

Notes of a Flood Debrief held on Thursday 25 June 2015 at 2.00 pm in the Civil Defence Emergency Operations Centre

Present: Peter Cameron (Ministry of Civil Defence) - Chair

Alan Worthington*	Planning/Intelligence
Alastair Dickie*	Police - Mosgiel
Andrea Jones*	Media Liaison
Andrew Metcalfe*	Southern DHB
Bill Feather*	Mosgiel –Taieri Community Board
Brendan Shea	Public Information
Chris Henderson	Water & Waste
Christine Garey*	Otago Peninsula Community Board
Dave Stevenson*	Communications
Derek King*	Welfare
Fiona Laing	Dunedin CDEM
Gavin Logie	Logistics
Gavin Palmer*	Otago Regional Council
Geoffrey Tompkins	Red Cross
Gerard McCombie	Water & Waste
Glenn Mitchell	Dunedin CDEM
Graham McKerracher	Media Liaison
Grant McKenzie*	DCC
Janine Sharp*	Red Cross
Jason Guthrie*	Police
Kirstyn Lindsay*	Planning/Intelligence
Laurence Voight*	Fire Service
Leanne Stenhouse	Saddle Hill Community Board
Megan Barrett	Southern PHO
Mel Aitken*	Police
Nathan Findlay	Red Cross
Neil Brown*	Dunedin CDEM
Nicola Pinfold*	Planning/Intelligence
Pam Jordan	Community Liaison
Paul Hayton	Public Information (Social Media)
Paul McNamara*	Southern DHB
Peter Standring	Transportation
Robyn Dawson	Welfare
Ruth Stokes*	DCC
Sandy Graham*	Logistics
Scott Weatherall*	Saddle Hill Community Board
Sean Lee	Public Information (Web)
Simon Pickford	DCC
Susan Fairbrother	Public Information
Vivienne Harvey	DCC - Minutes
Wendy Collard*	Logistics

Apologies: Dave Cull, Sue Bidrose; Laura McElhone, Jenny Lapham, Kate Davidson, Paul Freeland, Sue Price, Doug Third and Wayne Scott

Mr Cameron identified what the debrief would cover and reminded everyone of what happened and the timeline of events. The debrief will allow learning from the event and enhance the situation in Dunedin for emergency management.

Mr Cameron asked those present to consider the following aspects when responding to the debrief questions:

- Risk knowledge and management

- Warning receipt and promulgation
- Activation, declaration and public warning
- Liaison arrangements - could they be improved
- Information acquisition and processing
- Public information and news media liaison
- EOC staffing and functionality - were there enough people
- Community-based response
- Transition to recovery phase - still in at this stage.

Debrief Questions

1. What could have been done better in our response to the event?
2. What were the most positive parts about our response to the event?
3. What is your greatest learning point from this event?

Each organisation was asked to provide feedback based on the debrief questions.

Police:

The wider Police response will be debriefed next week. Alister Dickie has debriefed Mosgiel.

Alastair Dickie - With regard to Mosgiel, they didn't get many calls for assistance and then heard about self-evacuation in parts of Mosgiel due to surface flooding. The river levels were kept an eye on as the Silverstream was concerning. Mr Dickie called Bill Feather in the afternoon to talk about the situation and late afternoon set up an incident control point at the Downes Room of the Mosgiel Library. An incident management team was put together in case of the need for evacuation. [REDACTED]. Mr Dickie felt there is a need for a response plan in Mosgiel, Brighton and Outram.

The community representatives came together and the Downes Room was a good venue. Fire and Ambulance were absent, but they were busy elsewhere. A rep from the ORC was also required. They were monitoring the river levels and had spotters out on the ground. The plan is that a rep from the ORC is stationed at the ICP in the future. Pleased we didn't have to evacuate. We had one Unimog with five staff, and 10 Red Cross, 12 community patrol people and 5 cops. The community patrol people were good at feeding back information and they also did a good job providing advice to residents. [REDACTED]

There is a need to pull together. Mosgiel was having hourly teleconferences with Jason Guthrie.

