

Future major events in London
Final report of the Major Events Investigative Committee
March 2001



Future Major Events in London
Foreword by the Chair, Eric Ollerenshaw

The London Assembly on 6 December 2000 agreed to establish a cross party Committee of members to review the planning and cancellation of the London New Year's Eve event. Jennette Arnold, Jenny Jones Graham Tope and myself were appointed to the Committee and I would like to place on record my thanks to my colleagues and their staff for the hard work and support they have shown throughout this review.

I would also like to thank the variety of organisations that gave us their written views and also those that gave us their time to attend our meetings and answer our questions in such a frank and straightforward manner.

We hope this report will be a contribution to ensuring future major events in London will be of a world class standard, as befits a major world city.

Membership of the Committee

Eric Ollerenshaw (Chair)
Jennette Arnold
Jenny Jones
Graham Tope

March 2001

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Executive Summary

It is the conclusion of this Committee that the running of a successful major event in London requires each and every one of these essential conditions to be met:

- Sufficient lead-in time of at least 18 months
- A dispersed "footprint"; the event needs to be spread both in time, over the day and evening, and in space across Central London and beyond
- Sufficient resources
- Empowered leadership
- A committed multi-agency partnership
- Effective project management arrangements
- Effective decision making capability.

The Committee recognises that Central London's street pattern presents considerable challenges to running a safe event, but believes that any obstacles can be overcome. Successful major events are possible in London provided the conditions outlined above, and discussed in more detail in this report, are all in place.

This Committee concludes that in July 2000 the Mayor inherited a New Year's Eve event that could not be delivered as envisaged within the prevailing time and resource constraints. In our view the decision in November to cancel the event was correct because the odds stacked against the running of a successful and safe event were, by then, overwhelming.

However the Committee believes it is not too late for an event on 31 December 2002, if the commitment and resources can be marshalled and the right decisions made about how to spread the event both across time and across Greater London. The Committee believes there is no good reason to suppose the size and nature of the crowds that assembled for the very special millennium event of 31 December 1999 set a pattern for future events on less extraordinary dates.

Methodology

The Committee was charged by the London Assembly to review the background of the failure of the New Year's Eve event planned for London for 31 December 2000, and come up with recommendations on how the success of future major events could be assured.

The Committee received a large amount of written submissions, which informed a series of oral hearings, on 5, 7 and 27 February, at which the key partners in the New Year's Eve event for 2000 gave further evidence. Details of those submitting written and oral evidence can be found in Appendix A.

From the evidence the Committee received an attempt was made to reconstruct the events leading from the decision to hold a New Year's Eve event to its eventual cancellation. Some of this evidence was inconsistent. A chronology summarising the Committee's understanding of the key milestones in the process can be found in Appendix B.

The Committee also reviewed the debriefing document from the 31 December 1999 millennium event, "Lessons from Big Time", which is attached in Appendix C for information.

Findings

The Committee believes that the following essential conditions for a successful and safe event can be identified from the evidence presented to this Committee and the debriefing from the 31 December 1999 event:

- **An 18 month lead-in time for planning**

There was at best a seven-month lead-in time for the New Year's Eve event for 2000.

Much of the evidence heard by the Committee suggested this was the major issue that undermined the event.

- **Dispersed footprint for the event**

By "footprint" we mean the physical area over which the event takes place.

Most witnesses agreed that both Central London's narrow street pattern (including the tidal river), together with the shape and capacity of its transport infrastructure, point to the need for a dispersed footprint for any future major event.

Expert evidence from transport and emergency services partners indicates that for London "dispersed" must mean across the whole of London, not just Central London.

"Dispersed" also implies a need to spread activities over time so as to reduce the impact of large-scale crowd movements.

This would apply to any major event and not just future New Year's Eve celebrations.

The evidence further indicates that the current Central London infrastructure has the capacity to accommodate and transport no more than 1.5 million people for major events.

- **Sufficient resources**

Sufficient resources need to be made available to cover both the direct and indirect costs of running a large event. If partners are expected to use their own resources to fund indirect costs then they must be willing and committed to doing so.

