

## EXERCISE CONCORD

### NARRATIVE

Two days ago major disaster has occurred in Atlantis.

A severe cyclone struck the south coast of Atlantis about 150 kms west of Cape Verde and travelled northwards across the country and swung off north west, out to sea after passing to the west of Drongo. There were torrential rains (420 mm in preceding 24 hrs) and strong winds (gusting to 180 kph) but no sea surge.

First reports indicate widespread property damage, numerous landslides and extensive flooding. Many people are feared dead with more injured. While information is scarce, an initial estimate suggests that as many as 1.5 million people, or 50% of the total population may have been affected.

Machuville, was spared the worst effects but it did suffer damage and all routine public activities and communications have been badly disrupted. The most severe consequences of the cyclone seem to have occurred in the steep highland valleys west of Attitlan and in extensive flooding throughout the heavily populated, food producing plains of the Port Albert Region. There are reports that the bridge across the Lion river between Machuville and Attitlan and the main bridge crossing the Lazy River has been swept away, cutting off Atlantis from Marzipan. There are also rumours of a heavily populated valley at the headwaters of the Red River being washed out by an earth dam collapse. Thousands of people have been made homeless, both in the heavily populated Port Albert Region and particularly in the mountainous Attitlan Region where peaks rise to 2500 meters. (In Attitlan insurgents have been expanding their influence among the impoverished peasantry during the past two years, frustrating many efforts of government to install an effective administrative infrastructure). Word has not yet been received about the extent of destruction in Drongo, although population is sparse on the northern coast and the predominantly mining industry is unlikely to have been severely affected.

The world community, as well as everybody in Atlantis, is desperate to know the extent of what has happened and to speed relief to where it is most required.

**Situation 5-36 hours after the cyclone.**

### GOVERNMENT

The Government of Atlantis is embarrassed to admit that it does not really know the extent of the disaster, but it is afraid that it does not have the resources to cope with the urgent needs of more than perhaps 100,000 people. Because much of the devastation appears to be in the region of greatest political dissatisfaction, and in the all-important "bread-basket" of Atlantis, there are also possible security and political considerations. The armed forces can be relied upon to respond to the emergency as required by Government.

Atlantis is hesitant to admit that it is unable to cope. It neither wishes to seek international assistance, that later assessments may show was not necessary, nor does it wish to reveal possibly embarrassing information about the disaster or the areas affected, if foreign assistance is not required. On the other hand, if additional emergency resources are shown to be required and are not sought, then Government will be subjected to intense international and domestic criticism of failing to provide for its people. This is something which the political opposition will use against it. If adequate assistance is not forthcoming, or if it is provided only by the Army, there could be serious internal political consequences.

## DONORS

Representatives of donor countries, are surprised by the severity of the Atlantis disaster and are sure that Atlantis will need help to address the urgent needs of the million or so people affected. These donors are also aware of the opportunities to win diplomatic advantages, commercial contracts, and international goodwill for humanitarian assistance if they act quickly and effectively. They cannot act unless their involvement is requested officially by the Government of Atlantis. To complicate the issues, Donor A is not yet aware of what the political intentions and operational capabilities of other major donors B, C and D are, and is hesitant to disclose its intentions until it has a better idea of the relative needs and an indication of how other donors are lining up. The UN may be able to provide this information and organize a coordinated response. Considering the UN bureaucracies however, any significant delay will then lay the donors open to criticism by the international media, which is already on the scene in Atlantis having just covered another marriage of Elizabeth Taylor in neighbouring Marzipan. Meanwhile, the world is becoming more and more aghast at the photographs coming out of Atlantis and are starting to demand that their governments "do something". (Overseas the public are sending money to well known international NGOs because they believe them to be quicker, more efficient and more reliable than their own than government relief assistance.)

## UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES

The specialized United Nations agencies' headquarters all learned of the disaster immediately from their own representatives in Atlantis and from the subsequent notification from the UNDP Resident Representative (Res Rep) in Machuville. UNDRO then issued its first SITREP to all diplomatic missions, UN Agencies, the media, etc the following day. As all of the major UN Agencies involved with disasters (UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, WHO) are represented in Atlantis, the UN system has numerous technical and human resources in the country. UNDRO has already informed the UNDP Res Rep that it will be sending an "International Relief Coordinator" to Machuville within three days. Atlantis is an important recipient of UN development assistance. The disaster has inevitably disrupted on-going development programme activities. The UNDP Res Rep is certain that the Atlantis Government will require external assistance, but being aware of the multiple UN bureaucracies involved, is hopeful that emergency assistance funds can be received urgently from friendly bilateral donors which have special Emergency Relief Assistance Departments.

Following a coordination meeting with the Heads of other UN Agencies in Machuville today, the UN Res Rep has scheduled a meeting with local representatives of the major donors tomorrow. There will also probably be a meeting with NGO officials, as they are likely to have information about the conditions in the affected area. Meanwhile, initial contacts with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, and other line ministries with which UN Agencies ordinarily work, have revealed confusion and limited knowledge about the situation. The Deputy Res Rep and a Senior Programme Officer have been tasked to try to organize a "Joint Agency Assessment Mission" as soon as possible, but uncertainty remains concerning access to the worst hit areas. In addition to transportation, Government permission for such a mission must be obtained, a matter complicated if the Government is not going to declare a disaster. The Prime Minister's Office has advised that he will return the Res Rep's call requesting this clearance, as soon as he is able.

## RED CROSS SOCIETIES

Given the established standing of the Atlantis National Red Cross Society and the programme assistance being received from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCCS) to Atlantis, the Red Cross movement should be well placed to respond rapidly and effectively to the disaster. The National Society has ambulances, some trucks, blankets and many members trained in first aid. It is not been immediately clear however, what they are doing and where. The IFRCCS has excellent communications to its headquarters in Geneva, but there remains confusion as to what the priority needs are in the worst affected area. A Red Cross assessment team accompanied by the Chief Delegate of the IFRCCS set off by road yesterday and efforts continue to contact the Port Albert National Red Cross District Chief.

## NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Local and international NGO representatives in Atlantis and at the foreign NGOs home headquarters are concerned by the first sketchy reports received about the disaster. It is clear that the relief requirements will be considerable, particularly at community level. Timely and effective assistance will be difficult given Atlantis' limited resources and there are fears of corruption among government officials. Besides, it will take some time for the UN to get moving. But the NGOs have project materials available and dedicated national staff in several parts of the country, including the affected areas and who can act immediately. These local contacts should prove to be invaluable in identifying needed goods and services required.

Additional funds will be required, so it is fortunate that NGO No 1 is already in touch with its own bilateral donor's HQ to obtain emergency funds and NGO No 2 is preparing a document for its Ambassador's Special Emergency Fund (\$25,000) which will be released as soon as Atlantis officially declares a disaster. National appeals to their home public are planned by many of the NGOs, but all are seeking more information particularly photos or contact with international news media representatives who may be present in Atlantis. But internal and international communications and access are presently severely disrupted! Several "Regional Programme Officers" and even some NGO Directors are expected to arrive within the week to make an assessment of further needs.

## PROBLEM

The Prime Minister of Atlantis called you, one of his long term political colleagues into his office and reviewed the nature of the problems and prospects described above. Because of protracted bureaucratic dithering the Atlantis National Disaster Coordinator (Discord) has only recently been appointed and is not yet fully conversant with his responsibilities. The price is now being paid. The Prime Minister realizes that the matter of foreign assistance is a serious one if Atlantis is to be helped and the Government to remain credible. It is critical to bring a sense of order and purpose to coordinating the requirement for international assistance on which Atlantis must rely.

The Prime Minister informs you that Discord will be fully engaged coordinating the domestic elements of emergency relief. He wants you to organize and direct the international emergency relief response. To do so, he appoints you as the Consolidated Assistance Coordinator (Concord). You will be attached to his office with immediate effect with his delegated authority. Fortunately you can draw on the experience of seven other advisors organized as the Emergency Relief Group (ERG). Working as a group under your leadership and given the circumstances described, you are collectively tasked to do the following:

1. Identify the critical elements that must be addressed, and their relative priority, to enable an effective and expeditious international emergency relief assistance programme to be organized.
2. Devise a strategy to facilitate the implementation of a responsive, yet controlled, international emergency relief programme.
3. List whom you believe must be the key people for the emergency relief programme to be effective.
4. Identify the most critical information needs to be met within the next 5-7 days.

