



News letter

December 2015

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It is hard to believe we are winding up another year. And what an incredibly busy one it's been. The biggie was obviously the storm event of 19 and 20 June. We would like to take this opportunity to once again thank all those who were involved in the response. A lot of hours were worked over a short period of time in a stressful environment. While there were

some things that we could improve on for the next event, there was also a lot that did go well. Some other highlights over the past quarter were the retirement of long-standing Group Controller David Lean, the CDEM Foundation Courses that were run for each of our Advisory Groups, the Public Awareness Survey, ShakeOut 2015 and the A&P shows around the region.

In the eye of the storms



Group Controller David Lean is retiring after more than three decades of service. David led the response in major storms, flood and tornadoes in Taranaki during this time. These included Cyclone Hilda, Waitara floods of 1990, the Waitotara floods in 2004, and most recently the widespread flooding and slips of June 2015 which resulted in a declared state of emergency.

Through all the displays of nature's destructive power, however, there was always a positive constant. "What's always been impressive is the rapport between all the players involved – medical people, councils, emergency services," he says. "It's important to have a team where everyone is on a first-name basis, there's a high degree of mutual respect, and everybody works together to achieve the best possible outcome in the shortest possible time."

In the early days of David's involvement with Civil Defence – when he was Controller by virtue of being New Plymouth Mayor – he remembers something of a "Dad's Army" attitude to it.

"That's far from the case these days," he says. "What you see now is all the forward planning that's put in place and continually updated and upgraded. Civil Defence professionals are very busy people."

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GET READY NOW...

Make sure you have:

- ▶ Household emergency plan
- ▶ Emergency survival items
- ▶ Getaway Kit



Civil Defence Emergency Management
24 hours - 0800 900 049

www.trc.govt.nz/civil-defence/

 twitter.com/taranakiCD

 www.facebook.com/TaranakiCivilDefence

During work hours

New Plymouth District callers **06 758 1110**

South Taranaki & Stratford districts **0800 900 049**

or you can email: emo@trc.govt.nz

When the balloon goes up



David Lean (right) is congratulated by Brian Jeffares, the Taranaki Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Chair, at a presentation marking David's years of service and upcoming retirement as Civil Defence Controller.

When an emergency is formally declared, the Civil Defence Group Controller is responsible for co-ordinating the response. If necessary, the Controller can exercise wide-ranging emergency powers including ordering the evacuation of premises and places, authorising the entry of premises, ordering the closure of roads and public

places, ordering the removal of vehicles and vessels, and requisitioning property, equipment, materials, or supplies.

David Lean first became Controller when he was elected Mayor of New Plymouth in 1980. In more recent times, he has held the position under contract to the Taranaki Civil Defence Emergency Management

Group, made up of representatives of the New Plymouth, Stratford and South Taranaki district councils and the Taranaki Regional Council.

The Group will appoint a new Controller in due course. In the meantime, there are six Alternate Controllers able to step into the role should the need arise.

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"Nowadays the community has come to understand and expect that someone will pick it up and be ready to respond when something horrible happens – someone that has done enough preparation and can accept the responsibility and leadership to take action to lessen the impact and get the community back to normality as quickly as possible. Getting the community back on its feet, back to some semblance of normal, everyday living, is to my mind one of the most important aspects of Civil Defence."

He also believes that the Christchurch earthquakes were a wake-up call, making people more aware of the need to be prepared.

"There is better education now, especially at pre-schools and primary schools," he says. "And then we've got things like New Zealand ShakeOut, the national earthquake drill. It may have been laughed at by some commentators but it's important for people to practise and

rehearse their response, and to think about the personal implications of a sudden, disruptive disaster. We saw what happened in Christchurch – disaster striking where many people thought it would never happen. We don't want that attitude here. It will happen here in some form or other – it's a matter of when, not if."

For the future, he hopes Taranaki can continue to present a united front in the face of adversity. "I think people have come to realise that we need to look after ourselves," he says. "We're in a region that is not without its geographical challenges, and whether we sink or swim is largely up to our own efforts."

The Chairman of the Taranaki Civil Defence Emergency Management Group, Brian Jeffares, says David made a big contribution.

"For over 30 years now we have been well served by a group of outstanding individuals led by David. It is he who set the momentum and culture of Civil Defence in Taranaki. His no-nonsense, unflappable approach has

been to the forefront in his time as Controller and I know he will be sorely missed.

"I wish him well for the future and on behalf of the approximately 107,000 Taranaki citizens, I thank him for his commitment to our province."

Bev Raine served Taranaki Civil Defence in various roles from 1982 to 2007, working closely with David during emergency events and their aftermath, and on other community projects.

