

# **Joint Resilience Unit Annual Report**

## **January 2011 – 2012**



**Serving**  
**Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council**  
**and City and County of Swansea**

### Foreword

*“It is essential that emergency planning and business continuity continues to remain high on our agenda during these very challenging times and that they are a key part of all of our operational activities”*

Initially the purpose of this annual report was to look at the work of Joint Resilience Unit from January 2011 to January 2012. However, with the seemingly ever changing environment of both Local Authorities, we felt that this was an opportune moment to briefly reflect on future resilience support within the context of tightening budgets and the Welsh Government’s drive for greater collaborative working.

Collaborative working in the context of emergency planning and business continuity will mean that all seven South Wales Local Authorities are operating as a virtual team governed by an already established South Wales Local Authority Resilience Board which meets on a quarterly basis. It is important to note that we have merged where possible already and rationalised our workforce to improve resilience at both a local and regional level.

It is essential that emergency planning and business continuity continues to remain high on our agenda during these very challenging times and that it is considered a key part of all of our operational activities. The ongoing development of both the collaborative arrangements and the new working arrangements for the Joint Resilience Unit will undoubtedly be both challenging but ultimately rewarding as we look to build a more effective and efficient service.

#### **Jeremy Stephens**

*Head of Performance and Strategic Projects (City and County of Swansea Lead Officer for Resilience)*

#### **Graham Jones**

*Head of Human Resources (Neath Port Talbot Lead Officer for Resilience)*

| Index   | Page Number |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Introduction.....  | 4           |
| 2. Forward Work Programme January 2011 to January 2012..... | 4           |
| 3. COMAH Sites .....  | 7           |
| 4. Incident Information .....                               | 7           |
| 5. GIS and Website Development.....                         | 8           |
| 6. Partnerships .....                                       | 9           |

# 1. Introduction

Throughout the period of January 2011 to January 2012, both Neath Port Talbot Council and the City and County of Swansea have maintained their support to continually improve the services provided by the Joint Resilience Unit.

The aim of this year's annual report is to provide a brief overview of the Joint Resilience Unit's (JRU's) performance and some of the key achievements for the last 12 months..

Further information can be found within the JRU *'Forward Work Programme for 2011/2012'*.

Both Councils have continued with their ongoing commitment towards the JRU by investing a significant amount of time and resource towards maintaining the service despite facing some significant budget reductions.

Unfortunately, one outcome of the reduced funding made available to both Authorities by the Welsh Government for 2011/2012 is that, in common with other services across both NPT Council and CCoS, funding for the JRU has been reduced by a total of £80,000 pa. This comprises a £30,000 reduction by NPTCBC and £50,000 by CCoS.

The budget cut has inevitably resulted in the reduction of JRU employee numbers as staffing costs constitute most of the JRU's budget. In real terms reduced funding of £80,000 has necessitated the loss of the posts of JRU Manager and Senior Resilience Officer.

Subsequently, with effect from 1st August 2011 the responsibility for managing the JRU - which provides emergency planning and business continuity support to both NPT Council and CCoS - has been transferred to Shaun Burgess, NPT Council's Corporate Health and Safety Manager. However, all JRU staff continue to be employed by CCoS.

In addition to the above budget pressures, this year has seen a number of organisational reviews and operational changes that, whilst challenging in some ways, have also provided the JRU with some unique opportunities to introduce new, efficient and effective ways in which the service is delivered.

This has included the development of an interactive website for partner organisations, an e-learning system and a new interactive public facing website as well as the introduction of an integrated Geographical Information System (GIS) to assist in emergency planning.

The design, development and introduction of these new systems have been a joint effort between the JRU and NPT Council's I.T. Customer Services team. These new developments will be introduced at the start of the new financial year.

## 2. Forward Work Programme January 2011 to January 2012

Overall responsibility for emergency planning and business continuity within the LA's rests with the relevant Chief Executive.

The Corporate Health and Safety / Joint Resilience Manager is responsible for providing guidance and direction on

matters relating to emergency planning and resilience which may have an impact on the Council's undertakings.

The achievement of objectives is detailed in the annual Forward Work Programme 2011/2012. However, since August 2011, following the transfer of the JRU to the management of Shaun Burgess, the programme has been reviewed so as to focus on providing a more effective streamlined service, based on available resource.

The purpose of the Forward Work Programme is to support each Council to achieve as far as is reasonably practicable a robust and effective emergency response and business continuity framework for employees, service users and other persons who may be affected during an emergency incident. The Forward Work Programme for 2011/2012 introduced a number of objectives which were both challenging and demanding for the JRU and are detailed below;

- **Business Continuity** - Throughout 2011 the JRU continued to make good progress with the Business Continuity arrangements with Council Services in CCoS and NPT Council. 2011 saw the JRU deliver a number of business continuity exercises for Social Services, Environment and Education Directorates. The exercises were attended by over 100 key staff and managers and provided an excellent opportunity to review business continuity arrangements in a 'safe' environment.
- **Neath Port Talbot / City & County of Swansea Local Risk Group** – The NPT / CCoS Risk Working Group is scheduled to meet at the end of January to review its membership, Terms of Reference and Scope. The Group will review the local Risk Register which, in

turn will inform the work programme and training schedule.

