



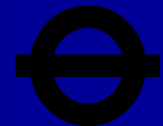
**Transport
for London**

TfL Marketing & Communications

Preparing for and responding to a crisis

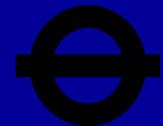
Vernon Everitt, TfL MD Marketing & Comms

23 April, 2009



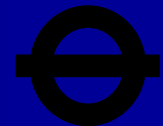
Today's presentation - Summary

- **Background to TfL**
- **Background to TfL Press Office**
- **What is a 'crisis'**
- **The four stages of a crisis**
- **How to respond to a crisis – General Rules**
- **Specific TfL example – Recent Snow Disruption**
- **London Resilience – How the capital responds**
- **Q&A**



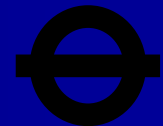
Background – Transport for London

- **Transport for London (TfL), London's transport authority:**
 - Strategic / Investment responsibilities
 - Operational management of an integrated transport network
- **Responsibilities include:**
 - London Underground / DLR / London Overground / Crossrail
 - London Bus Network / Cycling / Walking / River
 - Congestion Charge / Streets / Road Safety
 - A budget of circa £8bn per annum – mid-size FTSE 100
- **Chaired by Mayor of London, Boris Johnson**



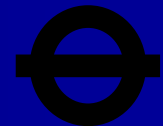
Background – TfL Marketing & Comms

- **Manages and oversees all communications for TfL, including:**
 - Press Office
 - Public Affairs
 - Marketing, inc. TfL website – www.tfl.gov.uk
 - Customer Services, inc. TfL helplines
- **TfL Press Office, one of the busiest in UK:**
 - Over 60,000 calls last year, over 1,100 per week
- **Resilient TfL website vital for providing info to our customers, especially during incidents or times of crisis**
- **Close liaison with key partners, esp. Mayor of London, Police and emergency services**



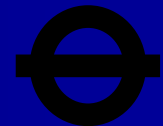
What is a 'crisis'

- **Any issue or event that requires an immediate and / or extraordinary response**
- **Examples include:**
 - Financial Crisis (a topical example!)
 - Reputational Crisis (eg Ratners)
 - Operational Crisis (eg rail crash)
 - Loss of Property (eg HQ becomes unavailable)
 - Major Incidents (eg 7/7)
- **Very different issues, but the basic preparation and response is very similar**
- **Not rocket science, but does require preparation**



The four stages of a crisis

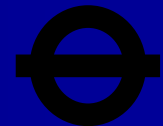
- **Stage 1 – Incident or Event:**
 - Followed by confusion
 - What actually happened, what was actually said
- **Stage 2 – Initial Response:**
 - Critical to the successful handling of the crisis
 - Swift and accurate response is vital
- **Stage 3 – Consolidated Response:**
 - Handling for the duration of the crisis
 - Several hours, days or weeks
- **Stage 4 – Recovery:**
 - Getting back to normal
 - Potentially as important to reputation as initial response



How to respond to a crisis

– General Rules (1)

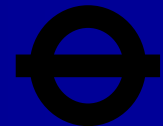
- **Rule 1 – Be Prepared:**
 - Ensure you have all necessary contacts, regularly updated
 - Ensure clear lines of responsibility, operationally and communications
 - Ensure the business has clear procedures to follow, including a business recovery plan
 - Ensure the Comms Team have access to necessary / important info – consider holding on paper!
 - Identify spokespeople in advance
- **Rule 2 – Test Yourself:**
 - Have a dry run – a full scenario or table top exercise
 - Tests staff response and identifies areas for improvement



How to respond to a crisis

– General Rules (2)

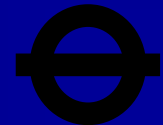
- **Rule 3 – A Swift and Accurate Response:**
 - It is vital to move swiftly to restore confidence – any unnecessary delay will undermine confidence
 - **BUT...**
 - Speed must not come at the expense of accuracy – it is vital to ensure information provided is as accurate as possible
 - If you are not sure of the facts, don't take a chance!
 - Rely on a holding line and update ASAP
- **Rule 4 – Be Visible:**
 - It is important to be visible, particularly during Stage's 3 & 4
 - Consolidated Response and Recovery
 - You will be criticised if you go missing or are deliberately evasive
 - Media abhors a vacuum and will fill it



