London Resilience Partnership Mass Fatality Framework
Version: 6.0 (September 2018)
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LONDON RESILIENCE GROUP


Version Control

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<th>Version</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>4.1</td>
<td>28/04/14</td>
<td>Home Office CAP &amp; SLRO amendments Post – Olympic revisions (MH, HW)</td>
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<td>4.3</td>
<td>17/02/14</td>
<td>Contacts Sheet (HW, MH, JH)</td>
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<td>4.4</td>
<td>08/04/15</td>
<td>Home Office, DCLG, Police, Local Authority, London Mass Fatality Working Group (Coroners, LMFWG, LRP, Resilience Direct)</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
<td>05/09/18</td>
<td>Routine review, streamlining and general updates Removal of references to NEMA which has been disbanded Annex referring to DDM sites and contact details removed to be stored separately and securely on Resilience Direct as a working document. This can be accessed via LRG.</td>
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## Critical Information

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<td>Who is the national lead?</td>
<td>Home Office.</td>
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<td>Who is the London lead?</td>
<td>Metropolitan Police Service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Who invokes the London Mass Fatalities Framework?</td>
<td>This Framework will be invoked automatically when the Mass Fatalities Coordination Group is convened. This is decided by a tripartite discussion between Her Majesty’s Coroner, Metropolitan Police and London Resilience Group.</td>
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<td>Who notifies partners of a mass fatality incident?</td>
<td>Partners will be notified according to the Strategic Coordination Protocol. The level of multi-agency strategic coordination will depend on the scale and impact of the incident.</td>
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<tr>
<td>When will the Mass Fatality Framework be reviewed?</td>
<td>Every three years unless an earlier revision is required as a result of learning identified during incidents or exercises.</td>
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<td>Key partner responsibilities</td>
<td>Her Majesty’s Coroner takes strategic control of the incident and sets the scope and nature of the post mortem response.</td>
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<td>The Metropolitan Police Service, City of London Police and British Transport Police - Disaster Victim Identification processes and investigation in consultation with the Coroner.</td>
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<td>Local Authorities – Financial and Logistical Support.</td>
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<td>MHCLG- RED - conduit from local to central government tiers – including liaison with the Home Office as appropriate.</td>
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<td>Who will coordinate the media response?</td>
<td>The London Resilience Communication Group.</td>
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1. Introduction

1.1 Aim and Objectives
1.1.1. To provide a Framework for dealing with mass fatality (multiple or large numbers of human fatalities that may be complex) incidents. The objectives of the plan are:
   - To enable an effective and flexible response to a mass fatality incident
   - To illustrate how the mass fatality response aligns with other strategic coordination functions within either the Police or the wider London Resilience Partnership
   - To support effective decision making at the tactical and strategic level
   - To highlight where operational planning is required to underpin this plan

1.2 Lord Justice Clarke
1.2.1 It is worthwhile considering four key principles which Lord Justice Clarke\(^1\) believed should be kept in mind throughout the identification process following a major emergency:
   - The provision of honest and accurate information at all times, at every stage
   - Respect for the deceased and the bereaved
   - A sympathetic and caring approach throughout
   - The avoidance of mistaken identity

1.3 Security Classification
1.3.1 The main part of this plan is marked as ‘official’ and may be shared with relevant partners.
1.3.2 An annex referring to Designated Disaster Mortuary sites and associated contact details is stored separately and securely on Resilience Direct as a working document. This is marked as ‘official-sensitive’ and should not be shared outside of the London Resilience Partnership.
1.3.3 Combined, the whole document, carries the protective marking ‘official-sensitive’.

2. Framework Activation
2.1.1 The London Mass Fatality Framework may be invoked when a mass fatality incident occurs in London. There may be complex, multiple or large numbers of fatalities. Depending on the situation these may or may not be more than local mortuary arrangements would otherwise usually deal with on a day-to-day basis.
2.1.2 Threats and risks that may result in a mass fatality incident can be found in the London Risk Register. This Framework may also be activated in response to an incident overseas which calls for the identification and repatriation of large numbers of UK nationals.
2.1.3 The establishment of a Mass Fatalities Coordination Group will trigger this Framework.

