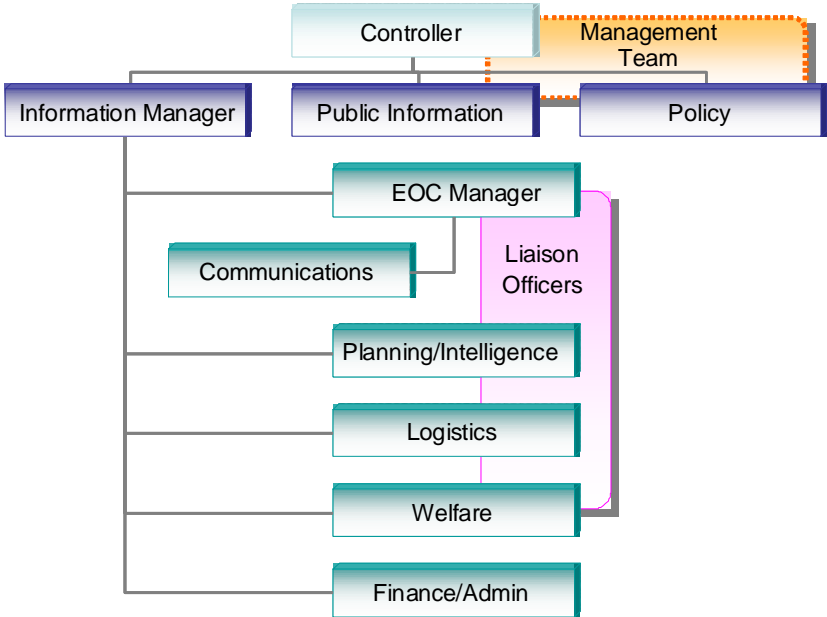


SOP.2.0. South Waikato Emergency Operations Centre Structure

Emergency Operations Centre Functions

EOC Organisation Chart



The following functions are relevant to the EOC and are appointed to suit the level and scale of the response required:

Functioning in the EOC	Functioning in the EOC or from elsewhere ¹
Controller	Management Team
Information Manager	Public Information Management
EOC Manager	
Planning/Intelligence	
Communications	
Logistics	
Welfare ²	
Finance/Administration	
Liaison	

Apart from the Controller and Information Manager, each function is represented by a section, headed by the EOC Manager and Section Managers. In smaller activations where a particular function is performed by only one staff member, that member is automatically the section manager. The section managers make up the Controller's Team.

EOC Function Descriptions

Management Team

¹ The Management Team, Public Information Management (PIM) and Policy functions may not be accommodated in the physical EOC itself. Where this is the case designated and equipped spaces with easy access to the EOC must be assigned to these functions.

² The Welfare function tends to be a separate function at especially local (TA) level EOC's due its importance in responding to community needs. At higher level EOC's the Welfare function may form part of the Logistics function through liaison with the welfare cluster.

Note: The Management Team may not be accommodated in the physical EOC itself and may function from the lead agency's normal offices. Since the EOC does not function in isolation from the political and policy point of view provided by the Management Team, its functions are described here.

Responsibilities:

- a) Provide overall emergency policy and direction to the Controller.
- b) Note the Action Plan.
- c) Consider declaration of state of emergency.
- d) Set expenditure limits.
- e) Act as spokesperson for the lead agency/jurisdiction.
- f) Represent the lead agency/jurisdiction at 'whole of government' level.

Management Team

Inputs	Activities	Outputs
Controller Briefings Sitreps Resource requests Public information Political Declarations	Consult Assess Prioritise Decide Direct	Overall management responsibility Establish Action Plan Attend briefings Attend external meetings Front media Liaise with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elected officials - Controller - Policy Manager - Planning/Intelligence Manager Risk management

Controller

Supplementary Reading:

Controller's Manual - www.mcdem.govt.nz

The overall purpose of the Controller is to:

- a) Manage a coordinated response leading up to and during an emergency.
- b) Effectively utilise available resources and information in order to protect life and property.
- c) Relieve distress in a complex and demanding environment.

In the EOC context, the responsibilities include:

- a) Leading, directing and coordinating all resources necessary to respond to effectively to the impact of the emergency.
- b) Determine the Action Plan (EAP).
- c) Determine Sitrep release and briefing times.
- d) Call and chair Controller's Team meetings at regular intervals or as required. (The Controller's Team consists of the Managers of each of the respective sections in the EOC, including the manager of the PIM and Policy sections- when applicable).
- e) Ensure that all actions are accomplished within the priorities established.
- f) Establish the appropriate staffing level for the EOC and continuously monitor organisational effectiveness to ensure that appropriate modifications occur as required.
- g) Determine what support agencies are required and ensure that inter-agency coordination is accomplished effectively within the EOC.
- h) Approve Sitreps before their release.
- i) Direct, in consultation with the Public Information Manager, appropriate emergency public information actions using the best methods of dissemination. Approve the issuance of press releases, and other public information materials as required.
- j) Liaise with Policy Group, Head of lead Agency and / or Elected Officials.
- k) Maintain contact with controllers at other levels of the response.
- l) Brief and liaise with Recovery Manager.
- m) Ensure risk management principles and procedures are applied for all EOC activities.

