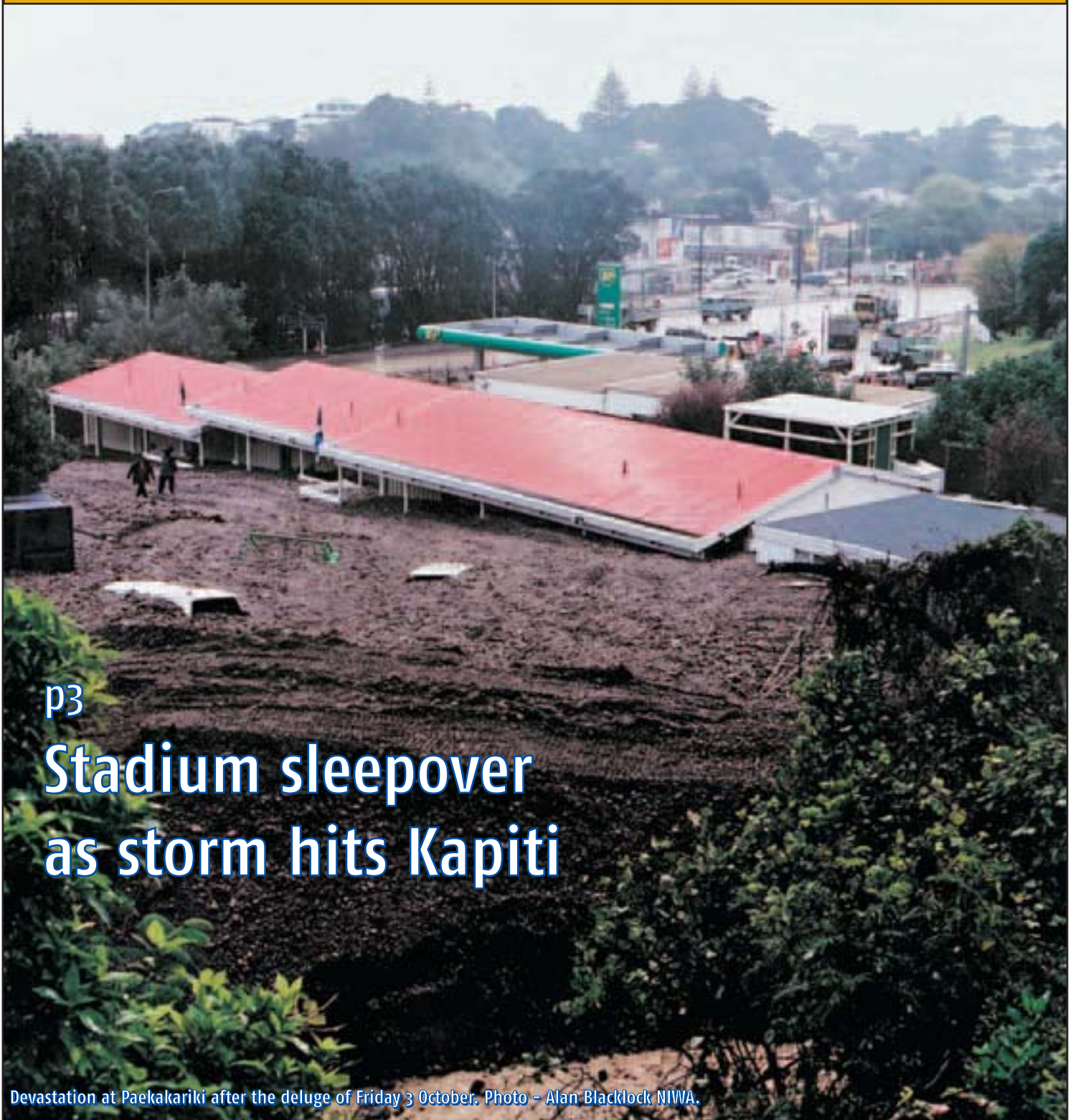


On the Plate

A quarterly publication from the Wellington City Council Emergency Management Office.

SUMMER 2003/04



p3

Stadium sleepover as storm hits Kapiti

Devastation at Paekakariki after the deluge of Friday 3 October. Photo - Alan Blacklock NIWA.

