

8 February 2000

Jane Bradbury  
Divisional Manager, Environment  
The Wellington Regional Council  
Level 3  
The Regional Council Centre  
Wellington

Dear Jane,

Re: Accommodation and Emergency Management

We refer to your briefing, our meeting with the Manager Emergency Management and the Harbour Master of 9 November 1999, our interim report to you of 16 November and our assessment meeting of 14 December. Arising from the assessment meeting a best course of action was resolved. The following is our report on the assessment and conclusions drawn.

#### **1. Purpose**

To lease accommodation to the rear portion of level 8 of the Regional Council Centre to:

- a) relieve congestion of the environment division on level 3 and
- b) provide a base from which the Emergency Management Department and the Harbour Master to be able to discharge their respective emergency response responsibilities.

#### **2. Background**

2.1 Pursuant to the Maritime Transport Act 1994, the Wellington Regional Council, via the Harbours Department staff, are responsible for the management of maritime oil pollution response and harbour shipping emergencies.

2.2 The Wellington Regional Council Emergency Management Department is also required to coordinate response to all other emergencies within the region.

2.3 The Environment Division is located on level 3 of the Regional Council Centre and accommodation for staff is at a premium.

2.4 Harbours Department staff are housed on level 3 of the Maritime Museum Building, which is located off the east side of Jervois Quay, opposite Post Office Square and is part of the Lambton Harbour Queens wharf development. The accommodation is on the top floor, of character design with sarked ceiling, high stud and timber floors. The

8 February, 2000

area occupied is some 100 square metres and is divided into four variable sized offices.

2.5 Other departments within the Wellington Regional Council are required to respond to emergencies.

### **3. The Current Emergency Response Facilities**

3.1 Harbours Department handles smaller oil spill events from its present accommodation.

3.2 In the event of larger Tier 2 Regional and Tier 3 National oil pollution events it is necessary to coordinate a response team with the Wellington Regional Council, Police, Maritime Safety Authority, Department of Conservation and the oil companies.

3.3 Harbours Department has no special incident response facility at present. The experience of Southland Regional Council, that recently had to deal with the Dong Won oil spill, showed that such a facility is necessary. It is likely that a similar spill in Wellington Harbour would cause greater damage. The Harbour Master is concerned that he may not be able to fulfil his new statutory obligations for oil spills with the present facilities.

3.4 The Emergency Management Department currently uses the Beehive basement as an emergency response centre. This is through the Ministry for Emergency Management and is at a negligible cost to council.

3.5 The Harbour Master does not consider the Beehive basement suitable for harbour emergencies.

3.6 The Emergency Management Department has a mobile communications unit at the ready to respond to regional emergencies.

### **4. Issues Identified**

4.1 Environment Division is short of accommodation.

4.2 Environment Divisional Manager is reluctant to see the Emergency Management Department isolated from the balance of the division.

4.3 The Beehive is regarded as a poor option for use as an emergency response incident centre, both for oil spill response and other emergencies such as earthquake. Parking is at a premium and rarely available. Security hinders access as security passes are required. The premises are underground and remote from natural light and air. The premises are very small and are regarded as inadequate to perform the function required. Use over time has shown that people in occupation can only work effectively for periods of up to four hours at any one time.

4.4 For harbour oil spills, the speed of response to a spill is critical. Consequently, it is desirable to have dedicated accommodation which provides for communications that are ready to operate, has charts, plans and maps set up for use and is able to house the influx of involved personnel.

8 February, 2000

4.5 Ability to respond to all major emergency events is a responsibility of the Wellington Regional Council.

## 5. Solution Identified

5.1 The Wellington Regional Council should establish a Regional Multi Functional Emergency Incident Command Centre, (ICC).

5.2 The ICC facility would be available for the use of all council departments which hold responsibility to respond to emergencies, particularly Emergency Management, Harbours and Flood Protection.

5.3 The council would be regarded as having met its statutory requirements and acting prudently.

5.4 A dedicated radio communications room should be established to ensure the ability to coordinate all operations with no loss in setting up time.

5.5 Charts, plans and maps should be permanently mounted on mobile display boards for ready access and use, again no loss in time will be encountered.

5.6 The ICC should accommodate the Emergency Management Group and perhaps the Harbours Department staff, as well as have appropriate communications and meeting rooms.

## 6. The ICC Requirements

6.1 The location should be central to the harbour.

6.2 It needs to be close to Police, oil companies, Government Departments, Wellington City Council and the Maritime Safety Authority.

