

Lakanal House Board Meeting
7th January 2010

1. Attendees

Ron Dobson (RD) – Commissioner/Chair
Tim Cutbill (TC) – DAC Strategy and Performance
Keith Minnear (KM) – Head of Legal
Linda Armstrong (LA) – Head of Employment and Litigation
Mike Curran (MC) – SM investigation team
Leah Clements (LC) Investigation team/ notes
Peter Zymaczyk (PZ) – GM investigation team
Peter Mansi (PM) – Fire Investigation
Steve Turek (ST) – AC Fire Safety
Scott Hayward (SH) – Control Commander
Jon Webb (JW) – AC Operational Policy
Kevin Hughes (KH) – DAC Operational Policy

2. Apologies: Gary Dobson, Brenda Weir, Dave Brown

3. Minutes of last meeting

3.1 Action at 4.4 – TC confirmed the draft report structure had been revised after comments were received from Board members.

4. Work streams

a. Fire investigation

5.1 PM confirmed BRE have begun building the computer model and a full size reconstruction. PM is in the process of obtaining plans from Southwark. The Police have scanned flats/corridors. The tests are expected to be completed by May/June and PM will be reviewing progress at regular interviews. The Board will be kept up to date on progress.

5.2 PM has been attempting to arrange an interview with the owner of flat [REDACTED] (Andrew Aveling) in order to obtain a better understanding of the content of the flat and the fire loading. This is arranged for Monday 11th Jan.

5.3 FI are continuing with the timeline, and will be bringing this work into the sequence of events that the general investigation team is working on.

b. Fire safety

5.4 ST stated the main focus of Fire Safety's work consists of gathering the information which should be completed by the end of March.

5.5 Fire Safety are waiting for the meeting with CPS/HSE (Monday 11th Jan) in order to determine how interviews will be carried out. More information is also needed from Southwark in order to progress.

c. **General investigation**

Sequence of Events

- 5.6 The first draft of sequence of events has been started and will take approximately 4 weeks. All LFB statements have been received from the Police with the exception of three that still need to be signed.

High Rise

- 5.7 KH confirmed a gap analysis has been carried out to identify if there are any discrepancies between the Generic Risk Assessment (GRA) and LFB Policy 633: High Rise Firefighting. Referring to the gap analysis provided to the Board, KH provided a summary of the main issues.
- 5.8 The Board discussed the process for systemising the process of the transfer of information from building owners to LFB. At present information is received on an ad hoc basis and owners/occupiers do not have a legal requirement to do so. TC confirmed there is an article in the RRO regarding maintaining facilities for firefighters, and LFB could influence an amendment for this section.
- 5.9 PM suggested the provision of a check list for crews to use when attending other incidents e.g. shut in lifts, including other aspects to check whilst at the building e.g. dry rising main, etc. KH agreed this may need highlighting to crews.
- 5.10 RD commented that if the RRO was being adhered to, LFB would expect fire risk assessments to be maintained for all these buildings. If a lift is not working, it would not be an unreasonable expectation for the responsible person to notify the Fire Brigade.
- 5.11 TC commented that the expectation in the GRA for having a sufficient amount of information on all building stock in London is unrealistic. KH suggested a more practical solution may be to produce a generic guidance on high rise buildings and the variety of layouts in order to familiarise crews with the features of these buildings.
- 5.12 PZ commented that at the Lakanal incident FRU crews were using USAR techniques to assist the search/rescue operations. TC suggested a search procedure/policy could be developed across other firefighting practices.
- 5.13 RD stated that there is not a large gap between the GRA and the LFB Policy. The next step will be to analyse the actions on the day compared with what is set out in the LFB policy. KH confirmed this work is being carried out. JW stated that a piece of work has already been started regarding notifying crews, for example, if a dry rising main is not functioning.
- 5.14 KH commented that the GRA/LFB Policy are largely based on the concept of a fire remaining within a compartment for a certain length of time. However, the outcome of the Lakanal fire highlights the potential need to adjust the way policies are written, including information on possible adaptations crews may need to make if a fire does not remain within the compartment.
- 5.15 RD requested for an additional piece of work to be carried out in order to address the issues that were raised from the gap analysis.

Action: JW

Control

- 5.16 A gap analysis is being completed SH outlined the work to date.
- 5.17 RD requested for another piece of work to also be carried out, comparing policy with what occurred on the day.
- 5.18 KH requested that this work is linked with Operational Policy, as work also needs to be carried out regarding relaying information from Control to the incident ground in order to make the best use of the information available.
- 5.19 ST stated that there is a need to look at how total evacuation situations are addressed, if a building does not behave as expected.
- 5.20 SH confirmed the work should be ready for the next Board meeting. RD highlighted that there is a need to use other departments as necessary to assist the work and ensure a joined up, systematic approach.

Action: SH to complete report/gap analysis and update the Board.

5. Any Other Business

- 6.1 TC stated CLG have requested BRE to look specifically at the staircase in Lakanal and why it became so smoke logged. ST has been given the task of looking at positive pressure ventilation and how this could have had an impact on the incident.
- 6.2 LA provided a brief update on the Coroner's pre-inquest hearing. Interested parties named themselves and only the Police and PM provided a briefing.
- 6.3 TC confirmed all interviews required by MPS have been carried out. There are only 3 outstanding statements to be returned. The detailed timeline needs to be completed taking into account the most recently received statements and this will be given to the Police upon completion. RD requested for the Board to review this document beforehand.

Next meeting: 8th February 2010