

10. Fire services

Summary The New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS) is responsible for firefighting and other specialist functions including Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) during an emergency. Fire services more broadly include the National Rural Fire Authority, rural fire authorities, and other fire services or brigades, which have roles and responsibilities during response and recovery.

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10.1 Introduction

	Part 5
	Roles and responsibilities
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42	Introduction
	<i>The National Commander of the New Zealand Fire Service, working in support of the Director and the National Controller, is responsible for—</i>
	(a) <i>co-ordinating the fire services; and</i>
	(b) <i>providing resources required to undertake requests for assistance.</i>

10.2 Objective

43	Objective
	<i>The objective of the fire services under this plan is to provide services to minimise the consequences of an emergency for people, property, and the environment.</i>

10.3 Principles

44	Principles
	<i>The principles underlying the role of the New Zealand Fire Service in this plan are to—</i>
	(a) <i>plan for, and prepare to fully participate in, the response to any emergency, while at the same time maintaining the capability to deliver its existing operational mandate; and</i>
	(b) <i>work in concert with the requirements of national, CDEM Group, and local CDEM plans; and</i>
	(c) <i>ensure that fire services incident management structures adhere to, or work within, the direction and principles of the current CIMS structure; and</i>
	(d) <i>develop and maintain the capacity to provide an operational response (including incident management, liaison, and advisory support) to CDEM at the national, CDEM Group, and local level; and</i>
	(e) <i>liaise with other members of the fire services to co-ordinate an effective response to an emergency.</i>

Note – Plan clause 49

In addition to the principles outlined above, the fire services also have responsibilities under the emergency services principles in Section 36 of the *National CDEM Plan 2015*. The overarching emergency services principle is to “ensure that planning encompasses the 4Rs and enables an effective response to all emergencies”.

10.4 Roles of the New Zealand Fire Service in reduction and readiness

45	Roles of the New Zealand Fire Service during reduction and readiness
	(1) <i>The New Zealand Fire Service maintains business continuity plans to ensure that its functions can continue during an emergency.</i>
	(2) <i>Those plans identify key risks, prioritise business, plan for the continuance of critical business, and provide for the redeployment of staff.</i>
	(3) <i>The New Zealand Fire Service emergency and command planning forms the basis for fire services operations, including action in a state of emergency, and refers to and integrates with CDEM plans at national, CDEM Group, and local levels.</i>
	(4) <i>The New Zealand Fire Service participates in multi-agency emergency planning and exercises contributing to a co-ordinated response using the CIMS.</i>
	(5) <i>The New Zealand Fire Service operates and reviews co-ordination schemes between fire brigades in accordance with the Fire Services Act 1975.</i>

The New Zealand Fire Service will work with CDEM Groups and local authorities to ensure community awareness of hazards and risks (for example, tsunami or flooding threats) and will provide input into the development of CDEM Group and local plans, education and/or awareness programmes and campaigns.

The New Zealand Fire Service maintains a number of operational instructions detailing the internal procedures for the management of operational New Zealand Fire Service activities. Operational instructions are further supported by local New Zealand Fire Service procedures, and the *NZFS Guide to CDEM*. This guide outlines specific responsibilities including:

- ◆ CDEM liaison
- ◆ CDEM planning, and
- ◆ actions taken once a state of emergency is declared under the *CDEM Act 2002*.

The *NZFS Guide to CDEM* is available on the Fire Service intranet. It can be obtained by contacting the Fire Service at question@fire.org.nz.

