



Greater Manchester Humanitarian Assistance Centre Implementation Guidance

Version 2.

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Document Name	Greater Manchester Humanitarian Assistance Centre Implementation Guidance
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KEY FACTS

A Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) is:

A physical premise where a variety of support services may be housed following a major emergency. It provides a one stop shop for people involved in an incident to access social, practical and psychological support. A HAC will usually take a minimum of 48 hours to establish.

The HAC will offer access to a range of services that will allow those in receipt of its support to make informed choices according to their needs and provide easy access to a range of services that avoid deepening existing trauma and act to support individual and community recovery.

HAC objectives should clearly link with the overall humanitarian assistance objectives decided by the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) and/or Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) with the aim of mitigating the human consequences of the emergency.¹

A HAC may be established to provide comprehensive longer-term humanitarian assistance, in particular during the remainder of the response and any subsequent investigations. The scale and nature of the emergency will influence the longer-term requirement for a Humanitarian Assistance Centre and the organisations required to be present. Having considered the potential scale of an incident, the SCG will make a decision on the opening and location of a HAC, in consultation with local authorities. The HAC may take over the site of the initial rest and reception centre, adding new services to these centres.

The responsibility for identifying and securing the use of suitable premises rests with the local authority. The local authority will co-ordinate the provision of welfare support to the community in the event of an emergency. It will also be responsible for meeting the costs of securing the use of premises in the planning phase, and for providing the centre itself in the event of an emergency.²

The following **key considerations** are central to establishing and managing a HAC:

- Ensuring the HAC compliments and supports but does not duplicate other available support, providing a clear route of transition between these services and the HAC where appropriate
- Locating and fitting out a HAC which is appropriate to the needs of users³
- Utilising the support of the community surrounding the HAC and working to minimise any effect on this community⁴

¹ See: 'Greater Manchester Generic Response Plan' (GMRP: September 09) Annex 1: 'Humanitarian Assistance in Emergencies – A Concept of Operations'.

² See: 'Emergency Response and Recovery' (HM Government July 09) pp. 166-167

³ A Building Requirements Checklist is attached as Annex 5 and a sample HAC Layout as Annex 6.

⁴ A Community Impact Assessment Template is attached as Annex 4

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- Avoiding intrusive access by media or inappropriate visitors by putting in place appropriate security measures
- Providing a HAC which reflects the changing needs of users by constantly monitoring HAC services and their quality and suitability
- Avoiding disputes and delays in service provision by considering the legal and financial implications of establishing and operating the HAC⁵
- Ensuring high quality services by providing appropriate staffing for the HAC
- Setting clear expectations for all stakeholders by considering the estimated timescale for HAC operation and criteria for HAC closure and modification at the outset and on a continuous basis
- Choosing a HAC form which best meets the needs of users and is most appropriate to the incident. The possible HAC forms include:
 - HAC set up in a building in response to the incident
 - HAC developing out of a reception/rest centre
 - Mobile HAC
 - A collection of small HACs operated from different buildings
- Implementing media and communications strategies that integrate with those in place for the wider emergency, reflect the needs of HAC users and take into account any investigation process and the wider public interest⁶
- Putting in place mechanisms to ensure the welfare of staff working in the HAC both during and after its operation
- Agreeing a clear definition of who HAC services are available to. Experience has shown that a clear definition which aligns with the support and resources available is key.⁷
- Ensuring those in need of support are informed about the service available in the HAC, how best to access these services and any planned changes in services available.⁸

Those **services provided** by the HAC may include:

Advice and Information

- Financial e.g. compensation claims, benefits entitlement
- Legal advice
- Insurance advice
- Forensic sample gathering
- Link to ongoing police investigations (Family Liaison Officers)
- Casualty Bureau
- Links to other services

Emotional Support

- Counselling

⁵ Information related to Data Protection in an emergency is attached as Annex 1113

⁶ Dealing with the Media a Guide for HAC Visitors is attached as Annex 7 and an example Internal Communications Protocol as Annex 10

⁷ The definition may be wide and include all those affected including survivors, friends and families and those not physically affected, but traumatised by an incident or more narrow to ensure the best and most appropriate use of the resources available.

⁸ Sample HAC Information Leaflets are attached as Annexes 8 and 9

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- Crisis Support
- Accompaniment to incident site, mortuary etc
- Peer support e.g. survivor support group, bereaved support group
- Cultural/faith based support
- Shelter/refuge with similarly affected people
- Police, family and survivor liaison
- Support through VIP visits and investigations and enquiries

Practical Support

- Accommodation
- Transport
- Refreshments
- Interpreters
- Support in accessing essential medication
- Childcare facilities e.g. for use whilst receiving support
- ICT facilities e.g. internet, telephones etc

Structures:

- The decision to establish a HAC will be made by the SCG or RCG.
- A Humanitarian Assistance Centre Management Group (HACMG) will be established, chaired by a Local Authority Director of Adult Social Care, to lead the implementation of the HAC and to strategically manage its operation and eventual closure.
- The HACMG will, in most cases, report to the RCG or RCG's Health and Welfare sub-group (if established). It may alternatively report directly into the SCG or day-to-day local authority structures.
- The operational management of the HAC will be led by a HAC Manager who will report to the HACMG.

Operational HAC staff and the members of the HACMG may be drawn from any responder depending on the nature of the emergency and the services on offer within the HAC. When agreeing the deployment of staff within the HAC, any financial issues that may arise in connection with the deployment of staff should be agreed as soon as practical.

The HAC Management Team will manage the facility and shared services and work to integrate the full range of HAC services from a customer perspective, commissioning the provision and management of different services from individual providers. Each service provider will have its own area of responsibility and be responsible for the advice and guidance it gives.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with two other **key documents**:

- The National Guidance: 'Humanitarian Assistance in Emergencies: Non-Statutory Guidance on Establishing Humanitarian Assistance Centres' (DCMS & ACPO: 2006).
- Greater Manchester's: 'Greater Manchester Generic Response Plan' (GMRF: September 2009)

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1. Introduction

Aim and Objectives

This document aims to support the national non-statutory guidance for setting up a Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) by detailing the Greater Manchester arrangements for establishing and managing a HAC, and by providing tools to aid its management.

