

Emergency Management Department

Activities undertaken in the period July to December 2000

1. **Introduction**

In the last six months the staff of the Emergency Management Department have been preparing and disseminating educational and promotional material (such as the Yellow Pages), meeting with relevant emergency management organisations, preparing for the Civil Defence/Emergency Management Group (CDEMG), developing a Logistics Contingency Plan, and conducting training and exercises for staff and volunteers.

This report provides a summary of these activities under the following headings:

- roles and responsibilities of the Department;
- training;
- regional emergency headquarters and communication;
- emergency management exercises;
- administration and technology; and
- hazard related activities.

2. **Roles and Responsibilities**

Civil Defence and Emergency Management Group

The Civil Defence Emergency Management Bill (CDEM) will repeal the Civil Defence Act 1983 under which Territorial Authorities and Regional Councils have carried out emergency preparedness, response and recovery activities for their communities. The Bill had its first reading on Tuesday 12 December 2000 and was referred to the Government Administration Select Committee. The Committee's report is due back in Parliament by 12 June 2001. It has called for submissions and these are required by 28 February 2001.

An introductory note from the Minister on 9 November 2000 indicated that:

- the new Bill will define the duties, functions and powers of central government, local government, emergency services, lifeline utilities and the general public; and
- it is meant to resolve a number of significant problems relating to dealing with new types of hazards, requiring a risk-based approach to civil defence/emergency management, emphasising responsibilities of individuals, businesses and communities to plan and prepare for emergencies, providing a crown statement about strategic direction for civil defence/emergency management and co-ordinate with other recent legislation.

There are various general statements in the proposed Bill whereby the changed thrust of emergency management is highlighted:

- the inclusion of the safety of property as well as the safety of people;
- achieving acceptable levels of risk for communities;
- CDEM Plans may be cautious in managing risks; and

- the responsibility of people and communities to provide for their own well-being.

The chief executives of the Region's local authorities met on 13 September 2000 to discuss the progress of the establishment of a Civil Defence Emergency Management Group (CDEMG) for the Wellington Region. They agreed to investigate a specific model for emergency management, which could have some advantages over the emergency management group model, which is proposed in the new CDEM legislation. The Divisional Manager, Environment, was appointed convenor of a Steering Group (comprising representatives of local authorities) to investigate the proposed model and to establish whether it can be developed into an acceptable and robust proposal.

Profession al development

The Manager, Emergency Management, was nominated by the Society for Local Government Managers to serve as their representative on the Professional Development Technical working group. The vision statement of this Group is *to achieve internationally recognised excellence in emergency management practice*. Other members of the Group include Rob Service (MSA), David Guard (NZFS), Jonathan Jull and Tom Roche (MCDEM), Joanne Duncan and Colin Vlietstra (NZ Police), Ray Pooley (LGNZ), and Mary Pecekajus (NZ Ambulance Education Council). The Group has had two meetings at which they discussed issues like membership, Urban Search and Rescue, the role of Industry Training Organisations, higher education programmes, co-ordinated incident management systems, and specific emergency management training programmes. At the forum meeting held on 6 December 2000, the Industry Training Organisations (LGITO, FRSITO, PSTO) and the universities (Auckland, Massey, Canterbury, Victoria, Waikato) gave presentations to the forum regarding applicable training programmes.

Inter group Relations

It is of great importance for us to work closely and co-operatively with all organisations and individuals involved in Emergency Management. For the period July to December 2000, we attended 84 meetings and had proactive dealings on emergency management with more than 1200 people. These included meetings with local authorities, lifeline groups, emergency services, hospitals, communication providers, Government departments, and special committees on rural fire, ports, Insurance Council, EQC, earthquake engineers, hazardous substances, oil pollution, private enterprise, etc.

The different committees (regional training, regional publicity, regional strategic planning, and the logistics contingency planning) have met on several occasions over the last six months. Good progress has been made. Specific details will be set out further on in this report. The Emergency Management Officers meet on a regular basis with the five Emergency Services Co-ordinating Committees throughout the Region which include local authorities, emergency services, hospitals, Defence Force, Dept of Corrections, Airport, Lifelines etc. These are working very well and a good partnership has been built with all the role-players.

