	London Ambulance Service NHS Trust **Pager and Short Message Service (SMS) Procedure** **For Use By: EOC, ADOs, AOMs, DSOs and EPU.**

Introduction

The London Ambulance Service (LAS), acting on a recommendation from The Fennell Enquiry, following The Kings Cross Fire 1987, introduced a series of British Telecom (BT) pagers throughout the service so that officers could be contacted quickly and easily at all times . This has now been superseded by the use of Page One paging system which uses a web based communication system.
The Paging system has also been enhanced by the use of Short Message Service (SMS) Text Messaging and has been adopted it as an integral part of LAS communications.

In general terms; urgent, time critical, incident related messages, as defined by the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), are passed to recipients using the Web Pager system. Non-urgent messages are relayed using the SMS text messaging system. Messages that relate to Major and/or Catastrophic Incidents are relayed using both systems with personnel sending pager messages in the first instance.

The service has established four systems: -

1. One of three colour coded prefixes to all pager messages sent from EOC

   GREEN: ALL ROUTINE / INFORMATION ONLY MESSAGES
   AMBER: PREPARE A STATE OF READINESS
   RED: ACTIVATION REQUIRED

2. EOC Action Cards: An individual Action Card for every type of incident that requires sending SMS text to an officer, stating name , which prefix to use and what text to send.

3. Messaging Groups: Revised and updated messaging groups set up on all the terminals within EOC, Fall Back Control (FBC) and Incident Control Room (ICR) ensuring ALL relevant staff are messaged at the onset of an incident.

4. Personal Issue Response Cards: To inform the cardholder of the response required to a RED Prefixed message.

Objective

1. To provide a consistent approach, across all teams within EOC, in the use of messaging prefixes.

2. To ensure that the appropriate staff are messaged in instances of Serious / Major / Catastrophic Incident(s).

3. To ensure all recipients of messages are clear as to the action to be taken.

4. To simplify the messaging process at the onset of an Incident, thus reducing EOC workload.

5. To introduce a formal system to maintain an accurate database of personnel, pager and phone details on the messaging systems.

Procedure

1.0 Inclusion of a Message Prefix

1.1 Prior to the sending of **ALL** routine or information only messages from a terminal within EOC or the Incident Control Room the sender must first prefix the message with the code word: - GREEN: followed by the message text. The code word GREEN: indicates to the recipient that the message is routine only and as such, the recipient should respond accordingly.

e.g. GREEN: Please call office

1.2 In the event of an incident that **MAY** require an officer response, e.g. a Potential Serious Incident or Potential Major Incident, an Airport Full Emergency or a Potential Chemical-Biological-Radioactive-Nuclear (CBRN) incident, the code word: - AMBER: should be inserted prior to the message text. The code word AMBER: will indicate to the recipient that an incident has occurred that may require their response and as such, the recipient should prepare for a state of readiness. This code is only to be used by EOC or the Incident Control Room staff upon authorisation by a Superintendent or Senior Operations Officer (SOO).

1.3 Whilst there is no requirement upon Officers to respond to an AMBER message, there may be occasions where, as a result of local knowledge or intelligence, initiative demands that a response may be required. If an Officer considers that a response to an AMBER incident is appropriate, then contact with EOC must be made to establish if adequate resources have previously been allocated. This will ensure inappropriate responses are kept to a minimum. The primary source of communication must be via the R/T, with land line calls kept to a minimum.

Requests for further information must be kept to the absolute minimum in order for EOC to manage the incident effectively.

1.4 AMBER Calls (Full Emergencies) to London Airports (Heathrow, London City, Biggin Hill, RAF Northolt and Battersea Heliport) will always require a response in accordance with local directions.

1.5 In the event of an incident that **DOES** require an officer response, i.e. a Declared Serious Incident or Declared Major Incident, Aircraft Accident Imminent or Declared CBRN Incident, the code word:- RED: should be inserted prior to the message text. The code word RED: will indicate to the recipient that an incident has occurred that requires their response and as such the recipient should respond according to their own predetermined response (see sample Appendix 1). This code is only to be used by EOC or the Incident Control Room staff upon authorisation by a Superintendent or Senior Operations Officer.

E.g. RED: Explosion, RVP Scotland Green Road, EC3. R/T CH 1

2.0 EOC Action Cards

2.1 A series of EOC Action Cards (see sample Appendix 2) have been created that reflect the common incidents that require multi officer messaging. These are available within EOC from the Loggist Desk, Senior Operations Officer (SOO) desk, at the messaging terminal within the Incident Control Room and situated on the SOO desk at Fall Back Control (FBC).

2.2 Upon receipt of information within EOC that requires multi officer messaging, the EOC Action Cards must be referred to for the correct prefix, message text and recipients. The Action Card gives the user clear instructions as to which code word prefix should be used, what text should be sent and to which recipients.

3.0 Messages and Messaging Groups

3.1 All urgent, time critical, Incident related messages as defined by EOC will be sent to recipients using the Pager system. Incident related messages are to be sent via the Pager system regardless of the colour code prefix.

