



impact

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Flooding hits Westport

Photo by Sheree Cargill Photography

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Common acronyms

MCDEM Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management
CDEM Civil defence emergency management
NCMC National Crisis Management Centre
ECC Emergency Coordination Centre
EOC Emergency Operations Centre
EMO Emergency Management Officer

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EDITORIAL

Hon Nikki Kaye, Minister of Civil Defence

Foreword from the Minister

Hello everyone. This is an interesting and exciting time to be involved in civil defence emergency management. There's a range of work underway, which is all about enhancing the work you do to keep our communities safe and resilient.



I'd like to share with you some of my key priorities as Minister of Civil Defence over the coming three years.

Strengthening the statutory framework for recovery

To help you do the frontline work that's necessary to recover from an emergency, the right laws need to be in place.

MCDEM is currently reviewing the legislative framework for recovery. At this stage, the review's scope is to progress changes to the CDEM Act.

This is about providing authority and a stronger mandate in the Act for those directing, coordinating and managing recovery from small to moderate emergencies, to ensure this takes place in a timely, coordinated way.

Improving public education

The Get Ready, Get Thru campaign has played a big role in improving household preparedness in New Zealand. Since the campaign began, the number of people prepared at home has increased by 40%, and those fully prepared have more than doubled.

The preparedness of communities generally is still too low, however, so the campaign has been reviewed, and I hope to announce next steps regarding this soon.

Enhancing international engagement

New Zealand is well placed to support other countries in emergency management. We're highly regarded for our expertise, and we aim to be a good global citizen.

The focus of our international activity will be helping our Pacific Island neighbours strengthen their national capability.

MCDEM has signed a partnership agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which covers both disaster risk management and support for response to emergencies.

Review of civil defence emergency management strategic framework

Both the National Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan and Strategy are being reviewed by MCDEM.

A revised Plan is expected by the end of this year, with the Strategy review expected to take around two years.

Both reviews will enable us to make changes building on what has been learned from the Canterbury earthquakes and other emergencies, and help move us closer to our goal of developing more resilient communities.

The capability assessments currently underway into the 16 CDEM Groups will also feed into the Strategy review.

We have great people and expertise here in New Zealand, and I know you share my vision and commitment to developing and fine tuning our current capabilities, to enhance the resilience of our communities.

I'm proud of the work you do, and I value your dedication and achievements. ■

Cyclone Pam

As this newsletter was being finalised for print, Cyclone Pam was tracking down the east coast of the North Island. The response was being managed by several of the regional civil defence emergency management groups, and MCDEM activated the National Crisis Management Centre to help gather and share information. A state of local emergency was declared for the Chatham Islands due to Cyclone Pam's imminent arrival, as well as rural fires affecting the islands. More information about Cyclone Pam and the response will be provided in the next MCDEM e-Bulletin.

Taranaki targets whānau resilience with Get Ready, Get Thru campaign

Ben Ingram (Emergency Management Officer, Taranaki Regional Council)

In 2014, the Taranaki CDEM Group made a successful application to the Resilience Fund to do some work around Whānau Resilience.

Taranaki CDEM partners with Te Puni Kokiri, iStudios and the TSB Community Trust to conduct some research around the effectiveness of our Get Ready Get Thru messages in the Māori community.

The results of our focus groups steered our Whānau Resilience Project that aimed to promote our key messages in a slightly different tone and manner.

The finished product consists of three one minute advertisements complimented by a range of posters that promote our key preparedness messages.

We were lucky enough to get television personality Pio Terei as the face of the campaign, which brought a real sense of professionalism and relatability to the messaging.

The resources will be available for national use, and all CDEM groups around New Zealand will receive copies of the videos on DVD once completed. ■



Flooding hits Westport

Chris Raine (West Coast CDEM Group)

Heavy rainfall on the South Island's West Coast led to the flooding in the township of Westport and the activation of the Buller Civil Defence Emergency Operations Centre in early March.

Over 100mm of coastal rain fell in a four-hour period on March 6 causing substantive flooding in Westport and surrounding areas.

The local Emergency Operations Centre was activated based on emergency services' and council intelligence reports.

Schools were closed, businesses and homes were flooded, with some communities isolated.

Slips forced the closure of State Highway 6 in the Lower Buller Gorge for most of

the day, with one car and its occupants temporarily trapped between two slips. Kiwi Rail also had two goods trains temporarily trapped by flooding in the Buller Gorge.

The Fire Service was deployed to pump out flooded homes and lift furniture above flood water heights, while Civil Defence volunteers along with council staff assessed the areas of flooding and damage in the town and wider Buller District.

The West Coast CDEM Group partially

activated its Emergency Coordination Centre, monitoring the situation in Buller, liaising with media and the Ministry.

