

10. Fire services

Summary During emergencies, Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fire and Emergency) is responsible for the safety of people and property threatened or affected by fire, hazardous substances emergencies, and transport accidents. Fire and Emergency also leads the Urban Search and Rescue function for New Zealand, and can assist in in rescues related to a variety of incidents.

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10.1 Introduction

Part 5
Roles and responsibilities
Fire services

42 Introduction

Fire and Emergency New Zealand, working in support of the Director and the National Controller, is responsible for—

- (a) co-ordinating the fire services; and*
- (b) providing resources required to undertake requests for assistance.*

10.2 Objective

43 Objective

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.

10.3 Principles

44 Principles

The principles underlying the role of Fire and Emergency New Zealand in this plan are to—

- (a) 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*
- (b) work in concert with the requirements of national, CDEM Group, and local CDEM plans; and*
- (c) ensure that fire services incident management structures adhere to, or work within, the direction and principles of the current CIMS structure; and*
- (d) 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*
- (e) liaise with fire services to co-ordinate an effective response to an emergency.*

Note – Plan clause 44

In addition to the principles outlined above, Fire and Emergency also has 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 4 Rs and enables an effective response to all emergencies”.

10.4 Role of fire services during reduction and readiness

45 Role of fire services during reduction and readiness

- (1) Fire and Emergency New Zealand maintains business continuity plans to ensure that its functions can continue during an emergency.*
- (2) Those plans identify key risks, prioritise business, plan for the continuance of critical business, and provide for the redeployment of staff.*
- (3) Fire and Emergency New Zealand 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.*
- (4) Fire and Emergency New Zealand participates in multi-agency emergency planning and exercises contributing to a co-ordinated response using the CIMS.*
- (5) [Revoked]*

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

Fire and Emergency maintains guidance detailing the internal procedures for the management of operational activities. Operational instructions are further supported by local procedures, and the *Fire and Emergency Guide to CDEM* which outlines specific responsibilities including:

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

10.5 Role of fire services during response and recovery

46 Role of 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 (Fire and Emergency New Zealand 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) *Subpart 1 of Part 2 of the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 confers authority on an authorised person (as defined in section 6 of that Act) to direct those under that person'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) – Fire and Emergency 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 board of Fire and Emergency New Zealand (CDEM Group and local level)

- (4) *During an emergency,—*
- (a) *the board of Fire and Emergency New Zealand, or a delegate of the board,—*
 - (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 board of Fire and Emergency New Zealand (national level)

- (b) *the board of Fire and Emergency New Zealand, or a delegate of the board,—*
 - (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.*
- (5) *[Revoked]*
- (6) *[Revoked]*
- (7) *[Revoked]*

Note – Plan clauses 46(5), (6) and (7)

These clauses referred to powers, roles, and responsibilities of rural fire authorities. They were revoked on 1 July 2017 when the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 came into force, resulting in the dissolution of rural fire authorities.

Liaison Officer

In the event that the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC) and/or a National Coordination Centre (NCC), an Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC), or Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) is activated, a Fire and Emergency Liaison Officer will be appointed to liaise and provide advice to the National, CDEM Group, and/or Local Controller on actual and intended Fire and Emergency 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 Fire and Emergency Liaison Officer will have the authority to address the following in relation to Fire and Emergency:

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

Where multiple ECCs or EOCs are established, Fire and Emergency may assign one Liaison Officer to cover more than one centre. This is a resourcing constraint brought about by the need of affected location managers to be available in the field for operations support of Fire and Emergency activities.

USAR Management Team (UMT)

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

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 Fire and Emergency.

