

# Briefing for Incoming Minister

## CIVIL DEFENCE

June 2011

**INTERNAL AFFAIRS**



Te Tari Taiwhenua

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## **Introduction**

1. The Civil Defence portfolio is concerned with the Government's role in planning and preparation for responding to and recovering from civil defence emergencies.
2. While the most significant emergency events in the last 80 years were the September 2010 and February 2011 earthquakes, flooding and severe weather-related events are the most frequent emergency events, with several activations of local or regional emergency operations centres in a typical year. These events often necessitate the evacuation of houses, cause road closures and require local authorities to provide accommodation for displaced people.

## **The role of the Minister of Civil Defence**

3. As Minister of Civil Defence, your responsibilities are to support the sector in its planning for, response to and recovery from emergency events. The Government's vision is to build a "Resilient New Zealand – Communities understanding and managing their hazards". Enhancing New Zealand's resilience requires the coordination of effort across the wide range of agencies involved in the management of civil defence events. As Minister, you will provide leadership to the key stakeholders in the sector, which include central government agencies, local government, welfare agencies, lifeline utilities, emergency services, science and education providers, and non-government organisations.
4. There are no Crown entities or other statutory bodies associated with this portfolio.
5. The Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (the Act) sets out your key statutory powers and duties as Minister of Civil Defence. These are to:
  - ensure that a current national strategy is in effect at all times
  - ensure that a national plan continues to be in effect at all times
  - comment formally on the plans prepared by local government civil defence groups before they are approved and adopted by the groups
  - declare a state of national emergency or a state of local emergency in particular circumstances, thus giving access to a range of special powers including (but not limited to): clearing roads and other public

places; removing or disposing of dangerous structures and materials; providing for the rescue of endangered persons and their removal to areas of safety; and providing for the relief of distress, including the provision of emergency food, clothing, and shelter

- direct the Director of Civil Defence Emergency Management or any other person to act according to their statutory functions.
6. During and after major emergency events your role includes briefing Cabinet about the event and recommending financial assistance, if appropriate, for response and recovery activities undertaken by local authorities.
  7. The resources of the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department), particularly the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (MCDEM), which is a business unit of the Department, will support you in your role.
  8. Within the next three months, you will be asked to consider Cabinet papers seeking reimbursement of councils' costs of responding to the September 2010 and February 2011 earthquakes, and potentially drafts of some plans from regional groups. There is a standing invitation to the Australian Standing Council on Police and Emergency Management, which is expected to be held in New Zealand at the end of July. Further details about these are set out in the following sections.

### **The Civil Defence portfolio**

9. The Civil Defence portfolio deals with the management of the hazards to New Zealand communities. New Zealand faces a wide range of natural (meteorological, geological and biological) and human-made (technological and social) hazards. The National Hazardscape Report released in September 2007 summarised the 17 most significant hazards facing New Zealand communities, including their distribution, frequency, possible impacts and how they could be managed.
10. Floods continue to be New Zealand's most frequent natural hazard. Floods claim few lives but they still regularly cause millions of dollars of damage to infrastructure and agriculture.

11. Earthquake risks are ever present in much of the country. While significant events are rare, as has been seen in Canterbury, they can be very costly in lives and damage.
12. In recent years New Zealand has experienced several tsunami threats caused by the Samoa earthquake in September 2009, the Chile earthquake in February 2010 and the Japan earthquake in March 2011. These events have required large scale public notification of the need to stay away from beaches and other at-risk areas. A destructive tsunami is regarded as a low probability for New Zealand but would be a high consequence event should one occur.
13. A table describing the likelihood and consequences for New Zealand of major hazards is attached as Appendix One.