How to respond to a crisis

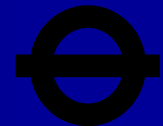
– General Rules (3)

- **Rule 5 – Plan for Recovery Stage early:**
 - Even though you are consumed by responding to the initial incident / event
 - From at least Stage 3 – Consolidated Response, preferably earlier, consider what you will need to ensure successful Recovery stage
 - Identity a ‘Recovery Team’ to plan, or build in resilience to staff – eg, send some home, to be fresh later when needed
- **Rule 6 – Debrief and Review:**
 - Once the crisis is over, ensure you debrief and review the response
 - Even though every crisis is different, you can always learn lessons to improve response next time



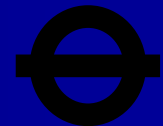
TfL Example: Recent Snow Disruption

- **Most recent and topical TfL example**
- **Major snowfall in London on 1 & 2 Feb 2009**
- **Context**
- **Preparation**
- **Initial Response – Overnight 1 & 2 Feb**
- **Consolidated Response – 2 & 3 Feb**
- **TfL Website Traffic**



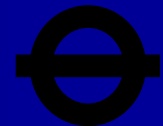
The context

- Heaviest snow fall in almost two decades
- 55 per cent of Tube is overground
- TfL is responsible for five per cent of London's roads – the London boroughs manage the rest
- 35 TfL gritters spreading 4,000 tonnes of grit spread over three days, from Sunday 1 Feb
- 30 bus incidents by midnight on Sunday, 142 emergency calls to bus operations centre
- On Monday 2 Feb up to 80 per cent of Tube services ran, 2000 buses out by evening rush hour
- DLR and London Overground ran a good level of service. Almost full service on Tuesday



Preparation

- **Autumn 2008, refreshed winter weather plans and wrote to all London Councils**
- **Following weather forecasts on Thursday 29 January, updated lines and briefings, contacted control centres**
- **Friday 30 January, TfL Duty Press Officer briefed to monitor across the weekend**
- **Sunday 1 January, Duty Press Officer calls into operational conference calls**



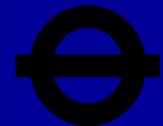
Initial response: Overnight Sunday 1 & Monday 2 Feb

- **00.10hrs Monday 2 February Duty Press Officer informed buses not operating due to road conditions**
- **01.00hrs Duty Press Officer dispatched to LU Network Ops Centre to gather info on roads, rails and buses**
- **Press Office open from 04.00hrs**
- **Real time information provided through TfL website**
- **Staffing plan developed, calls put into team to ensure staffing resilience throughout the next three days**



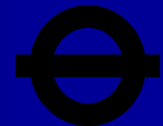
Initial response: Monday 2 Feb

- **Focus on timely, accurate travel information to customers via media and web:**
 - Rapidly changing weather picture and conditions
 - Traffic Link providing travel information to broadcast media
 - Service updates issued by TfL Press Office at regular intervals
 - Spokespeople available for interview
 - Real time information via TfL website
- **Spokespeople lined up and briefed by 07.00, first radio interview by 07.15**
- **Information shared with London partners via London Resilience Team (LRT) Comms**
 - More on LRT to come



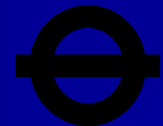
Consolidated response: Tuesday 3 Feb

- **Services returned to normal**
 - Explained what happened
 - Apologised for disruption
 - Check before you travel
- **Key messages focused on:**
 - Check before you travel, likely to be more disruption
 - Unique circumstances of heaviest snow for 20 years
 - Working hard to run as many services as possible Working with the boroughs to prioritise gritting
 - Our staff worked through the night to deliver Tube, bus, DLR and London Overground services
 - Almost full service on Tube, bus, DLR and London