Jason Guthrie - we are refining our staff call-out options. Staff were tied up with policing the FIFA U20 World Cup.

There needs to be a consistent message in terms of what we were telling people to do regarding the availability of evacuation centres where we could take people. The stadium has been tagged as one of those places but it was being used for an event.

The commitment of staff on ground was very good. Big hours were put in and staff kept a positive mind-set in challenging conditions.

The District Command Centre is a new positive aspect as it runs 24/7. Police were still able to set up the IMT even with staff busy with FIFA.

Learning thing - to get set up early.

Mel Aitken - based at the EOC. Evacuation of people from Fulton Home could have been done better in terms of who was responsible for it. Staff in the field felt they were responsible. As it progressed, they realised other agencies were doing the same task. There was a breakdown in communication in terms of working out who was doing what - a learning

curve. Having more regular round table discussions as to where people are at and what is happening would be good. Not having been involved in the pre-plans was a disadvantage.

Alastair Dickie - There was confusion about activation and declaration. Some people thought there was a declaration.

Fire Service:

Laurence Voight - Thoughts align with the Police. Internal resourcing of personnel sourcing specialist equipment for dealing with contaminated water. Safety wellbeing issues. Personnel being called back to work and the sheer volume of people required to do the work. Have to work with Service organisations. Having available messages to give the people they were dealing with - where can they evacuate to, should we wait...

Positive parts - recently set up a coordination centre. Deployment to incidents worked well and how it was handled on the ground. Being mindful of how they were dealing with the people concerned. The resilience of people doing the job.

Greatest learning - collectively get out of silos. Work together and get situational awareness of what is going on; think strategically; plan ahead; shift changeovers and bringing people from elsewhere; getting taskforces lined up and having plans.

Mr Cameron - Combined decision-making capability. Senior people making combined decisions so there is one source of the truth. This is something to work towards.

Southern DHB:

Paul McNamara - Had a couple of debriefs; one within the DHB and one with Fulton Home to talk things through and try and get input into residential care forums to share their experiences and what their thoughts are in the recovery phase. Learnt a lot. Using Health EMIS, we did very poor logging but good situation reports. Normally it's the other way round.

Things that could have been done better - There seemed to be an inconsistent approach in the EOC about requests, ie generator and lighting set for Fulton Home. It was obtained and Red Cross delivered it. Thank you to Red Cross and the two staff who stayed there. Some things which were requested by EOC risk assessment around the environments, what was best for 33 residents, whether they should evacuate to Cargill Enterprises or shelter in place. With elderly you don't want to move them too much as they die due to the extra stress they go through.

The determination to evacuate was the dementia unit. The Radius Fulton Home plan was to decant to St Andrews and Marne Street. Unfortunately Marne Street was also having problems. The DHB opened the EOC from 1300 and continued through the night.

One of the positives, when the city engineers were approached for an assessment around the environs of Fulton Home they came back with information on water levels, if it stopped raining then flood waters would pull away in about four hours. They could then adequately assess whether to keep people in place.

Working in isolation - we need to identify the problem, who will be handling and come back if support require. This is the central point. There are different levels of care - hospital, rest home and dementia care. The last thing you want is D6 patients wandering. We need 19 beds D6 level care. That was what was being worked on in the background.

Information flows - did request for a sitrep to get a grasp of the scale and there was none. Getting information from around the rooms - the frequency might need to be more than three.

Some of the good stuff - Assessment done, generator set. As things were slowing down before the calls came in, Thornbury House then had issue, required sand bags and getting that organised for them. Quick early action of the sand bags meant that they could stay.

Radius Fulton Home relied on staff to have their own torches. Getting the phone numbers to get torches and portalocs was good. We are good at snow events as we have them every year. Saw the Metservice alerts coming in but could not equate what that would mean. It was good to have a multi-agency event instead of the normal single agency response and employing a health liaison allows us to move forward.

The Health Liaison couldn't tell who was in charge visually. It would help if they were labelled. Some of us haven't done a practice run or been on an exercise. We're having useful talks but that information needs to be more in your face. Possibly having things written on boards so that it could be seen and acted on would have been useful.