The objectives of this guidance are to:

- Highlight the role of a HAC within the field of emergency response
- Detail the key considerations and objectives for those involved with HAC establishment and management
- Set out the process for HAC activation and structures for HAC management within Greater Manchester
- Provide supporting templates and guidance to assist in HAC setup and management.

Scope

This document is intended to support and not to replace the National Guidance.

It provides a Greater Manchester framework for the implementation of the national guidance: 'Humanitarian Assistance in Emergencies: Non-Statutory Guidance on Establishing Humanitarian Assistance Centres' (DCMS & ACPO: 2006).

Detailed operational guidance for the establishing, operation, modification and closure of a HAC within Greater Manchester is outside the scope of this document.

The full range of humanitarian assistance that can be provided in an emergency and the development of a humanitarian assistance strategy is outside the scope of this guidance. This is one of a suite of documents intended to support the strategic humanitarian assistance guidance set out in the 'Greater Manchester Generic Response Plan' and should be read in conjunction with this document.⁹

Assumptions

This document assumes a basic working knowledge of the Greater Manchester resilience framework and of the principles of humanitarian assistance within the field of emergency response.

Territorial extent

This framework relates to the Greater Manchester sub-region comprising the ten boroughs of Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

⁹ A copy of this document is available from the GMRF Secretariat

Ownership and authorisation

This guidance has been produced by the Greater Manchester Humanitarian Assistance Sub Group for the Greater Manchester Resilience Forum (GMRF).

Ownership of the document rests with the Resilience Development Group (RDG) on behalf of the Greater Manchester Resilience Forum.

Reviews and substantive changes will be agreed with the GMRF Humanitarian Assistance Sub Group and endorsed by the GMRF following consultation as necessary. The plan will be maintained by the GMRF administration.

Audience

This document is intended for decision makers within Greater Manchester's responding organisations and specifically for those who may become members of a HAC Management Group or HAC Management Team.

Testing and validation

This framework will be tested and validated through exercises developed as part of Greater Manchester's annual training and exercising programme, the responsibility for which lies with the Greater Manchester Training and Exercising Group, the Resilience Development Group and, ultimately, the Greater Manchester Resilience Forum.

The document will be reviewed as necessary in light of learning from incidents, exercises and comments received.

Audit and amendment

This framework will be subject to on-going review and revision as well as a formal review every three years which will be completed by the Resilience Development Group in conjunction with the Greater Manchester Humanitarian Assistance Sub Group. All amendments will be audited and communicated to partners.

Publication and distribution

This framework will be made available in electronic format to all responder organisations in Greater Manchester who have an interest in the humanitarian assistance aspect of emergency response and recovery.

Freedom of information and data protection

Release of information contained in this document should be considered with regard to freedom of information and data protection legislation. If in doubt, local partners should approach the GMRF Secretariat for advice on the handling of information requests from third parties.

Queries

We would welcome feedback on the content of this document which should be sent to the Civil Contingencies Unit in the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities.

2. Context

Emergency Response and Humanitarian Assistance

An emergency is defined by the 2004 Civil Contingencies Act as:

'An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK, the environment of a place in the UK, or war or terrorism which threatens serious damage to the security of the UK.'

In responding to the human welfare needs resulting from an emergency a number of organisations, under the leadership of a multi-agency Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG), will need to develop a package of support. This support package will vary considerably depending upon the nature of the emergency, but can be summed up under the umbrella definition of Humanitarian Assistance:

*'The provision of services and development of strategies necessary to mitigate the human consequences of emergencies, including those social, practical and psychological effects which fall outside the scope of acute medical services and other immediate life saving activities. Humanitarian Assistance should be initiated as soon as an emergency has begun and can last as long as is necessary to assist individuals, families and communities with the transition to a new normality.'*¹⁰

Any HAC established will form one of a number of components of the overall humanitarian assistance response.

The overall Humanitarian Assistance response has a number of strategic objectives including to:

- Provide safe places of refuge
- Meet essential welfare needs
- Assist in the identification processes
- Facilitate family reunification
- Provide emotional support
- Relieve suffering
- Provide clear and timely information
- Mitigate medium and long-term psychological effects
- Empower people to make choices and access support services
- Assist community recovery
- Support people through unfamiliar and emotional events e.g. inquests, memorials and anniversaries
- Ensure continued health and welfare services for the vulnerable
- Enable individuals and families to re-establish their day-to-day lives

These general objectives will guide the development of objectives by the SCG that are tailored to the specific emergency.

¹⁰ 'Greater Manchester Generic Response Plan' (GMRF: September 09)

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A Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) is one tool which may be deployed in order to support the achievement of these objectives by the SCG or RCG.

3. The National Guidance

The national guidance on establishing HACs: 'Humanitarian Assistance in Emergencies: Non-Statutory Guidance on Establishing Humanitarian Assistance Centres' (DCMS & ACPO: 2006)¹¹, sets out the **key considerations** for decision makers in establishing a HAC and for managers in managing a HAC and its services from day-to-day. Detailed information is also provided on the range of **services** which may be contained within a HAC. These key considerations and services are listed in the Key Facts section of this document, however the national guidance provides more detailed information for both decision makers and operational staff with regard to HAC operation, specifically in the following areas:

- The place of a HAC in the wider humanitarian response to emergencies (1.12 – 1.16).
- The key purpose of a HAC (chapter 4).
- Location (5.5 – 5.8)
- Security (5.8 – 5.10)
- HAC services (5.10 – 5.12)
- Phone lines and web service (5.13 – 5.20)
- Funding (5.21 – 5.26)
- Staffing (5.27 – 5.35)
- Legal implications (5.36 – 5.39)
- Roles and responsibilities (6.4 – 6.11 chapter 10)
- HAC closure (6.13 – 6.15)
- Considering the community (chapter 7)
- Media and communications (chapter 8)
- Data collection and information sharing (chapter 9)

¹¹ http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/132796/hac_guidance.pdf

4. HAC Activation and Governance in Greater Manchester¹²

The decision to establish a HAC in Greater Manchester will be made by the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) or Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG).

