

**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, 1 JUNE 2004, COMMENCING AT 9.30 AM.**

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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, 6 April 2004

RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Emergency Services Special Committee held on Tuesday, 6 April 2004, as circulated, be taken as read and now be confirmed.



4 **FUTURE EMERGENCY OPERATING CENTRE OPTION REPORT**

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is update the Emergency Services Special Committee of the progress currently being undertaken regarding the possible opportunity of integrating a Civil Defence Emergency Management Emergency Operating Centre and Headquarters within a new New Zealand Fire Service station complex in Waitakere City.

BACKGROUND

Committee members will recall that this report is a continuation of previous reports relating to the status of the Council's existing Civil Defence Emergency Management complex, future requirements and concerns over its limitations for future Civil Defence Emergency Management activity. At the Committee meeting of 6 April 2004, it was resolved to submit a detailed report on the issues associated with collocation of the Emergency Operating Centre and Headquarters with the Fire Service to the Long Term Council Community Plan and Annual Plan Special Committee in June 2004 for consideration as part of the 2004/2005 Annual Plan. At the time of the April 2004 report the following outcomes had been achieved:

- There is agreement in principle for the integration of a Civil Defence Headquarters and Emergency Operating Centre to be included in the building of a new New Zealand Fire Service station and associated district headquarters.
- There is a common thread between the New Zealand Fire Service and Waitakere City in terms of building design requirements.
- The method of working through the financial aspects of such a proposal were understood and accepted by both parties.
- There was a requirement for Waitakere City to develop a site plan based on known space requirements in order to establish some idea of cost based on a stand alone complex. This would not take into account savings that could be made in a shared complex arrangement by joint usage of some facilities such as toilets, meeting and training rooms. It is essential that an indication of approximate end cost be established for Annual Plan purposes.
- The New Zealand Fire Service would provide a design template for their anticipated requirements based on a new district headquarters and associated fire Station at Papatoetoe.
- A visit to the new Papatoetoe Station was to be arranged for early April for a walk through with a view to consider how Council requirements could be accommodated within the design.
- Following the site visit to the Papatoetoe Fire Station, a further meeting was to be convened in late April/early May for more in depth design and financial planning.

One point highlighted by the New Zealand Fire Service was that given their urgency in acquiring a site, there is no guarantee that the extra space required for our purposes could be accommodated unless there was a prompt commitment from the Council to the project. This was signalled as a key issue in the draft Annual Plan 2004/2005.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 places an emphasis on a regional approach to Civil Defence Emergency Management and also clearly places a responsibility upon Local Authorities to provide for Civil Defence Emergency Management measures within their areas of responsibility. In addition to the requirement for a Group Emergency Operating Centre, the draft Auckland Region Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan identifies the Waitakere City Civil Defence Emergency Operating Centre as one of three other main Emergency Operating Centres within the Auckland Region. Within this context, the Waitakere City Emergency Operating Centre could be called upon to be able to perform both Local and Regional functions.

In December 2003, an audit was conducted of all Emergency Operating Centres within the Region for the purposes of determining the capability of each to function both as a Local and Group Emergency Operating Centre. It had already been identified that the Waitakere City Emergency Operating Centre would have difficulty in being able to perform the Group function purely for the reason of limited space. It has also been identified that the current Emergency Operating Centre would also have difficulty in operating in an emergency environment for anything other than a limited period. Another consideration is the age of the existing complex, the limited capability for expansion and increasing maintenance concerns. The initial recommendations of the audit identified all of the above short falls.

The Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002, places an emphasis upon the closer integration of stakeholders for Civil Defence Emergency Management purposes plus a requirement for closer inter agency organisation and cooperation. The possibility of addressing all of these goals and imperatives led staff and the Committee to pursue the potential of an Emergency Operating Centre located with the New Zealand Fire Service.

ISSUES

Following a meeting at the new Manukau District Fire Service Headquarters in mid April where a concept of our space requirements was discussed, Mr Dave Povey from the New Zealand Fire Service undertook to produce a preliminary draft plan for consideration. This has been considered, with the following issues emerging:

- The need for optimal separation and integration to be achieved through design.
- The need for separate access to the civil defence.
- Some additional design work to improve flexibility and functionality of joint meeting and training rooms.

