

Resilience

Journal of the Emergency Planning Society Summer 2022



In the eye of the storm

Leading the EPRR team during the Novichok attack

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the inquiry five years on



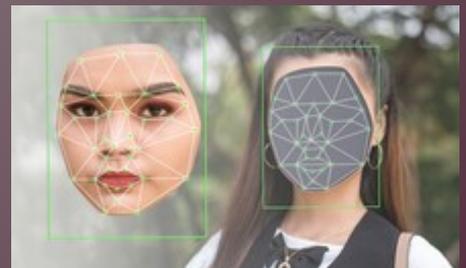
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support for refugees



READY: Rest Centre
Activation plan tested



DEEPFAKE: the emerging
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Resilience - next issues

The copy deadline for material for the next two issues of the journal are:

Autumn:

Thursday 8 September

Winter:

Thursday 3 November

Resilience

Summer 2022 issue

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memo

IT IS already an extremely busy year for us all. In fact that seems to now have become the norm for those working within resilience. The nature of the incidents and emergencies we face is becoming more diverse every day, whether a sudden mass influx of refugees or an unprecedented heatwave. Each new event is testament to your resilience, and indeed the public's capacity to 'bounce back.'



■ Acting Chair, Jeannie Barr

But how long can this continue, when more and more resources can be diverted to other priorities, leaving resilience stretched? Is the complex nature of emergency management and preparedness too diverse for people outside our sector to understand or too wide a scope for people to truly comprehend? Is there a lack of understanding by the community and government of the critical role of resilience? If so, what can we do to support a 'whole society' approach and improved communication with the communities and government?

A sign of encouragement has been the many recent reviews and reports around our sector that are being progressed, so let's hope that the lessons and recommendations that come from these truly reflect what is needed both by those working within resilience, and our communities.

In the meantime, the EPS will continue to develop our profession. Here's diary dates for the key events coming up:

14 September: Our AGM this year will be held virtually on Zoom once more. We are going to postpone the live annual conference and awards ceremony until 2023, and include these as part of our 30th anniversary celebrations.

21 - 22 September: We are key partners and will have a stand at this year's Emergency Services Show at the NEC Birmingham.

27 - 28 September: at the International Security Expo at Olympia, London, we will have a stand and participate in sessions at the event.

Also coming soon will be the launch of a toolkit – 'Creative Strategies for Personal Debriefing' – authored by Stuart Andrews and Patrick Duggan, and will feature in the Autumn issue of *Resilience*.

In addition, within the next month the EPS Human Aspects & Community Resilience Group will be asking for feedback on some good practise guides they have developed, prior to launching these at the above events. The guides are:

- *Code of Respect 2022*

Addresses issues in relation to respect for people affected by emergencies when using personal material in training, social media or publications.

- *Human Aspects Advice in Emergencies – a Handbook 2022*

Guidance for those seeking advice and those providing it.

- *HAG+CR 'TOP 10 Key Human Aspects Principles' in Emergencies 2022*

Guidance and Infographic about what should drive a joined up, timely, appropriate and compassionate response to the needs of people affected by emergencies.

EPS member awarded BEM



EPS member James Bertram has been honoured in the recent Birthday Honours Lists by Her Majesty the Queen.

James has been involved in Emergency Planning for over 20 years. He was previously an Associate Course Director at the Emergency Planning College where he was instrumental in writing an early course for Fire Risk Assessment.

James is now the national Health and Safety Manager for Police Scotland and leads a team covering all aspects of safety including providing a 24/7 response to operational safety at significant incidents. James said: "I am honoured to have been recognised by Her Majesty The Queen and to be awarded the British Empire Medal in the Birthday Honours List.

"I received a citation for Services to Policing and for my voluntary role with the Scottish Ambulance Service in recognition of 15 years' Service as a First Responder based in Largs."

New role for CCGs

THE government has introduced the new Health and Care Act, bringing in Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) into 42 areas of England, which became fully operational in July 2022.

Under the Health and Care Act, the former Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have been absorbed into the ICSs – specifically into their Boards (ICBs).

Each ICB will take on the commissioning and funding responsibilities that formerly sat with their local CCGs.

ICBs will also be responsible for broader aims such as strategic planning for their area.

Two new 'resilient cities' announced

MATOSINHOS in Portugal and the Province of Potenza in Italy are the latest areas to be recognised as 'Resilience Hubs' by *Making Cities Resilient 2030* (MCR2030), an initiative coordinated by 11 core partners.

The announcement was made during the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction event in May, convened by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).

Resilience Hubs are cities, municipalities or local authorities that have political and technical commitment to take actions to address disaster and climate risks. Cities or local authorities participating in the MCR2030 can be recognized as Resilience Hubs, for a period of three years, which can be renewed.

Matosinhos is the first city in Portugal to become a Hub and has introduced a number of initiatives to minimise the severity of disasters, including a 10-year 'Zero Fires' strategy to prevent forest fires. Last year, the city experienced only 24 fires compared to 108 in 2015.

The city also carried out more than 3,000 community awareness campaigns between 2009 and 2019, and last year created the Matosinhos Safety Home, where the public



can learn about the risks of everyday life through simulations.

Meanwhile, the Province of Potenza, which covers 100 municipalities, has established a permanent network for regional coordination around disaster risk reduction.

It has become a national role model for its Provincial Civil Protection System, which includes a seismic monitoring network that has been integrated into the Italian Strong Motion Network (RAN) since 2014. The region was among those affected by the 6.6-magnitude Irpinia earthquake, which impacted 15,000 people in the south of Italy in 1980. The Province of Potenza has pledged to share its experience with the broader MCR2030 network by peering with local governments, cities and communities that intend to undertake similar resilience journeys.

'It's a fair prop, guv'



THE street was filled with police cars, officers running around, cameras.... Is a major incident under way?

Then you spot the blue tape on the 'police cars'. When police cars are being used as props the police logo must be obscured, so the public know they are not operational.

So not a major crime scene after all, but the filming in Birmingham city centre of the latest series of the TV crime drama, *DI Ray*.

Are current resilient structures 'fit for the next 20 years?'

The National Preparedness Commission was amongst those who contributed their thoughts on the future of resilience, as part of the call for views and evidence by the government, as it undertook the five yearly review of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the development of the National Resilience Structure, earlier this year.

The NPC was formed in November 2020 to promote better preparedness for major crises and incidents. The Lead Editor for their submission, *An Independent Review of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and its supporting arrangements*, was Bruce Mann, the former Director of the Civil Contingencies Secretariat in the Cabinet Office.

The key question, the NPC said, was 'are current resilience arrangements fit for the next 20 years?'

The key recommendations in their review were:

- Need for a major investment in skills, and new arrangements to check that people and emergency response teams at all levels are competent.
- Fundamentally reboot the training system, including creating a Centre of Resilience Excellence (CORE).
- Creating proper partnership arrangements which involve all the people, voluntary organisations and businesses who can contribute. Covid-19 showed what a true 'Whole of Society' response could look like

- Publish more information on risks and their consequences to enable families, communities and businesses to be better prepared.
- Give people affected by emergencies a voice in developing policy and operational practice.
- Remove people's concerns around data protection that is stopping the sharing of personal data and hindering people getting the support they need when they need it.
- Increased funding to strengthen local partnerships.
- Designate the National Security Adviser (or Deputy) as UK Government Chief Resilience Officer with personal accountability for what is done to build UK resilience.
- Create a single dedicated national body to lead and drive the improvements needed with a clear mandate, authority and resources.
- Better recognise the role of metro mayors in a crisis, as a clearly visible local leadership figure, with significant agency and authority.

A key contributor to the report has been the voluntary and community sector



There is a need for major investment in skills for the emergency response say the NPC

(VCS), which has a raft of experience in providing support to public authorities in recent crises, from the Grenfell Tower fire and the Manchester and London terror attacks of 2017, to Covid-19 and Storm Arwen.

These events exposed clear gaps in the support available to impacted communities both in the immediate aftermath of a crisis and in the longer-term. The VCS is broadly united in calling on the Government to seize this moment, when so much has been learned during the pandemic, to develop a 'whole of society' approach to resilience and future risks, ensuring emergency systems and structures are aligned and responsive to people's needs, wherever in the UK they live.

'Resilience has been allowed to drift over the past decade'

The Review levels some criticism at successive governments, with the authors hearing powerful evidence of weaknesses in the way some departments discharged their responsibilities during the pandemic, and in the level of their knowledge, skills and training. The original Act in 2004 had a local focus, but the report makes clear that in a world where more national-scale emergencies are likely, central government needs to be held to the same standards as local bodies and partnerships.

Bruce Mann said: "Over the last 20 years, the UK's resilience arrangements have undergone several reforms, often in response to major emergencies. Local statu-

tory bodies and Resilience Partnerships are doing excellent work, despite limited resources. But successive governments have allowed the pace of development to drift over the past decade and quality to decay. Unlike counter terrorism and cyber security, UK resilience has suffered strategic neglect and now has some serious weaknesses.

