



**ANNUAL REVIEW AND REPORT  
OF THE JOINT RESILIENCE UNIT  
2007 – 2008.**

**JOINT RESILIENCE COMMITTEE – 25<sup>th</sup> July 2008**

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## 1. Introduction

- Welcome to the new members of the Joint Resilience Committee
- The report has been prepared in order to provide the Committee Members with a review of work undertaken through 2007 and the early part of 2008.

## 2. Background

- 2.1. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) placed 7 duties on Local Authorities as Category 1 responders bringing with it a substantial amount of additional work, the scope and complexity of which is far greater than originally anticipated.
- 2.2. A programme of work was developed to reflect 4 key areas of work closely tied into the duties within the CCA. This assisted the Joint Resilience Unit (JRU) in prioritising and focussing a limited resource on the main tasks to be undertaken. This was also to help other stakeholders in understanding what it is the JRU are intending to achieve.

The 4 Key work areas identified are:-

- Management of Risk
- Business Continuity Management
- Emergency Planning & Management
- Warning, Informing and Promotion

The CCA has huge implications for local authorities and we must demonstrate that we are prepared to respond to an emergency in order to protect our residents, the environment, property and the services we provide to the community. Secondly, we must recover from any incident and return to normality as quickly as possible.

## 3. Risk

- 3.1. Risk assessment is the basis for driving forward our contingency planning arrangements and is the foundation for the Civil Protection duty. All levels of Government are undertaking risk assessments and this information is increasingly being shared across the multi-agency partner organisations.

- 3.2. In the South Wales Local Resilience Forum (SWLRF) area, we have been working very closely with our multi-agency partners to identify and assess the highest priority risks which may have a significant impact on the region. A Community Risk Register was published in 2007, identifying the key risks. This will underpin the prioritisation of work for the SWLRF. The Joint Resilience Unit provide the chair and secretarial support for this group, which covers the 7 local authority areas in South Wales, we are delighted that the work completed to date has been recognised by the Welsh Assembly Government as a best practice model to be adopted across Wales.
- 3.3. A joint Neath Port Talbot/Swansea Resilience Partnership Risk Working Group has been established comprising of representatives from Category 1 and Category 2 responders, chair and secretarial support given by JRU. The Group is identifying and prioritising the risks and challenges facing the multi-agencies at a local level and managing and planning the mitigation arrangements required. A draft risk register has been developed by the Group. The purpose of this partnership is to put in place the “missing link” in the chain which now extends from the individual Local Authorities through to the South Wales Local Resilience Forum, in the first instance, and then to other target audiences such as the Wales Resilience Forum and the Civil Contingencies Secretariat at a UK level.

#### 4. **Business Continuity**

- 4.1. The Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004 requires Authorities to have arrangements in place to maintain services in the event of major emergencies. Part of the Business Continuity Management (BCM) cycle assesses all the risks that might affect an organisation’s ability to deliver a service and considers how services can be maintained, regardless of the cause of the disruption. Plans developed on this basis should complement Local Authority’s overall risk arrangements, help Authorities maintain critical services during and after any major emergency or catastrophic incident and promote recovery.
- 4.2. Responsibility for maintaining services is primarily the responsibility of the relevant section/service. The co-ordinating role on business continuity lies with the Joint Resilience Unit. The Local Authority is responsible for ensuring the continuity of its own services. Where a service is contracted out, or is dependent on external suppliers, it is still the responsibility of the Authority to ensure continuity. Therefore, the Authority needs to know that suppliers and contractors have continuity arrangements. This is an issue for those responsible for procurement strategies.

- 4.3. Business continuity plans and emergency management arrangements must be complementary. It must be possible to implement both at the same time. An emergency may trigger a continuity plan because *the emergency* affects the service directly (e.g. by damaging/preventing access to offices, computers or plant/equipment) or because *responding* to the emergency affects the service and triggers the plan (for e.g. transport staff and equipment redirected, school buildings required for rest centres or health plans, for e.g. flu pandemic vaccination centre). If the same staff and/or resources have different roles in both plans there must be priority and contingency arrangements.
- 4.4. The development of business continuity plans for identified critical services are being managed by the JRU for both authorities. Where plans have been completed, they are being shared with their respective service areas in each local authority, to ensure consistency in planning development, but also to support service areas who may be finding the work difficult to undertake or complete.
- 4.5. A key piece of work that remains outstanding is identifying the key corporate critical services that should be maintained whatever the cause of the disruption. This will provide the basis for informing the development of a Corporate Business Continuity Plan. An example of a disruption would be strike action by staff or the loss of a critical building such as the Civic Centres.
- 4.6. A draft strategic document has been prepared, titled, 'Arrangements for Managing an Influenza Pandemic'. The aim of this document is to describe the management arrangements for the continued operation of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and City & County of Swansea services during an influenza pandemic. In doing so, it considers internal business continuity arrangements and the Councils' response and details the roles and responsibilities of individuals, response teams and outlines a communication policy. It is essential that the corporate critical services are identified, included in this document and agreed by CMT.