\(^1\) Lord Justice Clarke, 2001
2.2 Notification and Strategic Coordination

2.2.1 Following a report of a mass fatality Incident, the Police and/or the London Resilience Group Duty Manager will inform the relevant Coroner. The Chief Coroner may determine which Coroner will lead the coronial aspects if the incident sits across more than one jurisdiction.

2.2.2 A number of different units within the Metropolitan Police Service, City of London Police and British Transport Police may be notified. These include:
   - Specialist Crime Teams - responsible for Disaster Victim Identification (DVI), recovery of human remains, forensics, evidence gathering, investigation and mortuary operations.
   - MPS Central Operations – command, control and resources.
   - Counter Terrorism Teams – investigation (if required).
   - UK DVI can also provide support, coordination, resources and international liaison.

2.2.3 The Police Senior Identification Manager (SIM) and Senior Investigation Officer (SIO), in consultation with the Coroner, will need to assess the potential number of fatalities and consider the complexity of the incident (i.e. condition of the victims, extent of disruption and whether multiple sites are involved) to inform the response.

2.2.4 Coordination is likely to require a multi-agency approach both in response and recovery. The Strategic Coordination Protocol provides guidance for multi-agency strategic coordination. It should be read in conjunction with this Framework.

3. Coordination Groups

3.1 Mass Fatality Coordination Group

3.1.1 The Mass Fatality Coordination Group (MFCG) is chaired by the Coroner. It is a multi-agency group that sets the strategy for body recovery and identification. A representative from the MFCG will feed in to the Strategic Coordination Group (if sitting). The Coroner’s office (or Lead Coroner’s office) for the incident will provide a secretariat function for the MFCG.

The strategy may include the need to:
   - Positively identify each body
   - Establish the precise cause of death
   - Collect evidence of the crime / samples
   - Prepare bodies for release to relatives
   - Ensure Human Tissue Authority compliance

3.1.2 The MFCG will decide the scale and scope of the mortuary response. Consideration should be given to the group’s ability and facilities to maintain shared situational awareness. Minutes will be taken and all key decisions and actions recorded.

3.1.3 Membership will be dependent upon the nature of the incident, but may consist of:
   - Coroner (Chair)
   - Coroner’s Officer
   - Supervising Forensic Pathologist
   - Police Senior Investigation Officer (SIO)
   - Police Senior Identification Manager (SIM)
- Mortuary Facilities Manager (usually appointed by the Local Authority)
- A strategic representative from the relevant Local Authority(ies)
- A representative of London Resilience Group
- Police Mortuary Operations Coordinator
- Relevant agency financial representatives
- Senior member of the Human Tissue Authority
- MHCLG – RED (Resilience and Emergencies Division) Govt. Liaison Team
- Building Control Manager /Designated Contractor as appropriate
- Police Logistical Support Representative
- Accident Investigation Bureau
- National Health Service
- Family Liaison Manager

3.1.4 The MFCG will select the most appropriate mortuary option to manage the incident.
- Local Authority mortuaries
- One or more of the Designated Disaster Mortuaries
- One or more of the Designated Disaster Mortuaries with additional body storage
- Elements of the Home Office Central Assistance Programme (CAP)

3.2 Financial Management Group
3.2.1 Upon activation of the MFCG, a primary action for the relevant Local Authority(ies) is to set up a Financial Management Group to monitor, document and maintain control of Local Authority spending related to the incident. Membership may include:
- Local Authority Finance Director
- Head of Property Services
- Representative from the Procurement Team
- Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Manager

3.2.2 The group should consider the financial implications of mortuary operations including budget, associated supply chain arrangements and the financial management process.
3.2.3 The Local Authority should also provide senior financial representatives to attend each MFCG meeting. Financial representatives must be authorised to make decisions.
3.2.4 Section 24 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 covers financial arrangements, expenses and costs incurred by the Coroner.
3.2.5 Local Authorities may be able to recover some costs incurred responding to the incident through the Government’s “Bellwin” scheme (Section 155 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989). Details are available on the GOV.UK website.

