# Multi-agency interoperability at major sporting and sailing

events

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# Abstract

As part of the 2012 Olympic Games, the sailing events were delivered some distance from the main games in Weymouth. A complex Risk Assessment identified a specific requirement for capability in responding to Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack (MTFA) type incidents. These incidents are extremely dangerous as they involve individuals roaming with firearms, a difficult risk to contain and eliminate in large crowded areas. This response needed to be multi-agency in delivery, incorporating Police, Military, Fire and Ambulance Services. As a rural area on the south coast of England, far from the built-up capital, and other cities considered to be potential targets, Dorset Fire and Rescue Service had no capability in this area. However West Midlands Fire Service were able to provide the required planning, protocols and capabilities on their behalf. Applying the principles of JESIP (Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Program) and JOPS (Joint Operation Planning System), a response capability was developed in order to mitigate this risk.

This case study will focus specifically upon the Fire Service approach, whilst also identifying each individual agency's response powers, policy, interoperability and communications arrangements.

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## Learning objectives:

- To understand the concepts of interoperability, multi-agency response and collaborative planning in relation to mega-events
- To understand regional variations in the capabilities of a country and how this can be mitigated through dissemination of expertise
- To understand the importance of risk assessment and planning for "megaevents"
- To understand the necessity of multi-agency response in relation to MTFA threats at major and mega-events
- To understand the importance of underlying frameworks such as JOPS & JESIP when developing and implementing response systems

# Introduction

After the announcement in 2005 that London would host the 2012 Olympic Games, the UK government entered a process of unprecedented emergency response planning. The inevitable surge in visiting spectators, the safety of athletes, and the heightened risk associated with mass gatherings generated a necessity for multi-agency response plans that could work seamlessly during a crisis. Although much of the focus for resources and planning of the 2012 London Games honed in on London as the centre of the games, roughly 33% of all Olympic spectators were located at sites outside of the capital.<sup>1</sup> This case study explores the challenges and successes of an Olympic Venue away from the central venues of the 2012 Olympic Games, looking to the satellite venue of Weymouth as an example. It also explores

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>British Transport Police, *The Line*, November 2012 <u>https://www.btp.police.uk/pdf/The\_Line\_November.pdf</u>

the impact of mega-events on such venues, as it has been established that cohesion with the local population and agencies is vital for a successful event.<sup>2</sup> This will be particularly relevant for the authorities in Qatar in their planning for the 2022 FIFA World Cup, and their future ability to respond to threats within mega-event settings, and wider emergency response system practice.

## Geography

Whilst the majority of events took place in London, the sailing events were to be held in Weymouth, Dorset. Previously, Weymouth had only hosted small-scale sailing events, in which almost all competitors were local, or from England. The Olympics represented a drastic growth in the scale of events held in the region, and the demands of planning reflected challenges that were new to the area.<sup>3</sup> Those tasked with planning the security of the Weymouth events often felt *'all the focus was on London'* and yet the expectations of planning were as intricate as the events within the capital.<sup>4</sup> Successful planning requires key stakeholders from the venue region, collaborating with policy-makers to ensure that they are not overlooked, and that there should be a 'shared understanding' of social factors surrounding an event.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Brent W. Ritchie, Richard Shipway & Bethany Cleeve (2009) Resident Perceptions of Mega-Sporting Events: A Non-Host City Perspective of the 2012 London Olympic Games, Journal of Sport & Tourism, 14:2-3, 143-167, DOI: 10.1080/14775080902965108

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Area Commander for Operations, West Midlands Fire Service, Interviewed 22/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Head of Education, Silver Commander for London Olympic Games 2012, *National Ambulance Service*, Interviewed 28/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Martin Wallstam, Dimitri Ioannides & Robert Pettersson (2018) Evaluating the social impacts of events: in search of unified indicators for effective policymaking, Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events, DOI: 10.1080/19407963.2018.1515214

Weymouth is located approximately 140 miles from the capital city of London, on the south coast of England. It lies 80 miles from the coast of France, and around 85 miles from the Channel Islands. Weymouth had a population of 65,167 according to the 2011 Census, making it the largest town in the Dorset region.<sup>6</sup> See Figure 1 for an outline of the geography of Weymouth.



Location of Weymouth Source: Google Maps

Whilst the emergency responders of London were accustomed to large-scale events and preparedness in terms of the threat of terrorism, Dorset was by no means as prepared or equipped for such instances. These 'satellite venues', where events take place away from the centre of the Games require equal preparation, but often have less access to finance, resources or relevant expertise.<sup>7</sup> It was also considered that the publicity surrounding the security measures in London may make

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> https://apps.geowessex.com/insights/AreaProfiles/PreUnitaryAuthority/weymouth-and-portland
 <sup>7</sup>D. Sadd, *The Impacts of Mega-Events held at Satellite Venues- Case study of Weymouth & Portland*, Dissertation Material, Supervised by Prof. John Fletcher, September 2004
 http://eprints.bournemouth.ac.uk/14445/ ACCESSED 27/4/2020

Weymouth a more attractive target for terrorists that may feel it was less protected and therefore more vulnerable.<sup>8</sup>

