subject to radio interference constraints.

### AMBULANCE EMCC

Ambulance Emergency Communications Centre. The permanent office which receives all demands for Ambulance services in Berkshire, co-ordinates and mobilises resources.

### AMBULANCE LOADING POINT

An area, preferably hard standing, in close proximity to the Casualty Clearing Station, where ambulances can manoeuvre and load patients.

### AMBULANCE MARSHALLING POINT

The place designated at the scene of a major incident where arriving ambulances can park, thus avoiding congestion at the entrance to the site or at the Ambulance Loading Point. These areas are also suitable for staff briefings, procurement of refreshments and re-stocking of equipment. May be located at, or in addition to, the RVP.

### BODY HOLDING AREA

A point close to the scene where the dead can be temporarily detained until transfer to the mortuary.

### CASUALTY BUREAU

Central contact and information facility set up by the Police as a focal point for all records and data relating to casualties, including deceased, injured, missing persons, survivors and evacuees.

### CASUALTY CLEARING STATION

An area set up at a major incident by the RBAT in liaison with the Medical Incident Officer to assess, treat and triage casualties and direct their evacuation (see Triage).

### COMMAND

The authority for an agency to direct the actions of its own resources (both personnel and equipment).

**CONTROL**

The authority to direct strategic and tactical operations in order to complete an assigned function, including the ability to direct the activities of other agencies engaged in the completion of the function.

**CONTROLLED AREA**

The area contained by the Outer Cordon, which may be divided into geographical sectors.

**CONTROL UNIT**

An emergency mobile command and control unit, normally the centre of communications for the organisation using it.

**CO-ORDINATION**

The harmonious integration of the expertise of separately responsible and autonomous organisations involved, with the object of effectively and efficiently bringing the incident to a successful conclusion.

**CORDON**

Inner:

Seals off the controlled area/hazard zone to which unauthorised persons are not allowed access.

Outer:

Surrounds the immediate incident site and provides security for it.

**DISASTER VICTIM**

A person directly involved in, or affected by, the incident. They can be injured, uninjured, deceased or an evacuee.

**EVACUATION ASSEMBLY POINT**

A location of safety, near the scene, where evacuees can initially be directed for assembly prior to being transported to rest centres.

**FIRE SERVICE MAIN CONTROL**

The main centralised mobilising control of the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

**FORWARD CONTROL/COMMAND POINT**

The command and control facility nearest to the incident site, responsible for immediate deployment and security

**FRIENDS & RELATIVES RECEPTION CENTRE**

Secure area set aside for use by friends and relatives arriving and for interviews with the Police.

**HOSPITAL DOCUMENTATION TEAM**

A team of Police Officers deployed to a receiving hospital, responsible for passing details of casualties received by the hospital to the Casualty Bureau.

**HOSPITAL LIAISON OFFICER**

The officer who is the link between the Documentation Team and the Casualty Bureau

### **HOSPITAL, LISTED**

Hospitals listed by the Regional Health Authority as adequately equipped to receive casualties on a 24-hour basis and able to provide, when required, the Medical Incident Officer and a Mobile Medical/Nursing Team.

### **HOSPITAL, RECEIVING**

The first listed hospitals to be alerted by RBAT to receive casualties in the event of a major incident.

### **HOSPITAL, SUPPORTING**

A listed hospital nominated to support the Receiving Hospital in dealing with casualties from a major incident.

### **INCIDENT COMMANDER FIRE**

Senior Fire Officer at the scene responsible for dictating tactics and resource management.

### **MARSHALLING AREA**

Area to which resources and personnel, not immediately required at the scene or being held for further use, can be directed to stand-by.

### **MEDIA BRIEFING CENTRE**

Central contact point for media enquiries, providing communications and conference facilities and staffed by press officers from all organisations.

### **MEDIA BRIEFING POINT**

A location at, or close to the incident, staffed by media officers from the relevant services, to assist with control of the media and provision of information regarding the physical response to the incident.

