

**Lakanal House Board Meeting
15th September 2010**

1 Board Membership

Commissioner – Ron Dobson, Deputy Commissioner – Rita Dexter, Interim Head of Legal – Linda Armstrong, Head of Health and Safety – Brenda Weir, Director of Operational Policy and Training – Gary Dobson, AC Service Delivery/Mobilising – Dave Brown, AC Operational Policy – Jim Knighton, AC Fire Safety – Steve Turek

2 Attendees

Ron Dobson (RD) - Commissioner/Chair
Linda Armstrong (LA) – Interim Head of Legal
Dave Brown (DB) – AC Service Delivery/mobilising
Jim Knighton (JK) – AC Operational Policy
Steve Turek (ST) – AC Fire Safety
Gary Dobson (GD) – Director Operational Policy and Training
Peter Mansi (PM) – GM Fire Investigation
Tim Cutbill (TC) – DAC Investigation team
Scott Hayward (SH) – POM Control
Joanne Stibbards (JS) – SOM Control
Mike Curran (MC) – GM Investigation team
Leah Clements (LC) – Investigation team/notes
Dave Kennett (DK) – Fire Safety
Sam Spindlow (SS) – Press
John Bradbury (JB) – DAC Fire Safety

3 Apologies - Brenda Weir, Rita Dexter.

4 Minutes of last meeting

- 4.1 Item 4, page 1 – meeting was held with Gordon Fielding, FBU. JK confirmed this meeting was held approx 3 weeks ago. There has been no further contact.
- 4.2 High Rise – JK confirmed the revised draft high rise policy is currently with the Assistant Commissioners. Pre planning, movement of the bridgehead, and a number of other issues outlined in the operational review report have been covered. Further sections may need to be added as a result of this meeting.

5 Control

- 5.1 SH/JS presented an overview of the draft Control report/analysis and post actions.
- 5.2 JS confirmed the report focuses on the fire survival guidance (FSG) advice provided that day. Issues looked at include the techniques employed, emotional bonding, fire safety input, information transfer and communications with fire ground.

Post actions

- 5.3 10/93 recommends that staff are trained in FSG between weeks 10 and 12. Prior to Lakanal LFB staff were trained in week 5. This has now been moved to allow the Control Officers to have some experience of calls beforehand.
- 5.4 FSG training has been reviewed to ensure it fully aligns with 10/93, subject to recommendations made to CLG. All Control staff have now received refresher training in FSG.

- 5.5 A full day of refresher training has been introduced, half of which is delivered by the fire safety team. Role play has also been introduced.
- 5.6 The FSG Reference Information File has been reworked to complement the FSG training package.
- 5.7 The appendix to Policy 539 has been updated to align with other documentation.
- 5.8 LFB training came to audit Control training team. They recommended introducing role play on a number of call types.
- 5.9 It is also recommended to introduce a supervisory training package of 2 weeks, similar to the CM package. This would include a MINERVA type exercise.

Proposed Actions

- 1. Review policy 539 .
 - 2. Letter to CLG to be considered .
 - 3. Review of communications with the fire ground, in particular in relation to fire survival calls and including the format of messages, examining two way communications.
 - 4. Supervisory training .
 - 5. All responding officers to be informed of FSG calls.
- 5.10 RD commented that there are potentially 2/3 areas to consider in relation to Control:
 - 1. The information transfer from control to fire ground.
 - 2. The question of where LFB stand in relation to training/guidance compared to national guidance. It is evident that national guidance is in need of improvement.
 - 3. to ensure that refresher training is maintained for fire survival calls and recorded on STEP.
 - 5.11 GD asked whether ,in relation to the gathering and relaying of information in Control , a template for FSG be used. SH – this will be considered if we can create a formatted message on the system. **Action: SH to review this**
 - 5.12 TC commented that the MPS have requested training information from Control and they will be provided with the package of national guidance/policy/training and RIF.
 - 5.13 SH - one of the appendices to the control report is a summary of Control operations which gives further background on the Control Officer's job and how Control runs.
 - 5.14 RD commented that he has not seen any evidence to indicate that smoke was not in the corridor, and residents escaping on advice from Control Officers could have been moving into smoke filled areas. Residents may not have known if there were escape routes. Therefore the Control Officers would not have been aware of this information either.
 - 5.15 RD summarised the recommendations:
 - 1. Review/update policy 539 – this has been carried out. LA suggested this should be re-visited after other work has been carried out. This was agreed by the Board.
 - 2. Letter to CLG to be considered
 - 3. Review of comms to fire ground – this does need to be carried out and full consideration should be given to the introduction of templates as they may restrict the Control Officer/slow them down.