For the millennium event (31 December 1999), all partners agree that this commitment was in place throughout the planning. In the case of the New Year's Eve event for 31 December 2000 it seems equally clear that a number of partners, particularly transport operators, were explicit from the outset about not being in a position to offer the same or similar resource commitments from within their own budgets. This was a clear danger signal from early on in the project.

- **Empowered leadership**

It is critical that the leadership of a major event has the power, authority and influence necessary to broker compromises between the partners, particularly if they have inherent resource implications.

The millennium event was led and championed by Ministers. By contrast the New Year's Eve 2000 event was initially led by Ministers, but then handed over to officers at the Government Office for London. These officers had neither the authority nor the power to broker the necessary compromises later on, and appear not to have been pro-active in co-ordinating the activities of the partners who needed to be involved in such an event. By the time the Mayor became personally and actively involved time had nearly run out.

- **Committed Multi-Agency Partnership**

The planning and execution of a successful major event is dependent on the commitment of a wide range of partners. In order for partners to make this commitment, it is important that the scope and scale of the event is clarified at an early stage in the process, and sets out what is expected from various partners. This in turn allows them to specify the contribution that they are able to make. These positions would then be negotiated in an ongoing process as the event develops.

The development of a formal or informal partnership agreement is a useful way to cement effective partnership working. The development of such an agreement must be a key role for the project manager. This Committee believes there was a lack of clarity during the New Year's Eve event as to who was responsible for developing and maintaining such a partnership agreement, with confusion amongst partners over the responsibilities of the commercial contractor and the project management team.

The evidence available to the Committee indicates that no such agreement was established for the New Year's Eve 2000 event. Project planning therefore did not take place in the clear context of partners' mutual expectations and commitments. It seems that the Mayor inherited a project in which the event that was envisaged never matched the commitment that many partners, chiefly transport operators, the metropolitan police and the emergency services, were in a position to make.

- **Effective project management arrangements**

Evidence heard by this Committee suggests that effective project management would require distinction between the structures set up by the project managers to deliver the event and the consultation and negotiation with partners that informed them. In the New Year's Eve 2000 planning these processes appear to have been conflated. This meant that:

- The project management structures were too large and unwieldy to manage the project.
- Development of a comprehensive view of the positions and views of the various partners in order to inform project planning never emerged.

- **Effective decision making capability**

In the case of the 31 December 2000 process, the evidence indicates an absence of effective decision making capability. As partners continued to express conflicting requirements, an ever-growing number of options were put forward for consideration, in the forlorn hope that one of the options would somehow be able to satisfy the needs of all the partners.

Effective decision making requires empowered leadership and clarity on the part of all the partners as to how, where and when decisions are reached. From the minutes of the New Year's Eve 2000 planning process it is difficult to see when and how decisions were made. Even where it is possible to identify decisions it is not clear how partners were then bound into them.

Recommendations

An important assumption that underpinned the resource and risk assessment of many of the partners was that the millennium event could or should be used as the benchmark for all future events. The Committee strongly believes that this is an erroneous assumption. There is no reason to presume that an ordinary New Year's Eve event would attract the same number of people.

- 1. It is therefore the recommendation of the Committee that planning and risk assessment should not be based on the experience of an event that happens once in every thousand years.**

The Mayor has responsibility for Trafalgar Square and Parliament Square. The Committee is aware that these areas are the focus for informal and often unruly gatherings every New Year's Eve.

- 2. It is therefore the recommendation of the Committee that further planning attention is given as to how these informal gatherings can be better managed.**

It is now too late to stage a major New Year's Eve event this year, but not for 31 December 2002. This Committee understands that commercial sponsorship would be available to support a New Year's Eve event in London. Furthermore evidence would suggest that a more conventional New Year's Eve celebration, in line with those held in other major cities, would not attract the kinds of crowds that caused concern during the millennium celebrations of 31 December 1999.

