

Resilience through Partnership



Joint Resilience Unit
Resilience through Partnership

Joint Resilience Unit Newsletter

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

Issue 8 - Summer 2015



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 Summer edition of **Resilience through Partnership**. This issue is packed with articles from the JRU and its partner agencies. The JRU would like to say a big thank you to those who contributed articles.

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.

Inside this issue:

Preparing for a crisis	p1
Choose well...where to go if...	p2
COMAH - Exercise Sentinel Steel & SCAPA	p2
Live rest centre training - Exercise Bridge	p2
EBOLA epidemic in West Africa - preparedness in	p3
Exercise Grey Dawn - Oil Spill Response Exercise	p4
What we've achieved...	p4
What's next?...	p4

Preparing for a crisis: Red Cross emergency response volunteers put their training into practice

British Red Cross emergency response volunteers in Swansea have recently put their skills to the test during an internal exercise at the charity's offices at Kidwelly House, Phoenix Way Enterprise Park.



BritishRedCross

The charity, who support Swansea NPT Joint Resilience Forum to set up and run rest centres during emergency situations, carried out the exercise to establish current training needs within the team and to assess how volunteers operate under difficult conditions.



The training event was developed by Eric Jenkins, a retired South Wales Police officer who now volunteers as a tutor and emergency response team leader with the charity. Eric worked alongside Gus Howlett, emergency response service manager, to develop the exercise scenario for the day-long training event.

Eric explains: "When I took on the role of team leader I looked at the current training we provide to our volunteers and questioned if there was more we could do to test our response. After speaking with Gus, we decided to hold an exercise to see how the team fared on an 'as-live' exercise."

The exercise took place on Saturday 22 November at the Red Cross office in Swansea which became a rest centre for the day. Eight emergency response volunteers took part in the training with volunteers from other services playing the roles of displaced residents in need of assistance.

"At the start of the day we briefed the volunteers on the scenario and then 'residents' began arriving at the centre. Each resident was assigned a persona to act out, testing the responses of the volunteers. These ranged from a young Mum in need of assistance to a couple who were a real thorn in the side of the responders.

"The team gave a first class response to each scenario they were presented with. The exercise helped us see what went well and what needed small tweaks to ensure we were following the correct procedures. It was a really useful exercise to run. We also completed a hot and cold debrief with the volunteers so all team members are now aware of what a potential 'real' situation could be like."

After the success of the exercise in Swansea, the charity is now looking to roll out the training to three other emergency response teams in South Wales. Teams of responders are on call throughout Wales to respond to emergencies ranging from fires and floods to terrorist attacks. During the Gleison Colliery disaster in 2011, Red Cross emergency response volunteers supported family members at the on-site centre while emergency services attempted to rescue the trapped miners. All volunteers are trained to provide psychosocial at a time of crisis – training that proved invaluable.

Eric concludes: "Exercises, such as the one held in Swansea, are really important as they are second only to the real thing. They also keep volunteers motivated and because evacuees are played by our own volunteers they get an insight into what it is like to be displaced. The exercise also acts as a good team-building event so the team gets to know each other and what skills can be used to their best advantage during a live incident.

"I feel confident that our volunteers will be ready and fully prepared for anything that is thrown at them in a true crisis situation. During the exercise all the training that the Red Cross provided the volunteers came to the fore under pressure and I was extremely proud of what our volunteers accomplished."

Article provided by British Red Cross



Choose well...where to go if...

Did you know 73% of people who go to Emergency Departments (A&E) are not actually admitted as an emergency? By choosing the most appropriate healthcare service for your illness, injury or condition you can receive and help us to provide everyone with the treatment they need as quickly as possible.

Visit www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk or call NHS direct Wales on 0845 4647 for a list of services that will help you access the right service and treatment for your illness, injury or condition.



Article provided by ABMU Health Board

COMAH - Exercise Sentinel Steel & Scapa

Under the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) regulations certain large scale industrial establishments are classified as either 'top tier' or 'lower tier' sites. Operators of top tier sites have a responsibility to establish off-site contingency arrangements in the event of an incident.

In Neath Port Talbot there are 5 top tier COMAH sites which emergency plans have to be prepared for. The JRU in association with the site operators exercise these plans every 3 years. Exercises are done under regulation and after the exercise, plans are updated by the JRU and distributed to all relevant agencies.



Steel Sentinel (TATA) held in December 2014 and Scapa (Calor Gas) held in January 2015 were exercises to bring all agencies together who have a role to play should an incident occur requiring a multi-agency response.

The exercises tested the robustness of the plans including alerting procedures, expectations from different responding agencies and whether plans are fit for purpose.

The exercises ran relatively smoothly enabling participants to talk through their response to an incident and identified any changes to respective off-site plans.

Participants expressed that the exercises are beneficial in terms of meeting people from other agencies that they might work with if an incident happened for real!

Live Rest Centre Training - Exercise Bridge



Recently the JRU in association with City & County of Swansea Social Services department ran successful live rest centre training - Exercise Bridge. The aim was for rest centre staff to practice the registration process and the setting up and operating of a rest centre.

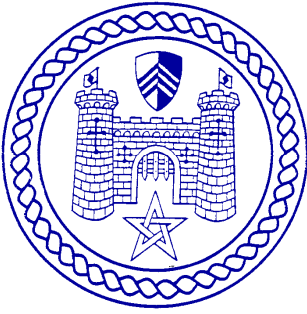
The exercise took place at Fforestfach Training Centre, who kindly agreed to support the event with use of their premises as the rest centre and staff/service

users as fictional evacuees. Each evacuee had a role profile to play on the day, with these profiles providing information to exercise players for registration and to mimic other issues that may occur in a real rest centre situation. The evacuees were all excellent and gave the exercise a very realistic feel.

