



Waitakere City Council
Te Taiao o Waitakere

NOTICE OF MEETING

EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE

I hereby give notice that a meeting of the Emergency Services Committee will be held on:-

DATE: Tuesday, 13 April 2010 **TIME:** 1.00 pm

**MEETING
ROOM:**

VENUE: Civil Defence Headquarters, 7 Elcoat Avenue, Henderson,
Waitakere

to consider the business as set out herein and to take any necessary action connected therewith.

7 April 2010

Judith Moore
COMMITTEE SECRETARY

Telephone (09) 836 8000 extn 8950

MEMBERSHIP:

Councillors	DQ	Battersby, QSM, JP (Chairman)
	RP	Dallow, QPM, JP (Deputy Chairman)
	WW	Flaunty, QSM, JP
	PG	Mitchell

Mayor RA Harvey, QSO, JP (ex officio)
Deputy Mayor PA Hulse (ex officio)

(Quorum 2 members)

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(Meeting Room could be subject to change)

(The reports and recommendations contained in all agendas are reports and recommendations only and are not to be construed, in any way, as Council policy until adopted.)

**AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE TO BE HELD
AT CIVIL DEFENCE HEADQUARTERS, 7 ELCOAT AVENUE, HENDERSON,
WAITAKERE, ON TUESDAY, 13 APRIL 2010,
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 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Council has acknowledged in its Code of Conduct that Members need to be vigilant to stand aside from decision making when a conflict arises between their role as a Member of the Council and any private or other external interest they might have. This note is provided as a reminder to Members to check that no such conflicts arise in relation to any items on this agenda.



4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Meeting Minutes -Tuesday, 1 December 2009

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Emergency Services Committee resolve to:

Receive the minutes of the meeting of the Emergency Services Committee held on Tuesday, 1 December 2009, as circulated, and that they be taken as read and now be confirmed.



5 **OVERVIEW OF CIVIL DEFENCE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RURAL FIRE ACTIVITY - BI-MONTHLY UPDATE**

GLOSSARY

Auckland Transition Authority	(ATA)
Civil Defence Emergency Management	(CDEM)
Emergency Operations Centre	(EOC)
Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management	(MCDEM)
New Zealand Fire Service	(NZFS)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide the Emergency Services Committee with an overview of Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) and Rural Fire activity since the last report dated 1 December 2009, and to outline future planned activity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Emergency Services Committee resolve to:

Receive the Overview of Civil Defence Emergency Management and Rural Fire Activity – Bi-Monthly Update report.

BACKGROUND

1. The Civil Defence Emergency Management 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 CDEM Groups and Coordinating Executive Groups 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.
2. **Reduction** - Identifying and analysing long terms 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.
3. **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.
4. **Response** - Actions taken immediately before, during or directly after an emergency, to save lives and property, as well as help communities to recover.
5. **Recovery** - Activities beginning after initial impact has been stabilised and extending until the community’s capacity for self help has been restored.
6. 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 (NZFS) but under the auspices of the Waitakere Rural Fire Authority. In an emergency, Rural Fire Forces become an element of the overall CDEM response.

