



<b>Agenda Item</b>
4.4

**Joint Commissioning Committee**

**Manchester Arena Inquiry: Review of R106 WAST Capability Report Update on Progress**

<b>Dyddiad y Cyfarfod / Date of Meeting</b>	15/07/2025
<b>Statws Cyhoeddi / Publication Status</b>	Open/ Public
	Not Applicable
<b>Awdur yr Adroddiad / Report Author</b>	Gavin Owen, Deputy Director of Commissioning for Ambulance and 111
<b>Cyflwynydd yr Adroddiad / Report Presenter</b>	Gavin Owen, Deputy Director of Commissioning for Ambulance and 111
<b>Noddwr yr Adroddiad / Report Sponsor</b>	Ross Whitehead, Director of Commissioning for Ambulance Services and 111

<b>Pwrpas yr Adroddiad / Report Purpose</b>	For Noting
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<b>Engagement (internal/external) undertaken to date (including receipt/consideration at Committee/Group)</b>		
<b>Committee / Group / Individuals</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Collaborative Commissioning Leadership Group	24/06/2025	Noted

<b>Acronyms / Glossary of Terms</b>	
HB	Health Boards
JC	Joint Committee
JESIP	Joint Emergency Interoperability Programme
MAI	Manchester Arena Inquiry
NWJCC	NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee

PID	Project Initiation Document
WAST	Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust
R105	Recommendation 105
R106	Recommendation 106
R107	Recommendation 107

## 1. SITUATION/BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the work being undertaken with the Welsh Ambulance Services University NHS Trust (WAST) and Health Boards (HBs) to respond to the findings of the Manchester Arena Inquiry (MAI). The report describes the review process that includes an independent legal review that has been commissioned to ensure that decisions are made within a sound legal framework and an independent expert review to provide an objective assessment of the report's findings, assumptions, and recommendations.

### 1.1 Manchester Arena Inquiry

The incident at the Manchester Arena in May 2017, where 22 innocent people were killed and over 100 victims needed hospital treatment, led to the publication of the Manchester Arena Inquiry (MAI) volume 2: Emergency Response.

The MAI found that the Ambulance Service:

- Failed to work together with other agencies or to properly utilise the Joint Emergency Interoperability Programme (JESIP) principles
- Did not address the 'Care Gap' quickly enough and ensure patients received high-quality clinical care as soon as practicable
- Did not deploy enough specialist resources into the scene
- Had a failure of commanders to 'get a grip' of the situation
- Did not learn from lessons from previous exercising or incidents
- Failed to anticipate that a terrorist attack could happen to them.

After the 3-year investigation 149 recommendations were made by the inquiry chair. The 3 specific recommendations that the Joint Committee (JC) need to be aware of are the following:

- Recommendation 105 (R105): Ambulance service trusts should review their capacity to respond to a mass casualty incident. That should include an assessment of whether they have an adequate number of trained specialist personnel to respond effectively to a mass casualty incident.
- Recommendation 106 (R106): Having carried out that review, the trusts should make recommendations to their NHS commissioners about the additional and/or different resources they require in order to ensure that they are able to respond effectively to a mass casualty incident in the numbers required
- Recommendation 107 (R107): The Department of Health and Social Care should give urgent and close consideration to any recommendations made by the Trusts and the NHS commissioners.

## **1.2 Response from WAST**

In response to recommendation 105, WAST developed a series of reports assessing what would be required to meet the requirements of the review:

### **1.2.1 Capability to Prepare**

This report looks at the emergency preparedness, resilience and response department as well as supporting staff to be as prepared as possible for significant incidents. This report is for the attention of the NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee (NWJCC) as the primary commissioner of WAST's core services.

### **1.2.2 Capability to Respond**

This report assesses the key requirements needed to enact a robust response to a major incident. The report details gaps in core ambulance and command assets, as well as those in the control room. This report is for the attention of the NWJCC as the primary commissioner of WAST's core services.

### **1.2.3 Capability of Specialist Assets**

This report details key domains of specialist response within WAST and is primarily for the attention of Welsh Government as the primary commissioner of specialist assets in Wales. The three reports developed in response to recommendation 105 have been synthesised in to the R106 WAST Capability Report.

On 21 August 2024, the Chief Executive of WAST submitted the R106 WAST Capability Report to the Chief Commissioner at NWJCC as per Recommendation 106.

## **1.3 WAST Progress to Date**

As part of the ongoing review of the R106 WAST Capability Report, significant progress has been made by WAST in addressing the recommendations outlined in the report. Of the 68 recommendations applicable to WAST, 48 have been actively progressed, demonstrating positive progress with enhancing the capability of the organisation to respond to Major Incident and Mass Casualty events.

Of these 48 recommendations, 44 have been formally closed, indicating that the required actions have been completed and verified. A further 4 recommendations remain in progress, with WAST confirming that these are within their current operational and financial capacity to implement without requiring additional external support.