- 3. It is therefore the recommendation of the Committee that now is the time to begin planning for New Year's Eve 2002.**

Conclusions

This Committee believes that the following elements made the successful, viable and safe delivery of the New Year's Eve 2000 event as originally envisaged impossible from the outset:

- insufficient lead time
- a lack of clarity among partners over what was meant by "dispersed"
- erroneous assumptions underpinning the risk and resource assessments of many partners
- the failure to identify sufficient resources
- the failure to extract a clear commitment from all the partners at the beginning of the process.

On application of the key preconditions outlined in the Government Office for London's own debriefing document, it is difficult to see how the Mayor could have been expected to deliver a safe and successful event with:

- only a seven month lead time
- a contract with a commercial partner that lacked clarity and was deficient in many respects
- the absence of an effective multi-agency partnership
- insufficient resources in comparison with the estimates of the direct and indirect costs of staging the previous event.

The committee recognises the complexities and potential threats to public safety that Central London's narrow street patterns present but believes that this does not represent an insurmountable obstacle to the holding of a major event.

It is the conclusion of this Committee that, in July 2000, the Mayor inherited an event and process from Government Office for London which was not capable of being delivered successfully and safely as originally envisaged. The continuing lack of empowered project leadership meant that by mid-November no centrally organised New Year's Eve event was viable. In light of the evidence heard during this review, the Committee believes that the Mayor's decision to cancel the event was correct.

Appendix A

Organisations Submitting Written Evidence to this Investigation

	<i>Organisation</i>	<i>Response from</i>
1	The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	Councillor Merrick Cockell – Leader of the Council
2	Wandsworth Council	Nigel Powson – Head of Professional Services
3	Royal Kingston	Scott Herbertson – Assistant Director of Education and Leisure Millennium Co-ordinator for Kingston
4	London Borough of Lambeth	Trevor Davies – Head of Regulatory Services
5	London Underground Limited	Rob Mason – Director of Customer Services (Stations)
6	Transport for London	Peter Brown – North Central Area Team, TfL Street Management REPLACED SEE NO.34
7	LFEPa	Valerie Shawcross – Chair of the Authority
8	London Borough of Havering	Anthony Douglas
9	Government Office for London	Pauline Clarke – Government/GLA liaison Unit
10	Corporation of London	Tom Simmons BA – Town Clerk
11	London Ambulance Service NHS Trust	Philip Selwood – Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer, Control services
12	Home Office –Emergency Planning division	Peter Davies – Head of Emergency Planning
13	Haringey Council	John Morris – Head of Recreation Services
14	Metropolitan Police Service	Michael Messinger QPM Commander

15	British Transport Police	Paul W. Nicholas – Assistant Chief Constable (Territorial Operations)
16	London Borough of Hillingdon	Lenny Kinnear – Head of Youth and Leisure
17	Risk Solutions	Dr. Louise Bennett – Partner
18	Port of London Authority	Steve Cuthbert – Chief Executive
19	London Borough of Camden	Sue Wilby – Assistant Director, Leisure and Community Services
20	London Underground Limited	Derek Smith
21	Events for London Team	John Hall – Former Director
22	City of Westminster	Tim Owen – Head of Special Events
23	10 Alps Broadcasting WITHDRAWN AND REPLACED WITH NO. 35	Des Shaw – Director
24	London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham	Richard Harbord – Managing Director
25	Association of Train Operating Companies	Paul Smith – Director, London Support
26	Legion Limited	Simon Ancliffe
27	Greater London Authority	Susan McLaren – Project Director, Events for London Team
28	Transport for London – London Buses	Beverly Hall – Head of Service Delivery
29	Transport for London	Richard Smith – Director of Integration
30	The Royal Parks	William Weston – Chief Executive
31	Greater London Authority	Ken Livingstone, - Mayor of London
32	Government Office for London	Joyce Bridges – Acting Joint Director

33	LFEPa	Brian Robinson – Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive
34	Transport for London	Peter Brown – North Central Area Team, Street Management
35	10 Alps	Bob Geldof KBE – Chairman

Organisation and Individuals Attending Evidentiary Hearings of the Major Events Investigative Committee

