

News



Launch of resilience PDA

Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Kenny MacAskill, visited Coatbridge College in March to launch the new Professional Development Award in Resilience Management.

The new, university degree level qualification, which is accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority, is the first of its kind.

Developed by Scottish Government in partnership with Coatbridge College, it is designed for professional resilience managers across all civil contingency organisations, including local authorities, NHS boards, the emergency services, the coastguard and other agencies.

Speaking at the launch, Mr MacAskill said: "Scotland is a country facing big risks without unlimited resources. Building Scotland's resilience is a key priority and this qualification is an important step in putting

our practitioners on a stronger professional footing. This award is important in contributing to a more resilient Scotland."

The course will be delivered through distance learning, workshops and online learning fora, making it accessible across Scotland. The first cohort of students starts this month, with people signing up from as far afield as the Western Isles and the Borders. *Scottish Resilience News* spoke to three of the first students.

Jonathan Hart is the SCG coordinator for the Highlands and Islands (HISCG). He says: "There are significant and unique challenges in developing resilience in a remote and rural SCG region.

"The PDA will afford me

an opportunity to reflect upon and review the long term strategic direction of the HISCG, helping to develop the continued improvement of resilience across the region, based on sound management and leadership principles and working in close cooperation with all the key stakeholder groups."

John Handling is an emergency planning officer with Dundee City Council. Recently registered as a chartered manager with the Chartered Management Institute, he says the PDA will help him get up-to-speed specifically with resilience management.

"I believe that leaders and managers must strive

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Welcome

Welcome to April's Scottish Resilience News. The last month has seen us reach some significant milestones. The launch of the new PDA in resilience management is this issue's front page story. You can read more about this valuable new qualification in the ScoRDS Update.

March also saw the completion of the programme to roll out the Firelink resilient communications system across Scotland (see page 2).

This month is also the start of a new financial and planning year, and there is no doubt it will present new challenges for all of us. The need to work together effectively, to plan for the future and to determine how we can make the best use of resources to achieve our joint aims, is stronger than ever. We have already had discussions with each SCG as part of drawing up the Memoranda of Understanding, and these will continue as we move further into 2010/2011.

Lorna Gibbs

Lorna Gibbs
Head of Resilience Strategy

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Voluntary sector conference

A Scottish Voluntary Sector Community Resilience Seminar, sponsored by the Resilience Advisory Board for Scotland (Voluntary Sector) sub group, will be held on 16 June in Perth. Interested organisations are invited to nominate one representative from their organisation to scords@scotland.gsi.gov.uk by 1 May. Exhibition display space is available.

There is no charge to attend, but organisations are expected to meet their own travel and subsistence costs. Delegates will be provided with joining instructions before the event, but if you have any queries now please contact Gemma.Bain@scotland.gsi.gov.uk.

At the seminar, RABS (Voluntary Sector) will present a current project to research the extent of, and potential for, voluntary sector involvement in emergency response work in Scotland. The first stage of this process is to map the voluntary sector's existing engagement and identify possible candidates for further investigation. A questionnaire has been designed to capture some of this information and we are keen to get as many responses as we can from the voluntary sector; further details are available from: ERintern@redcross.org.uk

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ Fire safety guidance

The Scottish Government consultation on practical fire safety guidance for small bed and breakfast and self-catering premises has closed. The responses and summary report are available [online](#). Revised fire safety guidance is due to be published in the spring.

Firelink rollout complete

March saw a major milestone for Scotland's resilience capability, with the completion of the Firelink rollout programme. Representing a £40m investment by Scottish Government, Firelink is now installed in over 1,200 fire and rescue vehicles and 395 fire stations across Scotland, ensuring resilient communications between fire services and other blue-light responders. Scotland is the first part of the UK to implement an end-to-end voice and data system.

Fergus Ewing, Minister for Community Safety, marked the completion at a meeting of the Rollout Board at the Scottish Parliament (right). He said: "This is one of the largest and most complex projects of its kind in Europe. Its successful delivery is testament to the excellent partnership working between Government, fire and rescue services, and suppliers."



Fire and Rescue Services Operational Assessments

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Advisory Unit (SFRAU) has recently completed a review of the progress made by Scotland's eight fire and rescue services (FRSs) on the issues identified in operational assessments of service delivery. Feedback has now been provided to all chief fire officers.

