

Civil Contingencies Act paper

The role of the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Mayor in the civil protection arrangements for London

Key information

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Aim

The aim of this document is to describe the role of the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Mayor in the civil protection arrangements for London, and how these are carried out.

This document will:

- describe the context of the duties and responsibilities in this area
- address key points in relevant legislation and non-statutory guidance
- describe the role of the GLA and the Mayor in preparing for emergencies
- describe how the Mayor and the GLA discharge the duties and responsibilities described above.
- be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure it is up to date.

Context – duties and responsibilities

a) Duties under the Civil Contingencies Act and Regulations

- The [Civil Contingencies Act](#) and associated Regulations provide a basic framework for agencies involved in emergency planning; they define what tasks should be carried out and how relevant agencies should cooperate. The Act defines key agencies involved as either ‘Category One’ or ‘Category

Two' responders.

- The civil protection duties are set out in the Act. The details of what those duties mean and how they should be performed are detailed in the Regulations.
- The GLA was appointed as a Category One responder by Statutory Instrument in 2011 following the abolition of the Government Office for London. This appointment was to ensure the continuity of the London Resilience Team and to put on a statutory footing the responsibilities that previously applied to the Government Office for London. [Find out more information on the history of resilience in London.](#)
- As a Category One responder, the duties in the Civil Contingencies Act that the GLA must fulfil are to:
 1. assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning
 2. put in place emergency plans
 3. put in place business continuity management arrangements
 4. put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters; and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency
 5. share information with other local responders to enhance coordination
 6. cooperate with other local responders to enhance coordination and efficiency - including through a local resilience forum, which must meet at least once every six months.

b) Responsibilities under guidance

- In addition to the statutory duties there is guidance for agencies involved in emergency planning and response. This includes [Emergency Response and Recovery](#) 2013 Guidance, which describes the multi-agency framework for responding to and recovering from civil emergencies in the UK, and [Emergency Preparedness](#) Chapters which provide guidance on part 1 of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, its associated regulations and non-statutory arrangements.
- In particular, Chapter 9 of [Emergency Preparedness](#) covers London and provides specific responsibilities for the GLA and Mayor. These are listed below:

The Mayor/the GLA:

1. is closely engaged in high-level discussions and decisions relating to the management of emergencies in London
 2. (or an appointed deputy) is currently Chair of the London Resilience Forum (LRF)
 3. contributes as necessary to the pre-informing of Londoners about the content of emergency plans; the correct behaviour in an emergency; and good practice in terms of preparedness in the home, as part of initiatives organised both locally and at the UK level
 4. prepares to play a key role in warning and informing the public during an emergency in London
 5. takes responsibility for civil protection issues in connection with the management of Parliament and Trafalgar Squares.
- There are also a number of duties in Chapter 9 of Emergency Preparedness that the GLA currently has in relation to London that are additional to other Category 1 responders. In particular, the GLA is responsible for:
 1. the secretariat of the LRF
 2. producing and maintaining a pan-London risk assessment, and publishing all or part of it in line with regulations
 3. the planning and exercising of pan-London emergency plans.

- The [Emergency Response and Recovery](#) guidance includes 8 guiding principles in relation to the duties to share information and coordinate with other local responders:
 1. **Anticipation** – ongoing risk identification and analysis is essential to the anticipation and management of the direct, indirect and interdependent consequences of emergencies
 2. **Preparedness** – all organisations and individuals that might have a role to play in emergency response and recovery should be properly prepared and be clear about their roles and responsibilities
 3. **Subsidiarity** – decisions should be taken at the lowest appropriate level, with coordination at the highest necessary level; local agencies are the building blocks of the response to and recovery from an emergency of any scale
 4. **Direction** – clarity of purpose comes from a strategic aim and supporting objectives that are agreed, understood and sustained by all involved. This will enable the prioritisation and focus of the response and recovery effort.
 5. **Information** – information is critical to emergency response and recovery and the collation, assessment, verification and dissemination of information must be underpinned by appropriate information management systems. These systems need to support single and multi-agency decision making and the external provision of information that will allow members of the public to make informed decisions to ensure their safety
 6. **Integration** – effective co-ordination should be exercised between and within organisations and levels (i.e. local, sub-national and national) in order to produce a coherent, integrated effort
 7. **Co-operation** – flexibility and effectiveness depends on positive engagement and information sharing between all agencies and at all levels
 8. **Continuity** – emergency response and recovery should be grounded in the existing functions of organisations and familiar ways of working, albeit on a larger scale, to a faster tempo and in more testing circumstances

