

## CIVIL DEFENCE AT No. 1 SUB-REGION LEVEL AUCKLAND REGIONAL AUTHORITY

J. G. Blenkinsopp\*

### 1. History

Legislation dealing with Civil Defence is dealt with in two Acts, firstly the Auckland Regional Authority Act 1963, which placed responsibility for "Co-ordination of Civil Defence within the Auckland Regional Authority's district", and secondly the Civil Defence Act 1962, which gives the Regional Authority the same powers and responsibilities as any local authority or joint authorities in the setting up of Civil Defence measures.

The Auckland Regional Authority therefore, in agreement with those local authorities concerned, established the present Civil Defence Sub-Region as a joint organization comprising four cities, two counties and nineteen boroughs within its district (See figure 1). Exceptions are those authorities within Franklin County boundary which have a separate joint organisation. The No. 1 Sub-Region boundary, is shown on figure 2, and the subsequent division of the local authorities into Civil Defence Areas is shown in the control chart, figure 3.

The territory has an approximate area of 2,000 square miles of which 120 square miles are built up and urban. It has a population in excess of 630,000, 173,000 dwellings, 3,200 factories, 6,000 retail premises, 213 schools and 71 hospitals.

Priority tasks in establishing an initial organisation in this territory were appreciated as:

- (a) The establishing of Area Joint Civil Defence Committees where none existed,
- (b) the setting up of the framework of an emergency control structure in terms of personnel, premises and communications,
- (c) to establish liaison with the existing and potential life saving services and relief services,
- (d) to set up the framework of supplementary volunteer emergency units in Civil Defence Sections,
- (e) the writing and approval of an overall Sub-Region plan, giving the necessary powers to act to Sub-Region Controllers during the interim period whilst Area plans were being approved and developed.

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\*Civil Defence Officer, Auckland Regional Authority, Auckland.

These aims were achieved by 1965 and Area Committees and plans have since been developed in accordance with the framework of the Sub-Region plan.

## 2. Role

With the eventual approval and development of the individual area plans, in which Areas can, to a certain extent, deal initially with emergencies within their own boundaries, the role of the Regional Authority has reverted more to one of co-ordination. Current plans therefore aim at:-

- (a) Co-ordinating, for the purpose of Civil Defence, resources and services of a Sub-Regional nature. These are Police, Post Office, Traffic, Hospitals, Fire Service, Harbour Board, Electric Power, Petroleum Industry and Harbour Bridge Authority.
- (b) To organise the resources of the Auckland Regional Authority for Civil Defence use. Whilst this is a considerable resource, of some 1600 personnel, 700 units of various types of transport, and other technical facilities, a large proportion of these are already involved in what could be classed as high priority services in emergencies, namely the supply of bulk water, main drainage reticulation and treatment, and transport.
- (c) To maintain an operational Sub-Regional Headquarters to co-ordinate resources already in the Sub-Region on inter-area relief measures, and the deployment of aid which may be directed into the Authority's district from outside sources.

## 3. Organisation and Control Structure

### Local Authority Committees

The Regional Authority and each Area maintains a Civil Defence Committee of elected members nominated by the joining authorities. The Committees' responsibility is clearly defined in National Civil Defence Plans as:-

- (a) to act as Controlling Authority in their district in emergencies,
- (b) to ensure that a written plan for Civil Defence is produced for their district,
- (c) to appoint a Civil Defence Controller,

and most important of all:-

- (d) to satisfy themselves that the resources of their district are so organised that the plan can be put into operation at any time.

The Regional Authority and Area Committee representatives meet together from time to time to deal with common matters and to integrate planning measures.

### Sub-Region Operational Structure

The operational control structure for reporting and the deployment of aid follows the conventional pattern of a chain of control used in other parts of the world, adapted to suit conditions in the Sub-Region, i.e. Sub-Region - Area - (Sub-Area where applicable) - Sector - Warden Post - Patrol Post - Public. Whilst the control system from Area downwards is common to the remainder of New Zealand, there was no precedent of a Sub-Region and an amendment to the legislation had to be effected for this.

### No. 1 Sub-Region Control

The premises selected for this control is a disused ex-Service bunker located in the grounds of the Teachers' Training College at Epsom. Built solidly of reinforced concrete against conventional bombing during the last war, it has some 5000 square feet on two floors, 30 feet below ground level. Being redundant and empty for some twenty years, the potential of the building was quickly appreciated and developed by the Regional Authority as a Civil Defence operational and training headquarters. Figure 5.

