



**Governing
and
Managing
Disaster
Recovery
in
Uncertain
Times:
*Towards
Enhancing
Guidance
and
Practice***

A NZ National Emergency Management Agency 2024/25 Resilience Fund Project Report

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Ehara tāku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini

My strength is not that of a single warrior, but that of many

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Opinions expressed in this report are by the writer or other attributed sources and not those of the National Emergency Management Agency.

Cover: James Edward Fitzgerald, First Superintendent of Canterbury Province 1853-57, statute erected in 1939, Rolleston Avenue, central Christchurch; image by the writer, 2014.

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Executive Summary

Section 1: Purpose and Scope

This project: Examines how disaster recovery in New Zealand is governed and managed. It reviews international and domestic frameworks, legislation, existing guidance, and case studies to identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improvement. The defined scope of ‘governance’ extends beyond government to include private sector and civil society actors.

The intent: Is not to measure the “success” of particular recoveries, but rather to distil attributes and practices conducive to effective governance, with emphasis on scalable, collaborative arrangements across local, regional, and national levels.

This report: Was developed as a resource document for those involved in regional and local recovery governance and management to assist them in broadening and deepening knowledge that might assist pre-event recovery preparedness. Case studies illustrate post-event recovery governance structures and processes to support this. These exemplify a ‘menu’ of options that is assessed in relation to four main recovery contexts and a set of ‘first order’ considerations influencing the selection of option appropriate to circumstance.

Conclusions and recommended actions: Are provided for consideration by those including NEMA involved in establishing direction and preparing guidance for the emergency management sector and system improvement.

Section 2: A Governance Framework for Effective Recovery

Disaster recovery: Occurs in contexts of high uncertainty requiring different approaches than ordinary ‘peacetime’ arrangements, but ‘good governance’ principles continue to apply. Effective governance requires ethical, compassionate, and adaptive leadership; strong trust-based collaboration; and risk governance that integrates public, private, and community actors.

International guidance: Suggests three basic models for governing arrangements recur: (a) empowering existing institutions, (b) creating a new recovery agency, or (c) hybrid approaches. Effectiveness depends a lot on circumstances but clear roles, transparent decision-making, community participation, flexibility, and long-term resilience building are common attributes. The concept of subsidiarity through decision-making at the lowest effective level is emphasised.

Review of the Australian experience: Suggests stronger pre-event planning, an enduring national recovery framework, and greater attention to recovery evaluation. Their practice underlines both the benefits and limitations of formal frameworks: while community-led recovery is promoted, as elsewhere tensions arise when centralised mechanisms override local leadership.

Section 3: Disaster Recovery in New Zealand Law and Guidance

Evolution: The legislative framework has grown incrementally, often in reaction to major disasters (e.g., 1931 Napier Earthquake, Canterbury 2010-11). The CDEM Act 2002 institutionalised recovery within local government, but its provisions remain response-oriented.

Current framework: The 2016 amendment formalised Recovery Managers and transition periods but left major-event governance under-developed. Local CDEM Groups show variable preparedness; national options remain ad hoc, often requiring bespoke legislation.

Guidelines: Directors' Guidelines in 2018 and 2020 set ambitious expectations for pre-event recovery planning and collaboration, but uptake is uneven. For severe events, collaborative central-local structures are envisaged, yet practical examples remain limited.

Reform and Future Directions: CDEM Act replacement and DPMC's new "Recovery Settings" tools aim to make national decision-making more systematic, but risk reinforcing centralised control unless regional and local capacity is strengthened.

NZ Recovery Reviews and Literature: Repeated reviews highlight recurring issues, limited clarity of roles, weak pre-event planning, insufficient iwi engagement, and lack of a permanent recovery office. A growing recovery governance literature stresses decentralised, flexible, and collaborative approaches.

Section 4: Case Studies

Canterbury Earthquakes (2010-11): Government created CERA under bespoke legislation. While centralised control enabled decisive action, it sidelined local leadership and weakened community trust. Waimakariri District exemplified more community-centred recovery within existing frameworks.

Hurunui/Kaikōura Earthquakes (2016): Recovery largely under CDEM framework, with Kaikōura requiring major external support. Collaborative innovations (e.g., the Steering Group and the NCTIR alliance) proved effective.

Buller Floods (2021-22): Locally led with central funding. The Buller Recovery Steering Group evolved into a durable collaborative forum, now guiding long-term resilience planning.

North Island Severe Weather Events (2023): Rapidly developed centralised framework (Taskforce, Recovery Unit) aiming to enable "locally led recovery" but much decision-making stayed Cabinet-centric. Regional innovations, especially the Hawke's Bay's Recovery Agency and Oversight Board, illustrated how collaborative governance can complement elected and emergency management structures. Other regions (Taranaki, Wairarapa, Auckland, Northland) revealed varied capacities and approaches.

Options for Recovery Governing and Managing Arrangements – A core set of considerations in resolving an option for arrangements in a particular situation are summarised. Options illustrated by the case studies, exemplifying approaches in four main recovery contexts are overviewed for their advantages and challenges. These contexts differ according to the severity and duration of the event on the one hand, and its geographic spread on the other.

Section 5: Conclusions and Recommended Actions

Several overarching conclusions are reached:

- *Collaborative structures are essential:* Effective recovery governance must reconcile competing priorities across multiple actors. Structures and processes that enable collaboration and trust-building should be developed and codified.
- *Central-Local alignment requires careful balance:* While government must manage fiscal risk, subsidiarity should guide recovery governance. Local and regional leadership should be empowered to lead recoveries with central support.

- *Pre-event recovery planning is critical:* The absence of pre-prepared frameworks, funding mechanisms, and governance arrangements hampers effectiveness. Investment in recovery readiness at local and regional levels is needed.
- *Governance decisions should be timely and transparent:* The choice of structures and processes for recovery is often rushed and ad hoc. Prepared options and clear criteria should guide decision-making immediately after disasters.
- *A National Recovery Governance Framework is needed:* An integrated framework should bring together legislation, policy, and guidance. It should codify scalable governance models, collaborative principles, and processes for decision-making.
- *Recovery is distinct from response:* Treating recovery as an extension of response undermines its long-term focus. Governance must prioritise sustainable outcomes beyond immediate crisis management.
- *Leadership matters:* Compassionate, ethical, and adaptive leadership is a core attribute of effective recovery governance. Building this capacity at local and regional level is a priority.
- *Learning and evaluation need to be systematized:* There is no consistent methodology for assessing recovery effectiveness. Developing agreed evaluation frameworks will improve accountability, transparency, and institutional learning.

From these a number of specific actions are recommended. These are put forward for consideration in the context of the Emergency Management System Improvement Programme, in collaboration with CDEM Groups and are summarised below.

1. *Develop a National Framework for Recovery Governance* - led by a set of principles and normative programme characteristics.
2. *Codify Recovery Governance Models* – A toolkit of options and relevant considerations in selecting recovery governance arrangements, to inform the national ‘Recovery Settings’ decision-making framework and local/regional decision-making on preferred arrangements.
3. *Mandate Recovery Readiness Benchmarks* - minimum expectations for pre- and post-event recovery planning and governance capability.
4. *Support Collaborative Structures* - a nationally endorsed toolkit for establishing and maintaining collaborative recovery governance arrangements.
5. *Link Recovery Governance to Risk Financing* - guidance on how recovery funding arrangements interrelate with governance structures and accountability requirements.
6. *Establish a Lessons Management System* - methodology for assessing recovery effectiveness and success that informs a national database of recovery governance lessons.

Section-by Section Summary

1.0 Introductory Context and Key Terms (pp34-41)

- This project considers governance and management of disaster recovery in New Zealand. These exist within the framework of institutional arrangements that has evolved over time and is now being tested by disaster events of increasing frequency and scale requiring sustained recovery efforts.
- A consequence of this is an apparent widening in the range of recovery governance and diversity in management arrangements. This is particularly so for events of national significance and in circumstances that are judged to have overwhelmed the ability of existing institutions to cope resulting in new structures and processes emerging.
- ‘Flex’ and adaptability to circumstances is a strength of emergency management. But reflections on the prevalence of bespoke recovery governance arrangements points to absences and shortfalls in direction, guidance and codified practice that might better assist recovery preparedness, activation, and delivery effectiveness in the future.
- The increasing diversity of adjustments to existing, as well as additional structures and processes that are evident in recent recoveries are examined in this report in the context of a high level review of international and local practice guidance for recovery governance.
- This report considers recoveries for significant events above a defined severity threshold; recovery in the holistic sense that the CDEM Act does; and, recovery governance in its broadest sense to reach beyond ‘government’ to include engagement of the private sector and civil society.
- It’s aim is not to seek to ‘measure’ the success or otherwise of any particular recovery effort – this would be a large and concentrated exercise in itself. Rather it seeks to identify from an appraisal across a range of reported and observed experience, factors that are conducive to effective recovery governance approaches and practices.
- Given the scope and scale of what is being appraised it is at best a high level review seeking to identify or confirm patterns and themes where direction, guidance and codified practice improvement might be of benefit.
- A strong focus for this is on enhancing approaches and arrangements that lie at regional and local levels. These draw on the ordinary resources of local government to be ready to stand up a recovery effort drawing on structures and processes anticipated to be in a constant state of readiness.
- Options illustrated by the case studies, exemplifying approaches in four main recovery contexts are overviewed for their advantages and challenges. A core set of considerations in resolving an option for arrangements in a particular situation are summarised.
- Support for this project is through several regional/group emergency management agencies whose recovery specialists are collaborating to improve recovery guidance and practice. They are particularly interested in arrangements as they scale and adjust to progressively more severe events.
- These require balancing the impulse for centralisation as the scale of consequences and fiscal risk to Government increases, with well-founded subsidiarity principles and documented collaborative governance practices.

- In this context governance is not the singular structure for and act of decision-making by a peak government body – rather it recognizes that (recovery) decisions are made based on complex relationships between many actors with different priorities. It is how these competing priorities are reconciled that is the essence of the concept of (recovery) governance.
- The importance of governance as a set of structural arrangements and processes through which coordinated decision-making and action takes place is precisely because complex problems such as those associated with disasters do not fit neatly within the purview of individual organizations and institutions.
- International guidance on recovery governance has continued to evolve in recent years as an organising concept to more closely define the normative institutional arrangements for recovery. Among the elements to be secured, arranged and scaled for any given recovery and of particular concern to this project, is how effective collaboration is activated as a driver for delivering other elements.
- This report has been prepared amidst protracted emergency management legislation reform, related system improvement, and parallel policy development. All this adds uncertainty in terms of how priorities and institutional arrangements will evolve over coming years.

2.0 A Governance Framework for Effective Recovery (pp41-71)

2.1 ‘Good Governance’

and Leadership in Crises and Disasters (pp41-46)

- Recovery is typically undertaken under conditions of high uncertainty, not just due to the unpredictable characteristics of how a disaster might play out, but also because of the ongoing turbulence in the socio-political environment.
- From the standpoint of ordinary governance arrangements and behaviours in ‘peacetime’ settings it is often difficult to appreciate how different these might need to be for effective recovery.
- Government, as with the governors for private companies and non-governmental entities are typically attuned to predictable and repeatable requirements. But it is frequently the case the same personnel are activated in dealing with disasters to perform differing roles and responsibilities requiring much less practiced competencies and behaviours.
- This challenge of stepping out of habitual to decidedly different and uncertain circumstances draws nevertheless on the characteristics of good governance and especially how crises at the entity level are deliberated on and resolved. This injects the prerequisites of leadership values and behaviours in crisis circumstances to the discussion of what might otherwise be seen as ‘dry’ structural and procedural attributes.
- A brief review has been undertaken of the stated behaviours and processes that constitute ‘good governance’ in New Zealand for companies and central and local government entities. There is a high level of congruence across these three governance domains in the principles for ‘good governance’ design and implementation.

- Less common for advice and training on governance in disaster circumstances is how these might be expressed but in ways that flex and adapt to crisis circumstances. Differing role boundaries, new ways of working under pressure, the importance of trust and external relationships, personal resilience and agility in decision making have all been identified as important by crisis leaders.
- There is a vast literature on leadership, less so in disaster settings. A definition by some leading thinkers that resonates in this context however is “leadership is not simply about getting people to do things. It is about getting them to want to do things. Leadership then, concerns the shaping of beliefs, desires, and priorities. It involves sharing a vision of how the world is and should be. Ultimately it is about securing influence not compliance”.
- Disasters expose and magnify vulnerabilities. The principles and practice of ethical and compassionate leadership, increasingly incorporated into mainstream private and public sector governance are highly relevant to the challenges of recovery governance.
- Concepts of adaptive and systems leadership are also relevant...’systems leadership’ rejects the idea that complex policy problems can be solved by a few heroic leaders in the centre of government or at the top of organisations. Many people need to contribute to systems leadership by collaborating to harness the skills of actors across government and outside of government.
- A systems view of leadership in recovery governance suggests it may also be understood as inclusive of building capacity in the wider citizenry in addition to a narrower view of “correct” decisions and outcomes.

Collaborative Governance (p46-49)

- Good governance and the leadership behaviours that are conducive to community and other recovery actor facing relationships leads into a focus on the characteristics of effective collaborative governance.
- The emergency management literature abounds with the term ‘coordination’. It is suggested significant differences between the terms cooperation, coordination and collaboration apply in recovery settings. In coordinated efforts, parties intentionally align their activities to achieve a predetermined goal. Collaborative initiatives however, unite parties to create something new that neither could accomplish alone. The outcome is often uncertain from the start. Collaboration necessitates strong interpersonal trust.
- To effectively prepare for and respond to complex crises, an array of responsible organizations must be able to collaborate across sectors, disciplines, jurisdictions, territorial boundaries, and levels of authority...this necessitates collaborative governance and collaborative crisis management capacities.
- Central to these is establishing and sustaining trust among collaborating parties. Frequently remarked on ‘in peacetime’ let alone crises circumstances is the lack of trust in government by communities and angst over why and what to do about it. Less common is consideration of the nature, extent, and implications of the level of trust by governments in communities as integral to this reciprocal relationship.

Risk Governance (p49)

- Collaborative disaster recovery may be seen as a subset of the expansive concept of risk governance. Risk governance refers to how public authorities, public sector employees, media, private sector, and civil society collaborate to manage and reduce disasters and climate related risks at local, regional, and national levels.
- It emphasises the horizontal connections between government ministries and departments, as well as vertical connections between local, regional, and departmental governments, and specific roles assigned to related institutions.

2.2 International Experience and Guidance (pp50-65)

Models for Institutional Arrangements (pp50-55)

- The broad and inclusive concept of recovery governance outlined above is described in international recovery agency guidance and based on wide-ranging observed practice of what makes for successful recoveries.
- While the experience base for these observations is frequently larger scale international disasters, very comparable challenges exist in New Zealand for significant disaster recoveries that typically transcend subnational jurisdictions. Often these may overwhelm local and regional recovery management capacities and draw on national level resources.
- ‘Business as usual’ arrangements are generally ill-equipped to deal with the complex task of recovery from multi-jurisdictional, significant disasters. New organisational arrangements and sometimes wholly new agencies emerge.
- Successful post-disaster recovery requires increased alignment and communication, both horizontally and vertically. This is critical to managing the increased flow of funds, information, and other resources across different aspects of recovery - social, built, natural, and economic. If multiple subnational or local jurisdictions are involved, collaboration among authorities is essential.
- Determining the ‘right’ set of institutional arrangements while dependent on a range of factors, generally aligns with one of three basic models – strengthen and align existing institutions; establish a new agency; or, a hybrid approach that creates a new unit within an existing government institution.
- There are pros and cons of each model. A starting point is rapid assessment of the capacity and capability of existing arrangements to scale and adapt to address the consequences of the disaster. The relative merits of powering up existing agencies/local governments versus establishing a new entity to lead and coordinate recovery are context dependent, strongly influenced by the strength and receptiveness of existing local (recovery) governance and the level of pre-event preparedness.
- A question that arises from this is the level of commitment and resourcing to strengthen local and regional recovery governance capacities and capabilities in pre-event circumstances. This is so they may be able to form the basis of institutional arrangements for recoveries that effectively accommodate the challenges posed in the aftermath of significant events.

- A strong theme in disaster governance literature promotes increased decentralization and greater decision-making power to local government. Underlying this is the concept of subsidiarity as an organizing principle which says that action should be taken at the lowest effective level of governance.
- Aside from capacity uncertainty, local government's potential contributions to long term sustainable recovery and increased disaster resilience are significant – existing presence, context familiarity, visible accountability, and ability to align recovery efforts with long term plans are cited advantages.
- Establishing a special purpose agency afresh may face several challenges, including delays in establishment, confusion over jurisdictional authority, and lack of input from local governments into policy related decision-making. There is a tendency for such agencies to centralize decision making processes which impacts the legitimacy and transparency of decisions made for local communities..
- Most disaster recovery governance systems combine elements of centralised control, and decentralized implementation and local-level recovery planning. Those that spread control of the recovery process across multiple levels of government are more effective than those that concentrate power and authority at only one level of the governmental system.
- Further, the most effective type of recovery organisation is one that collaborates with and supports existing agencies in doing what they do best..."adding value not in performing a radical new function, but by helping existing public and private organisations to perform more effectively during the compressed time frame of the post-disaster environment".
- Such an organisation in 'normal times' can focus on developing recovery readiness, cultivate strong working relationships with stakeholders, design recovery programmes and assistance measures, and recruit and maintain a specialised recovery workforce.

Institutional Attributes for Effective Recovery (pp55- 61)

- Institutional model in terms of structure is influential on but not in itself a predictor of success. Aside from the question of on which model might institutional arrangements for recovery have been based, is that of what are their attributes for effective recovery in any given set of circumstances? To identify those most frequently in evidence a scoping level examination of the international literature on recovery governance has been undertaken.
- From this review the identified key attributes that make these structures and processes effective are summarised below;
 1. Clear roles, responsibilities, structures, and processes - within a collaborative framework that assists integration across levels and sectors.
 2. Effective leadership and political will - not in order to exercise positional authority, but rather to exhibit ethical and compassionate leadership consistent with the principles of good governance.
 3. Transparent and accountable decision-making - decisions are evidence-based, transparent, and subject to oversight.
 4. Community centred approach - involving local communities in decision-making, planning, and implementation.

5. Inclusivity and equity - addressing the needs of vulnerable groups/ disproportionately impacted communities.
6. Adaptability and flexibility - Structures that allow adjustments based on changing conditions, needs, and lessons learned.
7. Resilience building - incorporating long - term resilience into recovery plans.
8. Integration of technology and innovation - leveraging technology and increasing information flows.
9. Learning-oriented processes - incorporating lessons from previous disasters to improve future responses.
10. Long-term vision and sustainability - integration of recovery plans with regional development planning.

Attributes related to pre- and post-event recovery arrangements (pp61-65)

- The literature on recovery attributes has been considered for insights from pre-event preparedness and post-event recovery planning and management. This is focused at local and regional levels, and particularly in relation to governance and institutional frameworks.
- One of the best ways to promote well-defined roles and responsibilities is by pre-event disaster planning, key elements being:
 - Risk governance that spans all levels and sectors
 - Pre-prepared enabling legal frameworks and instruments
 - Pre-established funding mechanisms
 - Training and capacity building
- Such planning enables rapid activation post-event, leveraging pre-established governance systems for immediate recovery coordination.
- Interlinkages between pre-event and post-event efforts include governance continuity, realised capacity building, data and resource alignment, and planning based on credible scenarios.

2.3 Australian Guidance and Experience (pp65-71)

- Relevant Australian guidance and experience has been considered separately given the many common affiliations, comparable institutional norms for governance, and, a more familiar and relevant experience base to draw on.
- That said, there are some distinct differences in Australia's emergency management arrangements arising from it being a commonwealth of states under a federal government structure.
- The level of inquiry upon which this section of the report is based is an indicative sounding of the Australian experience and knowledge base.
- Australian disaster recovery governance is formalised in federal and state laws and through a deliberative Framework that follows from wide engagement and which has been regularly refreshed since first being established in 1986.
- State government recovery planning appears to embrace pre-event preparedness more so than in New Zealand at regional level.

- A variety of regional recovery coordination mechanisms such as committees and appointed officials bridge the gap between state and local governments and help manage recovery across multiple council areas.
- The integrating National Recovery Framework sets out recovery principles and programme characteristics. It provides that some events will warrant activating extraordinary collaborative governance arrangements, recognising, and mitigating anticipated needs and risks.
- It sets out the criteria for the design of any new governance arrangements and provides model arrangements for activating national collaborative governance arrangements.
- Its implementation, and practice generally is supported by a substantial investment in a Knowledge Hub financially assisted by but managed independent from the Australian Government.
- There is much to recommend in Australian practice about the level of recognition for and investment in an integrating recovery framework and the guidance resources that are aligned with it. It provides for and encourages the participation of a wide range of government and non-government actors consistent with an all-of-government and all-of-society approach to recovery.
- A notable feature of this is the provision in most jurisdictions for the establishment of local recovery groups or committees as mechanisms to further the sought after community led approach to recovery.
- That said, the practical experience of the Framework in recent significant events has indicated shortfalls and a degree of controversy. In one instance the adoption of new institutional arrangements while planned federal and state-level coordination mechanisms were not used; while in another event those systems and tools that were used did not lend themselves to genuine community-centred recovery.
- These comments are intended as neither a critique of the Framework nor a conclusive inquiry into the full range of disaster recovery experience. Rather, they provide a snapshot of the challenges of aligning the declared and default in terms of planned approaches versus lived experience.
- Reflective of the body of Australian knowledge and practice, is the commitment to develop and populate a programme for monitoring and evaluating recovery programmes.
- The Australian Recovery Evaluation Framework developed for this purpose specifically addresses governance process, community centredness in recovery governance, effectiveness, efficiency, and alignment in implementation with the National Disaster Recovery Framework.
- In general there is good alignment between the structure, and process-oriented set of attributes of institutional arrangements for effective recovery set out in this report, with the more programme-specific and outcome-oriented Evaluation Framework criteria.

3.0 Disaster Recovery in New Zealand Law and Practice Guidance (pp71-110)

3.1 Evolution in the CDEM context (pp71-73)

- To assist understanding recovery governance issues and options reflected in institutional arrangements for recent disaster recoveries, it is useful to briefly consider the evolution of recovery related law that brings us to the era of the CDEM Act 2002.
- That Act and related instruments provide the ‘normative’ recovery framework, institutionalised in Government policy through which it intends disaster recovery should be governed and managed.
- That evolution is not a steady one, frequently occurring in steps correlated with the occurrence of significant disaster events, albeit often with significant elapsed time to pass into law and guidance lessons from them.
- Origins of the disaster governance framework in New Zealand stem from recovery from the 1931 Napier Earthquake, being a bespoke, centralised approach to reconstruction in the absence of not much else to call on at the time.
- It was not until the 1980s that recovery was depicted more as an integrated and holistic concept, based on sustainability and subsidiarity principles that place lower levels of Government in a guided responsibilities framework.
- A significant historical review suggested for significant events limited specificity in law about who and how decisions would be made and recovery practically delivered, meant that the framework was not truly tested until the Canterbury Earthquakes of 2010-11, found wanting, and supplanted in that case by bespoke legislation and government agency arrangements.
- At least until that experience closely followed by other significant events it is suggested that comparatively little had been done to identify and develop disaster recovery knowledge, capabilities and powers, the system was still response oriented, and therefore a functional system for recovery did not exist in New Zealand.
- Despite recent amendments to the Act in 2016, cementing the role of Recovery Manager as a statutory official, the picture of a system of elevated ambition by design, but of limited capacity and capability in practice relying ‘in the thick of it’ on significant external ad hoc resourcing as the norm largely remains.
- Another significant review of the framework coinciding with the 2010-11 earthquakes concludes that necessary emergency powers for recovery were absent from other legislation governing the built environment meaning ad hoc override provisions would, as was to prove the case, be necessary.

3.2 The current legislative framework for recovery governance (pp73-80)

- Recovery governance at regional and local levels sits within an emergency management ecosystem which is ‘grafted onto’ local government structure whereby CDEM Groups as the ‘peak’ decision making bodies exist as Joint Committees under Local Government legislation.
- Outside of the ‘CDEM world’ there is not wide appreciation of their role and function as significant and longstanding collaborative governance entities. Inside this world repeated

national Groups' capability assessments suggest variable commitment and practice for recovery preparedness, being least developed among main competency areas.

- The CDEM Amendment Act 2016 was a pivotal change in recognition of how recovery activities might be governed and managed under the Act through formalising transition periods to recovery and providing Recovery Managers with coercive powers in those periods.
- That said it was acknowledged at the time as a first phase of reform in provisions for recovery, focused on small to moderate scale emergencies and to achieve consistency within the Act, options which propose amendments drew heavily on the existing structure of Response provisions in the Act. An intended second phase focused on large-scale emergencies (i.e. of the nature of the Canterbury earthquakes) did not eventuate.
- A significant new requirement for Groups to engage in strategic recovery planning was imposed and substantial new guidance for this provided in 2018. In general the potential of this for pre-event preparedness and developing collaborative governance arrangements in the opinion of the writer is as yet far from being realised.
- In parallel the role of National Recovery Manager, if appointed in event circumstances, has been formalised from a previous Coordinator role who may give direction to Group and Local Recovery Managers. Those circumstances are briefly described in the National CDEM Plan as being where the scale of co-ordination is beyond the resources of the CDEM Group or the consequences of the emergency are nationally significant.
- That Plan also authorises the option of establishing a new recovery agency to manage and co-ordinate the Government's interest in the recovery. It directs its operating mode to be one of acting in partnership with the affected local authorities and CDEM Groups. It may be given specific roles, responsibilities, and powers.
- Apart from these brief references in secondary legislation there is little other direction and guidance as to how the institutional design for nationally significant disasters might be realised; what factors, evidence, or advice and from whom brought to bear in determining governance and how subordinate entities will interact within what might be 'de novo' national arrangements.
- The recent Recovery Settings policy addresses this issue – see below – but inside the Executive at the centre and outside of the 'status quo' emergency management framework.
- Apart from these secondary legislative provisions reference in primary legislation to recovery governance is also limited, implicitly relying on the hierarchy of upwards referral and downwards direction through CIMS that is grounded in Response phase arrangements.
- The National CDEM Plan as secondary legislation expands on CDEM Group recovery activities beyond those in the Act. It is itself supplemented by a Guide while statutory provision is also made for 'Directors Guidelines'.
- This composite of primary and secondary legislation, related guidance, and statutorily mandated guidelines are not well integrated, nor typically considered together, nor generally appreciated in their extent and effect.
- Group Recovery Managers, (as do Group Controllers) have direct statutory authorities and regulatory responsibilities, are employed by administering authorities while being

appointed by Groups who don't share the same powers. It could be argued this confuses the separation of governance and management roles and relationships as a tenant of good governance.

- This is further complicated by the appointment of a Co-ordinating Executive Groups (CEGs) in the Act, advisory to the Group which consists of Chief Executives of constituent councils and Response focused emergency service agency representatives. Groups themselves typically have a Group Manager employed by the administering authority and a Group Recovery Manager as their appointment.
- In practice (regional) Groups may vary along a spectrum of centralised (as for Unitary Councils) to highly decentralised with emergency management functions distributed under the control of territorial councils and a small Group Office. Groups rely on the collective agreement by participating Councils to budgets in a tight fiscal environment.
- The structure of authorised powers, advisory roles, accountabilities, and variable on the ground arrangements for emergency management is complex. It adds considerable challenge to the exercise of the significant responsibilities of Groups under the Act as collaborative governance entities and as strategic recovery planning bodies – both pre-event and upon recovery activation.
- The only specific territorial authority recovery role is to recommend to Group a Local Recovery Manager appointment, to be available if required in event circumstances, the appointees for which usually have a Council 'day job'. But otherwise these fall largely within the ambit of their general CDEM duties under the Act and are somewhat legislatively opaque as Group participants. Local Recovery Managers ability to develop and maintain 'recovery readiness' are through observation and experience of the writer, variable due to the appointees typical role duality.
- Across the emergency management system are a wide variety of organisations and agencies with roles to play in recovery. Those of lifeline utilities are scheduled by the Act and a wide range of other organisations and agencies are dealt with by appendices to the National CDEM Plan that also introduce the concept of clusters and standing 'sector coordinating entities'.
- There is a strong Response focus in all of this, with the role of agencies and groups across the other three of the '4Rs' including Recovery largely implicit.

3.3 Guidelines for Recovery Governance and Management Activities (pp80-88)

- Statutorily authorised Directors Guidelines help implement legislative direction for recovery governance and management. For strategic recovery planning these have been in place for 7 years with detailed operational recovery management guidance available since the early 2000s. They are both expansive and quite detailed in the anticipated level of planning activity by Groups in pre-event readiness.
- They anticipate extensive relationship development across all actors with a role to play in recovery. That said they are relatively limited in specificity of candidate structures and processes when dealing with recovery governance - the capacity, capability, collaboration, and leadership needed to strategically plan for and support recovery activities. 'Coordination' tends to be a catchall for all forms of shared endeavour.

- It is still relatively recent in the 5 year-cycle of Group plan review since the 2018 Guidelines for strategic recovery planning took effect. From observation by the writer, the awareness and extent across Groups in uptake of the level of ambition they exemplify has been variable.
- A model arrangement for governance and management of recovery at regional and local levels for post-event activation is provided. This is focused on the core recovery team for a given event, connecting upwards to the ongoing emergency management structure. It depicts relationships with the many other recovery actors as operational.
- It reflects a hierarchical rather than network approach that recognises the diversity relationships among recovery related entities and is pitched at smaller scale recoveries within the Group/territorial authority frame of reference. How the framework in practice is scalable/scaled for differing types and intensities of events is not developed. There is the suggestion of ‘bespoke’ augmentation and past a certain point of significance, wholly new entities are given mandate but little form is suggested.
- Guidance for recovery operations produced by the Wellington Regional Emergency Management Office does however consider how governance arrangements and recovery coordination might evolve and adapt for events of increasing severity across five levels.
- For ‘severe’ and ‘extreme’ events at levels 4 and 5 intensity that span local and regional boundaries, central/local collaborative governance structures are envisaged, including the option of an Independent Crown Entity with a mix of representatives in the governance body.
- In summary and in the opinion of the writer there is an evident need to develop thinking, document options, and describe practice in recovery governance consistent with the learned experience elsewhere on the merits of collaborative arrangements. This is further informed by consideration of recent recovery practices in Section 4.0 that suggests variation on the model approach is more common than not.

3.4 Framework Development Looking Forward (pp89-96)

- For almost 10 years now since policy work on the 2016 CDEM Amendment Act there has been a continuing flow of reviews and legislative reform initiatives relating to emergency management.
- The Ministerial Inquiry into the 2023 North Island severe weather events among many reviews focused on the Response phase and was the trigger for a further, in progress, reform of the CDEM Act through withdrawal and replacement in its entirety. At the time of writing this is at the consultation stage before a new Bill will be introduced.
- While consulted issues did not directly address Recovery policy settings, modernising and strengthening the EM system legislative framework could through implementation have benefits for recovery governance, e.g. strengthening, and enabling iwi Māori participation in emergency management.
- Government has adopted in parallel a five year Investment and Implementation Roadmap for strengthening the EM System that suggests over time enhanced capability and capacity may develop for recovery preparedness and implementation.

- While this would occur within recovery related policy settings that are confirmed through a new Emergency Management Act, those at the time of writing that relate to recovery do not look to be different to those in the current CDEM Act 2002, as amended in 2016.
- A concurrent workstream through DPMC at the centre of the Executive has sought to systematise the process of decision-making by Government on recovery policy settings in the immediate aftermath of a disaster of national significance.
- This acknowledges that Government may choose to tailor recovery settings to fit the type, scale, and impact of an event based on recovery approaches beyond standard emergency management arrangements. Those for recent significant event have varied, driven by immediate decision-making that has not been supported by clear options about settings or criteria to work through those choices.
- The recent Cabinet approved scope of the suite of decision-making tools addresses five key categories of recovery with possibly more to come. Two of these encompass recovery governance - leadership, including the degree to which recovery is locally or centrally led; and, enabling mechanisms, including legislative instruments and additional funding support arrangements.
- This approach could be seen as a response to the limits and uncertainties of current 'status quo' system settings at the national level for significant events; filling to a degree the 'phase 2' reform space left open following the 2016 amendments to the Act. This includes where significant 'extraordinary' appropriations are made with the expectation that government will have significant oversight of this expenditure, with associated accountability mechanisms strongly influencing recovery governance arrangements.
- A spectrum range of leadership options are depicted, ranging from 'locally-led, centrally supported' - through 'shared recovery governance' - to 'centrally led-locally informed'.
- The system and process the recovery settings tools bring to preparing advice and guiding government decision-making in relation to recovery settings in the aftermath of a nationally significant event do not in themselves seek to modify any existing emergency management system settings but likely have the practical effect of doing so.
- The potential exists for adoption of the tools as a guide for decision-making to assist making the process for assembly of viewpoints, weightings, and advice to be more ordered and transparent. How professional emergency management expertise and the views of others in government and further afield will be canvassed and brought to bear rely on the process orchestrated by DPMC.
- While the settings options include centralised recovery governance they also note collaborative or shared recovery structures as options. Governments' discretion to establish the former and a level of encouragement of the latter are contained in status quo recovery governance settings.
- However they are currently undeveloped in the context of pre-event recovery preparedness and post-event activation. Evidence suggests investment in regional/local recovery governance arrangements and the corresponding level of Government's confidence in 'local leadership' to partner with are highly correlated.
- Under-developed recovery capabilities and capacities at regional/local levels risks greater centrally determined and lesser collaborative and locally influenced arrangements than might otherwise be the case.

3.5 Recovery Reviews (pp96-103)

- Other than the case studies of recent recoveries considered in Section 4.0 a range of other recent recoveries have been subject to review, the findings of which as they may bear on recovery governance are relevant and useful to note.
- The most significant 20th century disaster event in New Zealand was the 3 February 1931 Napier Earthquake. The 1931-35 recovery from this disaster is widely cited in disaster recovery literature as a 'model' of early 20th-century centralised urban reconstruction.
- The Commission established to oversee the recovery at arm's length from and granted wide powers by Government may be seen as a form of collaborative governance.
- Apart from architectural legacy through enforced measures, the recovery set an institutional precedent for later disaster recovery efforts and was one of several cited case studies drawn on in considering arrangements for the 2010-11 Canterbury Earthquake Sequence recovery.
- A suite of recoveries from five regional scale events that occurred between 2005 and 2014 across five CDEM Group have previously been reviewed. All were arranged under CDEM Act 2002 provisions and in effect tested the model at this level. Critical success factors from the review aligned well with the 'institutional attribute for effective recovery' identified in this report, including the importance of leadership approach and relationship management.
- Partnership between government, regional services and community was identified in a subsequent and more detailed examination of the recovery from the 2005 Matata debris flow as essential to successful disaster recovery.
- Several reviews have addressed the recovery arising from the effects of ex-Tropical Cyclone Debbie following by Cyclone Cook on the Whakatāne District that included extensive flooding of the town of Edgecumbe in early April 2017.
- Among the findings were that role and responsibility clarity and familiarity both before and during the recovery enhanced recovery effectiveness. This includes a stronger governance participation by Iwi/Māori arising from preexisting relationships.
- The National Recovery Manager position and Office were activated facilitating both vertical (all-of-government) and horizontal integration mechanisms, something that can be anticipated and prepared for pre-event. "*External agencies played a significant role in recovery...the benefits of collaboration in recovery cannot be highlighted enough*".
- In events of scale relative to the capacity of the district council such as this, the extent of resources called upon and functional integration of the core recovery team's work with that of the Council becomes such that a hybrid model between the Team and Council business units develops as the recovery progresses.
- The final event recovery review noted is that more recently completed in 2023 in relation to the recovery from the Whakaari White Island volcanic eruption in December 2019. This event had many unusual circumstantial features, and so the recovery provided a testing environment for recovery framework and practice guidance.
- This review explicitly addressed recovery governance and leadership, pointing to lessons arising from the widely cited or indicated lack of a developed pre-event commonly held

understanding of roles, responsibilities and how recovery frameworks support and enable local processes, structures, and ways of working.

- The review also considered lessons for interagency interface and coordination. Wide-ranging engagement between agencies and organisations with a role in recovery is typically terms ‘coordination’. It was observed that there was some confusion about what ‘co-ordination’ meant for the overall recovery programme.
- Once again, limitations in the recovery – mana whenua relationship correlated with deficiencies in recovery framework and practice guidance were observed to hinder recovery effectiveness.
- It is important to note that the referenced recovery reviews recorded many positive responses and successes in process, outputs, and outcomes. Review observations and identified lessons tend to focus on shortcomings.

3.6 NZ Recovery Governance Literature (pp103-110)

- Apart from specific event reviews, there is a small but growing ‘recovery governance literature’ in New Zealand. A range of sources are reviewed for observations and reflections on practice that lend insight into effective recovery governance attributes.
- At least since in the first National Disaster Plan in 1987, national policy instruments direct that responsibility for recovery matters rests with the affected community. Interventions ‘from above’ should be designed to supplement local efforts but not to replace them unless the affected community’s local government is so affected as to be unable to function and provide recovery leadership.
- In a 1995 consideration of ‘Wellington after the Quake’ one commentator suggested the point to note is that, “should the impact community not have sufficient pre-planning contingencies that provide an appropriate framework for recovery, central government will intervene. If central politicians are not convinced that a viable recovery management process exists, they will attempt to establish their own”.
- Thirty years later a contemporary review of what the authors term ‘disaster and emergency management’ (DEM), addressed the frequently observed DEM practitioner quest for clarity of roles and certainty of structures needed moderation in the face of the multilayered and dynamic nature of today’s disasters.
- More flexible, decentralised, and adaptive approaches are needed to effectively deal with their complexity. Organisational culture and structure are seen as pivotal in mediating the balance between agility and traditional rigidity in DEM systems.
- Another researcher has considered whether New Zealand should establish a permanent national disaster recovery office based on the models of Queensland and New South Wales. This is based on the observed significant tension in recovery arrangements in New Zealand - the lack of readiness at both national and regional levels for recovery from nationally and regionally impactful events, alongside strong promotion of local leadership.
- The benefit of more centralised, (but responsive) arrangements typified by such recovery agencies are seen to produce greater effectiveness, efficiency, and resiliency evident in demonstrable and rapid on the ground recovery efforts.
- The most significant barrier to adopting such a model in New Zealand was opined as the current high degree of intergovernmental distrust. In relation to disaster recovery this is

based on prior observed experience wherein local government and community views were sidelined in decision making.

- A 'recovery capitals framework' that stems from the impact disasters have across the four environments has been articulated for both Australian and New Zealand conditions through a collaborative undertaking.
- 'Political capital' as one of the seven identified capitals as resilience enabling refers to the power to influence decision-making on resource access and distribution, and the ability to engage external entities to achieve local goals. This speaks to the convening power and credibility of local recovery arrangements and how to develop that 'capital'.
- To support effective critical infrastructure recovery in NZ a review of over a dozen large international natural hazard events suggested a number of lessons. The importance of governance, recovery programme management, iwi/community engagement, and information management were all identified.
- A recently prepared a report designed to promote disaster recovery research in Aotearoa New Zealand was premised on the observation that despite a decade of collaborative research whereby disaster readiness, response, and reduction were better understood, recovery had received less attention.
- To assist in agenda setting in this area, a limited review of international recovery literature and selected recovery frameworks was undertaken. Among eight identified themes, a key socio-political theme was 'good governance', which addresses coordination, collaboration, and partnerships.
- The authors suggest the observed 'cleansing' of ideological and political considerations from recovery frameworks may leave practitioners unprepared for the realities of disaster recoveries.
- The writer's observation and experience is that recoveries quickly become intensely political in the contest for influence on decision-making over resource allocation. This contrasts with apparent 'managerialism' manifest in a high level of focus on the role of the Recovery Manager in such frameworks.
- This lends a critical edge to what often appears in official recovery frameworks as largely unproblematic issues of leadership, mandate, participation, and inclusion that suggests effective recovery is more in the realm of management challenge than governance responsibility.
- One of these, leadership in disaster recovery, has been significantly examined through a locally authored and produced guide based on reflections from over 100 leaders in disaster recovery around the globe. Nine leadership qualities discerned from this enquiry are presented and elaborated in the Guide.
- Leadership in extreme contexts has also been explored through deep academic scholarship to consider not just leadership capabilities at an individual level but how this is embedded at a systems level.
- In signalling the importance of a systems approach, the author observes that people in governance roles plus the general public sometimes overlook their role in a distributed ownership model. During extreme contexts, while someone will represent the focal point of leadership, it is a distributed function, relying on coordinated and integrated efforts of many who may or not be as committed to the joint cause.

- These summaries are at best indicative and not exhaustive of a New Zealand ‘recovery governance’ literature that addresses structural arrangements and leadership capabilities and systems. It seems to be reaching for a framework by which to assess these aspects of recovery in the New Zealand setting that does not yet exist.
- The writings appear diverse, exploratory and generally limited in reference to policy and legislative reform that might reflect lessons learnt. They are constrained in this influence on practice by the absence of a lessons management methodology that would enable documentation and comparative evaluation of governance arrangements as an enabler of recovery framework and practice development.

4.0 Case Studies of Governance Arrangements for Recent Recoveries (pp110-175)

4.1 Framework (pp110-114)

- Section 4.0 reports several case studies of the governance arrangements adopted among recent recoveries. The focus of these case studies is on the three most constantly referenced effective recovery attributes: roles, responsibilities, structure, and processes; the exercise of effective leadership and political will; and, a community centred approach.
- The case study method has involved documents review and an indicative range of semi-structured interviews among interviewees who are familiar with the arrangements activated for each event. Questions related to both pre-event preparedness and post event recovery activation and delivery relevant to both documents review and interviews, although in most instances the extent of pre-event ‘recovery readiness’ is low.
- Some of the recoveries are complete, but for others they remain in progress. This is not an attempt to assess the ‘success’ of a particular recovery. Rather it aims to indicate the scope and nature of arrangements and consider their alignment with or refinement of attributes for effective recovery that are based on wider evidence and practice.
- This relatively wide scope of such enquiry across a range of recoveries within the parameters of this project inevitable means certain compromises. Reliance on prior event commentaries and reviews is high, although relatively few address recovery governance. The range of first hand viewpoints through interview is limited; typically interviewees have been in recovery governance or management roles.
- The considerable amount of time required and complexities of arranging, undertaking and distilling findings from interviews is a case study inquiry finding in itself for consideration in future endeavours. Distinguishing the efficacy of the arrangements adopted in a particular disaster situation from the performance of those involved and the tendency to ‘reach to the end of the story – was it a successful outcome?’ is challenging in its own right.
- A range of disaster event case studies have been selected spanning scale and type using a framework from the writer that classifies them according to the geographic spread and severity/duration of the event. Recoveries from localized and multiregional events, from moderate to severe/catastrophic in significance are examined through the case studies.
- As each of these dimensions increase up to the national catastrophic event scenario, the complexity of the recovery compounds and so the governance challenge in terms of horizontal and vertical integration structures and processes grows accordingly.

- While it should not automatically imply greater centralisation it often does, in part due to the low maturity levels of pre-event recovery readiness at local and regional levels. The option of enhancing regional/local capacities and developing capabilities among existing entities at that level with potential to contribute to longer term ‘recovery ecosystem’ resilience is not yet a developed strategy but could advance under the recently adopted EM system Improvement Programme.

4.2 Canterbury Earthquake Sequence (CES), 2010-11 (pp114-129)

- This seismic scale and characteristics of this severe – catastrophic disaster, level of impacts and consequences requiring a large and complex multi-year recovery remains of international interest and significance.
- Many lessons from it have been documented but they haven’t necessarily been learnt at a systems level,
- A key issue arising from the CES recovery – how roles, responsibilities, structures, and processes manifest in the adopted centralised leadership and coordination approach came about is the main focus of this case study.
- The efficacy of the adopted model of a newly created entity to lead and coordinate recovery directly accountable to a Minister and both with extraordinary powers under bespoke legislation continues to attract debate.
- The aim of the discussion of this here is not to seek to arrive at a concluding position on the matter but rather to illustrate the importance of timing and the nature of balancing considerations in decision-making that were and remain in play in structuring significant recoveries for events such as CES in the future.
- Mapped governance and management arrangements for the recovery show these to be very extensive, illustrating the complexity and diversity of recovery governance across all levels of government together with external agencies, organisations, and groups.
- While CERA as the agency established by Government to ‘lead and coordinate the recovery’ lay at the centre for a period of five years the range and diversity of the wider recovery ecosystem evolved and changed over this period.
- While the model was both hierarchical and interconnected, consistent with a centralised approach, there were many very developed collaborative governance entities, forums, and approaches through formal and informal arrangements. This gave rise to complex relationships that have also been mapped by others.
- Once the initial system design was activated, there is little evidence of stewardship and adaptive management at that level. The central recovery agency tended over time to become less of a strategic enabler and more of a programme deliverer.
- This followed after a short period of arrangements first put in place following the significant earthquake in September 2010. The Government appointed a joint central-local Earthquake Recovery Commission to exercise recovery leadership and advise on newly created legislative override powers, within the recovery framework of the CDEM Act.
- Barely three months into its tenure and a month after the catastrophic February 2011 earthquake this approach was completely over turned and a central recovery agency rapidly decided and stood up.

- Clearly the rapidly unfolding scale of the disaster required a response. But the speed of decision-making and limited scale of the consideration of structural options and the brevity of the (still contested) stated rationale for the decided lead agency model is notable.
- This haste reflected several factors: the urgency of the situation; the lack of confidence in local governance/recovery readiness; and the limited nature of the national framework and readiness within the CDEM structure for a recovery of this scale and nature.
- It also reflected the scale of the fiscal and political risks to the Crown such that a high level of central control on decision-making was deemed necessary. Even a Crown agent was considered not close enough to the centre.
- That the counterfactual was little explored then is a salutary reminder that little has changed to the present. The 2016 Act amendment process explicitly deferred consideration of recovery for large events to a later phase while the recent work on the approach to catastrophic events is response focused.
- Design and implementation of the CER Act centralised agency led approach has been appraised and opined on in a number of ways. The degree to which these evidence the efficacy of the model (in the absence of a counterfactual) versus its execution on the ground is a further source of debate.
- The Auditor-General as CERA was being disestablished in 2016 and recovery transitioned into regeneration recommended for the future that consideration of the most appropriate organisational type of any future recovery agency and a plan be developed that would enable it to be established quickly and effectively should be developed outside of the pressures of a very significant event.
- Government's 'self-review' suggested there was no consensus on the effectiveness of governance arrangements in driving community participation. CERA acknowledged that it missed opportunities to build local capacity partly due to public perception that it was responsible for everything recovery-related, and partly due to a strong culture of problem solving and 'doing' recovery.
- Academic interest in institutional design has tended to focus on the limitations of the CDEM framework at the time and lack of capacity and capability development of the emergency management sector. That building recovery capacity and developing institutional knowledge for this at local and regional levels was not an adopted strategy nor enduring outcome of the CES recovery was a focus of international disaster research interest.

Waimakariri Recovery Approach (pp129-132)

- Waimakariri District to the north of Christchurch experienced the CES and the CERA led recovery effort on the periphery. The District Council stood up a multi-year recovery programme at this level within the CDEM framework but adapted it to become a hybrid approach integrated with the Council's business continuance activities.
- The high level of Council governance body and across organisation engagement in the recovery reflects the required extent of the draw on resources and the culture and approach of the Council.

- The adopted community-centred recovery approach has attracted significant research interest. While it cannot be said to be an entirely community-led recovery, the extensive pre-existing positive council-community relationship was fostered and continued through into recovery.
- Rather than any pre-existing recovery planning preparedness, this exemplified the importance of governance culture to recovery effectiveness.
- A further feature of note for governance from this recovery is in relation to recovery continuum guidance when any significant land release through retreat is involved, as was the case here.
- Planning and implementing regeneration of active use of such land signalled a further stage ‘beyond recovery’ and an opportunity for further devolution of governance arrangements.

4.3 Hurunui/Kaikōura Earthquakes, 2016 (pp132-142)

- Mapped governance and management arrangements for the HKE recovery are considerably less in breadth and depth than for the CES but nevertheless are extensive and indicative of the scale of institutional elements and efforts required to resource, plan, and deliver even a localised but significant recovery such as this.
- Bespoke legislation was again required to facilitate restoration and reconstruction authorisations and an Independent Review Panel constituted to oversee this.
- 2016 amendments to the CDEM Act as the first phase of reform to address small to medium size recoveries by giving standing to Recovery Managers as statutory officials had been enacted just prior to this event.
- With this in place CDEM framework recovery arrangements were activated and a National Recovery Manager appointed to support locally led recoveries. There is no documented indication available that suggests systematic consideration of other options.
- Most Councils/CDEM Groups affected were in a position to lead localised recoveries with external support, except Kaikōura District Council requiring extensive assistance given the intensity of impacts experienced in the Kaikōura District and the limited capacities of this small rural Council.
- This case study focuses on arrangements for that Kaikōura recovery, noting separate CDEM framework based structures were implemented in three other district/city contexts Hurunui, Marlborough, and Wellington. While loose coordination among the three districts involved was facilitated, there is no indication of any greater collaborative undertakings.
- Collaborative governance and management arrangements to restore the coastal transport corridor given the extent of damage and disruption of corridor closure were separately determined and the North Canterbury Transport Infrastructure Recovery (NCTIR) Alliance formed and rapidly deployed.
- To a degree modelled off of SCIRT for the CES horizontal infrastructure rebuild, NCTIR proved highly effective. Conducive team culture and CES experienced aligned leadership were important success factors.

- A wide range of other collaborations arose and among them the central-local Earthquake Recovery Steering Group proved an important mechanism for achieving vertical alignment that was not otherwise evident in the CDEM Recovery Framework.
- A surge resourced and effective local recovery team with credible local leadership was established as per the CDEM model, with modifications to reflect particular projects and areas.
- The HKE Kaikōura recovery experience has been subject to research interest mainly for its community based recovery attributes and innovations towards community resilience as a small rural community.
- One reviewer suggested the recovery demonstrates what can be achieved through a community-centred recovery approach for small-medium scale recoveries under status quo recovery framework settings with appropriate additions and support.
- The fortuitous contribution by recovery leaders arriving with recent expertise from the earlier Canterbury disaster was contributory to this but not without its own tensions to be managed through clear, strong, and collaborative communication pathways.
- The involvement of recovery experienced expertise cannot always be assumed and poses the question: how can this resource with the right supportive approach be cached over time and become available to future recoveries?

4.4 Buller Floods, 2021-22 (pp143-147)

- The 2021 Westport flooding was a severe localised event that significantly impacted an isolated rural community and Council, comparable in that sense with the HKE disaster event for Kaikoura. Of interest to this case study was what changes in arrangements might be observable 5 years on from the HKE event, albeit a very different kind of disaster, while COVID-19, became nationally all-consuming in those intervening years.
- There is little evidence of the impact on recovery preparedness during this period arising from the release of substantial new Directors Guidelines that significantly extended and refreshed the CDEM recovery framework at Group/local levels.
- In its reach across the four environments in collaborative recovery arrangements at Westport, a similar to Kaikoura approach to supporting local delivery within the CDEM framework was apparent, less the acute challenges of coastal corridor restoration and economic recovery.
- Establishment of the Buller Recovery Steering Group in September 2021 is the key collaborative arrangement of note here from this recovery. This was strongly influenced by initial funding support from government to the BDC to enable it to stand up and deliver a locally-led recovery.
- While defined initially by its funding oversight role, through central-regional-local-iwi representation it played a wider role across the recovery. The BRSRG has proved to be an enduring collaborative arrangement through two transitions in Tor as recovery proceeded and the focus switched to longer term flood resilience for the Buller district.
- It persists today, overseeing multi-party flood resilience initiatives but has transitioned to Resilient Westport also leading a master planning exercise looking at options for long term relocation of urban development away from at risk locations.

- It poses the question of how in the future, might initial disaster event generated recovery arrangements founded in such collaborations be initiated, supported, and stewarded?

4.5 North Island Severe Weather Events, 2023 (pp147-175)

The Government's Recovery Framework (pp151-158)

- As with the CES recovery as a nationally declared level emergency, the speed with which the national framework for recovery was developed, mandated by Cabinet, and initiated was comparably swift, if not quicker again.
- Declared aims of configuring Government involvement as supporting and enabling a locally led recovery; high levels of Government engagement through Regional Lead Ministers with affected communities, recovery governance groups, Councils, and their CEs; and an integrated, whole-of-government approach are in some ways novel aspects of national level arrangements.
- That said key strategic decision-making remained tightly held at Cabinet level, albeit key deliberations spread wide across the extensive Extreme Weather Recovery Committee rather than one responsible Minister.
- New entities such as the Cyclone Taskforce and Recovery Unit were created and stood up at pace. In published and released documents the rationale for determining these arrangements from among possible options is limited.
- Their primary focus on the government policy making process for determining the nature and amount of Government financial assistance beyond status quo arrangements, rather than involvement with on the ground recovery delivery appeared opaque to and proved puzzling for some emergency management sector operatives.
- Understanding the roles of new entities (including a variety of modified existing and new entities at regional level) as they evolved and of the multiplicity of entry points to Ministers, government agencies seeking regional presence, and related engagement at regional governance group level also caused some confusion. An adage heard by the writer from a previous recovery 'collaborate 'til it hurts' comes to mind.
- The extent to which any 'friction points' were a consequence of the complexity of the organisational design that appeared to bypass some status quo arrangements; distinct from their communication, explanation, and implementation; and, the impacts any of this had on actual recovery delivery and outcomes remains a matter for future inquiry.
- In the writer's opinion the lack of pre-event recovery planning and preparedness for credible event scenarios at both national and regional level's was again exposed such that 'on the shelf' structure and process options to fill likely needed arrangements that could be matched with and stood up in the circumstances of an event were limited.
- That early on in this recovery there was a perceived need by DPMC and NEMA to articulate and distribute a set of recovery governance principles and related advice is indicative of this and the fragmented documentation of a national recovery framework.
- To a degree the Cyclone Recovery Taskforce set a precedent for senior and very well credentialed advisory group involvement by members who did not necessarily have disaster recovery experience. But they brought significant governance, government relations, and commercial acumen to the table.

- FOSAL in relation to NISWE established new approaches and precedents in land categorisation frameworks, cost share arrangements, intensity of regional-territorial council collaboration and wider community engagement in planning processes that will be relevant to future significant event recoveries involving buyouts and relocation. Capturing the corporate knowledge and institutional lessons from NISWE in this regard is important and it is to be hoped a lessons learnt exercise will be completed and publicly released.
- Among observable progress with this event/recovery in integration of All-of Government response is the Plan established to guide and coordinate Government's involvement in responding to social wellbeing needs. This Plan illustrates an integrated and prioritised approach in a post-disaster wellbeing domain that is often limited by fragmentation. An evaluation of its development and implementation is warranted.

Hawkes Bay Regional Recovery Governance Framework (pp158-163)

- A notable feature of the transition from response to recovery in this region was the readiness with which senior CDEM Group elected officials and executives concluded prior agreed, 'standard', CDEM Recovery structures would be inadequate to address regional recovery needs and went about devising alternative arrangements.
- The stand up and role of the Hawke's Bay Regional Recovery Oversight Board and Agency is a key innovation in collaborative recovery governance in an emergency management context in New Zealand and as such warrants further inquiry as an option for effective recovery governance.
- A number of reasons for these entities being established are suggested:
 - Underinvestment in CDEM Group capacity and capability and regional recovery readiness.
 - The nature of the event itself and the governance load arising for CDEM Group elected officials.
 - The nature of the Government's National Recovery Framework
 - Leveraging pre-existing strengths, relationships and 'local talent'
- The Hawkes Bay Regional Recovery Agency Board is of a similar ilk to the Cyclone Taskforce in bringing diverse, credentialed external views to the recovery governance table and the contribution of such entities warrants further inquiry.
- In the writer's opinion and reflected in the comments by elected officials and CEG members interviewed, this additional governance support should be seen as complementary to not competitive with either elected officials or emergency management professionals. Some in the CDEM sector feel otherwise.
- Two key features were cited to support this. *Councils were the key delivery agencies and had governance decision-making authority over the programmes being agreed to and the actions being undertaken; the RRA played a coordinating, advisory and advocacy role.*
- *Secondly, the Mayors and HBRC Chair became the key forum for brokering and agreeing joined up action between the councils (subject to formal ratification where needed). The RRA Board provided oversight and risk management of RRA activity, held final authority over regional recovery plans (after partner and Matariki input and approval), and provided*

strategy advice and 'steering' for the RRA organisation, but never sought to come between councils, their own decision-making, and their communities.

- The careful 'positioning' of the Regional Recovery Agency in support and engagement 'up' to connect with Government's recovery framework arrangements, and 'out' to support and coordinate Councils as the face of locally-led recovery is worthy of note for how 'Group'/regional recovery entities might be so positioned in the future.
- The RRA Board and Agency could be seen as an expression of the strategic recovery planning responsibilities of CDEM Groups and among all the interviewees was recognised for its contribution to effective governance of the region's NISWE recovery. The RRA Board was seen to add value to the recovery, both through skills and 'independence'.
- The experience gained from the Hawkes Bay's approach to regional recovery governance warrants closer consideration than is possible through this project. It will be a valuable resource to draw on and consider in the circumstances of concurrent significant events among districts in a region.
- This should in the writer's opinion include license in evolving and adapting the role and function of relevant Groups in establishing focused regional recovery governance arrangements.

Cyclone Gabrielle Recovery Structures in Tararua and Wairarapa (pp164-167)

- Tararua District sustained a pattern of damage and loss similar in nature to districts falling within the Hawkes Bay region and to the south in the Wairarapa, with comparable recovery needs. An experienced and respected local leader assumed the LRM role who alongside the Council and its staff are to be congratulated for standing up a comprehensive local recovery programme.
- It prompts asking the question for consideration for arrangements in the future as to how flex for recovery structures across boundaries of all types, including CDEM Groups, may be beneficial to recoveries from events the impacts of which have no regard for them.
- The Wairarapa Recovery Office was established to coordinate recovery across Masterton, Carterton, and South Wairarapa Districts. While Local Recovery Managers were appointed and active in each of the three Councils, rather than each elected council running separate recovery efforts, the three Wairarapa councils agreed to a single combined governance structure.
- Initial arrangements were transitioned as recovery advanced as a good example of adaptability and flexibility as one of the attributes for effective recovery noted in this report.

Auckland Council Recovery Governance Framework (pp168-171)

- Auckland Council governs a large urban region which in scale is of huge national significance. Emergency Management is closely integrated into the Council structure with the CDEM Group a Committee of the governing body.
- Despite all the benefits of scale and integration as a large Unitary Council, Auckland Council it is not immune from intense budget pressures and this includes determining the priority for emergency management spend among its responsibilities.

- A series of reviews stretching back five years prior to the NISWE disaster and in its aftermath highlighted the impact constrained emergency management capacity and capability consequently had in the event, and this also applies to the level of pre-event preparedness for recovery at Governance level as well.
- The initially established recovery arrangements anticipated through the Council's Recovery Office significant surge capacity would be needed as proved the case. This strongly 'Council- led' recovery structure was distinct from that put in place to support the Regional Ministerial lead for Auckland.
- As for other regions the role and function of the regional lead did not seem to be widely understood, nor integrated into a collaborative 'whole of recovery' governance arrangement. A focused evaluation of this feature of the NISWE recovery across regions for lessons learnt is warranted.
- The recovery governance structure evolved as the recovery progressed within the Council at elected official level to provide more focus, engaging of senior council executives and subsidiary organisation representatives but not widely outside of the Council Group.
- A feature of this recovery by a Unitary Council is the level of 'Council-lead' utilising its scale, internal vertical integration, regional governance prominence, and well established Government connections.

Northland Regional Recovery Governance Framework (pp172-175)

- Northland with widely dispersed affected communities and high levels of deprivation presents a significant contrast.
- Recovery from Cyclone Gabrielle has been described as the most extensive recovery effort in the near 25-year history of the Northland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group.
- Despite this it was assessed as a moderate event that taxed scarce response and recovery resources. How securing sufficient capacity and capability to handle a more severe event is cause for concern.
- The CDEM Group comprised of four Councils established a Group Recovery structure and way of working closely following established guidance. That said it also saw the need to put in place a bespoke recovery governance entity as a subset of the Group, with Iwi representation.
- Northland is among the first NISWE affected regions to commission an external recovery review in order to identify lessons and possible solutions to inform further recovery arrangements for the Northland region
- The Review report found that the recovery from Cyclone Gabrielle in early 2023 was effective and aligned to legislation and the guidance provided by NEMA and the Northland CDEM Group Plan.
- That said a range of both horizontal and vertical with Government integration issues were evident from interviews and the review report.
- As with other regions the ongoing challenge of developing and sustaining awareness and understanding of clearly defined roles and responsibilities was evident.

- There were many ‘recovery success stories’ but the consequences of limited Recovery Office capacity for developing recovery readiness pre-event and in post- event activation is readily apparent.
- The Review highlighted many things that went well, what the CDEM Group should keep doing and a large number of opportunities for recovery development. Securing collaborative recovery governance supported by adequate recovery management resourcing ‘in the thick of it’ was and in the general sense will continue to be challenging.

4.6 Options for Recovery Governing and Managing Arrangements (pp176-184)

- Case studies exemplify recovery governance arrangements in practice across four main recovery contexts that differ according to the severity and duration of the event on the one hand, and the geographic spread on the other.
- A series of ‘first order’ considerations in resolving an option for arrangements in a particular situation are summarised.
- Options illustrated by the case studies in each of the four contexts are overviewed for their advantages and challenges.
- Options at local/regional level are considered in relation to governance, advisory, core recovery team and operational delivery arrangements as components of the fundamental local and regional recovery management arrangements depicted in Directors Guidelines.
- For larger scale/longer lasting event(s) of national significance, two case studies illustrating markedly different approaches have been considered for their pros and cons . There are at least two other options worthy of documenting based on international experiences to provide a wider range of options for inclusion in evaluation using the recovery settings framework.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommended Actions (pp185-194)

A number of conclusions and recommendations are set out with rationale in this section in relation to:

1. What recovery reviews are saying and case studies suggesting about governance arrangements.
2. Supporting the alignment of central-local interests through the practise of collaborative structures and processes.
3. The need to reframe the role of funding recovery and its accountability in relation to recovery governance through innovation in risk financing and assurance arrangements.
4. The lack of, need for and value of pre-event recovery planning and preparedness.
5. The criticality of timing, criteria for, and process of decision-making on governance arrangements.
6. The need for, contents and value of an integrated National Framework for Recovery governance.
7. Recovery is not response and this remains poorly appreciated.
8. Developing empathetic and compassionate leadership through recovery governance.
9. The need for but challenge in agreed methodologies for assessing recovery effectiveness and success.

From these observations and conclusions, a number of recommended actions have been identified. These are put forward for consideration in the context of the Emergency Management System Improvement Programme, in collaboration with CDEM Groups and are summarised below.

Priority Area	Recommended Action
1. Develop a National Framework for Recovery Governance	Consolidate from the many legislative, policy, and guidance materials, an integrated framework for recovery governance that can be widely promoted. This would be led by a set of principles and normative programme characteristics that follow from wide discussion across the emergency management system.
2. Codify Recovery Governance Options	Develop a practical ‘Recovery Governance Options Toolkit’ with guiding considerations, example arrangements, and templates for local-regional-national adaptation. This would at national level be a resource to draw on in considering options for recovery governance arrangements to inform the ‘Recovery Settings’ decision-making framework when it is needed for national level events. At local/regional level it would assist decision-making on preferred arrangements for both pre-and post-event recovery planning and activation. It should be the authoritative source of lessons learnt on governance arrangements from other recoveries.
3. Mandate Recovery Readiness Benchmarks	Define minimum expectations for pre and post-event recovery planning and governance capability in Group Plans. This should include the values, leadership style and preferred behaviours that underpin the role of mandated recovery governance entities, including Joint Committees.
4. Support Collaborative Structures	Create a nationally endorsed toolkit for establishing and maintaining collaborative recovery governance arrangements across all of the sector environments. This includes alliancing models and should draw on lessons learnt through practical examples.
6. Link Recovery Governance to Risk Financing	Develop guidance on how recovery funding arrangements interrelate with governance structures and accountability requirements. Look to practice both elsewhere and locally such as through recent alliancing arrangements and use of mechanisms such as NIFFCo.
7. Lessons Management System	Establish a methodology for assessing recovery effectiveness and success. This should inform a national database of recovery governance lessons through case studies and a mechanism for tracking lessons learning through system improvement.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Context

Governance and management arrangements for disaster recovery in New Zealand sit largely within the framework of government and institutional arrangements generally. Those structures and processes are typically attuned to ‘peacetime’ circumstances when emergency events are not impacting on public order, the provision of services or the wellbeing of communities. Periodically however, at increasing frequency and scale, the nature of emergency events occurring across New Zealand is requiring not just management of short duration emergency responses, but sustained recovery efforts.

Over time but often delayed and only to a limited extent, lessons from this disaster recovery experience has led to a body of law, policies, and practices together with arrangements for their implementation being developed. In response to events of national significance and in circumstances that are judged to have overwhelmed the ability of existing institutions under ordinary business settings to cope, bespoke recovery governance entities close to Government with delegated responsibilities from the centre have been periodically established.