### **MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER (SCENE)**

Nominated representatives from each organisation responsible for the initial release of information from the scene of the incident.

### **MIO**

Medical Incident Officer.

### **OVERALL INCIDENT COMMANDERS (GOLD)**

Designated principal officer of each service who assumes the co-ordinating function for the operation as a whole on behalf of their service.

### **PARAMEDIC**

A qualified NHS Ambulance person who has obtained the IHCD Certificate in Paramedic Training and is permitted to administer specified drugs.

### **POLICE MEDIA SPOKESPERSON**

Senior Police appointee chosen by the Police Gold Commander to be responsible for the release of information on behalf of the Police.

**RBAT**

Royal Berkshire Ambulance NHS Trust.

**RENDEZVOUS POINT (RVP)**

A point selected, to which all resources arriving at the outer cordon are directed for logging, briefing, equipment issue and deployment.

**RENDEZVOUS POINT OFFICER**

Nominated Officer responsible for supervision of the RVP.

**RESCUE ZONE**

The area within the Inner Cordon.

**REST CENTRE**

Premises designated for the temporary accommodation of evacuees.

**SAR**

Search and Rescue.

**SECTOR COMMANDER**

The Officer in command of an operational area and having functional responsibility within the controlled area. Would normally equate with a "Bronze Officer".

**SENIOR INVESTIGATING OFFICER**

Police senior detective officer appointed by Gold to assume responsibility for all aspects of the Police investigation.

**SILVER COMMANDER AMBULANCE**

The RBAT incident officer on the scene (AIO).

**SILVER COMMANDER POLICE**

Senior Police officer responsible for the implementation of tactical command.

**STRATEGIC CO-ORDINATING GROUP**

A meeting, usually chaired by the Police, which comprises of the senior representative of the services/agencies involved, that discusses and agrees strategy, policy and the content of all press releases.

**SURVIVOR RECEPTION CENTRE**

Secure area to which uninjured and slightly injured survivors can be taken for shelter, first aid, interview and documentation.

**TACTICAL CO-ORDINATING GROUP**

Meeting of the Tactical Commanders of each service to determine the joint Tactical Plan for dealing with a Major Incident.

**TEMPORARY MORTUARY**

Building adapted for use as a mortuary, or area where modular mortuary facilities can be set up, in which post-mortem examinations take place.



**TRIAGE**

Process of prioritising the evacuation of the injured by the medical or ambulance staff at the Casualty Clearing Station.

**UHF**

Ultra high frequency. Personal radios used by the Emergency Services.

**VHF**

Very high frequency. Vehicle fitted radios used by the Emergency Services.



## **Berkshire Emergency Support Organisations Policy**



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### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Local Authority, Emergency Services, Health, GOSE, Military**

1. Local Authorities
2. Police
3. Fire Service
4. Ambulance Service
5. Health – PCTs, HPA, SHA
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## **Annex B**

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Emergency Support Organisations**

1. British Red Cross Society
2. Churches Together in Berkshire (CTIB)
3. Radio Amateurs Emergency Network (RAYNET)
4. Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)
5. St John Ambulance
6. South East Berkshire Emergency Volunteers Search and Rescue (SEBEV SAR)
7. WRVS

## **Annex C**

### **Table of Services**

## **BERKSHIRE EMERGENCY SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS POLICY**

### **Introduction**

In a major civil emergency, referred to as a “major incident”, the initial response will be from the Category 1 responders such as the Emergency Services. At an early stage the Emergency Services are likely to call for assistance of Local Authorities to help in containing the effects of the incident and subsequently to restore normality to the environment and community. The Local Authorities may in turn call upon local Emergency Support Organisations to assist in the response. It is important that all organisations involved in the response to a major incident are aware of each other's roles and responsibilities. Berkshire Unitary Authorities have prepared Emergency Plans for Major Incidents which describes, amongst other things, the responsibilities of the emergency services and other agencies for the co-ordination and control of a major incident.