The layout was adapted to suit the Civil Defence sub-sections of the Headquarters, i.e. Operations, Information, Signals, and at that time, Monitoring. The subsequent installation of communications and training facilities enables the control to be widely used for courses, demonstrations, exercises, films, lectures etc. Provision has been made for close co-operation with liaison officers of all major services involved or who may need to operate from the same Headquarters in support of the Sub-Region Controller; thus services, public utilities, and Civil Defence are kept aware of each others problems with a free and rapid interchange of operational information to their mutual advantage. Figure 4.

Civil Defence personnel to staff the Control are drawn from a number of sources. The Auckland Regional Authority providing the majority, supplemented by a small number of volunteer staff officers, Amateur Radio Emergency Corps, student teachers on call from the adjacent Epsom Teachers' Training College, Venturers, Guides and a wide variety of others as reliefs and reserves. Bearing in mind that staff would probably be working under stress from the outset, training and exercising on control procedures and routine is kept simple and as far as possible foolproof.

The Sub-Region Civil Defence Headquarter staff is grouped broadly into Operations, Intelligence, Information and Signals. They are interdependent on one another and work in close liaison with the Liaison Officers of the other emergency services.

The duties of the staffs are summarised as:-

Operations: To assist the Controller; maintain an Operations Log; issue his directives and instructions; co-ordinate inter-service liaison and tasks; make appreciations for his decisions. Figure 6.

Intelligence: To collate the mass of incoming information from all sources and present him with an up to date summary of the situation at any time, on maps, resources boards, casualty and homeless records; locations, routes, damage, fires, flooding etc; to submit periodic situation reports to higher and lower controls; to ensure that all services in the operations room are kept abreast of a developing situation.

Information: To maintain an information room with displays and records for all services represented in the Info room e.g. Gas, Water, Electricity, Drainage, Transport, Supplies, Health etc; to ensure a free interchange of operational information vital to these services; to keep the press and public informed by authorised releases; to act as a "buffer" between the operations room and extraneous enquiries.

Signals: To handle all Civil Defence signal traffic by telephone, radio, despatch rider, or messenger service; to maintain a signals register ensuring message priorities are observed; message distribution; the replacement of broken links in the control chain by mobile radio.

In times of National Emergency, an additional sub-section is planned for RADIAC duties (radio-activity detection, indication and computing). The basic elements of a monitoring room staff are periodically exercised in this function. A diagrammatic layout of a typical Sub-Region Control layout is shown in figure 4. The No. 1 Sub-Region is adapted to this pattern so far as the premises allow. An alternative control is earmarked in the Regional Authority's main office in Regional House; extra radio equipment as reserve and relay stations has been installed for this purpose.

#### **4. Radio Communications**

The primary means of communications over the whole control structure is by the normal telephone system, backed by a few private lines. Against failure of this, a comprehensive emergency radio network between Sub-Region, Areas, Sectors, local Authorities and other services has been established. Much of the equipment is battery operated, independent of vulnerable Post Office installations and operated on exclusive Civil Defence frequencies. The system is supplemented by a very close working arrangement with the considerable resources of the Amateur Radio Emergency Corps who undertake a good deal of the maintenance and operation of all Civil Defence radio communications.

#### **5. Area Controls**

Each of the five areas has an area Control staffed and equipped on similar lines to suit their own requirements. In some cases the premises are exclusive to Civil Defence use and in others, local authority premises, and alternatives, have been earmarked for quick adaption as required.

- Rodney Area : Control would be set up in Rodney County Council Offices, Warkworth.
- Northern Area : the area has adapted redundant coast artillery gun emplacements at Castor Bay.
- Western Area : a Control and training centre has been set up in Third Avenue, Henderson (Figure 9).
- Central Area : the Area occupies part of the Sub-Region control at Epsom.
- Southern Area : would operate from either Nathan House, Manurewa, or Manukau City Council premises at Otara.

Area controls plan and train to operate on a similar basis to the Sub-Region Control. All have liaison officers of the supporting services concerned in the Area appointed to support the Area Controllers with advice and their own resources. Staff for these controls are also drawn from local authority and volunteer personnel in the Civil Defence H.Q. Section. As far as possible a common pattern of staffing, duties, control routine and procedures is maintained to give flexibility and a possible interchange of relief key personnel who may live in one area and commute to another.

## 6. Warden Controls

No less important than the major controls, are the Warden Controls in direct contact with the public, forming the link between the public requiring aid and the Area co-ordinating it. Aiming at a well tried principle of not more than six subordinates to any level of control, the territory is divided into Warden Sectors, these further subdivided into Warden Posts and finally Patrol Areas, shown in Figure 3. Twenty eight Sector Posts are sited and earmarked, many of them are equipped with emergency radio equipment able to work back to the Area Control. The siting of subordinate Warden Posts and Patrols, and the appointment of Warden staffs is in the hands of Area Organisations and is in varying stages of development.

