

**AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE EMERGENCY SERVICES SPECIAL COMMITTEE
TO BE HELD AT WAITAKERE CENTRAL, 6 HENDERSON VALLEY ROAD,
HENDERSON, WAITAKERE ON TUESDAY, 3 APRIL 2007,
COMMENCING AT 1.00 PM**

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1 APOLOGIES



2 URGENT BUSINESS

Section 46A(7) of the Local Government Official Information 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 Committee by resolution so decides; and
- (ii) the Chairman has explained at the beginning of the meeting (when open to the public) that the item will be raised for discussion and decision, why the item is not on the agenda, and why it cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.

The Committee may make a decision on a matter determined to be urgent.

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



3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Meeting Minutes - Tuesday, 5 December 2006

RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes of the Meeting of the Emergency Services Special Committee held on Tuesday, 5 December 2006, as circulated, be taken as read and now be confirmed.



4 OVERVIEW OF CIVIL DEFENCE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND RURAL FIRE ACTIVITY

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to give the Emergency Services Special Committee an overview of Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) and Rural Fire activity since the last report, and to outline future planned activity.

BACKGROUND

The CDEM Act 2002 introduced a new framework for CDEM in New Zealand. The legislation has established a regional basis for the leadership of emergency management with the establishment of Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups (CDEMGs), and Co-ordinating Executive Groups (CEGs) to support them. Alongside this regional framework, there is still a strong responsibility for local emergency management that lies with district/city councils. The basis for this management is summarised within the "4R's" of emergency management, namely Reduction, Readiness, Response and Recovery.

Reduction: Identifying and analysing long-term risks to human life and property from natural or man-made hazards: taking steps to eliminate these risks where practicable, and where not, reducing the likelihood and the magnitude of their impact.

Readiness: Developing operational systems and capabilities before an emergency happens. These include self-help and response programmes for the general public, as well as specific programmes for emergency services, utilities and other agencies.

Response: Actions taken immediately before, during or directly after an emergency, to save lives and property, as well as help communities to recover.

Recovery: Activities beginning after initial impact has been stabilised and extending until the community's capacity for self-help has been restored.

Rural Fire is an integral element of the City's CDEM response organisation, although generally involved on a daily basis in dealing with fire events. In this regard they work in the same way as the volunteer forces of the New Zealand Fire Service but under the auspices of the Waitakere Rural Fire Authority. In an emergency, Rural Fire Forces become an element of the overall CDEM response

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

CDEM is a responsibility of Council under the CDEM Act 2002. CDEM forms part of Council's strategic framework, in that it contributes to community wellbeing and builds strong communities by increasing community readiness for and resilience to emergency events, reducing exposure to such events, and providing for emergency response in the case of such events. The requirement for local planning and coordination is essential to meeting these requirements. Rural Fire contributes to the Green Network through protection of rural forest areas, and strong communities through its volunteer programme, supporting communities to meet their own emergency needs.

ISSUES

1. New Emergency Operating Centre

There are no current specific issues relating to the construction of the new Emergency Operation Centre and at this time the project is expected to come in within budget and on time for an early August completion date. Regular reporting on the project is occurring, as agreed, via the Projects Special Committee.

A short power point demonstration will be given to the Committee at the meeting, showing the stages of development carried out to date.

2. Warning Sirens Project

As previously reported, a working group was established comprising emergency management staff from Waitakere City, North Shore City and the Rodney District. The purpose of this group was to develop a common approach for the North West Emergency Management Zone for the introduction of a layered public warning/alerting system within the zone. It was envisaged that this could include sirens, mass telephone and cell phone text messaging, and ripple control sirens in houses. This work would also be accompanied by the development of public education programmes, including evacuation and traffic management plans.

While good work was carried out by the Working Group in identifying various options for use, it did not further the Council's siren project. Over the Christmas break, Council officer's decided that this needed to be advanced independently of other councils in order to meet Waitakere City Council requirements. An advertisement for a suitably-qualified project consultant was placed in February, with a view to seeking system tenders in March. Only one company, Meerkat Alerting Systems (Meerkat), responded to the advertisement. They also made a separate proposal for the adoption of their siren system. Discussions were held with the company, and it was decided to ask Meerkat to submit a further tender to include a prototype siren design and the work required for a siren test to be conducted in April. This tender has now been received and accepted and progress on the development and testing of the prototype is being made. The initial test is planned to take place at Karekare on a date yet to be decided. Following the hopefully successful outcome of the testing programme, a further report will be made to Council with a recommendation for further action, including a tender process for a full siren system.