This document is a companion to these emergency plans, which brings together an outline of the responsibilities of the principal emergency support organisations that may find themselves involved in a major incident in Berkshire.

### **Aim**

The aim of this document is to set out the roles and responsibilities of those emergency support organisations most likely to be called upon to assist in the response to a major incident in Berkshire. It also summarises the roles and responsibilities of the Emergency Services, Local Authority and Health Authority.

This document has been prepared on behalf of, and approved by, the Berkshire Emergency Supports Organisations Group, which consist of the following organisations:

1. British Red Cross
2. Churches Together in Berkshire (CTIB)
3. Radio Amateurs Emergency Network (RAYNET)
4. Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)
5. South East Berkshire Emergency Volunteers Search and Rescue (SEBEV SAR)
6. St John Ambulance
7. WRVS

### **Overall Co-ordination of a Major Incident**

The initial response to a major incident will be from the Emergency Services. The Police will normally co-ordinate the activities of all those responding at

and around the scene of a major incident, although each of the other services and agencies will exercise control over their own specific aspects of responsibility. A Tactical ('Silver') Control will often be established. This will support to the Operational ('Bronze') Commanders at the scene. A Strategic ('Gold') Co-ordinating Group may be established to oversee policy for the co-ordinated response. Representation at these groups will depend on the nature of the Emergency.

## **Emergency Support Organisations Group**

### **Introduction**

Major incidents can over-stretch the resources of the Emergency Services, Local Authority services and the value of additional support from the voluntary sector has been demonstrated on many occasions. These occasions have shown that overall co-ordination of voluntary activity results in a more effective response.

It is recognised that the statutory services bear responsibility for the overall response to a major incident; the Emergency Support Organisations can offer valuable support.

### **Overall Co-ordination**

In the event of a major incident, the decision to call out one or more voluntary organisations lies with the local authority. There will be exceptions to this rule when an Emergency Service needs the direct and immediate support of an organisation, such as the Ambulance Service needing the assistance of St John Ambulance or British Red Cross. In these instances it will be the responsibility of the emergency service concerned to initiate the call-out.

### **General Requirements of the Emergency Support Organisations (ESO)**

Each ESO will ensure that it has appropriate plans and procedures to co-ordinate its members in support of the Emergency Services, Health and Local Authorities.

Each ESO will provide a point of contact for call-out and liaison throughout a major incident.

ESO members will be appropriately dressed to support a major incident and wearing any personal protective equipment that has been issued to the individual. The organisation should be easily identifiable.

ESOs will be prepared to provide a liaison officer at the relevant Control or Co-ordination Centre, if requested.

Each ESO involved in a major incident will provide a representative at any post-incident debrief and submit a post-incident report of their activities, if requested.

All organisations will protect the welfare and health and safety of their members at all times during and after a major incident.

All organisations will be able to provide a list to the Local Authority showing their member's name, role and employment locations. This may be required for insurance purposes.

### **Table of Services**

The Table attached at Annex C illustrates the range of services organisations may provide if requested to do so during a major incident. The service provided is described in general terms only, and may vary in level from branch to branch.

## **Media**

### **Objectives of the Strategy**

A joint Berkshire Media Emergency Planning Strategy has been developed to supply a fast, accurate and regular flow of co-ordinated information and to ensure that events are projected in the most positive light. All Media should be co-ordinated by the Police.

### **Overview**

Media activity will be handled at three levels:

- a. Sites, such as the scene, hospitals, rest centres, etc.
- b. Joint Media Briefing Centre, if appropriate, ie a building mutually suitable to media the emergency services and other agencies involved, for media briefing and co-ordinating of the media response.
- c. Strategic Co-ordinating Group, where overall policy for the incident is determined.

