



**AGENDA FOR AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE EMERGENCY SERVICES SPECIAL  
COMMITTEE TO BE HELD IN THE CIVIL DEFENCE HEADQUARTERS,  
7 ELCOAT AVENUE, HENDERSON, WAITAKERE CITY, ON  
TUESDAY, 5 AUGUST 2003 COMMENCING AT 9.30 AM.**

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b><u>ITEM</u></b>		<b><u>PAGE NO.</u></b>
1	<b>APOLOGIES</b>	<b>1</b>
2	<b>URGENT BUSINESS</b>	<b>1</b>
3	<b>CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES</b>	<b>1</b>
4	<b>EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE</b>	<b>2</b>
5	<b>FUTURE ROLES OF THE CIVIL DEFENCE VOLUNTEER RESCUE TEAM</b>	<b>4</b>

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**1 APOLOGIES**



**2 URGENT BUSINESS**

Section 46A(7) and (7A) of the Local Government Official Information Act and Meetings Act 1987 provides that where an item of business is not on the agenda, it may only be dealt with at the meeting if:

- (i) the item is a minor matter; and
- (ii) the Chairperson has explained at the beginning of the meeting (when open to the public) that the item will be raised for discussion, why the item is not on the agenda, and why it cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting; and
- (iii) the Committee resolves to deal with the item.

No resolution, decision, or recommendation may be made in respect of the item except to refer the item to a subsequent meeting for further discussion.

**NOTE:** Urgent Business need not be dealt with now and may be delayed until later in the meeting.



**3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

Ordinary - Tuesday, 3 June 2003

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Emergency Services Special Committee held on Tuesday, 3 June 2003, as circulated, be taken as read and now be confirmed.



#### 4 **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

##### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to give the Emergency Services Special Committee an overview of Civil Defence Emergency Management activity during the reporting period since the last meeting.

##### **STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

Civil Defence Emergency Management is a responsibility of the Council under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002. Civil Defence Emergency Management forms a part of Council's strategic framework in that it contributes to community well being and building strong communities by increasing community readiness for and resilience to emergency events, reduce exposure to such events, and provides for emergency response in the case of such events. The basis for emergency management is found within the "4R's" namely Reduction, Readiness, Response and Recovery. These four requirements form the focus of all local Civil Defence Emergency Management tactical and operational planning.

##### **ISSUES**

###### **Staffing**

With the appointment of the new Emergency Management Officer in early June, the ability to advance identified project work has commenced. The new officer has been tasked with the overall expansion of the districts welfare response capability and significant progress has already been made in this regard. The aim is to have the project completed by November. A particular element of this project is to develop a comprehensive database of all facilities throughout the district which can be used for welfare purposes complete with contact lists and resource capability. Additionally, district transport resources will also be expanded, catering suppliers will be identified to a far greater degree and arrangements entered into for priority supply and assistance in an emergency situation. At the District's Welfare Advisory Committee meeting on Wednesday, 16 July 2003, various committee representatives explained the work being undertaken in this regard by their own organisations. Of particular note is the comprehensive emergency planning being completed by the Salvation Army with particular emphasis on catering and the resources within the community that can be used for this purpose in either a declared or non declared emergency situation.

###### **Emergency Operating Centre**

The Emergency Operating Centre staffing lists have been updated and an exercise callout is to be conducted on the morning of Saturday, 2 August 2003. The aim of the exercise is to verify contact details and ensure that sufficient people would be available to staff the Emergency Operating Centre outside of a normal working day environment. A verbal brief will be given to the Committee on the outcome of the exercise. Work has also been commenced on updating Emergency Operating Centre desk files and individual work station resources and operating material.

###### **Training**

All requests from the public for assistance have been met which has included school visits, assisting a girl guide training weekend and a dedicated training session for students from the Prince of Wales Trust.

The volunteer rescue/initial response unit continue their agreed training programme and have recently completed New Zealand Qualifications Authority unit standard training for working in a Civil Defence Headquarters and the structure of Civil Defence in New Zealand. A number of the team members have also completed a unit standard in the use of lines in rope rescue. The North Shore volunteer rescue team members have also participated in the above training.

Additionally four new rescue team members have completed both an Urban Search and Rescue training weekend plus a Coordinated Incident Management System course.