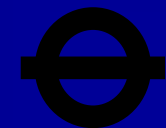
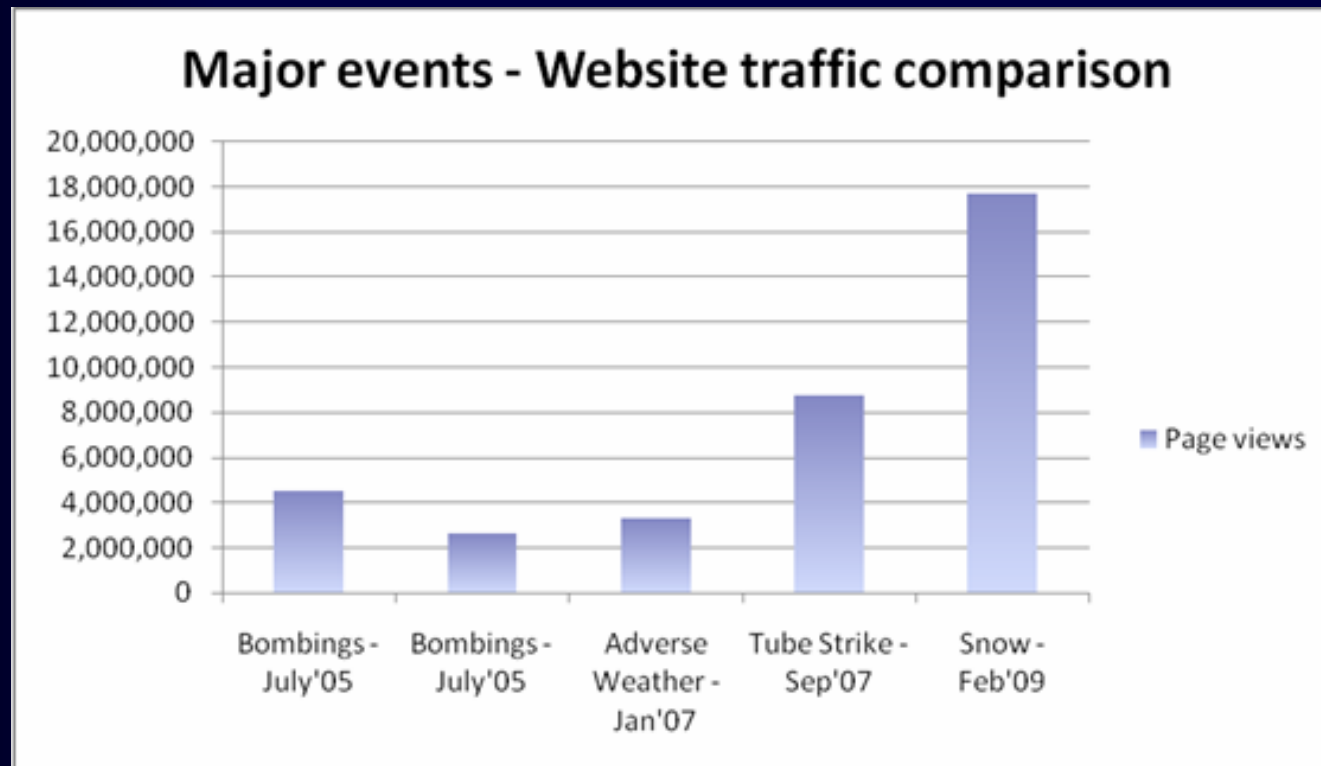