3.3 Mortuary Management Group(s)
3.3.1 This group is concerned with the operation of the chosen facility or an existing Designated Disaster Mortuary (with or without augmented body storage). Notwithstanding the
considerable differences of scale and financial commitment, this group will work to ensure the required functions for effective operation are considered. It is acknowledged that the method will differ considerably depending upon the scope of the mortuary response. Group members are predominantly provided by the Local Authority and may include:

- Facility Director (On-Site)
- Mortuary Facilities Manager
- Mortuary Technicians
- Health and Safety Officer
- Resources Manager
- Procurement Officer
- IT Officer and Administrative Support
- Emergency Planning and Business Continuity
- Officer responsible for liaison with the Human Tissue Authority

3.3.2 Whether functions require individual officers or teams will depend on the scale of the incident, the size of the facility and the duration of operations. The initial task for the Mortuary Management Group is to appoint team leaders for each function. Role specific responsibilities should be covered by local planning and associated arrangements.

3.3.3 The Coroner (or their representative) may also sit on local Mortuary Management Group(s).

3.4 Strategic Coordination Group

3.4.1 For information on Strategic Coordination Group arrangements in the event of a major incident, refer to the London Strategic Coordination Protocol and the London Emergency Services Liaison Panel (LESLP) Major Incident Procedure Manual.

3.4.2 The Coroner (or their representative) may feed in to the Strategic Coordinating Group. The Coroner is independent but engagement with this group may be mutually beneficial.

4. Roles, Responsibilities and Resources

4.1 Police Services and Disaster Victim Identification (DVI)

4.1.1 The Metropolitan Police Service, City of London Police and British Transport Police all have a number of DVI personnel that can be deployed in response to a mass fatality incident. The Metropolitan Police Service lead on coronial support.

4.1.2 The police service is responsible for investigating the incident, tracing missing persons, body recovery and identification (as and when appropriate).

4.1.3 The police service has responsibility for managing the reception and documentation of the deceased arriving at the mortuary and the gathering of physical evidence.

4.1.4 The police are responsible for coordinating the collection of Ante-Mortem (AM) and Post-Mortem (PM) data and the reconciliation process.

4.1.5 The police will provide the initial security of any mortuary site before other satisfactory arrangements are in place or agreed.

4.1.6 Where there is a police investigation into a death, the police have a duty to communicate effectively with the bereaved family. Following a mass fatality incident this will be conducted through Family Liaison Officers (FLO). The primary role of the FLO is that of an investigator and will involve facilitating the forensic retrieval of Ante Mortem data from the deceased’s home and/or families by Ante-Mortem Forensic Teams. DNA material, finger and palm
marks, dental records and other identifiers such as photographs would be collected to assist the Senior Identification Manager (SIM) in identifying those involved. The FLO will explain to family members the role of the Coroner, the process of identification and keep family members updated regards the identification and/or investigation. A rigorous strategy should accompany every FLO deployment and should be supervised by a trained Family Liaison Coordinator. The aims of the strategy must be clearly defined with achievable objectives based on the evidential requirements of the case.

4.2  London Coroners and Designated Disaster Mortuaries

4.2.1 London has eight coronial areas covering the 33 London Boroughs including the City of London, each with an appointed Coroner. Each Coroner has nominated a mortuary within their coronial area to act as a Designated Disaster Mortuary (DDM) in the event of a mass fatality incident, with the exception of the City of London. The City of London has arrangements in place to use one of the other DDMs.

4.2.2 The Coroner is responsible for the investigation into the cause and circumstances of violent or unnatural deaths, or deaths of an unknown cause, until such time as they are released for burial or cremation. The Coroner will give instructions on how bodies will be dealt with and will make the final decision on the mode of identification to be pursued. This responsibility must be exercised in coordination with the police who will be treating the incident as a crime until the contrary is established.

