

LOCAL LINES OF ACCOUNTABILITY FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Not Government policy

The Select Committee reported back on the Emergency Management Bill (No 2) to Parliament on 5 June 2026 and made recommendations to amend the Bill as introduced to Parliament in December 2025. Please refer to the information section on the [Emergency Management Bill \(No 2\)](#) on Parliament's website for complete information about the Select Committee's recommendations.

The Select Committee's recommendations are not Government policy. Parliament has not yet considered or agreed to the Select Committee's recommendations and will do so when the Bill is read for a second time for which a date has not been set. The reported-back version of the Bill can, however, be treated as the current version. When the Bill is read for a second time, Parliament may agree to all, some or none of the Select Committee's recommendations. There may also be further amendments to the Bill not in the Select Committee's recommendations.

This information sheet summarises key provisions in the Bill as reported back by Select Committee which are different from the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (which the Bill would replace, if enacted). This information should not be relied on as definitive guidance on the requirements of the Bill once enacted and readers will need to consider the Bill once enacted. This information should not be relied on as legal advice.

This information sheet summarises key differences between provisions for **local lines of accountability** in the Emergency Management Bill (No 2) as reported back by Select Committee (EM Bill) and the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (CDEM Act). Many provisions in the EM Bill are the same or similar to those in the CDEM Act and these are not covered here.

Further information sheets related to other topics and roles under the EM Bill can be found at www.civildefence.govt.nz.

Overview

The EM Bill provides for:

- clear lines of accountability between territorial authority chief executives and Controllers/Recovery Managers appointed within their districts, and
- an explicit mandate for territorial authority chief executives (or their delegates) to co-ordinate resources made available by agencies outside a declared state of emergency or transition period.

See **Topic Information Sheet 2: Emergency Management Committee roles and responsibilities**.

Emergency Management Committees

See **Role Information Sheet C: Multi-member Emergency Management Committees and Role Information Sheet D: Unitary Authority Emergency Management Committees**.

Many emergency management responsibilities are devolved to local government. Under the EM Bill, **Emergency Management Committees (EMC)** govern emergency management at the local government level. An EMC is either a:

- Multi-member EMC made up of more than one local authority in a region, each represented by a mayor or regional council chairperson, or
- Unitary Authority EMC made up of a single unitary authority.

Information about:

- Local authority chief executives
- Regional, District and Local Controllers
- Regional, District and Local Recovery Managers

Emergency Management Bill (No 2) as reported back from Select Committee INFORMATION SHEET 3

This reflects the different local government organisations that may be established under the Local Government Act 2002 as set out below.

Local authority refers to both regional councils and territorial authorities.

Territorial authority refers to district councils which include unitary authorities, and city councils (but does not include regional councils).

Unitary authority refers to territorial authorities who also have regional council functions.

New role in emergency management for territorial authority chief executives

See *Role Information Sheet G: Local authority chief executives*.

What will be different if the Emergency Management Bill (No 2) as reported back (the EM Bill) is enacted?

The EM Bill empowers the chief executive of a territorial authority, when there is no declared state of emergency or transition period in force, to co-ordinate the use of personnel, material, information, and other resources made available for the purposes of the EM Bill.

This power may be delegated to any person (including someone who is not employed by the relevant territorial authority), and the chief executive will remain responsible and accountable under the bill for the performance of the role.

Why does the EM Bill provide for this?

This provision will provide territorial authority chief executives with an explicit mandate to co-ordinate other agencies' resources when they have been made available outside a state of emergency or transition period. For example, during an escalating weather event, or for the medium-term recovery. This mandate may be delegated to other people, such as a District Controller or Recovery Manager, as appropriate.

When is this happening?

The new emergency management role for territorial authority chief executives begins 12 months after Royal assent.

New appointment requirements, responsibilities, and duties for Controllers

See *Role Information Sheet H: Controllers*.

What will be different if the EM Bill is enacted?

