

London First

TARGA

# CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL AND RADIOLOGICAL THREATS

GOOD PRACTICE FOR BUSINESSES



NOTES FROM THE BUSINESS CBRN WORKSHOP  
JUNE 2008

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- LESSONS LEARNT
- STAFF COMMUNICATIONS
- BUILDING PROTECTION

## **This guide**

In June 2008, London First and Targa consultants held a workshop for businesses to explore the risk of chemical biological and radiological (CBR) threats and to share good practice on risk mitigation methods.

As part of our commitment to share good practice, the notes from that session can be found below, categorised into preparation, response and recovery. They give a snapshot of risk mitigation methods that businesses have considered as part of their continuity plans. We hope you will find the tips useful and that you might consider chemical, biological and radiological threats within your own continuity arrangements.

The session focused on three themes: **Lessons learnt, staff communications and building protection**. The format included three presentations and then a group discussion - for comments, suggestions and inclusions.

## **Introduction**

The threat posed by CBR materials encompasses a range of hazards to health and business continuity. Unlike an explosive event, it may not be clear immediately that a 'real' chemical, biological or radiological material has been released.

The emergency services in the UK and particularly in London are well prepared to deal with real, hoax or false incidents. As a general guide, and in the absence of immediate casualties or specific advice/instructions from the police, most incidents involving loose materials (liquids or small quantities of powders) or 'funny smells' will not normally trigger a large-scale evacuation.

The key issues in preparing for CBR-related incidents are:

- Having a plan that manages risk effectively - and not assuming that one plan fits all eventualities
- Having an effective risk communication strategy – and practicing it
- Ensuring that risk management decisions are founded upon a firm understanding of the risks to which you think you are exposed.

This guide does not attempt to address every eventuality. However, it does represent the shared experiences of a number of agencies and businesses that have first-hand experience in dealing with the fear of 'CBR' hazards.

	Lessons learnt	Staff communications	Building protection
<b>Prepare</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly define the responsibilities of the building owner and the building occupier.  If existing leases are unclear, agree the following responsibilities as soon as possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who will lead cooperation with local authority / lead agency in the recovery phase</li> <li>Who will inform insurers and work with appointed loss adjuster</li> <li>Who will be responsible for site security</li> </ul> </li> <li>Practice decision making, with the decision makers.</li> <li>Know what emergency services will do when they arrive.</li> <li>Examine your vulnerabilities – physical points of access, process weaknesses and technical weaknesses.</li> <li>Integrate service partners into planning. Include BCP compliance at next contract negotiation.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare in advance escalating template messages to staff, that update on the unfolding incident.</li> <li>Ensure you have easy access to your staff contact details, while on and off site.</li> <li>Inform the workforce about protective plans and rehearse these with them.</li> <li>Rehearse quiet alarms and invacuation plans.</li> <li>Test and refine your response plan to build awareness and confidence with staff.</li> <li>When exercising, assist staff by providing decision tree flow charts.</li> <li>Ensure HR and legal both approve the chosen method to contact staff during an incident.</li> <li>Consider communication as part of your contingency plan.</li> </ol>	<p>(If Possible):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eliminate cracks and gaps around windows and doors.</li> <li>Have sliding door access to your mail room.</li> <li>Secure access to building plans.</li> <li>Control and monitor access to key facilities such as plant rooms &amp; aircon system.</li> <li>Familiarise yourself with the layout and characteristics of your buildings.</li> <li>Have a single control system accessed in the operations centre.</li> <li>Install independent air-conditioning for the mail room.</li> <li>Install manually controlled shutters on air vents</li> <li>Install air conditioning filters</li> <li>Ensure there is reverse thrust for complex air conditioning systems.</li> <li>Know how to shut down ventilation/air conditioning.</li> <li>Train more than one person to operate the air-conditioning.</li> <li>Know how to turn off internal ventilation and how long it will take to have an effect.</li> <li>Consider these measures at design stage (retrofitting is expensive)</li> </ol>

