

Report **06.596**
Date 12 October 2006
File Z/1/4/20

Committee **CDEM Group**
Author **Dr Roger Blakeley, Chairperson, Co-ordinating Executive Group**

Combined Hutt Valley Civil Defence Emergency Management and Rural Fire

1. Purpose

To inform the CDEM Group about the combined functions of civil defence emergency management and rural fire of the Upper Hutt and Hutt City Councils.

2. Background

The upper and lower reaches of the Hutt Valley share common risks in terms of natural disasters with earthquake and flooding being the two main events likely to impact on the two respective communities.

The Hutt Valley has a combined population of approximately 135,000 (Hutt City 96,800 and Upper Hutt 38, 200). The two city centres are approximately 20 km apart.

Until now each city has operated a separate CDEM and Rural Fire function from emergency operations centres located at each council.

For years there was a close working relationship between Upper Hutt and Hutt City Council Emergency Management Offices and Urban Bush Fire Forces.

Following the resignation of Upper Hutt's Emergency Management Officer in May 2006, a temporary contract between Upper Hutt and Hutt City required Hutt City to also undertake the emergency management and rural fire functions for Upper Hutt. This proved to work very well.

An independent study carried out on behalf of both Councils indicated opportunities for significant enhancements for both Upper Hutt and Hutt City and benefits to the Hutt Valley as a whole through a joint arrangement.

3. Progress to date

A proposal (underpinned by the achievement of an Emergency Management Office of critical mass) was prepared to combine the service delivery of civil defence emergency management and rural fire across Hutt and Upper Hutt cities into a single business unit administered by Hutt City Council. The proposal has been supported by all those consulted with.

The proposal was considered by both councils during August 2006 and included the following resolutions:

- Agreement to establish a combined Hutt Valley Emergency Management and Rural Fire Office
- Agreement to the Combined Governance Model of operation with the Hutt Valley Emergency Management and Rural Fire Office reporting to the Hutt Valley Services Committee of Council
- Agreement that Mr Marty Grenfell be appointed as Local Controller for Upper Hutt City with Mr Paul Nickalls as alternate local controller, and Mr Paul Nickalls be appointed as Local Controller for Hutt City with Mr Marty Grenfell as alternate local controller
- Agreement that emergency management and rural fire being administered by Hutt City Council, currently managed by Mr Paul Nickalls with the Director of Community Services of Upper Hutt overseeing, monitoring and ensuring service delivery standards for Upper Hutt City Council
- Agreement to put a Memorandum of Understanding in place with the established community rescue teams.

4. Conclusion

Circumstances have allowed the merging of two authority emergency management functions. The CDEM Group should see savings and efficiencies in the future.

5. Recommendation

That the CDEM Group:

1. ***Receive the report; and***
2. ***Note the contents.***

Report prepared by:

Dr Roger Blakeley
Chairperson, Co-ordinating Executive Group