It is emphasised that the draft plan concept is still very much in an early stage. The overall final design concept is still reliant upon the New Zealand Fire Service being able to find a suitable location within Waitakere City on which to build their new District Headquarters. There is also still no guarantee that the New Zealand Fire Service will be able to purchase a site that may in fact be able to accommodate our requirements.

However, to date it appears as though the concept for joint location can be made to work.

Another issue for consideration is how funding and tenure issues would be addressed. The New Zealand Fire Service has indicated at this stage that if integration does go ahead, they would prefer a lease arrangement. The way forward on this issue is still to be agreed.

There are three main options that could be considered with this knowledge we have now indicated three ways in which council could consider payment as follows:

- Council make a capital contribution towards the cost of the building (and land if necessary) and have a registered interest in the building by way of some mechanism such as the Memorandum of Encumbrance being considered for use in relation to Unitec's contribution to the Waitakere Central Library Project. This would not involve an ongoing lease payment.
- Council make a capital contribution towards the cost of the building (and land if necessary) but not own the building and instead have tenure guaranteed through a lease with no rental or a peppercorn rental.
- Council pay no capital contribution but instead lease the area on a commercial basis.

The New Zealand Fire Service has been requested to indicate which option would be preferable to allow better planning in relation to likely costs associated with that option.

In the meantime, staff are developing some costing options based on Council building estimates per square meter which will be forwarded to the Director: Corporate and Civic Services for submission to the Long Term Council Community Plan and Annual Plan Special Committee in June 2004.

As previously mentioned, there is still no guarantee that the preferred option of integrating a new Emergency Operating Centre and Headquarters within the New Zealand Fire Service District Headquarters will become a reality. Although the New Zealand Fire Service have given high priority to purchasing an appropriate site this may yet be some way off. Accordingly, the building of the new district headquarters could also be quite some time away, and at this stage would not seem likely during this forthcoming financial year.

The option of remaining in the current location is still not out of the equation. The Committee will recall that the original preferred option for a new Emergency Operating Centre and Headquarters was to build as a stand alone unit preferably on a Council owned property. This was before the chance of integration with the New Zealand Fire Service became a possibility. Given the existing use rights on the current site, it would be possible for to demolish the current building and erect a new Emergency Operating Centre. Obviously this would cause some operational disruption but would not be an insurmountable problem. Should it ultimately become untenable to integrate with the New Zealand Fire Service, it is considered that rebuilding in our current location would be the next best option.

CONCLUSION

At this time, the integration of a new Civil Defence Emergency Management Emergency Operating Centre and Headquarters within a new New Zealand Fire Service District Headquarters is still very much a possibility. There are still many issues to be determined including cost and design, and co-location is still very much dependant upon the New Zealand Fire Service obtaining a suitable site. The co-location option is the preferred option if satisfactory space and financial arrangements can be achieved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Future Emergency Operating Centre Option Report be received.
2. That the issue of future options for the Council's Emergency Operations Centre be reported back to the Emergency Services Special Committee following the deliberations on the Annual Plan 2004/2005 that following deliberations on the submissions to the Annual Plan.

Report prepared by: Ross McLeod, Director: Corporate and Civic Services and Bill Morley, Manager: Emergency Management.



5 RURAL FIRE REPORT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to give the Emergency Services Special Committee an overview of the activities of the Waitakere Rural Fire Authority during the reporting period and a forecast of the proposed activity planned for the next financial year.

This report also includes comment relating to the review of Fire Legislation currently being undertaken for the future of fire operations throughout New Zealand.

BACKGROUND

Under Rural Fire Legislation, Waitakere City Council is the Waitakere Rural Fire Authority for the rural area of this city and has responsibilities which include:

- a. Fire preparedness, fire prevention, fire suppression and the necessary training and equipping of the Volunteer Rural Fire Forces in order that they can carry out these roles.
- b. Producing a Local Rural Fire Plan on an annual basis.
- c. Authorising and monitoring open, restricted, and prohibited fire seasons for the Waitakere Rural Fire District.
- d. Meeting the requirements of the National Rural Fire Code of Management Practice for Council's Rural Fire risk factor.

