



City of Westminster

Guidance to the  
City of Westminster  
Contingency Plan  
For Major Emergencies.

*Help Us to Help You in an  
Emergency*

Date of Issue November 2016

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## Emergency contact telephone numbers

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**If you need to contact the police, fire, ambulance or coastguard in an emergency dial**

**999 or 112**

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The 24 hour contact number for the Council is

**020 7641 6000**  
**020 7641 8000 (Minicom)**

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This guidance has been produced by the Westminster Contingency Planning Team. If you require any further advice or guidance in respect of contingency planning or business continuity matters, the team can be contacted during normal working hours on:

Peter Reeves 020 7641 7090

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## Foreword

Westminster City Council is acutely aware of the challenges presented by major emergencies. Our responsibilities have been brought into sharp focus in recent years by the number of incidents that have occurred both at home and abroad. In addition, we have a legal duty under the terms of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to provide and maintain robust and resilient contingency plans.

The City Council's contingency plans are designed to enable the mobilisation of resources, at short notice, in response to a major emergency in addition to ensuring that core critical services are maintained in the event of major disruption.

To this end, the City Council has developed the 'City of Westminster Contingency Plan for Major Emergencies' which sets out the procedures applied to emergency management and is designed as guidance for staff who are responsible for implementing and managing the Council's response to a major incident.

The document is a generic plan and has been developed in partnership with the emergency services and other service providers on a pan-London basis.

The plan we are presenting here, Guidance to City of Westminster Contingency Plan For Major Emergencies, involves the same subject matter as the main plan, but has a different emphasis. This document focuses on providing information and guidance to raise the awareness of residents and businesses who may become involved in a major incident. The document is designed to highlight the procedures applied at the scene by the emergency services, including the Council's response and how those actions may affect residents and businesses.

It is crucial that in the event of a major incident, emergency services, support services as well as residents and businesses work together. This document aims to ensure that we achieve maximum co-operation and that we deliver the most effective response possible.

Cllr Robert Davis DL

## Contingency Plan

- 1.1.1 This guidance has been designed to provide more information as to what you may expect as a resident or a business to happen at the scene, also under the heading “ **Help Us to Help You**” additional advice that may assist you is given.
- 1.1.2 The number of major incidents, both accidental and natural, that have occurred in this country and abroad in recent years, exemplify both the need for and importance of contingency planning and preparedness. The threat of terrorist activity has also increased globally over recent years as has the scale of such activity. It is against this background the Government introduced the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
- 1.1.3 Under The Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Category One responders, (the emergency Services, Local Authorities and Health bodies) are the organisations at the core of an emergency response.
- 1.1.4 Westminster City Council, as a Category One responder is required to:
- Assess the risks of emergencies occurring and use this information to inform emergency planning and business continuity planning;
  - Put in place emergency plans
  - Put in place business continuity plans
  - 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
  - Share information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination
  - Co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency
  - Provide advice and assistance to business and voluntary organisations about business continuity management
  - Promote increased awareness of emergency planning

## Definitions

### Major Incident;

- 1.1.1 “A major incident is an emergency that requires the implementation of special arrangements by one or all of the emergency services and will generally include the involvement, either directly or indirectly, of large numbers of people”.  
(London Emergency Services Liaison Panel (LESLP) Major Incident Manual).

### Immediate Impact

- 1.1.2 Immediate impact “emergency” events or situations are those that occur with little or no prior warning. The effects are usually felt immediately and include transportation accidents, utility failure, industrial accidents or acts of terrorism. This type of event will be generally referred to as a major incident by the emergency services.

### Rising Tide Emergencies, Events or Situations.

- 1.1.3 “Rising tide” emergencies, events or situations have a lead in time of days weeks or even months, their onset can be gradual and the final impact may not always be apparent early on. Developing health pandemic, infectious disease outbreak in animals and extreme weather forecasts are all examples of rising tide emergencies, events or situations.

### Definition of an Emergency;

- 1.1.4 An emergency is defined as:

- An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK
- An event or situation which threatens serious damage to the environment of a place in the UK
- War or terrorism which threatens serious damage to the security of the UK.

(Civil Contingences Act 2004)

## Risk Assessment - City Profile

### Geographical area

- 1.2.1 The City covers an area of 8.5 square miles. The adjoining boroughs are:  
The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (west), London Borough of Brent (north west), London Borough of Camden (north east) and the Corporation of London (east). The River Thames forms the southern boundary.

### Population

- 1.2.2 Westminster has a residential population of approximately 230,000, the major residential area is located in the north of the City. With tourists and commuters the daily population increases to over 1 million.
- 1.2.3 There are 82 schools (including independent schools) within Westminster and 259 Nursery schools and early learning centres (including independent nurseries and centres) the school population is approximately 25,000.

### Tourism

- 1.2.4 Westminster contains many iconic tourist attractions, a large number of entertainment venues and a world famous shopping area, all of which attract a large number of day and long stay tourists. Westminster has 440 hotels with approximately 67,000 bed spaces.

### Major Events

- 1.2.5 Westminster also hosts many National and Ceremonial events in addition to large concerts and events within the Royal Parks where crowds of 100,000 plus can be expected. There are also frequent public demonstrations and marches held in the south of the City.

