7. Clusters

Summary   Clusters in a CDEM context may consist of agencies from the same sector or organisational grouping that collectively work to reduce the impact of, and plan to be ready for, respond to, and assist recovery from an emergency. Cluster members work to achieve common CDEM outcomes for communities in a coordinated manner. Clusters may be formed at local, regional, and national levels.

Contents   The section contents are:

7.1 Introduction

> **Part 5**
> **Roles and responsibilities**
> Clusters
>
> **30   Introduction**
>
> *(1)   A cluster is a group of agencies, either within or across sectors, that interact to achieve common outcomes, including the performance of a function or related functions.*
>
> *(2)   An agency's membership in a cluster does not limit any of the agency's statutory obligations under the Act or any other enactment.*

Common goals

A CDEM cluster is a group of agencies that interact to achieve common CDEM outcomes across the 4Rs in a coordinated manner.

Clusters seek to strengthen existing multi-agency coordination by:

- clarifying goals, responsibilities and roles for emergencies
- identifying gaps in capability and capacity
- addressing the gaps in capability and capacity through emergency management action plans
- providing for response and recovery coordination
- working in parallel with CDEM response and recovery structures, and
- sharing of relevant information (e.g. business continuity plans, risk reduction activities, response plans, etc.).

Benefits of a cluster

An integrated cluster environment and coordinated CDEM planning within clusters provides participants with:

- improved public and private sector understanding of their roles and responsibilities during emergencies
- strengthened internal planning arrangements (business continuity, crisis management, emergency response and disaster recovery plans)
- enhanced external relationships and management of interdependencies
- efficient service delivery and service restoration in emergencies, and
- being able to demonstrate their capacity to provide services during an emergency.

MCDEM may provide facilitation and support for cluster development[1].

Sector Coordinating Entities

Under the *National CDEM Plan 2015* (Clause 2((1)), Sector Coordinating Entities (SCEs) means-

"a sector co-ordinating entity that is an organisation, a group of sector representatives, or an individual agreed by a utility sector to provide a single point of contact to the NCMC, or an ECC".

The purpose of SCEs is to provide for pre-planned sector coordination through a single point of contact for each lifeline sector in the event of a major emergency.

SCE representatives may be part of a cluster, which can be established to assist with emergency response and recovery (see section 7.4).

See Section 13, Lifeline utilities for more detail about SCEs.

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[1]   For further information see *A Cluster Approach for Civil Defence Emergency Management: Enhancing multi-agency relationships* (www.civildefence.govt.nz – search for 'a cluster approach').

7.2 Objective

31 Objective

The objective of a cluster is to provide co-ordination across agencies to carry out a function or related functions across the 4 Rs, including—

(a) joint planning; and

(b) establishing and maintaining inter-agency communications; and

(c) providing access to shared resources; and

(d) avoiding duplication.

7.3 Principles

32 Principles

The principles underlying the role of clusters are to—

(a) operate in a co-ordinated multi-agency environment; and

(b) form clusters at the national level (but also at the CDEM Group and local levels where appropriate); and

(c) be flexible (with agencies able to join, exit from, or merge with clusters, for the purpose of enhancing arrangements, while allowing the overlapping of functions or membership where appropriate); and

(d) determine their own membership; and

(e) organise themselves, including establishing their internal management structures, co-ordinators, and emergency management plans; and

(f) develop and exercise liaison at the appropriate level of operation with local EOCs, ECCs, or the NCMC.

7.4 Currently-formed clusters

33 Currently-formed clusters

Currently formed clusters include—

(a) transport providers; and

(b) telecommunications providers; and

(c) lifeline utilities; and

(d) welfare services; and

(e) public information providers; and

(f) science and research providers; and

(g) international assistance providers; and

(h) the visitors sector; and

(i) search and rescue.

Examples of existing clusters

Examples of existing national clusters include:

- **Emergency services**: See Section 8, Emergency services; Section 9, New Zealand Police; Section 10, Fire services; and Section 11, Health and disability services.

- **Lifelines Groups:** Lifeline utility representatives collaborate with scientists, emergency managers and other professionals in regionally-based Lifelines Groups. Members of the Groups exchange information and support collective projects to reduce infrastructure outage risks and to promote readiness for emergency responses when outages occur. In these ways, the Lifelines Groups support member utilities in meeting their obligations under section 60 of the *CDEM Act 2002.* See Section 13, Lifeline utilities for a description of lifeline utility obligations.

- **Welfare:** The National Welfare Coordination Group is a cluster comprising agencies responsible for coordinating welfare services. It is led by MCDEM. Welfare Coordination Groups exist at the CDEM Group level. See Section 14, Welfare services for a description of these clusters.

