

Water Forum 2012

Report of meeting held on 24 July 2009

Summary of key issues and action required:

- Communication and governance including function and representation of existing planning structures and fora need further clarification
- Government Olympic Executive/government role in strategic coordination needs to be clarified to stakeholders
- Clarification of roles, responsibilities, boundaries and linkages between agencies and organisations
- Enhanced "real time response"- identification of action and resources to achieve this
- Identification of gaps and specific impacts of the Olympics/Paralympics in planning and delivery (what is different from normal service?)
- Co-ordination of strategic planning, prioritisation of action and resource allocation
- Review and consideration of the "fitness for purpose" of existing standards and protocols
- Enhanced/agreed management of situations not meeting standards
- Impacts and use of Olympic legislation

1. Introduction

The CIEH is striving to keep ahead of the Games in terms of environmental health planning. As part of this process, a series of environmental health professional workshops have been organised to bring together environmental health professionals involved in areas that are hosting Olympic/Paralympic venues or events. Throughout these workshops a number of cross cutting issues were identified. Water quality and safety in relation to the planning for the Olympics/Paralympics was identified as a key issue that would benefit from a specifically focused discussion about current concerns, challenges and developments. Together with the HPA, the CIEH sought to bring a representative group of key stakeholders together to start the discussion. The CIEH role was to primarily host the event.

The report outlines the key discussions and outcomes of the Water Forum held at Chadwick Court on 24 July 2009. A copy of the presentation is available separately on the CIEH website www.cieh.org.

2. Aims of the workshop

The workshop aimed to bring together key stakeholders to explore the impacts and issues around water in the planning and preparations for the 2012 Games including:

- Drinking and amenity water quality and supply
- Water contamination (natural or intentional – chemical, biological, radiological)
- Contingency planning - flooding, drought, early alerting, security
- Environmental - cooling towers, swimming pools, pest management
- Outbreak policies, sampling programmes, management strategies
- Media and communications

The participants were invited from a wide range of stakeholder organisations and agencies. The discussions highlighted the need to ensure wider representation at any future events.

3. Background

Sharon Smith (CIEH) gave a brief introduction to set the scene for the discussions. With three years to go to the opening ceremony the planning and preparations for the Olympics/Paralympics is starting to step up a pace. The Olympics/Paralympics is the largest mass gathering and over 7.7million tickets will be available for the Olympic events (1.5 million for the Paralympics). Mass gatherings of this size pose particular challenges for public health. The Games in 2012 will be a national experience as the venues are spread across the country and many localities will be involved in hosting training camps and community cultural events. The London 2012 Sustainability Policy provides the framework for planning the most environmentally sound, economically viable and socially responsible Games.

There are a number of key organisations that are involved in the administration of the Olympics/Paralympics. These can be found with other current information on developments on the main website – www.london2012.com. In particular, the role of the Joint Local Authority Regulatory Services groups that have been formed by the London Host Authorities (Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest) needs to be acknowledged in terms of their responsibility for regulatory enforcement within the Olympic Park.

The CIEH role is to help support the environmental health contribution to the Games to ensure the highest standards of public and environmental health. This will be achieved through raising standards, enhancing professional practice and working closely with the Olympic administration and partners. The CIEH acknowledges the significant experience and expertise that environmental health professionals have across the country and the improvements to professional policy and practice, enhancement of skills sets within the profession and the resulting improvements to public health are part of the legacy for the Games.

The impact of water in Olympic/Paralympic planning involves:

- Sports venues - Weymouth and Portland; Aquatics Centre; Broxbourne; Eton Dorney; Serpentine
- Amenity - Lower Lea (Lee) Valley, Royal Parks; coastal and inland water; swimming pools
- Public health and wellbeing- drinking water quality, safety and supply (Vectors for disease and water borne communicable disease)
- Safety and emergency planning – natural disasters, extreme weather, terrorist activity; accidents

As with other previous Olympic risk assessments, food and water borne diseases were considered high risk in Athens in 2004. Environmental surveillance models and programmes existed as part of the planning processes in previous Games (Atlantis and Sydney). The

Athens water quality surveillance programme formed part of a wider public health management programme and addressed issues around:

- Water supply systems
- Swimming pools
- Decorative fountains
- Cooling towers
- Sea coasts, airports and marinas
- Bottled water and ice producing plants

Water in relation to waste management and public toilets was addressed under a specific waste management plan.

In Athens, 44,741 premises of interest to the water surveillance programme were identified, although 8,000 premises were prioritised for the inspection and sampling programme. Athens utilised 196 environmental officers to carry out the programme. 2,606 inspections as part of the water surveillance programme in Athens were undertaken during Games time within and outside the venues.

4. Discussion feedback

The participants were divided into three groups:

- Drinking water (quality and supply)
- Sport and Amenity Water (quality and environment)
- Safety and resilience/contingency planning

Each group was asked to consider the risks, impacts for public health and safety and to list principles of a risk minimising strategy, key stakeholders, tools and protocols needed. The groups were also asked to put forward suggestions for key actions or next steps. The issues recorded by the groups can be found in annex 1.