Statistics

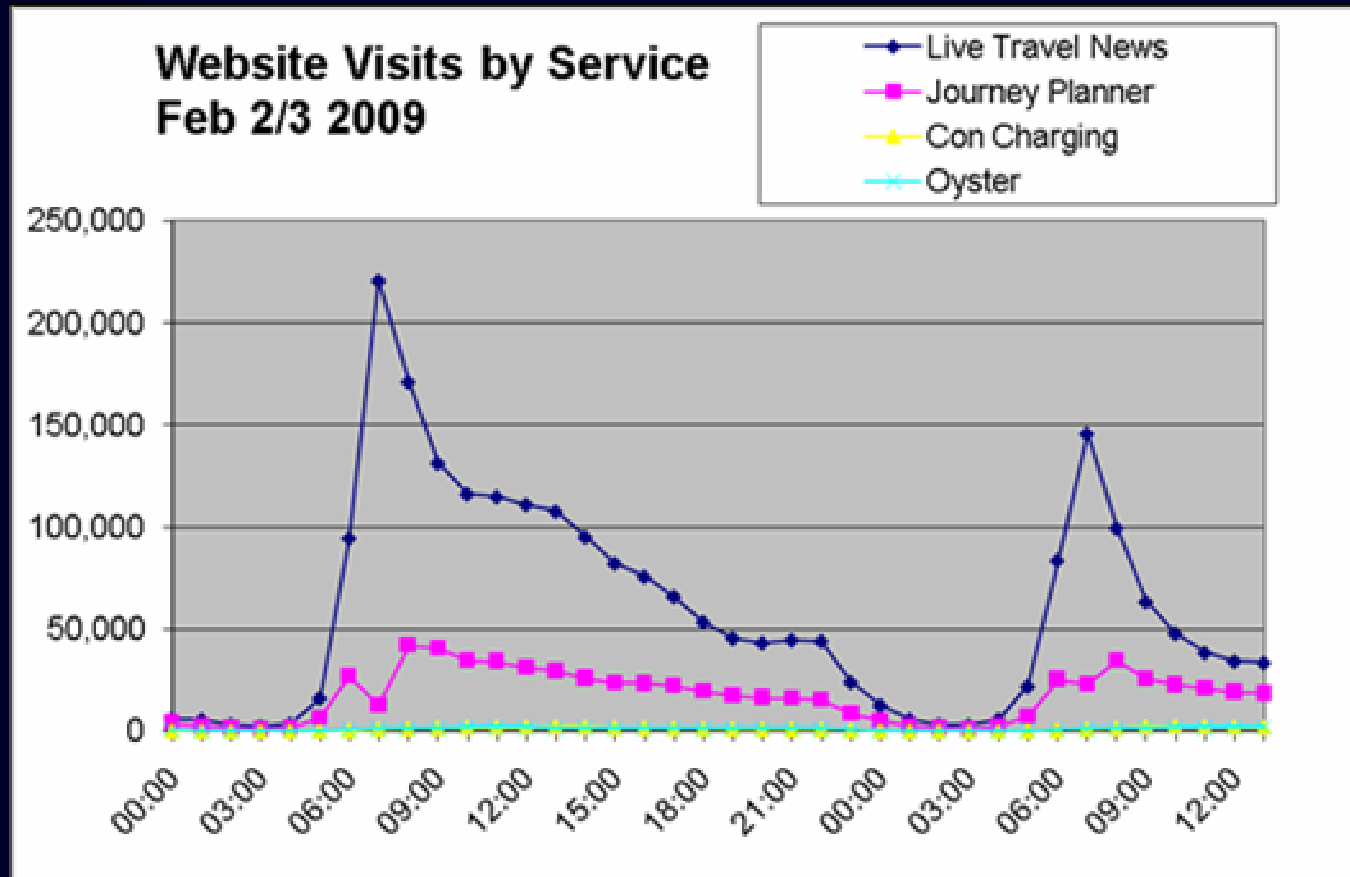
- **More than 40 broadcast interviews given**
- **2.5 million TfL website page views between 07.00 and 08.00hrs on Monday**
- **2.3 million visits to the website. Highest level of web traffic seen in a single day – more than Tube strikes and 7/7**
- **In total 18 million page views**
- **10 travel updates issued on Monday/Tuesday**



TfL Web Traffic re Snow (1)

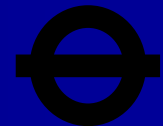


TfL Web Traffic re Snow (2)



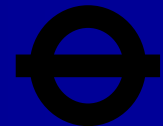
London Resilience – How the capital responds

- **Major London comms teams work together**
- **London Resilience Network involves all key agencies:**
 - Government
 - Police / Fire / Ambulance
 - Health / Utilities
 - Transport, inc TfL
- **London Resilience Gold Comms Group**
 - Strategic Comms Group exercises and plans response
 - Significant Incident Protocol warns of incidents
 - Gold Group meets to share info and ensure co-ordination
 - Successful response to 7/7 and many other incidents



In summary...

- **Keep your crisis response plans and material up to date:**
 - It is very easy to keep putting off the review or update of crisis plans
 - There will be no opportunity to catch-up when the crisis comes
 - And it will always happen when you least expect...
- **Provide accurate info to media and stakeholders early and keep them regularly updated**
 - Media abhors a vacuum and will fill it, often criticism or myth!
- **Seek the most resilient web communications**
 - Absolutely vital in today's world



Q&A

Vernon Everitt, TfL MD Marketing & Comms

www.tfl.gov.uk