"Recovery will need action at two levels. First, there is a need to improve the quality and sustainability of current arrangements. Then we believe that a further, more radical transformation will be needed. This will include putting more effort into preventing emergencies arising in the first place, in-

cluding 'designing resilience in' to our communities, to our infrastructure and to our policies at local and national level. And central government needs to recognise its responsibilities; Covid-19 has shown it has vital leadership and operational roles to fulfil. It needs to have duties in law; be tested against quality standards; and be held to account for its performance.

"With emergencies likely to happen more frequently and have greater impacts on people, the economy and the environment, it's vital that the Government recognises the urgent need to make the UK's resilience arrangements fit for the world the UK is moving into."



Grenfell - five years on

■ The Grenfell fire 14 June 2017 left 72 people dead

This summer sees the fifth anniversary of the Grenfell Tower fire, as the public enquiry rumbles on for a further year.

The tragedy left 72 people dead. The fire began when a refrigerator caught fire in one of the flats, but was exacerbated by the 23 storey residential block being covered in inflammable cladding and unsuitable insulation. The fire spread over 20 floors in just 18 minutes.

So far the enquiry has witnessed 400 days of testimony, and 300,000 documents studied. It is clear the main culprits were the Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding tiles which included highly flammable polyethylene plastic, which in turn ignited the polyisocyanurate foam insulation in the building.

The Grenfell enquiry first focused on the response of the London Fire Brigade. There was some disquiet at this, as many questioned why the enquiry was the 'wrong way round' – most enquiries look first at the cause, and then at the response, because unless you know what caused the incident, how can you judge whether the response was wrong?

The LFB were criticised for initially relying on their usual response to multi-storey social housing calling on tenants to stay put, and over an hour was lost in evacuating people. Since Grenfell however, the LFB have trained over 4,500 of their firefighters in high-rise fires, improved 999 Control Room links, and has invested in 15 ultra-long ladders as well as smoke hoods for residents.

The inquiry though has yet to get a definitive decision on who is responsible for use of the ACM cladding and insulation on the building, which was the cause of such an inferno – the plastic filling in the ACM, the enquiry heard, begins to drip at 130 degrees C, and ignite at 377 degrees C – temperatures at Grenfell exceeded 1000 degrees C.

The enquiry has also heard criticism of government departments responsible for housing regulations – a review had been promised after the fire at Lakanal House in Southwark, which killed six people in 2009, but which successive Housing Ministers delayed delivering.

Indeed, of the 366,000 most dangerous flats with inflammable cladding and insulation identified after Grenfell, five years on only 21,000 have been made safe. Meanwhile, as the *Sunday Times Magazine* points out, the manufacturers involved in the case have in the past five years made profits of £6.5 billion between them.

The victims and their families in comparison, have not received a penny in compensation, and cannot do so until the Grenfell Enquiry reaches its final conclusions in its report promised for next year, which will also determine if there is a criminal case to answer.

How the cladding got to be passed as 'Class O' standard

The *Sunday Times Magazine* (12 June 2022) carried out a major investigation based on the papers submitted so far to the enquiry.

The problem appears to have arisen from poor and unclear building regulations, which in turn were exploited by the three cladding and insulation companies involved.

The first tests on the type of cladding used on Grenfell were carried out by the

privatised Building Research Establishment in 2001, and completely failed. Yet the cladding was still in commercial circulation because of a loophole in the regulations, which the *Sunday Times Magazine* said, included:

"... the widely misunderstood Class O standard, which rates how fast fire spreads on a material's surface – not how flammable the whole product is. It meant that a highly flammable core (such as the plastic

inside the ACM cladding) could be coated with a thin fireproof surface (the ACM's aluminium facing) and pass as safe for tall buildings. The ACM that burnt so disastrously in the government test met Class O, so was legal to fit on high-rise homes."

Indeed, this loophole was not closed until December 2018, 18 months after the Grenfell tragedy.

Environment Agency delivers warning on coastal erosion

At this year's Flood & Coast event in Telford in June, the head of the Environment Agency warned that not all communities can be saved from coastal erosion, and that it would be more effective to move communities rather than look at further coastal defence.

Environment Agency Chief Executive Sir James Bevan said: "While we can come back safely and build back better after most river flooding, there is no coming back for land that coastal erosion has taken away or which a rising sea level has put permanently or frequently under water.

"Which means that in some places the right answer – in economic, strategic and human terms – will have to be to move communities away from danger rather than to try and protect them from the inevitable impacts of a rising sea level."

The UK has some of the fastest eroding coastlines in Europe. Of the mainland's 17,000km of coastline, around 2,900km - 17 per cent - is affected by erosion.



■ Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive of the Environment Agency

Sir James Bevan said that the "hardest of all inconvenient truths" was that "in the long term, climate change means that some of our communities - both in this country and around the world - cannot stay where they are".

He said however, it was "far too early to say which communities are likely to need to move in due course, still less make any decisions". But he added that "when we do eventually get to decisions on any relocation of communities, they must take full account of the views of the people who live there: no one should be forced from their homes against their will".

At the event, Sir James launched a new roadmap setting out how it aims to tackle



■ The Environment Agency at the recent Flood & Coast event in Telford

the growing threat of flooding from rivers, the sea, and surface water as well as coastal erosion.

It aims to protect new homes from flooding, safeguard vital infrastructure such as roads and railways and develop long term plans to manage what the Environment Agency describes as "future flooding and coastal change".

Sir James praised a new partnership between the agency and Defra called the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme, which is exploring "innovative approaches to coastlines where the coastal erosion challenges are really significant".

The importance of behavioural skills during incidents

EVIE WHATLING of JBA, sole supplier to the Environment Agency's Incident Management Training and Exercising (IMTE) Framework, explains why behavioural skills adopted during incident response and emergency management are crucial elements of effective incident management.

We work with a range of private and public sector organisations to train, exercise and evaluate emergency plans and incident response within a safe environment, helping to maintain and enhance levels of emergency preparedness and response.

As part of our role as sole supplier to the Environment Agency's Incident Management Training and Exercising (IMTE) Framework, we work to establish a baseline capability for all incident management roles and identify improvement plan options.

What are non-technical skills?

The human and behavioural skills adopted during incident response and emergency management are crucial elements of effective incident management.

Such behavioural (or non-technical) skills are defined as the underlying human skills which support incident response and are an essential aspect of emergency management.

Core non-technical skills include:



- situational awareness (how we build our understanding of the incident)
- decision-making
- Communications
- Leadership (continued overleaf) ▶



■ This year's Flood & Coast event in June, was held once again in Telford. The event attracted exhibitors, speakers and visitors from around the world to advance the debate about the impacts of climate change on flood and coastal erosion risk management, and discussing innovative ways of working together with the communities most affected by flooding

- Teamwork
- emotional resilience

Yet these can easily be taken for granted and hence are often overlooked. Without such skills, there is the potential to adversely impact the outcome of any incident.

While clear plans and procedures are fundamental to ensure we are prepared for a potential incident, a plan can never anticipate all potential outcomes or impacts of an incident. As a result, non-technical skills have been identified as the central theme for the training framework across all of the EA's incident cells and roles.

The Incident Management Training and Exercising Framework has been designed to take participants through a capability enhanced journey, whether they are new to an incident role or experienced. The programme has been split to provide equal opportunities between taught learning and self-development activities.

The programme is also progressive in nature, allowing for all individuals to gain an overview of the core non-technical skills, before utilising them in fictitious incident scenarios.

Why do they matter?

Post-incident investigations frequently identify communication as a key area for improvement, whether that be due to a failure in communication technology, or

because of unclear messaging which causes misinterpretation.

Non-technical skills are often overlooked as an area of improvement, leaving vulnerabilities in the resilience of individuals and the whole response team.

Training and exercising non-technical skills helps to build the awareness and confidence of incident responders, strengthening the capability of responders to manage unexpected changes during an incident.

Specifically focusing on these skills helps responders to anticipate potential risks and build a shared understanding of the incident with others involved.

This can also help reduce misinterpretation in communications; help individuals fully engage with the decision-making process and strengthen the relationship between the leader and team. Focusing on these skills can also help to increase the wellbeing and emotional resilience of personnel.

How do we improve these skills?

Non-technical skills are universal and independent of technical expertise. This allows for training to address any environment, any incident and in response to all risks.

Non-technical skills are the focus of the nine-unit training programme which has been delivered to over 400 EA Tactical and Strategic Incident Management staff for the past two years.

To train these skills, it is important to firstly describe and explore the process behind how non-technical skills operate in an incident, whilst identifying common barriers or challenges in the implementation of these skills. For example, responders might become complacent when responding to the same incident on a frequent basis.

Acknowledging barriers means actions can be taken to identify and address them.

Secondly, developing an exercise where these skills can be explored in isolation, away from plans and processes, helps to focus on incident personnel and their development. As these skills are universal and not dependent on technical expertise, training and exercising scenarios can be developed to address any environment, any incident and in response to all risks.