As these controls would necessarily be manned by volunteer citizens, the task facing Areas in respect of recruiting, training and appointing these is considerable. The minimum warden requirements aimed at are as follows:

28 Sectors - Staff of 5 (Sector Warden, Deputy, 3 Wardens)	= 140 Wardens
Average 5 Wdn Posts per Sector 140 Wdn Posts, - Staff of 3 (Post Wdn, Deputy, 1 Warden)	= 420 "
Average 5 Patrol Posts per Warden Post - 700 Patrol Posts - Staff of 2 (Patrol Wdn, Deputy)	=1400 "
Total requirement for total Warden Coverage - for one shift only	=1960 approx.

This does not allow for reliefs, or those absent from the area, or indeed those who may be affected by an emergency themselves. To ensure a more complete coverage, a Warden force of three times the above figures is recommended as a target.

## **7. Civil Defence Sections**

The control element of the Civil Defence Division is capably supported by a nucleus of well trained and practiced volunteers in the Headquarters and Wardens Sections.

In the setting up of other immediate "life saving", Rescue, Casualty and Welfare Sections, full use is encouraged of the ready co-operation of those existing organisations already involved in these roles to varying degrees. The responsibility for raising, training and maintenance of these sections rests with Area organisations who appoint Heads of Sections for the purpose.

### RESCUE:

Whilst rescue problems in rural and suburban areas may not be great, there are many parts of the sub-Region where rescue tasks would require trained men, skilled rescue techniques and specialised equipment. The first echelon of units for these tasks are the local authority's own resources of men, tools and material. These can be supplemented by units from industrial and commercial firms, many of whom already have rescue resources readily available for their own use. In addition, there are individual volunteers into the section undertaking regular training.

### CASUALTY:

The St John Ambulance Association, the Brigade, and the New Zealand Red Cross Society, with their particular talents form the nucleus of this Section. These also are supplemented by individual volunteers recruited and trained for the section. A significant contribution to the casualty effort in a widespread emergency would be the tremendous amount of first aid and "self-help" training which has been given to many thousands of the general public by these organisations.

With hospital resources already extended the methods of handling mass casualties in adverse conditions requires particular training and planning. The Extra-Mural Hospital Emergency and Disaster organisation of the Auckland Hospital Board works in close liaison with the Casualty Section in this respect.

Volunteers are recruited and trained in first aid and home nursing for the Emergency Volunteer Nursing Corps, to assist in the staffing of existing and emergency hospitals, Forward Medical Aid Units, casualty collecting posts on or close to disaster sites etc. The current strength of this volunteer corps, is in the order of 500, many of whom are fully trained registered nurses. Full support is given to the Hospital Board's effort by some hundreds of doctors, members of the New Zealand Medical Association in the Board's area. Both casualty

section and medical effort are also backed by the considerable resources, and skill, of the chemists and pharmacists of the New Zealand Pharmaceutical Association throughout the Area.

#### WELFARE:

This section could have the largest tasks of all with its various roles including emergency feeding, shelter, clothing, registration, enquiries, etc. As with other sections, many existing welfare organisations have been co-opted to expand to meet the need. Volunteers into the section are trained to provide the operational guidance. Over one hundred and Sixty premises suited for a particular welfare use have been surveyed and earmarked in plans for the purpose; where possible, the organisations concerned e.g. churches, YMCA, Salvation Army, are able to organise and run their own premises as emergency welfare centres. Training of the section places particular emphasis on local requisition of supplies, and emergency field cooking.

### **8. VolunTERS and Organisations**

In addition to some 2500 volunteers who have signified their willingness to help by enrolling into one or other of the Civil Defence Sections, Government Departments and official metropolitan bodies, sixty other major organisations have undertaken Civil Defence roles identified with their particular resource, e.g. light and heavy industries, equipment hire firms, transport undertakings, flying schools, university motor cycle clubs, master builders associations, funeral directors, contractors etc. These form valuable resources of men, tools, material and skill.

### **9. Training**

Many of the organisations who have undertaken a Civil Defence role are already trained and skilled in their own particular role. The training of individual volunteers however, rests with the Civil Defence Organisation, this inevitably puts a heavy load on the Civil Defence Officer, his heads of Sections, and volunteer instructors. A limited number of vacancies become available from time to time on courses at the Civil Defence School, Macedon, Australia; twenty people in the Sub-Region have attended such courses over the last six years; not all of these were instructor courses some were short background courses for Controllers and Section Heads. Some seventy volunteers have also attended three day courses in various Sections, held by Northern Region, which give valuable background knowledge. Several "local instructors" courses have been held, and whilst volunteer instructors who have the ability, the inclination, and the time are few, the necessary techniques are gradually being promulgated to the rank and file members. The majority of the training is conducted in many small groups on a weekly or fortnightly meeting basis in local authority premises close to volunteers' homes.

