



Final Report

AELG-8: Coordination of Public Communications:

Phase 1 report - Findings from the Utility Providers Communications Survey

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Attachment 1 – List of Organisations Surveyed

Attachment 2 – Auckland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group: Public Information and Media Management Plan

1.0 Executive Summary

Overall, it would appear that there are good communication systems and processes in place within each of the utility organisations (that responded to the survey) in regards to communicating with customer and stakeholder groups and amongst utility providers within the Auckland region.

One of the objectives of this project was to identify areas where communication processes could or should be improved between utilities and the CDEMG to ensure consistency of information given to the public via the media in times of emergencies or utility failures. The findings from this research reveal that no major improvements in this area are required for those organisation's that responded to the survey. However 15 out of 45 surveys were not returned and further efforts are required to establish relationships with these utilities.

It is evident that knowing who the nominated media spokesperson is within each of the utility organisations would be of benefit and it is recommended that contact lists collected as part of this survey be distributed to participating utility organisations. Learning's from the 2004 February floods have also indicated that having established relationships with other utility providers prior to a civil defence emergency is extremely useful.

Utility providers in the Auckland region have clearly defined what an emergency situation is and these definitions are very similar to the definition the Ministry of Civil Defence Emergency Management (MCDEM) has. All of organisations that participated in the survey have identified scales of emergencies and have plans in place to communicate to the public based on these scales whether it is a localised, regional or national event.

All of the organisations that participated in the survey indicated that they used a range of communication tools to communicate to their public. Most organisations' communications processes were consistent with those in the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group (CDEMG) Public Information and Media Management Plan (in that there are processes in place to advise the CDEM Group of media messages in advance of their release). It is noted that this Public Information and Media Management Plan allows for a lifelines coordination person in the Group EOC, although there is currently no such nominated person. The issue of lifelines coordination during an emergency is being dealt with as part of a separate project.

Most of the organisations that participated in the survey saw the CDEMG's role to plan and coordinate the efforts of utilities and emergency services in times of emergency. Within the communication plans there is evidence of differing understanding of the utility-CDEM relationship during an emergency. More communication about the CDEM Group role to utility providers would be beneficial.

A joint AELG-CEG team could be established to develop a best practice checklist of what actions should be undertaken at each stage when dealing with an event of advancing severity.

Most utilities indicated that some guidance from the CDEM Group as to the information that may be required from them in an emergency would be useful. A national project is underway that may address this issue.

The water industry has established a coordinated incident response approach across the sector. Similar arrangements could be considered for some other sectors as part of the 'sector planning' required for the CDEM Plan.

Key learning's from the 2004 February floods have also been highlighted as part of this report.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Background

Recent New Zealand experiences have highlighted that there is a need for the public to be receiving consistent information about utility failures in emergency situations. There is also a requirement to clarify who is responsible for keeping this information up-to-date so that the public can be communicated with, on what is happening. It is recognised as part of the project that these responsibilities will change as an incident escalates from a local, single utility incident to a regional or even national disaster.

In order to determine what communication processes were in place by utility providers in the Auckland region, the Auckland Engineering Lifelines Group (AELG) decided to undertake a survey of all utility providers in the region. The following outlines the findings from this survey.

2.2 Project Scope

The project brief originally developed for this project was to develop protocols and processes for how utilities communicate with the media and coordinate media messages with each other and the EOC during an emergency. The AELG agreed to initially carry out a scoping phase to review current processes and to consider whether revised approaches were necessary. This report summarises the findings from the phase 1 report.