A technique we have frequently used is to exercise responders through a fictional incident that they have no experience in.

By exercising incident staff away from a familiar environment, previous experience, preconceptions, and biases that may distract them from the use and development of these skills are removed.

To help focus on these skills further, it is important to have assessment frameworks and capability standards in place to ensure observations from facilitators are not influenced by their own biases, preferences, and misinterpretations.

These frameworks also allow for incident responders to reflect on their skills and to personally prioritise their own development.

Benefits of training and exercising

These benefits are seen from participants who attend the Environment Agency's Incident Management Training Programme where we train these core non-technical skills to incident responders at a Tactical and Strategic level.

Investing in non-technical skills can help reduce the impacts of an incident and can help to get 'ahead of the curve'. Early deployment, early assessments and strong situational awareness all help in mitigating impacts, ensuring response actions are appropriate to the scale of the incident and risks, minimising resource pressures and setting recovery actions sooner.

Want to know more?

For more information about developing behavioural skills in emergency management and incident response please contact Evie Whatling at: www.jbaconsulting.com

Salisbury – the toughest challenge

By Darren Nugent

TRACEY Merrifield is Head of Emergency Preparedness Resilience & Response (EPRR) for Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust. In 2018 she supported the hospitals tactical and strategic commanders during the Salisbury Novichok incidents and represented the Trust at the multiagency recovery groups. Tracey was the guest speaker at a recent meeting of the EPS Yorkshire and Humber Branch, which was opened up to the wider EPS membership via MS Teams and generated immense interest.

We had many enquiries for information from members that could not join the presentation. After the meeting I contacted Tracey and she willingly agreed to participate in an interview for *Resilience* magazine.

The Novichok incidents of 2018 put Salisbury and the hospital on the front pages world-wide. How prepared were you as a Trust to deal with the unique situation that you faced?

SALISBURY is only a small market town with a population of around 46,000, although it is now infamous for its 123m high Cathedral spire and muddy wet snow! As a Trust I envisaged a supporting role to Southampton Hospital as our major Trauma Centre when responding to a major incident. Did I ever envisage our small district hospital to be the focus of national and international attention? No, I did not!

But we had been busy prior to the incident, with lots going on in the background

regarding preparedness, particularly in relation to the Ebola outbreaks in Africa which put us in a good position of CBRN preparedness. We are well drilled in CBRN PPE dressing and undressing, with established clean and dirty lines and isolation facilities. These drills and protocols can be applied to biological agent or radiation threats, whether terrorist or public health related.

In 2016, we were not fully compliant with NHS England EPRR core standards so over the next two years we established training projects that included our CBRN trainer with 35 years of military CBRN experience who at the time had a dual role – this gave us a foot in the door with the Ministry of Defence's Defence Science and

Tracey

Merrifield is Head of EPRR for the Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust, and works with a small team of dedicated EPRR



Officers who joined the Trust post 2018.

She has worked in the NHS for 20 years, joining Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust in 2002. Tracey has worked in a variety of roles including positions in the Wessex Genetics Laboratories, Project Manager in Operations which involved working on capital building projects, Project Manager in Informatics linking between the technical teams and the end user, rolling out projects in maternity and cancer services.

In 2008 she supported the EPRR role to the Trust's EPRR lead, alongside the Project Manager role and obtained the Diploma in Health Emergency Planning and the Certificate in Business Continuity (CBCI).

In April 2016 she was appointed full time EPRR Manager, and is an active member of the Local Health Resilience Partnership (LHRP) and the Resilience (now EPRR) National Patient Advisory Group (NPAG) and, as well as the Novichok incident, supported commanders during the recent Salisbury rail crash and continues to be involved with the tactical response to COVID-19.

The events of 4 March 2018

ON 4 March 2018, Sergei Skripal, a former Russian military officer and double agent for the British intelligence agencies, and his daughter, Yulia Skripal, were poisoned in Salisbury,

The UK and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), say they were poisoned by a Novichok nerve agent. Both Sergei and Yulia Skripal spent several weeks in hospital in a critical condition, before being discharged. A police officer, Nick Bailey, was also taken into intensive care after attending the incident, and was later discharged.

The UK government accused Russia of attempted murder and announced a series of punitive measures against Russia,

including the expulsion of diplomats.

On 30 June 2018, a similar poisoning of two British nationals in Amesbury, seven miles north of Salisbury, involved the same nerve agent.

Charlie Rowley found a perfume bottle, later discovered to contain the agent, in a litter bin somewhere in Salisbury and gave it to Dawn Sturgess who sprayed it on her wrist.

Sturgess fell ill within 15 minutes and died on 8 July, but Rowley, who also came into contact with the poison, survived.

On 5 September 2018, UK authorities identified two Russian nationals, using the names Alexander Petrov and Ruslan Boshirov, as suspected of the Skripals' poisoning.



■ The regular media scrum outside of Salisbury hospital during the protracted incident



Technology Laboratory (DSTL) at Porton Down, which is only six miles away.

We called for volunteers from across the hospital to be trained in decontamination and CBRN PPE to undertake supporting roles for our Emergency Department CBRN team and, significantly, we conducted a CBRN exercise in September 2017, and we became fully compliant with the NHS EPRR core standards. So, looking back, a lot had been done to prepare us for what came along.

When you arrived at work on 5 March 2018, how did the incident unfold? Were you expecting a normal day in the office?

No, not at all. The weekend before we had been in the thick of the ‘Beast from the East’ severe weather incident response. Salisbury Hospital is on top of a hill and the blizzard made access very difficult – the snow plough could not reach us because of the abandoned cars blocking its path on the hill. I was expecting to be involved with the recovery from the ‘Beast from the East’, but on my way in to work I was called by the hospital’s Chief Operating Officer (COO) directing me to open the Incident Coordination Centre (ICC) and to set up an initial incident meeting.

As I arrived, I was hearing rumours of Russian Spies being on site - the initial two casualties, Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia,

had arrived about 5.30pm the afternoon before.

We declared a multi-agency major incident that morning at 10:10am and within three hours the press arrived – they filled a number of car park areas on the site and parked on the grass verges approaching the hospital.

The Police Officer casualty was admitted the following day. Other points were that Counter Terrorism Policing took over the investigation from Wiltshire Police the next day, we had a visit from the Home Secretary and then later, the Prime Minister. Sergei was the last casualty to be discharged on 17 May.

We stood down from the major incident on 23 May – at 80 days this was the longest

running major incident in the history of the NHS, until Covid came along.

And then, of course, you had to declare another major incident in July with the sad death of Dawn Sturgess.

Yes, that second incident had added difficulties due to a heatwave at the time. We had a number of personnel almost passing out in the CBRN PPE due to the heat and the confined spaces teams were working within the hospital template. A major incident was declared on 3 July. Dawn sadly died on 8 July, we treated her friend who had also been exposed to the Novichok - he was discharged on 20th July. The Trust had stood down from the major incident the day ▶

‘Taking place over 80 days, until Covid came along, it was the longest running major incident in the history of the NHS’



■ The entrance to Salisbury District hospital - about to become internationally famous



■ One of the many press conferences held throughout the incident

before, another 17 days in response mode.

From an emergency planning point of view what are some of the features or challenges?

Adaptability has been a key feature that helped get us through these incidents. We activated the Incident Command Centre (ICC) but had to change location four times for a variety of reasons, such as security and ensuring the hospital could function in a

'business as usual' manner. But we managed it with little fuss. We have quite a large pool of trained loggists, and these were used throughout from the point of the declaration of the major incident. We only used six loggists from a pool of forty – once they were in the flow of the incident it was sensible to keep it to a small number, due to the sensitivity of the incident and due to the fact that the incident was not as fast paced as I imagine a mass casualty incident would be; the loggist worked longer shifts for these reasons and two loggists covered long days.

Our emergency plan had been written for

'The second incident coincided with a heatwave, and we had several personnel pass out, when working in their CBRN PPE in the confined spaces of the hospital'

major and mass casualty incidents – this was different, but the plan was dynamic and fluid enough to adapt to this situation.

Communication was challenging, and more so as it became a counter-terrorist investigation. Digital and mobile forms of communication were no longer allowed – it had to be by analogue telephony (at both ends), and in some circumstances it had to be face to face only. This is one to bear in mind as we, and I am sure many organisations, are gradually shifting to an almost complete digital system away from analogue.

Another issue we had to deal with was the disposal of the contaminated property and waste materials. DSTL and the military assisted with its removal following the submission of a Military Assistance to a Civilian Authority request – the MACA process took time to arrange, some of which was due to unfamiliarity of the forms we were required to submit and a new process which I had ▶

Whatever happened to the Skripals?

By Darren Nugent

It is four years since Sergei and Yulia Skripal were discovered unconscious on a bench in Salisbury and spending weeks in Salisbury Hospital receiving critical care.