Discharging the duties and responsibilities

- The Mayor and the GLA fulfil many duties and responsibilities as described in the Act and in the guidance via the work of the GLA's London Resilience Unit (LRU). The Unit delivers and coordinates resilience services on behalf of the London Resilience Partnership and London Local Authorities including partnership coordination in an emergency response and the secretariat function for a meeting of the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG). This is the strategic level multi-agency meeting convened to coordinate the response to an emergency.
- The London Resilience Partnership (LRP) brings together organisations that each have specific responsibilities to prepare for, and respond to, emergencies.
- The [London Resilience Strategy](#) provides more details on the vision for civil protection in London, and information about how emergency preparedness is structured.
- Agencies within the London Resilience Partnership (LRP) come together at the LRF to set the strategy for the work of the Partnership and the LRU. The LRF is chaired by David Bellamy, the Mayor of London's Chief of Staff. The LRF has subgroups that focus on various aspects of emergency preparedness such as risk assessment, training and exercising, and learning lessons from past emergencies.

a) Statutory duties in the Civil Contingencies Act and Regulations

- **Risk assessment**

Risk to the capital is primarily measured at a London-wide level, and published on the GLA website as the [London Risk Register](#). The risk register is informed by the National Risk Assessment; and local knowledge is used to further tailor it for London, and ensure the best possible assessment is made. The risk register is maintained through the London Risk Advisory Group (LRAG), a subgroup of the LRF. LRU coordinate this meeting and senior leadership are in attendance. The risk assessment is prepared by LRAG for approval at an LRF meeting in which the LRF provides oversight of the risk assessment process.

Following approval by the LRF, a public facing version of the risk register is published on the GLA website. The London Risk Register is designed to inform the work of the LRF as well as assist local authorities, businesses, and voluntary and community sector organisations in developing their own emergency and business continuity arrangements for the risks outlined in the register.

The Act does not specifically require work to prevent a possible emergency at some future date, although the guidance does note that this type of work may be logical following risk assessment.

- **Emergency plans**

The LRF, which is chaired by David Bellamy, the Mayor of London's Chief of Staff and supported by the LRU, provides the mechanisms to develop and document city-wide multi-agency response plans, known as Frameworks.

As a member of the London Resilience Partnership and a Category One responder, the GLA is also represented as a single agency in a number of associated groups. This includes the overarching LRF and the London Resilience Programme Board (LRPB), which works to implement the strategy set by the LRF; each meet at least three times per year. The GLA is also part of functions including the London Resilience Communications Group (LRCG) and the London Communities Emergencies Partnership (LCEP). Additionally, they are part of a variety of capability groups that review and develop the suite of Partnership Frameworks.

The Frameworks are created through partnership collaboration and approved by the LRF. They outline roles and responsibilities of responder agencies during the response to specific incident types. They have regard to relevant assessment of risk, and include a series of checklists, references or aide memoires for senior officers to use at the time of an emergency. The Frameworks are supported by relevant training and exercising.

In addition to the LRU's responsibility to support pan-London coordination in response to an emergency, the GLA also has single agency responsibilities during a response. These are led by a designated GLA Gold (strategic level officer). Emergency plans and processes are in place for the sharing of information across the GLA and with partners during an emergency. The GLA has an Incident Response Procedure which outlines the response arrangements that should be followed when responding.

