
**WITNESS STATEMENT OF
MARK SAWYER**

1. I have been passed a request by the Inquiry Solicitor in a letter dated 6th April 2022 in relation to the request for evidence under rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006, to provide a supplementary statement, the details of which are set out below. I am authorised by the City of London Corporation to make this statement.
2. In order to deal with the request and assist the Inquiry, I set out below my responses to the questions asked.
3. ***Gold resolution***
4. *Recommendation 5 of the EP 2020 Progress Report (p.5 of Appendix A of EP2020 Progress Report {INQ00015129} states that the Local Authority Panel developed guidance for Chief Executives to make the Gold Resolution triggers and escalation points clearer and reinforced the importance of embedding a London-wide culture of mutual aid and support.*
5. Question 1a. *What Guidance was developed?*

6. I can confirm that guidance was published on 9th August 2018 to provide information to chief executives on the arrangements for pan-London support during emergencies and how this should be applied to individual and collective local authority response and recovery activities.
7. *Question 1b. Please provide the Inquiry with a copy of this guidance.*
8. A copy of the guidance is provided (MS2/01).
9. *Question 1c. Please provide details of any training provided in relation to how the guidance will operate in practice.*
10. Instruction on how the guidance should be applied is delivered in three ways. It is discussed and shared with all chief executives as part of their induction into local authority regional resilience arrangements, referenced in the more detailed London Local Authority Gold (LLAG) briefing session provided by London Resilience Group (LRG) to chief executives prior to undertaking LLAG on call duties for the first time and finally, incorporated into the pre-on call briefing provided by LRG a couple of days before the on-call duty begins.
11. The guidance is also incorporated in the London Local Authority Gold Operating Procedure (MS2/02) which is shared with all chief executives as part of their induction into regional resilience arrangements and again prior to undertaking LLAG on call duties. In addition, a contacts list of all London chief executives detailing office, home, and mobile telephone numbers is provided by LRG to support chief executives during their LLAG on call duties.
12. The role of LLAG in coordinating support to affected boroughs, where necessary, was a key component of the Exercise Safer City 2021 series of resilience related one-day exercises held in November 2021. Based on the six local authority resilience related sub-regions, each exercise included a conference call to allow LLAG to discuss ongoing and future support needs and provide an opportunity to secure understanding about how the affected borough was addressing the demands and proactively ensure the availability of wider support was understood by all and coordinated if required.
13. *Question 1d. Do you consider that this guidance addresses the concerns raised in the Peer Challenge review?*

14. The guidance provides clarity on the role of LLAG and how a regional layer of support is provided to an affected borough(s). Proactivity of the duty LLAG has been demonstrated on a number of occasions since the guidance was published. Examples include making early contact with the affected borough's chief executive or the Council Gold during high-impact incidents such as the Kingston UXB on 23rd May 2019 and Streatham terrorist incident on 2nd February 2020.

15. **Emergency Planning Teams**

16. *Recommendation 7 of the July 2019 Progress Report {INQ00015129} indicates that Directors of HR were in the process of commissioning a review of the role, positioning and capabilities of Emergency Planning Teams.*

17. *Question 2a. What was the outcome of this review?*

18. The review commissioned by the London Human Resources (HR) Directors Group in 2019 broadened in scope to provide guidance to local Human Resources Teams on the changing role and context of emergency planning and resilience.

19. The guidance published on 21st October 2019 contains a HR Strategy Assurance Framework designed to complement the Resilience Standards for London (RSL) assurance approach and provide a holistic view on what a resilient organisation should look like. The guidance illustrates the people management considerations that have emerged from research and dialogue with a range of stakeholders with an interest in resilience.

20. The guidance also provides a broad range of information covering background context, Pan London priorities for action, and resources for HR teams to use in assisting their chief executive to be assured that the organisation is prepared and ready to respond to a major incident and subsequent recovery activities.

21. Following publication of the guidance, the London HR Directors Group determined that the application and value of this work will be better understood following the completion of the full 2019/2020 RSL assurance process, which was expected to be undertaken by all boroughs. The results would then have been used to inform further discussions between chief executives and their directors. A key component of this process was the completion of the full five borough Local Government Association (LGA) Independent Peer Challenges, see para 59 to 62, and sub-

regional good practice workshops. Due to the onset of COVID-19 in early 2020, and the extreme demands this placed on London local authorities, the full regional RSL process was not completed and further work on this recommendation was paused.

22. It is anticipated that the Local Authorities' Panel (LAP) will discuss this year's approach to RSLs when it convenes on 7th June 2022. Engagement with the London HR Directors Group will follow.

23. *Question 2b. Please provide any reports or guidance issued following this review?*

24. The Guidance to Heads of Human Resources is provided (MS2/03).

25. **Community engagement**

26. *Question 3. Please provide a current update in relation to community resilience and community engagement as set out in recommendations 9 and 23 EP2020 refresh?*

27. Community Resilience is established as a RSL and a measure by which all London local authorities and the City of London Corporation can assess themselves against.