4. Supervisor training – agreed this should take place
5. Responding operational officers to be informed of FSG calls – agreed

Action: SH to add recommendation regarding training.

- 5.16 Agreed that a small group is convened to provide an independent review.

Action: LA to set up a review meeting

6 Operational Review

- 6.1 MC outlined the 5 areas the operational review has considered to be issues requiring policy/organisational change: pre planning, information gathering/recording, bridgehead redeployment, search operations and entrapment danger caused by fallen cables.
- 6.2 Each section has been reviewed by examining LFB and national policy, identifying the evidence to indicate what happened on the day and using this to reach a conclusion.

Pre planning - outline

- 6.3 There is considerable amount of policy/guidance on pre planning.
- 6.4 The local station, Peckham were familiar with the building. They set up a bridgehead and attacked the fire within 10 minutes of arrival which compared with trial data of indicative times of approximately 14 minutes.
- 6.5 There was no recorded information on the building available on the attending appliances.
- 6.6 The fire spread quickly, with smoke affecting the majority of the building. This level of spread is not covered within high rise policy or in national guidance. Fire spread below the floor of origin to other flats had not been experienced before in London or internationally as far as research has been able to establish. However, there have been some other high rise incidents recently where the fire spread up the building externally e.g. Kingston. In the case of Kingston a line drawing was available identifying where flats were located.

Pre planning – Recommendations

1. Conduct research – look at fires that have spread beyond the original compartment. Look to see if potential risk has increased over the years.
 2. Direct that more detailed pre planning is carried out and recorded on the MDT.
- 6.7 RD stated that the work BRE are carrying out covers the first option. Should take forward the recommendation of more detailed planning. GD agreed it would be useful to have further details recorded on high rise buildings as crews visit them throughout the year. Agreed there may be a need to re-issue an instruction with further guidance on what crews should do and what information to include on the MDT.

Action: DB

- 6.8 GD highlighted the need to look at what happened with the information Peckham had on the building.

Information gathering and recording at the incident – outline

- 6.9 The current policy focuses on the recording of information by ICP using ICW, which is then taken over by the Command Unit.
- 6.10 At Lakanal, the information was being pushed straight to the bridgehead as it came in. There is evidence of the crew requesting A3 sheets of paper to establish a record of

information and allocation of tasks. For recording information at a bridgehead position LFB currently only use the BA boards which are not appropriate for recording command and control information.

- 6.11 There is no policy requiring the explanation of FSG to operational personnel.
- 6.12 National guidance – NICS makes reference to brigades using decision making logs. Work being done on this in London but it is not part of systems of work at the moment. It is unclear if it would have met the needs of this incident.
- 6.13 A draft national document is available replacing technical bulletin 10/97 and addresses command and control when using BA. Within this document a strong recommendation is made for having a suitable means of recording information at an entry control point. It is also recommended that a bridgehead requires stage 2 BA.
- 6.14 There is a BA communications board available and references are made to this within the BA Policy/separate policy note. It was previously carried on the BAMIU and is now held on the Operational Support Units. It has fallen out of use and was not used at Lakanal. The board would not have been big enough.

Information gathering and recording at the incident - recommendations

- 1. Policy/procedure required on recording command information at the bridgehead.
- 2. Policy/guidance required for dealing with fire survival calls at an incident
- 6.15 RD commented that a very large area was used to record information at Lakanal which would not have been supported by an A3 board. In addition, the board was designed to be used to record communication with crews who had been committed, rather than command/control information.
- 6.16 GD stated he was unsure whether all of the information should be recorded at the bridgehead as it is available at the Command Unit. It is an unreal expectation that someone at the bridgehead is responsible for this.
- 6.17 TC – felt that consideration should be given to whether a means of recording information is needed at the bridgehead. Flat numbers were being relayed in a number of ways to the bridgehead and crews were committed based on this information. We do have systems on the Command Unit, but at this incident the key information gathering point was the bridgehead.

Bridgehead redeployment – outline

- 6.18 There is currently no policy/procedure on moving a bridgehead at a high rise incident. It has not been raised as an issue before by operational crews.
- 6.19 The movement of the bridgehead affected operations and the safety of crews. It also affected the transfer and gathering of information. There was one crew committed as the bridgehead was being moved out of the building but it did slow operations down.

