

Networking, Information Sharing and Boundary Spanning: *Using Vertical and Horizontal Networks to Manage and Maintain Relationships in Large Emergencies*

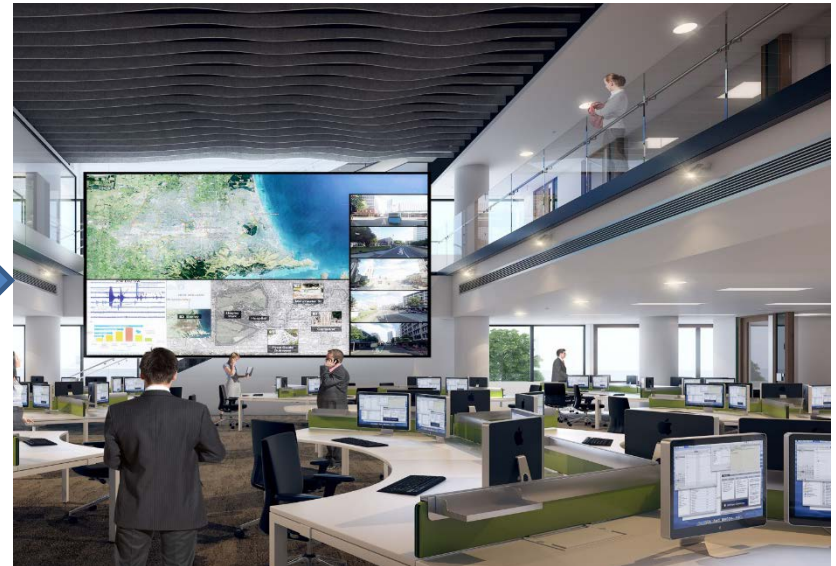
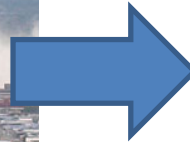
Research report for Post Graduate
Diploma in Emergency Management

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Research Need

- Loss of coordination centers in Christchurch after the 2011 Christchurch earthquake
- The design, build and occupation of a new multi-agency and multi-response level EOC for Christchurch and Canterbury



Research Aim



Explore aspects, particularly relationships, and their effects on interoperability between emergency coordination centres

Why?

Inform opportunities on how we work better together during emergencies



Research Focused on...

Factors that support collaboration and interoperability between coordination centres particularly..

Networking

Information Sharing

Boundary Spanning



The Research

- Literature review
 - Development of survey questions
- Online survey
 - Analysis of results to focus interviews
- Semi Structured Interviews



Response Complexity

“During such events, responding organisations must address unexpected and unplanned-for challenges, often under very severe time constraints, and they do so through their ability to incorporate new members; identify and utilize new resources; develop new organisational forms; compensate for lost personnel, facilities, and other resources; find alternative ways of accomplishing their aims if plans cannot be implemented and discard methods that do not work; and in general develop new action strategies under uncertain and urgent conditions”

Tierney & Trainor (2004)



Command and Control

- CIMS / ICS (hierarchical) like systems are seen to fail in large complex emergencies
- They work well in smaller routine events where there is...
 - Limited agencies involved
 - Strong established relationships
 - Well trained staff



Network Centric Operations / Collaborative Network

- Both hierarchical and peer-to-peer (vertical and horizontal)
 - Needs to empower people working in the response
- Characterised by...
 - Reciprocity
 - Representation
 - Equality
 - Participatory decision making
 - Collaborative leadership



Supporting Info Sharing

- Personal familiarity & strong relationships— helps with communication and collaboration
- Strong working relationships



Boundary Spanning

Someone who bridges the boundaries between
to organisations to facilitate a collective
objective

- Used a lot in business – new product development



Liaison Officers



- LO's are Boundary Spanners without the opportunity or authority to facilitate a collective objective(s)
- A true Boundary Spanner links organisations together and has authority to share information and help make decisions
- Typically come from the emergency services
 - What about between EOC's and EOC's and the ECC



Results & Discussion



Networking

- Participants all recognised the importance of networking
 - Region needs to pick up some networks for local level
- Takes time and effort to form relationships
- A higher value on relationships than policy and procedure
- Networking helps overcome the shortfalls of C&C



Networking

- Form Relationships at all level of response...community through to central government
- Look for opportunities to work in other organisations offices



