



**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
EMERGENCY PLANNING UNIT**

Committee Report

Meeting: CIVIL CONTINGENCIES COMMITTEE: 8th SEPTEMBER 2008

Subject: HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE CENTRE (HAC) WORKSHOP

Report of the Chief Emergency Planning Officer

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform members about the Northumbria Local Authority (LA) Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) Gap Analysis Workshop which took place on Friday, 27th June 2008 at Government Office for the North East (GONE), Citygate, Newcastle.
- 1.2 The HAC Workshop was well attended with 48 delegates taking part. Representatives from a range of involved organisations, including the Health Services (PCT), Voluntary Agencies and other Local Resilience Forums (LRF) from our region were present on the day and took an active role in the syndicate discussions and shared best practice.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A HAC is a 'one stop shop' for information in the aftermath of an emergency. It should provide those affected, either directly or indirectly by the emergency with as much information and help as possible, at a location convenient to the public.
- 2.2 To oversee the development of HAC's in our area, a Northumbria LRF HAC Sub-Group was established in 2006. This later became the Northumbria LRF Humanitarian Assistance Working Group (HAWG) Sub-Group. Group members agreed that a HAC event with the intention of further developing LA HAC Operational Plans for 2008 and beyond. The Tyne & Wear EPU has the responsibility for writing and disseminating HAC Guidance. Version 3.0 is currently in place and remains valid until June 2009.

3.0 GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

- 3.1 HM Government 'Humanitarian Assistance in Emergencies' Guidance is a follow-up to the interim government guidance published in September 2005. The new guidance highlights that the consequences of an emergency can be devastating and far-reaching for all those affected – particularly worried and bereaved families and friends and survivors, but also the emergency services and the wider community. From the outset

the relationship between the people affected and the responding agencies is crucial. To provide an effective humanitarian response, local responders need to understand the needs of their communities at this difficult time, and to draw on joint planning, exercising and training to meet these needs in a joined up, people focused way.

3.0 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF WORKSHOP

3.1 The main aim of the workshop was to scrutinize and review current draft LA HAC Operational Plans, in order to build an effective capability within Northumbria LRF for planning, establishing and operating a HAC in the event of a major emergency, within two or three days of the incident occurring.

3.2 The objectives set out for the HAC Workshop were to:

- Clarify the membership of LA Humanitarian Assistance Centre Management Group (HACMG) Groups;
- Identify areas and services required within the HAC;
- Identify those organisations best placed to provide those services;
- Define broad roles & responsibilities;
- Provide evidence of a seamless multi-agency approach to a whole range of assistance;
- Discuss the strategic media plan;
- Clarify methods of communication, both internally and externally;
- Identify procedures for longer term and ongoing support, and
- Discuss the HAC exit strategy.

4.0 HAC WORKSHOP FORMAT / PROGRAMME

4.1 The format of the HAC Workshop was designed to allow multi-agency syndicate tables to discuss issues relating to Humanitarian Assistance. The event was led by an officer from the Emergency Planning Unit and each syndicate table was facilitated by local authority representatives. The programme was written and designed to focus on three key areas as follows:

- HAC Management;
- HAC Facilities Management, and

- A Package of Care & Support.

- 4.2 Time was allocated within the programme for syndicates to provide feedback following the discussions relating to those bullet points above.
- 4.3 The HAC Workshop programme is attached at the end of this report (see **Annex A**) for information.

5.0 HAC PLANNING CHECKLIST

- 5.1 All delegates were issued with a workshop pack that contained a number of supporting documents. This included a HAC Planning Checklist and was the main document that each syndicate table discussed throughout the workshop sessions. Following workshop evaluation reports, all delegates felt this checklist was a useful planning document and assisted in the identification of any gaps within their draft HAC Operational Plans.

6. OUTCOMES

- 6.1 A full evaluation report following the event was disseminated to all group members and the outcomes of the HAC Workshop are attached at **Annex B**.