6.3 Ample parking should be available.

6.4 It needs to be close to the regional Council Centre and harbour access ; it should also should be close to a helicopter landing pad, bus, rail and ferry transport.

6.5 The premises should provide a large central meeting room capable of seating 30 persons. (Emergency Management Department convene regular meetings with 30 persons. Meetings are held 10 times each month.) In an emergency of significance, a minimum of 15 personnel will be involved and regular meetings are an essential function. A communications room to cater for up to 7 telephone and radio operators. Noise must be managed and the various functions isolated. To meet the needs of all functions, ***an overall area of 290 square metres is considered necessary.***

6.6 Based on the Southland Regional Council, Dong Won experience, a Tier 3 incident facility needs to accommodate:

a) Parking

b) Harbour Master office

8 February, 2000

- c) Dedicated communications room
- d) Dedicated intelligence gathering room
- e) Finance analysis facility
- f) Department of Conservation, wildlife monitoring room
- g) Operations management room
- h) Operations planning room
- i) Operations monitoring room
- j) National on scene commander's room
- k) Two meeting rooms and the council chamber
- l) The council rest and recreation area with toilet and catering facilities.
- m) a room for administration, and media.

## **7. Immediate Options Available**

7.1 A significant portion (318 square metres) of the third, (top), level of the Maritime Museum Building. This level is currently occupied to its north end by the Harbours Department and by Museum staff to its central portion. The south portion of level 3 is vacant and has been placed on the market for lease.

7.1 .1 The Harbour Master has **recognised** the potential for the area to provide for a Regional Multi Functional Emergency Incident Command Centre and has recommended the accommodation to the Divisional Manager, Environment.

7.1.2 Positives for the proposal are:

- a) Ideal location at the harbour.
- b) Parking readily available.
- c) Central to all means of transport.
- d) Proximity to the Harbour Department offices.
- e) Ability to house the Emergency Management Department and create a synergy between the two Environment Division Departments.
- f) Ability for the two Departments to share the administrative function.
- g) Frees up accommodation for Environment on level 3 of the Regional Council Centre.

8 February, 2000

- h) Meets the Environment Divisional Managers requirement that Emergency Management Department does not work in isolation of the balance of the division.
- i) Provides an incident centre available for use by all Council Departments involved in response to emergencies.
- j) Provides a Council facility for staff training and meetings which is remote from the Regional Council Centre.
- k) The building has been structurally upgraded, using seismic isolation lead-core rubber bearings to the foundations designed to absorb seismic energy. 26 new concrete piles were installed beneath the basement and post-tensioned concrete beams were installed to the basement to support the above ground structure.
- l) The building has had a water-drench fire protection system installed.

7.1.3 Potential negatives are:

- a) Occupies an old building, albeit seismically upgraded, which may or may not respond well in an earthquake.
- b) Is located on level 3 which is not ideal in the event of lifts not running. A central flight of stair are available and do have the benefit of being exposed to natural light.
- c) Has timber floors and sarked ceiling which places the premises at a greater risk of loss or damage by fire, although this should be minimised by the fire protection system.
- d) There are no partitions. Creation of an ICC facility will be from scratch
- e) There is no canteen facility available, but there are several commercial food premises in the immediate location.
- f) The stud height is very high which will increase the cost of partitions. Cost to partition is estimated to be \$200,000 plus \$25,000 to relocate equipment from the Beehive.
- g) The floor space is interrupted by two rows of timber columns which will inhibit best use of the floor space.
- h) There is a need to preserve an emergency aisle for a secondary means of egress through the space.
- i) There will be a market rent payable for the premises, \$63,000. The landlord would be the Museum of Wellington, City and Sea, owned by the Wellington Museums Trust, an affiliate of the Wellington City Council.
- j) The owner wishes to fast track a lease commitment decision.

8 February, 2000

7.2 An alternative option is to resume occupation of some 170 square metres, plus a share of the common space to the foyer, landings and toilets, in the rear portion of level 8 of the Regional Council Centre from American Home Assurance (AHA). This area was formerly occupied by Workbridge and has been available for sublease since vacation. The area is partitioned and carpeted. The partitioning is near ideal for Emergency Management Department needs and the only alteration needed is to create a plan room.

7.2.1 AHA has been trying to sublet the area on the open market. To date it has had no success. It has been put to AHA, on a without prejudice basis, that Pringle House limited may be willing to vary the lease to exclude the area subject to the partitions transferring at no cost and the effective date of the variation being 1 July 2000. AHA responded positively but with the rider that it would treat with another party, if one surfaced prior to 1 July.

