

Emergency Management. Workshop 2

Progressing Shared Services in Emergency Management? Cooperation, Innovation and Civic Leadership

In setting the context, it was reported that as part of the CroSplaN II Shared Services pProject two pilot initiatives were undertaken: one focusing on Tourism; and a second on Emergency Management Services that worked towards the development of an emergency planning mapping portal for the cross-border region of Ireland. This workshop focussed on the Emergency Management Services and the project findings were presented by the Co-chairs of the Cross-Border Emergency Management Working Group (CBEMWG), Mr Finian Joyce and Ms Joan McCaffrey.

Aim of Pilot Project

The aim of the cross-border emergency planning pilot project was to develop a proof of concept tool capable of displaying datasets on the location of key facilities for emergency planning. The project was led by the Southern and Western Environmental Health Group in Northern Ireland and the North West and North East Major Emergency Management (MEM) in the Republic of Ireland. Both groups worked in close collaboration with the ICLRD and the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) at Maynooth University.

It was explained that the mapping project was part of a wider collaborative initiative that has been underway for the last 12 months called the Cross-Border Emergency Management Working Group (CBEMWG). The purpose of this group is to act as a multi-agency group for agencies involved in emergency management on a cross-border basis. The idea of establishing the group was to formalise arrangements for cross-border collaboration on emergency management as, to date, multi-agency cross-border liaison has been done on an ad-hoc and piecemeal basis – examples include a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with cross-border fire agencies, work with CAWT on health situations on either side of the border and for other major events such as the G8 Summit in Enniskillen. At present, the CBEMWG is limited to 12 agencies from either side of the border coming from local authorities, police services, fire services, coastguards and health services etc.

Progress of CBEMWG to date

Much progress has been made in the last 12 months and there is now an agreed terms of reference for this cross-border, inter-disciplinary group. All agencies have reviewed their counterpart's capabilities in emergency planning and for the first time

there is now a shared knowledge of cross-border emergency management structures and infrastructures in place. At present, the CBEMWG are in the process of developing a business plan to identify, plan and prioritise inter-agency issues by:

- Developing an annual work programme
- Developing working protocols
- Developing and delivering cross-border inter-agency training and exercises.

The group is also actively keeping parent organisations, regional groups and government departments informed of progress and are also seeking opportunities to attract funding for cross-border projects in emergency management.

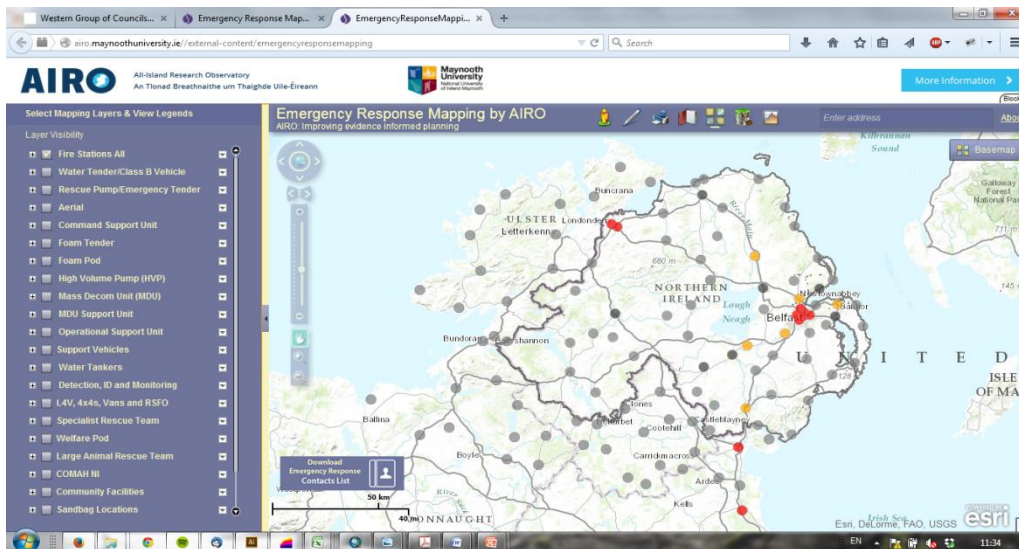
Mapping Pilot Project

The mapping pilot project was developed by the ICLRD and the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) as a proof of concept study for the CBEMWG with the intention that the successful pilot would lead to the establishment of a more extensive and professionally hosted system in the future. For the purposes of the pilot, the mapping tool was limited to local authority and fire services data for the Border region in the Republic and then all of Northern Ireland.

Following a close working relationship with the CBEMWG and AIRO, the project team developed a comparative set of cross-border emergency management facilities for the following resources:

- Cross-border contacts directory
- Locations of all Fire Stations
- Inventory of Fire Assets
- Council Buildings
- Evacuation Centres
- Sand Bag locations
- COMAH and SEVESO Sites (higher and lower tier)
- Multi-agency co-ordination centres.

The facilitators of this workshop, Mr Finian Joyce (Chief Fire Officer, Leitrim Council) and Ms Joan McCaffrey (Western Group Environmental Health Service, NI), provided a demonstration of the working pilot mapping project, and highlighted some of the unique functionality that allowed CBEMWG members from both sides of the border view and interrogate emergency management facilities in both jurisdictions.



<http://airo.maynoothuniversity.ie/mapping-resources/airo-research-themes/community-social/emergency-response-mapping-0>

Feedback from Attendees

In general, the feedback from all attendees was very positive and the establishment of both the CBEMWG and the pilot mapping tool was seen to be a major advancement in the emergency management planning of the cross-border area of Ireland.

Attendees recommended that the initial progress made should be continued and it was of vital importance that the CMEMWG seek funding to bring the project from pilot phase to a live and official project. Concern was raised about the number of pilot projects that make significant initial progress but never result in a completed output.

Next Steps

The next steps for the CBEMWG is to finalise its business plan, develop a work programme based on the agreed priorities, develop a proper set of working protocols and keep all stakeholders fully informed of progress.

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