



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

FCO CRISIS PROJECT: IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

The Crisis Project was established in order to coordinate the FCO's delivery of the recommendations contained in the 2011 Review of Consular Evacuation Procedures, together with related recommendations resulting from in-house reviews and lessons learned exercises.

WORKSTREAM1: NETWORK DEVELOPMENT		
	ACTION	PROGRESS
1	Create London Crisis Response Teams	77 London Crisis Response Team (LCRT) volunteers trained (target was 60). Roster initiated since September 2011. LCRT teams deployed on Bangkok floods crisis (October), Tehran Embassy crisis (November), Costa Concordia sinking (January).
2	Expand and upskill Rapid Deployment Team network and maintain regional resilience	More rigorous Rapid Deployment Team (RDT) selection procedure introduced. RDT cadre expanded by 48. Americas RDT expanded to cover South America. Recruitment for new Middle East & South Asia RDT underway – to be operational from April 2012. Programme of regular joint exercises and events initiated between RDT and MOD's Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Teams.
3	Develop concept of Crisis Regional Advisers	Expanded Crisis Management Department is delivering regional coverage for Posts, targeted at high-risk Posts, and linked in to Consular Regional Directors and their teams.
4	Increased training and exercising capability	Training and Exercising Team expanded from 1 to 4. New Crisis Manager Training (targeted at Deputy Heads of Mission) designed and rolled out. 10 semi-live exercises conducted at overseas Posts. 12 planned for 2012/13 aligned to risk profile of Posts as part of comprehensive training and exercising strategy. FCO Board training on Gold Silver Bronze system scheduled for March.
5	Revise and increase staffing structure in CMD	New CMD structure introduced. Team expanded from 16 to 28. Increased resource is delivering increased levels of crisis monitoring and planning,

		as well as training/exercising throughout the network.
6	Devise FCO plan for shift in staff resources during a crisis	Plan agreed with HRD. This sets out the steps to be taken to deliver a quick reallocation and reprioritisation of staff resource in the event of a major crisis/series of crises, in addition to the immediate LCRT capacity.

WORKSTREAM 2: CRISIS SYSTEMS

7	Adopt integrated crisis command structure using Gold/Silver/Bronze (GSB) command framework	GSB crisis response organograms, roles and responsibilities designed. Implemented during Bangkok floods crisis, Iran Embassy crisis and Costa Concordia sinking. Need for further testing at senior management level (Board training scheduled for 6 March).
8	Posts to have a single Post Contingency Plan including greater assessment of Consular risk.	New user-friendly Crisis Management Plan designed, bringing together all aspects of Posts' crisis planning. Soft launch of new template in December 2011. Pilot and roll out in 2012. CMD risk project has produced tools for assessing crisis risk to inform priorities over resourcing and training/exercising.
9	Improved guidance for crisis centre staff	Updated Crisis Centre guidance, induction packs etc developed. Crisis Community distribution list established to ensure all key network staff are kept informed of crisis-related developments. Feedback from LCRT teams is being incorporated into further improvements to guidance.
10	Improved crisis guidance on fconet	Guidance to FCO staff on crisis work comprehensively reviewed, simplified and updated. Soft launch took place in December 2011. Network launch scheduled for February 2012, in tandem with roll-out of new Crisis Management Plan.
11	Improved information management during crisis response	Ongoing. Use of Microsoft Sharepoint embedded in crisis centre operating practices to facilitate collaborative working and better information management. Real-time technical support arrangements with ITD put in place. CMD pursuing further opportunities presented by Sharepoint/Huddle/National Resilience Extranet and continuing to refine Information Management procedures in a crisis, based on lessons learned.
12	Upgrade crisis centre and equipment	Crisis centre refurbishment/expansion – including co-location with Global Response Centre – to