Fortunately the floodwaters began to recede in the afternoon and the Buller EOC deactivated with staff continuing to monitor the situation over the weekend. ■

Below: Flooding in Westport on 6 March (Photos by Sheree Cargill Photography)



West Coast CDEM Group completes transition

The West Coast Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Group has completed its transition arrangements from three separate council emergency management operational systems to one combined operation based at the West Coast Regional Council.

The combined operation is headed by a Regional Manager, Chris Raine, with three local authority emergency managers reporting to him via a seconded agreement.



Chris Raine

The three local authority emergency managers are Vern Morris (Westland District), Allan Wilson (Grey District), and Kerri-Anne Rakena (Buller District), who, along with Chris, make up Civil Defence West Coast (CDWC).

A new CDEM work plan has been produced along with the formation of new reporting committees to complement those already reporting to the Coordinating Executive Group (CEG). The committee structure includes the Readiness Response Committee, Welfare Coordination Group and Lifelines Group. A Reduction and Recovery committee will be formed later in 2015.

A number of projects are underway including an evacuation plan for the Westport township following flooding, rebranding and standardisation of operational systems, development of region-wide community response plans, recruitment of volunteers, and enhancement of public education. ■

Hawke's Bay civil defence website now easier to use

Helen Shea (Hawke's Bay Regional Council)

Hawke's Bay's civil defence website is now easier for local people to use before and during a civil defence emergency.

An upgrade to www.hbemergency.govt.nz puts all civil defence emergency information for Hawke's Bay in one place, whereas before every council has kept its own 'civil defence' pages for using during an emergency.

Hawke's Bay Civil Defence Emergency Management (HBCDEM) Group Controller, Ian Macdonald said the redesigned website acted as a portal which all Hawke's Bay councils now had access to use so that staff could keep up the flow of new information.

Individual council websites will take people to this one for emergency enquiries. This compliments the Hawke's Bay wide approach to social media during an emergency.

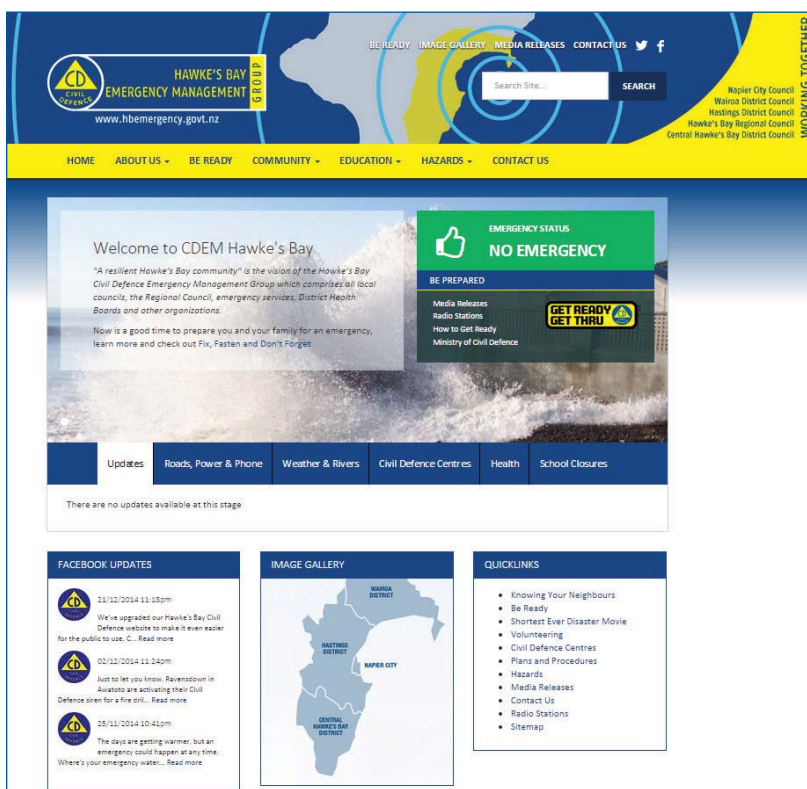
"All the councils have agreed to this system which is simpler for them and will make it much easier for their residents to get important information for their specific area and the wider region," Mr Macdonald said.

The site now highlights the status of any emergency in the region and includes sections for updates, road, power and phone status, weather and river conditions, which civil defence centres are open, health requirements and school closures.

Residents can also find out about the top 10 hazards for Hawke's Bay, as resilience to hazards relies on the community knowing about the risks they live with daily, so that they can be prepared.

The HBCDEM website also makes smart use of nationally agreed information on emergency preparation from the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management.

"Hawke's Bay people now get immediate, consistent and reliable information as all other parts of New Zealand about preparing and responding to an emergency," Mr Macdonald said. ■



Auckland CDEM helps swot Queensland fruit fly

Paul Clement (Manager Emergency Coordination Centre, Auckland Council)

On 16 February a single male Queensland fruit fly was found in a surveillance trap in Grey Lynn, Auckland. A controlled area was immediately established restricting the movement of fruit and vegetables out of the area.

