

SECTION 3 - Command & Control

3.0 Overview

The Gold (strategic), Silver (tactical) and Bronze (operational) tiered command structure used by police and other responding agencies are nationally recognised and accepted terms. The command structure is defined by role rather than rank.

Each organisation that attends a major incident is responsible for all personnel they have deployed to the scene and will have their own command structure. Every person on site should be aware of who they directly report to within their own organisation and also understand who they liaise with across organisations.

Command resilience is the ability to function effectively for a period of time and commanders should consider this from the outset of the incident. Handover procedures between Commanders must be robust to ensure a continuity of the management of the major incident.

3.1 National, Regional and County Co-ordination

Central government and devolved administrations will have a role to play in a large scale national event. HM Government has a dedicated crisis management facility, the Cabinet Office Briefing Room (COBR). During a national crisis, this may be activated. COBR will oversee the strategic aspects of the response and recovery phases, thus ensuring that Ministers are effectively briefed.

When the crisis affects the operations of BTP and the railway industry, a Chief Officer may be required to attend COBR.

In most instances, a major incident for the police service will not normally require a national response and the command structure will start at a county level.

3.2 Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG)

The SCG will be established by the lead co-ordinating authority. This will usually be the responsibility of the local police. BTP is not required to host the SCG; it is the responsibility of the local police force. The Government Liaison Team (GLT) and a Government Liaison Officer (GLO) will provide communication between the Gold Command and COBR when it is operating.

There is likely to be a discussion between BTP Gold Commander and the local police Gold Commander as to who is best placed to chair the SCG. The Chair of the SCG will ensure that the incident is reviewed from a strategic perspective and ensure strategic leadership for the duration of the major incident.

The membership of the SCG will dependent upon the nature and scale of the event. The membership will broadly be Category One and Two responders under the CCA, who are by and large the same membership as the Local Resilience Forum (LRF). In practical terms the attendees at the SCG will have worked together on a regular basis, which should assist with the command and control and resolution of the major incident.