5 February - 9.30am - 2.30pm, Room AG23

Westminster CC: Tim Owen – Special Events Group
Emergency Services Police: DSI Steve French/Commander Michael Messenger Ambulance: Tony Rowe – Senior Emergency Planning Manager Fire: Ron Dobson – Assistant Chief Fire Officer
TfL: Richard Smith LUL: Graham Stephens ATOC: Paul Smith/Andy Head
John Hall: Former Head of Events for London Team

7 February - 2.00pm - 4.00pm, Room AG23

GLA: Anthony Mayer/Susan McLaren
10 Alps: Bob Geldof/Des Shaw/Anton Jeffery

27 February - 4.00pm - 5.00pm, Press Conference Room

Mayor: Ken Livingstone

Appendix B

Chronology: an account of the process from January 2000

January 2000

- On 2 January the decision to hold a New Year's Eve event in 2001 is announced by Lord Falconer before a debrief had taken place. Senior members of the Government, including Jack Straw, Chris Smith and Keith Hill also voiced their support for an event.
- The process of debriefing from the millennium event began, co-ordinated by the Government Office for London (GoL). Meetings were arranged by the London Readiness Team (LRT), who oversaw the Millennium Eve project, under the leadership of Zyg Kowalczyk.
- All participating organisations, including the Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade, London Ambulance Service, London Transport and Railtrack, were asked by LRT to submit a written report on lessons learnt from Millennium Eve.

February 2000

- The debriefing process was begun in January and continued throughout February.
- Evidence began to emerge from some partners, chiefly transport operators, emergency services and the Metropolitan Police, about unacceptable threats to public safety during the millennium event on 31 December 1999. This led to concerns being expressed over a large-scale "midnight moment" focused in central London for New Year's Eve 2000, as this was a major contributor to safety threats, particularly as large amounts of people would need to travel home simultaneously.
- On 15 February Keith Hill met Chris Smith and agreed that there should be an early evening firework display for families and possibly a much smaller display at midnight. Chris Smith indicated he would seek a £1.5m grant from the Millennium Commission for the event.
- In late February, LRT began planning for the New Year's Eve 2000 event.
- The likely costs of the event were identified as:
 - £200,000-£225,000 for staffing costs of six person team to organise event;
 - £1-1.5m for fireworks, to be found from sponsorship;
 - £1.5m for the daytime cultural event, £2-3m for police costs, and £2-3m for LT.

March 2000

- On 22 March 2000 LRT met with partner organisations to review their paper “Lessons from Big Time”, which set out the lessons learned from the debriefing sessions following Millennium Eve. The meeting also reviewed the current plans for the New Year’s Eve 2000 event. Key issues raised at the meeting included:
 - The Millennium Commission was likely to make a £1.5m grant to London
 - An extra £7m would be needed for London Transport and £3m for the Police
 - The review showed a strong preference for an early evening fireworks spectacular
 - The previous year’s event “with some 3m people present at midnight” tested the abilities of transport and police to the limit
 - Detailed planning for a major New Year’s Eve event must begin as early as possible, preferably some 18 months before.
- The debriefing process began to merge with the planning process for the next event. LRT designed a tender specification for a contract with an event co-ordinator to plan and manage the New Year’s Eve 2000 event. All the partners agreed that “Lessons from Big Time” should underpin this contract. Inherent in this process was the assumption that any future New Year’s Eve events would be on the same scale as the millennium event.
- A contract is drawn up to tender for running the event for an amount of approximately £7m. The contract process is led by Zyg Kowalczyk on behalf of GoL and Keith Hill, Minister for London. The intention to hand the process over to the Mayor once s/he is elected is expressed by GoL and the Minister for London.
- On 24 March 2000 expressions of interest are requested by GoL.

