

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

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1. Aim

- The aim of this document is to describe the role of the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Mayor in the civil protection arrangements for London, and how these are carried out.
- This document will:
 - describe the context to the duties and responsibilities in this area
 - address key points in relevant legislation and non-statutory guidance
 - describe the role of the GLA and the Mayor in preparing for emergencies
 - describe how the Mayor and the GLA discharge the duties and responsibilities described above.

2. Context – duties and responsibilities

a) Duties under the Civil Contingencies Act

- The [Civil Contingencies Act](#) and associated Regulations provide a basic framework for agencies involved in emergency planning; they define what tasks should be performed and how cooperation should be conducted. The Act appoints key agencies involved as either ‘Category One responders’ or ‘Category Two responders’.
- The GLA was appointed as a Category One responder by Statutory Instrument in 2011 following the abolition of the Government Office for London. This appointment was to ensure the continuity of the London Resilience Team and to put on a statutory footing the responsibilities that previously applied to the Government Office for London. [Find out more information on the history of resilience in London.](#)
- As a Category One responder, the duties in the Civil Contingencies Act that the GLA must fulfil are to:
 - i. assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning
 - ii. put in place emergency plans
 - iii. put in place business continuity management arrangements
 - iv. 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
 - v. share information with other local responders to enhance coordination
 - vi. cooperate with other local responders to enhance coordination and efficiency – including through a local resilience forum, which must meet at least once every six months.

b) Responsibilities under guidance

- In addition to the statutory duties there is guidance for agencies involved in emergency planning and response. Chapter 9 of [Emergency preparedness](#) covers London and provides responsibilities for the GLA and Mayor. These are listed below:

The Mayor/the GLA:

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

3. Discharging the duties and responsibilities

- Through the work of the London Resilience Group (LRG), the Mayor and the GLA fulfil many duties and responsibilities as described in the Act and in the guidance.
- The Mayor and the GLA (with the London Fire Brigade and London local authorities) co-fund the LRG, which supports the work of the London Resilience Partnership (LRP). The LRP brings together over 200 organisations who each have specific responsibilities for preparing for, and responding to, emergencies.
- [The LRP Strategy](#) provides more details on the vision for civil protection in London, and information about how emergency preparedness is structured.
- Agencies within the LRP come together at the LRF to set the strategy for the work of the Partnership and the LRG. The LRF is chaired by [Fiona Twycross, Deputy Mayor for Fire and](#)

[Resilience](#). The LRF has subgroups (or capability groups) that focus on various aspects of emergency resilience.

- The LRG also provides the secretariat function for a meeting of the Strategic Coordination Group (SCG). This is the most strategic level multi-agency meeting called in response to an emergency or incident taking place.

a) Statutory duties in the Civil Contingencies Act

i. Risk assessment

Risk to the capital is primarily measured at a London-wide level, and published on the GLA website as the [London Risk Register](#). The risk register is informed by the National Risk Assessment; and local knowledge is used to further tailor it for London, and ensure the best possible assessment is made. The risk register is maintained through the London Risk Assessment Group (LRAG), a subgroup of the LRF. The Head of the GLA's Resilience team attends these meetings. The risk assessment is prepared by LRAG for approval at an LRF meeting in which the LRF's chair, the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience, provides oversight of the risk assessment process.

Following approval by the LRF, the risk register is published on the GLA website. Publication of the London Risk Register is designed to inform the work programme of the LRG and LRF as well as assist local authorities and businesses in developing their own emergency and business continuity arrangements against the risks outlined in the register.

ii. Emergency plans

The LRF provides the mechanisms to facilitate and document city-wide multi-agency response plans. As a member of the LRP, the GLA is represented in a number of groups (referred to as capability groups) that develop different aspects of the response plans, including cross-cutting communications arrangements and strategic coordination arrangements. These groups include the London Resilience Programme Board; the London Resilience Communications Group (LRCG); the Voluntary Sector Panel; and the overarching LRF meeting, which meets three times per year.

Through partnership work these plans are developed to outline actions taken to prevent emergencies from happening; reduce or control the impacts on any emergencies that do occur; and take action in connection with an emergency. This work and the resulting plans are publicly available in detail on the [London Prepared section of the GLA website](#).

The Mayor and GLA raise public awareness around the risks and emergency plans by ensuring all the plans are publicly available online and via [press releases](#). The GLA's City Operations Unit is responsible for leading the GLA's response to an emergency when it is happening. As such, the Unit has emergency plans and processes in place for the sharing of information across the GLA and with partners during an emergency. A GLA-wide Incident Response Protocol is currently under development.

iii. Business continuity

The GLA's business continuity plans are in place and currently under review following the COVID-19 pandemic and the move to new premises. Once the review is complete, a programme of exercising will be conducted. The GLA's business continuity arrangements are not published online.

iv. Arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public during an emergency

The GLA is an active member of the LRCG, which is facilitated through LRF mechanisms (as part of ensuring emergency plans are in place). This group maintains, facilitates and coordinates the multi-agency, outward-facing communications in the event of an emergency, to ensure that all agencies are promoting coherent, effective public messaging.

