



Pan Flu Readiness Board, 23 January 2020 0930-1030 PFRB(20)14
Pandemic Flu Readiness Board (PFRB)

**Held in 10 Victoria Street
Thursday 23 January 2020, 0930-1030**

Minutes

Chair
Katharine Hammond (CO)

Departments present:

BEIS
CCS (CO)
DfE
DHSC
DHSC Comms
DWP
GO-SCIENCE
HMPPS
MHCLG
MoD
NHS ENGLAND
PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND
WALES OFFICE

Via phone

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT
NORTHERN IRELAND
WELSH GOVERNMENT
MOJ
CPS

Apologies

NIO
Emma Reed (co-chair)

Secretariat

CCS



Item 1 – Welcome, Introduction, Review of Actions and Progress Update

1. KATHARINE HAMMOND opened the fourteenth meeting of the Pandemic Flu Readiness Board (PFRB) by welcoming all attendees, and outlined that due to the recent coronavirus outbreak, this meeting would be reduced to an hour. *She apologized to DHSC COMMS and the DA's that there may not be time to go through all agenda items as planned. Apologies were made on behalf of EMMA REED, co-chair, who was pulled into a last minute meeting.*
2. Turning to **NR** **NR** KATHARINE HAMMOND asked for an update on Action 137 **NR** explained that they do not expect public disorder problems as this was not experienced during swine flu. *An added benefit of YellowHammer planning was that this experience can feed into future work.* KATHARINE HAMMOND remarked that it would be useful for HO to report back to the Board on whether this was a validated view.
3. KATHARINE HAMMOND asked **NR** (DHSC COMMS) to confirm that the public health communications strategy has been shared (action 144). **NR** explained that they still needed a contact list in order to complete this action. KATHARINE HAMMOND asked for this action to be completed by the next meeting.
4. Turning to Action 152, KATHARINE HAMMOND thanked the DAs' for completing their papers as requested, and then thanked all for sharing their departmental communications contact (Action 153).

ACTION 1: HO to report back to the Board on the validation of the idea that there would not be public disorder during a pandemic.

Item 2- Objectives

5. Due to time constraints, the Board turned to Item 5 on the agenda on the scope and objectives of the exercise.
6. **NR** presented the paper to the Board and listed possible objectives for the exercise.
7. PHE stated that they were happy to create an exercise but a clear steer from the Board was needed. A date of Easter seemed quite close for their timelines.
8. **NR** explained the difference between a command post exercise and a TTX exercise. He stated that the objectives needed to be more specific.



9. KATHARINE HAMMOND opened the floor to questions on objectives. The DEVOLVED ADMINSTRATIONS stated it should be a four nation approach. HMPPS stated they agreed with the objectives, as Exercise Cygnus did not test prisons. CAROL MCCALL stated the exercise would re-engage comms colleagues. WELSH GOVERNMENT stated they wanted guidance for LRFs before proceeding with the exercise. NR stated that exercise design is crucial.
10. KATHARINE HAMMOND summarised that there was clear support for objective a as the lead objective; there was strong support for objectives c and d. NR (CPS) questioned the timing of the exercise. KATHARINE HAMMOND questioned if departments were prepared to commit resource if an exercise was planned. The majority of departments were not prepared to commit resource to the exercise.
11. KATHARINE HAMMOND suggested that the Board did not take a decision on the form of the exercise. She stated her disappointment in the change of view of the Board on levels of commitment they could provide. She reminded all of the risk to their departments and suggested the exercise planning be devolved to a working group.
12. The Board then discussed the scope of the exercise. NR was in favour of a, whilst MHCLG preferred B. The DEVOLVED ADMINSTRATIONS stated that they could involve their LRFs or equivalents. KATHARINE HAMMOND agreed there should be parity across the four nations.
13. KATHARINE HAMMOND reminded the Board that they were after a steer on how to engage the local level. There was a strong view from the Board of consistency across the four nations.
14. On the question of engaging ministers, there were mixed views. KATHARINE HAMMOND summarised that it is sensible to not have ministers involved and think about how to engage ministers after the exercise.

ACTION: ALL departments to nominate one member from their department for the working group and send to either NR (CCS).



- 15. [redacted] NR (MOD) outlined the paper. This is a top risk for MOD and the key challenge is avoiding pre-committing resource to tasks.
- 16. HOME OFFICE summarised that both police and fire would be impacted by staff reductions but both have business continuity plans in place.
- 17. [redacted] NR (CCS) stated that the DEVOLVED ADMINSTRATIONS would be engaged with at a later date.
- 18. KATHARINE HAMMOND thanked all for setting out the principles in the paper and stated to the Board that we could discuss testing these principles in the exercise.
- 19. KATHARINE HAMMOND thanked all for attending, apologised for shortening the meeting, not getting through all the items on the agenda and closed the fourteenth meeting of the Pan Flu Readiness Board.

ACTION

Item

ACTION

Item – AOB and Next Steps

- 20.