Emergency Management

Absolutely

POSITIVELY

ME HEKE KI PŌNEKE
WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

Wellington

Manager's column

It's amazing to think that 2003 is almost at an end. Well, you know the old saying – time flies when you're having fun! I'm not sure it's always fun, but I do know it's been a very busy year.

There has been a tremendous amount of work taking place, including:

- setting up of the Wellington Region Civil Defence Emergency Management Group
- our annual exercise – Moa
- review of the roles and responsibilities of Community Emergency Centres
- regional projects looking at commuters and emergency fuel supplies
- setting up the Tawa Rural Fire and Rescue Depot
- revamping the website (www.wcc.govt.nz/community/wemo)
- launch of the school resource pack
- implementation of response software in our emergency operations centre.

You can read more about some of these in this publication.

To supplement our schools education programme, Sandra attended the US Federal Emergency Management Academy training course on 'multi-hazard emergency planning for schools'. She came back with a tremendous amount of material (and excess luggage bill!) and very importantly an endorsement of the programmes we already have in place as being best practice in this field.

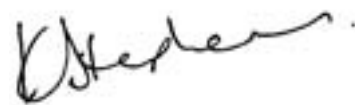
My main area of focus has been as a member of the regional working group to set up the Wellington Region Civil Defence Emergency Management Group (CDEMG). The inaugural meeting of the CDEMG, which is made up of the Mayors of each local Council and the Chair of the Greater Wellington

Regional Council, was held in May 2003. Mayor Wayne Guppy of Upper Hutt was elected as the Chair of the CDEMG.

The first task for the CDEMG was to set up the Co-ordinating Executives' Group. This group is responsible for ensuring the provision of Civil Defence emergency management by each of the local Councils (including Greater Wellington), emergency services and district health boards (DHBs).

The Co-ordinating Executives' Group was officially formed in August and is made up of the Chief Executives of each local Council within the region (Garry Poole for Wellington City), Ray Kennedy, Assistant Fire Region Commander New Zealand Fire Service, Police Superintendent John Kelly, Margot Mains of Capital Coast DHB, Anne McLean of Wairarapa DHB and Chai Chuah and Warrick Frater of Hutt Valley DHB.

Now that the CDEMG and the Co-ordinating Executives' Group are formed we have two years to develop a CDEM Plan – so the clock is ticking. Debbie Cunningham of Greater Wellington's Emergency Management Office has been appointed Project Manager for the development of the plan and we will include an article in the next edition on its progress.



Obituary



Don Conner
Hataitai Cluster Information Centre

Don passed away in July. He had recently retired from being one of our long-standing volunteers dedicating his time to helping many. We would like to express our condolences to his family. We are very thankful for the many years of time and effort that Don gave us as a Civil Defence volunteer.

Changes afoot for Community Emergency Centres

Community Emergency Centres are about to get a new (old) name and a change in role.

Karen Stephens, Manager of the Wellington City Council Emergency Management Office (WEMO), says that in the New Year the centres will revert back to their original name – Civil Defence Centres, and that their roles and responsibilities will broaden.

“It was a unanimous vote to go back to the Civil Defence Centre name as this was recognisable by the public and was consistent with the rest of the region.”

Over the past six years Community Emergency Centres have largely focused on reconnaissance and giving radio feedback to the Council’s emergency management office.

Karen says it is now recognised that under the Community Emergency Centre structure some focus had been lost and the centres no longer met the expectations of communities and the volunteers within those communities, in the event of a major emergency.

Earlier in the year a workshop with many of the Community Emergency Centre co-ordinators was held to look at establishing a better focus for the centres, says Karen.

The co-ordinators were asked to brainstorm issues including the needs of the community and WEMO needs from the community.