Mr Cameron - do you get a copy of the sitreps as they were issued?
Verbally at the briefings.

Red Cross:

From the guys on the street being asked questions and not being able to give standard responses. Would have been nice to have templates of what other agencies are in charge of different areas. [REDACTED]

The RC05 truck was out of town - it would have been useful to have. The Red Cross assets were used. Carried out lots of tasks, which was good.

The importance of training with other agencies to know what everyone is capable of and what is on hand in terms of assets.

Welfare coordination - nothing come up at the briefing. The welfare centre at Brighton worked well as the Red Cross are trained for that. Sometimes there is lack of awareness of the Red Cross resources and what we can do. Red Cross could provide 60 beds and blankets in the matter of hour.

CDEM group

Gavin Palmer, ORC and Otago Group - Activated in a monitoring role based on reports from the EOC. The ORC provided information on flood hazard - Water of Leith and Silverstream. They were occupied as the Metservice changed their forecast. This was the second highest flow in the Water of Leith in last 50 years, with assessed return period of 30 years. Was about half the size of largest flow on record that occurred 1929.

In previous events had a staff member in EOC, but didn't this time. There was good communication but on reflection should have had someone at the EOC and should have had someone at ICP in Mosgiel from ORC to adapt to rapidly changing event and to apply operational knowledge around risk.

Learning - although we did scenarios, the flows were higher than expected. It was just like 2006. Used all information available and gut instinct. The ORC don't have a lot of staff but deployed them strategically to hotspots at the Taieri and Leith and they relayed information back.

Mr Cameron: Is it practical to have a person at Mosgiel in the ICP or having field staff?

Gavin Palmer - We will have one of our staff roving and looking at hotspots and calling into ICP and feeding it back. At EOC we would have someone stationed.

Alastair Dickie - We did have an initial ORC contact - it would have been good to be able to retain it.

Otago Peninsula Community Board

Christine Garey - Thank you to Council staff and contractors in the area which was appreciated. Used to slips and trees coming down and the roads blocked, but the flood took us by surprise. Took a call about the issue but couldn't get through to the CSA. Didn't

understand the scope of the issue until tried to go to town. Stayed to help try and coordinate things.

Initial communication was an issue and not being able to get through to Council. Didn't have direct dial numbers and having a list for these types of situation and key cellphone numbers would be useful. Usually contact is made through the CSA. The contact with Civil Defence was late in the piece and contacted Civil Defence myself.

First concern was for the schools. Schools were trying to make decisions [REDACTED] about safety and getting kids picked up. Contact was not early, but once contact was made, it was excellent.

Email debrief, but yet to meet. Signage could be better round the aftermath and roads being closed and blocked at certain points. Better identification that roads were closed and where you can get through to.

This was a most incredible trial and we were fortunate to have this opportunity. The Community Board have been asking for an exercise, and would like to be trained. Seen where the gaps are and there is a lot of work the Board could do.

Excellent communication once it was established from Civil Defence, staff, Peter Standing and his team - special thanks. Christine acted as a conduit via social media, email and phone calls via board members. The local Police officer who is also a board member kept Christine in the loop about what he was doing in the field. This worked well from a Civil Defence and community perspective. The community appreciated updates. Staff managed to keep one road open, which was pivotal. Local knowledge was also good.

Key role for the board is communication and they need a local exercise.

Saddle Hill Community Board

Scott Weatherall - Our community started to become concerned late morning with flooding across the road at the northern end of Ocean View. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Not too many Community Board members were immediately available. Fire were pumping garages. Had to close the road at the northern end. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Had a Policeman turn up and he indicated do what you need to do. He headed back to Kaikorai Estuary and closed the road.

Andrew Lord DCC came out and provided practical support until he was required back in the situation. [REDACTED]

Rang back to EOC and advised road was closed. Asked for sand bags that request was made. 10-12 houses that were evacuated went to family and friends. One family from Westwood to come to the welfare centre. 45 minute calls into the centre. Indicated we would open Brighton Surf lifesaving centre. Then we had to evacuate Brighton Caravan Park. [REDACTED]. Brought them to Brighton SLC and looked after them. Community dropped off food and bedding. [REDACTED]

Call Centre was overwhelmed and the phones didn't get answered. People ring Community Board members saying people needed help. Told people to come to welfare centre. Communication was only one way. Received no updates from anyone from the EOC regarding Brighton and Westwood.