April 2000

- The Minister for London sounds out the main mayoral candidates and they all express enthusiasm for an event.
- The Metropolitan Police Service informed GoL that they would need additional funds in order to police the event. These were identified as approximately £3m.
- Several discussions took place at Cabinet and senior ministerial level to look at ways to fund the event. On 6 April, Keith Hill wrote to John Prescott setting out progress on the New Year celebrations, identifying the need for an event which is “smaller, more dispersed . . . with fireworks in the early evening.” The letter also addressed the key outstanding funding issues, including the Home Office’s inability to provide extra funding for the Metropolitan Police operation.

- The tender process proceeded. Tender documents referred to “Lessons from Big Time” but did not provide a detailed scope for the event in terms of such issues as:
 - financial resources available
 - crowd limits, geographical area (what is meant by “dispersed”)
 - clarity in terms of the respective roles and responsibilities of the commercial contractor, the public services and the overall organiser of the event.
- Expressions of interest from commercial contractors were received by GoL and the tender briefing took place on 19 April.
- The tender document did not outline any financial constraints within which bids should be framed, including the funding for crowd control and policing.
- After being briefed on the New Year’s Eve event, all mayoral candidates confirmed their support in principle.
- Despite the commitment to hold an event made in early January by Government and the prerequisite of an 18 month lead planning time identified in “Lessons from Big Time”, the tender and contract process appears to be the only planning activity that took place during the period from January to April. The Committee did not find evidence of work taking place in parallel with the contracting process to set up the necessary multi-agency partnership and to achieve commitment to holding this event.

May 2000

- The Mayor and Assembly were elected.
- The first official communication from GoL with the Mayor and the GLA providing available specification for design, organisation and delivery of the New Year’s Eve event was dated 10 May.
- On 15 May Ken Livingstone wrote to Keith Hill saying that he is “surprised and concerned to learn that the Government has not provided the GLA with sufficient funding” to deliver the New Year’s Eve event. He added that “this is very much a central Government initiative, and has not been allowed for in the GLA’s budget.”
- Tenders from commercial contractors were submitted on 16 May.
- On 16 May John Prescott met with Ken Livingstone to discuss a number of issues relating to London, including the plans for a New Year’s Eve event and said that there should be further discussions around funding for the event with the Minister for London.
- On 17 May bidders were asked by GoL to re-submit their bids on the basis of financial constraints, particularly the news that the Millennium Commission’s grant would only be

£1.5m. In the case of the final successful bidder, 10 Alps, the revised bid was approximately 20% of their original proposal.

- In a meeting with Ken Livingstone on 25 May Keith Hill informed the Mayor that the DETR would provide outstanding transport and Borough costs. He added that he and other ministers had written to Jack Straw to request funding for the policing costs.
- The first minuted planning meeting of a Transport Working Group set up by LRT was on 22 May. During this meeting concerns were again raised about transport provision and safety, particularly in the event that a large-scale midnight moment remained part of the planning.

June 2000

- Negotiations between GoL and bidders took place in early June and the tender from 10 Alps was finally accepted by GoL on 12 June.
- The Mayor is asked if he is willing to accept transfer of the event from GoL, which he agreed to despite voicing his reservations about funding.
- The London Readiness Team transferred to the GLA and became "Events for London" (EfL). John Hall was appointed as Project Manager on 19 June.
- Project Management structures were established. A weekly meeting is held between EfL and 10 Alps. Planning meetings were held of Transport Working Group, Safety Working Group and the Operational Planning Group. All of these meetings were attended by upwards of 20 people. Witnesses reported that some meetings were attended by up to 60 people.

July/August 2000

- On 13 July first Operational Planning Meeting held. The evidence available to the Committee indicates that three levels of planning meeting were now taking place: weekly meetings with contractors, working group meetings, and project meetings between all the partners.
- There were ongoing efforts to develop a final Event Plan to meet a deadline of 12 September. This plan needed to reconcile the safety and resource availability concerns of public service partners (police, transport, emergency services) with the commercial and creative viability concerns of the EfL team, the contractor and the GLA. Crucial to commercial sponsorship was the marking of the "midnight moment" against the backdrop of Big Ben, easily the most recognisable timepiece in the world. The planning debate began to centre around the impact of any midnight moment, no matter how low key, on public safety and transport capacity.
- On 24 July 2000 the contract for the New Year's Eve 2000 event was transferred to the GLA, despite protestations from legal advisors at the GLA about inadequacies in this

contract. Due to the transfer being made under section 409 (1) of the GLA Act 1999, the GLA was not able to refuse the transfer of the contract.