Controller

Inputs	Activities	Outputs
Controller's Team Briefings Sitreps Action Plan Resource requests Public information Political/Mayor/Group Chair/Head of Lead Agency Declarations	Consult Assess Evaluate Prioritise Decide Direct	Overall management responsibility Establish priorities Attend briefings Establish staff levels Monitor effectiveness Inter-agency coordination Brief Recovery Manager Approve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public information - Sitreps - Action Plans - Critical resource requests Liaise with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Management Team - Controllers' Team - Policy Section - Other controllers - Recovery Manager

Information Manager

Note: While not a standard EOC position, appointing a Information Manager in higher mode (larger) activations holds definite benefits. In lower mode (smaller) activations the Operations Manager can fulfil the responsibilities allocated to the Information Manager (below), or where the role of Controller is not activated the Information Manager can take responsibility for the overall EOC management. This role is typically being performed by the senior CDEM manager.

Reports to: Controller

Responsibilities

- a) Undertake special assignments at the request of the Controller.
- b) Ensure deadlines/timelines are met.
- c) Ensure resource requests are prioritised and tracked.
- d) In consultation with the Controller, schedule, announce and lead EOC shift change and operational briefings.
- e) Ensure the efficient and effective flow of information within the EOC.
- f) Coordinate internal functions of the EOC for effective operational capability.
- g) Monitor the health and welfare of EOC staff. Mediate and resolve any personnel conflicts.
- h) Where the Controller is not activated, take charge of EOC management.

Information Manager

Inputs	Activities	Outputs
Controller/Controller's Team EOC staff Briefings Sitreps Action Plan Resource requests Public information Policy Section Declarations Field staff/other EOC's	Consult Assess Evaluate Prioritise Organise Communicate Monitor Resolve	EOC operational Capability Assistance to Controller Conduct briefings Special projects Effective environment Critical internal incident debriefings Recognition initiatives Liaise with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Section managers - Controller - Field staff/other EOC's

EOC Manager

Reports to: Controller

Responsibilities:

- a) Manage/coordinate the operational objectives and assignments identified in the Action Plan.
- b) Establish the appropriate level of organisation within the Operations Section, continuously monitoring the effectiveness and modifying accordingly. Typical examples of sub-functions are: Registration (of information)³, Safety & Security, Services/Lifeline Utilities⁴, Search & Rescue, Transport, Rural/Agriculture.
- c) Develop action plans through the participation of the collective representation in the EOC.
- d) Maintain a communications link between Incident Controllers (sites) and the EOC or between EOC's (depending on the level of jurisdiction) for the purpose of coordinating the overall response, resource requests and event status information.
- e) Ensure that the incoming information is appropriately registered and disseminated internally.
- f) Ensure that outgoing information is properly registered and disseminated externally.
- g) Conduct periodic Operations briefings for the Controller or when requested.

³ The registration (logging) function may also be assigned to the Planning/Intelligence Section.

⁴ Lifeline Utilities may also form a stand-alone function in the EOC, or link with either the Planning/Intelligence or Logistics sections. The latter is more likely to apply for higher level response, whereas their linkage with the Operations section appears to be more likely at the lower end of response (e.g. TA level).

EOC Manager Operations Section

Inputs	Activities	Outputs
Controller/Controller's Team Information Manager Operations staff Briefings Sitreps Action Plan Resource requests Public information Incident controllers Declarations Field staff/other EOC's	Consult Coordinate Evaluate Prioritise Direct Supervise Register Disseminate	Coordination of response operations Provision of current response status Advise of new incidents Communication with sites/EOC's Contribute to briefings Liaise with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emergency Services - Lifeline Utilities - Transport/Roading - Search & Rescue - Agriculture agencies - EOC's

Planning/Intelligence Section

Reports to: EOC Manager

Responsibilities:

- a) Collect and evaluate information
- b) Register (log) information where the task is not performed by the Operations Section
- c) Prepare periodic Situation Reports (Sitreps)
- d) Draft Action Plan items
- e) Prepare warnings
- f) Complete Action Plan tasks
- g) Conduct Advance Planning and Risk Assessment
- h) Liaise as appropriate to gather best understanding of information/situation.
- i) Monitor open source information, e.g. media and websites.
- j) Maintain situation status boards/displays and maps.
- k) Provide information update at shift change briefings.