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

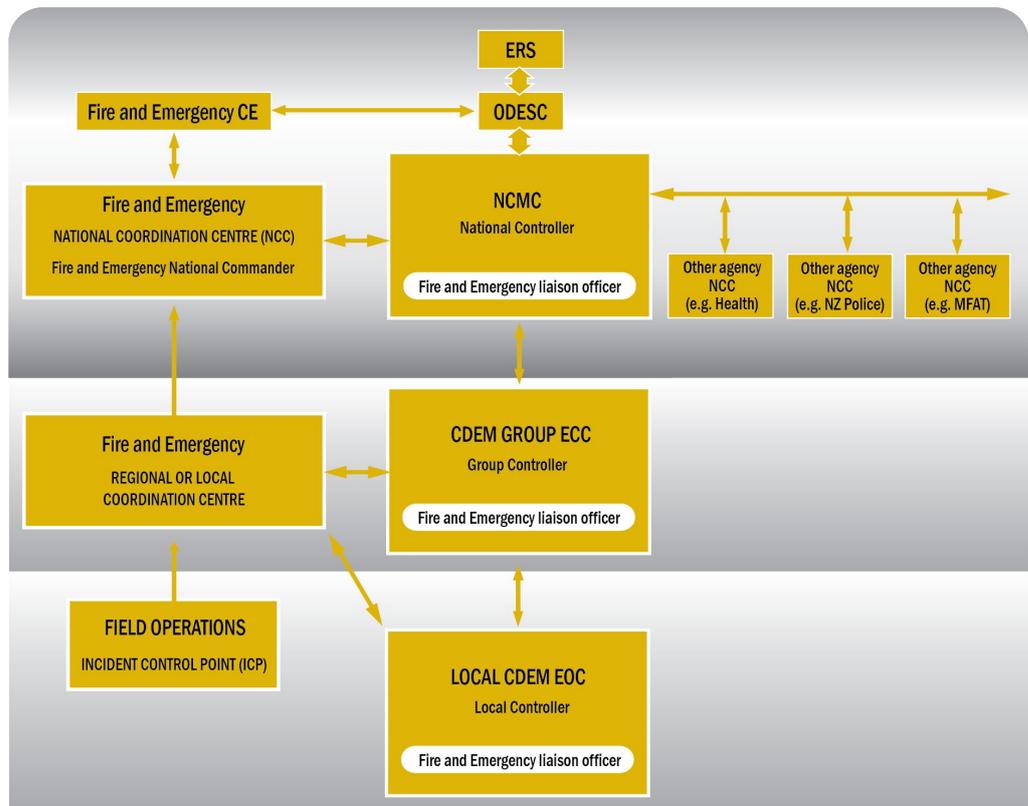


Figure 10.1 Coordination between Fire and Emergency and CDEM at the National, CDEM Group, and local levels.

10.6 Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)

USAR 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 Fire and Emergency National Coordination Centre, depending on the consequences of the emergency.

**Light team
(Response Team)**

The role of a Light USAR team is that of:

- ◆ 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 domestic emergency management arrangements.

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 no official INSARAG approved Light teams at this stage in New Zealand, but a number of local Response Teams hold this capability.

See Section 6, Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups

Medium team

A Medium USAR team:

- ◆ 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.

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.

Heavy team

A Heavy USAR Team:

- ◆ 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.

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 INSARAG approved Heavy team at present.

10.7 Fire and Emergency public information

Fire and Emergency will coordinate the release of information about its operations with other agencies. Fire and Emergency Liaison Officers, linked to Fire and Emergency communications advisors, 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.

Fire and Emergency 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, Fire and Emergency Liaison Officers, linked to Fire and Emergency communications advisors, will closely monitor media coverage of fire services field operations to verify the accuracy and appropriateness of reports.

10.8 References and links

Other sections of the Guide

- ◆ Section 1, Introduction
- ◆ Section 3, Management of emergencies
- ◆ Section 4, General roles and responsibilities
- ◆ Section 5, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) – formerly 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

- ◆ Operational instructions and Fire and Emergency procedures, policies, and guides as maintained on the Fire and Emergency intranet (these documents can be obtained by contacting regional offices)
- ◆ Urban Search and Rescue Mobilisation or Operations Manuals (these documents can be obtained by contacting regional offices):
 - *Urban Search and Rescue National Mobilisation Manual*
 - *Urban Search and Rescue International USAR Mobilisation Manual*
 - *Urban Search and Rescue National Operations Manual*
- ◆ INSARAG Guidelines (www.insarag.org – available under the 'Methodology' tab)