



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

Committee Report

Meeting: CIVIL CONTINGENCIES COMMITTEE: 1st DECEMBER 2008

Subject: CORE CITIES STUDY 2008

Report of the Chief Emergency Planning Officer

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise members of the fifth annual Core Cities Emergency Planning Group Study that was held at the Emergency Planning College, Easingwold, on 29/30 September – 1 October 2008.

Entitled 'Resilience – A New Impetus', the study provided the opportunity for members to highlight and discuss the developing resilience capability within the Core Cities and provided the opportunity to deliver useful feedback to further enhance national resilience policy.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Core Cities is a network of England's major regional cities, that form the economic and urban cores of wider surrounding territories. The Cities work in partnership to enable each city to enhance their economic performance and make real advances within a highly competitive international market, increasing the comparative standing and – in different ways – securing positive identities as places to live, work, visit and do business. The Core Cities for 10 years continue to develop long term partnerships with Government, national and regional agencies and other key stakeholders.
- 2.2 The Mission Statement is "*To work in partnership with Government and other stakeholders to promote and strengthen Core Cities as drivers of regional and national competitiveness and prosperity with the aim of creating internationally competitive regions*".
- 2.3 As the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 sharpened emergency preparedness across the country and resilience becomes a recognised key consideration in achieving Core Cities objectives, the Core Cities Emergency Planning Group has matured and added value to this national partnership. Clearly developing professional and lasting linkages with Regional Government Offices and the Civil Contingencies Secretariat, it provides an evermore useful forum for policy makers and multi-agency operators from our urban environments. This was the fifth Conference to be held at the Emergency Planning College and it continues to set an agenda that tackles the issues

at the forefront of both national and regional policy operators, who are meeting the challenges to deliver these strategies at the coal face.

- 2.4 Newcastle City Council has been a member of the Core Cities since it's inception in 1998 and provided the Chair to the Group until 2006.

3 PARTICIPATION

- 3.1 The 2008 Study brought together over eighty key officers from various professional backgrounds in the Core Cities. These included representatives from Local Authorities, the Police, Fire and Rescue Services, Ambulance Services, British Transport Police, Health Protection Agency, Environment Agency, Primary Care Trusts and Regional Resilience Teams.
- 3.2 This broad range of localised roles and responsibilities was enhanced by a panel of expert facilitators and speakers who fully engaged in the discussion of issues from a national perspective. The programme included contributions from a number of departments within the Cabinet Office and the Home Office CBRN Team.
- 3.3 Newcastle City Council Resilience Officers were supported at the event by representatives from Gateshead Council, Northumbria Police, Government Office North East and the Tyne and Wear Emergency Planning Unit.

4 PROGRAMME

- 4.1 The Study followed the format of:
- a. Subject Matter presentation
 - b. Four simultaneous Workshops to discuss questions presented
 - c. Workshop feedback to delegates.
- 4.2 **Day 1** subjects included:
- i. The Civil Contingencies Act Enhancement Programme
 - ii. Improving Local Resilience Forums
 - Workshop A Improving Local Resilience Forums – Delegates contributed comments for enhancement of CCA by suggesting improvements to how LRFs are managed.
 - iii. Reviewing the Category 1/Category 2 split
 - Workshop B Delegates contributed to the enhancement of the CCA by suggesting improvements to engagement of Category 2 responders and possible changes to categorisation.

4.3 **Day 2** subjects included:

i. Managing the Knowledge from CBRN Plans

Workshop C First half of workshop – Delegates discussed how the impact of the proposed changes in CBRN exercising will affect the Core Cities and identify solutions to overcome any potential difficulties.

Second half of workshop – Delegates discussed the co-ordination of training and exercising in relation to the Site Specific CBRN Plans to capture good practice and identify where gaps exist.

ii. National Occupational Standards (NOS)

Workshop D Effect of NOS on Practitioners and Teams – Delegates reflected on how the expectations of NOS can be fulfilled.

iii. The Civil Contingencies Act – Implementation and Performance Management

Workshop E Clarity: What is expected? – Workshop groups discussed the different duties of the CCA and provided suggestions as to how the guidance could be made clearer and more useful to responders.

Workshop F Intervention and Enforcement – Delegates looked at how Local Responders should be audited against the expectations set by the Act and what intervention measures the Government should take for those falling short of the expectations.

4.4 **Day 3** subjects included:

i. A Multi-agency Team to undertake Multi-agency Planning – The Birmingham model

Workshop G Is there a requirement for Multi-agency Resilience Teams? – Delegates discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the Birmingham approach and was there a requirement or not for the Core Cities to have multi-agency teams.

ii. Resilience Extranet

Workshop H Resilience Extranet at Government Level – Delegates discussed the proposed content, limitations, different level of access and functionality of the proposed national extranet facility.

5 STUDY TOPICS – IMPLICATIONS FOR TYNE AND WEAR RESILIENCE PARTNERS

- 5.1 The Core Cities Study provided a forum to highlight important current resilience issues and provided a valid consultation process for influencing future National Resilience topics.
- 5.2 Changes and updates to the Civil Contingencies Act and associated Guidance documents impact directly on all Category 1 Responders. Local Resilience Forums continue to develop as appropriate and act as effective drivers within the resilience remit, but commitment to further improvements are necessary and important. The Study provided feedback on such issues and that feedback will influence future resilience work at National, Regional and Local levels.
- 5.3 National Occupational Standards (NOS) will become an important factor in assessing the competency of responding officers and it is important the local authorities are part of the consultation process and the introduction of such standards.
- 5.4 The development of the Resilience Extranet (a secure National Resilience internet site) and it's availability to Local Authorities will allow not only for greater security of information but also the availability of 'restricted' information currently unavailable in electronic format to non-Government and Police agencies. The Study provided an opportunity for local authorities to influence what should be made available via the Extranet service.

6 2008 STUDY REPORT

- 6.1 The Fifth Annual Core Cities Emergency Planning Group Study Report had not been published prior to this committee report. Members will be informed of the implications and developments resulting from that report at a future date.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The Fifth Annual Core Cities Emergency Planning Group Study addressed a number of current issues within the resilience remit. The Study continues to provide an excellent and productive opportunity to network with relevant agencies and organisations with particular emphasis on improving relationships between the member Core Cities.

The information gathered will be used to inform the further development of resilience plans and procedures not just in Newcastle but across the Tyne and Wear, the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum area and the North East Region.
- 7.2 It is important to the Tyne and Wear area and beyond that Newcastle, as a founder member of the Core Cities, continues to provide a lead in resilience matters and respected voice on such influential National Forums and that the EPU continues to provide appropriate support.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 Members are asked to note this report.
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9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Core Cities Annual Study papers are held in the offices of Newcastle City Council Resilience Team and the EPU.