3.2 Non-urgent messages will be sent using the SMS Text messaging System.

3.3 Messages relating to Major and/or Catastrophic Incidents will be sent using both systems with personnel sending pager messages in the first instance.

3.4 The Pager and SMS terminals within EOC Loggist Desk and SOO desk) and within Incident Control Room have been established with predetermined messaging groups (see sample Appendix 3) which can be accessed whenever necessary.

3.5 When EOC has established the messaging group or groups to be notified of information, in accordance with the EOC Action Cards, the Group Message icon must be selected from the either the Pager or SMS screen, and then the appropriate group can be selected from the available database. The appropriate messaging colour code prefix must be inserted, followed by the message text, then sent to the relevant group.

4.0 Personal Issue Response Cards

4.1 Every member of staff included in one of the messaging groups has been issued with a Personal Issue Response Card (See sample Appendix 4) Upon receipt of a RED: prefixed message, the recipient should refer to the instructions printed on the front of their Personal Issue Response Card and respond accordingly

5.0 Future Amendments

5.1 It is the responsibility of the Systems and Networks department to keep the messaging group database accurate and up to date.

5.2 Amendment form LA 133 (see sample Appendix 5) must be completed and submitted to Systems and Networks, before any amendment to the messaging database can be made. Amendments will include promotion, retirement, leaving, and allocation of new mobile phone number and/or pager. This form should be completed at the earliest opportunity, to ensure the information on the database is accurately maintained.

5.3 Copies of Amendments Form LA 133 are available on '***the pulse***' in Forms > 'Administration' or Common Server, Emergency Planning Unit folder.

6.0 Delays and Message Sending Failures

6.1 It is the responsibility of the sender to monitor the receipt of AMBER: and RED: prefixed messages to the intended recipient(s). When a delay of five minutes or failures in the delivery of a message(s) occurs the sender must seek an alternative means of communication (e.g. landline telephony, radio telephone, etc)

7.0 Fall Back Procedures

7.1 In the event of a loss of the internet access for the Pager system interface EOC are to contact the service provider directly relay details of the message to be sent and quote either the individual call sign or Message Group of the intended recipient of the message.

7.2 In the event of a loss/failure of the SMS message sending computer terminal, personnel are to use service issue mobile telephones to send SMS messages.

7.3 In the event of mobile phone network(s) failure personnel are to seek an alternative means of communication (e.g. landline telephony, radio telephone, etc).

8.0 Pager System Testing

8.1 A daily pager test message will be sent to the following six pre-determined groups, which are GOLD, SILVER, BRONZE, MAJOR INCIDENT SUPPORT, CBRN BRONZE and EOC. If the pager message has been received, then the recipient can delete the message and take no further action.

6.3 If by 20:00hrs the message has not been received, or the message text is incomprehensible then the relevant member of staff must contact EOC as soon as possible.

References: **LAS: Fall Back Procedures**
Personal Issue Response Cards
The Fennell Enquiry – Kings Cross Fire 1987.

Signature:

Peter Bradley CBE
Chief Executive Officer

LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST

PAGING PROCEDURE
Procedure upon receiving a **RED** Pager Message for;

Gold (CEO, DoO, DDoO, ADO, ACAO)

ON CALL: BOOK MOBILE towards HQ ON GIVEN R/T CHANNEL
ON DUTY (available): REPORT AVAILABILITY WITH SOO
ON DUTY (unavailable): DISREGARD MESSAGE
OFF DUTY (available): BOOK MOBILE ON GIVEN R/T CHANNEL
OFF DUTY (unavailable): DISREGARD MESSAGE
If outside R/T reception area book availability upon arrival within M25 boundary

Silver (AOM, A/AOM)

ON CALL: BOOK MOBILE ON GIVEN R/T CHANNEL
ON DUTY (available): BOOK MOBILE ON GIVEN R/T CHANNEL
ON DUTY (unavailable): DISREGARD MESSAGE
OFF DUTY (available): BOOK MOBILE ON GIVEN R/T CHANNEL
OFF DUTY (unavailable): DISREGARD MESSAGE
If outside R/T reception area book availability upon arrival within M25 boundary

DUTY STATION OFFICER

ON DUTY (available): BOOK MOBILE ON GIVEN R/T CHANNEL
ON DUTY (unavailable): DISREGARD MESSAGE
OFF DUTY (available): DISREGARD MESSAGE
OFF DUTY (unavailable): DISREGARD MESSAGE

	LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE **Emergency Control Centre** **PAGING INSTRUCTION**	ACTION CARD **1** **1 OF 2**
	TITLE: PAGING INSTRUCTION SERIOUS INCIDENTS	SECTOR ALL

INFORMATION: ONLY INCIDENT RELATED MESSAGES SHOULD BE PASSED VIA A PAGER

Type of incidents may include train stuck in tunnel, suspect packages, explosive device, multiple resources activated, civil disorder, potential threat of multiple casualties etc. This list is not exhaustive.