Due to the range of services offered and the potential number of service providers, a HAC Management Group (HACMG) will be formed to lead in the establishment of the HAC and to provide strategic level direction during its operation. This group will usually report into the RCG's Health and Welfare sub-group (if established). However, if no RCG is in operation it may report directly to the SCG or into normal local authority management structures. The HAC Management and Service Structure is set out in Annex 1.

The HAC Management Group's terms of reference are set out in Annex 2 and a sample HAC Management Group Meeting Agenda in Annex 3.

Once a HAC has been opened, the HAC Manager (appointed by the HACMG) together with the HAC Management Team (HACMT) will have responsibility for day-to-day management of the HAC, with the HACMG adopting a strategic role.

The HACMT would normally contain:

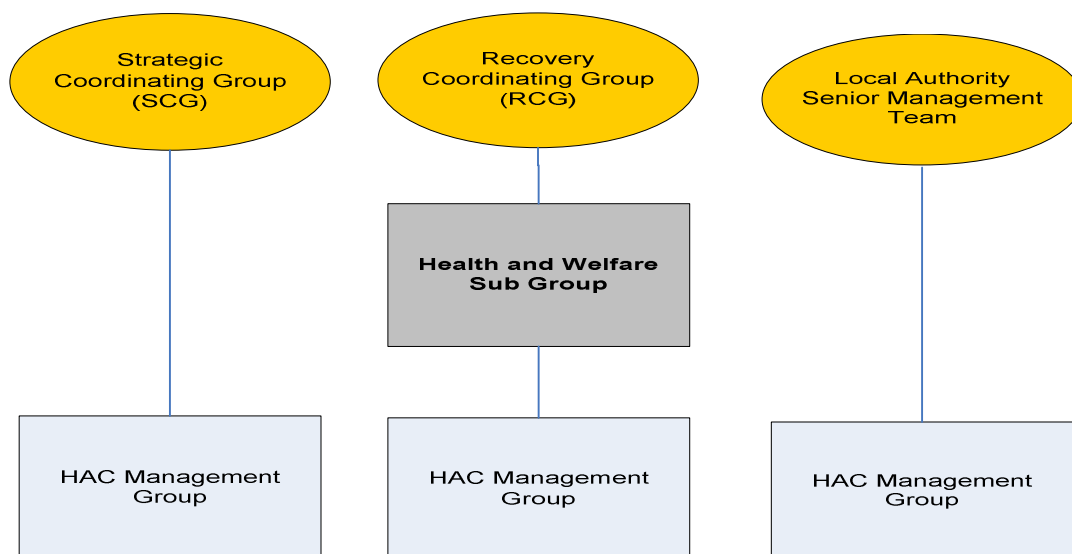
- HAC Manager
- Press/Communications Lead
- Management level representation from organisations providing key services in the HAC
- Administration Lead
- Facilities management representation, e.g. security, maintenance

The HACMT will report to the HACMG through the HAC Manager.

HACMG Role	To ensure that any HAC set up in Greater Manchester fulfils its objective to deliver high quality humanitarian assistance to those affected by an emergency, by providing strategic direction to the HAC management team who will be responsible for overseeing the centre and services on a day-to-day basis.
HACMT Role	To be responsible for the practical implementation of the HACMG objectives and priorities and to be responsible for the day-to-day operational management of the HAC. The HACMT will most probably be based on site and will have responsibility for areas such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Premises management• Managing finances, security and administration in liaison with partners• Dealing with day-to-day issues as they arise.

¹² More information on the structural arrangements for emergency recovery is set out in 'Greater Manchester Recovery Guidance' (GMRG: 2008).

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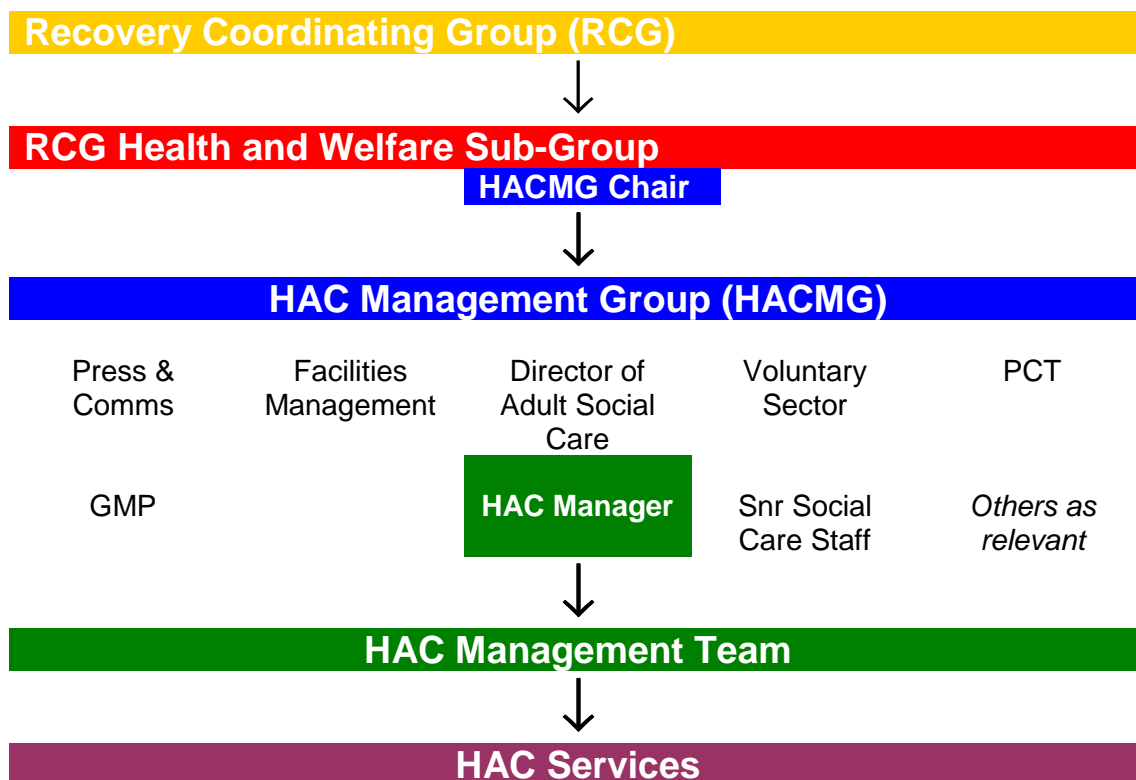


Annex 1: HAC Management and Service Structure

This annex shows the probable management and service delivery framework that the HAC is based on. Depending on the incident, the make up of each layer will differ.