### **Public Relations Manager**

A Public Relations Officer from the lead agency should be nominated as overall PR Manager, with the following responsibilities:

- a. Co-ordination of the media response by all agencies.
- b. Monitoring of the various points of media interest.
- c. Arrangements for the media to visit the site, possibly including arrangements for transport where it is in a remote area.
- d. Accreditation of medial personnel.
- e. Management of the Media Centre.
- f. To attend, or be represented at, the Strategic Co-ordinating Group.

### **Code of Conduct**

To minimise the risk of conflicting or misleading statements, the following Code of Conduct should be adopted:

- a. The PR Manager should be informed when verbal statements have been given to the media.

- b. Verbal statements should be restricted to matters specific to the agency making the statement.
- c. The PR Manager should be consulted before written press releases are issued.
- d. Staff who are contacted by the media, or who may wish to make statements, should be reminded of the need for co-ordination with the PR Manager.
- e. All organisations should exchange copies of written press statements.
- f. No agency should be drawn into comment on alleged shortfalls in the emergency response by themselves or others. A co-ordinated approach is paramount.

## Insurance Requirements

### Insurance Implications and Responsibilities

In view of the possibility of a major civil emergency, which requires, in addition to the Emergency Services, the presence and assistance of the Local Authority and the Local Emergency Support Organisations, it is necessary to have formally established guidelines in connection with the role of and responsibilities for insurance.

Each organisation involved in the framework of the Berkshire Emergency Support Organisations Group, along with its individual members, should be or be made aware of the insurance implications arising from activities undertaken in the event of a controlled and co-ordinated response to an emergency.

### Emergency Support Organisations

Any local Emergency Support Organisation, which may take an active role at a major civil emergency, must ensure that it has and maintains adequate insurance cover for its members and any public liability it may undertake.

### Liability and Personal Insurance

This *must* include Employers' Liability insurance, to indemnify the organisation for all sums it becomes legally liable to pay as damages in respect of injury sustained by a member arising out of, and in the course of, their duties on behalf of the organisation. A minimum limit of £5 million, any one event, is required.

It *must* also include Public Liability Insurance, to indemnify the organisation for all sums it becomes legally liable to pay as damages in respect of accidental injury or accidental damage to third parties or their property, as the result of a negligent act, error or omission on the part of a member arising out of, and in the course of, their duties on behalf of the organisation. Again, a minimum limit of £5 million, any one event, is required.

The organisation may wish to consider purchasing a **Personal Accident Benefits** policy to ensure financial provision in the event of death, injury or disablement to a member as a result of a "no blame" accident.



## Motor Vehicle Insurance

Any **emergency support organisation-owned** motor vehicle used by its members *must* be insured in line with the provisions of the Road Traffic Acts. As a minimum this will cover third party risks. However, this can be extended to ensure financial provision for accidental loss of or damage to the insured vehicle.

If a **privately owned** motor vehicle is used by a member of an organisation in order to perform their duties on behalf of the organisation that member has a responsibility to ensure their insurance policy is not invalidated and makes adequate provision for such use.

The organisation may wish to consider purchasing **Personal Accident** benefits policy to ensure financial provision in the event of death, injury or disablement to a member as a result of a “no blame” accident.

## Property

An Emergency Support Organisation may have insurance for loss of or damage to property that it owns or is responsible for. It may wish to consider extending the policy to include Property Contingency cover for its members’ personal property, excluding motor vehicles, when used in connection with their duties and not covered under a household or similar private policy.

The Local Authority cannot provide an indemnity to an Emergency Support Organisation or its members for loss of or damage to any motor vehicle or other property belonging to them.

## Evidence of Cover

As a part of the framework of the Berkshire Emergency Support Organisation, each organisation must accept and be prepared at any time to provide evidence of insurance arrangements, which meet the above criteria.

If and when requested, evidence of insurance must be produced in writing by the insurers or brokers on behalf of insurers with whom the organisation currently holds cover. A schedule, or in its absence what the industry terms a “To Whom It May Concern” letter, will suffice. This must provide details of the class of insurance and period of insurance, insurer name and policy number and indemnity limit with the document signed on behalf of the insurers.