DECISION MAKING

Issues

Operational Activity

7. The main operational activity over the reporting period was the response to the national tsunami warning generated from the 8.8 magnitude Chilean earthquake on the morning of Sunday, 28 February 2010. Initial notification of the warning was received at 11.50 pm on Saturday, 27 February 2010 whereupon the Duty Officer opened the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and carried out notifications as required by operating procedures. The Local Controller also responded and, following a teleconference with the Group Controller, it was decided to activate the EOC manned with a shift of Council officers. Partial activation was carried out at 3.00 am and a full activation at 5.00 am. Members of the volunteer Initial Response Unit, who also responded, were despatched to numerous boat ramp locations to warn boat owners of the possible threat of a major tsunami and advise them against taking boats to sea. Surf life saving clubs closed beaches and Auckland Regional Council Park Rangers assisted by closing access to some beaches and warned the visiting public of the threat. Rural Fire forces were also put on standby and Police and NZFS liaison officers were requested to attend at the EOC. Arrangements were also put in place for regular updates to the Council website, which continued throughout the day.
8. With all preparatory actions taken, it was then a matter of wait and see what the effect of the tsunami was at the Chatham Islands, where the first wave was expected to arrive at 7.05 am. The first wave was recorded at 8.00 am, which was monitored on the Geonet website and showed wave movement with between half and one metre fluctuations. There were no reports of any damage from the first waves, but scientific advice was that later waves are often the largest in a major tsunami event.
9. The initial concern for Auckland was that any generated tsunami could first start arriving at about 8.00 am, which may coincide with a king tide high water time of 7.40 am. The arrival time of any tsunami waves was later revised to approximately 10.00 am. Further Geonet readings at Gisborne and then Napier showed similar wave motion trends to the Chatham Islands which led to a national prediction that some tidal movement would be likely in Auckland, but unlikely to be significant. Following a further teleconference with the Group Controller, it was decided that the warning processes already in place would be continued as a precautionary measure and until such time as the national warning was downgraded.
10. Within the EOC, a second shift of Council officers commenced operations at midday and after a hand over briefing, the first shift was stood down. The Director: Community Wellbeing assumed the role of Local Controller.
11. Further monitoring of the Geonet website indicated some small tidal movements in Auckland during the afternoon, and at 3.00 pm the national warning was downgraded, with a rider that some tidal movements could be expected to continue, particularly in estuaries and confined waterways. With the downgrading of the national warning, some EOC staff were stood down and at 5.00 pm it was decided by the Group Controller that the overall response would close down at 6.00 pm. The Waitakere EOC officially closed at 6.30 pm, after stand down notifications had been made.

12. It should be noted that, the initial response by emergency management and Council officers was of the highest level and greatly contributed to an excellent overall response by the Waitakere CDEM organisation. Council is fortunate to have such a competent group of people who responded willingly in a potentially stressful environment. However, as with any incident of this nature, there were some lessons learned for future improvement and for resolution at both local and regional levels. The following are the primary issues for future planning and response purposes:
- Liaison between surf lifesaving clubs at the Group EOC level to be improved to ensure actions being taken at beaches are consistent with CDEM decisions;
 - Requirement to have an Information Management liaison person in the EOC at an early stage to assist with any technology issues;
 - Provision of signs for beaches and boat ramps advising the public of the threat;
 - Clarification of the authority CDEM volunteers have to prohibit public access;
 - Need for all organisations to ensure that contact details are updated regularly;
 - Ensure that a public information link for getting material on to the Council website for public viewing is established from the onset of any potential major incident; and
 - That the Local Controller at the time has the authority to override any planned technology outages that may have been programmed.
13. With the exception of a requirement to have additional generic computer log ons allocated for use in the EOC, there were no significant equipment operational issues during the event.
14. For this event, the consistent messages going out to the media from the Ministry of Civil Defence Emergency Management (MCDEM) were excellent. This was the result of learning from the past where the media were often broadcasting information before any releases from MCDEM.

Auckland Council Transition

15. Since the last report dated 1 December 2009, the final structure of the new CDEM organisation has been agreed by the Auckland Transition Authority (ATA), but no decision has yet been made which facilities will be used for emergency management purposes. The agreed organisation will comprise a Group EOC and three (possibly four) other local EOCs. The actual whereabouts of the EOCs is currently under review for recommendation by a CDEM work stream, sub group and property development work stream of the ATA.
16. The Emergency Services Committee will be aware of the role mapping exercise for all Council officers to determine if they will be in a change, or no change situation, for future employment purposes. Given that CDEM and rural fire office locations are not yet decided, it is most likely that all current officers will be in a change process environment until this is resolved.
17. The rural fire organisation is also yet to be fully resolved. The recommendation to the ATA from the CDEM and rural fire working group and other stakeholders is that transition occurs as a single rural fire authority. This is at variance to the wishes of the National Rural Fire Authority, who want to establish an enlarged rural fire district which would essentially involve the establishment of what would be a Council Controlled Organisation. Further information relating to this issue will be explained in more detail at the meeting.

18. Other work involves a review of all standard operating procedures and a comprehensive review of how each local authority currently conducts its CDEM and rural fire business. The aim of both projects is to develop one set of procedures for the new organisation by the time of transition. There had been some initial suggestion of CDEM transitioning early, but this has now been decided against and transition is expected to take place on 1 November 2010.

Initial Response Unit Activity

19. Other than continuing with their standard training programme and with the exception of their support to the Chilean earthquake response, the reporting period has been a relatively quiet one for the Initial Response Unit members. Given the uncertain future of where the team will operate from in the future and in what capacity, they are to be commended for their continuing support to Council and CDEM in general. The future of the team and the use of volunteers in general is a subject for review prior to transition.