“We were basically starting from a position that people in the

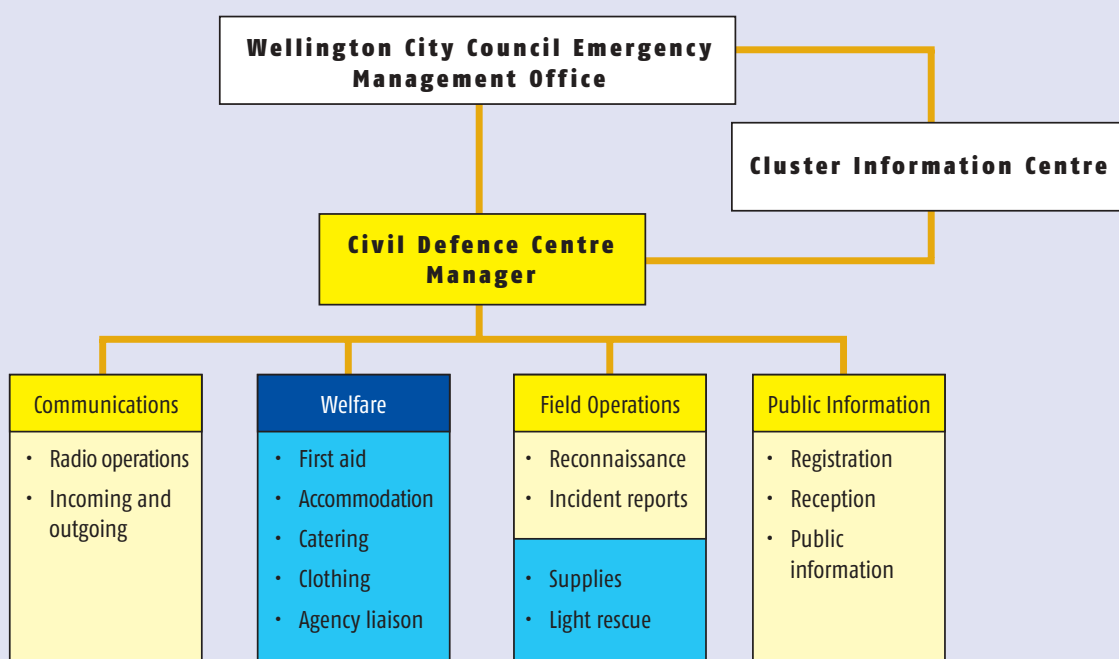
community will want to know what to do in an emergency, where to go for help and information and where to go to offer help.”

At the end of the brainstorm it was agreed to set up a project team to focus on the objective: *To provide the residents of Wellington with support and advice following a major emergency, and to provide information to Wellington City Council Emergency Management Office to assist in their response and recovery activities.*

The project team of Karen Stephens, Sandra Pedersen, Rachael Hunter – WEMO, Alastair Fox – Redwood, George Moutzouris and Paul Moss – Clyde Quay, Ayliffe Maddever – Clifton Terrace, and Gavin Murray – Kelburn, met on a monthly basis to develop a new structure, roles and responsibilities for the new Civil Defence Centres.

Karen says the new structure is designed for each Civil Defence Centre to work with individuals and other organisations in their communities to fulfil the roles and responsibilities. The structure and key responsibilities is shown below. The yellow boxes are roles and requirements that are mandatory and the blue boxes are optional dependent upon the needs of each community and the resources within it.

The next phase is the rollout of the new structure and the development of training programmes to support it, new signage and supporting documentation. It is aimed to ‘launch’ the new structure early in 2004 through meetings with community and voluntary organisations.



Stormy night for rugby fans as



Photo - Alan Blacklock, NIWA

Rail services halted as mud swept across tracks.

A night sleeping at the Westpac Stadium was not what a lot of supporters had in mind when they went to watch the Wellington Lions play rugby on Friday 3 October.

With flooding and a major land slip in Paekakariki blocking both rail and the road north, people were stranded in the capital, with at least 150 having to sleep at the Stadium. The WEMO office was activated around 10pm, monitoring the situation and supplying blankets and light refreshments for those having to stay.

“Everyone was in good spirits and by 2am, when I turned off the lights, they were ready to settle down,” says Jock Darragh, Operations Manager for WEMO, who had also been at the rugby game.

On the Kapiti Coast the night brought disaster to Paekakariki and the families of the crew on the cargo plane that crashed into the sea.

“After being called out to assist in the events, I spent the early hours of the morning helping with the search for the plane and listing down



One of many abandoned vehicles during the Paekakariki flooding.