### **The role of the Department of Internal Affairs**

14. The Department of Internal Affairs provides leadership in civil defence emergency management through:
  - administering the Act
  - formulation of the National Civil Defence Emergency Management Strategy
  - increasing public awareness and preparedness through a public education programme
  - development of standards and a framework for training for key civil defence roles
  - engagement with international counterparts
  - management of response and recovery activities at a national level following emergency events
  - assessment of council claims for central government reimbursement following civil defence emergencies
  - media communications during an emergency
  - operation of the National Crisis Management Centre (NMC).
15. This leadership role is principally delivered by the business unit known as the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management, along with policy, communications, legal, finance, and other support staff.

16. The recently established Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) which reports to the Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery, Hon Gerry Brownlee, is responsible for coordinating the recovery from the September 2010 and February 2011 Canterbury earthquakes. The Department is available to provide advice to Hon Gerry Brownlee and CERA on recovery issues.
17. It is standard government policy to allow councils, affected by civil defence emergencies, to seek government reimbursement from Vote Emergency Management, for certain civil defence response and recovery costs. The councils affected by the Canterbury earthquakes are currently working with the Department on the preparation of these claims. The claims will require Cabinet approval before reimbursements can be made. The Department is also assessing claims related to emergency events elsewhere in the country.

### **The role of local government in civil defence emergency management**

18. The Act requires every regional council to join with the territorial authorities within its region to establish a Civil Defence Emergency Management Group and prepare a Group Plan outlining their management of hazards and risks. Group functions include hazard risk management, and providing for emergency response and recovery. While the Groups provide a structure for the planning and coordination of efforts in the region, delivery still takes place at the level of the territorial authorities.
19. There are 16 Groups: Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, Manawatu-Wanganui, Wellington, Chatham Islands, Nelson-Tasman, Marlborough, West Coast, Canterbury, Otago, and Southland.
20. A Group must review its Group Plan if it has been operative for over five years. MCDEM has been working with the Groups during their review process and has provided comments on revisions to Group Plans. Four Groups (Northland, Manawatu-Wanganui, Gisborne and West Coast) had completed reviews of their Group Plans as at 1 June 2011.
21. Each Group has a Coordinating Executive Group (CEG) to advise it, implement its decisions and oversee the development and implementation of the Group Plan. The CEG consists of representatives of the local authorities, the

emergency services, the hospital and health services and other persons that may be co-opted by the Group.

22. During civil defence emergencies, local government elected representatives often have key leadership roles. A clear demonstration of this was Christchurch Mayor Bob Parker's work during the response to the September 2010 and February 2011 earthquakes, in which he played an important role particularly in communicating information to the public through the media.

## **National Framework of Civil Defence Emergency Management in New Zealand**

23. The key underlying principles of the Act are regional and local cooperation and coordination. Local authorities have responsibility for the delivery of CDEM in New Zealand with the Act giving Groups and their member local authorities responsibility to manage and plan for hazards and risks at the local level. The primary goal is for communities to be self-reliant so that they can reduce the likely impact from, prepare for, and be able to respond effectively to, emergency events on their own.
24. The purpose of the Act is to:
  - provide a basis for the integration of national and local planning
  - encourage the coordination of planning and activities across the wide range of agencies and organisations preventing or managing emergencies
  - improve and promote the sustainable management of hazards
  - encourage and enable communities to achieve acceptable levels of risk.
25. The current Strategy, which came into force in 2008, includes the Government's vision that New Zealanders understand and act routinely to reduce and avoid the adverse effects of hazards.
26. The Strategy has four goals which are:
  - increasing awareness, understanding, preparedness and participation in civil defence emergency management
  - reducing the risks from hazards to New Zealand
  - enhancing New Zealand's capability to manage civil defence emergencies

