



A brief report  
of  
4x4 Response  
support to the  
British Red Cross  
in  
Gloucestershire and the surrounding areas.

July 26<sup>th</sup> – Aug 4<sup>th</sup> 2007

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> July,**

At 08:52 Thursday 27/07/07 a call was received by Wessex 4x4 Response from The Red Cross at Warmley requesting four vehicles to attend the Red Cross distribution centre at Quedgley.

As only four vehicles were required a limited call-out was sent via SMS to 7 members who had already indicated that they were willing to attend if needed; requesting that they advise if available. The first responses indicated that Alan (R22), John (R35) Matt (R03), and Myself (R01) were available. Tom (R36) as called to double crew with Matt as a radio operator.

A brief E-mail was sent to all other members notifying them that there was an initial response in progress. Because of the travel time and anticipated delays, it was felt unlikely that additional units would be required before Friday. Units were on route by 10:00 Matt (R03) then advised that he was unavailable due to unforeseen family matters. He was however willing to take on the control and inform role. Adam (R42) was asked to respond in lieu of R03.

All units arrived at Quedgley between 12.00 & 12.30 Alan, (R22) had additionally called Andy (R27) to double crew/ assist as needed.

Having reported to the Red Cross the four vehicles were loaded with 2,300 litre of water and 2 boxes of WAG BAGS -toilet bags for use in the absence of other facilities. With two guides from the local Rotarians these were all delivered in convoy to an elderly persons home in Bishopstone Rd Gloucester.



Upon return to the distribution centre vehicles were reloaded in preparation for other tasks, the crews then assisted with the unloading of supply vehicles, before being retasked. This included Adam (R42) assisting to re-supply Tewkesbury Abbey.

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> July,**

The Wessex 4x4 Response Association controller was now co-ordinating a unified response from Wessex and neighbouring teams including Gloucestershire 4x4 Response from his home office. One double-crewed unit had stayed on site overnight. Throughout the morning additional units arrived with large trailers. Gloucestershire 4x4 Response controller then called upon his members to assist as part of the overall integrated team over the next few days providing excellent local knowledge.



All units were double crewed and thanks to the use of trailers delivering even higher quantities of water.

Several units again remained in the area over-night, meanwhile additional and replacement units and trailers had indicated their availability for tomorrow (Saturday) through to next Tuesday. Some for single days and some for extended periods.

At this time it was still not possible to say how long the incident would continue, but it was clearly obvious that we were looking at several days; possibly weeks.

Due to the obvious long-term impact the incident was now upgraded to an operation with its own unique identification, "Operation Aquarius". An online spreadsheet was created allowing Red Cross personnel at Quedgley and Warmley to see how many vehicles could be anticipated on any given day up to five days ahead.

There was some concern about the severe weather, which was now forecast for Saturday evening into Sunday.

## **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> July,**

Continuing reports indicated that the operation was by no means over and was likely to extend beyond the weekend of 4/5 August. During the day there were at least seven 4x4 Response vehicles from Gloucestershire 4x4 Response & Wessex 4x4 Response Association operating as an integrated team from the Quedgley distribution centre alongside Red Cross vehicles.



At the time of writing the actual total carried has not been confirmed but in excess of 25,000 litres is believed to have been carried up until Saturday. Contact had been made with several Powys members and we anticipated that for the next week there would be between four and six vehicles on site from various teams. The Duty Roster was being maintained on line to ensure visibility for all those looking to attend.

By this time contact had been made with several teams further afield including Scottish and East Anglian teams, should the incident prove both on-going and beyond the resources of those teams already attending. The weather forecast continued to indicate that additional heavy rain could be expected over night.

## **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> July**

As dawn broke it was clear that although there had been some rain it was by no means as severe as anticipated

Units from Wessex 4x4 Response Association, Gloucester 4x4 Response & Powys 4x4 Response were continuing to assist the Red Cross at Quedgley, with offers of assistance coming in from as far away as Humber-Yorks 4x4 Response who have offered 2 possibly 3 double crewed vehicles.

The latest figures indicated that 4x4 Response vehicles had delivered in excess of 35,000 litres of water and several hundred five-day food packs plus a large quantity of hygiene packs.



### **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> July**

A mixed team of Wessex & Powys 4x4 Response vehicles concentrated primarily on small drops today, providing some 11,000 litres of water & packs of food to individual households. Humber-Yorks 4x4 Response confirmed that 2 vehicles would be joining the effort for several days from early Wednesday morning

### **Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> July**

Members of the two teams were fully integrated into the delivery system and transported in excess of 16,000 litres to various institutions. The following was received from the Red Cross Transport Co-ordinator.

"...finally got 2 minutes to take some time out to let you know by e- mail the great work 4x4 response are doing for us. We will follow up with something more formal obviously. For now it must be said that these guys have been an exceptional support. We would never have shifted the litreage we have in this operation, helping THE MOST vulnerable victims of the floods in Gloucs if it were not for the increased capacity your vehicles offer us, but more importantly the hard work, flexibility and sheer enthusiasm all your crews without exception have shown. Nothing has been too much trouble, and the hours worked have been significantly in excess of normal expectations. Please pass on this e- mail to all concerned with my heartfelt thanks- more to follow. I look forward to our continued working relationship together over coming days. Keep in touch,"

By this time 4x4 Response members had transported in excess of 80,000 litres.

### **Wednesday 01<sup>st</sup> August**

Operations continued throughout Wednesday with members of Humber-Yorks, Powys and Wessex 4x4 Response teams operating as an integrated unit providing transport for the British Red Cross in the Gloucester & Cheltenham Area. Some 13,000 litres of water and various food packs were delivered.

### **Thursday 02<sup>nd</sup> August**

By 08:00 there were seven 4x4 Response vehicles on site. The first mission of the day saw 7,500 litres of water 150 food packs and 96 hygiene packs delivered in one drop.

By the end of the day members of Powys, Humber-Yorks and the various Wessex 4x4 Response teams had delivered some 15,000 litres plus a large quantity of food and hygiene packs.

### **Friday 03<sup>rd</sup> August**

As Friday progressed with Gloucester & Wessex members working side by side it was becoming clear that the workload was diminishing. By the end of the day a message had been passed to all members of all teams, to the effect that those not yet at Quedgley should NOT travel to site without checking with control.

### **Saturday 04<sup>th</sup> August**

Saturday saw the final 4x4 Response convoy from Wessex and Gloucestershire 4x4 Response teams, delivering water in the Gloucestershire area before members were informally stood down at 14:30, this was followed up by an E-mail from the Red Cross at 16:00 formally thanking us for our support in this operation. A final stand-down was sent to all members and all teams at 19:00 also posted on the National 4x4 Response forum (<http://www.4x4response.net/nationalforum/index.php>) thanking everyone for their help.

Some of the statistics give an idea of the size of this operation;

39 members in total were involved,

Nearly 4,000 miles was travelled

Approximately 150,000 litres (150 tonnes) of water several hundred 5 day food parcels and a similar number of hygiene packs were delivered.

This operation demonstrated the ability of 4x4 Response teams to Respond when needed.