There was a need for other regional response agencies to contribute resources and training for the Dorset organisations. A government directive (an instruction and requirement set out by UK governing bodies) directed this process, as the recognition of a need for specialist preparation was apparent during the planning phase. The agencies that helped fill the gap between capability and required response collaborated to create a multi-agency provision on interoperable platforms. The focus of such planning is largely preventative, and this is largely agreed to be the best basis by which to ensure safety and mitigate the risk of terrorist attacks.<sup>9</sup>

### **Olympic sailing events**

Sailing events have been scheduled during the modern Olympic Games since their first iteration in 1896; however due to weather conditions, they did not actually take place until the 1900 Olympic Games.<sup>10</sup> Sailing events usually take place away from the primary venues, in more rural or low-profile regions of the host country.<sup>11</sup> In

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> BBC NEWS, 'Mumbai attack' is worst-case scenario at Olympic sailing events, June 2012 <u>https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-dorset-18410625</u> ACCESSED 27/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Murray Turoff & Starr Hiltz & Víctor Bañuls & Gerd Van Den Eede, (2013). Multiple Perspectives on Planning for Emergencies: An Introduction to the Special Issue on Planning and Foresight for Emergency Preparedness and Management. Technological Forecasting and Social Change. 80. 1647-1656. 10.1016/j.techfore.2013.07.014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> The Olympic Studies Centre,

<sup>&</sup>lt;u>https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/Factsheets-Reference-Documents/Games/OG/History-of-sports/Reference-document-Sailing-History-at-the-OG.pdf</u>, International Olympic Committee, P2. ACCESSED 29/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> D.Sadd, *The Impacts of Mega-Events held at Satellite Venues- Case study of Weymouth & Portland,* Dissertation Material, Supervised by Prof. John Fletcher, September 2004

the case of the 2012 London Olympics bid the sailing events were largely seen, if successful, as an opportunity for redevelopment and growth for Weymouth.<sup>12</sup> As part of the wider Olympic Games, sailing events meet all criteria outlined for a 'megaevent' in academic writing.<sup>13</sup> Tied to the status of being a mega-event is the fact that they carry a greater expectancy of counter-terrorism capability than ever, with global scrutiny on the ability of the host country to protect their spectators.<sup>14</sup>

Sailing events, despite their reduced profile within the Games, require the same stringent planning and preparedness, especially regarding safety and security. The expectations of emergency response teams are equal to those at primary venues, and indeed come with added unique complexities and challenges. In addition to ensuring the safety and security of spectators on land, there must also be intricate planning and response systems in place for the water-based elements of the event. This added layer of requirement in Weymouth was met by a military presence in the water, alongside police, ambulance and fire capabilities to respond to water-based threats or incidents.<sup>15</sup> Not only was the use of military personnel necessary for logistical reasons of manpower and scale of area to cover, but they could also offer water-based expertise that was not otherwise available in the local response agencies.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Martin Müller (2015) What makes an event a mega-event? Definitions and sizes, Leisure Studies, 34:6, 627-642, DOI: 10.1080/02614367.2014.993333

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup>Richard Giulianotti & Francisco Klauser, *Sport mega-events and 'terrorism': A critical Analysis,* International Review for the Sociology of Sport, June 47, issue 3, 307-323, 2012

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> BBC NEWS, London 2012: Security Measures, <u>https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-17896225</u>, April 2012 ACCESSED 29/4/2020

The security planning undertaken for the London 2012 Olympic Games was on an unprecedented scale for the UK.<sup>16</sup> For Weymouth, existing systems of preparedness were not only disseminated by regional forces familiar with such practice, but specifically adapted and tailored to meet the dual security requirements of sailing events (land and water). Mass gatherings inherently carry a greater risk to human life, and as such need specific planning and preparedness, which in this instance went beyond the usual practice of local agencies.<sup>17</sup>

### Interoperability and multi-agency response

Interoperability is defined by JESIP (Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Program) as 'the extent to which organisations can work together coherently as a *matter of routine*'.<sup>18</sup> In simple terms it recognises the necessity for emergency response agencies to be able to work together in the event of an emergency, and ensure a seamless crisis management protocol whereby all agencies are able to carry out their function to the best of their ability. Core values of interoperability focus on clear communication between agencies, and the strategies used to 'minimise misunderstandings' between them when responding to an incident.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Dr Tobias Feakin, RUSI, *UK Terrorism Analysis*, <u>https://rusi.org/sites/default/files/ukta1.pdf</u> p.1, February 2012, ACCESSED 29/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> A Koski, A Kouvonen, H Sumanen. Preparedness for Mass Gatherings: Factors to Consider According to the Rescue Authorities. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2020;17(4):1361. Published 2020 Feb 20. doi:10.3390/ijerph17041361

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> JESIP, Edition 2, July 2016 <u>https://www.jesip.org.uk/uploads/resources/JESIP-Joint-Doctrine.pdf P.2</u> ACCESSED 29/4/20

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Victor A. Bañuls, Murray Turoff, Starr Roxanne Hiltz, Collaborative scenario modeling in emergency management through cross-impact, Technological Forecasting and Social Change, Volume 80, Issue 9,2013, Pages 1756-1774, ISSN 0040-1625, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2012.11.007.

Within MENA (Middle East & North Africa), interoperability has come to the fore of emergency planning. QESIP (Qatari Emergency Services Interoperability Principles) has recently become embedded into multi-agency response planning. This is an ongoing process of development and focus for the MENA region and will benefit its future delivery and event operations.