Positives: Resilience and resourcefulness within the community; the amount of food that was dropped off; the leadership from the community board. Without community boards we would have been stuffed. The Red Cross were fantastic; they stayed at the welfare centre as community board members were fatigued and needed to go to rest. We put something in writing to support them through the evening. Without the Fire Service we would have been challenged. Communication and relationships within the community are important. It would

have been good to have set up an incident control point out there - community board, fire service, neighbourhood support, but not enough people. There was good communication via social media. An email sent to Neil Brown with a wrap up on where we were at it was seen by large number of people.

We need to act earlier, and call for helpers earlier. Although we did ring the rugby club to help with sandbagging, all the seniors live in town and the surf club people also live in town. We are on our own. We now know that we are on our own and will plan and prepare for that. Concerned about the wider community board. Tried to support Abbotsford, but was not aware of the extent of that. Only just found out that Fairfield had houses with one metre of water.

10 houses were evacuated, 6 flooded - 18 people. The 16 who stayed overnight at the Surf Club were from the Brighton Caravan Park - some wanted to head back to the Caravan Park but we had concerns around the effluent floating there. [REDACTED]

A special thanks and acknowledgement for Council staff and support services for managing the recovery phase very well and all their efforts were and are extremely appreciated..

Mosgiel Taieri Community Board

Bill Feather - From a Community Board perspective role, it was making available facilities for the incident room to operate which had some basic equipment. From learning we have additional equipment being made available such as computers as well as additional rooms for kitchen facilities. The knowledge learnt from last night's debrief and how close Mosgiel was to being isolated completely from the city.

In communicating with the city; this was difficult. The room was equipped with two-way communication to the EOC. [REDACTED]. Bill coordinated the community patrol. There were seven mobile units which were extremely important. Each patrol sorted out an area of which they took care of and they continuously looped patrolling that area. As a result had some good information on what was wet, dry and different from last time. Will learn from that for future use.

Positive part is involving the community patrol. National organisation and they do have and have had discussions at national level with Civil Defence. First time that the patrol played a concentrated part in the event and they have a lot to learn from that exercise. They will be better prepared for next time.

Mr Cameron congratulated the three boards on how they conducted during the incident and how the communities responded. The communities demonstrated their own resilience.

DCC Controllers

Neil Brown - thanks for the feedback. It was hectic in the EOC. Today's comments will be followed up; we are here to learn. The agencies worked well together - that was a positive. It was a good idea that we should activate as requested by the Fire Service. Spatial awareness - agree with comments about we could have made it more obvious. Greater flow of information out of the EOC needs to be addressed.

Grant McKenzie - Council hasn't had a formal debrief. Still recovery work to be done. Visibility to get oversight what was happening in the wider environment. Communication back in. Information could flow back in as well as it could be and also information flowing back out. Another issue was the collating of information. So much information had come in it was hard to collate when we got to recovery phase. Some places had been assessed. We need systems and processes right up front to ensure it is done right first time.

Positives include the extra effort put in by staff who were working long hours; also our contractors. They were out there trying to give us eyes and ears. The only problem is they weren't ringing us. The work of the community boards was appreciated. An outstanding effort helping out the communities - well done Scott. Volunteers, and the work done by all

the volunteers - St Kilda Surf Lifesaving Club and the Red Cross. When you put the call out for volunteers it is hard to say no to volunteers, so you get what you get. The Edgar Centre is the designated evacuation centre although the stadium is also on the list.

Ruth Stokes - The key issues were covered by Grant - information and communication. Both the awareness of what information is out there, the collation and analysis of it and the communication of it so that it can be acted on is the biggest learning. Putting resource on that. Great staff and key operational staff working incredible hours, but to support them with people who can provide them with information. Internally, looking at infrastructure and assets. We do appreciate the community boards were the face of Council and thank them for their efforts, as well as the Brighton Surf Lifesaving Club, St Kilda Surf Lifesaving Club and other volunteers.