Volunteers from the Latter Day Saints Church have also been doing some excellent work in developing their welfare response capability. Apart from regular exercise training, they are also raising a three shift capability for all five chapels with a minimum of twelve persons per shift for emergency welfare centre response. This represents a huge commitment for which the City can be very grateful. In due course, it is intended to commence a New Zealand Qualifications Authority training programme for their volunteers in emergency welfare.

The Principal Rural Fire Officer maintains an ongoing training programme for the rural forces. To ensure compliance with the Health and Safety in Employment Act, all emergency management staff are undergoing unit standard training in rural fire duties and vegetation fire behaviour. Staff required to perform rural fire officer duties, must now have the above qualifications in order to carry out this function. This has not previously been the case, as formerly the ability to perform the function was based on perceived experience only.

Other specific unit standard training courses conducted for rural fire fighters during the reporting period were Fire Science, Operating Handheld Radios, Basic Firefighters, Protect Personal Safety at Vegetation Fires and Coordinated Incident Management System (4 courses).

## **RESOURCES**

All communications are operational and there are no resource problems to report. Tender processes are underway to determine the provider of new fire fighting clothing for our rural firemen as provided for in year one of the Long Term Council Community Plan and the rescue team element are totally resourced to the requirements of their perceived functions.

## **CONCLUSION**

The past two months has seen the continuation of the rescue training programme plus advances in welfare and the emergency response capability. Liaison with the Regional Emergency Management Office, the North West Emergency Management Committee and the District's Welfare Advisory Committee has been maintained through meeting and exercises. In addition the Manager Emergency Management has also been assisting in the Councils Business Continuity Project. The ongoing training programme for rural fire fighters ensures a continuing increase in their response capabilities.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the information be received.

Report prepared by: Bill Morley, Manager Emergency Management.



## 5 FUTURE ROLES OF THE CIVIL DEFENCE VOLUNTEER RESCUE TEAM

### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to update the Emergency Services Special Committee of the training and future direction planned for the Civil Defence Volunteer Initial Response Unit and to seek the Committee's endorsement of the programme being undertaken.

### **BACKGROUND**

During the 1980's and early 1990's a considerable number of Territorial Local Authorities supported volunteer rescue teams as a community response capability for Civil Defence purposes. Additionally, Red Cross, abattoirs and a number of other large private organisations had similarly trained teams. Within the Auckland Region, Red Cross (3), North Shore, Manukau, Auckland City, Rodney, Papakura and Waitakere City all had a volunteer rescue capability. Further a field, Tauranga, Thames, Hamilton, Far North, Whangarei, Taupo, Rotorua and Tokoroa also maintained a volunteer rescue capability.

For various reasons, mainly lack of financial support and council commitment, many of the formed teams have either been disestablished or run down to the extent that only the North Shore, Waitakere City and Rodney teams remain active in the Auckland Region. Of those only North Shore and Waitakere could be classed as top-level responder teams.

Traditionally, the purpose of the teams was to conduct light rescue activity in a declared emergency. There was, and still is, a national competency standard and selected members can gain instructor level awards. Despite regular training, exercises and competitions, membership commitment was hard to maintain as the scope of activities that could be undertaken was limited to purely light rescue. Additionally, there was only scant regard given to the teams by the normal emergency services.

Two years ago, the volunteer light rescue/initial response team were in need of new direction, numbers were falling and there was not a strong commitment towards the continuing development of the team. Council staff determined that the team was a valuable asset in the Emergency Management field and set about remedying this situation. A new training programme was introduced and goals were set for the team to achieve, in order to raise their skill levels and enable them to make a more worthwhile contribution to the organisation's response capability. Additionally there was the added bonus of personal achievement.

The team now meets every Tuesday night and their training programme is linked to appropriate New Zealand Qualification Authority accreditation. There are currently sixteen team members which in effect is the equivalent of two rescue teams.

Additionally, recent national strategy direction requires teams to develop an Urban Search and Rescue capability, and to develop more all round skills in other aspects of civil defence response capability. The current strategy is aimed towards the development of what will be termed Community Emergency Response Teams, and Waitakere volunteers are well placed to be accredited this qualification in the near future if the current training programme is maintained. The draft Auckland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan has also encapsulated this approach with an objective target being to raise up to ten such teams in the future, in conjunction with increasing Urban Search and Rescue Awareness and the development of a Neighbourhood Emergency Response strategy.

