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National Disaster Resilience Strategy

Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management

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Introduction

This document provides a summary of the National Disaster Resilience Strategy, a 10 year strategy made under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002. The summary provides an introduction to the purpose of the Strategy, an overview of the key points, and recommendations for different groups in society.

Purpose of the National Disaster Resilience Strategy

The purpose of the Strategy is to outline the vision and long-term goals for civil defence emergency management (CDEM) in New Zealand. CDEM in New Zealand is governed by the CDEM Act, which:

- promotes the sustainable management of hazards in a way that contributes to safety and wellbeing;
- encourages wide participation, including communities, in the process to manage risk;

- provides for planning and preparation for emergencies, and for response and recovery;
- requires local authorities to coordinate reduction, readiness, response and recovery activities through regional groups;
- provides a basis for the integration of national and local planning and activity; and
- encourages coordination across a wide range of agencies, recognising that emergencies are multi-agency events affecting all parts of society.

We interpret these as an overarching intent for a **resilient New Zealand**.

This is important because New Zealanders are, and will continue to be, at risk from a broad range of hazards.

Many of the risks we face both now and in the future can be readily identified. However, we also need to recognise that the future is uncertain: major, unexpected, and hard-to-predict events are inevitable. Within this uncertain future environment, resilience is an important requirement for success. Resilience is our—or a system's—ability to anticipate, minimise, absorb, respond to, adapt to, and recover from disruptive events.

Given our risk landscape, and the uncertainty of the wider domestic and global environment, it is important for us to take deliberate steps to improve our resilience and protect the prosperity and wellbeing of New Zealand—of

individuals, communities, businesses, our society, the economy, and the nation as a whole.

We can do much to reduce our risks, through both a risk management approach, and by building broader societal resilience. We can also ensure we have effective processes in place for responding to and recovering from emergencies and other types of disruption when they do happen.

The Strategy sets out what we as New Zealanders expect in respect of a resilient New Zealand, and what we want to achieve over the next 10 years. It explicitly links resilience to the protection and growth of living standards for all New Zealanders, and promotes a wide, whole-of-society, participatory and inclusive approach.

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The Strategy provides the vision and strategic direction, including outlining priorities and objectives for increasing New Zealand's resilience to disasters. The detail of **how** those objectives are to be achieved sits in an accompanying work plan, alongside other related key documents including the **National CDEM Plan and Guide**, the **National Security Handbook**, CDEM Group Plans, and a range of other supporting policies and plans.

Promoting an inclusive approach: resilience and people disproportionately affected by disaster

The Strategy promotes a holistic approach to resilience to deliver improved outcomes for New Zealanders. Disaster risk and disaster impacts reach all parts of society; so, to the greatest degree possible, disaster resilience should be integrated in to all parts of society.

Building resilience across all parts of society requires broad engagement and partnerships. It also requires empowerment, and inclusive, accessible and non-discriminatory participation, paying special attention to people disproportionately affected by disasters.

Understanding different vulnerabilities is important for reducing risks and ensuring particular needs are met in response and recovery. However, it is also important to recognise that many people and groups who face hardship or challenges in their everyday lives, also have tremendous capacity and capability. A strengths-based approach identifying different protective and adaptive factors and opportunities, can enable, empower, and give agency to groups who might otherwise be disproportionately affected. It can also significantly add to the richness and effectiveness of emergency management

planning, and ensure the outcomes from disasters are as equitable as possible.

Resilience and disabled people

Disabled people can face particular challenges during and after disasters. These include lack of access to information and communications, inaccessible facilities and services, lack of access to needed support resources, disintegration of social connections, degradation of the environment, and lack of inclusive and responsive policy frameworks.

Internationally, there is an increasing drive to design and implement disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and resilience practices.

The New Zealand Disability Strategy promotes a twin-track approach to inclusion: ensuring that all mainstream services are inclusive of, and accessible to, disabled people, and ensuring that there are disability-specific specialised support or services for those who need them.

