

J7 Response to the Provisional Index of Factual Issues – Provisional Index of Factual Issues – Issue 10

10. *The general nature of injuries typically caused by proximity to explosions.*

Victim Removal, Body Holding Areas, Temporary Mortuary, Victim Identification

The Greater London Authority 7 July Review Committee¹ reports and the London Regional Resilience Forum multi-agency debrief², failed to examine the issues around the removal of the deceased from each of the sites, where they were stored, how they were recorded, their subsequent transportation to the Temporary Mortuary (HAC), and their allocation to each of the designated areas within the Temporary Mortuary. These remain unexamined areas with no public record and would be imperative to the Factual Issues investigated by the Coroner.

Suggested areas for examination:

The 36 hours between the explosions and the setting up of the Temporary Mortuary in the grounds of the HAC.

Where the bodies were stored at all times before removal to the Temporary Mortuary.

A press release from the MPS on 7th July states:

Two mortuaries are being set up - these are at the Royal National Hotel and the Holiday Inn in Bloomsbury.³

and a Camden New Journal⁴ article stated:

EMERGENCY teams are facing the traumatic task of counting and identifying the dead in the makeshift base of a King's Cross hotel tonight (Thursday) following the bomb blasts which ripped through three underground stations (Liverpool Street Station, Edgware Road Tube Station and King's Cross Station) and obliterated a double-decker bus in Tavistock Square.

1 Report of the 7 July Review Committee | Greater London Authority - <http://www.london.gov.uk/who-runs-london/the-london-assembly/publications/safety-policing/report-7-july-review-committee>

2 London Resilience - looking back moving forward [PDF] - <http://www.londonprepared.gov.uk/downloads/lookingbackmovingforward.pdf>

3 Metropolitan Police Service - Response to terrorist attack - http://www.met.police.uk/news/terrorist_attacks/response3.htm

4 Terror on the Tube, Camden New Journal - http://www.camdennewjournal.co.uk/063005/cn070705_01.htm

While **charred bodies are taken to the Holiday Inn in Euston Road**, scarred survivors who limped free from the carnage are being treated in hospitals across the capital.

Were hotels used to store the bodies at any time during the recovery process, and if not, why did the MPS put out this press release and where did this newspaper article originate from?

Whether the draft guidelines in responding to & recovery from emergencies were followed:

Responding to Emergencies

The Draft Guidance on Response to and Recovery from Emergencies⁵ states:

5.35 Human remains may be taken first to a location designated as a **body holding area**. This should be under cover and protected from the public view for reasons of security, protection and sensitivity. A bodyholding area should only be regarded as a temporary holding point between the site of retrieval and the designated mortuary.

5.36 The usual practice is for bodies to be taken to a temporary mortuary for post-mortems to be carried out. **It is the responsibility of the coroner's office to make arrangements for the transfer of bodies to the mortuary.**

This is co-ordinated by the police acting on behalf of the coroner's office, using vehicles belonging to undertakers or police, although military transport may also be used for this task. It is essential to establish documented continuity in respect of each aspect of the recovery and transportation process.⁶

Whether the draft guidelines issued for Body Holding areas were followed and is the audit trail available for inspection by the Coroner and Inquest?

3.15 To ensure appropriate quality control measures it will be necessary to establish a disaster victim or body holding area close to the scene. Experience

⁵ UK Resilience - <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience.aspx>

⁶ Guidance on Dealing with Fatalities in Emergencies (May 2004) - <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/132748/fatalities.pdf>

has shown that it is best located near to the cordon control point ideally straddling the inner cordon line. Inflatable structures have been used with success in the past.

3.16 A disaster victim holding area must not be confused with a temporary mortuary. The body holding area is a secure, private location where victims and human remains that have been recovered from the site can be temporarily held prior to transfer to a mortuary – temporary or otherwise. The disaster victim holding area acts as a quality control point for victim labels and other accompanying documentation. Identification of victims will not take place in the holding area.

3.17 The disaster victim holding area will be staffed by a police documentation officer with other appropriate support appointed by the scene evidence recovery manager. The staff in this area will maintain a written log of all victims and remains recovered from the site ensuring that these are placed in a suitable order for transfer to the mortuary. All movements will be carefully recorded to maintain an audit trail for the whole process.⁷

On what date were all the bodies removed from each of the sites?

Reports state⁸ that up to 20 bodies remained on the Piccadilly Line train for at least 3 days.

Victim Recovery⁹

3.11 The recovery of the dead and human remains is also an evidence recovery process. It is normally appropriate for trained police officers to carry out this task. A number of police forces throughout the United Kingdom have such trained teams. However, in some incidents it may be necessary to seek wider support, for example from the military and this should be considered and agreed as part of the planning process.