Auckland Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) responded, providing dozens of council staff and volunteers to support the Ministry of Primary Industries' Field Operations Centre and on the ground support. CDEM staff worked closely with the Auckland Council biosecurity team to provide specialists to assist in eradicating the pest, with 500 traps placed in the controlled area in the first few days of the response.

Logistics support is ongoing, including rolling out an extensive programme of public awareness. This includes providing volunteers for public education campaigns targeting local businesses, supermarkets and events within the controlled area.

On Saturday 28 February, Auckland hosted

New Zealand vs Australia at Eden Park for the Cricket World Cup. The ground is included in the controlled area. The match was a great opportunity to educate about 40,000 members of the public on the Queensland Fruit Fly response. CDEM also provided volunteers to support MPI staff in creating awareness and making sure fruit was not taken out of the controlled zone.

"The event was a huge success with volunteers receiving great feedback from the public, who are keen to assist in the effort," said Angus McKay, Civil Defence Head of Emergency Management Operations.

As at 6 March, 14 fruit flies had been found in the controlled area and have been genetically identified as the same

population. The public education campaign will continue over the next few weeks with several events being targeted to reduce the risk of the pest spreading. ■

Below: Logan Matheson, Auckland Local Emergency Response Team member at Eden Park.



Natural Hazard Risk Communication Toolbox

Brodie Rafferty (Hazards Advisor, Auckland Council)

Auckland Council in conjunction with GNS Science have developed a Natural Hazard Risk Communications Toolbox. The purpose of this toolbox is to increase understanding of basic hazard and risk concepts by providing consistent content for communication materials used within council and externally to stakeholders, politicians and the community.

Staff from across the Council's teams work with a wide range of people on various aspects of natural hazard and/or risk management. The benefit of adopting common terminology and definitions provided by this toolbox can help to foster a better understanding of somewhat complex terminology when communicating natural hazard and risk information.

The toolbox contains written and visual materials to describe frequently used natural hazard risk management concepts. Some of the concepts include definitions for resilience, cumulative and cascading hazards, consequence, and hazard vs risk. For each concept the following information is provided; brief text explanations; more detailed explanations; visual representation (i.e. graphic images such as those pictured) and; Auckland case study (where possible).

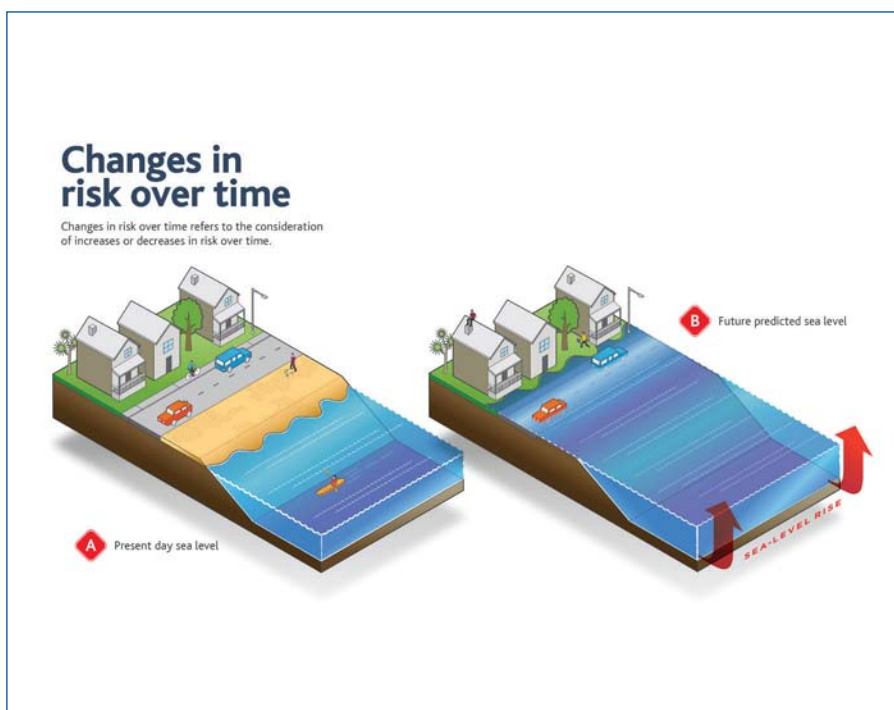
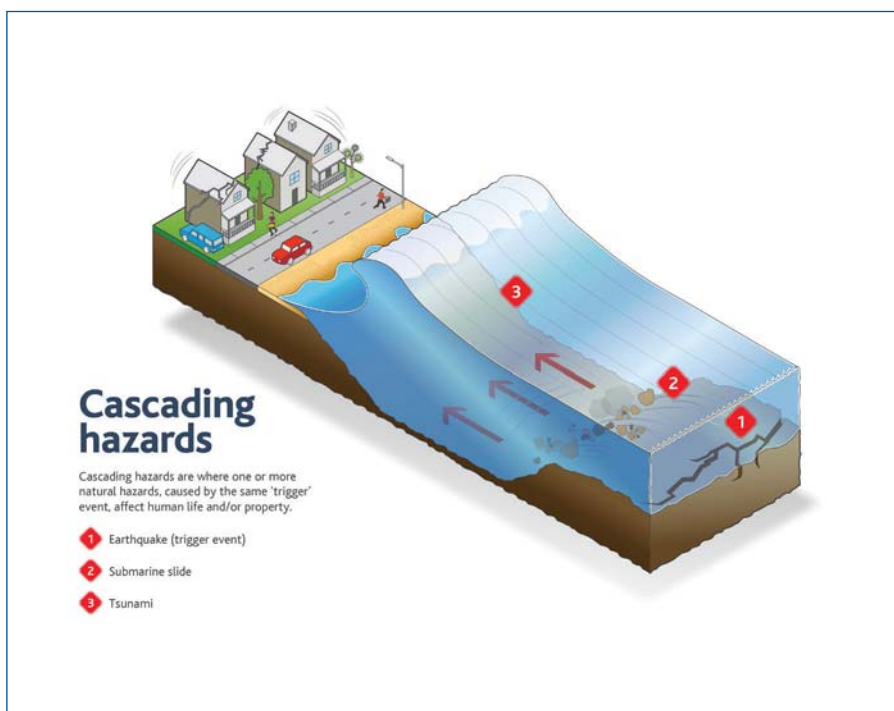
The toolbox was created due to staff identifying common issues when it comes to communicating natural hazard and risk information. Many of the terms used for natural hazard management are highly technical or abstract in nature, and supposing subject matter expertise, making the exchange of information difficult at times. Some terms are used interchangeably whether or not they have the same or a different meaning, or they are used in the wrong context, creating misunderstanding among different audiences.