Dependant on the scale of the incident different aspects of the below structure may need to be activated. For example, in a GM wide incident the full structure may be appropriate, whilst in a local incident the structure would be tailored to the circumstances being faced.

The HACMG may alternatively report directly to the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) or into Local Authority management structures if the Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) has not been convened.



Annex 2: Suggested terms of reference for the HAC Management Group (HACMG).

These terms of reference will be reviewed by the HACMG to ensure they are appropriate to the incident being faced when the HACMG is established.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP (HACMG)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

a) Purpose

To ensure that any HAC set up in Greater Manchester fulfils its objective to deliver high quality humanitarian assistance to those affected by an emergency, by providing strategic direction to the HAC management team who will be responsible for overseeing the centre and services on a day-to-day basis.

b) Reporting

The HACMG will report to the Recovery Coordinating Group's (RCG) Health and Welfare Sub-Group (if established). Alternatively the group may report directly to the RCG, the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) or normal Local Authority management structures. Ultimate responsibility lies with the SCG when it is in existence and the RCG once the SCG has been disbanded.

c) Role

- Ensure that a clear set of objectives for the HAC are agreed
- Agree early on, a clear set of criteria for HAC closure
- Agree the HAC venue and venue set-up requirements
- Agree who the services in the HAC will be on offer to
- Ensure longer term support needs for HAC users are planned for
- Link the HAC to any other humanitarian assistance provision available, providing clear routes of access for customers between the HAC and mainstream services
- Identify, set up and support the HAC Management Team
- Consider the necessary funding and resources for the HAC
- Consider the legal implications of HAC operation including service commissioning and resource procurement
- Consider issues around information sharing and security
- Coordinate the media and communications requirements of the HAC
- Ensure HAC Security is sufficient to avoid intrusive access or inappropriate visitors
- Ensure that the community surrounding the HAC are considered in HAC setup and operation. Giving consideration to issues such as community tensions and potential parking etc. (see Annex 4)

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- Ensure that the range of services offered by the HAC throughout its life is the most appropriate to the needs of users; their equality and diversity and commission services from suitable service providers
- Ensure effective liaison with and reporting to the RCG and/or local authority (dependant on the management structure in place).
- Ensure that sufficient welfare arrangements are in place for staff working in the HAC

d) Chair and Secretariat

Chaired by Local Authority Director of Adult Social Care. Secretariat to be provided by the organisation providing the chair.

e) Membership

Representatives to attend as relevant including representatives from:

- Social Care (adults and/or children)
- HAC Manager(s)
- Primary Care Trust
- Mental Health Trust
- Greater Manchester Police
- Voluntary sector organisation and community groups
- Press and communications
- Facilities management including security

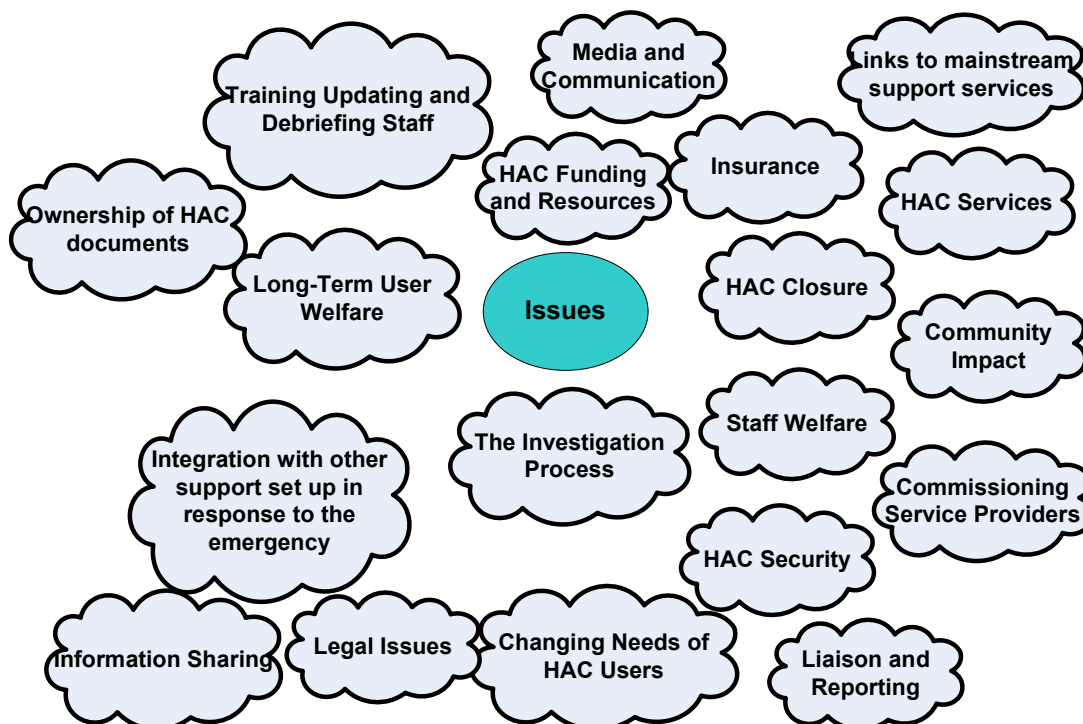
The HACMG may seek specialist advice and support from representatives from the following fields:

- Transport operators
- Government departments (i.e. DCMS, Department for Work & Pensions and FCO)
- Community leaders
- Legal services
- Health and Safety
- Procurement
- Coroners Service
- Fire & Rescue Service
- Regional Resilience Forum
- Finance
- Local authority emergency planning and business continuity staff
- Others e.g. community representatives, local Councillors.

