

Strengthening Emergency Management

**The National Emergency Management
Agency's Strategic Direction 2025 – 2035**
As at 1 July 2025

NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government



**National Emergency
Management Agency**
Te Rākau Whakamarumarū

Strengthening Emergency Management
The National Emergency Management Agency's Strategic Direction 2025 – 2035

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New Zealand Government

For more information on the work of the National Emergency Management Agency, please visit our website www.civildefence.govt.nz

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Strengthening Emergency Management

The National Emergency Management Agency's Strategic Direction 2025 – 2035

As at 1 July 2025

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Introduction

Dave Gawn,
Chief Executive,
National Emergency
Management Agency

"Sometimes it does us a power of good to remind ourselves that we live on two volcanic rocks where two tectonic plates meet, in a somewhat lonely stretch of windswept ocean just above the Roaring Forties. If you want drama – you've come to the right place."

**Former Prime Minister,
Sir Geoffrey Palmer.**

New Zealand is one of the riskiest places on earth.

The scale, severity and number of emergencies continues to increase. We know more about the science behind what's driving this and we know more about the risks we face. We can expect more extreme weather events, that are more intense and in places that haven't been considered at risk in the past.

The likelihood of severe weather events and major earthquakes, tsunami and volcanic eruptions in the next 50 years is clear. The economic and human costs of these events will continue to shape who we are as a nation.

The risks and hazards we face continue to change. We must do more to build our ability as a nation, and in communities, to deal with this.

New Zealand needs to get ahead of risks, be well set up to handle them, and our communities need to be ready to respond and able to recover. Being able to operate and adjust to whatever the climate, society, economy and the future throws at us will underpin New Zealand's resilience.

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) exists to help make this happen.

At NEMA we lead, co-ordinate and support the country to do this in our role as the steward and assurer of the emergency management system, while being an operator in our own right.

What we do starts with our people and the way we operate.

At NEMA, we will be clear about our role and impact, continually adapt and improve, and build trust and confidence in what we do and how we do it.

We will look for innovative ways to support and make it easier for local government, communities and iwi/Māori to effectively understand, prepare for, respond and recover when an event hits. NEMA will lead at a national level, working within the public sector and alongside the private sector, volunteer sector and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to strengthen and build a system that is effective and agile.

This Strategic Plan (2025 – 2035) maps out the way NEMA will approach its role in the system. It sets out our longer-term direction to enable us to make a difference, shaping what we will do and keeping us on track. It is a snapshot at this moment in time and will be revised iteratively. It has been, and will continue to be, influenced by the Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Act 2002, National Disaster Resilience Strategy (NDRS) and National CDEM Plan.

Operational excellence, and an exceptional ability to influence and co-ordinate across the emergency management system will be where we make a difference for New Zealand and New Zealanders.

Across the emergency management system we have a lot to do. To be successful we need to do more together, and do it better, if we are to truly become a disaster resilient nation where communities are empowered to prepare for, manage and recover from emergencies.

E te tu e te kahu i te wā o te kore.
Making a stand in times of crisis.

Emergency Management in New Zealand

Why Emergency Management?

Effective emergency management is fundamental to safeguarding the dignity, well-being, safety and prosperity of all New Zealanders.

Building resilience and strengthening the emergency management system will save lives and reduce the impacts and costs of emergencies.

There is a “preparedness dividend”. US Chamber of Commerce data shows “The preparedness payoff” whereby \$1 spent on resilience saves \$13 in recovery.

Achieving sustained and shared wellbeing and prosperity for all New Zealanders, present and future, is dependent on building resilience and strengthening the emergency management system.

The Emergency Management System and stakeholders

The **Emergency Management System** is part of the National Resilience System. It builds preparedness and manages the consequences of national and local emergencies. The Emergency Management System is led by the **National Emergency Management Agency** (NEMA).

The **Emergency Management System** includes the National Emergency Management Agency, other central government agencies, local government, emergency services, lifeline utilities, community groups, iwi/Māori, businesses, and research and science organisations. The system is supported by agreements with other domestic and international partners, and there is an international community that work closely around the globe.

A subset of the Emergency Management System is the **Civil Defence Emergency Management Sector** – made up of the National Emergency Management Agency and local government.

Communities

New Zealand's communities – both location and population based – are diverse and unique. They each have their own strengths and vulnerabilities.

NEMA acknowledges the importance of designing and supporting an emergency management system that recognises the diversity of New Zealand's communities and enables the participation of those communities within the system. This includes understanding the special challenges emergencies present for population groups including for example, disabled people, those with English as a second language, and geographically isolated groups.

Iwi/Māori

NEMA recognises the important role iwi/Māori, including hapū, whānau, and marae, play in Aotearoa New Zealand's emergency management system.

To achieve a well-coordinated emergency management system with iwi/Māori it must include:

- A partnership between the emergency management sector and Māori.
- Māori-led approaches being utilised and supported.

The 4Rs

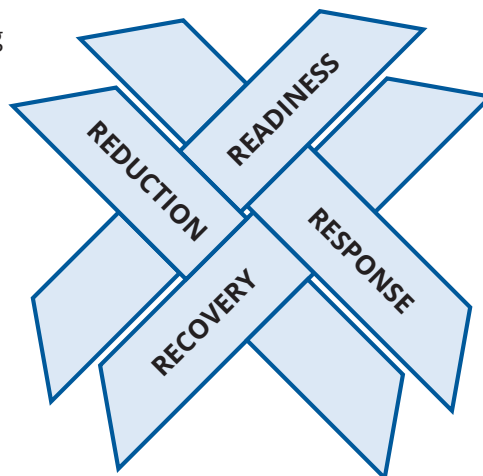
Aotearoa New Zealand's integrated approach to emergency management can be described by the four areas of activity, known as the '4 Rs': risk reduction, readiness, response, and recovery.

Risk reduction

Identifying and analysing long-term risks to life and property from hazards; taking steps to eliminate these risks if practicable and, if not, reducing the magnitude of their impact and the likelihood of their occurrence to an acceptable level.

Recovery

The coordinated efforts and processes used to bring about the short, medium, and long-term holistic regeneration and enhancement of a community following an emergency.



Readiness

Developing operational systems and capabilities before an emergency happens including self-help and response programmes for the general public, and specific programmes for emergency services, lifeline utilities, and other agencies.

