

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT & CITY & COUNTY OF SWANSEA AREA DESCRIPTION OF THE RISK REGISTER**

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## INTRODUCTION

The **National Risk Register** published by the Cabinet Office in November 2008 provides an '*assessment of the likelihood and potential impact of a range of different risks that may directly affect the UK*'.

The **Neath Port Talbot / City & County of Swansea Resilience Partnership Risk Register** is intended to capture the range of emergencies that might have a major impact on Neath Port Talbot and Swansea.

It provides a snapshot of the main risks we face and is designed to work alongside the National Risk Register and the South Wales Local Resilience Forum Risk Register (**Community Risk Register**)

Much of the information contained in the risk registers is unsurprising, but emergency planners have found them useful because:-

- They bring together information about potential risks that is relevant and consistent;

- different risks can be compared on a broadly like for like basis;
- they help in making decisions about the kind of emergencies to plan for and what their consequences are likely to be.

Major emergencies are rare in Neath Port Talbot/Swansea and in Wales but over the past few years we have seen various emergencies that have had an impact on the way we live our everyday lives. In setting out the risks (their likelihood and their impact), the register is not predicting any emergencies but enables effective multi-agency emergency planning based on a consideration of a wide range of risks.

The Neath Port Talbot /Swansea Risk Register helps inform priorities in a multi-agency work programme for emergency planning across the area. Additionally, it is a means of informing the public more fully of the types of risks we face.

## COMMUNITY RISK REGISTER

<http://www.walesprepared.org/index.php?id=1149&PHPSESSID=f839aaa9fbe5a50af4fc3b9df84d91db>

## HUMAN DISEASE

Human diseases can take various forms and consequently their impacts can vary both in scale and nature. It is considered one of the highest risks due to its *potential impact* rather than its *likelihood*.

**Pandemic Influenza** is one of the highest risks that face us. It emerges as a result of a new flu virus which is markedly different from recently circulating strains. Few, if any, people will have any immunity to this new virus thus allowing it to spread easily and to cause more serious illness.

The conditions that allow a new virus to develop and spread continue to exist, and some features of modern society, such as air travel, could accelerate the rate of spread. Experts therefore agree that there is a high probability of a pandemic occurring, although the timing and impact are impossible to predict.

Based on historical patterns, pandemics are expected to occur on average three or four times each century. Three pandemics occurred in the twentieth century ('Hong Kong' flu in 1968 - 1969, 'Asian' flu 1957 - 1958 and 'Spanish' flu in 1918 - 1919) and the first one is estimated to have caused 20 - 40 million deaths worldwide. There are indications that the pandemics started initially as avian flu and developed into human flu.

Past pandemics have varied in scale, severity and consequence, although in general their impact has been much greater than that of even the most severe winter 'epidemic'.

It is impossible to forecast the precise characteristics, spread and impact of a new influenza virus strain. However, based on historical information and scientific evidence we are able to predict the possible impacts:

- Many millions of people around the world will become infected, and up to around 50% may become ill with symptoms, and a variable proportion die from the disease itself or from complications such as pneumonia.

- Up to one half of the 3 million population of Wales may become infected and up to 37,000 additional deaths (that is deaths that would not have happened over the same period of time had a pandemic not taken place) may have occurred by the end of a pandemic in Wales.
- In the absence of early or effective interventions, society is also likely to face social and economic disruption, significant threats to the continuity of essential services, lower production levels, shortages and distribution difficulties. Individual organisations may also suffer from the pandemic's impact on business and services.
- Large numbers of staff are likely to be absent from work at any one time.

### Action being taken

The Welsh Assembly Government has published the *Wales Framework for Managing Major Infectious Disease Emergencies* which provides strategic guidance to assist local and national planning in Wales - including arrangements to support the *UK Influenza Pandemic Contingency Plan*.

Wales, alongside the other UK countries has purchased sufficient anti-virals to treat at a Clinical Attack Rate (CAR) of 50%. If the Clinical Attack Rate is higher than 50% then the use of antiviral drugs will be limited for the treatment of priority groups, such as frontline healthcare workers.