The group listed the key stakeholders that need to be involved in planning around water issues:

- HPA
- Host authorities (JLARS)
- LOCOG
- Water utilities
- Environment Agency
- DWI
- British Waterways
- Resilience Forums- emergency services and local authorities
- FSA
- HSE
- CIEH
- LACORS
- Industry specialists/public health specialists
- Royal Parks
- Port of London Authority
- Marine and Coast Guard Authority
- RNLI
- Met Office

Summary of issues and next steps from discussion:

Governance and responsibility

- Clarification of governance and need for co-ordination of current effort and action to prevent duplication and “assumptive planning”.
- Confusion over role of the numerous groups and fora discussing and planning for the Olympics/Paralympics and representation of stakeholders on these groups.
- Clarification of roles and responsibilities of agencies and organisations involved
- Linkages and connections with regard to agency/organisation roles especially around changes to Games time
- Differing views of connectivity of the range of fora and groups planning around the Olympics
- Mapping of fora
- Inclusivity – the need to ensure that key stakeholders are involved in decision making relevant to their responsibility and expertise
- Resources and co-ordination during Games time

Standards, protocols and response

- Checking that existing standards are consistent and “fit for purpose”
- Clarification of protocols to manage situations where standards not met
- Establishing or enhancement to ensure consistent testing regime linked to action planning and communication mechanisms
- Links to sustainability in terms of rain water use and irrigation sources
- Business continuity
- Response in real time and scaling up to provide better service and react quicker
- Links between London and outside London resilience Fora
- Identifying existing relevant protocols and review to ensure “fit for purpose”.
- Understanding of potential use of “Olympic legislation”
- Identifying gaps in planning and service coverage

Specific issues – Drinking water

- Distribution systems in “off Park” venues and for LOCOG to check with Atkins (LOCOG contractor) in relation to current procedures
- Check that the design and planning of vendor units water supply and physical connection on site
- Mobile vending water supplies- ensure mobile vending group tackling issue
- Water quality and sampling (Drinking Water Inspectorate) need for review of any gaps in arrangements leading up to and during Games time.
- Drinking water quality needs to be part of the national emergency contingency planning considerations and planning. This is particularly the case during Games time as it will involve additional stakeholders
- Water quality needs to be considered in venues post build but before being brought into use
- Water bottles may be discussed as part of the LOCOG food advisory group- checks on policy and practice

Specific issues- amenity

- Accidents in relation to non managed inland waters.
- Standards associated with coastal waters and sport use particularly gastro intestinal diseases
- Concerns and management of Legionella and Cryptosporidia

- Water standards “fit for purpose” and ability of some inland waters not being able to achieve standards within the timescale of the Olympics
- Management of a co-ordinated testing regime and follow up/remediation
- Specific water management plans for water sports venues
- Sustainability links to water management especially in the use of rain water and sources for irrigation

Specific issues- safety and contingency

- Partner understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Scaling up service to be able to respond quicker
- Sharing of information across agencies/stakeholders
- Wider and relevant representation from stakeholders
- Consider use and impact of Civil Contingencies Act
- Consider engagement through London resilience fora and outside London resilience structures
- Review relevance of existing protocols and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose for the Games
- Consider regulatory responsibilities particular in relation to the temporary nature of venues

5. Further action

The CIEH will write up and circulate the report of the meeting. Individual participants are at liberty to discuss outcomes within their respective organisations. A further meeting may be arranged if there is sufficient support and interest.

6. Further information

- www.cieh.org
- www.london2012.org
- www.newham.gov.uk
- www.hse.gov.uk
- www.lacors.gov.uk

Contact: Sharon Smith, Strategic Projects Director, CIEH

Telephone: 05601712276

Email: s.smith@cieh.org

Annex 1

Feedback from group discussions

Group focus	Risks and issues	Risk management	Partners/tools	Key actions
Sport and amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inland water ways • Public accidents in non managed sites • Gastro intestinal diseases in sporting locations • Legionella/ Cryptosporidia • Standards for inland waters • Standards for bathing water • Ability to achieve standards within timescales • Rain water use • Irrigation – what water is being used? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency plans- accidents • Outbreak management • Common regime for testing and response strategy for public health issues • Promoting hand washing • Monitoring of Olympic sports venues • Use of historical data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local authorities • Royal Parks • ODA • LOCOG <p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring water quality • ID surveillance • Registration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pollution incidents- management • Common regime for testing • Programme to achieve standards and what to do if standards cannot be achieved within timescale
Safety and resilience		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early alerting • Exchange of information • Civil Contingencies Act • Understanding of command and control structure for Olympics • Inclusivity- who leads on incidents? • Who gives messages to public? • Business continuity- what needs to be enhanced? • React quicker • Clarify roles and responsibilities • Working closer together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Emergencies Act • London and regional resilience infrastructure (not strategic bodies and work differently outside London) • LESLEP • UK Recovery Handbook (RDP) • Government Operations Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication between different stakeholders and need governance • Clarify roles and responsibilities especially at boundaries of agencies • Enhance resilience in service provision and business continuity • Being able to respond in real time/quicker • Respond to information alerts/results
Drinking water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution systems in off park venues • Mobile vending • Physical connections in design planning for vendors on site • Water quality in post build interim use of venues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking to national emergency response systems • Water quality monitoring • Bottled water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent systems for water monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check current systems operating by Atkins contracted to LOCOG • Build on excellent systems and identify gaps • Link into national emergency response • Additional resources for Games time co-ordination • Policy on bottled water for LOCOG food group