2.3 Project Objectives

The key objectives of this survey project were to:

- Identify what general communication processes utilities presently have in place to ensure that consistent information is going out to the public via the media in times of an emergency.
- Identify what specific processes are in place between the various utilities and the CDEM Group to ensure consistency of information goes out to the public via the media (this relates to utility failures and protection of utilities).
- Collect examples of templates, processes or any other relevant material used by utilities when disseminating information to the public via the media (i.e. see if there are any processes, systems or templates that could be used to improve communications between utilities and the CDEMG)
- Find out from utilities what processes are used and who is responsible for keeping information up-to-date and available to the public in times of emergency and to determine whether these processes change based on the scale or type of emergency.
- Identify whether utility organisations are aware of the CDEM Groups Public Information and Media Management Plan and their obligations in regards to this Plan.
- Determine if any learning's from the February floods are relevant to this project.
- Establish a database of media spokespeople and their backups for each utility organisation, including name and contact details.
- Make recommendations on areas where communication processes could or should be improved between utilities and the CDEMG in regards to ensuring consistency of information given to the public via the media in times of emergencies or utility failures.

2.4 Methodology

The approach undertaken for this project was to conduct an email survey with people within each of the identified utility organisations within the Auckland region (**See Attachment 1**). AELG and non-AELG members were included in the survey.

The purpose of the survey was to determine what each organisation presently does in regards to ensuring there is consistency in giving out public information in emergency situations.

Prior to the survey going out two initial survey forms were sent out and completed in order to test the survey. Test surveys were sent to Diana Staveley and Peter Scott at Manukau City Council. Minor changes were made to the test survey based on feedback received from those participating in the test survey and the project team.

The survey and covering email was sent out to the survey participants on 2 February 2005 and participants were given until 11 February 2005 to complete. Ten survey forms were received by this cut off date. Follow up email reminders after this cut off date were sent out on 16/2/05 and 3/3/05, 7/3/05 and finally on 29/3/05. As a result of these email follow-ups and reminders an additional 20 survey forms were received.

3.0 Summary of Findings from February Flood Report

The Department of Internal Affairs undertook a complete review of all aspects relating to the February 2004 floods in the Manawatu-Wanganui areas. Some of the areas looked at as part of this review included communicating to the public and looking at the communication and liaison that took place between utility providers. The following provides a brief summary of some of the findings, lessons learnt and recommendations relevant to utility organisations.

3.1 Summary of Key Recommendations

The communications and information systems available to the public and agencies involved in emergency management need to be significantly improved.

An appropriate computer based information system to integrate the information flow between local, CDEM Group and national levels of emergency management and associated agencies be agreed upon and implemented. (The Ministry has taken this on board and a project is underway to look at this)

Specific linkages be forged by CDEM Groups with Lifelines Utilities in their region to provide essential contacts during times of emergency.

3.2 Summary of Other Findings From the Report

Interaction with Utilities

Relationships developed as part of the Manawatu-Wanganui Lifelines Project provided a sound basis for the response and recovery work during the floods. The level of operational interconnection between CDEM Group members and utilities during the response phase is not fully established. There appeared to be a lack of familiarity with the intended regional level Group processes.

Not all utilities realised the importance of liaison with local authorities early in the event. Where a contact point was established the process of restoration of services proceeded more rapidly. The two-way flow of information, with local authorities being able to inform the utilities on road access, bridge status etc was important. Where links had been established prior to the event this process proceeded more rapidly and effectively. The need for utilities and CDEM Group EOCs to hold up to date contact lists was deemed as being essential.

There is a need for common information templates in order to provide a composite, real time asset to all parties involved and avoid repeated requests for often the same information from different agencies.

Summary of Lessons Learnt Regarding Management of Public Information

Websites were seen as an important part of managing public information during a civil emergency. Increased access to websites will lessen pressure on the phone system. Although, website management and regular updating must be planned for and it was noted that websites have limitations in reaching rural residents in time of emergency.

Dealing with the media must be managed at every EOC. Generally, the more open the access provided to the media the better the chances of passing on high quality information to the public.

EOC's should give consideration to allowing the media access to all briefings.

Public meetings and especially those attended by TLA's and politicians served an important function in uniting people, giving them a sense of perspective and in demonstrating that there was concern at management level.

