

Rupinder Hardy
Personal Briefing Document
Grenfell Tower Fire Response Team
Westway Sports Centre

1. **15th June 2017** – Initially volunteered to assist with the relief effort on, and suggested that Philip Lee-Morris work with me as this was my first response.
2. **16th June 2017** – received an hour's LALO training.
3. **17th June 2017** – arrived at Westway at approx., 7am. Spent the first hour assessing the situation from a strategic command and operational viewpoint. At 09:36 I assumed command of the Westway Centre, to become the Assistance Centre.
4. **17th June 2017** – at approx. 20-20:30 John Barradell and Eleanor Kelly GOLD Command (CE of the City of London and EC of Southwark Councils), met with Phil privately to understand and see what the reality at Westway actually was. They asked for an open conversation and update. I advised both that things were chaotic and there was a high degree of mistrust and an abject lack of deliver to outcomes needed as well as service desks to meet those outcomes. Eleanor made of note of this discussion. John asked what was needed to help Phil and I deliver to which I responded; for Ealing to assume control and start to organise the delivery model I had in mind.
5. **17th June 2017** – at approx., 21:00 I called Paul Najserak (who called me back), whereupon he spoke to John privately. At this point GOLD control had passed to Ealing Council and I informed our BECC/Donna Wootton.
6. **18th June 2017** – Ealing was in Command with a high and much appreciated Corporate Board presence.
7. **18th June 2017** – I continued to manage Westway with Phil as Sliver Command properly supported by a GOLD command structure.

Initial operational and tactical assessment over weekend of 17 & 18 June 2017 and subsequent shifts (management handover from Lewisham – Yvonne Brown to me):

My approach was delivering a largescale project within tight timeframes meeting the expectations of a variety of groups affected/involved.

- initial assessment of needs and requesting additional services,
- initial assessment and redeployment/use of floor space/services,
- site management & set up, plans to relocate services to make more space available within the sports centre,
- location and account of available emergency funds/how to request more,
- need for clear lines of communication from the ground to command along with points of escalation,
- assessment and clarification of data needs from GOLD command via BECC,
- gap analysis of needs vs LA services, including complementary services,
- gap analysis of other items required (i.e. PA/loggist/seating/tables/air-con/meals),
- analysis of time sensitive actions and activities including data reports,
- assessment of potential unrest and actions to mitigate,
- led, controlled and assumed authority of all meetings from 09:36 on 17/06/17, which then followed an agenda, to meet all expectations and delivered results/actions,
- assigned roles & responsibilities (immediate activity upon assuming control on Saturday morning – 17/06/17),
- community engagement and cohesion conducted via meetings and VOC/"you said, we did" exercises,
- communication needs/timely/targeted/informative/means to respond,
- communication platforms including flyers/leaflets/social media/website (bearing in mind English may not be a first language),
- process flowcharts to map out how services connect for those affected (bearing in mind English may not be a first language),

- partner/charity sector engagement,
- donators/supplier/corporate engagement,
- setting up a sustainable delivery model including a follow-up process,
- ongoing needs and services assessment,
- need for regular/timely and targeted communications,
- stakeholder engagement, including building and maintaining volunteer relationships,
- silver Command meetings and GOLD interaction/reporting/updating and subsequent delivery of any action,
- media impact assessment & management,
- data protection concerns (including media intrusion),
- security arrangements (MPS & private security)

