



**State Disaster Management Group
Ordinary Meeting Minutes
2 March 2011**

Conducted at Level 15, Executive Building – commencing at 2.00pm

Responsible Agency

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed:

Major General Mick Slater of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (Australian Defence Force) and Colonel Luke Foster from Head Quarters 1 Division.

Mr Graeme Newton the Chief Executive Officer of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.

Mr Greg Goebel from the Red Cross.

Representatives from the utilities sector:

Mr Chris Arnold from ENERGEX
Mr Kim Graham from OPTUS
Mr John O'Brien from TELSTRA.

Representatives from the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM):

Mr Jim Davidson
Mr Peter Baddiley.

The State Disaster Management Group (SDMG) members and their respective agency representatives.

A quorum was achieved at this meeting through attendance by SDMG Members or appointed SDMG Member Deputies as follows:

SDMG Member - Department of the Premier and Cabinet - Ken Smith

SDMG Member – Department of Community Safety - Jim McGowan

SDMG Member – Department of Communities – Tony Hayes

SDMG Member – Department of Education and Training – Graham Atkins

SDMG Member – Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation – Trevor Van Dam

SDMG Member – Department of Environment and Resource Management –

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Date: 26/05/11
Exhibit Number: 495
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John Bradley

SDMG Member – Department of Local Government and Planning – Paul Low

SDMG Member – Department of Justice and Attorney-General – Philip Reed

SDMG Member – Department of Public Works – Mal Grierson

SDMG Member – Department of Transport and Main Roads – David Stewart

SDMG Member Deputy – Local Government Association of QLD – Greg Hoffman

SDMG Member Deputy – Queensland Health – Jeannette Young

SDMG Member – Queensland Police Service – Bob Atkinson

SDMG Member – Queensland Treasury – Walter Ivessa.

2. Minutes and business arising from previous meeting

The minutes from the 8 December 2010 SDMG meeting were tabled for consideration.

Resolution:

Members confirmed the meeting minutes for 8 December 2010 SDMG meeting as a true and accurate record of meeting proceedings.

3. Endorsement of Extraordinary Minutes

The minutes from the recent extraordinary meetings have been completed and collated by the SDMG secretariat.

There were 18 sets of minutes for the Queensland Flood Events and 16 sets of minutes for the Queensland Cyclone activity.

Once approval has been granted by the Chair of the SDMG the secretariat is to distribute the minutes to the members for their perusal. Members will have two weeks from the date of distribution to identify any changes they require to be made and are to submit suggested amendments to the SDMG secretariat for consideration and inclusion (any substantial or conflicting amendment will be forwarded to the Chair for his consideration).

Once the minutes have been finalised the secretariat is to distribute the minutes to members for out of session endorsement via flying minute.

The endorsement of the Queensland flood events minutes are to take priority due to the flood inquiry commission.

Resolution:

The SDMG members endorsed this method of minutes endorsement and were supportive of the secretariat in the progression of this process.

Chair

XO

SDMG
Secretariat /
All Agencies



4. SDMG debrief introduction

The Chair provided a brief introduction to the debriefing process asking all agencies to consider what the SDMG had done well but more importantly to identify areas for improvement. Below is a summary of the feed back provided by individual agencies.

SDMG Chair Response

The *Disaster Management Act 2003* amendments allowing for the appointment of a State Disaster Coordinator and State Recovery Coordinator worked well but there are still areas within the act that need to be reconsidered. For example the duration of the disaster situation declarations (currently 14 days from activation) is not long enough to encompass large scale clean up tasking (eg asbestos removal) without the need to seek an extension.

Engagement at the district level is the best it has been (with acknowledgment being afforded the Queensland Police Service (QPS) District Disaster Coordinators (DDC's). Further engagement needs to be undertaken with the Local Disaster Management Groups (LDMG's) to enhance resilience and robustness.

Positive engagement at all levels in the disaster management processes is essential to ensure continuous and synergistic effort. Such engagement is not considered voluntary and in the majority there was strong engagement in the process.