## 5. **Emergency Planning and Management**

- 5.1. Work continues on reviewing the Emergency Response plans for both Authorities.
  - i) Exercise Twister - Emergency Response Plan Exercise for Housing Services facilitated in May 2007 and report and forward action plan completed.
  - ii) Exercise Ferret – Emergency Response Awareness Exercise for ACE Performance facilitated in June 2007. Report and forward action plan developed

- 5.2. Following on from Exercises 'Twister' and 'Ferret' the Joint Resilience Unit has reviewed the emergency response plans in co-operation with the Resilience Co-ordinators for each Directorate. **Exercise 'Sidetrack'** has been developed to test these plans and all exercises will be completed by the end of September 2008. The Resilience Co-ordinators will take the lead in the future for reviewing, improving, testing and updating these documents.
- 5.3. However, emergency planning work we undertake with and on behalf of our external clients must not be forgotten. The COMAH (Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 1999), REPPiR, The Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001 and MAHP (Pipeline Safety Regulations 1996) Regulations, require the Local Authority to review the emergency plans for the respective statute at least every three years. The COMAH regulations also require that the emergency plans are exercised every three years. There are five top tier COMAH sites across Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and the City & County of Swansea area, and 9 high pressure pipelines.
- 5.4. To meet statutory legislation, the multi-agency exercise 'Heavy Metal', incorporating live on-site and tabletop exercises, was developed, co-ordinated and delivered in October 2007 by the JRU, with the aim of:-
- bringing together INCO staff and the emergency responders in Swansea area to evaluate INCO's COMAH Off-site Plan,
  - ensuring it dovetailed with the On-site Plan and emergency response plans of responders
  - broadening the understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities when responding to an incident at INCO.
- 5.5. As a result of the Forward Action Plan developed and managed by the Joint Resilience Unit incorporating the outcomes from 'Heavy Metal', the Off-site COMAH Plan for Inco was fully reviewed and published on behalf of the multi-agency stakeholders involved.
- 5.6. Similarly, Exercise 'Fossil Fuel' for Calor Gas has been developed with the establishment and 'chairing' of the multi-agency COMAH Planning Group by the JRU since January 2008. The exercise was delivered and facilitated by the JRU on 12<sup>th</sup> June. A live multi-agency on-site exercise was arranged and co-ordinated by the JRU and took place on 4<sup>th</sup> June.
- 5.7. COMAH aide memoirs for FLOGAS, BOC Gas and INCO Refinery that compliment the COMAH Off-site Plans, have been completed and circulated to Stakeholders for our and their use, adding a new dimension to work we are legislatively responsible for on their behalf.
- 5.8. The COMAH Off-site plan for CORUS has been published.

- 5.9. The three year statutory review of Major Accident Hazard Pipeline (MAHP) Plans completed and plans published, for,

- (a) National Grid, South Wales feeder No 2
- (b) Wales & West Utilities – Neath Port Talbot
- (c) BOC Gases, Margam

The JRU were also responsible for writing the plan on behalf of Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and Neath Port Talbot for the new National Grid UKT 28 pipeline from Milford Haven to Aberdulais .

- 5.10. Multi Agency Flood Emergency Response Plan for Canal Side, Aberdulais has been issued with the Environment Agency after consultation with the Police and Fire Services. A 'live' exercise is in the very early stages of development and more information will be available in September.
- 5.11. The Major Incident Plan (MIP) for Neath Port Talbot CBC has been reviewed and published. The MIP for the City & County of Swansea will be reviewed and published by October 2008.
- 5.12. A Managing Crisis in Schools Guidance has been developed with representatives from Education and will be piloted with a number of primary schools in both local authority areas. This piece of development work is ongoing.
- The aim of this document is to ensure that all staff & governors are equipped with a full and concise working document, including flowcharts/action cards, to deal with any crisis that affects the school, its staff or pupils.
  - These incidents may range from a flooded classroom; a water leak; loss of all computer data to the death of a pupil or member of staff; tragic accident during a school trip or other off-site visit.
  - All members of staff and governors must be clear about their roles and responsibilities at such a time and should be able to utilise this document to identify who should be contacted and how in a number of different scenarios.
- 5.13. The Civil Contingencies Act places a significant emphasis on working with others in a way which exceeds previous expectations. This work and the processes involved is time consuming but we believe the benefits and outcomes in terms of emergency planning will far outweigh anything we have seen before