By contractual arrangements, and through the services of the Principal Rural Fire Officer, the Waitakere Rural Fire Authority provides some rural fire services to the Rodney and North Shore District Councils. Oversight of all services rests with the Manager, Emergency Management within the Corporate and Civic Services Directorate.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Waitakere City Council is deemed to be the Waitakere Rural Fire Authority pursuant to Section 7(2) of the Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977. Rural Fire contributes toward Council's strategic framework in that it contributes to community well being by enhancing community preparedness for the risk of wildfire by educating communities in fire safety, managing the fire risk and responding to and suppressing any fires which may occur. Rural Fire also contributes to the Green Network through providing protection of the Waitakere Ranges from fire hazards. Rural Fire resources are also available to provide assistance to communities in other emergency events.

ISSUES

Operations

Operationally this fire season has been particularly quiet. The weather conditions over the summer period have played a major part in reducing the number of fires occurring. Obviously the wet conditions have reduced the ignition factor, but the inclement weather conditions also reduced the number of people utilising our beach and forest areas. Although the fire numbers were down, volunteer fire crews have attended a steady stream of non-fire incidents. A successful cost recovery claim on Vector has been concluded for the costs of the Piha fire in December. Council has been reimbursed for the full cost of the fire, although Vector denies liability.

Training

All volunteer staff have been heavily involved in training. New Zealand Qualifications Authority training in a number of Unit Standards is ongoing to ensure that all volunteers gain and maintain required levels of competency. Two driving courses have been held with two more programmed during June. Two Coordinated Incident Management Systems level 2 (CIMS2) courses have been conducted with a further catch up course set for June. A programme for six Pump Operator courses is being developed and is due to begin in late June.

A self help policy is being implemented across all stations (Waitakere and Rodney) which will involve individual stations taking responsibility for specific areas of training. It is envisaged that each station will specialise in a particular subject and will then deliver any training on that subject to all other staff. It is hoped that the policy will strengthen units by enhancing their confidence and standing.

The additional level of training has been necessary to prepare a base level for the anticipated purchase of Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus which will require its own fairly major training programme.

Management

Waitakere Station

Warwick Maxwell, formally Deputy Chief Fire Officer has been appointed as Chief Fire Officer of the Waitakere Volunteer Rural Fire Force. As Mr Maxwell is an experienced Officer, staff have confidence that the Unit is in good hands. Station Officer, Peter Burlingham has been promoted to the rank of Deputy, and again has the experience necessary to fully support Warwick in his new position. A survey is being carried out on the Waitakere Fire Station to establish the overall condition of the structure. It was originally built by staff and has been added to over the years on a need for space basis and there are queries on its compliance with general building codes. Already identified are problems with the sanitary system. A report will be brought forward to Council when results and options are known.

Bethells Valley Station

A high output pump was recently installed on the Tanker appliance which was utilised fully at two recent fires at South Head. Since the withdrawal of the Tanker appliance at the Waitemata Station, this appliance is the only Tanker in the North Western area. The importance of the unit is such that additional crews from the Waitakere Station have been trained to operate the appliance to ensure it's availability at all times.

Karekare Station

Equipment levels and condition will be considered in depth prior to the next fire season, as at recent fires it was noted that some hose stock was losing condition. Karekare's Daihatsu appliance (Fleet No 502) is currently undergoing a 'half life' refit; this involves preventative maintenance to the engine and body and will extend its useful life. Cover for the station area will be maintained by moving the Waitakere Daihatsu to Karekare. The Arataki Ford appliance will replace Waitakere's appliance. Full cover throughout the District will be maintained.

Arataki Station

The resource unit at Arataki is functioning well with excellent co-operation from the Auckland Regional Council Rangers; staff are committed to training but will be held to basic and safety levels. As a resource unit their response parameters are confined to defensive control and safety.