Response

Actions taken immediately before, during, or directly after an emergency to save lives and protect property, and to help communities recover.

Our Emergency Management System

A system for a resilient New Zealand.

A future resilient New Zealand is a nation where resilience thinking is integrated into all aspects of life as a matter of course. There is a deep, shared understanding of a wide range of risks and the nature of the action that each of them requires.

From an individual level, to families and whānau, communities and hapū, cities and districts, and at a national level, everyone understands their own share of responsibility for reducing risk and strengthening resilience.



Locally Led | Regionally Coordinated | Nationally Supported

Emergency Services

ODESC

Minister for EM and Recovery

Cabinet

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Government Departments

NGOs

Private Sector

Local Authorities

Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups

National Emergency Management Agency

Emergency Management

National Emergency Management

What Guides Us

NEMA's role in the Emergency Management System

What we do

NEMA is one part of a much larger emergency management system – domestically and internationally.

Our role is to co-ordinate, lead and support Aotearoa New Zealand's Emergency Management System so that risks are reduced and communities are ready to respond and able to recover.

NEMA's vision is that Aotearoa New Zealand is a disaster resilient nation that proactively manages risk and builds resilience in a way that contributes to wellbeing and prosperity.

NEMA supports the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery, Director CDEM, National Controller and National Recovery Manager to carry out their functions and powers under the CDEM Act 2002.

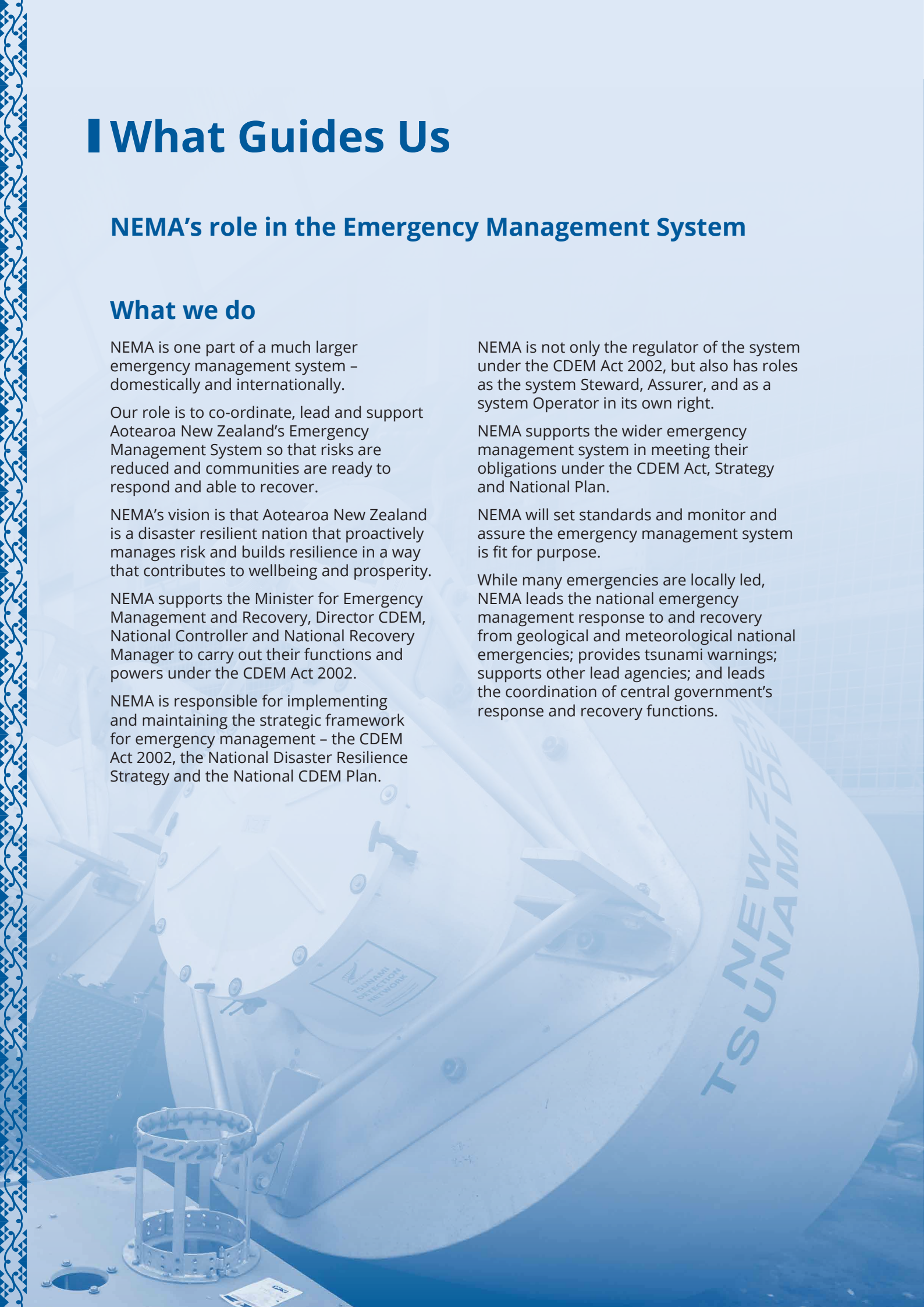
NEMA is responsible for implementing and maintaining the strategic framework for emergency management – the CDEM Act 2002, the National Disaster Resilience Strategy and the National CDEM Plan.

NEMA is not only the regulator of the system under the CDEM Act 2002, but also has roles as the system Steward, Assurer, and as a system Operator in its own right.

NEMA supports the wider emergency management system in meeting their obligations under the CDEM Act, Strategy and National Plan.

NEMA will set standards and monitor and assure the emergency management system is fit for purpose.

While many emergencies are locally led, NEMA leads the national emergency management response to and recovery from geological and meteorological national emergencies; provides tsunami warnings; supports other lead agencies; and leads the coordination of central government's response and recovery functions.



How we do it

NEMA has three enabling strategies that sit underneath this strategic plan:

- Te Kāhui Mataara – Māori Strategy
- Science Strategy
- International Engagement Strategy

NEMA has relationships with iwi Māori leaders and Māori Emergency Management practitioners that support increased collaboration across the four Rs.