### Hospitals

1.2.6 There are two NHS Trust hospital sites within Westminster:

- St. Mary's Praed Street W2 (Acute Trust A&E)
- Western Eye Hospital 171 Marylebone Road W1

1.2.7 In addition to which there are 20 private hospitals located within Westminster.

### Business

1.2.8 There are over 38,000 VAT Registered businesses within Westminster. The majority of the businesses within the City are associated with commerce, tourism and retail.

### Industry

1.2.9 There is no heavy manufacturing industry located within Westminster.

### COMAH Sites

1.2.10 There are no COMAH sites (a site subject to the Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations) located within the borough.

### Transport

1.2.11 Westminster has four main line rail termini:

Paddington, Marylebone, Charing Cross and Victoria. In addition to which there are 32 London Underground stations located within the City.

1.2.12 The bus station (operated by London Buses) at Victoria station and the roads in the immediate vicinity of the bus station form a major bus interchange.

Victoria coach station (operated by London Buses) in Buckingham Palace Road is a major terminus for the national coach network.



1.2.13 The Council's Contingency Planning arrangements are based on risk assessment and include:

- Identification of potential hazards and the subsequent
- Likelihood of the hazard causing a major incident
- The consequences on health, social economic and environment
- Removing reducing and managing the consequences

### **Summary of Westminster Hazard Assessment**

1.2.14 The hazard assessment is broken down into principle headings, which are listed below:

- Aircraft Crash
- Collapse of Structures (including buildings, bridges etc.)
- Damage to Reservoirs or water supply infrastructure
- Escape of Dangerous Substances (toxic gases, radioactive material, chemical spillage's etc.)
- Evacuation of residential and /or commercial area, including schools
- Explosion (gas , electrical or other explosive substance)
- Fire (a major fire damaging property and /or infrastructure)
- Flooding (tidal, burst water main and flash flooding)
- Health – pandemics and infectious diseases
- Industrial Accidents
- Major incident occurring at large public events
- Pollution of air and / or drinking water
- Power failures
- Public Disorder (major demonstrations and protest rallies)
- Rail crash ( mainline and London Underground)
- Serious Disruption or Failure of Food and other Essential Supply Chains
- Shipping accident on the Thames
- Storm Damage and Extreme Weather Conditions

### Community Risk Register

1.2.15 The Community Risk Register is developed by all boroughs within the Local Resilience Forum Area, using a national template. The London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) are responsible for keeping the Register. Westminster is included in the Central Area Risk Register. The Risk Register can be viewed by going to:

[www.London-fire.gov.uk](http://www.London-fire.gov.uk).

### *Help Us to Help You*

The majority of major incidents that occur in and for which the Westminster Contingency Planning procedures are activated are accidental and the larger proportion of these incidents are fire related.

The majority of fires within premises are caused by electrical equipment, heating appliances or cooking

A quick and simple assessment of the risks within your home or office to identify electrical risks including the use of multiple plug adapters, damaged and exposed electric cables, trailing electric cables and use of damaged appliances and any such items identified, should be removed or replaced as necessary.

Advice and guidance on fire safety and the installation of smoke alarms can be obtained from the London Fire Brigade at: [www.london-fire.gov.uk](http://www.london-fire.gov.uk)

Your local fire station can also put you in contact with a fire prevention officer who will be able to give you further advice

Prevention is better than cure **but** should the worst happen, be prepared - check that you have adequate insurance cover for your personal property and possessions

If you run your own business do you have a **business continuity plan**? Even as a small business having a business continuity plan could make the difference between recovery and going out of business.

A template to assist you with preparing a business continuity plan can be downloaded from London Prepared website at: [www.londonprepared.gov.uk](http://www.londonprepared.gov.uk)

If you require further advice and guidance contact the Westminster Contingency Planning Team on the contact numbers at the front of this document

## Emergency Services

2.1.1 The London Emergency Services (LESLP) Manual describes in detail the agreed protocols between the emergency services and other agencies (including local authorities) when responding to a major incident. The LESLP Manual can be viewed at: [www.leslp.gov.uk](http://www.leslp.gov.uk)

The main functions of the emergency services are:

### 2.1.2 Police

- The saving of life together with the other services
- The co-ordination of the emergency services, local authorities and other organisations acting in support at the scene of the incident
- To secure, protect and preserve the scene and to control sightseers and traffic through the use of cordons
- The investigation of the incident and obtaining and securing of evidence in conjunction with other investigative bodies where applicable
- The collection and distribution of casualty information
- The identification of the dead on behalf of Her Majesty's (HM) Coroner
- The prevention of crime
- Family liaison
- Short term measures to restore normality after all necessary actions have been taken

### 2.1.3 Joint Health Advisory Cell (JHAC)

The JHAC is a strategic group chaired by the Health Protection Agency (HPA), composed of representatives from a wide range of organisations and specialties who are able to give co-ordinated authoritative advice on the health aspects of an incident to the police incident commander, the Health Protection Agency and other agencies.