### **10. Plans**

As required by the legislation, the Auckland Regional Authority and each of the Civil Defence Areas have comprehensive plans which have the official approval of the Ministry of Civil Defence. The

plans cover the many facets of organisation, declarations of emergencies, controllers appointed, their powers, key locations and staff, the passage of warnings, communications and priorities, essential routes and rendezvous, supplies, transport etc. These are amended periodically and re-submitted for re-approval every three years.

With the varying degrees of emergency which could face the Sub-Region and its Areas, it is impossible to make a "yardstick" for the state of preparedness, e.g. the number of volunteers? the time taken to mobilise and deploy them? detailed planning measures in various areas? the local committee's enthusiasm? or lack of it? the state of training? With these impondurables it can be said that the organisation at the present stage of development could deal effectively with an emergency on a similar scale to any which has happened in New Zealand to date, e.g. West Coast, Napier, Murchison. Faced with a "Skopje" or an "Agadir", it could make a significant impact but would be extended. Let us hope it never has to.

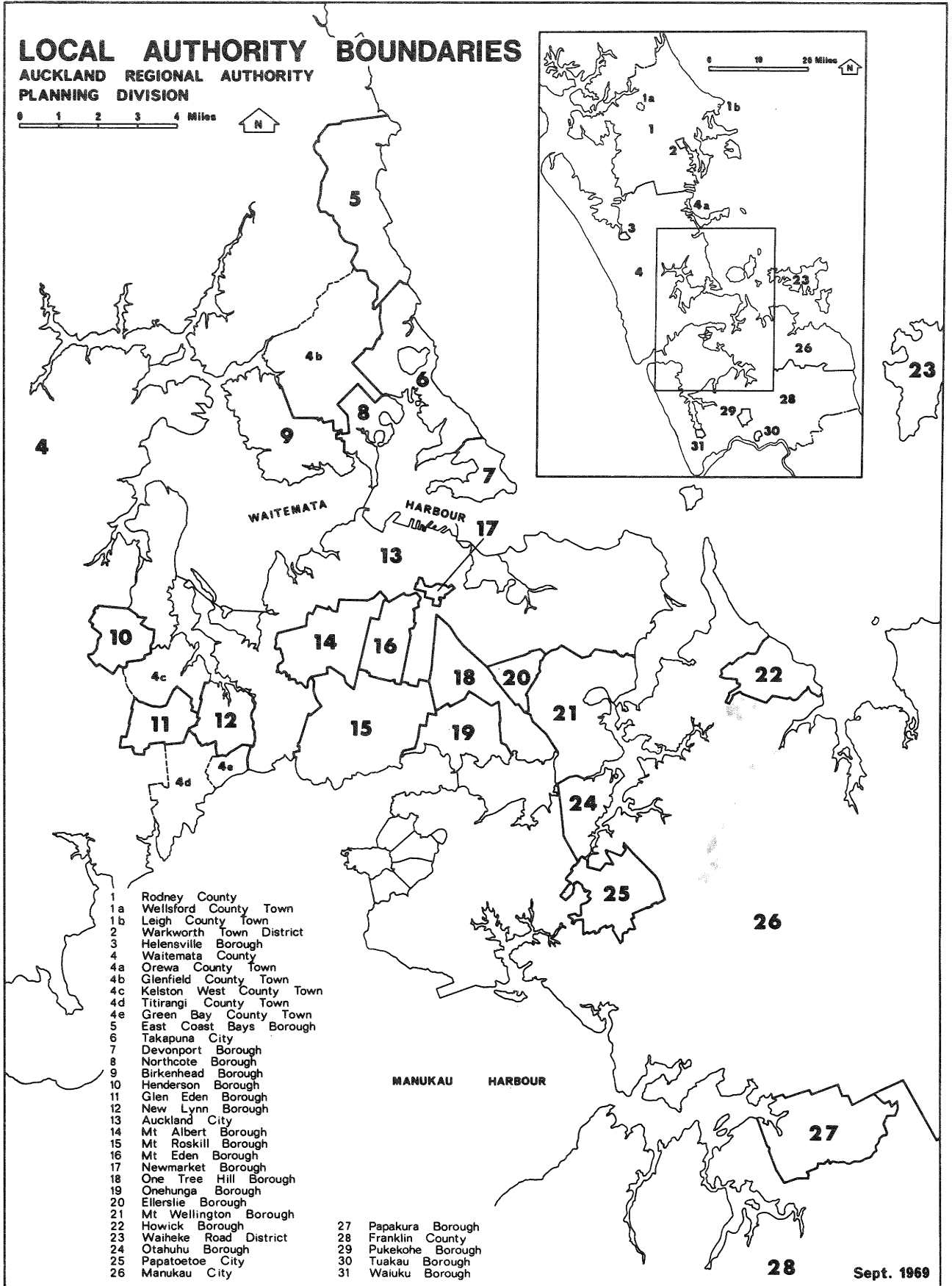
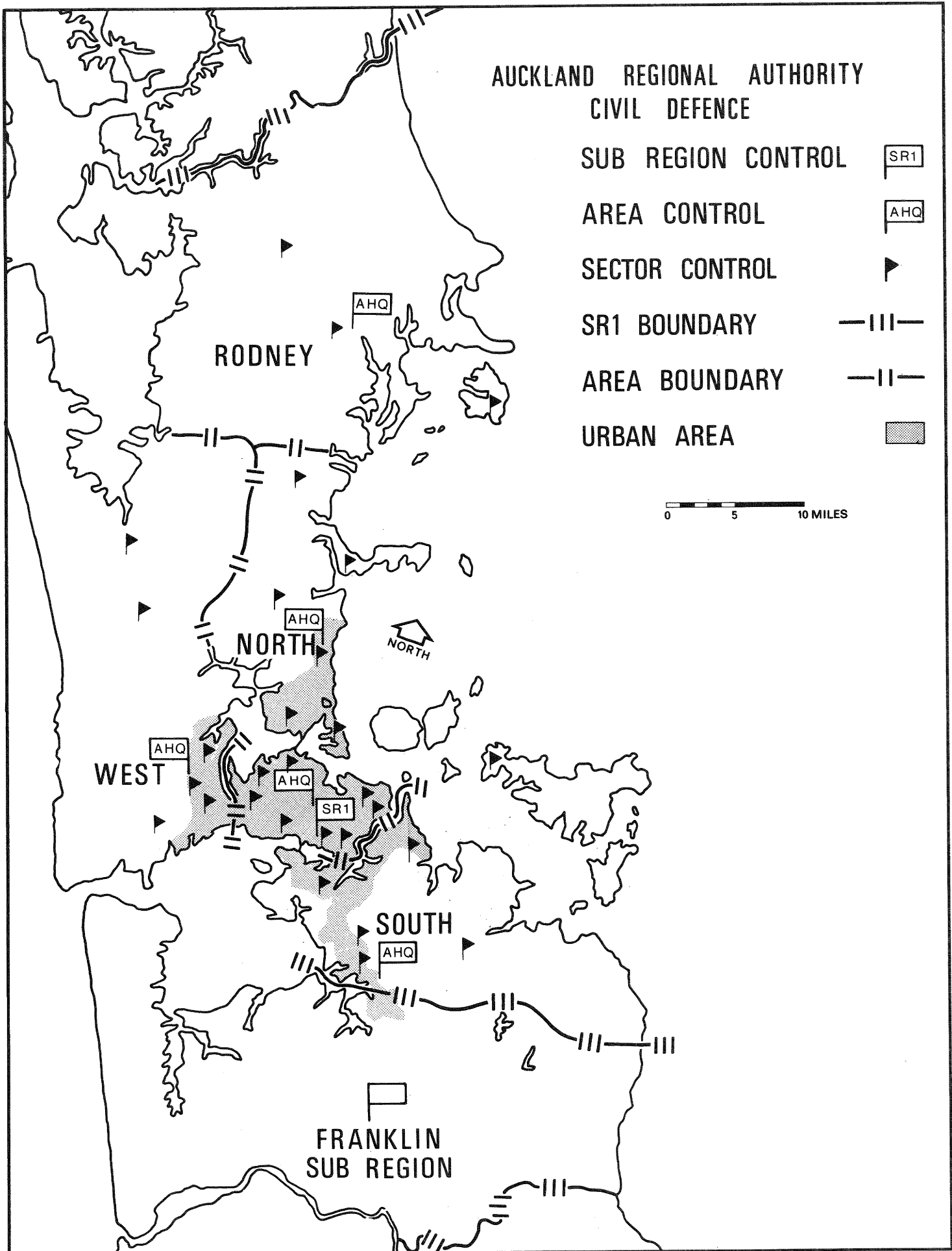