Interoperability was the default emergency response protocol in the UK before the Olympics, and has been an almost natural process since the formation of emergency service agencies.<sup>20</sup> JESIP, formed in 2012, came into being with the aim of enhancing, streamlining and consolidating the interoperable core of emergency response systems.<sup>21</sup> The core principles of JESIP are outlined in Figure 2.

For Weymouth, interoperability took on new layers of meaning. The usual interoperability between fire, police and ambulance services was required to respond to threats on land, in-line with those plans developed for the main Olympic Venues in London. The unique aspect however, came in the addition of agencies such as the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, Coastguard and Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) when formulating plans to deal with water-based threats. This complicated the planning process as systems were needed to incorporate elements beyond the familiar for responders, meaning that more training and testing was required. It also added another layer of 'command' which could contribute to issues around territory and jurisdiction explored later in the case study.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Wankhade, P., McCann, L., & Murphy, P. (2019). Critical perspectives on the management and organization of emergency services. New York: Routledge.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Ibid.

### **Co-locate**

Co-locate with commanders as soon as practicably possible at a single, safe and easily identified location near to the scene.

> Communicate Communicate clearly using plain English.

### **Co-ordinate**

Co-ordinate by agreeing the lead service. Identify priorities, resources and capabilities for an effective response, including the timing of further meetings.

#### Jointly understand risk

Jointly understand risk by sharing information about the likelihood and potential impact of threats and hazards to agree potential control measures.

#### Shared situational awareness

Shared Situational Awareness established by using METHANE and the Joint Decision Model.

Figure 2 – The principles of interoperability as outlined by JESIP Source: JESIP

Interoperability at a local level was already in place for Weymouth during 2012, in line with national practice. However, initial local risk assessments found that there was a significant lack of capability to facilitate specialist interoperable responses to terrorist threats during a large-scale event. This case study will primarily focus on the interoperability systems formulated in response to the threat of potential for an MTFA on land and how agencies were able to collaborate to create complex emergency response plans in a region that had previously no capability or experience in this area. Weymouth was chosen for its sailing-specific benefits: large stretches of open water, an established sailing culture and high-quality sailing facilities. Whilst these factors made it an ideal location for sailing, they lacked the

necessary capabilities to host a global mega-event; the means by which this was made possible were sourced from elsewhere.

This case is particularly interesting in that the concept of interoperability was not only applied across agencies, but also within them. For example, national coordinating personnel from ambulance services were deployed to disseminate expertise and training to regional ambulance services. <sup>22</sup>

### The context of requirement: MTFA threat

The threat and potential impact of MTFA incidents was at the forefront of emergency planning and had proven to be a highly lethal and effective means of terrorism. Images of the chaos, devastation and horror of mobile terrorist incidents had been seen across the globe, acting as a warning of just how lethal such incidents can be.<sup>23</sup> Foresight and thorough planning before an incident is vital in reducing the harm of MTFA attacks, and where this is lacking, the impact of such an attack is greatly magnified.<sup>24</sup>

The following example is not events-related but highlights the threat that formed the basis of planning for security during the London Olympics. MTFA attacks focus on crowded places as the terrorists seek maximum injury, public

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Head of Education, Silver Commander for London Olympic Games 2012, *National Ambulance Service*, Interviewed 28/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Graham, David (2018) Marauding Terrorist Firearms' Attacks, The RUSI Journal, 163:2, 42-50, DOI: 10.1080/03071847.2018.1464628 ACCESSED 29/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Panos Constantinides, The failure of foresight in crisis management: A secondary analysis of the Mari disaster, Technological Forecasting and Social Change, Volume 80, Issue 9, 2013, Pages 1657-1673, ISSN 0040 1625, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2012.10.017.

reaction and political and economic instability; all of which would make the Olympics an ideal target.

The incident which had dominated approaches and perceptions of the MTFA threat was that of the 2008 Mumbai Bombings. Over the course of four days in November 2008, there were twelve coordinated shooting and bombing attacks in Mumbai.<sup>25</sup> This wave of chaos left at least 176 individuals dead, with a further 300 injured.<sup>26</sup> The attacks were carried out by ten individuals on behalf of the organisation Lashkar-e-Taiba, a terrorist organisation based in Pakistan.<sup>27</sup> The attacks have largely been remembered as the incident in which a lack of response capability, uncoordinated agencies and lack of specific MTFA planning meant that the impact of the attack was a largely successful endeavour on the part of the terrorist organisation.<sup>28</sup> The horror of those four days was documented in the global media, showcasing the importance, and difficulty in developing response plans that could address MTFA incidents.

The capability for multi-agency response to MTFA, identified as an increasing risk within the UK National Risk Register, has become a focal point of planning and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, *Mumbai terrorist attacks of 2008,* Encyclopædia Britannica,

https://www.britannica.com/event/Mumbai-terrorist-attacks-of-2008 November 2019, ACCESSED 29/4/2020 <sup>26</sup> Rabasa, Angel, et al. The Lessons of Mumbai. 1st ed., RAND Corporation, 2009. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/op249rc. Accessed 4 May 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Rath, S. (2019). The Secret History of Mumbai Terror Attacks. London: Routledge India, <u>https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429486364</u> p.268

preparation.<sup>29 30</sup> It was felt at the time that the Olympics carried a significant risk of attracting such an attack, and that Weymouth may be a preferable target to the more prepared and protected area of London.<sup>31</sup> Whilst London response agencies would be familiar with and equipped to handle terrorist threats, there was potential for Weymouth to be perceived as 'easier' in terms of carrying out such an attack, where there was no precedent of terrorism, and thus a perceived reduction in preparation.

