



Media Release

Thursday 17 November 2016

Selwyn helps out in Hurunui

Around 15 Selwyn District Council staff are helping out with the earthquake response in North Canterbury this week.

Council staff have been working in the region since Monday, when the major 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck near Culverden. The quake has been followed by a series of significant aftershocks.

Selwyn District Council's Incident Command Bus has also been in North Canterbury for the week, being used by response teams working in Waiau. The bus is designed to be used at significant rural fires or emergencies and is equipped with Wi-Fi and radio communications.

Selwyn District Council staff trained in emergency management have also been rostered on this week to assist with incident coordination. Four building staff have been assisting with building inspections in Waiau, with two other Council staff working in welfare management roles.

Jason Flewellen, Selwyn District Council's Community Resilience Co-ordinator was one of a number of Council staff who spent time in North Canterbury. On Tuesday 15 November he and another Council staff member took the bus to Waiau, with 20 New Zealand Response Team members from Christchurch.

"The response team managed to visit 130 properties to complete rapid impact assessments on the day. Some of the houses there had major damage and there were people who were understandably very upset," he says.

"The visits were focused on identifying any welfare needs people had. Our role was to respond to requests for assistance and resolve them or refer them to local civil defence headquarters to be actioned if needed. The town was very busy with volunteer firefighters and resources like food and water arriving in town and we also helped coordinate and direct some of these resources to where they were needed along with a local civil defence volunteer. Many of the needs people had were able to be met locally fortunately."

Several Selwyn volunteers from community response teams also offered to assist with the earthquake response and were placed on standby to support evacuees from Kaikoura and other affected areas at Canterbury welfare centres.

"It's great to see that the community is also helping in practical ways with groups in Rolleston and Darfield collecting supplies for the response," says Mayor Sam Broughton.

Selwyn has its own emergency response support and notification network called Selwyn Gets Ready. This email and text alert system operates in conjunction with local volunteer networks who check on local households needing support and provide assistance if needed. To join this free system visit www.selwyn.getsready.net

Ends

Pictures attached: *Selwyn's Incident Command Bus being used by a New Zealand Response Team in Waiau, and Waiau School was used as a temporary welfare centre providing assistance and food*

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