Summary of Lessons Learnt Regarding Communications

Talk back radio can provide misleading information and mistaken listener originated reports. As a result there is a need to set industry standards.

There is a need for a nation wide civil defence emergency telephone number connected to a call centre, which can rapidly activate when needed.

An upgrade is needed in the quality, security and reliability of communications between TLA's, CDEM Group EOC's and others.

Telephone texting and internet emailing are growing means of communication and should be investigated for use in future emergencies

Cell phone providers should be urged to increase their coverage in rural areas, as cell phones play an important role in emergencies.

Key Findings Regarding Communications

The greatest difficulties in emergency management arose through the overloading or breakdown of communications.

Local authorities need to develop plans and procedures for ensuring an early and comprehensive assessment of the impact of an emergency, this should include the conducting of a reconnaissance to check on communities and residents where communications have failed.

The use of websites by local TLA's and other key agencies for communicating and displaying up to date status information proved effective and is to be encouraged.

The co-ordination of public information is an essential function during an emergency.

Status of roads being open or closed needs to be communicated to and by the EOCs quickly and efficiently and this requires having a common mapping system and a method of communicating map diagrams either by computer or video conferencing.

Need to re-examine the methods for alerting the public in emergencies. This includes having alert messages across all TV and radio transmissions. There is also a need for a dedicated nation-wide radio frequency to broadcast civil emergency information.

The process of phoning the local council in times of an emergency failed during the floods. Council communications even if staffed, quickly overloaded and many calls were lost.

During the emergency the issuing of media releases was seen as being problematic, the Incident Response Team Group leader was required to make media statements, including giving their opinion on some occasions. It was found that the media liaison approach worked well, this involved having a staff member from the local newspaper based in the EOC and working with the Group Recovery Manager and others. This approach resulted in good control over the material published. TV and radio requests were more difficult to deal with, although they did give radio interviews they needed to be aware of what was being asked. TV media often asked questions for which there were no answers yet and this needed to be managed.

Having lifeline utility contact lists was valuable in establishing first contact with the utilities during this emergency, it was noted that these contacts should include operational staff.

4.0 Summary of Survey Results

4.1 Survey Return Rate

A number of the organisations that sent back a completed survey noted that they wished for their organisations results to be kept confidential. As a result of this feedback and in respect of the confidentiality of the organisations who participated in the survey the following is a general summary of the findings from the survey and does not specifically relate back to any particular organisation.

Please note to assist with developing these summary findings a document, which outlines responses from each organisation to each question asked was developed. This will remain a confidential document and will not be available to those outside of the AELG Team who worked on this project.

A total of 43 Utility Providers Communication surveys were emailed out on 2 February 2005.

An additional 2 survey forms were sent out as a result of feedback received. This meant 45 surveys in total were distributed for completion.

21 surveys were emailed to AELG members and 24 surveys were emailed to non-AELG members (**See Attachment 1 for list of organisations**).

A total of 30 survey forms were returned.

18 were returned from AELG members and 9 were returned from non-AELG members. Note a couple of the organisations who returned survey forms only completed 2 of the questions relating to contact people and contact details.

In addition 3 organisations emailed to say they would not be completing a survey for a variety of reasons.

This results in a return rate of 66.6% (i.e. 30 surveys were completed out of the 45 surveys emailed out). As expected more completed survey forms were received from AELG members than non-AELG members.

4.2 Summary of Results by Survey Question

Q1. Definition of an Emergency Situation

The Ministry of Civil Defence Emergency Management defines an Emergency as being *A situation that is the result of any happening, whether natural or otherwise including, without limitation any explosion, earthquake, eruption, tsunami, land movement, flood, storm, tornado, cyclone, serious fire, leakage or spillage of any dangerous gas or substance, technological failure, infestation, plague, epidemic, failure or disruption to an emergency service or a lifeline utility, or actual or imminent attack or warlike act that causes or may cause loss of life, injury, illness or distress or in a way endangers the safety of the public or property in NZ or any part of NZ and that cannot be dealt with by emergency services, or otherwise requires a significant and coordinated response under the Act.*

The organisations who participated in the survey provided a range of definitions that were used by their organisations to define an emergency and in most cases their organisations had scales of emergencies which ranged from Level 1 or localised type emergencies up to Level 5 which were defined as state or national emergencies.