Fig.1





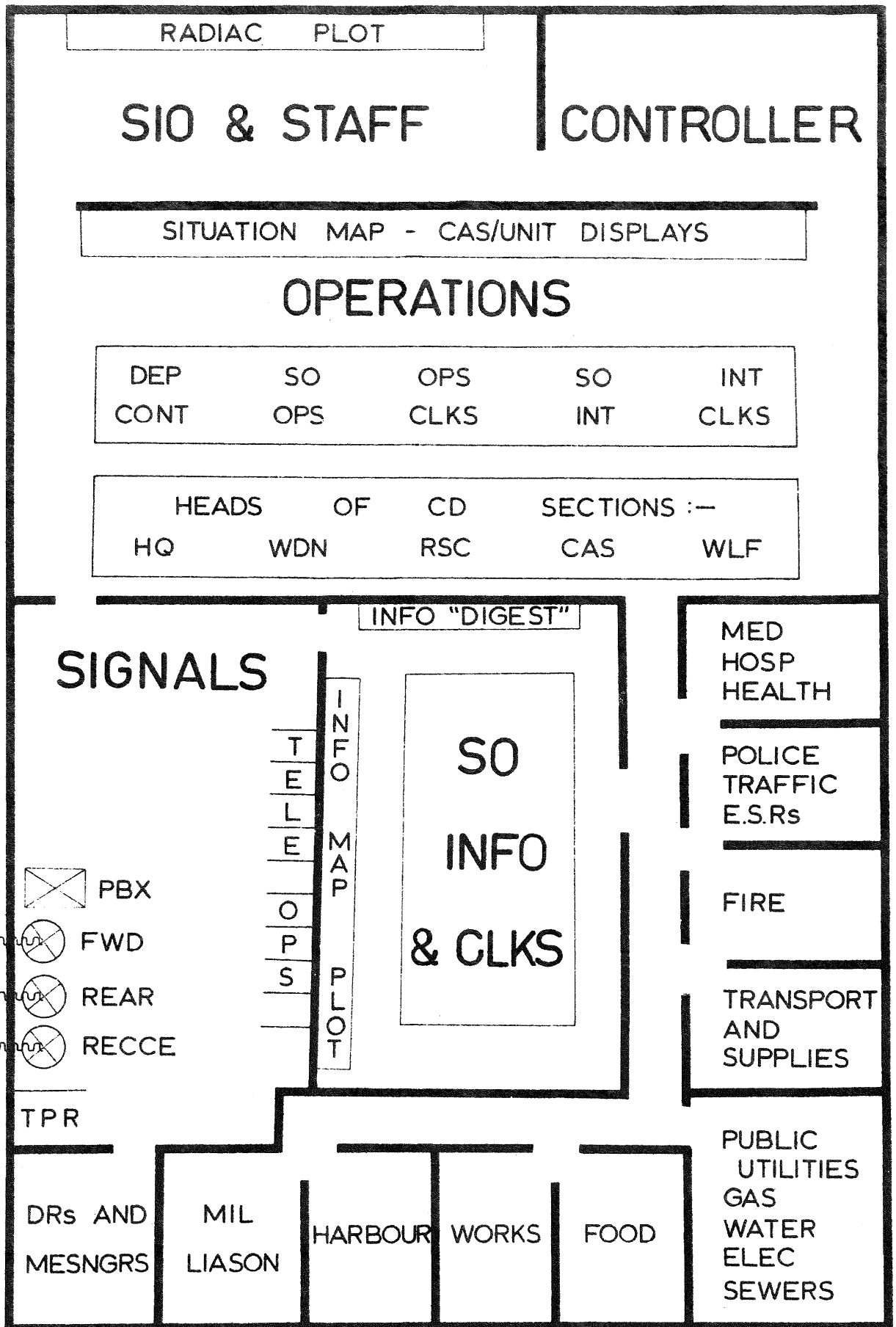


Fig.4. Typical layout of a sub-region control

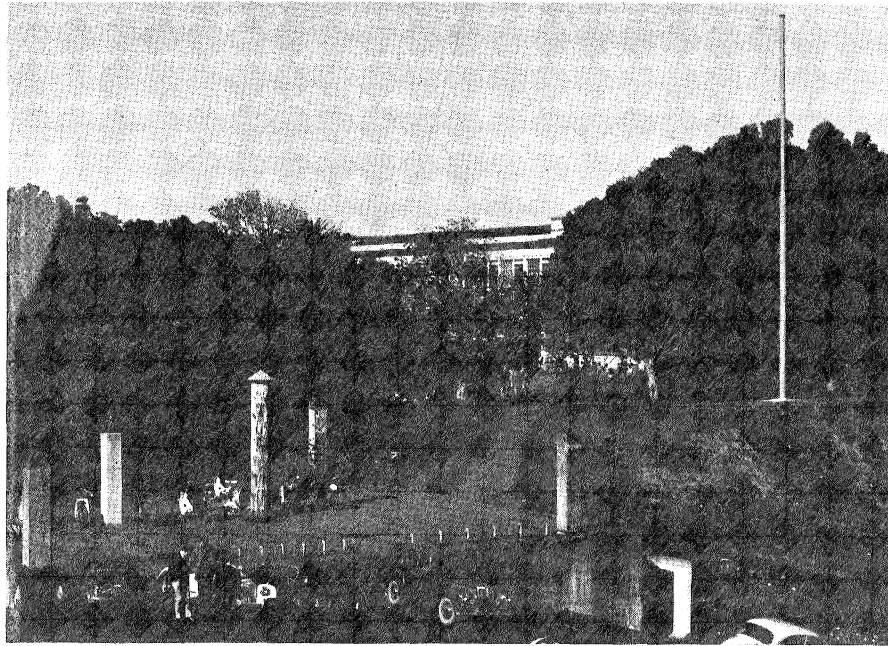


Fig.5. No 1 Sub-Region Control  
The "bunker" at Epsom.

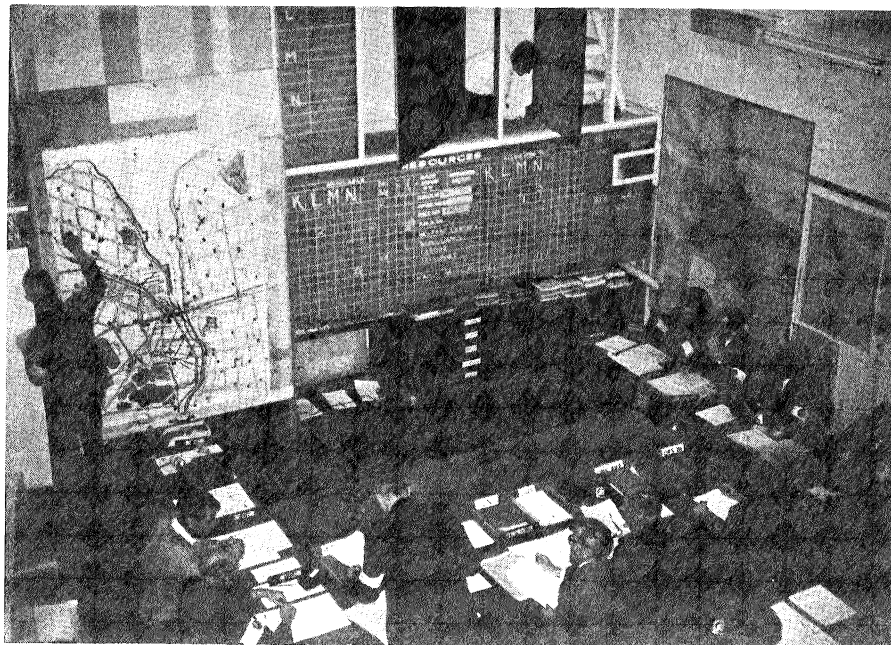