Meerkat Alerting Systems are well known and are currently trialling a ripple control alerting system in the Far North and a siren system in the Western Bay of Plenty. Pending the outcome of the Western Bay of Plenty trial, it is anticipated that 91 sirens will be installed in coastal locations in that area.

The Meerkat Alerting siren is primarily designed to operate using ripple control, but can be adapted to be activated by either radio or text messaging. The trial test in April will be activated by radio signal. Of interest is that there is ripple control provided to the West Coast beach communities, plus Huia and Cornwallis. These are, however, the only locations within Waitakere City where ripple control exists. Given that there are some blind spots for cell phone and radio reception at the West Coast beach locations, ripple control is the favoured method for primary activation for these locations. It is not yet known if the form of ripple control in use will be suitable for local activation purposes and a meeting is being held with Vector on 29 March 2007 to discuss this issue further. A verbal report will be given to the Emergency Services Special Committee on the outcome of this meeting.

While Waitakere City is at this time pursuing the siren system alone, there is still considerable interest within Rodney District and North Shore City for a common system approach. Emergency management representatives from both Councils will be invited to attend the testing programme at Karekare.

Work on GIS inundation maps to support the City's warning systems is almost complete. Based on this work, ongoing investigation for a mass telephone messaging system via the call centre will also continue.

3. CDEMG Capability and Capacity Assessment Report

Members of the Emergency Services Special Committee are familiar with the Capability and Capacity assessment that was undertaken by Kestrel Group Limited in 2006.

To further the work required in the assessment, the Coordinating Executive Group (CEG) established a working group, led by Harry O'Rourke as Group Controller, to examine the report, recommendations and actions in detail and report back to CEG and CDEMG with a proposed programme and actions for addressing the issues highlighted. Work on this was carried out by Emergency Planning Limited. This report and supporting recommendations were reported to the CDEMG at its meeting on Friday, 3 November 2006. The CDEMG adopted a draft work programme and budget based on the recommendations of CEG.

It appears that all councils have made provision in their draft Annual Plans for 2007/2008 for the expanded work programme and budget. However, Auckland City Council has made the funding subject to further business case work being undertaken to confirm the programme. This study is now being carried out and will be the subject of a further report to the CDEMG at its meeting in June 2007. This Council, and the Emergency Services Special Committee, will be advised of progress as the work is carried out.

In terms of a Group Emergency Operating Centre (GEOC), the Auckland Regional Council (ARC) has made the basement area of their building available for GEOC purposes. The Group Controller has recommended the suitability of the location for use as a GEOC and design concept work has commenced.

Additionally, the ARC are also going to provide staff for the GEOC on a three-shift basis and it is anticipated that all personnel will have received initial training for this purpose by the end of June 2007.

4. Local Emergency-Management Activity

All staff are currently involved in a number of local work activities and emergency management officers are also involved with a number of Group activities. At the time of writing this report, both a Crisis Management Team (CMT) and EOC exercise, aimed at testing the alternate EOC location in the Civic Centre, was undertaken on 21 and 22 March 2007. A considerable amount of staff time has gone into the development of this exercise and setting up arrangements for the alternate EOC. A verbal report on the outcomes of both activities will be given to the Emergency Services Special Committee at this meeting. In addition, a Ministry of Health Pandemic Exercise (Cruikshank) is being conducted over four days in May 2007, and a Group Lifelines Exercise (Marconi 07) will be conducted in June 2007. During Exercise Cruickshank, it is intended to exercise the Council's pandemic and individual departmental business continuity plans.

Other local activity since the December meeting includes:

- Emergency Management Officer (Karl Nuttall) has gained Local Government ITO Assessors' qualification. All emergency management staff now hold this qualification;
- Eight new members of the Initial Response Unit have gained their Urban Search and Rescue Category 1 Responder qualification;
- The Principal Rural Fire Officer has gained the National Certificate Level 4 Vegetation Fire Response Certificate;
- Refresher training conducted for all reporting centre staff, plus welfare training for all library support staff;
- The establishment of a North West Zone Welfare Advisory Group (WAG);
- Ongoing emergency management and rural fire training;
- New EOC Project Advisory Group.

Regional CDEM Group Activity includes:

- Chairman of the Coordinating Executive Group (Director: Corporate and Civic Services);
- Member of the Exercise Marconi 2007 Working Party (Manager: Emergency Management);
- Chair of the Exercise Cruickshank Working Party (Manager: Emergency Management);
- Chair of the Exercise Ruamoko Working Party (a national exercise based on a volcanic eruption in Auckland) (Manager: Emergency Management);
- Chair of the GEOC Working Party (Manager: Emergency Management);
- Member of the Group Communication Review Working Party (?);
- Member of the Group Training and Professional Development Working Party (Manager: Emergency Management);
- Member of the Public Education Working Group;
- Group Controller and principal support for the Group Controller.