### Gap analysis - Dorset capability vs need

The greatest challenge in preparing for the 2012 Olympic Games sailing events was the capabilities of local forces.<sup>32</sup> Dorset itself is not considered a probable target of terrorism in normal circumstances and, as a result, local response agencies had not received the funding or training necessary to equip for an MTFA style attack.<sup>33</sup> Dorset is a quiet, rural seaside area of England, and therefore not considered likely as a target due to its low profile and low population density.

The government had outlined its counterterrorism strategy under the publication of CONTEST. The main outline of this strategy can be seen in Figure 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Graham, (David 2018) Marauding Terrorist Firearms' Attacks, The RUSI Journal, 163:2, 42-50, DOI: 10.1080/03071847.2018.1464628

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup>Cabinet Office, National Risk Register,

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/61934/nati onal\_risk\_register.pdf ACCESSED 4/5/2020

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> BBC News, 'Mumbai attack' is worst-case scenario at Olympic sailing events,'
 <u>https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-dorset-18410625</u> June 2012, ACCESSED 29/4/2020
 <sup>32</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, Fire Service,

Interviewed 29/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Area Commander for Operations, West Midlands Fire Service, Interviewed 22/4/2020

- Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks;
- Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism;
- Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack; and
- Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

Figure 3: Principles of CONTEST Strategy Source: UK Government

Alongside the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) of 2004, emergency planning in response to terrorism threats was a national initiative and given political prominence and priority.<sup>34</sup> The CCA 2004 replaced the legislation for emergency planning in the UK, which had previously been built upon the 1920 Emergency Powers Act. The new legislation was developed in response to the global terrorist threat and encompassed a range of scenarios in which agencies would need to coordinate response to a threat. Whilst this work was by no means new in 2012, it had not been deemed a necessary nationwide provision for emergency agencies in low-risk areas. The Olympic Games sailing events of 2012 changed the status of Dorset to one of international scrutiny and attention. Whilst the government allocated additional funding and resources for the event, it could by no means be expected that the necessary provisions would be in place immediately.

### **Responding to the gap analysis**

The City of Birmingham, approximately 100 miles away from London, had been considered an at-risk site due to its size and nature as a built-up city. As such, West Midlands Fire Service had the expertise, resources and capability to respond to MTFA incidents in a range of differing scenarios and contexts. It was this capability that meant they were able to travel to Dorset and bridge the gap between capability and requirement. This was done through rotations of trained MTFA teams who established interoperable response systems with the local response agency and the development of appropriate systems through rigorous testing and exercises.<sup>35</sup>

As well as bolstering the capabilities of the usual responder agencies in Dorset, it was necessary to utilise military presence in Dorset for the duration of the sailing events. The use of military personnel on the water was necessary in order to form a patrol at sea around the sailing events, preventing any threats utilising boats from 'breaking through' to where the events were taking place.<sup>36</sup> As shown in Figure 1, Weymouth is entirely facing out to the open sea, and therefore the normal coastguard would not suffice in forming a protective barrier around the games. The Royal Navy and Royal Marines were posted on ships around the location of the games, to serve as guards of the water 'border' and to control usage of the water for the duration of the games (for example, areas usually used for public sailing were cordoned off and this needed policing.) This added another aspect to the demand for

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Area Commander for Operations, West Midlands Fire Service, Interviewed 22/4/2020
 <sup>36</sup> Ibid.

interoperability, as local agencies were now following plans more complex and layered than their usual 'day-to-day' experiences.<sup>37</sup>

### Multi-agency response systems and interoperability in practice

Response to all emergencies must be efficient, but MTFA incidents by nature must have rapid and effective multi-agency response systems. As evidenced in Mumbai, failure to react swiftly with effective action can be the difference between rapid containment and ongoing casualties.

In the instance of a roaming firearm attack, the police would need to contain/disable the attacker whilst also deploying units to protect other emergency responders at the scene. The fire service not only act as search and rescue teams but hold the necessary resources and training to operate in specific environments (smoke-filled, rubble, debris). Alongside this response is the need for ambulance services and paramedics to treat casualties on the scene, as well as evacuating and transporting them to hospitals or other suitable treatment areas. These functions are required simultaneously, and each agency is dependent on the actions of another to mitigate the risk during MTFA incidents. Failure to have effective interoperable systems in place could lead to the Games themselves creating an ideal environment for attackers, whereby large crowds are gathered and the resulting chaos makes the response agencies' job even more difficult. Instead thorough planning and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, *Fire Service*, Interviewed 29/4/2020

preparation was put in place, mitigating the risk of an episode such as that in Mumbai in 2008.