All Local Resilience Forums in Wales have completed multi-agency plans to respond to an influenza pandemic which take into account not only the health response but those arrangements that need to be put in place to deal with the wider social impact.

Neath Port Talbot and Swansea Councils have in place **Corporate Arrangements for Managing an Influenza Pandemic**.

## SEVERE WEATHER AND FLOODING – NATURAL DISASTERS

**Severe weather** can take many different forms and occasionally can cause significant disruption to normal life. Many types of severe weather only have a significant impact in isolated areas of Neath Port Talbot / Swansea, such as snow. The severe weather incidents that could have a pan Neath Port Talbot / Swansea area impact include; low temperatures, storms and gales.

### Coastal flooding

Of these types of incidents, coastal flooding has the potential to have the greatest impact.

Consequently, a lot of work has been done to improve flood defences.

An example of severe coastal flooding was seen in Towyn during 1990 where the sea wall was breached, resulting in flood damage to 2,800 homes and the evacuation of a further 2,000.

Also, during February 2008 a tidal surge threatened the South East coastline putting the area at a particular risk of flooding.

### Action being taken nationally

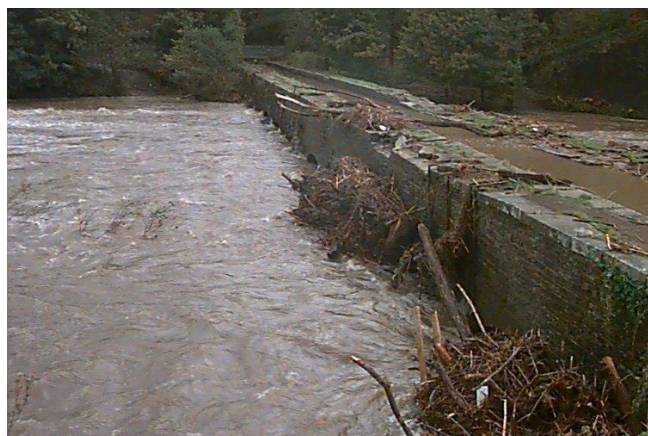
The flood strategy has moved in recent years from a defence dominated to a risk management centred approach utilising a wide range of resilience, defence, awareness, warning, response and recovery measures.

The WAG *New Approaches* Programme clarifies the policy aims and objectives for both flood and coastal risk management in Wales. It develops a broader toolkit of flood risk management interventions and establishes clear, joined-up delivery mechanisms with those at risk of flooding at the heart of service delivery. The key output from this project is a public consultation, which will be issued later this year. This consultation will assist in clarifying the framework for planning and delivering a publicly funded service. It will identify the type of measures the Assembly Government anticipates

delivering in Wales and will specify an appropriate funding and monitoring regime.

### Inland flooding

The frequency of this type of flooding is increasing and the events in Gloucester during 2007, which almost hit South East Wales, demonstrated the serious issues that could face the area during a flooding incident. The surface flooding experienced throughout South Wales during September 2008, and the high risk of flooding in Monmouth shows that this type of flooding is on the increase.



### Actions being taken nationally

The 2007 floods highlighted the vulnerability of surface water systems and our critical infrastructure in Wales to extreme rainfall.

The experience gained in of responding to these events highlighted the need for clarity in response, robust partnership working, public engagement and better planning. In response to those events a series of pilot studies were established aimed at exploring ways of better addressing surface water flooding. Those pilots will feed into the consultation process.

### Actions being taken locally

NPT/CCS Resilience Partnership has formed a Flood Group to specifically concentrate on multi-agency flood issues, to inform a programme of work. The Group is working on identifying specific problems and feasible solutions for some of the high risk areas prone to flooding.

Additionally, multi-agency flood plans are being developed with partner agencies for identified high risk flood areas.



## MAJOR ACCIDENTS

**Industrial accidents** and their impacts can vary considerably in scale and nature. Incidents of this kind in NPT/ CCS include the blast furnace explosion at CORUS in November 2001 when 3 people died on-site.

### Action being taken

Much has been done to help prevent industrial accidents and to minimise their effects, including the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Regulations.

On 11th November 2007, the Government and the Competent Authorities (HSE and Environment Agency) published their response to the Major Incident Investigation Board reports into the Buncefield Incident which occurred in December 2005. The response describes progress made by site operators, the Competent Authority and Government to meet the recommendations in the reports.



