

Emergency Management Department Report

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May 2000

1. Training and Exercises

The Department of Emergency Management provided training to 44 WRC volunteer staff in headquarters operations, headquarters management, the Co-ordinated Incident Management system (CIMS), radio-communications and in putting up and taking down the mobile headquarters.

The annual Regional Exercise took place on 27 April at Harcourt Park, Upper Hutt. The scenario for the exercise was that of a nearing tsunami (originated by a distant earthquake on the West Coast of South America). We made use of two shifts and each shift (10 staff) had to put up the mobile headquarters, establish radio-communications with Hutt City and Wellington City and then manage the event according to the training that they have received on 14 April. The event was managed by using the Co-ordinated Incident Management System (CIMS). The staff enjoyed the challenges put to them and, although we experienced a few glitches, we achieved the proposed outcomes for the exercise.

This year we also extended the Regional Exercise to include the Wairarapa staff. Training for the staff took place on 3 May and the exercise took place in the Wairarapa on 10 May. We used the same scenario, but this time with the impact on the Wairarapa coast.

One big advantage of the training and exercises is that the staff are becoming skilled in all the disciplines. In this way, we try and maintain a motivated and multi-skilled core of staff to manage any emergencies.

2. Communications

Regular testing of the radio-communication system is taking place each Wednesday. Apart from minor problems with the battery back-up in our office (already rectified), the system is maintained in a good working order.

3. Activities

Since the previous report to the Environment Committee on 6 April, this Department was involved in various activities relating to public information and general emergency management planning.

- We are working with Regional Councils in putting together a seminar regarding the Logistics Contingency planning for the Wellington region, which will be followed up by an appropriate exercise later this year.
- We are reviewing the format of the emergency management information that we annually publish in the Yellow Pages. The new format will include the 4 R's, namely reduction of risks, readiness, response and recovery, as well as a page on basic first aid. In this regard we have had several meetings with Telecom Yellow Pages when we proposed that the information should be published nationally. We are now negotiating with the other Regional Councils on this concept and the type and format of information to be published. If all goes well, emergency management information based on the 4 R's will be published nationally by Telecom Yellow Pages as from next year.
- We are working with the Hutt Valley Emergency Services Co-ordinating Committee in planning a combined exercise that will take place in the Hutt Valley later this year. The scenario will be that of a train carrying hazardous substances crashing into a bus with school children next to the river.
- We attended the Hutt River Floodplain Management workshop on non-structural options on 10 April. We did a presentation on the emergency management measures that should be in place should a major flood occur. In this regard we worked closely with officers from the Hutt City Council and Upper Hutt City Council.

4. **Representative Visits**

- We are involved with the Wellington Region SPCA in developing a Business Continuance Plan to be used in case of a major disaster. We provided the SPCA with the necessary information as well as guidelines on how to put the Plan together. We have already attended a couple of meetings and more meetings are envisaged.
- We attended the monthly meetings of Emergency Management Managers, the Insurance Council, the Rural Fire Committee and the Emergency Services Co-ordinating Committees. Main topics of discussion were the EMG, Logistics Planning, Publicity, Communications and Exercises.

5. **General**

- Nine (9) Special Weather Bulletins were received from the MetService. On 4 April we received 4 warnings for heavy rain and strong wind and on 9 April we received 5 for heavy rain. All involved were notified and we did not experience any problems. Since the last report, 43 earthquakes bigger than 3.0 on the Richter Scale occurred in the Country. The following Earthquake Reports for the Wellington Region were received from IGNS:
 - 30 March – Greytown (4.2)
 - 30 March – Greytown (5.7) plus more than 60 aftershocks
 - 30 March – Greytown (3.6)
 - 04 April – Greytown (4.2).