When this scenario is combined with an event that has large crowds, international coverage and persons of political prominence, the need for cooperative planning becomes even more integral. As a global event the Olympic Games attracts the attention of those around the world, including those seeking an opportunity to commit atrocities.<sup>38</sup> During the Weymouth preparations testing and simulation exercises were carried out on a daily basis, incorporating the local agencies, and the specialist forces from elsewhere.<sup>39</sup>

The Olympic Games utilised the 'tried and tested' tiered commander system. Commanders' tier levels corresponded with a certain level of responsibility in formulating and enacting plans. For an explanation of how this looked for each venue see Appendix 1. This model is entrenched in all emergency response agencies and is the established system by which individuals operate in a coherent and structured system.

In the case of an MTFA incident, Bronze commanders lead their response teams as operational leaders 'on the ground' whilst the Silver and Gold Commanders would gather intelligence and maintain communications with other agencies.<sup>40</sup> It is

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Hand, Robert. (2012). Anthony Richards, Peter Fussey and Andrew Silke (eds.). Terrorism and the Olympics:
 Major event security and lessons for the future. Journal of Terrorism Research. 3. 10.15664/jtr.419.
 <sup>39</sup> Area Commander for Operations, *West Midlands Fire Service*, Interviewed 22/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Ibid.

here that interoperability relies heavily on clear and efficient communications. Multiagency cooperation is impossible without effective communications, as the emergency response of the organisations depends upon live intelligence sharing. For example, ambulance crews need to be informed of the environment and its safety before being able to begin medical treatment. Without clear lines of communication, the response would be uncoordinated, chaotic and ineffective in minimising risk.<sup>41</sup> The use of mobile phones, alongside secure radio (airwave) platforms, allows live intelligence sharing, tactical coordination and fluid response action that adapts to the scenario as it evolves.<sup>42</sup> For Weymouth this included adding new layers to the familiar interoperability agents, bringing military agencies, waterbased organisations and local personnel into the fold. This was largely done through testing and, where possible, utilising the pre-trained expert persons as leads on exercises.<sup>43</sup> These experts came from within the response agencies, either as national strategy coordinators or brought in from regions that had an existing MTFA capability.

### Ensuring multi-agency cooperation is at the forefront of responses

One of the most important aspects of this training and testing comes down to the fact that, when under pressure, individuals are more likely to 'revert to type' and act in the protocols of their agency independently.<sup>44</sup> For example ambulance staff

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Comfort, Louise & Ko, Kilkon & Zagorecki, Adam. (2004). Coordination in Rapidly Evolving Disaster Response Systems: The Role of Information. American Behavioral Scientist - AMER BEHAV SCI. 48. 295-313. 10.1177/0002764204268987.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Area Commander for Operations, *West Midlands Fire Service*, Interviewed 22/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, *Fire Service*, Interviewed 29/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Head of Education, Silver Commander for London Olympic Games 2012, *National Ambulance Service*, Interviewed 28/4/2020

may resort to their basic medical training and focus on the treatment of an individual, as opposed to considering the wider-environment and potential risks at the site. Multi-agency response plans and systems need to become ingrained into those responding to MTFA threats, as if they feel unprepared, they will revert to their most basic levels of training. In Weymouth this risk was perhaps exacerbated by the inclusion of agencies that individuals may not have collaborated with previously.<sup>45</sup> The 'multi-agency' element was kept at the forefront of all communications and plans, to ensure that individuals on-site understood the importance of cooperative response.

### Considerations around allocating teams from other regions

In order for safe delivery of the 2012 sailing events there was a necessity to bring in MTFA specialist units from other regions. The MTFA response team used for the games was from the West Midland Fire Service, as it was the largest team of this nature, outside of London.<sup>46</sup> It was determined that the West Midlands could provide the resources, expertise and pre-trained response teams for Weymouth, whilst maintaining a sufficient capability within their home force.<sup>47</sup> This did require intricate planning in itself, as well as a logistical consideration of moving staff away from their homes and families.<sup>48</sup>

An overview of the arrangements for the movement and use of MTFA response teams from West Midlands Fire and Rescue is shown in Figure

47 Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, *Fire Service*, Interviewed 29/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Ibid.



Figure 1 - The rotation of MTFA response teams for West Midlands Fire Service during the 16-week 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Sailing Events Source: Author

The primary consideration that was required was whether moving teams to Weymouth would result in a deficit of capability within the West Midlands. Through rigorous assessment, risk analysis and resource management it was determined that West Midlands could provide the requisite staff and equipment whilst maintaining a safe response capability for themselves.<sup>49</sup> It is vital that this consideration is made, as *'plugging gaps by creating others'* creates additional risk in areas that may not be under the scrutiny of a global event, but that carry a threat of attack on a day-to-day basis.<sup>50</sup>

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 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, Fire Service, Interviewed 29/4/2020
 <sup>50</sup> Ibid.

The rotation of teams every four days not only minimised disruption to the personal lives of the teams, but also ensured fresh and rested staff were on-call in the instance of an emergency.<sup>51</sup> Testing exercises were carried out daily so that every member of the response team in Weymouth had routine practice and familiarisation with potential scenarios and the planned response systems.<sup>52</sup> These exercises simulated possible scenarios and rehearsed the multi-agency response of the teams, including communication channels and protocols.<sup>53</sup> They gave the West Midlands team the necessary preparation to rehearse with the teams from other organisations, and embed the multi-agency response protocols for the event into their preparation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Area Commander for Operations, West Midlands Fire Service, Interviewed 22/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, *Fire Service*, Interviewed 29/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Head of Education, Silver Commander for London Olympic Games 2012, *National Ambulance Service*, Interviewed 28/4/2020



Figure 2 - A selection of images taken from training and testing exercises for the MTFA response teams. This multi-agency approach to testing was vital for coherent response in the instance of an emergency across the venue locations.