NEMA has strong operational and research partnerships with science agencies, underpinning our evidence based approach. NEMA convenes a suite of Science Advisory Panels as one of the key mechanisms to connect with the science system.

NEMA has international relationships with emergency management counterparts overseas and engages on emergency management best practice and operational matters. NEMA supports international emergency management initiatives, focusing on the Pacific, Southeast Asia, and commitments to the United Nations and regional frameworks including the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. International engagement supports the strengthening of New Zealand's emergency management system and contributes to the global body of emergency management knowledge. It aligns with New Zealand's goal to create a safe, secure, and resilient Indo-Pacific region.

NEMA has a distinctive function to contribute to building national and community resilience by:

- Coordinating activities addressing risk reduction, readiness, response, and recovery across the emergency management system.
- Building relationships and connections with and among central and local government, communities, iwi Māori, emergency services, lifeline utilities, research and science organisations, and non-government organisations.
- Serving as a lynchpin between central government agencies and communities (through local and regional government) in emergency management.
- Serving as a bridge between central government agencies and the broader insurance, infrastructure, business, and banking sectors in getting operationally ready to respond to and recover from disasters.

What influences us

Lessons from previous emergencies, and the findings of reviews and inquiries (for example the Government Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events) significantly shapes the priority and focus of our work. NEMA has a strong focus on continued improvement and actively implements improvement actions to strengthen emergency management.

Changing Government priorities over time, and the development of new government policies and arrangements (for example the new Risk and Resilience Framework) also influences our work.

I What Shapes Us

The changing and uncertain environment we operate in influences what we do and how we do it.

Complexity and change

Societal shifts

Social cohesion is critical to building enduring resilience. National demographics are shifting to an older, more diverse population with different needs and less connection.

Global recession and fiscal restraints

New Zealand has historically underinvested in emergency management and the system cannot handle major events. National and global recession has led to fiscal constraints that require ruthless prioritisation, yet many emergency management system improvements need investment to be fit for purpose. Local, regional and national emergency management resources are increasingly stretched.

Legislative reform

The CDEM Act is under review and there are government reforms underway that impact local government, national risk and resilience and the science sector.

Geostrategic uncertainty

New Zealand faces heightened threats to our security and prosperity. These threats risk creating disruption to international supply chains. We are also called on to support and deploy to our international partners including the Pacific more often.

Hazard risks

More frequent, intense and longer lasting hazards

Over the past two decades, the frequency and severity of emergencies has increased. Compounding emergencies see events occurring concurrently or consecutively. Over 75% of New Zealand regions are in some form of recovery, yet New Zealanders continue to build and rebuild in areas with known risks and Te Ao Māori knowledge of hazards is underutilised.

Climatic shifts

Changing climate has resulted in unprecedented natural disasters. Predicted climate-related hazards pose major risks to health, the economy, the built environment, and the natural environment. Climate change adaptation policy is under development.

Geological threats

Recent risk and resilience science shows the likelihood of geological hazards is greater than we thought. As our understanding of catastrophic hazards and risks grows, so too does the need for planning, public education and further research.

Emerging risks

New Zealand has recent experience with space weather, cybersecurity, bio-security and pandemic risks. The uncertainty of future risks emphasises the need to leverage advances in data, science, emerging technologies, and disaster resilience research to better manage the risks we face now and in the future.

Evolving expectations

Communities

New Zealanders expect to feel safe and secure. There is a perception that there is a large workforce ready to step in and support them during response and recovery and that this will be branded as CDEM. That simply is not the case.

Community groups (geographic and demographic) are often unfamiliar with the emergency management system and what it means for them. The system must enable their participation and recognise the contribution that iwi Māori make.

Government

Multiple reviews have found an urgent need for improvement and a strengthened Emergency Management System. Government have agreed in principle to transforming the emergency management system so it can manage major to severe emergencies within the next five to ten years, subject to further policy work and business cases as required, the passage of enabling legislation, and availability of new funding through future Budgets.

International

NEMA supports New Zealand's role as a global citizen through international disaster response operations and Pacific resilience strengthening. We have a range of agreements with international partners outlining mutual support. New Zealand has also signalled commitment to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 - 2030 and regularly reports against it.

Technology

Antiquated infrastructure and technology

End of life, not fit for purpose and varied facilities and technology systems constrain interoperability across the system. Reviews and inquiries have identified the lack of a Common Operating Picture (COP) to enable situational awareness before, during and following emergencies as a critical gap in our Emergency Management System for over 20 years.

Criticality of digital infrastructure

Our society is now heavily dependent on digital networks. The connectivity is invaluable, along with the opportunities to utilise AI, and have better data and new technology. Our reliance brings new risks and vulnerabilities such as cybercrime.

Proliferation of social media

Social media enables emergency management organisations to directly connect with communities in real time. However social media also presents challenges through the spread of unverified and inaccurate information.

I The Direction

The Strategic Framework is a long-term north star for NEMA.

It includes **Strategic Outcomes** that identify the long-term change we expect to see as a direct result of the actions we take.

Our Strategic Framework



**National Emergency
Management Agency**
Te Rākau Whakamarumaru

PURPOSE

Empowering our communities, preparing for and managing emergencies

VISION

Aotearoa New Zealand is a disaster resilient nation that proactively manages risks and builds resilience in a way that contributes to wellbeing and prosperity.

ROLE

We lead and support Aotearoa New Zealand's emergency management systems so that risks are reduced and communities are ready to respond and able to recover.

WHAT WE DO



OPERATOR

We lead, coordinate and support partners and communities before, during and after emergencies.



STEWARD

We work with partners to ensure the system has shared goals and priorities, has the capabilities required, and can adapt when needed.



ASSURER

We monitor the system's performance and make improvements that reflect a growing knowledge of emergency management hazards and risks.

OUTCOMES

The emergency management system is well coordinated and aligned to clear, shared priorities.

The impacts of emergencies on people, the economy and the environment are reduced, and communities experience equitable outcomes.

NEMA is a high performing organisation, with the capabilities, culture and ways of working to succeed.