Those specialist advice and support functions required for HAC management and operation may be performed by appropriately qualified representatives from any agency involved, as requested by the HACMG Chair.

It is likely that the composition of the HACMG will change as the HAC matures.

f) Issues for HACMG consideration (*this list is not exhaustive*)



The HACMG will need to work in close liaison with the RCG to ensure the full humanitarian assistance response is aligned.

Questions to be asked	Action to be taken
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the HAC objectives? • How will progress against these objectives be monitored? • How will HAC closure be decided and linked to these objectives? • What services will be available? • How will changes to HAC services and method of delivery be decided? • How will anniversaries, memorials, appeals etc be managed? • How will the local community be impacted by the HAC? • How will the needs of HAC visitors be reviewed? • How will those affected be informed about the HAC and encouraged to use its services where appropriate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding of the incident’s impact and the support needed by those affected • Clearly define the intended recipients of HAC services. i.e. survivors and bereaved friends and relatives • Prepare requirements for HAC selection and fit-out • Put in place formal review mechanisms at specific stages in the life of the HAC • Ensure that premises selected for the HAC meet the necessary criteria • Prepare financial management arrangements • Confirm procurement arrangements for any necessary equipment and/or resources • Agree a suitable name for the

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	<p>HAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that a media strategy is in place• Put in place reporting mechanisms• Coordinate the provision of training, induction and ongoing support to staff• Commission HAC services as appropriate
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Annex 3: Template HACMG Meeting Agenda

	Agenda Item	For: Info/ Discussion/ Decision
1	Introductions & Apologies	
2	HAC Remit & Objectives E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on impact of incident • Agreement of HACMG terms of reference • HAC objectives: clarification, progress with achieving etc • Current & future HACMG membership • Type of HAC required/change to current HAC needed • Opening & closing times 	
3	Update from HAC Management Team E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress with setting up HAC • Support for HAC Management Team • Changes to HAC Management Team 	
4	Services E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current range • Changes to range needed • Business continuity issues 	
5	Funding E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels required • Levels obtained • Funding difficulties • Administration e.g. authorisation levels 	
6	Media & Communications E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press activity & requests • Web site • Telephone help line • Leaflets • Press releases/statements • Advertising • VIPs 	
7	Building Issues E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Building management • Layout • Furniture & equipment • Utilities 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety 	
8	Reporting & Liaison E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports due • Allocation of reporting • Feedback from partners/ interested bodies • Community impact information 	
9	Staff Welfare E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift patterns • Training • Induction • Ongoing support • Issues 	
10	HAC Closure E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria for closure • Exit strategy • Memorials • Anniversaries • Wind down process • Capturing of lessons learned 	
11	Any Other business	
12	Date & Location of Next Meeting	

Annex 4: Community Impact Assessment Template

**Greater Manchester HAC
Community Impact Assessment (CIA) Template**

This form is designed to assess the impact of operating a HAC from a specific venue; it should be completed periodically for the duration of HAC Operation. The HACMG will oversee the Assessment and determine who will be responsible for its completion e.g. community police or the local authority.

Date of previous assessment:

Name of person carrying out assessment:

Role:.....Date of assessment:.....

PART A: Incident Specific Information

<i>Incident Summary</i>

PART B: Site Information

Location of HAC	
-----------------	--

Positive attributes of the site in relation to use as a HAC <i>e.g. accessibility for those affected, size, location, meets health and safety requirements, public transport links, communication links, safety, security, does the site accommodate the needs of people with a range of disabilities, does the site have accommodation, good natural light, location to related services ? etc.</i>

Negative attributes of the site in relation to use as a HAC <i>e.g. close proximity to incident, size, location, health and safety concerns, poor public transport links, issues of safety/security, poor access? etc.</i>

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Is the site itself at risk of an emergency situation? E.g. located in a high-risk flood zone, subject of terrorist threat etc. <i>(Seek advice from local authority emergency planning team or Greater Manchester Police if necessary)</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please describe the nature of the risk.		

What will be the likely impact on the venue's normal usage if it became a HAC? <i>E.g. Can current services be delivered from elsewhere? What is the impact of those services being moved/disrupted?</i>

How sustainable is this venue as a HAC in terms of availability and affordability in the long term ?			
Affordability?	High <input type="checkbox"/>	Average <input type="checkbox"/>	Low <input type="checkbox"/>
Availability?	High <input type="checkbox"/>	Average <input type="checkbox"/>	Low <input type="checkbox"/>

Has a full risk assessment for the venue been carried out? ¹³ <i>(If yes, please attach)</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Is the site ' <i>fit for purpose</i> ' in terms of meeting the HAC building requirements checklist? <i>(See Annex 5)</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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¹³ As well as reviewing any existing risk assessment conducted as a normal part of building inspections, the use of a bespoke risk assessment developed for a HAC in response to the specific incident should be considered. Qualified health and safety personal should be consulted regarding risk assessments.

PART C: Impact Assessment

What are the main communities in this area? *Please list all the residential communities and transient groups that frequent the area together with statistical data if known.*

--

What are the main communities affected by the incident?

--

Are there any tensions between the communities affected by the incident and those residents near to the venue?

--

Is there a recent history of community tensions in this area? *If yes, please provide contextual background.*

--

Are any specific individuals/organisations or groups e.g. community groups businesses or residents likely to be affected if a HAC was located in this area? *Please list all groups that are likely to be affected and how.*

Group	Description of Impact

What are the **positive** impacts on the community of using this venue as a HAC?

--

What are the negative impacts on the community of using this venue as a HAC? Can these be managed?	
Impact	Management of Impact

What measures can be/have been put in place to engage the community in HAC planning?

What involvement has there been in carrying out this impact assessment from the communities affected by the incident and those who live/work near the HAC venue?

What measures can be/have been put in place to monitor the ongoing impact of a HAC on the community?