4.3  London Temporary Mortuary Sites

4.3.1 A number of potential Temporary Mortuary may be identifiable across London subject to the conditions and space available. Temporary Mortuary facilities will require a licence from the Human Tissue Authority who should be contacted for further guidance.

4.3.2 In the first instance the responsibility for applying for a Temporary Mortuary licence will fall to the mortuary manager in whose jurisdiction the proposed mortuary lies.

4.4  London Resilience Group

4.4.1 During an incident London Resilience Group (LRG) will support strategic coordination and situational awareness across the London Resilience Partnership. LRG is positioned to facilitate inter-agency communication including liaison with MHCLG-RED and, by extension, the Lead Government Department. In a mass fatality incident LRG may offer support to the secretariat of the MFCG and guidance against regional frameworks and the associated arrangements, depending on resources.

5. International Dimension

5.1  Foreign and Commonwealth Office

5.1.1 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) are able to respond to and/or assist with incidents involving either foreign nationals who have died or have been killed in the UK or British nationals who have died or been killed whilst overseas.

5.2  UK Disaster Victim Identification Capability

5.2.1 UK Disaster Victim Identification capability (UK DVI) is managed by National Policing and has capacity to deploy specialist personnel in the United Kingdom at the request of the Chief Police Officer responsible for the incident and abroad at the request of the Foreign Office. Request for this facility must be made through the National Police Coordination Centre (NPoCC) using the established mutual aid request format, identifying what skills are required.
5.2.2 UK DVI is the liaison point for Interpol in relation to mass fatality incidents. Where foreign nationals are amongst the deceased victims, Interpol protocols are that foreign authorities should be able to observe the DVI process. Increasingly there are examples of countries supplying international mutual aid following mass fatality incidents.

6. Other Considerations

6.1 Regional & National Assistance

6.1.1 Regional assistance may be required as part of the response to an incident. Temporarily relocating cases to a neighbouring mortuary or mutual aid of personnel are examples of such assistance. The MFCG will decide if London’s mortuary capacity (all options) has been exceeded and request component parts of the Central Assistance Programme, through MHCLG, and indicate what elements of the capability they require. The request will then be forwarded to the Home Office Mass Fatality Team and the decision documented.

6.1.2 Home Office National Resilience assets are available to support operations. Temporary collapsible body storage units, mortuary trolleys and other equipment are held centrally and can be requested via the National Disaster Victim Identification Unit - UK DVI. Access to specialist technical capabilities such as mobile Computerised Tomography Scanners can also be sourced via UK DVI.

6.1.3 For longer term operations other national assets, specifically refrigerated shipping containers have been distributed by Home Office National Resilience around the UK including the London region (hosted by the Royal Borough of Kingston). These assets can be requested where appropriate to support operations across the UK.

6.2 Suspect(s) Mortuary Arrangements

6.2.1 In the event of a malicious attack, regardless of methodology and dependent on its scale, the London Mass Fatality Framework will be invoked. A Disaster Victim Identification process will commence for any deceased members of the public and the style and scope of mortuary option will be determined by the MFCG.

6.2.2 It is recognised that there are extreme sensitivities in separating perpetrators that kill themselves during the course of an attack, from members of the public killed in the course of an incident. There is also a need to establish a forensic sterile corridor with a bespoke suspects’ mortuary supported by specialist forensic staff to support the investigation.

6.2.3 The removal of deceased suspects from the scene becomes a priority over members of the public as they may hold vital intelligence and evidence (e.g. mobile phones, documentation) which can provide essential information for the continuing direction and momentum of an attack, and therefore provides responders with the tools to stop further loss of life.

6.2.4 The Designated Disaster Mortuary’s can be used to process deceased suspects. Each one is self-sufficient, can be secured and will have its own activation plan. If a malicious attack is being dealt with then the provision of a ‘suspects’ mortuary will need to be considered.

6.2.5 It is accepted that the speed of events in requiring removal of suspects from the scene may overtake the activation of the chosen mortuary, including the decanting of existing deceased, deployment of staff and the building of any necessary demountable structure, but each mortuary will still provide fast time secure body storage capability.