With these issues in mind, the toolbox aims to provide staff with the appropriate means to communicate natural hazard information in all its forms. It provides one set of definitions which can be used to create a shared understanding within council, creating a consistent and integrated approach to communicating natural hazard risk management.

Auckland Council and MCDEM have been working closely together since the creation of the toolbox, as it has potential benefits for use by other councils and organisations within the CDEM and hazard management

sectors. The toolbox is available under the publication page listing on the MCDEM website, and is searchable under several key

subject headings so it can be readily found and viewed. ■



Minister presents civil defence awards

Civil Defence Minister Nikki Kaye recently presented awards to a number of people who have made significant contributions to civil defence emergency management in New Zealand.

Minister Kaye said the awards recognised people who had been on the ground and in the thick of the action, as emergencies unfolded around them.

“We also recognised people who have worked tirelessly and passionately to build and improve local civil defence systems and processes.

“Through their efforts, either as individuals

or as a team, they have all helped make our communities safer and more resilient.

“New Zealand is world-leading in the way it involves communities and local government in emergency management.

“The Ministry provides oversight and coordinates national support as needed, but local communities lead the way in identifying and reducing risks, and providing the front

line response to any emergency.

“The people recognised have been crucial in preventing loss of life and protecting livelihood, and I was proud to honour their efforts and achievements.”

2015 Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) silver awards were presented at a special ceremony in Parliament House on February 24 to the following recipients. ■



Liz Brooker

(award accepted by Liz's brother Richard Brooker)

This award is in recognition of Liz Brooker's important contribution when her community of Raetihi was affected by a serious drinking water contamination in October 2013. Prior to the emergency, Liz had not been involved in CDEM activities. With the support of the local Incident Management Team, Liz set up a highly effective and efficient social media communications system that attracted individuals in the community, many of whom would normally be difficult to contact. Liz's social media approach was an exemplary use of new technology and demonstrated an extraordinary response effort on her part. Within the first day a social media site had been established with some 316 followers, reflecting a significant impact considering there are only 342 households in Raetihi. It was calculated information from the site reached 35,520 people in the first week. The ability to answer questions, display photographs and videos and share information was important to the community. As a result of Liz's proactive positive approach and dedication to her community, Liz became a 'go to person' in the community for information. This award recognises that Liz went above and beyond during the water crisis for the sake of her community.



Phil Parker

Phil has been a passionate advocate and practitioner of CDEM for over 29 years at a local, regional and national level. He has played a prominent role in two statutory declarations in 2009, when Waihi Village was evacuated, and when over 700 travellers stranded on the Napier/Taupo Highway were rescued and provided for over a four day period. Phil was also the local CDEM contact for other events such as eruptions at Ruapehu and Tongariro and the Ruapehu lahar, leading to assistance in establishing the Eastern Ruapehu Lahar Alarm and Warning System (ERLAWS) on Mt Ruapehu. Phil is recognised by colleagues across CDEM Groups as a source of tremendous knowledge and experience. When it comes to community application of CDEM and supporting initiatives, his work is an enduring success. The level of community engagement and council support for CDEM in Taupo is the level to which all group members should aspire. In addition to his CDEM role Phil also formed NZ Response Team 6 - he has been Team Leader, qualified instructor and manager for the team since 1986. Without Phil's contribution the role and profile of CDEM in the Taupo District community would not be near the level it is now. He has made an outstanding contribution to his district over a sustained period and for that he can be justifiably proud.