If incident is an explosion, train crash, aircraft accident (on/off airport) or when the number or the type of casualties threatens to overwhelm normal services

Ensure Pre Determined attendance is deployed – DO NOT WAIT FOR REPORT;

Despatch a minimum of 6 Ambulances >1 DOV & > 6 Officers

THE FOLLOWING MESSAGES MUST BE PASSED TO ALL LISTED STAFF, USING THE REQUIRED FORMAT WHEN MAJOR INCIDENT STAND BY IS IDENTIFIED

THE DUTY STATION OFFICERS SHOULD BE DISPATCHED AS NORMAL VIA THE SECTOR(S)

BLUE COLOUR INDICATES OFFICERS FOR OUT OF OFFICE HOURS ATTENDANCE:

UPDATES MUST **BE SENT EVERY 20 MINUTES EVEN IF SITUATION UNCHANGED –** POINT 2

No	*Message*	*Recipient*
1	**AMBER: (type of incident) (location) R/T CH (number)**	Nearest AOM and Duty SILVER **On Call and EOC EPM** On Call Press Officer Duty SILVER On Call EPM On Call Press Officer
i	If incident is an explosion, train crash, aircraft accident (on/off airport) or when the number or the type of casualties threatens to overwhelm normal services Ensure Pre Determined attendance is deployed – **DO NOT** wait for report; Despatch a minimum of 6 Ambulances >1 DOV & > 6 Officers	
2	**GREEN: UPDATE (details)**	Same as Amber
	REQUIRE OFFICER(S) TO ATTEND? GO TO POINT 3	
3	**RED: (type of incident) (location) R/T CH (number) MAP REF**	Nearest AOM and Duty SILVER **On Call and EOC EPM** On Call Press Officer Duty SILVER On Call EPM On Call Press Officer
	MOVED TO ICR? GO TO POINT 4 MAJOR INCIDENT DECLARED? GO TO ACTION CARD 2	

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RELATED ACTION CARDS	2			

APPENDIX 3

LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST
PAGING PROCEDURE

PAGING GROUPS

3. AIRPORT PAGING GROUPS

LONDON AIRPORT HEATHROW (LHR)

LHR AIRPORT GROUP PAGER: All DSO's in NW: B5 AOM: F2 AOM
A2 AOM: B3 AOM: EPMs : WS, NW & SW DOVs

RAF NORTHOLT (NHT)

NHT AIRPORT GROUP PAGER: B5 AOM & DSO: F2 AOM & DSO
A2 AOM & DSO: B3 AOM & DSO: B6 AOM & DSO: EPMs: WS, NW & SW DOVs

LONDON BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT (BQH)

M1 AOM & DSO: M2 AOM & DSO: L1 AOM & DSO: L2 AOM & DSO:
EPMs: SE & SW DOVs

LONDON CITY AIRPORT (LCY)

K1 AOM & DSO: G3 AOM & DSO: N1 AOM & DSO: E3 AOM & DSO :
L2 AOM & DSO:
EPMs: NE, EC & CS DOVs

BATTERSEA HELIPORT (BAT)

R3 AOM & DSO: F2 AOM & DSO: Q3 AOM & DSO: EPMs: WS & SW DOVs

LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST
Personal Issue Response Cards

PAGER MESSAGE PREFIX

GREEN: ROUTINE / INFORMATION ONLY TYPE MESSAGE

AMBER: PREPARE A STATE OF READINESS. UPDATE WILL FOLLOW

RED: AN INCIDENT HAS OCCURRED THAT REQUIRES YOUR RESPONSE. ACTIVATE ACCORDING TO INDIVIDUAL RESPONSE. – SEE OVER

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

SENIOR OPERATIONS OFFICER (SOO): 020 7921 5197 HQ INTERNAL 2346
EMERGENCY PLANNING UNIT: 020 7463 3201-06 HQ INTERNAL 3291
HEMS DESK: 020 7 902 2553 / 2554 HQ INTERNAL 2553 / 2554
ICR: 020 7902 2579 - ONLY TO BE USED WHEN ICR IS OPEN

LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST

SMS SYSTEM DATABASE AMENDMENTS FORM **LA 133**

THIS FORM MUST BE FULLY COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED TO THE SYTEMS AND NETWORKS BEFORE ANY AMENDMENTS, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE SMS SYSTEM DATABASE CAN BE MADE

TITLE : **MR / MRS MISS / MS (circle)**

SURNAME : _____

FIRST NAME : _____

DESIGNATION : _____

RANK : _____

LOCATION : _____

MOBILE PHONE NUMBER : _____

I REQUEST AN AMENDMENT / INCLUSION / DELETION / (circle) TO THE PAGING SYSTEM DATABASE BECAUSE :-

_____

_____

_____

_____

NEW DETAILS

TITLE: **MR / MRS / MISS / MS (please circle)**

SURNAME : _____ (if different from above)

FIRST NAME : _____ (if different from above)

DESIGNATION : _____ (if different from above)

RANK : _____ (if different from above)

LOCATION : _____ (if different from above)

MOBILE PHONE NUMBER : _____ (if different from above)