

Terms of Reference for Otago Rural Advisory Group

Approved by
RAG
27 September
2018

Purpose

The Otago Rural Advisory Group (RAG) assists Emergency Management Otago (EM Otago) with the coordination of agencies in Otago's rural community to prepare for and respond to civil defence emergencies. During response EM Otago is better informed of and well placed to respond to primary industry and rural community needs.

The scope includes human welfare and animal welfare, agriculture, horticulture, viticulture including the wine industry, and primary industries business and rural community resilience and recovery.

Members take responsibility for understanding the arrangements and roles in emergency management across the Otago region. Strong leadership and coordination will provide synergies and increase the effectiveness of emergency management for the rural community and speed up the rate of recovery.

Objectives

The RAG assists EM Otago to deliver effective and efficient emergency reduction, readiness, response activities to primary industries and the wider rural communities and to support recovery from civil defence emergencies. The RAG achieves this by actively living the mantra 'We are all civil defence' through enhancing the coordination and integration of activities across the Otago region to implement the National CDEM Plan.

The RAG may also provide rural advice to the nine welfare sub-function leads (e.g. EM Otago for Needs Assessment, MoH for Psychosocial Support), in the development of their own planning documents.

The RAG may deliver specified projects to improve emergency management planning.

The RAG will develop draft Standard Operating Procedures (the SOPs) for civil defence emergencies. The SOPs will enable the RAG to know:

- Roles and responsibilities
- How to activate and who to contact and report to during an emergency (e.g. needs assessment)
- How the RAG will maintain communications during response, and enhance coordination of activities across primary industries
- How the RAG will integrate with Emergency Management Otago operations
- What resources and capabilities are available from within the RAG and across the Emergency Management Otago members

For example, the SOPs will advise on how the RAG and Emergency Management Otago can best coordinate assessments of farmers' needs in the response and recovery phases of a civil defence emergency.

Membership, Expectations and Benefits

The RAG will include EM Otago and all agencies involved in Otago primary industries comprising of the following sub-sets: community, government, dairy, drystock, horticulture, rural professionals, horticulture, viticulture and the wine industry, forestry and other industry groups. Refer to Appendix 1 for agency membership and Appendix 2 for membership expectations and benefits.

The RAG will be led by a Core Group involving Emergency Management Otago (with Group Welfare Manager as Chair), Ministry for Primary Industries, Otago Rural Support Trust, and 1-2 members of each sector sub-set. The Core Group is a working group that will lead the development of RAG in readiness and coordinate its activities in response.

The RAG may delegate the development of procedures and other tasks involved in its establishment and operation to task groups from within its membership for subsequent discussion by the full Group.

Governance

The RAG is chaired by the EM Otago Group Welfare Manager and a deputy chair is appointed from its membership.

The Core Group will be elected at the RAG meeting each calendar year.

There are no minimum or maximum numbers of years of appointments, but it is expected to rotate on a regular basis.

The Core Group will liaise closely with the Emergency Management Otago: Welfare Coordination Group (WCG) in reduction and readiness and with Emergency Management Otago: Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) in response and recovery.

As far as practicable, decisions will be made by consensus of the RAG. If it is not possible to achieve agreement, then a vote shall be held:

- The decision outcome will be based on the majority of votes
- Each member agency is entitled to vote once on an issue.

Communications

The chair of the RAG, or a person delegated by the chair, is the official spokesperson for the RAG. The RAG members are not prevented from making public statements on behalf of their own organisations, however where possible, and if the situation requires it, the RAG will provide coordination of key messages.

Frequency of meetings

The RAG will meet at least 6-monthly until fully established and then at least annually at a central location in Dunedin. Once established the Core Group will meet 6-monthly or more regularly as agreed. The chair

has the discretion to call for additional meetings of either the RAG or the Core Group. Members are expected to attend meetings as part of their readiness investment.

During a civil defence emergency, additional meetings and/or teleconference calls will occur as required.

Administration

The RAG is provided with secretariat services from Emergency Management Otago.

Review

These Terms Of Reference are reviewed annually at the RAG meeting.

Funding

Costs for member participation are met by the individual organisations.

Should any significant project be identified and approved by the RAG the members may be asked to consider a contribution or help in kind.

Appendix 1 – Members

Suggested Core Group

1. Emergency Management Otago: Group Welfare Manager
2. Regional Emergency Management Advisor – Southern
3. Emergency Management Otago: Emergency Management Officers
4. Territorial Local Authorities: Local Welfare Managers
5. Ministry for Primary Industries: Animal Welfare Sub-Function Lead
6. Ministry for Primary Industries
7. Federated Farmers
8. Otago Rural Support Trust
9. Beef and Lamb
10. Dairy NZ
11. New Zealand Veterinary Association
12. Rural Women New Zealand

Suggested Wider Membership

All agencies involved in Otago primary industries and rural communities comprising the following sub-sets: community, government, dairy, drystock, horticulture, rural professionals, horticulture, viticulture and the wine industry, forestry and other industry groups.

Appendix 2

Expectations of members

1. Represent their agency in readiness planning and emergency response and recovery

2. Understand and communicate their agency emergency management capacity and capability
3. Understand Emergency Management Otago capacity and capability especially welfare service arrangements as set out in the National CDEM Plan 2015
4. Be willing to undertake appropriate training and be involved in exercises
5. Understand other agencies roles and responsibilities

Expectations of agencies

1. Ensure the agency is aware of the RAG and member commitment
2. Ensure continuity of agency representation in readiness planning and emergency response
3. Commit to agency representative(s) attendance and participation at RAG meetings
4. Ensure agency representatives are resourced and supported to fulfil roles

Member benefits

1. In a time of an emergency or natural disaster the combined efforts of the membership is more effective than that of individual organisations
2. Ongoing forums for regular contact and interaction with related sector agencies for the exchange of information leading to improved coordination and planning, preparedness programmes and other issues of common interest
3. Access to best practice emergency management concepts and procedures
4. Access to Emergency Management Otago training and exercises
5. Strengthening the ability to identify vulnerable communities and areas
6. Assist compliance with the CDEM Act
7. Reduced costs through the coordinated development of emergency management outputs
8. Assist with the speedy recovery of the member's industry following an emergency