6.2.6 The MFCG will provide ongoing strategic leadership and advice.

6.3 Contaminated Fatalities

6.3.1 The Home Office has produced guidance on the safe handling of contaminated fatalities in the event of a CBRN attack. Similar precautions such as specialist protective equipment and
procedures are required for incidents involving hazardous industrial substances (HAZMAT incidents). The London CBRN Framework can also be referred to.

6.4 Family Viewing Arrangements

6.4.1 Bereaved families have a right to view the remains of their loved ones, subject to prevailing health and safety considerations, such as CBRN contamination.

6.4.2 In many cases, families will want to view their loved one for human and emotional reasons and should not be discouraged from doing so, although clear and direct information should be provided by the FLO regarding the physical condition of the body in order to allow the family to make informed decisions regarding the viewing process.

6.4.3 Where possible, steps will be made to repatriate the body to a nominated funeral director where viewings can be conducted with the greatest possible degree of dignity and respect for the families concerned. Funeral homes are designed for this purpose and this rationale is designed to divert the family away from the mortuary where intrusive clinical procedures are being conducted that may compound the family’s distress. A requirement for ‘defence’ post-mortem examinations may have a bearing on this decision.

6.4.4 Once bodies are identified they should be released to the family / undertaker. However, previous incidents have shown that families / loved ones may want the reconciliation process complete before a body is returned to them. Depending on the level of disruption to bodies this means longer term storage may need to be considered. If a body is unable to be released, consideration should be given to viewing at the designated mortuary.

6.5 Humanitarian Assistance

6.5.1 The London Humanitarian Assistance Framework provides guidance. This Framework should be read in conjunction with the LESLP Major Incident Procedure Manual which outlines the use and operation of additional assistance centres - Rest Centres, Survivor Reception Centres (SRC) and Family and Friends Reception Centres (FFRC).

6.5.2 The Voluntary Sector Capabilities Document outlines the potential voluntary sector services within the London region, and can be used as a reference tool to assist responders.

6.5.3 Consideration is to be given to the religious, cultural and ethical values of faiths and ethnic groups in the UK; they are included in the combined Home Office & Cabinet Office document The Needs of Faith Communities in Major Emergencies: Some Guidelines (2005).

6.6 Communications and Media Strategy

6.6.1 In the event of a mass fatality incident in London, existing media and communications arrangements will be used. The London Resilience Communication Group Emergency Plan covers the process for convening the Group (typically chaired by the Metropolitan Police Service). This group will also report to the Strategic Coordination Group as required.

6.6.2 The media will receive information regarding the mass fatality incident at the Media Centre. A designated Local Authority Press Officer and/or Police Media Liaison Officer will represent the necessary departments. Facts and figures pertaining to the number of fatalities etc. will only be provided to the media when verified and then through the use of a pre-identified point of contact. This contact MUST be the only means of communicating these figures.

6.6.3 Names of the deceased will not be released until their family members have been notified and sufficient time has elapsed to enable them to notify other relatives and loved ones. The identities of the deceased MUST not be released without the authority of the Senior Identification Manager.
6.7 Health and Safety

6.7.1 All agencies are required to comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and all other relevant statutory provisions and recognised codes of practice to provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, a safe working environment.

6.7.2 Issues will be referred to the Strategic Coordination Group as appropriate for further direction. This may include using the Scientific Technical Advice Cell (STAC) to inform the health and safety risk assessment process and associated safe systems of work.

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2The Safe Handling of Contaminated Fatalities Guidance Document June 2009 Home Office
# ANNEX A – Mass Fatality Coordination Group Agenda

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<td>Mortuary Options</td>
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<td>Impact on London / local mortuary capacity (knock-on effects)</td>
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<td>Human Tissue Act – requirements</td>
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<td>Additional considerations:</td>
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For information, please contact:

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LONDON RESILIENCE GROUP
The London Resilience Group is jointly funded and governed by the Greater London Authority, London Local Authorities and the London Fire Commissioner. We are hosted by the London Fire Brigade. Our work, and that of the London Resilience Partnership, is overseen by the London Resilience Forum.