SFRAU worked with the Chief Fire Officers Association (Scotland) (CFOA(S)) to agree a methodology for the assessments, which were undertaken in two parts. Firstly, each FRS self-assessed its own performance, using issued guidance. Next, teams of trained assessment staff,

comprising FRS personnel and led by SFRAU, examined issues and strengths from within the self assessment, which formed the basis of on-site visits to each FRS.

Each service was assessed individually, with key findings collated into a national report, published in December 2009. Alongside examples of good practice, it identified a number of areas for improvement, all of which are now being taken forward across the eight Scottish FRSs.

Feedback from services on the process has been generally positive, with the benefits of independent

scrutiny by peers recognised as a key tool in FRSs' overall improvement programme.

"We hope that operational assessment will continue to provide an effective method for Scottish fire and rescue services to self-assess their operational preparedness, supported by independent peer review and quality assured from the centre," says Andy Shuttleworth of SFRAU.

"It's important that the expertise gained by the fire and rescue service personnel involved continues to be developed and utilised by the services."

More info: SFRAU@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Launch of resilience PDA

(Continued from page 1) continuously to develop effective skills and behaviours. These become particularly relevant if they have a crisis leadership role," he adds.

Jeanette McFarlane is a

business continuity officer with The Moray Council. "Having a theoretical knowledge of your job is important, both from a personal and an organisational perspective," she says. "I would like to obtain

a formal qualification to validate the knowledge I've already obtained, and to give me more confidence in my skills to improve resilience within my organisation."

More info: Suzanne.Wilkie@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

The Scottish Ambulance Service has developed its major incident capability with support from Scottish Government.

Good sorts

Special Operations Response Teams (SORT) are deployed to large-scale, complex and hazardous incidents. They are currently being trained and equipped to work with the police and fire and rescue services, inside the inner cordon during serious emergencies.

The teams, made up of experienced paramedics, technicians and other support personnel, undertake a rigorous five-week training course to enable them to operate in chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) incidents, and incidents involving hazardous materials.

This intensive programme includes additional clinical skills, incident command training, risk assessment, forensic awareness and decontamination procedures. It covers specialist personal protective equipment (PPE), and includes training in the use of self-contained breathing apparatus, which has been delivered by the Scottish Fire Services



A Scottish Ambulance Service special operations response team during exercises (photograph: RAF Leuchars).

College at Gullane. The five-week training programme culminates in a realistic live-play exercise where teams deploy in PPE, including powered respirator and quick-don CBRN protective suits.

equipment

The teams work with specialist equipment, ranging from state-of-the-art forward command units, to simple three-wheeled stretchers that enable them to quickly move kit to the scene, and carry patients out. In a UK first, the Service worked with a Scottish dealership to develop a customised six wheel drive all terrain vehicle – called the Polaris – and trained the teams in off-road driving.

“The single purpose of this training and the new SORT role is to bring care to the patient, where and when they need it,” explains Jim Dickie, Scottish Ambulance Service Resilience Manager. “The teams will be able to operate in challenging and hazardous environments, including situations where no ambulance support was previously available.

“Robust policy and procedures are currently being finalised, and we hope to be able to declare an operational response capability from May. We look forward to working in partnership with the police and fire and rescue services, to ensure a joined-up approach that will save lives and improve health outcomes for patients.”

When the teams are not training, exercising and working with partner agencies, they provide an emergency response role using fast response vehicles to deliver patient care to the people of Scotland. During 2009 this amounted to over 9,000 emergency calls.

Further information from Jim Dickie, Scottish Ambulance Service Resilience Manager, at j.dickie@nhs.net.

Secure and Resilient: Scotland's CNI strategy

The protection and resilience of the critical national infrastructure (CNI) is crucial to the continued delivery of essential services to the UK. Without these key elements, the essential services could not be delivered and both Scotland and the UK could suffer serious consequences. For the past year, the Scottish Government has been working closely with key CNI stakeholders including UK Government in developing a strategy, *'Secure and Resilient'*, to improve the protection and resilience of CNI sites in Scotland – particularly in the CNI sectors where the responsibilities are devolved. *'Secure and Resilient'* is scheduled to be published on a restricted basis in the spring. Further details can be obtained from Jim Urquhart, CNI Programme Manager, at: james.urquhart@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Preparing Scotland

Guidance for fuel emergencies

Following the fuel disruption in 2008, officials from Energy and Telecoms Resilience have been working closely with fuel stakeholders including RABS (Fuel) to look at ways of improving fuel resilience in Scotland. One of the outputs has been the development of *'Guidance for fuel disruption in Scotland'*. Developed with stakeholders from Scotland's SCG community, the guidance will be published as part of *Preparing Scotland* in the spring. Further details from Bobby Ronnie, Head of Energy and Telecoms Resilience, at: bobby.ronnie@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

What's in a word?

