

CASE STUDY 1: THE LONDON TERROR ATTACKS, JULY 7, 2005 (CONTINUED)

12:30—Metropolitan Police confirmed explosions in three metro stations and one public bus and continues its presence on the incident sites. At the time, the police did not provide numbers of casualties but underline that there are many.

12:31—Emergency services personnel tell CNN writer William Chamberlain that all survivors had been evacuated from King's Cross station, leaving the dead below ground "in the double digits."¹² Britain's Home Secretary Charles Clarke tells the House of Commons there were four explosions in central London and the underground system will be closed all day. They would decide later in the day whether to resume bus services. Earlier, six attacks were reported.

2:38—US law enforcement sources cite the British government as saying that at least 40 people have been killed. London hospitals report at least 300 wounded, the Associated Press reports.

3:26—London Deputy Police Chief Brian Paddick says police had no warning of the attacks and have not received any claims of responsibility. He says police are keeping an open mind over who carried out the attacks and that it is unclear whether a claim of responsibility by al-Qaeda is genuine or whether suicide bombers were involved. No arrests have been made in connection with the attacks.

3:41—Assistant chief ambulance officer Russell Smith says the service has treated 45 patients with serious or critical injuries. A further 300 patients have been treated for minor injuries.

4:30—London Police announce that the Metropolitan Police Service Casualty Bureau has been opened and ask the public to call the hotline if they are concerned about their loved ones who may have been affected by the incidents. The police announced the number of the confirmed fatalities as 33 for the first time and mentioned that the incidents were caused by terrorists.

4:32—Transport authorities say Docklands Light Railway services in east London and mainline rail services have resumed, except out of King's Cross and Victoria stations. Buses in central London are also returning to service. All underground services remain suspended.

5:43—The British Prime Minister Tony Blair says that Britain will not be intimidated by terrorism and promises intense police and security services action to bring those behind the bombings to justice. "I would also pay tribute to the stoicism and resilience of the people of London who have responded in a way typical of them," says Blair.

5:49—The United Nations Security Council passes a resolution condemning the London attacks and expressing "outrage and indignation at today's appalling terrorist attacks against the people of the United Kingdom that cost human life and caused injuries and immense human suffering."

7:15—Metropolitan police updates the number of confirmed fatalities as 37 and confirms that the incidents involved four explosive devices.

This time line is based on multiple sources including CNN and the London Metropolitan Police media releases.

www.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/europe/07/07/london.timeline/index.html,

www.met.police.uk/news/stop_thesestus/response1.htm,

www.met.police.uk/news/stop_thesestus/response2.htm,

www.met.police.uk/news/stop_thesestus/response3.htm, and

www.met.police.uk/news/stop_thesestus/response4.htm.

Observations and Comments on Incident

London Metropolitan Police: London Metropolitan Police immediately responded to all potential incident scenes and fulfilled their first-response responsibility. The unique aspect of the incident management by the Metropolitan Police was consistent and persistent behavior in terms of releasing information to the media and the public. The department did not speculate on the incidents and their outcomes and public

impacts at any time. The Metropolitan Police chose to release factual information only when the validity of the information was confirmed by credible sources, in many cases its investigators or cooperating government officials. The first casualty numbers were announced about 4:30 p.m. by the department. Until then, various sources in the media were reporting a range of casualty numbers (between 2 and 90) based on *Multiple London Metropolitan Police Press Releases* and media coverage on July 7, 2005.¹³

London Fire Brigade: Around 200 firefighters were called to explosions at Aldgate, Edgware Road, and King's Cross London underground stations and an explosion on a bus at Tavistock Square on Thursday, July 7. Twelve fire appliances with 60 firefighters attended the incident at Edgware Road, 12 fire appliances with 60 firefighters attended the incident at King's Cross, 10 fire appliances with 50 firefighters attended the Aldgate incident, and 4 fire appliances with 20 firefighters were called to Tavistock Square. Throughout the morning, several fire specialist fire rescue units were deployed to work with the other emergency services to evacuate casualties and make the incident locales safe (London Fire Brigade, <http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/newsstatement.asp>).