## 6. Flooding

- 6.1.1. **The Pitt Report** refers primarily to flooding incidents which occurred in England during summer 2007. For Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government has recognised the relevance of the review recommendation and has agreed to implement where appropriate.
- 6.1.2. The National Flood Group agreed that the majority of Pitt's recommendation were relevant to Wales and their implementation would improve the country's preparedness to flooding. Of the 15 urgent recommendations 4 were specifically targeted at Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) and involved the following:
- REC 4 – Urgent review of local water rescue arrangements.
  - REC 5 – Urgent review of designated rest centres and other major facilities.
  - REC 12 – Development of flood warnings enhancements.
  - REC 13 – Enhanced arrangements to involve local media representatives in the local preparedness and response.
- 6.1.3. As part of the SWLRF, it should be noted that there will be considerable expectations on the local authority to support this important piece of work. The JRU are currently working with colleagues in Environment to collate existing information and map the identified high risk sites.
- 6.1.4. The Met Office and Environment Agency are developing a pilot service to forecast and assess the impact of extreme rainfall. Emergency responders are invited to take part in a six month pilot starting in July. Those who take up the offer will receive extreme rainfall alerts from the Met Office. These county level alerts will use the Met Office's latest forecasting technology to advise of the risk of surface water flooding from extreme rainfall with routine advisories and alerts up to 24 hours in advance of the incident.
- 6.1.5. And to help emergency services, local authorities and utility companies target the areas most likely to be affected by surface water flooding, the Environment Agency will from August provide data to emergency responders showing 'hot spots' where water may collect during extreme rainfall. The local authority will be supporting this pilot scheme.



## **7 Warning, Informing and Promotion**

- 7.1. The warning, informing and promotion agenda will be at the heart of the communication framework across our collaborative network. Our internal communication work has centred on improving the Council websites and intranets, so much so, we now have dedicated pages for Risk Management, Business Continuity and Emergency Planning which will prove to be an essential tool for warning, informing and promoting.
- 7.2. The intention is to provide regular updates and alerts with a view to making this an essential business management tool for key stakeholders. These sites will include new guidance, policy, plans and items of interest from the news or other sources of relevant information. Additionally, we will deliver the duty solely placed on the Local Authority by the Civil Contingencies Act for the promotion of Business Continuity Guidance to the local community through this media.
- 7.3. The Joint Resilience Unit organised an Elected Members seminar on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2008 at the Liberty Stadium. A 'table top' exercise with participation from partner category 1 responders supported the event. Elected Members participated in the exercise. The outcome has been the publication of an Elected Members Communication Protocol in relation to an emergency incident and has been included in the newly elected Members induction pack.
- 7.4. A working group at the LRF are looking at how we can more effectively engage with not only our partner organisations, but more importantly, the local communities. There will be local authority representation on this group. The Communication Group has been established and is currently agreeing terms of reference.
- 7.5. An advertisement was placed in the Swansea Business Life Magazine on behalf of the JRU promoting the need for local businesses/organisations to consider business continuity plans.
- 7.6. The JRU have been involved with the project team for 'StreetBroadcasting' and see this development as an additional resource in communicating with community in an emergency. The broadcasting units will have the ability to transmit emergency messages at anytime. The JRU are working closely with Communications and the Police to maximise the real benefit.

## **8 Additional Information**

### **8.1 South Wales Local Resilience Forum**

- 8.1.1. The Resilience Manager and Senior Resilience Officer are Chair and Secretary of the SWLRF Risk Working Group. As mentioned above, they have overseen the development and publication of the first Community Risk Register for the South Wales Police area.

- 8.1.2. The Chair of the risk group reports to the SWLRF Co-ordination Group on a quarterly basis and attends the LRF twice a year.
- 8.1.3. The JRU also represent local authorities on the Voluntary Sector and Severe Weather work streams.
- 8.1.4. Both Chief Executive Officers played an active role on the SWLRF with the Chief Executive of the City & County of Swansea currently undertaking the role of Vice Chair.
- 8.1.5. Additionally, a senior officer from Social Services is to be the chair of the newly established Humanitarian Assistance work stream and will be supported by the JRU in this role.

## **8.2. Incidents**

- 8.2.1. The JRU provides a 24 hour duty officer 'on call' service 365 days a year, as the link between the Emergency Services and the Local Authority for Neath Port Talbot & Swansea.
- 8.2.2. From the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008, the JRU were contacted for local authority assistance on 19 occasions. On three occasions, with the support of Social Services, rest centres were opened.

## **8.3. Review of the Joint Resilience Unit**

- 8.3.1. A review of the JRU has taken place. This was commissioned by the Head of Performance and Strategic Projects and the Head of Human Resources and undertaken by Price Waterhouse Cooper in conjunction with the Wales Audit Office.
- 8.3.2. A selection of key people, including Chief Executives and members of the JRC were interviewed
- 8.3.3. The results of this review will be published in a report due by the end of July 2008. It is hoped that the good work already achieved will be recognised and recommendations highlighted will further enhance the Unit's strategic and operational role on resilience issues.

## **8.4. Training and Awareness**

- 8.4.1. A rest centre guidance document has been published for Neath Port Talbot and three training and awareness events were arranged and facilitated for volunteers and rest centre managers by the JRU.
- 8.4.2. A training programme is being developed for 2008/09 and 09/10 which will include bronze/silver training for officers, members and resilience co-ordinators training and a resilience awareness week. This will, in the first instance, need to be considered with the recommendations of the JRU review report.

## 9. **Summary and Recommendations**

- 9.1. Although the JRU have faced a very difficult year with staff resource issues, increased demands on the Unit and the scale of the work programme, it is clear that the work is being delivered at a professional level and recognised, in certain areas, as best practice.
- 9.2. Members are asked to note the content of this report.

Paul Thomas

Resilience Manager

8<sup>th</sup> July 2008