Common words used by organisations when defining an emergency included the words, abnormal situation, damage to property, risk to life, interruption to services, environmental damage, loss of assets, damage to reputation and impacts a wide area.

In addition to the use of the word emergency a number of organisations also referred to a crisis, local or network emergency, and major incident, which they defined. For all of these situations they had plans in place for dealing with them. In the water industry they mentioned a regional drinking water incident (RDWI) and have comprehensive plans and systems in place to deal with these situations.

A number of the organisations who responded to the survey gave specific details on the types of emergencies they have had to deal with in the past eg rainfall type events, power failouts, containments in supply, water shortages etc.

In industries such as power and water an emergency and the scale of it is usually defined by the number of people impacted and the length of time it would take to restore the situation.

In conclusion, it would appear that organisations that participated in the survey shared a common definition of an emergency. In all cases they had plans to deal with each level whether it be a localised event through to a regional or national emergency.

Q2. Plans and Processes for Dealing with Scales of Emergencies

For all of the different scales of emergencies each organisation referred to they had comprehensive plans and systems in place to deal with them and to communicate with the public via the media.

A range of information depending on the scale and type of emergency would be provided to the media including information on extent of damage, area covered, time likely to be out of action, what is being done to resolve the situation, who is in control of the situation, what residents should do, etc.

The media strategy used by each organisation in an emergency situation it appears would be tailored to suit the situation the particular organisation was facing i.e. if it was a large scale emergency the approach to the media would be different and would include more regular contact i.e. regular media briefings and media releases (every half hour), faxes, radio updates etc. In smaller scale emergencies other tools would be used such as call centre, letter box drops etc.

The call centres at a large number of the organisations appeared to have a big part to play in providing information and updates during times of emergency.

A few organisations indicated they did not deal directly with the media and instead used front end messages on their telephone systems, this meant that members of the public got the information they needed from here rather than through the media.

Q3. When external communications are implemented

On the whole it would appear that the type and the extent of the emergency situation has an impact on when communication to the public would begin, the more serious the situation the more urgent the need to communicate.

Most of the organisations indicated that for localised events their call centre was relied on to provide information to customers and once it got past a localised event, media releases, radio or information on websites would be used to communicate to the public.

Other organisations indicated they would go to the media once the situation had been assessed and advice sought from their communications department.

Q4. Internal Communication processes in place

The organisations who participated in the survey indicated they had a range of internal communication processes in place in order to keep those within their organisation informed during an emergency.

A summary of some of the tools used include:

- Paging systems
- Texting to mobiles
- Conference calls
- Email
- Private radio/telephone network
- CIMS
- Debriefs
- Incident meetings
- Phone
- Intranet
- CAD system
- Conference calls
- Dedicated Communications room set up
- Fax
- Web
- On call person used available 24/7

Most of the organisations indicated they had distribution lists already developed of people who needed to be informed and updated.

Q5. Provision of Examples of communication materials or processes used

A number of the organisations provided examples of processes and systems they used. It is recommended that the material provided by these organisations be looked at more in-depth.

A number of organisations indicated that due to confidentially reasons they were not able to provide examples of systems and processes used.

Q6. Customer groups and responsibility for communicating with them during emergencies

All of the organisations that returned a survey form provided an extensive list of their customer/stakeholder groups and provided information on who would be responsible for communicating to each of these groups. In most cases it was the operation/asset/network manager or the communications department responsibility. In some cases it was the contractor or the retailers responsible to communicate.