But mostly at local and regional levels the task of governing and managing disaster recovery has been grafted onto existing institutional arrangements for local government that are otherwise attuned to everyday community leadership and service delivery. That being the case an increasing diversity of adjustments to existing, as well as additional structures and processes are evident in recent recoveries at this level and are examined in this report.

‘Flex’ and adaptability to circumstances is a strength of emergency management. But both formal reviews and ‘recovery anecdotes’ point to absences and shortfalls in direction, guidance and codified practice that might better assist recovery governance and management preparedness, activation, and delivery effectiveness in the future. Exploring frameworks for this and through case studies the experiences of recent recoveries towards improvements in guidance and practice are central tasks of this report.

A particular driver for this project, (and the support for it by several parties which is gratefully acknowledged¹) is to assist the work being led by the Recovery Capability Development Group (RCDG) as a community of practice comprised of Group Recovery Managers (GRMs). The RCDG is developing guidance tools and templates to enhance recovery preparedness and practice, particularly in relation to selection among a ‘menu’ of options for structuring governance and management.

This includes a ‘Recovery Scorecard’ as an assessment tool to support recovery preparedness. For events by rated severity it includes descriptors of impacts and suggested arrangements for recovery governance and management. A relevant extract is included as Appendix 1, being a reference point to further develop and refine as is possible in the context of other practice frameworks explored and recovery governance case studies in this report.

¹ Sponsor: Canterbury CDEM Group; supported by Environment Canterbury, Waimakariri District Council, Hawkes Bay CDEM Group, Hawkes Bay Regional Recovery Agency, Wellington Regional Emergency Management Office, Auckland Emergency Management.

While not generally governed at local/regional level, functioning across communities are a wide range of emergency services dedicated to emergency response. But the task and associated powers for coordinating them and the many other responders in the immediate circumstances of a hazardous event and particularly in managing its consequences is in the first instance given over to local authorities (Councils) through the work of Group and Local Controllers.

In the case of more significant disasters warranting a deliberate recovery effort Councils too are charged with readiness for and management of the ensuing recovery phase. They remain so activated working in with higher levels of government that may be engaged in larger and more complex recoveries, as well as a wide range of interested organisations & groups, and individuals from affected communities.

The institutional requirements for and timeframes to prepare and implement response and recovery phases are not the same. At local and regional levels they also differ markedly from governing and managing for ordinary purposes, but draw in doing so on the many skills, experience, and activities that Councils ordinarily possess and undertake.

While leadership of disaster recovery is embedded into both central and local public agencies, organising, and implementing disaster recovery is also hugely dependent on the finance, other resources, skills, and experience possessed by the private sector.

A similar 'reservoir' of knowledge, experience and capability exist in the organisations and groups present in disaster affected communities and by those communities at large. A large body of international and increasing local disaster recovery experience² suggests involving affected communities to the maximum practical extent in the decision-making and delivery of disaster recovery both hastens and enhances its completion.

In any event the inclusion of affected communities ('nothing about us without us') may be regarded as fundamentally the right thing to do. How communities are so involved is therefore considered central to the recovery management challenge. It is why the concept of governance of recovery has across the relevant academic and applied literature been seen to reach beyond Government to embrace community capacity and capability as well as that of the private sector.

A further challenge is that disasters of significance are on the increase. It is possible that New Zealand has entered a period of elevated seismic activity, or at least a newfound level of awareness of the potential for catastrophic seismic events to profoundly impact at the national level. As well, there is broad consensus that climate change exacerbation of adverse weather events continues to increase their frequency and severity. As a nation, we are not alone in this sense of experiencing a heightened state of uncertainty in relation to disaster events and increasing need to activate larger responses and dedicated recoveries at more frequent intervals.

How we do that is the subject of recent agency and Government Inquiry reviews, largely of recent North Island severe weather responses. But those together with review of emergency management experiences and attempts at legislative reform in the years prior have found arrangements for response and recovery wanting on a variety of fronts.

² See Section 2.2.

The Government's recognition of the need and its resolve to make systemic change in emergency management and replacement of the CDEM Act as the key legislative mandate has added to this state of uncertainty in terms of how institutional arrangements will be evolved over coming years. Recovery management however, has so far not figured greatly in such reviews on what might be lessons learnt and more importantly what to do about them.

Adding to this 'ferment' in emergency management is a succession of legislative adjustments proposed or underway directing how Councils deliver water services, undertake resource management and building control and provide property related hazards information – these and more have implications for how Councils prepare for and undertake disaster response and recovery.

It is within this context of turbulent times – of a VUCA world: volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous – that this appraisal of governance and management arrangements for disaster recovery is being undertaken, principally focused at the local and regional level world that Councils and their communities inhabit.

1.2 Key Terms

Defined terms abound in the emergency management sector of which disaster recovery is part. Terms used in this report that appear in the interpretation sections of relevant legislation, plans, and guidance³ are as stated there unless otherwise indicated. Of particular relevance are the expansive definitions of *recovery* and *recovery activity* in the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (the Act) that interrelate recovery across the '4Rs' – readiness, response, recovery, and risk reduction – that remain foundational to emergency management in NZ.

recovery means the co-ordinated efforts and processes used to bring about the immediate, medium-term, and long-term holistic regeneration and enhancement of a community following an emergency.

recovery activity means an activity carried out under this Act or any civil defence emergency management plan to deal with the consequences of an emergency, including, without limitation,—

- (a) the assessment and ongoing monitoring of the needs of a community affected by the emergency; and
- (b) the co-ordination and integration of planning, decisions, actions, and resources; and
- (c) measures to support—
 - (i) the regeneration, restoration, and enhancement of communities across the 4 environments (built, natural, social, and economic); and
 - (ii) the cultural and physical well-being of individuals and their communities; and
 - (iii) government and non-government organisations and entities working together; and
- (d) measures to enable community participation in recovery planning; and

³ Principally the *Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002*, the (Guide to) the *National Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan, 2015 (V2.0)* and *Recovery Preparedness and Management: Director's Guideline for CDEM Groups [DGL 24/20]*.

- (e) *new measures*—
- (i) *to reduce risks from hazards; and*
 - (ii) *to build resilience*

The term *significant*⁴ event for which a specific and sustained coordinated recovery effort is required is as defined through the work underway by the collective of CDEM Group Recovery Managers working on various components of recovery capability development that this project is intended to support.

Governance and management arrangements are intentionally broad with reference to disaster recovery structures and processes. At its simplest the term *governance* is *the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented)*⁵.

More specifically *governance encompasses the set of complex mechanisms, processes, and institutions that people and groups use to express their interests, negotiate their differences, and apply their legal rights and obligations. Governance involves state entities, as well as the private sector and civil society organizations. Functions previously carried out by public entities are now dispersed among a diverse set of actors including government institutions, the private sector, and the civil society*⁶.

*The shift from government to governance reflects global social changes that include practices such as contracting and outsourcing, new forms of collaboration in the form of public-private partnerships and joint ventures, and more decentralized organizations that have replaced hierarchical bureaucratic systems. Though government does not equal governance, state-based action is a fundamental element in disaster governance.*⁷

In emphasising that governance is not government *UNDP, 2010*⁸ highlights two observations. First, is the recognition that power exists inside and outside the formal authority and institutions of government. Therefore government is a major actor, but not the sole actor influencing decisions and how they are implemented, alongside many other actors in the private sector and civil society.

Second, *governance emphasizes 'process'. It recognizes that decisions are made based on complex relationships between many actors with different priorities. It is how these competing priorities are reconciled that is the essence of the concept of governance*⁹.

⁴ *Significant* means an emergency event rated overall as *major, severe or catastrophic* in its consequences with reference to the descriptors in Appendix 2. While such events are the focus for consideration of arrangements for disaster recovery in this report, more frequently occurring small-scale events rated *minor or moderate* may also require a deliberate recovery effort and so this report has relevance to them as well.

In that regard it is relevant to note that the paper cited below investigates how current emergency response and recovery approaches account for small-scale recurring disasters in Aotearoa New Zealand. It identifies and discusses limitations of the risk governance framework in addressing them for improved community outcomes in both response and recovery. Tennakoon, K., Serrao-Neumann S., Hanna, C., Cretney, R., 2023: *Enhancing disaster risk governance for small-scale recurring disasters through pre-determining emergency response and recovery entry points for improved social outcomes*, International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction, Volume 97.

⁵ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) International Recovery Platform, 2010 *The Guidance Note on Recovery: Governance*

⁶ Multiple authors cited in Mukherji A., N. I Ganapati, N.E., Manandhar, B., 2021, *Panacea or problem: New governance structures for disaster recovery*, International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction 52, pp1-9

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Refer 5. above.

⁹ Ibid.

Glavovic, 2014¹⁰ depicts the principle actors and institutions of governance in this context in Figure 1 below as a precursor to discussing its application to disaster recovery. Government, the private sector, and civil society interact through a range of institutions when applied to recovery governance towards the outcomes vested in resilient, sustainable communities. In the process both the role of science and the media are crucial influences on the behaviours of all the principal actors.

The rise of governance as a set of structural arrangements and processes through which coordinated decision-making and action takes place is precisely because complex problems such as those associated with disasters do not fit neatly within the purview of individual organizations and institutions. *Governance through networks of collaborating and diverse entities provides a means of addressing these problems because networks are flexible, adaptable, and capable of mobilizing diverse resources (Tierney, 2012)¹¹.*

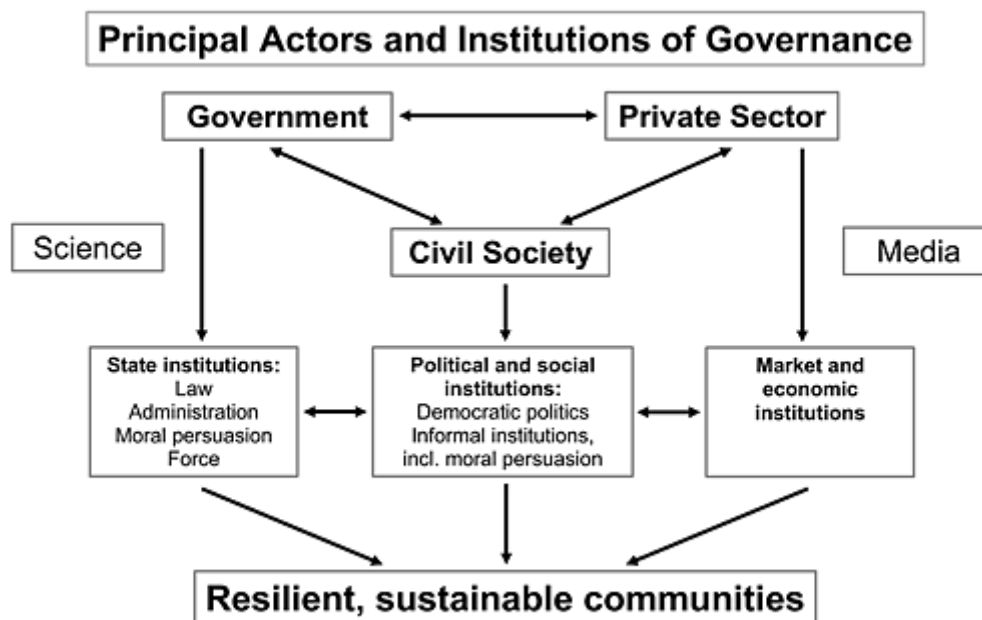


Figure 1: Actors and Institutions of Governance

Networking and follow on collaborative efforts as attributes of recovery governance reflect the diversity of actors involved that are not in hierarchical relationships. This contrasts with command and control structures typically used to organise emergency response directed at securing the survival, safety and security of persons, their property, and assets.

Tierney, 2012¹² considers disaster (recovery) governance on one hand as a form of the wider practice of collaborative governance for public purposes directed at managing the impacts and losses associated with disasters. While on the other also being subsumed under the more

¹⁰ Glavovic, B., 2014, *Disaster Recovery: The particular governance challenges generated by large-scale natural disasters*, pp199—214 in Boston, J., Wanna, J., Lipski, V., and Pritchard, J., *Future-Proofing the State Managing Risks, Responding to Crises and Building Resilience*, Australian National University Press.

¹¹ Tierney, K., 2012, *Disaster Governance: Social, Political, and Economic Dimensions* pp 341–63, Vol.37: *The Annual Review of Environment and Resources*.

¹² Ibid.

general rubric of risk governance, which consists of the application of governance principles to the risk and risk-reduction domains.

Viewing disasters through the lens of governance requires a more inclusive approach that takes into account the broader societal contexts that influence disaster management, a wider array of institutional actors, and diverse mechanisms for encouraging collective action around disaster-related concerns¹³.

As both hazards exposure and risk sensitivity increases, so governments are becoming more interested in how governance and management arrangements may be optimised for dealing with the consequences of disaster events.

The United Nations Development Programme in 2021¹⁴ expanded on its 2010¹⁵ discussion of governance as an organising concept to more closely define the normative institutional arrangements for recovery. *These are the organisational structures, policies and procedures that are put in place to plan, manage, and implement disaster recovery operations.* They were identified from many observed disaster efforts due to their presence and arrangement being a determining influence on the effectiveness and competence of those recoveries. Identified elements of these arrangements are shown in Figure 2 below.

While all elements are important, of particular concern to this project is how *structures* and *management* are arranged for effective *collaboration* and as drivers of other elements. Enabling resources, surging in *capacity*, and delivering *assistance to beneficiaries* in a timely way are all important elements. Effective *communication* through deep engagement with affected communities is key. Often overlooked for delivery is competent *administration* while ongoing *monitoring and evaluation* to capture changes as recovery proceeds and lessons learnt for future improvement frequently comes too little too late.

These institutional arrangements for recovery delineate linkages, levels of authority and participation of organizations at all levels of government and between governmental and non-governmental entities, including local communities and the private sector.

Recovery does not proceed at a constant rate and typically passes through several phases. Different sectors and communities of interest recoveries at any one time may be at different places along a continuum. Recovery governance needs to similarly adapt to changing circumstances and may look quite different at various times.

That said there are some typical recovery phases to consider as shown in Figure 3 below. For illustrative purposes, it shows even for significant events a short duration intensely peaked response phase, followed by ‘waves’ of recovery from immediate that might last months, through to longer term recovery possibly years in duration. Each possess their own recovery ‘efforts’ profile.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ United Nations Development Programme, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery 2021, *Handbook on Recovery Institutions: A Guidebook for Recovery Leaders and Practitioners*

¹⁵ Refer 4 above.

These are (or should be) preceded and followed by ongoing community development work directed at building and sustaining community resilience capacities. Similarly so for recovery readiness, and deliberative processes and programmes for risk reduction.

This generic illustration from an original 1970s¹⁶ concept has been depicted in a variety of ways and contexts and is generally understood. Less evident is the typically differential way in which sectors and vulnerable communities are both affected and experience recovery efforts over time and in intensity. While we may aspire to and plan for it, recovery is not a neat linear journey for all to arriving at the same destination at once and confronting disparities continue to emerge from partial and stalled recoveries.

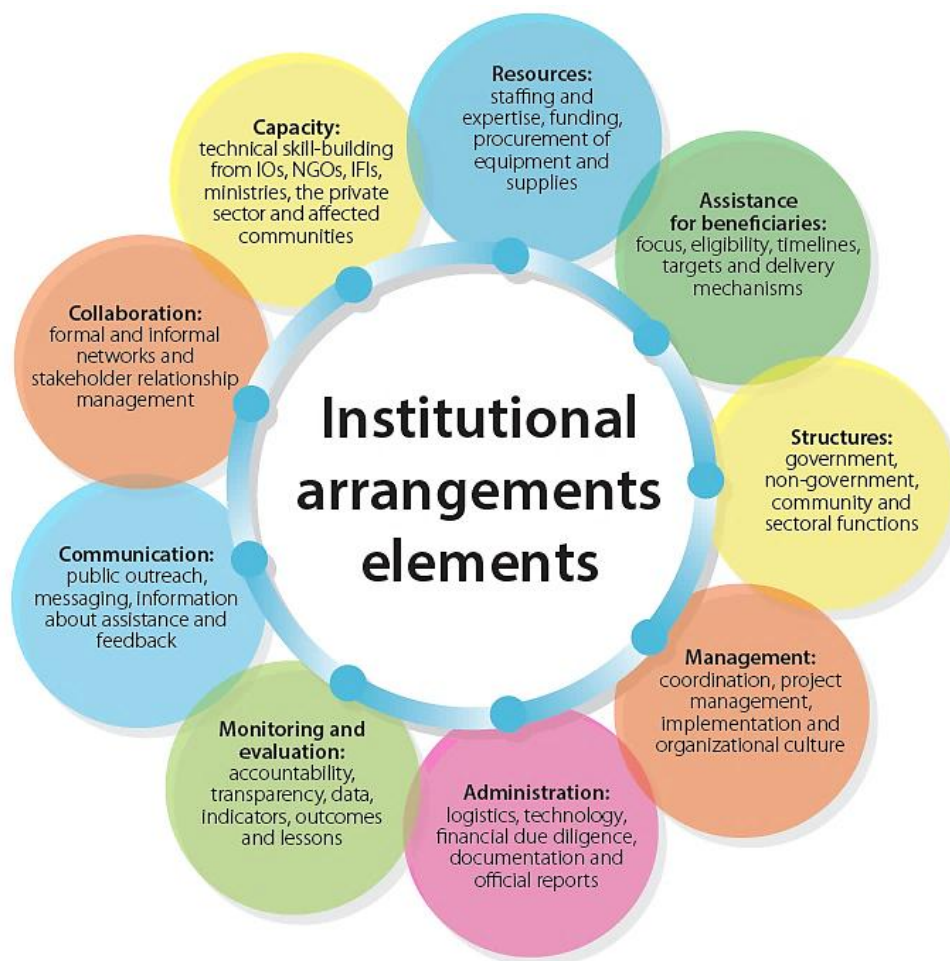
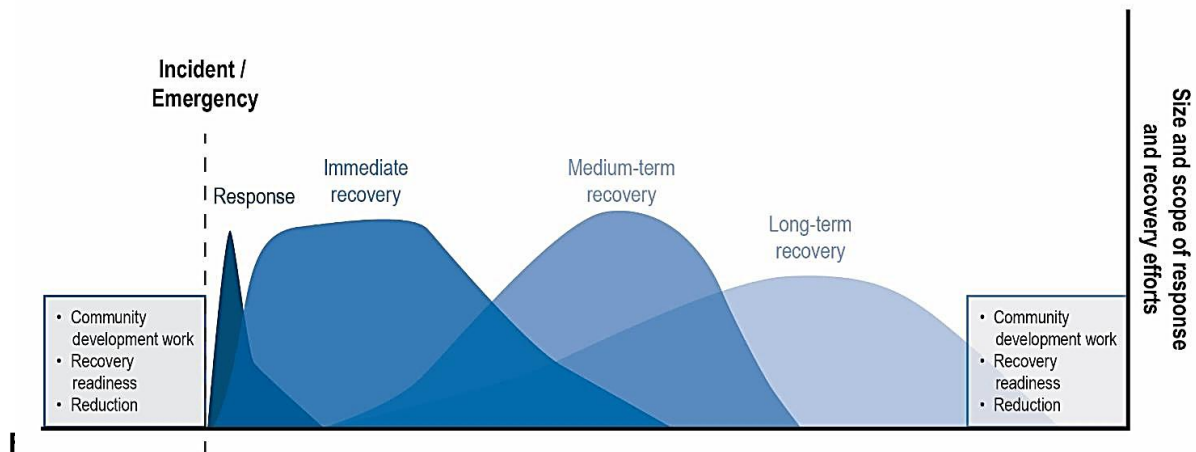


Figure 2: Critical components of how the institutional arrangements govern the recovery process, UNDP, 2021¹⁷

¹⁶ Haas, J.E., R.W. Kates, and M.J. Bowden (eds), 1977, *Reconstruction Following Disaster* MIT Press

¹⁷ Ibid



2.0 A Governance Framework for Effective Recovery

2.1 ‘Good Governance’

2.1.1 Context

As indicated above the concept of disaster recovery governance in this report is being viewed in the broadest sense to encompass the institutional arrangements spanning formal public government, private sector, and civil society actors. Through collaborative structures and processes the elements necessary to plan and deliver complex and often very uncertain recovery outcomes that cannot be achieved by any one agency or organisation alone are enabled.

In this context the terms government and governance are not interchangeable and the former is not the sole preserve of the latter. Rather it spans wider than single entities, to consider inter-entity relationships that underpin decision making and collaboration in delivery of complicated programmes and projects.

All this is required to be typically undertaken under conditions of high uncertainty, not just due to the unpredictable characteristics of how a disaster might play out, but also because of the ongoing turbulence in the socio-political environment. Governing for uncertainty is different from certainty – only the past is perfectly certain.

Indeed, disaster recovery might be best seen as a ‘wicked problem’ because of its high levels of ‘unstructuredness or problematicity’...*there is widespread agreement that wicked problems are best dealt with through collaboration in networks and partnerships that allow a plurality of actors to arrive at a shared understanding of the problem at hand and to identify possible solutions...collaborative strategies for solving wicked and unruly problems are needed when power is dispersed. Such strategies will work well when actors recognize their mutual resource dependence and the need to exchange knowledge, ideas, and knowhow in the pursuit of “collaborative advantage”¹⁹.*

¹⁸ National Emergency Management Agency, 2020, *Recovery Preparedness and Management - Director’s Guideline for Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups [DGL 24/20]*.

¹⁹ Ansell C., E. Sorensen, J. Torfing, J. Trondal, 2024, *Robust Governance in Turbulent Times*, Cambridge University Press.

From the standpoint of ordinary governance arrangements and behaviours in ‘peacetime’ settings its often difficult to appreciate how different these might need to be for effective recovery. Government is typically attuned to predictable and repeatable requirements, but its frequently the case the same personnel are activated in dealing with disasters to perform differing roles and responsibilities requiring much less practiced competencies and behaviours. So too are the boards of governors for private companies and non-governmental entities together with their management staff asked to participate in markedly different ways under emergency circumstances.

This challenge of stepping out of habitual to decidedly different and uncertain circumstances draws nevertheless on the characteristics of good governance and especially how crises at the entity level are deliberated on and resolved. This injects the prerequisites of leadership values and behaviours in crisis circumstances to the discussion of what might otherwise be seen as ‘dry’ structural and procedural attributes.

This section considers those characteristics from individual and entity through to systems level, towards identifying features relevant to the collaborative governance attributes of effective disaster recovery. This is but a sampling of a considerable relevant literature on leadership and collaborative practices relevant to a framework for recovery governance.

That framework provides the ‘lens’ through which both current recovery direction and practice guidance in Section 3.0, and a number of recent recovery case studies in Section 4.0 are considered.

2.1.2 Practices and Attributes

Good governance and crisis leadership

The NZ Institute of Directors (IOD) promotes a framework for governance best practice based on four pillars²⁰:

- *Determining purpose* - leading development of the entity’s purpose goals and strategy.
- *An effective governance culture* - acting as a team with a high performance culture exhibiting high standards of ethical behaviour.
- *Holding to account* - oversight of management’s performance and conformance in delivery of the agreed strategy
- *Effective compliance* – probity and a high standard of regulatory compliance and with duties and responsibilities

The NZ Controller and Auditor-General²¹ has recently articulated for effective governance for public sector entities a series of elements for every governing body that has the effect of elaborating on these pillars :

1. *Set a clear purpose and stay focused on it*
2. *Have clear roles and responsibilities that separate governance and management*
3. *Lead by setting a constructive tone*

²⁰ NZ Institute of Directors , 2017, *The Four Pillars of Governance Best Practice for New Zealand Directors*, Institute of Directors in New Zealand (Inc). IOD provides thought leadership for boards of directors in New Zealand, principally private companies but also a wide range of public and not-for-profit entities governing bodies.

²¹ <https://oag.parliament.nz/good-practice/docs/good-governance.pdf>

4. *Involve the right people*
5. *Invest in effective relationships built on trust and respect*
6. *Be clear about accountabilities and transparent about performance against them*
7. *Manage risks effectively*
8. *Ensure that you have good information, systems, and controls*

Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ)²² has applied many of these elements in setting out a series of principles for designing a governance system at a local level as per Figure 4 below.

Key community facing attributes of decision-making structures are that they should be:

- *Accountable and transparent*: enable citizens to understand who is accountable for decisions made and the reasons behind those decisions;
- *Responsive*: be able to respond to issues brought to the council’s attention without unnecessary delay;
- *Participation and diversity*: facilitate direct engagement between elected members and members of the public and the expression of diverse views;
- *Strategic focus*: be designed so that members’ ability to consider strategic matters is not “crowded out” by the urgent and reactive;
- *Equitable and inclusive*: be accessible to all communities;
- *Efficient and effective*: enable decision to be made in a timely manner, without unnecessary duplication.



Figure 4: Elements of a good governance system

Evident from above is a high level of congruence across these three governance domains in principles for the general design and exercise of entity level good governance. Less common for advice on governance in disaster circumstances is how these might be expressed but flex and adapt to crisis circumstances.

²² LGNZ, 2019, *Designing decision-making structures: A guide for councils*.

IOD has through interviews with chairs, board members and chief executives who have experienced major crises²³, identified six key themes that are pointedly relevant to all participant entities in disaster recovery:

1. *Be prepared* - being prepared enables a stronger response and quicker recovery...*It is not enough to identify the risks. The board should know how the risks are managed, including management's response plan if the risk becomes reality. This includes any changes in roles, responsibilities and delegated authorities between the board and management, along with communication and decision making expectations. When assigning crisis roles, take account of personalities as well as skills and experience.*
2. *The early response* - To achieve the best outcomes for their organisation, the board and management may need to find new ways to work together, particularly in the hectic and sometimes confusing early stages of the response.
3. *Trust and relationships are critically important* - Relationships based on understanding, trust, confidence, and loyalty will support the immediate response and long-term recovery.
4. *Be agile in decision making* - A crisis requires rapid decision making in an environment of heightened uncertainty and risk. Decision making processes need to reflect these changed circumstances.
5. *Prepare for the long haul* - Crises almost always take longer to resolve than we initially anticipate. The impacts ripple out and events unfold in unanticipated ways, adding uncertainty and change to our lives for months or years.
6. *Amplify health and safety* - With heightened risks in a crisis, extra precautions are required to manage the risk of harm and ensure directors' and managers' duties of care are fulfilled.

These themes suggest that culture is comparably important to structure and process for effective crisis governance. They pose a challenge for how to 'scale up' preferred governance attributes to the systems level of multiple collaborating participants in disaster recovery.

Leadership in Crises and Disasters

There is a vast literature on leadership, less so in disaster settings. But its desired attributes particularly relevant to the latter are well encapsulated in this extract from the highly regarded text by Haslam, Reicher and Platow²⁴:

Leadership for us, is not simply about getting people to do things. It is about getting them to want to do things. Leadership then, concerns the shaping of beliefs, desires, and priorities. It involves sharing a vision of how the world is and should be. Ultimately it is about securing influence not compliance.

Leadership therefore needs to be distinguished from such things as management, decision-making and authority. These are all important and they are all implicated in leadership processes. But from our definition, good leadership is not determined by competent management, skilled

²³ Seville, E., Richard Ball, June 2020, *The Board's Role in a Crisis - Key findings*, IOD, Resilient Organisations, and Te Hiranga Rū QuakeCoRE.

²⁴ Haslam, S.A., S.D., Reicher, and M.J. Platow, 2020 (2nd edn.) *The New Psychology of Leadership: Identity, Influence and Power*, Routledge, New York.

decision-making, or accepting authority in and of itself. The key reason for this is that these things do not necessarily involve winning the hearts and minds of others or harnessing their energies and passions. Leadership always does.

As one expression of this, IOD promotes the principles and practice of ethical leadership as highly relevant to both public and private sector governance decision-making and implementation. This is well documented for both crisis and ‘peacetime’ settings in a series of recent New Zealand case studies under the umbrella of ‘Human Good’²⁵.

This is strongly aligned with the work on disaster leadership by Martin Crosweller as a senior figure in the field of emergency management and disaster resilience in Australia. He has highlighted in these activities the need for virtue, mindfulness, and practical wisdom²⁶, through a relational leadership framework founded upon compassion, care, and justice.²⁷ Compassion is rated as the essential ethic of relational leadership in disasters when dealing with people at their most vulnerable²⁸.

Closely aligned with considering ethical and compassionate leadership as part of the culture of disaster recovery governance is that of adaptive leadership. This has been characterised as *the ability to adjust to evolving demands and respond flexibly and creatively to complex, unpredictable situations...adaptive leadership embodies a philosophy that positions fluidity and flexibility as core principles. Unlike traditional leadership models, adaptive leadership fosters a mindset of continuous learning and rapid adaptation. Moreover, adaptive leadership recognizes the importance of diverse perspectives and experiences, actively seeking to integrate a wide range of viewpoints in order to address challenges more creatively and effectively*²⁹.

Beyond adaptive leadership through the behaviours of individuals is that of systems leadership...‘systems leadership’ *rejects the idea that complex policy problems can be solved by a few heroic leaders in the centre of government or at the top of organisations. Many people need to contribute to systems leadership by collaborating to harness the skills of actors across government and outside of government*³⁰.

The authors searched the academic and grey literature for further advice on how to foster an effective systems leadership including as follows:

- *Reject heroic top-down leadership.*
- *Embrace collaboration to produce and deliver a collective vision.*
- *Focus on the big picture and be comfortable with systemic uncertainty and ambiguity.*
- *Facilitate dialogue, consider multiple perspectives, and learn from others.*
- *Collaborate to generate a collective understanding of wicked problems*
- *Share responsibility for a concerted response.*

²⁵ Nodder, Jd., 2021, Human Good., Aritahi – Brian Picot Chair in Ethical Leadership at Victoria University of Wellington.

²⁶ Crosweller, Mark, 2022, *Disaster management leadership and the need for virtue, mindfulness, and practical wisdom*, Progress in Disaster Science 16 (2022) 100248.

²⁷ Crosweller, Mark, 2022, *Disaster management and the need for a relational leadership framework founded upon compassion, care, and justice*, Climate Risk Management 35 (2022) 100404.

²⁸ Crosweller, 2024, *Compassion in Disaster Management – The Essential Ethic of Relational Leadership*, Routledge.

²⁹ Sott, M.K., Bender, M.S., 2025, The Role of Adaptive Leadership in Times of Crisis: A Systematic Review and Conceptual Framework. Merits 2025, 5, 2.

³⁰ Cairney Paul and Claire Toomey, January 10, 2025, *Systems Leadership: a qualitative systematic review of advice for policymakers* <https://paulcairney.wordpress.com/>

- *Systems leadership does not come naturally. It needs high and sustained political support.*

A systems view of leadership in recovery governance suggests it may also be understood as inclusive of building capacity in the wider citizenry in addition to a narrower view of “correct” decisions and outcomes³¹.

This wider view acknowledges the value of group learning, the development of trust, and the need to understand and acknowledge the views of diverse stakeholders. The processes of recovery, however, also place particular demands on the need for decisiveness and strong action, meaning that trade-offs need to be made³².

So while good process is important, it might not always be enough in disaster recovery. Recovery, and disaster management, is typically assessed against outcomes, as well as processes. An argument can be made that this is reasonable and what is expected by all the stakeholders in recovery.

Collaborative governance

This discussion of good governance and the leadership behaviours that are conducive to community and other recovery actor facing relationships leads into a focus on the characteristics of effective collaborative governance. It is suggested this benefits from distinguishing the terms and processes of cooperation, coordination, and collaboration.

A lot of confusion in the use of these terms arises in considering intergovernmental activities and as a result a lot of miscuing of behaviours and frustrations in implementation of recovery arrangements. Figure 5 seeks to clarify this given the overreliance on coordination as an organizing principle when deeper, more concerted, and sustainable constructive arrangements may be required³³.

³¹ March, Alan, Maria Kornakova, John Handmer, 2012, *Urban Planning and Recovery Governance*, Chapter 2 in *Urban Planning for Disaster Recovery* Edited by Alan March and Maria Kornakova Butterworth-Heinemann is an imprint of Elsevier.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ The basis of the diagram in theory and practice is drawn from: Castañer Xavier, Nuno Oliveira, 2020, *Collaboration, Coordination, and Cooperation Among Organizations: Establishing the Distinctive Meanings of These Terms Through a Systematic Literature Review* *Journal of Management* Vol. 46 No. 6, July 2020 965–1001.

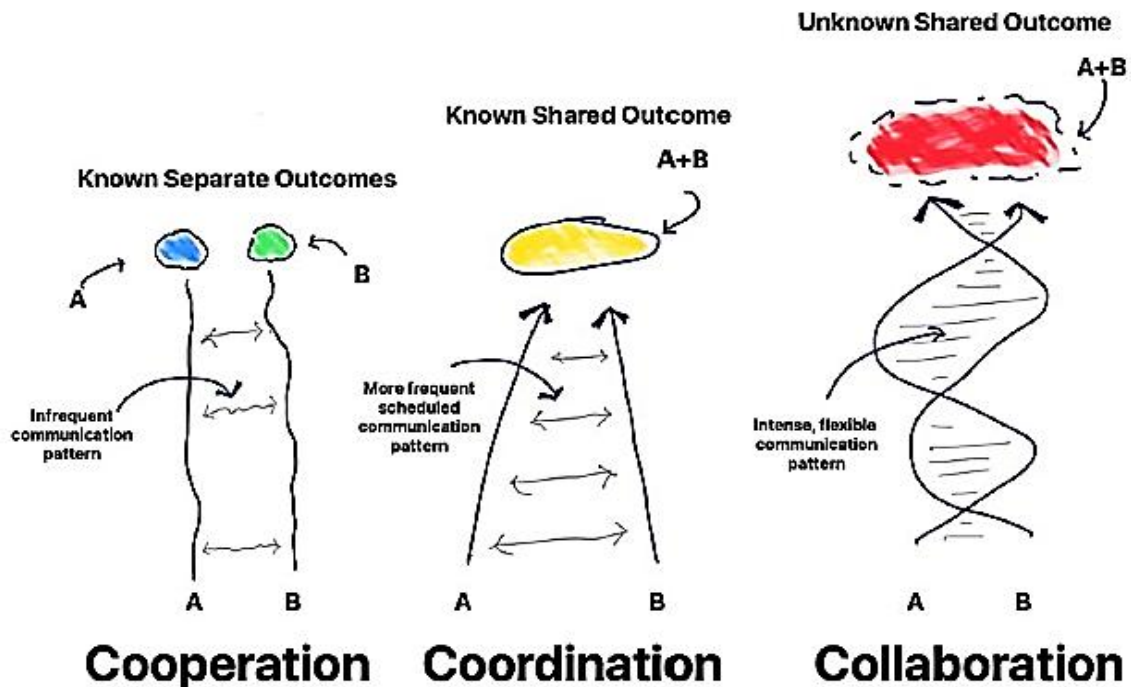


Figure 5 : Differences Between Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration

Ed Morrison from Strategic Doing³⁴, the author of this diagram contrasts these interactions between individuals or organizations as follows:

1. *Cooperation: Avoiding Conflict includes:*

- *Infrequent communication.*
- *Focus on avoiding disputes.*
- *Pursuit of different outcomes.*
- *Separated leadership.*

In cooperative circumstances, participants communicate primarily to ensure their respective activities do not conflict. Cooperation necessitates comparatively low levels of trust. Parties do not need to share objectives or collaborate closely; they merely need to respect each other's space and activity.

2. *Coordination: Moving Toward A Known Shared Outcome*

Coordination enhances interaction. It includes:

- *Regular communication.*
- *Alignment of activities.*
- *Working toward a clearly defined and shared goal.*
- *Single leader team(s).*

In coordinated efforts, parties intentionally align their activities to achieve a predetermined goal. Project planning is an excellent example of coordination. Coordination requires greater trust than

³⁴ <https://strategicdoing.net/>

cooperation. Parties must rely on one another to execute their tasks and meet deadlines to achieve the common goal.

3. Collaboration: Creating Something New Together

Collaboration is the most intensive method of working together. It requires frequent, in-depth communication. It includes:

- A creative process.
- Intensive communication.
- Working together for an unknown and shared outcome.
- Distributed leadership.

Collaborative initiatives unite parties to create something new that neither could accomplish alone. The outcome is often uncertain from the start. Collaboration necessitates strong interpersonal trust. Parties must be willing to freely share ideas, take risks together, and support one another through the challenges of the creative process.

Kapucu, 2014³⁵ includes six identified conditions for collaborative governance of disaster recovery:

- is initiated by a government or a government agency playing a leadership role;
- participants include non-governmental agencies and actors;
- there is direct and deliberative engagement in decision-making by both state and non-state actors;
- formalized structures to organize, meet and engage with each other is created;
- decisions are made through dialog, deliberation, and consensus; and
- collaborative governance is aimed at improving public policy or public management.

One of these key principles identified in the literature, is distributed leadership as a pertinent element of collaborative and networked governance where leaders and public managers help to mobilize, facilitate, and implement collaborative and cooperative structures to achieve set goals and take responsibility to engage stakeholders in deliberative ways.

Collaborative governance emphasizes arrangements that reach beyond coordination and requires the achievement of shared goals and shared decision-making through both interorganizational and cross-sector efforts and relationships...

To effectively prepare for and respond to complex crises, an array of responsible organizations must be able to collaborate across sectors, disciplines, jurisdictions, territorial boundaries, and levels of authority...this necessitates collaborative governance and collaborative crisis management capacities³⁶.

³⁵ Kapucu, N., 2014, *Collaborative Governance and Disaster Recovery: The National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) in the U.S.*, in Shaw, R., (ed.) *Disaster Recovery - Disaster Risk Reduction*. Springer, Tokyo.

³⁶ Ibid.

That said, Parker et. al., 2020³⁷, and O’Hara³⁸ explore the significant challenges to be faced and risks to be mitigated in collective-action arrangements which share power and authorities in less practiced ways, potentially generating conflicts and misalignment at both individual and agency levels.

Central to these is establishing and sustaining trust among collaborating parties. Frequently remarked on ‘in peacetime’ let alone crises circumstances is the lack of trust in government by communities and angst over why and what to do about it. Less common is consideration of the nature, extent, and implications of the level of trust by governments in communities as integral to this reciprocal relationship.

The ‘*Trust Flows Project*’³⁹ considered this closely and its implications for the ways in which government officials implement related programs and policies for disaster recovery. Key to the creation and maintenance of trust are behaviours and attitudes such as openness, reliability, accountability, respect, and confidentiality. Trust-building behaviours were relevant to the following ways in which trust is built and strengthened:

- *Building and maintaining relationships*
- *Expanding familiarity and awareness*
- *Increasing cultural awareness and competence*
- *Establishing communication strategies*
- *Developing methods for constructive collaboration*
- *Distributing trust equally across society*
- *Both government officials and communities developing ways to build trust*
- *Increasing trust building activities*

Risk Governance

Collaborative disaster recovery may be seen as a subset of the expansive concept of risk governance. Tierney, 2012⁴⁰ suggests risk governance refers to the coordination of public authorities, public sector employees, media, private sector, and civil society to manage and reduce disasters and climate related risks at local, regional, and national levels. It emphasises the horizontal connections between government ministries and departments, as well as vertical connections between local, regional, and departmental governments, and specific roles assigned to related institutions.

A key consideration underpinning risk governance is multi-stakeholder participation to support informed decision-making under high risks and uncertainties. This is vital to minimise the negative effects of trade-offs and encourage decisions that reflect the needs of communities and vulnerable groups.

³⁷ Parker, Charles F., Daniel Nohrstedt, Julia Baird, Helena Hermansson, Olivier Rubin, and Erik Baekkeskov, *Collaborative crisis management: a plausibility probe of core assumptions* Policy And Society 2020, Vol. 39, No. 4, 510–529.

³⁸ Danielle O’Hara, Understanding conflict in disaster recovery collaborations - A guide to conflict analysis https://static1.squarespace.com/static/62661756369fbc3df05c5c6a/t/680eb5c2c929a45310317b00/1745794498946/RecoveryConflictAnalysis_Framework.pdf

³⁹ Duckworth, Mark, Christine Horn, Michele Grossman, (2024) *Do Governments Trust Communities? The Trust Flows Project Research Report* Centre for Resilient and Inclusive Societies, Melbourne Australia.

⁴⁰ Tierney, K., 2012, . *Disaster Governance: Social, Political, and Economic Dimensions*, Annu. Rev. Environ. Resour. 2012.37:341–63

2.1.3 Summary

Section 2.1 has sought to highlight that institutional arrangements for effective recovery governance are not just about structures and processes. They include the attitudes and behaviours of those in positions of responsibility that populate those structures and drive those processes. And that this is not so as to exercise positional authority or sectoral advocacy but forge strong collaborative relationships with others invested in shared goals.

In particular:

- *Good governance and crisis leadership* - there is a high level of alignment across governance domains in the characteristics of good governance. Its application to crisis leadership requires a conducive culture in which trusting relationships flourish.
- *Leadership in Crises and Disasters* – ethical and compassionate leadership as part of the culture of disaster governance is closely aligned with adaptive leadership. In turn this may be embedded into systems leadership whereby collaboration harnesses the skills that lie across and outside of government.
- *Collaborative governance* - confusion between cooperation, coordination, and collaboration is frequently the case in considering intergovernmental activities resulting in miscuing of behaviours and frustrations in implementation of recovery arrangements. Collaboration under conditions of high uncertainty requires deep trust.
- *Risk Governance* - collaborative disaster recovery is a subset of the expansive concept of risk governance that emphasises both horizontal and vertical connections among diverse actors with a vested interest in disaster risk reduction. This ultimately minimises the circumstances in which disaster recoveries are needed in the first place.

2.2 International Experience and Guidance

2.2.1 Models for Institutional Arrangements

The broad and inclusive concept of recovery governance that was introduced in Section 1.2 above is described in international recovery agency guidance and based on wide-ranging observed practice of what makes for successful recoveries.

Notable characteristics were network structures and the collaborative behaviours identified in Section 2.1 that accommodate the wide range of actors that are required to effectively work together in a disaster recovery. These attributes bind together the institutional elements of effective recovery arrangements also identified in Section 1.2.

Collaborative governance that harnesses the efforts of multiple organisations and recovery actors also as described in Section 2.1 does not negate the responsibilities of boards of governors of individual organisations to apply the principles of good governance. But it asks them to reach further in the application of those principles, as a member organisation of a larger effort for a greater purpose.

The experience base for these observations is frequently larger scale international disasters, often in the 'global south'. It is suggested however that very comparable challenges exist for contexts such as New Zealand for significant disaster recoveries, that typically transcend subnational jurisdictions. Often these may overwhelm local and regional recovery management capacities and draw on national level resources.

In any event ‘business as usual’ arrangements are generally ill-equipped to deal with the complex task of recovery from multi-jurisdictional, larger scale disasters due to the combination of the following characteristics⁴¹:

- a. Recovery typically involves large-scale programmes requiring a diverse set of skills, resources, and protocols to plan, implement and monitor;
- b. Recovery projects and programmes need to be prepared quickly and implemented over a defined time period;
- c. They are implemented on an intensive basis in a specific geographical area or areas affected by a disaster; and,
- d. Recovery efforts receive a high degree of scrutiny and demand for accountability, thus necessitating good governance and public trust.

Johnson and Mamula-Seadon, 2014⁴² themselves and in citing the work of *Robert Olshansky*, (all who have researched the 2010-11 Canterbury Earthquakes among many other disasters), have closely observed the effects of ‘time compression’ on governments and governing in post-disaster recovery. These include:

- insufficient capacity to solve problems, provide resources and take actions;
- excess demands for information and stakeholder deliberation to make timely decisions;
- greater needs for organisational integration and coordination; and,
- immediate demands for large amounts of money with existing distribution systems challenged to meet the needs.

Bureaucracies often struggle with these and other time-compressed demands of post-disaster recovery and, as a result, new organizations, both governmental and nongovernmental, typically emerge to help provide more capacity, information, money, and other resources. Sometimes governments create new institutions to manage recovery.

Johnson and Mamula-Seadon, 2014⁴³ suggest that scholars agree that successful post-disaster recovery requires increased coordination and communication, both horizontally and vertically, among different levels of government as well as affected residents and stakeholders. This increased coordination is critical to managing the increased flow of funds, information, and other resources across different aspects of recovery—social, built, natural, and economic. If multiple subnational or local jurisdictions are involved, collaboration among jurisdictions is essential.

Determining the ‘right’ set of institutional arrangements as distinct from what pre-existing structures might be available that may or may not be fit for purpose is dependent on a range of factors. UN Development Programme guidance⁴⁴ suggests there are three basic models for institutional arrangements:

⁴¹ United Nations Development Programme, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery 2021, *Handbook on Recovery Institutions: A Guidebook for Recovery Leaders and Practitioners*

⁴² Johnson, L.A., Mamula-Seadon, L., 2014, *How National Policies and Organizations for Managing Disaster Recovery Evolved Following the 4 September 2010 and 22 February 2011 Canterbury Earthquakes*, *Earthquake Spectra*, Volume 30, No. 1, pages 577–605.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Broadly consistent with UNDP guidance which is extensively cited in this section is that provided by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) administered by the World Bank, et al., 2020, *Disaster Recovery Framework Guide*, Revised version.

1. Strengthen and coordinate existing institutions or line ministries to lead recovery;
2. Establish a new institution to manage recovery;
3. Use a hybrid approach to create a new unit within or above existing governmental agencies.

The pros and cons of each model framed in relation to significant disasters are explored in Figure 6 below to illustrate the range of relevant considerations. Starting with existing, (what may be nascent) arrangements, if a capacity assessment or other evaluation indicates that existing institutional arrangements are inadequate for recovery planning and management, then alternatives need to be considered and a preferred approach selected for rapid implementation⁴⁵.

A question that arises from this is the strengthening of local and regional recovery governance capacities and capabilities in pre-event circumstances to form the basis of institutional arrangements for recoveries that effectively accommodate the challenges posed in the aftermath of significant events.

That said, it is not the intent of this report to deliberate in a general sense on the relative merits of powering up existing agencies/local governments versus establishing a new entity to lead and coordinate recovery. Recovery governance literature points to the context relevance of this decision.

Institutional capacity for managing recovery is crucial: *day-to-day governance structures may be slow, inefficient, and inadequate to address the extraordinary, rapidly shifting, and dynamic conditions of post-disaster recovery and have only limited decision-making powers about funding*⁴⁶. However, there may be as much variation within local government as between this and other layers of government when considering capacities and capabilities to take up lead roles.

For example, *Beckham, et al, 2023*⁴⁷ discuss on the one hand the structural limitations of local councils in rural communities as compared with larger jurisdictions, but on the other the transformational power of community leadership can have in leading recovery in such contexts.

*UNDP, 2010*⁴⁸, *Rumbach, 2016*⁴⁹, *Baye, Y., et al, 2016*⁵⁰, among others note that much of the governance and disaster management literature promotes increased decentralization and greater decision-making power to local government. Underlying many of these arguments is the concept of subsidiarity as an organizing principle which says that action should be taken at the lowest effective level of governance.

GFDRR also emphasises how institutions that are set up to recover and rebuild from a disaster play a critical role in whether recovery and reconstruction will proceed smoothly or fail. GFDRR produced a companion guide for local governments that is similarly consistent as: Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery administered by the World Bank, et al, 2019, *Guide to Engaging Local Actors in Disaster Recovery Frameworks*. Similarly consistent is McKinsey & Company, 2022., *Disaster recovery - Lessons from around the world*.

⁴⁵ UNDP, 2021.

⁴⁶ Mukherji, A., Ganapati N.E., Manandhar, B., 2021, *Panacea or problem: New governance structures for disaster recovery*, International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction 52 pp1-9

⁴⁷ Beckham, T.L., et al, 2023, *BRIDGE Builders – Leadership and social capital in disaster recovery governance*, International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction (96)

⁴⁸ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) International Recovery Platform, 2010, *The Guidance Note on Recovery: Governance*

⁴⁹ Rumbach, A., 2016, *Decentralization and small cities: Towards more effective urban disaster governance?*, Habitat International 52 pp35-42.

⁵⁰ Bae, Y., Joo, Y., Won, S., 2016 *Decentralization and collaborative disaster governance: Evidence from South Korea*, Habitat International 52 pp50-56.

Model	Pros	Cons
Use existing capacities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A central body sets policies, establishes an action plan, assesses progress and resolves jurisdictional issues • Existing capacities of line ministries and/or local authorities are used for planning and implementation • Line ministries and/or local authorities are accountable to the central body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Relies on existing institutions, protocols and capacities ✓ Can accelerate decision-making ✓ Limited or no legislation required ✓ Does not create new institutional rivalries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Rapid recruitment of temporary human resources may not adequately supplement capacities ✓ Recovery coordination may be difficult if line ministry staff do not have experience or actively resist ✓ Line ministries may struggle to focus on recovery programmes at the expense of longer-term goals
Establish a new agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Envisions, strategizes, plans, implements and coordinates the overall multisectoral reconstruction programme • Used when existing capacity is not capable of responding to recovery needs • Requires significant resources to be operational • In some cases, can implement recovery activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Roles and responsibilities for recovery are clearer ✓ More effective internal and external communication ✓ Better capacity to handle complicated financial and M&E arrangements ✓ Is not bound by business-as-usual approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Potential friction with line ministries due to compromised authority and duplicated mandates ✓ Transaction costs of setting up a new institution can slow the recovery down and increase costs ✓ When the temporary agency closes, its accumulated capacity, knowledge and experience may be lost
Hybrid approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses and/or strengthens an existing structure • Provides coordination, guidance and support but not implementation • Responsible for inclusion of key stakeholders • May be a unit within an agency or dedicated commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Efficient means of implementing recovery, especially at the project level ✓ Can provide the opportunity for greater transparency and participation in the recovery process for donors when significant international aid is involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ May result in creation of parallel organizations with external technical staff who answer to donors and can undermine government policy agenda ✓ May reduce government ownership of the development and recovery process

Figure 6: Comparison of Models for Institutional Arrangements for Disaster Recovery

In other words, those tasks which local governments have the capacity to manage, should be led by local government, and higher levels of government should only take on responsibilities local government entities cannot assume. Aside from capacity uncertainty local government's potential contributions⁵¹ to long term sustainable recovery and increased disaster resilience is significant because:

- Disaster context familiarity leads to better placement to assess needs and devise relevant recovery programmes.

⁵¹ Rumbach, 2016.

- Often times greater level of accountability (visibility) to affected constituencies with an incentive to ensure greater quality of recovery services.
- They are typically responsible for development planning of respective constituencies assisting recovery efforts to be effectively aligned with long term development goals and risk reduction plans.
- Local governments are on-site with an established presence to coordinate recovery efforts.

Establishing a special purpose agency afresh may face several challenges, including delays in establishment, confusion over jurisdictional authority, and lack of input from local governments into policy related decision-making. *There is a tendency for such agencies to centralize decision making processes which impacts the legitimacy and transparency of decisions made for local communities*⁵².

Regardless of which model is chosen for what reasons, identifying a lead governmental body (whether a ministry/department of state, local authority, special purpose agency or high-level group), is emphasised in UNDP guidance⁵³ as important. This provides an overarching level of accountability and responsibility for coordinating and overseeing multi-sector, multi-governmental and multiorganisational recovery processes. But the role, purpose and culture of that entity is crucial.

*Most disaster recovery governance systems combine elements of centralised control, such as institutional arrangements, legislation, recovery planning, policy, finance, procurement, technical expertise, administration, and accountability, as well as elements of decentralized implementation and local-level recovery planning. Recovery management systems that spread control of the recovery process across multiple levels of government are more effective than those that concentrate power and authority at only one level of the governmental system*⁵⁴.

*Johnson and Olshansky, 2016*⁵⁵ based on two decades of research on great disasters in six different countries (including the 2010-11 Canterbury Earthquakes) conclude successful recovery management organisations empower networks to build capacity throughout the affected society.

Horizontally organized representatives of existing government agencies can promote coordination and information sharing, allowing individual offices to adapt to new post-disaster contexts while remaining responsible to their parent organizations. Conversely, vertically organized hierarchical agencies, with clear organizational charts and streamlined channels of communication, are usually not suited to manage disaster recovery because the lack of connection between vertical hierarchies limits collaboration.

The most effective type of recovery organisation is one that coordinates and supports existing agencies in doing what they do best. The recovery organisation adds value not in performing a

⁵² Bae, et al., 2016.

⁵³ UNDP, 2010.

⁵⁴ UNDP, 2010.

⁵⁵ Johnson L.A., Olshansky R.B., *After Great Disasters - How Six Countries Managed Community Recovery*, 2016, Policy Focus Report - Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

radical new function, but by helping existing public and private organisations to perform more effectively during the compressed time frame of the post-disaster environment.

IFRC, 2024⁵⁶ recommends that there be a standing government entity that is responsible for recovery, whether in the form of a recovery division within a national disaster risk management agency or a dedicated recovery agency. Such an ongoing entity can focus on developing recovery readiness during ‘normal times’...to cultivate strong working relationships with stakeholders, design recovery programmes and assistance measures, and recruit and maintain a specialised recovery workforce.

Local knowledge, culture, and leadership are key to successful recovery efforts and must be recognized for their tremendous value in the recovery process. Enabling local authorities to demonstrate these traits with sufficient capacity and capability being available is recommended by the UNDP. It is envisaged to support this that national governments demonstrate political will, mobilize resources, provide guidance on leadership, resolve regulatory, legal and policy questions and make much-needed technical assistance available to the recovery effort⁵⁷.

In light of commentary on the respective roles and merits of differing levels of government in recovery governance, Figure 7 below sets out the criteria identified by the *UN Development Programme* to consider in establishing institutional arrangements for recovery.

2.2.2 Institutional Attributes for Effective Recovery

The above discussion demonstrates that Institutional model in terms of structure is influential on but not in itself a predictor of success. Aside from the question of on which model might institutional arrangements for recovery have been based, is that of what are their attributes for effective recovery in any given set of circumstances? To identify those most frequently in evidence a scoping level examination of the international literature on recovery governance has been undertaken.

This limited level of inquiry into guidance and experience reflects both the vast nature of the literature and the contained level of inquiry appropriate to this project⁵⁸. Observed global practices through international frameworks⁵⁹, national guidance, academic research and case

⁵⁶ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2024, *Disaster Risk Governance Guidelines - Strengthening Laws, Policies and Plans for Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management*, IFRC, Geneva.

⁵⁷ UNDP, 2021.

⁵⁸ Several tools have assisted the scoping level literature search apart including reports and articles already available to the author. A Google Scholar search of the academic literature based on ‘*recovery governance and management*’ and variants of these terms was undertaken focusing on articles that in themselves were syntheses of case studies that might be relevant to NZ circumstances. Queries using AI tools of Microsoft CoPilot, Meta AI and ChatGPT 4o were performed with synthesis of attributes guided by the latter tool. Prompts related to ‘*disaster recovery governance*’ sought summaries but also reports, synthesis studies, review articles and case studies.

ChatGPT 4o proved most useful in identifying key characteristics of *successful disaster recovery governance and management structures together with why?, with examples and sources*. Further prompts were made on *how successful structures and processes for disaster recovery were reflected in pre-event preparedness for recovery and post-event recovery planning and disaster management, with sources*.

Finally, further analysis of examples or additional insights on *governance frameworks in relation to the structures and processes at local and regional levels* was sought, with results of all these queries brought together.

A large proportion of identified sources and case studies were passed by as not sufficiently nuanced on recovery governance arrangements, mainly narrative rather than analytical, not relevant at local/regional level, or to the emergency management context of New Zealand.

⁵⁹ The Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015) with its early focus on resilience and sustainable recovery, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) providing global guidance for proactive and inclusive recovery governance are of particular note in this category. Both reflect the experiences of a large number of disaster recoveries.

studies have been sampled and the results synthesised into a set of attribute characteristics. These are central to the framework for consideration of case studies in Section 4.0 of this report.



Figure 7: Criteria for consideration in selecting appropriate institutional arrangements⁶⁰

The effectiveness of disaster recovery governance and management structures and processes can be attributed to several interconnected factors that help ensure that recovery efforts are efficient, sustainable, inclusive, and resilient against future risks. From this review⁶¹, the

⁶⁰ UNDP, 2021.

⁶¹ The review draws from and aligns with the comprehensive guide produced by the International Red Cross as to what constitutes the foundations for an effective recovery system that address key themes and issues in disaster recovery, based on review of the frameworks for disaster recovery in eight countries and review of the experiences of major disaster events across thirteen jurisdictions; IFRC, 2023, *Laws, Policies And Plans For Disaster Recovery - Multi-Country Synthesis Report*, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva.

identified key attributes that make these structures and processes effective are summarised below. In the context of this report they function as a set of guiding principles and criteria.

1. Clear Roles, Responsibilities, Structures and Processes

Well-defined roles and responsibilities across all levels of government, private sector, NGOs, and communities within a collaborative framework assists integration across levels and sectors⁶².

Why it matters: Effective disaster recovery requires strong coordination and collaboration between governments, private sectors, NGOs, and communities to avoid duplication of efforts and resource wastage. Broad participation ensures diverse perspectives and better decision-making. Efficient governance ensures that recovery efforts are timely, cost-effective, and well-coordinated.

Streamlined processes and resource allocation contribute to efficient disaster recovery. All this is underpinned by clear legal frameworks pre- and post-disaster. Also well well-defined and clearly articulated funding arrangements to activate and scale up recovery resourcing , and to fund and implement developed recovery plans is important.

Studies from Hurricane Katrina to the present day emphasize the need for vertical as well as horizontal integration⁶³. The Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) in Australia is often cited as an example that effectively coordinated federal, state, and local efforts while integrating private sector and community input. It has also sought to integrate disaster recovery with urban planning and infrastructure development.

Johnson, 2014⁶⁴ undertook a comparative inquiry of three recoveries at local government level that exemplifies the importance of clear decision-making processes across a well-defined organisational structure for recovery. Clear legal authorities need to be in place. Formalised and engaged partnerships across diverse recovery actors enhance recovery effectiveness. *Often, the legal framework of an institutional arrangement for recovery allows for greater flexibility and powers than is usually the case* ⁶⁵.

2. Effective Leadership and Political Will

Effective leadership to prioritize recovery and build consensus. Effective does not mean the hierarchical exercise of positional authority. It contemplates leadership exhibiting the qualities identified in Section 2.1 above based on the precepts of good governance.

⁶² Key source: UNDP, 2021.

⁶³ See Chapter 1 of Smith, G., 2011, *Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery: A Review of the United States Disaster Assistance Framework*, Public Entity Risk Institute., and Kapucu, N., 2014, *Collaborative Governance and Disaster Recovery: The National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) in the U.S.*. In: Shaw, R. (eds) *Disaster Recovery, Disaster Risk Reduction*, Springer, Tokyo. This book Chapter highlights that a shared effort to redevelop, restore, and rebuild a community requires effective intergovernmental and cross-sector collaboration and cooperation. Recent recovery experiences in the US, especially post-Katrina, have shown a considerable lack of coordination between different government agencies as well as political conflicts in planning and executing recovery efforts.

⁶⁴ Johnson, Laurie A., 2014, *Developing a Local Recovery Management Framework: Report on the Post-Disaster Strategies and Approaches Taken by Three Local Governments in the U.S. following Major Disasters*, International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters, Volume 32, Issue 2, pages 242–274. This in one of the limited number of comparative case studies of post-disaster recovery that have explored organizational approaches by local governments. The case studies were in Los Angeles, California (following the 1994 Northridge earthquake); Grand Forks, North Dakota (following the 1997 Red River flood); and New Orleans, Louisiana (following 2005 Hurricane Katrina).

⁶⁵ UNDP, 2021

Why it matters: Leadership drives prioritization, funding allocation, and the alignment of stakeholders toward common recovery goals. Key features include visible commitment from political leaders, consistent and clear communication with the public and empowering local leaders for grassroots impact.

Local leadership in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina, U.S. (2005) also helped fill gaps in the federal response, particularly among marginalized communities. *Johnson, 2014* highlights the importance of effective leadership through collaborative working as being crucial for coordinated efforts. So does *UNDP, 2021*, stressing the importance of politically respected, competent, and empathetic leadership as crucial to ensuring political and community ownership and recovery financing.

3. Transparent and Accountable Decision-Making

Ensuring that decisions are evidence-based, transparent, and subject to oversight. Transparency in governance means openness and clarity in decision-making processes. Recovery governance should establish clear lines of responsibility and accountability.

Accountability works upwards by managers to recovery governors, and downwards by those decision makers to affected communities and the wider society that is a party to funding recoveries. In addition to upwards and downwards accountability, there exists a relational accountability between recovery actors who may work together and rely upon each other to achieve the larger recovery goals⁶⁶.

Why it matters: Trust in recovery governance depends on transparent decision-making, clear communication, and effective use of resources. Transparent recovery governance allows stakeholders to understand the rationale behind decisions, allocation of resources, and recovery plans. Stakeholders must be accountable for their actions, commitments, and outcomes during the recovery process.

*Taylor, et. al., 2014*⁶⁷ explores downward accountability by key government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to victims during the extended period of recovery from Australia's Black Saturday bushfire disaster in 2009. That study provides a critical assessment of the interplay between downward, upward (or hierarchical) and internal (or identity) accountability.

*UNDP, 2021*⁶⁸ emphasises the importance of well-designed institutional arrangements that codify information management and reporting practices and ensure a commitment to transparency and accountability to the public, the sources of recovery finance and government leaders.

⁶⁶ UNDP, 2010

⁶⁷ Taylor, D., Tharapos, M., Sidaway, S., 2014 *Downward accountability for a natural disaster recovery effort: Evidence and issues from Australia's Black Saturday*, *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, Vol. 25 Issue 7.

⁶⁸ UNDP, 2021.

4. Community Centred Approach

Involving local communities in decision-making, planning, and implementation of recovery efforts assist ownership of the results of those decisions.

Why it matters: Local communities are the most directly affected by disasters and often have the best understanding of their needs and priorities. Their involvement ensures culturally appropriate and sustainable recovery solutions.

Research on Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) generally highlights the importance of grassroots involvement. There is wide consensus in disaster recovery literature that sustainable recovery solutions should be inclusive and informed by the experiences and perceptions of community members, *UNDP, 2021*.

Kapucu, 2014 highlights the difference between consultative techniques and collaborative techniques of engagement which reflect two-way communication and multilateral engagement and emphasises its importance in effective collaborative governance. *Both pre and post disaster recovery advisory committees are an example of a type of collaborative governance arrangement but only when the advice of members is closely linked to the decisions that are actually made.*

*Fraser, et al., 2021*⁶⁹ note the potential and practice in US disaster experience following Hurricane Katrina in 2005 of such committees as mechanisms for local voices to be reflected in recovery policies. As was the case of disaster recovery committees in Japan following the 2011 Earthquake and Tsunami disasters, but here the risk of their capture by certain interested groups was also recorded.

5. Inclusivity and Equity

Addressing the needs of vulnerable groups/disproportionately impacted communities, ensuring equitable resource distribution, and involving diverse stakeholders.

Why it matters: Disasters disproportionately affect marginalized groups. Recovery efforts that prioritize inclusivity ensure that no one is left behind. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) highlights equity in disaster contexts that has been the mandate for national policies in relation to those disproportionately impacted by disaster.

An excellent guide towards achieving equity in post-disaster recovery suggests this is not just about tailoring assistance programmes towards marginalised groups but infusing equity considerations and participatory approaches in all aspects of the institutional arrangements that enable effective recovery⁷⁰.

6. Adaptability and Flexibility

Structures that allow adjustments based on changing conditions, needs, and lessons learned. Being responsive means adapting to changing circumstances during recovery.

⁶⁹ Fraser, T., et al., 2021, *In the hands of a few: Disaster recovery committee networks*, Journal of Environmental Management, Volume 280

⁷⁰ Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2023, *Achieving Equitable Recovery: A Post-Disaster Guide for Local Officials and Leaders*, FEMA.

Governance structures should be flexible enough to address emerging needs and challenges.

Why it matters: Disaster recovery is dynamic, and rigid systems may fail to address evolving needs or emerging risks.

Johnson, 2014 highlights the importance of developing flexible, scalable recovery frameworks that can adapt to different disaster scenarios.

7. Resilience Building

Incorporating long-term resilience into recovery plans.

Why it matters: Recovery efforts should not just rebuild what was lost but also reduce vulnerabilities and enhance preparedness for future disasters.

As far back as 1987 the Brundtland Report introduced the idea of sustainable recovery. The Paris Agreement (2015) linked disaster recovery to climate adaptation. By way of example The Rotterdam Climate Initiative combines flood recovery with resilient urban design. *Smith, 2010*⁷¹ in his review of lessons from multiple hurricane recoveries in the USA for post-disaster recovery planning highlights the unique opportunity that such planning provides for incorporating both risk reduction/resilience and longer term sustainable development initiatives. There are numerous examples closer to home arising from responding to the impacts of recent severe weather events through adoption of ‘build back better’ practices.

8. Integration of Technology and Innovation for Better Information

Leveraging technology for impact assessment, resource allocation, and communication. Increasing information flows to gather, integrate, and disseminate information effectively to enhance decision making and actions by all recovery actors⁷².

Why it matters: Advanced tools can improve the speed and accuracy of damage assessment, resource allocation, and risk prediction. The use of drones for damage assessment is now common. Research on smart cities highlights the role of IoT and GIS in recovery. We have barely begun the journey of the contribution of AI to disaster recovery.

9. Learning-Oriented Processes

Incorporating lessons from previous disasters to improve future responses. Reflecting monitoring results indicating shortfalls in plans and operational adjustments as recovery proceeds.

⁷¹ Smith, G., 2010, *Lessons from the United States: Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction*, The Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies, Volume : 2010-1.