Two Russian agents, Anatoly Chepiga (a GRU colonel) and Alexander Mishkin, travelled to the UK under false names to assassinate Sergei Skripal in March 2018. Sergei was also a past member of the GRU when he was recruited by MI6 in the 1990s.

The agents successfully poisoned Sergei, along with his daughter, Yulia, with the nerve agent, Novichok.

But, the swift actions of passers-by in alerting the emergency services and the efficient and professional response saved the Skripals' lives.

Dawn Sturgess, an innocent victim unrelated in any way with the Skripals, sadly died a few months later after coming in contact with the discarded Novichok.

The Kremlin denied allegations that it sent GRU military intelligence officers to kill Mr Skripal.

So, what has happened to the Skripals since?

As you might expect, having had one nearly successful assassination attempt on your life that also put your daughter at serious risk, Sergei Skripal doesn't keep a high profile of his whereabouts on social media.

The *Times* reported that a senior government source confided that the Skripals had set up a new life in New Zealand – so that is probably the one country in the world where they are definitely not residing. I interpret that as clear misinformation which leaves us with a choice of 192 other countries to choose from (I also excluded Russia and Belarus).

Understandably, we won't (or shouldn't) know where they are staying, but has there been any news on the Skripals since they were discharged from hospital? Well,

it would seem that Sergei keeps in contact with his neighbours in Salisbury.

The *Times* reported that Mo and Ross Cassidy received a Christmas card from their old neighbours, though they could not return their season's greetings as the card excluded a return address.

There are also reports that Yulia Skripal has been in contact with her cousin, Victoria, in Russia. The *Times* reported that an apparent transcript of the conversation was published in a Russian tabloid, *Moskovsky Komsomolets*, in which Yulia states that her father received a tracheotomy as a result of the attack and requires a tracheal tube to breathe.

Yulia had contacted Victoria at the behest of her father to enquire as to his mother's health. At the time Yelena was in good health at 92 years of age. The *Daily Mirror* newspaper subsequently reported that Sergei's mother, Yelena, died in a Russian hospital in January this year as a result of Covid.

not activated before. A learning point for us is to consider having MACA templates pre-populated with our generic information in advance.

Was site security at the hospital enhanced?

When the casualties first arrived, we didn't know their background, we had their names, and it appeared an odd situation and were convinced something awry.

A member of staff searched the name on the internet and following discussions with partners it was realised the international implications of the incident – with this information and the clinical findings we were considering a potential case of targeted poisoning.

As it became a Counter-Terrorism investigation further enhanced security measures were put in place. The analogue or face to face only communication requirement was part of this.

I can't go into too much about the security measures, but all members of staff had

their ID badges checked at all briefings and regularly on an ad-hoc basis. This was necessary as we had some attempts made by individuals pretending to be supporting professionals, trying to get close to the patients.

We even had drones attempting to fly into some of the hospital courtyards - we countered this by having some windows blacked out.

At what stage did you move into the recovery phase?

Many of our partners initiated recovery as soon as the incident started. I was moved into recovery when the incident was shut down at the hospital and represented the Trust at several recovery cell meetings.

The recovery phase lasted for over a year, mainly due to the process around dealing with the contaminated waste and getting the sites within the city which had been closed in the centre reopened.

Darren Nugent

has been involved professionally with disasters and Disaster Victim



Identification (DVI) since 2001 when he responded to the Selby rail crash at Great Heck, Yorkshire. He became a DVI responder a year later.

After two decades Darren is now a DVI trainer with the College of Policing. His portfolios include: Disaster Victim Identification; JESIP; and Structured Debriefing. He is the Deputy Chair of the EPS Yorkshire Branch.

Looking back at the incident what are your personal reflections?

I was working on the first incident constantly for 80 days, it was exhausting but, whenever I stepped away my professional curiosity urged me to get back to work. It was an emotional rollercoaster that you simply cannot escape from. One evening I went to a restaurant over 30 miles away from Salisbury for a couple of hours respite, but diners at a nearby table were talking about the Salisbury incident – I couldn't get away from it.

Working side by side with a team for 80 days non-stop does test relationships – both internally and externally, but ultimately this has led to new and enhanced relationships and makes our resilience stronger within our local patch.

But throughout the incident my feelings were of pride, privilege and humility. I am proud of what the hospital achieved, the team effort throughout the response, including maintaining business as usual under the huge pressures. It was a privilege to play a key part, working within the Counter-Terrorism bubble of confidentiality. It was a humbling experience that ultimately made me a stronger person and gave me a unique experience within EPRR and put EPRR into the spotlight.

Tracey, that has been insightful, on behalf of the Emergency Planning Society thank you for taking time to share your experiences with us.

■ The media from around the world camped out outside the hospital



CYBER-CRIME

A look at the work of the ROCUs

The Russian invasion of Ukraine provided a timely back-drop to a presentation on cyber-crime to the EPS North West branch by **Louisa Murphy** of the North West Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) in March.

She explained that cyber-crime was part of the 'Russia Playbook', which could only intensify with the beginning of open military conflict.

Indeed, Sir Jeremy Fleming, director of GCHQ, has warned that: "We've seen sustained intent from Russia to disrupt Ukrainian government and military systems. We've seen what looks like some spill over of activity affecting surrounding countries. And we've certainly seen indications which suggests Russia's cyber actors are looking for targets in the countries that oppose their actions" (*Independent*, 10 May 2022).

Much of Louisa's presentation though looked at the work of the ROCUs, and how we can make our organisations more resilient to the threat.

With the National Crime Agency and the City of London Police at its head, there are 10 ROCUs across England and Wales that have a range of specialist policing capabilities, including a dedicated cyber security team that works with businesses, organisations, and communities to promote the steps that reduce the chances of becoming a victim of cyber crime.

The ROCUs, and their counterparts in Scotland and Northern Ireland, regularly work with SMEs, charities, and representative organisations in response to specific threats and can provide support in the event of a cyber incident, irrespective of whether a formal police investigation exists.

There were particular issues for larger public sector organisations. One such threat was ensuring there was good back-up to save data. She cited the example of a school in Liverpool that was hacked and then re-



■ The West Midlands Police Regional Cyber Crime Unit at this year's 'The Security Event', which returned to the NEC in Birmingham in April. The event showcased installers, integrators, manufacturers, distributors and end users within the security sector.

ceived a ransomware threat demanding money for the return of access to their data.

She said: "The school went to its back-up, only to discover that the data back-up took place only every two weeks, and the attack happened the day before the scheduled back-up, causing maximum damage."

Another factor often overlooked by public sector organisations is the security of their supply chains: "How often do we request information about their cyber security?" She urged people to follow the National Cyber Security Centre's '12 Principles to Supply Chain Cyber Security'.

Louisa also explained how the ROCUs work with the Prevent Teams, to help ensure young people are not drawn into becoming cyber-crime perpetrators.

She said: "The Prevent teams will work with individuals - stereotypically they are younger males, but they will work with a

whole host of people who are on the periphery of committing cyber offences.

"It might be something as simple as where a young lad who is into gaming, and he wants to knock his gaming mate off line, because his opponent is winning everything.

"They might buy a package online and use it to knock their mates off. That is actually an offence under the Computers Misuse Act 1990.

"So, the Prevent teams will work with these young people to try to divert them away from that cybercrime."

'Public sector organisations had two particular tasks to help avoid cyber-crime - making sure they have good data back-up, and checking the security of their supply chain'

RAYNET - a valuable resource when the phones go down

An important resource during a major incident when communications are taken out, is RAYNET-UK.

RAYNET was formed in 1953 following the severe floods of the East coast, to utilise the valuable resource that Amateur Radio – the country's army of 'radio hams' - is able to provide to the community.

Since then, it has grown into a very active organisation with around 2,000 members, providing communication assistance on many hundreds of events each year.

The EPS Communications PWG has been looking at the lessons for communications from Storm Arwen, where loss of communications was one issue after the storm wracked large parts of Scotland.

As such, it invited Cathy Clark, Chair of RAYNET, to address its March meeting. Amateur Radio operators have access to a wide range of radio bands, operating modes and equipment which allows RAYNET to offer a unique range of emergency communication services to their user services. Coupled with their members endless resourcefulness, RAYNET is regarded as a professional support organisation by both the statutory and volunteer emergency service organisations.

When discussing Storm Arwen, Cathy said that while most of the UK was well covered by RAYNET's 2,000 members, there were gaps in Scotland. She said: "There are 10 groups in Scotland – they are all based around population centres such as Glasgow or Fife etc, and then we have the outposts like Shetlands and the Orkneys, although we're not particularly strong the Highlands.

"For Storm Arwen, most RAYNET groups were alerted quite early - we knew it was coming, we had seen the Met Office reports. But we didn't know the extent of how we would be used.

"In the end, we deployed but were not actually used, as communications began to hold up."

Cathy explained the procedures for bring



-ing RAYNET in: "We are usually alerted to a problem by local authorities, the police or fire services - anyone who thinks that communications are under threat of failing, from either floods, power loss, or loss of mobile phone coverage.