EOC functions:

Welfare

Derek King, Chair of Welfare - This is most important as it is people we are concerned with. Thanks to those involved. Moved 55 people and 18 families. Three of them didn't even turn up. Time was spent following up with the hotels to find out what happened to them. Where did those people go who said they urgently needed accommodation? No adverse feedback. Set up the South Dunedin centre on Thursday. The Red Cross were a great support. Didn't need victim support, comms or Polytech for food apart from Scott who wanted food. Once this was followed up they didn't end up requiring it. The Red Cross was used a lot. There needs to be a consistency of message - four groups trying to sort out Fulton Home. What is their plan? More regular catch-ups are needed. It is good to be here as a group and talk more; you do learn a lot. Finished just after lunch on Friday and then it was the weekend. Who do I ring over the weekend or overnight for food parcels? Who do you ring at 2am in the morning or over the weekend. Haven't had a committee debrief yet. We only meet once a year, but we need to have more of those meetings, and spend more time on preparation. It went well but we need to sort out what happens over the weekend.

How do you make people leave? On Saturday elderly couple wouldn't leave. House was really damp. When it's not safe, how do you make people leave? Police advised that if death or serious injury is imminent the Police can remove them under the Police Act.

Mr Cameron - Talk to the DHB about some psychological support. Welfare is the interface with the people.

Logistics

Wendy Collard - We could have rostered staff better at the EOC so that staff weren't doing long hours. Better use of GIS and intel. Collating the logs and information coming in, especially when pulling together the database. The phones - communication in and out of the EOC could have been better especially with Customer Services. We weren't aware that the CSA were going to close at 5pm and then calls went to the after-hours service, Tellus. [REDACTED]. Everyone worked well together. Being able to help people.

Media liaison

Andrea Jones - The key thing to do better is to get key consistent messages out more quickly to front line staff (CSA). [REDACTED].
Positives - we found it helpful to be in the bunker. There was a great collaborate atmosphere and it was easy to get to people - team work. The practical experience of a real life event - training doesn't always prepare you for a real life event.
Learnings - resourcing. The Comms team is small and drew in expertise from other areas. Pumping the resource into social media was exhausting - this needs to be addressed. Looking across the organisation for people with the skills we can bring in to assist. Think about how we can widen the base of people to be drawn on.
Greatest learning point - preparation. The more that we can do to update templates, think about key messages in advance and rolling out messages. Good feedback from media - three

briefings. Great collaboration from Fire and Police. Paul and Kate put a lot of resource into social media.

Mr Cameron: How many organisations have media people? How much contact was there amongst media.

Paul McNamara - we fed a consistent message through the DCC media liaison - Andrea. Police and Fire had established links. Could do more with DHB.

Mr Cameron: A consistent message should be easy to achieve.

Communications

Dave Stevenson - Positive was that the wired and wireless telephone network worked well. While there were threats, the street corner cabinets survived well and this made the job easy. The regular briefings on day one were helpful, every couple of hours. This should happen at all these meetings.

What we could have done better - the handheld radios that were being issued are too complex to operate for some people. Can reprogramme them to be more user-friendly. Greatest learning - our organisation AREC got hit badly as its premises are in South Dunedin. [REDACTED]. All electronic equipment should be above flood level.

Planning and Intelligence

Nicola Pinfold - All positive because the people were well versed on what they were doing. The production of reports worked well. Observations from the welfare and the recovery - our onsite presence at South Dunedin, it worked well having a base at South Dunedin. Connections established at the EOC. Some of the mapping of agencies and how to contact that the Customer Services Agency are now using were produced. These materials need to be stored and used in the future. Comms staff being involved in the key decision making meetings so they can clearly communicate.

Alan Worthington - Having an ORC person at the EOC would be beneficial and more live access to data being collected. Having GIS mapping of the scale of the event. With technology it is worth exploring this. Liaising with TLAs for larger events - if there is an Otago-wide event we need to be able to communicate. Having people trained. Having the Comms team sitting next to us and the amount of stuff going on to social media. Clearly a big part of the work coming out of the bunker.