- enhancing New Zealand's capability to recover from civil defence emergencies.
27. The Strategy provides the vision and strategic direction for civil defence emergency management. The mechanisms that contribute to the achievement of the Strategy, and the objectives of the Strategy include the National Plan, the Guide to the National Plan, Group Plans and other strategies and plans at both the national and local level.
28. The National Plan is a statement of the principles, arrangements and commitments that apply to the management of significant emergencies. The first National Plan under the Act came into effect on 1 July 2006. The Plan sets out how government will manage a national emergency and how it will support Groups in their management of local emergencies. In particular, it is concerned with emergencies that exceed the capacity and resources of local and regional communities and agencies to manage.
29. The National Plan is accompanied by the Guide to the National Plan, a MCDEM publication that provides further operational detail.
30. In accordance with the requirements of the Act, a review of the National Plan is currently underway but progress has been delayed by the 22 February 2011 Christchurch earthquake. The review is considering the following:
- the content of other national plans (worldwide)
  - the Plan's consistency with the intent of the Act and whether the Plan adequately provides for the goals and objectives of the Strategy
  - whether the Plan adequately provides for the management of hazards and risks at the national level
  - whether the Plan adequately provides for national management, national recovery, and national support to local authorities in civil defence
  - whether it reflects current national level arrangements, and whether current national level arrangements reflect the Plan.
31. Before a revised plan can come into force, a public consultation period will be required. The revised plan will require Cabinet approval. The Department will provide you with further advice about when this process is likely to take place and what this will involve.

## What happens in an emergency?

32. The Act and the National Plan establish the structure for the management of civil defence emergency events. Emergencies are generally managed by Groups' local personnel with routine assistance from government agencies and lifeline utilities (e.g. power companies) in the affected area. The Group can coordinate the region-wide response to an emergency if the event exceeds either the capacity or geographic boundary of a single territorial authority. If it is considered necessary, a state of local emergency can be declared (usually by the affected Council's mayor or chair of the Group) for affected areas, districts, or the Group's region. During an event, MCDEM will keep you informed of the situation as it evolves.
33. The National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC), located in the basement of the Beehive, supports emergency responses. There are four modes of NCMC activation:
  - i. Monitor – monitoring and assessing incidents that may lead to a state of local emergency. Normally the monitoring is conducted by a duty team and field staff, with the NCMC not being activated.
  - ii. Engage – as above plus activation of the NCMC to collect, analyse and disseminate information, report to government and provide public information.
  - iii. Assist – as above plus the processing and coordination of requests for support from local and regional organisations.
  - iv. Manage – as above plus the control of the overall response and the coordination of support, including aid from overseas, and international liaison.
34. By way of example, following the 4 September 2010 earthquake, Selwyn District, Waimakariri District, and Christchurch City Council declared states of local emergency. The response to the earthquake was managed in Canterbury by the councils' civil defence emergency management staff, with support at the national level provided by the Department and other central government agencies.



35. For large scale events, which typically involve a Mode III or Mode IV activation of the NCMC, such as the September 2010 and February 2011 earthquakes, an all-of-government response is required. Agencies including the Ministries of Social Development, Education, Agriculture and Forestry (particularly during and after flooding), Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Transport, the Treasury, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the New Zealand Fire Service, and the Police, and the Defence Force, can have significant involvement in aspects of the response and in the provision of advice to their Ministers.

### **The role of the Minister of Civil Defence during emergencies**

36. As Minister of Civil Defence you have the power to declare a state of local emergency if it appears to you that an emergency has occurred or may occur in the area of any Group and a state of local emergency has not been declared (this power has never been used by a Minister).
37. As Minister of Civil Defence, you may declare that a state of national emergency exists over the whole of New Zealand or any particular areas or districts if it appears that the emergency is, or is likely to be, so severe that it is beyond the resources of the Group or Groups affected. During a state of national emergency, the CDEM response will be managed by the National Controller.
38. The only time a state of national emergency has been declared under the current legislation was following the 22 February earthquake. The National Controller shifted to Christchurch to manage the response.
39. As was the case during the September and February earthquakes, the Minister of Civil Defence is likely to be one of the key public faces of future emergency events.
40. The declaration of a state of emergency triggers a range of emergency powers which will be discussed in a briefing on your role as Minister of Civil Defence during an emergency, to be provided separately.