"The main thing is that we are alerted early enough so that we can get our groups together. We have over 300 groups throughout the country – some areas are better covered than others.

"We need a good half hour's notice to ensure we can get the batteries charged on the radios and that sort of thing, even if we are then stood down, as happened in Storm Arwen."

She described a typical deployment: "The RAYNET group will most likely know the local terrain and what is feasible. They will usually turn up with a vehicle, with an ariel on it. If something more sophisticated is needed, then it might be a portable mast, and then just a power supply, a radio on a table and we are off and running."

The main concern of RAYNET is that they are often way down on the list of priorities for emergency planners – until something goes wrong, of course. Cathy said: "Interestingly, after a storm or other event, we get a flood of enquiries where people have lost contact with RAYNET – 'yes, it's in our emergency plan, but we need a bit of a refresher on it'.

She added: "A lot of local authorities don't call us out quick enough even if there is a threat of communications becoming overloaded, or a complete shut down. A

The move towards data transfer

DURING the discussion, Cathy was asked if RAYNET was capable of largescale data transfer.

She said RAYNET was still primarily a 'voice only' service, but a project was underway in Lothian and Fife.

The **Forth Estuary Experimental Data Network** – or 'FEEDNET' - is a project with the aim of developing a MESH data network covering the Forth Estuary and its environs.

FEEDNET is being built and managed by radio amateurs, the majority of them members of RAYNET.

It is a means for RAYNET to provide its services to its users. These services comprise file sharing facilities, email, webcams, IRC (Internet Relay Chat) and a VOIP telephone service accessible across the network.

Cathy said: "Its not superfast but they can provide various things a usual internet service could."

To find out more about FEEDNET, to to feednet.org.uk

lot of local authorities have this reliance on mobile phones – should the mobile phones go out, what are you going to do?

"We had a couple of incidences in heavy snow a couple of years ago in Scotland, where the mobile phone mast's dishes just froze up, so they were inoperable. We had to send operators out to the Isle of Aran to go and provide back-up services.

"So make contact with your local RAYNET groups, check those contacts in your emergency plans are up to date and valid, and just establish a working relationship with your local RAYNET group – we work in zones, so at least have the local zonal RAYNET contact to hand."

'The main issue is that we are alerted early enough to get our groups together, and half hour's notice to ensure batteries on the radios are fully charged, even if we are likely to be stood down'

Exercising a Rest Centre Activation plan



On 8 June 2022, the Kirklees Council Emergency Planning Team, alongside Kirklees Active Leisure (KAL), ran a live activation of a rest centre at a local leisure centre.

The primary objective was to validate the site's Rest Centre Activation Plan. The secondary objective was to allow KAL staff and emergency volunteers a training opportunity to familiarise themselves with the processes and roles expected of them in the event of a real-life rest centre activation.

Further to this, it is recognised that leisure centres are an important part of local communities, providing services essential to both physical and mental wellbeing.

Therefore, the exercise looked to further assess the viability of continuing to run the site for service users *alongside* the running of an active rest centre, albeit with some disruption to the normal service users experience.

This exercise allowed both KAL and Kirklees Council to identify key learning points in

By Laura Drew

Public Health Emergency Planning Officer, Kirklees Council

the activation procedures for this, and other Kirklees based, rest centre sites.

There were many notable learning points for us, including :

1 Staff were identifiable by tabards / high visibility vests labelled "staff" or "rest centre staff. Having more role-specific vests / tabards would help in ensuring all roles are filled, have dedicated personnel, and would make it clear to evacuees who they can go to for what issue.

2 The rest centre activated allows pets (cats and dogs) on site to be kept in a separate room from where people are staying. In the case of working pets (e.g., epilepsy alert dogs, guide dogs, hearing dogs, etc.) it may not be suitable to separate them from their owners. However, this may cause

tension with people who are being asked to leave pets in the separate pet area. Scope is needed for an additional space for pet and owner rooms with fair and equal access criteria.

3 Events like this build skills and relationships between staff who may not otherwise meet. It also builds site awareness for people who are unfamiliar

The key players

During the exercise, the following groups of people were involved:

- The Kirklees Council Emergency Planning Team: they designed the exercise, triggered the activation, observed the activation, running and takedown process, and were also on-hand to assist as required. They also had a representative playing the 'media' role to assess how media attention at the site would be managed.
- KAL staff: the leisure centre is managed by KAL. They were responsible for activating the site as a rest centre, initial welcoming and running of the site, and the take-down process to return to business as usual (BAU) use when the rest centre is stood down.
- Emergency Volunteers: these Kirklees Council staff who are signed up to a register and provided with specific training to assist the Emergency Planning Team in the event of an emergency, which included the running of rest centres. In this exercise they played the evacuees (each with a profile provided to test the system e.g., health issues, religious needs, dietary needs, etc). They were also provided an opportunity to complete evacuee paperwork themselves in a role-reversal at the end of the exercise due to one of their real-life assistance roles in an emergency is to complete evacuee registrations at rest centre sites.

with it. Both are invaluable for ensuring a smooth response with open communications allowing a timely and effective activation, running and take-down process.

4 For sites offering paid membership services to the public, membership terms and conditions need to identify that the site is a rest centre. They need to identify that when activated as a rest centre (real life or during an exercise) this may cause last minute cancellations to bookings. They should also clearly outline compensation for these cancellations. ▶



■ Above & Below: getting the Rest Centre ready

EMERGENCY PLANNING



5 Throughout a stay, the needs of evacuees may change. It is key to ensure a role is put in place to be a point of contact for these evacuees and to also check in with them actively throughout their stay.

6 Amendments to role action cards and additional roles / actions to support the smooth activating and running of a rest centre site.

7 Identification of amendments to the overall response plan to ensure it remains fit for purpose. This includes summary scripts for desk and escorting staff (it is easy to get caught up in emotional stories and general chit-chat and miss key points that should be covered) as well as a bullet point list of all points that Emergency Planning can assist with so that requests can be rooted into the wider system as soon as possible (e.g., emergency medical prescriptions).

8 Wider training for all staff (not just those acting as rest centre managers) and the keeping of a log to note who has undergone this training.

9 A log of other key skills e.g., languages, sign language, first aid training, etc. would be useful to support allocation of roles.

Overall, this exercise achieved its objectives of validating the site's Rest Centre Activation Plan and providing staff involved opportunities to develop their own skills and

awareness of running rest centre sites.

It also evidenced that it would be possible to run a rest centre alongside an active business. However, even though the majority of BAU was able to continue, there was some disruption meaning the site had to cancel some classes, close certain areas, and pull some provider services.

Finally, it is commendable to the site as to how well the KAL staff worked together to get the rest centre up and running in a timely manner. Feedback from emergency volunteers of their evacuee experience identified that KAL staff were calm, helpful, organised, and polite which helped people feel at ease.

Live activation exercises running alongside an active business are challenging. There is disruption to BAU and they are resource intensive to deliver and support. However, the learning / skills development, relation-

ship building, awareness raising, and real-life experience that they can generate offer great value and provide realistic situations for validation activities. As such, they will continue to form a key part of Kirklees Council Emergency Planning arrangements for the future.



■ The exercise in full swing

Partnerships at work in Solihull

The remit of Local Government Emergency Planning is vast and difficult to define, and if the correct systems and processes aren't put in place, then almost anything has the potential to be an emergency.

Council Emergency Planners tend to be seen as the professional problem solvers, things that are new or scary tend to get thrown our way to solve and we always have to be on our toes. This has certainly been the case over the past few years.

Solihull Council is an interesting place to be an emergency planner. To an outsider,



By Tom Knibbs
Strategic Enabler for Resilience and Change,
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Solihull is just a leafy suburban borough, most people don't realise that Solihull is home to;

- Birmingham Airport
- the National Exhibition Centre and the

Resorts World Arena

- a busy shopping centre
- some of the UK's busiest motorways
- a river network prone to flooding
- some of the most deprived communities in the UK.

With the emergence of Covid back in February 2020 our profession was put under a microscope like never before and thanks to the big pieces of national infrastructure in Solihull, my team and I found ourselves at the sharp end of regional, national and international crises.

Luckily, we were never alone. We always had the support of our local partners, not just those who form the Local Resilience Forum but our local businesses and our big commercial enterprises including, more often than not, our colleagues at Birmingham Airport.

As an airport hosting authority, the international ramifications from Covid were felt quite quickly here in Solihull. Our first experience of this was back in early March 2020 when British Nationals that were stuck in Oakland, USA, on the *Grand Princess* cruise liner were repatriated back to the UK, via Birmingham Airport.

The repatriation flight was a real challenge and gave us an indication of how difficult the next few years would be, but importantly it also kick-started a partnership response that would go on to be further tested and fine-tuned time & time again.

Looking specifically at our Covid-19 response, our initial learning taught us that: Early engagement with central government colleagues, in particular the Resilience & Emergencies Division (RED) of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities was crucial; often there are multiple government departments involved in these complex responses and the RED team can help to navigate and get the best out of central government by amplifying your key messages.

