

Olympic and Paralympics 2012 update

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This report outlines the support being provided to FRAs and councils to assist them in their preparations for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The Olympic Torch Relay commences on 19 May and ends in London on 27 July, with the games taking place from 27 July to 12 August. The Paralympic Torch relay takes place from 24 to 29 August with the Games commencing on 29 August and ending on 9 September.

Recommendation

Members are invited to note the contents of the report.

Action

As directed by members.

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Olympics and Paralympics 2012 update

Background

1. The summer of 2012 presents an unprecedented challenge for public services in the UK. The particular challenge for FRAs and local authorities is to ensure that they can still deliver a safe events programme alongside their statutory responsibilities under legislation such as the Civil Contingencies Act (2004).

The Olympic Safety and Security Programme

2. The scale, complexity and duration of events in 2012 and the consequences of the crowds and attention which they generate is significantly different to the usual 'context' in which public services are delivered.
3. The need to deliver Games is overseen by the Olympic Safety and Security Programme, coordinated by the Olympic Security Directorate (OSD). The OSD forms part of the Home Office's Office for Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT), in which local government is a key stakeholder.
4. The safety and security work is fully integrated with that of City and UK-wide Operations which are working to deliver the routine (as opposed to crisis) elements of planning as well as that of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG).

Planning

5. The approach adopted by government and responders to manage potential risks is based on existing mechanisms for resilience planning. As such, the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) has been put at the heart of planning. Two broad types of planning are being undertaken in host areas to deliver this aim: site-specific planning, and generic capabilities.
6. Site-specific plans are only developed when a location is judged to be of particular import, complexity or vulnerability. The Olympic Safety and Security Programme is also supporting the national representation of local government during the Games, including COBR and the Olympic Coordination Group (OCG).

The National Local Authority Olympic Resilience Programme

7. In order to support the emergency planning activities of all councils, the National Local Authority Olympic Resilience Programme has been established.

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8. The Programme is funded by the Home Office¹, backed by the LGA and London Councils and hosted by the London Fire Brigade. The Programme Team work to support the Lead Chief Executive for Olympic Resilience and Security, Mary Ney (Chief Executive, LB Greenwich) to deliver the Programme, the aim of which is:
 - 8.1 *To support, enable and inform the work of local authorities in discharging their statutory and regulatory responsibilities during the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, promoting a coordinated and consistent national approach.*
9. The governance of the Programme includes Members from both the LGA and London Councils through a Members' Steering Group, and Chief Executives from host-areas through a Programme Board. Engagement with practitioners is driven by a Co-ordination Group with representation from all host areas. The LGA is represented on the Members' Steering Group by Cllr Chris White and Cllr Stephen Castle.
10. Current priorities include active participation in four large national exercises, delivering a national conference for all hosting authorities and supporting local government in ensuring plans and procedures are in good order.

The Torch Relay

11. The Olympic Torch Relay will start at Land's End on 19 May 2012 on a 70 day journey towards the Olympic Stadium in London on 27 July 2012. It is likely to be the biggest operational issue facing a large number of FRAs and councils in England and Wales.
12. Paralympic flame lighting events are to be held on consecutive days in each of the UK's capital cities, starting with London on 24 August 2012. The four flames will unite at a special ceremony in Stoke Mandeville, home of the Paralympic movement, on 28 August. The relay will then begin its 24-hour journey to the opening ceremony of the Paralympic Games on 29 August.
13. In addition to the lighting events there will be a series of evening celebrations called Flame Festivals. Every English region will have the opportunity to hold its own flame festival and plans for this will be communicated shortly.
14. In respect of supporting the Olympic and Paralympics Torch Relays, FRAs will be managing this as a 'business as usual' event. However, given the potential interoperability issues associated with the Torch Relay it has been agreed that any multi-agency planning requirements will be coordinated and managed

¹ Funding consists of salary costs for two officers, a Programme and Deputy Programme Manager

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through the respective Local Resilience partnership forums and/or existing strategic coordination group (SCG) structures.

Current Position of Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) Planning

15. The biggest impact of the Games will be felt in and around competition venues and across central London, where Games competitions and planned parallel events will affect the surrounding areas. There are 37 competition venues across the country, of which 27 are in London. Significant Games activity is also taking place in Weymouth and Portland, Dorset; Eton Dorney, Buckinghamshire; Broxbourne, Hertfordshire and Hadleigh Farm, Essex. The Football competition is taking place at stadia in Cardiff, Coventry, Glasgow, Manchester and Newcastle, as well as London.
16. The principle approach adopted by the UK FRAs in planning for the Olympics has been to use the majority of core business activities and capabilities that already exist within the fire sector.
17. All of the FRAs hosting Olympic or Paralympics venues are carrying out specific planning for the games, this involves for example dedicated operational plans, officers being located into games specific command posts, some resources being deployed to games venues, Olympic specific exercises, Olympic specific training, the generation of specific venue operational plans for Olympic and Paralympic venues, an enhanced fire safety enforcement regime and coordinated communications messages.
18. All FRAs directly affected by the Olympics have been involved in planning for the Games over several years with the London Fire Brigade (LFB) undertaking a national co-ordinating role for the UK fire and rescue service. This approach has provided both continuity and consistency across the UK fire and rescue service and has directly supported the interoperability requirements of the partner agencies.
19. In order to independently verify the FRAs planning assumptions and operational preparedness for the Games, a specific Olympic assurance process has been created. This assurance process has been developed by the LFB and is being applied and managed by the office of the Chief Fire Rescue Advisor (CFRA). The process is providing assurance on 3-levels; local, regional intra-operability and national interoperability.
20. It is intended that the FRSs (nationally) will be in a position to provide the final assurance to central Government at the beginning of May. This assurance will be provided by the office of the CFRA.