## 2.1.4 Ambulance Service

- To save life together with the other emergency services
- To provide treatment, stabilisation and care of those injured at the scene
- To provide appropriate transport, medical staff, equipment and resources
- To establish an effective triage sieve and triage sort system to determine the priority evacuation needs of those injured and to establish a safe location for causality clearing i.e. triage areas
- To provide a focal point at the incident for all Health Protection Agency (HPA) and other medical resources
- To provide communication facilities for HPA resources at the scene, with direct radio links to hospitals and any other agency as required
- To nominate and alert receiving hospitals from the official list of hospitals to receive those injured
- To provide transport to the incident scene for the medical officer (MO), mobile medical / surgical teams and their equipment
- To arrange the most appropriate means of transporting those injured to the receiving and specialists hospitals
- To maintain emergency cover throughout the London Ambulance Service area and to return to a state of normality at the earliest time

## 2.1.5 Fire Brigade

- Life saving through search and rescue
- Fire fighting and fire prevention
- Rendering humanitarian services
- Management of hazardous materials and protecting the environment
- Provision of qualified scientific advice in relation to HAZMAT (chemical) incidents via their scientific advisers
- Salvage and damage control
- Safety management within the inner cordon
- To maintain emergency service cover throughout the LFEPA area and to return to a state of normality at the earliest time.

## Command and Control Protocols

### 2.2.1 Emergency Services

The emergency services command and control structure is relevant to function and not necessarily rank. In this respect the terms Gold, Silver and Bronze are used.

### 2.2.2 Gold (strategic)

Gold is the commander in overall charge of each service, responsible for formulating the strategy for the incident. Each Gold has overall command of the resources of their own organisation, but delegates tactical decisions to their respective silver(s).

### 2.2.3 Silver (tactical)

Silver will attend the scene, take charge and be responsible for formulating the tactics to be adopted by their service to achieve the strategy set by Gold. Silver should not become personally involved with the activities close to the incident, but remain detached.

### 2.2.4 Bronze (operational)

Bronze will control and deploy the resources of their respective service within a geographical sector or specific role and implement the tactics defined by silver.

### 2.2.5 Gold and Silver co-ordinating groups

Regular meetings will be held, as soon as possible, the Gold meeting will be away from the scene of the incident, with the silver meetings being in close proximity to the incident.

The co-ordinating meetings are chaired by the police.

*See also 2.2.9 referring to significant incidents requiring a London wide co-ordinated response*

### 2.2.6 The London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and the London Ambulance Service are London wide services with a chain of command back to their respective Headquarters.

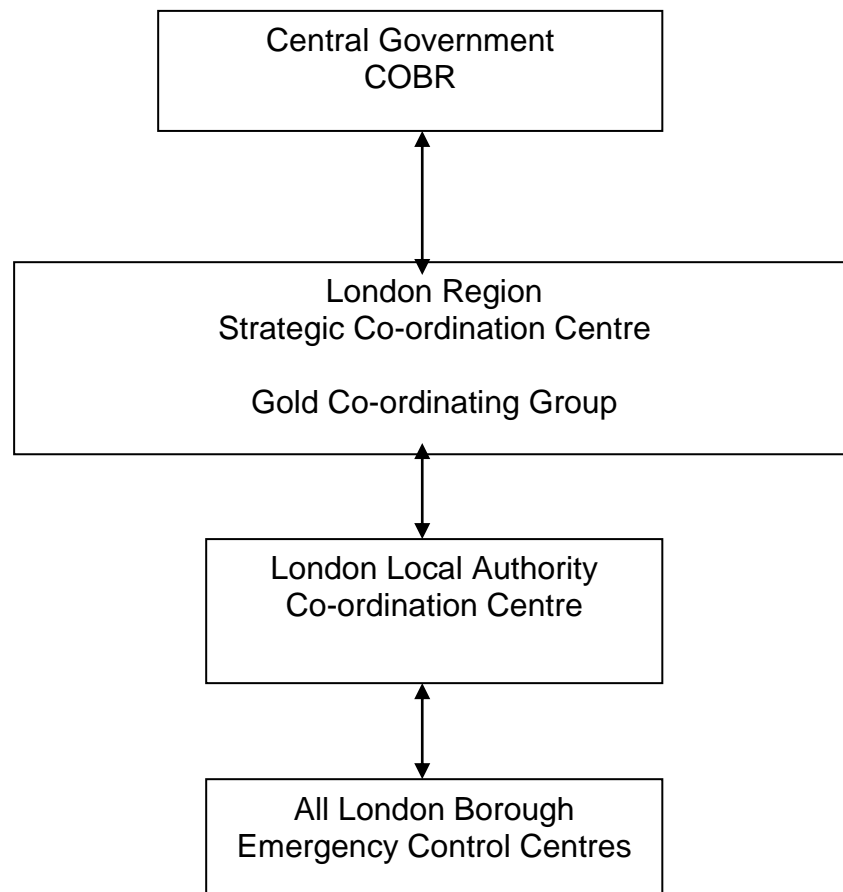
## Command and Control Protocols

- 2.2.7 There are three police forces operating within London, the Metropolitan Police Service, The City of London Police and British Transport Police.
- 2.2.8 If a significant incident has been declared set procedures can be activated, where all police forces operate under the umbrella of the Metropolitan Police Service
- 2.2.9 To ensure co- ordination between the emergency services, local authorities and any other agencies and organisations required to respond to a significant incident, a Strategic Co-ordination Centre (SCC) is activated and a Gold Co-ordinating Group (GCG) operated with “Gold” Officer representation from all agencies and authorities attending to provide a London wide strategic response to the incident.
- 2.2.10 The Gold co-ordinating Group is chaired by a police representative.
- 2.2.11 The response to a significant incident involving all London Boroughs is co-ordinated through the London Local Authority Co-ordination Centre (LLACC) which is activated when a significant incident is declared.
- 2.2.12 The LLACC is the control centre responsible for forwarding and receiving information from / to all boroughs and receiving and sending information to the Strategic Co – ordination Centre.  
*See Figure 1*
- 2.2.13 The Council’s response to a major incident that occurs within Westminster but is not declared a “significant” incident will be co-ordinated by the Councils Duty Contingency Planning Officers.  
*See figure 2*

