

**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**Item No 11**

**MEETING: 17 JULY 2017**

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**SUBJECT: NATIONAL RESILIENCE ASSURANCE – EXERCISE BLACK KITE**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE (THE CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY) THE STRATEGIC FINANCE OFFICER AND THE PERSONNEL ADVISOR TO THE AUTHORITY**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform members of the recent national resilience assurance exercise held in Tyne and Wear between 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2017.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 As part of the Authority's ongoing commitment to supporting the delivery of national resilience capabilities, including urban search and rescue (USAR) and responding to marauding terrorist firearms attacks (MTFA), there is a requirement to undertake regular assurance.
- 2.2 The USAR assurance programme is an agreed three-phase process of gathering evidence and inspection, approved through the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) USAR capability lead, CFO Dan Stephens from Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and the National Resilience Board (NRB). The programme outline follows the reoccurring pattern of year 1 – FRS assessment, year 2 – capability assurance visit and year 3 – participation in national exercise. As part of the year 3 assurance, each USAR FRS has agreed to support the planning and delivery of the relevant national exercise. TWFRS agreed with the USAR national working group to host the event for 2017.

## **3 EXERCISE BLACK KITE**

- 3.1 Exercise Black Kite examined our combined response capabilities by bringing together all the major organisations who would participate in minimising the impact of a major incident. This included assistance from the Fire and Rescue National Resilience capability lead, five USAR teams and Enhanced Logistics Support (ELS), Police Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) teams, Ambulance Hazardous Area Response Teams (HART), the Military - Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and Royal Air Force (RAF), as well as private sector partners. The broad objectives of the exercise were to test arrangements in place across partner agencies responding and recovering from a complex major terrorist incident.

- 3.2 The scenario for the exercise was an attack on an aircraft on approach to landing that then led to the perpetrators fleeing the scene pursued by Police. The aircraft involved subsequently crash-landed into an airport terminal building causing a collapse and a mass casualty incident.
- 3.3 The design and planning of the exercise took over 18-months to complete and was managed by the TWFRS Resilience Team in partnership with a range of category 1 and 2 responders from the military, public and private sectors.
- 3.4 The delivery phase of the exercise was made up of two distinct elements:
- 3.5 **Black Kite 1 - Monday 19/06/2017.**
  - 3.5.1 This phase of the exercise dealt with an attack resulting in building collapse and the need for Police to confront attackers who are using small arms and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). This was closely restricted in terms of observers due to the nature of the events and tactics employed.
- 3.6 **Black Kite 2 and 3 - Wednesday 21/06/2017 until Friday 23/06/2017.**
  - 3.6.1 These phases of the exercise followed on from Black Kite 1, as the location was assessed as free from further terrorist threat allowing rescue (Black kite 2) and recovery (Black Kite 3) phases to commence. These phases combined included 50 hours of continuous operations.
  - 3.6.2 The key aspect of Black Kite 2 was the USAR response involving national mutual aid, including the deployment of four additional USAR teams from Merseyside, West Yorkshire, Lancashire and Lincolnshire FRS to support the TWFRS USAR team and operational response. This phase also tested air support from the Royal Air Force (RAF) and Great North Air Ambulance (GNAAS) in the form of transportation utilising rotary wing aircraft.
- 3.7 The whole exercise required TWFRS to invoke the recently revised National Co-ordination Advisory Framework (NCAF) arrangements and involve the provision of a multi-agency strategic holding area (MASHA) supported by an enhanced logistics support (ELS) capability. NEAS also stood-up national mutual aid by bringing in support from additional HART to support their own capability.
- 3.8 Importantly, these phases tested mass casualty and mass fatality planning including disaster victim identification (DVI) protocols. They included the recovery of evidence and involvement of the Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB) and Joint Aircraft Recovery and Transportation Squadron (JARTS). All of which had not be undertaken simultaneously in previous exercises.
- 3.9 The Resilience Direct portal was used to provide information and support throughout, with live updates going through local command levels to a notional Cabinet Office Briefing Room (COBR).

- 3.10 Hot debrief was undertaken with each participant and formal inter-agency debriefs are underway. Initial feedback has been positive and the exercise achieved the key objectives well. Members will be provided with further information regarding the exercise feedback when the formal aspects are complete.

#### **4 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 A risk assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the risk to the Authority has been minimised as far as practicable. The assessment has considered an appropriate balance between risk and control, the realisation of efficiencies, the most appropriate use of limited resources and a comprehensive evaluation of the benefits. The risk to the authority has been assessed as low utilising the standard risk matrix based on control measures being in place.

#### **5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The financial implications of this exercise were met from existing grants and budgets to provide the USAR capability.

#### **6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no equality and fairness implications in respect of this report.

#### **7 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

#### **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The Authority is recommended to:
- a) Note the contents of this report for information;
  - b) Receive further reports as appropriate.

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#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The under mentioned Background Papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

National Resilience Urban Search and Rescue – Concept of Operations, version 2.1

National Co-ordination and Advisory Framework – March 2017

