

## COUNCIL 1. 12. 2011

### 5. LEARNING POINTS FROM THE CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKES 2010–2011

<b>General Manager responsible:</b>	General Manager City Environment, DDI 941-8608
<b>Officer responsible:</b>	Manager, Civil Defence Emergency Management (Civil Defence Emergency Management & Rural Fire Unit)
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#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Council of learning points identified following a recent review of the responses to the Christchurch earthquakes which occurred during September 2010 – June 2011. Response arrangements / procedures will be modified or developed to improve the response effectiveness of the Christchurch City Civil Defence Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to any future emergency response.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. On 4 September 2010, a magnitude 7.1 earthquake caused severe damage to properties and infrastructure within the Christchurch City Council territorial area which necessitated the activation of the Christchurch City Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Emergency Operations Centre from 4 – 17 September 2010. No deaths occurred as a result of this earthquake. A State of Local Emergency was declared by each of the following territorial authorities for the entirety of their districts: Christchurch City Council; Waimakariri District Council; and Selwyn District Council with respective EOCs being activated. The three EOCs were supported by the Canterbury CDEM Group's Emergency Coordination Centre and the National Crisis Management Centre.
3. The Christchurch City EOC was again activated on 26 December 2010 (Boxing Day) due to a magnitude 4.9 aftershock that caused further damage mainly within the Central Business District. The City EOC was activated from 26 – 28 December. No State of Emergency was declared for this response.
4. On 22 February 2011, a shallow magnitude 6.3 aftershock occurred which resulted in the deaths of 182 people; many people sustaining injuries, and further severe damage throughout the Christchurch district to property and infrastructure. A State of Local Emergency was declared by the Mayor of Christchurch City Council for the City Council's entire district on 22 February 2011 (1445 hrs). The State of Local Emergency was superseded with the declaration of a State of National Emergency by the Minister of Civil Defence on 23 February 2011 (1030 hrs). The EOC (or Crisis Response Centre) was operational from 22 February – 30 April 2011.
5. Management of the response changed from the Christchurch City Local CDEM Controller and CDEM Group Controller to the National Controller with the State of National Emergency declaration. The Christchurch City EOC and Canterbury CDEM Group Emergency Coordination Centre then merged to become the Christchurch Earthquake Response Centre (CERC) under the direction of the National Controller.
6. On 13 June 2011, the City was again impacted by two aftershocks within approximately one hour of each other. The first aftershock being a 5.5 magnitude aftershock and the second being a 6.3 magnitude aftershock. These aftershocks caused further damage to buildings, rock fall incidents and required a welfare centre to be opened. The EOC was activated from 13 – 15 June as a result of these two aftershocks. No state of local emergency was declared for this response.
7. Following a large scale civil defence emergency response it is common practice to undertake debriefs and reviews which focus on identifying opportunities for improvements.
8. In the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management commenced an independent review relating to the response to the 4 September earthquake late October 2010. This review was interrupted by the 22 February 2011 earthquake. A review report was produced but did not include comments from all intended personnel. A comment to this effect has been included within the report – City Council staff were amongst a number of personnel not interviewed as part of this review.

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9. The Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (John Hamilton, Director) announced on 17 October 2011 that an independent review of the response to the 22 February earthquake in Christchurch will be undertaken. The review team will be led by Mr Ian Mclean with support from Mr David Oughton. The Ministry expects that a draft report will be produced by Christmas 2011 and the final report completed by 31 January 2012. In addition to this review, consideration is being given to a separate study to review the coordination of activities at the national strategic level between government departments and agencies to identify improvements.
10. Staff arranged for an independent review to be carried out of local activities undertaken within the City's EOC, and at City Welfare Centres. The objective of the review was for key personnel involved within the City's response to share their experiences relating primarily, but not solely to the February earthquake response. As part of the review approximately 117 personnel from various organisations participated in an interview or on-line survey. The feedback received has been compiled into a report produced by the consultant (**Attachment 1**). Respondents were given the opportunity to comment on the draft before it was finalised.
11. The recommendations from this review have been compiled into an 'Earthquake Learning Points Action Plan' and will be used to improve the response effectiveness of the Christchurch City EOC to any future emergency (including: operating procedures and documentation; preparedness and training; resources and equipment).
12. These learnings will also be reported to the Canterbury CDEM Group.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13. Financial implications should be met from funding already provided within the 2009-19 LTCCP. Any additional funding required to implement improvements will be subject to either Annual Plan or LTCCP processes.

#### **Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2009-19 LTCCP budgets?**

14. Yes.

#### LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

15. The Civil Defence Emergency Management Act requires local authorities to:
  - (a) Plan and provide for civil defence emergency management within its district;
  - (b) Respond to and manage the adverse effects of emergencies in its area;
  - (c) Make available suitably trained and competent personnel, including volunteers.

#### **Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?**

16. Yes.

#### ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

17. 2009-19 LTCCP, p178

#### **Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2009-19 LTCCP?**

18. Yes, the LTCCP states that the Council will provide civil defence related services such as responding to emergencies when they occur.

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**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES**

19. National Civil Defence Emergency Management Strategy – Goal Three: Enhancing New Zealand's capability to manage civil defence emergencies.

**Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?**

20. Yes.

**CONSULTATION FULFILMENT**

21. Not applicable.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Council notes:

1. The independent review's final conclusion which reads: "...the response was positive and very well managed. As long as we build on what we have now established we will be ever better prepared" and
2. That staff will incorporate learning points identified in the review of the responses to the Christchurch earthquakes into future response arrangements.