⁷² Johnson and Olshansky, 2016.

Why it matters: Incorporating lessons from past disasters reduces mistakes and improves preparedness for future crises.

The Sendai Framework stresses iterative learning and improvement while research on organizational learning, such as After-Action Reviews (AARs), supports this, enhancing institutional memory and knowledge sharing.

10. Long-Term Vision and Sustainability

Key Features include integration of recovery plans with regional development planning, investment in green infrastructure and renewable energy, and policies aligned with climate change adaptation. Recovery must address more than just infrastructure - it should promote social, economic, and environmental well-being.

Why it matters: Successful recovery balances immediate needs with long-term development and environmental sustainability.

A synthesis of why these factors work⁷³ suggested this was because of:

- *Synergy:* They complement each other; for instance, community participation fosters transparency and builds resilience.
- *Human-Centred Focus:* Addressing real-world needs ensures meaningful recovery outcomes.
- *Forward-Looking:* Incorporating resilience and sustainability mitigates future risks.
- *Accountability:* Transparency and inclusivity build trust, essential for collaborative recovery.
- *Innovation:* Technology improves efficiency and accuracy in disaster management.

2.2.3 Attributes of Pre- and Post-event Recovery Arrangements

How the identified structural and process attributes of effective disaster recovery governance are interconnected with pre-event preparedness and post-event recovery planning and management was also examined in the literature search.

By integrating lessons, frameworks, and governance principles, disaster recovery becomes a more significant part of the cycle that builds resilience and reduces vulnerabilities, helping to ensure a better recovery the next time.

When analysing disaster recovery governance structures and processes at local and regional levels, successful implementation relies heavily on tailored frameworks, community involvement, and the ability to link regional and local needs with broader national recovery systems.

Below is an AI-assisted examination of the literature on recovery attributes with insights for pre-event preparedness and post-event recovery planning and management focused at local and regional levels and on governance and institutional frameworks. These are also useful prompts when considering the case studies.

⁷³ This draws significantly on FEMA's *National Disaster Recovery Framework* (U.S.), 3rd edition published on 10 December 2024.

a. Pre-Event Preparedness for Recovery

1. Governance and Institutional Frameworks⁷⁴

Establishing disaster recovery frameworks, assigning roles, and building institutional capacity before disasters occur provides for well-defined roles and responsibilities that help ensure smooth coordination post-disaster. Some key elements of these pre-event frameworks are:

- *Risk Governance*: Defined roles at each government level provides for stakeholders a clear structure for disaster recovery and helps ensure coordination across government levels and sectors.
- *Policy Support*: Legal frameworks and instruments to guide recovery actions.
- *Funding Mechanisms*: Pre-established disaster recovery funds and mechanisms that expedite their distribution.
- *Training and Capacity Building*: Regular practices and education programmes.

Some implementation challenges and risk mitigations are:

- *Coordination Across Levels of Government*: Misalignment of priorities and actions between national, regional, and local governments. This risk can be mitigated by using unified legal and policy frameworks to define recovery roles at all levels.
- *Insufficient Funding Mechanisms*: Pre-established recovery funds are often underfunded or misallocated. Dedicated, regularly updated, and adequately funded recovery mechanisms are available.
- *Legal and Policy Gaps*: Outdated or incomplete disaster laws that do not define recovery roles clearly is an ongoing risk. Regular reviews of enabling legislation and guiding policies that apply locally are required.
- *Lack of Capacity and Training*: Insufficient skills and knowledge at local levels undermine the effectiveness of frameworks.

Key structures and processes at local/regional levels:

- *Decentralised Governance*: Local and regional bodies must have defined authority to act quickly in the face of disasters.
- *Integration with Regional Planning*: Councils align pre-disaster recovery plans with broader urban planning, land use, and infrastructure policies.
- *Hazard and Vulnerability Mapping*: Regions and local Councils conduct risk assessments to identify vulnerable areas and populations.

Some challenges at local and regional levels are:

- *Resource Constraints*: Local governments often lack financial or technical resources for robust pre-disaster planning.

⁷⁴ The Red Cross in their most recent guidance is closely aligned with the attributes, challenges, and mitigations in this section – see International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2024, *Disaster Risk Governance Guidelines - Strengthening Laws, Policies and Plans for Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management*, IFRC, Geneva.

- *Capacity Gaps:* Limited training for local officials hinders effective recovery management.
- *Coordination Issues:* Miscommunication between regional and local levels can create overlapping efforts or gaps in coverage.

Other institutional elements of note are:

2. Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction

Engaging communities to identify vulnerabilities, build local capacities, and prepare recovery plans. Local communities are trained and empowered to manage risks and assist in recovery planning. Enhances community ownership and ensures recovery is context-specific and culturally appropriate.

3. Resilient Infrastructure and Land-Use Planning

Implementing building codes, retrofitting critical infrastructure, and zoning to reduce disaster impacts. Acts to reduce recovery time and costs by minimizing damage to critical infrastructure.

4. Data Collection and Analysis

Establishing hazard monitoring, forecasting systems, and data-sharing platforms. Facilitates timely evacuation and ensures preparedness for recovery through damage forecasting.

5. Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning (PDRP)

Planning recovery actions before a disaster occurs. Accelerates recovery by pre-identifying funding, logistics, and priorities.

b. Post-Event Recovery Planning and Disaster Management

1. Rapid Activation of Governance Structures Leveraging pre-established governance systems for immediate recovery coordination. Prevents delays in decision-making and resource allocation. Provides for efficient mobilization of resources, clear communication and coordination among stakeholders and timely initiation of recovery efforts. Some key elements of post-event activation are:

- *Pre-Defined Leadership Roles:* Disaster Recovery Managers/Coordinators or equivalent roles ensure quick decision-making.
- *Coordinated Communication:* Coordinated communications practices streamline communication between stakeholders.
- *Flexible Resource Allocation:* Dynamic resource prioritization based on real-time assessments.
- *Legislative Support:* Frameworks through contemporary legislation enables rapid mobilization with confirmed mandates.

Some implementation challenges and risk mitigations are:

- *Delayed Leadership Activation:* Lack of clear leadership or confusion about authority can delay recovery efforts. Can be mitigated by appointing leaders with clear authority to manage recovery and make rapid decisions.
- *Bureaucratic Hurdles:* Overly complex procedures for accessing recovery funds and resources. Mitigated by simplifying procedures for accessing funds and other resources.
- *Coordination Between Stakeholders:* Poor communication and role overlap among government agencies, NGOs, and the private sector.
- *Limited Adaptability:* Rigid recovery plans that fail to adapt to evolving needs. Can be mitigated by developing adaptable recovery frameworks that allow resource reallocation based on changing needs.

Key structures and processes at local/regional levels:

- *Localized Leadership in Recovery:* Local councils or committees take the lead in assessing community-specific needs and initiating recovery plans. Any confusion about authority between local and regional entities can delay decision-making.
- *Regional Coordination Mechanisms:* Regional bodies act as intermediaries, aligning local recovery plans with national policies and securing funding.
- *Community Participation in Decision-Making:* Local recovery committees include community members to ensure that recovery efforts align with real needs. Involving communities in post-disaster assessments, priority setting, and recovery execution aligns recovery actions with community needs and ensures inclusive decision-making.
- *Adaptive Recovery Planning:* Local plans evolve based on real-time assessments and changing conditions. Adjusting recovery strategies based on real-time needs and feedback ensures relevance and effectiveness in dynamic post-disaster conditions.
- *Inclusive Resource Distribution:* Recovery funds and resources are allocated equitably, considering marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Some challenges at local and regional levels are:

- *Leadership Overlap:* Confusion about authority between local and regional entities can delay decision-making.
- *Funding Bottlenecks:* Regional governments may struggle to distribute national funds efficiently to local authorities.
- *Community Trust:* Lack of transparency in recovery plans can lead to public dissatisfaction or resistance.

Other institutional elements of note are:

2. *Equity and Inclusivity in Recovery:* Ensuring marginalized groups have access to recovery resources and decision-making platforms. Avoids deepening existing inequalities and enhances social cohesion.
3. *Integration with Long-Term Development:* Linking recovery with sustainable development and resilience-building. Builds stronger, more resilient systems and reduces future risks.

4. *Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning*: Regularly assessing recovery progress and incorporating lessons into future planning. Improves transparency, accountability, and future preparedness.

c. Interlinkages Between Pre-Event and Post-Event Efforts

- *Continuity of Governance*: Pre-event frameworks ensure seamless transition into post-disaster recovery management. To do this governance frameworks must be detailed, well-communicated, and practiced regularly to ensure readiness. Post-event rapid activation depends on clear pre-established plans, efficient leadership, and adaptive coordination mechanisms.
- *Proactive Capacity Building*: Training and capacity building in preparedness stages support effective recovery. Training for local leadership enhances confidence and competence during critical recovery phases.
- *Data and Resource Alignment*: Pre-event data collection (e.g., GIS mapping, risk assessments) feeds directly into post-disaster recovery plans.
- *Scenario-Based Planning*: Pre-disaster recovery planning incorporates likely scenarios, streamlining post-disaster actions. Pre-event plans inform post-event actions by reducing response time and improves the accuracy of recovery measures.

d. Recommendations for Enhancing Local and Regional Readiness

- *Strengthen Capacity*: Invest in training programs for local and regional officials to manage recovery processes effectively.
- *Establish Coordination Mechanisms*: Create means to facilitate communication between local and national authorities.
- *Enhance Community Involvement*: Embed community representatives in recovery governance structures.
- *Increase Funding for Pre-Event Recovery Plans*: Allocate resources for local governments to develop and test recovery frameworks.

2.3 Australian Guidance and Experience

Australian guidance and the experience base for it in framing, planning, and delivering the institutional arrangements for disaster recovery governance is considered here separate from the international experience above. This is for several reasons. Many common affiliations and shared experiences, institutional norms for governance generally, and emergency management exchange arrangements with New Zealand suggest a more familiar and relevant experience base to draw on.

That said, there are some distinct differences in Australia's national governance arrangements as compared to New Zealand's, given the former is a commonwealth of states under a federal government structure. As well, the nature of prevalent disaster events in Australia - frequent bushfires and intense cyclonic floods with limited seismic activity - provides for interesting contrast.

But it is the extent of the Australian disaster experience base and their level of reflection on recoveries and allied reviews of institutional arrangements that is of particular interest. This has

spawned a degree of recovery governance framework development and recovery management related research that is a useful and accessible knowledge and practice base to draw on.

A key question in doing so is to what degree does this enrich, add to, or differ from the set of attributes from elsewhere identified above? That said, as with the limited extent of that broader international literature inquiry upon which those are based, this section of the report is at best an indicative sounding of the Australian experience and knowledge base.

2.3.1 Australian Recovery Framework

Australian disaster recovery governance is formalised in federal and state laws and through a deliberative Framework⁷⁵ (The Framework), following wide engagement and which has been regularly refreshed. Disaster recovery governance in Australia is multi-tiered, involving federal, state/territory, and local governments, as well as engaging key recovery partners in non-government organisations, private industry, volunteers, media, and philanthropic organisations.

National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) leads national coordination for disaster recovery. State and Territory Governments have primary responsibility for disaster recovery within their jurisdictions. Each state has legislation and a State Emergency Plan (or sub-Plan) to guide recovery efforts. Key state recovery agencies are a mix of dedicated agencies or significant departments of state governments.

A variety of regional recovery coordination mechanisms such as committees and appointed officials bridge the gap between state and local governments and help manage recovery across multiple council areas. Community recovery committees or groups reach out to engage community representatives in pre-event preparedness and/or recovery planning and delivery post-event.

Local Governments hold an important role in community recovery, developing and implementing local recovery plans, maintaining relationships with local communities and service providers, and working with state and federal agencies to coordinate resources in preparation and delivery.

As in NZ the four environments of social, economic, natural, and built are recognised elements of a holistic approach to recovery management. This is guided by an enduring set of National Recovery Principles, first developed in 1986, supported by a set of characteristics of successful recovery programmes.

In summary⁷⁶ these are as below, with the relevant attribute(s) for effective recovery identified in Section 2.2.2 above to which they (most) relate shown in brackets. From this it is suggested that Framework principles and programme characterises as normative behaviours are well reflected in the identified set of institutional attributes for effective recovery.

Recovery Principles	Characteristics Of Recovery Programmes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Understand the context (1,7,10)</i> • <i>Recognise complexity (1,5,6)</i> • <i>Use community led approaches (4)</i> • <i>Coordinate all activities (1)</i> • <i>Communicate effectively (3,4,8)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Responsive and accessible (1,2,3)</i> • <i>Whole-of-community (1,7,10)</i> • <i>Dynamic (2)</i> • <i>Needs & evidence-based (3,9,10)</i> • <i>Community-led (1,4)</i>

⁷⁵ National Emergency Management Agency, 2022, *Australian Disaster Recovery Framework - V3.0*, NEMA.

⁷⁶ There is more detail on each of these principles and characteristics in and referenced from the Framework document.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recognise and build capacity (7,8,9)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Demand-driven (3,4)</i> • <i>Interoperable (8)</i> • <i>Scalable (1,8)</i> • <i>Collaborative (1,4)</i> • <i>Capability focused 91,2,4)</i> • <i>Resilient (7,10)</i>
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The Framework suggest that practical adoption of these principles and programme characteristics means most events can be successfully managed through existing governance structures, authority, roles, and responsibilities. But it also recognises that some event characteristics will warrant activating extraordinary collaborative governance arrangements considering emerging or current needs for:

- *Greater clarity of accountabilities across multiple parties.*
- *A more comprehensive picture of impacts, consequences, requirements, etc.*
- *Improved planning, coordination, and consistency of decision-making and resourcing across multiple communities and recovery programmes.*
- *Reduced duplication and unnecessary administrative burden across collective efforts.*
- *Expanded and expedited access to necessary resources to sustain or scale recovery activities or access specialist expertise.*
- *Improved inter-organisational and public communication to minimise the occurrence of conflicting or confusing information and sustain public trust and confidence.*
- *Mitigation of avoidable consequences for individuals and communities arising due to compounding stressors, uncertainties, or in navigating complex support service systems.*

The Framework also suggests that the design of any new governance arrangements should set out clear:

- authority, roles, and responsibilities for all members*
- governance leadership, including the appointment of individuals and establishment of organisations (if/as required) to facilitate effective recovery governance*
- (existing or new) policies, mechanisms and legal arrangements guiding recovery programme development, delivery, monitoring, and evaluation*
- oversight, risk, compliance, and assurance arrangements.*

Model arrangements for activating national collaborative governance arrangements are set out in the Framework. Comparable State arrangements for activation may vary around the central themes, as parties aligned with that Framework.

Supporting Framework implementation is the Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub (the Knowledge Hub) as a national, open-source platform managed by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience⁷⁷, (AIDR), on behalf of the Australian Government. AIDR oversees the Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection that includes one providing guidance for Community Recovery.

⁷⁷ <https://www.aidr.org.au/>

The provision made and recognition afforded in the Framework to the benefits of collaborative governance generally, and extraordinary arrangements in some event circumstances, is comparable with the recognition of the importance of collaborative governance in Section 2.2.2 above, based on international guidance and experience.

2.3.2 The Framework in Practice

Australian emergency management arrangements are complex and continually evolving, especially in response to major events and this applies to recovery as well (IFRC, 2023⁷⁸). More recently this has especially been the case as a result of the Black Summer Bushfires 2019-20 fire season catastrophic events. This experience was the trigger for a Royal Commission of Inquiry into Arrangements⁷⁹ generally. Subsequently recovery-specific agencies were created at State and Federal levels, only to then be merged into multi-phase emergency management agency arrangements at these respective levels.

Notwithstanding the Framework and the legal, policy and planning instruments relating to disaster recovery, the Black Summer Bushfires illustrated considerable variation in practice. While post-event plans for immediate recovery were established, medium-long term planning was more limited. Moreover, the Bushfires were managed largely through ad hoc institutional arrangements established during and immediately after the event. In general, the planned federal and state-level coordination mechanisms were not used⁸⁰.

There was a lack of publicly available information regarding why governments decided to establish new institutional arrangements for the recovery from the Black Summer Bushfires, rather than relying on the existing and planned arrangements...the rapid establishment of Bushfire Recovery Victoria during the fires meant that the agency had to spring into action without having time to develop and refine its overall role in recovery, develop resources to support community recovery, and establish productive relationships with councils and other local organisations...this ultimately undermined the Agency's effectiveness⁸¹.

A positive aspect of the observed institutional arrangements for disaster recovery - both prior to the Black Summer Bushfires and at the time of writing the International Red Cross's report - is that they provide for the participation of a wide range of government and non-government actors consistent with an all-of-government and all-of-society approach to recovery.

A notable feature of this is the provision in most jurisdictions for the establishment of local recovery groups or committees as mechanisms to further the sought after community led approach to recovery. Such mechanisms evidence the commitment towards community-centred disaster recovery that most practitioners express and most experience supports⁸².

That said, *Sanderson et al., 2025⁸³*, based on key informant interviews and surveys among those who had experienced severe fires and floods since 2019 reports widespread dissatisfaction with

⁷⁸ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2023, *Disaster Recovery In Australia - A Legal and Policy Survey*, IFRC, Geneva.

⁷⁹ Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, 2020, *Final Report*, Commonwealth of Australia.

⁸⁰ IFoRC&RCS, 2023.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Sanderson, D., Heffernan, T., DeSisto, M., Clifford Shearing, C., 2025, *Community-centred disaster recovery: A call to change the narrative*, Disasters, Vol. 49.

⁸³ Ibid.

current practices suggesting among other things, the systems and tools currently used did not lend themselves to genuine community-centred recovery.

These comments are intended as neither a critique of the Framework nor a conclusive inquiry into the full range of related disaster recovery experience – far from it. But they serve to provide a snapshot of the challenges of aligning the declared and default in terms of planned approaches and prescribed arrangements versus observed experience. This, in a jurisdiction with vast experience of disasters and their recoveries, as with elsewhere such as the United States.

Reflective of that body of knowledge and practice, is the commitment to develop and populate a programme for monitoring and evaluating recovery programmes, as case studies accessible through the AIDR Knowledge Hub. Foundational to this is a Framework⁸⁴ developed for this purpose that is also relevant and a useful check in relation to the current exercise.

The Evaluation side of that Framework poses a wide range of evaluation questions by several topic areas shown below (with the relevant attribute(s) for effective recovery identified in Section 2.2.2 above to which they (most) relate also shown in brackets):

1. Governance of the recovery process - *governance structures can help achieve recovery outcomes by:*

- *taking a long-term perspective on outcomes and recognizing the complexity of the process (10)*
- *ensuring recovery programs are monitored on a regular basis (3,8)*
- *ensuring programs are adaptive to changing needs and impact (6)*
- *ensuring recovery plans clearly define roles and responsibilities for disaster recovery (1)*
- *ensuring governance procedures conform to legislation, policies, and other plans (1,3)*
- *establishing community-managed funds and other resources for disaster recovery (4)*
- *having a shared understanding among stakeholders regarding disaster recovery responsibilities, authority, and decision-making (1,3)*
- *ensuring governance is transparent and accountable (3)*
- *managing unintended consequences that might flow from recovery activities (6,9)*
- *coordinating response and relief efforts with the recovery process so that the two ‘work together’ (1).*

2. If the disaster recovery process is to be community-led, the affected communities must be involved in the governance of the recovery programmes. This will include:

- *stakeholder/community engagement in a timely and on-going way that provides adequate representation of community views (4)*
- *establishing a shared vision of a sustainable and resilient community that is understood by the community (10)*
- *joint planning between community actors and emergency teams and structures (1,4)*
- *organisations having capacity to develop and manage community volunteers for disaster recovery (1)*
- *recovery plans are developed through participatory processes (4,5)*
- *the community having the capacity and formal avenues to lobby and challenge external agencies on disaster recovery plans, priorities, and actions (3,4,6)*

⁸⁴ Australia and New Zealand School of Government, 2018, *A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Disaster Recovery Programs*, ANZOG for the Australian Government.

- *inclusion/representation of vulnerable groups in community decision-making and management of disaster recovery (5)*
- *agreed plans and management arrangements are well understood by the community and all disaster management agencies (1,4,8)*
- *information is developed and disseminated in multiple media, multi-lingual formats, alternative formats; is appropriate to a diverse audience, user-friendly; and accessible to under-served populations (3,4,8)*
- *community members have information they need to continue recovering from the disaster (4,8)*
- *evolving community needs are assessed and prioritized during the recovery process to inform recovery activities (6,9)*
- *governance processes are appropriately inclusive and representative of the affected community (4,5).*

3. Effectiveness

- *To what extent did the disaster recovery program produce a sustainable community? (10 part)*
- *To what extent did the disaster recovery program produce a resilient community? (7 part)*
- *Was there any trade-off between achieving resilient outcomes and sustainable outcomes? If yes, how was this negotiated? (7,10 parts)*
- *To what extent did program activities and resources allow positive interaction among the recovery domains? (6,7,9 parts)*

4. Efficiency

- *To what extent did the program achieve the right balance between centralisation of some activities to achieve economies of scale while at the same time being responsive to local needs and conditions? (1,4 parts)*
- *Did the program prevent price escalation stemming from the level of demand and competition between organisations? (n/a)*
- *How well did the program balance the need to optimize between cost of restoring essential public assets and the cost of delaying such projects? (10)*
- *How appropriate were the price benchmarks used to evaluate service providers? (n/a)*

5. Implementation

- *Was the recovery program consistent with the National Principles for Disaster Recovery? (n/a)*
- *To what extent has the program been implemented according to the recovery plan? In cases where activity has departed from the recovery plan, how was this managed and what were the implications? (6,9)*
- *Did the speed of the recovery process compromise quality of services? (10)*
- *Did the recovery program meet community needs as they changed over time and in response to changes in disaster impact? (6,9)*
- *To what extent did program activities and resources effectively encourage interaction between outcome domains (for example, did the restoration of cultural assets also promote economic tourism)? (n/a)*
- *Where disaster recovery involved several separate components or projects, how well coordinated were these with each other? If each of these components or projects were evaluated separately, did these evaluations draw common conclusions? (n/a)*

- *To what extent was the recovery process affected by external factors that may have had an impact on the community's ability to recover (e.g. general economic conditions, microeconomic conditions in specific markets, demographic changes, technological changes, government policy and climate and weather patterns)? (6)*

In general there is good alignment between the structure, and process-oriented set of attributes of institutional arrangements for effective recovery set out in Section 2.2.2 of the report, as compared the more programme-specific and outcome-oriented set of evaluation questions set out above.

However, the latter is notable for the emphasis given to community-led orientation of the recovery process that is developed and implemented; not solely as an aspect of the approach to community engagement but infused across all aspects of institutional arrangements. It is useful reminder of the degree to which collaborative governance practice and community expectations now converge.

3.0 Disaster Recovery in New Zealand Law and Practice Guidance

3.1 Evolution in the CDEM Context

TO assist understanding of recovery governance issues arising from variations in institutional arrangements for recent disaster recoveries in Section 4.0, it is useful to briefly consider the evolution of recovery related law that brings us to the era of the CDEM Act 2002. Together with related instruments this then in Section 3.2 provides the 'normative' recovery framework, institutionalised in Government policy through which it intends disaster recovery should be governed and managed.

Modernisation of emergency management law is typically not a steady evolution, frequently occurring in steps correlated with the occurrence of significant disaster events, albeit often with significant elapsed time to pass into law lessons from them.

For example, origins of the current process of replacing the CDEM Act 2002 lie in the Government response to the review following the Port Hills Fires in 2016⁸⁵, hastened now by its response to the Ministerial Inquiry into the response to North Island Severe Weather Events (NISWE) in 2023⁸⁶. But it may be a decade or so on from the Fires review before a new Act is in place in 2026/27 and 25 years on from the passing of the CDEM Act 2002 - itself the subject of much deliberation through the 1990s in replacing the Civil Defence Act 1883.

*Kipp, 2016*⁸⁷ considers how recovery was conceptualized in disaster scholarship in the 1970s as shown in Figure 3 above. On this premise he traces the origins of the disaster governance framework in New Zealand. This stretches back to beginnings brought about by the 1931 Napier Earthquake and to a degree reflected in the principles of post war 'Civil Defence' legislation.

⁸⁵ NZ Government, August 2018 *Delivering better responses to natural disasters and other emergencies - Government response to the Technical Advisory Group's recommendations*.

⁸⁶ NZ Government, October 2024, *Strengthening disaster resilience and emergency management - Government response to the Report of the Government Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events*.

⁸⁷ Kipp, R. D., 2016, *From Cold War To Canterbury: The New Zealand Experience In Emergency Management*, Doctor of Philosophy in Law Thesis, University of Canterbury.

However it was not until the 1980s that in at least policy and guidance that recovery was depicted as an integrated and holistic concept, based on sustainability and subsidiarity principles that place lower levels of Government in a guided responsibilities framework spanning the ‘4 environments’ – natural, social, built, and economic – and with the community at the centre.

Kipp highlights the limited specificity in law about who and how decisions would be made and recovery practically delivered following the occurrence of significant events, arguing the framework was not truly tested until the Canterbury Earthquakes of 2010-11, found wanting and supplanted in that case by bespoke legislation and government agency arrangements.

In part this was attributed to the scale of the disaster that overwhelmed existent capacities, but also due to relatively poorly developed recovery capability as documented in the 2012 national CDEM capability assessment and similarly observed in the repeat 2015 assessment⁸⁸.

*With the CDEM Act 2002, New Zealand followed a similar trend as emergency management globally by introducing into law a risk-based, integrated, and comprehensive framework – but it has also followed the trend of neglecting recovery in practice. The CDEM recovery framework was developed on sound principles but contained very little in terms of practicality*⁸⁹.

Kipp, 2016 suggests that the CDEM system by 2016 had done very little to identify and develop disaster recovery knowledge, capabilities and powers and was still response oriented and therefore a functional system for recovery did not exist in New Zealand...as with response in the 1960s and 1970s, recovery is primarily done on an ad hoc basis and relies on goodwill and a coincidental alignment of extant local capabilities and the demands of an emergency.

Few, if any, provisions for major crises were contained in statutes such as the Resource Management Act 1991, the Building Act 2004, while the CDEM Act 2002 offered no emergency powers for recovery. This made it inevitable for a significant event that special powers would be required at the least for land use and building issues arising from recovery needs.

More recent amendments to the Act in late 2016⁹⁰, post-dating *Kipp*’s work, bolstered the role of recovery managers through authorities to exercise specific powers during newly defined and extendable transition periods and made explicit a role for CDEM Groups in strategic recovery planning (see Section 3.2 below for more details). But his central thesis of a system of elevated ambition by design, but of limited capacity and capability in practice relying ‘in the thick of it’ on significant external ad hoc resourcing as the norm largely remains.

*Rotimi, 2010*⁹¹ also considers the evolution and status of legislative and regulatory provisions affecting disaster recovery in New Zealand, in particular the CDEM Act 2002, Resource

⁸⁸ Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management, December 2015, *CDEM National Capability Assessment Report*.

⁸⁹ *Kipp*, 2016.

⁹⁰ The Civil Defence Emergency Management Amendment Act 2016 created a stronger legal framework for recovery, with the establishment of transition periods and recovery manager roles. The *Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS)* accompanying the CDEM Amendment Bill 2015 for this Act indicates these changes form the first phase of a review of the legislative framework for recovery from emergencies focussed on small to moderate-scale emergencies; the second phase will focus on large-scale emergencies. It does not appear the second phase was ever progressed as intended.

⁹¹ Rotimi, J.O.B, 2010, *An Examination of Improvements Required to Legislative Provisions for Post Disaster Reconstruction In New Zealand*, Doctor of Philosophy in Civil Engineering Thesis, University of Canterbury

Management Act 1991 and the Building Act 2004, as they relate to the realisation of significant post-disaster reconstruction programmes as a subset of disaster recovery.

Results show that the three legislative documents may become sources of vulnerability in post disaster reconstruction because of their influence on the timely achievement of recovery objectives. The impediments posed by these legislative documents are mainly in the form of procedural constraints; ambiguities in rights and responsibilities for recovery management; and deficiencies in the intents and purposes of the legislative documents.

Bespoke recovery related legislation that addresses some of these impediments for specific disasters has been a feature of recent recoveries:

- Canterbury Earthquake Response and Recovery Act 2010 (repealed)
- Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act 2011 (repealed)
- Greater Christchurch Regeneration Act 2016 (repealed)
- Hurunui/Kaikōura Earthquakes Recovery Act 2016 (repealed)
- Severe Weather Emergency Legislation Act 2023
- Severe Weather Emergency Recovery Legislation Act 2023

More general results from Rotimi's 2010 inquiry *show that pre-planning the management of disaster resources; and collaborative arrangements for response and recovery programmes are a pre-cursor to effective and efficient management of reconstruction in New Zealand.*

3.2 The Current Legislative Framework for Recovery Governance

Figure 8 below summarises structures and processes for CDEM at regional and local levels as mandated by the CDEM Act 2002. It is an 'ecosystem' in large part 'grafted onto' local government structure with CDEM Groups that form a component of recovery governance embedded through the use of Local Government Act 2002 powers to establish Groups as joint committees.

The CDEM Amendment Act 2016 marks a pivotal change in recognition of how recovery activities might be governed and managed under the Act through formalising transition periods to recovery under a new part 5A by elective notice to follow on from the expiry of declared states of emergency (SoE). Under Part 5B, Recovery Managers are authorised to exercise coercive powers that that might expedite recovery but mirror those available to Controllers under a declared SoE. These include directing evacuations, closing roads, carrying out works, requiring information, controlling access.

That said the 2016 amendments were a first phase of reform in provisions for recovery, focussed on small to moderate-scale emergencies and to achieve consistency within the Act, options which propose amendments draw heavily on its existing structure of response provisions⁹². An intended second phase focused on large-scale emergencies (i.e. of the nature of the Canterbury earthquakes) did not eventuate.

Up until 2016 from as far back as the Civil Defence Act 1983 provision was made for the Director of CDEM to appoint a Disaster Recovery Coordinator (S.69) at a regional/local level to manage a

⁹² Ministry of Civil Defence Emergency Management, 2015, *Regulatory Impact Statement - Review of the legislative framework for recovery from emergencies.*

recovery on their behalf if the relevant CDEM Group (local authorities prior to 2002) were unable to ensure the effective carrying out of recovery activities in their area. The National Recovery Manager role under the CDEM Act 2002 is a successor to this.

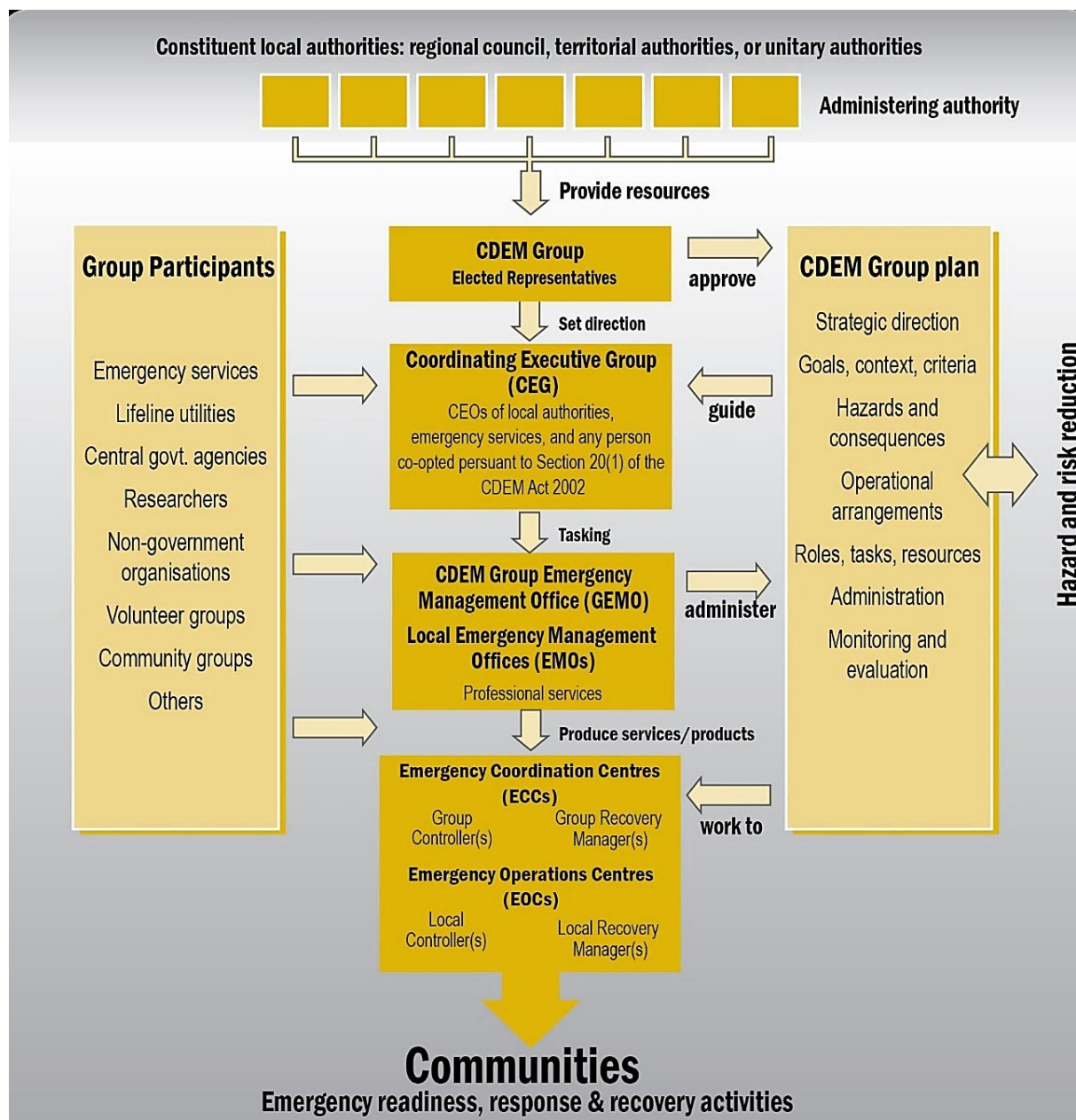


Figure 8: CDEM Group Structures and Processes⁹³

In parallel until the Local Government Act 2002 came into force provision was made under the LG Act 1974 for the appointment of a Commissioner for Disaster Recovery to act in place of the relevant local authority(ies) if they too became overwhelmed by a disaster. So the role of a regionally appointed Recovery Manager with specified powers and responsibilities is less than 10 years old.

⁹³ NZ Government, 2015, *The Guide to the National Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan 2015*, version 2.0 issued by the Director of CDEM under section 9 of the CDEM Act.

The exercise of coercive powers by non-elected statutory officers such as Recovery Managers under the Act is relatively unusual in the New Zealand legislative context, and it reflects the extraordinary nature of disaster recovery and emergency transition governance. The trigger for this is tied to emergency/transition conditions, with the ability to override normal property or movement rights under Ss. 94K–M rare and tightly limited powers.

That said the option of repeated renewal of 28 day transition period notices (in some instances as result of Cyclone Gabrielle for twenty⁹⁴ or more times) that enables officers with no judicial pre-approval (e.g. warrants) to potentially exercise many of these powers for extended periods, distinct from policing or health legislation is uncommon in law⁹⁵.

Group and Local Recovery Managers must under S.29 (compulsory for Group) and S.30 (discretionary for Local) be appointments by Groups (Joint Committees) of ‘suitably qualified and experienced’ persons. This is relatively ill-defined and statutory guidance for the sought after qualities as a basis for exercise of Group powers to appoint and replace Recovery Managers is limited.

The National CDEM Plan is secondary legislation designed to direct and detail the Act’s implementation. It was last Gazetted by Order-in-Council in 2015⁹⁶ but has been updated in part in 2020 as a result of amendments to the Act such as those made in 2016. It is also included in a published Guide to the Plan⁹⁷ that elaborates but does not form part of the Plan, including for recovery activities.

S.157 of the National Plan has been so updated and significantly expands on CDEM Group recovery activities beyond those in the Act. It indicates that recoveries that require co-ordination at the CDEM Group level will be co-ordinated through the CDEM Group Recovery Manager (GRM) and, where necessary, the establishment of a CDEM Group Recovery Office⁹⁸.

This invests the GRM as a statutory official with additional responsibilities to those under the Act, which may also include functions or duties delegated to the position by the Group under S30A. While Groups must appoint a GRM and they may remove from office or replace an incumbent (S.29(3)), they may not remove statutory responsibilities.

⁹⁴ Mayor of Gisborne District, 3 January, 2025, *Twentieth extension of local transition period for the Tairāwhiti Region Presented to the House of Representatives by the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery pursuant to section 94D of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002*. At

⁹⁵ it is unusual in standard law for an appointing body like a CDEM Group to lack coercive powers that its appointed Recovery Manager can exercise. But in the context of disaster and emergency law, this deliberate statutory design appears to be justifiable to ensure operational independence and rapid response under lawful, nationally accountable authority, upwards to the Director and the Minister. It does raise a range of legal and practical issues however, e.g., the circumstances of removal of an appointed recovery manager, the real or perceived diminution of the responsibilities of the Group for recovery. These together with how recovery planning responsibilities are discharged and by whom are worthy of further consideration in relation to both system design and practice guidance., but beyond the scope of this initial inquiry.

⁹⁶ <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2015/0140/latest/DLM6485804.html>

⁹⁷ *The Guide to the National Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan 2015* issued by the Director of CDEM under section 9 of the CDEM Act 2002.

⁹⁸ In the Act there is no recognition of the role of Group Managers (who may/may not be Group Controllers) to whom GRMs typically report, nor a Group Office (of which a Group Recovery Office might draw on/form a part). All are appointees of Regional/United Councils as administering authorities for Groups under Ss 23 and 24 of the Act, but their function is intentionally for administrative support not professional emergency management advice. On behalf of constituent authorities they are budget holders for Group activities, (including at least ‘peacetime’ Group recovery activities). There are a series of potential tensions in these arrangements complicated by the variation in emergency management structures, across regions from centralised in Groups and limited constituent council staffing, decentralised in Councils with a small Group Office, and hybrid structures.

These changes to recovery governance roles and responsibilities initiated in 2016 are reflected in a composite of primary and secondary legislation and statutorily mandated guidelines. The latter are considered below but in total they are not typically considered together, nor generally appreciated in their extent and effect.

It could be argued that investing GRMs with direct statutory authorities and regulatory responsibilities while being employed by administering authorities and accountable to Groups confuses the separation of governance and management roles and relationships as a tenant of good governance as discussed in Section 2.1.2 above.

This is further complicated by the appointment of a Co-ordinating Executive Groups under S. 20 of the Act that consist of Chief Executives of constituent councils and emergency service agency representatives. These forums are tasked with providing advice to and supporting Groups in implementing their decisions and undertaking their planning activities. How this grouping specifically interrelate with GRMs in undertaking recovery activities is unstated and through observation by the writer, highly variable.

Table 1 below summarises relevant functions and roles. CDEM Groups are the identified governance and strategic recovery planning body with appointment and planning powers. They declare regional level transition periods via authorised members but have no enforcement powers. Recovery Managers as appointed officers lead operational recovery and gain coercive legal powers only during a declared transition period.

‘Recovery’ through the 2016 Act amendments is focused at Group level anticipating constituent local authorities would be participating members in relevant Group level processes. Looking however to territorial authorities individually, apart from recommending to Group appointment of a Local Recovery Manager able to exercise specific powers in transition periods, their recovery responsibilities fall largely within the ambit of their general CDEM duties under S.64 of the Act, are somewhat legislatively opaque and also through observation by the writer, highly variable in practice.

‘Looking up’ to the national level, related changes to the Act provided for the appointment of a National Recovery Manager by the CDEM Director and delegations to that role (Ss. 11A, 11B). Similar to other recovery managers that position is able to exercise specified coercive powers in transition periods. In addition S.156 of the National CDEM Plan authorises and directs that position holder to carry out a wide range of national recovery activities.

Figure 9 below sets out the national framework within which appointees to these three recovery manager positions may operate in an event. This denotes a layered approach to recovery governance and management within the EM Sector comprised of NEMA and local authorities in a hierarchical structure and relationship.

The circumstances for a National Recovery Manager being activated are set out in S.156(1) of the Plan, described as *‘smaller-scale recoveries, where the scale of co-ordination is beyond the resources of the CDEM Group or the consequences of the emergency are nationally significant, the Director may co-ordinate national recovery activities through a National Recovery Manager and, where necessary, the establishment of a National Recovery Office’*.

Function / Role	CDEM Group	Recovery Managers (Group/Local)	Legal References (CDEM Act 2002; National CDEM Plan 2015 (V2.0))
Appointment Authority	Appoints Group and Local Recovery Managers	Appointees (not self-governing roles)	S.29-S.30
Recovery Planning	Responsible for region-wide recovery planning; integrates into Group Plan	Leads operational development and implementation of recovery plans	S.17(1)(e), S.30A, 49(2)(ca),
Community Recovery Engagement	Promotes recovery awareness, public engagement across region	Facilitates direct community engagement and needs assessments	S.17(1)(g), S.4 (recovery), S.30A
Interagency Coordination	Provides a governance platform for agencies, TAs, and lifeline utilities	Operational coordination of response partners in recovery activities	S.17, S.20, S.30A
Transition Period Declaration	May authorise declaration of local transition period via member	Cannot declare transition period but assumes special powers during it	S.94A-S.94B
Coercive Powers During Transition	⚠ None directly — oversight role only	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes — can direct evacuations, restrict access, compel information etc.	Ss.94H–94P
Reporting & Oversight	Oversees Recovery Manager performance and Group response/recovery delivery	Must report to Director and Minister on powers exercised (s94P)	S.17(1)(h), S.94P
Operational Response/Recovery Execution	High-level strategic and planning responsibility; resource allocation	Front-line leadership and delivery of recovery actions	S.17(1)(e), S.30A
Outside Transition Period	Leads readiness, planning, recovery capacity-building	Maintains readiness and advises on recovery but has no coercive powers	S.17(1), S.30A

Table 1:
CDEM Group and Recovery Managers functions/roles during and outside transition periods

That Section of the Plan continues below to set out the circumstance and authorisation for the establishment of a new (recovery) agency and its operating mode:

(2) In large-scale recovery, the Government may establish an agency to manage and co-ordinate the Government’s interest in the recovery.

(3) The agency will act in partnership with the affected local authorities and CDEM Groups and may be given specific roles, responsibilities, and powers.

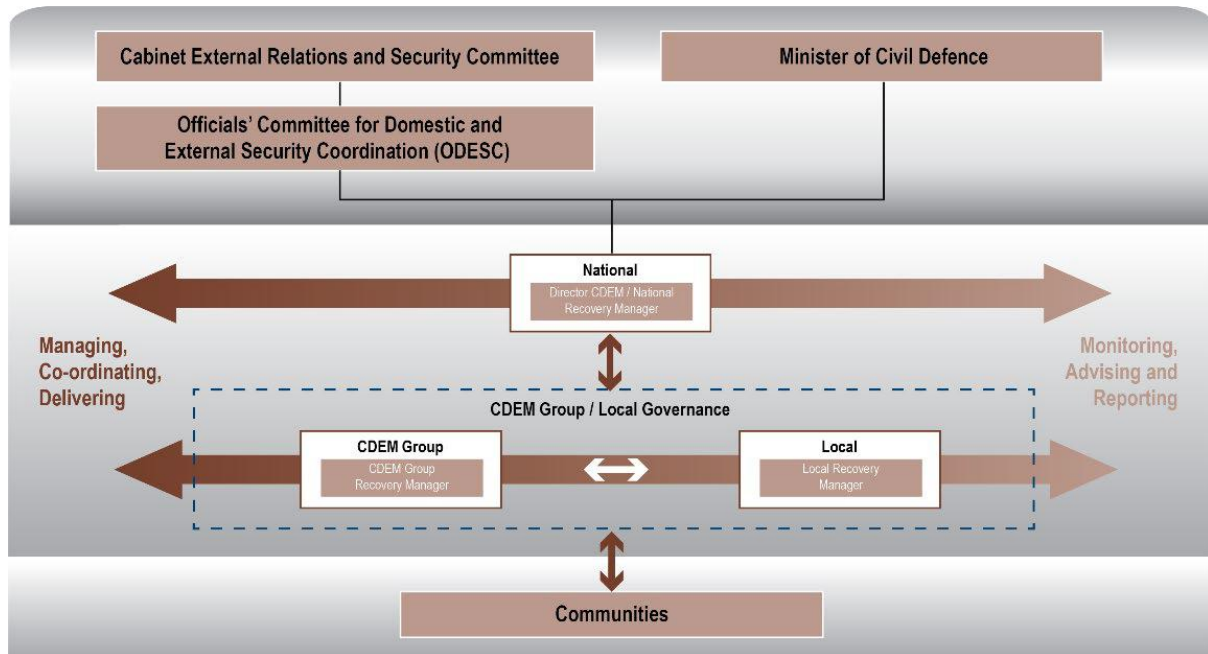


Figure 9: The national recovery management framework⁹⁹

This accords with the focus of the 2016 Amendment Act, as per the 2015 RIS referenced above. Arrangements for ‘large-scale recovery’ have not been further addressed to date in the CDEM Act or updates to the National CDEM Plan¹⁰⁰.

Across the wider emergency management system are a wide variety of organisations and agencies with roles to play in recovery. The Act through Schedule 1 recognises and provides for lifeline utilities as infrastructural service provision entities spanning local-regional-national operation. Apart from any responsibilities under other enactments, S.60 requires them to participate in CDEM planning and provide technical advice to Groups.

The National CDEM Plan at Appendix 1 lists mainly central but some regional level agencies that are mandated through legislation or expertise to ‘manage an emergency’ arising from the identified listed hazards. At Cls. 30-34 it recognises and outlines the functions of sectoral ‘clusters’ as groups of agencies across levels that interact to achieve common outcomes across the 4Rs. Their purpose is to strengthen existing multi-agency coordination, mainly with an emergency response focus.

⁹⁹ The Guide to the National Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan 2015 issued by the Director of CDEM under section 9 of the CDEM Act 2002.

¹⁰⁰ NEMA in December 2024 released *Catastrophic Event Handbook Version 1.0* approved by the Director of CDEM constituting ‘Directors Guidelines’ as statutory guidance under S.9 of the Act. This focuses on response to catastrophic events at the national level but includes a section on recovery that is considered in Section 3.3 below.

Appendix 3 of the Guide to the Plan lists a large number of agencies or clusters with emergency management roles and responsibilities across all wellbeings as set out in the Guide. Most are potentially relevant to recovery activities. Through Sections 8-16 of that Guide a number of these and other agencies and groups are similarly considered in greater detail with a reference to recovery similarly indicated.

In Sections 7 and 13 of the Guide that considers and expands on Clauses of the National Plan that address Clusters and Lifeline Utilities there are many references to ‘coordination’, including standing ‘sector coordinating entities’ for different lifeline services that may be activated in large scale emergencies.

It seems ‘coordination’ is a term being used broadly to refer to all kinds of ‘external to the entity’ relationships, including with CDEM Groups. It is not readily apparent what the responsibilities and accountabilities for this might be in the context of the cooperation-coordination-collaboration spectrum identified in Figure 5 above. Discussion relating to that Figure suggests effective recovery is founded in deep engagement and establishing collaborative relationships. For example, the activation of extraordinary collaborative governance arrangements under the Australian Recovery Framework (see section 2.3). These are distinct from what is loosely defined as ‘coordination’.

All the Sections and Appendices of the Guide to the CDEM National Plan cited above predate the 2016 Amendment Act that addresses recovery. There is limited discussion of the mechanisms for horizontal and vertical integration of efforts by the emergency management sector with the many other entities that potentially play an important role in recovery.

Table 2 below summarises CDEM Group and Recovery Managers responsibilities under the National CDEM Plan. The Plan reinforces that CDEM Groups have governance, planning, and coordination roles, while Recovery Managers have operational leadership roles. Recovery is expected to be ‘community-led’ through ‘collaboration’ and engagement but regionally governed and managed under the oversight of appointed statutory officials assigned to local authorities.

Significant responsibilities and obligations are assigned to Recovery Managers as statutory officials through both the CDEM Act and the National Plan that place them at the centre of a wide grouping of agencies and organisations with roles to play in recovery. While they might expect the support of the Group to achieve the necessary collaborative arrangements for effective recovery, there are few levers at their disposal towards this end other than the exercise of coercive powers in certain circumstances.

Entity	Responsibility / Function	Description	National CDEM Plan Clause Reference
CDEM Groups	Recovery coordination	Lead, coordinate, and deliver recovery activities in their regions	Cl.154- Cl.155, Cl.157
CDEM Groups	Appoint Recovery Managers	Must appoint Group Recovery Managers and	Cl.157

		approve local appointments	
CDEM Groups	Engage local authorities and stakeholders	Facilitate collaboration across local authorities and recovery stakeholders	Cl.154, Cl.157(2)(e)
CDEM Groups	Reporting and monitoring	Ensure monitoring of recovery progress and report to Director of CDEM	Cl.155B
Recovery Managers	Lead recovery implementation	Direct, manage and coordinate the implementation of recovery	Cl.155, Cl.157 (similar Cl. 156(4) national RM)
Recovery Managers	Coordinate interagency activities	Engage central and local government, iwi, NGOs, lifeline utilities, etc.	Cl.157
Recovery Managers	Communicate with affected communities	Provide public information and support participation in recovery planning	Cl.157
Recovery Managers	Conduct needs assessments	Collect, analyse, and report recovery needs to inform decision-making	Cl.157
Recovery Managers	Report to Director CDEM and Minister	Especially during transition periods (if exercising ss94H-P powers)	Cl.155B aligned with CDEM Act S.94P
Both	Apply integrated recovery framework	Apply the four environments: social, economic, built, and natural recovery domains	Cl.153-154

Table 2:
Recovery responsibilities under the National CDEM Plan

3.3 Guidelines for Recovery Governance and Management Activities

Groups under the 2016 Amendment Act as well as provision for the appointment of Recovery Managers gained new strategic recovery planning responsibilities (S.49(2)(ca)). To support implementation from 1 July 2018 CDEM Director’s Guidelines for Strategic Recovery Planning

were issued in December 2017¹⁰¹. This was supplemented and extended in December 2019¹⁰² with further Guidelines for Recovery Preparedness and Management. Section 53 of the Act specifies that CDEM Group Plans must take account of Director’s Guidelines.

These Guidelines are focused on emergency management sector entities and local authorities at regional and local levels. They are statutorily authorised (S.9(3)) but sit to the side in a context shaped by NZ highest officials-level guidance for a nationally consistent approach to emergencies – the Coordinated (emergency) Incident Management System¹⁰³ (CIMS). This establishes a framework of consistent principles, structures, functions, processes and terminology for response and the transition to recovery, applicable to all levels of Government. Roles and responsibilities for Recovery (in Response) between Recovery Managers and Controllers are briefly considered, but otherwise the focus of CIMS is incident response management.

The *Guidelines for Recovery Preparedness and Management* - DGL 24/20 superseded comparable guidance released in 2005¹⁰⁴ which was accompanied by a Director’s ‘Information Series’ document titled *Focus on Recovery: A Holistic Framework for Recovery in New Zealand* Information for the CDEM Sector. The latter paper set out a fundamental ‘normative’ guiding framework for recovery shown in Figure 10 below towards giving effect to the then National CDEM Strategy. This has been a core guiding principle of recovery management direction and intent since, recognises the multifaceted nature of recovery and placing the community at the centre of its implementation.

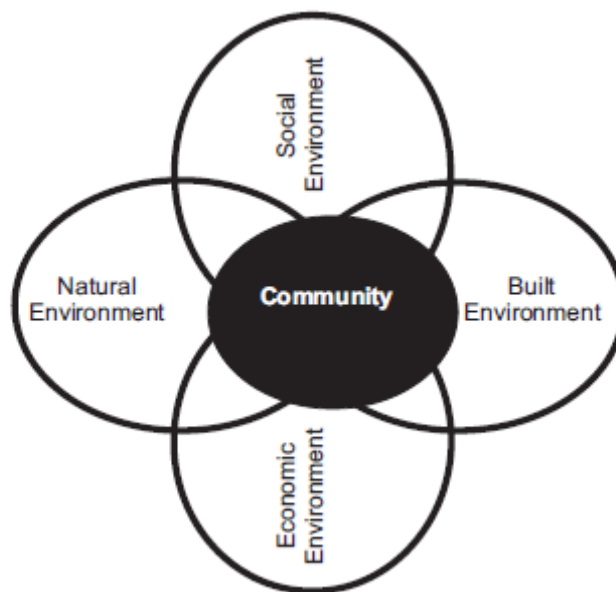


Figure 10: Concept of Integrated and Holistic Recovery¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Strategic Planning for Recovery - Director’s Guideline for Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups [DGL 20/17]

¹⁰² *Recovery Preparedness and Management* - Director’s Guideline [DGL 24/20].

¹⁰³ NZ Government, 2019 (3rd Edn.), *Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS)*, Published by the Officials’ Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

¹⁰⁴ Recovery Management Director’s Guideline for CDEM Groups [DGL 4/05].

¹⁰⁵ *Focus on Recovery: A Holistic Framework for Recovery in New Zealand* Information for the CDEM Sector [IS 5/05].

This ‘early in the life’ of the CDEM Act 2002 recovery framework, guidance for recovery management, and recognition of ‘Recovery Managers’ linked to the then National CDEM Plan but contrasts with the limited statutory Group level recovery authorisations in the Act. This tended to focused recovery less as a governance and more as a management challenge and was subsequently accompanied by a detailed Recovery Manager ‘Role Map’¹⁰⁶.

Table 3 below presents a high level summary of the detailed strategic recovery planning guidelines published in 2017 for Groups and Recovery Managers as they relate to recovery governance, planning, and the management of relationships. Figure 11 below it illustrates the anticipated strategic planning process for pre-event recovery readiness.

Title	Content
Statutory mandate	Section 2.1 confirms that, from 1 June 2018, every CDEM Group Plan must “state and provide for” strategic planning for recovery in line with the amended s49 CDEM Act 2002.
Group governance duties	The Joint Committee sets direction, resources, and monitors recovery work, while the Coordinating Executive Group oversees implementation under s20(2)(c) of the Act (Section 2.4).
Planning content	Plans must record strategic actions, priorities, implementation timelines, and monitoring arrangements that ready communities for recovery (Section 2.1).
Whole-of-local-authority approach	Section 2.5 advises embedding recovery considerations across routine policy, infrastructure, and financial processes rather than running a stand-alone programme.
Relationship management	Section 3.5.2 requires pre-event collaboration with iwi, lifeline utilities, NGOs, business, and central government, using modular, pre-agreed protocols that can scale to the event.
Capacity & capability	Section 3.5.1 directs Groups to identify and secure people, funds, and expertise—local, regional, and national—sufficient for recoveries of varying scale.
Monitoring & evaluation	Section 3.6 assigns the CEG responsibility for performance frameworks that track recovery preparedness and delivery, with clear indicators and trigger points for action.
Recovery Managers’ legal role	Recovery Managers, appointed under s30A CDEM Act, coordinate needs assessment, planning, and resource integration during the transition period; the guideline lists them as a primary audience.
Operational responsibilities	Recovery Managers work with Group staff to analyse hazards, draft recovery elements of the Group Plan and activate scalable structures (Section 3.1).

¹⁰⁶ MCDEM, 2010, *Civil Defence Emergency Management Competency Framework Role Map Recovery Manager*.

Chief Executives' support

Local-authority Chief Executives, through the CEG, translate governance intent into budgets, capability programmes, and joint initiatives across councils (box under Section 2.4).

Table 3:
Strategic recovery governance, planning, and the management of relationships

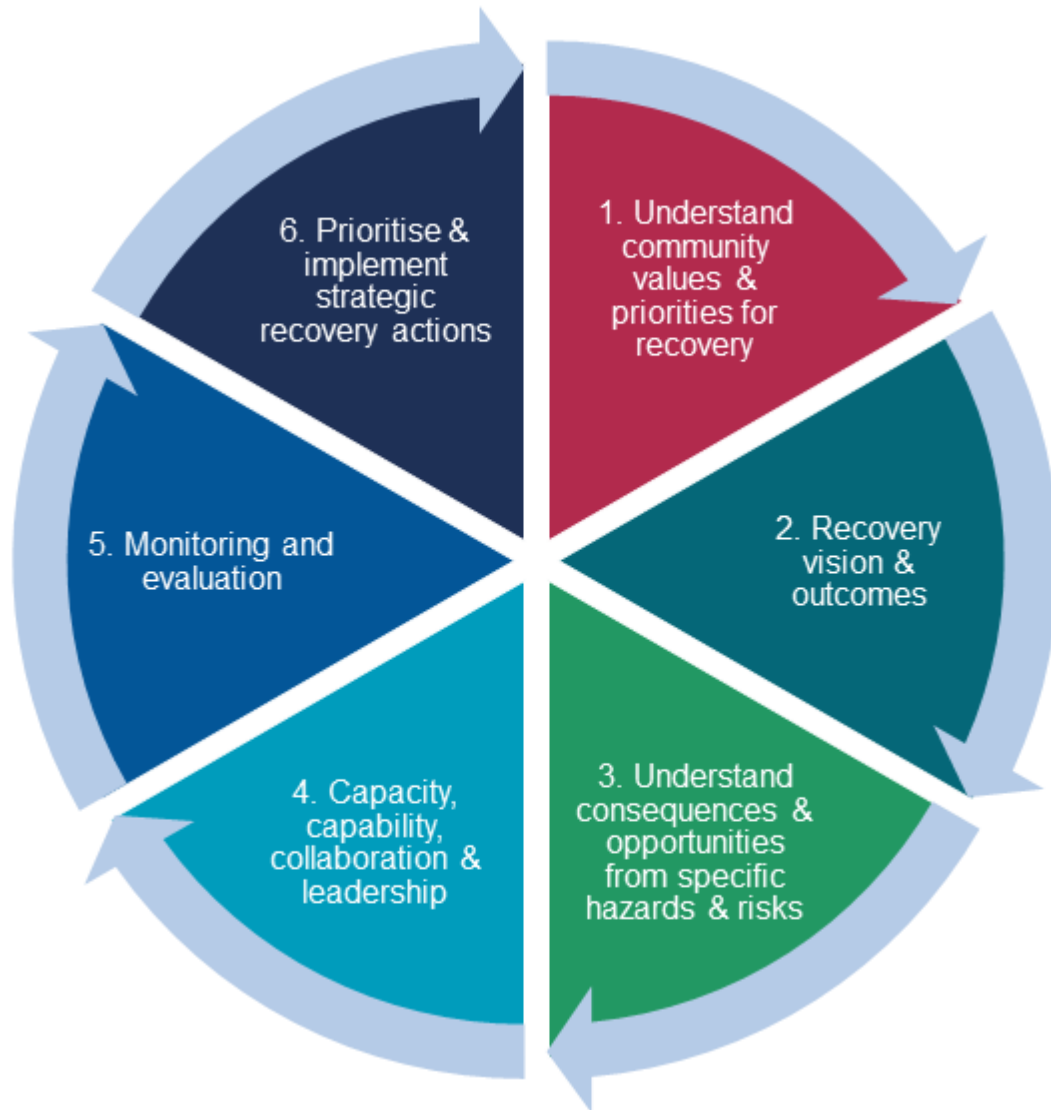


Figure 11: Approach to strategic planning for recovery

These Guidelines are both expansive and quite detailed in the anticipated level of planning activity by Groups in pre-event readiness. That said they are relatively limited in specificity of candidate structures and processes in Section 3.5 when dealing with recovery governance – the capacity, capability, collaboration, and leadership needed to strategically plan for and support recovery activities. *It is anticipated that each emergency will require a tailored approach to manage and deliver the recovery...but that experience has shown that recovery structures are not easily ‘scaled up’...and that ... it is better to take a modular approach when planning and devising recovery structures that focus on the components that may be required for different types and scales of recovery.*

It is suggested *that the roles and responsibilities of key government agencies, non-government agencies, the private sector, iwi, and other key stakeholders in supporting both the preparedness and the management of recovery, should be defined and pre-determined... before an emergency if they are to be activated quickly and effectively...with...strong communication and collaborative planning ...a key element of these relationships.*

Much of this guidance reflects effective recovery attributes (especially for pre-event planning) identified in Section 2.2 above, in turn drawn from the lessons of wide-ranging experience that is based on strong collaborate practices. It is still relatively recent in the 5 year-cycle of Group plan review and from observation by the writer, the awareness and extent across Groups in uptake of the level of ambition they exemplify has been variable. Likely the delay effects of the Covid-19 epidemic and the constrained resourcing available among competing Group priorities are part explanation for this.

They were followed two years later in 2019 by updated Guidelines (DGL 24/20) for activating and implementing recovery management. Table 4 below provides a high level summary from these Guidelines of anticipated recovery governance and management arrangements in terms of key attributes of structures and processes.

Title	Content
Two-tier governance structure	Recovery governance is organised into a strategic layer (e.g., council recovery sub-committee / Joint Committee) and an operational management layer (Recovery Manager + Recovery Team) leveraging existing committees (Section 8.4).
Good-governance principles	Decision-making in recovery must be participatory, equitable, transparent, responsive, and efficient, ensuring a clear community vision, accountability, and risk management (Section 8.4).
Scalable national-group-local framework	Responsibilities for monitoring, advising, and delivering recovery can slide between Local, CDEM Group and National levels, allowing structures to flex with event size (Sections 6.3 – 6.4).
Pre-event role clarity	CDEM Groups and councils are required to assign roles, responsibilities, and decision-lines for recovery before an emergency so personnel can operate “from day one” (Section 8.4).
Flexible coordination arrangements	Coordination arrangements (e.g., Figure 7) should be pre-designed yet modular so they can expand, contract, or adapt to actual consequences (Section 8.6).
Recovery environment sector groups	Social, built, economic and natural environment sector groups provide a scalable, modular platform for multi-agency collaboration; membership is identified by role and can be expanded as needed (Section 6.5).
Recovery Team model	A Recovery Team (Core Team + sector Chairs + project leads) supports the Recovery Manager in planning, logistics, intelligence, and stakeholder engagement; scale is set using the consequence matrix (Section 12.4).

Consequence-led project delivery	Where impacts are complex, operational work is grouped into discrete recovery projects to avoid duplication, define accountability and align reporting (Section 12.4.2).
Activation & accountability at transition	On entry to recovery, the strategic group and Recovery Team meet to confirm mandates, secure resources, and approve the first Recovery Plan, ensuring clear upward and lateral reporting (Section 12.8).
Monitoring & status reporting	Regular Status Reports track milestones, risks and finance against the Recovery Action Plan and are circulated to NEMA, CEG, elected members and sector Chairs (Section 12.7).
Information-management principles	Recovery information systems should be multi-agency, build on business-as-usual data, and capture needs analysis, performance and lessons learned to support decisions (Section 12.9).
Relationship network for managers	Recovery Managers maintain primary relationships with Joint Committee/CEG, NEMA, iwi, agency leads and sector Chairs to underpin coordination and resource mobilisation (Section 8.5 – 8.6).

Table 4:
Group recovery governance and management arrangements – structures and processes

These two sets of Guidelines work together anticipating strategic planning for recovery pre-event preparatory to operational planning and management to guide activation and post-event recovery (Table 5).

Aspect	Pre-Emergency: Recovery Planning	Post-Emergency: Recovery Delivery	Source (Page)
CDEM Group Plan	Includes provisions for strategic planning for recovery specific to local hazards and risks; promotes coordination.	Guides initial recovery actions and governance setup, including appointment of Recovery Managers.	DGL 09/18, pp. 4–6, 42–46
Strategic Recovery Planning	Focus on long-term vision, outcomes, values, and risk-informed priorities; build capability and partnerships.	Translates vision and priorities into operational recovery actions post-event.	DGL 20/17, pp. 8–20, 34–38
CDEM Group Roles	Establish governance and planning frameworks for recovery; build relationships with councils, iwi, NGOs, and lifelines.	Provides oversight of recovery implementation and supports coordination.	DGL 20/17, pp. 10–12, 27–29
Recovery Managers	Should be identified and trained pre-event; roles integrated into recovery plans.	Exercise powers during transition periods; lead operational recovery delivery.	DGL 24/20, pp. 8–10, 16–19
Recovery Frameworks	Identify consequences and strategic opportunities from hazards; prioritise in local/regional plans.	Adapt frameworks and actions to event-specific impacts and scale as needed.	DGL 20/17, pp. 20–27, 34

Monitoring and Evaluation	Develop performance frameworks and indicators based on community values.	Track progress and wellbeing outcomes; refine strategies where necessary.	DGL 20/17, pp. 31–33
Governance Bodies	Integrate formal governance roles and responsibilities for recovery into CDEM Group Plan.	Activate Recovery Managers, establish Recovery Coordination Centres (RCCs).	DGL 09/18, p. 51; DGL 24/20, pp. 14–16
Community Engagement	Engage to understand values, assets, and acceptable risk before events.	Involve communities in recovery priority-setting and communication.	DGL 20/17, pp. 15–18; DGL 24/20, pp. 23–25

Table 5:
Summary Table: Recovery Governance (Pre & Post Event)¹⁰⁷

Figure 12¹⁰⁸ below illustrates from Director’s Guidelines how these arrangements at local and regional level might look in outline. These are pitched at smaller scale recoveries within the Group/territorial authority frame of reference. They anticipate ‘peacetime’ governance arrangements centred on local authorities will be adopted recognising that territorial authorities play the primary governance role for their area¹⁰⁹.