10.5 Roles of the fire services during response and recovery

46 Roles of the fire services during response and recovery

- (1) *The role of the fire services during the response to and recovery from an emergency includes, subject to arrangements agreed between the fire services in relation to a particular emergency,—*
 - (a) *firefighting to control, contain, and extinguish fires; and*
 - (b) *containing releases and spillages of hazardous substances; and*
 - (c) *urban search and rescue (the New Zealand Fire Service is formally recognised as having a heavy urban search and rescue capability and the ability to co-ordinate urban search and rescue within New Zealand, and the capability to carry out urban search and rescue includes the national support team and urban search and rescue task forces (consisting of technicians, medical staff, engineers, and search dogs)); and*
 - (d) *limiting damage, including the salvage of essential material from endangered locations; and*
 - (e) *redistributing water, in consultation with the relevant territorial authorities, for firefighting.*
- (2) *On the declaration of a state of emergency, no additional powers or authority are conferred on the fire services (rather, the fire services continue to operate under the relevant sections of their Acts).*
- (3) *Section 28 of the Fire Service Act 1975 confers authority on the Chief Fire Officer of the relevant fire district, or, if absent, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, or, in the absence of both, the person who, for the time being, is in charge of a fire incident or other emergency, to direct those under that officer's control to do whatever is necessary, within reason, for the protection of life and property.*

Note – Plan clause 46(1)(c)

The reference to the national support team means the USAR Management Team (UMT). The New Zealand USAR capability has specific functions:

- 1) Management UMT – New Zealand Fire Service commanders who provide incident and command management skills
- 2) Technicians – technical search and rescue practitioners
- 3) Logisticians – provide critical support to taskforce functions
- 4) Medical – doctor and advanced paramedic clinicians
- 5) Engineers – structural and geotechnical specialists
- 6) Canine – search dog capability.

The Fire Region Commander

- (4) *During an emergency,—*
- (a) *the Fire Region Commander of the New Zealand Fire Service, or the Fire Region Commander's designated representative,—*
- (i) *is responsible to the Local Controllers or the CDEM Group Controllers for the mobilisation, co-ordination, and control of the fire services; and*
 - (ii) *is located, if required, in the ECC, or the EOC; and*
 - (iii) *should maintain communications with the national fire co-ordination centre, inform the Local Controllers or the CDEM Group Controllers of significant incidents, and advise on subsequent actions taken or to be taken; and*
 - (iv) *supports the Local Controllers or the CDEM Group Controllers and is responsible for co-ordinating fire services operations and providing the resources required to undertake requests for assistance; and*
 - (v) *is the fire services adviser to the Local Controllers or the Group Controller; and*
 - (vi) *advises on fire services operations, urban search and rescue priorities, and the resources required to continue operations; and*

The National Commander

- (b) *the National Commander of the New Zealand Fire Service, or the National Commander's designated representative,—*
- (i) *is responsible to the Director and the National Controller for the mobilisation, co-ordination, and control of fire services; and*
 - (ii) *is located, if required, in the NCMC; and*
 - (iii) *should maintain communications with the national fire co-ordination centre, inform the Director and the National Controller of significant incidents, and advise on subsequent actions taken or to be taken; and*
 - (iv) *supports the Director and the National Controller and is responsible for co-ordinating fire services operations and providing the resources required to undertake requests for assistance; and*
 - (v) *advises on fire services operations, urban search and rescue priorities, and the resources required to continue operations.*

Rural fire authorities

- (5) *Under section 36 of the Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977, principal fire officers of the rural fire authorities have powers to control fires occurring in forest and vegetation within their districts.*
- (6) *If a regional fire emergency exists under section 39 of the Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977, the National Rural Fire Officer may, in the public interest, take charge or appoint a Principal Rural Fire Officer or other appropriate fire officer to take charge for the duration of the emergency.*
- (7) *If a state of emergency declaration is proposed in a rural fire authority's area in response to a rural fire, the appropriate Local Controllers or CDEM Group Controllers will ensure appropriate liaison with the Principal Rural Fire Officer before and after the emergency is declared.*

Note – Plan clause 46(5)

Under section 36 of the *Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977*, principal fire officers of the rural fire authorities have power to control all fires within their districts. In practice however, due to fire protection agreements, the New Zealand Fire Service responds to, and manages, the majority of fires, especially structures.

Liaison Officer

In the event that the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC), an Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC), or Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) is activated, a New Zealand Fire Service Liaison Officer will be appointed to liaise and provide advice to the National, CDEM Group and/or Local Controller on actual and intended Fire Service operations including priorities (see **Figure 10.1**).

In addition to fulfilling the activities identified in clause 46 of the *National CDEM Plan 2015*, the appointed New Zealand Fire Service Liaison Officer will have the authority to address the following in relation to the New Zealand Fire Service:

- ♦ operational capabilities and limitations
- ♦ operational priorities, and
- ♦ the availability and commitment of resources.