The Prime Minister requires a written brief not exceeding three pages, quickly.

### Acknowledgement

This exercise was conceived, developed and written by Terry Jeggle, Programme Coordinator, Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre. Cranfield DPC are most grateful for ADPC's permission to use the exercise in its own Counter-Disaster Staff Training Programme.

## EXERCISE CONCORD

### ERG Working Guidelines

In considering the task of ERG, the following guidelines may be of some assistance in organizing the large amount of work to be accomplished in a relatively short time. They may also assist in focusing attention on critical issues.

1. Appoint Concord for the ERG. Assign another person as secretary/recorder.
2. In considering the issues, it is important to consider the perspective from which the issues are, or can be viewed.
3. There may be value in having one or two staff assume the role and viewpoints of a given group, so as to better get to the heart of their interests or concern.
4. What are your primary objectives?
5. What are your priority activities to achieve those objectives?
6. Consider the following as guiding questions:
  - What is the problem(s)?
  - Why is it a problem?
  - Who perceives it as a problem?
  - Why should it be solved?
  - When is it a problem?
  - Where is it a problem?
  - Who else does it affect?
  - Do they see it as a problem?
  - Who is interested in the problem?
  - Are they interested in solving it?
  - Who is opposed to solving the problem?
  - What really is the problem?
  - Is the problem, as defined, a symptom of something else?
  - What are the consequences if the problem is not solved?
  - How important is the problem, compared to others?
7. Consider time elements, and time sequence of events.

## DS NOTES - EX CONCORD

- A.
1. No Plan  
Organize and direct international relief  
Need to Plan. Coordinate  
Central system for operations under ERG  
Decentralize operations, implementation of NGOs etc.  
Assessment (damages, needs) centralize - ERG  
aid, number of affected utilities, transport.  
Data collection, dissemination, centralize - ERG  
Group organization ERG/NGOs linked  
Declare a disaster, mobilize Government abilities  
Support local resources, manpower
  3. NGOs  
Local Government  
Ministries
  4. Damage  
Agricultural effect  
Infrastructure conditions  
Locations  
Access
- B.
1. Joint Assessment  
Declaration of disaster  
Meeting of international organizations, NGOs  
Liaise with Relief Coordinator
  2. Form Disaster Management Group under CONCORD  
Implement Guidelines of Government  
Inform Donors  
Assign responsibilities with authority - Meet basic needs  
- Infrastructure  
- Communications  
Restore morale
  3.

Central Government	DISCORD
Provincial Government	ERG
International Agencies	CONCORD
Population	NGOs
  4. Damage  
People affected  
Infrastructural  
Government Resources  
Estimated budget of reconstruction

- C. 1. How and where to assist  
Assessment (Damages, Needs)  
Identify & quantify  
Existing resources  
Capacity of victims  
Gaps remaining  
Set policies  
Establish goals and objectives
2. Select strategies
- establish organization
  - form follow functions
  - participatory management
  - retain reasonable control
  - avoid bureaucratic
  - staffing, local. Balance with international experts, especially technical from international
  - budget and monitoring
3. USA  
UK, Canada, Sweden, Germany, Holland, Saudi, Communist Block, Inter-Government, UN, etc., EEC, OPEN, World Bank, etc.
4. Housing units destroyed  
Food, medicine needs, etc.  
Climate, weather  
Capacity of communication  
Coping mechanisms  
Law and order  
Accessibility  
Risks, secondary consequence
- D. 1. How to make international relief more effective and timely  
Rapid assessment  
Provide mechanisms to share needs, resources  
Declare state of emergency  
Government to assume responsibilities  
Organize joint assessment - international agencies  
International Relief Committee - international agencies )  
- donor ) Chairman - CONCORD  
- NGOs )
- Damage  
Affected population  
International resources available  
Communication  
Transportation