## Command and Control Protocol

*Figure 1*

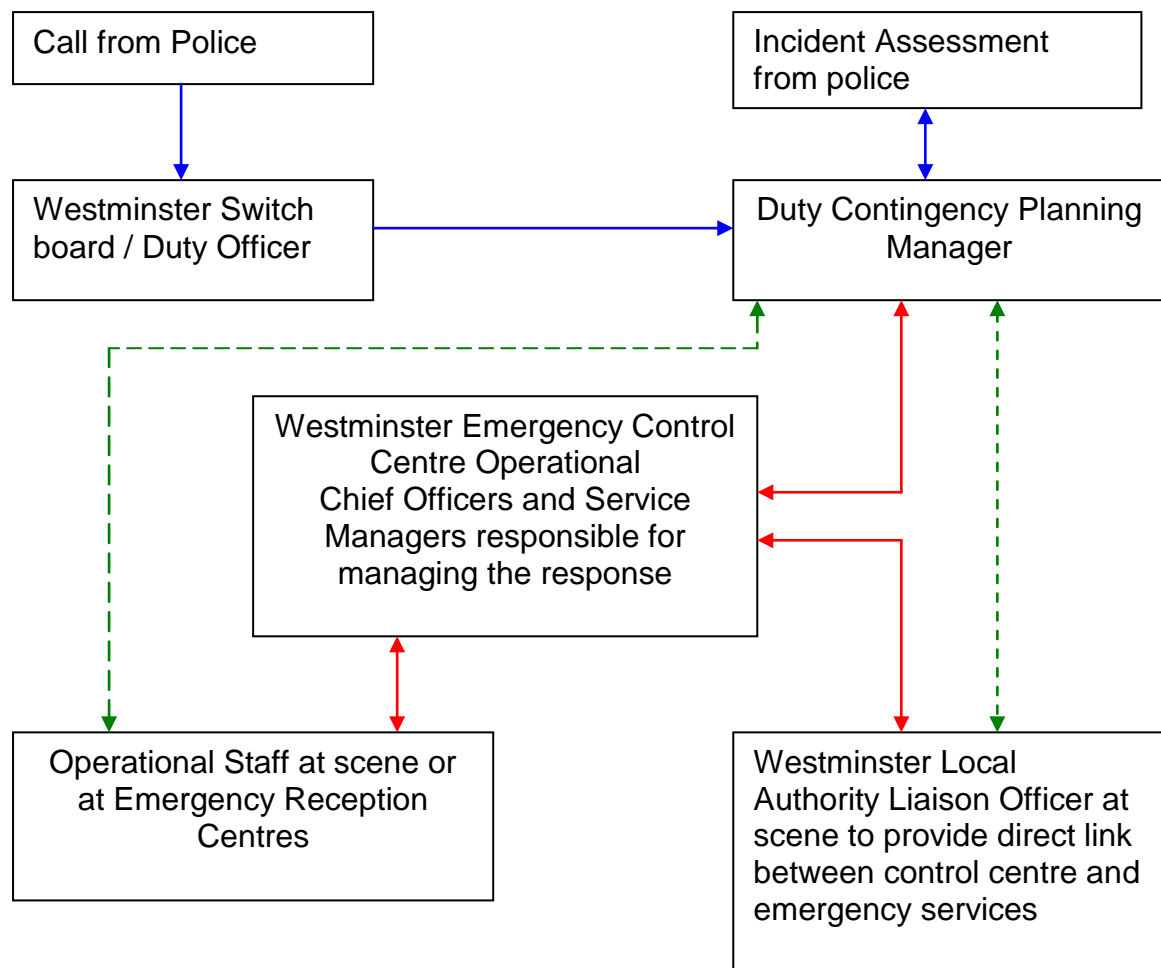
Communications Command and Control Protocol for Local Authority (Pan London) management of a significant incident



## Command and Control Protocol

Figure 2

City of Westminster management of a major incident



- Communication lines when control centre is operational
- - - - - Initial lines of communication before control centre is operational and where the control centre is not made operational due to the small scale of the incident



## Your Health and Safety

- 3.1.1 The Health and Safety of everybody at the scene or in close vicinity of an emergency or major incident, is of paramount importance.
- 3.1.2 Dependent on the situation there may be obvious dangers such as rubble and debris from damaged buildings or thick smoke. However there may also be less obvious risks such as invisible vapours, which may be damaging to your health.
- 3.1.3. If the incident occurs near your home or place of work and it is safe to enter the premises, go indoors, close all windows and doors turn on the radio or TV and wait for further information from the emergency services. Communitysafe will also be used to provide updated information. This can be accessed on the internet at :  
<https://westminster.communitysafe.org/join>
- 3.1.4 The emergency services at the scene will assess the risks and threats and may take a decision to evacuate the area.
- 3.1.5 If you are requested by the emergency services to evacuate your home or business premises it will be for good reason and your co-operation would be appreciated.