Langley Cavers

This award is in recognition of the significant contribution that Langley has made in enhancing the Waikato CDEM Group. In 2009, a Ministry assessment of the Group highlighted significant gaps in its capability. Langley volunteered to take on the role of Coordinating Executive Group (CEG) Chair to address the issues raised. Using a systematic and personable approach, Langley reinvigorated the CEG membership and re-educated those members on their roles. His quiet but consistent leadership built an executive team which quickly adjusted to the new direction and expectations of their membership. Langley also demonstrated leadership through establishing a relationship with the regional council and this facilitated the resolution of long-term outstanding issues. He also gained the confidence of the Joint Committee and supported them to make decisions which would move the Group forward. Under Langley's guidance, the structures and results within the Waikato CDEM Group have gone from strength to strength. The Group now has a highly functioning Group Management Office which is contributing to national initiatives, strong local capability, excellent understanding and ownership of roles and responsibilities. Langley has achieved all of this whilst also undertaking his role as the Chief Executive of the Hauraki District Council and participating in other Waikato region collaborative entities.



Northland CDEM Group

This award is in recognition of the tireless effort of the many staff and volunteers from the Northland CDEM Group during a series of three storm events in July 2014. As well as community leaders and volunteers, the Group comprises emergency services, local authorities, the Welfare Advisory Group and Lifeline Utility Group members and agencies involved in recovery, including the Northland Rural Support Trust. On 8-9 July 2014, communities in Northland were hit with 180kph winds and up to 150mm of rain. Power outages affected some 30,000 consumers, and widespread telecommunications outages affected communities as well. Although most services were restored within 48 hours, some isolated areas were without power for over a week. A second storm event on 12-13 July saw further heavy rain and extensive flooding. Rainfall totals for four days reached 524mm in one area - 140 percent of average annual rainfall. Sadly this event resulted in one fatality; though in another part of Northland, emergency services successfully rescued three stranded travellers. The final storm in this sequence hit the region on 19 July and again resulted in widespread flooding and evacuations. CDEM Group staff and volunteers yet again came to the aid of stricken communities through well-coordinated and practised CDEM arrangements. The response to communities across these three events was of the highest standard.



Pictured from left to right are: Phil Parker, Richard Brooker (accepting on behalf of his sister, Liz Brooker), Colin Kitchen (Northland CDEM Group), Minister of Civil Defence Hon Nikki Kaye, Langley Cavers, Claire Nyberg (Northland CDEM Group), Shona Morgan (Northland CDEM Group), and Bill Hutchinson (Northland CDEM Group).

'Selwyn Gets Ready' used during fire response

Sue Jenkins (Community Response Coordinator/Emergency Management, Selwyn District Council)

On the afternoon of 26 January 2015 a fire started on the roadside near Flock Hill Station in the Selwyn District.

Later that evening the Department of Conservation advised Police that the fire was out of control and there was potential for it to threaten the village at Castle Hill.

At about 10.30pm, Police comms rang the Selwyn District Council Community Response Coordinator and requested assistance to contact the residents of Castle Hill Village and alert them of the danger and possible need for evacuation.

Castle Hill village are part of the 'Selwyn Gets Ready' community response network.

All their contact details and special needs, skills and resources are listed on the website www.selwyn.getsready.net

The community response team contact person was telephoned first and advised of the situation.

Within 10 minutes of the Police request being made, the entire village of Castle Hill had been sent an email and text message advising them of the danger and what to do should an evacuation be necessary.

Their local community response team were on alert and ready to assist with their local knowledge.



We also contacted the Darfield Community Response team and put them on stand-by to open their emergency centre and receive people from Castle Hill should evacuees have nowhere else to go.

Fortunately the fire was contained and there was no need to evacuate the Village, but the residents were very grateful to be informed early. They had time to pack necessary belongings and consider their pets' safety.

This shows the value of our community response system and the selwyn.getsready website. ■

Photos: The base of the Flock Hill Station fire response where aircraft refilled with water while fighting the fire.



Dob in a landslide for GeoNet!

Sara Page (Public Information Specialist: GeoNet Project, GNS Science)

Here at GeoNet we have earthquake recording pretty well covered in New Zealand, but it is a bit trickier for landslides as we have to rely on human reporting, and therefore miss many that occur.