- On 1 August Bob Chilton (Interim GLA Chief Executive) wrote to GoL raising his concern that the issue of £3m funding for police costs was still not resolved.
- On 3 August Ian Johnson of the Metropolitan Police in a letter to Ken Livingstone raised his concern about the "current machinery for the management of the event".
- Questions to the Mayor were submitted by the Assembly raising concerns about the resourcing of the New Year's Eve event.
- In correspondence with GoL, the Mayor expressed concern about the availability of sufficient resources to fund the direct and indirect costs of holding the event.

September/October 2000

- On 11 September the contractor 10 Alps delivered the event plan, however this is described as inadequate by the project director and others and they requested revisions. The revised plan was presented to working groups on the 14 September and was accepted.
- On 13 September London Transport wrote to the project director to express their severe doubts about the ability of transport services to get people home, especially if a midnight moment keeps them in central London after midnight.
- Further global risk assessment work commissioned by Events for London.
- On 27 September, Ken Livingstone wrote to Keith Hill stating "in view of the uncertainty over the contract it is likely that the event will only be able to proceed on a certain contractual basis if a substantially increased cost is accepted" by central Government.
- The Mayor launched the event with Bob Geldof of 10 Alps on 11 October.
- Susan McLaren takes over from John Hall as Project Director for EFL.
- The Mayor became involved in brokering among partners in an attempt to find a solution. Much of this brokering took the form of attempting to establish a focal point for the celebration earlier in the evening to enable transport operators to get people home. There was agreement that there would be a "dispersed midnight moment", but no mainline or tube transport after 11pm.

November 2000

- Steering group meeting held on 1 November with Mayor and partners to seek ways forward in saving the event, however, several issues including crowd control and transport, still unresolved.
- On 1 November Keith Hill wrote to Ken Livingstone restating the legal obligation of the GLA under the Act to accept the contract but removed the requirement attached to the DETR's £3m funding that the GLA provide matched funding of £3m for policing.
- On 2 November the Millennium Commission refused permission to name the event after the main commercial sponsor, unless sponsorship matched the £1.5m provided by them. 10 Alps had secured commercial sponsorship for the fireworks from Yahoo. Once this condition came to light, Yahoo indicated its intention to pull out.
- This the first indication 10 Alps had that the Millennium Commission had set as a funding condition the requirement that its name be used to brand the event. Legal advice to the Committee indicated that this resulted from a failure by GoL to incorporate the obligations/conditions of the existing Millennium Commission contract into the later contract with 10 Alps.
- During early November the Mayor moved the midnight moment from midnight to 7pm, and then again to 5pm in order to meet the concerns of transport operators.
- A range of possible solutions focusing on transport exclusion zones and station closures were debated.
- On 10 November following a meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister, the Mayor cancelled the midnight moment.
- At Mayor's Question Time on 15 November, Assembly Members asked the Mayor further critical questions about the New Year's Eve event.
- On 17 November, following advice from 10 Alps that the event had fallen so far from its original specification as to be "creatively untenable and commercially unviable", the Mayor decided to cancel the event.
- On 20 November the Mayor announced that the New Year's Eve event had been cancelled.
- It is agreed at a meeting of Assembly Group Leaders on 22 November that there should be an investigation into the failure of the event.
- Later on the day of the announcement of the investigation, GoL officers arrived at the GLA to retrieve their files.
- 10 Alps requested compensation for loss of earnings due to cancellation. This matter is currently unresolved.

Appendix C

Lessons from Big Time

(Disclaimer: the spellings and grammar are as printed in the original document.)