Source: Author

Another consideration highlighted as particularly vital for Weymouth was the identification of 'likely' location targets during planning.<sup>54</sup> The visiting teams would not be operating in environments of familiarity, and this had the potential to complicate planning. To mitigate this, every training exercise worked on the basis of identifying 'vulnerable' or 'weak' spots of locations, and familiarising the team with how to respond in these areas.<sup>55</sup> The West Midlands MTFA commander at the time

<sup>54</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, *Fire Service*, Interviewed 29/4/2020

described this as 'a narrow field' in Weymouth due to the contained nature of the event venue, thus making this process simpler.<sup>56</sup>

### Interoperability: the challenge of 'territory' in Weymouth 2012

Whilst multi-agency interoperability is embedded into legislation for emergency planning, that does not mean it is without challenges. One area of difficulty raised by interviewed Commanders was that of 'territory' in regards to decision-making.<sup>57</sup> When multiple agencies work together, there can be competition for commanding positions, as each agency has their own '*priorities that naturally differ.*' <sup>58</sup> Whilst all agencies are aiming to save lives, their individual interpretations of best practice to reach these ends may differ, and may create tension when formulating plans.

One Commander gave an example as follows:

'There can be conflicts of interest around which individual has overall tactical command on the ground during an emergency. For example, Commanders from the ambulance team tend to favour immediate treatment and extraction of individual casualties as they are encountered, whereas search and rescue teams may prefer to "treat and leave" individuals to carry out rescue of individuals still trapped or at risk.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, *Fire Service*, interviewed 29/4/2020, Head of Education, Silver Commander for London Olympic Games 2012, *National Ambulance Service*, interviewed 28/4/2020, Watch Commander; Technical Rescue Unit and Technical Rescue Advisor for London 2012 Olympic Games, *West Midlands Fire Service*, Interviewed 28/4/2020
 <sup>58</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, *Fire Service*, Interviewed 29/4/2020

In a rubble/smoke-filled environment neither approach is wrong based on their organisations' mission; ambulance prioritise the immediate medical needs of individuals, search and rescue may want to focus on securing the environment to allow more treatment staff access to the site. If the plans do not thoroughly cater for and definitively resolve the potential of disagreeing aims, then they will not be successful at meeting either goal.<sup>759</sup>

In Weymouth this problem was mitigated by the involvement of regional and national coordinators in the planning for incidents.<sup>60</sup> Strategy leaders from all agencies formed advisory groups to work with LOCOG (London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games) to ensure that emergency plans reflected the aims and methods of all agencies without conflict. The advisory group was specific to the site, to ensure that all locations outside of London were as intricately prepared as the venues within the capital.<sup>61</sup> This consistency was vital in order to ensure Weymouth did not become a target due to being perceived as less prepared, or as an 'easier' opportunity to carry out an attack on the Olympic media platform.

Similarly, there were at times tensions within agencies. Those coming into Weymouth from a national command perspective were conscious of *'treading on the toes'* of regional leaders within their agency.<sup>62</sup> Careful relationship management was

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> Head of Education, Silver Commander for London Olympic Games 2012, *National Ambulance Service*, Interviewed 28/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> Ibid.

vital to ensure that even if these issues did '*bubble up every now and then*' they could be handled sensitively and ensure a best outcome for security, rather than personal aims.<sup>63</sup> This issue is especially present when planning mega-events, as individuals and agencies are vying for responsibilities on prestigious projects to boost their own reputation. One method used to ensure clear communications and positive relations between all individuals was the implementation of daily briefings and intelligence updates.<sup>64</sup> These briefings allowed all agencies, Commanders and responders to update strategies according to live information and reach a consensus on important decisions before moving them into the plans.<sup>65</sup>

# **Recommendations and application for Qatar**

### **Clearly defined command structures**

One of the key learning points from Weymouth is the importance of having a clearly defined and agreed command structure between the agencies. Whilst cooperative and collaborative planning is the core of emergency planning, when these plans are in action, one clear leader is required to direct and lead the operation. This is necessary as having more than one tactical Commander could cause contradictory instruction, inconsistent information or even agencies 'splintering' into their own agendas and priorities.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, *Fire Service*, Interviewed 29/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Watch Commander; Technical Rescue Unit and Technical Rescue Advisor for London 2012 Olympic Games, *West Midlands Fire Service*, Interviewed 28/4/2020

### Application for Qatar

The main responder agencies should decide which of them has the most experience of emergency response in unstable environments, casualty management in challenging circumstances and leadership from one command-point. This will probably mean that the Fire Service would provide the most experienced and rounded Commanders, as their job is more based around search and rescue on a day-to-day basis.<sup>67</sup> Whilst senior and experienced ambulance responders are vital for planning, their role as tactical Commanders may see a range of clinical skills '*wasted*' if they are coordinating logistical actions rather than on the ground treating people.