5. Rural Fire Activity

Operational

Only two vegetation fires of any significance were attended during this period:

- 1) A bush fire alongside the walkway at Bethells Beach.
- 2) A vegetation fire threatening homes above the lagoon at Piha.

Although having significant damage potential, both were controlled before major damage was done. The same period saw an increased attendance at structure fires, the most notable being the abandoned "P house" on Lone Kauri Road. This fire had the potential to cause harm to fire-fighters, as the house had yet to be decontaminated. Very sensible decision-making by the Karekare crew ensured that the crews remained safe while controlling the fire. Equipment and crews were fully decontaminated on leaving the site.

Training

Rural Fire staff attended at a number of training courses including:

- 1) Basic Firemanship.
- 2) Pump Operators.
- 3) C.I.M.S. two.
- 4) Breathing Apparatus.

All performed well and were successful in achieving the standard required. On-station skill maintenance training continued throughout, with crews also working toward basic Civil Defence unit standards.

The Waitakere crew entered a team for the United Fire Brigades' Association annual competition held in Fielding. Four months of intensive training three times a week resulted in a very credible and successful result, gaining a first placing in the over 40's and second placing in the pump-run events. This is a highly regarded and very serious competition and the team's performance and their general bearing has reflected very positively on Waitakere City and on Rural Fire in general.

All Rural fire staff have been signed on for a Structured Training Programme, under which it is intended that they will all complete the Unit Standards necessary to attain the National Certificate in Vegetation Level 2 by the end of the year.

Management

Documentation has been completed for a claim for the subsidy on protective clothing and equipment allowed for under the Grant Assistance Scheme.

Testing and recording systems are being reviewed to ensure compliance with the newly-introduced National Performance Assessment Criteria, which has replaced the former Code of Practice. This is being worked through with the Officers in Charge of stations, as it will significantly increase the workload on their officers and crews.

Waitakere is organising a Regional Breathing Apparatus course to be held in April 2007, with participants attending from throughout the Region.

An approach has been made by Fire Service on the possibility of the Waitakere unit responding outside the Rural District into urban areas. Although increasing the workload of our volunteers, it would significantly increase the protection of our citizens, so is being considered favourably. A memorandum of understanding is being prepared, which will provide the protections for our Rural Fire staff when operating outside their own jurisdiction.

A temporary contract of service, to provide Principal Rural Fire Officer services, is being prepared by the Rodney District Council to cover the period until they are able to replace their own Principal Rural Fire Officer, who recently resigned.

All appliances are in good condition, equipment and crew levels are adequate and the District Fire Force is in good shape and able to operate effectively.

Thanks are due to the on-going dedication and commitment shown by our volunteer crews and their families. Without this outstanding volunteer commitment, Waitakere Rural Fire could not function.

RESOURCES

The emergency management section remains well resourced for normal activity requirements and there are no specific operational issues.

CONCLUSION

Since the Christmas Holiday period, all staff and volunteers have again been very involved with training and activities at the local and regional level. Regional activity places an additional workload on staff, but it is hoped that when the new GEOC staffing issues are resolved, the need for the amount of in kind contribution from Waitakere staff will become considerably less.

Staff continue to work from office space in the GPT Building, which although rather restricting in terms of space, is adequate for day-to-day administration purposes. Despite a long period of dry weather, there has only been two significant fires in the rural area and some excellent work has been done by fire crews to restrict the size of a number of other fires due to their prompt and efficient response.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Overview of Civil Defence Emergency Management and Rural Fire Activity report be received.
2. That the Emergency Services Special Committee acknowledge the fine work being carried out by the City's Rural Fire Forces and that the Manager: Emergency Management Services formally convey to the City's Rural Fire Forces the Emergency Services Special Committee's appreciation accordingly.

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



5 WAITAKERE CITY VOLUNTEER INITIAL RESPONSE UNIT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform the Emergency Services Special Committee on current and future activities of the Waitakere City Volunteer Initial Response Unit (IRU), and to seek the Committee's endorsement of the Team's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) in accordance with national best practice guidelines for Registered Response Teams.

BACKGROUND

The Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Act 2002, Section 17, states that local authorities must provide an adequate response capability for CDEM purposes.

