



Structured Debrief Report

Debrief commissioned by:	Merseyside Resilience Forum (Chair of Hazards & Risks Sub Group)
Event:	Fire at: REMONDIS UK, Waste Transfer Station, Carr Lane, Prescot, L34 1 QL
Date of Event:	0600 hours on Sunday 4 th December 2017
Date of Debrief:	Friday 24 th February 2017
Debrief Location:	Liverpool Suite of Fire HQ, Bridle Road, Bootle
Debrief Team:	Paul Speers – MRF Secretariat
Debrief Participants:	See Appendix A
<p>Debrief Summary: All persons in attendance were informed of the ethics and purpose of the debrief process.</p> <p>The report focuses on areas for improvement and perceptions of what went well; it concludes with a series of recommendations to assist the MRF to improve the planning and management of similar future events. The report does not include or comment upon matters identified in any other debriefs or post-incident reports that may have taken place.</p>	

ITEM	IDENTIFIED BY	REC. No.	Comments
AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT			
Availability of water			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor/low pressure at nearest main Nearest main was a gravity feed and water pressure could not be increased Unusually, next main was also gravity fed 	Fire	1	Main reason why fire pumps deployed was increased from 4 to 12 was to maintain supply of water
Lack of Information / information management			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial contact received in a timely fashion but maintaining situational awareness was initially poor. Not declaring a Major Incident and not using ResilienceDirect (RD) did not help situation Initial information did not accurately reflect the scale of the incident and potential community impacts Ability to get a common picture across responding agencies very limited causing frustration (also refer to failure to declare Major Incident) Lack of frequent updates impacted on our ability to respond to questions being posed to us by the media and the public on social media (Council not lead agency reliant on other agencies – police/fire) 	Knowsley Council	2	This was during the ‘Golden Hour’ it improved later in the response phase when Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) was arranged at Knowsley Council’s request This improved coordination and communication between agencies to ensure all responders had shared situational awareness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial information flow and getting timely updates – messages being left and no reply received 	EA		As above and improved on arrival at the scene

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT			
Lack of Information / information management			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial information flow/updates 	Liverpool		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delay in establishing what was on the site: waste quantities, types of hazards due to sites electronic tracking system being down Initial estimates given by site on first day but these could only be confirmed as fire were working through the site and later by joint working with the site operator 	EA		
Failure to declare a Major Incident (MI)			
Incident should have been declared a MI, if it was the majority of the negative comments raised may not have transpired and when they did informed discussions would have been made after explanations had been given	Knowsley Council	3	Dispute over whether or not an incident is a MI has happened on a couple of occasions. It is very subjective and open to different in interpretation. As previously mentioned a TCG should have been established early in the incident to improve coordination and communication between agencies to ensure all responder had shared situational awareness
Supported this view – once declared formalisation of command and control improves response, co-ordination and situational awareness	NHS		
As above	PHE		
As above	Liverpool City Council		
Air Quality Cell			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requested but not activated Health advice required 	Knowsley/ Fire/NHS	4	EA informed the meeting that the activation criteria was not met. This was disputed by Knowsley Council. EA consulted PHE and they both agreed that they were unable to monitor the plume and the generic advice applied (go in door, lock windows/doors and tune in)

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT			
Warning & Informing			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicting public information given • Access to information in a timely manner 	Knowsley / Fire / Police / EA	5	Comments to the media from local Council elected member* (dangers around incident) conflicted with advice given by other MRF partners. This could have resulted in unnecessary alarming of the public and mistrust of the responding agencies messages. It also potentially led to the increased calls received from concerned members of the public (to Fire and EA) which may have been avoided.
Initial Notification			
NWAS not informed of incident – they cascade to NHS & PHE	NHS / NHS	6	Link to Ref No: 2 & 3 above, slowed situational awareness and resulted in time being spent obtaining information.

“The views of the elected member in question were sought to try and understand how this came about but no response was received.

AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

Response at Site

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person at site had good level of knowledge and a generic plan of what was on site (e.g. storage list, fuel radiation sources), this facilitated effective deployment of resources and remove radiation source and protect high risk areas. UU in attendance to explain main (gravity fed) and provide advice Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) worked well with relevant response partners, regular updates from the police and local authority. All partners kept fully informed 	Fire		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location of site easy to manage with regard to road closures JESIP worked well 	Police		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interagency (JESIP) worked well at the site despite TCG not being called 	EA		

Integrated Emergency Management

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination once TCG established and excellent working relationships Partnership working managing the incident Good support from partners Good information sharing to establish situational awareness/common operating picture 	Knowsley		Internally – a lot of support offered by colleagues/elected members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported the above observations 	EA		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular updates from police on current position Press updates assisted 	NHS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with Knowsley Council / EA to assess risks worked very well Being able to dial into TCG due to other work commitments was appreciated 	HSE		

AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE			
Integrated Emergency Management (Cont)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fact that all responding agencies were represented by experienced staff with track records of multi-agency working, an understanding of the JESIP principles and MRF structures and language made the response much more effective. 	All Agencies		
Warning & Informing the public			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public access to frequently asked questions (FAQs) via websites worked really well and helped Partnership working managing the media 	Knowsley		
FAQs very useful and helpful	HSE		
As above	EA		

No.	RECOMMENDATIONS - Multiagency	OWNER	COMMENTS
1	There needs to be a full audit of emergency water supply across the MRF region, covering quantity and access	Fire lead and relevant partners – LAs and UU	Hazards & Risks Sub Group
1	Liaison with UU to look at the two specific mains to see if anything can be done to alleviate this problem	Fire / UU	Link to 1 above but specific to this incident
1	Offsite/accident plan with maximum quantities of waste that can be stored to be accessible and readily available (including hard copies). To be included as a condition of the permits that EA issue to Waste Treatment Centres	EA	
1	Incidents at locations of identified poor water supply – early deployment of High Volume Pump	Fire	Personal Development / Review SOPs
2	Resilience Direct Protocol to be agreed – with thresholds that trigger RD messages/telephone conferences. RD will then be regularly updated to brief partners and maintain situational awareness	Capabilities Sub Group	
2	Lack of Information/Information Management. Programme of work for 2017/18 (CN1) is for a Task & Finish Group to look at developing a Multi-Agency Information Cell (MAIC) to improve information management.	Capabilities Sub Group	
3	Major Incident (MI) – Merseyside Emergency Response Manual (MERM) to include process chart and a protocol to cater for a ‘multi-agency incident’ that may fall short of a MI. This needs to include as a minimum, setting up a telephone conference intended to discuss command and control, communication and escalation if required (e.g. declaration of MI). This needs to be linked to use of Resilience Direct (RD) messages (heads up & situational awareness).	Capabilities Sub Group	MERM to be updated
4	Air Quality Cell – Activation protocols to be reviewed	EA	Feed back to MRF at BMG
5	At each incident/event a lead for Communications to be identified and encouraged to develop a FAQs document, this will be placed on websites as a way of reducing calls to agencies at key times and keeping the public informed.	W & I Sub Group	W & I Guidance (include if not already there)

No.	RECOMMENDATIONS - Multiagency	OWNER	COMMENTS
5	Awareness raising event to be delivered to elected members from each Borough across the MRF. To explain their role in an emergency and to include W & I Guidance, particularly around any messages to the public or media and where to obtain information from, to ensure consistent, accurate messages are put out.	TEV Sub Group	
6	Initial notification – actions at 3 should address this issue	Capabilities Sub Group	MERM to be updated

Appendix A – Participants

Agency	Name			
Fire	Dean Bolton	Mark Thomas		
Police	Rob Mucahey			
Knowsley Council*	Brian Toolan	Aimee Conroy	Ian Gaskell	Karen Christie
Environment Agency	Peter Johnson	Mark Easedale	Cathy Jack	Karen Henson
NHS England	Jo Richardson			
NWAS	Jon Butler			
Public Health England	Sue Silvester			
Liverpool City Council	Paul Byrne			
Liverpool Community Health	Neil Furness			
Health & Safety Executive	Joanne Eccles			

*The local ward councillors for the Remondis site were contacted by email to seek their views on the multi-agency response to the fire but no responses were received.