PART C: Community Impact Assessment Sign Off

Are any changes expected that might impact on the appropriateness of the buildings usage and impact on the local community.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, please provide further details:		

Decision on suitability:

Venue suitable as a HAC venue? <i>This decision is also dependant on the satisfaction of the HAC Building Requirements Checklist (Annex 5)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Possibly
Reason for decision and any modifications/further research necessary	

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If this is a change to a previous assessment then please detail the key reasons for this change.

*Any change in assessed suitability should be communicated to the HAC
Management Group*

**Name and title of officer signing off
CIA:**

Signature:

Date:

DATE OF NEXT CIA REVIEW:

Annex 5: HAC Building Requirements Checklist

This checklist is a tool to assess the initial suitability of a venue for use as a HAC and will be completed under the direction of the HAC Management Group. Should the venue appear suitable from this assessment, further investigation will be required to support the use of this venue as a HAC, such as a community impact assessment (Annex 4). The exact venue requirements will depend on the nature of the emergency and the list below should be seen as a guide only.

The Local Authority is ultimately responsible for securing use of the premises and providing the HAC and is therefore responsible for identifying any liability issues at an early stage¹⁴.

Name of Venue			
Address of Venue			
Building Owner / Letting Agent			
Building Owner / Letting Agent: Contact Name			
Building Owner / Letting Agent: Contact Number			
Building Owner / Letting Agent: Contact Address			
Name of Assessor			
Job Title			
Date of Assessment			
Venue Suitable	Yes	No	Maybe
Reason for decision <i>e.g. further checks needed, difficulties that can be resolved etc</i>			

Requirement/Feature	Y/N	Notes
Estimated lead in time for use of building	N/A	
24hr access to building		
Relevant activity licensing agreements		
Contracts/clauses affecting the use of this building		
Impact of cancellation of the building's normal activity in the short term		

¹⁴ See: 'Emergency Response and Recovery' (HM Government July 09) p. 167

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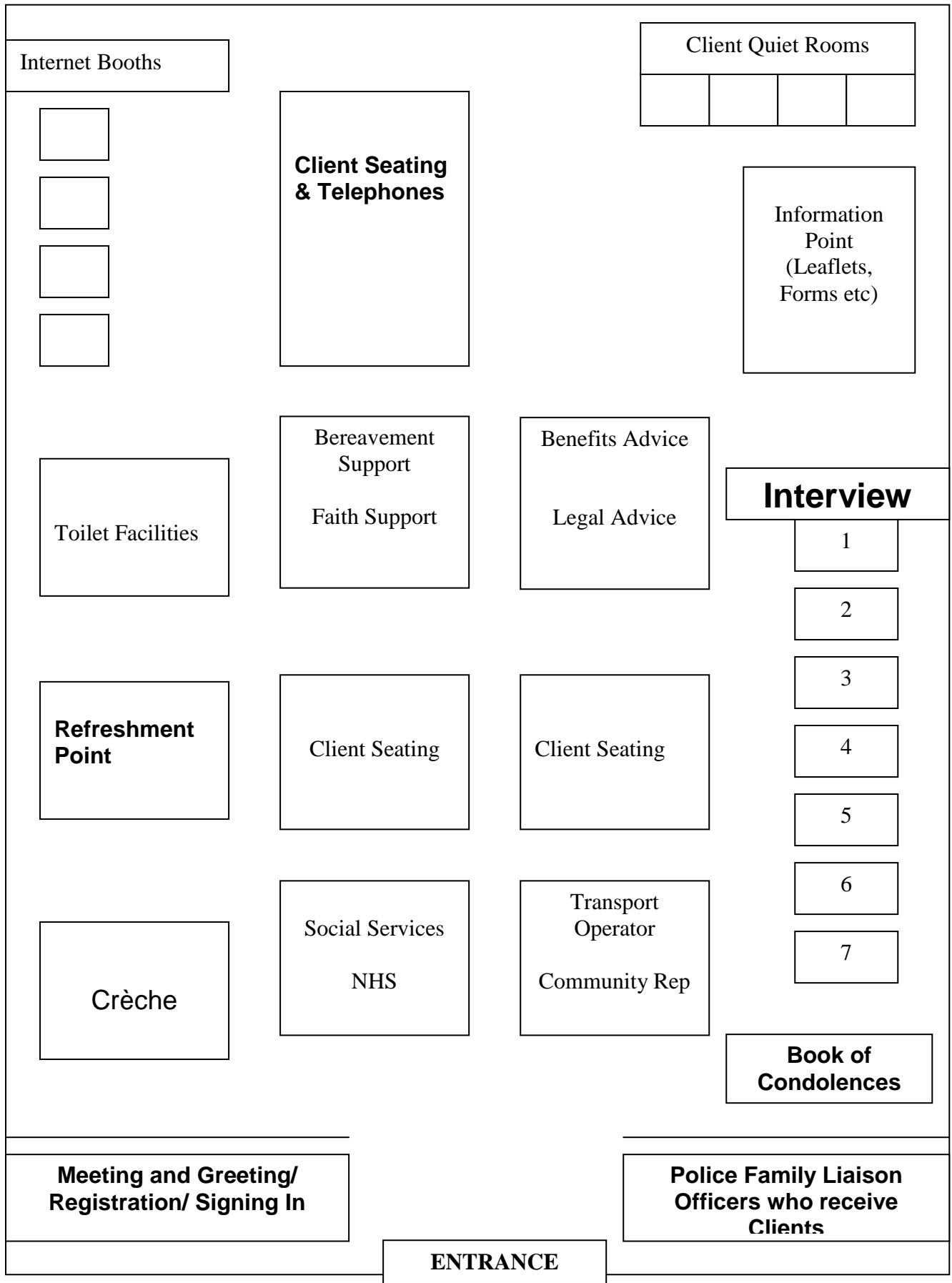
Impact of disruption to normal business in the long term		
Nearest emergency mortuary sites		
Impact on traffic		
Good public transport links		
Parking		
On street signage to site		
Telephone points		
Internet access		
Television access		
Mobile phone reception		
Natural light		
Wheelchair access to building		
Wheelchair access to toilet		
Other disabled facilities e.g. induction loop		
Toilets		
Baby changing and feeding area		
Refreshment facilities		
Information display facilities		
Secure storage facilities		
Management planning/meeting/control room		
Suitable press holding area nearby		
Unique entrance for HAC users		
Health & Safety		
Securable building/facility		
First aid provision		
Breakout/rest/briefing room for staff		
Building risk assessment in place		
Fire risk assessment in place		

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Service Areas		
Registration and reception area		
Client seating area		
Children's play area		
Quiet area/rooms		
Animal holding area		
Confidential interview/support rooms		
Support agency desks		
Private telephone/internet areas		
Administration area (stationery, photocopier etc)		
Additional Comments:		

Annex 6: Sample HAC Layout

This is an example of a HAC layout based on the arrangement used at the July 7th Assistance Centre in London. The layout and scope of service provision will differ, depending on the incident.