Bridgehead redeployment - Recommendations

- 1. Policy/procedure needed for controlled movement of a bridgehead at a high rise incident to minimise disruption and ensure safe operations.

Search Operations – outline

- 6.20 Although a substantial amount of training is carried out, there is no distinct policy on how to conduct, command or control complex search operations.

- 6.21 The current national Technical bulletin 10/97 is being reviewed and the new version suggests keeping a suitable record of what you are asking crews to do at an incident and how this information should be recorded.
- 6.22 A Rule 43 letter was sent to Cleveland FRS regarding their search operations at a multi-occupancy care home. They were seen to be lacking in how they structured their search.
- 6.23 The recording of information at the bridgehead on the 3rd floor at Lakanal indicates good practice of conducting a systematic search and recording this search. The building was used to separate out the tasks – e.g. staircase for briefing/debriefing, etc. Later a system of door marking was adopted and looking in unaffected flats prior to entry by BA crews provided an enhanced understanding of the building. The question is whether or not we take these methods on as best practice and bring them in to our policy and training on conducting complicated search operations. Multiple compartment/multiple level fires create a logistical challenge for officers.

Search operations – recommendations

1. Policy/procedure is needed on conducting search operations in terms of those conducting search operations and those having to control and manage these operations.

- 6.24 TC- it is unlikely that this level and complexity of search had been required before.
- 6.25 ST - we had a systematic process and should adopt some of these practices for complex searches.
- 6.26 GD – need to consider having the guidance on recording information as a sub section to a search policy.

Entrapment danger by fallen cables – outline

- 6.27 LFB currently do not have a policy on this hazard or a means of mitigating it.

Entrapment danger by fallen cabling - recommendations

- 1. A policy/procedure and means of mitigating the hazard to crews.
- 6.28 RD highlighted the need also to consider changing the requirement for the housing of cabling. Crews need to be made aware of the hazard and a means of mitigating this should be identified.

Supplementary Matters

- 6.29 Agreed that supplementary matters which do not warrant policy or organisational change should not be included in this report.

7 Fire investigation

- 7.1 PM outlined the structure of the fire investigation report. It has been compiled in the format that has been provided to Coroners' courts in the past. The report describes everything in lay terms to allow it to be accessible to members of the public.
- 7.2 BRE has almost completed its work. A meeting was held last week with MPS/HSE/LFB and BRE to discuss progress.
- 7.3 TC stated CLG have confirmed they have secured funding to carry out BRE modelling regarding smoke spread in the staircase of the building.

8 Fire Safety

- 8.1 DK outlined the fire safety report and its contents.
- 8.2 RD stated the report is very helpful in laying out the history and issues since the fire took place. GD agreed the report is very important particularly when taken in context. RD questioned if there are examples of standards being adhered to but not being sufficient. DK explained the fire doors burnt through more quickly than would be expected, particularly the front doors to the flats. This occurred approximately 20 minutes from the fire getting into flat 79, when they should act as 30 minute fire doors from when the door is first attacked by the fire.
- 8.3 The ventilation was compliant in terms of cross ventilation, but caused unforeseen problems in regards to smoke spread.
- 8.4 GD asked whether we would be commenting on the methodology for building owners to have their buildings inspected and approved. JB confirmed a letter had been written to all Chief Officers regarding external panels. ST also wrote to all heads of housing. ST stated that as long as the building is built to relevant standards at that time, FSG advice for residents is still sound.

Fire Safety – Recommendations

- 8.5 The FSR Housing policy – review policy and LACORs
- 8.6 Review engagement with Local Authorities
- 8.7 Continue sampling the quality of Fire Risk Assessments in high rise premises.
- 8.8 FSR Team planning to continue targeting of social housing using a risk based approach.
- 8.9 Review learning and training for inspecting officers in terms of social housing.
- 8.10 Conduct post investigation/prosecution review, in particular in relation to liaison with MPS/CPS/HSE.
- 8.11 Raise standards on installation and testing of fire lifts as a national issue.
- 8.12 RD commented that we also need to examine any required external recommendations.

Action: JB to consider any required external recommendations

- 8.13 RD commented that the refurbishment in 2006 appears to be key to the fire spread, in comparison with the fire in 1997.
- 8.14 MC highlighted that the smoke spread throughout the building had a significant impact, leading to more FSG calls, people getting trapped in their flats and on balconies. Lakanal does not have smoke seals on the doors, etc and this creates a difficult scenario for crews to deal with. PM confirmed this will be covered in the FI report and the CLG report will examine smoke spread specifically in the stairwell.