All the TAs, the Earthquake Commission, Insurance Council, Lifelines and all emergency services have been working together to achieve consistency with the information they provide to the public. Yellow Pages information was revised and a Poster produced. See Report 01.35.

The training committee is in the process of developing training programmes that can be applied at all TAs across the Region. These programmes will utilise NZQA unit standards where these are appropriate.

3. Training

Our long-term performance indicator states, *The Council can demonstrate that it has done all that is reasonably possible to ensure that the Region is ready to cope with a major emergency event.* We are taking all possible steps to keep our volunteer staff able and motivated through dedicated and suitable emergency management training. We are committed to training and equipping our volunteers with the knowledge and skills to handle any situation effectively during an emergency.

In this regard we have followed our training programme which included training on headquarters operations, co-ordinated incident management, emergency management administration, communications, and the deployment and use of the mobile headquarters.

In order to enhance the knowledge and skills of the Emergency Management staff, we attended various external-training sessions. These included public information management, co-ordinated incident management, advanced driver training, report writing, presentation skills, workplace assessment, and non-structural options for the Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan. We also attended seminars on emergency management, lifelines, and earthquake hazards.

We gave presentations to various educational groups and business organisations interested in Emergency Management.

4. Regional Emergency Management Headquarters and Communication

Relocation of Emergency Operations Centre

In July 2000 the Council approved the relocation of the Emergency Management Department from Level 3 to Level 8 of the Regional Council Centre. The Divisional Manager, Environment, Manager, Emergency Management and Manager, Harbours worked together in the planning and setting up of a multi-functional facility. The facility makes provision for:

- an Incident Command Centre for the management of oil spills;
- an Emergency Operations Centre for the management of Civil Defence emergencies;
- a meeting venue (large meeting room for 20+ people, and a smaller room for 10 people); and
- office accommodation for the Emergency Management Department.

The fit-out on Level 8 was completed on time and within the allowed budget. The fit-out included the relocation of the radio communications network from Level 3 to Level 8, the installation of telephone and data cabling, the construction of 10 metres of

dry wall partitioning, mechanical services (air conditioning), electrical services, repairs to furniture and contract management.

Infrastructure Maintenance

Inspections of all sites have been conducted on a regular basis to ensure all equipment is maintained in a state of functionality. These sites are located in the Beehive, Regional Council Centre (Wakefield Street), all Local Authorities, Hospitals, Police, Fire Services Command Vehicle, Beacon Hill, Mt. Climie, Colonial Knob, Normandale, Mt Eringa, and the Mobile Headquarters.

For safety reasons, and in order not to have all our eggs in one basket, we decided to re-locate the Mobile Headquarters from the Newtown Fire Station in Wellington to the Trentham Fire Station in Upper Hutt. This new agreement took effect on 1 July.

The Duty Officer Service (to ensure 24-hour readiness) is shared by the Manager: Emergency Management and the Emergency Management Officer of the Council. The duty officer's guide is being maintained on an ongoing basis to ensure that we always have the latest updated contact information and operating procedures available.

Communication Tests

Formal communication testing between the Regional Operation Centres (Beehive, Regional Council Centre, our vehicle and the Mobile Headquarters) and the territorial local authorities, Beacon Hill signal station, Wellington Police, Wellington Hospital and our maintenance contractor (Access Telecom) has taken place every week. This determines the capability and the effectiveness of the communication system.

