

Resilience First Webinar Summary

'Partnering with Purpose'

in partnership with the National Preparedness Commission and Marsh McLennan

Chair:

Lord Toby Harris, Chair, National Preparedness Commission.

Speakers:

Richard Smith-Bingham, Executive Director, Marsh McLennan Advantage.

James Crask, Consulting Director & Resilience Advisory Lead, Marsh Advisory.

Alan Brown, Group Security Director, Tesco.

Professor Fiona Strens, CEO Security & Resilience Research Centre, University of Strathclyde.

Key Points:

Initial Comments from the Chair:

- Any large company or organisation wants to be resilient but questions remain about how to find the necessary financing and how government can help.
- How do we strengthen interaction between the public and private sectors to incentivise resilience?
- These themes are central to this paper commissioned by the National Preparedness Commission.

Presenting the Report:

- The breadth, scale and complexity of the risks we face require a whole-of-society response, but securing the alignment and interaction between different sectors to achieve this presents a challenge.
- If we want to harness our collective capabilities more effectively, we need to unpack what we are trying to achieve.
- The report presents three distinct resilience goals:
 - Reducing broadly defined societal impacts;
 - Maintaining the reliability of critical ecosystems;
 - Securing the UK's strategic imperatives.
- The report examines where government might step up, step back or play a different role.
- It calls for greater intervention in areas where current resilience and preparedness to significant risks is insufficient, and where there might be a mismatch in the financial or operational risk appetite of individual organisations that have systemic influence.
- The report also asks where corporate responsibilities for resilience might begin and end, acknowledging the differing capabilities between small and large organisations.
- We need more analysis-led discussions around risks and tolerances that spur more equitable, creative solutions.
- The report also examines the use of data in the private sector and its role in supporting resilience, suggesting that we should consider refreshing our conventions on privacy and data sharing.
- The report touches on communication and collaborating, noting that there is greater scope for private-sector involvement in public resilience discussions at an early stage. This would perhaps highlight further unseen risks.
- The government must also be able to flex in a crisis event but, at the same time, businesses need consistent signalling to make and adapt contingency plans.

From a Business Perspective:

- It is clear to most that the need for resilience has never been clearer than it is today, and we must learn the crucial lessons from our recent past. Doing nothing is not an option.
- Handling crisis well can add real value to an organisation but real resilience takes effort.
- We are poor at being prepared for large events and perhaps this stems from our human instinct to hope for the best and not assume the worst.
- Whatever the reason for not being prepared enough, the pandemic serves as a wakeup call that we need to do better.
- The pandemic has shown how weak our supply chains are to external shocks in the private sector.
- Crisis events are not just localised issues and can be global in nature, requiring a far greater and concerted response effort.
- The pandemic has also exposed our tendency to ignore high-impact but apparently low-probability events and this has led to short termism.
- The opportunities exist in having a balanced dialogue about resilience, in better use of data to enhance forecasting and planning, and a longer-term view of resilience will help put the interests of customers first.
- We stand at a crossroads: we could continue as before or we could use the events of the recent past as a catalyst for real resilience.

A commercial perspective:

- Commercial organisations by nature seek to be self-contained in their own resilience but the reality is we all have shared aspects of resilience with a myriad of dependencies.
- Being self-contained has its utility to a point but, when challenged at the enterprise level to be resilient, there must be multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinarian partnership. The approach has to be dynamic and an affiliation that comes together when needed.
- Central to the partnerships required is confidence and during non-crisis periods we need to be clear about the impacts and influences of these relationships and partnerships.
- In the constrained world of the competitive markets in which we operate, creating these partnerships is easier said than done.
- We need a shared, common approach to crisis, and to achieve this we need to be prepared and be brave enough to work in novel ways – a challenge which may be more readily felt in the public sector.
- There is the appetite and environment to make the changes we need to make. Businesses need to be brave, and the public sector needs to take the first steps in creating the environment for effective private-sector contribution to outcome-focused resilience.

A Societal Perspective:

- Trust and confidence levels among communities are low in how we respond to crisis or in our own abilities to be prepared.
- We depend on services beyond our level of control and this can lead to a sense of powerlessness in crisis.
- There is an opportunity here for citizenry to have a collective role in making us more resilient as a nation. We all vote, we all consume and many of us exist as employees in one form or another, and there is scope to exercise our collective voice.
- Information, education, communication, and skills development for resilience need to be high up on the government's agenda.