Both before and after an event they anticipate the Group and appointed Recovery Manager(s) play key roles, with national level involvement and support cascading vertically as circumstances require. Significant horizontal integration is anticipated through coordination arrangements forged by Groups and Recovery Managers with relevant agencies and organisations through Sector Environment Groupings that are operationally focused.

Engagement of the many other influencing agencies and organisations is couched as a coordination challenge ‘looking across’, with NEMA as the primary central government touchpoint. Guidelines make suggestions and give examples of more focused ‘bespoke’ governance arrangements that draw on other ‘voices’ according to differing circumstances.

But these are not developed and do not reach as wide and deep horizontally and vertically as the collaborative governance framework indicated through international experience and guidance. in Section 2.2 above.

In summary, together with relevant provisions of the National CDEM Plan within the legislative mandates conferred by the CDEM Act, there is a substantial body of direction and guidance for recovery management. But its distribution across differing instruments of statutory significance compounds its complexity and in the opinion of the writer the 2016 amendments and their implications have not fully been integrated into the framework.

¹⁰⁷ This also draws upon *CDEM Group Planning - Director’s Guideline for Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups* [DGL 09/18].

¹⁰⁸ *Recovery Preparedness and Management - Director’s Guideline* [DGL 24/20]

¹⁰⁹ Recent work under the auspice of the Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Project by Group Recovery Managers to produce a *Recovery Function Guide* that provides descriptions of recovery function roles for short-term recovery operations suggests the depiction of Core Recovery Team roles warrants updating.

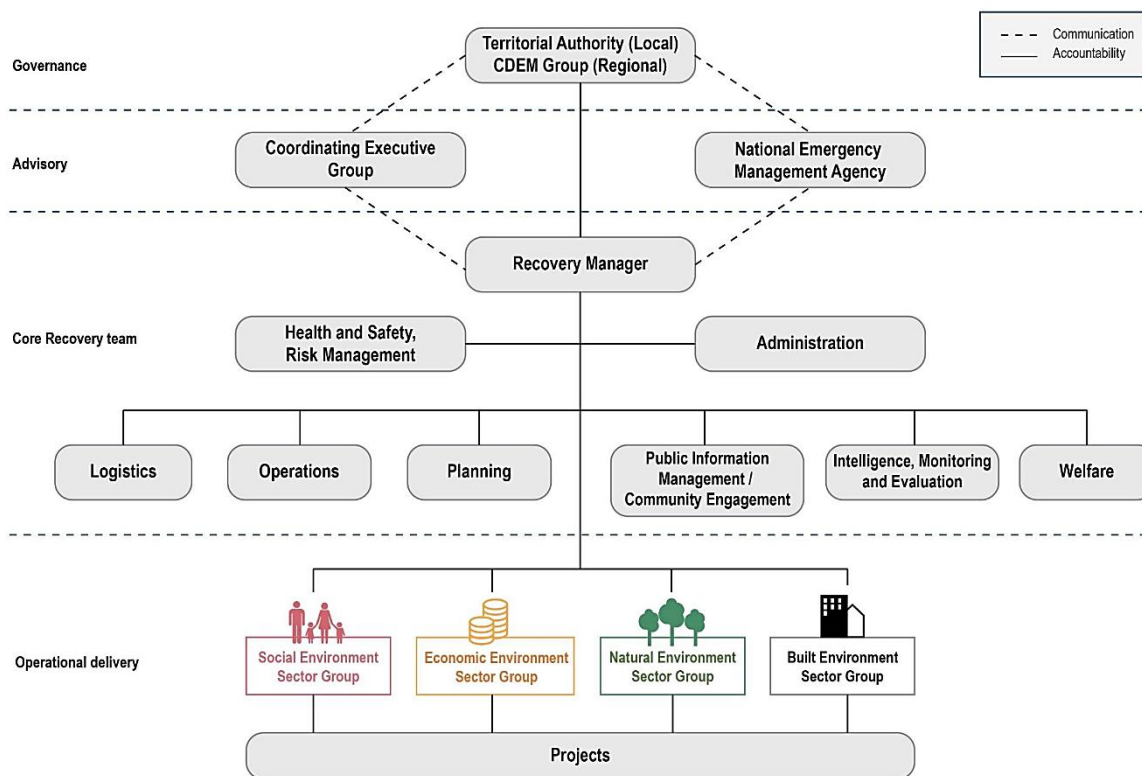


Figure 12: Fundamental local and regional recovery management arrangements

Across the CDEM Sector at regional/local levels its overall uptake and expression in recovery planning and preparedness has not to the writers’ knowledge been systematically evaluated, but anecdotally, appears highly variable. What is anticipated is expansive and may have fallen foul of the accusation of yet another unfunded mandate in an increasingly contested funding environment.

How the framework in practice is scalable/scaled for differing types and intensities of events is not developed. There is the suggestion of ‘bespoke’ augmentation and past a certain point of significance, wholly new entities are given mandate but little form.

The challenge of how recovery governance structures might evolve according to the complexity and scale of events is considered in a substantial guide to recovery operations prepared by the Wellington Regional Emergency Management Office¹¹⁰. The guide considers five recovery levels and recommends governance structures for each. These are summarised in Table 6 below.

Recovery Level	Recovery Coordination	Recommended Governance Structure - Indicative
1. Single council incident Moderate event, single TA impacted	Provided sufficient capacity, the council may fully or partially activate its Recovery Office to carry out needs assessments and coordinate recovery tasks.	The elected members of the affected local authority can act as Recovery Governance.

¹¹⁰ Wellington Regional Emergency Management Office, 2022, *Recovery Operations Guide - First Edition*, WREMO.

<p>2. Local emergency Medium event, one or more TA impacted</p>	<p>A medium sized event that impacts one or two councils. May require partial or full activation of each impacted Council's Recovery Offices, and partial activation of the Group Recovery Office.</p>	<p>Elected members of each affected local authority can act as Recovery Governance with the business-as-usual (BAU) Regional (Group) Leadership Committee providing advice and support as and when requested.</p>
<p>3. Local or regional emergency Medium to severe event, one or more TA impacted</p>	<p>Full activation of impacted TA or TA's Recovery Offices and partial activation of the Group Recovery Office.</p>	<p>Either as for Level 2, or Regional (Group) Leadership Committee augmented with leaders from any key supporting agencies.</p>
<p>4. Regional emergency Severe event, one or more TA impacted</p>	<p>Full activation of local and regional Recovery Office/s. Local Recovery Managers and the Group Recovery Manager work in close collaboration.</p> <p>Partial or full activation of the National Recovery Office with support or direction provided by the National Recovery Manager.</p>	<p>Either as for Level 3 (expanded representation), or Bespoke governance and leadership structure with wide representation to give specific attention to directing and supporting recovery operations.</p>
<p>5. State of national emergency Extreme event, one or more region impacted</p>	<p>Full activation of the Local, Regional and the National Recovery Office/s with active direction and support coming from the National Recovery Manager.</p> <p>Long-Term Recovery Organisation may be needed with new legislation defining the organisations structure and necessary authorities and powers</p>	<p>A joint governance structure between central and local governments that optimises the use of resources, community engagement and considers long-term planning.</p> <p>This can take various forms, including an Independent Crown Entity with a mix of representatives in the governance structure.</p>

Table 6:
Five Recovery Levels and Recommended Governance Structures¹¹¹

Noteworthy is the progressive expansion of mobilisation and representation with spread and scale of impacts and the corresponding preparedness to include bespoke arrangements. For the most severe event at Level 5 a collaborative governance structure between central and local governments is recommended.

With Wellington, as the seat of central government and a major urban centre, a significant emergency event in the region is recognised as likely to result in a strong interest by central government to participate, oversee or even lead recovery.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

3.4 Framework Development Looking Forward

Sections 3.2 and 3.3 consider the current legislative provisions, statutory plan and guidelines that together provide the directive and advisory framework for recovery governance and management. It covers pre-event preparedness, activating recovery in transition and overall recovery governance through stages on the continuum. This has been addressed in some detail as a point of reference for consideration of case studies in Section 4.0. Before doing so several other relevant 'points of reference' are considered in the balance of Section 3.0.

Emergency Management Legislation Reform and System Improvement Programme

Since 2016, in part stemming from the 'TAG Report'¹¹² in the aftermath of the 2017 Port Hills Fire, previous governments have addressed reform of the EM sector and some aspects of the wider system. In 2022 the Trifecta sector engagement programme¹¹³ (Trifecta) sought feedback on reform of the Act that addressed particular topics but not policy settings specifically related to recovery.

In 2023 an Emergency Management Bill was introduced to Parliament that sought to 'modernise' the Act and took up a range of proposals that had been considered through Trifecta. The emergency management response to the North Island Severe Weather Events that led to a Ministerial Inquiry report¹¹⁴ and Government Response¹¹⁵ to it were however contributory to the decision in early 2024¹¹⁶ to discharge that Bill.

An alternative approach to a replacement statute was favoured, that responds to the adopted recommendations arising from the NISWE Ministerial Inquiry. It is important to note that policies and actions relating to the recovery from the NISWE were not within the terms of reference of the Inquiry¹¹⁷, although many of the recommended actions to strengthen the emergency management system would depending on the scope and scale of implementation have beneficial consequences for disaster recovery as well as other of the 4Rs.

A discussion document was released for submission in April 2025¹¹⁸ outlining possible options for response to in total 22 issues arising from adopted NISWE Inquiry recommendations that include a legislative response(s). As at the time of preparation of this report the outcome of this consultation in terms of what might find its way into a new Emergency Management Bill is not known. None of the consulted issues directly addressed Recovery policy settings, although as above, strengthening of the EM System legislative framework could through implementation have benefits pertaining to recovery governance, e.g. strengthening, and enabling iwi Māori participation in emergency management.

¹¹² Technical Advisory Group, 2017, *Ministerial Review – Better Responses to Natural Disasters and Other Emergencies*, (TAG Report).

¹¹³ NEMA, 2022, *Modernising the emergency management framework - Engagement with local and regional emergency management sector for the Emergency Management Regulatory Framework Review (Trifecta) Programme*.

¹¹⁴ Inquiry Panel March 2024, *Report of the Government Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events*.

¹¹⁵ New Zealand Government, October 2024 *Strengthening disaster resilience and emergency management - Government response to the Report of the Government Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events*.

¹¹⁶ Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2024, Proactive Release – *Cabinet Documents relating to the Government's decision to not proceed with the Emergency Management Bill - LEG-24-SUB-0039* refers.

¹¹⁷ Inquiry Panel March 2024, *Report of the Government Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events, Appendix A*.

¹¹⁸ NEMA, April 2025, *Discussion document - Strengthening New Zealand's emergency management legislation*, NZ Government.

Alongside new legislation the Government response to the Report of the Government Inquiry outlined the direction of travel for a five-year work programme to strengthen the emergency management system. It, as did the Inquiry Panel, has concluded that the emergency management system is not fit for purpose for large events that impact multiple regions at once¹¹⁹.

NEMA has as a consequence initiated a programme of changes to build an emergency management system able to improve and strengthen over time, termed Emergency Management System Improvement Programme¹²⁰ (EMSIP) so the system can manage major to severe emergencies and thereby operationalise the Government's Response to the adopted NISWE Inquiry recommendations.

An adopted Investment and Implementation Roadmap¹²¹ envisages progressive new funding beginning with modernising emergency management technology systems. Incremental benefits of other aspects of the Roadmap suggest enhanced capability and capacity for recovery preparedness and implementation might be anticipated, beginning with expanding the national recovery function and thereby strengthening some aspects of recovery governance. This would occur within recovery specific policy settings that are confirmed through a new Emergency Management Act, but these at this stage these do not look to be different to those in the current CDEM Act 2002 as amended in 2016.

Recovery Settings

Parallel to the above activities also with origins in the NISWE experience is a workstream of more direct significance to recovery governance. The Cyclone Recovery Unit¹²² (CRU) was established within DPMC as a unit to provide leadership and coordination of central governments' NISWE recovery work. Based on lessons from NISWE it has been tasked with developing advice about ways in which the recovery area of the emergency management system could be improved.

The Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery indicated in an authorising paper¹²³ for the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee that *when an event occurs where the impact is nationally significant and recovery is expected to be complex, lengthy, and costly, Government may choose to tailor the recovery settings to fit the type, scale, and impact of the event.*

Further, *that recovery approaches from these types of events have varied, driven by immediate decision-making that has not been supported by clear options about settings or criteria to work through those choices.* The paper sought Cabinet's agreement to the broad scope of the proposed suite of decision-making tools across five key categories of recovery shown in Figure 13 to be developed by CRU and for targeted consultation in relation to them.

¹¹⁹ New Zealand Government, October 2024 *Strengthening disaster resilience and emergency management - Government response to the Report of the Government Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events.*

¹²⁰ <https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/cdem-sector/emergency-management-system-improvement-programme>

¹²¹ New Zealand Government, June 2025, *Strengthening Emergency Management: A Roadmap for Investment and Implementation*

¹²² The recovery governance role and function of CRU is discussed in Section 4.0 below in the context of case studies arising from NISWE recoveries.

¹²³ Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, November 2024, *Recovering from Significant Events: Decision-making Tools*, Cabinet document, ECO-24-SUB-0237 refers.

Leadership	The degree to which recovery is locally or centrally led – assessing whether elements of recovery policy and delivery should be led locally or centrally, depending on the characteristics of the event.
	Recovery decision-making arrangements – determining if recovery-related decisions require different temporary arrangements than the status quo and if so, what type of arrangements.
	Central government organisation and coordination – identifying how central government agencies support and coordinate recovery activities if the status quo arrangements are not sufficient.
Enabling mechanisms	Legislative and non-legislative instruments – considering mechanisms to remove regulatory barriers to speed up recovery activities.
	Who pays for which elements of recovery – determining if (and if so, what) additional support Government provides and what contributions are required from others.
Infrastructure remediation	Infrastructure continuity – determining which recovery-related infrastructure projects the Government may want to intervene in, to what level, and how to support delivery.
Support for property owners	Approach to severely affected property – determining whether central government provides support to severely affected property owners, and if so, the scope, scale and delivery of that support.
Economies	Business and key sector recovery – determining whether (and if so, what) support is provided to businesses and local economies to recover.

Figure 13: First tranche categories for development of tools to assist Cabinet decision-making

Development of the decision-making tools

The tools consolidate lessons from the North Island Weather Events (NIWE) recovery as well as experiences from previous recoveries from significant natural hazard events. *“Between November 2024 and March 2025, we met with nearly 300 people and received written feedback from 37 organisations. We have also worked closely across central government to develop and test the suite of recovery settings and tools”.*

For each of these categories¹²⁴, possible policy settings along a spectrum of the potential intensity and options for government involvement beyond what may be existing emergency management system determined settings, was indicated in consultation material. In large measure this spectrum from least to highest intensity involvement corresponds to the likely spread and intensity of a natural hazard event, from minor through catastrophic.

By way of background it was noted that while there is some existing guidance for recovery activities, given the unique nature, impacts, and specific needs after each significant event, Government often needs to make decisions (quickly) about how to tailor recovery settings (e.g., leadership and/or coordination, financial support to communities) beyond standard emergency management arrangements.

To facilitate this a suite of tools to support immediate decisions while allowing for flexibility to ensure the settings fit the specific situation were proposed¹²⁵ so as to:

- *enable decisions that match the scale, nature and impact of the natural hazard event, and the local characteristics of the affected communities,*
- *ensure that the implications of decisions are identified early, are well understood, and can be managed effectively,*

¹²⁴ Selected as the priorities for the initial suite of tools because they are the areas where significant ad hoc decisions were made and settings came together in different combinations in recent recoveries, acknowledging that additional categories such as social recovery could be added in the future.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

- *enable choices to be considered concurrently to consider overall cost and resource implications, and*
- *improve the transitions into and out of recovery*

To a degree this approach could be seen to respond to the limits and uncertainties of current settings at the national level for significant events, particularly in the nature and levels of financial assistance in the face of many and varied competing demands (exemplified by the multi-regional NISWE). Impacts may be disproportionately distributed among affected communities as are vulnerabilities. Local funding capacities for disaster management vary widely.

The NISWE Inquiry report¹²⁶ gave considerable attention to the limitations of current funding arrangements giving rise to both uncertainty but also ad hoc Government Budget provisions for post disaster response needs that also apply to recovery¹²⁷. Where significant ‘extraordinary’ appropriations are made there is an expectation that government will have significant oversight of its implementation and this accountability infuses recovery governance.

The tools are designed for natural hazard events where the impacts are nationally significant, and the recovery is expected to be complex, lengthy, and costly. These are the situations that warrant Government consideration of whether and how to tailor recovery settings outside of business-as-usual emergency management arrangements.

The five identified areas in Figure 14 were observed as being *where recovery settings came together in different ad hoc combinations in the recoveries from the NIWE, Canterbury Earthquake Sequence and the Hurunui/Kaikōura earthquakes. Additional scope could be added in the future to address social (or other) recovery settings if required.*

The first two – leadership and enabling mechanisms have the most significance for recovery governance and related institutional arrangements, while the nature and extent of financial assistance for infrastructure remediation, support for property owners, and economise are more related to ‘on the ground’ recovery outcomes.

Government approved the suite of recovery settings and related decision trees (‘the tools’) in May 2025¹²⁸. This is to support immediate Ministerial decision-making about recovery settings following a significant natural hazard event where government involvement beyond what is provided under existing settings may be warranted. The tools include decision trees with criteria to respond to two questions. Firstly, should government provide additional support to recovery beyond what is provided under existing settings. Second, if it decides to do so, in what areas and to what extent will that support be provided. The responsibility for coordination of advice to Government through the application of the tools rests with DPMC.

¹²⁶ Inquiry Panel March 2024, *Report of the Government Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events*.

¹²⁷ The fragmented nature of Government emergency management funding arrangements both within and beyond ‘baseline’ appropriations for post disaster response and recovery is examined in a paper for the Canterbury Group Recovery Manager by Simon Markham Consulting Ltd, May 2024 *Background Paper : Funding Arrangements for Disaster Recovery*. The provision through the National CDEM Plan at Cl. 164, Special Policy for Recovery, is broadly stated to recognise the need to be responsive, but at the same time ‘invites’ ad hoc funding allocations. The ‘Recovery Settings’ work has the potential effect of *systemising* this decision making.

¹²⁸ Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, May 2025, *Recovering from Significant Events: Decision-making Tools*, Cabinet document, ECO-25-SUB-0067 refers.

Decision tree 1. for the initial ‘strategic’ assessment of whether Government should get involved beyond existing settings addresses five questions:

- *Are there severe or lasting impacts?*
- *Will the recovery exceed current capacity and/or capability?*
- *Are there compounding factors*
- *Is it Government’s role to get involved?*
- *Does initial financial advice suggest a need for Government involvement?*

Identified inputs to that assessment include a wide range of sources of local insights, including local authorities, affected residents, affected iwi, hapū and hapori Māori, businesses, and primary producers. This highlights the importance of a good understanding of current policy settings across government that might be called upon in disaster recovery, and through impact assessments and follow on consequences analyses, rapid appreciation of the implications of the disaster.

If the answer is ‘yes’ to one or more of the criteria then decision trees 2-4 may come to the fore to guide involvement considerations in relation to infrastructure remediation, support to affected residents and dwellings, and stabilising national or regional economies. Along relevant spectrums of involvement the more intensive options suggest greater central government influence in recovery governance, matching accountability with financial exposure and/or policy and legislative overrides.

It is however decision trees 5 and 6 that are of most direct significance for governance arrangements. Decision tree 5 addresses mechanisms to enable Government’s recovery priorities that considers settings to address the following (with examples of the most intensive Government involvement shown in brackets).

- *legislative or regulatory obstacles (legislation to give powers to a specially appointed commissioner)*
- *capability or capacity obstacles (contribute funding for local capability/capacity)*
- *financial obstacles (provide bespoke financial support)*
- *Who pays for which elements of recovery (negotiate a funding agreement)*

Decision tree 6 directly addresses Government’s approach to recovery leadership.

- *To what degree should the recovery be locally or centrally led? (range is from locally led, centrally supported, through shared recovery governance to centrally led-locally informed – see Figure 14)*
- *Are the standing Ministerial arrangements fit for this recovery? (most intensive example being ‘granting a group of Ministers Power to Act)*
- *How should Government be organised for this recovery? (most intensive example being ‘establish central body to lead and deliver).*

To what degree should the recovery be locally or centrally led?

		LOW (most like existing settings)	(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH
Setting		Locally led, centrally supported	Centrally led, locally informed
Example		In the NIWE recovery, where possible, decisions were made locally. Statutory responsibilities remained in place, as did responsibility for related decisions. Decisions made by central government were those that required nationwide trade-offs such as injections of taxpayer funding.	In the Canterbury recovery, the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) had significant powers to relax, suspend or extend laws and regulations for clearly defined purposes related to earthquake recovery. CERA was disestablished after five years as the Government transitioned from leading the recovery to establishing long-term, locally led recovery and regeneration arrangements.
		In the Hurunui/ Kaikōura recovery, a steering group was established, including representation from central and local government and iwi. Following floods in July 2021 and February 2022 in Westport, the Resilient Westport Steering Group was appointed by Ministers to oversee and synchronise the various packages of flood resilience work that the Government is co-investing in that will be delivered by councils. The group is independently chaired and comprises representation from district and regional councils, iwi, and government agencies.	

Figure 14; Extract from ‘Recovery decision-making after a natural hazard event – recovery setting options - decision tree 6’

It is noted in the authorising Cabinet Paper that *‘the tools provide a starting point to guide critical, early decisions in situations where government might consider providing additional support. They will assist Ministers to make decisions during the first days and weeks following an event that consider options, trade-offs, and implications of government involvement above existing recovery settings. The tools are flexible and do not preclude other options being considered. They do not bind governments to make decisions or to make them within a particular timeframe¹²⁹’*.

The system and process the recovery settings tools bring to preparing advice and guiding government decision-making in relation to recovery settings in the aftermath of a nationally significant event do not in themselves seek to modify any existing emergency management system settings. They reflect the fact that Government reserves the right, depending on the post event situation, to intervene should those circumstances justify that and impose corresponding accountabilities for any significant extraordinary powers or appropriations.

The process for such decisions in recent recoveries can or have been seen as somewhat opaque in terms of what viewpoints, weightings and advice has been brought to bear in making decisions and the authorising Cabinet Paper points to demonstrable variations in approach that have emerged¹³⁰. The adoption of the tools as a guide for decision-making assists make this potentially more ordered and transparent.

It confirms arrangements for nationally significant recovery decision-making to be led out distinct from the agency charged with its management. How professional emergency management expertise and the views of others in government and further afield will be canvassed and brought to bear rely on process orchestrated by DPMC. It is also yet to be indicated as to what it means for the threshold for government involvement generally and for that in relation to events/recoveries that are not of national significance but still warrant government assistance beyond existing settings.

A theme from consultation on the proposal to develop the settings identified in the Cabinet Paper noted how significantly capability and capacity can drive different recovery outcomes. The role

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, November 2024, *Recovering from Significant Events: Decision-making Tools*, Cabinet document, ECO-24-SUB-0237 refers.

of EMSIP as well as Groups efforts to enhance regional recovery capacity and capability are brought into focus by this feedback. In short, evidenced investment in regional/local recovery governance arrangements and the corresponding level of Government's confidence in 'local leadership' to partner with are highly correlated.

While the settings options include centralised recovery governance they also note collaborative or shared recovery structures as options. Governments' discretion to establish the former and a level of encouragement of the latter are contained in existing recovery governance settings¹³¹ through the National CDEM Plan and Directors Guidelines. However they are undeveloped in the context of pre-event recovery preparedness and post event activation.

This, coupled with the variable and significantly under developed recovery capabilities and capacities in the emergency management sector¹³² risk greater centrally determined and lesser collaborative and locally influenced arrangements than might otherwise be the case.

PhD work¹³³ underway by Deborah Te Kawa on what is termed 'The Practical State' is relevant here. She suggests that *in Aotearoa, public power has long swung between two poles: concentrated executive authority, akin to authoritarianism, on one hand, and a cultural desire for egalitarianism through fragmented delegation on the other.*

Te Kawa suggests balance may be appropriately stuck in the Practical State, *this isn't a department or reform agenda. It's a way of working. It emerges where public servants and communities meet: not just in service delivery, but in shared authorship. It lives in the middle, between policy and practice, between centrally divined strategy and street-level reality, where trust is built, discretion is exercised, and legitimacy is earned - daily.*

NEMA have been giving attention to further articulating national level recovery settings within the existing emergency management framework. A focus of this is on guiding the activation of a national recovery operating structure drawn initially from NEMA's ongoing resources to stand up a National Recovery Office, progressively augmented with surge capacity as shown in Figure 15. The Model is included in the recently published Catastrophic Event Handbook¹³⁴, constituting Directors Guidelines, which are mainly focused on AOG response arrangements for an event of this scale. The model seeks to match the scale of the emergency with the relevant workforce, capacity, resources, and governance structures but these are not further articulated in the Handbook.

¹³¹ *Guide to the National CDEM Plan*, 2015 Section 32.7, CL.156 and *Recovery Preparedness and Management - Director's Guideline* [DGL 24/20], Section 8.4 Recovery Governance.

¹³² See for example, CDEM Special Interest Group for Emergency Management, June 2024, *Workshop Report for the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet on the Recommendations of the Government Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events and Related Emergency Management System Issues.*

¹³³ <https://substack.com/home/post/p-165821728>

¹³⁴ NEMA, December 2024, *Catastrophic Event Handbook, Version 1.0*, Approved by the CDEM Director.

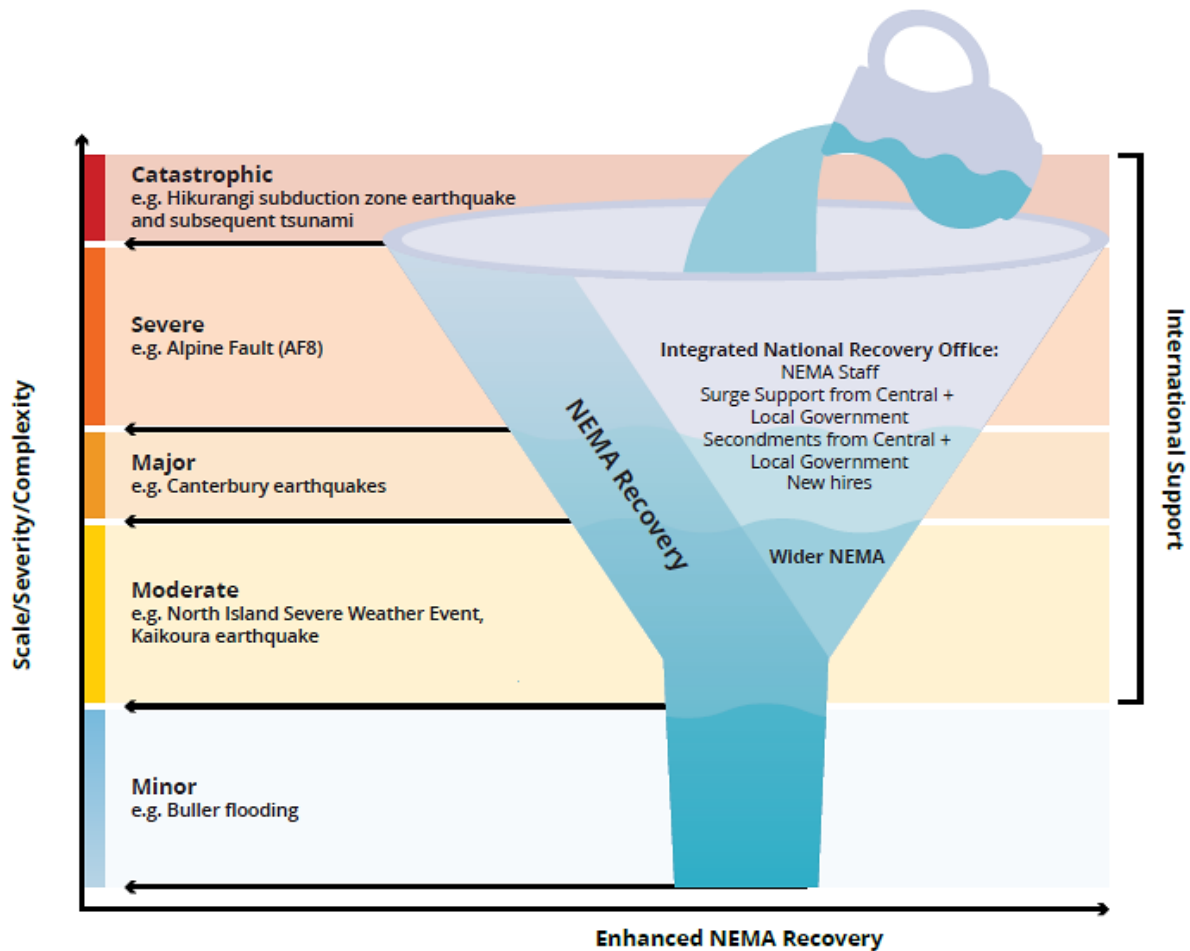


Figure 15: Proposed scalable recovery model showing scales of increasing severity and complexity

3.5 Recovery Reviews

Some of the case studies of recent recoveries considered in Section 4.0 below have been subject to review, although not necessarily addressing recovery governance. A number of other recoveries have also been subject to review and the findings of these as they may bear on recovery governance are relevant and useful to note¹³⁵. This short section of the report reflects the fact that review of recoveries and related arrangements in New Zealand is itself limited in evidence.

The most significant 20th century disaster event in New Zealand was the 3 February 1931 Napier Earthquake. As a 7.8M earthquake that caused 256 fatalities and 4,000 injuries it severely affected Napier and Hastings through extensive building collapse and fires. Its recovery has not so much been reviewed as reported. *Hollis, 2007*¹³⁶ provides a case study of the recovery from this disaster in the context of several international case studies. Her thesis seeks mainly to

¹³⁵ These are drawn from available public documents based on extensive searching but is a selected, not authoritatively comprehensive coverage.

¹³⁶ Hollis, M., 2007, *Formulating Disaster Recovery Plans for New Zealand: using a case study of the 1931 Napier Earthquake*, Master of Science in Hazard and Disaster Management, University of Canterbury.

examine success in terms of recovery outcomes but provides some insight into recovery governance.

The 1931-33 recovery from this disaster is widely cited in disaster recovery literature as a 'model' of early 20th-century centralised urban reconstruction. Within weeks the Hawke's Bay Earthquake Act 1931 was passed to enable fast recovery. It established the Napier Reconstruction Commission with an independent Chair and included central government officials, engineers, and prominent local figures, reporting up through key Government Departments. It had full authority to make decisions and supervise the reconstruction of Napier, including urban design, planning, public works, land use, and infrastructure.

The Commission operated over the 1931-35 period with quasi-judicial powers. It could override local council decisions, acquire land, enforce building standards, and allocate funding. It managed distribution of government loans and grants and facilitated insurance settlements. The Napier Borough Council had limited authority, mainly implementation and consultation, although public consultations were minimal. In so doing it exemplified the trade-offs between efficiency and democratic participation in post-disaster recovery. It began to wind down in 1934 and by 1935 was formally dissolved with responsibilities returned to local authorities.

Apart from architectural legacy through enforced measures, the recovery set an institutional precedent for later disaster recovery efforts, influencing the eventual creation of the Earthquake and War Damage Commission in 1945 (EQC's predecessor) and major reforms to building codes (seismic design).

Hollis, 2007 concluded the recovery of Napier after the 1931 earthquake was remarkably successful for an era where the community did not fully understand the mechanisms behind the disaster as there was no disaster recovery framework, nor had very little pre planning for which she strongly advocates contemporary practice be developed .

A suite of recoveries from five regional scale events that occurred between 2005 and 2014 across five CDEM Group (regions) were reviewed in an earlier CDEM Resilience Funded project in 2015¹³⁷. Similar to the current project the report was based on consideration of existing recovery doctrine, review of event/recovery related documents and in-depth semi-structured interviews.

Recoveries were implemented through arrangements established by Groups under the CDEM Act 2002 and relevant Group structures in relation to the following events:

- Northland Floods, 2014 with experiences from earlier flood events in 2007, 2011, and 2012 also recognised.
- Bay of Plenty floods/debris flows 2005 affecting Tauranga and Matata.
- Gisborne earthquake 2007 with experiences from previous flood events in 1985.1988 (Cyclone Bola) and 2005 recognised.
- Nelson-Tasman floods/landslides, 2011
- Seddon earthquakes, 2013

¹³⁷ Morris, Brendan, 2015, *Learning from Regional Recovery Events - A Practical Guide for Territorial Authorities and Local Recovery Managers*, Prepared for: Gisborne District Council under the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management Resilience Fund.

These events led to recovery management arrangements being activated under the 2002 Act, informed by prior experiences and Director's Recovery Guidelines prepared in 2005. Critical success factors for recovery identified through the review are identified below (with the number of the corresponding 'Institutional Attribute for Effective Recovery' from Section 2.2.2 indicated):

- *Ensure governance and management support* – preferred approaches and behaviours by Council elected members and senior management. (1)
- *Build relationships, trust, and communication with recovery agencies* - being critical both prior to and during recovery processes. (1)
- *Actively manage and support the recovery team* - Ensure recovery team welfare is monitored and maintained.(1)
- *Appoint the right people as local recovery managers* – being those exhibiting a range of preferred values and behaviours. (2)
- *Ensure the public information management function is well resourced and managed* – reflecting the importance of public information management (PIM), and its role in informing and engaging communities in recovery.(4)
- *Get communities involved in recovery* - Feedback from all regions recognises the importance of community involvement during recovery.(4)
- *Ensure welfare needs are assessed* - Understanding the welfare needs of people ensures that recovery planning is appropriately prioritised and targeted.(4)
- *Collect and manage information effectively* - Sound information collection and management systems and processes are required in order to understand what is required to manage recovery.(8)

Other important considerations:

- *Set up local community service hubs* - communities relate best to dealing with local people on-site within their community. (4)
- *Provide simple and practical assistance to communities* - the importance of finding out what communities really need and facilitating provision of simple and practical assistance. (4)
- *Be creative and flexible* - recovery may not mean getting things back to how they were prior to the event, as this may be impractical, unaffordable, or impossible. (6)

This Review did not explore recovery governance structures and decision making further, focusing mainly on the role of the Recovery Manager and the activities of the Recovery Team.

A separate study of the Matata debris flow, describing the community disaster recovery process undertaken within the Matata community two years after the disaster event in 2005 was published in 2008¹³⁸. Its focus was on the community recovery process with particular emphasis on how long-term psychological and social impacts on community members were being addressed.

¹³⁸ Spee, K. 2008, *Community recovery after the 2005 Matata disaster: long-term psychological and social impacts*, GNS Science Report 2008/12.

It also did not directly address recovery governance but did make at least one relevant recommendation for improving and enhancing long term disaster recovery.: *partnership between government, regional services and community is essential to successful disaster recovery. As early as possible, responsibilities need be clarified between the parties and the expectations of the disaster recovery process.*

Several reviews have addressed the recovery arising from the effects of ex-Tropical Cyclone Debbie following by Cyclone Cook on the Whakatāne District. These included extensive flooding of the town of Edgecumbe in early April 2017. The District Council¹³⁹ commissioned an independent review of the response and early recovery. The Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (MCDEM) commissioned a review¹⁴⁰ to examine how the 2016 recovery amendments to the CDEM Act supported the recovery. Also the Council's District Recovery Team prepared¹⁴¹ a significant debrief to capture the 'recovery story' and compiled a compendium of resources for future recoveries.

The Council commissioned review considered among other things the extent to which the Whakatāne District Council's systems, processes and capability were aligned with the expectations and requirements of a district council in relation to major flooding events. This included the expectation that a Council's recovery arrangements are structured to enable the steps necessary for the affected sectors of the community to return to a normal state, and to mitigate future risk from similar events.

Findings from this Review were mainly oriented towards response but several lean into recovery governance (relevant Section 2.2.2 attribute in brackets):

- The role of the Chief Executive of a local authority in an emergency is not well defined. As for other recent emergency events, positioning of the CE relative to Controller(s), the balance between business continuance and emergency management, while also supporting the Council with a key interest in both spheres as well as reach into the community were identified issues. (1)
- While it was indicated the civic leadership exercised by the Mayor, elected members and the Chief Executive was effective, national level guidance on the roles of Mayors, elected members and Chief Executives in declared emergencies is required, along with appropriate training and induction. (2)
- Ensuring the Mayor, elected members and other community leaders are regularly briefed and provided with key messages and information that enables them to engage with the community in an informed manner that promotes community confidence was a specific recommendation. (2)
- Early recovery community-centred initiatives to enable households to begin recovery were favourably received by community representatives. (4)
- *This event and others of recent times in New Zealand provides a clear indication that the preparations for response to and recovery from flood events need to be addressed with*

¹³⁹ Kestrel Group, 2017, *Review of the Actions Taken by the Whakatāne District Council in the Response and Early Recovery Phases of the District's Flooding Events of April 2017*

¹⁴⁰ Smol, David. 2019, *Review Of Recoveries, A report to the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management*, Rimu Road Consulting.

¹⁴¹ Whakatāne District Recovery Project – Kia manawanui, 2018, *Whakatāne District Recovery Debrief and Toolbox*.

greater focus and urgency... noting that some relevant to recovery recommendations from a 2004 event still did not appear to have been fully addressed.

The MCDEM commissioned review considered both the Whakatāne District flood and the 2016 Kaikōura earthquakes recoveries in light of the 2016 Amendment Act. Coverage of the latter recovery is included in the Kaikōura case study in Section 4.3.4 below.

The position of National Recovery Manager was activated and a National Recovery Office established to support the earthquakes under new legislative provisions. The scope of the National Recovery Office was subsequently expanded to support the 2017 Whakatāne District flooding recovery. The Director CDEM appointed a Recovery Facilitator, who frequently visited the region. That said the recovery was largely locally led and mainly resourced by the Council's Recovery Manager and Team while reaching across District Council resources.

Relevant to recovery governance observations and recommendations by the Reviewer based on survey responses, targeted interviews and documents review include:

- Iwi/Māori have a strong presence in the affected locality and played a significant role in the operational response. The need to build strong trust based relationships pre-event to enhance understanding of response and recovery and partnering in designing and providing recovery support to the extent practicable was emphasised. (1)(5)
- Feedback from all levels suggested some uncertainty and confusion over roles and responsibilities among those charged with leading and supporting the recovery. Differing aspects of recovery required coordination between/across differing levels. A particular need for flexibility and adaptability in the role Group played; when to step forward and back was noted. (1)(6)
- That the event impacts sat 'neatly' within the boundaries of the District Council simplified things, but this cannot always be relied upon.
- National coordination and support was implemented through local and national forums established by the National Recovery Manager, such as the Whakatāne Leaders' Forum and the All of Government Recovery Coordination Forum. A need for managing membership to ensure the on the ground recovery efforts through the local Recovery Manager/Office were 'connected' with wider agency representatives at senior levels in such Forums was noted. (1)
- That said the value add of the National Recovery Office to the local recovery in its understanding of and access to the machinery of government was noted. (1)
- Pre- and post-event functions and related skillsets required of the Local Recovery Manager were different and consideration to separating the roles has merit. (1)
- The level of reliance of the local recovery on capacity and capability from within the 'peacetime' functions of the Council suggested a shift in recovery leadership over time; but a source of confusion warranting clarification. (1)
- The 'natural tension' between locally-led recovery reflected in the desire to be determining of priorities and spend, and the need for government to ensure accountability for public funds, while still minimising bureaucratic processes was in evidence. This is seen to be best managed through ongoing dialogue and pre-existing relationships between relevant leaders. (1)

- Codifying funding arrangements, improving their consistency and predictability, and reducing process complexity in cost sharing arrangements were all observed as needed improvements. (1)
- The effectiveness of the recovery environment framework in structuring recovery activities was noted, but so too is the need to be adaptable and a project-based approach may be more relevant and effective in some situations. (6)
- Limitations of data collection and information systems to support transitioning a response focused common operating picture and maintain it as recovery progressed was widely commented on. (8)

The District Recovery Team prepared a significant debrief of the Whakatane flood recovery focused on the activities led by and facilitated through the Recovery Office to deliver the recovery into and with the affected community.

The recovery team and office structure template shown in Figure 13 of this report was considered and leads for each environment identified, but a more project than working group approach adopted with relationships forged on this basis. *External agencies played a significant role in recovery. The benefits of collaboration in recovery cannot be highlighted enough.*

For the main stages of and key recovery activities, successes and challenges/lesson learned from the debrief are recorded. Analysis of debrief responses highlighted some key themes and insights into the recovery process. Those of particular relevance to recovery governance additional to those identified above include:

- Whakatāne District includes seven Iwi. A decision from the outset was made to ‘weave’ Iwi engagement throughout each environment, rather than Iwi engagement being a project in itself. Existing Iwi forums supported recovery work communications and engagement. (1)(5)
- That communities lie at the core of recovery. A key theme was the criticality of underpinning recovery with the principles of community-led development and building resilience. That said, the community-led approach needed to be responsive to differences within the community. (4)(5)
- The need for recovery preparedness and planning in advance by putting in place the right capacity and capability, collaborative relationships, and leadership prior to an emergency. As part of recovery preparedness and planning, it is important to identify, develop, and communicate policies, protocols, and processes. (1)(2)

The final event recovery review noted in this Section is that more recently completed in 2023¹⁴² in relation to the recovery from the Whakaari White Island volcanic eruption in December 2019. The report was commissioned by the Director, Emergency Management Bay of Plenty (EMBOP), to assess the efficacy and effectiveness of the Whakaari/White Island Eruption Recovery processes so as to identify lessons to inform future recovery operations. As with other reviews, a range of stakeholder and agency personnel were interviewed and documents considered.

¹⁴² James, Sandra and Jane Rollin, 2023, *Review of Bay of Plenty CDEM Group Recovery from Whakaari White Island eruption December 2019*, prepared for the Bay of Plenty Civil Defence Emergency Management Group.

The Whakaari White Island recovery was described as both complex and challenging because of a range of factors including:

- *the emergency happening on a privately owned off-shore Island not within the boundaries of an established local authority*¹⁴³.
- *the significant national and international interest in the event.*
- *that this was a local emergency with significant national impact, and*
- *the nature of the emergency*

This considerably added to the complexity of the recovery structure¹⁴⁴ across all levels of government. The EMBOP GRM was identified as responsible for leading the recovery supported by the Whakaari/White Island Leaders' Group. This grouping established in December 2019 to drive the delivery of recovery initiatives acted in the stead of the CDEM Group providing important local-regional-national (vertical) as well as working across, (horizontal) integration. That said, its forum update like characteristics, limited connection with national AOG officials coordination group, shifting membership and lacking in delegated decision-making authority were noted disadvantages.

A Recovery framework was put in place, based on guidance from the *Recovery Preparedness and Management Director's Guideline* (DGL24/20) reviewed in Section 3.3 above. The event had many unusual circumstantial features, and so the recovery provided a testing environment for recovery framework and practice guidance. The recovery review usefully focused on several aspects of the institutional arrangements for recovery governance including (Section 2.2.2 linkages in brackets):

- *Recovery governance and leadership* - The lack of a developed pre-event commonly held understanding of roles, responsibilities and how recovery frameworks support and enable local processes, structures, and ways of working was widely cited or indicated. This appears to be a combination of uncertainty and confusion given special event and jurisdictional circumstances but also limited awareness and understanding of what frameworks and guidance that was available. There were lesson identified from this for the state of recovery planning and preparedness.
- *Interagency interface and coordination* – The wide-ranging engagement between agencies and organisations with a role in recover is typically terms 'coordination'. It was observed that there was some confusion about what 'co-ordination' meant for the overall recovery programme. Information exchange and agency updates were seen as a more accurate description of what took place. Designated 'Lead Agencies' had varying knowledge of their own recovery roles and how some of the terminology (co-ordination) translated to action. (1)
- *Communication, information, and confidentiality* - This was a highly sensitive and political recovery with wide local, national, and international interest. Confidentiality, at times, caused tensions between agencies. Early in the recovery, the media interest was intense and relentless, often taking its toll on recovery staff and distracting them from the

¹⁴³ The Minister of Local Government is the territorial authority and there was no arrangement in place for recovery with EBOP.

¹⁴⁴ See Appendix 5 of the Review report.

recovery work programme. Governance groups and political leaders have a key responsibility and role to play in communications and engagement

- *Iwi relationship, interface, and processes* – The limitations of CDEM Act provision for iwi participation and related limitations in recovery framework and practice guidance adversely impacted relationships between Ngāti Awa and the recovery office...*the recovery structure...did not consider the aspirations and expectations for a Māori led recovery nor did it acknowledge or recognise the wider, more strategic role that Iwi could have had. Recognising iwi Māori contributions at all levels in the recovery was not understood and partnership opportunities were not explored.* (1)(2)(5)
- *Recovery funders and funding* – widespread uncertainty and lack of understanding of funding roles and arrangements including by and of lead and support agencies. (1)

It is important to note that the Whakaari recovery review as did the others cited in this Section of the report recorded many positive responses and successes in process, outputs, and outcomes. Review observations and identified lessons tend to focus on shortcomings. That said there are some observable themes relevant to guidance and practice:

- The need for clarity of definition and shared understanding of roles, responsibilities, structures, and processes that provide both coherence to and enable collaborative endeavour in the delivery of recovery to and with communities.
- Significant focus on recovery management ‘working across’ environments, but less developed appreciation of structures and processes for integration up and down levels of government, especially as they relate to funding arrangements and matching accountabilities.
- The extent of bespoke ‘invention’ in arrangements – in one sense indicative of shortcomings in framework, in another, of beneficial flexibility and adaptability.
- The balance between what is and should be locally determined and what is necessarily and appropriately centrally decided continues to be hard won.
- Persistent shortcomings in inclusivity and equity as it relates to Iwi/Māori participation.
- Similarly, shortcomings in systems and procedures for data collection and information management beyond response incident management to support recovery decision making not just accountability reporting.

3.6 NZ Recovery Governance Literature

Apart from specific event reviews, there is a small but growing ‘recovery governance literature’ in New Zealand. This section examines a range of such sources for observations and reflections on practice for insight into effective recovery governance attributes (corresponding with those identified in Section 2.2.2).

Roles, responsibilities, structures and processes (1)

Among early writers on the subject a paper by *Rolfe and Brittan, 1995*¹⁴⁵ as a contribution to the *Wellington after the Quake* conference held that year addressed the questions faced by everyone

¹⁴⁵ Rolfe, Jim, and Neil R Brittan, 1995, *Organisation, government, and legislation: Who coordinates recovery?* in *Wellington After the Quake - The Challenge of Rebuilding Cities*, Proceedings of a conference held in Wellington, New Zealand, 27-29 March 1995, Earthquake Commission.

in authority when cities commence recovery after a disaster: *What happens next? What do I do now?*

In the context of the Civil Defence Act 1983 and the first National Recovery Plan developed in 1987, in the first instance direct responsibility for recovery matters rests with the affected community. Interventions 'from above' should be designed to supplement local efforts but not to replace them, unless the affected community's local government is so affected that a Recovery Coordinator is appointed, and if necessary also a Commissioner for Disaster Recovery to act in the stead of the local authority if it is unable to operate as such.

Some Councils, Wellington City included, had at the time used provisions of the then Act to develop and implement their own disaster recovery procedures. As the authors state with relevance to practically all major disaster recoveries since:

...the point to note is that, should the impact community not have sufficient pre-planning contingencies that provide an appropriate framework for recovery, central government will intervene. If central politicians are not convinced that a viable recovery management process exists, they will attempt to establish their own...

If Wellington is to maintain control over its own destiny, it needs to demonstrate that it has a plan for recovery, one that takes account of the interests of national actors, that it is capable of managing the recovery process in partnership with the other units of government in the region, and that it does not have to demand an excessive level of assistance from central government.

Thirty years later Miller, et. Al., 2025¹⁴⁶ address at a conceptual level the frequently observed disaster and emergency management (DEM) practitioner quest for clarity of roles and certainty of structures by which to order their activities. They contrast current DEM practices that often rely on hierarchical, linear command structures that struggle to address the multilayered and dynamic nature of today's disasters with more flexible, decentralised, and adaptive approaches that are needed to effectively deal with their complexity.

Drawing on systems thinking, complexity theory, and 'complex adaptive systems' (CAS) principles they explore how disaster management structures can become more adaptable and responsive with relevance to the way roles and structures are defined and implemented.

They trace the evolution of DEM to reveal its strong historical ties to military principles, reflected in the continued use of phased approaches and hierarchical frameworks. Lessons from past disasters reinforce the necessity of adopting comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approaches to DEM, particularly in addressing social vulnerabilities and fostering interorganisational collaboration.

Organisational culture and structure are seen as pivotal in mediating the balance between agility and traditional rigidity in DEM systems. Identified as equally important are legislative frameworks that provide the foundation for addressing systemic challenges and fostering interorganisational coordination. *Balancing organisational autonomy with the necessity for coordinated action requires careful attention to the design and governance of collaborative efforts.*

¹⁴⁶ Miller, Todd, Loic Le D'ée, Katherine Hore, March 2025, *The adaptive shift: Embracing complexity in disaster and emergency management*, International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction Volume 119, 105323.

Hayes, 2024¹⁴⁷, considers this balance from a different perspective in exploring the research question, *whether New Zealand should establish a permanent national disaster recovery office based on the models of Queensland and New South Wales?* He contrast the 'locally led' NZ approach to disaster recovery with that employed in Queensland and New South Wales wherein centralised approaches are engaged with Reconstruction Authorities tasked to coordinate statewide recovery and resilience-building efforts.

Hayes observes a significant tension in recovery arrangements in New Zealand - the lack of readiness at both national and regional levels for recovery from nationally and regionally impactful events, alongside strong promotion of local leadership, demonstrated in part by the ongoing disinterest among local governments to explore horizontal integration when disasters affect multiple regions.

Those organisations are expected to rapidly coordinate and build relationships with a myriad of recovery partners, including non-government partners and the full range of ministries and agencies of central government. The habitual creation of ad-hoc recovery arrangements in such circumstances introduces complexity and high resource demand at times when these resources are at their most strained.

In contrast, the Queensland, and New South Wales Reconstruction Authorities as state authorities, can undertake informal and streamlined negotiations and resource-sharing with state stakeholders, and hold powers to 'step-in' and order decisions be made on behalf of another authority, including local government.

The benefit of more centralised, (but responsive) arrangements typified by such agencies are seen to produce greater effectiveness, efficiency, and resiliency evident in demonstrable and rapid on the ground recovery efforts. *The QRA and NSWRA demonstrate the capacity of these models to connect the many central government recovery functions, whilst simultaneously incorporating and balancing local communities in perspectives and priorities.*

In NZ assessed inefficiencies caused by insufficient horizontal and vertical integration; disaster recovery involves a range of services delivered by different agencies and levels of government, is compounded by lack of preexisting recovery funding arrangements. Hayes posits a standing NZ Recovery Authority that would retain and make deployable disaster recovery specialists, support pre-disaster planning, and coordinate, currently ad-hoc and regionally-limited disaster recovery activities to a more holistic model.

The most significant barrier to adopting an NZRA model observed by Hayes is the current high degree of intergovernmental distrust in New Zealand. In relation to disaster recovery this is based on prior observed experience wherein local government and community views were sidelined in decision making. The extent to which this experience alone, versus New Zealand's complex political dynamics between central and local governments more generally might be the basis for this approach not being a model for current consideration.

¹⁴⁷ Hayes, Danny, 2024 *The New Zealand Reconstruction Authority: Should New Zealand establish a permanent national disaster recovery office based on the models of Queensland and New South Wales?* Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of the Master of Public Policy, The University of Auckland.

Also observed by Hayes is a broad *academic consensus that recovery should be operationalised at the lowest levels of government to ensure local views and priorities are represented effectively. While assistance – money, expertise, labour force, information – from outside sources and higher government is vital, and existing agencies and departments should collaborate rather than establishing new entities, empowering rather than directing local recovery leaders.* This suggests that determining ‘best’ arrangements have more than policy ‘optimisation’ considerations to contend with.

By contrast to examining the merits of a particular recovery governance structure, the Recovery Capitals (ReCap) project lends insight into evidence based considerations by which arrangements might be determined. ReCap is a trans-Tasman collaboration amongst recovery academics and professionals to provide guidance for those engaged in recovery in each country¹⁴⁸.

The seven recovery capitals framework stems from the impact disasters have across the four environments with the ‘social’ environment is expanded into four capitals – social, cultural, political, and human – to enable deeper understanding of these important aspects of recovery. A focus on the capitals that people and communities have supports strengths-based approaches. In the context of this project, political capital is of most direct relevance although the interconnectedness of capitals is emphasised.

‘Political capital’ refers to the power to influence decision-making in relation to resource access and distribution, and the ability to engage external entities to achieve local goals. It includes agency, voice, justice, equity, inclusion, legislation, regulation, governance, leadership, and policy. It applies within and between groups and exists both formally and informally.

In this regard the Guide suggests the lack of inclusion of the voices of Māori and of diverse and marginalised people impedes effective recovery decisions, recognising that these are often made for and by those with the most voice and agency. More generally the following attributes are identified as highly valuable in disaster resilience and recovery (Section 2.2.2 attributes reference):

- community participation, agency, and knowledge, with processes and structures needed to support this. (4)
- External support to communities affected by disaster is important and those with greater ability to draw on these external connections that are established pre-event tend to fare better.(1)
- Influencing knowledge through recovery communications and how the disaster is depicted in light of that in the media is also important. (3)

¹⁴⁸ The ReCap project has drawn upon relevant data and findings from the Beyond Bushfires study and related research conducted by the University of Melbourne, Australia; on Resilient Wellington and related research conducted by Massey University and QuakeCoRE partners, Aotearoa New Zealand; and other relevant disaster recovery research. Two guides, one for each jurisdiction have been produced. The Aotearoa New Zealand edition is cited as adapted by E. Campbell and D. Blake (2021), from Quinn, P., Gibbs L., Blake D., Campbell E., Johnston D., and Ireton G. (2021), *Guide to Disaster Recovery Capitals (ReCap)*. Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand: Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre.

- Strong and adaptable leaders can help to access external resources, encourage innovation, support community mental health, and foster cooperation within and between communities. (2)

*Mace and Brown, 2023*¹⁴⁹, in the context of the NISWE examined grey and white literature from over a dozen large international natural hazard events and suggest a number of lessons to support effective critical infrastructure recovery, including several related to governance arrangements.

Governance - particularly for large scale critical infrastructure recovery efforts, they suggest a dedicated governance body for monitoring and guiding recovery programmes to ensure they are effectively utilising funding, meeting recovery goals, and meeting needs of stakeholders. Separate to operational delivery the structure should facilitate deep collaboration with stakeholders, including recovery funders. Including key community stakeholders within the governance body can help to enable a community-centred recovery.

Recovery programme management - Also for large programmes, a coordinating team with an operational focus is useful to provide oversight of work, resource allocation, progress, and stakeholder communications. It also provides a vehicle to establish a shared set of values and culture across delivery organisations; providing a common set of objectives and operating procedures to unite an often diverse set of delivery organisations. This team may have stakeholder representation.

Iwi/community engagement - Recovery efforts should ideally be centred around empowering and involving affected communities in decision-making processes, ensuring that their voices are heard, and their unique needs are addressed. Iwi, in particular, should be active partners. By actively involving the community, recovery projects can foster a sense of ownership, promote social cohesion, and build resilience from the ground up.

Information needs - A centralised information sharing platform is useful to facilitate efficient sharing and access to relevant information among all parties involved in recovery works. This can serve as a repository for data on infrastructure damage, resource availability, recovery plans, and progress tracking.

No specific preferred structure was identified in the Review. However it is noteworthy that both the Canterbury and Kaikōura earthquake recoveries were considered, both of which as indicated in Section 4.0 employed dedicated infrastructure recovery governance arrangements.

*Vallance et al, 2024*¹⁵⁰, recently prepared a report on promoting disaster recovery research in Aotearoa New Zealand. This arose from the observation that despite a decade of collaborative research whereby disaster readiness, response, and reduction were better understood, recovery had received less attention.

¹⁴⁹ Mace, Hugh , and Charlotte Brown, 2023, *Critical infrastructure recovery: Key lessons*, MBIE Extreme Weather Science Response Funding - Supporting Critical Infrastructure Recovery.

¹⁵⁰ Vallance , Suzanne, Julia Becker, John Hopkins, *Sulaiman Sarwary and Simon Markham, 2024, Recovering well: a brief report on promoting disaster recovery in Aotearoa New Zealand*, A report prepared by Landcare Research New Zealand Ltd for Resilience to Nature's Challenges National Science Challenge.

To assist in agenda setting in this area, a limited review of recovery literature and selected recovery frameworks used by the United Nations, United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand sought to identify distinct challenges associated with recovering well. This led to eight themes across the acknowledged recovery environment being considered, with most attention paid to social recovery further dissected as suggested by the ReCap framework discussed above. A key socio-political theme was ‘good governance’, which addresses coordination, collaboration, and partnerships.

An issue raised in the academic literature, but largely absent in the practitioner-focused recovery frameworks, is disaster justice, which covers diverse themes such as ideological politics and positioning, disaster capitalism, who pays for what, the ambivalent role of markets and regulation, the privatisation of risk management, when disasters exceed local governance capability, etc.

This ‘cleansing’ of ideological and political considerations from recovery frameworks may leave practitioners unprepared for the realities of disaster recoveries. It may also reduce the chances of developing effective and equitable bipartisan solutions pre-disaster and amplify vulnerability post-event.

Such observations lend a critical edge to what often appears in official recovery frameworks as largely unproblematic issues of leadership, mandate, participation, and inclusion. In the writer’s opinion this suggests effective recovery is more of a management challenge than a governance responsibility.

A further socio-political theme is that of coordinating public, private, and third sector services. The cost, magnitude of dysfunction, and need to coordinate public, private, and third sector activities may or may not prompt the development of a new recovery governance entity. That said, subsidiarity is cited as a key recovery principle in the United Kingdom’s recovery framework suggesting *decisions should be taken at the lowest appropriate level, with co-ordination at the highest necessary level. Local agencies are the building blocks of the response to and recovery from an emergency of any scale*¹⁵¹.

Effective Recovery Leadership (2)

*Leading in Disaster Recovery*¹⁵² is a locally authored and produced guide based on reflections from over 100 leaders in disaster recovery around the globe. It is frequently referenced and well regarded insight to assist those in leadership positions. It injects a human face and dynamic into what it means to exercise effective leadership in the frequently chaotic circumstances of a disaster recovery.

Those circumstances, especially in larger events, are characterised by high levels of uncertainty, complexity, competing priorities in short time frames, are psychologically taxing and demand high level of endurance.

Nine leadership qualities discerned from reflected local and international recovery experience are presented and elaborated in the Guide:

¹⁵¹ United Kingdom’s Cabinet Office’s Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance cited in Vallance, et. al. above.

¹⁵² Elizabeth McNaughton, Jolie Wills, David Lallemand, 2015, *Leading in Disaster Recovery: A Companion Through the Chaos*, NZ Red Cross.

1. *Having a noble purpose - people are the purpose.*
2. *Being ethical - it takes courage to do the right thing.*
3. *Being intentional - hope is not a method.*
4. *Making Decisions - perfect is the enemy of the good.*
5. *Keeping perspective - seek wise counsel.*
6. *Leading with empathy it's about real connection.*
7. *Being innovative - because you have to.*
8. *Supporting the team - people ... not human resources.*
9. *Prioritising self-care - to be effective*

By contrast Pepperell, 2021¹⁵³, reaches deeply into 'leadership' academic scholarship, motivated through reflection on his own extensive leadership experience in extreme contexts, including disasters, considers three related research questions:

1. What are the leadership systems necessary to deliver more successful outcomes in extreme contexts and what is the standard for measuring success?
2. What are the academic scholarship required during extreme contexts and how do these differ from those capabilities required during business-as-usual conditions?
3. Lastly, through effective leadership, how can we leverage these unfortunate events to thrive rather than merely survive?

His findings indicate *that there is more to leadership than the characteristics and actions of a single individual and that it is not until the system, in its entirety is considered, that many of the opportunities for and challenges to successful mission completion are identified.*

Additionally, understanding the needs and aspirations of a broad spectrum of society is a necessary antecedent when compiling a list of those individual and collective capabilities required to generate successful outcomes.

In signalling the importance of a systems approach, Pepperell observes that *people in governance roles plus the general public sometimes overlook their role in a distributed ownership model. During extreme contexts, while someone will represent the focal point of leadership, it is a distributed function, relying on coordinated and integrated efforts of many who may or not be as committed to the joint cause.*

This distributed leadership will occur across time (before, during, and after). And, paradoxically, the people judging the efficacy of leadership during extreme contexts will often be those most responsible for resilience building in the first place.

The above summaries are at best indicative and not exhaustive of a New Zealand 'recovery governance' literature that is largely focused on structural arrangements and leadership capabilities and systems. This is especially so since not included here but referenced in Section 4.0 case studies are reviews that analyse and opine on governance in relation to specific recoveries.

¹⁵³ Pepperell, Bruce, 2021, *Leadership in extreme contexts: When survival is not enough!*, A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of: Doctor of Philosophy In Emergency Management, Massey University, Wellington.

That being the case the writings appear diverse, exploratory and generally limited in reference to policy and legislative reform. They are constrained in influence on practice by the shortcomings of systematic lessons management that would assist documentation and comparative evaluation of governance arrangements.

4.0 Case Studies of Governance Arrangements for Recent Recoveries

4.1 Framework

Section 4.0 reports several case studies of the governance arrangements adopted among recent recoveries as further evidence to inform recommendations for guidance and practice in Section 5.0 below.

The focus of these case studies is on the three most constantly referenced effective recovery attributes: roles, responsibilities, structure, and processes; the exercise of effective leadership and political will; and, a community centred approach. (Attributes 1, 2 and 4 in the Section 2.2.2 Framework). How these are manifest tends to drive the level of transparency and accountability in decision-making; the degree of inclusivity and equity; and overall adaptability and flexibility (Attributes 3, 5 and 6).

The case study method has involved documents review and an indicative range of semi-structured interviews among interviewees familiar with the arrangements activated for each event. Questions were drawn from a list of possible queries¹⁵⁴ relevant to both pre-event preparedness and post event recovery activation and delivery relevant to both documents review and interviews.

Some of the recoveries are complete, but for others they remain in progress. This is not an attempt to assess the 'success' of a particular recovery. Rather it aims to indicate the scope and nature of arrangements and consider their alignment with or refinement of attributes for effective recovery presented in Section 2.2.2 of this report that are based on wider evidence and practice.

This relatively wide scope of such enquiry across a range of recoveries within the confines of a time-delimited project inevitable means certain compromises. Reliance on prior event commentaries and reviews where available in these circumstances is high. That said, many of those are focused more on particular recovery outcomes and less on the structures and processes by which they were arranged and delivered. Others address only particular structures without necessarily appreciating all the relevant criteria for consideration in selecting appropriate institutional arrangements in a given situation (see Figure 7).

Interviewees¹⁵⁵ typically have been in recovery governance or management roles, or themselves been reviewers, with several experienced in multiple recoveries. Their willingness to be interviewed and shared insight is gratefully acknowledged. Time limitations have contributed to these perspectives not being matched by interviews among members of impacted communities, often outside formal structures; unless reported through document sources.

¹⁵⁴ See Appendix 3.

¹⁵⁵ See Appendix 4.

That of Iwi/Māori is indicated through document review but not directly through interview; a conscious decision by the writer to either do it well or not attempt it in token fashion. There is a considerable body of knowledge from recent emergency management reform enquiry among other observations on the failings of bringing mana whenua perspectives into governance structures and strategic decision making beyond the frequent reliance on operational contributions by Iwi/Māori to response and recovery (see Section 3.0).

In some regional recovery contexts the realities of significant minority or majority Māori population and the progress made by post settlement entities have meant structures have evolved more in a *Te Tiriti* context, but in others this is a journey still very much yet to progress.

The amount of time required and complexities of arranging, undertaking and distilling findings from interviews is a case study inquiry finding in itself for consideration in future endeavours. It is a lesson for the level of resourcing required of future more in depth appreciation of particular recoveries, as well as the high level overview of multiple event arrangements undertaken through this project.

Case studies that have been selected across a range of disaster events by scale and type using the framework shown in Figure 16 below.

This figure has been prepared by the writer through several iterations based on reflections arising from experience of the Canterbury Earthquakes and several smaller recoveries. It addresses a first order question - what is the scope and nature of the event(s) to be recovered from? That arises from the geographic spread and the impacts/consequences intensity of the disaster itself. In combination these are key influences on the horizontal - across, and vertical - up/down, nature of recovery governance challenges and opportunities.

This is not a simple linear progression as complexity grows exponentially with event scale and while it should not automatically imply greater centralisation it often does. Other factors such as the capacity and capability limitations among more localised recovery agencies and low maturity levels of pre-event collaborations tend to lead to that approach being adopted, more by default than design.

An option would be to enhance regional/local capacities and develop capabilities among existing entities with potential to contribute to longer term 'recovery ecosystem' resilience. Or, some combination of the two that promotes closer connection between recovery entities and actual or potentially affected communities through shared governance arrangements.

Figure 17 'positions' the case studies within this framework. The wide distribution of impacts of the Canterbury Earthquake Sequence in 2010-11, (CES) across Greater Christchurch combined with the intensity of key seismic events in the Sequence and its extended duration cause it to lie within the 'top right' quadrant¹⁵⁶. Within the CES context, brief consideration is given to the recovery for the Waimakariri District led by that Council, exemplifying a discrete approach in an affected area on the periphery of a very larger event.