Planning/Intelligence Section

Inputs	Activities	Outputs
Controller/Controller's Team Information Manager Planning/Intelligence staff Briefings Sitreps Action Plan Resource requests Public information GIS Air Cell Other EOC's	Consult Coordinate Collect Evaluate Analyse Summarise Display Write Direct Supervise	Coordination of Plan/Intel Section Sitreps Maps Displays Assessments Action Plans Warnings Contribute to briefings Liaise with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical specialists (e.g. weather forecasters, river managers, tsunami scientists, seismologists etc). - Lifeline Utilities

Logistics Section

Reports to: Controller

Responsibilities:

- a) Ensure the Logistics function is carried out in support of the response. This function typically includes locating, acquiring, dispatching and tracking of equipment, supplies, personnel, facilities, and transportation as well as (at some higher response levels) arranging for welfare⁵ (food, lodging, and other support services) as required for displaced people and on-site operations.
- b) Ensure logistics objectives and tasks as stated in the Action Plan are accomplished within the operational period or within the estimated time frame.
- c) Coordinate closely with the EOC Manager to establish priorities for resource allocation.
- d) Coordinate closely with the Financial/Administration Manager about financial aspects related to the management of resources.
- e) Liaise with welfare agencies on welfare support matters (when no separate Welfare section exists).
- f) Ensure critical resources are allocated according to the Action Plan policy, priorities and direction.
- g) Ensure maintenance of a Resource Status display and report Resource Status at shift change briefings.
- h) Keep the Controller informed of all significant issues relating to the Logistics Section.

⁵ When no separate Welfare section exists or in support of the Welfare section.

Logistics Section

Inputs	Activities	Outputs
Controller/Controller's Team Information Manager EOC Manager Planning/Intelligence staff Finance/Admin Section Briefings Sitreps Action Plan Resource requests Other EOC's	Prioritise Coordinate Monitor/Record Anticipate Organise Obtains/Acquire Direct Supervise	Coordination of Logistics Section Source, acquire & supply resources Manage resources Displays Contribute to briefings Liaise with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operations Manager - Finance/Admin Manager - Suppliers - Welfare Manager, or where not appointed Health Agencies and Welfare Agencies - Lifeline Utilities

Welfare Section

Supplementary Reading:

Guide to the National CDEM PLAN, Section 12: 'Welfare' - www.mcdem.govt.nz

Reports to the EOC Manager

Responsibilities⁶:

- a) Manage the community welfare response to the emergency, including coordination of support by welfare agencies and maintenance of links with Civil Defence welfare centres.
- b) Arrange for welfare (food, lodging, and other support services) as required for displaced people as well as those that can be sustained in their homes but require welfare support.
- c) Manage the registration of displaced people and people otherwise in need of welfare support.
- d) Advise the Controller on community welfare issues.
- e) Liaise with the Welfare cluster (WAG's/NWRCG)

⁶ The tasks of the Welfare Section are supported by Welfare Advisory Groups -WAG's (in the case of local and CDEM Group response or the National Welfare Recovery Co-ordination Group- NWRCG (in the case of national response).

Welfare Section

Inputs	Activities	Outputs
Controller/Controller's Team Information Manager Operations Manager Planning/Intelligence staff Finance/Admin Section Briefings Sitreps Action Plan Welfare requests Welfare agencies Other EOC's	Prioritise Coordinate Monitor/Record Anticipate Organise Obtains/Acquire Direct Supervise	Coordination of Welfare Section Source, acquire & supply resources Manage resources Displays Contribute to briefings Liaise with: EOC Manager Logistics Manager Finance/Admin Manager Suppliers Work & Income NZ Red Cross Salvation Army Victim Support Child, Youth & Family DHB's Public Health

Finance/Administration Section

Reports to: Controller

Responsibilities:

- a) Ensure that all financial records are maintained throughout the event or emergency.
- b) In consultation with the Controller determine spending limits, if any, for Logistics, Operations, and other relevant staff.
- c) Ensure that all travel and expense claims are processed within a reasonable time, given the nature of the situation.
- d) Work with the Logistics section on financial aspects related to the management of resources.
- e) Work with the Policy section in preparation of special funding requests.
- f) Maintain expenditure records.
- g) Ensure that all on-duty time is recorded and collected for all personnel.
- h) Manage EOC security/access control.
- i) Manage shift rosters and inform staff.
- j) Manage EOC supplies, equipment and services.
- k) Manage EOC catering (meals, snacks, liquids).
- l) Manage EOC staff safety and welfare requirements (Health & Safety, transport, accommodation, stress/fatigue, illness, family support).
- m) Make announcements on 9-12 above at shift change briefings.

Finance/Administration Section

Inputs	Activities	Outputs
Controller/Controller's Team Information Manager Finance/Admin staff Briefings Sitreps Action Plan Purchase Orders Travel & Expense Forms Staff Lists	Anticipate Coordinate Monitor/Record Organise Process Supervise	Coordination of Finance/Admin Section Procurement Compensation & claims Travel arrangements Cost analysis Access control Shift rosters Arrange catering Arrange staff welfare Resolve equipment needs, problems or failures Contribute to briefings Liaise with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Controller - Information Manager - Logistics Manager - Staff - Service providers

Liaison Officers Report to EOC Manager

Note: Liaison Officers (LO's) – also referred to as 'Support Agency Representatives'- do not function as one team and therefore no Liaison Manager is appointed. Instead LO's link into the particular team in the EOC where their input is required. A dedicated area for liaison officers that provide for communication with their agencies is recommended. The following allocations serve as a general guideline:

NZ Police:	EOC Manager
NZ Fire Service:	EOC Manager
NZ Defence Force:	EOC Manager/Logistics
Health Services:	EOC Manager/Welfare or Logistics
Welfare Services:	EOC Manager/Welfare or Logistics
Lifeline Utilities:	EOC Manager, Logistics or Planning/Intelligence ⁷
Agriculture/Rural:	EOC Manager
Technical specialist agencies:	EOC Manager. Planning/Intelligence