We record landslide information to establish the hazard that landslides present to the safety of people and infrastructure, and to mitigate these hazards. If you see one and can email us the following, we would be very grateful:

1. **Date and time of event**
2. **Location** – ideally GPS coordinates, but a street address would suffice. In areas without addresses distance from a landmark or intersection of roads.
3. **Size** – Could one person could clear the landslide, or would heavy machinery be needed. Estimates of the landslide's width, length and height would also be useful.

4. **Type** – Was the landslide rocks falling from a cliff, along a road? Is it a flow of material rather than a fall? Were there damages or injuries?
5. **Photo** – these are very useful, especially showing the whole landslide and its context within the landscape
6. **Any other comments** – Possible cause (heavy rain, earthquake, excavation etc.)
7. **Your contact information**

GeoNet has a rapid response capability for landslides in New Zealand, the team investigate larger events that meet a certain criteria including, those that result in death

or serious injury, damage to infrastructure or personal property to a value of over \$1 million, large economic losses, threats to public health and those of significant research interest. We are also interested in smaller events, as cumulatively, hundreds of small landslides in a particular area can be just as damaging as one big event.

Please send in reports to:
landslides@gns.cri.nz ■

Photo: A large landslide in the Puketoi Range Foothills following the January 2014 Eketahuna earthquake.



Disaster Preparedness creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities

Matt King (Emergency Compost Toilets)

Emergency Compost Toilets (ECT) recently partnered with disability support agency IDEA Services with the objective of creating properly paid employment opportunities for a team of people who have intellectual disabilities.

Over six weeks, ECT set up a workshop in Lower Hutt and manufactured 50 toilets for sale to trial our processes, work out relative health and safety practices and see if it was work that people were keen and capable to do ongoing. The results were brilliant!

ECT is a social enterprise committed to promoting and developing composting toilets as the most appropriate emergency sanitation solution. ECT runs and facilitates workshops on making and managing a compost toilet for emergencies and freely gives out design plans.

The ECT toilet is a simple box and bucket toilet system that works in the separation of liquids and solids enabling households and businesses to be prepared and independent in the event of a disaster.

The ECT concept was developed during the Christchurch earthquakes as a community resilience initiative by members of the Relieve - compost toilets for community resilience. Over several months, Relieve members held workshops, coordinated

materials and provided support to Christchurch communities to make and manage their own emergency compost toilet. Since this time the concept has been picked up by organisations and local authorities in Vancouver, Canada and Portland, Oregon.

We set up the workshop in Lower Hutt with a table sander and painting benches. The six members on the team worked through tasks like sanding, painting the plywood, fixing the toilet seats and bagging the wood shavings. We use industry standards as a benchmark for health and safety.

“The whole process went amazingly well,” said Matt King from ECT.

“The team were up to speed within a couple of days and worked really well to make 50 toilets.”

Jane Siene from IDEA Services highlighted a number of positive non-financial benefits for the team members including:

- People having choice in all elements of the ‘have a go’ and work/teaching, and supporting people to make their own decisions i.e. being their own boss – as opposed to people feeling like staff are automatically ‘the boss’.
- Learning/embedding good work habits, work ethics – getting to work on time, dressing appropriately for job being done, taking time to have a good breakfast, bringing enough food to last the day, and self-management.

Comments from the team members: Anthony, Simon, Maria, Rex, Dan and Trevor included: “loving the work”, “loving working”, “proud of being a



working person”, “just like regular people”, “makes me get out of bed and get going in the morning”, “I didn’t think I’d be able to do it but I can!”, “I’m proud that I pushed through when I was feeling tired and did a good days work”, “doing this work is making me eat healthier”, “I’m really tired from working and I love it!”.

ECT is currently working to keep this process going to supply households, businesses and organisations with ECT units. ■

Above: Trevor inspects a finished section.

Left: Maria paints a section of plywood.



ShakeOut launch plans underway

Planning is now well underway for the launch of New Zealand ShakeOut 2015. The campaign will be launched by the Minister of Civil Defence, Hon Nikki Kaye at the end of April. Once launched, people will be able to sign up to take part for the drill which takes place at 0915 on 15 October 2015.

New Zealand ShakeOut is a national earthquake preparedness campaign, led by the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management. It is supported by civil defence emergency management groups across the country, as well as Government departments, emergency and lifeline services, and many other organisations.

The Planning Group met again in December and February to finalise key messages, discuss promotional opportunities and decide the plan for the launch. The Planning Group is meeting again on 20 March and the Steering and Governance Groups meet on 23 March.

The Planning Group is working on a guide for CDEM Groups, due out at the end of March and Bridget Cheesman, New Zealand ShakeOut Coordinator, met with the National Public Education Reference Group (NPERG) on 6 March to determine what their regions need to help promote New Zealand ShakeOut 2015.

