Outcome meeting 17/7/17

PRC Outcomes Grenfell Tower 3rd July 2017

Organisational Development

1. Radio communication problems were experienced at the incident, particularly within the building. When these problems occurred, 'runners' were used to pass information. The problems included issues with fireground radios (general, command and BA channels), Airwave radios and Breathing Apparatus (BA) telemetry equipment. Review incident ground communication systems and associated procedures, and review the process for battery replacement and charging at an incident.

2. Extended Duration Breathing Apparatus (EDBA) was used extensively for search and rescue. Review the capacity and use of EDBA within the organisation.

3. The Operational Risk Database (ORD), accessed through the Mobile Data Terminals (MDT) did not provide sufficient information on Grenfell Tower, in particular the tactical plan and floor plans. Review PN800, consider the training provided to staff in collating and recording key information on the ORD and ensure there is a suitable Quality Assurance process in place.

4. Surrey FRS' aerial appliance was utilised at the incident as it provided a greater reach and height capability. Review the specifications required for LFB aerial appliances.

5. There was a delay in Brigade Control receiving a second informative message reducing their situational awareness. Review our messages policy to include quick 'through the windscreen messages'.

6. There was no access to the helicopter downlink (heli-tele) at Stratford Control fall-back. Review the equipment at our Control fall-back locations.

7. Some casualties were brought out of the building through smoke. Consider the use of Smoke Evacuation Hoods.

8. The Command Support System (CSS) failed. Review the effectiveness of the current CSS with a view to updating or replacing it.

9. The Incident Commander (AC) used an officer to record his key decisions. Review the availability of competent loggists with a view to training additional staff so that using loggists becomes 'normal business'.

10. There was a delay in implementing the relief plan. Review the use of transportation of personnel to and from the incident ground, ie consider using mini-buses.

11. The sharing of Fire Survival Guidance (FSG) information between Control and the fireground was carried out by operational officers who were supporting Control staff within the Stratford control room. The communication link was by mobile to mobile phone, not the dedicated line (within PN790); therefore the conversations were not recorded. Reinforce FSG training, reminding staff of the need to use the dedicated line which is secure and recorded.

12. Dangerous Structure Engineers (DSE) could not provide an adequate assessment on risk areas and there was a delay in them arriving at the incident. Work with Local Authorities, the London Resilience Forum (LRF) and the Institution of Structural Engineers to fully review the availability of DSEs, in particular those who can provide suitable advice on the effects of a fire on a structure. The review should also consider how an urgent response to an incident is undertaken.

13. FSG information was written on a wall within the building. Review the ability for capturing large amounts of FSG information at incidents.

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14. The ability for officers to contact Brigade Control and book in attendance was restricted due to over capacity on phone lines and using Airwave. The launch of BOSS mobile should provide greater resilience in this area.

15. The gas authority were requested, however did not arrive until a significant time into the incident. Review call-out arrangements with utility companies.

16. The Protective Equipment Group (PEG) and the Brigade Distribution Centre (BDC) were key in providing and maintaining BA resources to the incident. Much of this was done on good will. Review the contract to ensure it is resilient in terms of out of hours support.

Organisational Positive

1. Officers in various command roles felt empowered to carry out a dynamic risk assessment and use their operational discretion to move outside normal operating procedures during the most dynamic stages of the incident to save saveable life.

2. The incident benefited from the development of close working relationships with other agencies, including the Disaster Victims Identification team (DVI). This relationship has been created from previous joint agency training (ie. EUR).

3. The post incident procedure provided positive welfare and counselling support to staff and enabled the capturing of contemporaneous notes post incident.

4. Control (particularly FSG) worked well at Stratford due to their close proximity to each other within the room. Consider the layout at the London Operations Centre (LOC).

5. FSG calls to other FRS control rooms worked well during periods of high call volume. Arrangements should be reviewed with a consideration to formalising.

Individual positive points

Mike Dowden

1. Good early anticipation for resourcing the incident as it developed and good early make ups.

2. Good early structure established across the incident which was built on throughout.

3. Good command point and position maintained whilst in command.

Alex Norman

1. Demonstrated calm leadership to deliver an effective structure for disseminating FSG information, on an unprecedented scale, to the incident ground.

Richard Welch

1. As Incident Commander, early declaration of Major Incident and Made Pumps 40 to adequately resource firefighting and rescue activities.

2. Demonstrated strong leadership as Fire Sector Commander to co-ordinate resources and maintain momentum to save saveable life.

Adrian Fenton

1. Assisted with the co-ordination of FSG calls. This is above and beyond the normal role of the Brigade Co-ordinating manager in BCC.

Joanne Smith

1. Effectively built on the FSG coordination structure within Brigade Control and created a strong link for key information to be passed to the fireground.

2. Effectively co-ordinated communications between other emergency service's control rooms and BT to share, manage, and co-ordinate critical information.