There are 5 sites that fall under the COMAH Legislation in the NPT / CCS area. The Local Authorities working closely with their partner agencies, compile, review and exercise plans to deal with any off-site effects that may occur from an incident at one of these sites. Plans are exercised and reviewed every 3 years.



### Major Accident Hazard Pipelines

There are a number of pipelines carrying hazardous substances such as natural gas and other substances at very high pressure across the two Local Authority areas.

### Action being taken

The Pipeline Safety Regulations were established in 1996 to assist in minimising the consequences to the health and safety of people in the event of an emergency involving a major accident pipeline. There have been no accidents involving high pressure pipelines in the NPT / CCS area. However, similar to the COMAH Legislation, the Pipeline Safety Legislation puts the responsibility on the Local Authorities to compile and review emergency response plans to alleviate the effects on the local community if such an accident was to occur.

## ANIMAL DISEASE

There have been a number of cases of significant animal disease in Wales over the past decade, with Foot and Mouth disease being the most noticeable example in the NPT / CCS area. Recent years have seen a number of small-scale examples of animal disease including:

### Avian flu

Avian flu is a highly contagious disease in birds. An outbreak of H7 N1 Avian influenza occurred in North Wales during May 2007 which also resulted in 17 human cases.

### Bluetongue

Bluetongue is an insect-borne viral disease which can be caught by all species of ruminants. Cases of the disease appeared in first Wales during 2008. Two imported cattle tested positive for Bluetongue type 8 in Ruthin, Denbighshire in September.

### Bovine Tuberculosis

Bovine Tuberculosis is a chronic, debilitating, infectious disease. It has a significant impact on the health and welfare of the national cattle herd in Wales, and the rest of the UK. It is transmissible to humans and other mammals including badgers and deer, which means it has serious implications beyond the health of cattle.

The incidence of bovine TB continues to rise in Wales and in some other parts of the UK, and consequently its impact on the farming industry, Government and taxpayer continues to increase.

### Action being taken

The Welsh Assembly Government, following talks with key stakeholders and operational partners, has published a *Framework Response Plan for Exotic Animal Diseases* and *Overview of Emergency Preparedness for Exotic Animal Diseases*.

The Welsh Assembly Government has put in place a number of legislative measures to confront avian influenza outbreaks. Details of these measures can be found at:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/avianflu/legislationai/?lang=en>

The Welsh Assembly Government has implemented legislation to reduce the risk of introducing or spreading bluetongue. Essentially, the measures involve restrictions with large protection and surveillance zones (100 km and 150 km minimum radius respectively) around the infected holding. The legislation provides for movement restrictions on suspicion of the Bluetongue virus circulating in an area. It provides for eradication of the disease by control of the vector, and if appropriate slaughter and/or vaccination.

On 8 April 2008 the Minister for Rural Affairs made an announcement on the Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) Eradication Programme. This Programme is being taken forward as part of the One Wales programme for Government commitment to 'vigorously pursue a programme of TB eradication'. This commitment is being backed by an additional £27.7 million of funding over the next three years.

Both Councils have Notifiable Disease Contingency Plans in place, with specific arrangements for Foot & Mouth and Rabies outbreaks.

## COASTAL POLLUTION & SEABORNE INCIDENTS

### Marine and Land Pollution

The term contamination covers many situations where the land or sea is polluted in some way. In some cases, where certain criteria are met, a site may be determined under the legal definition set out in part 11a of the *Environmental Protection Act 1990*.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has well practised plans including all the relevant emergency services for both major and minor pollution incidents and procedures for handling vessels that are involved in accidents.

The last marine pollution incident in Wales was the spillage of over 70,000 tonnes of Oil off the coast of Milford Haven in 1996. The spillage from the *Sea Empress* resulted in a large-scale clean up operation and caused major environmental damage to the South West Wales coastline including the cockle beds of North Gower Peninsula. The Local Authorities at the time assisted in the response to the pollution incident by giving mutual aid to the affected Local Authority areas.

