



**Civil Contingencies
Secretariat**

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LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM CHAIRS

27 September 2007

Dear Colleague,

LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM TELECOMMUNICATIONS SUB-GROUPS

In April this year, we published the Resilient Telecommunications Strategy, an important element of which is the proposal that each LRF establish a Telecommunications Sub-Group responsible for enhancing the resilience of the communications in its area. The purpose of this note is to provide guidance to LRFs on the formation of these groups.

The Resilient Telecommunications Strategy has been developed by the Civil Contingencies Secretariat in collaboration with stakeholders. The views of stakeholders have been sought throughout the process via a Resilient Telecommunications Stakeholder Panel, which includes representatives of all Category 1 responders, and wider consultation through a Resilient Telecommunications Workshop held last October. Representatives from all LRFs were invited to the workshop and it was these representatives who first proposed the idea of telecommunications sub-groups being established. The role and the structure of the sub-groups have subsequently been developed with the help of the Stakeholder Panel, and the guidance in this note is based on the outcome of those discussions.

Role of the sub-groups

The role of the sub-group will be to consider all aspects of communications, including technical means, and how resilience might be enhanced within its area. Key tasks for the sub-group will include the development and ownership of a telecommunications plan and management of the Mobile Telecommunications Privileged Access Scheme (MTPAS). A list of tasks for which it is envisaged the sub-groups will have responsibility is included in the model terms of reference attached at Annex A.

Structure and Membership

It is envisaged that, in the majority of cases, the tasks set out in the model terms of reference will necessitate the need for a new group to be established. But, if you feel this work can be amalgamated into existing structures, that would be perfectly acceptable.

Whether you are establishing a telecommunication sub-group or utilising an existing group, it is important that you have the right membership. It is recommended that, as far as possible, all organisations which play a role in the response to an emergency are effectively represented on the sub-group. To work effectively, sub-groups should comprise of a mix of emergency planners and telecommunications specialists at middle manager level.

There are many practitioners who are already very involved in this area of work and sit on existing groups who could add valuable expertise to the sub-groups. An example of this is the Contingency Communications Group which is made up of local authority practitioners. It is recommended that LRFs utilise this and other relevant expertise. A list of CCG members is attached at Annex B.

Timeline

The timeline that we are proposing for the establishment of the sub-groups is:

- Structure, membership and date for first meeting agreed by end October 2007
- Work plans agreed by January 2008
- Draft Telecommunications Plans developed by each Telecommunications Sub-Group no later than September 2008

I hope that this guidance is helpful. If you have any questions regarding the information in this note, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We are planning to hold a workshop for Chairs of the Telecommunications Sub-Groups in London before Christmas. Could I therefore ask you to advise Tony Part (on tony.part@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk) when you have agreed who will take on this role so that he can ensure they receive an invitation.

I am copying this letter to Ian Walford at the Scottish Executive and Judith Brown at NIO for information.

BRUCE MANN
Director, Civil Contingencies Secretariat

Local response gateway: preparing together

LRF Telecommunications Sub-Group

Model Terms of Reference

Aim

The purpose of the [insert area] Local Resilience Forum Telecommunications Sub-Group is to ensure local responders, and their partners within [insert area] are able to communicate effectively even when faced with the most challenging circumstances.

Objectives

- To prepare, evaluate and review a telecommunications plan for [insert area]. This should:
 - Set out the critical communication processes that are essential to the effectiveness of response operations in [insert area]
 - Set out the communication requirements (where and how the communication is initiated; where and how the communication is received; and the intended outcome of the communication)
 - Offer a diversity of technical solutions
 - Set out the arrangement for multi-agency training and exercising
- To manage the Mobile Telecommunications Privileged Access Scheme for all responders (MTPAS) in [insert area], including assessing new applications, maintaining records of registrations and reviewing current holdings to ensure they are valid.
- To co-ordinate each organisation's approach to resilient telecommunications, including the take up of privileged services, to ensure that they complement each other and dovetail with partners' arrangements.
- To liaise with neighbouring LRFs regarding cross boundary communications.
- To monitor relevant legislation and guidance to identify ways to improve existing plans.
- To identify, share and use good practice.
- To feed back to the Local Resilience Forum and regionally on issues as appropriate.

Contingency Communications Group Membership

Region	Contact
North West	Mike Coward Cumbria County Council mike.coward@cumbriaepu.gov.uk
North East	Ian Clough Northumberland County Council iclough@northumberland.gov.uk
Yorkshire and Humber	Peter Hall South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service phall@syfire.org.uk
West Midlands	Jeremy Lee Warwickshire County Council jeremylee@warwickshire.gov.uk
East Midlands	Chris Spry Northamptonshire County Council cspry@northamptonshire.gov.uk
East	Owen Tomlinson Hertfordshire County Council owen.tomlinson@hertsc.gov.uk
South West	John Brown Bath and North East Somerset Council john_brown@bathnes.gov.uk
South East	Tony Morris West Sussex County Council tony.morris@westsussex.gov.uk
London	Rod Stafford London Borough of Waltham Forest Rod.Stafford@walthamforest.gov.uk Rob Walley London Borough of Brent Rob.Walley@brent.gov.uk
Wales	Keith Butt Pembrokeshire County Council keith.butt@pembrokeshire.gov.uk