Tom Goodall

1. Provided a robust structure for managing, controlling, recording and disseminating vital FSG call information, that had been received from Brigade Control, to the Fire Sector during life saving operations. Excellent support was provided to the CU staff throughout.

Lee Drawbridge

1. As Sector Commander for Command Support, demonstrated effective management and co-ordination of resourcing requirements for the incident.

Andy Roe

1. As Incident Commander, demonstrated strong leadership with a calm and measured approach and with a reasoned, articulate decision making process throughout.

2. Empowered and inspired officers to deliver key objectives and move outside of standard operating procedures during the most dynamic stages of the incident to save saveable life.

3. Quickly recognised the need to change the FSG 'stay put' guidance and swiftly communicated this decision to Brigade Control and the incident ground.

4. Decisive and justifiable decision making demonstrated throughout, particularly in continuing to commit crews into a high risk area to save saveable life and recognition of our obligation under the Human Rights Act and Fire Services Act 2004.

5. Early recognition of extreme hazards and subsequent request for Metropolitan Police Territorial Support Group (TSG) for potential civil disturbance and, using their riot shields, to protect the access and egress for emergency responders and casualties.

Dave O'Neill

1. As Sector Commander Safety, an effective safety structure was quickly implemented and a hazard zone established. The access and egress to the Fire Sector was effectively controlled using the TSG with riot shields and safety officers as spotters.

Dany Cotton

1. Motivational hands-on leadership and compassion demonstrated throughout the incident to support all fire service personnel. This had a significant positive impact on staff, galvanising and motivating them to work tirelessly to achieve a common shared purpose to save saveable life.

Mick Mulholland and Matt Cook

1. Acted above and beyond the ORT role, providing support to Incident Commanders by relaying key messages and information across the incident ground in addition to carrying out their ORT function.

Individual development points

Andy Walton

1. If the Incident Commander assesses that the criteria for a Major Incident has been met, they are to declare a Major Incident with Brigade Control to ensure that organisational support mechanisms are established and to prepare other emergency responders. Whilst you recognised that this was a Major Incident, you did not share that information.

Andy O'Loughlin

1. Once the Incident Commander (IC) has made a request to the Command Unit staff for a priority make up and to send a key informative message, it is imperative that the IC confirms that this has been sent. Neither the Makes Pumps 40 message with further additional appliances and officers, nor the METHANE message were sent to Brigade Control.

2. The Incident Commander must consider if the FSG 'stay put' advice remains appropriate if the conditions within the building change. It is clear that whilst en-route and on arrival you did consider the information being shared as part of FSG, however when you moved from the incident ground onto the Command Unit, due to being more remote in terms of what you could directly observe, you did not get a chance to reconsider the FSG advice.
   It is however absolutely clear that whilst you were IC, you were dealing with an extremely dynamic and rapidly escalating situation. Rationale was also given during the PRC that under normal circumstances, appropriate compartmentation should provide adequate protection to those trapped inside unaffected compartments, enabling rescues by BA crews. It is recognised that the conditions experienced at this incident were unprecedented.

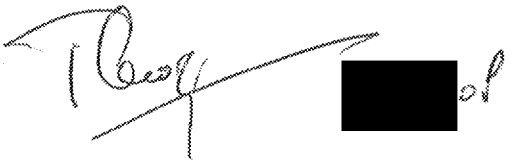
No positive or development points

Brett Loft

Gareth Cook

Note:

It is recommended that the following Sector Commanders should receive positive points, outside of the PRC process (individuals did not attend the PRC):



1. Pat Goulbourne (Fire Sector) – by Andy Roe

2. Steve West (Command Support) – by Lee Drawbridge

Informal points

Other organisational considerations noted at the PRC (not positive or development)

1. At a point during the incident there were two Incident Commanders. However, this was an unprecedented fire and this situation is highly unusual, therefore it is felt unnecessary to review handover/takeover procedures.

2. Control did not receive regular updates from the incident ground on the progress of dealing with Fire Survival Guidance (FSG) calls. However the number of FSG calls being processed was unprecedented, therefore a review of PN790 to deal with this specific point is not deemed necessary. FSG training to senior managers, Command Unit, and Control staff should however reinforce the message that two-way communications is maintained between Control and the incident ground.

3. There is no mobilising protocol established for Positive Pressure Ventilation (PPV) equipment. At this incident, once the request for PPV was received at the Brigade Coordination Centre (BCC), the equipment was quickly mobilised in a vehicle on blue lights. The availability and mobilising arrangements for PPV and other specialised equipment should be considered and formalised.

4. The Command Unit used for booking in did not have sufficient spaces for the number of nominal roll boards (NRB) given in. Whilst this did not present a significant issue, the use of NRB and booking in procedures should be reviewed with a view to utilising new technology (ie. bar code and scanner that automatically books a resource on to the incident within Vision).

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