



Vincent Street
CESSNOCK 2325

26 February 2008

To All Councillors

You are hereby notified that the next Meeting of the Works & Services Committee will be held in the Council Chambers on Wednesday, 5 March 2008 commencing at 6.30 pm, for the purpose of transacting the undermentioned business.

**B R MORTOMORE
GENERAL MANAGER**

AGENDA:

PAGE NO.

(1) APOLOGIES.

(2) CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES.

Minutes of the Works & Services Committee Meeting
held on 23 January 2008

(3) OFFICERS' REPORTS

DIRECTOR WORKS & SERVICES

2/2008 Emergency Risk Management Project 2

(4) QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

OFFICER'S REPORTS

DIRECTOR WORKS & SERVICES REPORT NO. 2/2008

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY RISK MANAGEMENT PROJECT

Civil Construction & Emergency Services Manager, Mr Les Kirwan, reports:

BACKGROUND

In early 2005, Cessnock City Council, in conjunction with Maitland, Dungog and Port Stephens Councils, commenced an Emergency Risk Management (ERM) project for the Lower Hunter Emergency Management Co-ordinating Committee. The ERM project has investigated natural, technological and biological hazards and has identified levels of risk for these hazards and has undertaken a gap analysis of treatment plans for hazards having high and extreme risks. This report presents the outcomes of the ERM project for the information of Council.

REPORT

The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) adopted an Emergency Risk Management (ERM) process in 2000 as the basis for emergency planning in New South Wales.

It is the responsibility of local Councils through the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) to undertake the preparation of plans in relation to the prevention of, preparation for, response to and recovery from emergencies in the local government area for which it is constituted under section 29 of the NSW State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989.

Dungog, Port Stephens, Cessnock and Maitland Councils have combined emergency management resources through the Lower Hunter Emergency Management Coordinating Committee to address hazards that are similar for all four Council areas, with the aim of producing a combined Emergency Risk Management (ERM) Plan.

The impact of not having an ERM Plan in place for natural hazards may result in future reductions of government funding to Council for natural disaster relief.

In early 2005, a workgroup was appointed by the Lower Hunter Emergency Management Co-ordinating Committee to undertake the ERM project. The workgroup consisted of the Local Emergency Management Officers from Cessnock, Dungog, Maitland and Port Stephens Councils.

The ERM project has principally undertaken an investigation of risks from natural disasters in accordance with the grant funding received to undertake the project. The project has also recognised that the ERM study area is exposed to risks from technological and biological hazards arising as a consequence of natural disasters and so has also addressed these hazards as a part of the project.

As a part of assessing the level of risk for each hazard, the impact of the hazard on the community and / or its assets needs to be considered. As such, the project identified a number of elements of risk that were to be assessed as a part of the risk assessment process. These elements were people (life and health), environment, property, lifelines (critical infrastructure including utilities), animals (farm and domestic – life and health), welfare and the economy.

The interaction of the hazards and the elements at risk has been analysed and evaluated to determine the level of risk. The level of risk is an assessment of how seriously adverse the interaction between the hazard and the element at risk is. The levels of risk (in ascending order) are low, moderate, high and extreme.

Consultation during the ERM project to assist in the risk assessment process has been extensive across the four (4) local government areas. This consultation has involved all stakeholders identified as a part of the project including emergency services (combat agencies and support agencies) through to representative community groups.

The project workgroup has completed the risk assessment process and has determined that extreme and high levels of risk present a significant level of risk and require the development of treatment plans to reduce the level of risk. Tabulated below is a summary of the hazards, and their elements at risk, that present a level of risk of either extreme or high.

