

Manager's Report, Emergency Management

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1. Communications

A group comprising ourselves, territorial local authorities, emergency services, lifeline utilities, and hospitals, work together to carry out weekly testing of the Regional Communications System. The tests show that all the equipment is in a well-maintained and functional condition.

The repeaters at Mt. Climie and at Normandale will be upgraded before the end of the year to provide us with extra capability, especially when using voice and fax frequencies simultaneously. It will also allow us to expand our capability to accommodate the Lifelines groups.

2. Regional Monitoring Centre (RMC)

To ensure the Regional Monitoring Centre's capability, two special system tests will be carried out on 24 November and 17 December 1999. These tests will only involve the Regional Centre and the National Centre. Normal weekly testing between the RMC and the territorial local authorities will still be carried out according our schedule.

The Ministry for Emergency Management developed a new "Process Manual" that will be used on the tests, as will a new incident reporting form.

3. Y2K

We attended several meetings with the EQC, Lifelines, emergency services, local authorities, the Defence Forces, Insurance Council, and our Communications Section to discuss planning and preparation for Y2K.

We developed and distributed a Y2K-poster urging communities to prepare themselves for Y2K. The poster was received with great enthusiasm and it is presently displayed throughout the region.

We started our media-awareness week (by using the mobile headquarters and display material) on 30 October with the AMP-Show in Carterton. We followed that up with displays at Upper Hutt (1 November), Masterton (3 November), Wellington (4 November), Martinborough (5 November) and Masterton again (6 November). These displays resulted in a huge public interest in awareness planning and at least 2300 people attended our displays.

We also appeared on NewstalkZB on 31 October, Channel 7 TV on 3 November (with a re-broadcast on 10 November) and published Y2K features in community newspapers.

4. Representative Visits

To follow-up the development of a “Logistics Contingency Plan to Support the Wellington Region” (as well as a New Zealand-wide Logistics Plan), we had an in-depth meeting with Professor Douglas Paton (School of Psychology) of Massey University. Professor Paton regarded the work that we have done so far as very comprehensive. The Logistics Plan will include measures on economic issues, resilience of our communities, distributed decision-making (collective solutions), leadership, technological advances such as GPS, GIS, satellite communications, training and information management.

We had the opportunity to attend the following workshops and training sessions:

- NIWA workshop on Climate Change. In-depth discussions of the effects of La-Nina and El-Nino and the impacts on our emergency planning, especially for floods.
- NZ Army workshop on Strategies for the next 10 years. Brigadier L Gardiner explained the situation in the NZ Army and how they could assist emergency management in the event of a major disaster.
- GNS (Geological and Nuclear Sciences) workshop on “Science Directions in the New Millennium”. This workshop provided us with valuable information on seismology, earthquake engineering, volcanoes, subduction zones, groundwater, coastal hazards, landslides and information on hazards and society.
- Health and Safety Training Course for Managers.
- CIMS (Co-ordinated Incident Management System) Train the Trainer Course. We are working with all emergency services and the lifelines and in the event of a major disaster CIMS will allow us to work together better and in a co-ordinated way.
- Emergency Rescue Training Course. Attended the Porirua City Council rescue training course. The knowledge and skills provide us with an understanding of how others plan and prepare.

5. General

- One Special Weather Bulletin was received from the Met services, namely a Heavy Rain Warning for the Wellington Region on 12 November. All the involved agencies were notified and no problems were experienced.
- The following Earthquake reports were received from IGNS:

- 11 October – Porirua (3.4)
- 11 October – Porirua (3.7)
- 18 October – Milford Sounds (4.5)
- 18 October – Taupo (3.0)
- 22 October – Ross (3.9)
- 24 October – Hastings (4.8)
- 26 October – Taupo (6.3)
- 28 October – Taupo (3.9)
- 31 October – Porirua (3.8)
- 4 November – Paraparaumu (3.8)
- 7 November – Wanganui (4.4)
- 17 November – Edgecumbe (3.0)