

Guidance Note for Chief Executives

Initiating Pan-London Support during Emergencies

Purpose of Guidance

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.

Principles

Regardless of the scale of an incident, a local authority starts by activating some or all of its own command and control structure to initiate an effective response. Depending on the scale of the incident, a local authority may seek, or be sought through dialogue at the appropriate level, to activate pan-London local authority coordination arrangements which are underpinned by the London Local Authority Gold Resolution.

Chief executives should ensure that this culture of London-wide collective coordination and support is embedded within their own organisation by reinforcing it through appropriate guidance and training programmes.

Core Elements of Pan-London Local Authority Coordination

- London Local Authority Gold Resolution
- London Local Authority Gold (LLAG)
- London Local Authority Coordination Centre (LLACC)
- Mutual Aid Agreement

Summary of Resilience Arrangements

The London Local Authority Gold Resolution underpins the pan- London local authority emergency response and recovery arrangements and the role of the LLAG, which is performed by a substantive London local authority Chief Executive in their capacity as Head of Paid Service.

The Gold Resolution facilitates coordination of the collective local authority effort, including the provision of advice, guidance and support where necessary to help shape the responses of individual authorities. It delegates formal support from the LLAG so that they can provide collective guidance and advice on behalf of London local government, to deliver a coordinated response in emergency situations following the convening of Gold/Strategic Coordination Groups.

The delegated powers, under Section 138(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, enable LLAG to incur such expenditure as they consider necessary in taking action to avert, alleviate or eradicate the effects or the potential effects of the event, subject to:

- confirmation from the Minister that expenditure reasonably incurred by LLAG for taking immediate action to safeguard life or property, or to prevent suffering or severe inconvenience, will be reimbursed by HM Government; or
- LLAG has received confirmation on behalf of the Council(s) in whose area(s) the incident has occurred that expenditure reasonably incurred for taking immediate action to safeguard life or property, or to prevent suffering or severe inconvenience, or to promote community cohesion and a return to normality, will be met by the Council (or the Councils in proportions to be agreed by them).

The power to incur expenditure is not exercisable unless one of the above conditions for taking immediate action is satisfied.

An addendum to the Gold Resolution in 2011 enhanced the remit of LLAG by:

- formalising the role of LLAG in lower-impact, emerging incidents, enabling them to coordinate any pan-London local authority response as necessary. (LA Gold would not have power to either direct Councils or incur any expenditure).
- formalising the support role of LLAG in localised incidents which may have wider implications. The role of LLAG in this situation is to compliment the response by the affected borough, consider wider London impacts such as increased community tensions, and develop a coordinated approach to address the wider impacts.
- empowering LLAG, in exceptional circumstances, to respond to incidents and exercise delegated powers where Gold/Strategic Coordination Group has not been convened, for example in the event of extreme and disruptive weather or other events. This could only happen where detailed safeguards are complied with and where absolutely necessary. These safeguards are the convening of a London Resilience Partnership meeting and agreement from London Councils on behalf of all boroughs.
- enabling LLAG, in extreme and rapidly developing situations, to take immediate action. Where this is absolutely essential, LLAG can exercise their delegated powers swiftly with agreement of the Chief Executive of London Councils, including incurring minimum levels of expenditure up to a sum not exceeding £1m in total. This is whilst the process to obtain necessary confirmation is underway.

Examples of the LLAG role in different emergency scenarios are provided in Annex A.

Additional Peer Support

During any incident notified to LLAG by the London Resilience Group, a mechanism exists for peer support and advice to be provided by the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Local Authorities Panel, Chief Executive of London Councils and other experts as deemed necessary.

Mutual Aid

During an emergency, there is a presumption that London Local Authorities will use mutual aid as the route to augment their own response capabilities, making requests at the earliest opportunity.

Core elements of the mutual aid agreement include:

- Subject to the nature of the request, the default position of all London Local Authorities will be to release their staff and other resources to the requesting authority and without delay.
- Mutual aid should, in the first instance, be sought from neighbouring boroughs. At the point that this proves ineffective or LLAG deems it appropriate for mutual aid to be coordinated centrally, this requirement will then be supported by the London local authority Coordination Centre.
- The Requesting Authority should undertake to reimburse the Responding Authority on a cost recovery basis, once the incident is over.

ANNEX A – Examples of the LLAG role during different types of incident

Example	Level of Activity (meetings, issues, coordination)	Role of LLAG
Routine Event/Demonstration Partnership Teleconferences	Low	Watching Brief: Usually delegated to the Duty LLACC Manager
Industrial Action	Low	Participation in SCG teleconferences (can be delegated to Duty LLACC Manager if low level information exchange), dissemination of information to Chief Execs supported by DLM, liaison with London Councils as necessary.
Relevant Overseas Incident – e.g. Icelandic Volcano Eruption	Low	Participation in SCG teleconferences (can be delegated to Duty LLACC Manager if low level information exchange), dissemination of information to Chief Execs supported by DLM, liaison with London Councils as necessary.
Local Major Incident – e.g. Croydon Tram Incident	Medium	Watching Brief: Consideration of wider London impacts and support to the Chief Exec of the affected Borough as necessary.
Local Major Incident – e.g. Russell Square Murder (knife attack initially considered a possible terrorist incident) or North Greenwich attempted	Medium	Support to the Chief Exec of the affected Borough as necessary and participation in SCG (teleconference or in person) to consider wider impacts alongside Chief Exec of affected Borough, liaison with London Councils and oversight of London Councils LA

Bombing of Tube Train		communications approach.
Flu Pandemic – Protracted Incident affecting London	Medium	Participation in SCGs, Liaison with Government and London Councils, regular communications to Chief Executives.
Alexander Litvinenko – Multiple Boroughs affected.	High	Participation in SCGs, Liaison with Chief Executives from affected Boroughs, Government and London Councils, regular communications to all other Chief Executives.
Severe Weather – Multiple Boroughs affected e.g. significant snow in 2009 and 2010	Medium	Participation in SCGs, Liaison with London Councils, regular communications to Chief Executives.
Terrorist Attack (Lone Attacker) – e.g. Westminster Bridge	High	Participation in SCG to consider wider impacts alongside the Chief Executive of the affected Borough, liaison with London Councils and Central Government and oversight of London Councils LA communications approach.
Marauding Terrorist Attack (Multiple Attackers) – e.g. London Bridge	High	Participation in SCG to consider wider impacts alongside Chief Exec of affected Borough, liaison with London Councils and Central Government and oversight of London Councils LA communications approach.
Terrorist Attack including Marauding (Multi-Borough) – e.g. 7/7	High	Participation in SCGs, Liaison with Chief Executives from affected Boroughs, Government and London Councils, regular communications to all other Chief Executives and oversight of London Councils LA communications approach.