Rodney District

The contract for training with the Rodney District Council is being fulfilled, with the staff of their four stations receiving the same levels of training as our own as part of the joint programme. Some problems with the processing of Unit Standards through the New Zealand Qualifications Authority have been experienced, but it appears that this is not an uncommon occurrence.

North Shore City

Operationally the year has been quiet, with no major fires within the District. Four responses were made to the prison at Paremoremo with all being minor incidents. Some issues with Fire Permits, dealing with developers was experienced but have now been resolved.

Permit Issue

The past restricted fire season saw the issue of 173 Fire Permits. A review of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority Unit Standards will require all Warranted Rural Fire Officers to under-go further training to maintain their qualification to issue Permits. This training will be carried out prior to the start of the next fire season.

Priorities 2004

Apart from the upgrade of the Karekare Station, the major effort for the remainder of the year will continue to remain firmly on training. The increased operational capability possible through the issue of breathing apparatus requires a wider range of basic skills for all staff.

RESOURCES

With the upgrade of the Karekare appliance all vehicles will be fully prepared for the coming fire season. Equipment levels are good, and following the survey and possible re-equipping of Karekare all should be in order. Some problems in sizing were experienced with the issue of Level 2 protective clothing but are being resolved. Staff now have the full level of protection for their expected duties.

Review of Fire Legislation

Both the Fire Services Act and the Forest & Rural Fires Act are no longer relevant or compatible with the range and type of operational activities that are the standard and accepted business of both organisations. Both require an urgent review or, in the case of the Forest & Rural Fires Act especially, a complete re-write.

Current Emergency Management Legislation requires an "all hazards" approach to incidents by increasingly integrated emergency services. It is an economic fact that no single response organisation has the capability to effectively and efficiently control a major incident with its own resources. The utilisation of multi agency management as is current practise in the Coordinated Incident Management System is clearly the direction of future emergency management throughout New Zealand. It would seem sensible and would clarify and delineate the role of the country's Fire and Rescue Services if a single Act covering a realistic range of the expected activities of these Services could be given serious consideration.

The practical operational role of both branches of the Fire Service nationally is, especially in the areas of rural/urban interface, almost identical with regard to normal response activity. The outstanding differences in the range of response parameters of the two services are simply due to the fact that the training facilities of Rural Fire are limited. Given the opportunity of training, the minor remaining differences could be effectively removed, providing an even level of service to all communities.

Whereas the roles and response parameters of both branches are similar, the two Acts, in an operational sense, do not reflect this. The deficiencies and omissions found in the Forest & Rural Fires Act impact severely on the operational rural staff, in Waitakere's case, volunteers who continue to provide an emergency service to their communities without the clear and basic protections which should be expected from their governing legislation.

The Forest & Rural Fires Act was written in the age of the Forest Service when the prime need was clearly to deal with the specialist risk of major vegetation fires, although the responsibility of a Rural Fire Authority as defined in the Act includes; the suppression of any fire (no mention of vegetation) occurring within the Rural District. The need for specialist vegetation suppression skills and knowledge still exists to the same extent today, but could be covered adequately within a single fire management structure.

What was not anticipated or recognised within the provisions of the Forest & Rural Fires Act, is the rapid development of urban growth and the associated widening range of the response parameters of Rural Fire units. This increased requirement of Volunteer Fire Force units to provide protection to our smaller communities places a considerable burden on Local Government, who in the main does not have the expertise or the funding base to properly manage the role.

The situation has not changed to the same extent for the other agencies which make up Rural Fire, such as the Department of Conservation, or forest owners whose activities are still concentrated on vegetation management and suppression. The Local Body managed Fire Force units however, must carry out a wider and more 'emergency generic' range of activity to ensure that they are cost effective. This requirement is re-enforced by the expectations and demands of the communities they cover, who are a major source of their funding, as well as the members of the units themselves who see themselves as serving their local community.

In this situation, individual Rural Fire Authorities and the suppression units within them operate at vastly differing levels depending solely on the commitment and funding of the District. This results in situations in which the individual units set their own levels. Very few national standards or policies are able to be set within this random system, giving little operational credibility to the whole.