The above details key policies. An Emergency Support Organisation may well be aware of the advantages in obtaining and purchasing other insurance for its members which is relevant to the specific service and activities it provides.

Advice on any additional risks and appropriate cover will be available from the organisation’s insurers or insurance brokers.

## Local Authority

Berkshire Unitary Authorities have current insurance policies in place to protect the interests of the respective council and all officers, employees and volunteers directly responsible to the Council whilst undertaking duties as directed by and in connection with approved Council activities.

These include **Employers' Liability, Public Liability and Personal Accident Benefits** cover as outlined above. Volunteers who are engaged directly by the council and under control and supervision of its officers can benefit from these policies. However, volunteers may decide to purchase or already possess policies, which provide them with better levels of liability or personal accident cover.

All Council-owned **property** or property for which it is responsible, used in connection with Emergency Planning activities is insured subject to the Council's Property policy terms and conditions.

All Council-owned **motor vehicles** or vehicles on loan to the Council and for which it accepts responsibility and notifies to the relevant Council's Insurance and Risk Management Section, are insured subject to the Council's motor policy terms and conditions. This is a comprehensive policy which makes provision for accidental damage to the insured vehicle. However an excess may apply for loss or damage to the insured vehicle which will need to be met by the Council Service Unit which owns or accepts responsibility for the vehicle.

## **Annex A - Roles and Responsibilities of the Emergency Services, Health and Local Authority**

These are given in more detail in the Unitary Authorities' Plans for Major Emergencies but are summarised as follows.

### **Local Authority**

The principal responsibilities of local authorities include support to the Emergency Services, support and care for the local and wider community and co-ordination of the response by organisations other than the Emergency Services. As time goes on, and the emphasis switches to recovery, the local authority will take a leading role in rehabilitating the community and restoring the environment.

### **Police**

The Police role includes saving and protecting of life, protecting and preserving the scene by cordons, establishing diversions, effecting evacuations, preserving evidence for any subsequent investigation, and taking the lead on media management. On a wider scale, it includes collation and dissemination of casualty/survivor information and identification of victims.

### **Fire Service**

The primary areas of fire service responsibility at a major incident are;

- a) The saving of life in conjunction with the other emergency services.
- b) In the event of a major fire to assume control of the incident.
- c) Rescue trapped casualties.
- d) Prevention of further escalation of the incident, by tackling fires, dealing with released chemicals and other hazardous situations.
- e) The gathering of information and hazard assessment to give to the Police on the need to evacuate members of the public.
- f) Liaison with the Police regarding the establishment of an inner cordon and subsequent control of that inner cordon.
- g) The safety of all personnel involved in rescue work. This includes ensuring that all non-fire service personnel entering the cordon are aware of and conform to fire service safety procedures and, in particular the use of the evacuation system and nominal roll procedures.
- h) Consideration of the effect and actions to minimise any dangers to the environment.
- i) Liaison with the Ambulance Incident Officer and the Medical Incident Officer.
- j) Recovery of the dead in conjunction with the Police as required. Participation in investigations and preparation of reports with supporting evidence for subsequent enquiries.

k) Standing by during the non-emergency/recovery phase as appropriate.

### **Ambulance Service**

The Ambulance Service key roles are to:

- Save life
- Assess the incident
- Co-ordinate the on-site operational NHS response
- Liaise with other Emergency Services on site
- Identify and activate the resources needed to respond
- Manage the NHS activity at the scene
- Co-ordinate the NHS communications at the scene
- Treat casualties, assist extrication and triage
- Transport casualties to hospital
- Protect the Health and Safety of all health service personnel

### **Health –split Health into PCTs, Health Protection Agency and Strategic Health Authority**

Health have overall responsibility for the public health of the population within their geographical area and for securing accident and emergency services and major incident responses on the part of the hospital, ambulance and community healthcare NHS Trusts. Principal concerns are NHS co-ordination and the acquisition of additional NHS resources.