Once the agency and individual tactical Commander has been identified for a venue, there needs to be consensus on the jurisdiction and extent of control which that Commander has. For example, if an ambulance team feel they are being put at risk during an operation, should their own Commander have the authority to override that of another agency? These grey areas often form the most contentious and challenging aspect of agencies working together, and Qatar should factor in specific guidelines around these issues. For example, there should be clear direction on who holds overall command of each agency, the extent to which Gold commanders can define strategy across agencies, and justification for allocating responsibilities and roles to each agency. Once these boundaries have been established, they can form a more permanent approach to multi-agency interoperability and build it into their national agenda for emergency response.<sup>68</sup> Through this intricate and careful

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Area Commander for Operations, West Midlands Fire Service, Interviewed 22/4/2020

planning process the adoption of multi-agency planning could become as coherent and entrenched as within the UK. This would allow future event planning in Qatar to be more efficient, as 'tried and tested' systems can be put in place from the first stages of planning.

### One communication platform for all agencies

During the response to an incident it is vital that live intelligence is fed through the tactical command centres, to the Commander, and onto teams on the ground. It is this live information which informs the 'next move' and defines the orders given out by Commanders. It may relate to the safety of an environment, the scale of casualties or the ongoing threat of the incident.<sup>69</sup> In order for this to stay coherent there must be one communal data channel, with clear direction identifying which 'voice' provides the information. As one Commander explained:

'Imagine having two of me? Two people communicating orders or information? There is almost certainly going to be disparity in what is said, a lag in response to separate channels of information between agencies or missed information from between streams.'<sup>70</sup>

### Application for Qatar

The communications between agencies during an emergency response need to take place on secure channels such as radio, and need to be fed to all agencies at once. One platform and one voice can ensure that all agencies are coordinated in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, *Fire Service*, Interviewed 29/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, *Fire Service*, Interviewed 29/4/2020

their actions, acting on the same live intelligence and united in their strategy on the ground. The key to this process is to keep it 'as simple as possible, and don't leave people out in the cold.<sup>71</sup> Ensure communication channels are developed under the advice and inclusion of all agencies so that everyone is comfortable with this, and that they feel confident in how information is relayed through these channels. Once this channel has been established and tested, the information must feedback to one command centre when at a mega-event, which can then coordinate the teams 'on the ground.' This ensures all agencies are reacting to the same instructions, creating a coordinated and efficient emergency response, maximising the security during mega-events.

### Testing and training exercises

As aforementioned, training and rehearsal were part of the daily routine for response teams in Weymouth. There were a range of simulated incidents in which coordinated response was practised, and there was a consistent focus on familiarising teams with the venues and surrounding areas.<sup>72</sup> This was seen as especially important in Weymouth as there were visiting response MTFA teams, agencies beyond the scope of normal interoperability scenarios, and an event which in scale was unprecedented in the area. Without proper testing '*gaps in where there was risk*' could not have been identified and, as such, not mitigated, resulting in vulnerable or unfinished areas of planning.<sup>73</sup> This is applicable not just to teams

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Head of Education, Silver Commander for London Olympic Games 2012, *National Ambulance Service*, Interviewed 28/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, *Fire Service*, Interviewed 29/4/2020

acting in unfamiliar regions, but as a core necessity of all events, regardless of scale and nature.

### Application for Qatar

For Qatar as a host to mega-events and for their normal response practice, it is important that testing and training is 'organic'. The rehearsal of scenarios needs to resemble the real-life incident as closely as possible otherwise the danger is creation of a 'false truth' in your teams' capabilities.<sup>74</sup> In line with this, when testing a scenario allow the rehearsal to act as part of a reflective learning process. Do not halt testing because of error; it is these mistakes that will inform the need for further planning and training.<sup>75</sup> Exercises are also only as meaningful as their review; make sure every training exercise is reviewed to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the response across all agencies, to collaboratively evaluate and improve performance.

Qatar may benefit from liaising with those who have run testing and training exercises for mega-events, to benefit from their learning around what extra level of testing is required as a host country. The author, alongside expert Commanders from the Police service worked with Qatari authorities to develop QESIP, and built upon their own experiences to create a detailed and cohesive basis for mega-events in Qatar. This consultation not only allows the authorities to build on the successes of other events, but also gain insight into areas of development and ongoing

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Head of Education, Silver Commander for London Olympic Games 2012, National Ambulance Service, Interviewed 28/4/2020
 <sup>75</sup> Ibid.

improvement to ensure their protocols are 'keeping up' with those developed across the globe.<sup>76</sup>

### Balancing the demands of the event, and everyday requirements

During mega-events and sporting occasions, the host country must also be able to function in its normal response capacity. Whilst events such as the 2022 FIFA World Cup will undoubtedly require a huge scale-up of planning and personnel for emergency response, there must also be capacity for response to emergencies beyond the event.<sup>77</sup> This was one of the greatest challenges for Weymouth, whereby resources and experts were being relocated to accommodate the Olympic Games.

