

News



The six St Andrew's Award winners pictured with the First Minister at Brave@Heart.

Honouring Scotland's heroes

First Minister Alex Salmond hails Scotland's heroes at the first annual Brave@Heart Award

Fifty Scots were commended for their courage at a celebration hosted by the First Minister at Edinburgh Castle on 9 June. The First Minister also presented a St Andrew's Award to six people who have demonstrated exceptional bravery. They included Kirsten Elder and Riah Holland, aged just 14, who saved a woman from jumping from a bridge in Glenrothes, and PC Steven Gilmour who saved a man from drowning in Ardrossan harbour.

Nominations were put forward by blue light services

and rescue organisations and considered by an independent validation panel. Of the 50 selected to receive a Brave@Heart Award, 26 are emergency service staff and 24 are members of the public.

Courage

First Minister Alex Salmond said: "The Brave@Heart Awards are about recognising and celebrating exceptional acts of courage. As a nation we are not always good at championing our own achievements, but it is

incredibly important to honour those who have demonstrated great bravery."

The validation panel that considered nominations consisted of a representative from the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS), the Chief Fire Officers Association Scotland (CFOAS) and the Scottish Ambulance Service. The panel was chaired by Professor David Alexander of the Aberdeen Centre for Trauma Research, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen.

Welcome

Welcome to June's Scottish Resilience News, the first since the Westminster elections in May brought in a new coalition government.

The new administration is already taking a different approach to resilience. The Prime Minister, David Cameron, is chairing weekly meetings of the new National Security Council, which replaces NSID as the umbrella for Cabinet business on resilience and security, while Baroness Neville-Jones, the Minister for Security at the Home Office, leads the resilience agenda at UK level.

An updated National Security Strategy, setting out the priorities which will guide spending review decisions at UK level, is due to be published soon. Early indications are that the new administration is – like the Scottish Government – committed to developing community resilience, as part of the Prime Minister's 'big society' philosophy.

In the meantime, we will remain in close contact with Whitehall colleagues and with the Scottish resilience community as the new agenda takes shape.

Congratulations to all the Emergency Planning Awards winners, announced last night.

Lorna Gibbs
Head of Resilience Strategy

Stop Press: Scots teams win UK EPS awards

The winners of the [Emergency Planning Awards 2010](#) were announced last night at the Emergency Planning Society's [annual conference](#) in Glasgow. Congratulations to the Highlands and Islands Public Communications Capability Group, who won the City of London Award for Resilience Team of the Year. Tayside SCG, and ScoRDS/Coatbridge College, were also highly commended in the SCG National Capability Award and HPA Emergency Planning Initiative of the Year categories respectively.

Water rescue meeting

The first meeting of the Scottish Government Inland Water Rescue Stakeholder Group was chaired by the Head of the Scottish Resilience Emergency Response Unit, Stephen Woodhouse, in June. The group was set up to consider the recommendations of Paddy Tomkins' [Independent review of open water and flood rescue in Scotland](#).

In his report, Mr Tomkins concluded that the current multi-agency approach to water rescue in Scotland is robust, but there is scope for making more effective use of the resources currently held by responder agencies, including the voluntary sector.

The stakeholder group includes representatives of public and voluntary sector responder organisations, trade unions, and strategic coordinating groups.

Johann.MacDougall@Scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Resilience Framework Cycle: second phase

Frank Clayton joined Scottish Resilience on secondment from Grampian Fire and Rescue Service in March. Frank is a well-known face within the resilience community, having been the FRS tactical lead on Exercise Green Gate last year.

His role is focused on the second phase of the Scottish Resilience Framework Cycle: Capability Analysis and Development. This work will further support the resilience community to assess the ability to respond to an emergency and address any identified gaps in delivery. Draft guidance is due to go out for consultation in July.

More info: Frank.Clayton@Scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Under the volcano

When the glacier-covered Eyjafjallajökull volcano began erupting in southern Iceland, it emitted clouds of volcanic ash that closed airspace across the UK and large parts of Europe in mid-April, causing enormous disruption and leaving travellers stranded worldwide.