In some instances, it was highlighted that the need to follow well established processes is essential and that in some cases where the process was circumvented it was reflected the efficiency of effort.

A review of approach to establishment and management of evacuation centres is required, and include consideration of the following:

- A stronger policy approach is required regarding self-evacuation.
- Planning for centres must ensure adequate resources and management – risks associated with opening unprepared sites.
- The establishment of unofficial evacuation centres without coordinator with disaster management arrangements.

The work carried out by the utilities sector in response to the disasters should be praised and recognition that the earlier the utilities providers were included in the SDMG's the better positioned they were to effectively respond.

Bureau of Meteorology

Jim Davidson thanked the group and expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to be part of the SDMG process.

Jim Davidson advised that the Bureau is looking at their procedures with regard to servicing the number of requests for briefings.

Peter Baddiley supported the comments made by Jim and added that the providing details for flood hazards is always a challenge.



Jim and Peter asked the members to provide feedback to them should they have suggestions on how the Bureau can improve their performance

Comments

The Chair of the SDMG thanked the Bureau for all their support in the lead up to and during the two events through the provision of comprehensive and accurate presentations and briefings. The Chair acknowledged their work, describing it as superb.

It was identified that there was a need to have good communications with local communities to achieve the full picture of the event unfolding. Mr Baddiley explained that the Bureau provided the vertical information (with regards to hydrology) but it was the local government that translated it into the horizontal. Basically the Bureau could tell how high the rivers would rise and when the peaks were due, but the local communities provided advice with regards to how that would translate on the ground (where the water would course).

The Chair commented that a particular benefit in Local Groups participating in SDMG meetings is that they would receive the latest BOM briefing in addition to other essential information, optimising time of all stakeholders.

Australian Defence Force

Colonel Foster advised that the provision of liaison staff worked well but believes that it would be beneficial for the liaison staff to commence planning earlier if possible.

Colonel Foster advised that he thought the ADF were fortunate to have a number of people in the right place at the right time.

The Chair noted that there had been challenges with the Defence Assistance to the Civil Community process due to the existing framework surrounding engagement with ADF via DACC until after all local, private and/or state assets have been exhausted. This process hampers the preparation and operational response as it curtailed the time available for necessary operational planning. The Chair said a review of this process would be taken up with the Commonwealth as part of the COAG approved review of emergency management arrangements.

Major General Mick Slater advised that the ADF are used to planning as part of their operations and they would much prefer to plan for a response and be prepared and then have the response cancelled than having limited planning time.

It was suggested by Major General Slater that there be two areas of engagement, as follows:

Regular and routine engagement throughout the year to maintain a healthy working relationship between the SDMG and the ADF.

Disaster engagement at the earliest possible opportunity to assist the ADF in their operational planning with the opportunity to "turn off" operations if not required.



Comments

Mr Jim McGowan praised the work of the ADF and in addition noted the impact they had within the community with regards to raising the level of confidence out in the region. He stated that the ADF deployment had made a significant positive psychological impact on the effected communities and this should not be understated.

Red Cross

Mr Greg Goebel thanked Emergency Management Queensland, the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service for their assistance within the regions.

Mr Goebel noted that the response they received when engaging with LDMG's was varied.

Mr Goebel agreed with the Chair's earlier statements relating to the need to address the identification, definition and management of shelters and evacuation centres.

Mr Goebel also identified a need for the SDMG to address the issue of donations. Despite request for the community not to donate goods, donations continued to flow in. There are no facilities in which to store these donations and no formal distribution process in place and this caused a number of challenges.

Mr Goebel praised the QPS on their communication work utilising social networks such as Facebook and Twitter and identified this as a communications mode that could be further utilised by various agencies as a means to communicate with the community.

Mr Goebel identified that cases of abuse of donations / support was occurring at recovery centres (this included the handing out of free mobile phones to back packers/tourists not local residents).

Mr Goebel stated that further work needs to be undertaken between the Red Cross, the Local Government Association of Queensland and the Queensland Police Service with regards to the National Registration Inquiry System.