***For more detailed information on evacuation procedures see Westminster Response and Recovery sections of this guidance***

## Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Incidents

- 3.1.6 Chemical incidents are not uncommon and can be caused by accidental spillage, or a leaking hose or valve in a cleaning or manufacturing process, the impact of which is limited to a very small area. Road traffic accidents involving vehicles carrying chemicals may impact upon a larger area. Biological, Radiation and Nuclear incidents are extremely rare.
- 3.1.7 All CBRN incidents are assessed by the London Fire Brigade who deploy Scientific Advisers to attend the scene. Dependent on the findings the response by the emergency services may vary from advising every one to leave the area or for residents and businesses to go and remain indoors, closing all doors and windows until advised by the emergency services that the area is safe.

### Your Health and Safety

#### Decontamination

- 3.1.8 In rare and exceptional circumstances and dependent on the chemical or substance involved in the incident it may be necessary to activate very specific plans for managing the effects of the pollution, including the need to decontaminate everyone who has been either in the vicinity or had direct contact with the substance.
- 3.1.9 In such circumstances you will be asked to remain in a designated area to prevent you coming into contact with other people until you have been decontaminated, the process of which will involve passing through a shower unit and being scrubbed down. Issues around Faith and special needs will be taken into account and facilitated as far as is reasonably practical.
- 3.1.10 All your clothing and personal possessions will be sealed in bags and may be destroyed. After you have been decontaminated you will be given new temporary clothing and removed to a reception centre where assistance and support will be made available to meet your immediate needs and any longer term issues.

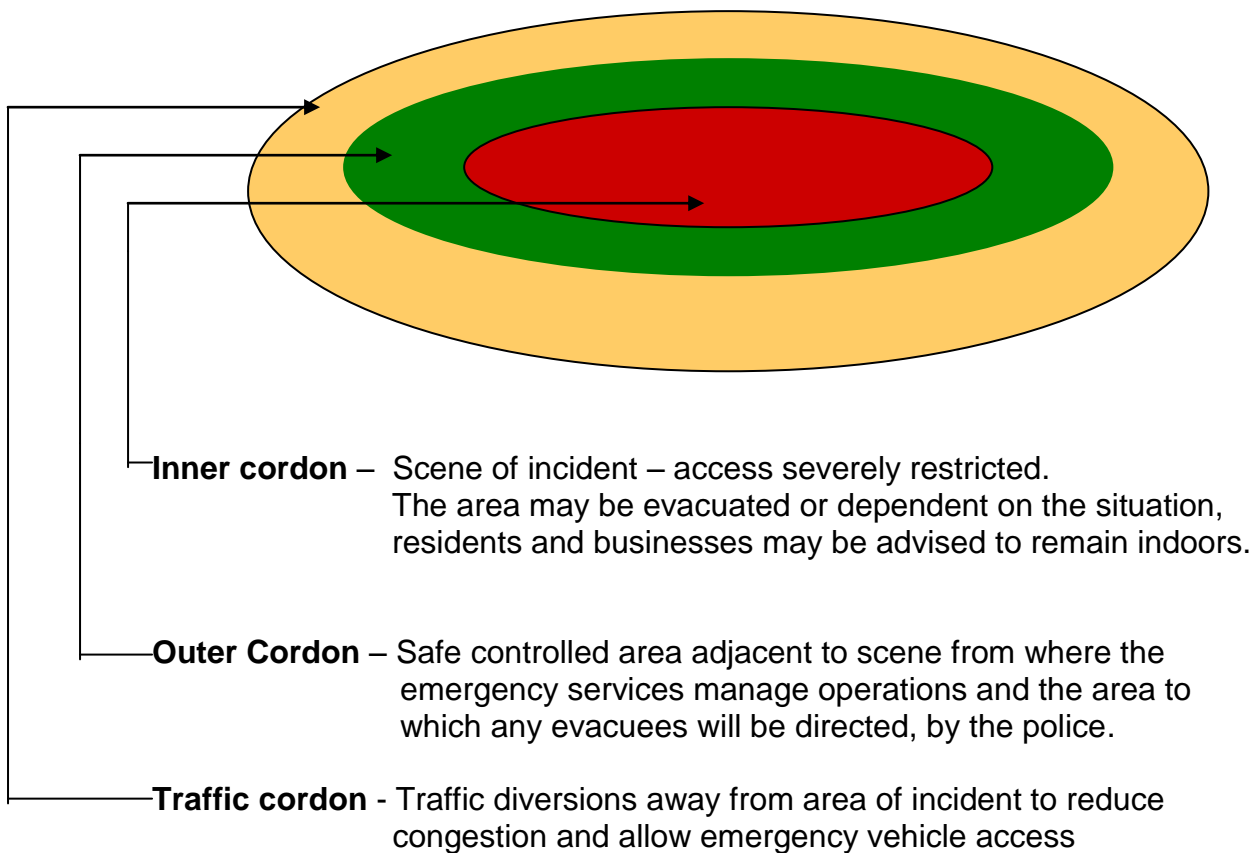
***See also Welfare section of this guidance***

- 3.1.11 The decontamination process is managed by the emergency services.