London Emergency Medical Services: The response of the emergency medical service units to the bomb attacks in London has generally been assessed as "adequate" by experts. The incident claimed more than 50 lives, left more than 700 hurt, and kept about 100 overnight in hospital, 22 of whom were in critical condition as of July 8. Hospitals responding to the crisis included St. Mary's Hospital in Paddington, the Royal Free hospital in Hampstead, St. Thomas's Hospital, and Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, which does not have an emergency department but took in 22 patients. Hospitals in London were put on major incident alert within minutes of the first explosion, which occurred at 08:51 BST in the third carriage of an underground train traveling in a tunnel 100 meters from Liverpool Street station. Less than a mile away, at the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel, medical staff implemented a well-rehearsed strategy to cope with the first of 208 patients. The shock waves from the blast were the cause of the most frequently seen injuries on that day, which are particularly traumatic for air-filled parts of the body. The waves can cause perforated eardrums, collapsed lungs, and perforated bowels. But the force can also devastate soft tissue—the blast was responsible for many of the limbs lost during the attacks. Smoke inhalation resulting in lung damage, burns, and ripped skin caused by debris such as glass shards were also common injuries.¹⁴ "Medical Teams Praised for Reaction to Bombings," www.newscientist.com/article.ns?id=dn7649.

Leadership and Crisis Communications

The British Prime Minister Tony Blair was participating in the G8 summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, when he learned about the terror attacks. At 12 p.m. that day, Blair appeared before the media in Gleneagles and gave a 3.5-min long speech about the day's terrorist incidents.

Blair's style of communication on that day has demonstrated his leadership skills and expertise in crisis communications. An analytic piece about the way he delivered his speech marks the following nuances in his speech as critical to conveying the right message in the right way:

- He demonstrated his passion for his people and did not choose to hide his emotions.
- He not only shared his emotions (grief) but also presented a strong image that communicated he and his government were there and ready to deal with the problem.
- He improvised his speech instead of reading it, which proved that it was not "business as usual" for him.
- He used many long pauses to communicate the gravity of the situation.
- He avoided speculations and focused on stating the limited number of facts he was informed about.
- He sincerely communicated his condolences to the families who lost loved ones in the attacks.
- He used strong and direct vocabulary to describe the events ("barbaric").

The analysis above is based on analysis by T.J. Walker ("Crisis Communications with Class," <http://www.mediatrainingworldwide.com>). For the video of the complete speech, see http://relay.wesminsterdigital.co.uk/demand.php?c=number10/statements&m=statementFull2005-07-07_wm&wvx. For a transcript of the speech, see www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page_7853.asp.

National Incident Management System (NIMS): A system that provides a proactive approach guiding government agencies at all levels, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work seamlessly to prepare for, prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity, in order to reduce the loss of life or property and harm to the environment.

National Response Framework (NRF): A document released in 2008 to replace the National Response Plan that guides how the nation conducts all-hazards response. The framework documents the key response principles, roles, and structures that organize national response. It describes how communities, states, the federal government, and private-sector and nongovernmental partners apply these principles for national response. It also describes special circumstances where the federal government must exercise a larger role, including incidents where federal interests are involved and catastrophic incidents where a state would require significant support. It was designed to allow all response stakeholders to provide a unified national response.

National Response Plan: A plan released in 2004 to replace the Federal Response Plan that guided the response actions of local, state, and federal resources to major “incidents of national significance.” This plan was replaced in 2008 by the NRF.

NRF Cooperating Agency: Cooperating agencies have specific expertise and capabilities that allow them to assist the coordinating agency in executing incident-related tasks or processes. When the procedures within a support annex are needed to support elements of an incident, the