Fig.6. No 1 Sub-Region Control  
An operations room exercise in progress.

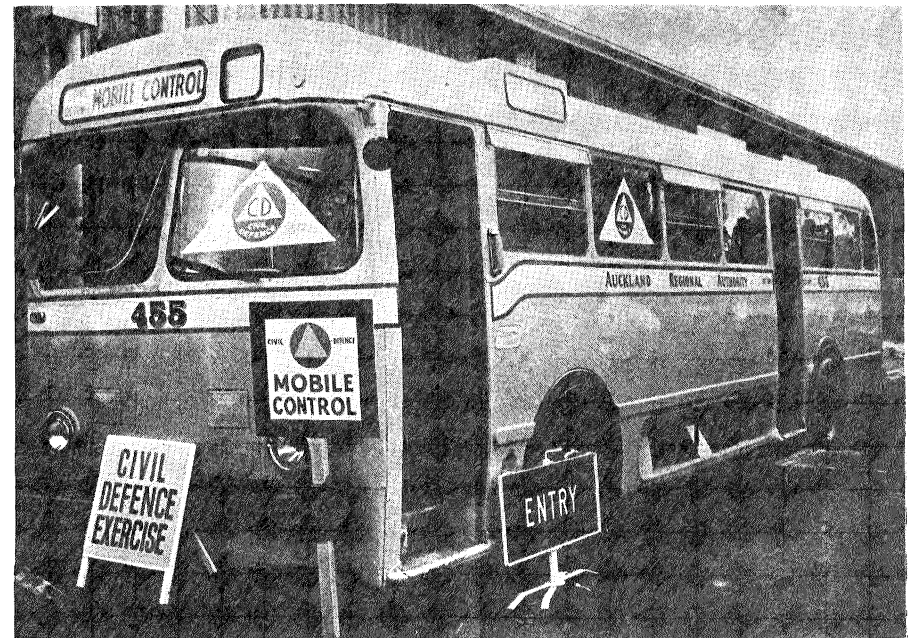


Fig.7. An Auckland Regional Authority Passenger  
Transport vehicle adapted for use as a  
mobile replacement control.



