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Waterloo Complex Feedback on the Response to the 7th July Bombings

An open meeting was held at Waterloo ambulance station on Wednesday 27th July to allow staff the opportunity to share their experiences of 7th July and attempt to identify any further issues that might inform the formal; debriefing process. It was made clear to staff that they should still submit any individual feedback in writing as already requested, and that that this feedback meeting was designed to add to, rather than detract from the formal debrief meetings.

The key themes that came out of the meeting were:

1. There was still some misunderstanding about what was expected from the first resources on scene:
 - At Aldgate East there were LFB personnel who became abusive towards the first crew on scene (who were the first LAS personnel on scene) because they didn't immediately start to load and convey patients.
 - The second LAS response was a Team Leader in a DSO vehicle, who failed to liaise with staff already on scene, did not take overall responsibility for the incident as the senior LAS person on scene, and simply disappeared into the station with their paramedic equipment.
 - Difficulty of subsequent resources in identifying the first on scene (i.e. too many vehicles with blue lights left on).
 - Lack of clarity about the assignment of BRONZE roles.
2. Communication difficulties:
 - Having one radio channel for multiple major incidents created some confusion.
 - Difficulty in getting information from 'track level' to 'street level' at Underground stations. Improvised use of 'runners' alleviated this at some locations.
 - Failure of mobile telephone system to operate under these circumstances.
 - Many crews were held back when it was clear that their assistance was required.
3. Lack of familiarity with the ESVs:
 - Drivers struggled to open doors, and were unsure what equipment was carried or where it was stored.
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4. Lack of co-ordination over hospital usage:
 - Uneven distribution of patients.