



Cabinet Committee on Canterbury Earthquake Recovery

CER Min (12) 9/3

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Minute of Decision

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Review of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Response to the 22 February 2011 Christchurch Earthquake

Portfolio: Civil Defence

On 24 September 2012, the Cabinet Committee on Canterbury Earthquake Recovery (CER):

- 1 **noted** that in November 2011, Cabinet noted that the Terms of Reference for the Review of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Response to the February 2011 Christchurch Earthquake had been agreed by relevant Ministers [CAB Min (11) 4/9];
- 2 **noted** that the independent report *Review of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Response to the 22 February 2011 Christchurch Earthquake* (the report) has been completed and is generally positive about the response;
- 3 **noted** that six of the report's 108 recommendations for improving New Zealand's preparedness for future major emergencies are key recommendations;

The emergency management response

- 4 **noted** that the report recommends that territorial authorities should not retain the power to control the response to an emergency, but that they still retain the power to declare a state of local emergency;
- 5 **agreed** that, rather than diminish the role of territorial authorities, the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management (MCDEM) will work with regional Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups that need strengthening;

Location of the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management

- 6 **noted** that the report recommends that consideration be given to relocating the MCDEM to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet;
- 7 **agreed** that the MCDEM remain a business unit within the Department of Internal Affairs;

Addressing other recommendations of the report

- 8 **agreed** that, in response to the report's four other key recommendations, the MCDEM will:
- 8.1 explore options for a 'cadre' of highly trained managers to enhance the ability of local authorities and Civil Defence and Emergency Management Groups to control large-scale emergency responses;
 - 8.2 link emergency response systems (for example, guidelines and protocols) more closely with communities;
 - 8.3 review arrangements to ensure a higher priority is given to preserving businesses and jobs following a major emergency;
 - 8.4 continue to promote a culture of preparedness for major emergencies amongst all sectors (community, business and government);
- 9 **directed** the MCDEM to report to CER by November 2012 with the Corrective Action Plan in response to the report's 108 recommendations;

Publicity

- 10 **noted** that the Minister of Civil Defence intends to:
- 10.1 publicly release the report;
 - 10.2 make a press statement announcing the government's high-level response to the report when the report is released;
- 11 **agreed** that when the report is released, the submission under CER (12) 25 and subsequent minute are also released, with appropriate deletions under the Official Information Act 1982 if required.

Committee Secretary

Reference: CER (12) 25