The Civil Contingencies Secretariat has produced the first version of a Civil Protection Lexicon which seeks to establish a common point of reference for UK civil protection terminology. It:

- ◆ promotes convergence on common terms;
- ◆ exposes differences where they exist so that they are out in the open and ambiguity can be reduced; and
- ◆ provides a single point of reference for readers and writers of documentation in this field of work.

It can be found at

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/cplexicon.

Cabinet Office is currently working on version 2, which will see the lexicon double in size to around 700 terms. Particular areas being developed relate to resilience capabilities, the Olympics and the NHS.

The Scottish Resilience contact for the lexicon is Kerry.Jardine@scotland.gsi.gov.uk, or visit the ScoRDS website.

Responders take a bow

The Emergency Planning Awards 2010 will take place on 22 June as part of the Emergency Planning Society's annual UK conference in Glasgow.

Staged at the Glasgow Science Centre and Imax Theatre, there are eight awards categories aimed at recognising individuals and organisations who've excelled in fields of emergency planning. It will be followed by the annual conference dinner.

It's hoped that holding the awards ceremony in Scotland will boost the number of nominations from the Scottish resilience community. This year also the judging panel includes Ian Walford, Head of Scottish Resilience.

The closing date for nominations is 11 May.

For more information on the conference and how to submit award nominations please visit:

www.epsconference2010.org

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 across Scotland, please contact the editor:

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Scottish Resilience

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Focus on Severe weather: the Tayside SCG response

After the prolonged period of severe weather at the start of this year, Tayside Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) was tested again in late February, when very heavy snowfalls hit Perthshire, causing serious travel disruption and leaving around 7,000 homes without power.

Early that week, the potential for forecast snow to cause damage to power lines meant that Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) went on alert. They shared the information with the SCG coordinator, and the Met Office forecast was risk-assessed by local category one responders.

Twenty-four hour communications links were put in place between SSE and the SCG, and emergency planning officers raised awareness within their organisations. So when snow began to fall late on Wednesday, responders were well prepared.

A tactical coordinating group convened on Thursday, led by Tayside Police during the response phase and then by Perth and Kinross Council as the focus turned to recovery.

The council set up public



Auchterarder High Street, 25 February. Photo courtesy of Perth and Kinross Council.

help lines and drop-in centres at schools and fire stations on Thursday evening. Volunteers with off-road vehicles ferried local people to the drop-in centres and assisted police in Auchterarder the next day.

SSE worked closely with SCG partners to ensure the needs of its elderly and vulnerable customers were met. SSE's Lisa Doogan (Head of Operations) said: "Around 200 staff were involved in the repair works and we also received assistance from our sister company Southern Electric, with 60 engineers from England.

"Our emergency service teams took around 20,000 telephone calls from the public, allowing us to provide valuable information on our progress."

In rural Perthshire,

Glenalmond College was without mains power from Thursday morning. A back-up generator covers the main college area, but some of its outlying boarding houses were without power, and closing the school was not an option.

A call to Bill Maddox at Perth and Kinross Council put the college in touch with the tactical coordinating group.

"They were an excellent source of advice and support," says college bursar Keith Montgomery. "They made sure the road was cleared of snow, to allow a generator to be brought in, and they provided advice on contingency plans for fire safety. They knew we had to keep going, and they enabled us to do that."

Ready Scotland web portal: your views sought

Ready Scotland is a new emergency preparedness web portal, now being built within the Scottish Government website.

The portal aims to build Scotland's resilience by increasing the public's awareness of the risks facing them, and the actions they can take to prepare themselves, their families, their homes and their businesses.

Ready Scotland will show

that by taking a few commonsense actions, people

can stand themselves in good stead in a wide range of emergency situations.

The site presents preparing for emergencies as a sensible and manageable thing to do – and part of the normal business of government and local and national responders.

The Scottish Resilience communications team has



developed the first phase of the site in consultation with SCGs. The team is now keen to hear the views of a wide range of responders, before making it more widely available.

Please follow the link to the [Ready Scotland](http://ReadyScotland) site, and provide your comments to SRCommunication@scotland.gsi.gov.uk