UMT

In the event of an emergency necessitating the use of domestic and international USAR teams, the New Zealand Fire Service will deploy representatives from the UMT to operationally lead and coordinate those activities. A member of the UMT may be positioned within the NCMC, ECC and/or operational EOCs if thought necessary to assist the Controller.

Members of the UMT work in conjunction with representatives from the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team where deployed, while remaining under the control of the New Zealand Fire Service.

See Section 31, International Assistance for New Zealand for arrangements on deployment of UNDAC teams.

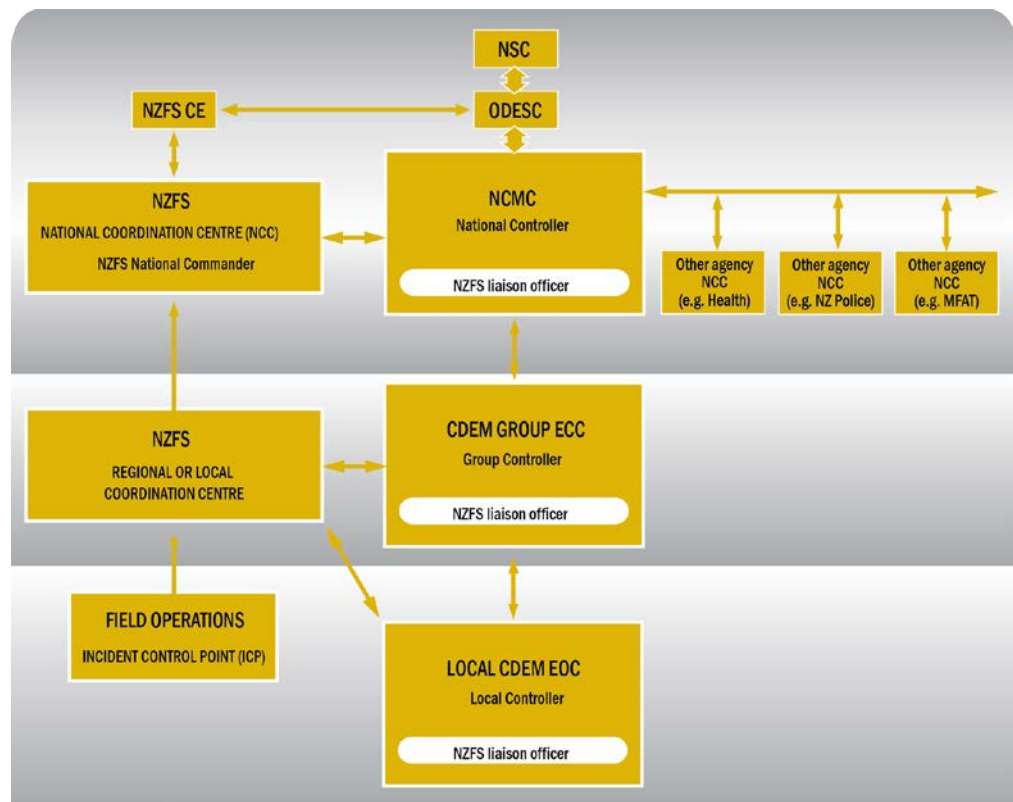


Figure 10.1 Coordination between the New Zealand Fire Service and CDEM at the National, CDEM Group and local levels.

10.6 Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)

