



TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
EMERGENCY PLANNING UNIT

Committee Report

Meeting: CIVIL CONTINGENCIES COMMITTEE: 1st DECEMBER 2008

Subject: GREAT NORTH RUN

Report of the Chief Emergency Planning Officer

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The 2008 Great North Run took place this year on Sunday, 5th October 2008. The event, which is sponsored by BUPA, is now a fixture in the international sporting calendar, and has become part of the cultural heritage of the North East.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is inform Members of the detailed planning involved in preparing for the safety aspects of the Run, and the involvement of Newcastle, Gateshead and South Tyneside Councils, and the Tyne and Wear Emergency Planning Unit in the development of those arrangements.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Great North Run is the World's largest half marathon, and since its inception in 1981 over half a million runners have taken part, with runners from every postcode area in the UK being represented. This year there were in the region of 52,000 entrants, from around the world.
- 2.2 There are many diverse events taking place during the Great North Run weekend, in addition to the half marathon; which include the junior categories, i.e. 9-12 and 13-16 year groups competing over 1 to 2 miles. The junior races are sponsored by Tesco, and are held on the Saturday.
- 2.3 The main event of course is the 13.1 mile race held on the Sunday, which starts on the Central Motorway in Newcastle, and crosses the Tyne Bridge into Gateshead. The route then proceeds along the A184 past the Gateshead International Stadium on the Felling By-pass before turning onto the A194 at White Mare Pool. It then turns onto the A1300 John Reid Road, then the Coast Road, and finishes on the seafront in South Shields opposite the Bamburgh Public House. All of these roads are closed off to normal vehicular traffic to ensure the safety of the participants.
- 2.4 An detailed aspect of the pre-planning arrangements relate to the road closure and re-opening schedules which have to be carefully coordinated to ensure as little disruption as possible, and to ensure the speedy restoration of the highway system.

3 SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP

- 3.1 In accordance with the policy approved by the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum, a Safety Advisory Group (SAG) had been established to ensure the Event was organised and managed in a safe manner. The SAG includes representatives of; Northumbria Police, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, North East Ambulance Service, Nova International, the Emergency Planning Unit, Newcastle City Council, and Gateshead MBC. It is chaired by a Senior Officer from South Tyneside Council.
- 3.2 The SAG met on a number of occasions prior to the event, to monitor the detailed preparations being undertaken in the various working groups, and oversee the safety procedures that were being developed. All of these procedures were incorporated into the comprehensive 'Event Safety Plan' which details the agreed operational procedures that have been put in place for the event, and to define the key roles and responsibilities in relation to the safe management of the Run.
- 3.3 The SAG working groups are; Start, Course, Finish, Event Control, Contingency Plans, and Medical. The Event Safety Plan considers the subjects of traffic management, medical arrangements, course design, emergency management and contingency planning etc., all of which are covered by the work of the sub-groups.
- 3.4 The Event Safety Plan, which is written to ensure it 'dove-tails' with the Major Incident / Emergency response arrangements of the three participating local authorities, must be endorsed by all members of the SAG before the Run can proceed. The Event Safety Plan is a dynamic document, it had been fully reviewed following the 2007 Run, and potential improvements incorporated to enhance the arrangements for this year's event.

4 VALIDATION EXERCISE

- 4.1 In line with the Northumbria LRF Training and Exercising policy, in order to validate the emergency response arrangements, a multi-agency emergency exercise was held on the 12th June 2008. The aims and objectives of the exercise named 'Coyote' are shown at Annex 1.
- 4.2 The exercise was devised by a small planning team comprising representatives of North East Ambulance Service, Nova International, Northumbria Police, Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service, and Tyne & Wear Emergency Planning Unit. Over 50 people from relevant organisations participated in the exercise which was held at Fire and Rescue Control, West Denton.
- 4.3 A number of scenarios examining a range of potential emergency situations were considered by the syndicates, and possible solutions were debated. The results of these deliberations were all noted and considered against the existing emergency arrangements as outlined in the Event

Safety Plan, thereby ensuring that the Plan contains validated response arrangements.