Reports to: Own Agencies and allocated section in the EOC

Responsibilities:

- a) Link with the assigned function in the EOC.
- b) Advise of their agencies' activities and any other information associated with the emergency.
- c) Inform their organisations of the emergency situation, response priorities and requests/tasks emanating from the EOC.
- d) Maintain contact with their agencies (including after hours contact) and provide feedback on the execution of tasks/requests requested by the EOC.
- e) Maintain records of own agency resources, and where practical, a display board of resource information.
- f) Assist in the preparation of requests and directives issued by the EOC.
- g) Maintain a diary or log of actions taken.
- h) Arrange for their relief.
- i) Receive and brief incoming relief LO's.

⁷ Lifeline Utilities may also form a stand-alone function in the EOC, or link with the Operations, Planning/Intelligence or Logistics functions. Linking with Planning/Intelligence or Logistics is more likely to apply for higher level response, whereas their linkage with the Operations section appears to be more likely at the lower end of response (e.g. TA level).

Liaison Officers

Inputs	Activities	Outputs
Controller/Controller's Team EOC Manager Briefings Sitreps Action Plan Own Agency Procedures/Lists	Anticipate Coordinate Monitor/Record Organise	Convey EOC requirements Provide own agency response status Advise new information Advise solutions Contribute to briefings Liaise with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Controller - EOC Manager - Own Agency

Public Information Management Section

Supplementary Reading:

Guide to the National CDEM PLAN, Section 22: 'Public information management' - www.mcdem.govt.nz

MCDEM Information Series IS9/07: 'Public Information Management: Information for the CDEM Sector' - www.mcdem.govt.nz

Note: The Public Information Management (PIM) section may not be accommodated in the physical EOC itself. Where this is the case designated and equipped spaces with easy access to the EOC must be assigned to these functions.

Reports to: Controller – EOC Manager

Responsibilities:

Public Information:

- a) Serve as the coordination point for all public information released by the EOC.
- b) Ensure that the public within the affected areas or others who need it receive timely, accurate and clear information about life safety procedures, public health advisories, relief and assistance programmes and other vital information.
- c) Promote effective public information management between all response agencies.
- d) Prepare public information messages for sign-off by the Controller for release.
- e) Ensure that a Toll-Free Public Information Service (hotline or call centre) is established for the public to access helpful information and advice. Provide the call takers with timely and accurate messaging sheets so that they offer only confirmed and approved information.
- f) Pre-record public information messages on hotline.
- g) Regularly update relevant websites with appropriate public information.
- h) Liaise with peers at other EOC's to ensure consistent messages.

Media Relations:

- a) Serve as the coordination point for all media releases for the EOC.
- b) Coordinate media releases with officials representing other affected response agencies.
- c) Develop the format for press conferences and briefings in conjunction with the Controller.
- d) Prepare media releases for sign-off by the Controller for release.
- e) Maintain a positive relationship with media representatives, monitoring all broadcasts and written articles for accuracy.
- f) Liaise with peers at other EOC's to ensure consistent messages.

Stakeholder Relations:

- a) In consultation with the Controller and Information Manager, coordinate and facilitate visitor tours of the EOC.

Public Information Management Section

Inputs	Activities	Outputs
Controller/Controller's Team Public Information staff Sitreps Warnings Briefings Displays/Status boards Public information Media enquiries Other EOC's Other agencies	Collect & validate info Prioritise needs Prepare material Determine audience Obtain approval Disseminate Supervise	Coordination of PIM Section Public Info messages Press releases EOC visits Contribute to briefings Liaise with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Controller- Information Manager- Media- Other PIM officers- Minister/Mayor/Head of lead agency

Policy Section

Note: The Policy function becomes essential at higher response levels. The function is optional at lower response levels. The Policy section may not be accommodated in the physical EOC itself. Where this is the case designated and equipped spaces with easy access to the EOC must be assigned to these functions.

Reports to: Controller

Responsibilities

- a) Provide overall emergency policy and direction to the Controller and Minister/Mayor/CE of Lead agency
- b) Prepare and advise on declaration and termination of “State of Local or National Emergency.”
- c) Prepare policy papers, briefings and other submissions for higher-level stakeholders.
- d) Track and manage requests, enquiries and initiatives from Minister/Mayor/CE of Lead Agency.
- e) Arrange visits to impact areas by Minister/Mayor/CE of Lead Agency in consultation with the Controller.
- f) Develop/prepare proposals for assistance.
- g) Advise on expenditure limits.
- h) Liaise about policy matters with officials from other agencies.

Policy Section

Inputs	Activities	Outputs
Controller/Controller's Team Minister/Mayor/Political stakeholders/CE of Lead Agency Briefings Sitreps Public information Legal advisors Other agencies	Consult Assess Prioritise Advise Prepare & Submit Arrange Supervise	Policy/Direction Requests Submissions/Forms Briefings Liaise with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minister/Mayor/Head of lead agency - Controller - Operations Manager - Other Agencies

EOC Staffing

5.1 Who?

Personnel to staff the EOC are drawn primarily from the lead agency's existing departments, supplemented by representation from external agencies and volunteers. The personnel to staff the EOC may be full-time, part-time, paid or voluntary staff.