## Incident Response – Scene Management

### Cordon Control

3.2.1 The police have overall responsibility for co-ordinating the response of the emergency services at the scene. Cordons will be set up to restrict access to the scene to enable the emergency services to manage the incident and once the area has been made safe investigate the cause of the incident.



3.2.2 The size of the cordons and the length of time cordons are applied will be dependent on the type of incident – a fire involving oxygen acetylene cylinders will require a 200m inner cordon for a minimum of 24 hours, an explosive device may require an inner cordon of 400m. (or more) dependent on the size of suspect device. However cordon area may be restricted in size to a single property if that property is the only threat to Health Safety. The setting up of cordon does not necessarily mean the area is evacuated.

## Incident Response – Scene Management

### EVACUATION

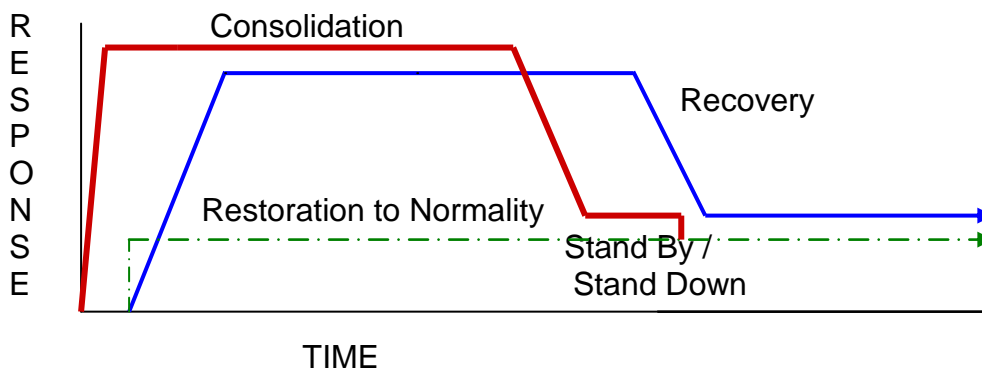
3.2.3 If the inner cordon area is evacuated residents and businesses will be directed by the police into the outer cordon area, where the police will if at all possible arrange for immediate temporary shelter in a suitable building. If an area is evacuated the police are responsible for security within the area.

3.2.4 Businesses which have been evacuated need to take into account the potential size of the cordons when considering staff assembly points. Your business continuity plan should identify the Building Services Manager or equivalent who should identify themselves to the emergency services to provide any relevant information regarding your business premises

*See also Recovery section – Returning to your property*

3.2.4 As previously stated the emergency services will be the first responders to an incident, the City Council is not a blue light service, but once advised by the police of the incident the first officers to respond will be Westminster Local Authority Liaison Officers.

### 3.2.5 Stages of an Incident



Emergency Services —————

City of Westminster —————

### 3.2.6 Role of Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO)

The LALO will be the first officers from the Council to arrive at the scene. Their role is to be liaison between the emergency services and the Duty Contingency Planning Manager who will be arranging for the necessary staff to attend and open a reception centre, plus any transportation that may be required.

## Incident Response – Scene Management

### 3.2.7 Staying with Friends or Relatives? -How to stay Informed.

If you have been displaced and take the decision to leave the area and stay with relatives or friends, the LALO will give you a free telephone number where you will be able to listen to a recorded message advising you of the current position. The message will be updated regularly and when known, give you an estimated time when you may expect to be able to return home. The LALO will also request you to leave your name address and contact number in case the Council or the emergency services need to contact you, in addition to accounting for your safety

### 3.2.8 Reception Centres

Where necessary reception centres will be made available as soon as possible after the Council has been notified of an incident. The LALO at the scene will advise where the centre is located and if transport is required where the pick up point for such transport is located.

3.2.9 Upon arrival at the reception centre you will be asked to complete a registration form (staff are available to assist if required). The registration form serves a number of purposes, including enabling your safety to be accounted for and to assist our staff in identifying and prioritising the needs of all displaced persons.

3.2.10 A reception centre will be operated as long as is necessary however if it is obvious that you are not going to be able to return to your home within a few hours, arrangements will be made, if at all possible to place you in temporary accommodation. Any such accommodation may be limited and priority will be given to those with specific needs e.g. young children or elderly persons.

3.2.11 Where temporary accommodation cannot be found a rest centre will be opened by the Council.

3.2.12 Light refreshments will be made available at reception centres and if necessary arrangements will be made for more substantial meals.

3.2.13 Pets should, if safe to do so, be left indoors, where this is not possible any animals brought to a reception centre should be on a lead or in a cage and kept under control. If necessary temporary arrangements will be made for an animal welfare organisation to care for them.

## Incident Response – Scene Management

### REMAIN INDOORS - Residents and Businesses

- 3.2.14 If the advice of the emergency services is to remain indoors and tune into local radio or television. If the situation persists over an extended period of time, a door to door check will be made by Police and /or Council staff to ensure the well being of everyone in the property and to identify any immediate requirements. All Council staff will show their formal identity cards.
- 3.2.15 Should a situation arise while remaining indoors that requires urgent assistance you should attract the attention of a police officer or the emergency services who will be in the close vicinity.