She says his "excellent leadership skills and ability to sort out the major problems from the minutiae" were evident right from the early days, and particularly during Cyclone Bola in 1988 and Cyclone Hilda in 1990. She recalls the teamwork involved as they worked through the sensitivities and complexities of relief funding and Government disaster assistance after big events. "We seemed to understand each other and were not afraid to say what we think, and were certainly not afraid of hard work."



All disasters have the potential to cause disruption, damage property and take lives. So it's vital that you prepare now.

Three basic steps are:

- 1** Create and practise a household emergency plan.
- 2** Assemble and maintain emergency survival items.
- 3** Have a getaway kit in case you have to leave home in a hurry.

For details, go to www.getthru.govt.nz.

New Zealand Shake Out 2015

www.shakeout.govt.nz

ShakeOut 2015, the national earthquake drill, took place at 9.15am on 15 October 2015, when we all practiced 'Drop Cover Hold'. In Taranaki we had 27,129 registered participants in the exercise.

We would like to thank all those who took the time to register and participate. It is important that we practice what to do in any given emergency. It is also important to think about what that emergency could mean for ourselves and our family.

If a significant disaster was to occur while you were at work, do you have:

- a meeting place for you and your family if you cannot communicate with them?
- at least 3 days supply of food, water and other household items at any given time?
- a getaway kit, if you had to evacuate that you can grab and go?



South Taranaki District Council Chief Executive (and Coordinating Executive Group member) Craig Stevenson, and Group Recovery Manager Fiona Greenhill after ShakeOut 2015.

TEMO staff and Stan spent the afternoon of ShakeOut travelling around the District Councils and Regional Council to ask some of these questions.



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Foundation Course Training

In November 2015 the TEMO staff ran Civil Defence Foundation Courses for the Rural Advisory Group, the Lifelines Advisory Group and the Welfare Coordination Group. The aim was to ensure all members have a basic understanding of Civil Defence & Emergency Management, and understand where the advisory groups fit within the wider scope of emergency management. Intermediate Courses, as well as Civil Defence Centre training will be under way in early 2016.

Public education and awareness survey

We recently undertook our five-yearly public education and awareness survey, and this time we had 1474 participants – the largest number ever!

The purpose of the survey is to find out how prepared the region is for a disaster. Some of the things we found out were:

- ▶ More people than ever have a household emergency plan, but the number of people with getaway kits has not changed significantly since 1995.
- ▶ The people of Taranaki have a sound understanding of what hazards they are exposed to, and the services that could be disrupted in a disaster.
- ▶ There is also an understanding of the importance of being prepared. People understand that it is their responsibility to look after themselves and their family in an emergency.

▶ Understanding, however, does not seem enough to influence the majority of people to take the steps needed to prepare themselves for a disaster. Why not? The stated reasons include limited finances, laziness, and the 'it will never happen to me' mentality.

The results of this survey, along with those from previous Taranaki and national surveys, will feed into the *Taranaki Resilience Strategy* to be completed by June 2016. This will incorporate preparedness, resilience and social change in an emergency context.

Watch this space!

Going forward...

2016 will be another very busy year with the Taranaki CDEM Group Plan up for review, foundation, intermediate courses, and Civil Defence Centre training all in the works, as well as the development of the Taranaki Resilience Strategy, a Civil Defence Strategy, and the continuous corrective action planning.

We at TEMO would like to again thank all those who have been involved in CDEM in 2015. It has been a challenging but successful year. We hope to continue to progress in 2016, and have another good year. We hope you enjoy the holiday season, remember

to travel safe if you are going away, and you will hear from us again in 2016.



Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year

A&P Shows



Stan and Lynsey handing out balloons and emergency preparedness bags

Waverley, Hawera and Stratford A&P Shows

During November, the team attended the Waverley, Hawera and Stratford A&P shows to talk to people about preparedness, and give a few goodies out to the communities. Of course, Stan the Civil Defence dog was very popular with young and old, and got into plenty of mischief.

Despite some average weather, the sun managed to come out, which meant a great turnout. The shows were really successful and we were happy to be a part of them. We will see you all again next year!



Stan assisted Waverley's Volunteer Fire Brigade

Check your emergency survival items

The beginning of daylight saving is a good reminder to check your emergency survival items and getaway kit.

Emergency Survival Items

- ✓ Torch
- ✓ Radio
- ✓ Spare batteries
- ✓ Food for at least three days
- ✓ Emergency water
- ✓ First aid kit
- ✓ Pet food
- ✓ BBQ or camping cooker
- ✓ Face and dust masks



Are you prepared for an emergency? Visit
www.getthru.govt.nz

**GET READY
GET THRU**