THE RESULTS OF THE DETAILED REVIEW: PAPER BY GOL/LONDON READINESS TEAM

Introduction

The review of London's Big Time millennium celebrations has been in two parts. First an initial and immediate review with papers produced for and discussed at the Pan-London Steering Group meeting on 12 January, and second a more detailed review which has taken board and shared the in-depth debriefing and analysis that has taken place since then. Detailed papers were prepared for a working level meeting chaired by GOL/London Readiness on 10 March.

This paper summarises the main lessons that have emerged from the process. The Annex to this paper summarises the key points made by each organisation.

Context

As well being a success with the public, it is clear from the review that Big Time was also a major success for all the organisations involved. With some 3 million people present at midnight, their abilities and resources were tested to the limit. The intensive planning and preparation process was vindicated, plans and systems worked out well, both for individual organisations and for the wider Pan-London structure put in place for the millennium. The emergency services and boroughs kept control very effectively of a rapidly developing and sometimes dangerous situation. The transport operators adapted rapidly, to the unprecedented numbers, rescheduling services and expanding their capacity significantly beyond expectations. And the arrangements for ensuring safety on the river worked well, with good co-operation between the emergency services and PLA.

There were, nevertheless, many important lessons learnt which should be built into the planning of any future major events in London. The key overall theme has been that an event on the scale of Big Time carries serious public safety risks which cannot be completely eliminated. Goodwill and good fortune were as important as good planning in delivering Big Time safely. The consensus is that if there are to be future New Year celebrations, they should be on a smaller scale, and to a more dispersed design, i.e. avoiding both the over-concentration of crowds, and single time of mass departure that were a feature of Big Time. Millennial style hype should also be avoided and the public should be made clearly aware of the likelihood that they will face congestion and delays. Provided all this is achieved, however, the other main lessons are addressed, and adequate

resources are provided, the review concludes that major New Year celebrations in central London can be safely organised.

There was also a consensus that there were strong practical reasons {including safety, cost and convenience) for running a firework spectacular in the early evening rather than midnight (when there was a real danger of crowds on the foreshore being swamped by a fast incoming tide).

Main points

The main points to emerge from the review are as follows:

Safety

- In general more effort should be made to implement the recommendations in the "Purple Guide", but with allowance made for the unique nature and size of the event.
- Any future event must remain within the capacity of London's services: this includes the limiting to some extent the size of the crowd, the ability of the transport infrastructure to cope, and to avoid large simultaneous migrations.
- Greater dispersal of firework viewing areas (with less emphasis on the river), separation of global village elements and facilities from main viewing areas all essential;
- Once fireworks have ended, attractions need to be sufficient to retain interest, and avoid mass departure all at the same time (as happened especially in the vicinity of Waterloo and Victoria).
- Pre-determined sterile areas must be kept both open and accessible. Those bridges and roads necessary for use by the emergency services must also be maintained. First aid posts should be provided at stations and other likely points of crowd concentration. Hospitals either within or near to the footprint need to be protected from bearing too much pressure.
- Plenty of information should be available "on-site" for location of first aid, meeting points and toilet facilities, as well as the time and location of attractions. To do this, it has been suggested that an official programme should be produced, information kiosks are provided, and extensive signage installed.
- Communication to the crowd must be provided, and messages should be able to either be heard or seen by a majority of the people within the target area. Messages to the public, key staff and emergency service personnel must be accurate, timely, and relevant.
- Substantial improvements in provision of toilets, lost people facilities, and food and drink concessions are necessary

- Food, drink and toilets facilities should be sited away from the main viewing areas to reduce congestion.
- The task of primary risk assessment should fall to the organiser. Organisers should approach the emergency services with a risk assessment done, thus allowing only residual risks needing assessment.
- The provision of signage should assist those using mobile phones to call 999 to accurately describe their location.
- The practice of using the river to bypass, or insert personnel into, large crowds worked well.
- In future years, shops, bars and night-clubs will be open, and should have a substantial beneficial effect on crowd numbers and migration, and crowd comfort.