OUR BEHAVIOURS

Manaakitanga

We respect and care for others

Kaitiakitanga tūrangawaewae

We guard and protect places that are special to us, for future generations

Mātauranga

We value knowledge and understanding

Rangatiratanga

We lead by example

Whanaungatanga Kotahitanga

We nurture positive relationships and partnerships

Tikanga

Our customs and practices are central to who we are

Manawa reka

We are inquisitive and eager to learn

Kakama

We are agile and move quickly and easily

OUR VALUES

Kia maia / Courageous

We stand up

Kia honohono / Connected

We join together

Kia manawanui / Committed

We believe in what we do

Kia taute / Respect

We do it with respect



Strategic Outcome 1: Reduced Emergency Impacts

NEMA's primary strategic outcome is that **the impacts of emergencies on people, the economy and the environment are reduced, and communities experience equitable outcomes.**

A strategic priority for NEMA in the first three years is to **strengthen operational readiness for emergency response and recovery.**

The focus is on saving lives, reducing harm, achieving equitable outcomes, and building public trust.

Objectives

- 1. Resilient Communities (Community Collaboration)**
- 2. A Prepared Nation (Nationwide Readiness)**
- 3. Interoperability (Facilities and Systems)**



1. Resilient Communities (Community Collaboration)

What NZ needs

NEMA's contribution

Communities bounce back quicker

The impacts of emergencies on people, the economy and environment are reduced.

Fewer lives are lost, harm is reduced, there are equitable outcomes and a faster recovery. Events don't cut as deep or impact New Zealand for as long.

Decision makers understand the science and evidence, including recovery and its relationship to long term economic, built, social, and environmental resilience and the opportunity to address risk reduction, readiness, and response.

- Increase community resilience via the administration of the **Resilience Fund**.
- **Timely and effective response and recovery support** to communities will drive resilience and support prosperity.
- Advance opportunities to **address risk reduction during response and recovery**.

Emergency management is in our DNA

Emergency management is part of each person, whānau, community, and organisation in Aotearoa New Zealand. We all understand the hazards and risks we face, know how to protect ourselves and others, and are ready and able to respond, recover, and thrive after an emergency.

New Zealand is a disaster resilient nation that acts proactively to manage risks and build resilience in a way that contributes to the wellbeing and prosperity of all New Zealanders.

- **Public readiness lifted**, using scientific evidence and research to influence behaviour change that protects lives, reduces injuries and other trauma, and speeds up recovery.
- Establish effective **pre-emergency relationships and arrangements** with international partners, NGOs, the private sector (including with lifeline utilities), central and local government (including CDEM Groups), the science community, and other community groups including those that are culturally and linguistically diverse.

Māori perspectives and contributions

Māori participation in emergency management is recognised, valued and enabled. Partnerships with iwi/Māori across the Emergency Management system, connecting with Māori perspectives, enhancing the system's resilience and cultural responsiveness over the next decade.

- Establish and maintain working **partnerships with iwi/Māori to support collaboration** across the emergency management sector.

By the community for the community

All communities are better prepared to respond to and recover from emergencies.

Businesses, organisations and communities (geographic and demographic) understand and play their part during a response and its recovery. They are equipped, organised and ready to mobilise in a crisis.

At risk communities are strong and have built resilience and the ability to protect themselves.

- **Community development and outreach programmes** are established for geographic and demographic communities.
- A **National Community Resilience Framework** ensures consistency and uplift of community resilience practice.
- Strengthening the cohort of **Community Resilience in Emergency Management practitioners** including the Community Resilience Roopu.

2. A Prepared Nation (Nationwide Readiness)

What NZ needs

NEMA's contribution

We understand and manage our risks

Across New Zealand we have a science-based understanding of our natural hazards and risk scenarios and what we can do about them. This includes our catastrophic risks.

Accurate and timely scientific advice and local knowledge will be applied across the 4Rs.

- **New or changing hazards and risks are identified and planned for**, with arrangements regularly **tested, refined, and revised** with system partners including CDEM Groups.
- We actively promote and integrate the **use and coordination of science and research** and the sustainable management of hazards in a way that contributes to safety and wellbeing.
- **We convene a suite of Science Advisory Panels**, drawing from experts across the science system.

Everyone is ready to work together

Disaster resilience isn't just for the emergency management system players – it's an issue for everyone.

Decision makers recognise the importance of ethnic and Māori cultures to resilience. They support the continuity of cultural places, institutions, and activities, and enable the participation of different cultures in resilience.

NEMA will be connected and ready to coordinate across the system and internationally. As a small nation we must all expect to work together, trust, support and have confidence in one another.

- **Engagement and partnership with iwi/Māori** including hapū, marae and hāpori Māori.
- Engagement with **domestic and international stakeholders** to strengthen disaster resilience in New Zealand, the Pacific and beyond.
- New Zealand is ready with **effective coordination arrangements** throughout the system including local and central government.

Planning enables rapid response and recovery

There are suitable plans and they have been tested. As new needs emerge, plans are revised, developed, and exercised.

Faster and better-quality recovery support to communities with no daylight between response and recovery. Long-term national prosperity is underpinned by reducing the impact and cost of events.

New Zealand has the necessary resources and equipment to support emergency response and recovery.

- **National response plans** (hazard agnostic, hazard specific, and scenario specific) developed, updated and implemented that apply science, data, and lessons.
- **Effective local authority and CDEM group planning, readiness and coordination activities** including supporting CDEM Groups and other partners to be ready.
- Pre-disaster recovery planning to support **economic, built, social and environmental recovery**, and reduce secondary impacts of events.
- Increased **stockpiles** and access to **nationally critical equipment and supplies**.

Good global citizen

A safe, secure and resilient New Zealand, connected in the Indo-Pacific and beyond and with resilient Pacific neighbours.

- **Partnerships are maintained and supported**, improving regional disaster management capability and capacity.

3. Interoperability (Facilities and Systems)

What NZ needs

NEMA's contribution

Integrated data, facilities and systems

Data, facilities and technology protect lives and help to rapidly mobilise relief and expertise to where it is most needed.

The different parts of the system work together, with updated warning systems and the modernisation of antiquated and disconnected technology and facilities.

Government and the private sector address the capacity and adequacy of critical infrastructure systems, and upgrade them as practicable, according to risks identified.