Overall the exercise ran very smoothly and it proved to be a valuable experience and a great opportunity to test rest centre guidance and the registration process. Rest centre staff were given an insight into how a centre should be set up and operated and how to deal with complications that can arise from the registration process and welfare needs. All players commented on the usefulness of using a live exercise to practice their response.



EBOLA epidemic in West Africa - Preparedness in Wales



As at March, the total confirmed, probable and suspected cases of Ebola is approaching 25,000 in the following 5 countries: Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, the UK and the USA and in the 4 countries – Senegal, Spain, Mali and Nigeria - which have been declared Ebola free. There have been over 10,000 deaths.

The UK is leading the international response in Sierra Leone in order to halt the disease in West Africa. That is the single most important way of preventing Ebola from infecting people in the UK and is why we have committed £427 million to eradicating the disease in that country.

In Sierra Leone, the UK has recruited, trained and deployed over 4,000 local healthcare workers and 2,000 community mobilisers, worked with more than 600 religious leaders and with 40 local radio stations to explain how to reduce the risk of infection and support the reintegration of Ebola survivors into their families and communities. The latest data shows that the number of new cases of Ebola in Sierra Leone has levelled out, but there will be localised flare ups.

To date there have been over 21,000 cases with over 8,000 deaths from Ebola Virus Disease (EVD).

Ebola has already arrived in the UK The risk to the UK remains low, but in December 2014, the first case of Ebola diagnosed here was confirmed in a nurse who had been working in the Kerry Town facility in Sierra Leone just returned home to Glasgow from London Heathrow.

The Prime Minister chaired a Cobra meeting on Ebola on 30th December with Ministers and officials from across Government and the First Minister of Scotland, who joined the meeting via video conference.

Following treatment at the Royal Free Hospital she made a full recovery.

A second case, an Army Reserve staff nurse, admitted to the Royal Free Hospital on 12th March 2015, also recovered from the Ebola virus following treatment in the high level isolation unit (HLIU) at the Royal Free Hospital.

General preparedness An 'Ebola Strategic Oversight Group' set up by Public Health Wales comprises Consultants in Communicable Disease Control, Welsh Government officials, the police and ambulance services, and representatives from Local Health Boards.

Bill Arnold, Director of Port Health Services at Swansea Bay port Health Authority is also a member of the Group which co-ordinates the public sector response in mitigating the potential introduction of Ebola in Wales. Robust training has been implemented across the NHS, other agencies, and for local government officers including port health staff at air & sea ports to protect our borders.

NHS staff volunteers and others from Wales who visit West Africa are registered with PHW and are monitored on their return. The level of surveillance implemented is categorised according to the degree of risk posed following the individual's role and level of contact with Ebola patients. PHW monitor returning front-line workers on a daily basis, whilst those who didn't knowingly come into direct contact with patients are requested to self monitor during the incubation period.

Shipping The MCGA 'National Maritime Information Centre' provides data on 'Vessels of Interest' on passage from ports in West Africa to the UK. Together with similar information from shipping agents, Authorities able to assess the risk posed by such vessels due in Wales well in advance of their arrival and the 21 day incubation period of the disease

It is a duty upon Masters to complete 'Maritime Declarations of Health' in such cases so that port health and medical officers can make informed judgements about health status and advise the port community (pilots, agents, stevedores, chandlers etc) who may come into contact with members of crew and any passengers on board accordingly. Permission to trade (termed 'Free Pratique') is issued by port health officers only if there is no risk posed.

Exercise Grey Dawn - Oil Spill Response Exercise



Neath Port Authority held a Tier 2 Oil Spill Response exercise on Tuesday 12th May involving multi-agency attendance.

Participating agencies included RNLI, Coastguard, Police, Fire Service, Natural Resources Wales, representatives from City & County of Swansea / NPTCBC and the JRU, bringing together responses from Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.

The 3 local authorities in Swansea Bay - Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend tested their 'on-shore' pollution plan with a table top exercise running alongside the Port's scenario.

The scenario was based on a moored vessel lying at anchor off Aberavon beach which starts to drag anchor towards Crymlyn Sands, grounding to the beach, resulting in a fuel oil leak.

The purpose of the exercise was to ensure there is an integrated response in the event of a major oil spill incident affecting localised or large areas of coastline extending from the Loughor Estuary in the west to the Ogmore Estuary in the east.

Article provided by Neath Port Authority

What we've achieved...

Here's some of things we've worked on during the past few months

- ◆ Exercise BRIDGE - Live Rest Centre Training
- ◆ Exercise Steel Sentinel & Scapa - TATA & Calor Gas COMAH live and table top exercises
- ◆ Business continuity awareness week promotion
- ◆ JRU Twitter account and public facing website updates
- ◆ On call duty officer response to Godregraig Forestry Fire incident

What's next?...

Here's a taster of some of things we are working on over the next few months.

- ◆ Planning & facilitating a COMAH table top exercise for top tier site Flogas
- ◆ In house business continuity drop in sessions
- ◆ Exercising and auditing business continuity plans for Council critical services
- ◆ Planning & facilitating a multi agency reservoir exercise - Exercise CASCADE
- ◆ Continue to provide an on-call duty officer service to respond to local emergency incidents



Contact Us:

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