¹⁵⁶ But there is a high probability it will not potentially be New Zealand's greatest seismic calamity this century A June 2021 GNS Science update estimates an Alpine Fault Event probability estimate of 75% before 2068 at an 8.0M+ event magnitude probability of 82%.

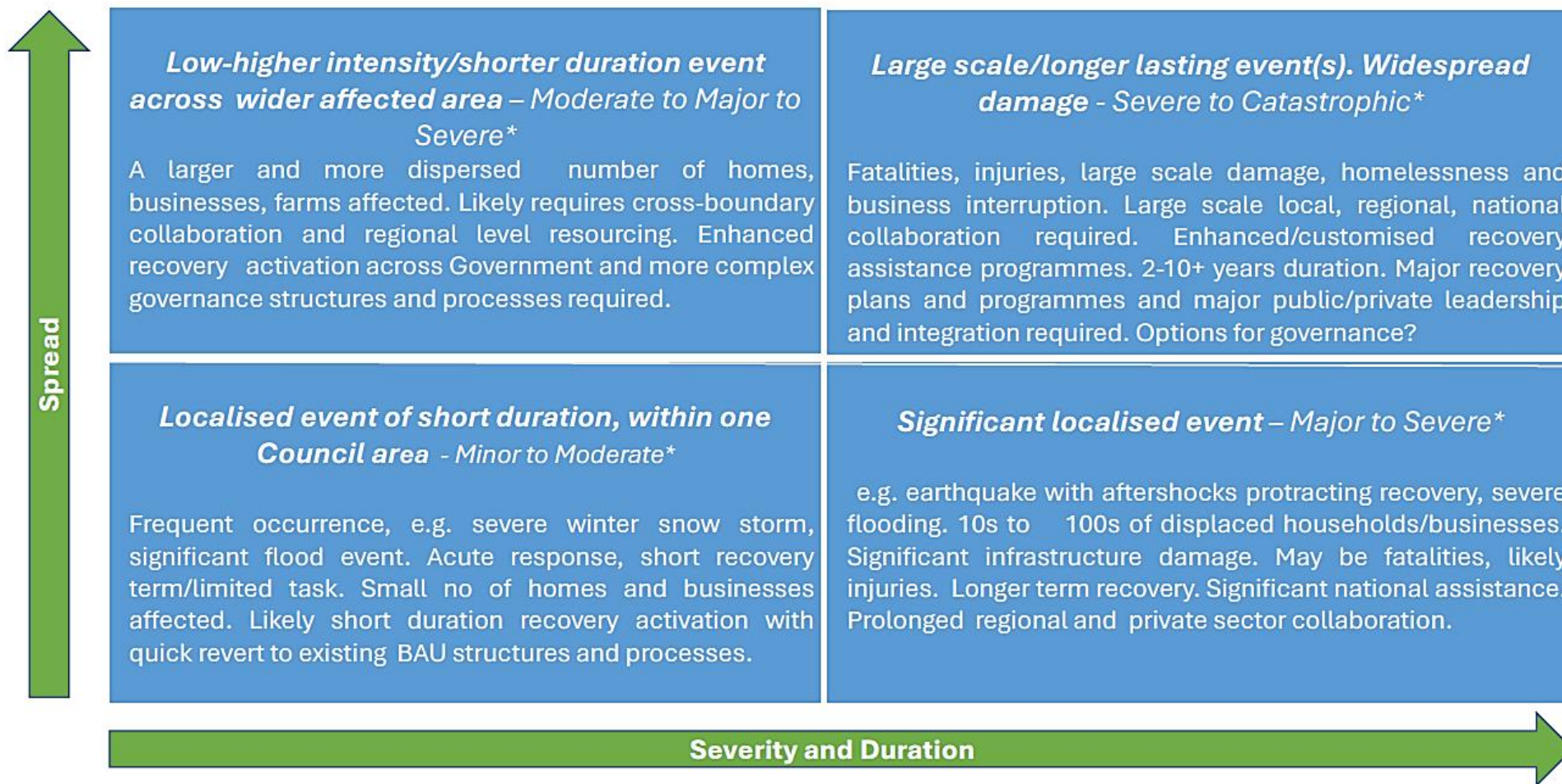


Figure 16: What event(s) are to be recovered from?¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ Developed by Simon Markham, www.smconsulting.co.nz.

* Severity Descriptors are as per Recovery Capability Development, 2024, Recovery Scorecard Assessment Tool. In Appendix 2.

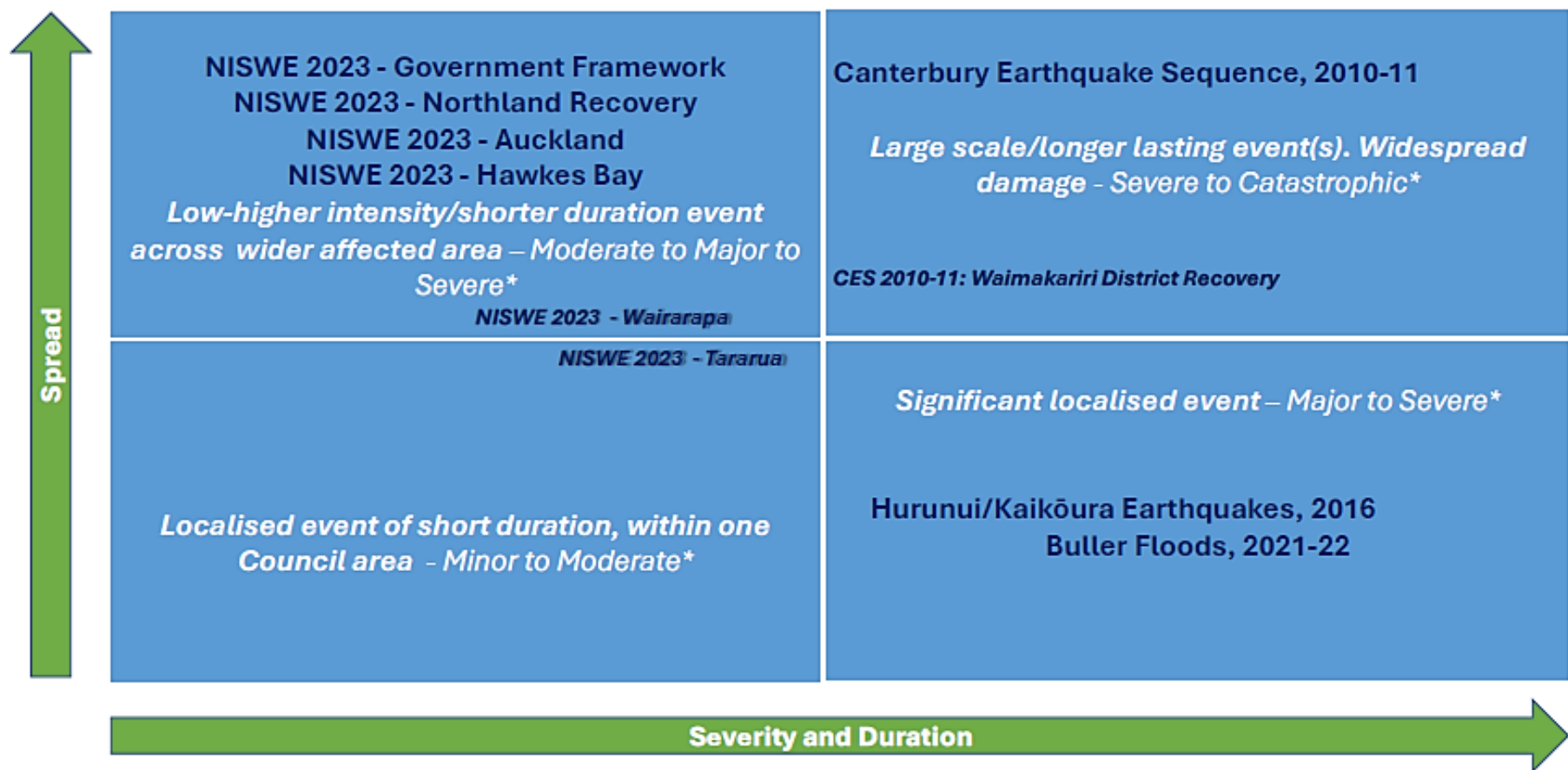


Figure 17: Recovery case studies illustrated within the event impacts/consequences framework

In some contrast the Kaikoura Recovery from the Hurunui/Kaikōura Earthquakes, 2016 and the Westport Recovery from the Buller Floods, 2021-22 illustrate approaches to significant localised events. Noteworthy however was that there were largely separate recovery efforts begun in 2016 in three other local authority areas as a result of earthquake impacts; Hurunui and Marlborough Districts, and Wellington City.

The North Island Severe Weather Events (NISWE) of early 2023 led to the creation of an overall Government recovery framework, within which differing affected regional CDEM Groups launched recoveries specific to their regions. In the case of the Hawke's Bay the focus of attention in the case study is on the collaborative governance arrangements invested in the Hawke's Bay Regional Recovery Agency (HBRA). Brief consideration is however given to arrangements for NISWE recovery arrangements by Tararua District and by three Wairarapa Councils that lie within other CDEM Group regions.

4.2 Canterbury Earthquake Sequence, 2010-11

4.2.1 Overview of the Disaster Event

As a result of the earthquake of 4 September 2010 but just prior to the 22 February 2011 earthquake it was estimated that approximately 3,300 properties have suffered very severe or major land damage, 1100 in the Waimakariri District and 2200 properties in Christchurch. Council infrastructure, public land, and commercial and industrial properties were also damaged by that first event and following aftershocks.

The economic costs of the earthquake were not fully known in mid-February 2011, but the cost of the Canterbury Earthquake was then estimated likely to reach around \$4.9 billion, with around \$2.5 billion worth of damage estimated to have been done to residential assets alone¹⁵⁸.

What was not anticipated at that time was that the thousands of aftershocks that followed would have an ongoing and cumulative impact. This included several very significant earthquakes (measuring over magnitude 6) on 22 February, 13 June, and 23 December 2011. The 22 February 2011 earthquake was the most significant in the whole sequence due to the scale and severity of its impacts.

This earthquake caused 185 immediate fatalities and over 6,000 people were injured. Damage to land, property and infrastructure was severe across much of eastern Christchurch. Liquefaction was much more extensive in flat land areas than in previous earthquakes. The Port Hills saw a significant amount of boulder roll, cliff collapse, and landslides.

The event triggered the first state of national emergency in New Zealand's history. National civil defence emergency management systems were activated and a National Controller took charge of the coordinated emergency response. This state of emergency continued for nine weeks¹⁵⁹.

Around 15,000 houses required demolition and over 100,000 houses were damaged. Over 460,000 claims to EQC resulted from several recognised damaging earthquakes over a 15 months period. Estimates of recovery costs vary considerably but in today's dollars those arising from the

¹⁵⁸ Ministry for the Environment, 2011, *Options for Expediting RMA Consent Application Processes for Land Remediation in Canterbury under the Canterbury Earthquake Response and Recovery Act 2010*, Regulatory Impact Statement.

¹⁵⁹ CERA, 2016, *Walking the Recovery Tightrope - Learning and insights from the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority*.

2010–11 Canterbury earthquakes are estimated at \$45-50 Billion, of which the Crown contributed in excess of \$17 Billion.

4.2.2 Overview of Governance and Management Arrangements

Figure 18 provides a high level overview of CES recovery governance and management arrangements. This diagram is an AI-assisted compilation from iterative web searches spanning a wide range of documents, many of which are contained in the EQ Recovery Learning repository¹⁶⁰. It and commentary on the CES case study also draws on the experience of the writer as a ‘participant observer’¹⁶¹ in the recovery, as well as other informants who had more significant roles.

Figure 18 attempts to capture in one place the breadth and depth of arrangements across all levels of government together with external agencies, organisations, and groups. It purposefully seeks to illustrate the complexity and diversity of recovery governance for the CES. It is a comprehensive but not an exhaustive list of recovery actors and limited in its ability to illustrate relationships¹⁶².

The diagram is largely based on the central phase of the recovery, 2011-16 when CERA as the Agency established by the Government to ‘*lead and coordinate the recovery*’ was in place. But some elements of the initial phase¹⁶³ in which CBCAN had a significant role and at the end, the transition to long term recovery initiatives from 2016 onwards, are also indicated.

This model is both hierarchical and interconnected, consistent with a centralised approach but includes a range of collaborative governance forums, some key ones being:

- *The Cabinet Committee on Canterbury Reconstruction (CBCAN)* was established immediately following the first significant 4 September 2010 earthquake to coordinate central government’s response. But it also played a foundational role in key decisions to establish centralised recovery coordination reflected in the position and authority of the Minister and the establishment of CERA as a reporting government department. Both were subsequently invested with extraordinary powers under the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery (CER) Act 2011.
- *The Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Review Panel* provided independent oversight of proposed legislative overrides authorised by the CER Act.
- *The Community Forum* was a statutory advisory body of some 20 members set up to give the Minister and CERA officials regular, structured feedback from residents and local groups across Greater Christchurch. Designed as a *mechanism for meaningful community participation* it met 80 times over the 5 years of the CER Act. its influence remained mostly internal, with some community expectations extending beyond its

¹⁶⁰ EQ Recovery Learning is a component collection of CEISMIC the Canterbury Earthquakes Digital Archive maintained by the University of Canterbury. The full archive contains 159,587 Items in 2,057 Collections. EQ Recovery Learning is a collection of resources, compiled by DPMC in 2016-18 in conjunction with organisations and groups across recovery including the private sector, community organisations, social enterprise, and government available at <https://quakestudies.canterbury.ac.nz/store/collection/22109>

¹⁶¹ The writer held the position of Local Recovery Manager for the Waimakariri District Council, 2010-15 assisting with earthquake recovery in the District and representing it in a range of collaborative forums.

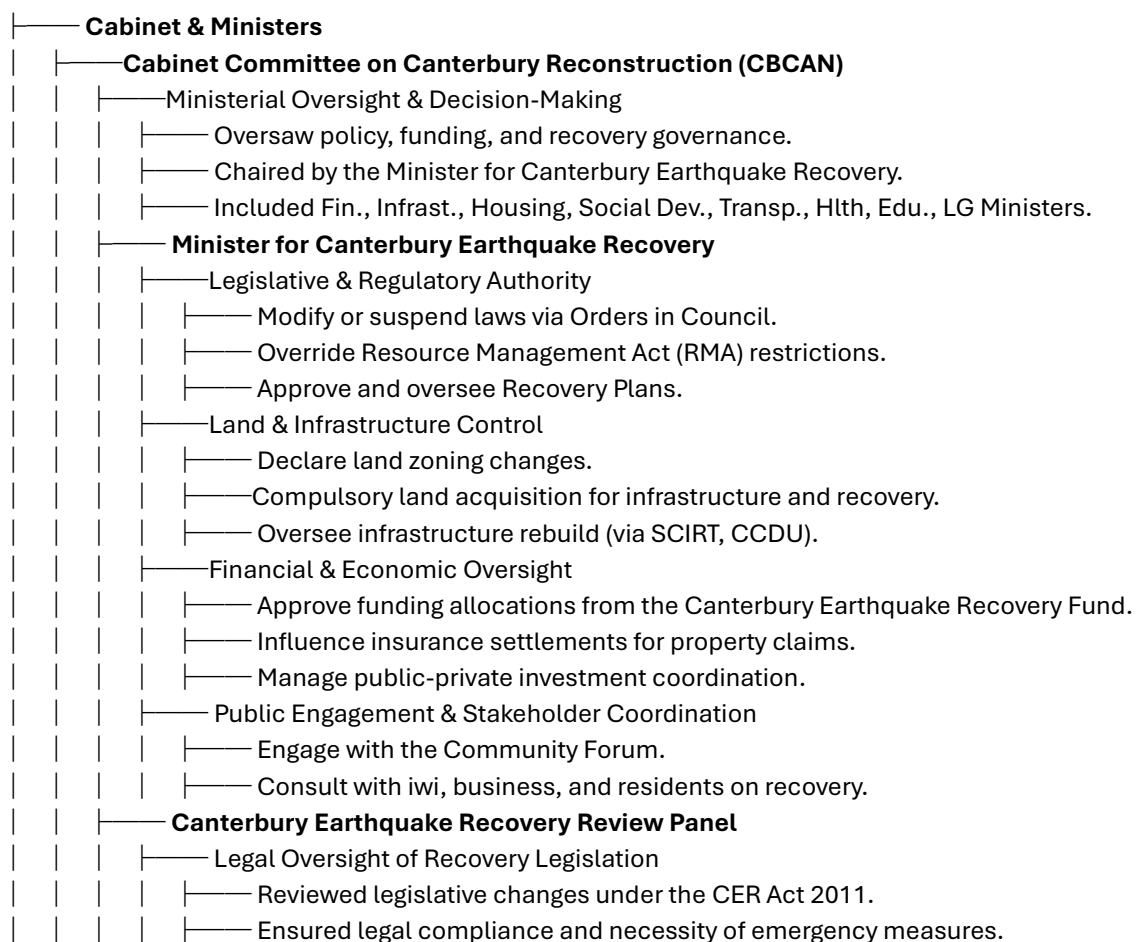
¹⁶² By contrast Figure 22 below graphically illustrates the range and complexity of relationships but without the clarity of structure.

¹⁶³ The initial phase may be seen as the period following the first 7.1M earthquake during which time CBCAN provided Cabinet advice that led to the creation of the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Commission – see section 4.2.3.

formal advisory role. Strong critique of its limited brief and that of community participation in CEs recovery governance generally is extensively documented¹⁶⁴.

- CERA itself established a number of *Task Groups* as *Collaborative Forums* across relevant sector organisations and agencies to provide input to the implementation of the recovery strategy. The balance between ‘information update’ and ‘advisory to decision-making’ varied between groups and over time.
- The *Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team (SCIRT)* was a multi-agency public-private sector alliance to oversee and undertake the Christchurch horizontal infrastructure rebuild. It was a formal and generally regarded as successful collaboration (within the full definition of the concept as per Section 2.1.2) among involved parties that stands out as a legacy achievement and model for future practice in infrastructure recovery.
- A number of *Independent Collaborative Recovery Groups* arose through the recovery as advocates and implementers of recovery projects.
- As did a range of *Collaborative Organizations & Research Programmes* have significant roles to play.

Figure 18: CES Recovery Governance and Management Arrangements



¹⁶⁴ See for example, Uekusa Shinya, Steve Matthewman and Bruce C. Glavovic, 2022, *A Decade of Disaster Experiences in Ōtautahi Christchurch - Critical Disaster Studies Perspectives*, Palgrave Macmillan.

- Comprised of legal, planning, and government experts.

- Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) (2011-2016)**

- Functions of CERA

- Lead and coordinate earthquake recovery
- Develop and implement the Recovery Strategy
- Oversee Christchurch Central Recovery Plan
- Direct and monitor infrastructure rebuild
- Manage Red Zone properties and land acquisition
- Engage with community and business stakeholders
- Ensure financial accountability for recovery funds

- Powers of CERA

- Acquire and manage land for recovery purposes
- Direct infrastructure repairs and urban planning
- Suspend or amend local government regulations
- Coordinate investment and economic recovery
- Establish partnerships with private and public sectors

- Collaborative Forums Established by CERA**

- Social Environment Task Group (SETG) – Housing, health, and well-being.
- Economic Recovery Task Group – Business recovery, jobs, and financial support.
- Built Environment Task Group – Infrastructure, land use, and building safety.
- Cultural Recovery Task Group – Heritage site protection, Māori-led recovery.

- Crown Agencies with Recovery Roles**

- Treasury – Financial oversight & Recovery Fund management.
- MBIE – Housing, infrastructure, business support.
- DIA – Local government policy & administration.
- NZTA – Roading & transport infrastructure repair.
- EQC – Insurance claims, compensation, land damage.
- MoH – Health infrastructure recovery & mental health support.
- CDHB – Hospital recovery, psychosocial support, medical services.
- MoE – School rebuilding, education continuity.
- LINZ – Land acquisition, zoning, and mapping.
- MSD – Welfare programs, temporary housing, employment services.
- SSC – Oversight of public sector agency coordination and performance.
- NZDF – Disaster response, logistics, emergency relief.
- FENZ – Search and rescue, fire prevention, emergency response.
- New Zealand Police – Security, evacuations, public order.

- Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team (SCIRT)**

- Governance & Composition

- Multi-agency alliance involving:
 - New Zealand Government (via CERA)
 - Christchurch City Council (CCC)
 - New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA)
 - Major construction firms

- Functions

- Managed repair and reconstruction of roads, bridges, three waters
- Ensured cost-effective and efficient infrastructure delivery.
- Coordinated design, planning, and execution of recovery projects.
- Provided transparency through performance monitoring and reporting.

- Regional Agencies with Recovery Roles**

- ECan – Flood risk, river protection, water quality.
- CREDS – Economic recovery, business investment.

- Canterbury Civil Defence – Emergency response, evacuation.
- Canterbury Regional Transport Committee – Public transport, road recovery.
- Greater Christchurch Partnership – Regional planning, sustainable development.
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce – Bus. recovery & investment.
- Tourism Industry Recovery Group – Reviving Canterbury's tourism sector.
- **Local Government Partners**
 - Christchurch City Council (CCC)
 - Infrastructure repair and rebuild
 - Residential planning & district plan updates
 - Land zoning approvals
 - Community facilities rebuilding
 - Transportation network recovery
 - Flood protection and stormwater management
 - Support for business recovery in urban areas
 - Waimakariri District Council (WDC)
 - Rebuilding of Kaiapoi and Rangiora
 - Local roading and bridge repairs
 - Housing and subdivision planning
 - Rural infrastructure restoration
 - Business and tourism recovery
 - Coordination of community-led recovery initiatives
- **Independent Collaborative Recovery Groups**
 - CanCERN – Advocates for community groups in recovery discussions
 - Student Volunteer Army (SVA) – Mobilized students for physical recovery work
 - Farmy Army – Farmers assisting with cleanup and resource support
 - Gap Filler – Creative urban revitalization projects
 - Ministry of Awesome – Supports innovation and entrepreneurship post-quake
 - Greening the Rubble – Transforms vacant land into green spaces
 - The Concert Initiative – Organizes cultural events to rebuild community morale
- **Collaborative Organizations & Research**
- **Ngāi Tahu Earthquake Recovery Programme**
 - Role in Recovery
 - Worked with CERA and local councils on land use planning.
 - Provided cultural and environmental input into urban redevelopment.
 - Advocated for Māori-led housing and social recovery projects.
 - Assisted whānau with post-quake housing, financial, and well-being support.
 - Led protection and restoration of culturally significant sites.
 - Coordinated emergency response and recovery for Māori communities.
 - Red Cross, Salvation Army, NGOs – Disaster relief & social support.
 - Resilient Organisations Research Programme – Urban resilience & DRR.
 - Led by University of Canterbury and GNS Science.
 - Focused on business continuity, urban resilience, and DRR.
 - Provided policy recommendations to CBCAN and CERA.
 - Christchurch UD Strategy Partnership – Integrated urban growth planning.
- **Transition to Long-Term Recovery (2016 Onward)**
 - Ōtākaro Limited – Managed Crown assets & major recovery projects.
 - Regenerate Christchurch – Led long-term urban development planning.
 - Greater Christchurch Partnership – Regional planning coordination.
 - Land Use Recovery Plan (LURP) – Guided land-use planning.
 - Waimakariri Residential Red Zone Recovery Plan – Red zone redevelopment.
 - Collaborative Governance of Christchurch Red Zone – Red zone governance.

| | | | — WDC Regeneration Plans & Activities – Infrastructure, business, community
 | | | | — CCC Regeneration Plans & Activities – Housing, transport, community projects.

The purpose in highlighting these collaborations (there were undoubtedly more) is to note them as integration mechanisms working across and up/down to both deliver recovery activities but often in less formal ways ‘temper’ the exercise of executive authority vested in the Minister and the appointed lead recovery agency, CERA. That this might be needed is perhaps a consequence of the centralised model that was chosen which remain a key contested element of CES recovery effectiveness.

4.2.3 A Key CES Recovery Issue - Roles, Responsibilities, Structures, and Processes

The benefits for effective recovery of well-defined roles and responsibilities across all levels of government, private sector, NGOs, and communities within a collaborative framework and culture is a consistent theme in international advice and lessons identified from observed recovery practice. A conducive pre-event framework and preparedness assists early activation of this post-event with its final shape confirmed in light of event impacts and consequences.

Key decisions both pre- and post-event on structure have generally been shown to have significant implications for the overall shape and progress of the recovery¹⁶⁵. In the Case of CES the merits of how these led to the centralised approach manifest in CERA reporting to a Minister of the Crown remains the most debated element of the CES recovery narrative to the present, in itself and consequential influence on leadership approach to and community participation in recovery.

The aim of this brief discussion of this is not to seek to arrive at a concluding position on the matter but rather to illustrate the importance of timing¹⁶⁶ of decision-making and the nature of balancing considerations that were and remain in play in structuring significant recoveries for events such as CES in the future.

Less than two weeks after the 4 September 2010 earthquake the Government through CBCAN had determined additional governance support was required for the balance of the response to and the recovery from that event. On 15 September 2010, the Canterbury Earthquake Response and Recovery Act 2010 (CERRA) was passed to provide for the establishment of the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Commission (CERC)

It authorised legislative override by Order in Council in circumstances where existing legislation might hamper recovery efforts, on advice from CERC. Commissioners were appointed on 18 October and CERC’s agreed terms of reference (TOR) confirmed by Ministers on 9 December 2010¹⁶⁷. In a legislative sense it is evident from both the Bill¹⁶⁸ and the Regulatory Impact

¹⁶⁵ See for example Johnson, Laurie A., and Robert B. Olshansky, 2017, *After Great Disasters - An In-Depth Analysis of How Six Countries Managed Community Recovery*, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

¹⁶⁶ The ‘speed versus deliberation’ dilemma.

¹⁶⁷ That said the TOR were not published in the *New Zealand Gazette* until 10 February 2011.

¹⁶⁸ *Canterbury Earthquake Response and Recovery Bill*, 2010 – 215, Cl.3.

Statement (RIS)¹⁶⁹ for CERRA that the primary purpose of establishing the CERC was to provide a check on the authorisations given to enable Orders-in-Council for *relaxation or suspension of some statutory requirements*; perhaps more as a matter of legislative ‘check and balance’ rather than earthquake recovery.

CERRA provided for Terms of Reference to be set for CERC by Ministers that set a considerably widened advisory role and appointed four Government Commissioners alongside the three local Mayors. Its TOR noted *the overall recovery from the earthquake is being led by Canterbury local authorities in accordance with established procedures for the recovery under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002* and directed the Commission to *undertake its role within this framework and work in accordance with the Government’s National Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan*.

The Government through the TOR set overarching goals for the recovery process and determined that CERC in performing its functions, should:

- *take into account the Government’s overarching goals;*
- *provide strategic oversight of the recovery effort, in particular in those areas that lie across current roles and jurisdictions of local authorities and government agencies;*
- *facilitate a process to set priorities and act as a clearing house to ensure good information flows between local authorities, government agencies, and key stakeholders, and ensure they are all aware of the full scope of activities supporting the recovery effort;*
- *advise on what support (including technical support) is necessary to ensure effective and co-ordinated decision making at a national, regional, and local level;*
- *identify impediments to the recovery process and advise on how they might be overcome (including a co-ordinated approach to Orders in Council); and*
- *keep Ministers and local authorities informed of overall progress on the recovery effort and escalate issues that are unable to be resolved at a local level.*

So aside from the *apriori* central determination of recovery goals, the CERC’s TOR positioned it at the ‘strategic crossroads’ of vertical/horizontal integration. Its authority was to be delivered by influence rather than statutory decision-making, as an example of collaborative governance aligned with the existing CDEM recovery framework.

Barely three months into CERC’s tenure, the scale and nature of the ‘event’ as an Earthquake Sequence became evident in the tragedy and destruction wrought by the 22 February 2011 earthquake. Major change in the leadership and coordination of the recovery was determined by Cabinet on 28 March 2011, the CER Act came into effect on 19 April 2011 and CERA as a Department reporting to an Earthquake Minister came into being for a five year tenure. The CERC was disestablished by the CER Act.

Guidance drawn from international experience discussed in Section 2.2.1 while suggestive of the net benefits of locally led solutions whenever possible, indicates there is no one ‘optimal’ set of

¹⁶⁹ State Services Commission, 2011, Regulatory Impact Statement Canterbury Earthquake Response and Recovery Bill - Agency Disclosure Statement

institutional arrangements for severe to catastrophic event recovery governance. There are pros and cons for using existing capacities, establishing a new agency or a hybrid approach, as in the creation of CERC. That it was an augmentation of the existing framework and that legislating *de novo* for override powers suggests that framework was underdeveloped or resourced, or both.

That guidance suggest there are a range of criteria for consideration in selecting appropriate institutional arrangements:

1. The characteristics of the disaster;
2. The capabilities and capacities of the extant (recovery) governance structure;
3. Prior/elsewhere disaster recovery experience;
4. The convening power of what is proposed;
5. Credibility – the level of trust in, prior experience, convening power and capacity of the of the lead institution;
6. Capacity of anticipated arrangements to coordinate, monitor, oversee and supervise the diverse set of recovery actors involved.

The factors that helped determine the institutional design and the efficacy of the adopted centralised recovery governance model for the CES recovery have been subject to considerable record, appraisal, and scholarly review. A starting point is the declared basis for that design as per the relevant Cabinet papers and RIS that accompanied the CER Bill.

*Two papers*¹⁷⁰ were prepared for Cabinet decision on arrangements, one on governance and a second on proposed powers for the appointed Minister and CERA. In *Paper 1* the need to look at new governance arrangements is based on a range of factors (matched by the writer with the criteria cited above) leading to a conclusion that it was *necessary to put in place stronger governance and leadership arrangements for the rebuilding and recovery of greater Christchurch from the cumulative effects of the earthquakes. These include:*

- *the scale of the post-earthquake rebuilding effort recognising that the 22 February earthquake represents an incomparable natural disaster in New Zealand's history; (1)*
- *lessons learnt from international experience and from the recovery planning after the 4 September earthquake including the strong indication to have a single entity in charge of and responsible for the recovery efforts; (3)*
- *the need for timely and effective decision making powers; (2)*
- *the significant co-ordination needed between local and central government, residents of greater Christchurch, Ngai Tahu, NGOs, business interests, and the private sector, (4) (5) (6) and:*
- *the advisory capacity of the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Commission being considered no longer sufficient to deliver what is now needed (2)*

Lessons from a tabulated evaluation of five other significant disasters are annexed to the paper and summarised as:

¹⁷⁰ Offices of the Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery and of State Services, 2011, *Paper 1: Canterbury Earthquake Recovery: Proposed Governance Arrangements* - CAB Min (11) 13/9, and, *Paper 2 Canterbury Earthquake Recovery: Proposed powers* - CAB Min (11) 13/10.

- *the status quo was not sufficient to address the recovery from major disasters and, in each instance, a new authority was needed to focus on the recovery effort;*
- *recovery was a long-term activity that needs to commence quickly, and*
- *recovery cannot just be about infrastructure - the social and economic contexts are equally, if not more, important.*

This experience along with the conclusion reached that the scale of the recovery effort required was beyond the capability of current institutions led to the recommendation that new institutional arrangements with specific powers were required. It was suggested that the political and fiscal risks to the Crown, given the extent of coercive powers and Government investment that was required post the 22 February 2011 event meant a high degree of Ministerial control was required.

In light of this among options considered for that organisational form were either a department or a Crown agent, *the departmental form was preferred as providing for an entity that has a high degree of central control, with a leadership structure that is able to act decisively and quickly and be closely aligned with the Government's priorities*

Other notable features of this advice taken up by Cabinet were:

- *Advisory Board* – consideration was given to the retention of CERC, or a version of it, as a check on the use of broad powers for Orders in Council and as independent input to decision making processes. This was not recommended as reducing the visibility and effect of a straight and clear line of accountability from the chief executive of CERA to the Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery and alternative collaborative mechanism were available.
- *Review Panel* - an independent group of persons convened by a former or retired High Court judge to review draft Orders in Council before they are finalised was however considered a necessary component of the checks and balances of the new framework.
- *Community Forum* - International experience was cited to reinforce the importance of engagement with local community interests through the recovery process...*a community forum gives the opportunity for the Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery to encourage meaningful participation by community representatives in the process.*
- *Cross-part Parliamentary Forum* - of relevant MPs was convened, in order that issues for recovery of Greater Christchurch from the earthquakes could be worked through in a cooperative manner. *It would assist in gaining broad political buy-in to the recovery effort.*

Paper 2 outlined the necessary statutory powers vested in CERA and the Minister, via the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act, to ensure:

- Expedited planning approvals, resource consents, and demolitions.
- The ability to override or streamline existing legislation when essential for recovery.
- Rapid operational flexibility—through Orders in Council or Ministerial delegations.

Figure 19 below illustrates the proposed governance and roles arrived at for the recovery under the CER Act, focused on CERA, the Minister and Cabinet. A surprising feature for the writer as an observer over the following years was the extent to which Cabinet decision-making was repeatedly called upon as the recovery progressed.

Fiscal risk and the ‘need for speed’ leading to centralised decision-making as a result are factors of significance to both *Papers*. This design was undoubtedly influenced by the situation on the ground, a month in from the most damaging February earthquake and the need to ‘have a way forward’ for the recovery to follow on from the eventual lifting of the State of Emergency declaration and transition to recovery.

There was no direct reference in the *Papers* to the then existing recovery framework manifest in CDEM arrangements; by inference the framework and related capacity and capabilities were not considered an adequate basis to scale up from as another option for consideration.

The RIS¹⁷¹ for the new Bill to implement Cabinet’s adoption of *Paper 1 and 2* recommendations considered several legislative options for overall leadership and coordination of the recovery effort. But it was largely premised on a new Government Department being created and focused on legislative options to equip it with necessary powers.

A somewhat unrelated additional option was considered and quickly dismissed as overreach in the RIS. That was to suspend the democratically elected local councils and replace them with a Commissioner with powers to enable overall leadership and coordination of recovery, possibly reporting directly to the Minister¹⁷².

Design and implementation of the CER Act centralised agency led approach has been appraised and opined on in a number of ways. Some key findings from a range of these are summarised below to illustrate the issues raised of relevance to the governance design for future recoveries of this scale. The degree to which these evidence the efficacy of the model (in the absence of a counterfactual) versus its execution on the ground is a further source of debate. Section 2.1 of the report highlights the importance of leadership style and organisational culture alongside structure and process as influential on performance.

The *Auditor-General* considered the role of CERA in the context of the roles and accountabilities of all public entities engaged in the recovery in 2012¹⁷³, and at the end of its tenure in 2017¹⁷⁴, specifically of how effectively and efficiently CERA performed.

¹⁷¹ State Services Commission, 2011, *Regulatory Impact Statement Canterbury Earthquake Response and Recovery Bill*, Agency Disclosure Statement.

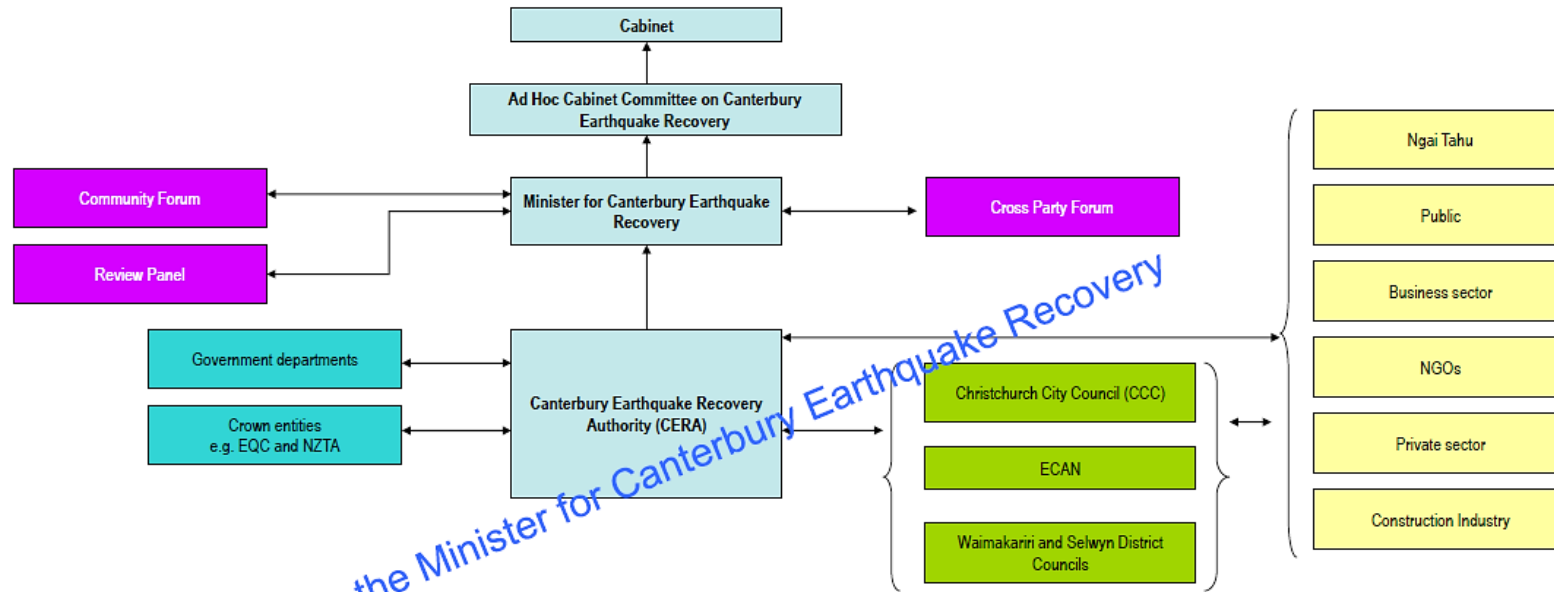
¹⁷² Not specifically referenced in the RIS is that this in effect would have picked up on then surviving provisions of the largely repealed Local Government Act 1974, that provided for such a role, akin to that which was enabled in relation to the Napier Earthquake in 1931.

¹⁷³ Controller and Auditor-General, 2012, *Roles, responsibilities, and funding of public entities after the Canterbury earthquakes*, Parliamentary Paper.

¹⁷⁴ Controller and Auditor-General, 2017, *Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority: Assessing its effectiveness and efficiency*, Parliamentary Paper.

Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority – Proposed Governance and Roles

Overview of Governance arrangements



Overview of Roles

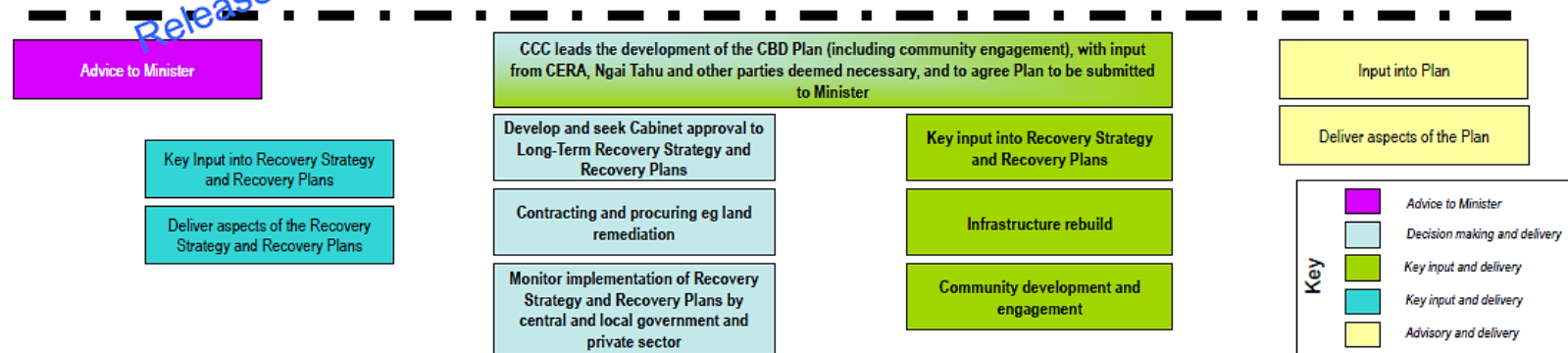


Figure 19: Governance design for the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery under the CERA Act

Figure 1
 Relationships between public sector entities, private companies, Ngāi Tahu, and Canterbury earthquake recovery tasks

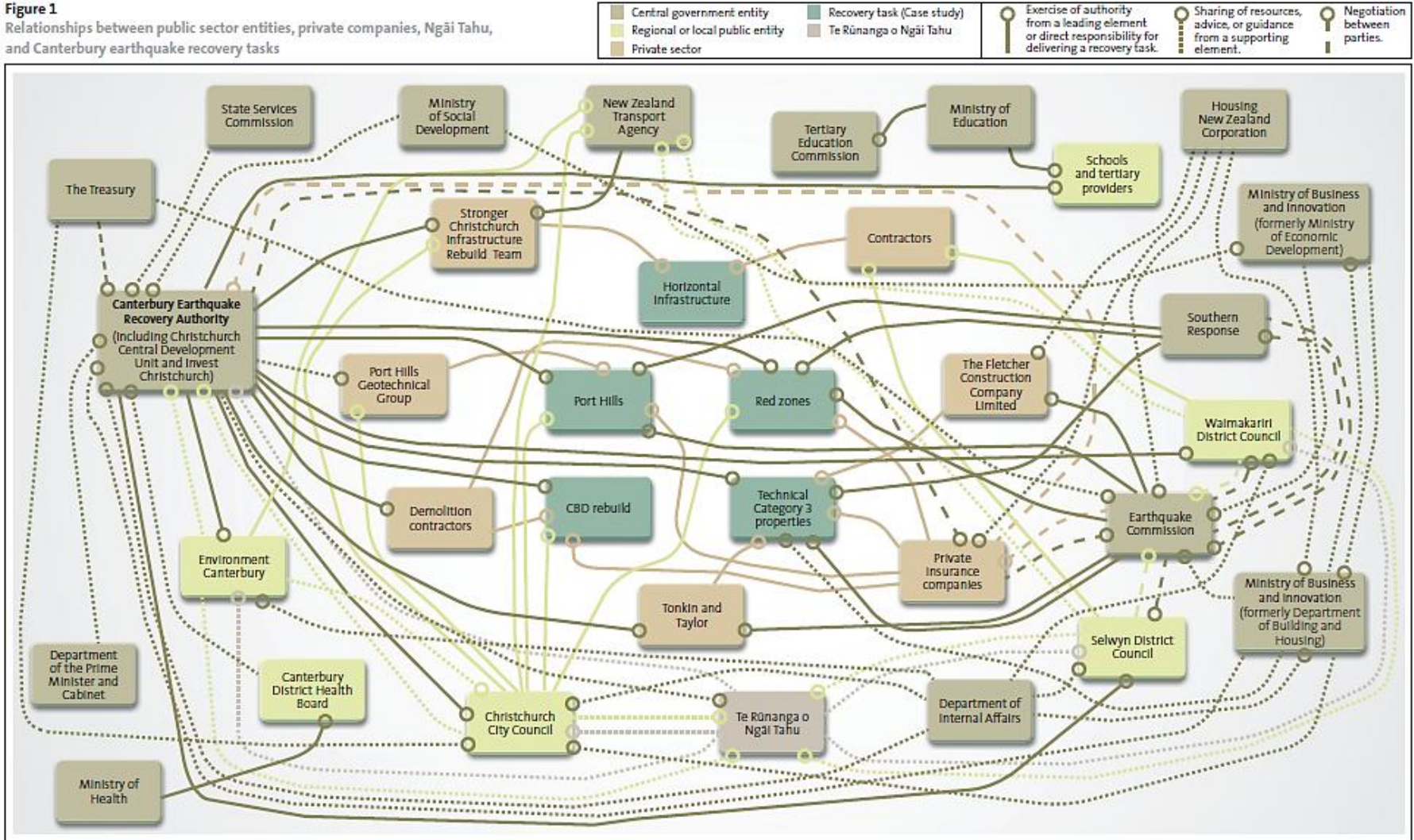


Figure 20: Auditor -General's 2012 Report – Relationships Diagram

In the 2012 Report the importance of effective collaboration among public entities was a recurrent theme. *CERA cannot manage or deliver Canterbury's recovery alone. The recovery depends on the contributions of many public, private, and non-governmental organisations, and on the communities of greater Christchurch.* To illustrate the importance of role clarity amid complex collaborative relationships the diagram in Figure 20 was prepared for inclusion in that report.

The 2017 report suggests a number of lessons for the future. It recounts the challenges of establishing 'from a standing start' a new agency to lead a recovery of this scale. The *Auditor-General* recommended that consideration of the most appropriate organisational type of any future recovery agency and a plan be developed that would enable it to be established quickly and effectively outside of the pressures of a very significant event.

This report directly addressed lessons for governance, organisational structure, and functions. *The governance arrangements for CERA (as the lead agency) did not change to adapt to its changing functions and the different phases of the recovery.* Role clarity of and between governance and management and with other parties was emphasised. *What a recovery agency should achieve by the end of its lifetime ... should be expressed in a performance framework with realistic targets and be regularly reported on.*

CERA was responsible for leading and co-ordinating the public sector's response to the recovery, which it was required to do with its strategic partners. CERA was also responsible for creating an overarching recovery strategy: a statutory document that created a platform for a range of policies, programmes, and recovery plans.

Exercising this leadership and co-ordination role involved working with a wide range of organisations in the public, private, and non-government sectors, as well as with members of the community. The 2017 report describes how developing and adapting these relationships over differing phases of recovery and across the wide range of strategic issues and delivery programmes CERA became involved with proved challenging.

CERA's 'self-review' at the conclusion of its tenure in 2016 described the experience *as a balancing act like walking a tightrope...you are constantly balancing tensions, making trade-offs, being pulled in different directions and responding to conflicting pressures*¹⁷⁵.

A more formal 'whole of government' review was completed by the Greater Christchurch Group within DPMC to which residual CERA functions transitioned in 2016¹⁷⁶, reporting to the Minister supporting Greater Christchurch Regeneration. The report references more than 200 published reports, resulting in around 50 lessons identified across five topic areas, including recovery governance arrangements.

¹⁷⁵ CERA, 2016, *Walking the Recovery Tightrope - Learning and insights from the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority.*

¹⁷⁶ Greater Christchurch Group 2017, *Whole of Government Report- Lessons from the Canterbury earthquake sequence*, DPMC.

This report suggests it was recognised that the CDEM legislation would not be adequate to deal with recovery from a large-scale disaster like the CES post the 22 February earthquake...*it is within this context, along with ongoing local governance problems in Canterbury, that governance structures were developed and evolved in response to the Canterbury earthquakes.*

It suggests these *combined top-down and bottom-up approaches, providing centralised leadership with formal community input into decision-making, however there is no consensus on the effectiveness of these governance arrangements in driving community participation. CERA acknowledged that it missed opportunities to build local capacity partly due to public perception that it was responsible for everything recovery-related, and partly due to a strong culture of problem solving and 'doing' recovery.*

The debate over institutional design attracted academic interest early on. Brookie, 2012¹⁷⁷, *argues that the statutory framework for long term recovery in New Zealand at the time of the quakes was inadequate. The governance arrangements created after the September 2010 and February 2011 quakes addressed a number of concerns, but they also generated their own problems.* It was suggested¹⁷⁸ that the international evidence for the design had not been correctly interpreted and the creation of CERA with a direct reporting line to a Minister compromised the appropriate level of independence that either an independent crown entity and/or a governance board would have brought.

Brookie, 2012 suggested a number of the concerns cited by *Rotimi* in 2010 prior to the CES (see Section 3.1) about the adequacy of the statutory and regulatory framework to manage disaster recovery have been realised. In particular that the institutional capacities of actors mandated in recovery activities – namely local councils – would be insufficient. Brookie pointed to the fact that just prior commissioners had already replaced the elected regional councillors of Environment Canterbury, and Christchurch City Council was experiencing a range of issues such that by February 2012, CCC was operating with a government-appointed Crown observer.

Kipp, 2016 also adopted an historicalist perspective, tracing the evolution of disaster recovery law and practice influential on the decision to establish bespoke legislation and government agency arrangements. Kipp posed among others a research question: *was the creation of the Canterbury recovery framework under the CER Act 2011 and CERA an anomaly necessitated by the extreme nature of the event or was it an outcome of vulnerabilities within the CDEM recovery framework?*

He concludes *that it was an anomaly in that it is a deviation from the intended process for disaster recovery under the CDEM Act 2002 – but it is not an anomaly simply because of the extreme nature of the Canterbury earthquakes. A disaster of the scale of the Canterbury earthquakes was the primary reason for creating and sustaining a civil defence system – but that system failed when it was needed most.*

¹⁷⁷ Brookie, Rachel, 2012, *Governing the Recovery from the Canterbury Earthquakes 2010 -11: the Debate over Institutional Design*, VUW Institute for Governance and Policy Studies, Working Paper 12/01.

¹⁷⁸ This is reference to the assessments by knowledgeable reviewers cited in Brookie's paper above.

Kipp goes on to suggest the post-Canterbury recovery framework was an outcome of familiar historic patterns which resulted in shortcoming within the CDEM recovery framework which limited its implementability during a crisis...*The familiar historic patterns are the central government putting significant responsibilities onto local government without sufficient guidance or financial support or consideration for the demands on local capacity that civil defence responsibilities would have.*

Considerable discussion followed from real/perceived shortcomings in large measure addressed by the bespoke arrangements and powers authorised by the CER Act. Among the issues raised were: the degree to which ad hoc powers could/should be codified; collaborative governance structures ‘in waiting’ developed; roles and responsibilities (further) clarified for an event of national significance; and, a core, permanent central resource of recovery knowledge and practice established to be ready to support and enable more decentralised, community facing and engaging arrangements, have all received attention.

The CERC/CERA experience also attracted significant international disaster research interest. Among that *Johnson and Mamula-Seadon, 2014*¹⁷⁹ traced the governance transformations that evolved following the 2010-11 earthquakes and that increasingly centralized recovery authority and operations at the national level...*this may have helped to strengthen coordination among national agencies and expedite policy and decision making; but the effectiveness of coordination among multiple levels of government, capacity building at the local and regional levels, and public engagement and deliberation of key decisions are some areas where the transformations may not have been as effective.*

A Symposium at the University of Canterbury as a milestone in establishing the Earthquake Recovery Learning and Legacy Programme in 2018 brought together a wide range of perspectives to share lessons learned from the CES . *Johnson, 2018*¹⁸⁰ gave a plenary presentation at this event reflecting on the CES recovery within the context of other catastrophic disasters. This included an illustration reproduced as Figure 21 of a preferred evolution of recovery governance structure and style seen as a more effective recovery approach to move towards in turbulent circumstances.

¹⁷⁹ Johnson, Laurie A., and Ljubica Mamula-Seadon, 2014, *Transforming Governance: How National Policies and Organizations for Managing Disaster Recovery Evolved Following the 4 September 2010 and 22 February 2011 Canterbury Earthquakes*, *Earthquake Spectra*, Volume 30, No. 1, pages 577–605, February 2014.

¹⁸⁰ Johnson, Laurie, A., 2018, *Reflections on Recovery – The canterbury earthquakes within the context of other catastrophic disasters*, Plenary Address, Canterbury Earthquakes Symposium, University of Canterbury 29-30 November, 2018.



Traditional Governance	Collaborative/Network Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More directive leadership model • Manager is organizer/controller. • Goals are clear, and success is attainment of the goals. • Linear/rational approach to planning • Public participation – Complies with legal requirements, educate the public, and obtain public support for proposals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More generative leadership model, creating conditions to bring teams together and help build collective capacity to learn about problems and find solutions together • Manager is a mediator and process manager • Goals are sometimes in conflict or likely to change as part of deliberation. Success is realization of collective action and capacity to adapt to change. • Non-linear approach to planning where goals may be revisited as part of analysis, policy development or implementation • Public participation – Engage in joint learning and deliberation; build public capacity for problem-solving and adaptation

(Innes and Booher, *Planning with Complexity*, 2018)

Figure 21: Contrasting Approaches in Recovery Governance

4.2.4 Waimakariri Recovery Approach

The experience of recovery in the Waimakariri District following from the first CES event on 4 September 2010 has been reviewed and commented upon for its particular approach in a number of ways. It is briefly considered here to exemplify aspects of its governance structure with reference to the model set out in Figure 12, and to note phases in the context of the recovery continuum included above as Figure 3. The writer was extensively involved in this recovery filling the local recovery manager role until 2015.

The CES impacts on and implications for the town of Kaiapoi and adjoining Pines and Kairaki Beach communities in the southeast part of the Waimakariri District north of Christchurch were significant. Elsewhere in the District the seen and unseen damage was widespread. From the day after the first event and over the following several years a significant and sustained recovery effort was mounted.

That became protracted and much more significant following the red zoning decisions that followed the 22 February 2011 Christchurch Earthquake. Recovery transitioned into ‘Regeneration’ in response to land damage that led to the loss of close to a quarter of Kaiapoi-The Pines-Kairaki overall housing stock and substantial business sector disruption. How then to utilise around 100 hectares of land previously in residential use became the question.

It is important to note that regardless of the scale of the event the all hazards-all risks 4Rs mandate upon local authorities under the Act including for recovery and business continuance

continues to apply to the maximum practical extent regardless of what larger scale recovery governance is implemented. The challenge then becomes how best to discharge those local responsibilities in the best possible way working alongside other entities.

That this challenge was taken up willingly through a community centred recovery approach by the Council and its management has been extensively appraised, (*Vallance 2013¹⁸¹, Gopinath and Vallance, 2018¹⁸², Gopinath, 2019¹⁸³, Min Gu Jun, 2019¹⁸⁴, Vallance et al, 2019¹⁸⁵, Cartagena, 2019¹⁸⁶*). This leveraged a range of pre-event factors including a distributed leadership approach to and relationship between the community and Council and its management that was conducive to trust building and engagement. This more than any specific pre-event recovery readiness contributed to that positive relationship. Indeed pre-event recovery readiness was largely non-existent, although the Council was well organised and practiced in emergency response.

The model upon which the recovery was based drew initially on that contained in the Guidelines as in Figure 12. The 'four sector environment group approach – built, natural, social, and economic were activated. The Council became a 'committee of the whole' for recovery decision-making purposes. But as shown below in Figure 22, a month in from the event, the sheer scale of consequences for the council organisation meant drawing on its full resources through a 'hybrid' recovery model¹⁸⁷.

In short the event was just too large in its impacts to mean a self-contained recovery effort separate from the 'ordinary' business structure and resources of the Council was going to be practical. It drew on all parts of the organisation and its existing external relationships and this approach, working from known strengths, proved effective over the following difficult years of recovery.

The extent of draw on Council resources due to scale of impacts and needed expertise located elsewhere in the organization was a feature also noted in the Whakatane District Council's Recovery Teams debrief from the 2017 Edgcombe floods recovery¹⁸⁸. This brings into focus the need early on to consider the relationship between recovery management and Council business functions and continuance in adjusting organisation structure to cope with the demands of a significant event recovery at a local level.

¹⁸¹ Suzanne Vallance, 2013 - Waimakariri District Council's Integrated, Community Based Recovery Framework, May 2013, MCDEM, Wellington.

¹⁸² Mithran Gopinath & Suzanne Vallance, 2018 - Waimakariri Way: Community Engagement in Kaiapoi Town Centre Plan, Lincoln Planning Review, 9(1-2) (2018) 3-8.

¹⁸³ Mithran Gopinath, 2019 - Waimakariri District Council – A Local Government Model for Community-Based Disaster Response, Recovery and Regeneration, Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Planning at Lincoln University.

¹⁸⁴ Min Gu Jun, 2019 - Increasing Resilience by Managing Trust: A case study of the Waimakariri District Council's participatory disaster risk and resilience approach, A Dissertation submitted for the Degree of Master of Disaster Risk and Resilience, Department of Geological Sciences, University of Canterbury.

¹⁸⁵ Vallance et.al., 2019 - Soft Infrastructure for Hard Times – Collaborative Planning for the (Re)build of Better Homes, Towns and Cities, BHTC National Science Challenge.

¹⁸⁶ Martin Garcia Cartagena, 2019 - Community Resilience Capital Framework – A Critical Assessment Based on a Waimakariri Case Study, Ph.D. Thesis, Massey University

¹⁸⁷ Additional structures, functions and processes shown italics and dashed boxes.

¹⁸⁸ Whakatāne District Recovery Project – Kia manawanui, 2018, Whakatāne District Recovery Debrief and Toolbox

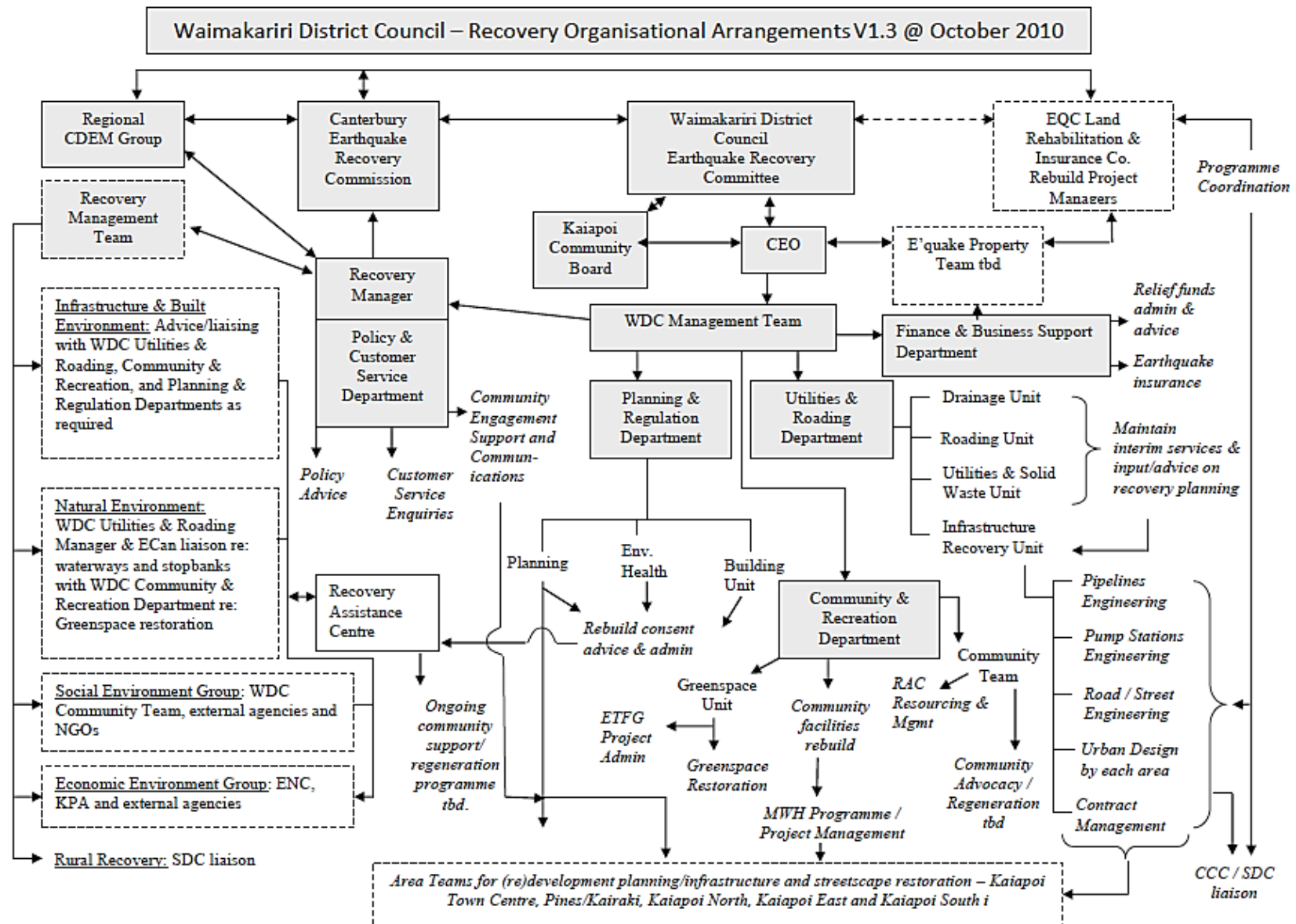


Figure 22: Waimakariri District Council – Recovery arrangements @ October 2010

Extensive community outreach through support services and engagement in recovery planning processes was a feature of the Council's approach. But it remained clear that those decisions that were within the scope of the Council to make would be made at the Council level, informed but not driven by community views. In the opinion of the writer this recovery can therefore be seen as being strongly community focused but not 'community-led'. That it 'worked' reflects pre-existing strengths.

A further feature of note for governance from this recovery is in relation to recovery continuum guidance included above as Figure 3. This depicts a phased approach that as suggested in Section 1.2 masks the reality that different sectors and communities within the affected area experience recovery at different rates and in varying ways. From an inclusivity and equity perspective it is that variation as much as the 'overall picture' that is important.

In this regard a particular challenge for this recovery was in dealing with extensive urban land release for alternative use due to the buyout programme. This extended the duration and complexity of the recovery over months and years for over 1,000 households as the most affected part of the community faced with relocation while in large measure other communities had 'moved on'¹⁸⁹. When significant relocation does figure in a recovery then the continuum for those involved becomes protracted and how that is governed and managed in its own right warrants particular attention.

Buyouts as a form of managed retreat gave rise to development of a land use recovery plan¹⁹⁰ to guide future land use in vacated areas that signalled a further stage 'beyond recovery' – that of 'regeneration' as a follow on phase. This prompted extensive and ongoing community participation as part of plan development and in the years following as the plan was realised. That this was in large measure devolved from the Council, could be judged to be far more community focused¹⁹¹ and also illustrative of adaptability and flexibility as an effective recovery governance attribute also identified above in Section 2.2.2.

4.3 Hurunui/Kaikōura Earthquakes, 2016

4.3.1 Overview of the Disaster Event

On the 14th of November 2016, a magnitude 7.8 earthquake struck in the North Canterbury area of Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ), leading to two fatalities, nearly 600 reported injuries, and an estimated economic loss of between NZ\$4 to \$5 billion. In Wellington, approximately 300 kilometres from the epicentre, the quake triggered a tsunami warning and severely damaged several high-profile buildings¹⁹².

The earthquake involved the rupture of at least 21 faults across a span of approximately 180 km. It is estimated that close to a million cubic metres of rock and material fell onto the coastal transport corridor. This coupled with faulting, buckling, landslides, and damage to tunnels and

¹⁸⁹ Markham, Simon, 2014, *Kaiapoi and the 2010-11 Earthquakes – A Case Study of Planned Retreat*, 7th Australasian Natural Hazards Management Conference, Wellington 24 September 2014.

¹⁹⁰ https://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0025/139354/DPMCWRRZRecoveryPlanWeb.pdf

¹⁹¹ https://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0030/31998/Participation-Strategy-Final-Version-March-2017.pdf

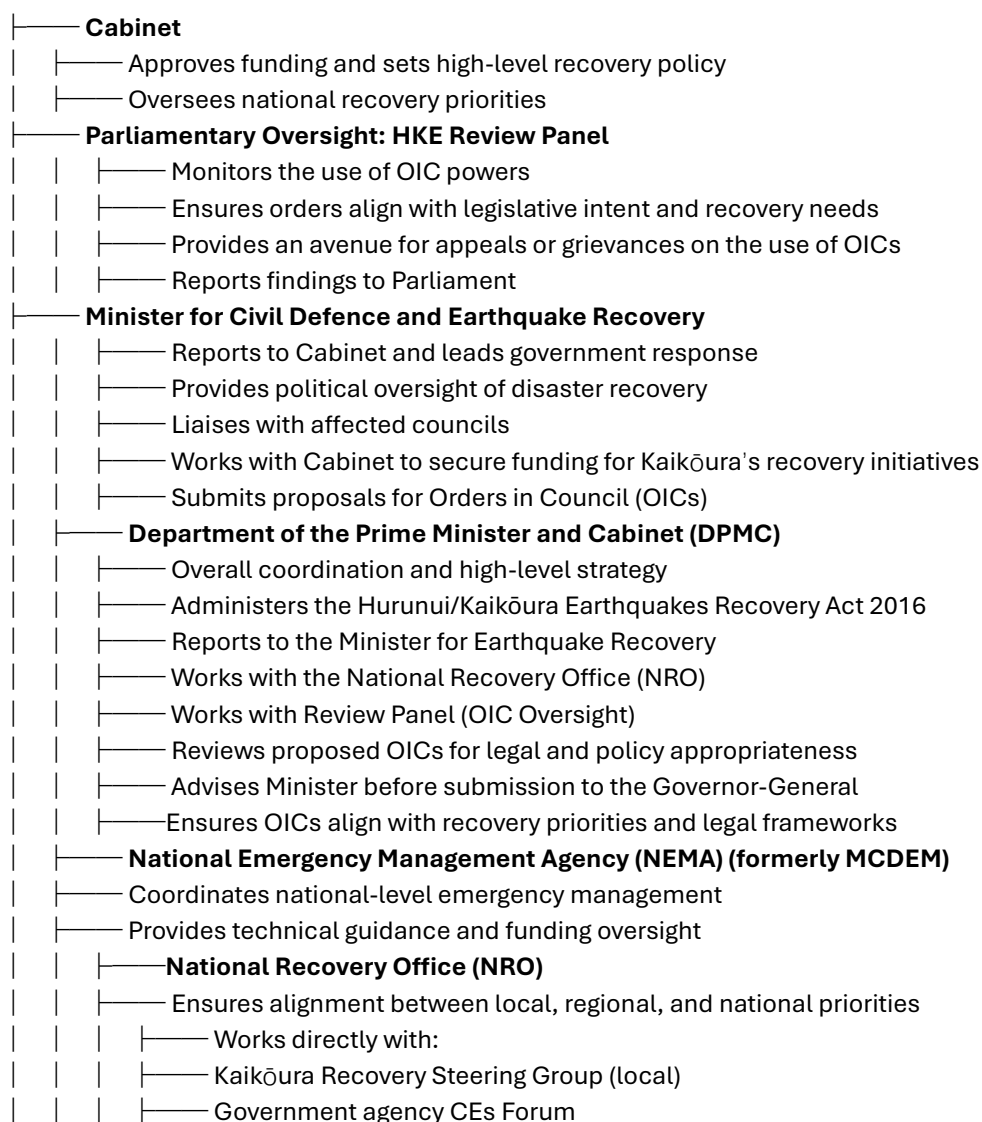
¹⁹² Vinnell, Lauren J, Taciano L. Milfont, John McClure, 2019, *The impact of the Kaikōura earthquake on risk-related behaviour, perceptions, and social norm messages*, Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies Volume 23, Number 2.

bridges meant all roads and the rail network in and out of the area were damaged and closed by the slips and Kaikōura and the surrounding rural communities were isolated. A year, a month, and a day after the earthquake, State Highway 1 opened¹⁹³.