Weeks later, and following further periods of sporadic disruption to air travel, the volcano is currently classed as being 'paused', with no emissions of volcanic ash, although it won't be deemed 'dormant' until it has been resting for three months.

Dr Sue Loughlin from the British Geological Survey in Edinburgh recently provided a brief to Scottish Ministers on the current state of play and future prospects for renewed volcanic activity. Sue was also involved in producing the UK level expert advice from SAGE.

Response

Scottish Resilience worked closely with colleagues across Scottish Government, including from transport directorate, Transport Scotland, economy, tourism, health, animal health, rural affairs, environment and communications, to respond to the event.

The Scottish Government Resilience Room (SGoRR) was first activated on 15 April to gather information, brief Ministers

and coordinate the response across Scotland and with UK level initiatives. The Scottish Government's Homecoming Helpline was set up on 20 April and provided travel, visa, health and other advice to over 2,100 callers over nine days at the height of the disruption.

"The eruption demonstrated that modern society is very vulnerable to disruptive events such as this one," says Rod McKenzie, who is coordinating risk and impacts assessment for Scottish Resilience. "Tourism and some business sectors in particular, depend heavily on air transport. Other widespread effects, for example on people's health and on agriculture, are also possible in the event of future increased volcanic activity."

For now SGoRR remains on standby, but work continues to coordinate contingency planning across Scottish Government for possible future disruption, and to ensure that the public and businesses are kept informed about the prospects for disruption to air transport.

Focus on Tayside Strategic Coordinating Group

Disaster victim identification exercise

A full-scale disaster victim identification (DVI) exercise took place at RM Condor, Arbroath, in April. Hosted by Tayside Police in conjunction with the ACPOS Major Incident Co-ordination and Development Unit, the exercise was designed to test interoperability arrangements in a mass fatality incident.

About 70 trained staff from all Scottish police forces took part, along with colleagues from other agencies. Observers from a wide variety of partner organisations including

Scottish Government, COPFS, Tayside Fire and Rescue and Dundee City Council also attended. Details of new technology and techniques were highlighted by experts in DVI related matters based at the University of Dundee.

Learning outcomes will be identified and available in due course. More information from: Clive.Murray@tayside.pnn.police.uk



Minister addresses FBU national conference

Fergus Ewing became the first ever Scottish Minister to formally address the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) national conference, held in Southport in May.

The Community Safety Minister, Fergus Ewing, told 300 delegates at the FBU's national conference that Scotland could be held up as an example of how to deliver progress and change through dialogue and partnership working.

Outlining some of the firsts achieved in Scotland – including the installation of the Firelink resilient communications system and the publication of a Learning and Development Strategy – he said:

“We have already shown what can be achieved through partnership. Maintaining this partnership approach between the services, local government and the FBU is vital if we are to steer our way through the uncertainties ahead.”

Against the backdrop of a new Westminster Government and future spending cuts, Mr Ewing stressed that all



those with a role in delivering fire and rescue services needed to work together, to find the efficiencies that would help protect frontline services.

The Minister also announced his intention to ask the Head of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Advisory Unit to form a working group to review emergency

response standards in Scotland.

The group will bring together the fire and rescue services, FBU and Government, and will be tasked with highlighting any marked changes to response

standards since the move to Integrated Risk Management Planning in 2005.

“This, I am sure, will present us with an informed and considered position, highlight any gaps, and help develop solutions,” he said.

“This partnership approach is vital if we are to steer our way through the uncertainties ahead”

Stewart Borthwick takes on Preparing Scotland review

Stewart Borthwick, Regional Resilience Advisor for Strathclyde, has taken on the work of reviewing the [Preparing Scotland](#) suite of guidance, working one or two days a week out of Scottish Government offices at Atlantic Quay.

The review will make recommendations on the future format of Preparing Scotland as well as the processes for the production of multi-agency guidance. It will also review the current content in line with those recommendations and oversee the work of updating those areas that are out of date or have been replaced by new guidance.