5 EVENT SAFETY CONTROL

- 5.1 The Event Safety Control was located in the Police 'Gold Command' Room, Southern Communications Centre at Mill Bank, South Shields, from where the safety aspects of the Run were monitored by the Police, the Event Safety Officer and representatives of the other relevant organisations.
- 5.2 The Event Safety Plan has a well structured communications system through which information can be disseminated from Event Control to the Race Director and through to the relevant Directors (Start, Course and Finish) and their staff. Within each Directorate are a number of subdivisions; including medical, highways and event suppliers, to name a few.
- 5.3 Should an incident have occurred which necessitated a Major Incident response, then the Event Safety Control would have become the multi-agency 'Gold Control'. Arrangements were also agreed for the Event Safety Officer to relinquish command to the Police in the event of a major incident, and to make all event resources available to help manage the situation.

6 EVENT DE-BRIEF

- 6.1 The Safety Advisory Group met after the Run, to consider what worked well, and which aspects could possibly be improved for future events. The meeting was held in accordance with the LRF De-brief protocol, and is part of the continuous process of striving to improve the safety of the Run.
- 6.2 The SAG is always looking to improve the safety aspects of the Run. Although the medical cover for 2008 worked well, the SAG will ask the Medical Sub-group to examine in detail all aspects of the provision, to determine if it can be improved even further for next year's event.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Due to detailed safety arrangements established prior to the event, the Great North Run was once again a great success, and the Event Safety Control was able to handle competently all of the incidents which occurred on the day.

8 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 Members are asked to note this Report and to approve involvement of the EPU in the preparations for the 2009 Great North Run.
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Background Papers

The under-mentioned Background Papers relate to the subject matter of the above report and are held in the EPU office:-

- BUPA Great North Run 2008 – Event Safety Plan.
- Northumbria LRF - Event Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Executive – The Event Safety Guide (HSG195)
- Exercise 'Coyote' - Evaluation Report

LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM EXERCISE & TRAINING GROUP

Nova International
North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust
South Tyneside District Hospital NHS Trust
Northumbria Police
Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Service
Tyne & Wear Emergency Planning Unit
Newcastle City Council
Gateshead Council
South Tyneside Council



EXERCISE 'COYOTE'

12 June 2008

**COMMAND, CONTROL & CO-ORDINATION
of Untoward Events, Emergency Situations and potential, or actual, Major
Incidents,
at Outdoor Events**

EXERCISE 'COYOTE' 2008

AIMS and OBJECTIVES

Aim

To validate the Contingency Arrangements and Emergency Procedures put in place in respect of the management of the Great North Run to be held between Newcastle and South Shields, on the 5th October 2008

Objectives

- to identify any anomalies apparent in those Contingency Arrangements prior to the event and to ensure that the appropriate action is taken post-exercise

- to identify the roles and responsibilities of each of the key agencies involved in the production of the event and to establish relationships between personnel from those involved agencies who may be required to work together in close liaison within the main Event Control facility

- to facilitate and promote the exchange of information, discussion of best practice, and the development of mutual understanding in roles between participants

- to enhance the integrated emergency management working arrangements of all agencies involved in the Event, and to confirm the roles and responsibilities of each individual command level

- to ensure that the contingency arrangements in respect of GNR Event Control are appropriately co-ordinated and to evaluate the specific arrangements for participant accommodation, medical cover, lost children, refreshments, traffic management and public transport

- to ensure the effectiveness of communications between GNR Event Control and the interface with those other agencies involved

- to consider media liaison arrangements in respect of any untoward incidents and/or emergency situations occurring during the Event, and to integrate information so as to provide a unified and co-ordinated response to media demands

- to confirm arrangements made to allow "normal business" to continue during the progress of the Event and to determine when an element is deemed "closed"