4.3.2 Overview of Governance and Management Arrangements

Figure 23 below as for CES is an AI-assisted compilation of the governance and management arrangements for the HKE recovery drawn from a wide range of sources¹⁹⁴ and through interviews. While considerably less in breadth and depth than for the CES, it is nevertheless extensive and indicative of the scale of institutional elements and efforts to resource, plan and deliver this localised but significant recovery, reaching across levels of government, with the private sector and the community.

Figure 23: Kaikōura Recovery Governance and Management Arrangements



¹⁹³ Fountain, Joanna and Nicholas A. Cradock-Henry, 2023, We're all in this together? Community Resilience and recovery in Kaikōura following the 2016 Kaikōura-Hurunui earthquake, *New Zealand Journal of Geology and Geophysics*, 2023, vol. 66, no. 2, 162–176.

¹⁹⁴ This includes relevant legislation, an extensive record of the recovery on the NEMA website, <https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/resources/november-2016-earthquake-recovery>, Council publications and research papers and reports, validated with interviewees accounts.

- North Canterbury Transport Infrastructure Recovery (NCTIR) Alliance
 - Local councils (Kaikōura, Hurunui, Marlborough)
 - Iwi representatives (Ngāi Tahu, Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura)
 - Reports directly to DPMC and Cabinet
 - **Various Government Agencies** (MBIE, NZTA, MPI, etc.)
 - Provide funding, policy, and technical support
 - Work with NCTIR for infrastructure recovery
 - Collaborate with regional councils for local implementation
 - **Governance & Coordination**
 - **Transport Corridor Oversight Group**
 - Oversees restoration of key transport links (roads and rail)
 - Includes representatives from:
 - Ministry of Transport
 - Treasury
 - National Recovery Manager
 - Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency (NZTA)
 - Works with NCTIR to repair transport infrastructure in Kaikōura
 - Funds road and bridge reconstruction projects
 - KiwiRail
 - Leads repairs to the Main North Rail Line in Kaikōura District
 - Works with NCTIR and KDC on rail resilience projects
 - **North Canterbury Transport Infrastructure Recovery (NCTIR) Alliance**
 - Key infrastructure recovery alliance (NZTA, KiwiRail, contractors)
 - Reports to Central Government agencies (MBIE, NZTA)
 - Oversees restoration of State Highway 1 and the Main North Railway
 - Includes major contractors (Downer, Fulton Hogan, HEB Construction, Higgins)
 - Works closely with local authorities (Kaikōura District Council, etc.)
 - **Kaikōura Earthquake Recovery Steering Group (cross-agency coordination)**
 - Independent Chair
 - Kaikōura District Council Mayor and Deputy Mayor
 - Includes representatives from NEMA (MCDEM) and DIA
 - Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura representatives
 - Regional and Appointed Officials support
 - Focuses on local rebuilding efforts and funding alignment
 - Seeking Māori perspectives and needs integrated into recovery plans
 - Provide oversight and align recovery projects
 - **Kaikōura District Council (KDC)**
 - Local government leadership
 - Works with central government agencies on funding & planning
 - Works with Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura on local recovery efforts
 - Collaborates with community groups and local businesses
 - **Kaikōura District Council Recovery Team**
 - local recovery initiatives, ensuring community needs and priorities are addressed.
 - coordinates and supports social and economic recovery forums and activities
 - Implement recovery projects and initiatives
 - Liaises with property owners, community stakeholders and businesses
 - Work with the Steering Group to prioritize projects
 - **Kaikoura Infrastructure Steering Group**
 - Focuses on local-level infrastructure restoration
 - Engages with communities on flood and earthquake resilience
 - Chairperson and Project Director from KDC

- | | | | — DPMC and NZTA representatives
- | | — **Kaikōura Harbour Restoration Steering Group**
- | | | | — Led by Kaikōura District Council Chief Executive
- | | | | — Works with the National Recovery Office on restoring the harbour
- | | | | — Focuses on marine and economic recovery related to fisheries and tourism
- | | — **Restoration Liaison Group (RLG) (Environmental & Cultural Oversight)**
- | | | | — Provides guidance on ecological, environmental, and cultural restoration
- | | | | — Includes:
 - | | | | | | — Department of Conservation (DOC)
 - | | | | | | — Kaikōura, Hurunui, and Marlborough District Councils
 - | | | | | | — Iwi representatives (Ngāi Tahu, Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura)
 - | | | | | | — NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) and KiwiRail
 - | | | | | | — Fisheries and marine conservation groups
 - | | | | | | — National Recovery Office representatives
- | | — **Canterbury Regional & Marlborough District Councils**
- | | | | — Environmental and regional land-use coordination
- | | | | — Work with KDC and NCTIR for recovery projects
- | | — **Regional Recovery Steering Group**
- | | | | — Includes representatives from all affected districts
- | | | | — Ensures coordinated recovery efforts across Hurunui, Marlborough, and Kaikōura
- | | | | — Aligns local recovery plans with national strategy
- | | — **National Social Recovery Coordination Group**
- | | | | — Led by the National Welfare Manager in MCDEM
- | | | | — Coordinates social recovery initiatives across affected areas
- | | | | — Ensures support for mental health, housing, and community services
- | | — **Housing and Social Support Coordination Group**
- | | | | — Works with MSD and Kāinga Ora on emergency and long-term housing
- | | | | — Supports vulnerable populations with housing and welfare needs
- | — **Iwi & Māori Representation**
- | | — Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura
 - | | | | — Represents local Māori in decision-making
 - | | | | — Works with KDC & Central Government on Māori recovery needs
 - | | | | — Engages with tourism, marine, and land-based recovery projects
- | | — Ngāi Tahu
 - | | | | — Regional Māori governance body
 - | | | | — Supports Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura in cultural and economic recovery
 - | | | | — Engages in business recovery, employment, and environmental management
- | — **Economic & Business Recovery**
- | | — Tourism Industry Recovery Taskforce
 - | | | | — Works with MBIE and local businesses to revitalize Kaikōura's tourism industry
 - | | | | — Focuses on marketing and funding for tourism operators
- | | — Kaikōura Business Support Groups
 - | | | | — Support small businesses affected by the earthquake
 - | | | | — Work with KDC and MBIE on financial aid and grants
- | | — Primary Industry Recovery Coordination
 - | | | | — Works with MPI to support Kaikōura's fishing and agricultural businesses
 - | | | | — Facilitates funding and resources for local landowners
- | — **Community & Business Groups**
- | | — Local Businesses & Tourism Industry
 - | | | | — Key stakeholders in economic recovery
 - | | | | — Work with KDC, NCTIR, and Central Government for business support

- | |—— Local Community Recovery Groups
- | | |—— Grassroots groups supporting residents
- | | |—— Work with KDC, Iwi, and Central Government for housing & social recovery
- | | |—— Advocate for local needs in the governance process

4.3.3 Kaikōura Recovery Structure – Direction and Collaboration

Notable features of these arrangements include:

Governing bespoke legislation - By the time of the Hurunui/Kaikōura Earthquakes (HKE) the legislative override provisions customised for the CES through the CER Act had expired when that Act was repealed and replaced in April 2016 with the Greater Christchurch Regeneration Act 2016¹⁹⁵. To address restoration and reconstruction authorisations arising from the HKE impacts, similar override provisions were required. Comparable enabling legislation was enacted as the Hurunui/Kaikōura Earthquakes Recovery Act 2016 applicable to all affected areas and Councils¹⁹⁶.

Orders in Council as recommended by the Minister responsible for Earthquake Recovery were under the new Act similar to CES subject to scrutiny by an independent Review Panel with some accountability in the process to Parliament as a check on Executive overreach. Administration of that process occurred through DPMC separate from the national recovery agency¹⁹⁷ that under the 2016 amended CDEM Act was authorised to operationally lead recovery at a national level. In so doing they reported to the Minister of both Civil Defence and Earthquake Recovery who had wide-ranging powers to lead and coordinate recovery across Government at Cabinet level.

Recovery within the CDEM Framework - The distribution and nature of HKE impacts were such¹⁹⁸, that most Councils/CDEM Groups were in a position to lead localised recoveries with external support. But it became apparent early on that Kaikōura District Council would require extensive assistance given the intensity of impacts experienced in the Kaikōura District and the limited capacities of this small rural Council.

The National Recovery Office, as part of MCDEM, was accordingly activated for a fixed term in December 2016, supported by recent amendments to the CDEM Act that enhanced the role of the National Recovery Manager (NRM) by placing it in legislation. The amendments also gave the ability to give notice of recovery transition periods which provide for a limited suite of extraordinary powers. The HKE event provided the first test of those new arrangements.

A NRM was appointed for an initial one year term and tasked with coordinating and supporting central and local government recovery activities. As envisaged by the Act, affected local authorities established local arrangements for recovery, including Local Recovery Managers, and

¹⁹⁵ This new Act mainly dealt with functions, powers, and processes relating to Regeneration of greater Christchurch as the phase 'beyond recovery' as well as transitional issues.

¹⁹⁶ Additional bespoke legislation, the Hurunui/Kaikōura Earthquakes Emergency Relief Act 2016 (administered by the Ministry for the Environment) was also passed in December 2016 to streamline resource consenting for specified works.

¹⁹⁷ Then the Ministry of CDEM later in 2019 to transition to NEMA.

¹⁹⁸ With exceptional circumstances of the need to rebuild the Coastal Transport Corridor aside that warranted distinct arrangements.

recovery plans that identify goals, priorities, and actions to support their delivery of recovery at the local level.

Central government provided support included financial assistance either through existing policies or Cabinet decisions. This assisted local authorities to lead and coordinate community recovery across the four environments and support local structures to deliver recovery, consistent with the CDEM framework. In the case of Kaikoura the Canterbury CDEM Group provided support while from within the region experienced recovery leadership filled key roles that helped enable the District Council's business continuance and recovery¹⁹⁹.

NCTIR's collaborative governance of a major infrastructure recovery project- The extent of coastal transport corridor damage led to a Cabinet decision in December 2016 to rebuild and improve State Highway 1 and the main rail trunk line along their current coastal route, with improvements to the safety and resilience of the route, at an estimated cost in the range of \$1.4 billion to \$2.0 billion. This became a distinct major recovery project in its own right within the orbit of a senior officials Oversight Group on behalf of Ministers. It was delivered by the North Canterbury Transport Infrastructure Recovery (NCTIR) Alliance.

NCTIR became one of the most significant and successful collaboratively governed and executed recovery projects arising from the HKE. As a major public private joint venture with its own governance and management structure, it drew on the experience of SCIRT in the CES that undertook major horizontal infrastructure rebuild. Its approach and performance has been extensively documented and recognised with a significant 'lessons learnt' review of it undertaken²⁰⁰.

Among key learning themes from NCTIR both documented and spoken of by interviewees was the strong team culture built and sustained for the duration of the project, based on strong outcome-focused leadership and collaborative governance arrangements. Beyond the availability of 'the right people at the right time' to lead and manage projects of this nature, is the challenge of incorporating the effective recovery governance attributes exhibited by NCTIR (and its forerunner, SCIRT) into recovery guidance and practice. This includes when and how to use (and when not to use) alliancing, at what scale of project complexity, and how to activate it rapidly. Also what do these lessons suggest for the transferability of this approach to non-infrastructure sector components of recoveries.

Other Collaborations - Figure 23 illustrates a wide range of other collaborative forums and groups that 'emerged' or were developed at regional and local level, led by the KDC, and/or enabled by the NRO. Principal among them was the Kaikoura Earthquake Recovery Steering Group (KRSG) as a collaboration to support the Council in its governance of local recovery.

KRSG was directed at achieving vertical, central – local, as well as horizontal, across community, integration in recovery planning and authorising of its delivery. Chaired independently, advisory

¹⁹⁹ A feature of this was the engagement of several senior local authority leaders who had recent CES recovery experience in key advisory roles. This ability to draw on the CDEM network is strong feature of Response but as yet a much less developed aspect of Recovery.

²⁰⁰ NZ Government, 2021, *Moving Mountains to Reconnect Communities*, the story of the restoration and improvement Of Kaikōura's transport networks; NZ Government, 2021, *Legacy Capture and Lessons Learnt Full Report*, North Canterbury Transport Infrastructure Recovery (NCTIR) Alliance Project; . Wotherspoon Liam., et. al., 2018, *Data and decision making in the transport system following the Kaikōura earthquake: Final Report*, A Resilience to Nature's Challenges project.

to the Council it also functioned through monitoring and reporting as a mechanism for probity oversight of Government funding support.

It was established as a temporary body, intended to operate during the critical phases of the recovery process. Its duration was aligned with the time required to achieve key recovery milestones. KRSG provided strategic oversight, facilitated collaboration, and guided resource allocation. As a mechanism to achieve vertical alignment benefits between levels of government and with others, the role, composition, mode of operating and activation arrangements for bodies such as KRSG warrants inclusion and development within recovery guidance.

Other collaborations of note include:

- NRM facilitation of across government participation and alignment through a regular Chief Executives' Forum and periodic All-of-Government meetings.
- Prompted by the significant transport corridor and natural environment recovery challenges, the Restoration Liaison Group (RLG) providing, with mana whenua participation, environmental & cultural oversight.
- The Regional Recovery Steering Group as a means of coordinating recovery efforts across Hurunui, Marlborough, and Kaikōura Districts.
- The range and number of other sector environment specific collaborations, several of which connect central and local recovery activities, and others connecting local groups and organisations.
- Such collaborations exist within sector environment groupings and also as project based initiatives. Experience suggests the need for these in all likelihood is reasonably foreseeable for credible event scenarios and so this is amenable to pre-event recovery preparedness.

The Kaikōura District Council Recovery Team – Was established and scaled up to lead delivery of and support local recovery initiatives by others. This was off the back of little pre-event recovery preparedness and the highly constrained resource profile of the Council. Engaging a credible local recovery manager with relevant leadership experience proved to be a key element in generally well regarded delivery by the Council's Recovery Team.

Figure 24 illustrates its initial structure integrated with the business as usual structure of the Council. An expanded version of this a month further on indicates a significant expansion of economic recovery collaborations for almost a dozen individual sectors of the economy. The KDC recovery programmes worked alongside and through touch points with the NCTIR coastal transport corridor project.

Kaikōura District Council

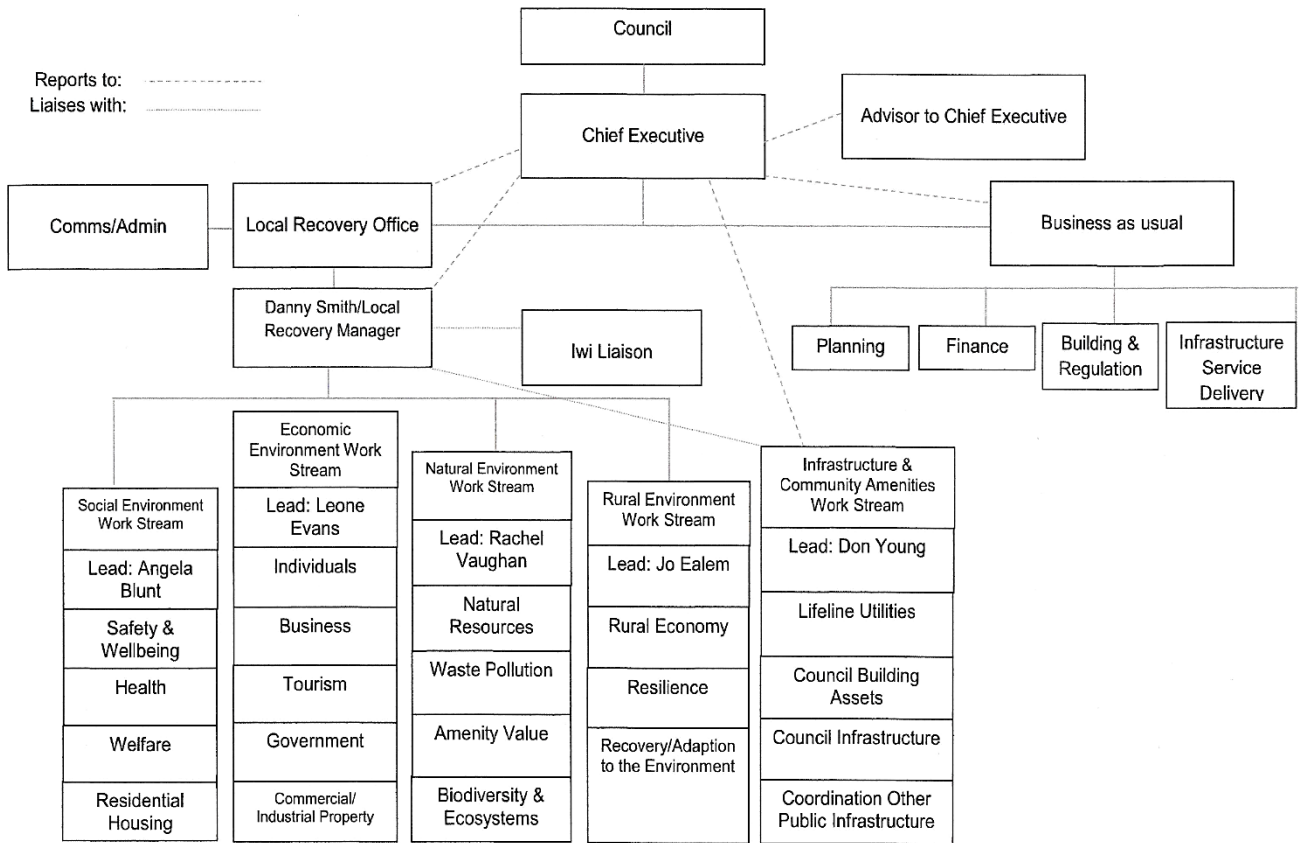


Figure 24: Kaikōura Recovery Team – Initial Scope and Structure

The Kaikōura Recovery Team worked with the community to develop the Recovery Plan ‘*Re-imagine Kaikōura*’. A community survey generated nearly 3,000 ideas, condensed into 34 themes that were workshoped and developed to form the plan.

Other Impacted Area Arrangements - Impacts of the HKE prompted significant recovery activation by the respective Councils for three other affected areas - Hurunui and Marlborough Districts and Wellington City. While not examined in any detail here, Figure 25 provides a ‘generic’ overview of these, indicating parallel recovery efforts were mounted, each within the governance umbrella and surged CDEM recovery capacities of respective Councils with support through the NRO.

Figure 25: Other Councils – High Level Overview of Recovery Governance Structure

Hurunui District:

Central Government

- **Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC)**
 - | — Administers the Hurunui/Kaikōura Earthquakes Recovery Act 2016
 - | — Provides strategic oversight and policy guidance
- **National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)**
 - | — Coordinates national-level emergency management
 - | — Supports local recovery initiatives

- └─ Collaborates with:
 - └─ **Hurunui District Council**
 - └─ Leads local recovery planning and implementation
 - └─ Engages with community stakeholders
 - └─ Reports progress to NEMA and DPMC
 - └─ **Regional Recovery Steering Group**
 - └─ Comprises representatives from affected districts
 - └─ Ensures coordinated recovery efforts across regions
 - └─ Aligns local plans with national strategies

Marlborough District:

Central Government

└─ **Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC)**

- └─ Administers recovery legislation
- └─ Provides policy direction and funding

└─ **National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)**

- └─ Offers guidance on emergency management
- └─ Supports regional recovery operations

└─ Collaborates with:

└─ **Marlborough District Council**

- └─ Develops and implements the Marlborough Earthquake Recovery Plan
- └─ Coordinates with local businesses and communities
- └─ Reports recovery progress to NEMA and DPMC

└─ **Regional Recovery Steering Group**

- └─ Includes members from Marlborough and neighbouring districts
- └─ Facilitates resource sharing and strategic alignment
- └─ Monitors implementation of recovery initiatives

Wellington City:

Central Government

└─ **Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC)**

- └─ Oversees national recovery policies
- └─ Coordinates inter-agency collaboration

└─ **National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)**

- └─ Provides emergency management expertise
- └─ Supports urban recovery efforts

└─ Collaborates with:

└─ **Wellington City Council**

- └─ Leads local response and recovery operations
- └─ Engages with urban communities and businesses
- └─ Reports to NEMA and DPMC on recovery status

└─ **Wellington Region Emergency Management Office (WREMO)**

- └─ Coordinates emergency management across the Wellington region
- └─ Supports local councils in planning and response
- └─ Ensures consistency in recovery approaches

The HKE had a significant impact on mid-rise buildings, particularly in Wellington’s CBD and the Hutt Valley. This gave rise to extensive building assessments, several notable demolitions and many building strengthening and renovation projects. A high level of collaboration between the City Council and Government to manage the consequences of this was required.

4.3.4 HKE Recovery Reviews

Published HKE accounts and reviews have mainly focused on community recovery and resilience rather than how the recovery was governed and managed at a systems level, (*Fountain and Cradock-Henry, 2023*²⁰¹, *Fountain, Cradock-Henry, and Buelow, 2019*²⁰²). These authors also examined in the aftermath the development of resilience initiatives outside of formal recovery and ongoing governance structures²⁰³.

A substantial thesis inquiry by *Rudkevitch, 2022*²⁰⁴ examined the role of ‘collectives’, comprising community-based organisations or less formal social networks with a shared purpose. This was further explored by *Rudkevitch, Vallance and Stewart, 2024*²⁰⁵.

*Nicol, 2018*²⁰⁶ explored the complex interplay between three parties to the Kaikōura recovery process: the existing local government in the district; central government agencies funding the recovery of the local residents and the national transport infrastructure; and recovery leaders arriving with recent expertise from the earlier Canterbury disaster.

This review noted that a number of people who had been involved in the Canterbury recovery provided assistance, knowledge, and expertise to Kaikōura locals, and to the KDC in particular. They came from a variety of agencies including local and national government, national roading, and social services. Many had pre-existing relationships amongst themselves as a result of five years of close involvement in the Canterbury recovery.

Until this recovery, such transfer of knowledge and expertise directly acquired from recovery experiences has been rare for natural disasters in New Zealand. But the temporal and spatial proximity of the CES and HKE events influenced the expertise of the governance group and its response to the recovery process.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with thirteen people from among local and central government, community leaders and independents who had been involved in the recovery in its first year. Nicol noted that the Kaikōura recovery was locally led with assistance from expert leaders and concluded: *this approach to recovery utilised local council and community leaders to lead a ground-up recovery centred strongly in the community, with the government taking a secondary role.*

The community-centred recovery approach emphasised collaboration, community consultation, locally-led recovery, and communication as key elements of the recovery effort. Such an approach to recovery is presently considered international best practice and appears to have

²⁰¹ Fountain, Joanna and Nicholas A. Cradock-Henry, 2023, We're all in this together? Community Resilience and recovery in Kaikōura following the 2016 Kaikōura-Hurunui earthquake, *New Zealand Journal of Geology and Geophysics*, 2023, vol. 66, no. 2, 162–176.

²⁰² Cradock-Henry Nicholas A, Franca Buelow and Joanna Fountain, 2019, *Social-ecological inventory in a post disaster context: the 2016 Kaikōura earthquake, Aotearoa-New Zealand*, *Ecology and Society* 24(3).

²⁰³ Cradock-Henry, Nicholas A, Joanna Fountain and Franca Buelow, 2018, *Transformations for Resilient Rural Futures: The Case of Kaikōura, Aotearoa-New Zealand*, *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 1952.

²⁰⁴ Rudkevitch, Ashley Marie, 2022, *Shaking ground and shifting collectives: Understanding community resilience in Kaikōura, Aotearoa New Zealand*, thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Lincoln University.

²⁰⁵ Rudkevitch, Ashley M., Suzanne A. Vallance and Emma J. Stewart, 2024, *Where's the community in community resilience? A post-earthquake study in Kaikōura, Aotearoa New Zealand*, *Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies* Volume 28, Number 1.

²⁰⁶ Nicol, Lily, 2018, *Balancing recovery governance with disasters in close proximity: the Kaikōura recovery*, A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Commerce in Management, University of Canterbury.

been effective, with most interviewees in this study recording contentment in the design and operation of the recovery.

The transfer of experts from the 2010-2011 earthquakes in Canterbury to the Kaikōura recovery was seen as a key aspect in the post-disaster recovery. Such input was critical for developing a recovery programme in which ‘mistakes’ were minimised, and knowledge was transferred effectively and efficiently into the recovery zone.

However, a reported downside of this was that the introduction of experts during the transference process can cause tension in the recovering community. As is often the case in other disasters, the role of experts in the Kaikōura recovery environment was a key point of discussion in governance debate.

The well recognised tension between a government-led recovery and a locally-led recovery was complicated by the addition of experts who typically have no prior connection to the community in recovery mode. It was suggested by *Nicol, 2018* these challenges are most likely to be overcome by establishing clear, strong, and collaborative communication pathways between stakeholders.

Apart from the consideration of lessons learned from the NCTIR experience noted in Section 4.3.3 above, the other available review report relevant to HKE recovery governance is that undertaken by *Smol, 2019*²⁰⁷. This examined how the newly legislated recovery provisions of the CDEM Act in 2016 supported the recoveries after the 2016 HKE event and the 2017 flooding in the Whakatāne District. That report’s consideration of the latter is introduced in Section 3.5 above.

Recovery governance observations and recommendations by the Reviewer based on survey responses, targeted interviews and documents review in Section 3.5 are applicable to both events. In summary, uncertainty, and lack of awareness of roles and responsibilities and how these may change as recovery progressed was a key observation. The lack of engagement with Iwi in recovery design from the outset proved especially contentious for the HKE recovery.

Collectively considering interviewee observations and recovery review documents that also drew on first hand perspectives, there are many positives for the effectiveness of arrangements put in place to govern the HKE recovery.

The National Recovery Office and Manager arrangements that continue to be available through the CDEM framework today were activated and proved effective in supporting local recovery leadership, collaborative working, and the flow of government assistance. The role of the Steering Group in achieving central-local integration and the involvement of recovery experienced expertise applied to government engagement and recovery programme design and alignment proved significant. As one reviewer noted this cannot be assumed for future recoveries - but poses the question: how can this resource with the right supportive approach be cached over time and become available to future recoveries?

²⁰⁷ Smol, David. 2019, *Review Of Recoveries*, A report to the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management, Rimu Road Consulting.

4.4 Buller Floods, 2021-22

4.4.1 Overview of the Disaster Event in Context

Westport's urban area sustained severe flooding from the Orowaiti and Buller Rivers between 15 and 18 July, 2021. Flooding covered ~ 3.8 km² and required over 2000 people to be evacuated. More than 800 properties were inundated with 455 residential buildings damaged. Residential building and contents insurance claims exceeded 1300, with insured losses up to NZD \$87.9 million²⁰⁸. Measurements showed a flow of 7,640 cubic metres per second in the Buller River during that event, the largest direct measurement river flow ever completed in New Zealand.

As the urban recovery was well underway in February and again in July 2022, severe weather events resulted in large scale infrastructure and land use damage in the wider District. Infrastructure restoration costs were equivalent to the value of insured losses in Westport itself.

The occurrence of severe events such as this in rapid succession with overlapping recoveries appears to be becoming increasingly common. The destructive impacts of these events had a correspondingly severe impact on the Buller District Council's (BDC's) financial position and their ability to manage the flood recovery.

Westport is highly vulnerable to flooding and had very limited flood protection in place, in part a reflection of its high level of socio-economic vulnerability and low rating base. The flooding of Westport prompted the Government at the time to inventory the extent across New Zealand of comparably vulnerable communities defined as communities in areas that have the bottom 10% of most socio-economic vulnerability with significant exposure to flood risk, finding a cohort of forty-four such communities²⁰⁹.

A further thirty-one vulnerable communities were removed from the scope of the study because either flood protection infrastructure was planned for the community or because in depth analysis of surface flooding in heavily urbanised locations was excluded from the scope of the inquiry. Comparable disaster events to the 2021 Buller floods are therefore more than likely.

4.4.2 Overview of Governance and Management Arrangements

Figure 26 overviews arrangements in the same format to other case studies, similarly drawing on a wide range of council and government documents, review articles, interviewees and media reports. In overview, collaborative arrangements spanned three main areas:

- *Funding & Resource Allocation* – A joint parties Steering Group was quickly formed to oversee distribution of government funds, providing regular funding reviews and accountability reports to Cabinet and DIA.
- *Strategic Planning & Implementation* – Also through the Steering Group to ensure alignment between government, iwi, and community priorities. The BDC Recovery Team led its own and supported others in delivery of localised recovery programmes.

²⁰⁸ Reported from a variety of sources in Paulik, Ryan, Alec Wild, Conrad Zorn, Liam Wotherspoon, and Shaun Williams, 2024, *Evaluation of residential building damage for the July 2021 flood in Westport, New Zealand*, *Geoscience Letters* (2024) 11:15.

²⁰⁹ Te Tari Taiwhenua Internal Affairs, 2022, *Report: Vulnerable Communities Exposed to Flood Hazard*.

- *Community & Iwi Engagement* - Regular public forums and consultations acted as feedback mechanisms for community needs, while Iwi engagement sought to ensure cultural and environmental considerations were integrated.

The BDC was the recipient of significant NEMA and DIA engagement and support in both response and recovery. This event was confined to one district and the immediate challenge for a small relatively isolated rural community and council was significant. It did not however appear to meet the threshold for the appointment of a National Recovery Manager to take a leadership role in recovery coordination as was the case in Kaikōura.

Rather, intensive support to the BDC through these agencies was provided, in connecting with other government agencies for assistance, and in seeking Cabinet approvals for additional finance. Interviewees found this multi-stranded engagement demanding, reflective of the fragmented arrangements at national level for disaster assistance²¹⁰.

Figure 26: Buller Recovery Governance and Management Arrangements

Central Government



²¹⁰ This need for clarity and consistency in criteria and streamlining of funding support arrangements was a significant finding of the NISWE Ministerial Inquiry in its *Report of the Government Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events*, March 2024 Department of Internal Affairs.

- |—— Buller District Council for local implementation
- |—— DIA and Cabinet for funding oversight and policy direction
- |—— **Buller District Council Recovery Team (Local Implementation)**
- | |—— Implements recovery projects and initiatives
- | |—— Engages with community stakeholders and businesses
- | |—— Works with the Steering Group to prioritize projects
- |—— Reports to Buller District Council and Steering Group
- |—— **Iwi & Mana Whenua Collaboration**
- |—— Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Waewae
- | |—— Works with BDC and WCRC on iwi engagement in recovery
- | |—— Advises on cultural values, Māori housing, and land use
- |—— Māori Business and Community Groups
- | |—— Involved in economic and social recovery efforts
- | |—— Ensure Māori businesses and households receive adequate support
- |—— **Community & Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)**
- |—— Local NGOs & Volunteer Groups
- | |—— Provide direct support to affected residents
- | |—— Operate community hubs and navigator services |
- |—— Business & Economic Recovery Networks
- | |—— Local businesses and industry groups
- | |—— Work with BDC and Steering Group on economic recovery
- |—— **Infrastructure Recovery (Regional & National Coordination)**
- |—— Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency (NZTA)
- | |—— Leads the repair of damaged transport infrastructure
- | |—— Works with BDC and WCRC to prioritize road and bridge restoration
- |—— West Coast Regional Council (WCRC)
- | |—— Oversees regional land use and environmental recovery efforts
- | |—— Works with central government on flood resilience projects
- |—— Buller District Council Infrastructure Team
- | |—— Focuses on local-level infrastructure restoration
- | |—— Engages with communities on resilience-building initiatives
- |—— **Social & Community Recovery Structures**
- |—— Buller Community Recovery Navigator Service
- | |—— Provides one-on-one support to flood-affected residents
- | |—— Assists with accessing grants, insurance, and welfare services
- |—— Housing and Social Support Coordination Group
- | |—— Works with MSD and Kāinga Ora on emergency and long-term housing
- | |—— Supports vulnerable populations with housing and welfare needs
- |—— Public Health & Wellbeing Recovery Initiatives
- | |—— Led by local health agencies and DHBs
- | |—— Focus on mental health and community wellbeing post-floods

Establishment of the *Buller Recovery Steering Group* in September 2021 is the key collaborative governance arrangement of note from this recovery, five years on from the Kaikōura Recovery Steering Group. BDC received an initial funding allocation under CDEM National Plan provisions to initiate recovery but advised Government it was in a severe financial situation and would exhaust its available funds within a month of the July 2021 event. Cabinet provided additional significant assistance to enable the Council to meet its immediate operating shortfalls and start a recovery programme of works.

Driven by the extent of funding support required to enable BDC to stand up and lead a recovery, NEMA and DIA established in consultation with the Council the Buller Recovery Steering Group to oversee and monitor the Council's use of available funding²¹¹. In its initial form the BRSG may be seen as a further iteration of the KRSG as a collaborative governance group established for the Kaikōura recovery.

The purpose of the Steering Group was to:

- a. provide effective guidance and oversight of the \$8 million Financial Assistance appropriated by Cabinet in August 2021 to support the Buller Recovery.*
- b. identify and agree mid- to long-term recovery activities and the necessary funding that may be required in the district, and*
- c. provide advice to the Crown and elected Councils' members on relevant matters (as set out in the Steering Group Terms of Reference and the Funding Agreement that has been developed between the Crown and the Council.*

Chaired independently, the BRSG's initial oversight focus on funding support was informed by a financial health check²¹² of the Council that provided a baseline assessment of resourcing and capability to manage the recovery going forward.

The BRSG was authorised to operate until December 2021 and then be subject to review. That review considered the increasing shift occurring from response and immediate recovery to longer term flood resilience for the Buller district and the impact this might have on membership. Although the Group continued to need to provide assurance to Ministers for the remaining allocation of the \$8 million appropriation as well as advice on future funding assistance.

In February 2022 amended TOR were agreed to direct the Group to identify and recommend longer term flood recovery priorities for the District including options to increase resilience to future events²¹³. Local/regional members of the Group – BDC, the West Coast Regional Council and Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Waewae on request of the Government were in early 2022 asked by and delivered to the Minister of Local Government in June that year a co-investment proposal for Westport's resilience²¹⁴.

This sought substantial funding of \$45M towards this purpose. In January 2023, the Buller Flood Recovery initiative transitioned to the Resilient Westport program, reflecting the shift from immediate recovery to long-term resilience planning and infrastructure development. Through Budget 2023, the Government set aside \$22.9 million for a number of flood resilience initiatives.

The BRSG became the Resilient Westport Steering Group with continuity of membership appointed by Ministers to maintain oversight and synchronisation of the various packages of work that will be delivered by the respective Councils from funding agreed in the Budget.

²¹¹ Offices of the Minister for Emergency Management, Local Government and Housing, 2021, *Update on the Buller District Council's use of funding for flooding recovery efforts*, Cabinet Paper, CAB-21-SUB-0065.

²¹² Morrison Low, 2021, *Buller District Council Health Check Report*, Department of Internal Affairs.

²¹³ Extraordinary Council Meeting Agenda, 23.02.22, West Coast Regional Council .

²¹⁴ Buller District Council, West Coast Regional Council and Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Waewae, 2022, *Co-Investment in Westport's Resilience*, Proposal to Hon Nanaia Mahuta, Minister of Local Government.

The evolution of these arrangements mirrored the progress from recovery funding to resilience planning. A further, in progress iteration, is a master planning exercise looking at options for long term relocation of urban development away from at risk locations, notwithstanding improved flood protection for Westport as an interim measure²¹⁵.

The nature and extent of this collaboration, now in its 5th year, continuity in membership and the transition within this framework from recovery to risk reduction is notable. This, despite interviewee expressed frustrations over the level of funding complexity and scrutiny, parties' responsiveness, and the overall pace of progression.

It poses the question of how in the future, might initial disaster event generated recovery arrangements founded in such collaborations be initiated, supported, and stewarded. This is worthy of further inquiry given the growing probable frequency of disaster triggered risk reduction/adaptation follow-ons and how this might together with recovery be dealt with through a more holistic and enduring approach to risk governance and to risk financing.

4.5 North Island Severe Weather Events, 2023

4.5.1 Overview of the Disaster Event

In early 2023, a series of severe weather events (the Auckland Anniversary floods, ex-Cyclone Hale, and Cyclone Gabrielle) devastated parts of New Zealand's North Island. Gabrielle was a powerful and destructive tropical cyclone. It caused an estimated 1720 injuries, 11 deaths with an economic loss estimated to be up to NZ\$14.5 billion²¹⁶, of which NZ\$3.18 billion are insurance losses.

The description below mainly drawn from media reports, Councils' websites, and Wikipedia. It is somewhat more expansive than for other case studies to emphasise the wide distribution and varying intensities of impacts across the North Island, and hence the challenge posed for deciding and implementing recovery arrangements.

Firstly the arrangements put in place at a national level by Government to manage its own and connect with regional recovery efforts are outlined, and then the recovery frameworks for Hawke's Bay, Auckland and Northland are considered. Those for Tairāwhiti and the three adjoining Wairarapa District Councils, each of these falling within other CDEM Group are also briefly touched. These raise the question of boundary issues in deciding recovery arrangements.

Response and recovery in Waikato & Coromandel and Bay of Plenty regions for lesser impacts were handled through standard CDEM structures. Those for Tairāwhiti have distinct elements of bicultural context and approach, and deserve a level of case study attention beyond the resourcing available for this project.

Northland²¹⁷ - Widespread flooding forced evacuations in some communities (e.g. Ruawai, Dargaville), and parts of the region were temporarily isolated. Major roads closed (e.g. SH1 at the

²¹⁵ www.resilientwestport.co.nz

²¹⁶ Wilson Nick, Tim Chambers, Marnie Prickett, Adele Broadbent, John Kerr, 2023, Nick Wilson, Tim Chambers, Marnie Prickett, Adele Broadbent, John Kerr, *Water infrastructure failures from Cyclone Gabrielle show low resilience to climate change*, Public Health Communication Centre, Aotearoa.

²¹⁷ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/509128/cyclone-gabrielle-anniversary-looking-back-at-the-devastation-caused>

Brynderwyn Hills) due to slips. Many lost electricity, phones, and internet. The rail link to Whangārei was severed by a 60,000 m³ landslide (among ~50 slips), closing it for ~3 months. Farmland was inundated in low-lying areas. Significant coastal inundation and erosion occurred as a result of storm surges.

Impacts from the cyclone and severe weather meant that access was significantly restricted to the region due to damage to State Highway 1 between Auckland and Northland for a prolonged period of time, over 3,400 households filed insurance claims relating to building damage. The cost of rebuilding public infrastructure, including some basic resilience for the future, would total at least half a billion dollars²¹⁸.

Auckland - The West Auckland communities of Piha, Karekare, Waimauku and Muriwai were heavily affected. Four people died in the Auckland Anniversary Weekend floods of 27 January 2023 and two firefighters died after being caught in a landslide in Muriwai during Cyclone Gabrielle. 224 buildings were red stickered across the region, 323 were yellow stickered, meaning access is restricted, while 977 were white stickered, meaning minor damage only.²¹⁹ Prolonged road and rail disruptions and property damage curtailed business activity. Dozens of landslides scarred the region's hills, e.g. 16 slips in Karekare caused homes to collapse. Coastal erosion and sediment runoff occurred in vulnerable areas.

Waikato & Coromandel²²⁰ (Incl. Thames–Coromandel District) - Some communities were temporarily cut off – e.g. Port Waikato was completely isolated by flooding and slips. Residents in Thames and other low-lying areas were urged to evacuate as rivers rose. Extensive damage to the Coromandel Peninsula's roads: multiple large slips closed SH25 and other routes, isolating towns. This storm was the fifth to hit Coromandel that summer, further degrading already fragile roads. Repeated storm damage heavily affected businesses and tourism on the peninsula, as road closures cut off visitor access for extended periods. In rural Waikato, agricultural operations were disrupted by flooding and infrastructure damage.

Bay of Plenty - Precautionary evacuations took place in parts of the Eastern Bay of Plenty (Whakatāne and Ōpōtiki Districts) as rivers rose and a storm surge threatened coastal homes. Overall, BOP's infrastructure fared better than in harder-hit regions. Economic impacts were moderate. Agriculture and horticulture in BOP suffered some losses (e.g. localized crop and orchard flooding),

Tairāwhiti (Gisborne District) - 1 confirmed death. Thousands of residents were cut off by road failures. The cyclone caused extensive damage to the water supply pipe into Gisborne city, breaking it in ten places. It took 45 days to repair and reconnect the pipeline which meant water restrictions for the population of nearly 40,000 people. Extreme infrastructure damage. Only 9 homes were red-stickered (total loss) in Gisborne, but many more were flooded or otherwise damaged. At least 149 homes had yellow stickers (restricted use). State Highway 35 was severely ravaged – long stretches collapsed or washed out, and bridges (like the Hikuwai Bridge) were

²¹⁸ Trüdinger, Mark, 2024, *Recovery planning with communities at the heart*, The Australian Journal of Emergency Management, Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience.

²¹⁹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20230301112420/https://ourauckland.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/news/2023/03/flood-and-cyclone-damaged-building-assessments-have-almost-been-completed/>

²²⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyclone_Gabrielle

destroyed, cutting off towns on the East Cape. The regional economy suffered a heavy blow. Forestry and agriculture – critical to Gisborne – were devastated as floods carried forestry slash and sediment over farms, destroying crops and pastureland. The hill country experienced tens of thousands of landslides, contributing to the ~140,000 landslides mapped across affected areas.

Hawke's Bay - Hawke's Bay was among the hardest-hit regions, particularly during Cyclone Gabrielle in February 2023 and approximately 9,000 people were evacuated or rescued in Hawke's Bay during the cyclone's peak. The impacts across Hawke's Bay's communities were catastrophic – 8 lives were lost, thousands displaced, homes and infrastructure destroyed, and large swathes of productive land inundated with silt and debris. In total, at least 83 homes in the region were completely destroyed (red-tagged) and 991 left damaged (yellow-tagged). Agriculture and horticulture were hardest hit. Thousands of hectares of orchards, vineyards, cropping land and pasture were ruined. Initial estimates put the total cost of Gabrielle in Hawke's Bay at over NZ\$5 billion.

Napier City experienced significant flooding and at one point the urban area (70,000 population) was cut off by road as all access routes flooded or blocked. Napier recorded at least one fatality as floodwaters inundated parts of Napier's residential and commercial areas, but the city proper saw fewer homes lost than neighbouring districts (Four Napier homes were destroyed (red-stickered) and 118 had major damage (yellow-stickered)²²¹ Hundreds of hectares of cropland, orchards, and vineyards on the city's periphery were buried under thick silt and woody debris, ruining the 2023 harvest for many growers.

Hastings District (Heretaunga Plains and surrounding rural areas) was severely affected, with entire communities inundated and many emergency evacuations required. Tragically several of the cyclone-related deaths in Hawke's Bay occurred in the Hastings District's rural areas. The district suffered the greatest housing losses in Hawke's Bay, especially in rural floodplain communities. At least 94 homes were destroyed or rendered uninhabitable (red-stickered), and 682 homes had significant damage restricting use (yellow-stickered). Critical infrastructure was devastated including six major bridges destroyed. Thousands of hectares of orchards, vineyards, and farm paddocks were buried under thick layers of silt, sand, and forestry slash. Over 83 km² of landslide scars resulted in Hastings, mostly on steep pasture lands as widespread erosion washed huge volumes of soil downhill, often into rivers. Stopbanks largely protected its CBD from the level of flooding seen in Napier.

Central Hawke's Bay (CHB) saw widespread flooding. Initially about 632 homes in CHB were flooded to some degree during Cyclone Gabrielle, affecting several thousand residents²²², but only 1 home was red-stickered and 97 yellow-stickered. The district's roading network was hit hard. Over 100 roads in CHB were initially closed and at least 69 bridges and large culverts were destroyed. CHB's rural economy (sheep, beef, and some cropping/horticulture) was significantly affected. Hundreds of paddocks were covered in gravel, silt, and debris. Fences and farm tracks were washed away, and livestock losses were reported. The District's forestry sector was less prominent than further north, but slash from upstream did exacerbate damage in some waterways. Local businesses in Waipukurau and Waipawa suffered downturns due to water

²²¹ <https://www.1news.co.nz/2023/03/07/over-2100-properties-red-yellow-stickered-post-cyclone/>

²²² <https://www.chbdc.govt.nz/our-council/cyclone-gabrielle/>

shortages and the general disruption. An estimated 30 km² of land in Central Hawke's Bay was scarred by landslides and slip erosion from Gabrielle. The sediment from these slips, combined with forestry debris, smothered streams, and will affect soil productivity.

Wairoa - The northern Hawke's Bay town of Wairoa (pop ~8,300) was catastrophically flooded when the Wairoa River burst its banks. At the peak of Cyclone Gabrielle, 10–15% of the town's area was underwater – this low-lying area contained roughly half of Wairoa's population²²³. Wairoa became completely isolated for over a week with all roads into the district severed. With power and communications down, the town was essentially cut off from the outside world. Although the official rapid assessment count was relatively low (only 3 homes red-tagged destroyed and 151 yellow-tagged with major damage), those numbers belie the widespread inundation – many houses not formally “stickered” still had extensive flood damage to interiors and require full refurbishment. The infrastructure toll in Wairoa District was severe. Numerous local bridges were washed away or heavily damaged. The cyclone's impacts on land use were significant but somewhat different from Hastings/CHB. The Wairoa area borders the heavily forested Tairāwhiti/Gisborne region, and decades of forestry debris exacerbated damage. Wairoa still saw around 23 km² of land affected by slips.

Tararua District²²⁴ - Widespread destruction occurred across Tararua. Flooding and slips damaged numerous rural communities. Dozens of local roads were damaged or destroyed by washouts and landslides. State Highway 2 (connecting Tararua to Hawke's Bay) was closed for days due to a bridge failure. Pasture, fences, and farm infrastructure were swept away on many farms – recovery of the rural landscape could take 5–10 years by some estimates . Farmers incurred significant costs in lost stock, ruined crops, and clearing silt and debris. Roughly 20 km² of land in Tararua suffered landslides or severe soil loss from Gabrielle

Wairarapa²²⁵ - The *Masterton District* was hit by severe flooding and landslides, especially in eastern areas. Infrastructure damage included washed-out rural roads and bridges. A number of homes and farm buildings suffered flood or slip damage, especially in areas east of Masterton town. The district's economy, based on agriculture and some viticulture, sustained losses from flooded and eroded paddocks. the total land area impacted by slips in Masterton District was around 11 km.

Carterton District experienced similar impacts to Masterton – heavy rainfall caused flooding in low-lying rural areas and pockets of urban flooding in Carterton township. Floodwaters and slips damaged parts of Carterton's infrastructure. Portions of rural roads were washed out, and drainage networks were overwhelmed, requiring repairs. A few homes and farm structures sustained damage from inundation or nearby landslides. The economic impact in Carterton was relatively limited, reflecting the district's small size. Some farms and vineyards had flooding or fence damage, incurring cleanup costs. The district's forestry areas shed debris but saw far less destruction than those on the east coast.

²²³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyclone_Gabrielle

²²⁴ <https://www.tararua.govt.nz/services/emergency-management/cyclone-gabrielle/recovery>

²²⁵ <https://wairaraparecovery.nz/cyclone-gabrielle-two-years-on/>

South Wairarapa District - Coastal communities like Ngawi and towns like Martinborough saw flooding along rivers and in some coastal zones. South Wairarapa suffered infrastructure stresses from back-to-back storms. Sections of the Cape Palliser coastal road experienced slips and erosion. Some bridge approaches and rural roads were washed out by swollen streams, requiring temporary fixes. A few homes (especially older farmhouses on floodplains) were flooded. Key economic sectors – farming and viticulture (around Martinborough) – sustained some damage.

4.5.2 The Government’s Recovery Framework

NISWE led to only the third declared State of National Emergency under the Act. As the nature and extent of impacts became evident during the response phase it also became apparent early on that collective recovery arrangements for these multiple, concurrent, regionally, and locally significant events would require a national component. Socio-political context for what that might look like was important and several factors are of note:

- The first stage of reform to ‘status quo’ recovery settings for small to medium recoveries through the 2016 amendment to the Act had not fully taken effect until mid-2018 but the implementation of strategic planning for recovery provisions remained limited.
- Stage two to address status quo arrangements for large disasters did not appear to have progressed, perhaps overshadowed by the TAG Review seeking more fundamental ‘whole of emergency management sector’ reform.
- In 2018-19 MCDEM entered a process of change to become NEMA from 1 December 2019, ‘just in time’ for the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A process of reform to emergency management law that included ‘Trifecta’ engagement in early 2022 led to a replacement Bill appearing in 2023.
- By early 2023, in one sense New Zealand had only ‘just’ emerged for the public health led response to the COVID-19 pandemic that produced considerable controversy about the extent of ‘reach’ of Government into the lives of every New Zealander.
- In another sense controversy about the balance between central and local participation in the governance of the Canterbury Earthquake Sequence as a large national disaster recovery continued to reverberate. It was about this timer in the immediate aftermath of the NISWE that the writer first heard the phrase ‘ABC - anything but CERA’.
- In another context work on climate change adaptation leading to the mid-2022 release of the first National Adaptation Plan led to policy discussion of pre-and post-disaster settings for managing adaption that intersects with disaster recovery, including that for NISWE.
- Early on in the event it became apparent there were a variety of shortcomings in emergency management response arrangements that affected delivery in some regions more than others. This prompted a large number of agency, sector and eventually though Ministerial Inquiry²²⁶, system level reviews of the response phase.
- These did not for the most part address recovery issues and arrangements, ran in parallel with an unfolding recovery phase, and identified a wide range of response improvements. This heightened awareness of response to an extent deflected attention from recovery

²²⁶ Apart from the Ministerial Inquiry report published a little over a year on from the NISWE, the writer is aware of some 20+ response focused reviews by Councils, lifeline utilities, Government agencies and CDEM Groups and a review of the reviews by NEMA.

arrangements but triggered a government decision to commit to new legislation and the EMSIP initiative.

Into this context of protracted legislative reform, institutional change and contested settings for Government involvement in adverse events, NISWE posed new challenges by its very nature. It affected multiple regions and districts at different severity levels and spread of impacts that varied widely across intense urban to isolated rural communities and districts. This wide spread of impact and large distances between affected regions and areas spanning eight CDEM Groups triggered extensive and frequent Cabinet consideration for how to respond to recovery needs at a national level in a proportionate, responsive, and equitable manner.

As for that with the CES, critical to the framing of the Government's approach to recovery was early consideration by and advice to Cabinet and this section draws unless otherwise indicated largely on a series of Cabinet papers that confirmed that approach²²⁷. Understanding how the national framework came about is important when considering how regional frameworks evolved and responded to it.

Within a week of the Cyclone Gabrielle event subsiding, on 21 February 2023 the Prime Minister announced a new Cabinet Committee, the 'Extreme Weather Recovery Committee', (EWRC), to help coordinate the Central Government response and recovery from Cyclone Gabrielle. The PM appointed the then Minister of Finance to Chair that committee as Minister of Cyclone Recovery. The EWRC included portfolio leads and a series of regional ministerial leads who became members of the Committee, mandated to collaborate with councils and communities – in all 13 Cabinet Members were part of EWRC²²⁸.

On 27 February 2023 further arrangements at national level were confirmed noting *recovery will take strong and experienced coordination across all arms of government, working alongside local government, the business community, social service providers, iwi, and community groups*. A new Cyclone Recovery Taskforce was established to focus on supporting the economic and infrastructure recovery and provide a means for many relevant voices to be heard in the recovery and rebuild phases.

Its purpose was stated to *be to pull together and align the recovery efforts and ensure local voices and iwi have input into decision-making. It will provide an independent perspective to the Minister for Cyclone Recovery and to Cabinet on what is required for the recovery efforts and to improve resilience in the future. It will advise ministers on the priority needs for recovery and provide assurance on implementation of activities to meet those needs*.

In so doing it would act as an interface between the regional groups, iwi, ministers, and central government to ensure their needs are recognised and inform advice to and decision-making by

²²⁷ 2023-03-07 *Cyclone Gabrielle: Recovery Arrangements* (CAB-23-SUB-0056)
2023-03-23 *Supporting Regional and Local Recovery Structures* (EWR-23-SUB0022 refers);
2023-06-27 *Cyclone Recovery: Proposed Triage, Direction, and Analysis Process for Funding Proposals* (EWR-23-SUB-0049 refers)
2024-04-08 *North Island Weather Events Recovery Framework* (ECO-24-SUB- 0039 refers)
2024-05-20 *Regional Recovery Planning Process: Update and Next Steps* (EWR-23-SUB-0070 refers)
2024-07-09 *Results of Actions to Speed Up the Recovery from the North Island Weather Events: Report Back* (CAB-24-SUB-0246 refers)

²²⁸ https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/lead-ministers-local-cyclone-gabrielle-response?utm_source=chatgpt.com

ministers. To support the Taskforce and delivery of functions listed below, a new Chief Executive role, that of Chief Executive for Cyclone Recovery was also confirmed to provide:

- **leadership and coordination** of the Government's recovery work programme, including providing joined up advice to the Cyclone Recovery Minister and Ministerial Committee
- strategic oversight and coordination of a significant **policy work programme**, looking across locally led planning and cross agency work to ensure that advice to ministers is coherent and brought together in a way that supports decision-making
- support for locally led **engagement** with communities, iwi, business, local government, regional groups, and others.
- advice on system **risk and assurance** to provide ministers and decision-makers with regular assurance about delivery across what is likely to be a broad programme of work, and advice on emerging risks and mitigations.
- **ensuring alignment** of the recovery programme with wider policy decisions and work programmes relating to long-term resilience, climate change, and managed retreat.
- leading a unit to support these functions, communicate progress and provide a **secretariat** support for the Cyclone Recovery Taskforce, and other groups as required.

Figure 27 shows the extensive national recovery decision-making, advisory and cross-Government coordination framework arising from Cabinet decisions that was put in place within a month of the event and expected to last for two years. This sits alongside and separate from what has come to be termed 'status quo' recovery arrangements established through the CDEM Act. The main 'touchpoint' of the new Cyclone Recovery Unit (CRU) was with what were anticipated to be a series of regional and local recovery governance groups.

Cabinet in committing to a locally-led recovery noted *CDEM Groups are required by the CDEM Act to appoint a Group Recovery Manager, who then, by convention establishes a recovery office, and, a governance level recovery leadership group to assist with recovery coordination and oversight. Recovery leadership groups can include local government, central government, iwi, and business leaders.*

This 'convention' appears informed by the collaborative governance arrangements for Kaikoura and Buller recoveries with an implicit expectation that CDEM Groups/affected local Councils will identify and mandate a more recovery-focused governance support grouping that seeks vertical integration of arrangements across levels of Government. A report back in mid-March 2023 was directed on *ways to bolster regional recovery leadership groups to ensure that all partners are well represented, noting this is likely to be bespoke for each affected area.*

NOTE: alignment with the existing Recovery legislative framework under the CDEM Act is shown in blue

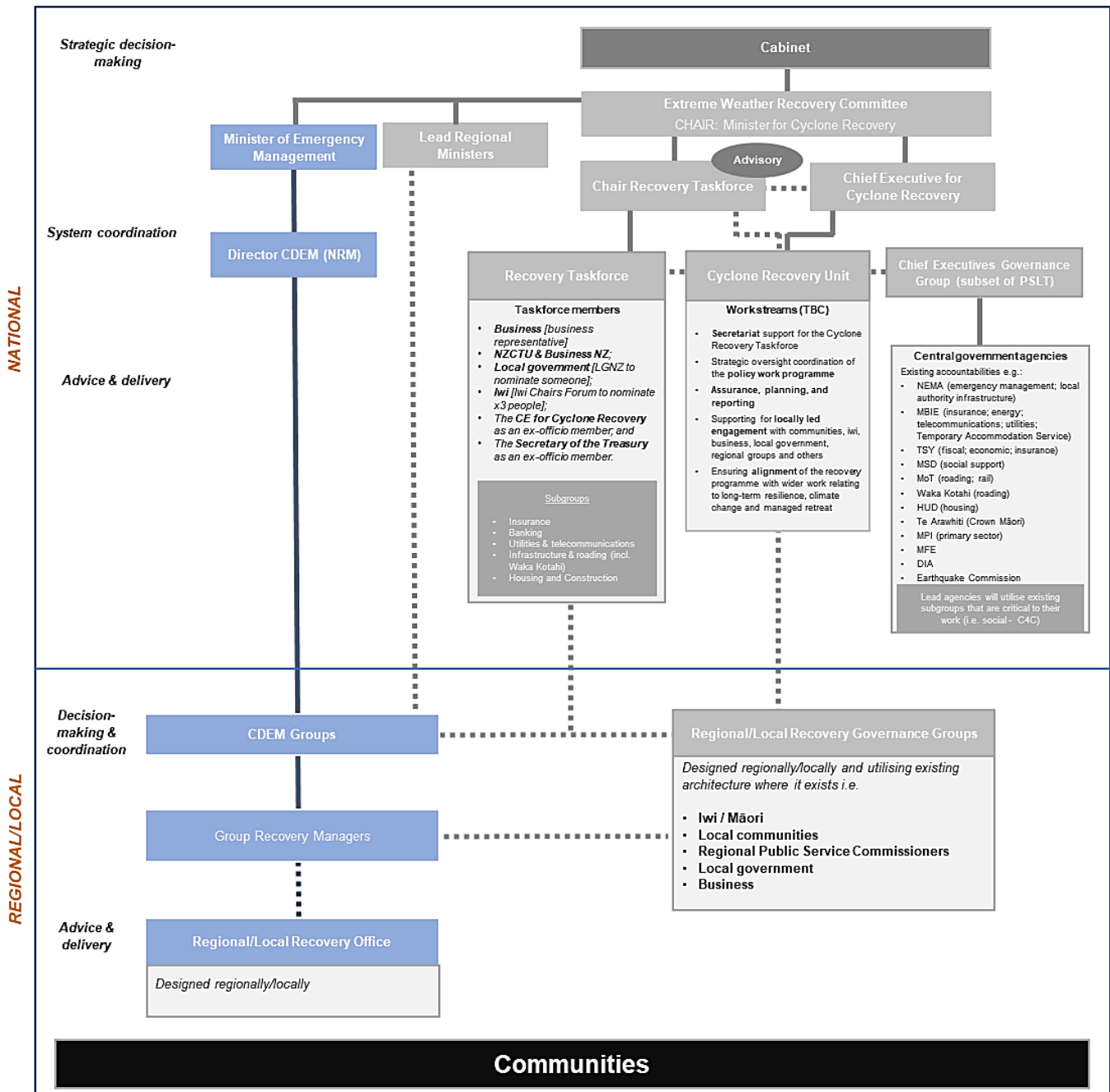


Figure 27: National Recovery Framework for Cyclone Gabrielle

As was the case for both the CES and HKE recoveries, provision was also signalled early on and subsequently made for bespoke legislation comparable with the Hurunui/Kaikōura Earthquake Recovery Act 2016 to authorise and manage legislative overrides to support NISWE recovery activities. This third instance of bespoke legislation to enable disaster recoveries suggests a more enduring legislative framework for managing approvals may be more efficient and effective.

The mid-March report back to Cabinet on supporting regional and local recovery structures describes governance and organisational recovery structures in all cyclone affected regions and districts as they had been thus far developed. It confirmed interim funding support towards their activation and authorised further assessment of local government resourcing needs. To support the EWRC Ministers assigned to regions in that role, funding for a range of bespoke advisors and groups was also confirmed, as was alignment with national and regional arrangements with both the CDEM and Local Government Acts.

Collectively these arrangements are comprehensive and multi-stranded in design, seeking to achieve an integrated all-of-government approach that was supportive of and responsive to regionally led recovery efforts. They were summarised in a paper prepared at the time by DPMC and NEMA²²⁹. This notes that typically, the national recovery functions and responsibilities would be expected to be undertaken by NEMA while national responsibilities for recovery coordination in relation to cyclone recovery were transferring to the new Cyclone Recovery Unit, as per clause 156(2) of the National CDEM Plan 2015²³⁰. There is little further discussion of the organisation design rationale to supplement rather than bolster and apply status quo national recovery arrangements.

That paper suggested *design of the CRU was being informed by lessons-learned from the recent and significant cross-agency coordination of efforts within central government to respond to and manage COVID-19 at a national level, Canterbury earthquakes, 2016 Kaikoura earthquake and tsunami and 2017 Whakatane flooding*. How these lessons are documented is not indicated.

It also was supportive of CDEM Groups exercising their discretion under the CDEM recovery framework that allows flexibility and scalability to ensure fit-for-purpose recovery arrangements that support implementing their strategic recovery planning responsibilities. To this end it articulates a series of governance principles and success factors for recovery management that are appended (Appendix 5) and that are well aligned with the effective recovery governance attributes set out in Section 2.2.2 of this report. These are reproduced as another useful starting point for articulating an overall framework to guide recovery governance and inform recovery settings decisions at all levels in the ‘recovery ecosystem, as outlined and recommended in Section 5.0.

Interviewees largely from regional and external to Government perspectives provided mixed feedback on these arrangements. Feedback possibly arises from the integrity of the design, its implementation performance, or the lack of awareness by interviewees of its intent, or more than one of these factors. Some found the presence of and availability of regional lead Ministers with reach into Cabinet indicative of Government’s responsiveness and valued the opportunity. Others were concerned about fragmentation and duplication of roles at both regional and national levels and multiple points of entry to engagement with Government.

At regional level, the diversity across ministerial advisory groups, alongside CDEM Groups, and, recovery specific governance groups was noted - at national level, individual regional lead

²²⁹ Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, National Emergency Management Recovery Agency, 13 March 2023, *National Recovery Arrangements for Cyclone Gabrielle Guidance*.

²³⁰ Cl. 156 (2), *In large-scale recovery, the Government may establish an agency to manage and co-ordinate the Government’s interest in the recovery*.

ministers, the taskforce, and range of public service policy advisors similarly so. Also how well the coordination across Government, given the multiplicity of agencies and funding streams in play was noted. When considered arrangements ‘in the round’ some were surprised at the extent of them as being deemed necessary to seek alignment and coordination of government recovery efforts. In this some were confused by parallel roles being assigned to NEMA and CRU.

In the months following startup of decided arrangements, regional recovery agencies were requested to develop Regional Recovery Plans, in some instances based on rollups of Locality Plans. In addition to these that include funding needed to give effect to them, EWRC were to receive or received sectoral proposals (including horticulture, viticulture, pastoral), Iwi/Māori proposals, and proposals related to central government processes, such as the future of severely affected locations. By the beginning of August 2023 the total cost of RRP, as submitted, was \$9.8 billion, while the Government had as at 4 August, allocated and distributed \$812.9 million of funding to affected NISWE regions.

Cabinet mandated, to be coordinated by CRU an across-Government resourced process for triage, direction, and analysis to evaluate diverse funding proposals to ensure consistent, fair, and transparent funding decisions. From the outside this process appeared opaque to some recovery operatives and brought to the fore the fragmented nature of the current Government recovery funding system and process.

Recent efforts led by CRU in developing recovery settings and by the National Recovery Coordination Group in inventory of funding mechanisms have arisen to begin to address this. The lack of ‘system coherence’ to recovery funding was a friction point and frequently cited theme among interviewees. As much as it is of value to seek and capture community aspirations and reflect them in recovery plan proposals a consequence of this was raised expectations for funding assistance for which funding approvals were highly unlikely. How funding decision-making and recovery governance interact is further addressed in Section 5.0.

As the recovery proceeded, focus shifted to the future of severely affected locations (FOSAL), and to the restoration of local transport infrastructure including how enhanced resilience might be built into the latter. Significant policy development for the former in land categorisation and its application to affected properties was conceptually similar to that which took place and led to the ‘red zoning’ for voluntary buyout of a large number of properties in Greater Christchurch as result of the CES recovery, especially those hillside properties where assessment of life risk tolerance was involved.

But there were significant differences in the nature of the hazard, risks, mitigation options, property, and ownership types (farms, orchards, vineyards, marae) and in cost-share expectations. Resolving the FOSAL framework led to a large workstream to support Government and Councils’ decision-making and institutional arrangements for implementation. Among other things this resulted in Crown Funding Agreements with Councils in three affected regions in October 2023, contributing \$1.6 Billion towards voluntary buyouts, risk mitigation, and local transport projects.