28. A London Resilience Forum (LRF) funded Community Resilience Co-ordinator, is likely to begin work very soon and it is expected to build on community resilience activities progressed regionally prior to the onset of COVID-19 and support local authorities and other stakeholders at the local level. It is expected that this will include building on the strong relationships established during the COVID-19 response between the community, faith, voluntary and funders sector, the GLA and London local authorities.

29. Following the Community Resilience Co-ordinator starting work, as detailed in para 28, and as agreed by the LAP Implementation Group and then by LAP on 15th February 2022, this recommendation has been recorded as complete and assimilated into mainstream local authority activity and re-enforced by the RSL assurance process.

30. *Question 4. In light of the Cabinet Office 'Planning the coordination of spontaneous volunteers in emergencies guidance' published in June 2019, please provide an update as to what steps have been undertaken including any consultation on guidance provided to Local Authorities regarding the treatment of spontaneous volunteers {GOL00001836}?*

31. A ‘Planning the Coordination of Spontaneous Volunteers – Guide for London Local Authorities’ was published in September 2021 and supported by a Borough Implementation Checklist – Planning the Coordination of Spontaneous Volunteers. Both documents are provided (MS2/04 & MS2/05).

32. Simplification of plans

33. *Question 5. Recommendation 15 (within Appendix A of the Progress Report {INQ00015129}) – notes: ‘Local Authorities’ Panel should engage with the LRF to simplify joint plans and support arrangements between blue light partners and councils. The status of this recommendation is complete and notes London Resilience Group, on behalf of the London Resilience Partnership are in the process of simplifying all regional frameworks and protocols, including those associated with LLAG. Please provide details of what has been done in relation to this recommendation.*

34. This recommendation was presented to London Resilience Group (LRG) who oversee the development and delivery of regional plans and frameworks on behalf of the LRF. I believe LRG are best placed to provide the Inquiry with an update on the status of simplifying joint plans.

35. The LLAG operating procedure has been reviewed and republished in August 2019 v10.0 in a simplified format and is provided (MS2/02).

36. Humanitarian Assistance Programme

37. *Recommendation 18 of EP 2020 Refresh report {GOL00001346} recommended that the Local Authorities’ Panel should commission a review of current plans and exercising so as to build on learnings from the experience of the humanitarian and welfare response provided to victims and survivors in 2017. To further this a Humanitarian Assistance Programme, supported by London ADASS (Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) was created.*

38. *Question 6a. Please provide an update as to the Humanitarian Assistance Programme, including an update as to what has been done to develop policies and procedures for local authorities in providing ‘wrap around’ support to survivors and those directly affected by major incidents?*

39. The latest update on the Humanitarian Assistance Programme is provided (MS2/06).

40. A guidance document addressing key worker support to people critically affected by emergencies was endorsed by LAP on 15th February 2022. It will now be further developed through a robust Pilot programme. Following evaluation of the Pilots, an implementation checklist will be shared with all London local authorities to aid local development and application. The guidance has been shared with all London local authorities and is provided (MS2/07).
41. *Question 6b. In the January 2022 Local Authority Panel Business Plan {GOL00001836}, under the section Humanitarian Assistance, Row 11, Column M, refers to 'Guidance released to EP Teams for consultation - deadline 31 Dec; deadline extended to 17 Jan 2022'. What Guidance was released to EP Teams?*
42. The guidance released to EP teams was a draft version of the key worker support to people critically affected by emergencies, which was endorsed by LAP on 15th February 2022, see para 40.
43. *Question 6b i. Please provide a copy.*
44. Finalised guidance provided (MS2/07), see para 40.
45. *Question 6b ii. Has this Guidance been approved following consultation?*
46. The Key Worker Support to People Critically Affected by Emergencies Guidance (draft version 4.1) was approved by LAP on 15th February 2022, see para 40. It will now be the basis of Pilots which are designed to aid refinement of the policies and procedures and support the roll-out of the capability/service across all London local authorities.
47. **Role of Mayor of London**
48. *Question 7. As part of the work undertaken in your EP2020 refresh report, what consideration has been given to the role of the Mayor of London?*
49. I am not aware of any consideration being given to the role of the Mayor of London within the work undertaken to deliver the original EP2020 prospectus and the EP2020 refresh report, beyond that of delivering the 'Voice of London'.

50. During the simplification process associated to the LLAG Operating Procedure (MS2/02) it was determined not to include reference to the role of the Mayor. The Mayor's role is however included in the London Strategic Coordination Framework and incorporated into LLAG arrangements briefings to chief executives and relevant exercises.

51. *Question 8. Has there been any requests and/or identified need to expand the Mayor's role from beyond being the 'voice of London' to an operational role?*

52. I am not aware of any requests and/or identified need to expand the Mayor's role.

53. **Resilience Standards for London**

54. *Question 9. In what way does the Resilience Standards for London complement the National Resilience Standards published in 2018 {GOL00001284}?*

55. Throughout the development of the Resilience Standards for London the author, Sean RUTH, was in regular contact with Dr Rob McFARLANE from the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS) in the Cabinet Office who have ownership of the National Resilience Standards. Sean RUTH established an external scrutiny and challenge group which consisted of a large number of stakeholders including Rob McFARLANE. The purpose of the group was to share their knowledge and experience and to function as a critical friend.

