



**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
EMERGENCY PLANNING UNIT**

Committee Report

Meeting : CIVIL CONTINGENCIES COMMITTEE : 15 March 2010

**Subject : Local Government Association - Annual Emergency Planning
Conference and Exhibition - 11-12 January 2010**

Report of the Chief Emergency Planning Officer

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This year's Local Government Association's (LGA) Annual Emergency Planning Conference and Exhibition was held at the Holiday Inn at Stratford Upon Avon on 11-12 January 2010. The Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority was represented by a Resilience Manager from the Tyne and Wear Emergency Planning Unit.
- 1.2 The conference focused on key issues in the field of Emergency Planning, and consisted of a series of presentations and workshops.
- 1.3 Running alongside the conference was an exhibition with specialist companies displaying their equipment and services appropriate to the field of emergency planning.

2 KEY PRESENTATIONS

- 2.1 Delegates heard from a wide range of speakers covering key issues:
 - Risk and Resilience - Laura Gibb- Cabinet Office
 - Pandemic Response and Recovery –Helen Shirley-Quirke- Dept of Health
 - Winter Highways Maintenance- Matthew Lugg- Eng. Committee, County Surveyors Society
 - Flood and Water Management Bill- David Lees- DEFRA
 - Reservoir Flood Plans- Ian Hope- Env. Agency
 - National Resilience Extranet-John Harrison- Cabinet Office
 - Community Resilience- Moya Ward-Heath- Red Cross

3 KEY MESSAGES

- 3.1 **Risk and Resilience - Laura Gibb-** (Assistant Director Community Resilience and Recovery-Cabinet Office) gave an overview of the main issues facing Emergency Planning in the UK under the 6 C's:

- **Capability:**

- Implementing the Pitt recommendations
- Planning for Recovery
- Business Continuity
- Resilient mechanisms for information sharing
- CBRN 'Model Response' Roll out
- National Emergency Plan for Fuel
- Olympics 2012
- Civil Contingencies Enhancement Programme
- Reducing vulnerability of critical infrastructure

- **Critical Infrastructure Resilience**

- Reduction of disruption caused by natural hazards to critical infrastructure and essential services
- Identify vulnerability and risk of assets to flooding
- Building resilience into critical infrastructure assets from flooding
- Business Continuity planning for infrastructure operators

- **Consistency**

- Consistency is required at all levels and for all occasions
- Provision of expectation sets from self assessment, peer review and inspection by regulators
- Supporting responders and developing capabilities for continuous improvement
- Self assessment and Peer review- development of performance and identification of gaps in performance and action plans
- Performance Monitoring- dealing with non compliance

- **Community Resilience**

- Effective response and recovery through communities acting in support of the 'blue light' services
- Activity to be targeted on risks people perceive as being most likely to affect them
- Consideration to be given how community resilience can be supported and extended
- Community resilience to use existing citizen engagement initiatives

- **Corporate Resilience - Businesses**

- Being ready to keep operating in an emergency
- Supporting the local community in an emergency

- Supporting staff to be better prepared
- **Catastrophe**
 - Continue to learn from lessons
 - High impact events such as:
 - Pandemic Flu
 - Wide area flooding
 - Reservoir inundation
 - Non conventional terrorism
 - New capabilities:
 - Regional level planning
 - Crisis co ordination across boundaries

3.2 **Pandemic Response and Recovery - Helen Shirley-Quirke** (Dept of Health) gave an overview on the UK's response to Swine Flu:

- How the UK was prepared- e.g. (National and local plans, Stockpiles and Flu Service, Public engagement, Guidance)
- Managing the outbreak- responding to swine flu by managing outbreaks and making treatment available
- NHS response:
 - Approx 4 million vaccinations given to priority groups
 - 1.1 million courses of antivirals dispensed through the NPFS and primary care
 - Robust command and control arrangements including mutual aid in place
- Local Authority response:
 - Review and revision of plans
 - Business Continuity plans implemented
 - Community engagement increased
 - Reporting and communications
- Lessons Learnt:
 - Take action in advance where possible
 - Communicate, share information and understanding
 - Base plans on best available resources to meet a range of needs
 - Work within a framework adapted to local circumstances
 - Exercise and review

3.3 Winter Highways Maintenance- Matthew Lugg (Eng. Committee, County Surveyors Society) gave an overview into the severe winter weather of 2008/ 09, and a brief insight of the weather conditions of winter 2009/10.

