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TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY  
EMERGENCY PLANNING UNIT

*Committee Report*

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Item No. 4

**Meeting: CIVIL CONTINGENCIES COMMITTEE - 31 JANUARY 2011**  
**Subject: UPDATE OF NORTHUMBRIA COMMUNITY RISK REGISTER**

***Report of the Chief Emergency Planning Officer***

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the update of the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Community Risk Register (CRR).
- 1.2 The CRR is an important document produced following extensive work by partners within the LRF area. It provides a basis for local responders to consider which emergency plans are required, and whether any existing plans should be modified in the light of continuing risk assessment. It is also used to determine priorities for the LRF annual training and exercising calendar.

**2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 According to 'Emergency Preparedness' - the Guidance to the Civil Contingencies Act (CAA) 2004, risk assessment is the first step in the emergency planning and business continuity planning processes. It ensures that Category 1 and 2 responders make plans that are sound, and proportionate to risks.
- 2.2 As part of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) process, Category 1 and 2 responders co-operate with each other in maintaining the CRR. The Register provides an agreed position on the risks affecting a local area and on the planning and resourcing priorities required to prepare for those risks.
- 2.3 Its purpose is to enable Responders to:
  - be fully informed of the risks of emergency in its area;
  - benefit from the range of views on risk of its partners on the LRF;
  - identify collectively the main local emergency plans and resources which are needed;
  - decide which of the plans and capabilities should properly fall to it; and
  - know which of its partners in the LRF acknowledges responsibility for developing plans and capabilities against the various risks.
- 2.4 The Guidance advocates a six-step process for risk assessment that reflects widely accepted good practice. It involves a cycle of identifying

potential hazards within the local context, assessing the risks, and considering how those risks should be managed.

### **3. NORTHUMBRIA LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM RISK ASSESSMENT WORKING GROUP (RAWG)**

3.1 The RAWG is chaired by the Head of Resilience for Northumberland County Council, with an officer from Tyne & Wear Emergency Planning Unit representing the 5 x Tyne and Wear Local Authorities and providing support to the Chair.

3.2 Other RAWG members include representatives of; the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Northumbria Police, Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service (also representing Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service), North East Ambulance Service Trust, the Health Protection Agency, the Environment Agency and the Health and Safety Executive. Meetings are also attended by representatives of Northumbrian Water, Transco, CE Electric and the Government Regional Resilience Team.

3.3 The RAWG tasks include;

- To facilitate co-operation on risk assessment between all relevant Category 1 and 2 Responders, other local bodies or regional and national organisations.
- To identify and recommend the adoption of sound methodology for risk assessment using best available guidance.
- To facilitate the creation and maintenance of a Community Risk Register for the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum area, and make it available to the public.

### **4. ASSESSMENT OF RISK**

4.1 There is a duty placed on Category 1 and 2 responders to assess the risk of an emergency within, or affecting, a geographical area for which each responder is responsible. The term 'Emergency', as defined in the Act, is an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the United Kingdom, an event or situation which threatens serious damage to the environment of a place in the United Kingdom, or war, or terrorism, which threatens serious damage to the security of the United Kingdom.

4.2 It must also meet either of the following criteria:

- The hazard is of a sufficient scale and nature that it is likely to seriously obstruct a Category 1 or 2 responder in the performance of its functions.
- The hazard requires the Category 1 or 2 responder to undertake a special mobilisation.

### **5. COMPILATION OF THE COMMUNITY RISK REGISTER**

- 5.1 Each year the Government produces a 'Local Risk Assessment Guidance' for LRF RAWGs. It is intended to support RAWGs in developing their local risk assessments by providing central guidance on the likelihood of some potential disruptive challenges, and promote consistency in approach across the country.
- 5.2 In addition, the Government also publishes an unclassified National Risk Register (NRR) that sets out its assessment of the likelihood and potential impact of a range of different risks that might affect the UK.
- 5.3 The Northumbria RAWG met regularly during 2010 to review the CRR, identify appropriate risks within the area, and undertake assessments of those risks. This allowed comparisons to be made, and facilitated the procedure of risks being prioritised. The assessments and guidance contained within the LRAG and NRR were considered when making these assessments.
- 5.4 A draft CRR was circulated to the Northumbria LRF in December. The CRR Version 6 was presented to the Business Management Group of the LRF for ratification on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2011 to be endorsed by Executive Board at its meeting in March.

## **6. UTILISATION OF THE REGISTER**

- 6.1 Risks identified in the CRR are prioritised into four categories;
  - Very High
  - High
  - Medium
  - Low
- 6.2 This allows organisations to develop control measures, and plans and response arrangements for the highest risks.
- 6.3 The Very High risks in the Northumbria Register are
  - Industrial Accident – involving large toxic release e.g. of Chlorine
  - Flooding – coastal / tidal, fluvial (river), and
  - Influenza – pandemic and epidemic
- 6.4 These all have specific emergency response plans prepared for them; on-site and off-site plans for the industrial accident site (under the Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 1999), The LRF Multi Agency Flood Plan, and an LRF Influenza Plan.
- 6.5 There are a range of other risks in the High, Medium and Low categories. While some of the have specific response arrangements, incidents involving others would normally be dealt with using generic emergency arrangements including the appropriate Council Major Incident / Emergency Response Plan.
- 6.6 The prioritisation of the CRR also allows training and exercising to be targeted at those risks which figure highest. The Register is therefore a

useful tool for the LRF Training and Exercising Group when determining priorities for developing the annual LRF training and exercising programme.

## **7 PUBLICATION OF THE COMMUNITY RISK REGISTER**

- 7.1 The Civil Contingencies Act requires that the Register be published. The latest version (V6) of the CRR is available on the LRF web-site; <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=8179>
- 7.2 Having the CRR hosted on a central web-site, with links from the web-sites of partner organisations, is an effective method of meeting the public information requirements of the Act.

## **8 CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 The update of the Northumbria LRF CRR, developed by the RAWG, has been duly published. It provides the basis to determine priorities for the LRF annual training and exercising calendar for 2011.

## **9 RECOMMENDATION**

- 9.1 Members are asked to note the publication of Version 6 of the Northumbria LRF Community Risk Register.

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### **Background Papers**

The under-mentioned Background Papers relate to the subject matter of the above report and are held in the EPU office:-

- Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- “Emergency Preparedness’ Guidance on Part 1of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- The National Risk Register 2010
- The Local Risk Assessment Guidance 2010 (Restricted)
- Northumbria Local Resilience Forum Community Risk Register Version 6