



Natural Resources Wales

Board Meeting

Tuesday 19th March

Paper Title	Update to the Board on arrangements for managing incidents in Natural Resources Wales.
Paper Reference:	Paper 11 (03/13)
Paper Prepared By:	Alun Williams

Purpose of Paper:	Discussion/Information
Recommendation:	To note this update
Decision Required:	Not Applicable

Impact: To note – all headings might not be applicable to the topic	Impact on the Environment: : Effective Incident response ensures that the impact on the environment is minimised Impact on the Economy: n/a Impact on Community: Effective Incident response ensures that communities and property are protected Impact on Knowledge: n/a
--	---

Issue

1 Natural Resources Wales is designated a Category One organisation within the Civil Contingences Act, and this places a legal responsibility on us to have robust incident management arrangements in place to respond to incidents and emergencies

Background

2. The Operational Readiness project has been working to establish the arrangements for incident response management within Natural Resources Wales. This includes; ensuring that there are systems in place for vesting day, communications with partner organisations and confirmation of cross border working arrangements with the Environment Agency.

3. Each of the 3 legacy bodies have operational procedures that cover their current response roles e.g. Forestry Commission Wales (FCW) for Forestry fires, Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) for Marine Pollution incidents and Environment Agency Wales (EAW) for floods, pollution and other environmental incidents

4. The Living Wales Programme made a decision to adopt the Environment Agency model for incident management due to the fact that the Environment Agency already had comprehensive systems in place that could be adapted to meet the requirements of NRW.

5. The Board received a detailed presentation on the Day 1 arrangements in January 2013 and this paper provides information on the more detailed procedures.

6. The Environment Agency has a Major Incident Procedure which is supported by detailed guidance and attached as Appendix A is the current document. This document will be used by NRW as it stands and will be further adapted after vesting day for continued use by NRW. The supporting documents will be updated and eventually available to staff electronically via the NRW Intranet and internal Document Management System (DMS).

7. All duty rotas for EA Wales, CCW and FCW will be held with the EAW/NRW 24/7 Communications Centre prior to 1st April. This centre will become the NRW centre from 1st April so will ensure business continuity,

8. In addition to the duty rotas Environment Agency Wales has produced a cascade list to be used in the event of a major incident where additional staff can be drafted in to work shifts and comply with the Health & Safety and Work-time Directive. The project has ensured there are effective arrangements in place for incident response over the Easter weekend. A copy of the Head Office Wales duty officer availability is attached as Appendix B, and similar systems are in place at a local level. It should be noted that the approach to the transition into NRW incident management arrangements has been focussed on business continuity and reducing risk. This

means that there is very little change to existing arrangements as these have been shown to work well.

9. Prior to the Bank Holiday there will be a five day Flood Risk Forecast and should there be a significant risk of flooding over this period staff will be alerted of the increased likelihood of being required to respond to and manage an incident.

Communications

10. Key partners have been informed of the changes including the BBC Wales weather team, who will be required to notify the public of where to look for flood warning information.

11. All staff involved have been made aware of any new requirements, although as mentioned earlier in the report these are not significant.

12. In the week prior to the change a reminder will be sent by EA Wales to the EA in England of the change on 1st April and confirming the 24/7 contact arrangements which will be used by the NRW 24/7 Communications Centre Cardiff and the EA 24/7 Communications Centre (Rotherham).

13. Until the NRW e-mail system has had time to bed in the EA and the National Flood Forecasting Centre will use both the old EA Wales e-mail accounts and the new NRW e-mail accounts.

14. In the event of major incidents or cross-border incidents NRW will inform the Environment Agency and for major incidents will continue to inform the Emergencies Team at Welsh Government in order that they may brief Ministers.

Annex 1 EA National Incident Management Procedures

Annex 2 Easter Availability (Example)