This progress reflects positively on WAST's internal capability and responsiveness to the findings of the R106 WAST Capability Report. However, a number of the remaining recommendations require additional investment and system-level support to be fully realised.

To support strategic decision-making, WAST has submitted the R106 WAST Capability Report to the NWJCC. This document serves as both a summary of current capabilities and a detailed evidential submission outlining the areas where financial support is being sought. It includes:

- A breakdown of the recommendations that remain outstanding
- A detailed costed proposal for the improvements required to meet the minimum standards set out in the MAI recommendations
- Supporting evidence to justify the proposed investments and their alignment with national preparedness and response objectives.

The report is intended to assist the NWJCC in understanding the strategic scope of the remaining recommendations, appraising the financial implications of full implementation and interrogating each proposal to ensure alignment with commissioning priorities, value for money, and system-wide benefit.

### **1.4 NWJCC Strategic Priority/Foundation Plan**

As part of the development of the NWJCC Foundation Plan for 2025-26, the response to the R106 WAST Capability Report has been identified and prioritised as a key strategic programme. This reflects the critical importance of ensuring that the WAST is appropriately commissioned and supported to deliver effective preparedness and response capabilities in the event of major incidents or mass casualty events.

The R106 WAST Capability Report outlines a series of recommendations that have significant implications for emergency service readiness, inter-agency coordination, and patient outcomes. In recognition of this, the NWJCC has committed to a structured and evidence-based approach to reviewing and responding to the report's findings as a core component of its strategic delivery plan for the year.

To support this work, a Project Initiation Document (PID) was developed, outlining the scope, objectives, governance arrangements, and delivery milestones for the programme. The PID was formally discussed and endorsed by the NWJCC Senior Leadership Team in May 2025, confirming the programme's strategic relevance and the commitment of senior stakeholders to its successful delivery.

The PID provides a detailed framework for the programme's implementation, including risk management, stakeholder engagement and evaluation criteria.

## **2. SPECIFIC MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

To ensure a comprehensive and transparent evaluation of the R106 WAST Capability Report, the NWJCC Ambulance Services and 111 Commissioning Team has implemented a multi-faceted review process. This approach is designed to incorporate stakeholder input, legal and expert perspectives, and a structured

assessment of the report's recommendations. The process comprises four key components:

## **2.1 WAST Presentation and Stakeholder Engagement Workshops**

The review commenced with a series of four structured workshops, each involving representatives from all HBs, the NHS Executive and WAST. These sessions were designed to:

- Provide WAST with a platform to present the R106 WAST Capability Report in detail, including the context, methodology, and rationale behind each recommendation
- Enable stakeholders to engage directly with WAST subject matter experts to seek clarification, raise concerns, and explore the operational and strategic implications of the report
- Facilitate early dialogue and shared understanding among commissioning and emergency planning colleagues, laying the groundwork for a collaborative assessment process
- Each workshop was structured to allow for open discussion, with a focus on transparency, inclusivity, and the identification of key themes and areas requiring further exploration.

## **2.2 Collaborative Assessment Workshop**

A dedicated collaborative workshop took place on 27 June 2025, bringing together a cross-section of stakeholders, including:

- Health Board commissioning leads
- Strategic and emergency planning representatives
- NWJCC commissioning colleagues

The purpose of this workshop was to undertake a systematic review of each recommendations within the R106 WAST Capability Report, specifically those related to the Capability to Prepare and Capability to Respond. This collaborative approach ensured that the assessment is informed by operational insight, strategic alignment, and system-wide perspectives.

The session structured evaluation framework, considering factors such as:

- Feasibility and deliverability
- Alignment with national and regional strategies
- Impact on patient outcomes and system resilience
- Resource implications and funding options

This collaborative approach ensured that the assessment is informed by operational insight, strategic alignment and system-wide perspectives.

Participants were asked to review each of the recommendations put forward by WAST. Following discussion, a collective position was agreed upon for a number of the recommendations. However, there were several recommendations where HB commissioning and emergency planning representatives were unable to reach a conclusion due to the need for further clarification and input from WAST.

As a result, there was a collective request for a follow-up workshop to be convened. This would allow stakeholders to work through the remaining recommendations in conjunction with WAST, ensuring that the assessment process is as robust and comprehensive as possible.

### **2.3 Legal Advice**

To support the governance and accountability aspects of the review, an independent legal review of the R106 WAST Capability Report has been commissioned. This review will:

- Provide clarity on the legal responsibilities of the NWJCC in relation to the recommendations.
- Identify any statutory obligations, risks, or liabilities associated with implementation.

The legal advice will be used to inform the final recommendations to the JC, ensuring that decisions are made within a sound legal framework and with full awareness of potential risks. This legal advice was received 24 June 2025 and is currently being considered by the Ambulance Services and 111 Commissioning Team.