- **Modernisation of aged technology** for real time information, warnings and emergency response and recovery decisions.
- Guidance to **improve regional and local coordination centres** including technology, standard operating procedures and training that support interoperability and deployability for events.
- Resilient national **operational facilities** and **operating systems** that work well:
 - A fit for purpose **National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC)**.
 - An appropriate **Alternative National Crisis Management Centre (aNCMC)** secondary site.

Situational awareness

Improved situational awareness supports decision-making in emergencies.

Information is integrated locally, regionally, and nationally to provide real-time situational awareness. The public will receive timely warnings and responders will have a clearer picture of what is happening on the ground.

- An effective **Common Operating Picture** able to be used throughout the system.
- Enabling and empowering central government to effectively and efficiently **collect and share data** to improve decision making.

A pool of people

An identified and capable pool of people who know how to get the most from the facilities, technology and the information available to them throughout the system.

Deployed people can integrate and add value quickly, rather than having to learn new systems and processes.

- A well **trained and accessible pool of people for the NCMC and aNCMC** including alternates in leadership roles.

Strategic Outcome 2: Effective Emergency Management System

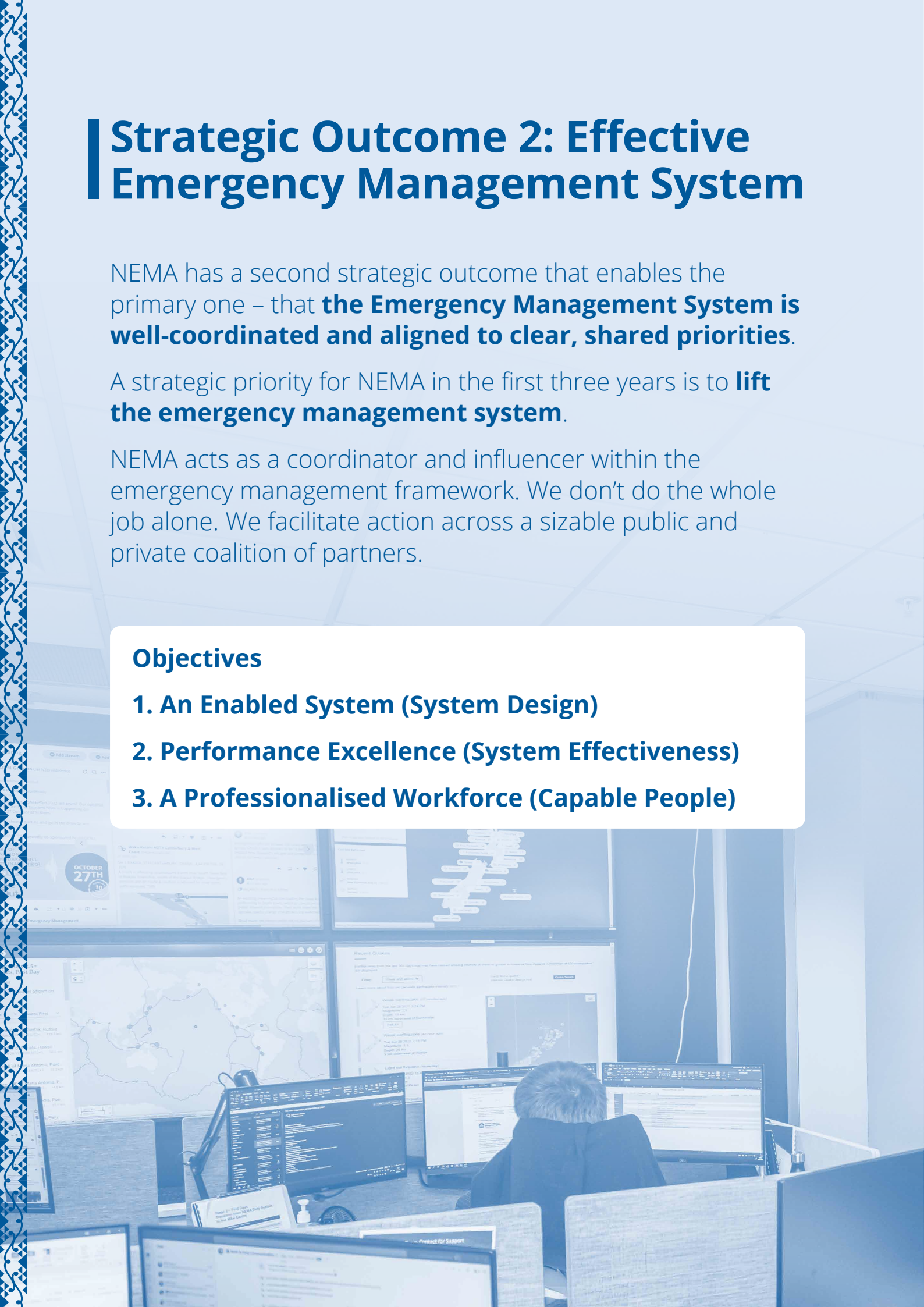
NEMA has a second strategic outcome that enables the primary one – that **the Emergency Management System is well-coordinated and aligned to clear, shared priorities.**

A strategic priority for NEMA in the first three years is to **lift the emergency management system.**

NEMA acts as a coordinator and influencer within the emergency management framework. We don't do the whole job alone. We facilitate action across a sizable public and private coalition of partners.

Objectives

1. An Enabled System (System Design)
2. Performance Excellence (System Effectiveness)
3. A Professionalised Workforce (Capable People)



1. An Enabled System (System Design)

What NZ needs

NEMA's contribution

Fit for purpose legislation

A foundation that accounts for the current challenges the nation faces.

The CDEM Act enables, empowers, and supports community resilience, emergency response and recovery. People know what is expected of them, and they use the supporting resources to strengthen their emergency management plans and responses.

- An effective emergency management regulatory **framework** including the implementation of **revised legislation, guidance, and standards**.
- Monitor and evaluate the **National Disaster Resilience Strategy**.
- Develop, monitor and evaluate the **National Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan**.
- Develop emergency management **policy and guidance**.
- **Gaps in risk reduction policy are addressed** considering climate change adaptation.

Role clarity

People and organisations know and can play their part in the system. It is clear who is responsible for what, nationally, regionally, and locally, in response and recovery.

Agencies and communities will have greater clarity in a crisis, enabling faster, more coordinated decision making.

- Well-defined **roles and responsibilities** at national, regional, local and community levels.
- Develop and implement the **National Recovery Operating Model (NROM)**.