5. Emergency Management Exercises

Since July 2000 this Department has been involved in various exercises, which indicates our readiness and effectiveness of handling emergencies, namely:

- **Exercise “Apron strings”:** This exercise was held at the Wellington International Airport on Tuesday, 26 September 2000. The scenario for the exercise was that of a fire aboard a passenger craft close to the terminal buildings (a similar and real event occurred at the Airport earlier the year). The Manager, Emergency Management was appointed as the overall Exercise Co-ordinator. Participants in the exercise were the NZ Police, NZ Fire Service, Airport Fire service, Capital Coast Health, Wellington Free ambulance, WIAL Airside operations, WIAL Terminal services, the Control Tower, medical staff (18 doctors), airline operators, airport security, and the Salvation Army. Full debriefs of the exercise were held on 3 October and 14 December 2000.
- **Project “Phoenix”:** Since 1998, the Wellington and Auckland Regional Councils have been developing an ongoing series of exercises under the “Phoenix” title, testing the logistical planning and operational response capability of the two regions in the event of a major earthquake hitting Wellington. In developing our Logistics Plan, we are mainly focussing on three areas, namely search and rescue, treatment and movement of the injured and the provision of water. These will cover Phase One of the Plan. Phase Two will cover areas such as welfare, sanitation, restoration of lifelines and economic/financial issues. We have held meetings at regional level to plan

and develop a logistics contingency plan for the Wellington Region. It is envisaged that this plan could become a prototype for other similar plans around the country. The purpose of the Logistics Contingency Plan is to provide logistic arrangements to enable effective response and recovery from a major emergency in the greater area of Wellington.

More than 50 organisations will take part in this exercise which will include local emergency management, TLAs, other regional Councils, Police, Fire, Traffic police, Defence, Ministries of Transport, Health, Agriculture and Forestry, and Emergency Management, MSA, Lifelines organisations, Airways Corporation, Petroleum Industry, Transit, Transrail, Automobile Association, NZ Customs, LTSA, supermarket chains, NZ Red Cross, engineers, NZ Contractors Federation, etc.

During the last six months we considered the following:

- immediate and significant assistance after a major disaster, particularly search and rescue, treatment and movement of the injured, and the provision of safe water;
- the impact and loss of existing resources in the Wellington Region;
- the application of protocols for the reception and distribution of International aid; and
- the co-ordination and direction of aid from other areas of New Zealand.

6. Administration and Technology

Response Database

On 11 July 2000 the suppliers (RMD) completed the upgrade our database. The upgraded system is now called Response 2K. The upgrade made the database easier to use.

The system is maintained and updated with data on a regular basis. We are still waiting for an additional “Logistics” part of the database to be incorporated into the system. Development work on this is progressing well.

7. Hazard Related Activities

The Emergency Management Department has been involved with hazard related activities, including:

- attending conferences on geophysics, hazards, and risk management;
- providing information and maps concerning earthquake hazard to members of the public;
- liaising with emergency managers from outside organisations;
- responding to public queries regarding zoning of land based on geological hazard;
- commenting on natural hazard aspects of district plans; and
- consultation on natural hazard aspects of resource consenting.

Warnings/Events

One hundred and one earthquakes ranging between 3 and 6.2 on the Richter-Scale occurred in New Zealand over the past six months. During this period fourteen earthquakes were recorded in the Wellington Region, the largest being as 5.1 Richter (Waikanae, 31 October). The earthquakes felt in Wellington were:

2000 July 11 - Waikanae (3.6)
 2000 July 14 - Masterton (3.6)
 2000 August 4 - Wellington (4.1)
 2000 August 15 - Waikanae (4.6)
 2000 August 25 - Wellington (3.3)
 2000 September 13 - Wellington (3.7)
 2000 September 17 - Wellington (4.0)
 2000 September 29 - Waikanae (3.5)
 2000 October 3 - Upper Hutt (3.8)
 2000 October 11 - Wellington (3.8)
 2000 October 31 - Waikanae (5.1)
 2000 November 1 - Porirua (3.9)
 2000 December 15 - Wellington (4.1)
 2000 December 19 - Wellington (3.7)

In the period July to December 2000 a total of 45 weather warnings were received and promulgated in our Region. Of these 16 were for strong wind and 29 for heavy rain. This Department informed all involved. No problems were experienced

Summary of Weather Warnings received from the Metservice in 2000

Month	Heavy Rain	Strong wind
January 2000	5	5
March 2000	4	
April 2000	9	9
June 2000	3	6
July 2000	4	4
August 2000 (Alert)	1	1
September 2000 (Alert)	1	
September 2000	9	3
October 2000	9	8
December 2000	5	