**10.0Debrief**

Debriefs serve several functions, they allow staff to voice their opinion and suggestions for improvement but additionally they are a vital way of learning operational lessons after an emergency, incident or exercise and thereby allow for plans to be reviewed, revised or updated to further enhance organisational resilience.

It is important that a ‘hot’ debrief is organised during the recovery period and that a further debrief is organised at an appropriate time after. Whilst individual agency debriefs will be carried out during and after the event, it may be necessary to carry out a Joint Agency Debrief to fully evaluate the effectiveness of the response so that any lessons identified are captured and plans updated accordingly. It will be essential to ensure that contractors and voluntary agencies are involved in any debriefs.

In order to facilitate debriefing and provide evidence for inquiries (whether judicial, public, technical, inquest or of some other format), it is essential that a comprehensive record is kept of all events, decisions and actions taken. Good record keeping allows the lessons to be identified and made more widely available for the benefit of those who might be called upon to respond to other similar incidents in the future. Thus lessons identified can be put in to effect and become lessons learned.

There may be several debriefs but will fall into two general categories:

A Hot Debrief – held immediately after the exercise, incident, emergency is stood down or immediately after a shift handover. This is vital as it captures immediate thoughts or concerns about the response, allows for immediate remedial action to be taken and allows the individual to defuse before going home. A hot debrief can be held on a 1-2-1 basis or in a group. The decision on whether to hold a 1-2-1 debrief or group debrief should be taken by those being debriefed. There is a possibility that those being debriefed may want to discuss an issue that they may not feel comfortable discussing in a group setting. The hot debrief also allows for individual post incident support needs to be identified.

A Cold Debrief – should be held between 2 and 4 weeks after the incident, emergency or exercise. It is more formal than the hot debrief. Information collected during the cold debrief will form a large part of the post incident, emergency or exercise report.

In the event of a multi-agency incident or emergency, there will be a multi-agency cold debrief. This will usually be facilitated by the agency with primacy at the exercise, incident or emergency and the Trust should send appropriate representation.

**(see Appendix B3 for incident management team debrief)**

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