# Application for Qatar

Ensure those senior figures involved in the planning for the 2022 FIFA World Cup are supported and enabled to carry out a dual function; planning for the event, and maintaining standards in their usual capacity. This may include allocating funding to hire support staff, devising rotas by which they are allocated time for both roles, or reallocation of some of their duties.<sup>78</sup> As one interviewee phrased it:

'You get caught up in the excitement and demands of testing, training, planning for the event and it takes up the vast majority of your time. At the end of the day though, those emails keep rolling in for the day job, you still have the possibility of an incident

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Area Commander for Operations, West Midlands Fire Service, Interviewed 22/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, *Fire Service*, Interviewed 29/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Head of Education, Silver Commander for London Olympic Games 2012, *National Ambulance Service*, Interviewed 28/4/2020

requiring your attention 50 miles from the venue; you must be ready to juggle a lot of balls.<sup>79</sup>

For Qatar they should allocate command roles to experienced individuals with a track-record of project management and leadership. This will allow them to use their expertise to delegate, lead and coordinate where appropriate whilst maintaining high standards across the event planning, and their routine job responsibilities.

### Utilising local resources and surroundings

A final strategy used in Weymouth and seen as extremely effective was the employment of local fishermen in a security function.<sup>80</sup> Weymouth has a large fishing industry, which was heavily disrupted during the sailing events due to the space being used for the Olympics, or cordoned off in-line with safety perimeters. While the Royal Navy and Royal Marines were deployed on the HMS Bulwark as the main water-based security measure, local fishermen were also hired as 'extra eyes' on the water.<sup>81</sup> They were used to feed back any information on activity, potential threats or relevant information in the surrounding areas, expanding the 'sight' of the naval defences even further.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Station Commander, Lead in Command Development Centre London Olympics 2012, *Fire Service*, Interviewed 29/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Head of Education, Silver Commander for London Olympic Games 2012, *National Ambulance Service*, Interviewed 28/4/2020

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Ibid.

### Application for Qatar

Qatar can use this example to consider how to not only increase their awareness of the surrounding area of a venue, but also engage the local population to minimise friction within that population. Mega-events generate 'mega-disruption' for residents, and the inclusivity and financial incentive to assist in their planning meant that not only was security improved, but the cohesiveness of the local region surrounding the venue enabled plans to be put in place with reduced local disruption.

### Conclusion

What has been presented in this case study is an instance of successful multiagency interoperability in the planning and delivery of a mega-event. Risk and security management are integral to mega-events; in situations where risk of stack, and scale of impact is heightened, coordinated and efficient response systems must be proven to be effective across venues and event sites. Weymouth is particularly interesting and relevant within this topic in the fact that the planning and cooperation of agencies needed to go beyond the familiar practice so well entrenched in UK emergency response. There were more agencies to factor into planning, more geographical considerations, and the need for regional movement and allocation of resources. What can be seen across all fronts is a process of streamlining; planning, testing, communication and implementation all of which were formulated through the collation of expertise from a range of revenues, crafted into one inclusive approach. Multi-agency interoperability is undoubtedly best practice, and the 2012 Weymouth Olympic Sailing events highlights just how intricate and complex it can be to generate simple and effective systems.

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# **Teaching notes**

- Outline some of the challenges faced by 'satellite venues' when hosting mega-events.
  - Lack of resources/expertise in that area
  - Struggle for focus/attention away from the main centre of the event
  - Can be perceived as an easier target for an attack, still have a mass impact but in a less prepared area
- Describe considerations that need to be considered when moving specialist teams/resources from one region to another
  - Is there a capability/capacity left behind in the region they have come from

- They will lack familiarity with the new environment and will need specific

venue and location familiarisation

- There can be 'territorial' issues/variations in practice within the area they are deployed to; command structures need to consider this.

3. How can we use the example of Weymouth to explain the importance of training and testing when preparing for a mega-event?

- Identification of vulnerable areas/targets within venues enabled mitigation to be put in place

- Teams that did not usually work together were able to build familiarity of practice and good working relationships

- Testing incorporated a range of scenarios and agencies to ensure that a tactical response would be rehearsed in the event of an incident.

4. Why is it important to have a clearly defined command structure for events such as the 2022 FIFA World Cup?

- Territory- agencies may fight over jurisdiction and decision-making if there are not clearly defined roles

Agencies inherently hold different priorities/values; if one clear multi-agency tactical command is not established there is a risk each agency will 'revert to type' and act with conflicting aims, thus undermining the operation
To ensure each skillset is appropriately utilised.

- 5. How could the legacy of the FIFA 2022 World Cup contribute positively to the Qatari event space?
- Familiarity/rehearsal of response systems that are multi-agency and efficient in mass gathering based venues
- Expertise attained through training and testing remains within agencies for further growth and incorporation into daily practice
- Status and reputation as a host of a successful global event with visibly highquality detailed planning and preparation.
- 6. How could Qatari authorities apply the concept of 'Gap Analysis' to the 2022 FIFA World Cup?
- Identify whether there are regional deficiencies at venues; will resources/agencies need to be moved around to accommodate the increased demand?
- To ensure that all aspects of planning receive equal care and quality assurance; learning from the struggle for focus in Weymouth, despite it being a possible terrorist target

- To identify areas for further support/development from external agencies/experts.

# Appendix 1: The structure of Commander tiers

Taken from training documents delivered in Qatar by the author as part of the QESIP program



Command Level (Role related)	Operational (Bronze)	Tactical (Siver)	Strategic (Gold)
Location	At scene	At scene	Remote
First stages: Bronze/operational	~		
Second stage: Silver/Tactical	~	$\checkmark$	
Third stage: Gold/Strategic	~	~	~