Severe Weather Activity and incidents

20. There have been no severe weather events during the reporting period.

Novel Influenza (AH1N1)

21. As reported at the last meeting, a vaccine is now available for emergency management front line officers as a single dose vaccination and has also been added to the normal influenza vaccination as a three in one dose.
22. There are no specific concerns by the health authorities other than planning for the effects of the forthcoming annual influenza.

Other Regional and Local Civil Defence Emergency Management Activity

23. Other than the work being carried out by various working groups for transition purposes and involvement in other established national and regional working groups, local activity is very much of a business as usual nature.
24. Current personnel involvement in all activity is:
- Chairmanship of the Auckland Region CDEM Group Committee - Councillor Battersby;
 - Member of the CDEM Coordinating Executive Group – Chief Executive;
 - Support member for the CDEM Group – Sue Bidrose/Bill Morley;
 - Member of the Group Communication Review Working Party - Brandon Guttery;
 - Member of the Group Training and Professional Development Working Party - Bill Morley;
 - Chair of the Group Public Education Working Group - Karl Nuttall;
 - Member of the National Urban Search and Rescue Advisory Board - Bill Morley;
 - Member of the National Local Government Industry Training Organisation Civil Defence Advisory Board - Brandon Guttery;
 - Leader of the CDEM and rural fire transition work stream – Sue Bidrose; and
 - Member of the CDEM and rural fire transition work stream – Bill Morley.

Rural Fire Update

Operational

25. The major incident during this reporting period was a fire at Piha which occurred just after midnight on the morning of 1 January 2010. The fire involving approximately six hectares of re-growth bush was caused by a parachute flare set off to celebrate the New Year at midnight. Reports gave Garden Road as the launch point which is within the jurisdiction of the NZFS. This caused some confusion regarding command on the night, but as the fire involved bush, Waitakere's Principal Rural Fire Officer assumed command of the fire. Due to darkness and the terrain, the fire was fought utilising water buckets and was brought under control within four hours.
26. Identification of the exact launch point of the flare is still under investigation by the New Zealand Police and the responsibility and therefore costs for this fire, will be identified following the result of their enquiries.
27. A number of other vegetation fires have also been attended but quick action by the volunteer crews resulted in none developing into any significance.

Training

28. External training has included a Rural Basic Skills course and two Breathing Apparatus Operators courses both held at the Fire Service Training Centre.
29. Internal training at station level has continued throughout and with a number of new recruits includes the whole range of skills.

Management

30. The major factor has been maintenance on fire appliances where work has been required on both Waitakere appliances and the Bethells Valley tanker has needed a clutch replacement. These problems have all been rectified and all appliances are fully operational. A replacement Command vehicle for use by the Principal Rural Fire Officer is due in early May 2010.
31. The water supply to Bethells Station is under investigation. The collection tank is quite small and its infrequent use has contributed to poor quality of water purity. Council's Property Services are assisting in resolving this problem; in the interim, the crew are making use of bottled water.
32. Waitakere's crew won the Wajax Pump competition at the Kumeu Show beating Kumeu by a narrow margin. A volunteer fire-fighter from the Bethells Valley Station recently attended the international stair-climbs in the USA and gained a very good grading.
33. Equipment levels are good, and our volunteer crews are providing excellent service to their communities.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

34. CDEM is a responsibility of Council under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002. CDEM forms part of Council's strategic framework in that it contributes to community wellbeing and building 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.

35. As a Rural Fire Authority, the Council also has a responsibility for rural fire management under the Forest and Rural Fires Act 1987. 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.

CONSULTATION

- 36 There was no consultation required for this report.

RESOURCES

37. There are no resources required for the writing of this report other than staff time.

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

38. Other than the work being undertaken by the CDEM and Rural Fire work stream for the ATA, there are no implementation issues with this report.

AUCKLAND COUNCIL TRANSITION ISSUES

39. The decision making proposed in this report is not constrained by section 31 of the Local Government (Tamaki Makaurau Reorganisation) Act 2009, as it does not directly or because of its consequences: significantly prejudice the reorganisation, significantly constrain the powers or capacity of the Auckland Council or any subsidiary of the Auckland Council following the reorganisation, or have a significant negative impact on the assets or liabilities that are transferred to the Auckland Council as a result of the reorganisation.

Report prepared by: Bill Morley MBE, BEM, Manager: Emergency Management.