### **GOSE**

Government Offices exist to manage regional programmes on behalf of participating Departments, to support and facilitate effective linkages between partners and programmes and to inform the development of Departments' policies from a regional perspective. The Government Office for the South East (GOSE) represents central government in the South East, particularly the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister; the Departments for Education and Skills; Trade and Industry; Transport; Culture, Media and Sport; Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; the Home Office. GOSE works to influence, contract and develop government programmes and initiatives at a regional and local level, by working in partnership with relevant organisations to meet local needs.

During a Major Incident, the role of GOSE, in general terms, is to:

Support the operation of the Regional Civil Contingencies Committee (RCCC) and the Regional Nominated Co-ordinator where convened and appointed.

Act as the focal point for communication between Central Government Departments and multi-agency strategic co-ordinating groups in the Region.

Provide, where required, representatives to multi-agency strategic co-ordinating groups in the Region.

Provide assessment and situation reports to Centre and to Other Government Departments (OGDs).

Where RCCC has not been convened or is no longer sitting, for example during the Recovery phase, provide support to the Lead Government Department and various local responders or agencies as required.

## **Military**

### **Military Aid to the Civil Authority (MACA)**

Military aid is provided under MACA arrangements fall within 3 categories:

- a) MACP (Military Aid Civil Power) - military support to the police e.g. provision of specialist capabilities like EOD.
- b) MACC (Military Aid to the Civil Community) - military support to the community e.g. assists a local authority with a rest and reception centre.
- c) MAGD (Military Aid to other Government Departments) – military support to essential services e.g. fire fighting, flooding.

### **Requesting MACA**

Military aid is normally requested through the Chief Constable or the Chief Executive of the Local Authority. The Joint Regional Liaison Officer (JRLO) 145 (HC) Brigade should be consulted for guidance on drafting the request, which is then submitted to the Home Office or other relevant Government Departments. MACC requests should be submitted direct to HQ 145 (HC) Brigade for staffing to MOD for approval.

### **MACA Triggers**

Military aid will normally only be provided if:

- a) the situation is catastrophic which has or may overwhelm the Local Authority or civil power;
- b) the capability request is not available from other sources;
- c) life and limb are at risk.

### **Military Chain of Command**

Once MACA has been approved by MOD, HQ 145 (HC) Brigade will be tasked with its provision. Military commanders will be present at GOLD, SILVER or BRONZE depending on the size of the MACA deployment.

### **Military Media Response**

Military Media Operations staff will normally be alerted by the chain of command if such a deployment takes place. If military involvement is minor, Media Operations staff will deal with any enquiries from their offices, or through the existing duty officer system.

If the deployment is significant, then Media Operations staff will also deploy. The number of staff will vary depending on the scale of the incident, and will most likely be a mixture of civilian and military personnel.

At least one representative will work from the emergency media centre, where they will act as liaison between military units at the incident scene, higher military headquarters and the Defence Press Office in London.

If required, further personnel will deploy to the scene of the incident, including a military spokesman who will be cleared to give interviews.

## **Annex B - Roles and Responsibilities of the Emergency Support Organisations**

### **British Red Cross Society**

#### **Role**

The British Red Cross is a national and international emergency response organisation. Locally the Red Cross is able to provide teams of trained volunteers, for duties both at and near the scene of a major incident and in support roles at hospitals, Survivor Reception Centres, Mass Care Shelters and Rest Centres and Temporary Mortuaries.