Store water for emergencies

When a big quake hits and the Wellington faultline moves – or even when we’re hit by flooding (see above) – the region’s water supply network will be disrupted, meaning there may not be any water flowing from the treatment plants to the reservoirs in the cities.

We cannot live without water. It is essential not only for drinking, but also for personal hygiene and food preparation.

“It is such a simple task to store water so that you and your family will be self-sufficient for the initial period after the disaster strikes, says Adrian Glen, a member of

the Wellington Metropolitan Emergency Water Supply Group.

“Rest homes, hospitals and schools must also provide for people in their care, and it must be a critical part of their emergency planning to have adequate supplies of water.”

“Full restoration of water supplies will take several weeks, and you will probably have to travel to community supply points with your containers to collect your water.”

Storing water is easy.

- Wash out large, plastic soft drink bottles (not milk bottles) or buy plastic water storage containers

rain lashes Wellington region

items that were found along the coastline," says Sandra Pedersen, WEMO's Education and Marketing Manager.

"I then went and assisted in the Kapiti Coast District Council's Emergency Operations Centre in Paraparaumu, with the Upper Hutt Rescue and Rural Fire teams, monitoring and co-ordinating the situation in Paekakariki.

"It was not until Sunday that I managed to see the full damage that had been caused by the land slip and the devastation for the 21 families whose houses were badly flooded with silt, mud and sewage.

"We do not realise how vulnerable we are – and the need to store water and other emergency supplies is critical, not only for an earthquake event."

The Civil Defence declaration was not lifted in Kapiti until lunchtime Thursday 9 October, though the clean up and welfare issues will take, in some cases, months to be completed.



Photo – Alan Blacklock, NIWA



Photo – Rob Kitchin, Dominion Post

Battling the flood waters in Paekakariki.

- Fill with cold tap water till overflowing
- Secure lid tightly
- Label bottles with date
- Store in a cool dark place
- Replace water every 12 months.

How much should you store?

Three litres of drinking water per person for three days is only enough for basic drinking water. You will need more for personal hygiene and food preparation which could be 15 to 20 litres per person a day, for at least three days.

Don't think it's too hard – storing some water is better than none at all says Adrian. A fact sheet on storing emergency water is available from WEMO or Greater Wellington Regional Council.



Be like Ben and store emergency water.

Kids clued up to cope with emergencies

Children across the Wellington region are being clued up to deal with emergencies thanks to a new school resource pack from the Wellington City Council Emergency Management Office (WEMO).

Are you prepared for an emergency? is a school resource which develops students' knowledge and understanding about the types of emergencies that could strike, the risks involved and the best ways to react to them.

As well as a teachers' guide, it includes a set of specially designed plastic bags that can be used to start a home emergency kit and a fun, educational, Survival card game that was designed by a local student.

Sandra Pedersen, Education and Marketing Manager, says the resource reinforces the message that every school and home needs an emergency plan and kit.

The types of issues that children have to work through in the resource include who will pick them up from school during a flood, the best way to get out of the house after an earthquake and how much drinking water should be stored for an emergency, says Sandra.

"Although this resource pack was originally designed solely for

Wellington City it has proven so popular that Councils throughout Wellington region are adopting it for their use.

"In the Wellington region we need to face the fact that we will have to deal with an emergency situation at some point in the future. The better prepared we are, the better we will be able to recover.

"By learning about being prepared for an emergency, we hope children will take a leading role in making sure their own families are better equipped.

"It is crucial that children learn what might happen and the best way to respond."



Students from Seatoun School get prepared for an emergency and have fun at the same time.

Back to school – multi-hazard emergency planning

Multi-hazard emergency planning for schools was the focus of a week long course held recently at the Federal Emergency Management Academy centre in Emmitsburg, Philadelphia, USA.

Sandra Pedersen from WEMO attended and gained valuable knowledge of helping schools to prepare for emergencies.

"I found it very interesting listening to different groups discuss events that have happened in their schools and how they have coped afterwards. Planning for emergencies and ensuring that everyone involved is aware of what to do in an emergency situation is critical to students and school personnel surviving an emergency.

"Although we have already done a lot of work with schools, it was good to get fresh ideas for alternative evacuation and

planning procedures and how we could do that here."