Stewart will continue with his role as RRA, and will be supported in his work on Preparing Scotland by Rob Roberts, who joined Scottish Resilience in June.

More information from: Stewart.Borthwick@strathclyde.pnn.police.uk

Public weather service stakeholder meeting

The first of what is intended to be an annual meeting between the Met Office's Public Weather Service Customer Group and resilience stakeholders in Scotland took place in June.

The group discussed issues relating to improving public information about weather forecasts and warnings as well as Met Office work to understand public perceptions.

They also outlined an initiative to review their weather warning processes to make them more impact based, potentially introducing a new service in Spring 2011. More information on Met Office initiatives is available [online](#).



Airwave interoperability

Airwave is a secure and resilient digital communications system used by police forces, fire and rescue and ambulance services in Great Britain, as well as other non-blue light emergency responders.

With all three blue light services now using the system, it's important that they have a standard method of operating. Airwave users in Scotland are currently taking this forward through a series of meetings and workshops. They hope to produce a simple, easy to understand document on interoperability for Scotland, which can be incorporated into existing emergency plans and manuals, later this summer.

Scottish Resilience recently published a circular on [Airwave interoperability in Scotland](#), which includes an update on the applicability of the guidance issued by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) to Scotland. More info from: Craig.Alexander@Scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Natural hazards partnership: feasibility study

A joint Met Office/Environment Agency/Ordnance Survey team is currently carrying out a feasibility study into setting up a Natural Hazards Partnership (NHP). This would join up the tools used by various agencies to forecast a range of natural hazards, both long and short term.

The joint team held a workshop in Edinburgh in May, where representatives of strategic coordinating groups, CFA(S) and SEPA met with colleagues from Scottish Resilience and other areas of Scottish Government to consider the value such a partnership could bring to Scotland. More information from Stephen.Woodhouse@Scotlandgsic.gov.uk

Scottish Resilience News

Scottish Resilience News is published every two months by the Scottish Government.

The newsletter aims to keep those working in fire and civil contingencies up-to-date with what's happening at Scottish Government level and across Scotland. If you have any comments, or information you'd like to share with the wider resilience community, please contact the editor: Joanna.Swanson@Scotland.gsi.gov.uk

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Mr Ewing with John Stevenson, Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team Leader (centre) and Alfie Ingram, Chairman of the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland (right).

Funding for mountain rescue

The Scottish Government is to make £300,000 available for mountain rescue services in Scotland this year, and fund a new project manager post at the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland (MRCOS).

The Minister for Community Safety, Fergus Ewing, announced the funding as he visited Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team Base in Fort William earlier

this month.

Mr Ewing said: "As a former member of Lomond Mountain Rescue Team, I know first-hand the vital service that Mountain Rescue Team volunteers provide for Scotland, and the numbers of lives they save each year.

"Mountain Rescue Teams represent the best traditions of community service, and continue to

deliver a first-class voluntary service in the face of increasing demand and sometimes daunting challenges."

John Craig has been seconded to MRCOS from Scottish Resilience for 18 months. He will work with the organisation to develop its business and strategic objectives. More information from: Drew.Peden@Scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Voluntary Sector Resilience Seminar

April's Scottish Resilience News highlighted plans for a seminar involving voluntary sector organisations across Scotland, to help build activity around the theme of community resilience.

The Scottish Voluntary Sector Resilience Seminar took place in Perth in June.

The seminar enabled voluntary organisations to meet with each other and the wide range of agencies involved in resilience. Discussion focused on activity and good practice already underway, how agencies can work together, and how we collectively ensure that communities are as prepared as they can be to deal with emergencies.

The results of a research

project commissioned by Scottish Resilience and led by the British Red Cross were also revealed – setting out the current range of voluntary sector

involvement in resilience and the potential for future development.

For more information please contact Drew.Peden@Scotland.gsi.gov.uk



The Ready Scotland emergency preparedness web portal is now widely available on the Scottish Government website at www.scotland.gov.uk/readyscotland. The Ready Scotland graphic (above) can be used to link to the site from responder organisations' websites. It is available to download at www.scotland.gov.uk/readyscotlandlogo.