There is insufficient capacity within the parameters of this project to adequately address how FOSAL affected recovery governance. But it warrants noting in post-event settings more generally

and as was the case for the CES recovery, that as soon as the prospect of withdrawal of land from active use and associated residential relocation at any scale becomes evident, the recovery becomes significantly more complex and protracted.

FOSAL in relation to NISWE established new approaches and precedents in land categorisation frameworks, cost share arrangements, intensity of regional-territorial council collaboration and wider community engagement in planning processes that will be relevant to future significant event recoveries involving buyouts and relocation. How to govern and manage these situations and processes that span years in implementation, and which have profound impacts on the wellbeing of affected households deserves particular attention. Capturing the corporate knowledge and institutional lessons from NISWE in this regard is important.

The multiplicity of regions, communities and sectors differentially affected and the wide range of government agencies needing to rapidly mobilise and upscale recovery programmes with settings that reflect this diversity challenged standing up an all-of-government approach. An example of an integrated and prioritised approach picking up on the EWRG directive in this regard is the plan established to guide and coordinate Government's involvement in responding to social wellbeing needs for an initial two year period²³¹.

This framework include a set of objectives, working principles and assumptions, a defined scope and, as a first expressed example, how lessons from previous events were being carried forward into the NISWE recovery framework. Identified lessons in summary were:

- *Locally led*
- *Coordinated approaches*
- *Flexible and innovative approaches*
- *Trusted relationships*
- *Long term support is needed*

The following dimensions and lead agencies were included in the framework:

- *Financial support - Lead: MSD*
- *Accommodation - Lead: MBIE, HUD, Local Government, TPK*
- *Mental wellbeing (psychological component of 'psychosocial') - Lead: Ministry of Health, Te Whatu Ora, Te Aka Whai Ora*
- *Health and Disability support - Lead: Ministry of Health, Te Whatu Ora, Te Aka Whai Ora, Whaikaha*
- *Iwi, Pacific, and community infrastructure - Lead: TPK, MPP, MSD*
- *Employment - Lead: MSD, MBIE*
- *Education - Lead: Education*
- *Perceptions of safety - Lead: Te Puna Aonui, Police*
- *Provider/agency infrastructure - Lead: All*
- *Communications - Lead: MSD MEC, Whaikaha, MPP, DIA, TPK*

Based on these dimensions and identified agencies, an overall Social Sector Plan for actions was set out having considered:

1. *population groups that may require additional attention,.*

²³¹ Ministry of Social Development, June 2023, *Social Sector extreme weather recovery approach | A coordinated approach that is locally led, regionally enabled, nationally supported.*

2. *a current state assessment for each region.*
3. *focus areas for ongoing response – dimension, by region by assessed required level of support*
4. *agency roles in existing support and response by them to date*

Appendix 6 is an extract from the Plan as per 2. and 3. above to illustrate the integrated and prioritised nature of the approach in a post-disaster wellbeing domain that is often limited by fragmentation. Evaluation of its development and implementation performance is warranted. This should include how alignment with regional and local recovery efforts was achieved.

It also seems possible and of potential future benefit in order to facilitate early, coordinated, activation post-event, to set up such a framework pre-event. This might be in anticipation of needs based on credible event scenario(s) consequences analysis for communities that exhibit differing (and generally known) vulnerabilities in a given region or set of regions.

4.5.3 Hawkes Bay Regional Recovery Governance Framework

All five Councils in the Hawke's Bay Region (Wairoa District Council, Hastings District Council, Napier City Council, Central Hawke's Bay District Council, and the Hawke's Bay Regional Council) in transitioning from response embarked on establishing recovery activities in the context of their individual responsibilities and community contexts.

As participants for the CDEM Group for the Hawkes Bay Region they had collaborated back in 2015 to agree a pre-event Group Recovery Strategy²³². This innovation pre-dated both recovery related amendments to the CDEM Act in 2016 and consequently expanded and update guidance to support that in 2018 and 2020. The Group was one of the few groups then and even at the time of NISWE to have produced such a document.

The Strategy was based on the CDEM Group structure and process as shown in Figure 8 and model local and regional recovery management arrangements shown in Figure 12. However in the aftermath of the Cyclone response and as attention lifted to recovery a substantially different structure that set aside that which was foreshadowed in the Strategy document emerged and documented as a concept in late March as per Figure 28. This was largely finalised for accelerated activation with local, central, and ultimately regional governance supports secured by early May²³³.

²³² Hawke's Bay Emergency Management, 2015, *Group Recovery Strategy 2014-19*

²³³ A series of three comprehensive papers incorporating specialist advice were approved by the Matariki Governance Group on options and a proposed operating model for a new Regional Recovery Agency.

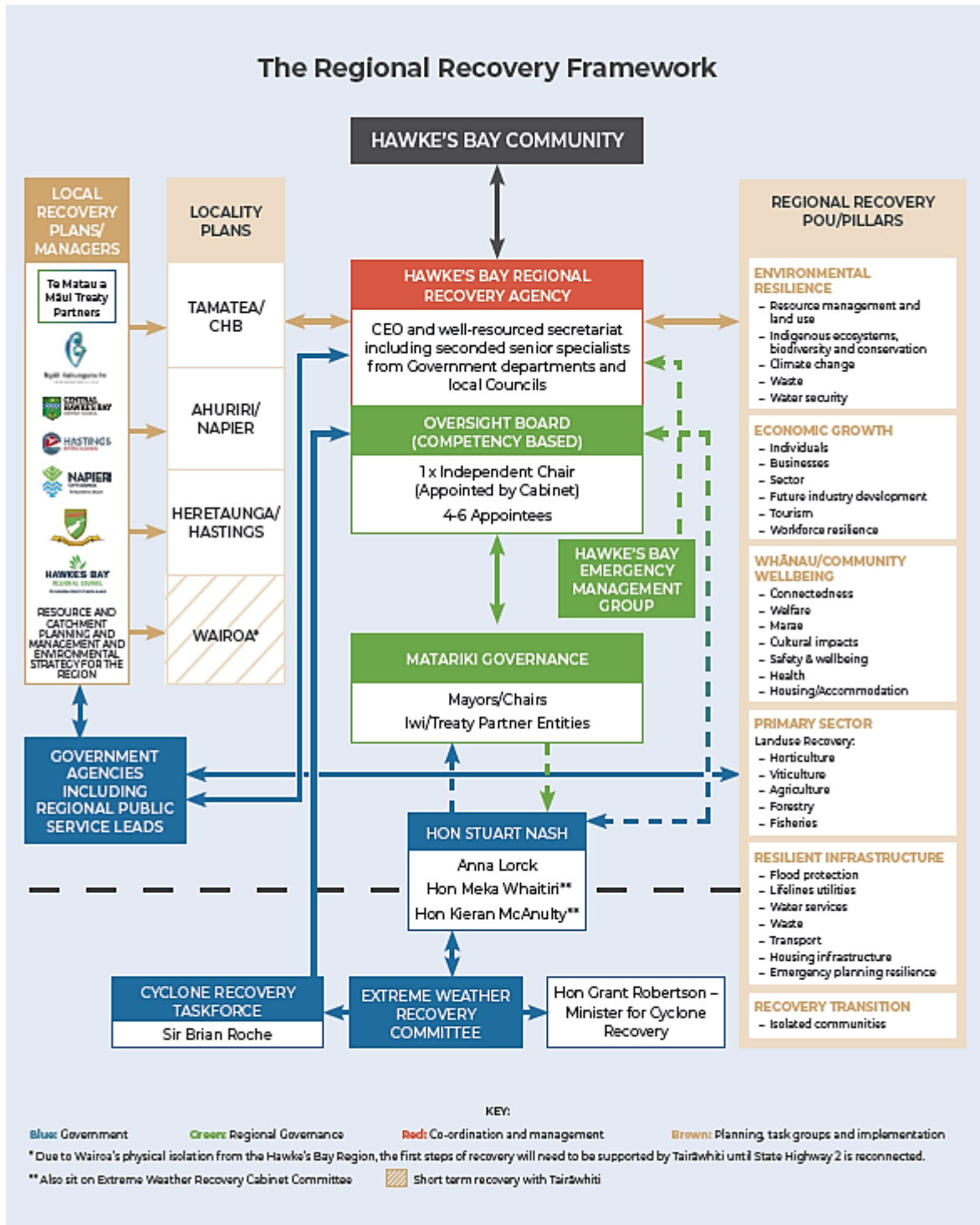


Figure 28: Hawke's Bay Regional Recovery Framework²³⁴

Matariki is the pre-existing Hawkes Bay Regional Development Forum composed of thirteen members that includes Iwi leaders (incl. drawn from post-settlement entities) and Mayors and

²³⁴ Quick Guide to Hawkes Bay Recovery Framework (pdf), March 2023,

Chair of the five councils, who otherwise comprise the CDEM Joint Committee for the region. It was identified early on as providing regional governance for the recovery.

Accountable to Matariki is a Regional Recovery Agency Oversight Board made up of six locally appointed directors and an independent Chair, appointed by Cabinet. Directors come from a variety of governance, senior management, and commercial backgrounds, possessing significant credibility within the Hawke's Bay region. The Board was identified as responsible for:

- Building the Regional Recovery Plan.
- Prioritising and sequencing the delivery of the regional activities needed at scale.
- Negotiating with Government on issues of funding, legislation and other regulatory powers that may be needed.
- Providing assurance to regional leaders and Government as recovery progressed.

Supporting the Board a Regional Recovery Agency acting as secretariat and lead regional recovery agent was established to:

- Coordinate resources and planning for the region.
- Explore innovative recovery delivery mechanisms.
- Work with local and regional agencies and councils on efficient planning and delivery

Advise to Cabinet, a series of resolutions and supporting memoranda of understanding confirmed alignment and compliance of this arrangement with CDEM and Local Government Act requirements. This stand up and role of the Hawke's Bay Regional Recovery Oversight Board and Agency is a key innovation in collaborative recovery governance in an emergency management context in New Zealand. Considered as a whole, analysis of documents as above and Interviewees accounts, including those across all levels of government and external advisors indicate a range of factors led to this outcome:

Underinvestment in CDEM Group capacity and capability and regional recovery readiness - Both pre²³⁵- and post-NISWE²³⁶ reviews while focused on response highlighted a wide range of limiting factors to overall Group capacity and capability generally. The overwhelming scale and exhausting nature of the NISWE response as it played out across the region left it ill-equipped to stand up a recovery of the required scale and resourcing within the context of the previously agreed approach. Nor was the level of wider regional agencies and organisations, (that would come to play a recovery role), readiness and collaborative arrangements sufficiently developed to just proceed to stand up the recovery within this structure. Some frank conversations among members of the Joint Committee and CEG confirmed this conclusion.

The nature of the event itself and the governance load arising for CDEM Group elected officials – The Hawke's Bay was the most impacted region and across all local Council areas within it, damage and loss was significant. It became readily apparent to key decision-makers that Mayors would be immersed in their own district and city level local recovery efforts while regional

²³⁵ ContextusSolutions June 2021, *Strengthening Civil Defence Emergency Management in Hawke's Bay - Review of Civil Defence Emergency Management in Hawke's Bay based on Events and Lessons from 2020*

²³⁶ Bush International Consulting, March 2024 *Independent Review into the Hawke's Bay Civil Defence Emergency Management Response into Cyclone Gabrielle*, commissioned by the Hawke's Bay Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Joint Standing Committee

recovery would require a level of regional governance focus and engagement with Government that needed its own surge capacity and capability.

The nature of the Government's National Recovery Framework – An early and clear signal was provided regarding expectations by the EWRC of a Government supported, regionally coordinated, and locally delivered recovery approach. Government requested and provided financial assistance to stand up regional recovery leadership groups and provided financial assistance to stand up supporting recovery management resources.

Leveraging pre-existing strengths, relationships and 'local talent' – Exemplified by the existence of the Matariki Governance Group the region has a history of collaborative endeavour and strong level of trust and cohesion in relevant to recovery relationships, and an appetite for innovation. This made it easier to develop and confirm new arrangements and preparedness to collaboratively share and involve the private sector in governance, leveraging local talent. An experienced and well regarded local government executive became the RRA Chief Executive.

The RRA was initially framed and over time further developed a considered positioning to support local recovery delivery. Key roles identified for the RRA in the first iteration of the Recovery Plan it prepared are:

- Identifying and prioritising regional recovery opportunities and priorities.
- Supporting the prioritisation of how funding is to be allocated to recovery activities.
- Coordinating work with councils, central government, and other entities on the Future of Severely Affected Locations (FOSAL) across Hawke's Bay.
- Receiving, triaging, packaging, and sharing advice with the Cyclone Gabrielle Recovery Taskforce, Ministers, and others.
- Identifying the policy and regulatory enablers of recovery and interfacing with central government to discuss settings that can better enable recovery or address any policy and regulatory gaps or barriers.
- Convening organisations and agencies involved in recovery and drafting and developing the recovery plan to direct recovery at the regional level.
- Overseeing and monitoring the implementation of recovery objectives.

The RRA itself does not directly interact with affected communities, determine the initiatives for each community's recovery, or deliver recovery projects. Further, the RRA does not possess a statutory function or decision making role and has no delegated functions from central or local government.

These roles are led and delivered by local authorities and entities leading local recovery efforts, who have a first-hand view of Cyclone Gabrielle's impacts at the local level. Locality Plans and local-level plans prepared by local authorities and other entities set out planned actions that are to be led and delivered at the local level...

Instead, as a 'systems integrator', the RRA plays a fundamental role in coordinating implementation across the region to ensure efforts are efficiently directed to where they are most needed, a clear recovery pathway is provided and duplication of effort is avoided.

The RRA does not receive and distribute recovery funding but plays an important role in advocating for and securing the funding needed to advance recovery across the region. This approach ensures that recovery funding is allocated efficiently and directly to entities leading activities on the ground²³⁷.

The RRA Board and Agency could be seen as an expression of the strategic recovery planning responsibilities of CDEM Groups and among all the interviewees was recognised for its contribution to effective governance of the region's NISWE recovery. It is undertaking its own lesson learned exercise. In looking ahead to transition beyond the RRA and intensive recovery work, there are moves to retain and embed in ongoing local governance arrangements the skills and knowledge gained. It lends new insight to what might be the standing recovery governance arrangements for future significant regional events in the Hawke's Bay.

At an operational level collaborative arrangements that supported the work of the Agency, Councils and other recovery partners evolved rapidly. The following description provided by the CE of the RRA is reproduced in full as it captures the dynamic nature of recovery collaboration:

- *With five councils and a dedicated recovery agency involved, it was essential that information was shared openly, promptly, and in a coordinated manner. To achieve this, a Group was established to facilitate the exchange of recovery-related knowledge, align decision-making, and track progress across organisations. Known informally as “the Morning Meeting,” it initially convened up to three times per day in the earliest stages of the recovery, before settling into a daily schedule. Over time, the frequency reduced to three times per week and later to weekly as the recovery continued. Attendance varied according to need but typically included key recovery and FoSAL personnel, communications staff, and, at times, Chief Executives. Other participants included central government officials, Insurance Council representatives, and members of Post-Settlement Governance Entities (PSGEs). The meetings ensured that discussions with Government were communicated promptly, emerging issues were identified and addressed, and decision points and milestones were tracked and shared among all parties.*
- *A Recovery Managers Forum was established about 5 months after the event. Comprising the Group Recovery Manager and key RRA staff together with Local Recovery Managers and key staff, the Forum met fortnightly and ensured there was awareness of recovery issues across the region, coordination of cross council areas of work, and a forum for escalating emerging issues.*
- *An Infrastructure Working Group brought together agencies with infrastructure resilience and recovery issues and programmes, including councils and NZTA, HBRC, Transpower and lines companies, Napier Port and Hawke's Bay Airport, the Infrastructure Commission, and the Telecommunications sector. This group initially worked to scope out, share and then refine the scale of work required across the region, and has subsequently worked to facilitate coordination across different organisations and*

²³⁷ Hawke's Bay Regional Recovery Agency, 30 September 2023, *Cyclone Gabrielle 2023 Te Matau-a-Māui Hawke's Bay Regional Recovery Plan - First Iteration*.

programmes (e.g., bridge rebuilds and stopbanks) and address regional concerns to national organisations.

- *Chief Executive Forums, one for councils, and one for councils and PSGE/Iwi Chief Executives together, met at least weekly initially and then as required to aid coordination and information sharing.*
- *The Regional Leaders Group (Mayors and HBRC Chair) met at least monthly and as required to coordinate between council leaders.*

The Regional Council set up an internal Recovery Team to support these efforts and provide oversight to the HBRC Cyclone Recovery Committee.

Napier City's participation in these arrangements sought to ensure local needs were represented in the Hawke's Bay Recovery Plan. Napier Council developed a dedicated Napier Locality Plan for recovery and resilience, in partnership with iwi and community groups . The Council also launched support programs for affected residents – including a Category 3 voluntary buyout scheme for the most flood prone properties (to remove intolerable future risk) , and assistance with temporary housing for displaced families. Local civil defence and welfare centres remained active for months to help citizens still without homes or basic services.

Hastings District Council played a central role in establishing the Hawke's Bay Regional Recovery Framework. HDC established a dedicated Building Recovery Team immediately after the cyclone to assist residents with damaged homes. This team helps navigate inspections, consents and rebuilds for the hundreds of red- and yellow-tagged properties. HDC also set up local recovery taskforces for issues like silt removal, rural support, and business aid.

Central Hawkes Bay District Council is also fully integrated into the Hawke's Bay Regional Recovery structure. It launched a local Recovery Team to address large scale roading damage and support affected, and isolated localities.

Wairoa District Council has been supported by the Hawke's Bay regional recovery structures and central government, aided by strong local advocacy, particularly to compensate for its isolation and particular circumstances.

The experience gained from the Hawkes Bay's approach to regional recovery governance warrants closer consideration than is possible through this project. It will be a valuable resource to draw on and consider in the circumstances of concurrent significant events among districts in a region.

This should in the writer's opinion include license in evolving and adapting the role and function of relevant Groups in establishing focused regional recovery governance arrangements. These need to be able to effectively engage with Government on the one hand and on the other support but not supplant local delivery by Councils.

4.5.4 Cyclone Gabrielle Recovery Structures in Tararua and Wairarapa

Brief reference to recovery structures for these two recoveries in districts contiguous to each other/the Hawkes Bay region, but in different CDEM Group areas is warranted in the context of the Hawkes Bay experience.

The recovery framework for Tararua District's Cyclone Recovery Programme is shown in Figure 29. This framework reflects established guidelines for framing local recoveries across the five established recovery environments, a core recovery team, and Local Recovery Manager. But it was

also bolstered with focused recovery governance support through the collaborative advisory group, *Mayor's Taskforce for Recovery*, reflecting the convening power of that office and cross-government and iwi collaboration resolve.

Tararua District sustained a pattern of damage and loss similar in nature to districts falling within the Hawkes Bay region and to the south in the Wairarapa, with comparable recovery needs. An experienced and respected local leader assumed the LRM role who alongside the Council and its staff are to be congratulated for standing up a comprehensive local recovery programme.

Tararua was the only district (and a small one at that with circa. 20,000 population) within the large Manawatū-Whanganui CDEM region to warrant a recovery standup, running in parallel with the Hawke's Bay's regional framework approach. It is also contiguous with the Wairarapa Councils. It prompts asking the question for consideration for arrangements in the future as to how flex for recovery structures across boundaries of all types, including CDEM Groups, may be beneficial to recoveries from events the impacts of which have no regard for them.

The recovery governance approach to and arrangements by the three Wairarapa Councils who fall within another CDEM Region – Wellington, is also relevant and warrants recording in the context of this report. Its formation was supported by the Wellington Regional Emergency Management office as a collaborative approach to sub-regional coordination.

The Wairarapa Recovery Office (WRO) was established to coordinate recovery across Masterton, Carterton, and South Wairarapa Districts. While Local Recovery Managers were appointed and active in each of the three Councils, rather than each elected council running separate recovery efforts, the three Wairarapa councils agreed to a single combined governance structure.

Figures 30 and 31 show the governance committee initially established in early 2023 and as the collaboration evolved into a subcommittee from May 2024. Features of note include:

- A standing Recovery Governance Committee, with voting rights, across the three Councils, the Regional Council, local iwi, local business and a seat for the Minister filled by the Regional Public Service Commissioner.
- Local Recovery Managers as the external face of the recovery with their respective Councils and Mayors but supported by a Recovery Programme Manager and an experienced programme manager appointed to that role.
- As shown in Figure 31, a second phase subcommittee acting under bounded delegation when the emphasis turned to managing the recovery instead of providing direction.
- Composed of Chief Executives, Recovery management, and an iwi representative.

These arrangements are good examples of *adaptability and flexibility* as one of the attributes for effective recovery identified in Section 2.2.2 above.

Recovery framework

**TARARUA DISTRICT
CYCLONE GABRIELLE
RECOVERY PROGRAMME**



He waka eke noa
We're all in this together

**VERSION 13
18/10/2023**

To work with those impacted, communities, Iwi, partners and central government to help the Tararua District recover from Cyclone Gabrielle and build resilience

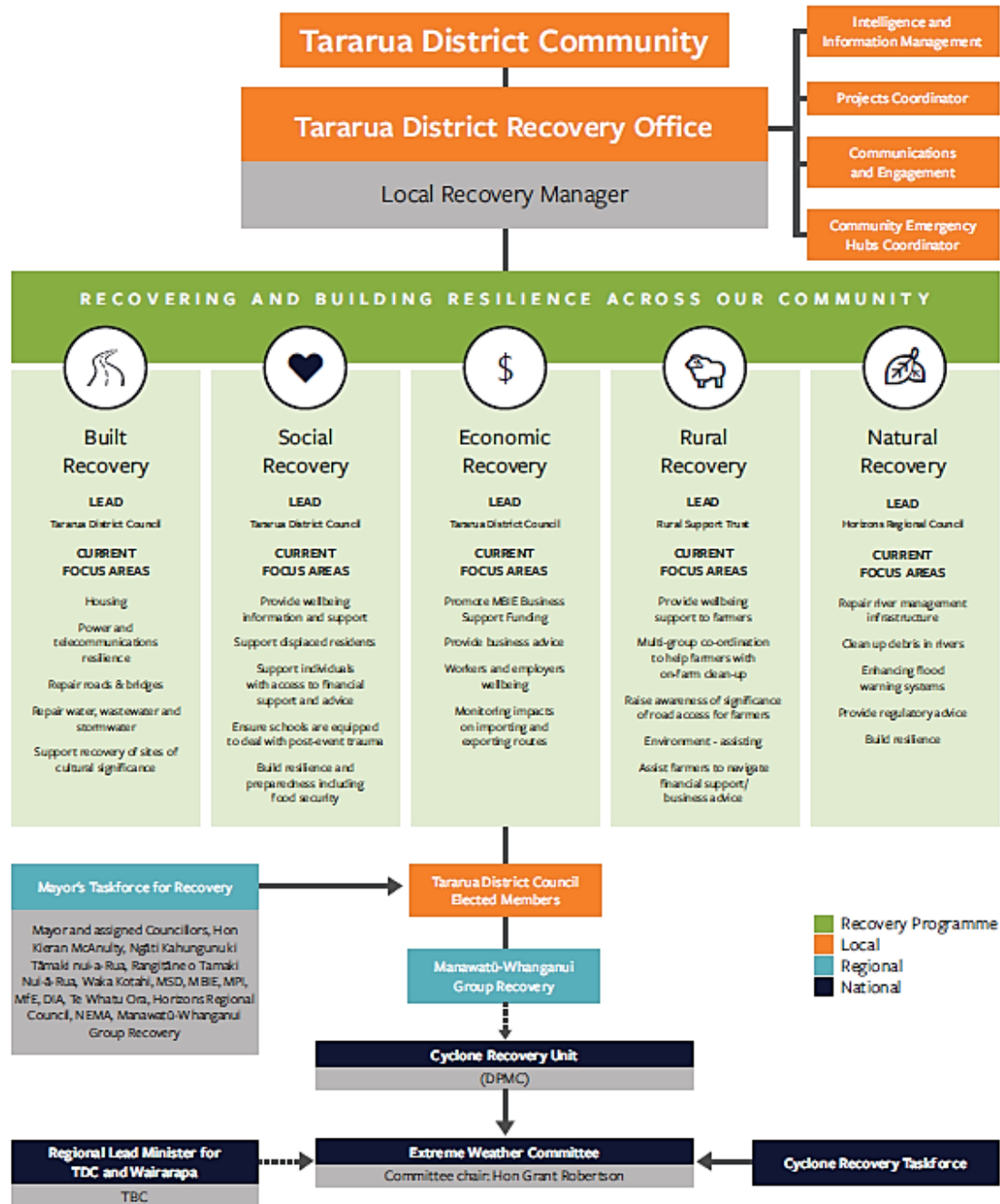
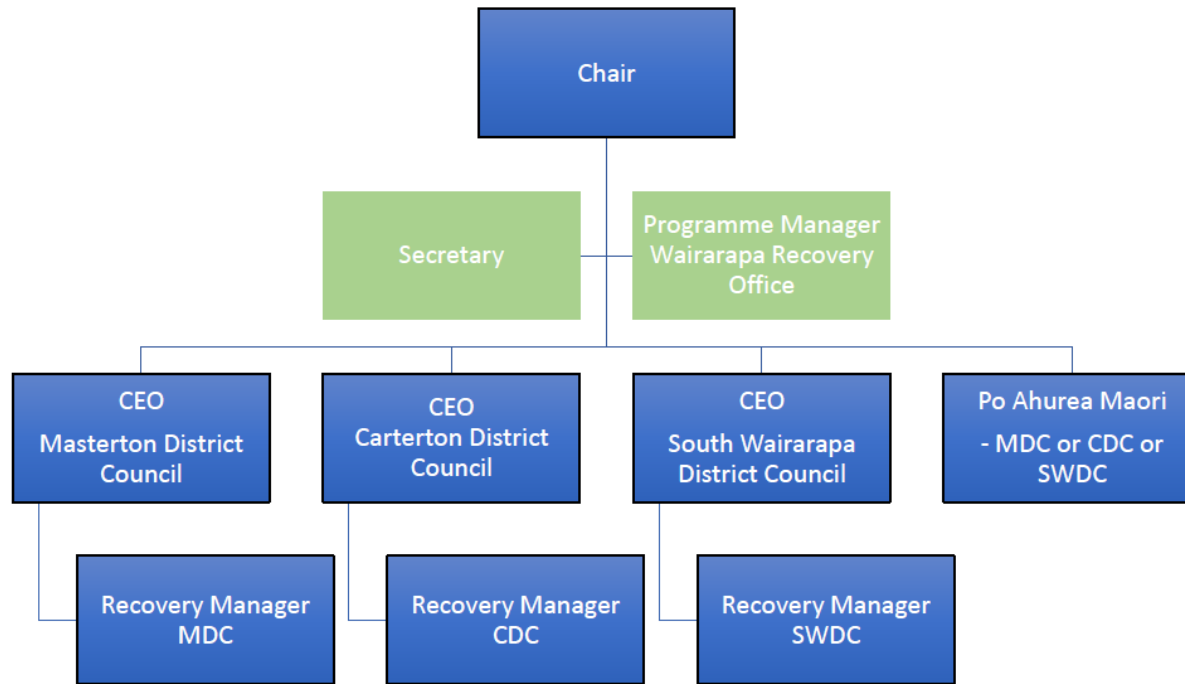
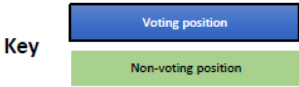


Figure 29: The recovery framework for Tararua District's Cyclone Recovery Programme

Wairarapa Recovery Sub Committee



Note:
Established May 2024
Once set up, the CEOs for MDC and CDC transferred their delegation to their Recovery Managers. SWDC CEO delegated to their Recovery Manager Mar 25.

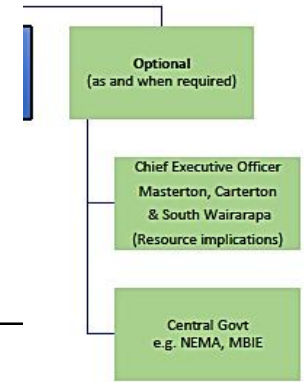


Figure 30: Wairarapa Recovery Governance Committee as initially established in 2023

Wairarapa Recovery Sub Committee

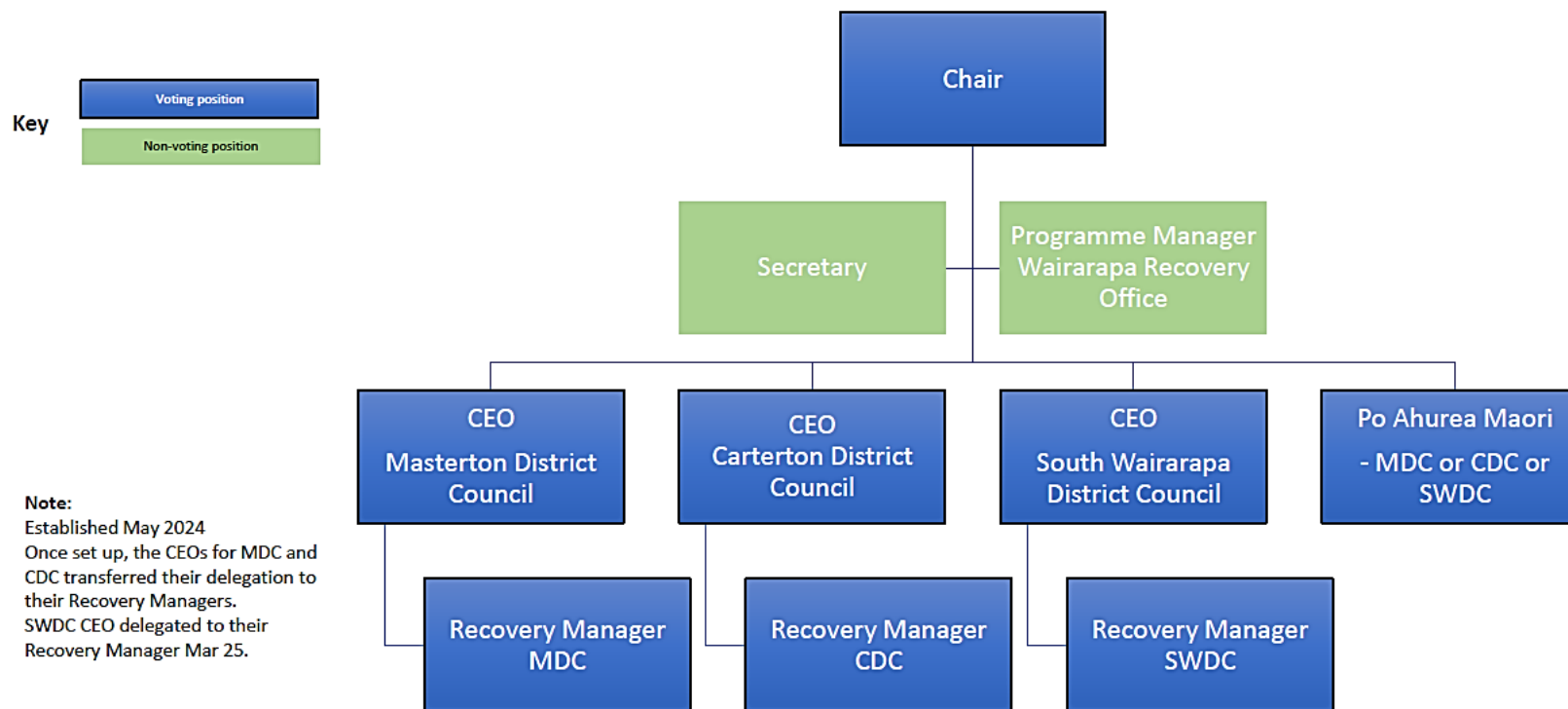


Figure 31: Wairarapa Recovery Committee from May 2024

4.5.5 Auckland Council Recovery Governance Framework

The Auckland Region, home to a third of New Zealand’s population and governed at regional level by a single Unitary Authority presents another, contrasting example of NISWE regional recovery governance arrangements. Auckland Council is the largest Council by population in Australasia with a combined Group fte staff count exceeding 10,000, delivering a wide range of services. Like most, much smaller local authorities it is not immune from intense budget pressures and this includes determining the priority for emergency management spend among its responsibilities under many statutes. This includes the CDEM Act affecting response and recovery capacity and capability.

In this context pre-existing readiness in these regards is a pertinent aspect for consideration. The Council is responsible for co-ordinating and supporting the work of the Auckland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group, integrated with its ongoing governance arrangements. The CDEM Group as a Council (governing body) Committee comprises councillors, representatives of the Independent Māori Statutory Board, ex officio Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and observers from relevant organisations (such as emergency services), lifeline utilities (such as suppliers of water and electricity), and welfare agencies.

In 2019, the Auditor-General (OAG) reviewed²³⁸ how prepared the Council was to support Auckland’s response to, and recovery from, significant emergency events. The OAG identified substantial concerns with operational capability and capacity and support for good governance, applying the principles for that articulated through the OAG office discussed in Section 2.1 above.

A follow-up review in 2023²³⁹ concluded Auckland Council was better positioned to carry out its emergency management functions in 2023 than it was in 2019, finding encouraging developments...*however, there is still much to do*. One of six recommendations included strengthen governance oversight of its progress with key emergency preparedness matters, particularly its progress on implementing recommendations from recent reviews.

A year later the OAG prepared a further follow-up report²⁴⁰ suggesting that aspects of Auckland Council’s emergency management governance still need strengthening, including *reporting that is required to ensure that governors maintain good oversight of progress while striking an appropriate balance between strategic focus and holding management to account, without straying into operational details...effective governance relies on ensuring that risks are well understood and factored into planning*.

At this time, the Council’s response to the Auckland Anniversary Floods as an ‘entrée’ to the NISWE prompted both well reported controversy and further specific event reviews²⁴¹ noting shortcomings as had the OAG in relation to emergency management generally.

This background is recalled not to be overtly critical of Auckland Council. Hard lessons have been learnt and much progress made. Rather it is to demonstrate, even for the largest and arguably

²³⁸ Controller and Auditor-General, 2023, *Auckland Council: Preparedness for responding to an emergency*, presented to the House of Representatives under section 20 of the Public Audit Act 2001, June 2023.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Controller and Auditor-General, 2024, *Improving Auckland Council’s emergency preparedness: A follow-up report*, Presented to the House of Representatives under section 20 of the Public Audit Act 2001. September 2024.

²⁴¹ Bush International Consulting, 2023 *Auckland Flood Response Review: Independent, External Review of Events, January 27-29, 2023*; *The Auckland Severe Weather Events 2023* debrief by Toa Consulting.

most resourced Council in the country, funding, developing, and retaining emergency management capacity and capability at both operational and governance levels is hard, even for the practised area of response, let alone recovery readiness. There are many reasons for this and those in relation to recovery have been touched on through this report and are reflected in conclusions and recommendations in Section 5.0.

As with other Councils the Cabinet in early March 2023 considered governance and management arrangements for the Auckland Region's recovery from the effects of NISWE. As initially implemented these are shown in Figure 32. Auckland Council's recovery arrangements formed part of the core Council structure. An expanded Recovery Office, supporting the work of Sector Groups was at that time being designed and surge capacity secured.

Alongside that and in the context of a substantial ongoing Government presence in Auckland through the Auckland Policy Office, a structure to support the role of the Auckland Lead Minister from the EWRC (and Minister for Auckland) was also developed. This included an Advisory Group establishing an independent to the Council, direct community representatives to ministerial oversight connection.

As the recovery progressed additional arrangements were established²⁴², including governance support to the Council's Governing Body. A *Storm Recovery Political Advisory Group* was convened to provide political oversight on recovery schemes and policy. This group includes the mayor, deputy mayor, a representative of Houkura (formerly the Independent Māori Statutory Board), and the Chairs of the other two most relevant Council Standing Committees.

A Storm Recovery Executive Steering Group: provided support and guidance on the integrated recovery programme and supervises the budgeted Storm Response Fund. This group is made up of key Executive Leadership Team members.

A Storm Recovery Funding Oversight Group ensures compliance with the joint funding agreement with central government and manages reporting and funding bids to Crown Infrastructure Partners. This Group includes senior staff from the Recovery Office, Finance, Healthy Waters and Auckland Transport.

Within the Recovery Office the *Recovery Leadership Team* monitors operational delivery, funding agreements, budgets and identifies risk and opportunities within the recovery programme. This team reports to the Group Recovery Manager. Several Council-controlled organisations are delivery partners for Auckland's recovery and report to their respective boards.

The Recovery Plan finalised in early 2024²⁴³ sets out how the recovery is being delivered. The Recovery Office was established to support the transition from response to recovery through leading the coordination of repair and rebuild efforts on behalf of the Auckland Council group, the government, and community partners and stakeholders.

Under the leadership of the Group Recovery Manager, the Recovery Office coordinates and supports delivery of recovery efforts through work programmes under the four *whenu* outlined in the Tāmaki Makaurau Recovery Plan; Community and Social Recovery, Māori Partnership and

²⁴² <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/recovery-extreme-weather-disasters/Pages/recovery-office-decision-making-guide.aspx>

²⁴³ Auckland Council, January 2024, *Te Mahere Whakaora mō Tāmaki Makaurau Tāmaki Makaurau Recovery Plan*.

Participation, Natural and Built Environment and Economic Recovery. These are shown in Figure 33 below.

The deliverables under the four whenu which form the basis of recovery efforts are owned and managed by different departments and organisations across Auckland Council and, in some cases, by other entities. Ongoing work will continue on these deliverables past the operational timeline of the Recovery Office.

The Recovery Office has led the work to establish the cofunding agreement with the government which includes:

- Category 3 Property Buyouts - approximately \$774 million will be spent on purchasing nearly 700 (at Jan 2024) residential properties in cases where there is a risk to life and further risk reduction is not feasible
- resilience projects – approximately \$820 million will be allocated to projects aimed at enhancing resilience. This includes the Making Space for Water programme which includes initiatives such as stream rehabilitation and the implementation of blue-green spaces in critical flood-risk areas.
- transport network recovery – restoration of the transport network affected by storms via a dedicated budget of \$390 million.

Overall the government has committed a \$1.1 billion contribution to the recovery in Tāmaki Makaurau. This contribution co-funds a substantial recovery. Ongoing Auckland Emergency Management and Recovery Office staffing surged as a result of the NISWE from around 40 to at the peak some 170 ftes, with most of that increase reporting through the Group Recovery Manager. The ability to bolster staffing from across a large regional employment catchment and draw on the corporate resources of a major Council are key enablers.

But a range of challenges are evident. These include securing recovery finance from a Council with a large portfolio of pulls on its money, maintaining Governing Body focus on recovery, and programme management of diverse activities; while, providing nuanced delivery to most affected communities distributed across a large urban area. The Recovery Office is enabling and supporting community-led recovery and resiliency planning projects in 23 communities across the region seeking in this to empower communities to the maximum practical extent.

A large range of other recovery partners were engaged from across the Auckland Council Group and beyond. But a feature of this recovery by a Unitary Council is the level of ‘Council-lead’ utilising its scale, internal vertical integration, regional governance prominence, and well established Government connections. That the event and its recovery has prompted a substantial lifting of focus to longer term resilience and a substantial, in progress, lessons learnt evaluation can only be good things.

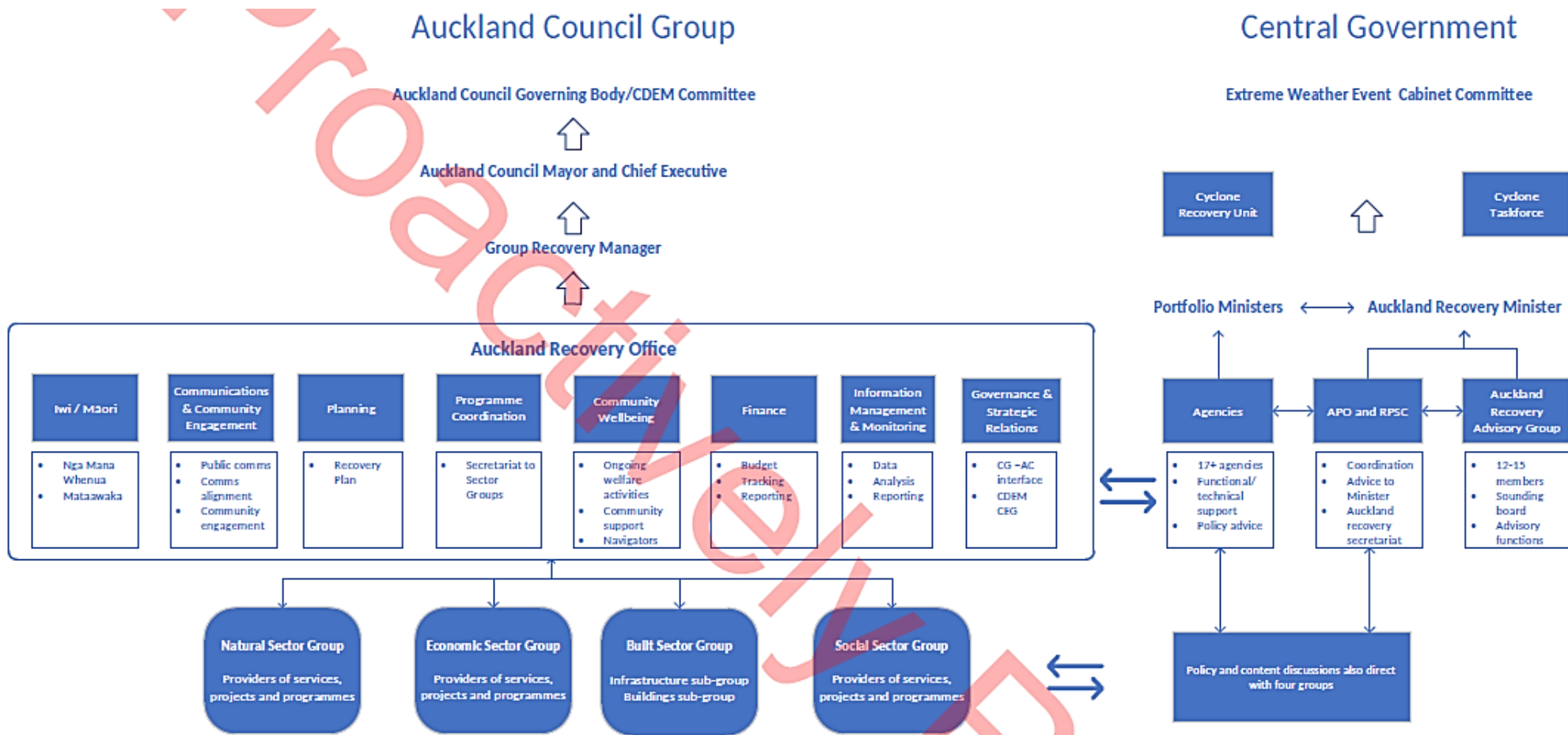


Figure 32: Auckland Recovery Structure, March 2023 (as advised to and agreed by Cabinet - 2023-03-23 *Supporting Regional and Local Recovery Structures* (EWR-23-SUB0022 refers))

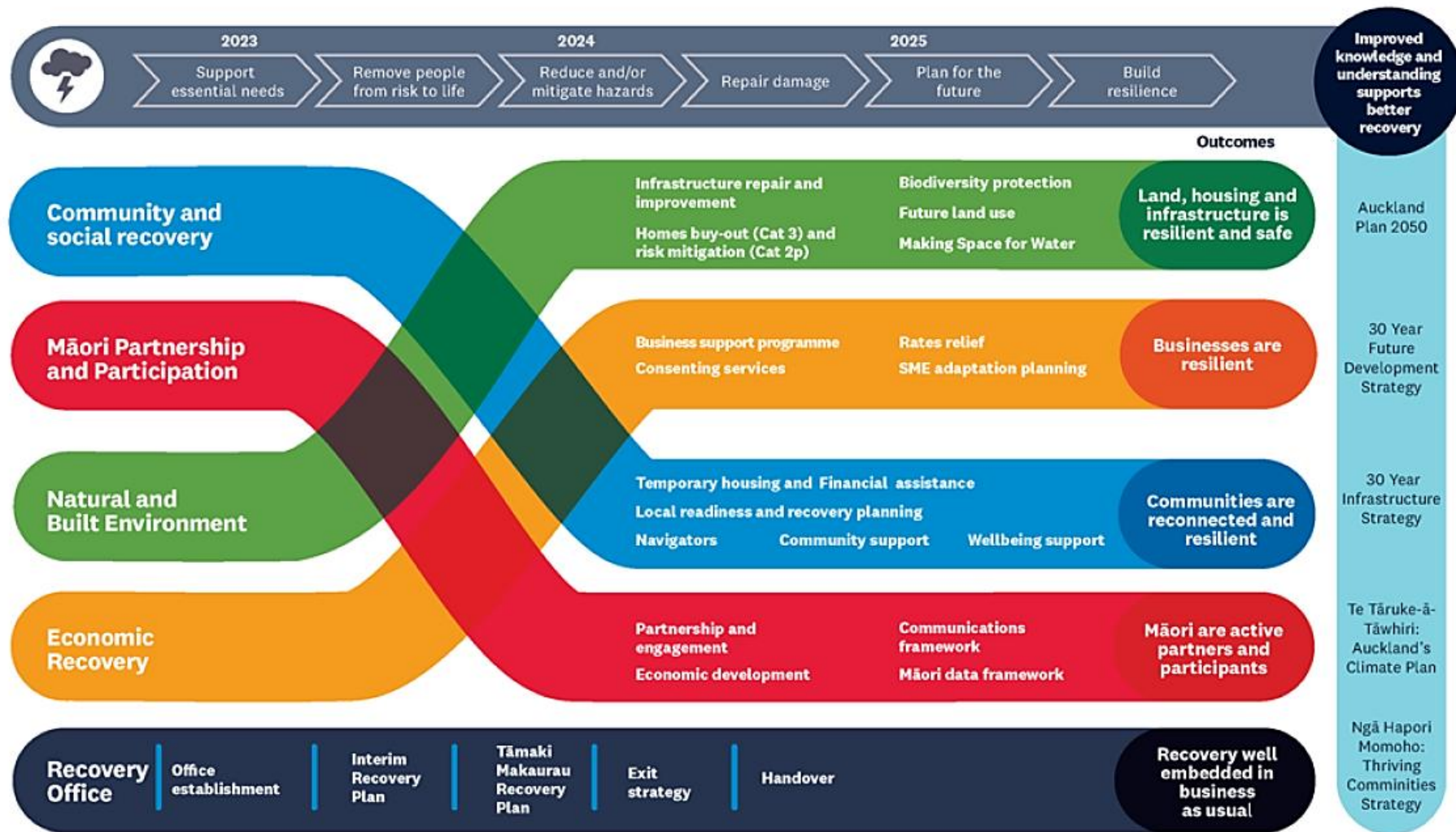


Figure 33: Planning Pillars and their delivery through the Auckland Recovery Plan ²⁴⁴

²⁴⁴ Auckland Council, January 2024, *Te Mahere Whakaora mō Tāmaki Makaurau Tāmaki Makaurau Recovery Plan*.

4.5.6 Northland Regional Recovery Governance Framework

Recovery from Cyclone Gabrielle has been described as the most extensive recovery effort in the near 25-year history of the Northland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group. Because the impacts affected more than one district the recovery was assessed ‘moderate’ and Group CDEM was deemed necessary to coordinate recovery activities.

Figure 34 shows the adopted Recovery Structure set within the Northland CDEM Group:

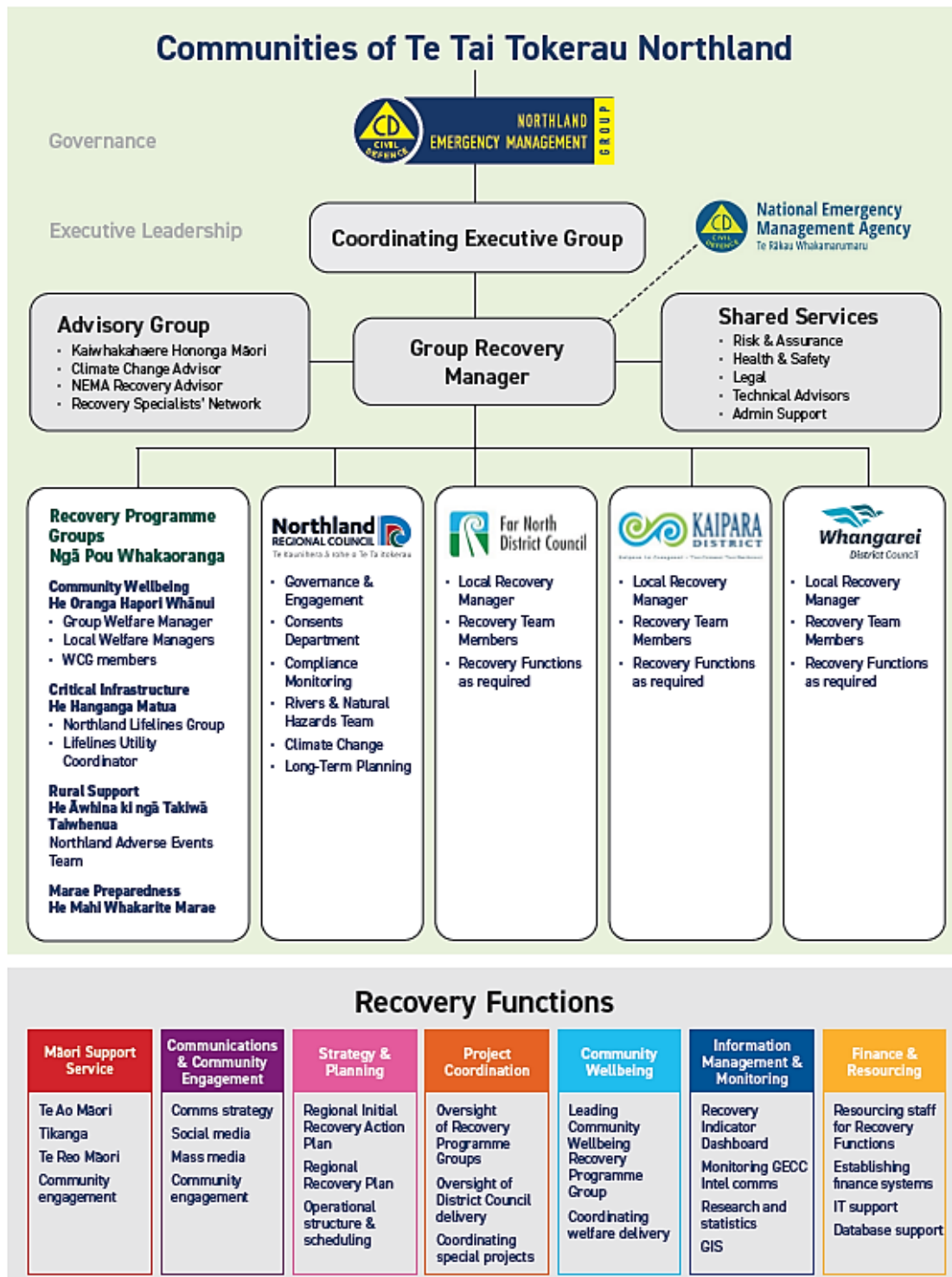


Figure 34: Northland CDEM Group Recovery Structure

While this is vested in Directors Guidelines for recovery planning and management, the Group established a bespoke Recovery Governance structure that reflected the nature of the event and was representative of Te Tai Tokerau. It had the following membership:

- The Mayors of Far North, Kaipara, and Whangārei District Councils and the Chair of Northland Regional Council (or their representatives).
- The Chair and Deputy Chair of the Northland Regional Council (NRC) CDEM Group representative (or their representatives).
- Two Iwi representatives from the CDEM CEG (or their representatives).

The responsibilities of the Recovery Governance Group from its Terms of Reference were to:

- Ensure the Regional Recovery Plan is completed.
- Maintain high-level oversight of recovery plan activities/projects and ensure the needs of affected communities are being met.
- Ensure regional recovery is in line with national guidance or directives.
- Advocate to central government and other agencies for resources and support for Tai Tokerau Northland's Recovery.

Governance oversight of the cyclone recovery returned to the Northland CDEM Group (Joint Committee) on 5 December 2023. Recovery reports were also provided to the Joint Committee and the CEG through their usual meeting cycles. There were no formally appointed Local Recovery Managers, at the beginning of this recovery and Local Recovery Managers rather than developing their own local recovery plans, preferred to include actions in the Northland Group CDEM regional recovery plan.

Northland is among the first NISWE affected regions to commission and external recovery review²⁴⁵ in order to identify lessons and possible solutions to inform further recovery arrangements for the Northland region²⁴⁶. The review method was to provide a 'snapshot' from 16 interviews across agency participants in the recovery, noting there will be many perspectives and stories that weren't heard...*this is not a forensic investigation of what happened during recovery instead the approach was exploratory and inquisitive.*

The Review report found that the recovery from Cyclone Gabrielle in early 2023 was effective and aligned to legislation and the guidance provided by NEMA and the Northland CDEM Group Plan. A range of challenging factors were identified, including and despite Northland's recovery planning work done to that date, a lack of common understanding of recovery arrangements at all levels, including roles and responsibilities and how recovery frameworks could support a locally led, regionally supported, and nationally enabled recovery.

Mandated by NEMA recovery planning and implementation direction and guidance is the tailoring of recovery governance, accountability and decision making arrangements, but this serves to heighten the need for clarity of roles, responsibilities, and priorities. The new national level arrangements in CRU's recovery project triage and evaluation process and the new role of a

²⁴⁵ James, Sandra, December 2024, Review of the Cyclone Gabrielle Recovery, for Northland CDEM Group

²⁴⁶ McDonald, Graeme and Mark Trüdinger, 18 February, 2025, Cyclone Gabrielle Recovery review report, Northland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Meeting Agenda, 4 March 2025.

Regional Ministerial lead were found not to be well connected with the Northland CDEM Group Recovery Office.

Northland's bespoke recovery governance structure was generally seen to have worked well, but some felt that the recovery did not have the level of attention, mana or as much buy-in that it could have had or deserved. How the exercise of ongoing executive leadership and governance by individual councils works alongside the same entities as a collective through the Group arrangements and with its appointed Recovery Manager requires significant relationship management in any context and this proved the case in Northland.

A notable feature of the work of the Group recovery office despite its constrained resourcing was its consultative approach and level of community centeredness. Through the Group Manager the pace and extent of recovery planning documentation to guide recovery efforts was significant. An Initial Regional Recovery Action Plan²⁴⁷ for Northland was issued on 23 March (three weeks after transition) and the full Regional Recovery Plan²⁴⁸ on 28 April (eight weeks after transition). The community consultation for the Plan was published separately in August 2023²⁴⁹. A comprehensive final Recovery Report²⁵⁰ at exit was produced 18 months on.

Over 230 stakeholders and partners were listed in the Northland CDEM final recovery report, highlighting the wide range of iwi, organisations and agencies who played a role in this recovery. Managing and maintaining large numbers of relationships at all levels while both extremely important, was time-consuming, and challenging.

The level of engagement with Group was variable with some groups and organisations just 'getting on and getting stuff done'. Bringing regional government agencies together at a strategic level would have been useful to build relationships, and to share information but due to the workload of the Group Recovery Manager this did not happen.

There are 21 iwi and 254 hapū in Te Tai Tokerau Northland. Māori representation was built into the Recovery framework to ensure representation at the governance and operational levels, through the recovery team and in recovery programme groups. Additional Iwi representation on the Recovery Governance Group was a strength and was deemed to be highly successful.

Overall the Review highlighted many things that went well, what the CDEM Group should keep doing and a large number of opportunities for recovery development. Securing collaborative recovery governance supported by adequate recovery management resourcing 'in the thick of it' was and in the general sense will continue to be challenging. Northland is particularly exposed to this challenge as a large region with many small, relatively isolated communities and a range of well-known vulnerabilities. The Cyclone Gabrielle recovery experience however highlights the need for and benefits of greater pre-event recovery preparedness not just by the Group but across the wide range of likely involved agencies and organisations.

²⁴⁷ Northland Emergency Management, 2023, *Initial Regional Recovery Action Plan Cyclone Gabrielle 2023*, Northland Regional Council.

²⁴⁸ Northland Emergency Management, 2023, *Cyclone Gabrielle 2023 Regional Recovery Plan for Northland | Te Mahere Whakaoranga mō Te Tai Tokerau*, Northland Regional Council.

²⁴⁹ Northland Emergency Management, 2023, *Cyclone Gabrielle and Tai Tokerau Northland: Stories of community resilience and messages of support for the rest of Aotearoa New Zealand*, Northland Regional Council.

²⁵⁰ Northland Emergency Management, 2023, *Titiro Whakamuri, Kōkiri Whakamua Cyclone Gabrielle Final Recovery Report for Te Tai Tokerau Northland*, Northland Regional Council.

4.6 Options for Recovery Governing and Managing Arrangements

The above case studies exemplify recovery governance arrangements in practice. These are set within the context of the framework set out in Section 4.1 above that suggests these will be strongly influenced by the severity and duration of the event on the one hand and its geographic extent on the other (Figure 16 and 17 above). As both dimensions grow, the complexity grows exponentially reflected in recovery scale, duration and the number of agencies and organisations involved. For example, consider the arrangements shown in Figure 18 for the CES recovery alongside those for the Buller Floods recovery in Figure 26.

In each of the four main contexts described in the framework and exemplified by these and other case studies a range of options exist for structuring the recovery. They are considered here in light also of wider reported guidance and practice in preceding sections of this report. Collectively this suggests there are some 'first order' considerations in selecting options for recovery arrangements:

- *Scale and scope of the disaster* - events that in impacts and consequences span more than one jurisdictional boundary of the entity with primary emergency management responsibility, mean the collaborative governance challenge becomes more significant. For example over 230 stakeholders and partners were identified with a role to play in Northland's NISWE recovery.

In larger events responsible district/regional level entities need to/benefit from arrangements for collaborative working and higher order entities at multi-regional/national level expect this will be the basis upon which they would engage/collaborate. The approach to NISWE recovery in the Hawke's Bay manifest in a regional recovery entity well illustrates this. Regardless of scale involving Iwi/Māori in recovery governance is a constant preferred feature reflected in most case studies.

- *Existing capacities* - territorial authorities/united councils with primary emergency management responsibilities vary hugely in capacity and capability to respond to and recover from events individually and in collaborations through CDEM Groups. Setting arrangements needs to reflect this reality regardless of what may be desirable. The augmentation of Kaikōura's recovery capacity by those from beyond the District illustrates this.

- *Level of pre-event preparedness* – size alone does not determine the level of pre-event preparedness and the Auckland NISWE recovery exemplifies this. As observed through the case studies generally the level of pre-event preparedness for recovery and so prior determined structures and resources ready to activate is generally low. But it is an advantage if they have been established and can be built on, especially if demonstrated to be effective in prior recoveries.

While most Groups have over recent years appointed full-time Group Recovery Managers, few have other recovery dedicated staff to support this function in pre-event preparedness. Most territorial authorities have identified Local Recovery Managers, but most of them have other full-time Council roles and limited time/resource to allocate to preparedness. There are only a small number of pre-event plans in place with limited

detail on how a recovery office might be stood up, with identified funding and resourcing for activation. With limited exception this is the pre-event picture for most of the case studies in this report.

- *Convening power and credibility* – Are the governance and management arrangements in capability and ‘working style’ credible in facilitating community participation and collaboration? This is closely related with structure and for example was and for some remains a contested aspect of CES recovery arrangements.
- *Phasing and Agility* – Arrangements for recovery activation, determining and delivering short term recovery needs are not necessarily durable for longer term recovery. Most case studies illustrate agility and progressive change in structures and mandates as recovery progresses. The innovations of SCIRT and NCTIR in CES and Kaikōura recoveries illustrate new collaborative arrangements being rapidly stood up, deliver and then decommissioned.
- *Balancing local v. central expectations and requirements* - Recovery ‘theory and practice’ support decisions being made closest to the affected community v. collaboration being embedded to the highest level possible. Resolving this in arrangements to balance the benefits of participation and the needs for accountability when national resources are allocated locally is an ongoing challenge for every recovery. The Steering Group arrangements established for both the Kaikōura Earthquakes and the Buller Floods recoveries illustrate a collaborative mechanism designed to achieve this balance.
- *Achieving vertical and horizontal integration* – Arriving at that balance is strongly associated with how local/regional structures and processes vertically integrate with national equivalents. This is a central issue with larger recoveries as the CES and NISWE event recoveries illustrate.
So too is how integration across achieved. A feature of all recovery case studies is the wide variety of sector environment, area and project based collaborations often rapidly activated, many together with vertical elements to align both national and local regional efforts.
- *Where and how will recovery planning and delivery functions be positioned* – There is considerable variation across CDEM Groups in ongoing emergency and therefore recovery management arrangements. In some regions CDEM management resources, including for recovery are mainly located at regional level (by definition so for United Councils). At the other end of the spectrum they may be distributed among participating Councils with a small(er) Group Office. There are a variety of arrangements in between.
- *Available recovery leaders upon activation* - An observation of how arrangements are established in the immediate post event phase made by several interviewees with experience across multiple recoveries is however, it still remains the case that it a lot

depends on the capabilities and approach of recovery leaders with prior experience that 'happen' to be available at the time.

- *Legislative Compliance* – Structures and processes for recovery governing and managing arrangements need to comply with the CDEM Act and National Plan as primary and secondary legislation and may be tested for their alignment with Director's Guidelines as statutory guidance. The Act prescribes the membership of CDEM Groups as Joint Committees as the 'peak' regional CDEM decision-making body. But it mandates wide delegating powers in relation to Group functions apart from delegations prescribed in relation to Recovery Managers as statutory officials. The exercise of this discretion is enabling of a now widening range of collaborative governance arrangements evident in most case studies.

These considerations need to be born in mind in seeking to codify a 'menu of governance and management options' that can be input to pre-disaster recovery planning for consideration in developing national frameworks and guidance. They suggest such a menu will not likely be a straightforward 'picklist' along a single continuum but more nuanced to circumstance in relation to such considerations. A range of options having regard to them together with observations from the case studies are outlined below. These options are considered with reference to four main recovery contexts described in the framework above.

A relevant point of reference in so doing is the recently released *Recovery Functions Guide* as an output from the 'Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Project' shown as Appendix 7. This is a contemporary list of core functions that need to be provided for in arrangements under seven main categories, with greater detail shown in Appendix 7 and the Guide itself:

1. Strategy and governance support
2. Specialist and technical advisors
3. Māori recovery support specialists
4. Recovery analytics
5. Community engagement and communications
6. Finance, resource and ICT
7. Programme management and delivery

The Guide indicates: *Some functions may be unnecessary in smaller recovery events. In some situations, individuals may perform dual functions, or in events of greater scale, a team of people could be required to perform a function.*

Category 1: Localised event of short duration, within one council area – Minor to Moderate

Frequent occurrence, e.g. severe winter snow storm, significant flood event. Acute response, short recovery term/limited task. Small no. of homes, businesses, farms affected. Likely short duration recovery activation with quick revert to existing BAU structures and processes.

This is the context in which a recovery effort is most likely to be needed because of frequency of minor to moderate events. However, the level of consequence of only a minority of them will warrant activating a full core recovery team/recovery office. Where the event is significant enough,

this is the context for which there is 'best fit' of the 'Local recovery management arrangements' shown in Figure 12 and described in related Guidelines. This exemplifies a 'locally led - centrally supported' recovery arrangement. The case study that falls within the Category 1 context (Figure 17)) is that for the Tararua Cyclone Gabrielle recovery (Figure 29). The following features are evident:

Governance: The governance body for local decision-making was the Council of elected members as is typically the case for Category 1 events. In some instance (as was the case for the Waimakariri District Council's approach to the CES recovery) the Council convened as a 'committee of the whole'; with specific terms of reference for disaster related decision making. This option aids focus and transparency. A local 'governance body template' guided by recent practice may be useful.

Advisory: In the case of Tararua, the Mayor and Council opted to form a 'Mayors Taskforce for Recovery' that included representatives from local Iwi, central, regional, and local elected officials, and a range of key agency representatives. This collaboration reflecting the convening power of the Mayor's office and provided information and advice to the Council while informed the decision-making of other agencies and Government.

Such advisory 'integration and alignment' mechanisms are increasingly a feature of recent recoveries and are evident in a variety of forms in most case studies in this report. By including elected members and officials they are unique transitional structures seeking consensus within the mandates of participants and function to provide vertical and horizontal integration of recovery efforts. Similar to above, an 'advisory group template' and casebook of examples guided by recent practice may be useful.

Core Recovery Team: A dedicated but small core recovery team/office was established for the Tararua recovery led by a contracted local Recovery Manager. The recovery office functions included 4. *recovery analytics*, 5. *community engagement and communications*, and 7. *programme management and delivery* staffing in order to function, with other function requirements provided by the host Council or reach into regional or national resources. The decision as to which functions should be resourced by seconded or contracted staff in the Recovery Office versus drawn from wider Council resources and beyond is highly situational depending on the scale of the event but frequently driven by available standing capacities.

Operational Delivery: Tararua DC established five recovery focus areas, including Rural Recovery to reflect the significance of rural impacts of the event. These correspond with the sector environment groupings in established Guidelines and that connect with Recovery Office through the programme management and delivery function. Two of these were convened by Leads from other agencies.