Several factors have been identified that support the resilience of disabled people. These include:

Preparedness: supporting the design and implementation of resilience-focused emergency preparedness that includes disabled people, their family/whānau, caregivers and key people and/or groups in their community.

Participation and inclusion: sustainable solutions that benefit everyone in communities emerge if people with disabilities are included in emergency management planning and implementation.

Diversity within disability: effective disability-inclusive emergency management strategies require recognition of the needs and capabilities of the diverse range of lived experiences of people with disabilities.

Collaboration: following disasters, disability-inclusive response, recovery and regeneration activities require the contributions of a diverse range of stakeholders for collective impact and effective recovery.

Build back better: using disasters as an opportunity to enhance the social, economic, environmental and physical conditions of communities, including incorporating universal design.

In addition to these, it is important that emergency managers, emergency responders, and those supporting communities generally, are aware of and competent in disability-inclusive planning, response, and recovery, so that disabled people can participate in resilience, response, and recovery on the same basis as others.

The Strategy

The vision of the Strategy is that:

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

In order to achieve this vision, the Strategy has an overarching goal:

To strengthen the resilience of the nation by managing risks, being ready to respond to and recover from emergencies, and by empowering and supporting individuals, organisations, and communities to act for themselves and others, for the safety and wellbeing of all.

We will do this through three main priorities:

1. Managing risks
2. Effective response to and recovery from emergencies
3. Enabling, empowering, and supporting community resilience

Each priority has six objectives.

Objectives of the Strategy

The six objectives designed to progress the priority of **managing risks** are **at all levels**:

1: Identify and understand risk scenarios (including the components of hazard, exposure, vulnerability, and capacity), and use this knowledge to inform decision-making

2: Put in place organisational structures and identify necessary processes—including being informed by community perspectives—to understand and act on reducing risks

3: Build risk awareness, risk literacy, and risk management capability, including the ability to assess risk

4: Address gaps in risk reduction policy (particularly in the light of climate change adaptation)

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5: Ensure development and investment practices, particularly in the built and natural environments, are risk-aware, taking care not to create any unnecessary or unacceptable new risk

6: Understand the economic impact of disaster and disruption, and the need for investment in resilience. Identify and develop financial mechanisms that support and incentivise resilience activities.

The six objectives designed to progress the priority of **effective response to and recovery from emergencies** are:

7: Implement measures to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of people is at the heart of the emergency management system

8: Build the relationship between emergency management organisations and iwi/groups representing Māori, to ensure greater recognition, understanding, and integration of iwi/Māori perspectives and tikanga in emergency management

9: Strengthen the national leadership of the emergency management system to provide clearer direction and more consistent response to and recovery from emergencies

10: Ensure it is clear who is responsible for what, nationally, regionally, and locally, in response and recovery; enable and empower community-level response, and ensure it is connected into wider coordinated responses, when and where necessary

11: Build the capability and capacity of the emergency management workforce to enable effective response and recovery

12: Improve the information and intelligence system that supports decision-making in emergencies to enable informed, timely, and consistent decisions by stakeholders and the public

The six objectives designed to progress the priority of **enabling, empowering, and supporting community resilience** are, **at all levels:**

13: Enable and empower individuals, households, organisations, and businesses to build their resilience, paying particular attention to those people and groups who may be disproportionately affected by disaster

14: Cultivate an environment for social connectedness which promotes a culture of mutual help; embed a collective impact approach to building community resilience

15: Take a whole of city/district/region approach to resilience, including to embed strategic objectives for resilience in key plans and strategies

16: Address the capacity and adequacy of critical infrastructure systems, and upgrade them as practicable, according to risks identified

17: Embed a strategic, resilience approach to recovery planning that takes account of risks identified, recognises long-term priorities and opportunities to build back better, and ensures the needs of the affected are at the centre of recovery processes

18: Recognise the importance of culture to resilience, including to support the continuity of cultural places, institutions, and activities, and to enable the participation of different cultures in resilience

What can I do?