The EM Bill creates a line of accountability between:

- Multi-member EMC territorial authority chief executives and District Controllers
- Unitary Authority EMC unitary authority chief executives and Regional Controllers, and
- Unitary Authority EMC unitary authority chief executives and Local Controllers.

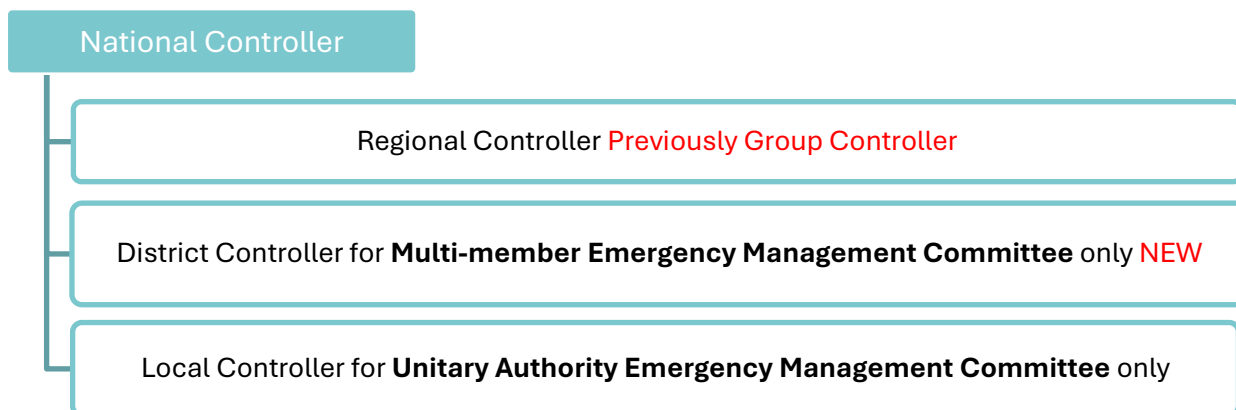
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Emergency Management Bill (No 2) as reported back from Select Committee INFORMATION SHEET 3

Local, District and Regional Controllers (and people authorised by them) have a duty to exercise powers during a state of national emergency or concurrent national transition period consistently with the priorities for the use of resources and services determined by the Director-General of Emergency Management, National Controller, or National Recovery Manager.

Controllers

The EM Bill creates new levels and replaces some titles for Controllers. The new levels of Controller are:



New appointment requirements and responsibilities for Controllers

Regional Controllers (Multi-member EMC)	Appointment: EMC must appoint a suitably qualified and experienced person as Regional Controller.
	EMC must appoint at least 1 suitably qualified and experienced person to act as alternate Regional Controller.
	Responsibilities: No change from existing Group Controller responsibilities.
Regional Controllers (Unitary Authority EMC)	Appointment: EMC may appoint the unitary authority chief executive as Regional Controller, if suitably qualified and experienced. If the chief executive is not appointed the chief executive must appoint a suitably qualified and experienced person as Regional Controller.
	The chief executive must appoint at least 1 suitably qualified and experienced person to act as alternate Regional Controller.
	Responsibilities: No change from existing Group Controller responsibilities.
	Timeframe: Under transitional arrangements, existing Group Controllers and their alternates continue in their roles until their appointments end. New appointment requirements apply to their replacements.