#### **Responsibilities**

Outline responsibilities in a major incident include:

- a. Through Royal Berkshire Ambulance Trust arrangements:
  1. The deployment of all types of ambulance vehicles to nominated Royal Berkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust (RBAT) locations.
  2. The deployment of 4-wheel drive ambulances to specific RBAT locations.
  3. The deployment of suitably qualified staff to serve as ambulance crews and first aiders.
- b. Provision of first aid, health and social care personnel to support the Local Authority and RBAT in the care and welfare of survivors and evacuated persons at nominated Rest Centres, Mass Care Shelters and Survivor Reception Centres. This will include practical as well as emotional support, befriending and listening.
- c. Provision of first aid, health and social care personnel to assist NHS hospitals.
- d. The provision of first aid, health and social care personnel to support NHS Mobile Medical Teams at Emergency Medical Centres.

The provision of specialist vehicles (including Fire Victim Support Vehicle and disabled passenger vehicles), medical aid equipment, second-hand clothing and bedding, as well as signposting to other Organisations. Access to the British Red Cross International Logistics Department.

The provision of trained personnel to supervise and assist communities in their efforts to implement personal care in the homes.

Controlling and co-ordinating those tasks delegated to members in support of RBAT, the Health Authorities and Local Authorities through Red Cross Headquarters

Establishment of Disaster Appeal Schemes, through British Red Cross UK Office.

## **Churches Together in Berkshire (CTIB)**

### **Role**

To enable the response of the faith communities to an emergency, to respond to the spiritual needs of all those involved, and to provide a link from Gold Command to co-ordinate liaison with both local and distant faith communities.

### **Responsibilities**

Outline responsibilities in a major incident:

- Co-ordinating and supporting religious representation at the scene to minister to the dying, injured and others affected, liaising closely with the Police Incident Officer.
- Providing a link with Gold command to assist with liaison between faith communities as necessary.
- Co-ordinating and supporting a spiritual presence for relatives and friends of victims and others involved. This may take place away from the scene, for instance at a Survivor Reception Centre, Mass Care Shelter or Rest Centre, hospitals, a temporary mortuary, or in people's homes.
- Supporting those involved in pastoral care of responders.
- Enabling other faith representation as necessary
- Coordinating and supporting private or public acts of remembrance, either at the scene or later at any memorial service.

## **Radio Amateurs Emergency Network (RAYNET)**

### **Role**

RAYNET is a voluntary organisation with members throughout Britain. These members are organised into local groups and provide emergency radio communications facilities for various organisations.

### **Responsibilities**

Outline responsibilities in a major incident include:

- a. Deploying members and equipment in support of the User Services defined in the Amateur Radio Licence. These include the Police, Ambulance Service, Local Authority, St John Ambulance, British Red Cross, Government Departments and Public Utilities.
- b. Staffing RAYNET station in local authority emergency centres and other locations as required.

### **Limitations**

RAYNET operations governed by the terms of the Amateur Radio Licence issued by the Department of Trade and Industry. This is a very flexible document permitting licensees to operate on a very wide range of frequency bands using transmission modes including voice, teleprinter digital data and television.



Some examples of operational limitations are:

- a. Operation from aircraft is strictly forbidden.
- b. Non-licensed personnel may only transmit on Amateur Radio frequencies under the direct supervision of a licensed Radio Amateur.
- c. Traffic may only be handled on behalf of the recognised User Services.

## **Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals**

### **Role**

The RSPCA, at the request of the Local Authority and in liaison with the Police and Dog Warden Service, to assist with transportation and boarding of evacuated animals.

### **Responsibilities**

Outline responsibilities in a major incident include:

- a. To assist with the registration of animals arriving and reported at rest centres.
- b. To provide counsel to animal owners who are reluctant to part with their pet(s).
- c. To set up a feeding regime for those animals left behind.
- d. To deliver the effective relief of animal suffering and enforcement of animal welfare legislation.

## **St John Ambulance**

### **Role**

The St John Ambulance are able to provide teams of trained personnel for duties both at or near the scene of a major incident and in support roles at hospitals, Survivor Reception Centres, Mass Care Shelters and Rest Centres.