### **Domestic and External Security Coordination**

41. The Domestic and External Security Coordination (DES) committee of Ministers and related officials' committee have a role in the oversight and coordination of the all-of-government approach to civil defence emergency management. The Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination (ODESC)

provides advice to DES Ministers in the event of a national emergency or an emergency of national significance. As the lead agency in a civil defence emergency, MCDEM provides advice to, and takes strategic direction from, ODESC if the DES system is activated.

## **International Engagement**

### ***(Australian) Standing Council on Police and Emergency Management***

42. New Zealand has a standing invitation to participate in the newly established Council of Australian Governments - Standing Council on Police and Emergency Management which was created following a review of the previous system of Australian ministerial councils. As Minister of Civil Defence you will be invited to attend future meetings of this council.
43. The Council provides a means for coordinating approaches to law enforcement and emergency management between the federal and state levels in Australia, and with New Zealand.
44. A proposed date for the inaugural meeting of the Standing Council has been set for 28/29 July 2011. The meeting will be hosted by New Zealand.

### ***International CDEM Engagement Strategy***

45. In December 2007, New Zealand developed a strategy for international CDEM engagement to strengthen relationships with regional neighbours such as Australia and the Pacific Island countries, as well as key partners such as the United States. The strategy is based on three objectives:
  - to ensure that New Zealand's response capability is supported by access to international assistance following a large emergency event
  - to fulfil New Zealand's international obligation to be a good 'global citizen' through response operations, capability development and the provision of international assistance
  - to increase New Zealand's domestic resilience and capability through increased CDEM knowledge.
46. New Zealand has signed formal agreements with both Australia and the United States. These agreements have been designed to assist in strengthening disaster resilience and enhancing response and recovery capability through information sharing and knowledge exchange.

47. MCDEM has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to support Niue, Samoa, the Cook Islands, Tokelau and Tonga to understand and prepare for risks, especially those relating to tsunami.

## **Current Work Programme**

48. The Director will arrange for an independent review of the response to the 22 February 2011 earthquake. A review of the recovery following the earthquake will be undertaken at a later time.
49. For 2010/2011, your predecessor agreed the following Civil Defence priorities with the Prime Minister:
50. **Strengthening the statutory framework for recovery after a major civil defence event.** While Ministers have noted the need for stability in civil defence arrangements, the Canterbury earthquakes highlighted a need to assess the effectiveness of plans for recovery after a major civil defence event. In particular, the establishment of the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority in response to the magnitude of the recovery task has led to questions about the legislation that relates to recovery. Accordingly, a review of the Act and other related legislation is underway. The update of the National Plan, to be completed in 2011, will also provide the opportunity to re-consider non-statutory recovery processes in light of any lessons learned from the Canterbury earthquakes and to incorporate them into the revised Plan and supporting Guide.
51. **Enhancing capabilities for the national management of civil defence emergencies.** Work is underway to strengthen NCMC staffing arrangements for extended periods of operation. Work is under way to establish an alternative NCMC in Auckland by the end of 2011. A key initiative is the development of a business case on the options for using telecommunications technologies to enhance the dissemination of alerts and warnings to the public. Implementing the results of the business case will require a financial injection. The business case will also assess whether regulation might be desirable to assist meeting public alerting objectives. The roll-out of the Emergency Management Information System planned for June/July will represent a major enhancement of response capability across the sector. The system will integrate information management and exchange systems across the national, regional and local

levels of the sector to enhance the effectiveness and speed of the response to emergencies.