- We need to consider the balance between resilience for now and for the future. We need to invest in resilience for the future.
- The change axis is creating a different world and we need a resilience strategy which is fit for the future.
- In the UK we have a large and capable academic sector, and academia is another major contributor in resilience and have a willingness to do so, but this must be done through a clear strategic framework with clear expectations.

Considerations:

- We must seek outcome-focused resilience.
- We need to establish understanding and trust between the public and private sectors.
- We need continuous and constructive dialogue between the public and private sectors.

The webinar recording found [here](#).

Speakers Biographies:

Lord Toby Harris was made a Life Peer in June 1998 and has been Chair of the Labour Peers since 2012. He has sat as a member (currently the Vice Chair) of the Joint Committee on National Security for most of the last decade. He is a member of the Select Committee on Life Beyond COVID and was a member of the Committee on Democracy and Digital Technologies, which reported in summer 2020. Outside Parliament, he chairs the National Preparedness Commission with the mission of promoting better preparedness for a major crisis or incident, and is President of the Institute of Strategic Risk Management. He has also been Chair of National Trading Standards (which is responsible for delivering national and cross-boundary consumer protection enforcement activity) since May 2013, and Chair of the Fundraising Regulator (overseeing charitable fundraising) since January 2019. In addition, he chairs the Independent Reference Group for the National Crime Agency. In 2016, he conducted an Independent Review for the Mayor of London on London's Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident.

Based in London, **Richard Smith-Bingham** leads the Insights team for the Marsh McLennan Advantage. Focusing on climate resilience, cyber resilience, healthy societies, innovations in infrastructure, transformative technologies, and workforce for the future, the team draws on the unique expertise of MMC and its networks to identify breakthrough perspectives and solutions to society's most complex challenges. Richard specialises in emerging risks, which has him exploring trends and disruptions in the macrolevel risk landscape and advising companies and governments on how to better anticipate and respond to new complex threats. He publishes widely, is a frequent speaker at conferences, and often participates in projects run by multilateral bodies and non-governmental organisations. He is also responsible for BRINK, a digital content platform that posts a new article each day. He sits on the Advisory Board of the World Economic Forum Global Risks Report and is a Steering Group member of the OECD's High-Level Risk Forum, which focuses on country-level risk governance arrangements.

James Crask leads the resilience consulting practice for Marsh Advisory. He works across multiple industries including with organisations with a focus is on helping clients assess complex risks and put in place measures to successfully mitigate them. Prior to joining Marsh, James held the role of Head of Risk Management at the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority. Earlier roles included leading a resilience consulting practice at PwC and working within the Civil Contingencies Secretariat at the Cabinet Office. James also chairs the International Standards Organisation (ISO) panel responsible for the publication of all global Standards on organisational resilience and business continuity. In 2021 James published a book; Business Continuity Management, a practical guide to organisational resilience and ISO 22301.

Alan Brown OBE QPM was appointed Group Director for Tesco with responsibility for Security, Safety and Resilience in October 2006. From 1972 to 2006, he served in the Metropolitan Police, concluding his career as Assistant Commissioner. Alan was awarded a Queens Police Medal for work in relation to Hostage Negotiation and an OBE for Services to Policing, with specific mention of leading the response to the terrorist attacks committed in London on 7/7/2005. Since joining Tesco, Alan has had responsibility for business resilience and led the company response to major incidents, setting the standards and approach that has ensured Tesco has thrived at times of challenge

Fiona Strens is a Professor of Practice at the University of Strathclyde, leading their Security & Resilience Research Centre. Her career started as a fast-stream civil servant and led into strategic technical consultancy across Defence, Security & Public Safety sectors. Fiona then co-founded technology company CrowdVision, keeping people safe and serviced in crowded places, and led it as CEO through to its acquisition. This broad career experience means Fiona naturally takes a holistic approach to the resilience mission, embracing interdependencies with technological and climate-led change agendas, and recognising the need to work collaboratively across academic, industrial, governmental and citizen communities.