USAR	<p>The International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) USAR team classification system has identified three levels of classification: Light, Medium, and Heavy USAR teams. During an emergency, the National USAR Manager may be based in the New Zealand Fire Service National Coordination Centre, depending on the consequences of the emergency.</p>
Light Team (Response Team)	<p>The role of a Light USAR team is that of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ reconnaissance and survey of the affected area◆ identification of hazards and undertaking actions to reduce the level of risk◆ control of public utilities◆ isolation of hazardous materials and identification if it can be safely done◆ surface search and rescue◆ initiating medical care and extrication of victims◆ establishment of Casualty Collection Points, and◆ assisting international teams to integrate into local emergency management arrangements. <p>Light Teams are capable of conducting rescues from structures made of wood, light metal components, unreinforced masonry, adobe, or raw mud and bamboo. There are a number of Light Teams throughout New Zealand.</p>
Medium Team	<p>A Medium USAR team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ is required to have the capacity to work only at a single worksite◆ is required to have the capability of search dogs and/or technical search◆ must be adequately staffed to allow for 24 hour operations at one site (not necessarily at the same site; the sites may change) for up to seven days, and◆ must be able to medically treat its team members (including search dogs if present) as well as victims encountered if allowed to do so by the government of the affected country. <p>Medium Teams have the ability to conduct technical search and rescue operations in collapsed or failed structures of heavy wood and/or reinforced masonry construction, including structures reinforced with structural steel. There are no official INSARAG approved medium teams at this stage in New Zealand, but a medium team capacity is able to be provided due to the existence of New Zealand's heavy team.</p>
Heavy Team	<p>A Heavy USAR Team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ is required to have the equipment and manpower to work at a Heavy technical capability at two separate worksites simultaneously◆ is required to have both a search dog and technical search capability◆ is required to have the technical capability to cut structural steel typically used for construction and reinforcement in multi-storey structures.◆ must be adequately staffed and logistically sufficient to allow for 24 hour operations at two independent sites (not necessarily at the same two sites; and the sites may change) for up to ten days, and◆ must be able to medically treat its team members (including search dogs if present) as well as victims encountered if allowed to do so by the government of the affected country. <p>Heavy Teams have the operational capability for complex technical search and rescue operations in collapsed or failed structures that require the ability to cut, break, and breach steel reinforced concrete structures, as well as de-layer these structures using lifting and rigging techniques. New Zealand has one Heavy Team at present.</p>

10.7 New Zealand Response Teams

New Zealand Response Teams (NZ-RTs) trained and qualified in the specialist skill of light USAR can, when requested by the New Zealand Fire Service, work under the New Zealand Fire Service guidance to assist the National USAR teams.

See section 6, CDEM Groups for more information about New Zealand Response Teams.

10.8 New Zealand Fire Service public information

The New Zealand Fire Service will coordinate the release of information about its operations with other agencies. New Zealand Fire Service Liaison Officers will work in conjunction with appointees of National, CDEM Group, and Local Controllers to ensure that messages released to the public are timely, complete, and accurate.

New Zealand Fire Service personnel have instructions to cooperate with media inquiries, but also to restrict their comments to the scope of their own roles and responsibilities. To this end, New Zealand Fire Service Liaison Officers will closely monitor media coverage of Fire Service field operations to verify the accuracy and appropriateness of reports.

10.9 References and links

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| Other sections of the Guide | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Section 1, Introduction◆ Section 3, Management of emergencies◆ Section 4, General roles and responsibilities◆ Section 5, Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (MCDEM)◆ Section 6, Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups (CDEM Groups)◆ Section 8, Emergency services◆ Section 17, Reduction◆ Section 18, Readiness◆ Section 24, Response◆ Section 26, National Crisis Management Centre◆ Section 28, Public information management◆ Section 31, International assistance to New Zealand |
| Other documents | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Operational instructions and New Zealand Fire Service procedures, policies, and guides as maintained on the New Zealand Fire Service intranet (these documents can be obtained by contacting the Fire Service at question@fire.org.nz, or contacting regional offices)◆ Urban Search & Rescue Mobilisation or Operations Manuals (these documents can be obtained by contacting the Fire Service at question@fire.org.nz, or contacting regional offices):<ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>Urban Search & Rescue National Mobilisation Manual</i>– <i>Urban Search & Rescue International USAR Mobilisation Manual</i>– <i>Urban Search & Rescue, National Operations Manual (2008)</i>◆ INSARAG Guidelines (www.insarag.org – available under the 'Methodology' tab)◆ Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (2012) <i>Guidance for Establishing and Operating New Zealand Response Teams (NZ-RTs) Director's Guidelines for the CDEM Sector [DGL12/12]</i>; ISBN 978-0-478-35563-5 (www.civildefence.govt.nz – search for 'guidance for establishing response teams') |

