

## **National Resilience**

### **Purpose of report**

As background for the presentation and discussion.

### **Summary**

We will be joined for this discussion by Jennifer Cole, Senior Research Fellow, Resilience and Emergency Management at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI).

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the paper as background information to the presentation.

### **Action**

Officers to progress as appropriate.

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### **Introduction**

1. Following her presentation at the LGA's Annual Fire Conference, Jennifer Cole, Senior Research Fellow, Resilience and Emergency Management at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) will attend the meeting to discuss emerging threats, in particular from climate change and other natural hazards, on national resilience. A biography is attached at **Appendix A**.

### **RUSI**

2. RUSI is an independent think tank engaged in defence and security research. Founded in 1831 by the Duke of Wellington, RUSI has nearly two centuries of experience in undertaking research, discussion and reflection on defence and security matters. RUSI's patron is Her Majesty the Queen, and their President is His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent KG, GCMG, GCVO.
3. Further information on RUSI can be found on their website: [www.rusi.org](http://www.rusi.org)

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4. At the LGA's Annual Fire Conference in March, Jennifer outlined how the UK's security environment has changed over the last fifty years, and the importance of adapting security policies to deal with new threats. More recently, both natural and manmade events – from flooding to fuel strikes – exposed gaps in the UK's ability to absorb unexpected shocks and highlighted the need for a highly co-ordinated response at both national and local levels. As time has gone on, the traditional response to terrorist incidents, led by the Home Office and the police, has moved to a broader, more modern interpretation of what might be considered an emergency. As a result, there is now wide acceptance that natural disasters such as swine flu, foot and mouth, and extreme weather can be as damaging to communities as terrorist incidents and this has shaped both the national and local response to emergencies, with a new focus on individuals working at the local level in a wide variety of organisations being absolutely critical to building resilience and to restoring business as usual when incidents do happen.
5. In her presentation to the conference (available on the LGA's website: [www.local.gov.uk/past-event-presentations/-/journal\\_content/56/10180/6025588/ARTICLE](http://www.local.gov.uk/past-event-presentations/-/journal_content/56/10180/6025588/ARTICLE)) and published articles, Jennifer highlights the importance of this shift in the nature of the threat, recognised through the creation of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which set up the system of Category 1 and Category 2 responders working through a Local Resilience Forum. Jennifer recognises the need to consider and keep threats in context, and suggests that this architecture is a good foundation in which to adapt to future challenges.

6. Jennifer will explore what this changing risk profile means for fire and rescue services in their assessment and management of both national and local resilience.

## **Appendix A**

### **Biography: Jennifer Cole**

1. Jennifer Cole is a Senior Research Fellow at RUSI, working within the National Security and Resilience Department. Since joining RUSI in January 2007, Jennifer's research interests have focused on the UK's emergency preparedness and response capabilities.
2. Jennifer's particular interests and areas of expertise include CBRN(E), flood management, cyber security, resilient communications and the role of training and exercising in resilience. She regularly appears as a national security expert on TV and radio, and has presented at conferences in the UK, Israel and India on topics ranging from interoperability to Medical Responses to Terrorism. She is the author or co-author of a number of reports and academic papers, including *Interoperability in a Crisis 2: Human Factors and Organisational Processes* (RUSI, 2009), *Combined Effect: A New Approach to Resilience* (RUSI/Serco, 2010), *Anatomy of a Terrorist Attack: What the Coroner's Inquests Revealed About the London Bombings* (RUSI, 2011) and *Chemical, Biological and Radiological Materials: An Analysis of Security Risks and Terrorist Threats to India* (RUSI/ORF, 2012).
3. She has a degree in Biological Anthropology from Cambridge University, is a Visiting Fellow at Symbiosis School of Biomedical Sciences, Symbiosis International University, in India, and is currently undertaking a PhD in Digital Epidemiology at Royal Holloway, University of London Computer Science Department.