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Emergency Management Bill (No 2) as reported back from Select Committee
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<p>District Controllers (Multi-member EMC only) NEW ROLE</p>	<p>Appointment: Every territorial authority must have a District Controller.</p> <p>An EMC may appoint the chief executive of a territorial authority as the District Controller, if suitably qualified and experienced. If the chief executive is not appointed, the chief executive of each territorial authority must appoint a suitably qualified and experienced person as District Controller.</p> <p>The chief executive of each territorial authority must appoint at least 1 suitably qualified and experienced person to act as alternate District Controller.</p> <p>Responsibilities: During a state of emergency, a District Controller must direct and co-ordinate the use of personnel, material, information, and other resources that are made available.</p> <p>A District Controller must follow directions given by the Regional Controller during a state of emergency.</p> <p>At any time, the District Controller:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must perform any functions, duties delegated from the EMC or that they have under the EM Bill or another Act • may exercise any power delegated to them under the EM Bill, and • may authorise any suitably qualified and experienced persons to perform or exercise their functions, duties, or powers and will remain responsible and accountable for the performance or exercise. <p>Timeframe: Appointments are not required until 12 months after Royal assent.</p> <p>Under transitional arrangements, existing Local Controllers continue in their roles for 12 months after Royal assent.</p>
<p>Local Controllers</p>	<p>Appointment: The unitary authority chief executive may appoint 1 or more suitably qualified and experienced persons to be a Local Controller.</p>

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Emergency Management Bill (No 2) as reported back from Select Committee INFORMATION SHEET 3

<p>(Unitary authority EMC only)</p> <p>OPTIONAL APPOINTMENT</p>	<p>Responsibilities: A Local Controller may only exercise an emergency power if they have been directed to hold that power by the appointing chief executive. The chief executive may direct the Local Controller to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">perform any functions and duties of, or delegated to, the Regional Controller of that committee, andexercise the powers of Controllers in the area for which the Regional Controller is appointed, including emergency powers. <p>The Local Controller must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">follow directions given by the chief executive of the unitary authorityfollow directions given by the Regional Controller during a state of emergency, andperform any functions or duties delegated from the EMC or conferred on them by the EM Bill or another Act. <p>The Local Controller may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">exercise any power delegated to them under the EM Bill, andauthorise any suitably qualified and experienced person to perform or exercise any of their functions, duties, or powers, and will remain responsible and accountable for them. <p>Timeframe: Local Controller appointment provisions do not come into force until 12 months after Royal assent. For the first 12 months after Royal assent, the CDEM Act Local Controller appointment provisions continue to apply.*</p>
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**A person who was appointed as a Local Controller and directed to carry out or exercise specified functions, duties, or powers under the CDEM Act can continue in that role for 12 months after Royal assent. After 12 months, these Local Controllers will:*

- continue in their roles if their CDEM Group became a Unitary Authority EMC, or*
- cease to hold their roles if their CDEM Group became a Multi-member EMC.*

At 12 months, every district in a Multi-member EMC must have a District Controller. Some current Local Controllers may be appointed as District Controllers.

New appointment requirements, responsibilities, and duties for Recovery Managers

See **Role Information Sheet I: Recovery Managers**.

What will be different if the EM Bill is enacted?

While EMC appoint Regional Recovery Managers, the EM Bill creates a line of accountability between:

- Multi-member EMC territorial authority chief executives and District Recovery Managers
- Unitary Authority EMC unitary authority chief executives and Regional Recovery Managers, and
- Unitary Authority EMC unitary authority chief executives and Local Recovery Managers.

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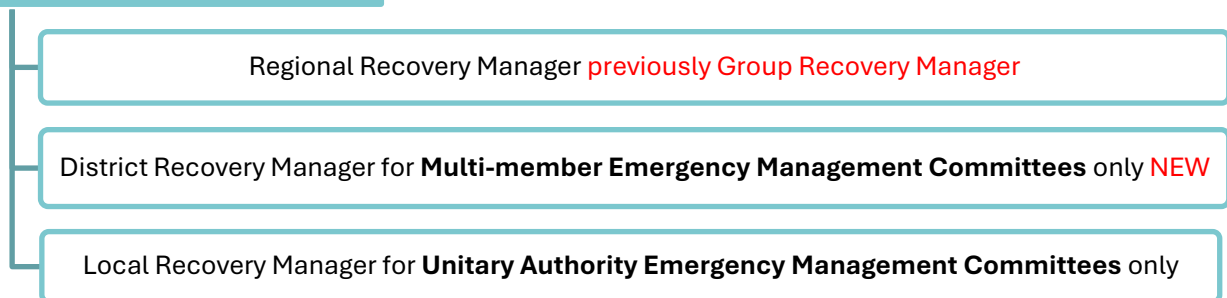
Emergency Management Bill (No 2) as reported back from Select Committee INFORMATION SHEET 3

Recovery Managers have a duty to exercise powers during a national transition period or concurrent state of national emergency consistently with the priorities for the use of resources and services determined by the Director-General of Emergency Management, National Controller, or National Recovery Manager.