Mr Goebel also stated that the current volunteer numbers for the Red Cross stand at 1500 trained volunteers and these events highlighted the need to increase this to between 2000 and 3000 in strength.

Queensland Police Service

The Commissioner, Mr Bob Atkinson stated that the QPS had learned a lot from these events and that they have already started an internal process to capture and encompass these lessons into policing policy and management.

The Commissioner stated that moving of the SDMG meetings into the new Queensland Emergency Operations Centre at Kedron worked well but that further work was required with regards to teleconference etiquette.



The Commissioner praised the work of those QPS and EMQ members involved in the transition and implementation of *Disaster Management Act* changes that occurred on 1 November 2010.

The Commissioner also thanked the Australian Defence Forces for their support and services provided during the two events.

The Chair called upon Deputy Commissioner Ian Stewart who occupied the position of State Disaster Coordinator (SDC) during the two major 2010/2011 disaster events, to provide his comments.

Deputy Commissioner Stewart stated that the cooperation in the management of these disaster events was outstanding. He did note however that there may be a need to look at powers for the SDC for times when there is a need to take decisive action without protracted consultation with LDMG's. An example of this could be the ordering of mandatory evacuations.

Two possible solutions would be to:

1. Identify trigger points during a disaster event that will require an overriding of authority in order to save lives/assets etc
2. Retraining of local people to ensure they are able to make well informed and timely decisions under the pressure of a disaster.

Comments

The Chair noted that prior to the changes in legislation on 1 November 2010 the Districts were the least empowered in the conduct of their disaster management duties. He praised the work of the DDC's and asked the Commissioner to pass on his thanks to all DDC's involved.

Local Government Association of Queensland

Mr Hoffman advised that technology was an issue in some regional councils which often made it difficult (especially in remote areas) for representatives to engage effectively.

Mr Hoffman also raise the issue of the time impost these meetings (LDMG meetings, DDMG meetings, SDCG and SDMG teleconferences) had on the participants from local governments. He suggested a review of communication engagement with LDMG's to streamline the communication requirements.

Department of Community Safety

Mr Jim McGowan stated that good working relationships between agencies was evident in the well focused management of the disasters.

Mr McGowan agreed that there is a need to clearly define what constitutes a shelter and an evacuation centre.

Mr McGowan also advised that there is room for improvement with regards to information systems. This includes the sourcing and sharing of the information through all levels of government.



Queensland Health

Dr Jeannette Young advised that it was important to have a well functioning LDMG as they were vital to the dissemination of health related information for the community. Where the LDMG's were not stood to or functional, Queensland Health faced significant problems.

Dr Young stated that the department has learnt that it is important to get the Department of Health and Ageing involved early to assist in the management of the elderly (including assisting with aged care centre evacuation).

In conclusion Dr Young thanked the ADF for their support throughout both disaster events.

Department of Transport and Main Roads

Mr Stewart identified the misalignment between commercial interests and resupply priorities. There were issues with commercial resupply including the use of the resupply efforts by retailers to avoid freight charges. He identified that more work in this areas is required.

Mr Stewart also indicated that a lot had been learned about the capacity of the 131940 line/website and agreed that the use of social media was the way forward to get the messages out, especially with regards to road closures.

Mr Stewart also highlighted issue with legislation, particularly in the area of reconstruction. He identified that better management in this area is required.

Department of the Environment and Resource Management.

Mr Bradley thanked every one for their involvement but particularly the Bureau of Meteorology in the area of forecasts and hydrology. Mr Bradley identified that DERM and the Bureau already work well together but some finer tuning in some areas (storm surge) would be beneficial.

Mr Bradley identified that problems existed in the intersection or responsibilities and communication between LDMG's and DDMG's when it came to the utilities sector.

Comments

The Chair noted that an engagement and reporting chain needs to be established with the critical infrastructure sector. A reporting structure also needs to be developed for LDMG's which should include reporting templates and reporting arrangements.

Department of Local Government and Planning

Mr Low identified the need for capacity building within the department to assist with recovery. In particular work needs to be taken with regards to the current planning and development constraints and how they may be overcome or eased to assist in the recovery and rebuilding process.

