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Report to Environment Committee
from Debbie Cunningham, Emergency Management Officer

Marketing and Communication of Hazards and Emergency Management Information in 2001-2002

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee about the communication and marketing activities of emergency management that were carried out in 2001-2002.

2. Background

A Communications and Marketing strategy for hazards and emergency management information was developed in March 2001. This strategy is now being implemented by the Emergency Management Department and by the Hazard Analyst in the Resource Policy Department.

3. Hazard Fact Sheets

Hazard fact sheets were developed this year and were reported to the Committee (in Report 02.331). Over 1400 requests for the sheets have been received in the month. they have been available. This has exceeded our expectations, and demonstrates the interest of our target audiences.

Hazard fact sheets for flooding and meteorological hazards are now being developed and will be added to the series in December 2002.

4. **Website**

The content of the hazards and emergency management websites was completely revamped this year. This was as a result of one of the objectives in our Communications and Marketing Strategy which was to make more of our information available on the Internet.

The Hazards pages were updated to include our hazard fact sheets, pdf copies of our most recent research and links to relevant WRC reports. They can be seen on www.wrc.govt.nz/em/hazard.htm.

The emergency management pages were revised to focus more on what people can do to prepare themselves for emergencies. The previous pages only focussed on the WRC's role in managing emergencies. The pages now include a checklist of survival supplies, and a family plan that can be filled out online. They can be seen on www.wrc.govt.nz/em/maneme.htm.

5. **Public Enquiries**

A steady number of public enquiries and requests for information were received through the year. These were responded to promptly and the information requested was provided. Where we were not the most appropriate agency to provide the information, a referral was made. Public enquiries were received from schools, residents, consultancy organisations, businesses and volunteer organisations.

Our most commonly requested resources are our earthquake hazard maps, and our new hazard fact sheets.

6. **Yellow Pages**

The WRC continues to fund the emergency management information in the back of the Yellow Pages. This information has been agreed with all other emergency responders in the Wellington region. This year we also assisted the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management to revise the content and format of the page they fund in every Yellow Pages book in the country.

7. **Newspaper coverage**

There has been a lot of newspaper coverage of hazards and emergency management issues initiated by the WRC this year. This included particular interest in our report on Tsunami hazard in the Wellington Region, and on the options available to manage the hazard.

In addition, the WRC has used events happening around New Zealand to highlight the need for Wellingtonians to be prepared for emergencies. An example is when the

natural gas supply was disrupted to the Region by earthworks. In this case the importance of business continuity planning was highlighted to the media by the WRC.

There have also been many newspaper articles covering the activities of the Emergency Management Department. This included coverage of our earthquake exercise, and features on both of our staff - Debbie Cunningham after returning from assisting with the wildfires in Australia; and Rian Van Schalkwyk after returning from his UN mission to Jenin.

8. **Exercise Phoenix**

The Emergency Management Officer was responsible for the media campaign and coverage of Exercise Phoenix. A media strategy was written that included a media briefing, press releases and arranging interviews and television footage. The key messages that were intended to be conveyed were about the necessity of emergency management exercises, and about how individuals need to be prepared to look after themselves in a major Wellington earthquake.

The media coverage of the exercise was extremely positive. Over 40 articles appeared in local and daily newspapers in the Wellington Region. There were numerous radio interviews with the Manager, Emergency Management, and both Television networks covered the Rescue Day organised by the Emergency Management Officer at the conclusion of the Exercise.

9. **Rural Fire Awareness Information**

The Emergency Management Officer serves as Chair of the Regional Publicity Committee for Rural Fire. The summer of 2001-2002 was very wet and it was not necessary to have a fire ban. Effort was therefore put into the development of a brochure that is ready for distribution in the Wellington Region when the fire danger increases.

10. **Hazard Research Communication**

The Communications and Marketing Strategy outlines a process for communicating the results of research completed by the WRC. This involves press releases, distribution of the research results to interested and affected parties, and presentations by the researchers.

This process has been followed with our research on Non-Petroleum Hazardous Substances, Tsunami Management Options, and Meteorological Hazards and Climate Change.

11. **Presentations**

The Emergency Management Department is requested to give numerous talks to community groups about the hazards in the Wellington Region and how they can be prepared. This year presentations were made to school groups in association with territorial authorities, to early childhood teachers, to businesses and to community organisations.

Presentations have also been given at conferences for lifeline utilities, organisations with roles in disaster recovery, and organisations involved in the management of natural hazards.

12. **Joint Projects**

During this year we have had a number of joint marketing projects with territorial authorities. For example, a poster was produced about the Tsunami hazard on the Wairarapa Coast WRC and Masterton District Council contributed to the costs of development. This poster was personally delivered to the most at risk homes in Castlepoint and Riversdale. The feedback from the posters were very positive.

13. **Internal Marketing**

A pin board on level three outside the cafeteria has displayed all earthquakes felt in the Wellington Region. Feedback from staff was excellent and the record of felt earthquakes was often eagerly awaited.

Newspaper articles relating to hazards and emergency management were also posted on this board

A number of Coast to Coast articles detailed the activities of the Emergency Management Department.

14. **Communications**

The marketing and communications activities of the Emergency Management Department are ongoing.

15. Recommendation

That the Committee receives this report and its contents are noted.

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