### INFRASTRUCTURE FAILURES

- 3.2.16 A situation where people are unable to leave Central London by some form of public transport is extremely rare, however extreme weather conditions, infrastructure failure etc. could develop into such a situation.
- 3.2.17 In the event of such an occurrence commuters should where possible remain at their place of business and tune into radio and television for latest information. Specific plans would be activated by the transport providers to establish temporary services as soon as possible, details of which would be broadcast on radio and TV
- 3.2.18 Westminster will open emergency evacuation centres for persons who are stranded with nowhere to shelter, arrangements are in place for theatres and similar large capacity premises to be used.

***See also Information and Advice section for where and how to receive information during an incident and***

***Recovery section for returning to your property***

## Incident Response – Scene Management

### *Help Us to Help You*

A major concern for anybody involved in an emergency situation is the safety and whereabouts of the remainder of the household, family, friends and relatives.

You can be better prepared for an emergency by taking time to find out;

- How members of your family / household will stay in contact
- The emergency procedures for your children at school – have you the contact number for the school and has the school got **your** correct contact details.
- The emergency procedures at your workplace
- How and where to turn the gas, water and electricity off in your home
- Any elderly or vulnerable neighbours who may need you assistance
- Keep battery powered torches and radio where you can easily find them

In rare circumstances you may be advised to leave your home quickly by the emergency services, with no time to gather belongings, in such circumstances some very basic items kept in a location where you know where to find them quickly and take with you;

- Mobile phone
- Useful telephone numbers – close relatives / friends, school, doctor etc.
- Any prescribed medication
- Cash and credit cards
- Home and car keys

## Council Services (Operational)

4.1.1 For the purposes of emergency management all services provided directly by the Council and those provided by contractors are grouped into four main categories, these are:

- Operational
- Welfare
- Logistics
- Advice and Information.

Below is a summary of the services that may be activated as the Westminster response to a major incident.

### 4.1.2 Operational

The services covered in this section are:

District Surveyor

- Responsible for assessment of structural damage to buildings necessary to make the building / structure safe.

Environment and Leisure -responsible for:

- Operation of leisure centres for use as emergency accommodation
- Labour and vehicles for cleansing and transportation of waste materials
- Cleaning and washing down highways
- The removal of clinical and some categories of hazardous waste
- Dog warden service

Highways and Transportation - responsible for;

- Equipment and labour for removal of debris
- Traffic management – signage and barriers
- Street gully cleansing
- Street lighting
- Co-ordination of the utilities companies.



## Council Services (Operational)

### Community Protection - Environmental Health

The primary responsibilities of Environmental Health are:

- The safety of food and drinking water
- Pest control
- Air quality and pollution control
- Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) incidents
- Communicable diseases
- Burial of the deceased
- Management of Westminster Mortuary and any temporary mortuary that may be required by an incident occurring within Westminster.

## Council Services (Logistics)

4.3.1 The services covered within this section include:

- Facilities and supplies
- Telecommunications
- IT communications
- Transport
- Parks and open spaces
- Corporate services
- Finance
- Contracts.

4.3.2 All or any of the above services may be activated in the event of a major incident as part of the Council's response.

## Council Services (Welfare)

- 4.2.1 The Children and Community Services Department has overall responsibility for welfare services including schools and residential establishments, including where the service has been contracted out to a service provider by the Council.
- 4.2.2 Voluntary agencies may also be used by the Council to provide additional welfare services in an emergency.
- 4.2.3 The Children and Community Services Department has responsibility for Westminster local authority education establishments and housing
- 4.2.4 Children and Community Services Department will co-ordinate the Council's support and welfare services for the victims, including survivors, family and friends and anyone else affected directly or indirectly by the incident in the immediate aftermath of an incident and for the longer term.
- The provision of trained staff to manage and operate emergency centres
  - To identify any immediate needs of displaced persons and co-ordinate measures necessary to meet such needs in the immediate aftermath of an incident
  - Supply trained trauma counsellors who work in association with Police Family Liaison Officers and the voluntary services, Including the British Red Cross.

### Schools

The Children and Community Services Department is responsible for co-ordinating Westminster Local Authority Schools and retains the generic emergency plan for such schools. In addition to which the schools have their own site specific plans and procedures.

## Council services (Information and Advice)

4.4. 1 The Policy and Communications Department are responsible for managing the media and public relations strategy for the Council.

4.4. 2 It is recognised that being kept informed with accurate and up to date information during an emergency is important to residents and businesses. To enable such information to be distributed the provisions detailed below have been made by the Council, in partnership with Westminster Police and the voluntary services and partner agencies.

### **Staying informed during an emergency.**

- **Radio and Television**

Local radio (BBC Radio London 94.9 fm) and television news

- **Community Safe**

Community Safe is operated by City of Westminster and Westminster police and enables you to receive information by the web site, email or SMS text .

Registration is free of charge and you can register on line by going to [www.westminster.gov.uk/communitysafe](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/communitysafe)

- **Telephone Help Lines;**

The police may open emergency help lines which will be made public by radio, television and in newspapers.

Westminster will provide an information line for displaced residents and businesses, the telephone number will be made available from the Westminster officers attending the scene and from reception centres.