In 1994, a 9,000-ton Indian cargo vessel, the *Vishva Parag* was steered away from rocks and beached On Swansea Bay. She was holed when part of the steel plate cargo shifted in a Force 10 storm about six miles offshore and listing badly. The crew were evacuated to a rest centre and cared for by the then West Glamorgan County Council. Luckily, nobody was hurt.

### Action being taken

UK legislation is now in place to deal with minimising these types of risks and plans have been put in place to minimise the likelihood of incidents happening again. Within Wales, control can be activated to minimise the impact of such an incident and ensure a rapid recovery process

A tripartite arrangement was established several years ago between Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea Councils to plan for and respond to an incident in the Swansea Bay area – the Swansea Bay Counter Pollution Group.

A contingency plan has been developed and regular hands-on training takes place to respond to an oil pollution incident, which involves Council employees using Central Government oil pollution equipment.

Several exercises have also taken place in both Authorities in co-operation with multi-agency responding agencies to evacuate passenger carrying vessels at sea and bring passengers ashore to a safe place.



## MALICIOUS ATTACKS

As with other areas of the UK, Wales also faces a serious and sustained threat from terrorism with a current threat assessment standing at 'severe'.

The terrorist attack on Glasgow Airport on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007 demonstrated that such attacks could be possible anywhere in the UK. Such attacks could take many forms.

### Attacks on Crowded Places

Crowded places such as shopping centres and stadia offer easy access and provide less protective security. Terrorist will therefore have a higher likelihood of success in causing a high loss of life or mass casualties. Crowded places in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea are equally vulnerable to such attacks as other areas of the UK.

### Attacks on Critical National Infrastructure

Fundamental services required by society such as electricity, gas, water and telecommunications are likely targets for terrorism in that they can cause major disruption to daily life. Attempts were made to attack electricity substations in the 1990s resulting in widespread damage and disruption but relatively few casualties. Although no such targets have occurred in Wales a number of critical infrastructure sites exist here which could be targeted in this way. There are also a number of such sites outside Wales which, if attacked, would cause major disruption to essential services within the Principality.

### Attacks on Transport Systems

Public transport systems are accessible and vulnerable to terrorist attacks as demonstrated in London on 7th July 2005 and in Madrid in 2004.

Air transport has also been targeted with the attacks on the World Trade Centre on 2001 and the Lockerbie attack on the Pan Am flight in 1988.

### Non-conventional Attacks

Although very few examples exist of attacks of this kind the risk from chemical, biological, radioactivity and nuclear (CBRN) attacks do exist.

Such attacks have the potential for widespread impact.

### Electronic Attack

The growing reliance on information technology for government, business and social purposes make it a target for attack.

### Action being taken

The UK Government's counter terrorism strategy, CONTEST is an integrated approach based on four main work streams, each with a clear objective to try and stop terrorist attacks occurring or, when they do, to mitigate their impact.:

- Pursue: stopping terrorist attacks
- Protect: strengthening our protection against attack
- Prepare: mitigating the impact of attacks
- Prevent: stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism

The Wales CONTEST Board takes forward this work on Wales, chaired jointly by the Welsh Assembly Government and the Police. Counter-Terrorist Security Advisers in each Police Force area in Wales are working with local partnerships to reduce the vulnerability of crowded places.

There is also work being undertaken to protect infrastructure and transport; provide specialist equipment and training for emergency services in Wales in response to the CBRN threat; and all public services and utility companies are developing robust business continuity plans against electronic attack.



## FURTHER INFORMATION

Met Office Website for up to date Weather Warnings:

[www.metoffice.gov.uk](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk)

Environment Agency Flood Information:

[www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

Pandemic Influenza Information:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/health/protection/communicable-disease/flu/?lang=en>

Animal Health and Welfare:

[www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/index.htm)

For central public information on the work being undertaken to strengthen resilience in Wales at local, regional and all-Wales levels:

<http://www.walesresilience.org/>

For general public information:

[www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk](http://www.preparingforemergencies.gov.uk)

For Civil Protection Practitioners:

[www.ukresilience.gov.uk](http://www.ukresilience.gov.uk)

National Security Strategy:

[http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/reports/national\\_security\\_strategy.aspx](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/reports/national_security_strategy.aspx)