### **2.4 Independent Expert Review**

In response to a recommendation made at the March 2025 JC meeting, an independent expert review is being commissioned. This review will:

- Be conducted by a suitably qualified and impartial expert or organisation with experience in emergency service capability and system design
- Apply the same evaluative criteria used in the stakeholder workshops to ensure consistency and comparability
- Provide an objective assessment of the report's findings, assumptions and recommendations.

The inclusion of an independent perspective is intended to strengthen the credibility of the review process, provide assurance to stakeholders, and support evidence-based decision-making.

## **3. KEY RISKS / MATTERS FOR ESCALATION**

A comprehensive and active project risk register has been established to support the governance of the R106 WAST Capability Report review process. This register is subject to regular monitoring by the project team and will be reported into the Project Board at defined intervals. Risks will be managed through the established project governance structure, with escalation to the Project Board where appropriate.

The following key project risks have been identified as directly relevant to the NWJCC's responsibilities in relation to the review and subsequent decision-making on the R106 WAST Capability Report:

### 3.1 Inadequate Preparedness and Response

There is a risk that WAST may be unable to adequately prepare for or respond to a mass casualty or major incident. This could result in significant harm or loss of life, with serious implications for public safety and system resilience.

### 3.2 Incomplete or Ineffective Review Process

Failure to undertake a thorough and effective review of the R106 WAST Capability Report may compromise the NWJCC’s ability to make informed, evidence-based commissioning decisions. This could lead to suboptimal service design and missed opportunities to strengthen emergency preparedness.

### 3.3 Failure to Commission Appropriate Services

Should the NWJCC fail to commission services at a level that enables WAST to meet its statutory and operational responsibilities in the event of a major incident, there is a risk of reputational damage to the NWJCC and wider system partners. This may also impact public confidence in emergency response capabilities.

Mitigating actions are being implemented to address each of these risks, and the project risk register will continue to be updated as the review progresses.

## 4. ASSESSMENT

Objectives / Strategy	
<b>Dolen i Amcan (au) Strategol CBC / Link to JCC Strategic Objectives(s)</b>	Ensure Quality
	If more than one applies please list below:
<b>Dolen i Ddeddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol – Nodau Llesiant / Link to Wellbeing of Future Generations Act – Wellbeing Goals</b> <a href="#">150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf</a> <a href="#">(futuregenerations.wales)</a>	A Resilient Wales
	If more than one applies please list below:
<b>Dolen i Hwyluswyr Ansawdd</b> <i>(Canllawiau Statudol Dyletswydd Ansawdd (llyw.cymru)) / Link to Enablers of Quality</i> <a href="#">(Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance (gov.wales))</a>	Whole-systems Perspective
	If more than one applies please list below:

<b>Dolen i Feysydd Ansawdd</b> <i>(Canllawiau Statudol Dyletswydd Ansawdd (llyw.cymru)) /</i> <b>Link to Domains of Quality</b> <i>(<a href="#">Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance (gov.wales)</a>)</i>	Timely
	If more than one applies please list below:
<b>Effaith Amgylcheddol/ Cynaliadwyedd (5R) / Environmental / Sustainability Impact (5Rs)</b>	No - Not Applicable
	If more than one applies please list below:

Impact Assessment		
<b>Ansawdd</b> <i>Ydych chi wedi ymgymryd â Sgrinio Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Ansawdd? /</i> <b>Quality</b> <i>Have you undertaken a Quality Impact Assessment Screening?</i>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Outcome:	If no, please include rationale below:  This will be completed as part of the formal report to SLT following the outcome of the project.
<b>Cydraddoldeb</b> <i>Ydych chi wedi ymgymryd â Sgrinio Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Gydraddoldeb? /</i> <b>Equality</b> <i>Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment Screening?</i>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Outcome:	If no, please include rationale below:  This will be completed as part of the formal report to SLT following the outcome of the project.
<b>Cyfreithiol / Legal</b>	Yes (Include further detail below)	
	Legal advice has been sought and received in relation to the response to the Manchester Arena Inquiry from Legal and Risk Services within NWSSP.	
<b>Enw da / Reputational</b>	Yes (Include further detail below)	

<b>Effaith Adnoddau</b> <i>(Pobl / Ariannol) /</i> <b>Resource Impact</b> <i>(People / Financial)</i>	There is no direct impact on resources as a result of the activity outlined in this report.
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## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Committee is asked to:

- **Note** the content of the report
- **Note** the project risks outlined in the report.

## 6. NEXT STEPS

- The follow-up workshop will be held to work through the remaining recommendations in conjunction with WAST.
- The legal advice will be considered and will inform the final recommendations to the JC.
- The independent expert review will be used to strengthen the credibility of the review process, to provide assurance to stakeholders and to support evidence-based decision-making.
- A recommendation will be made to the JC.