Within specific utility areas the responsibility for communicating to the main customers and key stakeholders groups were as follows:

Within Councils

Councils themselves communicated directly with their key customer and stakeholder groups either through their call centre, their contractors, and communications department or senior managers.

Petrol industry

It appeared it was up to each of the 4 oil companies in the Auckland region to communicate directly with their customers.

Power Industry

Communicating with customers was up to the retailer in conjunction with the supplier in most incidences.

Telecommunications industry

It would appear it was up to each particular organisation to communicate directly with their customers.

Water industry

Watercare chairs the communication group as part of the Auckland Water Industry Group which is made up of water organisations in the Auckland region and this group is responsible for communicating information out to water customers.

It was evident that all of the organisations knew whom they needed to communicate with and had established who would be responsible for communicating with these groups in times of emergency.

Q7. Involvement of Marketing and Communications sections

The majority of the organisations who participated in the survey indicated that their communications, marketing or corporate affairs department were extensively involved in the internal and external communication processes.

At the very least it would appear that the communications team were kept informed if they were not directly or actively involved.

In the majority of cases nothing went out to the media unless it had gone past the communications team first.

One organisation indicated they did not have a marketing or communications department however the duty engineer was responsible for making a call on whether communication was required.

It was also recommended by one survey participant that all of the media people from the utility organisations maybe should get together, this is something that should be looked into and could fit with a project that the CDEMG's Public Education Project team is working on.

Q8. List of spokespeople and back up spokespeople

A list of media spokespeople and back up spokespeople along with their contact details were provided for by all organisations returning a survey form.

It is recommended that if the organisations are happy that this list be distributed to all those utilities that participated in the survey for their future reference.

Q9. Effective methods for communicating

A range of communication tools were mentioned by survey participants as being effective in getting information out to the public, these included:

Media releases

Internet

Telephone system front end

Radio – multiple stations (as need to get to different ethnic groups)

Briefing call centre staff

Media advertising

Mail outs

Electronic billboards
Public Notices
Cell phone
Media releases
Information hotline
Text
Website
Teleconferences
Television
Letterbox drops
Call Centres
O800 numbers

Q10. Pre prepared statements, key messages

A large number of the organisations that participated in this survey had pre-prepared statements or messages, these either came in the form of pre recorded phone messages through to fact sheets, website notices or news releases.

A number of organisations did not have material prepared in advance but commented that they handled emergencies on an individual basis and although they didn't have things written in advance they did have a checklist of what should be included when sent out.

Q11. Situations when utilities communicate with each other

There was a range of situations given when utilities would communicate with one another. These included:

When supply failures occur eg power, water, phone, gas etc
Road subsidence affecting utility services
When a number of providers share line space or impact on each other
Road closures
Communicate with councils and hospitals when there is a loss or potential loss of supply that could affect them
Large disruption to traffic flow
Water contamination
Wastewater overflows
Electricity failure to waste pumps
Chemical spill

Communication is normally undertaken by RT, email, phone and mobile phone. A few organisations have access to satellite phones that they can use.

It would appear that utility organisations currently contact one another in times of emergency should it be required.

Q12. Awareness of CDEMG role

All but two of the organisations that responded to the survey indicated that they were aware of the CDEM Group and were able to define what there CDEM Group role is.

Summary of what people thought the CDEM Groups role is as follows:

Understanding of what role is
As defined by new CDEM Act 2002 i.e. to provide a coordinated response and recovery plans for the region and to work with councils to produce risk reduction and readiness strategies.
As defined in Section 17 CDEM Act 2002
Role is to work with Emergency Services, Lifeline providers and other relevant services to assist them to reduce, prepare, respond and recover from emergencies either natural or