7.2.2 The benefits of this accommodation are:

- a) It minimises the need for additional accommodation as during an emergency the Regional Centre meeting rooms and cafeteria can be used.
- b) It would assist to ease the Environment Divisions accommodation problems on level 3.
- c) It places the rent payable in the council purse rather than the private. The rent would be in the order of \$30,000 to 34,000 plus GST per annum. The area of the premises will need to be established and agree with AHA and the rent rate will need to be at the same rent per square metre as AHA pay at present.. The AHA rent rate is very similar to the rent rate paid by all council departments in the building.
- d) The Building is modern and complies with all code requirements.
- e) The premises are in close proximity to all Council departments.
- f) Ample carparking could be available both within the building and in the adjoining James Smith carpark.
- g) All facilities for communication can be set up permanently and the balance facility used by all departments for meetings, staff training and as an overflow facility.
- h) The Ground floor reception area can be used, in an emergency, for media interface.
- i) Harbours Department would remain where it is at present.
- j) The building is capable of housing a stand-by generation plant, (at a cost of approximately \$150,000), which would supply the building with 85% of its optimum power needs. The building would then be able to function in an emergency when supply of power is lost.

8 February, 2000

- k) From the perspective of Pringle house Limited, if or when American Home Assurance vacate, the front portion of the premises will prove far easier to let on the open market than the whole floor.
- l) Time of commitment is more under the control of the council and with the poor market conditions, commencement may be deferred to the new financial year.

7.2.3 The negatives are:

- a) The accommodation is on the eighth level. Access will be difficult when the lifts are out of operation.
- b) Emergency management would be on level 8, isolated from level 3 and the balance of the environment division.
- c) The premises are slightly less central to non council agencies than the Port.
- d) A rent will be payable, albeit to Pringle House limited.
- e) Fitout costs are likely to be \$15,000 plus \$25,000 to relocate all equipment from the Beehive.

7.3 The final option is to retain the status quo.

7.3.1 This does possess positive features as:

- a) it minimises cost.
- b) ensures the Harbour Master remains where he wishes to be.
- c) The Beehive remains to be available free of charge.

7.3.2 Negatives are:

- a) The Harbour Master cannot guarantee to perform his statutory obligation efficiently.
- b) The accommodation shortage problem of the Environment Division on level 3 is not addressed or resolved.

## 8. The Proposal

8.1 The best option available is considered to be the lease of the rear portion of Level 8. The accommodation needs of the Environment Division will be met, a permanent, convenient and functional home for emergency management will be created and the council, via the Harbours Master, will be able to discharge all statutory responsibilities.

8.2 It is proposed that an agreement will be entered into with AHA and Pringle House Limited which will provide for:

8.2.1 As from 1 July 2000, the AHA lease will be varied to reduce the area occupied and the rent payable.

8 February, 2000

8.2.2 As from 1 July 2000, the rear portion of level 8 to be leased by the council for the occupation of the Environment Division emergency management department to establish a ICC.

8.2.3 Prior to 30 June 2000, a process will occur with AHA which will identify the area of level 8 to be occupied by the council and to identify the proportion of entry foyer, landings and toilets which will be the responsibility of the council.

8.2.4 Prior to 30 June 2000 AHA is to agree to transfer the partitions to the rear portion of level 8 to the ownership of the council.

8.2.5 Prior to 30 June 2000 the council and AHA to agree on the variation of rent which AHA will cease to pay from 1 July 2000 and which from that time will be payable by the council.

8.2.6 The agreement must include a clause which could bring the 1 July date forward in the event that a genuine proposal to sublease the premises is submitted to AHA. This provision will require full disclosure of the offer to sublease to the council.

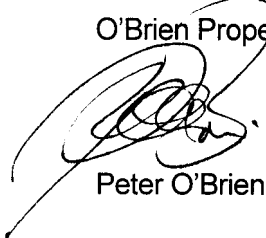
## **9 Recommendation**

1. That council resolve to establish a Regional Multi Functional Emergency Incident Command Centre.
2. That council resolve to establish the Regional Multi Functional Emergency Incident Command Centre in the rear portion of level 8 of the Regional Council Centre.
3. That council resolve to enter negotiations with American Home Assurance and Pringle House Limited to take over responsibility as lessee of the rear portion of level 8 at a rental rate to reflect a fair proportion of the present lease.
4. That the council resolve to agree to the use of other council facilities within the Regional Council Centre in the event of a significant emergency incident.

We trust that this report on our conclusions is of assistance and will help this matter to be progressed.

Yours sincerely

O'Brien Property Consultancy Limited.



Peter O'Brien