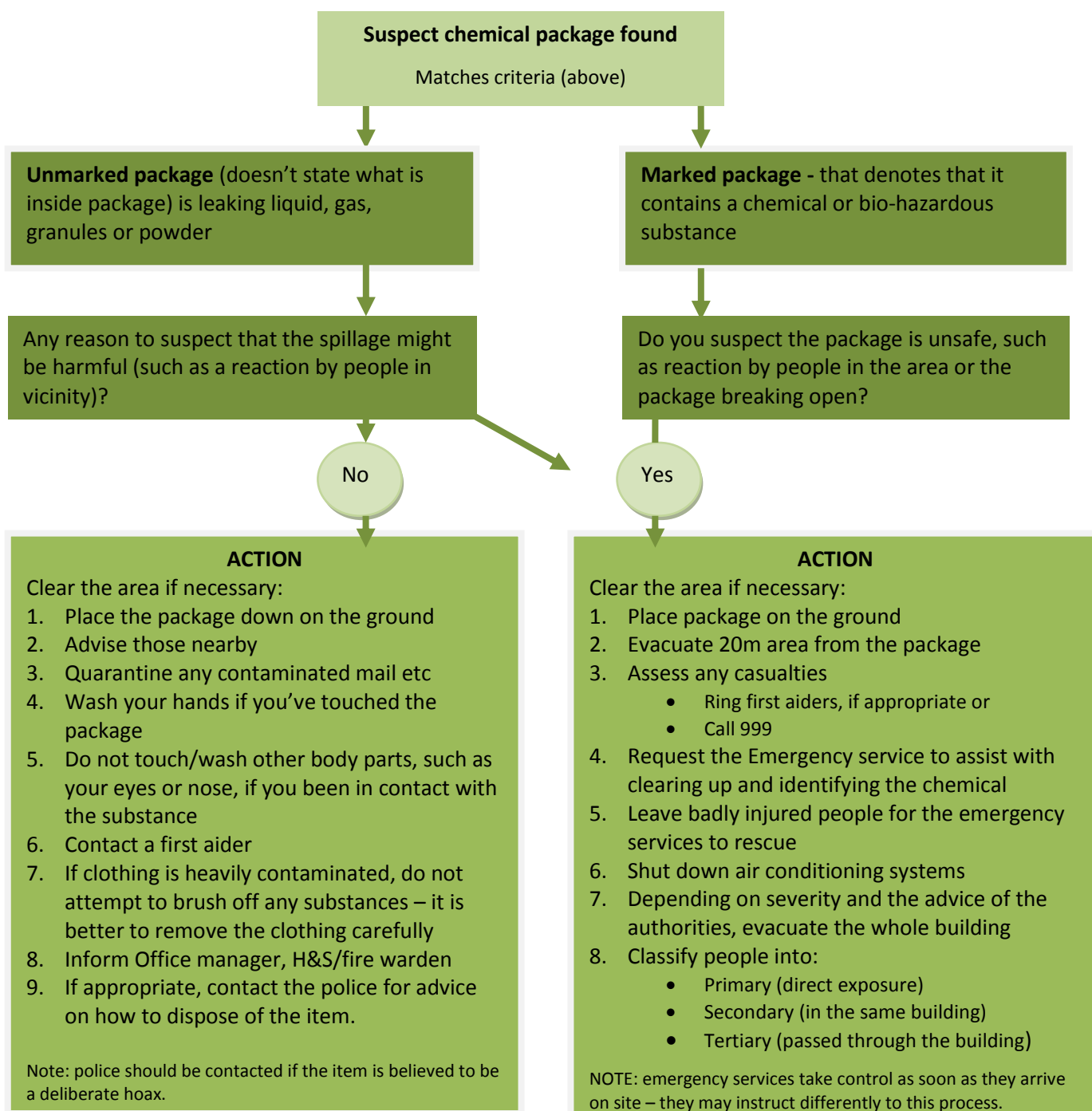
Respond	Lessons learnt	Staff communications	Building protection
	<p><b>Risk Assessment: internal incident</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm if there is an immediate concern.</li> <li>• Set up immediate cordon around site of contamination. (+20 meters)</li> <li>• Call emergency services</li> <li>• Ensure those within contaminated area stay within that area; all others stay outside area.</li> <li>• Ensure no personnel leave the site until the emergency services arrive and give permission.</li> <li>• Turn air circulation off.</li> <li>• Maintain operations as best possible.</li> </ul> <p><i>(See flow chart page 6)</i></p> <p><b>Top Tip:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When it is clear the incident is indeed an emergency - ensure senior managers familiarise themselves with the plan. It will help focus them on the right actions and keeps them occupied while key decision makers assess the situation.</li> <li>2. When clearing the building - check each area and floor. (Roll calls based on sign in sheets can be unreliable).</li> <li>3. If it is unsafe to go outside, initiate a quiet alarm: instruct security team walk the floors and notify heads of departments. You could also send a staff email/SMS/ pager message with details.</li> </ol>	<p>Maintain clear and open communications with staff. Real or potential CBR incidents will have immediate psychological impact.</p> <p><i>See communications template (page 7)</i></p> <p><b>Top Tip:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communicate facts to all audiences at the same time.</li> <li>2. Communicate what actions you want from staff (eg: close windows, the evacuation plan).</li> <li>3. Use more than one of these means to communicate messages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cascade phone system</li> <li>• SMS/text</li> <li>• Internet</li> <li>• Pager</li> <li>• Conference calling</li> <li>• Site alarm system</li> <li>• Information phone lines for staff</li> <li>• Loudspeaker / megaphone</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify 'safe' areas in your building such as corridors, away from windows and incident area.</li> <li>2. In the event of an outdoor incident, close windows, eliminate cracks and gaps around windows and doors.</li> <li>3. Explain to the emergency services the way in which the building is zoned, how to get to the 'incident area' and if the air conditioning is on/off.</li> </ol>

Recover	Lessons learnt	Staff communications	Building protection
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Set up a recovery helpdesk; a single point of contact to handle information and support the decision making team.</li> <li>2. The Board has a role in communicating key messages. Their physical presence in the areas affected will have a positive impact.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update website, intranet and the phone line message - for staff to access updated information include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What more is known</li> <li>• Information on recovery plans</li> <li>• Any actions for staff (eg – working from home, back up sites and how to report any IT issues )</li> <li>• When the next updated information will be available</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Have contingency for trauma counseling.</li> <li>3. Consider the psychological effect on staff and their willingness to work in a building that has been decontaminated.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. During recovery, give consideration to the prior presence of containments, such as asbestos or lead within the building. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the impact of damage.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

Below is a flow chart and template guide for mail room procedures relating to suspicious mail. Any suspicious item that cannot be discounted through existing procedures (such as screening and checking with the sender) and that is believed to be a viable threat, should be reported to the police without delay.