9 AOB

- 9.1 RD agreed that the timeline team could start to put together the story of what occurred at Lakanal and form the overarching report.
- 9.2 The pre inquest hearing is being held on the 8th December 2010.

Next Meeting: 8 November 2010 15:30

APPENDIX 1 ACTION PLAN

Ref	Action/Issue	Key Tasks	Lead Officer	Update
1	Analysis of High Rise Policy		AC/OP	7/1/10 completed 22/2/10 meeting held with CLG to discuss review of GRA
2	Undertake BRE modelling		AC/FSR	7/1/10 work has commenced, it is expected to be complete in June 22/2/10 some initial modelling is completed and the reconstruction test is scheduled for the 22/3/10 7/4/10 reconstruction tests were successful 19/7/10 First draft of report has been received and sent back with comments. The test will also be run to consider the impact of the missing staircase.
3	Complete Operational Sequential Time Event Plot		DAC Cutbill	5/5/10 decision not to proceed and now superseded by the Sequence of Events document
4	Complete Sequence of Events		DAC Cutbill	?/8/10 draft provided to Police. Completion subject to further investigations
5	Undertake Gap Analysis of Control National and London FSG Policies		AC/SD	07/4/10 completed
6	Review High Rise Policy		AC/OP	15/9/10 Policy has been revised in draft and is with Assistant Commissioners for comment
7	Review Control involvement in PRC and ORT meetings		AC/SD	
8	FSG – Training to include input from Fire Safety		AC/SD	15/9/10 – Training includes input from Fire

	Officers			Safety Officers
9	FSG – Revise RIF file		AC/SD	15/9/10 – Ongoing
10	Revision of Policy 539		AC/SD	15/9/10 - Ongoing
11	FSG -Initial Training		AC/SD	15/9/10 Initial Training on FSG is now provided later in induction training
12	FSG – Refresher Training		AC/SD	15/9/10 – Refresher training provided to all control staff, consideration being given to how this is completed in future years. It may include Computer Based training and STEP records
13	Draft Letter to CLG re FSG		AC/SD	15/9/10 – awaiting completion of investigation
14	FSG – Policy for communications with the fire-ground		AC/SD	15/9/10 – consideration is being given to standard formatted messages and two way communications. All responding senior officers should be informed of FSG calls.
15	FBU Briefing		AC/OP	15/9/10 - Briefing conducted on 12/8/10
16	Control – General Review of Training		AC/SD	22/6/10 – Audit of Control ongoing. 15/9/10 – Audit feedback now received. Enhanced role play was one recommendation and a more proactive training plan including use of STEP
17	Enhanced Training for Control Supervisors		AC/SD	15/9/10 – Suggested two week course include attendance at Minerva training, will be piloted in new year
18	Draft Control Sequence of Events		AC/SD	
19	Independent Review of draft Control analysis		H of LS	
20	Review of high rise fires where fires spread beyond the compartment		AC/FSR	

21	Fire crews to increase the level of pre-planning at residential high rise fires to include single line diagrams showing number and location of individual flats.		AC/SD	
22	Policy/procedure on recording command information at the bridgehead.		AC/OP	
23	Policy/ procedure for operational staff dealing with fire survival calls at an incident		AC/OP	
24	Policy/procedure for controlled movement of a bridgehead at a high rise incident.		AC/OP	
25	Policy/procedure for conducting search operations – to include guidance for those conducting search operations and those having to manage those operations		AC/OP	
26	Policy/procedure for the means of mitigating the hazard to crews from fallen cables		AC/OP	
27	Consideration of changing national requirements for the fixings of cables		AC/FSR	
28	The FSR Housing policy – review policy and LACORs agreement		AC/FSR	
29	Review engagement with Local Authorities		AC/FSR	
30	Raise standards on installation and testing of fire lifts as a national issue.		AC/FSR	
31	FSR Team planning to continue targeting of social housing using a		AC/FSR	

	risk based approach.			
32	Conduct post investigation/prosecution review, in particular in relation to liaison with MPS/CPS/HSE		AC/FSR	
33	Review learning and training for inspecting officers in terms of social housing.		AC/FSR	
34	Consider any external and national RFS issues		AC/FSR	