17/06/17 & 18/16/17	LALO duty as assigned by Ealing Council. Reported to Westway at approx. 7am.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate impression was that there was a lack of leadership and command authority. • Handover from the previous RBKC shift was minimal in detail with more questions raised than answers given. • All documentation was paper based in terms of residents/staff/volunteers on site. • Whilst emergency money was being handed out, this was also being documented on paper without a proper process to manage funds and who received it. Again, no checking process. • I requested admin support/loggist to start creating an excel log of these items. This was supplied by Sutton Council. • No one had attended Silver Meetings at the Kensington Leisure Centre, so there was no exchange of urgent and important information with no LA representation. • There was no food management or identification of food needs, apart from the volunteers leading this. • There was confusion on the role of the Westway Centre with RBKC stating there were standing down the centre. This was not confirmed. • Data was not being transmitted to the BECC and they were chasing constantly. • Confusion from RBKC on donations, if they were being accepted or rejected, what to do and how to manage the process. • RBKC senior managers were on site, but being disruptive to the tasks we were delivering so I asked for all of those, surplus to immediate needs to be removed (call to BECC). • RBKC staff in tabards were being singled out and residents were very reluctant to approach them. • Volunteers who had been supporting the residents since the night of the fire were not fully engaged by RBKC to use them as an asset working with the residents. Volunteers openly stated they didn't trust the LA and questioned my/Phil's roles and how we could/would help them all. • Westway still had the police cordons up and a high police presence which was upsetting people. The comments were that it looked like a crime scent and not a rest centre. • At 09:36, I communicated that I had taken charge of the Westway Centre. This email was sent to Donna and the ERT at Ealing. • We set about getting in the much needed support service desks via identification of needs and relayed this to BECC.

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Initial Lessons learnt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Whilst the response for cross council had been triggered, there was an abject lack of operational control and assigned roles and responsibilities (EPO onsite lead/BECC officer contacts and names, lead/volunteer lead/FM (including environmental health, sanitation, waste, clinical waste etc. /donation lead/loggist/media lead/charity lead/faith lead/food lead/MPS liaison/security/Legal lead/Silver & Gold names/Lead. This is paramount to the running of any operation on the ground. ✓ Immediate and initial command presence on site is useful to calm residents and other parties involved. This seems to placate them and demonstrate things are being taken seriously. ✓ Immediate triage area needs to be set up with clear routes to access the assistance centre. ✓ Notice boards on site to inform. (can be flip charts to start with). ✓ Information leaflets need to be distributed within hours to manage expectations. These need to be issued to all community centres acting a relief centres as well as communicated by social media/news/websites etc. ✓ ICT is an absolute necessity to quickly set up a virtual response account with a means to communicate data and reports etc to BECC. ✓ This ICT should be supported by Media to establish public facing communication to keep the public informed and sign point them the help available, where it is and how to access it. ✓ A summary of the command and control process for everyone as a flowchart would be useful. ✓ A robust, timely and informative handover from outgoing to incoming shifts is essential to reduce tensions and continue the delivery of services/outcomes. ✓ LA staff need to be aware of the high emotions and staff must be able to deal with everyone with sensitivity and compassion whilst remaining in command and delivering to needs/outcomes. ✓ An assessment of the first response needs should be made by duly skilled officers on site and this should be quickly relayed to BECC to authorise and deliver. ✓ Logs/reports/data needs to be controlled and documented on a timely basis to be fed to the control teams. ✓ Consistent and regular data requests should be diarised by the lead to ensure delivery. ✓ Regular Silver Meetings times and locations are a must for two-way communications, urgent and important and time relevant updates. ✓ Regular meetings with stakeholders on site must be programmed in to avoid confusion and duplication. My first meeting with all stakeholders (staff, volunteers and partners), set the tone for future meetings focusing on the needs of the residents to meet their immediate outcomes as well as positively engaging with the volunteers, who were distrustful and sceptical. ✓ Once all stakeholders saw that they needs were being delivered and actions were being taken, they were far more cooperative and started to build trustful relationships with the staff. ✓ Clear and regular communication by Gold Coms is necessary to inform the public on the humanitarian relief effort being delivered. ✓ Clear and regular messages to staff on site through one BECC are essential so as not to add layers or create confusion. Repeated requests slowed down the activity and duplicated the process as more than one officer was contacted. ✓ Media Coms need to be on site from the start.