7. THE WAY AHEAD

- 7.1 Local Authority HAC planning managers are continuing to develop their HAC Operational Plans with the intension of completing draft Version 1.0 by the end of 2008 as per the LRF HAWG Sub-Group Action Plan for 2008-09.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 Members are requested to:

- a) note the progress being made in this important area of work;
- b) receive further reports as appropriate

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Northumbria LRF Local Authority HAC Event – Evaluation report dated July 2008.

DETAILED HAC WORKSHOP PROGRAMME**ANNEX A**

<u>TASK</u>	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>RESPONSIBLE</u>	<u>TIMINGS (HOURS)</u>
Reporting	Arrival & Registration – GONE / ID Badges / Meet & Greet / Tea – Coffee / Delegate Packs	GONE	0915 – 0930
Welcome Introductions	& Welcome and Introductions – Health & Safety – Aim / Objs / Format	TWEPU	0930 – 0940
HAC DVD	Messages & Lessons from London	TWEPU	0940 – 1000
Workshop Part 1	<i>Management and the Roles & Responsibilities within the HAC</i> – Syndicates to discuss and identify any gaps (rep to provide feedback)	Facilitators / All	1000 – 1045
COMFORT BREAK	BRUNCH	All	1045 – 1105
Workshop Part 2	<i>Facilities Management</i> – Syndicates to discuss and identify any gaps (rep to provide feedback)	Facilitators / All	1105 – 1145
Workshop Part 3	<i>Package of Care & Support</i> – Syndicates to discuss and identify any gaps (rep to provide feedback)	Facilitators / All	1145 – 1220
Part 4	Summary – Questions & Feedback / The Way Ahead – Evaluation	TWEPU / All	1220 – 1230
De-registration Dispersal	/Return ID Badges	All	1230

HAC WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

ANNEX B

ISSUE RAISED	SUGGESTION/RECOMMENDATION	ACTION TAKEN
Police involvement in HAC	Police involvement in incident if not Terrorism (R Ford) – would be lower	Possibly lower if not a criminal incident
HAC (Wider Issues)	Humanitarian Assistance (HA) required even if a smaller type incident	
Pre Planning	Meeting prior to incidents to plan for large scale incident – requires further development	
Management of HAC Name of HAC	Managing of organisations within HAC. Use date / name of incident / media ID / Tag	
Floor Plan	Very good indication of organisations required	
Identification of secondary HAC	ID several sites for HACs (Flood areas considered) as per Pitt Review	Flood assessments
Size of HAC	Start large and scale down (easier than other way)	
Furniture etc	Arrangements (multi-local authority) may be better than individual contracts	N'land EPD has info on a provider
Feeding	Possible use of school dinners	

Language barriers	Possible use of Interpreters	
Reception Areas	Personnel to be well trained and have a good approach – aware of media – area to look attractive as this will be seen as the first impression of the HAC	
Ready to use equipment	The provision of a 'Grab Bag/Box' including any signage will require pre-arranging and preparing	LA's to consider a Rest Centre Box approach
Communications	Plans should consider a balance of ICT / Telephones and face-to-face communications with the clients	
Information	Information to the public is key – pre packaged info & well informed staff	
Assessment	Initial Assessment of needs (self assess to establish main requirements)	
Information	Have the information available but try not to inundate clients with too much info. Allow clients to make the choice.	
Handout of LA HAC Leaflet (Information Leaflet)	Police role on form. Police Family Liaison Coordinator to scrutinise this and make any amendments direct to TWEPU	FLO Coordinator to liaise with TWEPU
Virtual HAC	'Virtual HAC' Setup if incident overseas involving large group within the region	This area requires more development/ consideration
Cultural Links	Working and communicating links with other cultural areas	

Transport	Transportation to and from arrangements. May be required if transport becomes an issue	Think of fuel rationing
Anniversaries	Local authorities to make provision for and consider incident anniversaries / memorials etc	Will require pre-planning and at a cost on the day