### **Responsibilities**

Outline responsibilities in a major incident include:

- a. Through Royal Berkshire Ambulance Trust arrangements:
  1. The deployment of all types of ambulance vehicles to nominated Royal Berkshire Service NHS Trust (RBAT) locations.
  2. The deployment of 4-wheel drive ambulances to specific RBAT locations.
  3. The deployment of suitably qualified staff to serve as ambulance crews.
- b. Provision of first aid personnel to support the Local Authority and RBAT in the care and welfare of survivors and evacuated persons at nominated Rest Centres and Survivor Reception Centres.
- c. Provision of health and social care personnel to assist NHS hospitals.

- d. Controlling and co-ordinating those tasks delegated to members in support of RBAT, the Health Authorities and Local Authorities through the St John Ambulance Headquarters.
- e. The provision of first aid personnel to support NHS Mobile Medical Teams at Emergency Medical Centres.
- f. To provide trained personnel to supervise and assist communities in their efforts to implement personal care in the homes.

### **South East Berkshire Emergency Volunteers Search and Rescue (SEBEV SAR)**

#### **Role**

SEBEV SAR's main role is in support of the emergency services. By providing a disciplined, organised and well-trained group of people to aid in the searching of a given area for persons/survivors involved in a major emergency. The police will activate SEBEV SAR in search and rescue. However SEBEV SAR will also assist Local Authorities. The Local Authorities will activate SEBEV SAR for support. Immediate first aid and rescue/recovery may also be tasks that they will be requested to carry out. Their members can also be utilised for stewarding / security purposes at a Survivor Reception Centre, Mass Care Shelter or Rest Centre.

### **WRVS**

#### **Role**

The WRVS is a professionally managed national organisation, whose emergency trained volunteers are able to provide welfare services to victims and their relatives, members of responding organisations from the Emergency Services and other voluntary organisations involved in a disaster.

#### **Responsibilities**

Outline responsibilities in a major incident include:

- a. Deploying members, equipment and stores in support of the victims, relatives, Emergency Services and/or Local Authorities and hospital authorities.
- b. Assisting in the care of persons in Mass Care Shelter, Rest Centres and Survivor Reception Centres including the documentation of individuals for input to the Police Casualty Bureau, and the provision and staff of Information Points.
- c. Providing light refreshment and/or assisting in the provision of meals for victims or relatives of a major incident and for members of the Emergency Services and/or Local Authorities involved in emergency operations.
- d. Providing welfare services in hospitals.
- e. Organising the reception, sorting and issuing of second-hand clothing, when required

**.ANNEX C - VOLUNTARY SECTOR – TABLE OF SERVICES**

	First Aid	Vehicles	General Support at Hospitals	Comms	Specialist Vehicles and Equip	Staff	Catering	Used Clothing or Furniture	Spiritual Support	Emotional Support	Bereavement Counselling and Support	Animal Welfare	Practical Help and Information	Daily Living Equip
British Red Cross Society (BRC)	✓	✓	✓	for BRC staff only	Ambulances Specialist Disabled Vehicles Fire Victim Support Service Vehicle	✓		Used clothing		✓	✓ support and befriending		✓	Medical loan equipment Limited bedding
Churches Together in Berkshire (CTIB)									✓					
Radio Amateurs Emergency Network (RAYNET)														
Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)												✓		
St John Ambulance (SJA)														
South East Berkshire Emergency Volunteers SAR (SEBEV SAR)	✓	4X4 (14)		✓	✓	✓								
WRVS		1 WRVS & Vols private cars	✓			✓	✓			✓			✓	

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

### **Berkshire Major Incident Protocol**

**These documents have been checked for equality impact with regard to Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Services responsibilities and procedures and it has been found that there are no people implications as the document is purely technical from this perspective, However, Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service is unable to comment authoratively on the documents entire comments as large sections relate to the other emergency services, Berkshire Unitary Authorities and the Berkshire Healthcare organisations.**