The New Zealand Fire Service has the advantage of a defined and well-organised command and management structure, with the ability to set and enforce levels of service and response for the differing grades of its brigades. Rural Fire has no such structure; minimum standards of resources and skills are contained within the Rural Fire Management Code of Practice, whose basic requirements can, and are, circumvented with ease.

The lack of any credible national standards within Rural Fire forces the New Zealand Fire Service to treat all calls to a Rural Fire District as requiring a New Zealand Fire Service response to ensure adequate protection is provided, which results in the inefficient and expensive policy of sending New Zealand Fire Service appliances out of their own fire districts denuding their own cover, as "back up" to rural incidents, simply because the operational capabilities of the local rural units are unknown.

The New Zealand Fire Service National Commander, Mike Hall, has stated that he would appreciate the ability to formulate a national policy covering all of the fire suppression units in the country. Part of this policy would be to grade every station (New Zealand Fire Service and Rural) according to its normal response parameters, with the subsequent grade strictly governing the equipment, skill level, and thus the response parameter of that particular station.

This common sense policy would allow the correct, and only the correct, level of equipment, training and response parameters to be designated to any particular station and would allow an efficient and economic level of management to be properly applied. This system could already be utilised within New Zealand Fire Service brigades but while the rural sector continues to operate at a variety of operational levels as independent units, the whole system is negated.

In addition to the general deficiencies of the Act when applied in the modern environment, specific changes are urgently needed to provide the normal and accepted legal protections for rural suppression staff which, in the case of Waitakere, are volunteers. This factor has become even more urgent since the introduction of changes to the Health & Safety in Employment Act, which now classes volunteers as paid staff. The responsibilities placed on the Officers of volunteer units under Occupational Safety and Health, especially when carrying out their duties under legislation which affords them minimal or no protection for their acts, is untenable and unacceptable.

Numerous attempts have been made to rectify the situation through the existing system with no result; it may be that the major deficiencies in the Act apply more specifically to the Local Government Fire / Emergency Sector of Rural Fire, who are usually outnumbered when decisions are made, by the vegetation sectors of the Department of Conservation, Forest Owners and Federated Farmers. This is not an idle appraisal, in general the vegetation sectors operate in a completely different environment than Local Government. Their staff are paid employees and are able to be designated specific training, thus their overall policies are able to be enforced by contract. All equipment is owned, giving control over its use, including its testing and maintenance. Public access within their districts is able to be restricted as the agency is actually the landowner of the district, and their major risk factor is purely vegetation.

From their perspective breathing apparatus, vehicle extrication or hazardous material training is not a requirement for their normal operational role. Whereas; non-vegetation incidents in which these skills are fully utilised, account for 80% of the responses of the Local Body District's suppression units and are an integral part of their role.

Summary

Legislation is required which provides for a sensible but firm level of discipline and control to Rural Fire on a national basis, to enable realistic standards to be set which are relevant to the risk and activity of the Fire District. Clearer protections should be in place to allow suppression staff to perform their duties with confidence. Delegation of authority within the units is essential, especially where volunteer staff are involved.

Anomalies in the Transport Act regarding emergency response should be corrected to clarify the role of rural appliance drivers. Access to funding to assist in the purchase of non vegetation fire equipment and protective clothing is urgently needed.

These and more are the factual points required to be considered to enable Rural Fire to operate effectively under the existing system, but staff consider that the result would only equate to a 'patch-up' and would, over a period of time degenerate due to the management philosophy which exists within the National Rural Fire Authority at the present time and which has consistently failed to address these problems in the past.

It is considered that to ensure progress is achieved, and maintained into the future, a complete change of philosophy is required. The existence of two separate fire services is the major cause of the deficiencies affecting both services. The creation of a single service responsible for the provision of all fire and emergency response services would provide a structure which could achieve this in an effective, efficient and economic manner.

The requirement for specialist vegetation knowledge could be accommodated within such a single structure and could adequately provide the same protection levels, with the added advantage of a single resource base in which to operate. Rationalisation of equipment and training on a national basis could provide savings in costs by defining a consistent and manageable level for individual districts.