- **Health:** Government health agencies, District Health Boards (DHBs), Public Health Units (PHUs) and land and air ambulance services, operate as a cluster in support of CDEM. See Section 11, Health and disability services for a description of this cluster.

- **Transport:** The Transport Emergency Management Coordination Group (coordinated by the Ministry of Transport) considers all strategic transport arrangements (land, sea, air) in support of CDEM. See Section 13, Lifeline utilities for more information.

- **Telecommunication:** Telecommunications Emergency Forum promotes the continuity of telecommunications services in New Zealand by providing a forum for discussion of telecommunication issues relating to emergency preparation and maintaining a well-functioning intra-industry communications capability to aid emergency response.

- **Tourism:** The Visitor Sector Emergency Advisory Group (VSEAG) includes tourism industry bodies and government agencies active in the visitor sector, which collectively plan a response for the impacts of an emergency on international visitors to New Zealand. They will work to mobilise the sector's resources to assist with national and local responses to emergencies.

- **Search and rescue:** The New Zealand Search and Rescue (NZSAR) Council has a mandate from the New Zealand government to provide strategic leadership to the search and rescue sector.

VSEAG

The purpose of the VSEAG is to support New Zealand's crisis management arrangements by contributing and coordinating visitor sector situation information, expertise, advice and resources for the lead agency and other response clusters to support the national emergency response.

Specifically the VSEAG's role in an emergency involving international visitors to New Zealand is to:

- provide consistent, timely, fit for purpose and accurate visitor sector information and advice to relevant stakeholders

- mobilise visitor sector networks and resources to ensure they can be effectively used for the emergency response, where/as required

- identify key issues affecting visitors (current and intending) and the visitor sector, determining key priority actions to address these issues and ensure they are dealt with by the lead agency and/or the appropriate response clusters, and

- minimise economic loss to the visitor sector, for example by pre-empting cancellations, re-routing itineraries and offering transfers as required.

The VSEAG fulfils its roles through the development, maintenance and implementation of the VSEAG Plan.

NZSAR Council	The NZSAR Council provides national strategic governance and leadership to New Zealand search and rescue. In keeping with the Council's high level strategic function, its membership is drawn from the Chief Executives of the Ministry of Transport (chair), New Zealand Police, New Zealand Defence Force, Maritime New Zealand, the Civil Aviation Authority, and the Department of Conservation.
	The responsibility for the operational coordination of search and rescue operations (SAROPs) rests with one or the other of the two Coordinating Authorities, New Zealand Police, or the Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ). The Coordinating Authorities work in close cooperation where necessary, and coordinate the activities of the many organisations in the search and rescue sector that provide people, aircraft, vessels and other forms of transport in response to a search and rescue event.
	The field operations, i.e. the actual search and rescue response activities, are carried out by a host of organisations and groups. Most of these organisations are represented on the NZSAR Consultative Committee.
	Search and rescue organisations (such as Coastguard, LandSAR, Surf Life Saving) are available to assist during emergencies. They can be tasked via the local New Zealand Police search and rescue Coordinators.

7.5 Cluster chairpersons

33 Cluster chairpersons

(1) Each cluster is expected to select one of its members to be the chairperson and secretariat for the cluster.

(2) As the chairperson, the selected member is responsible for bringing together the emergency management planning for the cluster.

(3) As the secretariat, the selected member is responsible for giving administrative support, distributing information, and working as a clearing house.

7.6 References and links

Other sections of the Guide	◆ Section 5, Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (MCDEM)
	◆ Section 6, Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups (CDEM Groups)
	◆ Section 8, Emergency services
	◆ Section 9, New Zealand Police
	◆ Section 10, Fire services
	◆ Section 11, Health and disability services
	◆ Section 13, Lifeline utilities
	◆ Section 14, Welfare services
	◆ Section 31, International assistance for New Zealand
Other documents	◆ Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management, *A Cluster Approach for Civil Defence Emergency Management: Enhancing multi-agency relationships* (www.civildefence.govt.nz – search for 'a cluster approach')
	◆ Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (2014) *Director's Guideline for Lifeline Utilities and Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups [DGL 16/14];* ISBN 978-0-478-36808-6 (www.civildefence.govt.nz – search for 'Lifeline Utilities and Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups')
	◆ Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (2015) *Welfare Services in an Emergency Director's Guideline for Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups [DGL 11/15];* ISBN 978-0-478-43513-9 (www.civildefence.govt.nz – search for 'welfare services in an emergency')