Appropriate staffing and/or skills required for the respective functions may be:

Management Team:

Head of the lead agency/Mayor and elected officials/Chair of the CDEM Group.

Controller:

A statutory position determined in the particular organisation's CDEM Plan.

Information Manager:

Serve in support of the Controller, therefore normally the senior CDEM manager.

EOC Manager:

Manages the EOC when the Controller is not activated.

CDEM Officer(s) and Services personnel; support agencies' Liaison Officers, registration/data entry personnel.

Planning/Intelligence:

Staff who possess an ability to analyse and summarise information; knowledge of information management systems and familiarity with the use of maps and plotting information. A planning capacity and an ability to work against and meet deadlines is essential.

Logistics:

Purchasing, Human Resources and Administration personnel.

Welfare:

This function requires specific pre-training and knowledge of the applicable welfare arrangements and procedures. Dedicated and trained CDEM welfare staff are therefore normally used.

Finance/Administration:

Finance and Accounting as well as Human Resources personnel.

Public Information Manager:

EOC Manager, Controller, Public communications, Liaison and Customer Services personnel.

Policy:

Policy, Legal and Planning personnel.

5.2 Staff Readiness

All staff that may or will be required to serve in the EOC must be appropriately informed of this requirement through appointment contracts or performance agreements. These staff must then be supported to put in place 'Personal Readiness Plans' that address family and household requirements for times when the person is called upon to serve in the EOC. A 'Personal Readiness Plan' should include aspects such as a family communication plan, family evacuation plan, dependent and pet arrangements, emergency supplies, keeping a travel kit of personal effects and transport to the EOC. The support provided can be in the form of training and providing staff with pocket size reference lists and sufficient means of communication.

Staff must understand that there is an expectation on them to:

- Staff the EOC during an emergency.
- Be capable of receiving notification of EOC activation at any time via the procedures outlined in appropriate Standard Operating Procedures.
- When aware of an emergency and not contactable, to check on the EOC status themselves.
- When aware of an emergency and not able to communicate in any way (e.g. telephone networks are disrupted), to assume that the EOC has been activated and to report for duty as soon as practicable.
- Whilst notified that they have been placed on standby, remain on 24-hour telephone contact and remain within the region.
- Advise their managers of any weekend or other absences (including for purpose of leave) away from the region.
- Ensure that their contact particulars as contained in the organisation's contact lists are up to date at all times.
- Consider in their personal readiness plans the possibility of being separated from their families during an emergency.

Supplementary Reading: *RAPID module 'Personal Readiness'* www.rapid.org.nz

5.3 Staff Development

Appointing staff that possess all the skills mentioned above does not guarantee a well functioning EOC. Only real activations, exercises and training towards the unique EOC environment can ensure that. Due to the fact that real events are normally far and few between and exercises may be offered only once or twice a year, training is the single most important element in ensuring an effective EOC.

Training should be conducted regularly, ideally on a monthly basis. Training can be in the form of focussing on a specialist topic, e.g. logging of information, understanding a particular hazard, activation routines, operating electronic equipment in the EOC etc. Training should also be repetitive to cover for personnel changes and organisational restructuring.

To account for staff shortages, there should be ample alternate personnel trained to serve in the EOC. While staff normally specialise in particular EOC functions, they should ideally also be cross-trained to a certain extent to be able to fill staffing gaps as and when they occur.

EOC staff training should be conducted through a structured programme that carries the support of management and is published well in advance so that staff can schedule accordingly. Keeping to a fixed time (e.g. 'every first Wednesday afternoon of the month') will support a routine that staff can plan towards. Ideally a training database should also be kept to record the training offered and staff that attended such training.

Staff Welfare; Health & Safety

EOC staff need to experience being taken care of during an activation. This includes having enough and good quality food and water, comfortable break/sleeping areas, bathrooms and shower facilities and support with transport to and from the EOC.

The role of 'Safety Officer' must be included in the tasks of the Finance and Administration Manager (or other appropriate manager) to oversee staff welfare issues during EOC activations. The Safety Officer must be cognisant of personnel working too many hours consecutively, and also be vigilant of diminishing productivity on the part of personnel as a result of long shifts.

Besides the above, EOC's must be subject to a formal and continuous Health & Safety (H&S) regime that provides for aspects such as the maintenance of clearly marked evacuation routes and procedures, emergency contact numbers, first aid kits, access register, hazard register and H&S notice board. As these H&S matters require continued attention and management (not only during EOC activations) the EOC must be included in the portfolio of the agency's full-time H&S officer or a dedicated H&S officer must be appointed for the EOC.

Supplementary Reading: *RAPID modules 'Health and Safety' and 'Stress Management'*
www.rapid.org.nz

Shift Management

Considering the level of activation, the Information Manager (in consultation with the Controller/EOC Manager) must determine the staffing levels required by the respective functions in the EOC. The Finance and Administration Section then roster staff accordingly.