Information Sharing

- Improved information sharing is strongly linked with good relationships
- This also helps with preventing duplication of information gathering
- Trust is important for info sharing- results indicated we have good trust in Canterbury
- When requesting information make it clear why the info is being requested



Boundary Spanning

- The traditional LO role is important – it can be enhanced though
- We should do more training in this role
 - Also describe the role fully
- Direction....ECC to EOC (so down)
 - But need to recognise staffing issues
 - Reciprocal if there are enough staff



Recommendations

1. Plan and allow for vertical and horizontal networking
2. Improve coordination centre relationship by having more ICS functional manager forums and meetings
3. Emergency Managers be encouraged to work more closely together



4. Need to show there is trust and dispel parochialism
5. Continue to integrate EMIS into our EOC – will help with info sharing
6. Develop the Boundary Spanning Role and training for the role

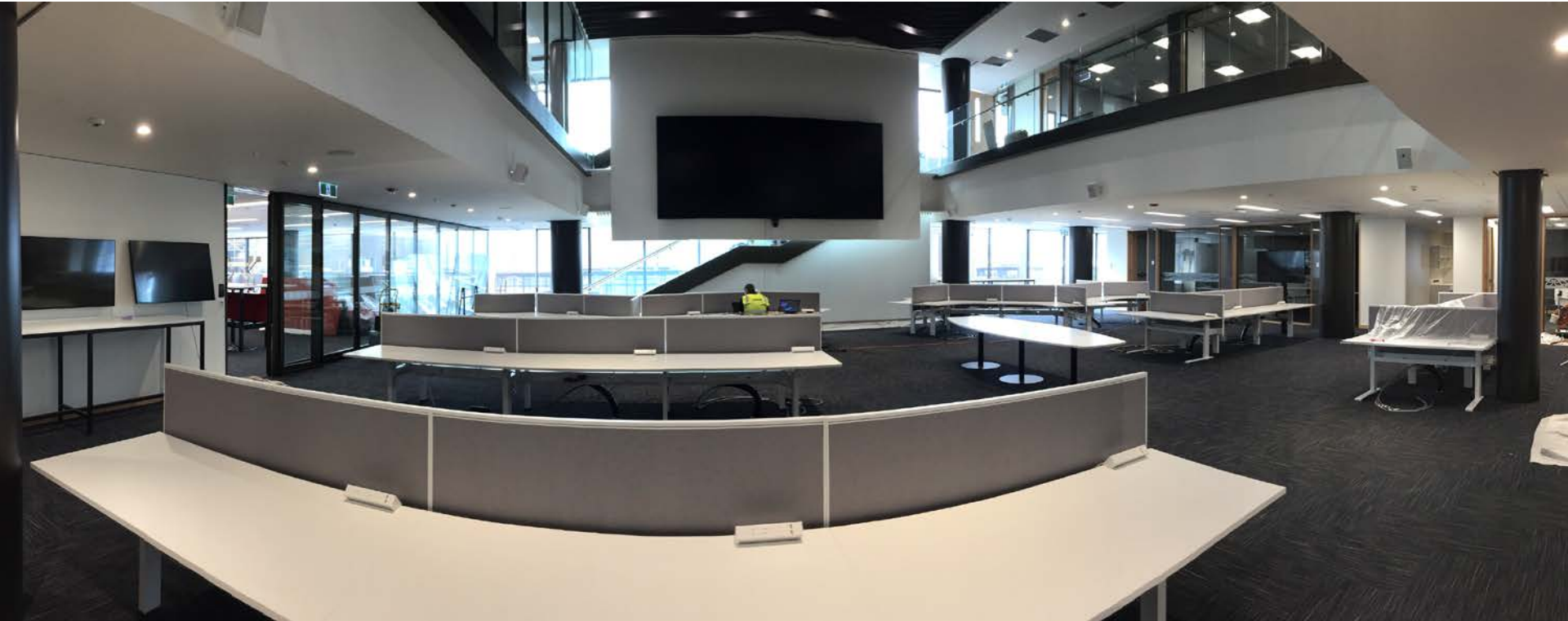


Implementation Observations so far

- Boundary Spanners for the Port Hills Fire and July 2017 Flooding – senior staff provided integrated liaison
- CIMS Functional Manager relationship building – PIM & Welfare



New EOC – Further Implementation



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