52. **Developing community resilience through the public education programme.** A revision and update of the Get Ready Get Thru campaign will ensure that the messages remain compelling and provide additional information to the public on the actions to take during earthquakes and tsunamis. The public education programme will also support Exercise Shakeout, a national exercise planned for 2012 that follows a successful Californian model that is aimed at encouraging businesses, schools, communities, and families to simultaneously participate in a major earthquake drill to encourage preparedness.
53. **Supporting the development of capability across the sector.** A major initiative has been to undertake capability assessments of the Groups as part of a monitoring and evaluation programme. The findings from these assessments have provided the most thorough overview of the capability of the Groups and provide a basis for guiding support to the Groups as well as lessons for the sector. Additional assessments will be conducted of government departments, emergency services, lifelines and the all-of-government crisis management capability. Work on the development of a nationwide system for logistics coordination which commenced last year will be continued and aligned to the Emergency Management Information System to provide an integrated and nationally consistent arrangement for managing critical assets and allocating resources.

### **Significant papers expected to be provided to you in the next three months**

54. The following papers are expected to be provided for your consideration within the next three months:
- A Cabinet paper seeking reimbursement of councils' immediate costs associated with responding to the 4 September 2010 earthquake (this will be the third set of claims for government reimbursement relating to this event).
  - A Cabinet paper seeking reimbursement of councils' immediate costs associated with responding to the 22 February 2011 Christchurch

earthquake (this will be the first set of claims for government reimbursement relating to this event).

- The following Groups may invite you to comment on final drafts of their 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Group Plans (as required by the Act) during this time period:
  - Waikato
  - Marlborough
  - Southland
  - Bay of Plenty
  - Otago

## New Zealand's Hazards

Hazard Event	Likelihood	Consequences	Context
<i>Large Urban Earthquake</i>	Approximately once a century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries.</li> <li>• National resources stretched to capacity during response.</li> <li>• Tens of thousands of displaced people.</li> <li>• Significant loss of networked services for large areas.</li> <li>• Billions of dollars of direct losses, and billions of dollars of secondary costs such as lost tourism and export earnings (c. 10-15% GDP).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Christchurch 22/2/11 earthquake is an example of this type of event.</li> <li>• Other likely scenarios include the Wellington region, an Alpine Fault event, and the east coast of the North Island.</li> </ul>
<i>Moderate Urban Earthquake</i>	Approximately once a decade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly tens of deaths and hundreds of injuries.</li> <li>• Regional resources stretched beyond capacity during response.</li> <li>• Hundreds to thousands of displaced people.</li> <li>• Major loss of networked services for some areas.</li> <li>• Hundreds of millions of dollars of direct costs, and hundreds of millions of secondary costs such as lost tourism and export earnings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 4/9/11 event is an example of a "moderate" event in this context, for although a larger magnitude than the Christchurch 22/2/11 earthquake, the consequences were less severe due to its location and timing.</li> <li>• The 1987 Edgecumbe and 2007 Gisborne earthquake are examples in this context.</li> </ul>
<i>Large Tsunami</i>	Approximately once a millennium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thousands to tens of thousands of displaced people during the warning period.</li> <li>• Possibly tens to hundreds of deaths in some coastal locations and hundreds of injuries.</li> <li>• National resources stretched to capacity temporarily during response for worst case event involving impacts in several regions.</li> <li>• Some key national infrastructure (fuel supply, road networks, electricity and telecoms etc.) damaged or inoperable for a short period.</li> <li>• Billions of dollars of direct costs, and millions of dollars of economic losses costs due to economic disruption (c. 2% GDP).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warning (and associated evacuations of threatened coastal areas) is possible for distant-source and regional source events (&gt; 1-3 hours travel time).</li> <li>• No official warning is possible for local-source tsunami events, which could also be associated with a large magnitude earthquake.</li> <li>• The east coast of the North Island is particularly vulnerable to local source tsunami associated with earthquakes along the offshore Hikurangi Trench.</li> </ul>

