

Report 09.202
Date 14 April 2009
File Z/01/04/20

Committee CDEM Group
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Group

Exercise Phoenix V Evaluation Report

1. Purpose

To inform the Group about the outcome of and lessons learned from *Exercise Phoenix V*, an exercise to test the Wellington Region CDEM Group's arrangements for responding to a major disaster resulting from an earthquake in Wellington.

2. Background

Exercise Phoenix V, carried out on 12, 13 and 17 November 2008, marked the 10th Anniversary of the Phoenix Project. It was a Tier 3 earthquake simulation exercise which focused on key agency arrangements at local and national levels. The exercise was led, planned and delivered by the Wellington CDEM Group Office.

The aim of Exercise Phoenix V was to practice the Wellington CDEM Group's planning arrangements for an emergency on a national scale. Planning began five months prior to the exercise. This involved participating groups and organisations identifying particular aspects of civil defence emergency management that they wanted to exercise. Many briefing meetings were held and much documentation prepared.

The exercise was set for days 3, 4 and 10 of a large earthquake in Wellington and included the recovery aspects of a disaster.

A wide range of emergency management agencies were involved in this exercise. These included:

- Government agencies with roles in respective plans relating to the functions to be exercised (MCDEM, DPMC, MoT, NZTA, etc.)

- Wellington CDEM Group organisations (Greater Wellington Regional Council, Territorial Authorities, Emergency Services and District Health Boards)
- Auckland, Manawatu-Wanganui, and Hawke's Bay CDEM Groups
- National Transport Cluster, the Regional Welfare Advisory Group and other observers (Canterbury University, etc.).

3. Observations

The Wellington Group Office prepared a report of the exercise which is attached as *Attachment 1*.

Overall, the exercise went very well. At the CDEM Group level we now have a good level of capability to respond to and recover from major events. The report makes a number of recommendations and officials are developing an action plan to implement them. A wide range of work is already underway as part of the Ministry's ongoing programme in direct response to the exercise.

The exercise provided an opportunity to think more about how we respond and recover regionally with national support. No exercise can predict or simulate everything that would happen in this scale of emergency. The Wellington earthquake event will always be tough – it will be a big and complex situation.

What this exercise offered was another opportunity to make sure we have in place the facilities, systems, tools and staff to carry out an effective response and recovery.

The more we exercise this earthquake scenario, the more we learn and the better prepared we will be.

The months of preparation for the exercise have also been very valuable in enhancing understanding about roles and responsibilities across the emergency management sector and making sure those relationships across local, regional, national and international agencies are well established.

4. Conclusion

The participation of all of the emergency management agencies was enthusiastic and constructive, with significant commitment evident from a number of the individual organisations and other co-ordinating agencies. The considerable preparatory work undertaken by most participating agencies in the leadup to Exercise Phoenix V was a key element in the success of the exercise.

Based on the observations and feedback from those involved in the exercise, it is considered that the exercise aim and objectives have been met. A number of important operational learnings, within and across agencies, have resulted from this exercise and capability development needs have been identified.

5. Recommendations

That the CDEM Group:

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the contents.*

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Attachment 1: The Exercise Phoenix V Evaluation Report