- **Command and Control events** - An event was held for local site operators in August to provide training and awareness on the Command and Control structure used during incidents. The event was very well received with over 30 participants attending from local COMAH sites and iconic sites such as the Liberty Stadium and DVLA.

During the event participants were encouraged to take part by playing the 'Integrated Emergency Management' Game and to listen to presentations from the emergency services. Due to its success the JRU are facilitating a similar event in January 2012 for Local Authority Silver and Bronze response officers.

- **Fuel Shortage Plans** - The documents have been reviewed and merged so that there is now one Fuel Crisis document for the two LA's. This needs to be rehearsed and will therefore be a scenario for corporate business continuity exercises in the future.
- **Recovery Guidance** - The documents have been reviewed and merged so that there is now one Recovery Guidance document for the two LA's. Future training and exercising events will incorporate recovery issues as, in the past, this area has not been considered.
- **Resilience Coordinators** - The Resilience Coordinator Group met in November 2011. During this meeting a SWOT analysis was carried out on the role of Resilience Coordinators and their relationship with the JRU.

The purpose was to identify ways in which we can improve their role and develop their skills further. As a result it has been agreed to involve Resilience Coordinators more widely in training

*and exercising events, incidents and planning developments.*

- *An **E-learning Training Package** is in the process of being developed and will be available in early February. Future training of Resilience Coordinators will be a priority going forward.*
- ***Olympics 2012** -The JRU has been instrumental in forming a working group across Swansea and Neath Port Talbot looking at cross border issues in relation to the Olympic Torch Relay route. Meetings have been held and briefing notes issued to key staff.*
- ***Temporary Mortuary** - Swansea and Neath Port Talbot continue to have in place a contract for the provision of Temporary Disaster Mortuary (TDM) structures, equipment and personnel with Kenyon International Emergency Services Ltd at a cost of £1,000 per annum per authority. This contract is in line with the five other local authorities within the South Wales Local Resilience Forum. At present the preferred location of the TDM is the former BSC Felindre site, however, due to regeneration of the area work is currently under way to find a new location.*
- ***Members Seminar 2012** - A Member's Seminar has been scheduled for early 2012 where the JRU will brief Elected Members on their roles and responsibilities during an emergency incident.*
- ***Review of Members Protocol and Guidance** - The Members Protocol has been reviewed. The Guidance leaflet has been updated and made more user friendly. Both will be launched at the forthcoming Members' Seminar.*
- ***Business Continuity Awareness Week 2011** - Business Continuity Awareness Week took place in March 2011. To mark this event the JRU carried out a number of activities to promote business continuity planning to internal Council services and external businesses. Activities included:*
  - *A press release on the internal / external websites for both NPT / CCoS*
  - *Promotional posters displayed in foyers, lifts, canteens and meeting rooms in Civic buildings*
  - *Business Continuity Tip of the Day each day of the week on Intranet / Internet*
- ***Severe Weather Policy** - A Severe Weather Policy has been developed to support the response of Heads of Service and Directors during a period of inclement weather. This will be published and circulated in early 2012.*
- ***Emergency Control Centres** - Plans have been developed for both authorities to support the use of Council premises in the event of a Major Incident. These plans reflect the flexibility of premises, people and IT.*
- ***Review of Lower Tier COMAH Sites** - A review of lower tier Control of Major Accident Hazard (3) sites was conducted and plans suitably amended.*
- ***Reservoir Inundation Plans** - Although planning for Reservoir Inundation is not yet a statutory duty the JRU is working with CCoS officers to write 'on' and 'off' site plans for Bryn Mill Reservoir which CCoS are the Undertakers (owners). It is hoped that, once completed, plans for the other reservoirs within both authorities can be written.*

### 3. COMAH Sites

The JRU arranged and facilitated two top tier COMAH site exercises.

During 2011, the JRU arranged and facilitated two top tier COMAH site exercises. These were held with Tata Steel, Port Talbot and Calor Gas, Aberdulaish.

Exercise Titan took place on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2011 to test the COMAH off-site and on-site plans for Tata Steel, Port Talbot. The exercise scenario focussed on a fire at the 'BOS' Gas area of the steel works which resulted in a large gas cloud escaping into the atmosphere over the local community.

The subsequent Forward Action Plan, compiled and managed by the JRU as a result of the exercises, was signed off by the operator and stakeholders. The COMAH Multi-Agency Off-Site Plan and Aide-Memoir for Tata Steel was subsequently fully reviewed and updated to reflect issues raised at the exercise.

Exercise Ignition took place on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2011 to test the off-site plan for Calor Gas, Aberdulaish. The JRU arranged and facilitated the exercise. Exercise participants were asked to look at a gas leak scenario and consider the resulting on-site and off-site consequences. A Forward Action Plan was developed and is currently being managed by the JRU as a result of the exercises, with the COMAH Multi-Agency Off-Site Plan and Aide-Memoir for Calor Gas being fully reviewed.