56. The National Resilience Standards have been developed for Local Resilience Forums. After discussions with the CCS, it was agreed to adopt a similar format for the Resilience Standards for London (RSL) to ensure the two sets of standards would be complementary, although different in terms of subject matter areas and content.

57. The content for each of the RSL have been drawn from national guidance and legislation, LGA guidance, London specific guidance and other publications and reports. Examples include British Standards, Business Continuity Good Practice Guidelines 2018, and the Kerslake Report.

58. *Question 10. The Assurance Framework review conducted by Sean Ruth {GOL00001596} indicated that the central government could have an enhanced role in supporting local authorities where it is appropriate to do so on a voluntary basis and at the request of the local organisation. Do you consider, as was ventilated in that review, that there should be an*

independent role of assembling a peer review team, similar to a model adopted by Ofsted (paragraph 4.9, p.16)?

59. A number of options were explored during the assurance review to determine the most appropriate method of external and independent challenge. Options included a government inspectorate (ruled out during early discussions with CCS), a national public sector body such as the Local Government Association (LGA), a private sector organisation such as one of the ‘big 4’ accounting firms and a subject matter expert commissioned specifically for the work.

60. One of the options discussed was the CCS matching peers from across the Local Resilience Forum system to a London Borough for peer review purposes. This option was not explored further due to other priorities within CCS. It was also understood that consideration was being given to adopting this process for the national standards too.

61. Following discussions at LAP, the LGA, who facilitate local government peer challenges across a wide range of service areas, were contracted to deliver this element of the RSL assurance process, over a four-year programme.

62. The current system of LGA peer challenge appears to be an appropriate model as it draws on sector experts from across the local government system including local politicians and senior officers. There is however merit in the Government further considering its role and the value of assembling an independent peer review team as this would connect the emergency planning and resilience work being undertaken at national, regional, and local level

63. Local Authority Panel Business Plan, January 2022

64. *Please confirm the current position in relation to the EP2020 refresh 27 Recommendations.*

65. *Question 11a. How many have been completed?*

66. It is worth noting that several recommendations within the EP2020 refresh prospectus are of an advisory nature, with adoption at the discretion of individual London local authorities.

67. Recommendation 12 relates to chief executives chairing new local authority sub-regional group meetings. Following discussions with LAP members, the delivery of this recommendation was amended to reflect the chairs roles needing to be at an executive director or director level and

officers who have resilience and emergency planning in their portfolios. The meetings have also been redesignated Sub-Regional Resilience Programme Boards. All six programme Boards have been convening periodically since 2018.

68. Recommendation 20 relates to chief executives attending training events and participating in a structured exercise programme to prepare them to undertake LLAG duties. In January 2020, a one-day LLAG training session was delivered by London Resilience Group to all chief executives. This was designed to complement resilience related training delivered locally. No further LLAG training sessions have been held due to COVID-19 but discussions on reinstating training of this nature will start soon. In addition, London Resilience Group host Multi-Agency Incident Gold Commander (MAGIC) courses in London and invitations are sent to all chief executives. Recognising that participation opportunities are limited; chief executives also have the opportunity to arrange attendance on MAGIC courses held elsewhere in the Country. This option will be included in new London chief executive induction packs being developed by London Councils.

69. LAP oversees an annual regional exercise programme with Exercise Safer City, delivered by LRG, offering six opportunities for chief executives to perform the role of LLAG. This complements chief executive participation in Exercise Safer City as Council Gold and also in other local exercises.

70. The LLAG training and exercise events form an annual rolling programme which remains under constant review.

71. I can confirm that taking into account the comments in paras 66 to 71, all but one of the recommendations can be classified as complete.

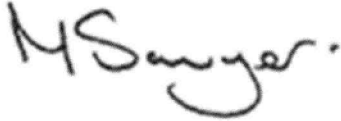
72. *Question 11b. Please confirm which recommendations remain outstanding.*

73. Recommendation 4 - Common Standards for EP Professionals. Following discussions at the London HR Directors Group, it was agreed on 22nd November 2019 to await the completion of the first round of RSL peer challenges facilitated by the LGA. Recognising that roles and responsibilities are determined locally, the HR Directors Group wished to consider outcomes from the peer challenges to build a business case for common standards. Due to the COVID-19 response, the full series of peer challenges did not take place as planned and this recommendation will therefore be progressed at the point when the full RSL programme is re-instated

74. Question 11c. *When are those recommendations expected to be completed?*

75. Recommendation 4 cannot be progressed until the RSL programme is re-instated. LAP will discuss this matter when it convenes on 7th June 2022.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "MSawyer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'M' and a long, sweeping underline.

Dated: 27/04/2022