

**An application by John David Rodway**

**Corporate and Public Safety Manager**

**Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils**

**for consideration to be awarded the title of:**

**A L A R M**

**Risk Manager of the Year - 2008**

**Supported by:  
Ian Lowrie.  
Chief Executive  
Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils**

## **Executive Summary**

In 2007 joint working arrangements were agreed between Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council. Whilst both Councils have retained their political and legal identity a number of services had been identified as being suitable for joint working arrangements.

The Corporate and Public Safety Unit that now exists within the joint working arrangements of Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils is an example of the enthusiasm with which John Rodway has addressed the task of integrating risk management into both local authorities.

This approach to risk management across 2 local authorities is an example of John's ability to communicate with senior managers and elected members. The Corporate and Public Safety Unit was originally formed in Adur District and provided a focal point within the Council for matters relating to risk including the key functions of business continuity, operational risk management, health and safety and responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act.

Through a series of briefing and training sessions John had been able to ensure the production of a corporate risk register and the corporate risk strategy that has a foundation provided by the managers in consultation with employees at all levels. In addition he has written and compiled a significant library of in-house risk policy and guidance documentation available to all employees on the council intranet.

As a member of several County based risk groups John promotes the management of risk and provides support to other Districts and Boroughs. This has led to two other local authorities following the example of bringing in Corporate and Public Safety Units.

During the past year John has led trials involving new technology flood defence bags to ascertain if there is an alternative to traditional sandbags. This has led to a community safety initiative working with emergency responders in the County

As a non-executive board director and representative of the Local Authority for the Shoreham Port Authority, John has been able to convey a level of expertise and knowledge to assist with the implementation of a risk management strategy for the Port.

In 2007 joint working arrangements were agreed between Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council. Whilst both Councils have retained their political and legal identity, a number of services had been identified as being suitable for joint working arrangements. Corporate and Public Safety became a joint service provision in April 2008. John Rodway had previously established the unit in Adur District Council in 2005 and had raised the profile of risk assessment and management, together with a need for integration of a number of elements within the Council.

John had given presentations to the executive and senior managers of the council that resulted in a central resource available to all managers and sections. With high-level management support for health and safety, fire risk assessment and risk management elements, sufficient budgets were provided for information technology support.

One of the first actions John put in place was to commission an independent audit of Health and Safety (HSG65) across both Councils. This involved working with the Council insurers and resulted in an extensive audit of all health and safety arrangements. Together with interviews and testing of risk processes it has provided the base information upon which to build future plans. There is now a clear measurement of the strengths and weaknesses of both organisations in terms of health and safety and risk.

Prior to the formation of the Corporate and Public Safety Unit risk management had been a response restricted to operational areas and normally applied after an incident was reported. One of the first tasks was to produce comprehensive guidance on risk assessment and management of risks. Training sessions were delivered to managers and those employees identified as being in a higher risk category to ensure good standard of awareness throughout the Council. All injury accidents and near misses are now investigated by line managers under guidance from Corporate Safety to identify the true cause of accidents and inform the process of accident reduction.

The posts of Health and Safety Officer at both Adur District and Worthing Borough became vacant during 2007. An example of an initiative to ensure a sound basis in succession planning and a level of expertise within the office was addressed in the month before the joint arrangements were put in place. Working with the British Safety Council John was able to secure funding for educational support for both posts. The posts have become trainee posts and the new employees will undertake

a programme of education leading to a Diploma in Safety Management. This is a significant change in the approach to risk management and will provide both Councils with modern educational standards to high level.

The introduction of fire reform legislation and the need for a new approach to fire risk assessment and management provided the impetus for training and certification as a fire risk assessor for both John and the then Insurance Officer. By reference to the Council asset register it was possible to clearly identify all relevant Council properties and provide individual risk assessments using fire risk software purchased for the specific tasks. The unit provides policy documentation and guidance for senior managers and premises managers. It attends all serious fires, working with the fire and rescue service to establish the cause and effect of fires. The information obtained is then passed to the buildings and maintenance section to implement fire safety recommendations.

Working closely with the Chief Executive Communication and Performance Officer, John has previously given presentations to all senior managers on the need for corporate risk assessment and subsequent risk management. This has ensured the production of corporate risk register and the corporate risk strategy that has foundation provided by the managers in consultation with employees at all levels. Through a series of briefings to managers and elected members a detailed examination of all risks was undertaken. This process led to the production of a risk matrix with the top level risks being subject of monthly review at Director level. The risks identified by each operational division were then fed back to all managers for verification and then placed on the corporate risk register. Every divisional manager was then required to incorporate risk action plans with their annual service planning arrangements to ensure that issues were kept alive. The introduction of performance indicator surveillance software administered by the Chief Executive's office has resulted in comprehensive risk management support. In addition John has written and compiled a significant library of in-house and risk policy and guidance documentation available to all employees on the council intranet.

Working closely with Human Resources John introduced a stress risk management survey based on the Health and Safety Executive 'Work Positive' programme. This survey examined areas of stress risk and resulted in a 60% return rate from employees. This led to a detailed analysis of the survey down to divisional level. Presentations were then provided to the executive officers, senior managers and

human resources working groups to identify and plan actions associated with the significant risks arising from the survey.

The introduction of the Civil Contingencies Act and the need to assess the risks to the community has resulted in the production of a community risk register. The Council Internet provides links to all areas of civil contingency planning and supports the arrangements for warning and informing the community of the actions to be taken during an emergency. Guidance documents and a one sheet public advice document have been produced to assist the dissemination of advice.

By presentation of project initiation documents and explanation of risks associated with communications failures, John was able to secure significant funding for asset protection within ICT and alternative communication equipment to ensure that the council was able to communicate in an emergency.

