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any catastrophic disaster.

The different sub scenarios or vignettes aim to draw out specific communication issues; and these sub scenarios will in the near future be further developed as required to provide sufficient detail for the technical requirements for the project's demonstrator test.

## Disaster movie script

The scenario, to a degree, reads like the script of a disaster movie. This is the scene: in country X, a very large reservoir feeds off a major river has over recent weeks undergone substantial and much needed restoration work on its retaining walls.

Coincidentally, shortly after the restoration work commenced there has followed a sustained period of heavy rain in the nearby mountains that sources the aforementioned river. This has in turn led to increasing water levels that are now approaching the capacity of the reservoir and placing increasing pressure on retaining walls that are still not fully repaired.

Experts estimate that within the next 72 hours the southerly walls of the reservoir will breach and flood down an adjacent valley which contains a large urbanised area with residential housing, a chemical plant, a power plant; also major transport infrastructure (road and rail).

This urbanised area is a border town and a major access route into a neighbouring country Z further down the valley (1 km away); there is also on the western side of the valley a 0.75 km road tunnel that links the two countries.

At the foot of the valley in the adjacent country by the border crossing is a spit of flat land 250 metres wide that is a popular nature reserve; this then leads into a deep natural sea harbour that is home to several species of wildlife and is a protected environmental location.

The serials as defined by BAPCO are:

- Strategic command
- Incident command
- Ground command evacuation
- Ground command vulnerable premises
- Ground command damage limitation
- Media
- Reservoir walls breached
- Flooded tunnel
- Amateur radio
- Disaster victim identification
- Chemical plant noxious smoke cloud
- Investigation
- Business continuity.

"We chose the flood scenario because research from the Universite Catholique De Louvain in Brussels in 2006 showed that 50 per cent of world disasters involved flood events," explains O'Neill, adding that BAPCO Association's role in the Project doesn't end with the drawing up of the scenario for the technical project partners. "There are a number of other tasks over the coming months that we'll be undertaking, such as assisting the consortium partners to

understand what happens in control rooms, procedures in emergency response, and we'll also be involved with planning the evaluation exercise."

## Progress report and next steps

At the end of February 2009, BAPCO submitted on schedule a major package focussed on user requirements; a high level conceptual overview of the environment such a system as Secricom could operate within; and an environmental scan (UK and Europe wide) of current developments, initiatives and projects that are related to Secricom's aims and objectives.

Other project deliverables that BAPCO has contributed to include dissemination activities (the three BAPCO roadshows in October 2009) and preparations for a presentation by the Secricom project at the BAPCO national Conference on 21 April 2009.

Regular progress project reports are submitted to the BAPCO national executive for dissemination to the regional committees; and O'Neill concludes by saying that now the project has some impetus he is very happy to attend regional committee meetings and provide members with more detailed information on progress

## Emergency – walls breached!

Under this scenario, it turns out that contrary to expert advice the walls are breached within 48 hours. The strategy for the crisis is now focused very much on the preservation of life with urgent messages about the impending flood water being communicated to all deployable resources for each agency; and to Country Z via strategic and incident command levels.

It is during this phase of the crisis that flooding water from the reservoir sweeps through the valley causing large numbers of deaths of the public and ER agency personnel with the torrent of water taking several bodies through the valley and across the international border into the adjacent country and onto the environmentally protected deep harbour. Scores of bodies and survivors are situated across both countries with many survivors finding themselves in the sea. Mobile phone and other telecommunications infrastructure is eventually lost or severely damaged. Agency contingency and operational plans are enacted for the rescue of survivors.

## Outline scenario

- Need for scenario to be plausible
- Reservoir that breaches & floods into neighbouring country
- Multi-agency response with several crisis sub-scenarios
- Strategic, Tactical and Operational levels of command
- Focus on communications needs – avoidance where possible of state, regional and agency protocols



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