“The success of the 2012 ShakeOut campaign was largely due to the agencies, groups and departments who got on board early on, using their channels and networks, engaging with stakeholders and generating a sense of excitement,” said Bridget. “We’re relying on them to get behind it again and we want to



make promoting the drill as easy as possible for them.”

The Planning Group is also working on providing more information this year on what to do during the drill, including specific information for people with disabilities, and key steps to take after the drill, such as knowing when it’s safe to evacuate, how to practise for tsunamis and making contact with family and colleagues.

In 2012, 1.3 million people took part in New Zealand ShakeOut. This year the aim is for 1.5 million people to take part.

“We’ll start by contacting past participants, schools and large organisations and later in the year we’ll run a media campaign to get new people involved.”

The 2015 campaign will involve social media, radio, print and, closer to the day of the drill, television advertising.

“We want to develop a fun, exciting campaign that people feel compelled to sign up to,” said Bridget. “Our aim is for all



New Zealanders to know what to do before, during and after an earthquake.”

We need you

From 28 April you will be able to sign up for New Zealand ShakeOut 2015 on the website www.shakeout.govt.nz. In the meantime, we need you to start spreading the word and mobilising your organisation. If you haven’t already, start talking about how your organisation might approach this earthquake preparedness campaign and how you can involve your staff, customers, clients and communities to promote the campaign.

Establish a planning team – check out who is keen to be involved in your agency and get them on board (shoulder tap people from your HR and Communications teams and anyone involved in workplace safety).

If you have any great ideas for how to get more people involved in ShakeOut, we’d love to hear from you. Contact Bridget Cheesman at shakeout@dpmc.govt.nz. ■



ShakeOut Planning Group members pictured above (left to right): Naomi Luckett (CDEM Groups’ Representative), Michele Poole (Queenstown Lakes District Council), Victoria Walker (Auckland Council), Drew Broadley (Hawke’s Bay Regional Council), Drew Mehrtens (Thames-Coromandel District Council), Bridget Cheesman (MCDEM), and Anita Walker (MCDEM).

New Zealand secures United Nations classification of search and rescue team

New Zealand has gained a United Nations classification of its national urban search and rescue team following a 36-hour exercise that ended in Palmerston North on March 10.

In its decision, a panel of eight UN classifiers said the team had demonstrated strong competency across all aspects of urban search and rescue – from logistical and management expertise through to reconnaissance, use of search dogs, technical rescue skills and medical treatment of victims.

Classifiers graded the team in 136 categories, giving a green – the highest rating – in all but seven areas. The second category, yellow, signifies some room for improvement. A single red disqualifies contenders.

“We were extremely pleased with their performance,” said the UN team’s leader, Arjan Stam, of Netherlands. “In fact, if there had been a gold rating, they would have received some of them instead.”

Paul Baxter, Chief Executive & National Commander of the New Zealand Fire Service, which led the exercise, said the UN decision was a vindication of many years of hard work to raise the country’s USAR capability to world-class standards.

“The Christchurch earthquakes showed that our USAR teams were up there with the best when it came to hands-on search and rescue. Where we needed to make improvements was in logistics and

management – and today’s decision proves that we have made those gains.”

New Zealand now becomes the 41st USAR team in the world to have either a medium or heavy-capacity classification.

As a heavy-capacity team, it meets the requirement to carry out incident management, search, rescue, medical and logistics activities at two disaster sites simultaneously for up to 10 days. It also satisfies the requirement to be able to identify hazardous substances, to have a dog search capability and a technical rescue capability, and to be self-sufficient for all power, water, supplies and equipment needs.

The Palmerston North exercise simulated a deployment to Fiji after its capital Suva had been hit by a severe earthquake. The 71-member team put through its paces at the disused Longburn freezing works was drawn from more than 200 search and rescue personnel at bases in Auckland, Palmerston North and Christchurch. Team members also carried out a rooftop rope rescue from a central city high-rise and led dog searches at a contractor’s yard. The multi-agency team included firefighters, paramedics, engineers, dog handlers and a doctor.

Mr Baxter said the classification was important because it confirmed New

Zealand met international standards of best practice. It also provided an assurance to neighbouring countries seeking its help after a crisis that it had the necessary expertise to help, rather than hamper, local operations.

“We need to pull our weight on the international stage, and classification is a prerequisite for providing any assistance.”

Mr Baxter said the UN was keen to increase the number of classified teams in the Asia-Pacific region, which included the earthquake-prone Pacific Rim and which until today had only six classified USAR teams.

As a member of the UN’s International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG), New Zealand would now increase its commitment to training and mentoring work with other countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

INSARAG promotes enhanced standards and co-operation among its 80 member countries, 33 of which have classified teams.