This will provide recorded information relating to when you may expect to be able to return to your property or where to go for further information and advice if the incident is expected to continue beyond 24 hours.

## Council services (Information and Advice)

- **Telephone Support Lines**

Westminster in association with the voluntary services, operate telephone support lines, where anyone who has been affected by the incident, directly or indirectly, can call and receive assistance and support. The telephone numbers are made public by radio, television and newspapers.

- **Written Communication**

The Council will distribute leaflets to keep businesses and residents advised when necessary, of ongoing disruption or inconvenience caused locally, directly or indirectly, by the aftermath and recovery phase of a major emergency.

### 4.4.3 Further Information and Advice

Preparedness and awareness are key elements in contingency planning and further details of where to find additional information are given below;

#### Community Safe

In addition to emergency information, is also used for;

- warnings of disruption to travel arrangements due to incidents or major events is given on the web site
- Information of public meetings relating to contingency planning, anti terrorist and crime reduction issues
- Training and seminars relating to business continuity, fire prevention and contingency planning.

#### Business Continuity

- A business continuity plan is essential to every business, without such a plan the chances of a business surviving a major emergency are significantly reduced.
- Advice and guidance on developing a business continuity plan can be downloaded from the following website:

[www.londonprepared.gov.uk](http://www.londonprepared.gov.uk)

- Business Continuity plans should also be kept under regular review and exercised, if you require further information please contact the Contingency Planning Team.

## Council services (Information and Advice)

4.4.4 Additional guidance and information on Contingency Planning and Business Continuity can be found on the following web sites;

- [www.londonprepared.gov.uk](http://www.londonprepared.gov.uk)  
This site contains information on business continuity and strategic contingency plans for London and is operated by London Resilience, a department of the Government Office for London
- [www.leslp.gov.uk](http://www.leslp.gov.uk)  
This site is managed by the Metropolitan Police and contains the London Emergency Services Liaison Panel manual for emergency services response in London.
- [www.london-fire.gov.uk](http://www.london-fire.gov.uk)  
This is the web site of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority which has advice and guidance on fire precautions and the Fire Regulations. The Community Risk Register for Central London (which includes Westminster) is also located on this site.
- [www.mi5.gov.uk](http://www.mi5.gov.uk)  
Government security services site relating to security threats and levels together with advice and guidance on security issues.
- [www.metoffice.gov.uk](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk)  
For up to date information when severe weather warnings have been issued

4.4.4 Useful emergency telephone numbers;

Electricity supplies – UK Power Networks 0800 0280 247  
UK Power Networks Power Cut Line Dial 105

Gas – emergency number 0800 111 999

Thames Water 0800 316 9800

Environment Agency – Flood line 0845 988 1188

# Recovery

## Recovery

- 5.1.1. Depending on the nature and severity of the incident, the recovery may take months or even years as it addresses the enduring human, physical, environmental, social and economic consequences of a major incident.
- 5.1.2 The recovery phase is a multi agency function and dependent on the circumstances, the management of the recovery may be co-ordinated at national, regional or local level.

## Westminster recovery process

- 5.1.3 The recovery phase of an incident begins during the consolidation period of the incident response (see paragraph 3.2.5.) in partnership with the emergency services and any other agencies and or organisations as may be required (e.g. utilities companies).
- 5.2.4 The City Council Incident Recovery Management Team (IRMT) consisting of the Leader of the Council, Chief Executive, Cabinet Members Ward Councillors and Chief Officers, would be activated to co-ordinate the recovery process.
- 5.2.5 The role of the IRMT is to co-ordinate and work with the residents and businesses in the affected area to ensure that all possible assistance is made available to support the community, in addition to maintaining an over view of the restoration of the area, working with the relevant authorities and organisations.

## Returning to your property

- 5.3.1 In the majority of cases where damage is very limited, cordons will be lifted with everyone free to return to their property, with only the affected building(s) remaining cordoned off with restricted access allowed for the occupiers ( if it is safe to enter) facilitated through the police.

## Extensive damage over a wide area.

- 5.3.2 On the rare occasion where extensive damage has occurred to properties over a wide area cordons may remain in place for days or even weeks, until the area has been made safe and all buildings secured, in such circumstances Westminster will open an Emergency Cordon Assistance Centre as near to the cordon area as possible.

### Returning to your property (continued)

5.3.3 The centre will be managed by Westminster with assistance from the Police and will offer the following facilities:

- Provide a location where property owners can register their interest and arrange meetings, with Westminster District Surveyors utilities companies etc. to gain an accurate assessment of the situation and if safe to do so entry into your premises.
- The registration process is necessary to reduce the risk of unauthorised entry into premises within the cordon area for both health and safety and security reasons.
- Access into the cordoned area would be by passes issued at the centre, upon proof of identity.
- The location of the centre would be published on Community Safe and available from the cordon control points.

## Further Information or Assistance

If you or anyone you know would like this publication in large print, on audio tape, in Braille or in another language please write to us at the address below. Please supply your name and address, your requirements and for translations the language required.

If you require any further information on contingency planning matters or business continuity issues please contact us at:

The Contingency Planning Team  
Westminster City Hall  
64 Victoria Street  
London SW1E 6QP

Email: [contingencyplanningteam@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:contingencyplanningteam@westminster.gov.uk)