

Resilience through Partnership



Joint Resilience Unit Newsletter

Serving the City and County of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Issue 4 - Winter 2012



Working together



About the Joint Resilience Unit (JRU)

The JRU is responsible for ensuring, on behalf of Neath Port Talbot and Swansea Local Authorities, that the impact of major emergencies affecting their communities is greatly reduced, so increasing the safety of their residents and visitors.

The JRU team consists of four members of staff and a manager. The team is based at The Quays, Briton Ferry, but also use office space at the Civic Centre, Swansea.

Welcome to our winter edition of **Resilience through Partnership**. This issue will tell you what the JRU has been up to during the past few months.

We always welcome feedback from our readers. If you have any questions or comments please email joint_resilience@npt.gov.uk.

In addition, if you have any suggestions for articles of interest that you would like to see included in future issues, or you have some information you wish to share please email the address above.

Happy Reading!...

Inside this issue:

Exercise Dirty Quays	p1
JRU Website - Kids Corner	p1
Exercise NEW FLAME	p2
Get Ready for Winter Campaign 2012	p2
Follow the JRU on Twitter	p2
Winter Driving on Snow & Ice	p3
Flood Warnings on Facebook & Widgets	p3
Working with Voluntary Organisations	p4

Exercise DIRTY QUAYS

On Sunday 21st October 2012, the JRU held a live survivor reception centre exercise. The purpose of the exercise was to provide an opportunity for Neath Port Talbot CBC rest centre managers and staff to exercise together and gain an understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities in operating such a centre.

The exercise was organised by Mid & West Wales and South Wales Fire & Rescue Services in partnership with the JRU. The scenario involved Emergency Services reacting to the detonation of a 'dirty bomb', which exposed 100 office staff to unknown hazardous chemicals. The Fire & Rescue Services deployed a regional response of over eighty Fire fighters with specialist mass decontamination equipment.

The 100 'employees' were evacuated from The Quays and processed through Mass Decontamination Units before being registered at a Local Authority led Survivor Reception Centre. Trained

Social Services volunteers worked closely with volunteers from the British Red Cross and South Wales Police to ensure each evacuee's needs were met.

Councillor Peter Rees, Chair of the Joint Resilience Committee for Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Councils, said:

"This is an excellent opportunity for both local authorities to work alongside our emergency and voluntary services and to test our ability to run a survivor reception centre".

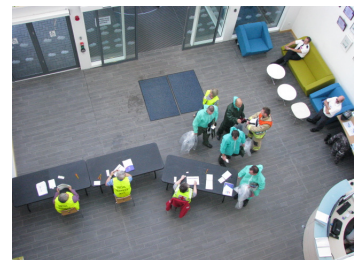
The Joint Resilience Manager, Shaun Burgess, was pleased with the event

"This exercise proved to be a really valuable environment for our rest centre managers and staff to consider the practicalities of setting-up, operating and decommissioning a survivor reception centre. It provided a useful insight into how the different partner agencies work, an idea of their concerns and the expertise & resources at their disposal. The time and

effort put in by all our partner agencies to make this exercise worthwhile was greatly appreciated".

Mass decontamination of the public may raise some unsavoury images but it is essential that regular exercises are undertaken to test joint response plans that are in place to reassure the public about the protection that is provided for this particular type of risk.

The event was considered by all participants to be a success.



JRU Website - Kids Corner



Kids' Corner - Help us spot the emergencies in Seaport

Equip your child with some basic knowledge about how to deal with an emergency incident by visiting our Kids Corner webpage.

The page brings together some essential information and tips on how to teach your child to deal with an emergency incident.

The Kids Corner webpage enables the JRU to introduce

emergency management to children and young people as part of fulfilling the obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

The page includes information on the risks that could affect our community, a short quiz and a link to 'WHAT IF' games.

The WHAT IF website

contains a series of interactive games designed to engage children and young people in the awareness of emergency situations and to provide information, ideas and suggestions so that they are able to choose how best to plan & prepare for emergencies.