Recovery Managers

The EM Bill creates new levels and replaces some titles for Recovery Managers. The new levels of Recovery Manager are:

National Recovery Manager



New appointment requirements and responsibilities for Recovery Managers

Regional Recovery Managers (Multi-member EMC)	Appointment: EMC must appoint a suitably qualified and experienced person as Regional Recovery Manager.
	EMC must appoint at least 1 suitably qualified and experienced person to act as alternate Regional Recovery Manager.
	Responsibilities: No change from existing Group Recovery Manager responsibilities.
Regional Recovery Managers (Unitary Authority EMC)	Timeframe: Under transitional arrangements, the Group Recovery Manager and their alternates continue in their roles until their appointments end. New appointment requirements will apply to their replacements.
	Appointment: EMC may appoint the unitary authority chief executive as Regional Recovery Manager, if suitably qualified and experienced. If the chief executive is not appointed, the chief executive must appoint a suitably qualified and experienced person as Regional Recovery Manager.
	The unitary authority chief executive must appoint at least 1 suitably qualified and experienced person to act as alternate Regional Recovery Manager.
Regional Recovery Managers (Unitary Authority EMC)	Responsibilities: No change from existing Group Recovery Manager responsibilities.
	Timeframe: Under transitional arrangements, existing Group Recovery Managers and their alternates continue in their roles until their appointments end. New appointment requirements will apply to their replacement.

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<p>District Recovery Managers (Multi-member EMC) NEW ROLE</p>	<p>Appointment: Every territorial authority must have a District Recovery Manager. EMC may appoint the chief executive of a territorial authority to be the District Recovery Manager, if suitably qualified and experienced. If the chief executive is not appointed, they must appoint a suitably qualified and experienced person as District Recovery Manager.</p> <p>The chief executive must appoint at least 1 suitably qualified and experienced person to act as alternate District Recovery Manager.</p> <p>Responsibilities: During a transition period the District Recovery Manager must direct and co-ordinate the use of personnel, material, information, and other resources that are made available.</p> <p>A District Recovery Manager must follow directions given by the Regional Recovery Manager during a transition period.</p> <p>At any time, the District Recovery Manager:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must perform any functions or duties delegated from the EMC or that they have under the EM Bill or another Act • may exercise any power delegated to them under the EM Bill, and • may authorise any suitably qualified and experienced person to exercise any of their functions, duties, or powers (apart from this authorisation power). District Recovery Managers will remain responsible and accountable for these actions [cl 66]. <p>Timeframe: Appointments are not required until 12 months after Royal assent. Under transitional arrangements existing Local Recovery Managers continue in their roles for 12 months after Royal assent.</p>
<p>Local Recovery Managers (Unitary Authority EMC)</p>	<p>Appointment: The unitary authority chief executive may appoint 1 or more suitably qualified and experienced persons as Local Recovery Manager(s).</p>

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OPTIONAL APPOINTMENT

Responsibilities: A Local Recovery Manager may only exercise a power if they have been directed to hold that power by the appointing chief executive. The unitary authority chief executive may direct the Local Recovery Manager to:

- perform any functions and duties of, or delegated to, the Regional Recovery Manager, and
- exercise the powers of the Regional Recovery Manager, including emergency powers.

The Local Recovery Manager must follow directions given by the Regional Recovery Manager during a state of emergency.