In seeking classification, the Fire Service worked in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, MCDem, New Zealand Defence Force, New Zealand Customs Service, Ministry for Primary Industries, St John, Air Chathams Airline and the Emergency Management Office of Horizons Regional Council. ■

CDEM Controllers Development Programme – 2015 dates

The dates for all of the Cohorts for the CDEM Controllers Development Programme this year have been confirmed, and are:

Cohort 15/1

Applications are closed
Start online component: 7 April 2015
Residential phase: 25 May 2015 - 29 May 2015 (Wellington)

Cohort 15/2

Applications open: 7 April 2015
Applications close: 1 May 2015
Start online component: 1 June 2015
Residential phase: 26 July 2015 - 31 July 2015 (Auckland)

Cohort 15/3

Application open: 3 August 2015
Applications close: 28 August 2015
Start online component: 28 September 2015
Residential phase: 15 November 2015 - 20 November 2015 (Christchurch)

Enquires for attendance on the Programme should be directed to respective CDEM Group Managers in the first instance.

Busy start to the year for Auckland Rural Fire

Sandy Dubey (Auckland Rural Fire Authority)

Auckland Rural Fire had a busy start to the fire season at the end of last year with a Boxing Day vegetation fire at Cornwallis.

Like any wildfire, they don't respect boundaries and we lost 8.5 hectares of our regional parkland. Although there was a row of houses on the ridge above the fire there was no damage to property. The conditions were very much in our favour and a targeted aerial response on the vegetation and the ground crews on structure protection delivered a solid outcome.

As well as responding to our patch, Auckland Rural Fire has been supporting incidents around the country:

January 2015 – Lance Dixon, Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer on Great Barrier Island and his team were deployed to Flock Hill fire at Arthur's Pass, Lance and the team were used to the steep stuff but this fire sure reinforced topography and elevation and some of the considerations when on mop up.

February 2015 – Scott Marchant, Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer has been deployed to the Onamalutu Fire in Kaikoura, again, great being able to send the support down, Scott deployed as part of the National Incident Management Team.

On February 28, Prime Minister John Key and Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott attended a function to meet with Auckland rural firefighters who had supported deployments to assist Australian fire fighters at the time of the need during wildfires in Australia.



Prime Minister John Key, Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott, and Auckland Rural Fire team

Tony Abbott, a fire fighter himself acknowledged the fantastic support the volunteer networks bring to firefighting.

Prime Minister John Key also spoke very highly about the volunteer networks in New Zealand and their support to Emergency Management and many other volunteer organisations.

At the conclusion of the speeches, Tony Abbott inspected the new fire appliance that Auckland Rural Fire had built for commissioning on Great Barrier Island. What a fantastic opportunity to showcase Rural Fire and volunteering in New Zealand.

March 2015 – Rory Renwick and Thomas Harre Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officers

have been deployed to the Poutu Fire, 45km South West of Dargaville Forest on Fire. Another complex fire with real potential, Rory deployed as part of a National Incident Management Team and the following week Thomas spent the week supporting the Regional Incident Management Team, its great to see the strong emphasis being put on setting the incident management up early.

It has been a busy start to the year but hopefully it will settle down, I would have to say it most people have been very responsible. Tropical Cyclone Pam has just gone down the east coast of Auckland and we were left relatively unscathed, the rain was definitely welcome fallout of Pam passing by. Not quite a season breaker, but it all helps. ■

Long service award

Not long after receiving a Ministerial CDEM Award (see p8-9), Taupo Emergency Manager Phil Parker was presented with a Long Service Award. The CDEM Award for Long Service is presented for at least 10 years CDEM service at the local or national level. Phil vacates his role at Taupo to pursue other opportunities in early April, after being a passionate advocate and practitioner of Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) for over 29 years at a local, regional and national level. Director CDEM, Sarah Stuart-Black, is pictured below presenting Phil with his Long Service Award at the Waikato Joint Committee meeting on March 2.



Youth Training Solutions

The pilot phase of a project managed by United Fire Brigades Association (UFBA) and EMQUAL to deliver emergency management training to senior secondary students is over. It resulted in 70 students from 10 schools participating in five programmes. Participants achieved 13–21 credits at levels 1–3 on the National Qualifications Framework.

The project report (available on request) is a summary of evidence and research which define best practice and the value of emergency response and risk awareness training for young people.

Emergency management training is uniquely placed to meet a wide range of policy outcomes across government agencies, including education, accident prevention, mental health, volunteer workforce sustainability, safer workplaces, community resilience and capability building.

The UFBA is currently working with the Ministry of Youth Development to deliver four more programmes through the YES (Youth in Emergency Services) project. These programmes will take place in Paekakariki, Heretaunga, Tawa and central Wellington. The YES project is helping young people make a positive contribution to their communities through local emergency services.

The UFBA is also working with the Ministry of Education to scope a vocational pathway in emergency management which will include NCEA level 2 assessment activities by using risk awareness and emergency response skills and services as the context for curriculum-based learning.

The UFBA is keen to share information and ideas about engaging young people in risk awareness and emergency response skills.

For more information or idea/resource-sharing suggestions, contact:

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