To find out more visit www.jointresilience.co.uk/kidscorner



Exercise NEW FLAME

On Friday 5th October 2012 the JRU held a Multi Agency tabletop exercise to test Flogas' off-site COMAH plan. Participants included representatives from Flogas, the Emergency Services, Neath Port Talbot CBC, Environment Agency and ABMU Healthboard.

The purpose of the exercise was to examine the coordinated Multi Agency response to a major incident occurring at Flogas. The exercise scenario was based on a severe escape of LPG from the Flogas site.

The exercise planning group, led by the JRU, developed a new exercise format, where Bronze and Silver syndicate groups were based in separate rooms, and encouraged to communicate with each other via Airwave radios and mobile phone.

As part of the exercise, a Tactical (Silver) meeting was held in order to plan and coordinate resources to deal with the major incident at the site. This provided a welcome opportunity for officers to observe and take part in a Tactical Command meeting.

The exercise ensured Neath Port Talbot CBC's compliance with COMAH regulations, in terms of testing the off-site emergency plan every 3 years. Overall the exercise was a great success and feedback was very positive in terms of the new exercise format and its objectives.

The exercise helped to raise awareness of each agencies roles and capabilities; to identify further planning issues in respect of the off-site emergency plan; and to identify future training needs and exercise requirements.



Get Ready for Winter Campaign 2012

HM Government



The Get Ready for Winter Campaign is a partnership involving key government departments and agencies and voluntary sector partners to join up messages to encourage individuals, families and communities to think about what winter preparations they can make to help them stay warm, healthy and safe. The aim of the initiative is:

- ✦ to raise awareness of weather impacts and the benefits of planning
- ✦ to provide an opportunity to link local activities and messages to a national initiative
- ✦ User friendly access of information through a central point of contact (web pages) which will provide links to further information.

This year's Get Ready for Winter Campaign will be hosted on the

Met Office website
www.metoffice.gov.uk/getreadyforwinter

The web pages highlight some very practical and straight forward advice to help individuals and communities prepare for a range of winter weathers and provide top tips on Health and Well-being, Protecting Your Home, Out and About, and; Communities, as well as identifying possible ways of saving money.

Follow the JRU on Twitter...

The JRU are pleased to announce their presence in the Twitter world.

Follow us at **@JointResilience** and you can expect to receive tweets covering:

- ◆ alerts about new content on our public facing website, particularly website updates, news, publications, etc
- ◆ invitations to provide feedback from our resilience teams about what they're doing
- ◆ Information on exercises and events the JRU are running or taking part in.



Winter Driving on Snow and Ice....



Driving on snow and ice can be challenging and has safety and financial consequences for the unprepared.

The British weather is very unpredictable. When severe weather strikes suddenly the best advice is to stay home and off the road. If you must drive, remember over 90% of crashes are attributed to human error, so make sure you are prepared and drive for the conditions.

Before undertaking a journey it is necessary to decide if your

journey is absolutely essential.

If you do drive in severe weather take warm clothes with you, some water, or a hot drink, and a charged mobile phone. Also keep de-icer, a blanket and a torch in the boot of your car.

Before setting off it is important to prepare your car properly, to clear all the windows, lights and number plate of snow, not forgetting to clear the roof to prevent the snow sliding down the windscreen or blowing off distracting other road users.

When driving on icy and snowy roads the golden rule is to drive very slowly, ice can be patchy - drive at the lowest speed and in the highest gear possible...set off in second gear, avoiding high revs.

Remember to allow more time for your journey.

It is important to have a safe separation distance from the vehicle in front - stopping distances are 10 times longer in ice and snow.

Visibility can be seriously reduced and the use of dipped headlights is essential in falling snow.

Be particularly careful when on hills and making turnings as tyres may not have enough grip. If you become stuck in snow or on ice try using a higher gear to move away.

Visit www.drivingadvice.org.uk for further advice, traffic updates and weather forecasts.