		start in February. Increased booster capacity for blackberries.
WORKSTREAM 3: CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION		
13	Publish detailed crisis response guide	Chapter on crisis assistance included in revision of <i>Support for British Nationals Abroad</i> published on 3 October 2011.
14	Design successor to LOCATE which is fit for purpose in crisis	<p>Crisis IT project established to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - effective registration service - database covering BNs requiring support in a crisis (eg evacuation) - better collaboration with crisis stakeholders, eg other government departments - better remote access to information by staff in the field. <p>Pilots of registration by SMS underway. Trials to begin in January of upgraded LOCATE software which provides for crisis database based on simpler information input by customers.</p>
15	Develop menu of customer communication tools for use in crisis	+44 SMS texting service set up, currently just through Vodafone, allowing quick communication with BNs overseas in pre-crisis and crisis situations. Guidance on Crisis communications for Posts (including use of social media) to be rolled out as part of the Guidance refresh.
16	Adapt Travel Advice framework to facilitate pre-crisis drawdown of BNs in-country	Menu of appropriate wording drawn up and agreed with Travel Advice team. Implemented in relation to ongoing Syria crisis.
17	Implement clear call handling system	Call handling escalation framework drawn up, setting out triggers for handling by Post/Global Response Centre/Emergency Response (call-handling) Teams as well as outsourcing to private sector call centres according to nature of crisis. Implemented during Bangkok floods and Costa Concordia crises. Further logistical improvements to be built in to introduction of ECHO telephony system.
18	Introduce system for communicating with MPs/Parliament during crisis	Dedicated parliamentary cell within crisis centre incorporated into design of LCRT. In the event of a crisis likely to attract significant Parliamentary interest, contact numbers to be communicated via PRD, FCO. Working with Parliament included in training of LCRT staff.

WORKSTREAM 4: EVACUATIONS

19	Agree principles on redundancies (esp charter flights)	Chartering guidance for Crisis Centre staff produced including explanation of the options and limitations on redundancies (back up aircraft, double crews etc).
20	Agree clear policy on charging during evacuations	Ministers have approved guidelines on recovery of costs of services provided in crisis situations. Principle of fast-track system agreed to provide for quick real time decisions if there is a case for waiving/reducing charges.
21	Develop relationships with aviation brokers and MOD charter specialists	Closer working relationships - with regular visits and exchanges - established with aviation brokers. Close relationship established with MOD charter specialists.
22	FCO to tender for Framework Agreement for global 24/7 land and maritime chartering .	Maritime charter arrangements can be made through MOD (DSCOM), who have ready access and established relationships with maritime brokers. Global land chartering agreement not possible (no global providers available), so will continue to be led by Posts with CMD support. Posts to include contingency work on local land chartering in their Crisis Management Plans.
23	Agree Service Level Agreement with MOD	Draft Agreement drawn up and agreed at working level. Scheduled for signature in early 2012. Closer working level co-operation established with JFHQ officer positioned in CMD.
24	Update FCO/ MOD guidance to include role of MOD's Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations Coordination Centre (NEOCC)	Terms of Reference of NEOCCs have been made available to all crisis centre staff. Easy to use guide (for fconet) in preparation. Role of NEOCC highlighted in crisis training for FCO staff.
25	Agree evacuation lead in different countries.	Rolled into ongoing discussions with EU partners on 'lead state' responsibility in third countries.
26	Agree guidelines on funding of crises overseas .	Ongoing. Cabinet Office taking forward work on the cross-HMG position on longer-term issues arising from evacuations, including roles and responsibilities of key Departments in a crisis. With HMT agreement, FCO has the use of the Emergency Disaster Reserve (EDR) if costs of crisis handling exceed £150,000.
27	Develop guidance on concluding evacuation operations , including post-evacuation arrangements	Falls under the Cabinet Office work (see action 26).
28	Agree policy on responsibility for Commonwealth nationals in an	Agreed principles established for handling of non-British eligible persons in an evacuation, together

	evacuation	with modernisation of crisis cooperation with Commonwealth.
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CMD – Crisis Management Department, FCO

RDT – Rapid Deployment Team

ERT – Emergency Response Team (FCO call-handler volunteers)

OLRT – Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team (MOD)

LCRT – London Crisis Response Team

NEO – Non-combatant Evacuation Operation

SLA – Service Level Agreement

GSB - Gold Silver/Bronze command and control system