Annex 7: Dealing with the Media a Guide for HAC Visitors

Dealing With the Media: A Guide for HAC Visitors

Following a major event such as the one you have been involved in, press interest in survivors and bereaved families, though legitimate, can be intense.

Everyone reacts to this interest in different ways – you might find talking to the media a valuable way of bringing issues that are concerning you to light; others might avoid any contact. Some people feel that they ought to speak to the media, particularly local press, as there is a public interest in their story.

For many people this is the first time that they have had to deal with the media. For others, who have worked with the media before, it might be a question of finding themselves dealing with them about personal issues for the first time.

Whatever your situation, it can be daunting, but the key is for you to feel in control of the situation.

Journalists are under an obligation to respect the position of bereaved people and survivors under the Press Complaints Commission (PCC) Code of Practice. This Code states that: “In cases involving personal grief and shock, enquiries and approaches must be made with sympathy and discretion and publication handled sensitively.”

If you don't want to speak to the media

If you do not want to speak to the media you are under no obligation to do so. Tell them you do not want to speak to them. You might want to say something along the lines of:

“I do not wish to speak to the media about this issue. I will not be speaking to you or any other journalist about it. I understand that under the Press Complaints Commission Code of Practice you must not persist in contacting me if I have asked you to stop.”

However, this may not be the end of the story if a journalist, paper or TV channel has your phone number. They may ring back:

- Be consistent
- Don't panic
- Get an answering machine or ask someone else to answer your phone and repeat the message above on your behalf
- If you still feel that you are being harassed, contact the PCC immediately (on 07659 152656 or at www.pcc.org.uk)
- You can also ask for advice from HAC staff who may be able to help.

If you do want to speak to the media

- Always make a note of the person's name and contact phone number at the outset

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- Consider appointing somebody as a spokesperson for you/your family. This could be a relative or friend or your solicitor. Some support groups have appointed media liaison people who will field questions on behalf of the support group
- Don't do anything in a hurry – whatever the journalist says about deadlines. Ask them what they want to talk to you about; ask them to write down the questions they want to ask you; give yourself time to think about what you want to say; write down your answers; ask the journalist to ring you back at a specified time
- Never say anything “off the record” unless both you and the journalist have a shared understanding of what this means
- Remember that a journalist is entitled to report anything you say, so don't mistake them for counsellors or friends; and
- Bring the conversation to a close if you are uncomfortable.

Pictures

Sometimes journalists will ask for pictures of you, your loved one, and your family. You may wish to provide one, but remember, **you are under no obligation to do so**, and if you do, ensure that you have a copy of the image.

At Home

If the media turn up at your home you don't have to let them in and the same principles as outlined above apply. If you do not wish to answer your door, pin a short note to it saying that you do not wish to speak to journalists and do not want to be disturbed.

You may wish to tell the Police if you continue to experience problems.

Useful Contacts

Press Complaints Commission Urgent Contact Tel: 07659 152656

Website: www.pcc.org.uk

Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Press Office Tel: 020

7211 6276, Out of Hours pager: 07699 751153

British Red Cross Press Office Tel: 020 7877 7042, Out of Hours pager: 07659 145 095

Annex 8: HAC Initial Flyer Template

**Were you involved in the [insert name
of incident]?**

**Have you been affected by the [insert
name of incident]?**

**Do you need some help, advice or
support?**

**Are you missing someone who was
involved in the [insert name of
incident]?**

Please contact or visit the [insert name of incident]
Assistance Centre for help:

TEL:
EMAIL:
WEB:
ADDRESS:

Logo as relevant
e.g. local
authority, police
etc

Logo as relevant
e.g. local
authority, police

Annex 9: HAC Information Leaflet Template

[Insert name of centre]

Information Leaflet for Visitors

Who is the [Insert name of centre] for? E.g. (to be amended as necessary)
Injured and uninjured survivors and the relatives and friends of those who have died or been injured.

What does the [Insert name of centre] do? E.g. (to be amended as necessary)

- Provides advice, help and support to anyone affected from one place in a secure and private environment
- Collects and gives out information about those involved in the incident
- Provides updates on the [insert name of incident] and any investigation into what has happened

What facilities are available? [insert list of services and facilities as appropriate to the HAC] E.g.

- Counselling and emotional support
- Police Family Liaison Officers
- Advice on legal and financial issues
- Crèche
- Internet and telephone facilities

Who runs the Centre?

The Centre is run by [insert name of local authority/organisation] with help from the following organisations:

- List other organisations working in the Centre

How much does it cost? E.g.

There is no charge for using the Centre or any of the services it provides.

Where is the Centre and when is it open? [insert details as appropriate e.g. address, web, telephone etc and opening hours]

How to find the Centre

[Insert transport details, map if possible etc]

If you need help with accommodation or transport this may be able to be arranged or made available through [insert details of any support available]

Annex 10: Internal Communications Protocol

[Insert Name of HAC] Internal Communications Protocol

This protocol sets out guidelines for HAC staff on issues of internal communications and dealing with the press. This protocol applies to all staff working in the HAC, regardless of their employing organisation.

For further information or clarification about any aspect of this Protocol, please contact: [insert name of Press/Communications Lead].