The Local Recovery Manager:

- must perform any functions or duties delegated from the EMC or that they have under the EM Bill or another Act
- may exercise any power delegated to them under the EM Bill, and
- may authorise any suitably qualified and experienced person to exercise any of their function, duties, or powers (apart from this authorisation power). Local Recovery Managers will remain responsible and accountable for these actions.

Timeframe: Local Recovery Manager appointment provisions do not come into force until 12 months after Royal assent. For the first 12 months after Royal assent, the CDEM Act Local Controller appointment provisions continue to apply.*

**A person who was appointed as Local Recovery Manager and directed to carry out or exercise specified functions, duties, or powers under the CDEM Act can continue in that role for 12 months after Royal assent.*

After 12 months, these Local Recovery Managers will:

- *continue in their roles if their CDEM Group became a Unitary Authority EMC, or*
- *cease to hold their roles if their CDEM Group became a Multi-member EMC.*

At 12 months, every district in a Multi-member EMC must have a District Recovery Manager. Some current Local Recovery Managers may be appointed as District Recovery Managers.

Overview of local emergency management structures

The attached diagrams show what is different between the EM Bill and CDEM Act in relation to emergency management structures and lines of accountability at the local government level.

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Local government structures under the Emergency Management Bill

Multi-member Emergency Management Committees

The Emergency Management Bill provides different structural arrangements for “multi-member” and “unitary authority” Emergency Management Committees (EMC).

This page sets out the structural arrangements for **multi-member EMC**, which are either:

- a joint committee of the local authorities in a region, or
- a joint committee of two or more unitary authorities.

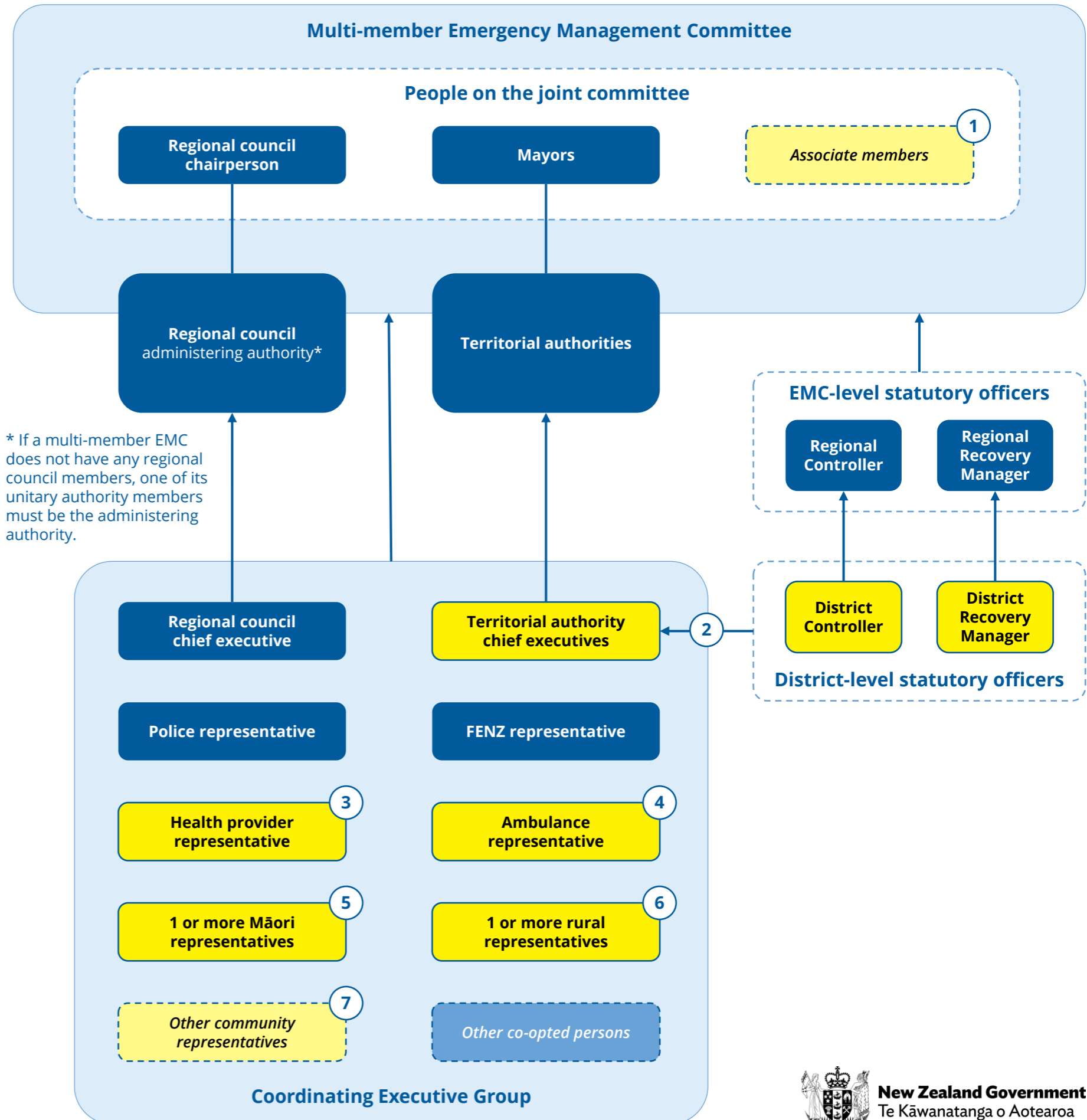
Key:

Structure unchanged from CDEM Act

Change to structure or line of accountability

Summary of structural changes

- 1 A multi-member EMC may appoint non-elected members who have the skills, attributes, or knowledge that will assist the work of the Committee, in line with the Local Government Act.
- 2 Each territorial authority member of a multi-member EMC must have a District Controller and District Recovery Manager for their district. These officers are appointed by the territorial authority's chief executive (or the EMC, if the chief executive is to hold the role).
- 3 The Bill clarifies which kinds of health providers are represented on Coordinating Executive Groups.
- 4 Each EMC must appoint the chief executive or a senior officer of an emergency ambulance service to its Coordinating Executive Group.
- 5 Each EMC must appoint to its Coordinating Executive Group at least 1 person with an understanding of local Māori and Māori communities and their interests and values.
- 6 Each EMC must appoint to its Coordinating Executive Group at least 1 person with knowledge, experience, or expertise regarding the interests and needs of rural communities.
- 7 Each EMC must consider co-opting to its Coordinating Executive Group 1 or more persons who have knowledge of other community interests.



Local government structures under the Emergency Management Bill

Unitary authority Emergency Management Committees

The Emergency Management Bill provides different structural arrangements for “multi-member” and “unitary authority” Emergency Management Committees (EMC).

This page sets out the structural arrangements for **unitary authority EMC**, which are made up of a single unitary authority.

Key:

Structure unchanged from CDEM Act

Change to structure or line of accountability

Summary of structural changes

- 1 The Regional Controller and Regional Recovery Manager are appointed by the unitary authority’s chief executive (or the EMC, if the chief executive is to hold the role). The chief executive may also appoint Local Controllers and Local Recovery Managers.
- 2 The Bill clarifies which kinds of health providers are represented on Coordinating Executive Groups.
- 3 Each EMC must appoint the chief executive or a senior officer of an emergency ambulance service to its Coordinating Executive Group.
- 4 Each EMC must appoint to its Coordinating Executive Group at least 1 person with an understanding of local Māori and Māori communities and their interests and values.
- 5 Each EMC must appoint to its Coordinating Executive Group at least 1 person with knowledge, experience, or expertise regarding the interests and needs of rural communities.
- 6 Each EMC must consider co-opting to its Coordinating Executive Group 1 or more persons who have knowledge of other community interests.