Staff rosters and shift times must be displayed at an appropriate place in the EOC. Staff rosters must also be recorded for future audit purposes.

While three 8 hour shifts are the preferred option, limited staff numbers often dictate a two 13 hour roster (allowing for an hour hand-over between shifts). Shift durations for EOC staff must however not exceed this time. All staff must take time off equivalent to at least the duration of their previous shift, and at least one full day off after each consecutive five shifts worked.

An hour must be allowed for hand-over between shifts and the shift change briefing. All incoming and outgoing EOC staff must attend shift change briefings. Shift handover must follow a structured process. The following is offered as a model:

- a) The outgoing Finance and Administration Manager determines incoming staff status (staff present/absent) and reports to the incoming Information Manager.
- b) The outgoing Information Manager leads the Shift Change Briefing (held in the EOC). The incoming Information Manager minutes proceedings.
- c) Agenda for shift change briefings:
 - i. Information brief (Planning/Intelligence Manager)
 - ii. Logistics brief (Logistics Manager)
 - iii. Operations brief (EOC Manager)
 - iv. Liaison Officers brief
 - v. Public Information brief (PIM Manager)
 - vi. Policy Team brief (Policy Manager)
 - vii. Finance & Administration brief (Finance/Admin Manager)
 - viii. Controller's remarks and requirements
 - ix. Management Team comments
 - x. Other comments/business
- d) The Incoming Information Manager ensures staffing levels are appropriate.
- e) Individual section handovers to incoming staff (before and after the briefing).

EOC Information Management

The following elements of information management are common to all EOC's:

- Collection
- Collation
- Interpretation
- Planning
- Dissemination

Supplementary Reading

Guide to the National CDEM PLAN, Section 21: 'Emergency information management' - www.mcdem.govt.nz

RAPID module 'Process CDEM Information' - www.rapid.org.nz

6.1 Information Collection

6.1.1 Sources of information:

- Reconnaissance.** This is the most fundamental method of gathering information and must be conducted from the outset. The focus is on the impact (what has happened) and the extent of what the impact. Physical reconnaissance of the impacted areas is directed by the Operations Manager and is conducted by reconnaissance personnel equipped with suitable transport and communication links to the EOC.
- Other Agencies.** Liaison Officers from support agencies report information obtained through their activities via their associated sections in the EOC. The focus is on supplementary reconnaissance information as obtained/observed by those agencies and what response actions they are undertaking. Where agencies are not represented in the EOC the Planning/Intelligence and Logistics sections seek and establish links with the agencies that information is required from. (It is important that only one section in the EOC serves as liaison point with a particular agency).
- Situation Reports (Sitreps) and Action Plans (EAP's).** Received from other EOC's via the Operations section.
- Requests for assistance.** Requests for assistance are normally conveyed through ICP's, other EOC's, reconnaissance personnel or the public via public enquiry systems/call centres. Requests for assistance must be received via the Operations section.

- e) **Offers of assistance.** Offers of assistance must be registered via the Operations section.
- f) Technical subject specialists. Planning/Intelligence must liaise with technical subject specialists/scientists to get their interpretations of aspects pertaining to the event, e.g. weather forecasts (MetService), seismic information (GNS Science), river level predictions (Regional Councils and NIWA), tidal information (NIWA).
- g) **Aerial photographs and maps.** Complete and up-to-date sets of aerial photographs and maps (hard copy and/or electronic format/GIS) must be kept in the EOC. Maps are an essential part of information display and are managed by the Planning/Intelligence section.
- h) **Hazard Consequence and Impact Modelling reports.** These reports are commissioned by councils and CDEM Groups to better understand and plan for hazards in their areas. While the reports' main focus is on risk reduction, they can also facilitate response planning during emergencies.
- i) **Media and Public information.** The media (printed, radio, television) and websites are useful sources of complementary information and for the verification of information. The Planning/Intelligence section must keep a constant watch on relevant media and websites for new or additional information.
- j) **Public & Community groups.** The public and community groups often provide first or supplementary information regarding the impact of the emergency through telephone calls to emergency services and local authorities. This information can assist in determining the areas of greatest impact, the needs of affected people/communities and community resources available to assist if required. The EOC must have systems in place for this information to be conveyed to it by the relevant call centres.

Information Collation

It is critical that all information coming into the EOC be registered and available to all the functions for use. A suitable registration, internal distribution and display system must be established in this regard.

- a) **Registration (Logging):** A central EOC information log must be kept. Preferably the log should be electronic as it can facilitate direct access to all information by all EOC functions. However, where an electronic system is used it is important to back it up with a hard copy central log file.

The central information log records all information received and produced in the EOC as well as all decisions made and actions taken. It serves as a repository of all EOC information during the activation, and must be archived after the emergency for the purpose of audit and review, historical research and future exercises or training.

- b) **Distribution:** After registration, the information must be distributed to the appropriate sections for attention and action. Distribution can be via electronic or manual systems.

- c) **Event File:** It is advisable to create an electronic event file that is accessible to all functions in the EOC. Sub-files for the Action Plan, Sitreps, meetings, news releases, staff matters etc can be created in this file.

