

MEDIA RELEASE

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Media key to better emergency information for diverse communities

Civil Defence Emergency Management authorities and media are joining forces to ensure better access to emergency information for diverse communities.

Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (MCDEM) Director Sarah Stuart-Black says a summit held on Tuesday 31 July saw ethnic media outlets, MCDEM, and Auckland Emergency Management meet to develop understandings and identify opportunities to keep diverse communities safe.

“MCDEM research shows that migrants and non-English speakers have lower rates of preparedness than the most New Zealanders, and this means that when an emergency happens, they are more likely to be adversely affected,” Mrs Stuart-Black says. “We believe that everybody has the right to be safe and informed in emergencies.

“I am heartened that the summit and other activities we have underway are stepping us towards an inclusive emergency management system where all New Zealanders are well-informed, well-supported and best able to manage during an emergency.”

Mrs Stuart Black says the summit, facilitated by the Superdiversity Centre and chaired by Mai Chen, will foster closer working relationships. MCDEM has enlisted the support and advice of Auckland Emergency Management as it develops a new national public education strategy for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, which is due to be released early next year. MCDEM is also providing funding support to a Christchurch City Council and Plains FM 96.9 project to develop foreign language emergency messaging for radio, and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Deaf Aotearoa as part of its ongoing drive to improve the accessibility of emergency information..

“As around half of New Zealand’s CALD communities live in Auckland, which is one of the world’s most ethnically diverse cities, Auckland Emergency Management already work extensively with these communities and ethnic media outlets.

“We want to ensure that we learn from and support this good work, and are able to share it across New Zealand.”

Sarah Sinclair, Director Auckland Emergency Management, says Auckland’s diversity is a strength that can be further harnessed through collaborating with MCDEM and our ethnic media on making sure we recognise and value our diverse communities.

“The scale of the city’s ethnic diversity is significant, nationally and internationally, and we are eager to look at ways we can ensure our diverse communities are safe in an emergency. Partnering with MCDEM and our ethnic media is a great opportunity to share and grow what we are already doing to build preparedness across our communities.”

Media outlets who attended the summit are:

- Chinese New Zealand Herald
- Filipino Migrant News
- Indian Newslink
- Korea Post
- Mandarin Pages
- Multicultural Times
- NZ Messenger
- Radio Tarana
- Skykiwi
- Tagata Pasifika
- Waikato Weekly Chinese Newspaper
- WTV

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