Hazard Event	Likelihood	Consequences	Context
<i>Large Central North Island Volcanic Eruption</i>	Approximately once every ten millennia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social and economic disruption (and loss of international confidence) during lead-in period of perhaps several years prior to main phase of volcanic eruptions.</li> <li>• Hundreds of thousands of displaced people, potentially permanently for several areas of the central North Island/Bay of Plenty</li> <li>• National resources stretched beyond capacity during response, over extended period (several years).</li> <li>• Complete loss of infrastructure across large areas of several regions.</li> <li>• Cessation of most economic activity across large parts of several regions of the North Island.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A large eruption from one of the “caldera” volcanoes (Taupo, Rotorua, Tarawera, Okataina areas) represents the worst-case volcanic scenario for New Zealand.</li> <li>• High levels of uncertainty during the build up to such a large eruption (over potentially several years) would create significant social and economic disruption and loss of international confidence.</li> <li>• After the event, the scale of the changes in the physical environment and ongoing and extensive secondary physical impacts (such as mudflows) could make any recovery untenable for decades in parts of the central North Island.</li> </ul>
<i>Auckland Volcanic Eruption</i>	Approximately once a millennium (with large uncertainty)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social and economic disruption, and loss of international confidence during the build up phase.</li> <li>• Critical national infrastructure potentially exposed. Regional Health system pushed beyond capacity temporarily due to evacuations.</li> <li>• Tens to hundreds of thousands displaced, for several months, impacting neighbouring regions.</li> <li>• Regional resources stretched beyond capacity during response.</li> <li>• Complete infrastructure loss within 5 km of the eruption site.</li> <li>• Billions of dollars of direct costs, and billions of dollars of economic losses costs due to economic disruption at a national scale (perhaps up to 15% GDP).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our understanding of the probabilities of these events and their possible effects is constantly being developed.</li> <li>• There may be a relatively short lead-in time to such an eruption ( a few days of warning time)</li> <li>• Considerable uncertainty during the build up phase regarding timing and location of the eruption will challenge effective response management.</li> </ul>

Hazard Event	Likelihood	Consequences	Context
<i>Central North Island Ash Eruption</i>	Up to once a decade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disruption for extended periods (months and intermittently over several years) leading to severe economic decline through losses in tourism and agricultural sectors.</li> <li>• Repeated short-term disruptions to some networked services for large areas of several cities.</li> <li>• Millions to billions of dollars of cumulative direct losses.</li> <li>• Millions to billions of secondary costs such as lost tourism and export earnings (c. 5% GDP).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The type represents a range of potential scenarios of relatively high likelihood, involving widespread distribution of volcanic ash across the North Island from the central North Island cone volcanoes including Taranaki and Ruapehu.</li> <li>• Such activity could last for months or years, causing significant disruption to aviation (domestic and international) and other transport, regional social structures, and with major cumulative effects on the national economy.</li> <li>• This class also includes a range of near-source impacts such as lahars and other locally destructive volcanic flows.</li> </ul>
<i>Large Urban Flood</i>	Approximately once a century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly tens of deaths and injuries, but warning systems should enable timely evacuations</li> <li>• Local resources stretched beyond capacity temporarily during response.</li> <li>• Hundreds to thousands of displaced people, some for several months.</li> <li>• Major loss of networked services for some areas of the impacted urban area.</li> <li>• Billions of dollars of direct costs (property and infrastructure damage), and hundreds of millions of secondary costs such as social and economic disruption to the regional economy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This a worst case scenario for flooding which exceeds the design capacity of protection measures in an urban area. Notable future scenarios include, Palmerston North, Lower Hutt, and Christchurch.</li> </ul>



**Appendix Two****Key departmental contacts for Civil Defence Emergency Management**

Name	Role	Cell-phone	Work number
Paul James	Deputy Chief Executive, Policy, Regulatory and Ethnic Affairs		04 495 9329
John Hamilton	Director, Civil Defence Emergency Management		04 495 6815
Marilyn Little	Acting General Manager, Policy		04 494 0589
Joy McDowall	Manager, Regulatory Policy		04 494 0671
David Coetzee	Operations Manager, MCDEM		04 495 6806
Anthony Richards	Manager, Fire and Emergency Policy		04 494 0644