Through the Recovery Functions Guide and links to further information in it there is considerable guidance and associated templates for these groupings. Specific task and location/area specific projects that crossover these groupings and that need to be actively managed are evident in several case studies. For each, focus areas, involved agencies and resourcing levels vary considerably as the recovery transitions from short to medium and long term recovery.

Typically a very wide range of agencies and organisations including community groups and organisations associate with the recovery through sector groupings. A feature reported in recovery reviews and case studies (e.g. Whakatane district/Edgecombe floods, Kaikōura earthquakes and Northland NISWE recovery) is the variable terms of reference, perceived value, and functional role of these groupings. This includes how they together with the ‘Recovery Office’ engage with and involve mana whenua.

As key collaborative mechanisms that are a feature of most if not all recoveries, there is room for further guidance and an examples casebook to help yield most functionality and value from the considerable investment of time and resources into such sector groupings.

Category 2: Low-higher intensity/shorter duration event across wider affected area - Moderate to Major to Severe

A larger and more dispersed number of home, businesses, farms affected. Likely requires cross boundary collaboration and regional level resourcing. Enhanced recovery activation across Government and more complex governance structures and processes required.

This is the context for each of the regions most affected by the NISWE that are case studies in this report – Northland, Auckland, and Hawke’s Bay. Because of the multi-regional impacts of the event that elevated it overall to national significance (as the third only declared state of national (CDEM) emergency), a significant national level recovery governance and management structure was established beyond ‘status quo’ settings.

This reflected the early assessment that significant national resources would be required for transfer to regions to assist recovery, strong messaging regarding ‘locally led, regionally coordinated and centrally supported’ recovery, and significant resolve to effect an ‘all-of-government’ integrated recovery effort from the centre.

Bespoke arrangements ‘at the centre’ shown in Figure 27. These included innovations of fixed term lead Regional Cabinet Ministers, a Recovery Taskforce of external, credentialed advisors, and an agency, the Cyclone Recovery Unit within DPMC. These arrangements are considered in some detail in Section 4.5.2 of this report. The ‘Recovery Settings Toolkit’ outlined in Section 3.4 is a resulting legacy from this experience. It includes extensive consideration of options for how government should organise its involvement in nationally significant recoveries. It is not considered further here with the focus below on regional arrangements.

Both Northland and Hawke’s Bay CDEM Groups support district and city council emergency management within their respective areas, while Auckland as a Unitary Council includes local and regional CDEM responsibilities within one agency. Leading and collaborating for recovery across regions with dispersed localised impacts in rural and urban situations that cross local jurisdictional boundaries (in the case of Auckland, Local Board Areas rather than Districts) is nevertheless a common challenge for lead regional recovery agencies in Category 2 contexts. The case study of the sub-regional collaboration by the three Wairarapa Councils is also considered in Context 2.

Governance: In the case of Northland while the Joint Committee retained overall CDEM recovery governance responsibility, the Group established a bespoke recovery governance committee

with expanded representation to include Iwi representatives from CEG. It established specific Terms of Reference and was the governance body to which the Group Recovery Manager mostly referenced direction from until for Governance oversight of the cyclone recovery returned to the Joint Cttee at the end of 2023.

In the case of Auckland the severity and the unitary status of the Council led to a different approach. Because of the extent of Council:Government funding committed to recovery; key decision-making occurred at Governance Body level informed by advisory groups and Long Term Plan engagement with the community at large. As this has transitioned into risk reduction and resilience, increasingly decision-making occurred through the standing committee structure of the Council.

Hawke's Bay is different again. Under the auspice of the Joint Committee, but in close association with Iwi/Māori a new a regional recovery agency led by an independent Oversight Board was established as the Hawke's Bay Regional Recovery Agency (HBRRRA). Reasons for opting for this approach that draw on the 'first order' considerations in selecting options for recovery arrangements discussed above are detailed in Section 4.5.3. In this context it is important to note the HBRRRA is an advisory, advocacy and supporting resource for and to local authorities and entities leading and delivering local recovery efforts with their communities rather than a delivery agency in its own right.

Northland and Auckland adopted for an approach of augmenting existing governance arrangements while Hawes's Bay in the circumstances it faced opted for establishing a new support agency that was a lead interface with a similarly bespoke agency at the national level (the Cyclone Recovery Agency). It 'governed' by influence not positional authority. There are pros and cons for each approach and the differing situations make generalisations problematic.

The experience gained from the Hawkes Bay to regional recovery governance warrants closer consideration and documentation than is possible through this project and its forthcoming 'lessons learnt' project report will be useful in this regard. It offers an option that to a degree may 'short circuit' oft observed tensions within Group arrangements supporting multiple Councils but it requires a high level of trust reflected in the maturity of pre-existing relationships. A key factor is retaining the knowledge and experience from building recovery capacity and capability through the NISWE. Under either approach it is too soon to tell at this point.

Advisory: Auckland governance decision-making and its implementation was supported by internal political and senior executive advisory groupings as a reflection of its size and unitary status. Similarly, governance and group management level advisory arrangements supported the Northland recovery. In both instances these did not reach up to include government representatives.

While in a sense 'outsourced' to the HBRRRA in the Hawke's Bay, the Oversight Board was regionally sourced/convened. This also leaves regional officials, whether elected or appointed, to forge relationships with the centre. This contrasts with collaborative central/local steering arrangements such as for localised but severe recoveries arising from the Buller floods and Kaikōura earthquakes.

In the writer's opinion pre-prepared arrangements for local/regional collaboration with central government for a credible significant event scenario are a highly desirable aspect of pre-event planning. Guidance and templates for that are warranted.

Core Recovery Team/Recovery Office: In the case of Northland, recovery functions closely correspond with those in the Functions Guide and were led by a small Group Recovery Office with support services provided by the Regional Council (Figure 34). The recovery office was responsible for integrating local recovery action planning and regional projects into a single regional plan that was overseen by the bespoke governance group.

This raises a wider question regarding the level of activation of both local and regional level recovery offices for the same event and how planning alignment and coordination in delivery might be achieved. In the case of the Hawke's Bay impacted local councils facilitated local processes to prepare locality plans that were then integrated at a regional level, with their delivery led by local councils through their own recovery offices.

This in a sense 'distributed' core recovery functions across local and regional levels, but in a deliberative manner. In summary, options at either level conditioned by circumstances exist, but the key point is that the stand up of recovery efforts and what functions are to be performed at each level are done in a considered way. This is usefully considered in coordinated local-regional pre-event recovery planning. A template for such plans would be useful.

Operational Delivery: In these and other case studies delivery of recovery programmes is generally led by local councils and through sector environment group collaboration. The comments above in relation to the recovery office and those for operational delivery in Category 1 contexts also apply here.

The Wairarapa case study is an interesting example of where part but not all of a region is event impacted with three Councils needing to mount recovery efforts. To facilitate and coordinate planning and delivery for the three Districts, collaborative governance and delivery arrangements established, supported by the Group Office. This saw activation at subregional level with a small Wairarapa Recovery Office (WRO) sub regionally based and focused on integrated programme management.

This arrangement was designed to support local recovery managers as the external face of the recovery with their respective Councils. This option of how to deal with several but not all impacted district recoveries in a region has a lot to recommend it and would be a useful casebook example.

Category 3: Significant localised event – Major to Severe

e.g. earthquake with aftershocks protracting recovery, severe flooding. 10s to 100s of displaced households/businesses. Significant infrastructure damage. May be fatalities, likely injuries. Longer term recovery. Significant national assistance. Prolonged regional and private sector collaboration.

Case studies in this category are the Kaikōura earthquakes and the Buller floods. In both instances these were smaller districts/councils overwhelmed by the event impacts and consequences, requiring significant external assistance to mount and implement a recovery. The

extent and nature of these arrangements is summarised in Figures 23 and 26 above. The Kaikōura recovery is notable for the activation of the National Recovery Manager role to support but not replace locally led recovery and foster connections with and responsiveness by national agencies. This remains an ongoing option dependant of severity and circumstance.

Figure 24 shows in some detail the recovery arrangements for the Kaikoura District Council integrated with and reliant on business as usual arrangements. Waimakariri District Council's approach to the CES events as a significantly impacted district in its own right is also comparable in this Category. Its arrangements albeit quite early in the recovery are shown in Figure 22.

Resourcing surge recovery capacity and balancing local expectations with the accountability requirements that go with external assistance are key considerations in recovery governing and managing arrangements in Category 3.

In the case of Kaikōura the extent of coastal transport corridor damage leading to the decision to rebuild and improve State Highway 1 and the main rail trunk line along their current coastal route led to the establishment of the NCTIR Alliance. Collaborative governance and delivery arrangements for NCTIR as a distinct project were quickly established.

NCTIR as with SCIRT in the CES Category 4 context and as public:private alliances are well regarded options for dealing with large scale concentrated infrastructure recovery, lessons from both of which have been well documented. As suggested in Section 4.3.3 consideration of what do these lessons suggest for the transferability of this approach as an option for non-infrastructure sector components of recoveries warrants attention.

Governance: While local recovery decision-making remained with Councils, both these Category 3 cases are notable for the establishment of collaborative steering groups, These reached across to involve key local recovery partners and up to connect with government, with independent chairs and officials in the stead of relevant Ministers.

Both the Kaikōura Earthquake Recovery Steering Group and the Buller Flood Recovery Steering Group (BRSG) acted as key collaborative governance support mechanisms. The BRSG is notable for its transitioning into the Resilient Westport Steering Group to lead resilience project delivery and long term resilience planning. As indicated above, preparing templates of Terms of Reference for such bodies for both short and longer term recovery/resiliency would be useful.

Advisory: As above.

Core Recovery Team/Recovery Office: Both recoveries involved establishing and resourcing local recovery teams/offices. In structure, (similarly for Waimakariri DC in response to the CES event), both were initially based from the arrangements depicted in Figure 12 as part of Directors Guidelines.

But in each case, arrangements for local coordination and delivery were adapted to circumstance from there to reflect hybrid elements with host Councils. They also evolved overtime as recovery progressed. This highlights the value of the Recovery Functions Guide that is not linked to any particular arrangement but assists posing the question at any point of how and where will these core functions be required and arranged.

Operational Delivery: As above.

Large scale/longer lasting event(s). Widespread damage – Severe to Catastrophic.

Fatalities, injuries, large scale damage, homelessness and business interruption. Large scale Local, regional, national collaboration required. Enhanced/customised recovery assistance programmes. 2-1+0 years duration. Major recovery plans and programmes and major public/private leadership and integration required. Options for governance?

Both the Canterbury Earthquake Sequence and North Island Severe Weather Events and their recoveries have clearly been very significant occurrences for affected communities and for national level disaster management practice in New Zealand. In relation to the latter, arrangements for recovery *governance*, *advisory* support, the positioning and managing of *core recovery functions* and arrangements for *operational delivery* are significantly contrasting in approach between the two cases.

They are beyond the frame of reference for local/regional disaster management in engaging the full Cabinet as the highest collaborative governance body available to deliberate and decide on recovery governing and managing arrangements. As well in each instance a large number of Cabinet considerations were required to decide on the nature and amounts of national resources that will be transferred in the process of recovery.

Report sections 4.2.3 for the CES and 4.5.2 for the NISWE cases in some detail document the relevant ‘first order’ considerations for national arrangements as a reflection of those listed above, and the structural options considered in arriving at decisions. These in the case of the CES led on the one hand to the centralised approach to both governing and delivering recovery manifest in CERA, and on the other for the NISWE significant arrangements for centrally supported, regionally coordinated, and locally delivered recovery.

The CES recovery required bespoke enabling legislation. The NISWE recovery involved testing and mandating proposed regional/local recovery arrangements as compliant with existing CDEM Act and National Plan requirements. Given the extent of national resources injected into both recoveries, high level governance decisions remained highly cabinet-centric. Options for standing up independent crown entities or crafting shared local-national governance arrangements were not pursued.

Also as indicated above a legacy from the NISWE Cyclone Recovery Unit decommissioning is a ‘Recovery Settings’ Framework to guide constructing advice to and decision making by Cabinet on arrangements for a significant national event. This does not determine any particular arrangements but is intended to guide their selection from among options. As discussed above each of the two contrasting case studies have pros and cons.

The counterfactual of alternatives such as shared governance or independent entities to lead Category 4 event recoveries are yet to be examined in detail drawing on international case study evidence. To fully inform the consideration of options for a future national level/Category 4 event (such as an Alpine Fault 8.0+ event recovery) it would be useful to document the counterfactual options alongside these cases in a consistent manner.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommended Actions

1. *What recovery reviews are saying and case studies suggesting about governance arrangements*

There have been a limited number of event reviews in New Zealand that have considered recovery governance. As indicated above, it is important to note that they have recorded many positives about arrangements to decide and deliver recoveries and demonstrable successes in process, outputs, and outcomes. Review observations and identified lessons tend to focus on shortcomings.

Recovery case studies have considered a range of events by spread and severity, localised and multi-regional, through to a nationally severe catastrophic disaster. Some of these are complete and have been subject to review, and others remain in progress. From this there are some observable themes relevant to recovery governance guidance and practice:

- *Clearly defined roles and responsibilities* - The need for clarity of definition and shared understanding of roles, responsibilities, structures, and processes that provide both coherence to and enable collaborative endeavour in the delivery of recovery to and with communities.
- *Pre-event awareness of arrangements* - That said, the oft cited lack of awareness of available existing or likely required arrangements for which guidance information to establish is available, is itself a limitation to recovery effectiveness. This is indicative of the low level of pre-event recovery planning and preparedness, a matter discussed further below.
- *Limited collaborative governance design* - Role and responsibility clarity is one thing. Relationships, structures, and processes for collaboration another. A far higher level of investment in collaborative governance design than generally appreciated is warranted.
- *Limited awareness of extent of collaboration likely required* - Mapping of governance and management arrangements for each recovery indicates these are likely far more extensive than generally appreciated. While coordinated through emergency management sector structures and processes, these reach far beyond that sector in diverse collaborations.
- *Lack of documentation of extent of collaboration* - Many such arrangements for recent recoveries are little documented in the public domain. Diagrams of arrangements tend to be overly simplified and/or are incomplete in many instances. Particularly the range and number of collaborations and efforts required to develop and sustain them is under recorded.
- *Low Iwi/Māori participation in recovery governance* - Persistent shortcomings in inclusivity and equity as it relates to Iwi/Māori participation
- *Lack of appreciation of need for 'vertical integration'* - Significant focus on recovery management 'working across' environments, but less developed appreciation of

structures and processes for integration up and down levels of government, especially as they relate to funding arrangements and matching accountabilities.

- *Tested collaborative model(s) for infrastructure recovery not integrated into guidance* - Substantial central-local/public-private collaborations for infrastructure recovery are manifest in the SCIRT and NCTIR. These are generally seen as effective and successful in exhibiting collaborative governance to an extent unanticipated by current guidance and worthy of consideration for inclusion in this. This might include further evaluation for their scalability to smaller recovery contexts and wider application across other recovery sector environments.
- *Guidance for balancing the local/central tension in decision-making not developed* - The balance between what is and should be locally determined and what is necessarily and appropriately centrally decided continues to be hard won. Guidance from practice elsewhere suggest decision-making at the lowest level practical and coordination at the highest level possible is the better overall balance.
- *Recognising there will be variation upon the four environments model* - The holistic recovery – four environments model is a consistent reference point. But in practically all reported circumstances there is a varying degree of bespoke ‘invention’ in arrangements. These include adopting project and programme management approaches that address particular issues, or area specific structures where multiple and interrelated sector environments are involved and best dealt with together.
- *Moving beyond convening the four environments to genuine collaboration* - In one sense such variation could be seen as indicative of shortcomings in the framework. In another, of beneficial flexibility and adaptability. Guidance for how sector environment groups beyond convening, (updating and information sharing) might actually collaborative and programme manage recovery work would be beneficial²⁵¹.
- *Recognising hybrid recovery – business continuance relationships* - Model structure guidance at local/regional level suggests relatively contained recovery management team/core recovery office arrangements; to a degree quarantined from other aspects of local government activity to achieve desired focus. But especially at local level the frequency of hybrid arrangements reflecting the interdependencies between business continuance in service restoration/delivery and the work of the Recovery Team is notable.
- *Recovery information management poorly developed* - Shortcomings are widespread in systems and procedures for data collection and information management to support recovery decision making and delivery, beyond response incident management, and not just for accountability reporting.
- *Options for Recovery Governing and Managing Arrangements* – There are a range of options for consideration in determining local/regional and national structures and processes to govern and manage recovery and each has advantages and challenges in

²⁵¹ The ‘just released (mid-2025) *Recovery Function Guide*, developed by the Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Project begins to address this need.

order to be effective. Case studies illustrate a range of these that are more/less relevant to one or more of four main recovery contexts determined by the magnitude and scope of the event. At local/regional level many adopted arrangements are informed by national guidelines but adapted to circumstances. At national level there is markedly contrasting experience of two main options. Selecting the 'right' option is strongly influenced by a set of first order considerations.

2. *Supporting the alignment of central-local interests through the practise of collaborative structures and processes*

Achieving the 'right' balance of central and local participation in decision-making structures and processes to align their respective interests in an effective recovery emerges as one of the most problematic and contentious issues from recovery governance literature, reviews, and case studies.

Currently there appears to be an implicit expectation that the hierarchical design for ongoing emergency management oriented towards tiered decision-making for response will generally apply to recovery as well. However experience outlined in this report indicates the needs of the centre and of local governance and communities in recovery settings are different and more complex - multi-participant and 'multistranded'.

This reality and that of the increasing probability of significant event recoveries being required, demands greater attention to how these tensions may be managed in contemporary recovery governance. Government will continue to reserve the right to intervene if it sees it being necessary and shared decision-making comes with significant caveats. In practise multiple recent recoveries demonstrates a wide variety of 'working across' and 'central-local' vertical integration through novel collaborative structures and processes have been rapidly set up post-disaster.

That these emerge 'on the fly' and often rely on the leadership attitudes and behaviours of key individual 'on the day' is more often the case than not. They are documented more for what they did than how they are arranged. But establishing and promoting a casebook of collaborative governance initiatives to draw on through guidance and a community of practice for design of institutional arrangements may be one contribution to mitigating the tensions in the central – local relationship in particular.

3. *The need to reframe the role of funding recovery and its accountability in relation to recovery governance through innovation in risk financing and assurance arrangements*

Seeking, determining, and overseeing the injection of external funding to finance recovery activities undertaken by entities with recovery responsibilities and directly to those affected by the disaster is a feature of all significant events. In all case studies it consumes a large amount of recovery governance time and energy.

Funding recovery produces key inflection points in relationships between partners to the recovery and with communities. The best laid intentions and plans can easily fail for lack of finance to

resource their delivery. A recently released Guide illustrates the complexity and diversity of central government recovery funding arrangements²⁵².

Just as cooperation, coordination and collaboration have different roles in recovery, so too does accountability, probity, and assurance in relation to transfer payments. There is a 'natural' assumption that large payments by Government that produce for it fiscal risks that should be mitigated in part by significant participation in governing arrangements.

The diverse characterises of effective recovery governance suggested through this report mean it should not just be about decision-making and oversight relating to financing recovery needs and activities. But the extent to which accountability, probity, and assurance in relation to funding appears from case studies to be disproportionately influencing on the balance in central/local arrangements and relations among recovery partners is notable. In short it takes the 'recovery oxygen' away from leadership to financial management.

It is suggested less consuming and more efficient ways to both secure necessary funds through innovative disaster risk financing and mechanisms to provide the necessary accountability and assurance are both needed and available.

In the first instance global agreements are one mechanism that can, coupled with parametric insurance²⁵³ at the area level for specified events rapidly deliver a pool of funding for recovery delivery as one approach. To achieve the latter assurance, mechanisms comparable to the recently established Crown entity, National Infrastructure Funding and Financing Limited (NIFFCo), may have a useful role to play.

4. *The lack of, need for and value of pre-event recovery planning and preparedness*

The writer's observations and experience of recovery that accords with documented experience of many disasters and their recoveries is that vulnerabilities across and between communities that were evident pre-event are surely exacerbated by disaster impacts and consequences. This magnifies the harm and distress and hinders recovery efforts.

This equally applies to the institutional arrangements for recovery and especially to the level of pre-event preparedness and to the effectiveness of arrangements that may be rapidly needed at the point of post-event recovery activation. International experience and codified practice demonstrates that investment in pre-event recovery planning and preparedness to raise community awareness and involvement, strengthen capacity and develop collaboration mechanisms pays off.

Pre-event recovery planning is in its infancy in New Zealand, largely not evident in most case studies and the take up of strategic recovery planning guidance for recovery is low. This needs to rapidly change. In the writer's opinion the single biggest difference to moving recovery as one of the 4Rs to where it needs to be is making explicit a requirement to undertake and develop pre-

²⁵² National Recovery Coordination Group, 2025 *Central Government Recovery Funding Factsheet & Guide*, Version 1.1.

²⁵³ With parametric insurance (Index-Based or Trigger-Based Insurance), pre-agreed parameters define the event (e.g., magnitude \geq 7.0 within 50km of a location). When the parameter threshold is met, the payout is automatically triggered, regardless of actual loss. It's explicitly event-based and does not require loss assessment.

event recovery plans at group and local levels. Such plans need to be not just about within emergency management sector structures.

They should be designed to achieve a state of genuine recovery readiness and be able to activate at least initial post-event ‘whole of recovery ecosystem’ and community-based recovery institutional arrangements for credible disaster scenarios for a region or district. These should indicate how vertical integration for governing significant disaster recovery might be arranged and address the likely Government funding accountability requirements.

It should be a more focused and specific undertaking than the presently mandated but limited in practice strategic recovery planning by Groups. However it is the process that is as important as output – its value lies in getting the diverse range of public and interested private sector and civil society parties to recovery to get to know each other, consider and prepare for how collaborative recovery governance would be arranged and delivered.

Yes, the next disaster event requiring a recovery effort to be stood up will surely not exactly be what then was planned for, but there will be a practised platform at local/regional level to adjust and match what central government will bring to the table.

Otherwise Government will continue to take up the recovery ‘governance oxygen’ because they don’t see the affected community leadership and arrangements available that they can rely upon and provide the probity they require for the transfer of whatever national resources that may be appropriated.

In my opinion the biggest single reason why we continue to make up bespoke arrangements on the fly in the thick of it is precisely because in ‘peacetime’ when we can deliberate in a considered way on this we haven’t made that readiness investment.

5. *The criticality of timing, criteria for, and process of decision-making on governance arrangements*

Experience shows that decisions made rapidly in the immediate aftermath about whether to activate pre-event structures and processes, albeit surge resourced and adapted, or whether to put in place new entities, often with untested responsibilities have significant consequences.

Decisions at national level ‘in the aftermath’ of nationally significant events have been made rapidly and to date the frame of reference for these appears ad hoc. Immediate demands arising from the event response, including what structure will ‘lead’ recovery once the declared state of emergency expires weigh highly in documented deliberations. Considerations of how building capability and capacity at a system level might be advanced through how a recovery is configured recognising the recurring nature of disasters appears low.

The influence decided arrangements have on the overall effectiveness of the recovery - its pace, responsiveness, complexity cost, and completeness - is significant, albeit this aspect of recovery assessment is less explored than many others.

Documented policy provides for, experience through previous recoveries indicate, and the case studies in this report shows that Government retains the prerogative of deciding recovery governance arrangements for nationally significant disasters. In so doing modifying or replacing

what might be previously understood or agreed in light of the circumstances of an event remains a continuing possibility.

The recently established Government recovery settings policy serves to codify the process but not predetermine the outcome of deliberations by Cabinet towards confirming arrangements where significant national resources for recovery are likely required and to be progressively allocated to affected regions.

This does not negate the value of investing in forethought pre-event of what might be the options in structure and process that are applicable to credible event scenario recoveries in a given setting through the application of agreed criteria and how this might inform decisions to be made about the preferred approach. But it does suggest cataloguing of structure and process options for arrangements and establishing agreed criteria for selection in light of specific event circumstances has merit.

Models may range from locally led and delivered for local and regional events as at present, through novel shared governance arrangement options to derive the value from collaborative governance, to, if and when centrally driven and delivered arrangements for national catastrophic disasters might best be adopted.

Criteria might arise from consideration of disaster circumstances; preexisting governance capacity, capability, and experience; and, the convening power and credibility of existing and proposed institutional arrangements.

Observed limitations at local and regional levels in any of this means central government will tend to (over) compensate. Balancing the time and resources to upskill and surge the capacity of pre-existing versus establishing new lead entities should be an explicit part of these considerations.

6. *The need for, contents and value of an integrated National Framework for Recovery governance*

The complex, cascading, concurrent, and compounding nature of modern systemic risk environments demands a more considered systems level approach to recovery governance. This needs to encapsulate and speak to the diversity of participants involved, be collaborative and networked rather than hierarchically delineated and not predefined by public sector accountability structures.

Other than the direction to strategically plan for recovery at Group level and appoint statutory officials to manage implementation the Act is limited in its attention to recovery. As is the attention in the National Disaster Resilience Strategy to recovery, while recovery tends to be 'crowded out' by the breadth of emergency management wide direction and guidance through the National CDEM Plan.

In short, recovery is woven through primary and secondary legislation and addressed in statutory guidelines, other guidance, and practice toolkit information but lacks a coherent framework as one of the 4Rs in its own right. Presently defining role and responsibilities tends to be focused inwards on the structure of recovery within the emergency management sector in terms of how it might organise and explain itself based on a single model dominated by response arrangements. Limited reference is given to how the sector's outwards dependencies and relationships with

many recovery partners might be developed, sustained, and activated within a collaborative governance framework.

What appears missing between the high level legislative aspiration for holistic recovery in the Act supported by this detailed prescription of roles, responsibilities, structures, processes, and plans; is a National Framework for Recovery that has standing and that all those involved in recovery preparedness and implementation can relate and might sign in to.

Such a Framework would set out the principles and expected normative programme characteristics and behaviours for recovery governance and management at differing severity levels and act as a point of reference for pre-event planning and post-event activation. The Australian experience of such a Framework is a starting point for consideration and improvement upon. Confirmed and signed into following wide engagement to produce it is envisaged as having standing equivalent to that of a National Policy Statement under the Resource Management Act.

An experience based/practice case study informed catalogue of structures and processes as options to achieve both horizontal and vertical integration of likely required institutional elements of recovery within this overarching collaborative approach would assist such a Framework's implementation.

This criteria-based, options-informed approach founded in practice reflects the findings in this report that there is no single optimal governance structure for a given level of disaster severity in all circumstances, but that those options that exhibit collaborative governance characteristics are likely to be more effective than not.

7. Recovery is not response and this remains poorly appreciated

Institutional arrangements for recovery draw deeply on the frameworks, mindsets, and organisational culture of established emergency management response 'dogma' and entities mainly experienced and engaged in that endeavour.

This is not a criticism of those undertakings per se – what is tried, tested, and attuned to the response phase has merit in its own right and context. But recovery challenges are different, require adapted frameworks and skills that to date are less developed, prepared, and practiced.

There are marked differences from response in what might be required for effective recovery in the context of the many and varied recovery actors across 'traditional' institutional boundaries - central to local, public to private and so forth - the effective collaborative efforts of whom are a hall mark of effective recovery.

Developing awareness and understanding of this is an ongoing challenge but needs momentum through enhanced programmes. Reviews and case studies show many 'recovery actors' are unaware of relevant frameworks and responsibilities.

8. Developing empathetic and compassionate leadership through recovery governance

Apart from the benefits of making conscious and considered decisions by recovery governors, experience and documented recovery practice indicates the importance leadership approach and style plays in sustaining the convening power and credibility of leadership entities.

While there is strong foundational guidance on good governance and crisis leadership at entity level, systems level leadership in disaster contexts is different. Collaborative governance across levels and sectors poses new challenges for shared decision-making and behaviours conducive to the time compressed and incomplete information contexts that characterizes recovery .

As part of this and insofar as disaster recovery addresses vulnerability at all levels, expressing empathic and compassionate leadership behaviours is a strong theme in contemporary recovery leadership guidance. Balancing the values and emotions brought to the fore in disaster contexts with the other dimensions of conscious and considered decision making is challenging. While this is supported in professional development pitched at recovery managers and teams, it is less so for those making difficult decisions in governing roles.

9. *The need for but challenge in agreed methodologies for assessing recovery effectiveness and success*

Making such assessments is hindered by the lack of attention to and agreed methodologies and practice for how recoveries are reported, evaluated and lessons identified in the context of a national framework for considering and acting upon lessons learnt. This gap in guidance and practice has challenged and constrained the high level nature of this report in considering documents and through interview inquiry of reported, recent and in progress recoveries.

Putting in place such methodologies linked to a preferred approach framework such as that proposed above needs to be matched with a ‘clearing house’ for consideration of changes arising from lessons that have systems significance and enables a systems learning approach.

A review/lesson learnt methodology would benefit from a framework for consideration of recovery governance effectiveness in terms of a series of preferred attributes such as that which has been proposed for use in this report. Within the confines of this project that remains only partially applied to a few key attributes among the series of ten identified.

There are a number of challenges in such inquiry:

- Distinguishing structure and processes that deliver recovery outputs from the outcomes arising and the connection between the two; noting that output – outcome causality is a problem in programme evaluation generally.
- Considering how much the ‘results’ are a consequence of the overarching structure and process of adopted arrangements, or their ‘performance’ in delivery, and, how much of success derives from other factors – just not enough finance and resources, socio-political factors, etc.
- How much of that performance is due to competence and how much to simple lack of awareness and support that a reasonable level of pre-event preparedness might deliver.
- The need for agreed criteria by which to assess efficacy; from which viewpoint and to which audience are they and the findings based on them directed.
- The reality that while any significant recovery is in progress, putting time and priority into learning processes and providing documented lessons is difficult to justify funding from the pool of available resources. A system level solution to this is required commensurate with system benefits.

- The high reliance in reported cases on ‘triangulation’ through interviews from a range of involved and interested parties, not necessarily the most influential or informed, nor connected with assessment criteria of recovery outcomes.

Recommended Actions

From these observations and conclusions, a number of recommended actions have been identified. These are put forward for consideration in the context of the Emergency Management System Improvement Programme, in collaboration with CDEM Groups and are summarised below.

Priority Area	Recommended Action
1. Develop a National Framework for Recovery Governance	Consolidate from the many legislative, policy, and guidance materials, an integrated framework for recovery governance that can be widely promoted. This would be led by a set of principles and normative programme characteristics that follow from wide discussion across the emergency management system.
2. Codify Recovery Governance Options	Develop a practical ‘Recovery Governance Options Toolkit’ with guiding considerations, example arrangements, and templates for local-regional-national adaptation. This would at national level be a resource to draw on in considering options for recovery governance arrangements to inform the ‘Recovery Settings’ decision-making framework when it is needed for national level events. At local/regional level it would assist decision-making on preferred arrangements for both pre-and post-event recovery planning and activation. It should be the authoritative source of lessons learnt on governance arrangements from other recoveries.
3. Mandate Recovery Readiness Benchmarks	Define minimum expectations for pre and post-event recovery planning and governance capability in Group Plans. This should include the values, leadership style and preferred behaviours that underpin the role of mandated recovery governance entities, including Joint Committees.
4. Support Collaborative Structures	Create a nationally endorsed toolkit for establishing and maintaining collaborative recovery governance arrangements across all of the sector environments. This includes alliancing models and should draw on lessons learnt through practical examples.
5. Link Recovery Governance to Risk Financing	Develop guidance on how recovery funding arrangements interrelate with governance structures and accountability requirements. Look to practice both elsewhere and locally such as through recent alliancing arrangements and use of mechanisms such as NIFFCo.

**6. Lessons
Management
System**

Establish a methodology for assessing recovery effectiveness and success. This should inform a national database of recovery governance lessons through case studies and a mechanism for tracking lessons learning through system improvement

Appendix 1: Extract from Recovery Scorecard Assessment Tool – Options for recovery coordination and governance arrangements by severity index descriptors²⁵⁴

Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe	Catastrophic
Recovery Coordination				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some local CDEM recovery coordination required to establish recovery priorities, processes, and transition from emergency to recovery • Regional Recovery Group in monitoring mode to provide support if requested • Minimal to no national recovery support required beyond BAU central govt service delivery • Recovery delivery undertaken by BAU agencies through their own systems and funding streams with some oversight by the local Recovery Manager • Central government agencies provide recovery support through their existing BAU capacity – this may include CDEM payments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Recovery Office/s lead recovery coordination with support from the Regional Recovery Desk/Office • National Recovery Desk in monitoring mode and providing support as and when requested • A moderate level of coordination required between local & regional councils and other recovery partners • Some collaborative planning, joint communication and information sharing amongst recovery partners required • Some involvement of central government in resource allocation and support • NGO’s mobilize their regional resources for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Recovery Office leads recovery coordination in collaboration with Local Recovery Office’s • National Recovery Desk/Office actively providing support • Significant coordination needed between local & regional councils, central government, and other partners • Active joint planning, communication and information sharing required between all recovery partners • Central government provides substantial support and coordination of resources • NGO’S mobilize their national resources to support recovery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A national recovery structure is established that enables and facilitates multi-agency, all-of-government coordination, and delivery at all levels • Recovery Office’s established at all levels • National Recovery Coordination Group / National Recovery Manager / Notice of National Transition period • Central government has critical role in in funding and response strategies • International assistance may be required, coordinated by central government • International NGO’s actively support local NGO’s and community recovery organisations working in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A national recovery structure is established that enables and facilitates multi-agency, all-of-government coordination, and delivery at all levels • Recovery Office’s established at all levels • National Recovery Manager / National Coordination Group leading / National Notice of Transition Period • International assistance required - coordinated by central government • International NGO’s actively involved and providing surge staff/resources to support local NGO’s and community recovery organisations working in coordination with the national recovery plan

²⁵⁴ See Appendix 2.

Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe	Catastrophic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local NGO's and community groups provide support within their capacity 	<p>localized recovery assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community organisations/groups play an active role in supporting their recovery in coordination with local Recovery Office's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community organisations/groups support recovery efforts as best they can 	<p>coordination with the national recovery plan</p>	
Recovery Governance				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local government takes the lead in overseeing the recovery effort. Coordination with regional and central governments is limited but consultative. Hapu/Iwi Māori consulted on specific issues related to their jurisdiction. Governance structure emphasizes local decision-making and resource allocation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated governance structure involving local, regional, and central governments. Local government leads the recovery efforts with support and guidance from regional authorities. Central government provides resources, technical assistance, and policy direction. Hapu/Iwi Māori are actively engaged in decision-making processes related to their communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated governance structure with strong collaboration among all levels of government. Local government coordinates recovery activities with oversight from regional and central authorities. Central government plays a significant role in resource allocation, strategic planning, and policy coordination. Hapu/Iwi Māori have a formal role in governance structures, contributing to decision-making and implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centralized governance structure with a unified and coordinated approach. Central government takes the lead in overseeing and coordinating all aspects of the recovery effort. Regional and local governments operate under the direction of the central authority. Hapu/Iwi Māori have a recognized and influential role in governance, ensuring cultural considerations and community needs are addressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative governance structure involving all levels of government and external partners. Central government establishes a dedicated recovery authority with broad powers and responsibilities. Regional and local governments work in close coordination with the central recovery authority. Hapu/Iwi Māori are integral members of the governance structure, with decision-making powers and direct involvement in recovery planning and implementation.

Appendix 2: Severity Rating to Guide What Constitutes a Significant Disaster Event²⁵⁵ - Severity Index Descriptors

Minor: Minimal disruption and damage, affecting a small area or few individuals, some modified business-as-usual (BAU) service delivery may be required to support recovery and little external assistance needed.

Moderate: Some property damage and minor injuries, affecting a larger area or more people, requiring local response efforts and possibly some external assistance. A modified or enhanced level of BAU service delivery may be required to coordinate and support recovery efforts.

Major: Significant disruption and damage to infrastructure and community life, causing injuries and requiring substantial resources dedicated local & regional recovery resource and support to coordinate recovery efforts.

Severe: Extensive and widespread impact, causing severe damage and multiple casualties, with long-term recovery needs requiring dedicated local, regional, and national recovery resource and support to coordinate and sustain the recovery effort.

Catastrophic: Overwhelming destruction with extensive loss of life and extensive infrastructure damage, necessitating immense resources, national or international aid, and prolonged dedicated recovery efforts.

²⁵⁵ Recovery Capability Development Group, 2024, *Recovery Scorecard Assessment Tool*.

Appendix 3: Case Study Documents Review/Interview Questions

Range of perspectives to be considered as is possible/practical through reviewed documents and interviews includes Iwi/Māori, CDEM Group (from among Joint Cttee, CEG, Group Manager, Group Recovery Manager, Recovery Entities (e.g. Regional Recovery Agency), local councils (Mayor, Local Recovery Manager), national agencies (NEMA, CRU, DIA), Academics and Researchers, Community organisations.

Institutional Attribute for Effective Recovery	Pre-Event Preparedness	Post-Event Recovery Activation and Delivery
<p>1. Clear Roles, Responsibilities, Structures and Processes Well-defined responsibilities across all levels of government, private sector, NGOs, and communities towards integration across levels and sectors demonstrating collaborative governance.</p>	<p>Q. Pre-event plans/indication of roles definition, responsibility assignment, structures, and processes for delivery/integration. Q. Is there an indication of vertical and horizontal integration design thinking through identified structures and processes to support collaborative governance. Q. Policy support through predefined legal frameworks and instruments anticipated as being necessary to guide recovery actions and their degree of seamlessness across levels. Q. Pre-established disaster recovery funds and mechanisms that expedite their distribution are in place, if required. Q. Level of pre-event training and exercising for activation readiness, with appointees/ likely participant recovery agency partners involved. Q. Do authorities at regional and local levels reflect the principle of subsidiarity, enabling decisions to be made at the lowest practical level with resources necessary to implement them. Q. Is there evidence of capacity building that supports decentralised governance of recovery. Q. Is there role clarity between local and regional levels.</p>	<p>Q. Capacity assessment or other evaluation undertaken early to determine whether preexisting arrangements would be adequate/conscious evaluation of ‘structural’ option(s) against defined criteria Q. Why were the adopted arrangements at least in overall structure the one used for recovery...how did they change from pre-event structure/did it evolve/change as recovery progressed and if so how. Q. Did identified structures and processes evidence in practice horizontal and vertical integration to support collaborative governance. Q. Level of definition of roles/responsibilities incl all levels and sectors, and was pace at which activation occurred appropriate, or were there delays. Q. Was there a clearly defined lead agency that actively sought vertical as well as horizontal integration Q. Was activation of necessary legal frameworks and instruments and availability of disaster recovery funds and mechanisms timely and fit-for-purpose Q. Do authorities at regional and local levels reflect the principle of subsidiarity, enabling decisions to be made at the lowest practical level with resources necessary to implement them.</p>

		<p>Q. Is there evidence of capacity building that supports decentralised governance of recovery.</p> <p>Q. Is there role clarity between local and regional levels with local councils or committees empowered to take the lead in assessing community-specific needs and initiating recovery plans.</p> <p>Q> Did appointees to main recovery roles have prior experience to bring to bear on the recovery.</p> <p>Q. How were staff working in recovery supported to sustain ongoing recovery capacity, given the typically extended timeframes/intensity of the work.</p>
<p>2. Strong Leadership and Political Will Effective leadership to prioritize recovery and build consensus</p>	<p>Q. Pre-event identification of likely recovery leadership roles/appointees and training/socialisation to support that.</p>	<p>Q. Who/how did the ‘recovery leaders’ arise/express themselves, evidencing visibly committed, politically respected, competent, and empathetic leadership</p> <p>Q. Relative leadership roles and behaviours of ‘formal’ political and management level leaders.</p>
<p>3. Transparent and Accountable Decision-Making Ensuring that decisions are evidence-based, transparent, and subject to oversight. Openness and clarity in decision-making processes. Clear lines of responsibility and accountability.</p>	<p>Q. Indications pre-event of how information management and reporting arrangements would apply.</p> <p>Q. Indications of who/how recovery decisions would be made and communicated.</p>	<p>Q. Transparency of design and operation of decision-making processes across recovery governance participants/to affected communities.</p> <p>Q. How did/does vertical and relational accountabilities work across all levels and sectors of recovery governance participants.</p>
<p>4. Community Centred Approach Involving local communities in decision-making, planning, and implementation of</p>	<p>Q. Pre-event plan and preparedness for likely surge in communications and engagement requirements.</p>	

<p>recovery efforts assist ownership of the results of those decisions.</p>		<p>Q. Indication of level of use of consultative and collaborative techniques and appreciation of the differences. Q. Level of community input achieved/engagement with community leaders/spokespeople.</p>
<p>5. Inclusivity and Equity Addressing the needs of vulnerable groups/disproportionately impacted communities, ensuring equitable resource distribution, and involving diverse stakeholders.</p>	<p>Q. Pre-event planning consideration of possible/likely vulnerable sections of the community/localities and preparations for disaster response/recovery accordingly.</p>	<p>Q. How were the needs of vulnerable groups/disproportionately impacted communities addressed in recovery planning and implementation. Q. Were representatives of those sections of the community/localities included in recovery decision-making, planning, and implementation.</p>
<p>6. Adaptability and Flexibility Structures that allow adjustments based on changing conditions, needs, and lessons learned. Governance structures should be flexible enough to address emerging needs and challenges.</p>	<p>Q. How were lessons learnt from previous/other relevant event recoveries factored into pre-event planning. Q. Were structures and processes tested through exercises in relation to differing event scenarios.</p>	<p>Q. How did structures and processes evolve/change through the various stages of recovery through to eventual exiting for 'formal' recovery coordination/programmes Q. What/who/how triggered these changes – planned/forced change. Q. How flexible are resource allocations/(re)prioritisations in adjusting to real-time assessments.</p>
<p>7. Resilience Building Incorporating long-term resilience building into recovery plans. Recovery efforts should not just rebuild what was lost but also reduce vulnerabilities and enhance preparedness for future disasters, based on a 'Build Back Better' philosophy and approach.</p>	<p>Q. Indications of how resilience thinking and planning has been factored into pre-event recovery planning. Q. Has recovery planning been linked/integrated with resilience initiatives and ongoing sustainability efforts.</p>	<p>Q. Indications of how resilience thinking and planning has been factored into post-event recovery planning and decision-making, including to restore and develop social capital and enhance social cohesion. Q. Has/is retrofitting of critical infrastructure and its replacement acting to reduce impacts, recovery time, and costs by minimizing likely damages.</p>
<p>8. Integration of Technology and Innovation Leveraging technology for impact assessment, resource allocation, and communication. Increasing information flows to gather,</p>	<p>Q. How is technology and innovation through technology reflected in pre-event preparations.</p>	<p>Q. How is technology being used to enhance recovery efforts, and awareness. and use of technology innovation indicated.</p>

<p>integrate, and disseminate information effectively to enhance decision-making and actions by all recovery actors.</p>	<p>Q. How is information management planning figuring in pre-event preparedness, anticipating the markedly increased demand for information and reporting post-event. Q. How aware and responsive are actual/potential recovery leaders to the potential of and investment in technology that would support recovery.</p>	<p>Q. How has technology been constructively used to enhance recovery decision-making and reporting.</p>
<p>9. Learning-Oriented Processes Incorporating lessons from previous disasters to improve future responses, reducing mistakes and improves preparedness for future crises. Reflecting monitoring results indicating shortfalls in plans and operational adjustments as recovery proceeds.</p>	<p>Q. Indications of previous/other event lessons learned exercises and adjustments to arrangements/plans accordingly.</p>	<p>Q. How lesson learnt re being documented and evaluated for in- progress adjustments/for later review. Q. Level of recovery governance leaders/forums engagement in consideration of lessons learnt.</p>
<p>10. Long-Term Vision and Sustainability Integration of recovery plans with regional development goals, investment in green infrastructure and renewable energy, and policies aligned with climate change adaptation.</p>	<p>Q. Do pre-event recovery plans reflect longer-term land use planning and sustainability initiatives, particularly in relation to climate change adaptation. Q. Do pre-event recovery plans reflect understanding of most likely and maximum credible event scenarios for framing recovery plans and sizing recovery capacities (including surge capacities).</p>	<p>Q. How are immediate needs being balanced with long-term development and environmental sustainability. Q. Have long term recovery goals been articulated (and how) and shorter term steps been aligned towards them.</p>

Appendix 4: Interviewees	
Name	Affiliation
Professor Bruce Glavovic	Massey University
Dr Suzanne Vallance	Manaaki Whenua, Landcare Research
Jim Palmer	Fmr CE Waimakariri District Council
Malcolm Millar	Manager, Risk and Recovery, NEMA
Simon Randall	Policy and Advocacy Manager, LGNZ
Julia Blyth	Principal Advisor – Strategic and Operational Recovery, NEMA
Richard Ball	Canterbury CDEM Group Recovery Manager
Sandra James	Fmr Social Recovery Manager, Consultant
Paul Barker	Partnership Director, DIA
Karen Thomas	Adjunct Research Fellow, VUW
Dan Neely	Group Recovery Manager, WREMO
Professor David Johnson	Massey University
Jane Parfitt	Fmr Recovery Adviser to Kaikōura DC CE
Sharon Mason	Fmr CE, Buller DC
Steve Gibling	Fmr Interim CE, Buller DC
Katrina Casey	CE, Cyclone Recovery Unit
Scott Dray	Recovery Specialist, WREMO
Will Doughty	KDC CE ex SCIRT and NCTIR
Caroline Dumas	Partnership Director, DIA
Jessica Petersen	Recovery Adviser Hastings DC 2023
Claire Brown	GM, West Coast Group Recover Manager
Malcolm Alexander	Fmr LGNZ CE and member TAG (2017 Review)
Blair O’Keefe	Chairperson, Hawke’s Bay Regional Recovery Agency
Ian Wilson	NEMA Regional Emergency Management Advisor
Ross McLeod	CE, Hawkes Bay Regional Recovery Agency
Nigel Bickle	CE, Hastings District Council
Alex Walker	Mayor, Central Hawkes Bay DC
Doug Tate	CE, CHBDC
Craig Little	Mayor, Wairoa DC
Lawrence Yule	Crown Manager for Wairoa DC and HBRC flood resilience
Danny Smith	Recovery Manager, KDC 2016-17
Simon Taylor	Programme Manager, Wairarapa Recovery Office
Richard Hills	Councillor, Auckland Council
Mace Ward	Group Recovery Manager, Auckland Council
Linda Greenhalgh	Community and Social Recovery Manager, Auckland Council
Wayne Brown	Principal Recovery Advisor, Auckland Council
Mark Trüdinger	Recovery Specialist /Group Recovery Manager, Northland EM

Appendix 5: Good Governance Principles And Success Factors For Regional And Local Recovery Arrangements²⁵⁶

Governance principles

Effective leadership and good governance are essential for providing clarity of roles, responsibilities and priorities during recovery as well as ensuring the needs of affected communities are met. Recovery governance focuses on strategic decisions. Below are six good governance principles to support the establishment of regional and local recovery arrangements.

1. *improves performance and community outcomes*
 2. *has a defined vision for the future of the community*
 3. *takes a holistic view of recovery; understands the impact of decisions on others*
 4. *ensures there is accountability and oversight of operations*
 5. *manages risk*
 6. *finds the right balance between making short-term gains and building long-term outcomes*
1. *Improves performance and community outcomes* through relationship building and management

Governance at all levels of this recovery will strongly determine recovery activity effectiveness and ultimately community outcomes. Strong and effective relationships through all levels of recovery governance will be crucial to ensure good recovery outcomes for communities. Effective relationships will support understanding of roles, responsibilities, and the strengths of partner agencies, and will build trust and credibility between agencies and communities over time

2. *A defined vision for the future of communities*

Members of regional and local recovery governance groups know and understand what drives their communities, their values, strengths and vulnerabilities, and needs and priorities. They can use this knowledge, lead conversations with communities and co-design local and regional community visions for the future which recovery activities can enable.

3. *Takes a holistic view of recovery and understands the impact of decisions on others*

Regional and local governance needs to maintain a strategic and holistic view of recovery which places the community at the heart of decision making. It recognises that recovery extends beyond just restoring physical assets or providing welfare services. This holistic view will support communities to positively adapt to their changed reality and explore options for further positive change and enhancement. Regional and local governance need to consider the impact their decisions will have on different parts of their communities and others outside their area, as well as advocate for their communities when others decisions may impact them.

4. *Ensures there is accountability and oversight of operations*

Regional and local governance groups should have accountability and oversight arrangements in place to demonstrate performance in recovery. This will allow them to monitor recovery progress and ensure changes are made where necessary to against priorities and outcomes.

²⁵⁶ Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, National Emergency Management Recovery Agency, 13 March 2023, *National Recovery Arrangements for Cyclone Gabrielle Guidance*.

Recovery can be expensive, and groups and public entities managing recovery need to be accountable to communities for performance and public funding spent.³ There will also be accountability lines to Government in relation to any locally allocated funding.

5. *Manages risk*

Risk is inherent in recovery. Regional and local governance groups will manage risk at their level and elevate risks to an appropriate national level if required.

6. *Finds the right balance between making short-term gains and building long-term outcomes*

Recovery governance needs to maintain a strategic focus on the immediate, medium, and long term objectives, rather than serving the immediate needs only. This recovery will provide a window of opportunity for major change and betterment in communities however governance at all levels may need to make sensitive and pragmatic trade-offs to achieve long-term recovery outcomes.

Success factors of recovery management

At an operational recovery management level, experience has shown that the presence of the following factors can help ensure a more effective recovery⁴. Regional and local governance groups can also ensure these are considered at an operational level.

1. *Comprehensive scope*: Recovery activities are planned and delivered to support people, their culture, and their place. Recovery efforts must address a continuum that includes individual needs as well as the needs of the community and surrounding environment.

2. *Effective decision-making and coordination*: This includes characteristics such as defining stakeholder roles and responsibilities; coordinating response activities with corresponding recovery functions; examining recovery alternatives, addressing conflicts, and making informed and timely decisions; and establishing ways to measure and track progress, ensure accountability, make adjustments, and reinforce realistic expectations.

3. *Integration of community recovery planning processes*: Recovery planning should be linked to other planning efforts and processes occurring in the community such as long-term planning and community-led planning, and criteria should be developed for identifying and prioritising key recovery actions and projects.

4. *Well-managed recovery*: Pre-emergency partnerships at all levels of government, with the private sector and with non-government organisations should be effectively leveraging resources; seeking out and successfully using outside resources; establishing guidance for moving from response to recovery; and planning for surging personnel demands post-emergency.

5. *Proactive community engagement, public participation, and public awareness*: Stakeholders work together to maximise the use of available resources; creating post-emergency recovery plans that can be implemented quickly; and making sure public information is actionable, effective, and accessible to keep everyone informed throughout the recovery process.

6. *Effective financial and programme management*: Funding sources that can finance recovery are understood, external funding can be accessed, systems for internal financial and procurement are in place and the use of local businesses to support recovery of the local economy is maximised.

7. *Organisational flexibility*: Recovery arrangements at all government levels that can evolve, adapt, and develop new skills and capacities to address changing recovery needs are in place; and facilitate compliance with laws, regulations, and policies; and ensure flexible staffing and management arrangements.

8. *Resilient rebuilding*: Taking into account ecological, environmental, and local capacity; adopts sustainable and inclusive building techniques, building codes and land use practices; and incorporates risk reduction strategies into local governance and decision making.

9. *Health integration*: Health and wellbeing considerations and implications are included in recovery decision making.

Appendix 6: Extract from MSD Social Sector Plan for Recovery, 2023

9

Current state will continue to evolve and change – We have identified areas of emerging need

Regional needs are different and some pre-date the weather events and have been exacerbated by them. There are some common concerns including preparedness for winter and anxiety about further extreme weather events. Regional and local plans, in development, will provide more detail on the scale of these issues.

Heat map based on emerging areas of need ■ Emerging areas of need ● Significant support needed
Areas of need are dynamic – e.g. groups of people may move between regions.

Tai Tokerau | low lying coastal areas

- > Region has pre-existing vulnerabilities including housing supply/quality and infrastructure issues such as water and wastewater systems.
- > Ongoing cost of satellite communications to maintain connectivity.
- > Workforce shortages for disability support.
- > Poor housing quality, many houses needing repairs.
- > Cost of living impacts.
- > High proportions of Māori (36%) (2018 census).
- > Rooding access issues – isolation, supply chain, travel to work, training and whānau.
- > A number of Marae have been impacted.

Tamaki Makaurau | West Coast beaches

- > Compounding issues from previous events, low resilience.
- > Psychosocial support – easy pathways for individual, whānau and community level support needed.
- > Cost of living issues.
- > Large number of displaced households and time-limited financial support for housing coming to an end (incl. insurance, mortgage holidays).
- > Some displaced people un-insured or under-insured with limited pathways to replace or repair.
- > Labour shortage/work opportunities in construction.
- > Muriwai is without public water supply.
- > Safety and security concerns for property and retail owners.
- > Five early learning centres and kohanga reo closed.
- > Many Marae have been impacted.
- > Significant budget cuts proposed by Auckland Council will have flow on impacts for community groups involved in recovery.
- > Some early indications of increase in demand for family violence prevention services in some areas.
- > Community Services and Marae support.
- > Neglect and isolation of older people.

Waikato | Hauraki, Thames Coromandel, Port Waikato, Waitomo Taupō

- > Compounding issues from previous events, low resilience.
- > Rooding access issues – isolation, supply chain, travel to work, training and whānau.
- > Healthcare – access for emergency vehicles, access to acute/planned healthcare, and residents missing hospital appointments.
- > Communication issues – lack of phone and internet.
- > Likely redundancies (35% businesses self-reporting).
- > Potential long term employment impacts in forestry sector.
- > Permanent Housing availability to retain workforce and attract skilled workers to the region.
- > Demand on local Social Services, Health, Community Services and Marae support.
- > Neglect and isolation of older people.
- > Many houses needing repairs (Hauraki).

Bay of Plenty | Te Kaha

- > Iwi leaders have raised concerns about whānau not accessing support.
- > Whānau from other affected areas are returning to region, putting additional pressure on services.
- > Ongoing rooding connectivity to East Coast / Tairāwhiti.
- > Cell phone and internet connectivity.

Tairāwhiti | Wairoa, Te Karaka, Tokomaru Bay

- > Region has pre-existing vulnerabilities including housing supply/quality and infrastructure issues (ongoing power instability).
- > Low levels of income, no or under-insurance.
- > Large number of displaced households and time-limited financial support for housing coming to an end (incl. insurance, mortgage holidays).
- > Psychosocial impacts in schools (children, teachers and principals).
- > Psychosocial support – easy pathways for individual, whānau and community level support needed.
- > Rooding access issues – isolation, supply chain, travel to work, training and whānau. Significant for Wairoa who still can't access the Hawke's Bay.
- > Safety and security concerns for property and retail owners.
- > Cost of living issues.
- > Workforce shortages for disability support.
- > Many Marae and urupā have been significantly impacted, loss of taonga.
- > Prediction of high employment impacts.
- > Neglect and isolation of older people.
- > Kohanga reo closed.
- > Some early indications of increase in demand for sexual and family violence services in some areas.
- > Over 50% of the population identifies as Māori (52%: 2018 census): 84% in Tokomaru Bay, 72% in Wairoa.

Hawke's Bay | Esk Valley, Puketapu, Omaha, Waiohiki, Tāngōio, Pōrangahau

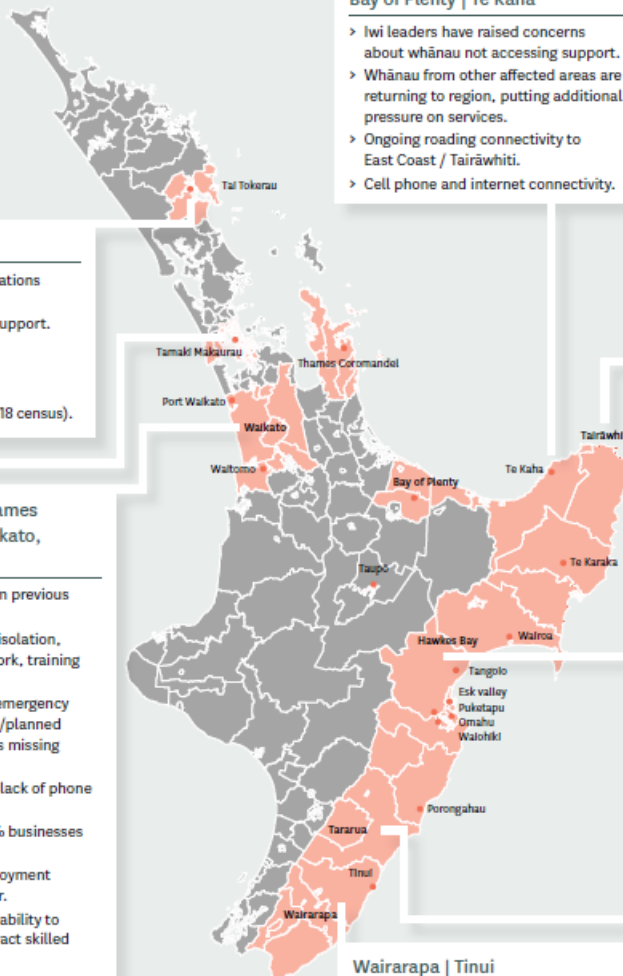
- > Rooding access issues – isolation, supply chain, travel to work, training and whānau.
- > Large number of displaced households and time-limited financial support for housing coming to an end (including insurance, mortgage holidays).
- > Many houses and some papakāinga impacted. Lack of housing supply and temporary housing is not always fit for purpose for whānau.
- > Psychosocial support – easy pathways for individual, whānau and community level support needed.
- > Residents reporting sense of hopelessness and anger which may have contributed to recent suicides.
- > Safety and security concerns for people, property and retail owners.
- > Cost of living issues.
- > Volunteer burnout and insufficient volunteers to meet demand.
- > Workforce impacts in horticulture, viticulture, tourism. Increasing unemployment of particular concern to ethnic communities including RSE workers.
- > Reduced construction workers available to repair damage to Whaikaha funded housing modifications.
- > Significant damage to Marae and urupā, loss of taonga.
- > Some schools, early learning centres and kohanga reo closed, or operating from alternative sites.
- > Neglect and isolation of older people.
- > Some early indications of increase in demand for family violence prevention services in some areas.

Wairarapa | Tinui

- > Psychosocial support – easy pathways for individual, whānau and community level support needed.
- > Rooding access issues – supply chain.
- > Cost of living issues.
- > Labour shortages.
- > One school operating from alternative site.

Tararua

- > Psychosocial support – easy pathways for individual, whānau and community level support needed.



9 Focus areas for ongoing response

Each area has some common and some unique challenges and is at a different point of their recovery. In some cases current service delivery is sufficient, in others more targeted support is needed. Social sector agencies will focus service delivery on each region's emerging needs. Regional and local plans, in development, will provide more detail on the scale of additional support needed. This is a 'moment in time' assessment as at June 2023 and needs will change over time.

Assessment of level of support required

Supports are in place
More support is required
Significant support needed in specific communities
Significant support needed across region

Definition

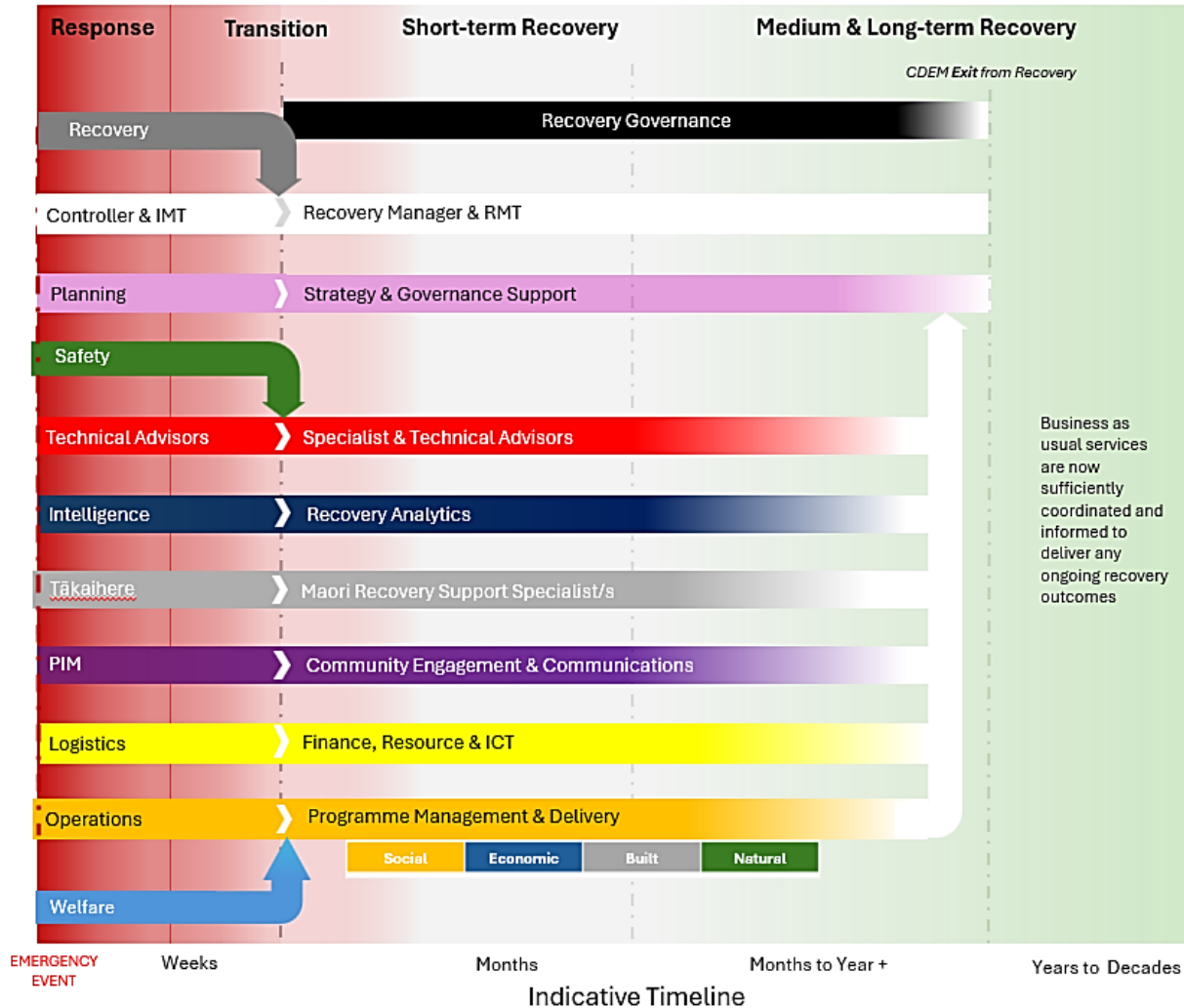
Existing supports likely to be sufficient to meet identified need, or to be able to be pivoted to meet identified need.
Some additional investment in existing supports is required to meet identified need, likely over the medium term (1-2 years).
Significant investment into existing supports or new support are required to meet identified need in a specific communities, and could be over a longer term (3+ years).
Significant investment into existing supports or new support are required to meet identified need across the region, and could be over a longer term (3+ years).

Regions

Dimensions	Te Tai Tokerau	Tamaki Makaurau	Waikato	Tairāwhiti	Bay of Plenty, Waitomo	Hawke's Bay	Taranua	Wairarapa
Welfare	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	More support is required	More support is required	Supports are in place	More support is required	Supports are in place	More support is required
Accommodation	Supports are in place	Significant support needed across region	Supports are in place	Significant support needed across region	Supports are in place	Significant support needed across region	Supports are in place	Supports are in place
Mental wellbeing Psychological component of 'psychosocial'.*	Supports are in place	More support is required	More support is required	Significant support needed across region	Supports are in place	Significant support needed across region	More support is required	More support is required
Employment Maintain current support	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	More support is required	More support is required	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place
Health	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	More support is required	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place
Iwi and community infrastructure	Supports are in place	More support is required	Supports are in place	Significant support needed for 1 or a small number of communities	Significant support needed for 1 or a small number of communities	Significant support needed for 1 or a small number of communities	Supports are in place	More support is required
Education	Supports are in place	More support is required	Supports are in place	More support is required	Supports are in place	More support is required	More support is required	More support is required
Perceptions of safety (incl. FVSV)*	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place
Communication	More support is required	Significant support needed for 1 or a small number of communities	More support is required	More support is required	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place
Provider/agency infrastructure	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place	Supports are in place

* Needs in this dimension may increase over time as the long-term stressors relating to the weather events (unemployment, displacement) become more apparent. Causes may become more complex.

Appendix 7: Overview of Core Recovery Function Roles and Progression from CIMS



RECOVERY FUNCTIONS

Specialist & Technical Advisors	Recovery Analytics
For example: Wellbeing & Safety; Secretarial & Administration Services, GIS, Insurance, Legal, Building Engineers, Human Resource etc.	For example: • Analysis • Intelligence Assessments • Forecasting • Monitoring
Māori Recovery Support Specialist/s	Community Engagement & Communications
For example: • Māori relationship management • Planning & coordination with Māori communities	For example: • Coordination of community engagement • Coordination of recovery comms
Finance, Resource & ICT	Strategy & Governance Support
For example: • Financial management • Resource management • Information management systems	For example: • Recovery Plan • Long-term Strategic Plans • Policy development • Governance reporting • Exit Plan
Programme Management & Delivery	
For example: • Project coordination • Project planning support & reporting • Any ongoing operations & welfare delivery • Relationship management	

Source: Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning Project, 2025 *Recovery Function Guide* - descriptions of recovery function roles for short-term recovery operations,