Whether it's a pandemic or a plane full of evacuees, Local Resilience Forum partners are as reliable as ever and when called upon we can collectively and quickly move into our Strategic and Tactical Coordination space to provide the very best, joined-up support to our local communities.

The voluntary sector, at national, regional and local level are an asset that should not be overlooked. Their dedicated volunteers and ability to reach into local areas is invaluable.

The strength of local commercial partners shouldn't be underestimated and their willingness to step-up and support in

Although we are a relatively small borough, we are proud to have played a big part in supporting the national response to COVID-19. Solihull has been home to some key critical resources that have played a significant part in helping the UK to deal with the ongoing pandemic. Over the last two years we have hosted:

- > A Regional PPE Hub at the NEC
- > The NEC Nightingale Hospital
- > West Midlands and Warwickshire Temporary Mortuary
- > Regional testing centres
- > An Inland Border Facility
- > Local testing centres
- > A direct red-list flights terminal at Birmingham Airport
- > Five Quarantine Hotels
- > Three Asylum Seeker Hotels
- > Welfare stock warehouses
- > Vaccination centres
- > A Nightingale Surge Hub at Solihull Hospital
- > A Strategic Command Centre, as chairs of the multi-agency Strategic Coordination Group



■ Above: A map of the Covid infrastructure in Solihull.
Below: Solihull is an airport hosting authority



Lessons from 'Operation Tipping'

Birmingham Airport was used to repatriate 63 per cent of all those evacuated from Afghanistan, as part of Operation Pitting. Over eight days and 39 flights, Solihull supported evacuees in the most challenging circumstances I've ever experienced in my career to date.

After initially being overwhelmed by the numbers of vulnerable arrivals, we were able to work with partners, again from across the region, both from the commercial and voluntary sectors to provide a reception centre inside Birmingham Airport's South Terminal which included food and welfare provision, a medical facility and a prayer room.

In all, the South Terminal Reception Centre provided assistance (in some cases life-sustaining) to over 8,100 evacuees

I never expected to set up a reception centre in an airport and the logistical challenges were immense, but it was what was needed at the time. The evacuees had both immediate and ongoing support needs, with the initial point of care being at the airport.

But an equally important role being played later by our local quarantine hotels, NHS services and Council resettlement teams, who have been supporting the evacuees ever since.

There was a clear need for all of the partners playing a role in the evacuees journey



to work together as best we could to jointly ensure our duty of care for these people was met. This started with the MOD and the various central government departments, then reached out to agencies at the airport and into local council and health services, who in turn were supported by our local hotels and voluntary sector.

It's important that we learn from challenges like Operation Pitting, even if they might *feel* like one-off major events that we think (or hope) will probably never happen again.

However our learning from Operation Pitting was captured and implemented again, most recently as we established a 'Welcome Point' model for



■ **Top:** members of the Solihull team at Birmingham airport for Operation Tipping, the lessons of which helped with the 'Welcome Point' set up for refugees from Ukraine (above)

evacuees arriving at Birmingham Airport, this time from Ukraine.

Partnerships (continued)

ways that no one would have expected was incredible. For us this meant we could deliver:

- A Nightingale Hospital and PPE stores at the National Exhibition Centre
- Testing & Vaccination Centres in Jaguar and Land Rover warehouses
- At Birmingham Airport; Inland Border Facilities, a regional testing centre, a temporary mortuary and a dedicated terminal for those returning from 'Red List' countries (supported by a network of Managed Quarantine Hotels).

Local Government played a key role in pull-

ing all of these partners together and it was clear that our strength lies in knowing and understanding our people. We found that starting conversations early was key to making sure that we were as prepared as possible for the unforeseen challenges that continued to come our way.

We all understood that we were 'building the planes as we were flying them', so by setting up meetings early we were able to put our heads together, from different disciplines, to create responses and operating models that worked well across multi-agency systems.

The underlying driver for every partner

agency was the desire to do the best for our communities and to truly put people first. The first 18 months of Covid helped us strengthen relationships and build cohesion that in normal times would have taken years to achieve.

We were tested again in August 2021, as Birmingham Airport played a major part in Operation Pitting, the evacuation of British nationals and eligible Afghans from Afghanistan (*see above*).

Although Covid is hopefully now in the rear view mirror, the role of Local Government in emergencies continues to be an imperative one.

DANGER

Beware of Deep Fake

Imagine... you are the business continuity manager and responsible for crisis management in a large, very male-dominated organisation. The CEO has decided to resign after 20 years' service and there are two candidates for the role: the Operations Director, John, and the Human Resources Director, Helen.

The board deliberates and decide to appoint Helen. She will be the first female CEO in the organisation's long history. Most of the organisation agree with the selection as they recognise Helen as a very bright, thoughtful and a competent leader.

However, there is a group of staff, mainly male, who feel John didn't get the job purely because he was male and the board made the decision on political correctness, rather than merit.

For the first month, the job goes well for Helen and she even manages to win over some of her doubters, but she comes in to work one Monday and she feels that the atmosphere has changed slightly.

She goes to visit one of the organisation's depots and as she arrives, she feels that the men are slightly leering at her and there is something not quite right, but just can't work out what it is.

She returns to headquarters and speaks to her closest confidant, her manager. When she tells him about her visit, he looks shifty and embarrassed. She presses the case and reluctantly he pulls out his mobile phone. As she watches the video she goes white – she is watching herself taking part in a full-on porn film.

She knows it is not her, but it looks pretty convincing. You, as the crisis manager, are called into the boardroom and asked for your advice on what to do.

Welcome to the world of deepfakes. We all know how a 'picture paints a thousand words'. There was the grim but iconic picture from the refugee crisis of little Aylan Kurdi lying dead in the sand in Turkey. He was dressed in similar clothes to those which our children wear, which brought



By Charlie Maclean-Bristol

Charlie is one of the founders and Directors of PlanB Consulting.

A former Infantry Captain in the British Army, Charlie has held several emergency planning, business continuity and crisis management positions within the energy and utility industry.

Over the past 12 years, Charlie has delivered business continuity consultancy in six of the world's seven continents.

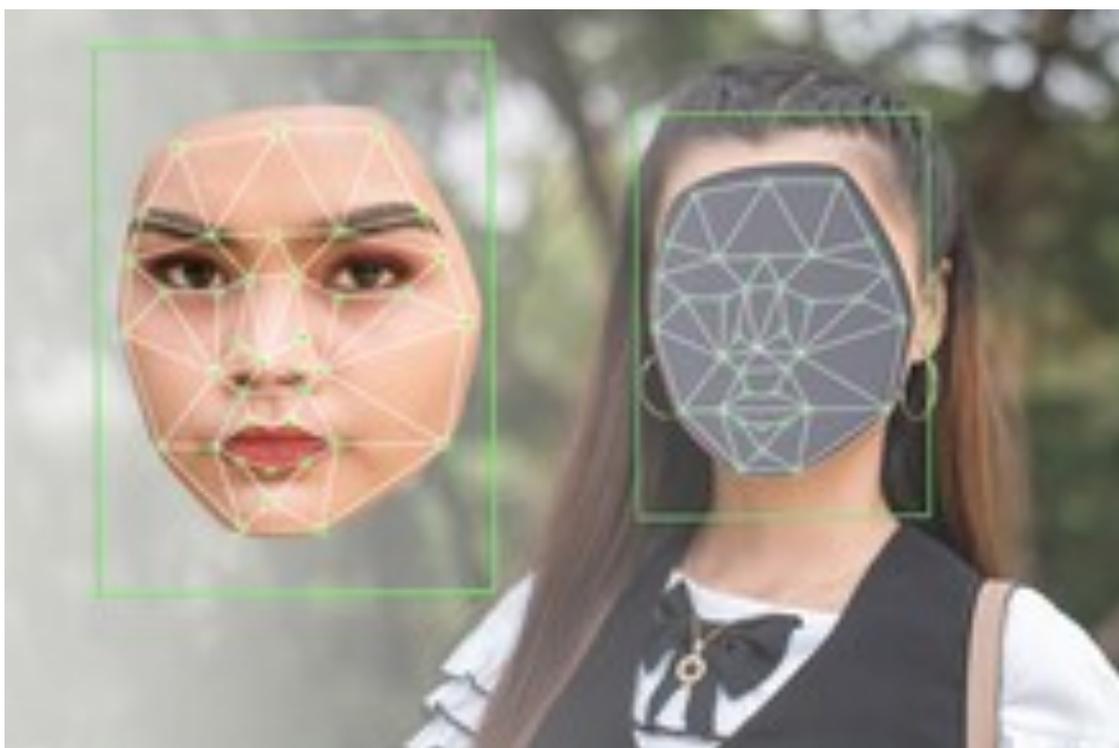
He is a member of the EPS Communications PWG.

home the human cost of the refugee crisis to many in Europe.