Where such an event file does not exist, the registration (logging) function must maintain a system to distribute the above types of information to the relevant sections in a timely and effective way.

- d) **Display**⁸: Some information must be displayed in the EOC immediately upon receipt. Such information includes changes to communication regimes/numbers, the whereabouts of staff and political stakeholders, meeting times, briefing times, announcements etc.

Information Interpretation

The interpretation element of information management consists out of two processes:

- Information evaluation
- Intelligence analysis

Information Evaluation

Information needs to be evaluated by the Planning/Intelligence section to convert it into intelligence by subjecting it, among others, to the following questions:

- a) Does the information relate to the current event and priorities⁹, or do they indicate new matters to be considered?
- b) Does it relevant to information already at hand, and if so does it confirm, update or change existing information?
- c) Is the source reliable? Information must not be accepted at face value without assessing reliability of the source and cross-checking with other information. Do not discard what appears to be unlikely without sound reasons.
- d) Is confirmation required?
- e) Does the information have urgent implications?
- f) Is it significant? If the significance of an item of information is not recognised, the resulting response may be deficient. Significance is determined by what may need to be done in response to the information.

⁸ See 'Displays'.

⁹ Priorities are set by the Controller at the initial EOC activation and are reviewed continuously. In most cases priorities will centre around safety of people; safety/damage of property; prevention/minimisation of further damage; resources/support; restoration.

Intelligence Analysis

Situation Reports (Sitreps)

The outcome of the evaluation process is increased situation awareness. This enables a common operating picture (intelligence) that is stated in the form of a Sitrep. Sitreps form the basis for decision making and the preparation of public information and media releases. Sitreps are produced by the Planning/Intelligence section.

Since Sitreps are produced against time deadlines, not all the above questions (evaluation) will necessarily have been answered for all information at all times. It is therefore important to note in Sitreps what information still requires verification or what information is outstanding/in the process of being sought.

Sitreps are factual statements of impact by providing:

- a) An Emergency Impact Summary (EIS).
- b) Information about risk and complicating factors.
- c) Information about future scenarios and uncertainties.
- d) Information about response priorities.
- e) Information about response assistance required.

Aspects to be dealt with in the EIS part of Sitreps include the following:

- a) **Event status:** Summary of the nature and history (escalating/deescalating) of the event.
- b) **Response status:** The response management structures activated and initial recovery planning.
- c) **People status:** Numbers and locations of displaced, missing, injured, dead people, welfare needs and what actions are taken.
- d) **Community Infrastructure status:** Impact on community infrastructure (hospitals, medical centres, rest homes, special care facilities, welfare agencies, educational institutions, commercial infrastructure including financial infrastructure, post and courier functions), estimated times of outages and response taken.
- e) **Housing and property status:** Numbers and locations of houses and property damaged, seriously damaged and condemned; the estimated times before re-occupation will be possible and response taken.
- f) **Transport Infrastructure status:** The extent of damage to roads & bridges, rail, harbours and airports, estimated times of outages and response taken.
- g) **Lifeline Utilities status:** The extent of damage to lifeline utilities, estimated times of outages and response taken.
- h) **Environmental status:** The extent of damage on the environment (including the impact on farming activity) and response taken.

Action Plan

Once the initial common operating picture has been established, an Action Plan needs to be established. The Action Plan is based upon an assessment of the situation and analysis of response options. It looks forward, setting the objectives and how they will be met. The Action Plan is primarily meant for internal EOC use as it sets the direction for activities within the particular EOC. It would however be appropriate to communicate an Action Plan with the immediate higher level and neighbouring EOC's and other relevant stakeholders.

The scope of the Action Plan will vary at each level of response. At local level the Action Plan will be focussed on immediate operational tasks. The CDEM Group Action Plan will focus on control, support and coordination. At national level, the Action Plan will reflect strategic policy, support and whole of government response.

The Controller is responsible for the Action Plan through the provision of policy guidance and the setting of strategic objectives and priorities. The Controller should consider the inputs of the Controller's Team (the managers of all the EOC functions) in the determination of the Action Plan. For instance, the Planning/Intelligence manager must advise on priorities and risk, the Logistics manager on capability and the Policy manager on legal and political considerations. The Operations Section, with input from the Planning Intelligence Section develops the response structure (the detail of the Action Plan) to meet the objectives.

The Action Plan is reviewed after every Sitrep and/or new directions given by the Management Team.

Aspects to be considered in determining the Action Plan include:

- a) Resource matching: Allocation of personnel and resources to identified tasks.
- b) Deployment: Responding using available resources.
- c) Extent of activation of support agencies.
- d) Request for assistance: Where the identified tasks cannot be matched to immediately available resources.
- e) Logistics support.
- f) Prognosis- how is the event considered to unfold and the requirement of additional resources.
- g) Higher level and political expectations
- h) Public expectations

The Action Plan is communicated to all EOC staff by the Controller or Information Manager via an initial EOC briefing and contains the following elements:

- a) Confirmation of the EOC activation level and times of operation
- b) EOC Priorities

- c) Specific objectives- immediate and medium term
- d) Specific tasks- who, how and when
- e) Resource issues
- f) Communications Plan
- g) Next Sitrep times
- h) Next meetings

The Action Plan is confirmed at every subsequent shift change briefing or other EOC briefing.