Mr Cameron: How did you gather intelligence from other agencies?

Kirstyn Lindsay - through the briefings and direct communication.

Derek King - Lots of people in South Dunedin don't have social media because they can't afford it as the internet costs a lot of money, how do we get in front of them?

Andrea Jones - Used media in a general sense. Then actual physical drop of leaflet. Do we need to think about drops earlier? We did put out social media messages to say if you have a family member or friend who isn't on social media make contact with them.

Derek King - Maybe all the agencies need to ring those people as most of them are clients.

Mr Cameron: It needs to be multi-media. In Christchurch we had to hold public meetings - another way of spreading message.

Ruth Stokes - Public meetings were discussed. After door knocks, we didn't pursue it this time due to scale and issues, but it was discussed.

Mr Cameron: The length of the event determines that as well. Need to think of whole gambit of approaches.

Derek King - they might have TV.

Mr Cameron: Any other points to be raised?

Scott Weatherall - How much worse did the situation have to be before a declaration was made?

Mr Cameron: I personally can't answer that. The Emergency Management team need to answer that. It is down to how much resourcing was needed - would the situation be improved by a declaration. The agencies have Acts they can work under. Making a declaration doesn't change what you can or can't do. It is only where we really have a situation where more resource is required. The decision is up to the Emergency Management team on the day. That is the team of all the emergency services involved. Coordination is what it is about. No one lost their lives. The system and resources were able to cope. Communications is the element to be tidied and coordinated better. If emergency services and controller can cope, then no need to declare.

Neil Brown - Would any benefit have accrued from a declaration, ie powers etc. Would like to thank the team that was here. It was a relatively short event which changed rapidly and had an unexpected outcome the next day. Will address the issues raised, but you haven't patted yourself on the back enough for the amount of work. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]. I didn't think there was a lack of coordination. From that point of view it was a success.

Alastair Dickie - We were lucky.

Laurence Voight - There is an opportunity to tidy a few things up. The nuts and bolts issues that need to be looked at - documentation and reference material available, numbers to ring, who to go to, which agency will deliver. Would like to see for this room a CIMS structure up and more use of whiteboards and maps that can be drawn on so people know what is going on.

Mr Cameron: The key element is relationships. Perhaps meeting once a year is not enough. How you relate to each other on the day. Good points about the EOC.

[REDACTED]

Mr Cameron: Pre-awareness campaign. This is what sandbagging does and doesn't do. Know what to expect prior to event and whether it will work. Clarify what it will do.

Robyn Dawson MSD - Some people didn't know where to get sand bags.

Mr Cameron: Sand bags need a lot of plastic behind them to make them effective.

Nicola Pinfold - [REDACTED]. We should consider having a community response unit to coordinate response team - this has been used in others.

Mr Cameron: If you look at community boards, it is about the community being prepared and helping itself. The community response from community boards was the most positive.

Ruth Stokes - Communities need to be prepared. They need to have access to staff and know what they can and can't do, who to contact and have equipment and resources. This will need to feed into our internal debrief.

Paul McNamara - We were lucky. [REDACTED] We were getting messages from the person on the

ground that Police were about to evacuate. Having the Police, Ambulance and Fire in a separate area of the EOC may hinder the flow of information.

[REDACTED]

Paul McNamara - CD was what the communication was. A medical group here and a liaison person here - it is more than just one person sitting here. The amount of background work to evacuate and transfer people is more than one person sitting in a room. We were lucky. There have been some good learnings for the SDHB as an organisation.

Mr Cameron: In time the points will be worked through. The corrective action plan the DCC puts out will be developed and shared. Is there anything else to clarify?

Ruth Stokes - Peter was here for a couple of days. Thank you Peter, from the DCC's perspective, for your advice and input. It was greatly appreciated and your ongoing involvement is appreciated.

Mr Cameron: Recovery is an ongoing task, will take some time and is a long job.

Thank you all for attending. This debrief will result in some enhancements and improved communications. Relationships work the best.

The meeting closed at 3.49 pm.