Hazards	Elements at Risk							Responsible Agency
	People	Environment	Property	Lifelines	Animal	Welfare	Economy	
Natural								
Cyclone	High	High	High					SES
Tornado		High	High	High	High			SES
Earthquake	High		Extreme	Extreme		Extreme	Extreme	Police
Coastal erosion	High							Port Stephens Council
Fire—bush	Extreme	High	High	High	High	High	High	RFS/FB/DEC C
Fire—grass	Extreme	High	High	High	High	High	High	RFS/FB/DEC C
Flood	Extreme	High	Extreme	High	High	Extreme	High	SES
Fog	High			High				Police/ RTA/ Council/ Aviation
Extreme cold					High			
Extreme heat	Extreme		High	High	High	High		
Land slip/rock fall/mudflow	High							Police/ DECC
Severe storm—electrical	High	High		High	High			SES
Severe storm—wind		High	High	High	High			SES
Severe storm—rain			High					SES
Severe storm—hail	High		Extreme	High	High	Extreme	High	SES
Storm surge		High						SES
Tsunami	High	High						SES
Drought		High		High	High	High	High	
Technological								
Aeronautical	High							Police
Bridge collapse	High							RTA/ Council
Building collapse	High		High					Police
Dam failure	High			High				SES/ DSC/ Owner
Hazardous materials	High	High						FB
Industrial accident	Extreme	High	High					Police
Infrastructure failure—power				Extreme				Electricity Providers
Infrastructure failure—water	High			High				Hunter Water/ Dungog Shire Council
Infrastructure failure—sewerage		High						Hunter Water/ Dungog Shire Council
Infrastructure failure—communication				High			High	DOC/ Telstra/ Owners
Infrastructure failure—gas								Alinta
Infrastructure failure—road	High			Extreme				RTA/ Council
Infrastructure failure—rail				High			High	State Rail/ ARTC
Mine accident	Extreme							Police

Hazards	Elements at Risk							Responsible Agency
	People	Environment	Property	Lifelines	Animal	Welfare	Economy	
Natural								
Pollution—chemical	High	High	High	High				FB (HAZMAT)
Pollution—oil/fuel		High	High	High				FB (HAZMAT)
Transport accident—air	High							Police
Transport accident—rail	High	High	High	High				State Rail/ ARTC
Transport accident—road	Extreme	High						Police
Transport accident—sea	High							NSW Maritime/ N'cle Port Corporation
Explosion	High		High					FB
Fire—residential	High		Extreme					FB
Fire—industrial	High	High	High			High		FB
Biological								
Pathogens	High				High			HNEAHS
Communicable disease— affecting humans	Extreme				High	High	Extreme	HNEAHS
Communicable disease— affecting animals					High		High	DPI
Communicable disease— affecting plants		High					High	DPI

Legend

SES	State Emergency Service	FB	NSW Fire Brigade
RFS	Rural Fire Service	DECC	Department of Environment & Climate Change
RTA	NSW Roads & Traffic Authority	DOC	Department of Commerce
DSC	Dam Safety Committee	ARTC	Australian Rail Track Corporation
HNEAHS	Hunter New England Area Health Service		
DPI	Department of Primary Industries		

As a result of the risk assessment outcomes, the ERM working group has undertaken an analysis of the risk treatment planning process. The analysis has determined that the majority of high and extreme risks have treatment plans already prepared by the responsible agency. This would indicate that a high level of preparedness for the emergency events exists within the emergency combat agencies such as the SES, RFS and Police and support agencies such as DOCS, Hunter New England Area Health Service and Councils.

The project has identified some gaps in the treatment plan process. For some hazards there is no single agency responsible for dealing with the element at risk. In this case, the element at risk is the economy and the hazards include earthquake, fire, severe storm and communicable disease affecting people. The Lower Hunter Emergency Management Co-ordinating Committee intends to prepare a press release to alert businesses that they should consider these hazards as a part of the preparation of their business continuity plans.

The process has also identified that each of the representative Councils and the Roads & Traffic Authority have some risks that require the development of treatment plans. Much of the documentation for these plans already exists, however, formal treatment plans will now be developed. These principally relate to infrastructure failure (road), landslip and fog.

The overall outcome of the ERM project has identified a number of areas of significant risk for natural, technological and biological hazards across the four (4) local government areas. The project has determined, however, that treatment plans for these risks have, by and large, been developed by the responsible agency and are in place ready to be implemented should the event occur. A high level of readiness exists within all responsible agencies for the management of emergency events. The management of the June 2007 flood event bears testament to this.

Attached for the information of Council is the Executive Summary and Part 1 of the Emergency Risk Management report that provides further detail on the project that has been undertaken and its outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION that the information be noted.

To: **The General Manager**
Works & Services Committee –
5 March 2008

L OLDFIELD
DIRECTOR WORKS & SERVICES
26 February 2008