Staff Updates and Briefings

All HAC staff will be briefed about the HAC, the triggering incident and any other relevant information.

The HAC Management Team will meet, initially at each shift change, for a formal handover and debrief. Discussion on issues relating to the press, internal communications will be part of this meeting. The outcomes of the discussion will usually be relayed to all staff as appropriate. The sensitivity of the information relayed will also be made clear.

Telephone, internet and television facilities are available for use by staff and are located in [insert location].

Requirements of Staff

To treat information carefully e.g. information from media sources may not be up to date or accurate and should not be relayed to HAC visitors, as 'fact'.

To only share information about the HAC, its visitors or the incident where it is necessary e.g. as part of the support being given.

To preserve the privacy and security of HAC visitors by taking care when discussing the HAC or any of its visitors or services. Discussions should be held in private, away from the main HAC area.

HAC visitors may be extremely distressed and upset. Staff should relate to all HAC visitors and staff in a compassionate, caring and approachable manner.

To ensure Family Liaison Officers take the lead in communicating personal information to HAC visitors

To be clear with HAC visitors what information will and will not be treated as confidential.

To put in place clear procedures for the passing on of information related to any investigation being undertaken about the incident.

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To ensure that the information is delivered in a format that is accessible to HAC visitors by alerting the Press/Communications Lead of any such needs identified.

To take care when recording and disposing of any information relating to the HAC, particularly where it relates to individuals. Information should be handled and disposed of in accordance with the guidelines (available from the HAC Manager)¹⁵.

Information for HAC Visitors

Any information for release to HAC visitors must first be authorised by the Press/Communications Lead and be in the required format agreed for the HAC. This applies to general posters, leaflets etc and not to information specific to an individual HAC visitor as part of their support package.

Dealing with the Media

Only the Press/Communications lead is able to respond to requests for information from the media. Any enquiries should be forwarded to [insert name] immediately to be dealt with.

Staff should be aware that the media may try to gain access to HAC visitors by posing as someone who has been affected by the incident. If staff have any concerns about a HAC visitor they should refer to the HAC Manager immediately.

¹⁵ See also: 'Data Protection and Sharing: Guidance for Emergency Planners and Responders' (HM Government: 2007).

Annex 11: Data Protection Information

The Data Protection Act 1998 provides a framework to strike a balance between the rights of individuals and other competing interests. It is an important piece of legislation giving confidence to individuals that their personal data will be treated appropriately and that it will not be misused. The Act gives individuals the right to know what information is held about them, and it provides a framework to ensure that personal information is handled properly.

Specific information for emergency responders regarding the sharing of information in an emergency is set out in: ['Data Protection and Sharing – Guidance for Emergency Planners and Responders'](#) (HM Government: 2007)

It is important to make clear that as this document states:

'Data protection legislation does not prohibit the collection and sharing of personal data – it provides a framework where personal data can be used with confidence that individuals' privacy rights are respected. Emergency responders' starting point should be to consider the risks and the potential harm that may arise if they do not share information. Emergency responders should balance the potential damage to the individual (and where appropriate the public interest of keeping the information confidential) against the public interest in sharing the information.'

The Data Protection Act works in two ways. Firstly, it states that anyone who processes personal information must comply with eight principles, which make sure that personal information is:

- Fairly and lawfully processed
- Processed for limited purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate and up to date
- Not kept for longer than is necessary
- Processed in line with the individual's rights
- Secure
- Not transferred to other countries without adequate protection

The second area covered by the Act provides individuals with important rights, including the right to find out what personal information is held on computer and most paper records.

Should an individual or organisation feel they are being denied access to personal information they are entitled to, or feel their information has not been handled according to the eight principles, they can ask the Information Commissioner to help. Complaints are usually dealt with informally, but if this isn't possible, enforcement action can be taken.

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More detailed Information can be found in:

- 'Data Protection and Sharing: Guidance for Emergency Planners and Responders' (HM Government: 2007).
- 'GMRF Information Sharing Agreement' (GMRF: Pending).

Annex 12: Glossary	
TERM	DEFINITION (in the context of HAC Planning)
CB Casualty Bureau	Initial point of contact for receiving and assessing information about victims
CCA Civil Contingencies Act	The main legislation setting out the requirements for contingency planning
CIA Community Impact Assessment	An exercise to test the impact of the HAC on the community
DCMS Department for Culture Media and Sport	Lead government department for humanitarian assistance
DWP Department for Work and Pensions	Government department that may provide a benefits advice service in a HAC, depending on the incident
FAC Family Assistance Centre	Former term, now replaced by HAC
FCO Foreign and Commonwealth Office	Department may support a HAC where an incident has occurred abroad or involves foreign nationals
FM Facilities Management	Umbrella term for all aspects of building management
FLO Family Liaison Officer	Officers appointed to a bereaved family by the police to guide them through processes such as investigation
FRRC Friends and Relatives Reception Centre	Provided to help reunite family and friends with survivors including the capacity to register, interview and provide shelter for family and friends
GMP Greater Manchester Police	Police force for Greater Manchester
GMRF Greater Manchester Resilience Forum	Representatives from a range of Greater Manchester organisations and sectors who oversee the development of civil protection measures across the region
HACMG HAC Management Group	Strategic group, usually chaired by Local Authority Director of Adult Social Care, with overall responsibility for the set up, running and closure of a HAC.
HACMT HAC Management Team	Group set up to manage the day-to-day activities of the HAC. Led by the HAC Manager who will also be a member of the HACMG.
PCT Primary Care Trust	Responsible for delivery of primary care services in an area

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RC Reception/ Rest Centre	Building managed by the local authority to temporarily accommodate evacuees/homeless survivors
RCG Recovery Coordinating Group	A multi agency group to provide strategic direction during the emergency recovery process. Usually chaired by the Local Authority (sometimes referred to as the recovery working group RWG)
SCG Strategic Coordinating Group	A temporary group set up to provide strategic direction to the initial management of an incident. Usually chaired by the police
SRC Survivor Reception Centre	Secure area in which survivors not requiring acute hospital treatment can be taken for short terms shelter and first aid