Fig.8. Interior of vehicle in use as a mobile  
control.

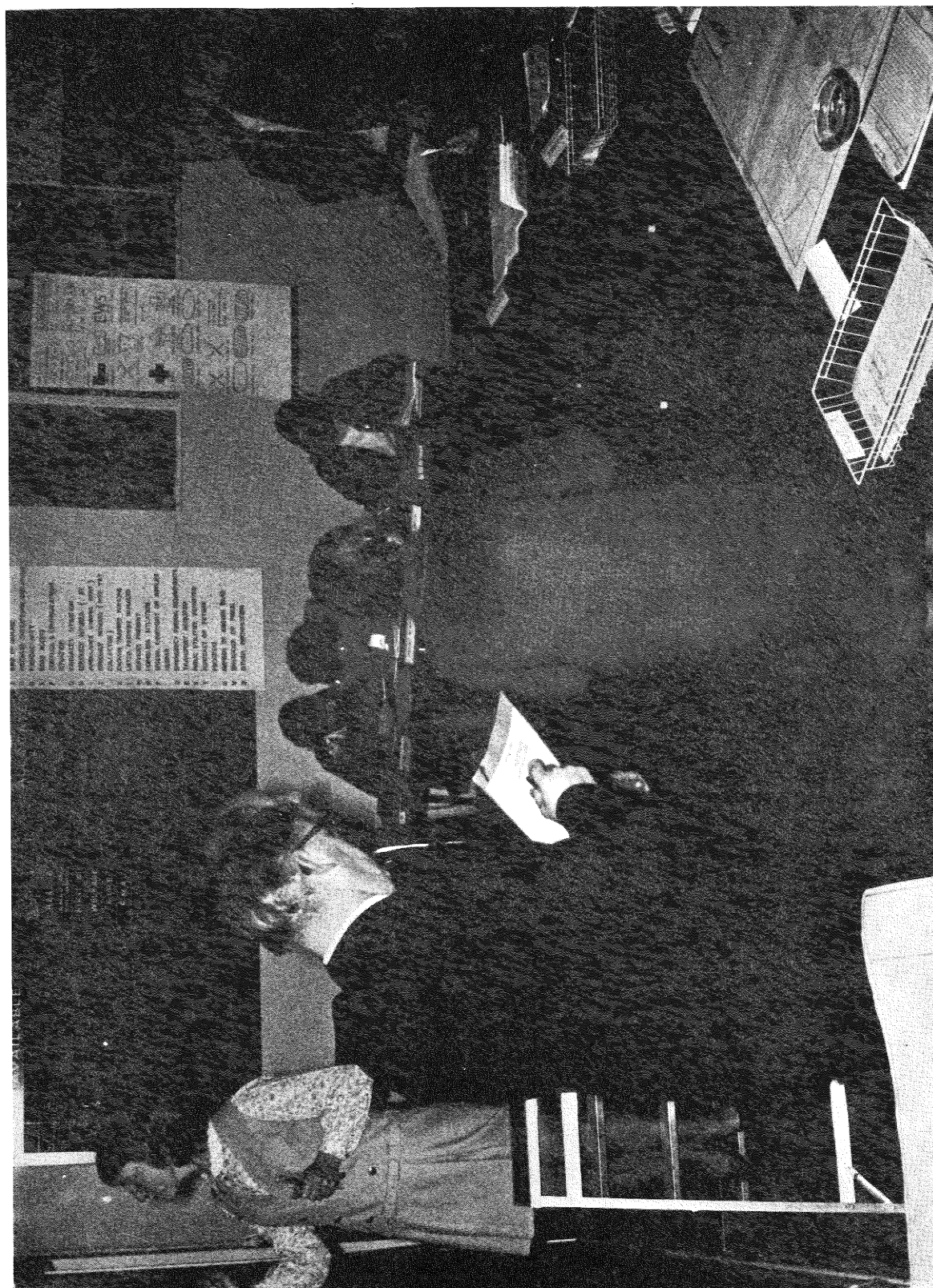


Figure 9. Volunteers training in the Western Area Control operations room at Henderson.