The course covered emergency management, operations planning, training and testing plans, planning for terrorist incidents and a final exercise. It also helped participants to develop emergency operation plans for school emergencies by incorporating the coordinated incident management system (CIMS) into the plans, says Sandra.

Representatives from Police, fire, emergency management, principals and Board of Trustees members all attended the course and worked together to enhance school safety.

Sandra says the scenarios for the exercise differed depending on the area the group was from for example Kentucky had floods whereas California had earthquakes.

New premises and controller for Rural Fire Force

The new fire season heralds a few changes to the Wellington City Rural Fire Force – a move to new premises in Tawa and a new controller.

Controller and ten year fire-fighting veteran, Tim Mahar decided to retire from the force to spend time with his family and developing his business venture. He has been replaced by Daryl Percy.

"We would like to thank Tim and his family for his time and dedication to the fire force. Daryl Percy has been elected as the new controller with Colin Robson and Des Crosby as his deputies," says Jock Darragh, Principal Rural Fire Officer.

The Rural Fire Force left the Raroa Station in July and took up permanent residence in the Wellington City Council Tawa depot.

The Tawa depot has been given a new look with many hours of hard work by the fire force spent turning this facility into an operational station," says Jock.

In addition to the Rural Fire Force the station will also house Wellington City rescue team, the Red Cross, Wellington City Council Parks and Gardens and CitiOperations.

"It will still be a while before the alterations have been completed to incorporate a training and equipment area, WEMO's secondary response centre and a library."

In the meantime training continues. Jock says a management team is being formed within the force to ensure all members are working towards gaining their qualifications and learning new skills constantly.



New recruit Jimmy Koti extinguishes hot spots at the Pinehaven fire in Upper Hutt.

"We have been running a recruitment campaign aiming for volunteers in the northern suburbs which has been very successful but we are always looking for new recruits from the Wellington City area.

"Once recruits pass the police and medical checks training commences immediately, so that they are active for the fire season."



End of the day rest for Wellington City Rural Fire-fighters before clean up begins at the Pinehaven fire .

Exercise Moa tests Wellington's terrorism response

On Friday 22 August Wellington suffered a terrorist attack – thankfully only simulated.



Council staff Stavros Michael, Andrew Dalziel and Rachel Cuthbertson assess infrastructure damage during exercise Moa.

This was the scenario for Wellington City Council's annual emergency exercise and it involved the activation of the emergency operations centre at WEMO.

Over 50 Council staff, including full activation of the Council's call centre backup, managed the incident in co-operation with Police and other emergency services, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

In addition to the activity at WEMO the scenario required an 'evacuation' of the Civic Centre. Key Council units relocated to their backup locations to run their operations.

"This was an opportunity for these units to test their business continuity plans," says WEMO Manager Karen Stephens.

"For example the traffic signal management, usually managed through a system located in Civic Centre, was handled through a laptop in the CitiOperations depot in Torrens Terrace," says Karen.

One of the key objectives was to exercise the different dynamics of a major incident resulting in a crime scene as opposed to a natural hazard emergency such as an earthquake. This required the understanding of different relationship requirements with Police, and highlighted the need to clearly define the difference between the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 and the Terrorism Suppression Act 2003.



Uniform Sergeant Denise Trail from District Headquarters Management Team and Karen Stephens, Manager, WEMO discussing the terrorist attack.

Debriefs were held with all participants, with the conclusion that the exercise was a success.

"There is a need to reinforce current plans focusing on the importance of communications and strong relationships between the emergency services agencies and Wellington City Council," says Karen.

Additional resources for emergency operations

Exercise Moa was a good opportunity to test the Council's new emergency call centre.

"The call centre located at WEMO has been purpose built to provide emergency capacity for the Council's main call centre," says Adrian Glen WEMO Business Continuity Manager.

"It also has the flexibility to be incorporated into, and augment, WEMO's existing radio communications.

"We have also installed a computerised

incident management system that allows us to record and automatically map incidents on the Geographic Information System (GIS).

"The system was tested during exercise Moa, giving us an opportunity to expose any problems while fully operational or to make changes to incorporate our systems already in place," says Adrian.

The new incident management system (right) enables information to be mapped and displayed on the wall of the incident control room.