Organisation, Planning and Funding

- The inter-agency arrangements worked well, but management of the project would have benefited from a much simpler chain of command and budget structure, and non-involvement of NMEC (understandably completely pre-occupied with the
- Dome).
- The introduction of the Mayor, and the bringing together of so many of London's core organisations will provide a major benefit for future pan-London planning.
- Detailed planning for a major New Year event must be begin as early as possible (preferably some 18 months before) but not later than the previous May.
- Final plans should be distributed 2-3 months before the event.
- The system of working level sub-groups worked well, but inter-group communications could be improved. Fewer groups should be necessary in future.
- The HSE need to be involved as early as possible in the process.
- Staff attendance was exceptional this year, with large payments and much goodwill assisting. Such levels cannot be expected again. Additionally this NYE
- Is a Sunday, and therefore a 'volunteer day' for TOCs.
- Overall funding and the level of sponsorship must be fixed as early as possible, as fluctuations cause delay in finalising event plans. This had a significant effect on the publicity campaign, safety provision, and managing crowd expectations.
- A number of agencies bore additional costs this time on a one-off basis; this would not

be possible in future years.

- Sponsor applications need 'substance' to succeed, so early firming-up of event content is desirable.
- Inflated wage (and other) costs are unlikely to be repeated on the scale of last year, but additional costs will be incurred if this event is to be a regular feature. The Royal Parks Agency costs will be levied on purely commercial basis, and other agencies, such as the Port of London Authority will have costs that need to be covered.

Transport and Traffic

- Crowd numbers and dispersal patterns transport operators caused serious congestion at some key stations close to the event, particularly around Victoria and Waterloo. A means of separating routes for rail and tube passengers into stations needs to be found to help address this issue.
- The Met Police and Westminster would prefer a Traffic Exclusion Zone, instead of a Traffic Limitation Zone in future. Although levels of traffic were kept low by the focus on public transport, this caused difficulties with bus and emergency services operations around the TLZ boundary.
- Methods of effective communication to those waiting outside stations need to be addressed.
- The division of responsibility for crowd management inside and outside stations needs to be clearly defined with effective communications between agencies.
- All operators had excellent staff turn-up, but this may not be repeated, and should be planned for accordingly.
- Despite the publicity a number of people were unaware of the station closure plans
- scope for improved communication between MPS/COLP and BTP, and evidence of some communication failure between LT and MPS over station exit closures
- As planned, there was little provision of transport to enable people to leave before midnight, but there was a small and noticeable demand.

Communication to the Public

This was led and co-ordinated - loosely - by GOL/DETR. The strategy aimed to strike a

balance between on the one hand promoting the attractiveness and thorough preparation of the event, and on the other getting across the "plan your journey", transport and safety messages. Big Time had to compete for publicity with the Dome, Eye and Bug. Considerable coverage was achieved (Standard supplements etc) but this has to be balanced against the constant stream of negative publicity - troops on the street, mass drownings, no trains, bridges closed, Millennium gridlock etc.

What is clear is that the message that Big Time was taking place got through but that many people failed to take in rudimentary information about station closures etc. It is also clear that the information available to people on the day, and communication with the crowds at the event, was inadequate.

Recommendations:

- Work needs to be done on how to promote the event without the media hyping it, and on how to ensure that information sticks
- A ring-fenced publicity budget should be made available and early planning of press releases and essential messages is desirable.
- It is important not to raise public expectation too highly, or to concentrate focus on anyone particular geographical point that may attract unmanageable crowds. There is evidence that many people travelled from a large distance outside of London, who were unfamiliar with the transport system and normal practice. The pre-event publicity should either seek to dissuade, or usefully inform this group.
- A high priority in the budget should be a common helpline, internet site and much better information sources in the event area.
- Simple easy to read leaflets and/or a priced programme should give: transport arrangements, recommended routes home avoiding stations likely to be overcrowded, the programme of events, a detailed map of the footprint showing loos, first aid centres etc
- There could be information booths, good signage, even roaming "information marshals, a greatly improved PA system, as many giant screens as possible (available free from sponsors but vetoed by NMEC) and better planned, more informed and responsible use of London radio partners.

LR2K/GOL
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