Many conflicts have iconic photographs, which have come to symbolise the human cost. Politicians, governments and journalists understand the power of photographs and know that a single photograph can encapsulate a moment much more significantly than thousands of pages of text.

But as long as there have been photographs people have tried to manipulate them, long before Photoshop was created.

The picture from the American civil war, shows General Sherman posing with his generals, and General Blair has been added to the photograph from another sitting. ▶



Deepfakes use a type of technology called 'machine learning' to create a digital version of someone. This maps a person's face and mouth movements so that it can then copy them

Amateur deepfakes can be made using apps or programs, but they can usually be spotted by showing unusual flickering or blurring around someone's face

Technology is advancing however, meaning we need to be on guard for more realistic deepfakes appearing.

DISINFORMATION

Stalin was particularly famous for 'airbrushing' political rivals and colleagues who had fallen from grace. The pictures below shows one of the doctored photos where a commissar was removed after falling out of favour with Stalin.

We used to think that videos could not be easily faked but in the last couple of years with new software, increase in AI and cheap computing power, deepfakes are now much easier to develop and have become more convincing.

Deepfake videos started in the porn industry, with people superimposing the face of a famous actress onto the body of a porn star, but more recently this has included doctoring videos of politicians and celebrities to make them say something completely different.

With the use of actors doing the voice over, computer power to edit their speech and facial expressions and make the mouthed words convincing, you can have a video of pretty much anybody saying anything.

I found an article on deepfakes which had a video of Jeremy Corbyn endorsing Boris Johnson and vice-versa. They look reasonably convincing. We now have the power to make it look like anybody is saying anything, if we put enough time and effort into it.

The cleverest deepfakes play on existing stereotypes or narratives and can be produced to reinforce a cause or to discredit someone.

This brings us back to the story at the beginning of the article. I think it is a difficult situation to deal with. You can ask various social media companies to remove the video but if it has circulated around a number of different platforms, then it is difficult to eradicate.

Does Helen go public and acknowledge and condemn the video and its creator, or does this actually draw attention to it and create further watchers?

I was inspired to write this article by a piece in *The Economist* on deepfakes. Their

article shows how women, especially politicians and journalists, are being undermined by deepfakes, rumours and disinformation by rivals, trolls and governments, to undermine or discredit their authority.

As business continuity people we need to be aware of this risk and perhaps use it as an exercise scenario to explore how your organisation would respond.

- After the American Civil War, General Blair (right) was added to the picture of General Sherman pictured with his other victorious Generals. Less fortunate was Nikolai Yezhov, a senior figure in the early Soviet Union's NKVD (the forerunner of the KGB). After falling from Stalin's favour, he was secretly executed and then airbrushed out of history.

Now you see him...



...now you don't



Don't fall foul of copyright rules

By Bob Wade

Vice Chair, EPS Communications PWG

The Communications PWG is warning EPS members to tread carefully around the rules of copyright.

What's that got to do with emergency planning, you may well ask? Well, a lot of Emergency Planning Units are closely involved with community resilience, and may help produce newsletters or bulletins that then could go up on the web.

You may think that for your little newsletter to a limited group of people, its ok to pinch a picture off the internet or Google Images, right?

Wrong. New technology now means it is easier than ever to trace a source of an image. And there are now agencies - like latter-day 'digital bounty hunters' - doing just that, trawling the internet on behalf of such media organisations as the Press Association, checking up on where their images are ending up and whether the user has paid for them or has a licence to publish it. Several small community organisations and pensioner groups have been caught out.

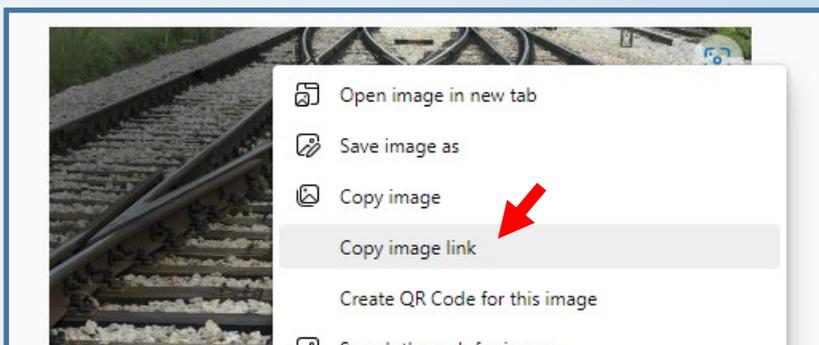
Such groups like those can use the 'Fair Use' defence. 'Fair Use' is a legal doctrine that says you can reuse copyright-protected material under certain circumstances without the copyright owner's permission. Courts rely on four factors to decide Fair Use on a case-by-case basis, including:

- The purpose and character of the use
- The nature of the copyrighted work
- The amount and substantiality of the copyrighted work used
- The effect on the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work'

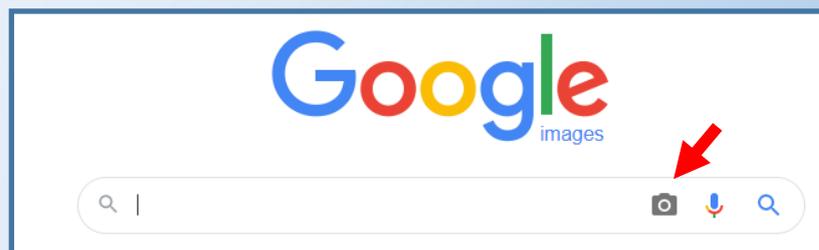
But it is best not to end up in court in the first place. If you don't know the source of a picture on the internet you were hoping to use, always 'Reverse Image Search' it first (see right).

To be on the safe side, always go for copyright free pictures first - put 'Public Domain Images' into your search engine and that will bring up lots of sites that provide copyright free pictures and images you can use. But most of us have cameras on our phones now - the safest pictures to use are always ones you have taken yourself.

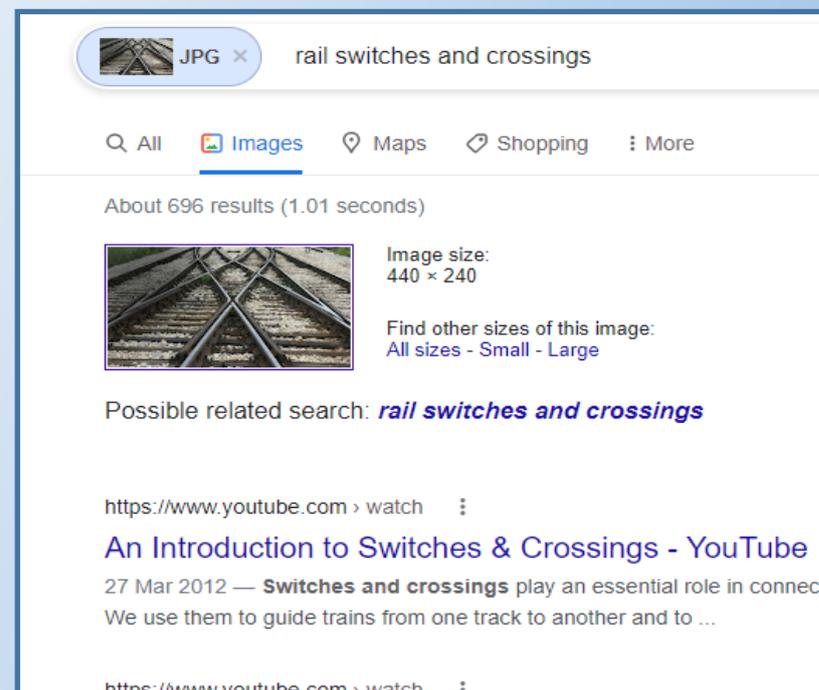
1 You've found a picture you want to use on the internet. But is it safe to use? Right Click on the image and select 'copy image link'.



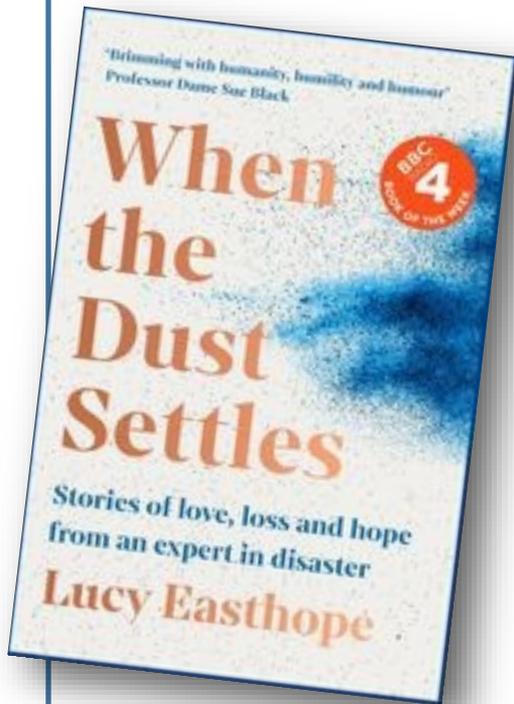
2 Now open Google Images and click onto the little camera icon, and paste in the image link.