Consistent and high standards

Minimum standards and policies that work, hold people to account and prevent New Zealanders having different experiences based on where they live.

- Establish and monitor **standards** and legislative requirements for emergency management across the system.
- **Support to enable local government and communities** to deliver a consistent minimum standard of emergency management across New Zealand.
- Set **guidance for the Emergency Management System** including CDEM Groups and the infrastructure sector.

Māori values and knowledge

Māori perspectives and knowledge embedded in policies, procedures, and resilience-building efforts to create a culturally responsive emergency management system.

Māori involvement in emergency management is recognised, valued, and enabled across the entire system.

- Formally recognise and enhance iwi/Māori roles and **embed iwi/Māori within the system** across the 4Rs.

2. Performance Excellence (System Effectiveness)

What NZ needs

NEMA's contribution

A system that works

An emergency management system that is well-coordinated, high-performing and enjoys widespread trust and confidence.

The system must deliver on our worst day. Communities and decision makers need to have confidence that each level of the system is resilient, ready and continually lifting its performance.

There is consistency and evidence of excellent performance. The system and individual organisation strengths and areas for improvement are known. There are clear operating protocols and national monitoring, evaluation and assurance processes.

Government plans for transforming the emergency management system to manage major to severe emergencies have been realised.

- NEMA leads the way with our own **operational readiness and performance**, including co-ordination across a wide range of agencies and as lead agency for the national emergency management response and recovery to geological and meteorological national emergencies.
- A **national assurance function** provides visibility of system strengths and weaknesses, enabling targeted support and intervention if necessary.
- The Government Response to the Inquiry into the North Island Severe Weather Events is implemented (subject to budget decisions), with system transformation **delivering system improvements**.

A seamless network

The emergency management system has a lot of players but they are integrated and work together well. They understand local hazards, risks, and communities, with science, evidence, and local engagement. The system works for all communities, with iwi/Māori and tangata whenua engagement throughout.

Iwi/Māori and emergency management agencies collaborate across the four Rs within a system that reflects Māori values and knowledge.

There are skilled deployable people available to provide support domestically and internationally.

- **Regional support teams, recovery support function and deployable resources** lift local and regional capacity, capability and readiness.
- Identify and take opportunities for the system to **better use science and data** to support decision making.

Learning from experience

Lessons management is part of managing our growing resilience.

Continuous improvement and learning from monitoring, reporting, events, reviews and inquiries, training and exercising domestically and internationally. Carefully designed and targeted exercises lift individuals, and organisational and system processes.

- **Inquiry and review findings**, and other lessons identified, used to further strengthen the system.
- **Continuous improvement and lessons management is championed** throughout the system.
- **Multiple annual exercises**, testing system readiness to respond and recover.

3. A Professionalised Workforce (Capable People)

What NZ needs

NEMA's contribution

Enough skilled people

Sufficient skilled leaders, and response and recovery, surge, and alternative staff in the emergency management system.

The workforce contains enough people holding qualifications such as National Controller, Controller and Recovery Manager certification to support emergencies that could be long or complex.

Ongoing competence is maintained by experience, training, exercises, or opportunities such as deployments and secondments.

- **Develop response and recovery capability and capacity** across the system through training, exercising and developing clear processes.
- Increase **national response and recovery capacity and capability supporting regions**.
- Establish a pool of **surge support**, to provide capability no matter what the emergency.

An Emergency Management career pathway

An emergency management workforce in which there are career pathways, consistent and high-quality training and development, and clear professional standards and accreditation processes.

- **A national pathway** and training for statutory leadership roles.
- **Accreditation processes and qualifications** for all emergency management roles, including volunteers, surge, and alternative staff.
- **Professionalised pathways funding model** that reduces cost barriers and improves equity.

Great leaders

Improved capability and professionalism across the system. Leaders are accountable and people have the skills, knowledge and expertise at all levels to manage the increasing frequency and severity of disasters and recovery efforts.

- Ensure **accountable leaders and people**, with the right skills and expertise are in place.

Technical expertise

There is a clear articulation of what it means to be proficient in the Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) roles and ways to develop and recognise that capability.

- **CIMS 4th edition** with science advice, Māori partnerships, lessons management, and continuous improvement.
- A **standardised training programme in place across all CIMS roles** informed by science, data, communities, and lessons.

Strategic Outcome 3: An Agile and Integrated NEMA

To enable the other strategic outcomes, there is a second enabling outcome – that **NEMA is a high performing organisation, with the capabilities, culture, and ways of working to succeed.**

A strategic priority for NEMA in the first three years is to **enable our people, systems, and processes to perform.**

As a relatively new agency, we are working out who are we and how are we best to do things. We have an opportunity to set our path and culture to deliver on NEMA's vision and purpose for all New Zealanders.

Objectives

1. A Thriving and Agile Place (NEMA Workplace)
2. An Evolving and Integrated NEMA (NEMA Performance)

NEMA
Te Rākau Whakamarumarū



1. A Thriving and Agile Place (NEMA Workplace)

What NZ needs

NEMA's contribution

NEMA workforce is fit and ready

New Zealanders have trust and confidence that NEMA can operate at the top of their game.

People are clear on what we do and why we do it.

NEMA people are skilled and engaged subject matter experts in their field of expertise. They provide effective subject matter leadership to the emergency management system, particularly in times of national response and recovery.

- NEMA's **Public Sector Reputation Index** score continues to reflect public trust and confidence in the agency.
- Our people **know what good looks like, how to get there, and how their role contributes** to our strategic direction.
- NEMA people **show others the way** in emergency management, with **system leadership** and industry leading training for our people.
- Continuously **grow and develop our people** to perform effectively in their roles and be supported in their professional development.

Strong NEMA leadership

The leadership throughout NEMA enables people to flourish and maintain their wellbeing and safety.

NEMA leaders set clear expectations and direction. We celebrate great performance and support each other's achievements. But we won't shy away from tackling poor performance either.

- **Wellbeing and health and safety** are prioritised and embedded in all corporate and operational work.
- NEMA's **leadership supports our people to thrive, speak up safely, and perform at their best.**
- NEMA's **Leadership Framework** is enacted.

A representative workforce

NEMA people understand New Zealanders because NEMA reflects our nation's diversity.