All readers of the Strategy are encouraged to consider what the priorities and objectives mean for them, their family/whānau, business or organisation, community/hapū, and what they can do to contribute to their own resilience or the resilience of others. Some recommended actions are provided below.

Individuals and families/whānau

1. Understand your risk—Be aware of the hazards or disruptions you could experience, your exposure—the things you have that are at risk from those disruptions, and

your vulnerability—how you and your things might be adversely affected.

2. Reduce your risk factors—Think about the range of ways you could reduce your exposure or vulnerability, and invest in doing so where possible.

3. Future proof where possible—When making new purchases, think about how to future-proof yourself and build in resilience.

4. Prepare yourself and your household—Think about the range of impacts that could occur from emergencies (for example, power, water, or communications outages, access or transport issues, the need to stay in or out of your home for an extended period). Think about the things you would want or need to have available to you during that time. Remember to include animals in your emergency preparedness.

5. Plan for disruption—Plan for disruption; consider how you would meet up with family/whānau and friends if there was a communications outage or access issues.

6. Stay informed—Find out more; talk to others about risk and resilience; find out the different ways you can stay informed during an emergency and how to receive alerts and warnings.

7. Know your neighbours—Get to know your neighbours and participate in your community—you are each other's front line.

Businesses and organisations

1. Understand your risk—Be aware of the hazards or disruptions you could experience, how your assets (people and capital) might be impacted and the strengths and resources available to manage those disruptions.

2. Make resilience a strategic objective and embed it in appropriate actions, plans and strategies—

The continuity of your business (and the wellbeing of the people that rely on your products/services) depends on it.

3. Invest in organisational resilience—By reducing and managing the factors that are contributing to your risk, ensuring comprehensive business continuity planning, and considering and building your ability to respond to the unexpected.

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4. Seek assurances about supply chain resilience—

Seek specific advice and assurances from suppliers as to their business continuity plans, stock carrying policies, exposure to non-supply and supply chain alert processes.

5. Benefit today, benefit tomorrow—Try to find crisis/disaster preparedness solutions that have everyday benefits for your organisation.

6. Consider your social impact—Consider how you can contribute to the resilience of your community, city or district. As well as helping your community, you will also be reducing the risks to your organisation of being disrupted.

7. Keep the long term in mind—Consider the longer-term changes in your environment, for example the impact of climate change, and how you can position your organisation to see these changes as an opportunity.

8. Collaborate with others and build your network—Find others with similar objectives in respect of risk and resilience, and collaborate with them—we are stronger together, and you have much to contribute and gain.

9. Learn about response and recovery—Understand how response and recovery will work in your district or area of interest, and build your own capacity to respond to and recover from disruption.

Communities and hapū

1. Understand your risk—Seek to build a collective understanding of your risks: the hazards or disruptions you could face, your collective exposure in terms of people, animals, property, and assets, and your vulnerabilities—how these could be adversely affected.

2. Reduce your risk factors—Consider whether there are ways to reduce your community's exposure or vulnerabilities—it needn't cost money, but there may be options if it does.

3. Keep the long-term in mind—Consider the longer term changes in your environment, for example, the impact of climate change, and what you could do about them.

4. Benefit today, benefit tomorrow—Try to find risk reduction, readiness, and resilience, solutions that have an everyday benefit to your community. As well as being prepared for tomorrow, you will have a richer community today.

5. Learn about response and recovery—Understand how response to and recovery from emergencies will work in your city or district.

6. Understand your collective resources—Think about what resources you have, now or in an emergency, and how you could put them to work.

7. Make a plan and practice it—Community response and recovery planning helps communities understand how they can help each other after a disaster. Ask your local emergency management office for help if you need it, and practice any plans, as practicable.

8. Organise community events—Communities who know each other are stronger communities—in good times and in bad.

More information

The full version of the National Disaster Resilience Strategy and supporting resources are available online at www.civildefence.govt.nz.