- **Business continuity**

The Act requires Category 1 responders to put in place arrangements to ensure that they continue to exercise their functions in the event of an emergency so far as is reasonably practicable.

The GLA's business continuity plans are currently under review following the September 2024 TfL cyber incident. The GLA Business Continuity Plans will have regard to relevant risk assessments and engagement has been done across the GLA on developing them. The GLA's business continuity arrangements are not published online.

More localised teams and units across the GLA also have their own Business Continuity Plans, including the LRU, which outlines contingency arrangements to maintain the Unit's critical functions.

- **Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public during an emergency**

The Act requires Category 1 responders to put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and to maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency.

The GLA prepares to play a key role in warning and informing the public during an emergency in London.

The Mayor, as the Voice for London in an emergency, communicates to Londoners in an emergency via social media, press releases, broadcast appearances and the GLA website. The GLA uses an integrated and multi-channel approach (tailored to relevant audiences) to ensure as wide a reach as possible. The GLA is an active member of the London Resilience Communications Group (LRCG), which shares information across partners and activates when needed in response. In an emergency, this group maintains, facilitates and coordinates the multi-agency, outward-facing communications, to ensure that all agencies are promoting coherent, effective public messaging.

The GLA also hosts public information pages on the London.gov website. These pages set out the work of the LRP, the London Risk Register and a suite of plans for coordination and response during an emergency. It is the responsibility of the LRU to maintain the pages.

In addition to sharing information on arrangements online, the LRU also works in partnership with the London Communities Emergencies Partnership (LCEP), which represents London's community, voluntary, and faith leaders, and hosts engagement sessions and training with community leaders to promote awareness and engagement about risks and resilience.

- **Share information with other local responders to enhance coordination**

Category 1 responders have a duty to share information with each other. This happens in preparation for emergencies, for example by sharing risk assessment information and plans, as well as during the emergency response.

The LRU supports information-sharing across the London Resilience Partnership. Via the LRU, agencies (including the GLA) meet regularly to share information and collaborate. Key GLA policy officers attend relevant multi-agency meetings; and GLA officers are involved in the overall approval and oversight of these preparatory plans at the LRF.

The LRU maintains communication channels with relevant responders to share information, research and analysis; and attend regular partnership meetings to develop shared situational awareness and to work to mitigate and prepare for risks.

GLA officers will attend any London SCG convened in response to an emergency, and any relevant subgroups of the SCG.

- **Cooperate with other local responders to enhance coordination and efficiency**

Category 1 responders have a duty to cooperate with other local responders to enhance coordination and efficiency.

Whilst the GLA, as London's strategic authority, does not normally have an operational response on the ground during an incident, the GLA works with other agencies to enhance multiagency coordination during a response, in accordance with the [Strategic Coordination Protocol](#) and the Emergency Response and Recovery guidance.

The LRU works with other responders to achieve this aim. Via the LRF the GLA supports and participates in this multiagency cooperation. The GLA both partly funds and is an active member of the Partnership, and shares information with partners both via formal channels that the LRU services, and through direct contacts with relevant agencies. This cooperation enables multi-agency planning and preparedness, as well as a coordinated response to an emergency or incident.

b) Further responsibilities outlined in Chapter 9 of Emergency Preparedness

The [Emergency Preparedness](#) Guidance describes the obligations imposed by the Act and provides guidance for those implementing them within relevant responding agencies (which includes the GLA). In addition to the exiting duty, the Guidance also sets out particular activities the GLA/Mayor fulfil, these are outlined in Chapter 9.

- **The Mayor/GLA is closely engaged in high-level discussions and decisions relating to the management of emergencies in London**

The GLA and Mayor are closely engaged in discussions about the management of emergencies via the cooperation it has with agencies within the London Resilience Partnership. This is through the LRF, with the Mayor appointing its Chair, but also the GLA's LRU as the convening body for the Partnership, and as a Category One responder itself.