Both exercises were well attended, with representatives from the following organisations:

- Tata Steel / Calor Gas
- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
- Environment Agency Wales
- Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service
- South Wales Police
- ABM University Health Board
- Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust
- Public Health Wales
- Health and Safety Executive

### 4. Incident Information

The Fforestfach fire presented huge challenges for all concerned

The following information relates to the key incidents involving the JRU for both the Swansea and Neath Port Talbot during period January 2010 to January 2011.

#### • Fforestfach Fire

On 16th June 2011 at 13.05hrs, emergency services received reports of a large fire at a disused warehouse on Fforestfach Industrial Estate. Approximately 5,000 tonnes of 'tyre flock' was alight. Shortly after receiving the initial 999 call, a Major Incident was declared.

A multi-agency response was put in place involving Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, South Wales Police, CCoS, Environment Agency Wales, ABMU Health Board and Public Health.

Multi-Agency Silver and Gold Command Groups were established, chaired by the Local Authority. Staff from the JRU provided support to the Gold Command Team

The fire presented huge challenges for all concerned, particularly the Fire Service, as the burning material could not be extinguished using traditional methods. The material had to be extracted from the building, submerged in water and left to cool. This meant extinguishing the fire was a long process.



Despite the huge demands on all agencies involved and impact it had on the surrounding community, the shared approach to decision making and co-ordinated approach to dealing with the incident helped ensure the fire was extinguished ahead of schedule.

- **Gleision Mine Incident**

On the morning of 15th September 2011, reports were received that four miners had become trapped at Gleision Colliery, near Rhos, Pontardawe.

Very quickly a multi-agency response was put in place, including emergency services, mines rescue, cave rescue and the Local Authority. Staff from the JRU provided support to the Gold Command Team based at The Quays throughout the incident.

A search and rescue operation was launched but despite the dedicated efforts of all concerned, the four trapped miners were found deceased the following day. The incident generated huge media interest from all over the world and tributes were paid to the miners from the world of sport, politics and media.

A joint investigation into the cause of the Gleision mine incident is being carried out by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and South Wales Police.

- **Flooding incidents, Neath Port Talbot - 13<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

Flooding reported in Briton Ferry and Margam areas of NPT. The JRU co-ordinated Highways / Drainage response.

- **Morfa Road Fire - 8<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

Fire at a domestic property in Morfa Road. Gas supply burning. Three nearby properties evacuated.

- **House Fire, Merthyr Road, Glynneath - 20<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

Serious house fire at Merthyr Road, Glynneath. Nearby properties evacuated.

- **3M Fire, Gorseinon - 25<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

Fire reported at 3M factory involving an adhesive unit. Fire extinguished shortly after notification so no Local Authority action required.

- **Windsor Road Fire, Neath - 28<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

Fire reported at Amey Constructive just off Windsor Rd Neath. Surrounding buildings were evacuated and a Rest Centre was opened at Dwr y Felin Upper School.

- **Tata Steel Fire - 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2011**

JRU notified of industrial fire in Margam Steel Power Plant area of Tata Steelworks Site. Advised by Fire Control that situation was being dealt with on-site with no off-site consequences.

## 5. GIS and Website Development

The JRU team have introduced new and improved ways of working which take into account the reduced staffing numbers

Recognising the legal obligations placed upon both Councils and the reduction in staffing levels, the JRU have introduced a clear risk-based focus regarding a more effective engagement with partners and associated responders through the adaptation of an interactive website complete with an integrated geographic information system (GIS).

The overall design of the website including the GIS module has been developed to capture, store, analyse and present all types of referenced and stored data for informing the decision making process. GIS applications are tools that allow users to create interactive queries (user-created searches), analyse information and edit data in maps.



The website is a set of secure linked webpages containing Business Continuity plans, Emergency Response plans, guidance notes etc. The website is hosted by NPT Council and is accessible via the Internet to all partnering organisations. Its purpose is to present real time information on demand.

## 6. Partnerships

The JRU Team continue to develop strong working relationships with all local Category 1 responders

Partnership working is vital as the actions of one organisation in an emergency could impact on the other organisations involved.

The JRU has therefore continued to strengthen working relationships with all local Category 1 responders, specifically South Wales Police who are regular visitors to their hot desk facility at The Quays. This facility assists the JRU in building close working relationships with the emergency services which has proven to be invaluable during both the Fforestfach fire and the Gleision Mine incident.

In recent months the JRU has supported a number of multi agency work streams.

A Suspect Package Training event has been developed in conjunction with SWP. This event was held at the DVLA and participants included mail room staff from local hospitals, DVLA and local Authorities.

Exercise Aftermath was held in Cardiff to validate the SWLRF Mass Fatalities Plan.

During 2011 the JRU arranged and facilitated two multi agency COMAH exercises. These exercises were a good

example of how the JRU engages with other organisations to meet its legislative duties.

In recent months the JRU has developed new relationships with Category 2 responders and key organisations such as the DVLA, Liberty Stadium and SWTRA.

During 2012 the JRU will continue to develop and strengthen the relationships already formed. Furthermore the JRU will look to build new relationships with local businesses, organisations and communities to develop their resilience.

**Shaun Burgess**

*Corporate Health, Safety and Joint Resilience Manager*