A culturally capable workforce at a national level that engages appropriately and effectively with our diverse communities including iwi/Māori.

Te reo Māori me ōna tikanga is embedded in our ways of working and our people are supported to develop the cultural capability to engage better with Te Ao Māori.

- NEMA people are **culturally capable**, including understanding how the **emergency system connects with Te Ao Māori.**
- **Te Kāhui Mataara** sets NEMA's vision to recognise Māori values, knowledge, and capabilities within the emergency management system.

2. An Evolving and Integrated NEMA (NEMA Performance)

What NZ needs

NEMA's contribution

A fit for purpose national agency

New Zealand's emergency management agency operates and is structured in a way that enables it to deliver.

NEMA's operating model enables the agency to easily shift between being a steward, operator and assurer. There is clarity on the resources needed to deliver the work, the most effective structure to have, and how to best apply the resources available.

NEMA's role is not to do everything ourselves, but to coordinate and engage across the system. This requires a creative approach to delivery. NEMA influences, coordinates and guides as well as being a system regulator.

It is the norm for NEMA to leverage technology, research and data; promote continuous improvement and learning; and expect and foster innovation.

- **Responsive to government and our operating environment** with the facilities, systems and capability and capacity to lead the emergency management system.
- Effective as **operator, steward, and assurer** and in the regulator function under the CDEM Act.
- **The right workforce and structure for NEMA**, with people who show the behaviours, values and leadership needed to deliver our strategy.
- **A role model to the system** including in continuous improvement and working with our diverse communities.

Accountability

NEMA has effective corporate policies, systems and processes to enable governance, efficient delivery and accountability for performance.

Government's emergency management priorities are delivered.

There is a strategic focus on investment and implementation as per the Government Response to the Inquiry into the North Island Severe Weather Events and subsequent budget decisions.

- **Deliver on the Government emergency management priorities.**
- NEMA processes and functions are integrated and **effective in supporting our strategic purpose, vision and role.**
- **Change the emergency management system in line with government expectations, including via monitoring and reporting.**
- **Budget bids and business cases** to support emergency system transformation.

An evolving NEMA

NEMA's way of working and organising itself supports delivering the strategy and the demands on the agency. As needs and opportunities change, so does NEMA.

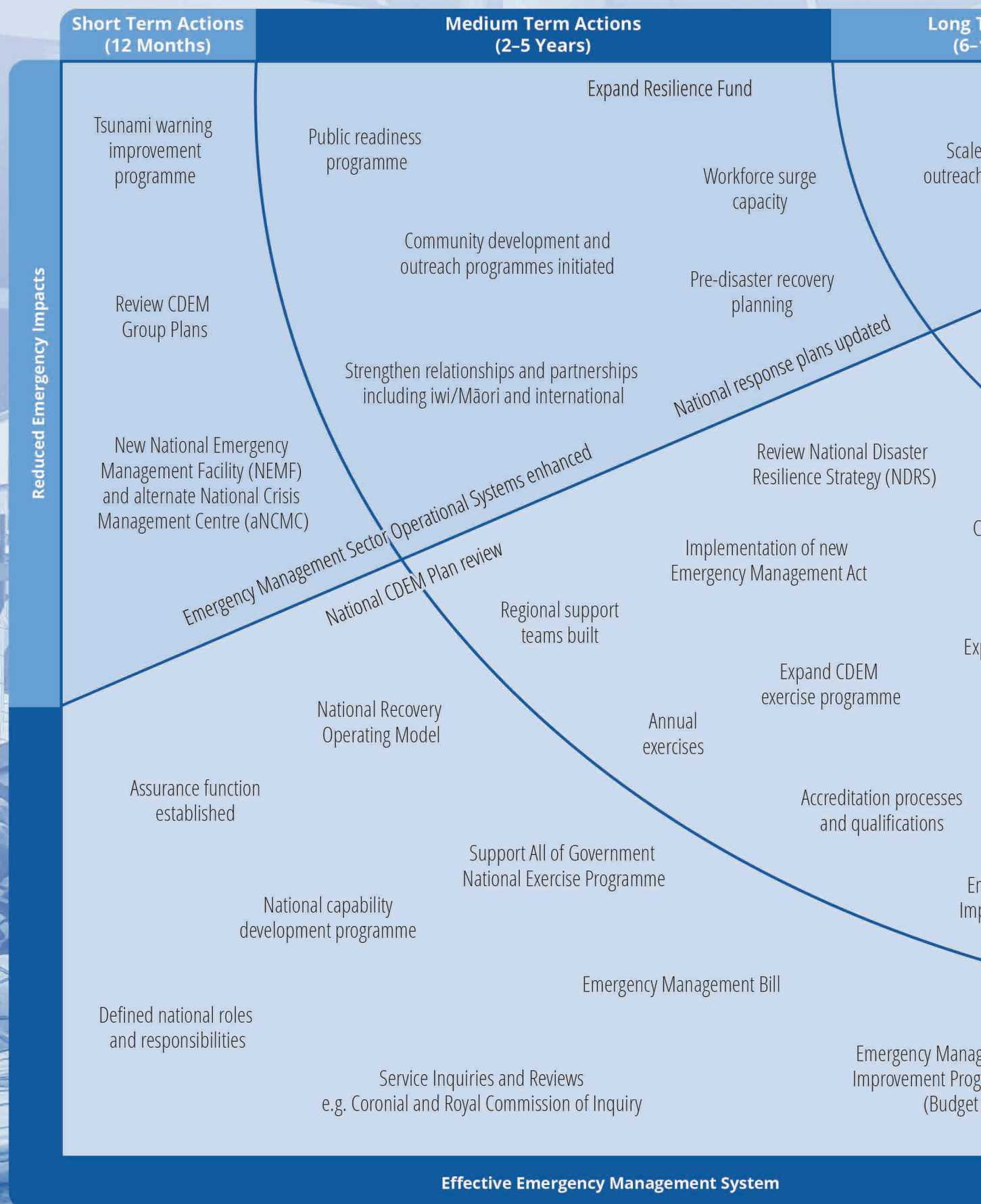
NEMA people need to be agile and able to flex to the changing demands and priorities of the organisation including transitioning into emergency response and recovery.