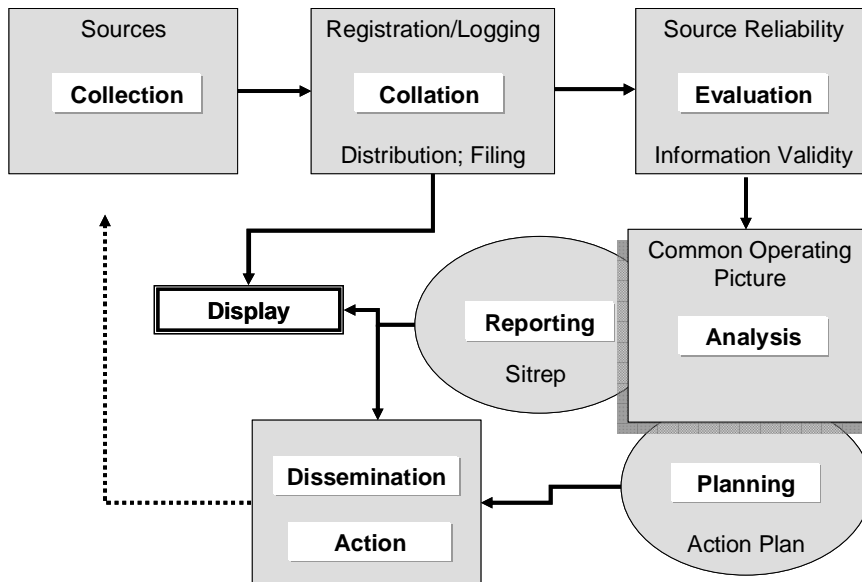
Information Dissemination

The final element of information management is to ensure its effective promulgation to end-users. Information flow must be upwards to higher level EOC's and political stakeholders, downwards to field units and lower level EOC's, inwards to EOC functions and outwards to other involved agencies and the community. This is achieved through the following types of products and outputs:

- a) **Directives:** Inwards communication in verbal or in written form; documented and registered. Directives result from decisions taken by the Controller and/or Management Team and serve to set a course of action in the EOC.
- b) **Sitreps (Situation Reports):** The official documented common operating picture. Sitreps are disseminated upwards, downwards and inwards. While disseminated to all internal stakeholders, external dissemination is restricted to selected recipients. External distribution must however include all the other agencies that have a stake in the response.
- c) **Action Plans:** Action Plans are mainly directed at inwards communication but it is appropriate to communicate Action Plans with the immediate higher level and neighbouring EOC's as well as other relevant stake holders.
- d) **Warnings:** Where appropriate, warnings are issued to provide information regarding potential dangers. A number of methods of dissemination may need to be used concurrently to make sure that everyone who needs to be warned is warned.
- e) **Displays:** Displays serve as a vital tool to maintain a common operating picture in the EOC. Equipment such as white boards, pin boards and data projectors can be used to display information. Displays may represent maps, event and resource status information, the Action Plan, communication plans/contact numbers, staff rosters, announcements etc.
- f) **Media Releases:** These are designed to ensure that the public is properly informed of the current situation and the response taken. A media release should include a short statement on:
 - i. what has happened;

- ii. what is currently being done about it;
 - iii. what is intended to be done; and
 - iv. public safety messages.
- g) **Briefings:** Briefings contain an overview of the situation and may include operational, administrative, communications and media information. Three types are distinguished:
- i. Formal briefings to political stakeholders, usually in written format.
 - ii. Operational briefings held for staff during operational activity, typically at shift changeovers or as deemed necessary by the controller or Information Manager.
 - iii. Media briefings, held at a venue away from the EOC.

Figure 4: EOC Information Management



Information Management Systems

There are many emergency information management systems options, including utilising business as usual systems and those available on the open market. The later systems are designed specifically for the EOC situation and offer computerised capabilities such as information registration (logging), tasking, information flow, information/report escalation, resource database, resource tracking, status collation, checklists, procedures etc.

While these systems support efficient EOC information management, they may be out of the reach of budgets or isolated from business as usual. They also require appropriate (continued) maintenance arrangements and regular training of EOC staff in their use is essential. Before investing in such systems a proper market scan including demonstration and testing is advised. Aspects to investigate include:

- a) robustness
- b) back-up capacities
- c) maintenance arrangements
- d) easy to use
- e) appropriateness for the level of EOC operations
- f) security
- g) access
- h) capability to manage concurrent events
- i) escalation of information
- j) audit and archiving capability
- k) compatibility with other existing IT systems.

The use of sophisticated emergency information management systems must not be seen as a prerequisite or condition for good and effective EOC/emergency management. While they do serve as a tool in this regard, the use of a basic electronic logging database capability (that can easily be developed through existing IT resources) coupled with basic email capability in the EOC will already go a long way in ensuring effective information management.

All councils also maintain well established Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) and employ skilled staff to support these systems. GIS can and should be used as a vital tool to support information management in EOC's. Reference material to acknowledge this area's importance and application in emergency management is under development.¹⁰