Mr Low also identified the need to be able to feed in to the local governments and to insert staff into the areas where capability problems occur.



Mr Newton (QRA) agreed that there is an issue with regards to donation management and receipt and this needs to be addressed through clear messaging early in the disaster response phase.

Mr Newton noted the importance of data capture and in particular aerial photography to assist in damage assessment and recovery and reconstruction planning.

Mr Newton also noted that the need exists for recovery and reconstruction planning to commence at beginning of a disaster to ensure it has well established communications and procedures in place to commence work as soon as practical.

Mr Newton also commented that DDCs were often able to provide much more accurate information than local governments.

Emergency Management Queensland

Mr Grady noted the requirement to enhance our data systems to more efficiently manage out data. He state that meetings are not for data collection but should be used as a means of data presentation.

Mr Grady agreed that there is a need to build LDMMG competency levels especial in the areas of:

1. The planning environment
2. The disaster management frame work
3. Roles and responsibilities (to avoid either duplication or omission).

Mr Grady advised that planning should occur for what could possibly happen and not what usually happens.

He also advised that there is a great need for an improvement in messages to the community to ensure better community understanding.

Department of Justice and the Attorney General

Mr Reed noted that the coordination and the running of the meetings worked well and provided an opportunity for agencies to look at business continuity planning during events such as those we have recently experienced.

Mr Reed also noted that JAG worked with the legislation surround the issues of trading hours and asbestos removal as part of the disaster response and recovery.

Department of Environment, Economic Developments and Innovation

Mr Van Dam echo previous statements that the introduction of utilities providers (power/water/communications) at the early stage of the disaster event worked extremely well.

He also stated that the planning for recovery needs to start much earlier to assist in the transition from response to recovery.



Department of Education and Training

Mr Atkins thought the process worked well, especially in the area of school community closure advice.

Mr Atkins agreed that there is a requirement for better data collection (and sharing) surrounding disaster events.

Mr Atkins also raised concerns about schools being used as evacuation and/or recovery centres during disasters. Mr Atkins noted that during the floods the schools were closed for school holidays so this wasn't as much of a problem but during Yasi this was not the case. He noted that the use of schools can become problematic as the return of schools to operational after an event is vital to the communities (so parents can return to their work).

In addition Mr Atkins noted that DETA needs to also look at "expectation management" when returning to school post event. During the floods there was ample time to advise parents and students about damage to the school and the on going repair requirement but post Yasi there was damage and debris within the schools which hadn't been clearly articulated to the returning students and their parents.

Department of Communities

Ms Apelt (who was present for part of the meeting only ~~not appearing on the attendance sheet as DoC's representative~~) stated that the engagement between the Commonwealth, Non Government Organisations, State and Local Governments was the best to date.

Ms Apelt also acknowledged the assistance provided by CENTRELINK and Volunteering Queensland.

Ms Apelt also noted the representation and interaction with the indigenous councils on the same level through the SDMG.

Ms Apelt also noted a requirement of more work to be done with the LDMG's especially in the areas of evacuation centres (including lead agencies and donation management).

Ms Apelt also noted that more work need to be done around the coherence of cash payments

Energy Sector

ERGON Energy – Chris Arnold

Mr Arnold acknowledged the benefits of getting involved at the earliest opportunity to assist in planning for response and recovery activities.

Mr Arnold advised that through their involvement in disaster response there is now a better understanding of the links between power and communications interdependencies.

Mr Arnold agreed with statements made by other SDMG members that certain



LDMG's have some operating issues that need to be addressed.

Comments

The Chair noted that the arrangements made with the master electricians around reconnections of houses affected in the Brisbane/Ipswich flood worked well once the finer details regarding costing etc were agreed upon and communicated to the public.

The Chair recommended consideration be afforded to making this a standard agreement with master electricians and having this detailed and documented for timely implementation ahead of any further disaster situations.

Telecommunications Sector

Optus – Kim Graham

Mr Graham thanked the SDMG for the opportunity to take part in the event debrief.