manmade.
To provide coordinated response and recovery plans for the region and to work with councils to produce risk reduction and readiness strategies. Resilient Manukau project.
Coordinate and lead the response of the wider Auckland region to civil emergencies. Made up from councils and emergency services
All fire fighters are trained to understand the role of the CDEM in and emergency and work closely with them to co ordinate relief and rescue operations associated with any civil emergency.
Co-Ordinate assistance to the affected area. Provide the mechanisms to manage emergency situations, liase and advise Central Govt. of an emergency situation
Coordinate and manage the input from all appropriate utility service providers in the event of civil emergency that will help restore normal operating conditions.
To coordinate resources during a civil emergency
To enable the effective and efficient management of regional significant hazards and risks that may affect the Auckland Region and to develop a resilient community.
Co ordinate regional response to major incident or emergency especially in relation to natural disaster.
Coordinate the efforts of utilities and emergency services in the event of a civil defence emergency
To provide for a co-ordinated and integrated approach to the way significant risks and hazards are managed. This will help ensure the community's social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being as well as safety of people and property.
Promote relationships between key stakeholders in CDEM.
To plan and coordinate cdem throughout the various regions, this includes risk mitigation, awareness, readiness planning and coordination through actual incidents.
In general terms: To plan and have appropriate emergency procedures established. To coordinate emergency response as required to re-establish essential services as soon as possible To maintain communication with public, key Utilities and essential services.
To plan, prepare and coordinate emergency responses to a major emergency.
Ensure there are plans in place for dealing with CDEM in their respective areas and coordinating response in the event of an emergency
Aims to strengthen NZ's resilience to disasters
Core component of CDEM Act 2002, can be viewed as a consortium of the local TLA's in a region working in partnership with emergency services, lifelines and govt departments amongst other things to identify and understand hazards and risks, prepare CDEM Group plans and to manage hazards and risks in accordance with the 4R's.

In summary most of the organisations saw the CDEMG's role to plan and coordinate the efforts of utilities and emergency services in times of emergency.

The two organisations that were not aware of the CDEM Group indicated that some people within their organisation would be aware of the CDEM Group but not all. It would appear that more communication by the CDEM Group in conjunction with AELG to utility providers about their role would be beneficial.

Q13. CDEM Groups Public Information and Media Management Plan Requirements

The majority of organisations who responded indicated that their current plans and processes followed what would be required under the draft Public Information and Media Management Plan (**See Attachment 2**).

Eleven organisations said No they had not included these requirements but a number indicated they would like to see a copy of the draft with a view to including in their plans and processes.

It is noted that this media plan allows for a lifelines coordination person in the Group EOC, though there is currently no such nominated person. The issue of lifelines coordination during an emergency is being dealt with as part of a separate project.

Q14. Information to the EOC

Most organisations indicated that the information they would provide to the EOC would be based on what was requested or required by the EOC. Others indicated they would provide information such as scope of area affected, situations reports, estimated repair time, numbers of customers affected, any information relating to roading or water infrastructure, remedial plans etc.

In summary the utilities can provide what the EOC needs if and when required – i.e. a reactive rather than proactive approach.

One of the key recommendations as a result of the February Flood report was to have an appropriate computer based information system to integrate the information flow between local, CDEM Group and national levels of emergency management and associated agencies. This recommendation has been taken on board and a Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management Information Project is now underway and looking at how this can be achieved. Information and updates on this project will be provided to AELG when available.

Q15. Systems that are in place to pass on information that is accurate and up to date to the EOC

The organisations that responded to this question indicated that there were a range of systems and processes in place to pass on accurate and up to date information to the EOC this included:

- Phone calls
- Staff being based at GEOC
- Having on-site liaison person in the local CD centre
- Using CIMS reporting
- The Water industry has 3 key roles appointed who would act as EOC Liaison points (Strategic Asset Mgr, Industry Development Mgr, H&S coordinator).
- Having CD liaison person appointed
- Fax and radio links

Q16. No question 16

Q17. List of people responsible for passing information on

Almost all of the organisations that responded provided the name and contact details for the person who would be responsible for passing information on to the EOC.

It is recommended that this list be distributed, to all those who responded to the survey for their future reference.