A single management structure would effectively remove the existing problems with communications, procedures and management at incidents and would identify responsibilities and a chain of command. The transfer of the management of Rural Fire from a multitude of differing agencies, each with their own priorities to a single governing body would allow consistent and relevant standards to be implemented.

Most importantly; it should be remembered that the reason for the existence of both fire services is simply to provide for the protection and wellbeing of our people and their property. The present two service system where anomalies in service delivery, funding, and range of cover, cannot be improved in any meaningful way will not achieve this aim, as has been clearly demonstrated in the past. An in-depth review of the whole system, to identify the expectations of the role of "Fire" on a National basis is an essential step toward the formation of a comprehensive and relevant management structure. It is considered that the results of this review will identify the absolute and urgent need for a single Fire Service.

CONCLUSION

Although operationally quiet, this has been a busy year for staff with a number of staffing changes coming at a time when equipment issues and training programs were at their height. This has ensured that the Waitakere Rural Fire District is well prepared for the next fire season.

Thanks and appreciation is again due to our volunteer staff, who once again has demonstrated a level of commitment which must be admired. Without their service and dedication we could not function.

In respect to the review of Fire Legislation currently being undertaken, it is recommended that Waitakere City as the Rural Fire Authority takes every opportunity to advance the case for a single agency to provide for all aspects of fire protection, as may be presented in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Rural Fire Report be received.
2. That a letter of appreciation be forward to all volunteers for their support and dedication.
3. That at the appropriate time, a submission to the review process of the Fire Service legislation be prepared for the Emergency Services Special Committee's consideration, based on the contents of the Agenda report.

Report prepared by: Peter Barber, Principal Rural Fire Officer and Bill Morley, Manager: Emergency Management.



6 **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 and other planned activity.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Civil Defence Emergency Management is a responsibility of the Council under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002. Civil Defence 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 basis of all local Civil Defence Emergency Management tactical and operational planning.

ISSUES

Training

Coordinated Incident Management Systems level 2 (CIMS2) courses continue to be conducted for Council staff and other response agencies within the North West Emergency Management Zone. To date four courses have so far been conducted with some 50 people attending.

Bi-monthly Welfare Centre training courses have also been programmed with the first of these scheduled for the 19 June 2004. In addition a two-day Welfare Centre Managers course was held at the North Shore Emergency Operating Centre at which we had 12 people attending from both the New Zealand Response Team 3 and Emergency Management office staff.

During the week 11-15 May 2004, three Emergency Operating Centre activation and management exercises were conducted culminating with a practical welfare evacuation exercise. The aim of the Emergency Operating Centre exercises was to test the Council's declaration and operational management capability. Each session was of three hours duration and the same scenario of a hazardous substances incident was used for all. In total 45 Emergency Operating Centre staff from Council attended the three sessions. All of the newly appointed Controllers also participated in the training sessions. Such ongoing training is essential in order to ensure that the Council's response capability is maintained to an effective level as required by the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002. At the time of writing a Welfare Exercise based upon the same scenario as above is to be conducted on Saturday, 15 May 2004. This exercise will include the following participants:

- Civil Defence Emergency Management
- New Zealand Fire Service
- New Zealand Response Team 3
- Landrover Club
- Salvation Army
- Welfare Volunteers from the Latter Day Saints Chapels
- Red Cross
- Evacuees from Waitakere Gardens Retirement Village
- Neighbourhood Support
- Citizens Advice Bureau

The exercise will be run as a casualty removal and evacuation exercise initially with New Zealand Response Team 3, Police and the Fire Service participating in the movement of three casualties. The evacuees will then be moved on to the Salvation Army Faith Factory in View Road for a cup of tea and then onto the Latter Day Saints Welfare Centre in Lincoln Park Avenue where the evacuees will be processed through welfare centre procedures. The exercise will be conducted over a four hour period session.