**TEMPLATE: IDENTIFY A SUSPECT PACKAGE (MAIL)**

A lot of wrapping or sealing?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / <input type="checkbox"/>
Grease stains, discolouration or crystallization on wrapping?	
Addressed to a possible target?	
Restrictive endorsements such as 'Personal' or 'Confidential'?	
Excessive postage paid?	
Note: some explosive materials smell of marzipan or almonds	
Granular or sand like substances ?	
An explosive device is unlikely to be less than 3mm thick or weigh less than 43g. However a package containing a chemical substance can be this small. In this case, look for indications as per the points above.	
Lopsided packages should be treated with suspicion	



# TEMPLATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS DURING A CBR INCIDENT (MAIL)

## Suspect Package:

- A suspect package has been found in (*..specify area or zone where package was found*)
- Do not touch the package. Move away from the immediate area, but stay together.
- We are taking practical steps to protect your safety and welfare.
- Trained police have been called and they will advise on next steps.

## Hazardous / Chemical

- A package has leaked in (*..specify area or zone where spillage occurred*)
- Checks are being made to confirm whether the contents are hazardous/harmful.
- As a precaution, if you have touched the package or its contents, please wash your hands immediately.

## Suspect Powder

- To prevent the possible risk of further contamination, please move away from the immediate area, but stay within the designated area (*..specify area or zone within the 20m isolation area*).
- Because biological agents can be dispersed easily, it's important to reduce the risk of further contamination. We will therefore turn off all machinery, air circulation systems and fans.
- The emergency services have been called and will issue further instructions on their arrival.

## Building evacuation

- It is unsafe to remain in the building so we need to evacuate – please go quickly and safely to the nearest assembly point and report to (*...specify who and where*)
- It has been decided to evacuate the building. All people with specific roles, Fire Warden, First Aiders should report to (*...specify who*)
- Please do not re-enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so.
- The emergency services have been called and they will issue further instructions on their arrival.

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## Useful links:

[CPNI advice on CBRN attacks](http://www.cpni.gov.uk/MethodsOfAttack/cbr.aspx) (www.cpni.gov.uk/MethodsOfAttack/cbr.aspx)

[ODPM Precautions to minimize effects on buildings and infrastructure](http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/fire/pdf/143741.pdf)

(www.communities.gov.uk/documents/fire/pdf/143741.pdf)

[Secure in the Knowledge – protective security guidance](http://www.londonfirst.co.uk/documents/097_Secure_in_the_Knowledge.pdf)

(www.londonfirst.co.uk/documents/097\_Secure\_in\_the\_Knowledge.pdf)

[London Prepared site with guidances for business](http://www.londonprepared.gov.uk) (www.londonprepared.gov.uk)

[Security Service site with information on major threats and advice](http://www.mi5.gov.uk) (www.mi5.gov.uk)

[Preparing for Emergencies UK Business Portal](http://www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk) (www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk)

[Metropolitan Police Service portal for business](http://www.met.police.uk/business) (www.met.police.uk/business)

[City of London Police business advice service](http://www.cityoflondon.police.uk/CityPolice) (www.cityoflondon.police.uk/CityPolice)

If you would like a copy of the presentations, please [contact us](#).

## London First

London First is a business membership organisation with the mission to make London the best city in the world to do business in. We represent the capital's leading employers who account for over a quarter of London's GDP. A key priority is promoting London as a safe and resilient city. We work to improve the communication between business, government and the police services at a strategic level, encouraging progressive ideas and innovative partnerships.

## Targa

Targa is an operational, political and reputational risk management consultancy specialising in support to commercial operations in complex risk environments in Africa, Central and South America, Europe, the Middle East and Southern Asia.

Working with insurance industry partners, Targa provides a fully integrated risk management and risk transfer advisory service, including:

- Asset and revenue protection through the identification, assessment and mitigation of operational, political and reputational risk - specifically:
  - Optimized risk profiling (retained v transferred)
  - Better management of retained risk and
  - Better management/terms/cost/availability for transferable risk
- Operational Support to manage high consequence risk events
- High level political/strategic/geographic/sector risk assessment
- Business Continuity Planning, design of contingency plans & Crisis Management
- Training: Management of contingency operations, crisis management, decision making, collection and assessment of commercial information

**With thanks to the following resilience network members for their knowledge and expertise:**

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