3.12 Recovery will be conducted under the overall supervision of the scene evidence recovery manager and carried out as part of a carefully documented process. This process will normally use nationally recognised victim labels and recovery booklets each bearing a unique reference number. **In addition to contemporaneous documentation the process may be supported by video and still photography.** There is no specific definition of

⁷ UK Resilience - <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience.aspx>

⁸ 7/7: Blitz On Britain: As the bodies were brought up top, their | Sunday Mirror Newspaper | Find Articles at BNET - http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qn4161/is_20050710/ai_n14721242/

⁹ From the [UK Resilience](#) website [Guidance on dealing with fatalities in an Emergency](#) (PDF)

what constitutes a body (under section 8 of the Coroners Act 1988), essentially the test will be whether the quantity of remains found is sufficient enough to prove death.

The ISC report¹⁰ claims that:

10 July – Pathologist reports suggest that the men later identified as HUSSAIN, KHAN and LINDSAY were in possession of, or in close proximity to, the bombs at the times of the explosions.

How was this possible if so many bodies had still not been recovered from all the sites?

How could the sites have remained intact for the forensic, explosive & crime investigation teams to examine?

Each site had been the scene of much activity by the emergency services in the rescue of casualties, and also by London Underground staff who are unlikely to have been trained in the art of evidence and crime scene preservation. What measures were taken to account for the disruptions and displacements of the injured and deceased that occurred at each scene as part of the rescue operations. For example, this report¹¹ of Blue Watch firemen at the Piccadilly Line train:

"Jackson called for more lighting and more fire fighters arrived. "We had to get dead people out of the way so we could get to people trapped underneath.

We were taking bodies out of the carriage, but eventually we just piled them to the side of the carriage."

There were dismembered parts everywhere. It was impossible to tell which had come from which bodies."

This would have confused the investigation in establishing proximity to the explosions. On 8th July, Andy Hayman said in a press conference¹²:

And when I describe the scene in Russell Square, it's yet to be the case for us to get near the carriage.

10 P15 http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/210852/20090519_77review.pdf

11 July 7th People's Independent Inquiry Forum -> King's Cross / Russell Square - <http://z13.invisionfree.com/julyseventh/index.php?showtopic=7&st=70&#entry11532277>

12 CNN.com - Transcripts - Police Give Update on London Terror Attacks; London Terror; Interview With Rudy Giuliani - <http://edition.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0507/08/se.01.html>

When did the teams access each of the sites? When was photographic evidence taken from each site?

Chris Hadkiss, a manager with Britain's Forensic Science Service, says his laboratory has so far analyzed DNA samples only from the suspected bombers. But he says it's "inevitable" that the lab will get around to studying DNA from victims whose bodies prove difficult to identify by other means¹³.

On what date were the remains of the 4 alleged bombers removed and kept separately from the other victims at the Temporary Mortuary? How were these remains identified as being from the alleged bombers?

Several articles in Spanish newspapers have expressed shock at the time it has taken for information on the number and names of the dead to come out. Twenty-four hours after the train bombings in Madrid last year, Spaniards knew that at least 190 people had died. And by then most of the bodies had also been identified. Most were buried within three days of the attacks¹⁴.

Why was there such a long delay in identifying the victims?

On the 14th July 2005, one week after the event and at an easily accessible site where the fewest victims perished, the Metropolitan Police¹⁵ claim that there is no forensic evidence placing Khan at the Edgware Road scene, despite his property being found there.

In relation to the third man who travelled from West Yorkshire, the position remains that property in his name was found at the scene of both the Aldgate and the Edgware Road attacks, **but we have not yet been able to gather forensic evidence to confirm that he died in any of the explosions.**¹⁶

Why was Mohammed Sidique Khan not identified until 16th July? How does this lack of forensic evidence linking Khan to the Edgware Rd explosion square with the statement in the ISC report at point 6?

Was a second post mortem ever carried out on Khan or any of the other 56? If so, on

13 The Hardest Count - TIME - <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1083869,00.html>

14 Families feel pain of name delay | UK news | The Guardian - <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2005/jul/12/july7.politics1>

15 July 7th People's Independent Inquiry Forum -> Metropolitan Police Press Statements - <http://z13.invisionfree.com/julyseventh/index.php?showtopic=123&st=7&#entry13253695>

16 July 7th People's Independent Inquiry Forum -> Metropolitan Police Press Statements - <http://z13.invisionfree.com/julyseventh/index.php?showtopic=123&st=7&#entry13253667>

whom, when and what were the results?

When was the Inquest into Khan opened?