- Winter 2008/09 Key issues:
 - Sustained cold weather October to February
 - Public transport, schools, health services affected
 - High profile media coverage
 - Some authorities managed well while some ran low on salt
 - Mutual aid arrangements were activated
 - Emergency purchases of salt etc
 - Service levels reduced
 - Salt Cell established
 - Salt stock information through Regional Resilience Teams
- UK Roads Liaison Group (UKRLG) Review Recommendations, a package of 19 recommendations covering four themes
 - Winter Service Resilience
 - Preparation for and operation of Winter Service
 - Communications
 - Procurement
- LGA Report 'weathering the storm' was published end of October 2009, and was consistent with many of the recommendations of the UKRLG report.
- Winter 2009/10 Key issues:
 - Worse than 2008/09, and affecting all the UK
 - Most authorities purchased more salt than the previous year, and had adopted many of the recommendations of the UKRLG report.
- To Conclude:
 - Need to improve aspects of winter service, and a good opportunity to build on the experience of the previous year
 - Need for urgency to fully adopt the 19 recommendations of the UKRLG review.

3.4 Flood and Water Management Bill- David Lees (DEFRA) gave an overview of the Flood and Water Management Bill which addresses a wide range of issues including:

- Roles and responsibilities for flood and coastal erosion
- Reservoir Safety

- Sustainable drainage
- Water industry administration
- Hosepipe bans
- Large infrastructure projects
- Surface water drainage charging schemes

3.5 **Reservoir Flood Plans- Ian Hope** (Environment Agency) explained the importance of Reservoir Flood Plans, and the three components of these plans.

- On site Plans - Actions to be taken by the owner on site to avert or mitigate the effects of a dam failure
- Inundation Mapping – Release of outline inundation maps December 2009, Detailed inundation maps released January 2010
- Offsite Plans- For use by emergency services in the event of an actual or potential release of water. They are created by LRF's with appropriate exercising to follow.
- Guidance prepared by the Cabinet Office, with funding available
- Reservoirs ranked by risk, and off site plans to interface with on-site plans

3.6 **National Resilience Extranet-John Harrison** (Cabinet Office) gave an overview of the development of the National Resilience Extranet. This is being funded by the Cabinet Office, and its applications include:

- Storage and management of RESTRICTED information
- Provides a 'one view for all' information picture
- Enhancement of communication and multi agency interoperability
- Web based fully resilient and managed service.

Schedule of Implementation:

- Phased roll-out to a controlled group (Pilot) by end of January 2010 (Approx 250 users)
- February 2010, more organisations to be included (Approx 500-750 users)
- March 2010 approx 1250- 1500 users and end of the pilot – review of project

It should be noted that the first phase of the pilot has now been extended to March 2010, following which additional users will be accepted

3.7 **Community Resilience- Moya Heath-Wood** (Red Cross) summarised the role of the voluntary sector in supporting Category 1 and 2

responders, and the professional and skilled resource available from this sector.

She also presented the project 'Informed, Prepared, Together', which aims to build resilience in the communities.

The project aims to:

- Explore how we can use all resources from citizen through to the voluntary and statutory sector to improve individual, community and national resilience in civil protection
- Provide advice to those affected by an emergency or disaster
- Target audiences included; Citizens, volunteers, community groups, public authorities and government

Key messages for public authorities should:

- Recognise value of information / communication
- Talk to communities about local threats
- Target information to the audience
- Recognise contribution of citizens and volunteers
- Recognise value of working with communities
- Provide opportunities for training and exercising

Key messages for citizens:

- Understanding and awareness of local threats
- Appreciating the benefits of preparing in advance
- Recognising emergency services may be overstretched

4 CONCLUSION

The Conference was extremely useful update of contemporary issues in the field of Emergency Planning that will usefully inform local planning and response. It also provided the opportunity to network with representatives of other local authorities and agencies.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to note this report.

Background Papers

Conference papers available from Tyne and Wear Emergency Planning Unit