In response to emergencies taking place the GLA is represented on an SCG if convened. As a Category One responder, it has a role within the multi-agency partnership, and a responsibility to participate fully in the multiagency response – particularly in relation to sharing information and providing relevant information to the public in fulfilling the Mayor's role as the Voice of London. The GLA's representative on the SCG reports to the Mayor's Office and wider GLA leadership, as set out in our Incident Response Procedure.

In an emergency the Mayor may convene a Mayor's Advisory Group, which enables a strategic, high-level briefing for the Mayor from the key relevant partners, depending on the incident at hand. The Mayor may attend COBR meetings in response to some incidents and emergencies. COBR is shorthand for the Government's Civil Contingencies Committee that is convened to coordinate major crisis and national emergencies.

- **The Mayor/ GLA (or an appointed deputy) is currently Chair of the LRF**

The Mayor has appointed David Bellamy, his Chief of Staff, as the current chair of the LRF.

- **The Mayor/ GLA contributes as necessary to the pre-informing of Londoners about the content of emergency plans; the correct behaviour in an emergency; and good practice in terms of preparedness in the home, as part of initiatives organised both locally and at the UK level**

The Mayor and GLA raise public awareness around the risks and emergency plans via public engagement and press releases. There is also information available online to pre-inform the public about emergencies published on the GLA website on the London Prepared pages, alongside the London Risk Register.

In addition to this, the LRU and the London Communities Emergencies Partnership (LCEP) promote awareness and engagement about risks, resilience and preparedness.

A new dedicated communications function within the unit is working to improve risk and resilience communications across the LRP. The GLA will work with partners to promote public information campaigns such as winter and summer preparedness and counter-terrorism.

- **The Mayor/ GLA prepares to play a key role in warning and informing the public during an emergency in London**

The GLA has plans and prepare to warn and inform the public at pace in an emergency. The Mayor, as the Voice for London, communicates to Londoners in an emergency via social media, press releases, broadcast appearances and the GLA website.

The GLA uses an integrated and multi-channel approach (tailored to relevant audiences) to ensure as wide a reach as possible. The GLA is an active member of the London Resilience Communications Group (LRCG), which shares information across partners and activates when needed in response. In an emergency, this group coordinates the multi-agency, outward-facing communications, to ensure that all agencies are promoting coherent, effective public messaging.

The GLA's internal response plans also enable rapid communication to ensure the Mayor is briefed and able to fulfil the role of Voice for London.

- **The Mayor/ GLA takes responsibility for civil protection issues in connection with the management of Parliament and Trafalgar Squares**

The GLA has responsibility for civil protection issues in connection with the management of Trafalgar Square and Parliament Square Garden. The GLA is legally responsible for the proper management of the squares. The GLA has a structured process in place to facilitate the proper use of the square for activities such as events and protests. This is via an application process, with permission based on risk assessment and confirmation bylaws and rules will be followed. The GLA also employs Heritage Wardens who are onsite at the squares and support the proper use and management of the squares. The LRU works closely with the GLA team that manages the squares and the Met Police to ensure protection of the specific areas.

- **Responsibility for the secretariat of the LRF**

The GLA provides the secretariat to the LRF, by Mayoral funding enabling the LRU to carry out this role.

LRU's secretariat role includes the responsibility for setting up and supporting LRF meetings but also supporting the wider work of the LRF. This includes convening and supporting LRF sub-groups and panels, facilitating multi-agency capability reviews and convening partners to deliver on actions set by the LRF.

- **Responsibility for producing and maintaining a pan-London risk assessment; and publishing this in line with regulations**

The GLA publishes the [London risk assessment](#). The risk assessment is developed and maintained by the London Resilience Partnership via the London Risk Advisory Group (LRAG) as described above.

- **Responsibility for the planning and exercising of pan-London emergency plans**

Multi-agency emergency planning and exercising in London is coordinated by the LRU. The London Resilience Partnership has an ongoing exercise programme that is used to rehearse and improve existing capabilities across the Partnership. The plans for, and learning and feedback from, the exercises are shared with the LRF to inform future improvements.

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