Training is continuing for New Zealand Response Team 3 to bring the new members up to date and to enhance the skills of the existing members. An Urban Search and Rescue awareness course was recently undertaken by two new team members and on 22-23 May 2004 four team members will be attending a flood training pilot scheme that will be held in Palmerston North. This training has been funded by the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management. In addition, one other team member has attended an Urban Search and Rescue Train the Trainers course in Wellington. This is a significant step as it will give the organisation the ability to now not only train but to also assess in Urban Search and Rescue plus General Rescue techniques. In addition, New Zealand Response Team 3 members will undertake rope responder and technician training over the weekend of 29-30 May 2004.

As previously mentioned Project Rapid, the Ministry of Civil Defence sponsored project to enhance community response capability was officially launched during April. Given that our New Zealand Response Team 3 Unit is one of four pilot scheme teams involved in Project Rapid, some seed funding has been made available from the Ministry to assist our particular involvement. The Manager Emergency Management has made an application to the Ministry for \$5,000 of the available funding.

Web Site Upgrade

The Council's Civil Defence Emergency Management and Rural Fire website page has recently undergone an upgrade and it is now up and running. Both the Civil Defence and Rural Fire pages have been updated with new information and links. This upgrade represents a vast improvement on that as was previously listed.

Welfare

A programme to expand the Council's welfare volunteer base has been initiated. The aim is to target church, community and neighbourhood support groups in order to raise the volunteer numbers and commence a programme of quarterly training and exercise sessions.

A joint programme is being undertaken with Neighbourhood Support consisting of a series of 16 evening community meetings. The aim of the meetings is to inform the public about Neighbourhood Support, Civil Defence and other community welfare groups. A call for Welfare volunteers is also made at the meetings and so far there have been several interested parties who have put their names forward to become involved.

Staff Training

Since the last meeting staff members have undertaken the following training:

- Three staff members attended a regional Coordinated Incident Management Systems level 4 (CIMS4) course held at the North Shore Emergency Operating Centre as assistant trainers. This participation in a trainer role allows our organisation to gain credits to send future Council staff to such courses. Three of the councils nominated Controllers will complete this course over the next few months as a requirement for their position. It is worthy of note that three of the Emergency Management Staff are qualified to undertake this activity in a training role.
- Staff members have also been involved within working groups for elements ongoing Civil Defence Emergency Management Group projects.

Local Plan

As a requirement of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan each Council needs to prepare a local plan based upon a regionally agreed template. This plan is required to be completed by the end of June this year. Currently a first draft of this plan has been completed and once finalised the plan will be taken to the North West Emergency Management Committee for their comments before being presented to the coordinating Executive group for consideration. This plan will ultimately replace the current Waitakere City Civil Defence Transitional Plan.

Recent Flooding Event

On the evening of Saturday, 1 May 2004, heavy rainfall was experienced in Waitakere City. Fire and Police responded to reports of flooding in the Henderson Valley and surrounding areas that were adjacent to water courses. The Civil Defence Duty Officer was paged at 12.30 am on Sunday morning and told that there was serious flooding and evacuation of houses was occurring. The Duty Officer went into the Emergency Operating Centre and was in contact with Fire and Police as to the extent of the evacuations. In the end about 40 houses were evacuated but only two families required assistance from Civil Defence. One family temporarily visited the headquarters but then found alternative accommodation with family members and a second family spent the night at the Emergency Operating Centre as they had no where else to go. All evacuees were allowed back into their homes the next morning.

This event was small in terms of a required Civil Defence Emergency Management response and only required minimal support to the emergency services. A debrief with the key players is currently being arranged to ensure any gaps are filled and processes updated. Of note is that the activation procedures for the Civil Defence duty officer as requested by the emergency services worked well.

CONCLUSION

The past two months has been an extremely busy and productive time for the Emergency Management team and volunteers. Good progress is being made in a number of areas to upgrade and improve our community response and welfare capability as detailed in the report and will be ongoing throughout the year. Given the support of Council, the programmed Emergency Operating Centre Training programme and welfare evacuation exercise in May will greatly enhance the Council's overall response capability.

The next pressing priority activities will be to meet the deadlines for the development of our draft Local Civil Defence Emergency Management and Recovery plans.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Emergency Management Update report be received.

Report prepared by: Antoinette Mitchell, Emergency Management Officer and Bill Morley, Manager: Emergency Management.