3 This will show you the picture's history of how it has been used going all the way back to its original source, so you can work out if it is owned by a major newspaper or Photo Agency, and therefore may be subject to copyright, so best to be avoided.



Disasters from the inside - with compassion and humour



When the Dust Settles

Lucy Easthope
 Hodder & Stoughton;
 March 2022
 ISBN: 9781529358261

By Darren Nugent

My current role takes me all over the UK – week in, week out. To keep me alert whilst accumulating hundreds of miles in hire cars I have discovered the joy of listening to audio books.

A couple of weeks ago, whilst preparing for a 200 plus mile drive I cheered when I saw that Lucy Easthope’s book, *When the Dust Settles*, was available. I quickly bought it and downloaded it ready for my journey.

My joy was enhanced when I realised that Lucy herself was narrating her own story. And what an amazing performance she gives – you can’t tell that she is reading, her full personality that we in the EPS all know and love, simply flows

from the speakers.

Now, I must warn you, this is not the book to listen to when getting ready for a party. Lucy does not hold anything back – she will take you through some harrowing experiences in full graphic detail, and she skilfully sets you up as a reader (or listener) to press those buttons that will turn you cold.

The hairs on the back of my neck warned me early when she described a family visit to Alton Towers and casually mentions the date - you suddenly become alert as you realise what is coming, and Lucy was there!

The Hillsborough disaster, 9/11, the war in Iraq, the Boxing Day tsunami, 7/7 bombings, Grenfell, Covid are just some of the mass fatality events that Lucy dissects from the inside, and compassion for the bereaved is central throughout.

If you want a knowledgeable insight into disaster management (and mismanagement), and how it is influenced by the relationships between the bereaved families, the Police, Local Authorities, other agencies, and private industry, then this book, written by a champion for the families, is definitely for you.

Now you won’t be surprised to hear that, in true Lucy style, the book is full of humour, and I laughed out loud only to follow it up with guilty confusion when I realise what I am laughing at, but the humour works and is placed at the right moments to release tension.

The book is also a life story of her own battles in her personal life, and these insights are just as riveting as her professional stories – deeply personal stories of successive miscarriages (and you can’t help but cheer when she successfully gives birth) and the curious synchronicities of her pilot husband’s professional links with 9/11 and the Tunisian terrorist attacks.

It is a common saying that every day is a school day - no matter how much professional experience you have in disaster management, read this book and learn and, yes, even though you may feel uncomfortable admitting it, be entertained and laugh.

Book Reviews

Editor’s picks

Trouble in Mouseland

CLEVER, satirical and capturing the zeitgeist of working in today’s public sector, *Hector (he works for the Public Sector)* will resonate with all those whose original professionalism is being lost in a world of outputs and targets.

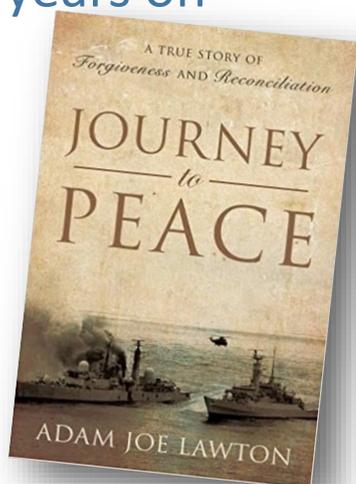
The author, Cathy Kingham, deals with the subject in a novel way, creating a picture book for adults about the life of Hector the mouse. He is delighted when he is assigned a new post with the Cheese Distribution Team at Vermin City Council. Very quickly however, he soon discovers the pressures of undeliverable targets, and becomes increasingly aware of the deteriorating physical and mental health of his colleagues, perpetuated by a dysfunctional, managerialist culture.

The author, basing the picture novel on her own ‘burnout’ experience, says: “This is not a coffee table fable of idealistic hope, but an honest story that is played out daily by millions of UK citizens who are simply trying to do a good job. Hector recognises that burnout is a problem of workplace circumstance and not an individual mental health problem.”



Hector (he works in the public sector)
 Cathy Kingham

Falklands - 40 years on



Journey to peace - a true story of forgiveness and Reconciliation

Adam Joe Lawton
Matador, 2012
ISBN-10 : 1780883188

WITH the 40th anniversary of the Falklands War, it is timely to return to *Journey to Peace*, by Adam Joe Lawton.

The book examines the disturbing effects that war has on young minds, both during conflict and the aftermath, caused by Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. This is a tense, heart-stopping read and a true story of reconciliation and forgiveness.

Adam was one of three 17 year old ratings assigned to *HMS Sheffield*. His first tour with the Royal Navy of the Persian Gulf appeared to fulfil all the promises of the posters in the careers office: sunshine, crystal clear seas and exotic locations. Not only that, but the tour was ending just in time for shore leave for his 18th birthday.

Instead, after hearing strange rumours about some place called the Falkland Islands (which he thought were off the Scottish coast) they were redirected to Gibraltar to be refitted for war. When he grumbled to all that it was not fair he was going to miss out on the big 18th birthday party his family had planned, he received the standard Royal Navy reply that has resonated down the years since Nelson's day: "Welcome to life in the blue suit, Jack."

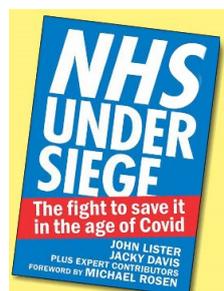
As they sailed south, the enormity of what he was about to face only hit him when, at the age of just 17 – not even old enough to vote – he was ordered to fill out his last Will and Testament.

He recalls his harrowing experiences after *HMS Sheffield* was hit by an Exocet missile, but moves on to outline how his life unravelled during peacetime, how drink and drugs were taken to fill the emptiness left inside him, which led to getting into trouble with the police, jobs, family and friends lost.

He reminds us of the toll of PTSD, and that an equal number of Falklands veterans later have taken their own lives as those who were killed in the actual war. Of the two fellow 17 year olds with him that day on *HMS Sheffield*, one later committed suicide and the other was receiving psychiatric care.

Adam did not find his 'peace' until 20 years later, revisiting the Falklands and also meeting Argentinian veterans in Buena Aires. As he puts it: "I survived the war, and now I have survived the peace."

'State of the Union' look at NHS



NHS under siege

John Lister & Jacky Davis
Merlin, June 2022
ISBN10 0850367778

THIS book edited by long time health campaigners John Lister and Jacky Davis, looks at the NHS, before, during and after the pandemic. Called *NHS Under Siege, the fight to defend it in the age of Covid*, many commentators have described it as a 'must read for anyone interested in the NHS and care policy, regardless of their politics'.

The contributions by a host of well-known experts adds to the core of the book and adds to its credibility, with thorough analysis, combining journalism and academia and the commitment of campaigners.

It does not just consider the past, but examines the current state of Government proposals and NHS plans for the future.

In his review of the book, Roy Lilley, founder of the former Federation of NHS Trusts, and now the renowned NHS writer and broadcaster, writes: "Promise me you will read this book. It's not a cover-to-cover commitment. It is a dip-in, read a bit and be drawn in to the next paragraph, next

chapter, next author. This is a book for everyone working in the NHS, manager, board member, NED, patient and politician."

Exercising Business Continuity

WHETHER you're a seasoned practitioner or just getting started, Charlie Maclean-Bristol provides you with expert guidance, a practical framework, and lots of proven examples, tools, tips, techniques and scenarios to get your business continuity exercise program moving.

As Charlie explains, an unexercised continuity plan can be more dangerous than no plan at all.

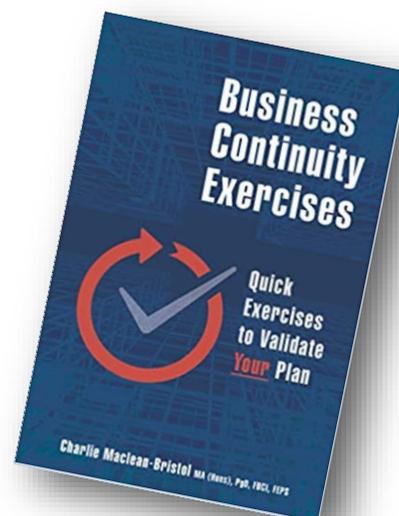
You can carry out any of the 18 simple yet effective exercises detailed in this book - *Business Continuity Exercises: Quick Exercises to Validate Your Plan* - in less than an hour, regardless of your level of experience.

It will help you to understand the process of planning and conducting business exercises efficiently while achieving maximum results, and develop the most appropriate strategy framework for conducting and assessing your exercise.

It will help you choose the most appropriate and effective exercise scenario, purpose and objectives, so you can plan and conduct your exercise using a straightforward, proven methodology with extensive tools and resources.

Business Continuity Exercises

Charlie Maclean-Bristol
2020





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