Flood Warnings on Facebook and Widgets!



The Environment Agency (EA) has made it easier for the public and website developers to access flood warning information. Earlier this year the world's first flood warning service on Facebook was launched along with a flood widget to display live flood warning information on their own web pages.

The new Facebook application 'Flood Alerts' shows all flood warning that is in force across Wales and England.

It is the first service of this type and allows Facebook users to

get posts on their Facebook wall when a Flood Alert, Warning or Severe Flood Warning has been issued in their area. It helps flood warnings reach even more people by giving them easier access to information through social media. The 'app' can be found at:

<https://apps.facebook.com/FloodAlerts>

The EA has also developed a new flood warning 'widget' for use on websites. This is a computer script/code that web developers can download from the EA website:

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/137543.aspx>

and add to their own web pages. Once added, the 'widget' will show a live summary of flood alerts and flood warnings in force.

The 'widget' will update at the same frequency as the flood information on the EA website.

There are eight different 'widgets' available – one for each of the six EA regions, a 'widget' for EA Wales and a national (Wales and England) summary 'widget'.

Check out our 'widget' at www.jointresilience.co.uk



BritishRedCross

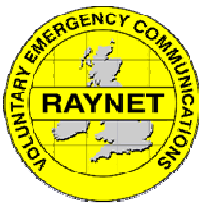
Volunteers and staff from the British Red Cross distributed more than 7,000 leaflets containing important practical and health information for residents and businesses in the vicinity of the Fforestfach Industrial Estate Fire, Swansea, in July this year.

The fire, which burned for three weeks was finally put out after a ground-breaking multi agency effort to contain and extinguish it. More than 30 Red Cross volunteers were mobilised over three days, requested by the Joint Resilience

Unit, to distribute the leaflets door to door to people's homes and to public places, giving local residents information and advice on health protection and pollution control measures.

A spokesman for the City & County of Swansea praised the efforts of the Red Cross, saying

"It is essential that the local community is kept informed of the ongoing situation. The British Red Cross volunteers have been fantastic in distributing leaflets to thousands of homes in the local area and we are very grateful for their efforts".



Who we are?

RAYNET (Radio Amateur Emergency Network) is the UK's national and

international voluntary emergency communications service, provided for the benefit of the community licensed radio amateurs.

This service was formed in 1953 following the East Coast Floods when radio amateurs provided the only communications available, as all public communications had failed.

West Glamorgan RAYNET is part of this service and supports the unitary authorities for Neath Port Talbot and the City & County of Swansea.

What we do?

We provide a flexible emergency radio communications service in

the event of major civil emergencies or related exercises and local community events both on land and at sea.

What have we done?

RAYNET has provided communications at major incidents involving aircrafts, trains, flooding, evacuation, telephone exchange and mobile phone outages, missing persons searches, adverse weather and oil/chemical pollution incidents, for e.g. Lockerbie air crash, Towyn flooding and Sea Empress oil pollution disaster.

How do we do it?

RAYNET is equipped with sophisticated radio equipment to provide emergency communications in situations where established emergency systems fail or require assistance. In addition to voice, plain text messages can also be sent and printed ensuring total

accuracy over short and long distances.

Who do we provide service to?

Under the CCA 2004 and the Radio Amateur Licence, RAYNET is permitted to pass messages on behalf of agencies such as the Emergency Services, Maritime & Coastguard Agency, Health Services and other voluntary organisations.

How do we train?

RAYNET train to a nationally agreed standard that takes place at monthly Group meetings. Tabletop and live exercises involving Local Authority Resilience Units provide further training in preparation for unexpected events where lives and property may be put at risk.

Those interested in taking part in amateur radio emergency communications can contact West Glamorgan RAYNET via the JRU.

Contact Us:

The Quays, Brunel Way, Baglan Energy Park,
Briton Ferry, SA11 2GG
01639 686409
joint_resilience@npt.gov.uk
www.jointresilience.co.uk