Q18. Other comments

A range of other comments were made they are as follows:

The following additional comments were made:

It was suggested that it would be good to have a meeting of all the Lifelines Utilities media representatives who would look after the external communications in an emergency or utility failure – having a list of contacts would be useful also.

Recommend that this be followed up on.

We need advanced notice of requests for survey information and briefing from AELG would be helpful.

Recommend that in future where possible that AELG give notice of planned surveys etc.

Wanted to know when will a full report and recommendations and contact lists be available?

Recommend we send an email out to all those who responded thanking them for participating and give an indication when the report will be available.

Would like to see a co-ordinated approach from CDEMG's national so that I do not have to provide the same information to several different groups.

Comment is noted and recommends that AELG advise other Lifeline Groups.

5.0 Conclusions

Utility providers in the Auckland region have clearly defined what an emergency situation is in a similar way to the Ministry of CDEM definition. All organisations have identified scales of emergencies and have plans in place to communicate to the public based on these scales whether it be a localised or a regional or national event.

The call centres run by utility providers are a key point in disseminating information to other public and keeping staff updated and informed is essential.

When organisations commence communications with the public it varies and depends on the scale and type of event and in all cases if it is deemed a major emergency or a level 5 event, communication to the media normally commences as soon as possible and is undertaken on a regular basis.

All of the organisations were aware of whom they needed to communicate with and who was responsible for communicating with them in times of emergency.

It is evident that the communications and marketing people from this utility organisation are heavily involved with the internal and external communication processes during an emergency situation and the suggestion for media people from utility organisations to get together is a good idea.

The organisations that participated in the survey indicated they used a range of communication tools to communicate to the public.

Pre prepared messages and fact sheets have been developed by some organisations but on the whole they deal with emergencies as they arise and by referring to a checklist of issues.

Utility organisations already appear to communicate well with each other in times of emergency and have good systems in place, having contact lists of people to contact would be useful to them. It is noted that the AELG already coordinates an inter-utility contact list for this purpose.

Most of the organisations saw the CDEMG's role to plan and coordinate the efforts of utilities and emergency services in times of emergency. More communication by AELG and the CDEM Group to the utility providers about their role would be beneficial.

Utility providers indicated that if the EOC required information they would provide whatever they required and that systems are already in place to get this information through including having local a CD liaison people on the ground, fax, phone and radio links.

6.0 Recommendations

The AELG has agreed to proceed with the following recommendations:

1. Utility organisations be asked to review their processes taking into account the Auckland Region CDEMG Public Information and Media Management Plan. Similarly sector organisations (notably the Water Industry Contingency Planning group) should review its regional procedures to ensure consistency with the regional media plan.
2. AELG should keep utility providers in the Auckland region updated on what is happening in regard to projects being undertaken by the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management eg: the National Information and National Disaster Impact projects.
3. A joint AELG-CEG team could be established to develop a best practice checklist of what actions should be undertaken at each stage in dealing with an event of advancing severity (this is a potential AELG project that will be considered during the next business planning round).
4. Sectors review the need for a more integrated regional approach as part of the 'sector planning' initiatives being undertaken for the CDEM Plan.
5. Communication templates, samples and manuals provided by some of the organisations that participated in the survey are looked at in more detail by sector task groups to identify improvements in sector planning.
6. The CDEM Group and other regional lifelines groups in NZ are advised of the findings from the research.
7. The AELG and the CDEM Group work together on communicating and providing more information to utility providers about the Auckland region CDEM Group and in particular on:
 - what the utility role is and what the new CDEM Group Plan means for their organisation.
 - how utilities and the EOC will communicate during emergencies
8. CDEMG and AELG establish relationships with those organisations that did not respond to the survey.
9. The contact details for the media spokespeople from each utility organisation are passed on to the CDEM Groups Public Education team who is looking at opportunities to work with media people (in peace time) to ensure that there are some common understandings about how things might look in an emergency event.