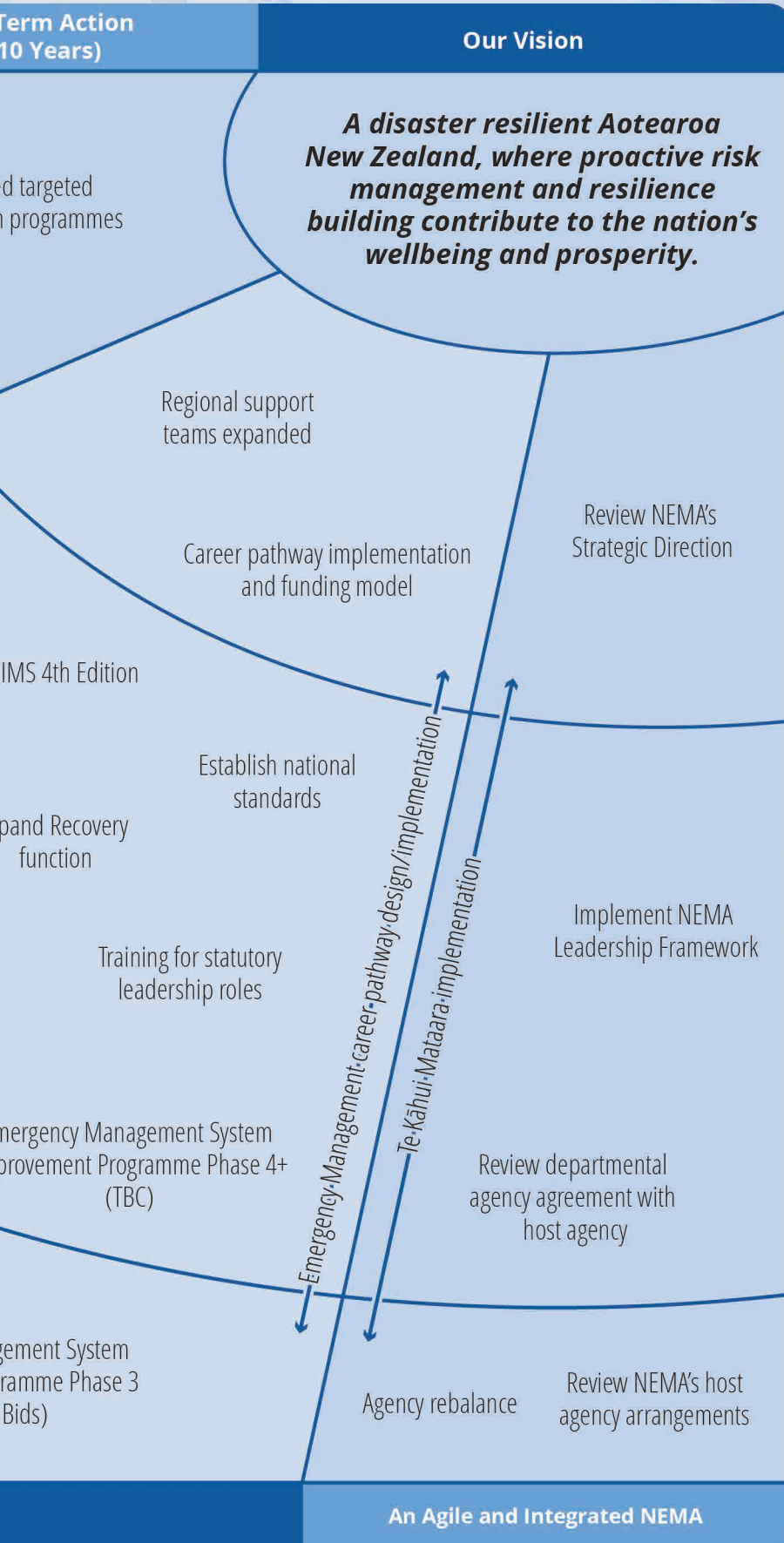
- **Continuously innovating and improving how we work**, as an organisation and as emergency management system leaders.
- NEMA's **workforce planning** builds and maintains a cohort of capable and diverse people able to deliver what is required of them.
- NEMA effectively manages the **dual role** we ask of our people (in business as usual and response / recovery).

Operation Awhina (Cyclone Gabrielle), NZDF. 2023. Image Adapted in 2025.



I Getting to 2035





Strategic Plan on a Page

Empowering our communities, preparing for and managing emergencies

Strategic Outcomes

Strategic Outcome 1: Reduced Emergency Impacts

Impacts of emergencies on people, the economy and the environment are reduced, and communities experience equitable outcomes.

Strategic Outcome 2: Reduced Emergency Impacts

The emergency management system is aligned to clear, shared values and principles.

Strategic Priorities

Strengthen operational readiness for emergency response and recovery

Lift the Emergency Management System

Objectives

1. Resilient Communities (Community Collaboration)

- Communities bounce back quicker
- Emergency management is in our DNA
- Māori perspectives and contributions
- By the community for the community

2. A Prepared Nation (Nationwide Readiness)

- We understand and manage our risks
- Everyone is ready to work together
- Planning enables rapid response and recovery
- Good global citizen

3. Interoperability (Facilities And Systems)

- Integrated data, facilities and systems
- Situational awareness
- A pool of people

1. An Enabled System

- Fit for purpose
- Role clarity
- Consistent and aligned
- Māori values and principles

2. Performance

- A system that works
- A seamless network
- Learning from experience

3. A Professional System

- Enough skilled people
- An Emergency Management System
- Great leaders
- Technical expertise

Outcome 2: Effective y Management System

Management system is well-coordinated and
shared priorities.

Strategic Outcome 3: An Agile and Integrated NEMA

NEMA is a high performing organisation, with the capabilities,
culture, and ways of working to succeed.

Emergency Management

Enable our people, systems, and processes to perform

System (System Design)

the legislation

and high standards
and knowledge

System Excellence (System Effectiveness)

works

network

experience

Specialised Workforce (Capable People)

people

Management career pathway

advertise

1. A Thriving And Agile Place (NEMA Workplace)

- NEMA workforce is fit and ready
- Strong NEMA leadership
- A representative workforce

2. An Evolving And Integrated NEMA (NEMA Performance)

- A fit for purpose national agency
- Accountability
- An evolving NEMA



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

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