

## ANNEX 6: EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

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### 6.1 Primary Communication System

The primary system of communicating during an emergency will be normal day-to-day services such as telephone (including mobile telephone), email, or facsimile if available.

### 6.2 Secondary Communication System

If the primary system is not available for whatever reasons then the CDEM Group emergency communications Very High Frequency (VHF) radio network will be used. This network provides radio communication with and between the members of the CDEM Group, NZ Fire Service, Police and Hawke's Bay District Health Board. The VHF radio can also be used to contact the Gisborne CDEM Group.

In the event of prolonged interruption to the regional telecommunications links and the need to co-ordinate additional radio communications, contingency radio communication systems may be available on ships or aircraft in the area at the time of the emergency.

A high frequency radio (HF) radio network is available to contact central government via the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management.

### 6.3 Operational Procedures

Operational procedures providing details of emergency telephone and facsimile numbers together with radio call signs are contained with the Hawke's Bay Regional Council Emergency Procedures Manual. This includes the network procedures for the Regional Emergency Communications Networks, which is the dedicated Civil Defence VHF radio network provided and managed by Hawke's Bay Regional Council.

#### 6.3.1 Local communication

Local authorities are responsible for providing and maintaining their own communication networks to enable them to function and carry out their responsibilities during an emergency.

The preparation, planning, implementation and continued maintenance of necessary communications networks within local authorities districts must preserve the following priority of order as listed within the *National Civil Defence Plan Part 10, Communications*.

- Gathering of information regarding the emergency.
- Dissemination of warning bulletin and operation of warning devices.
- Rescue and evacuation of people under immediate threat.

- Continuation of local government, and maintenance of law and order.
- Emergency Services Operations Centres and Rescue Operations.
- Casualty management, including hospitals, emergency medical units and traffic control related to casualties.
- Public information.
- Community welfare needs.
- Maintenance of essential services.
- Protection of property.
- Restoration of remaining communication networks.

### 6.3.2 Methods of Communication

The civil defence communications network has to be able to function in both day-to-day and emergency conditions. It needs to use the most reliable and least prone to error techniques available.

Inward and outward use of communications and system loading capacities increase dramatically during an emergency. Emergency and essential services may need to dispatch staff or check systems; commercial interests may need to communicate with local or distant clients; industries may need to re-route deliveries of supplies; and people may need to reassure families or friends. Standard communications networks are usually only designed to handle a small percentage of traffic at one time. Hence the chaos when everyone wants to use the communications network at the same time.

Emergency planners need to ensure that there is “triple redundancy” available (at least 3x times the amount of normal communications systems load carrying capacity) for use in an emergency. Emergency power facilities and back-up will also need to be catered for. Where facilities are available, the following means in the order of preference shown, should be used for the delivery of emergency information:

- Electronic messaging between computers.
- Facsimile machine.
- Telephone via commercial PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network), PABX systems, or Cellphone networks (if still operational due to limited capacity).
- Mobile radio telephone systems via VHF, UHF or HF frequencies.
- Courier delivery.

### 6.3.3 Communication Resources

In an emergency there are many numerous private and commercial electronically based communications networks, which could be available nationally, regionally or locally. The following agencies and organisations have extensive communications networks that may be of assistance during a civil defence emergency:

- Amateur Radio Emergency Corps. (AREC)
- Courier and Delivery Services;
- Department of Conservation (DOC);
- Electricity Corporation of New Zealand;
- Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management;

- New Zealand Defence Force;
- New Zealand Fire Service;
- NZ Police;
- Radio New Zealand Limited;
- Rural Fire Authorities;
- St John Ambulance - Central Region;
- Taxi and Bus Companies;
- Telecom Corporation of New Zealand;
- Television NZ Limited;
- Telstra Clear Communications Limited;
- Territorial Authorities;
- Tranz Rail;
- Vodafone.

#### **6.3.4 Co-ordination of Resources**

In order to make best use of communications systems, and to provide for alternatives when an emergency occurs, Telecom Corporation of New Zealand will appoint liaison officers to civil defence at national and regional level. During a state of local emergency, these liaison officers are available to assist in an advisory role to facilitate restoration of communication systems inside and outside the area of disaster.

#### **6.3.5 Restoration Priorities**

Responsibility for the restoration of communications facilities rests with their owner. However, the Controller (Group or Local) may stipulate priorities for the restoration of communications during the response to a disaster, depending on the need(s) of the emergency and/or the availability of resources.