Following a communications review that highlighted the fragile nature of communications based on mobile telephone technology in 2007, John was able to secure funding to upgrade and re commission a Public Mobile Radio (PMR) system for the Council. This has led to partnership working with neighbouring local authorities in Sussex to provide an emergency communications system. The system allows local authorities to obtain reliable communications on a mutual aid basis if mobile telephones fail during an incident.

Experience gained in dealing with incidents has also led to the acquisition of a web based information management system (AIMS). This provides time stamped recording of events and incidents. Working with a colleague in Worthing Borough John liaised with a national supplier resulting in 8 local authorities joining a consortium. This approach to incident management will reduce the time and resources spent on recording incidents and linking strategic decisions to events on the ground.

During 2007 John was instrumental in developing a series of trials to ascertain if there were alternatives to the traditional approach of using sandbags to reduce the effects of flooding. The main drivers were to improve the management of flood risks to the organisation's assets. In addition the risks associated with Health and Safety, to reduce manual handling and in Civil Contingencies, to support business continuity and community response to incidents were addressed.

A series of trials took place in cooperation with Fire and Rescue Services with invited observers from Environment Agency, Local Authorities and other responders. The trials indicated that new technology floodbags have a place in flooding preparedness and could be considered for initial protection of domestic buildings and small to medium business units. A technical report on the trials was produced and published on the internet, in addition to television coverage an article written for a leading insurer in house magazine (Code Red) and a presentation given to a regional ALARM meeting in London.

The strategic response to flooding incidents in the District is now spearheaded by the use of new technology flood bags. This has reduced storage requirements, mitigated the problems associated with manual handling and given both business and domestic property owners an ability to protect against the initial effects of flooding. In addition the waste associated with storage of traditional sandbags has been eliminated.

John is deputy chair of the Sussex Local Authority Emergency Planning Group, and has been the driving force that has brought 12 District and Boroughs, 2 Counties and 1 Unitary Authority together to address the risks associated with emergencies in the County. He sits as a member of the county risk group, the influenza pandemic group, the severe weather group and the coastal pollution group.

As a coastal district manager, John has previously recognised the need for a strategy for the risk management of beaches and foreshores and obtained a qualification in beach risk management. He is a member of the South East Beach Management Group. This knowledge came to the fore one weekend in January 08 with the unexpected arrival of several hundred tonnes of timber from a ship sunk at sea. John took the lead for Adur District Council arranging emergency liaison meetings within the first 24 hours and conducting briefings on the beach to ensure the safety of all those involved in recovery. Working closely with agents for the vessel insurers and other local authorities John was able to make a significant contribution to the operation.

As a founding member of the Sussex Local Authority Safety Officer Group and a member of the West Sussex insurance and risk management group, he shares his knowledge and enthusiasm to risk management with like-minded professionals throughout the two counties of West and East Sussex.

During the past year John delivered training to 100 employees and contractors ensuring a base knowledge of health and safety and risk assessment. This was achieved in conjunction with the British Safety Council and the local authority was recognised as a centre for the delivery of training. John made special arrangements for employees with learning difficulties and for some this was the first certificate of education that they had achieved since leaving full time education. In a joint presentation with the Chief Executives of both Councils, certificates were awarded to every candidate. This achievement was featured in a national publication in March 2008

Ian Lowrie, Joint Chief Executive of Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council says “ the enthusiasm and energy that John brings to Risk Management in the Council and elsewhere provides motivation and encouragement at all levels of the organisation. The senior management team and members of the Council benefit from his industry in all areas relating to risk”

As a non-executive director and board member of the Shoreham Port Authority, John has a defined responsibility in relation to risk management and contingency planning for the Trust Port. As a local authority officer with the knowledge skills and experience in the area risk management he was appointed to the board working with the Chief Executive. This has ensured that the strategic review for the port is based on corporate risk management, an area that was shown by audit as being in need of attention and proper documentation.

The Port is located adjacent to highly populated residential area and has a number of risks associated with port activity. These include petroleum storage, ammonium nitrate and other volatile substances. Whilst all of these are adequately controlled and subject to inspection and regulation they were not incorporated into business continuity plans. A corporate risk register is now being produced together with a comprehensive risk assessment program to sit alongside existing Health and Safety assessments.

Rod Johnston, chief executive of the port said of John. “the Port Authority appointed John because of his proven record in risk management. He has the ability to present what at first appears to be a difficult subject in a positive and simplified manner that

provides managers with the confidence to undertake risk management based on their own knowledge of work areas and industry specific risks”

Working with Sussex Police (West Downs) John developed a safe system of work to deal with the risks associated the recovery of organic based drugs. The Council is now able to provide a response service to support the Police on operations involving the recovery of cannabis plants with the Council supplying a dedicated team and equipment to minimise the risks to police officers and Council employees.

John provides the risk management support for Lancing Parish Council, one of the largest parish councils in southern England. In addition he supports his local church with areas of risk management and community safety.

Fr David Weston, priest in charge of St George's Church in Hove gave public praise to John for his voluntary work that resulted in fire risk management policy and risk assessments for the church following implementation of the new fire reform legislation and the areas associated with Corportae Manslaughter legislation.

As a member of ALARM, John has gained the status of Registered Risk Practitioner which he regards as a statement of his professional ability and status in the risk management community.

Following his interest in cricket, John has supported the health and safety initiatives for Sussex County Cricket Club undertaking safety inspections and risk assessments. In 2008 he provided an educational input to young cricketers in the Sussex Academy through an evening session to improve safety and risk awareness ahead of community projects.