With the introduction of the CDEM Act 2002, the Ministry of Civil Defence Emergency Management (MCDEM) recognised the requirement for enhancing response capabilities throughout the country and launched the concept of New Zealand Response Teams. This element of response capability is based on an Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) capability. A core part of this has been the establishment of three USAR Task Force Groups, consisting primarily of New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS) personnel trained specifically for technical and heavy rescue work. These three Task Force units are based around the country, with Task Force 1 in Palmerston North, Task Force 2 in Christchurch and Task Force 3 in Auckland. To further provide support to the Task Force Groups, a number of volunteer IRUs throughout the country have completed standardised training to nationally-set standards for USAR purposes and are known as New Zealand Response Teams. The Waitakere City Volunteer IRU became the third team in New Zealand to achieve the standards in November 2003 and is officially known as New Zealand Response Team 3 (NZRT 3). There are currently 18 registered response teams in the country.

In addition to USAR skill, the concept of New Zealand Response Teams has lifted the standard of training and equipment for IRUs across a broad range of other skills, including emergency welfare, emergency operations' centre support, first aid and communications.

The Waitakere City Volunteer IRU is supported primarily by the CDEM Section of Waitakere City Council and is not only an asset to Council but also for the Auckland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group (CDEMG).

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

CDEM is a responsibility of Council under the CDEM Act 2002. CDEM forms part of Council's strategic framework in that it contributes to community wellbeing and builds strong communities by increasing community readiness for and resilience to emergency events, reducing exposure to such events, and providing for emergency response in the case of such events. The requirement for local planning and coordination is essential to meeting these requirements. The Volunteer IRU is an integral element of the City's overall emergency response capability.

ISSUES

SOP 122 - Initial Response Team

Under the MCDEM best practice guidelines, New Zealand Response Teams are required to maintain a SOP for the Initial Response Unit. This SOP was initially written in 2003 as part of the IRUs' application to become a registered New Zealand Response Team.

As part of the ongoing development of the IRU, the SOP has been updated and presented and accepted for use at the IRUs' Annual General Meeting in November 2006. Given the changes involved, it now requires the SOP to be endorsed for use by the Emergency Services Special Committee.

A1-A52

It is recommended that the Committee endorses the SOP for use by the IRU. A copy of the draft SOP is attached at pages A1 to A52 of this report.

Team Leaders; Annual Report.

The following is a summary of the Team Leaders' Annual Report, as provided to the Manager: Emergency Management Services by the Initial Response Team Leader, Mr Corey Neal.

"During 200, the Initial Response Unit completed:

2,738.75 hours Scheduled training consisting of weekly training on Tuesday nights.

994 Hours Additional training consisting of weekend training, training Rural Fire, community open days and exercises.

142.75 Hours Operation deployments including responses into Ranui for Tornado damage, two calls to persons over cliff, Piha and Cornwallis, and storm response work in New Lynn assisting New Zealand Fire Service.

This constitutes 3,875 hours of voluntary service to Waitakere City Council and the community.

The team currently has 16 members: 15 CAT 1R, 1 CAT 1A. There are five General Rescue trainers, three USAR Awareness trainers and two LGITO/FRSITO Assessors."

A53-A54

A copy of the report is attached at pages A53 to A54.

Training

The IRU has commenced a training programme for 2007, based around strengthening the Team's capabilities for the specific hazardscape of Waitakere City, including high angle rope rescue plus storm and flood response courses. In addition and in keeping with the North West Zone arrangements, the IRU is forging closer training and operational links with Response Teams in both North Shore City and the Rodney District.

RESOURCES

The IRU remains well resourced through the Waitakere City Council's CDEM Section for normal activity requirements and there are no specific resourcing issues.

CONCLUSION

The IRU continues to develop and train to a high professional standard and is an asset to Waitakere City Council and the Auckland CDEMG. The 2006 year was a very busy one for the IRU, with each member of the team contributing on average over 240 hours of service to the wider Waitakere Community. 2007 is developing as a busier year again through training, closer relations with Rural Fire and ongoing community support.

All equipment and team member levels are adequate and the team is capable to operate effectively. Thanks should be given to the team members and their families for their voluntary dedication and commitment shown to the Waitakere Community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the overview of the Waitakere City Volunteer Initial Response Unit report be received.
2. That the Emergency Services Special Committee endorses the Draft Standard Operating Procedure to be adopted by the Initial Response Unit.
3. That the Emergency Services Special Committee acknowledges the commitment given by Initial Response Unit team members to Civil Defence Emergency Management in Waitakere City and that a letter of thanks be forwarded to the team management accordingly.

Report prepared by: Brandon Guttery, Emergency Management Officer, Emergency Management Services.