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Civil Defence Emergency Management is a responsibility of Council under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002. Civil Defence Emergency Management forms part of Council's strategic framework in that it contributes to community well being and building strong communities by increasing community readiness for and resilience to emergency events and provides for emergency response in the case of such events. Inherent within the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002, is the Council's responsibilities to recruit and train volunteers for civil defence emergency management tasks, provide for the rescue of endangered persons and their removal to safety, and provide for the relief of distress, including emergency food, clothing and shelter. A well trained and multi –skilled volunteer response team can assist greatly in meeting the provisions of these requirements.

The Council is also committed to building strong communities through enhancing and drawing on volunteer effort and expertise. Volunteer rescue teams are a concrete example of Council doing this on the ground at very little cost.

## ISSUES

A number of steps have been taken and are required to be taken to deliver on the strategy outlined above. These are discussed as follows:

### Step One

The first step in the teams development was to identify the direction in which they should be heading in order to meet the requirements of a civil defence response team in context with what was being done on a national basis and what was forecast in future strategies. The initial outcome was for each team member to become qualified in the following competencies:

- Co-ordinated Incident Management System
- Workplace First Aid
- General Rescue Certification
- Urban Search and Rescue Responder level Certification
- Workplace Health and Safety
- Use of two way radios.

All of these above are New Zealand Qualification Authority accredited qualifications. This training was undertaken.

Such was the success of the programme that the North Shore rescue team joined in the training programme with the net result that at the end of last year twenty three volunteers were awarded the Urban Search and Rescue Category 1 Responder qualification. This was a first for the Auckland Region and has significantly raised the profile of the volunteers in the eyes of the emergency services and the Auckland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group as a whole. Additionally a further five of our team members qualified as nationally accredited light rescue instructors. It is now intended that the above training programme becomes the standard for all new volunteers in the first year of volunteer training.

## Step Two

The second step in the training programme requires team members to achieve the following New Zealand Qualifications Authority unit standards:

- Functions and Operation of Civil Defence in New Zealand
- Process information in a Civil Defence Headquarters
- Act as an Emergency Welfare Centre staff member
- Supervise a Civil Defence Welfare Centre.

The achievement of these qualifications widens the team member's skills further to the extent that they can operate effectively within a civil defence headquarters and an operational welfare centre. These skills are being obtained this year interspersed with maintaining existing skills and assisting new members. They will greatly enhance the versatility and use of the rescue volunteers.

## Step Three

Rope rescue is an element of the general rescue qualification and it is imperative that team members be appropriately qualified to undertake this requirement. In this respect, four members of the team will undergo a rope rescue technician certification course in September. A similar number of North Shore team members will also undertake this course. Completion of this course will ensure appropriately qualified team members, able to supervise the activity of others in a safe and competent manner within a nationally acknowledged level of competence.

## Step Four

When all of the above training has been met, our volunteers will meet the Community Emergency Response Team concept and will qualify the team to be registered as a nationally accredited Response Team. Only three such qualified teams currently exist, one in Christchurch and two in Wellington. Although there is no compunction to become registered as a Response Team, do so would ensure the team is audited annually and the need to meet nationally set standards would ensure appropriate levels of efficiency are maintained. It also has the benefit of giving team members greater ownership for maintaining standards.

## RESOURCES

The Health and Safety in Employment Amendment Act requires that Council considers volunteers be classed in the same sense as employees and that they should be suitably equipped in order to perform their functions in a safe manner. During the last twelve months, new personal equipment has been purchased to ensure our rescue volunteers are appropriately equipped to perform their functions and the training programme has been designed to meet national qualification standards. Overall the team members are well resourced and there are no major financial outlays required for them to be able to continue their current and foreseeable functions.

## CONCLUSION

The advances made in meeting national standards in both equipment and training has ensured that the current volunteer rescue capability is of a high standard. The volunteers represent an efficient resource for the district, which can be utilised in a wide range of roles for any emergency response situation. The advances made by the team members has also considerably raised their profile within the normal emergency services.

Given the proposed National and Regional Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups future targets and objectives, the Community Emergency Response Team and Nationally accredited Response Team concepts, our current training programme objectives are totally in keeping with national practice standards.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the information be received.
2. That the current training and strategy programme for the Civil Defence volunteer rescue team members be endorsed and that approval be given for the team to become a nationally registered Response Team.
3. That a letter of appreciation from the Chairman and Chief Executive be forwarded to all rescue team members thanking them for their dedication and support and congratulating them on their achievements to date.

Report prepared by: Bill Morley, Manager Emergency Management.