Communications form an essential and key part of the GLA's role in emergency response (and specifically the Mayor's role as the 'Voice of London'). The LRG maintains a central protocol that outlines multi-agency response to emergencies in the capital: [the Strategic Coordination Protocol](#). The document includes details of the Mayor's key response role as the Voice of London in emergencies and incidents. The role of the Mayor is to support the operational response to an emergency in London by providing leadership, advocacy, clear communication and a unified statement – a 'voice' for London.

The Mayor, as Voice for London, in an emergency communicates to Londoners via [social media](#), [press releases](#), broadcast appearances and the [GLA website](#). The GLA uses an integrated and multi-channel approach (tailored to relevant audiences) to ensure as wide a reach as possible.

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

v. Share information with other local responders to enhance coordination

The LRG provides the mechanisms for information-sharing to take place as part of developing different capability workstreams in order to develop multi-agency response plans. Via the LRG, agencies (including the GLA) meet regularly to share information and collaborate. Key GLA policy officers attend relevant multi-agency meetings; and GLA officers are involved in the overall approval and oversight of these preparatory plans at the LRF. [Find out more information on the LRF](#).

The GLA's City Operations Unit maintains communication channels with relevant Category One responders to share information, research and analysis; and attend regular partnership meetings to develop shared situational awareness and to work to mitigate and prepare for risks.

GLA officers will attend any London SCG called to respond to an emergency, and any relevant subgroups of the SCG where appropriate. GLA officers would also be involved in any disaster appeals.

vi. Cooperate with other local responders to enhance coordination and efficiency

Whilst the GLA does not have an operational response on the ground during an incident, the GLA works with other agencies to enhance coordination and efficiency during a response, in accordance with the [Strategic Coordination Protocol](#). The City Operations Unit works with other Category One responders in business-as-usual time, and in a time of emergency, to achieve this aim. The GLA both partly funds and is an active member of the Partnership, and shares information with partners both via formal channels that the LRG services, and through direct contacts with relevant agencies. This cooperation enables multi-agency planning and preparedness, as well as a coordinated response to an emergency or incident.

b) Further responsibilities outlined in Chapter 9 of Emergency Preparedness

i. Close engagement in high-level discussions and decisions relating to the management of emergencies in London

The GLA is represented on an SCG if called. As a Category One responder, it has a role within the multi-agency partnership, and a responsibility to participate fully in the multi-agency response – particularly in relation to sharing information and providing relevant information to the public in fulfilling the Mayor’s role as the Voice of London.

In an emergency the Mayor may call a Mayor’s Advisory Group, which enables a strategic, high-level briefing for the Mayor from the key relevant partners, depending on the incident at hand. In response to some incidents and emergencies the Mayor may attend COBR meetings.

ii. Chair of the LRF (role may also go to an appointed deputy)

The Mayor has appointed Fiona Twycross, Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience, as the current chair of the LRF.

iii. Contributing as necessary to the pre-informing of Londoners about the content of emergency plans; the correct behaviour in an emergency; and good practice in terms of preparedness in the home, as part of initiatives organised both locally and at the UK level

Activity to pre-inform the public about emergencies is coordinated through the LRG and published on the GLA website on the [London Prepared](#) pages, alongside the London Risk Register. The LRF, which is chaired by the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience, oversees this work of the LRG. The GLA will work with partners to promote public information campaigns such as winter and summer preparedness and counter-terrorism.

iv. Preparing to play a key role in warning and informing the public during an emergency in London

The Mayor communicates to Londoners about emergencies via [social media](#), such as Twitter, through [press releases](#), broadcast appearances and the [GLA website](#). The GLA's internal organisational response plans enable strategic decisions to be made at pace to ensure the Mayor is briefed and able to fulfil the role of Voice for London. In an emergency the GLA works with lead agencies to amplify key/essential messaging to London and Londoners.

v. Taking responsibility for civil protection issues in connection with the management of Parliament and Trafalgar Squares

The GLA has responsibility for civil protection issues in connection with the management of Trafalgar Square and Parliament Square Garden. The GLA is responsible for securing proper management of the squares via by-laws. The GLA employs Heritage Wardens who are onsite at the Squares and support the delivery of this responsibility. The GLA City Operations Unit works closely with the Met Police to ensure protection of the specific areas.

vi. Responsibility for the secretariat of the LRF

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

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

The GLA publishes the [London risk assessment](#). The risk assessment is developed and maintained by the LRP as described above, supported by Mayoral funding of the LRG.

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

Multi-agency emergency planning and exercising in London is facilitated by the LRG and overseen by the LRF, which is chaired by the Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience. The LRP has an ongoing exercise programme that is used to rehearse and improve existing capabilities across the partnership. The LRF oversees this work of the LRG.