Mr Graham highlighted that the opportunity for Optus to get on board as early as possible in disaster planning and response meant that Optus was better prepared with regards to expectations and could focus their efforts in line with the groups priorities.

Mr Graham praised the work of the DDC's and highlighted that the LDMGs were not always functioning to standard and the DDC's became the most reliable source of information and action.

Mr Graham also reiterated the point made about hydrology and water levels. Mr Graham acknowledged that from the point of view of his operations and response, when it comes to flood waters it isn't necessarily how high the water gets, its where the water goes (across the landscape) that most impacts operations.

Mr Graham also noted the lesson learnt about the distribution of "free mobiles" at Recovery Centres. A minimal identification check (drivers licence etc) would have helped alleviate the problem.

Telstra – Jon O'Brien

Mr O'Brien advised that the engagement with Telstra had been great.

Mr O'Brien noted the requirement for reporting and the importance the reporting has on planning and response and would like to work with the group in the development of some reporting framework.

Mr O'Brien also recognised the importance of working with Ergon with regards to resupplying energy to communications assets.

5. SDMG Chairs Summary – Resolutions

The Chair recognised the importance of engaging with the utilities sector well ahead of any disaster, during the response and recovery phases of a disaster



and again as part of these debrief activities.

Resolution:

The Director General, Department of Community Safety, Mr Jim McGowan is to work with the members of the Utilities Sector (Power / Water / Communications) in developing disaster management plans.

In addition the Chair stated that the SDMG needs to undertake planning with the Non Government Organisations, Australian Defence Force and Private Sector identities such as

- Banks
- Retailers
- Qantas
- Insurance councils.

This should take the form of Disaster Management planning and be undertaken by the appropriate member agencies of the SDMG.

6. Other Business

- Mr Jim Davidson from the Bureau of Meteorology, provided a brief update on the current weather situation of Queensland and highlighted a 30 – 40% chance of a yet unnamed Cyclone (if it forms will be called Errol) forming in the coral sea some time over the coming days.

7. Next Meeting

- The next Ordinary Meeting of the SDMG is **Friday 20 May 2011** at 1:30 – 2:30 in the Level 15 Conference Room, Executive Building, 100 George Street.



Attendance Sheet

Meeting Date: 2 March 2010 Time: 2:00 – 3:30
 Venue: Level 15 Conference Room, Executive Building
 100 George Street Brisbane

Quorum = 8 Permanent Members

	Agency	Attending	Signature
Members	Department of the Premier and Cabinet <i>Chairpers</i>	Ken Smith	
	Department of Community Safety <i>Deputy Chairpers</i>	Jim McGowan	
	Department of Communities TONY WATKES	Linda Apelt	
	Department of Education and Training <i>SDMG Member Deputy</i>	Graham Atkins	
	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation	Treas VANDS Ian Fletcher	
	Department of Environment and Resource Management	John Bradley	
	Department of Local Government and Planning	Paul Low	
	Department of Justice and Attorney General	Philip Reed	
	Department of Public Works	Mal Grierson	
	Department of Transport and Main Roads	David Stewart	
	Emergency Management Queensland	Bruce Grady	
	Local Government Association of Queensland <i>SDMG Member Deputy</i>	Greg Hoffman	
	Queensland Health <i>SDMG Member Deputy</i>	Jeannette Young	
	Queensland Police Service	Bob Atkinson	
Queensland Treasury <i>SDMG Member Deputy</i>	Walter Ivessa		
Other Attendees	Queensland Police Service <i>Executive Officer</i>	Alistair Dawson	
	Queensland Police Service <i>Secretariat</i>	Deb Watkins	
	Queensland Police Service <i>Departmental Contact Officer</i>	Richard Hahn	
	Queensland Police Service	Ian Stewart	
	Queensland Police Service	Ross Barnett	
	Department Of Transport and Main Roads	Don Bletchly	
	Department of Community Safety	Warren Bridson	
	Department of Community Safety	Peta Robertson	
	Department of Communities	Phil Carney	
Queensland Health	Dorothy Vincenzino		

