

31. International assistance for New Zealand

Summary Offers of international assistance or requests for international assistance may result from an emergency. When these occur they are to be considered by the National Security Committee of Cabinet (NSC), via the Officials Committee for Domestic and external Security Coordination (ODESC) system.

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31.1 Introduction

Part 8 Response

International assistance for New Zealand

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- (1) *An emergency in New Zealand may—*
 - (a) *generate offers of assistance from overseas governments and non-governmental organisations; or*
 - (b) *necessitate requests from New Zealand for external assistance.*
- (2) *The National Controller, or the Director, as a member of the ODESC, may recommend that international assistance be requested to support the response or recovery.*
- (3) *The Government will approve the use of international assistance through the government crisis management arrangements of the ODESC system.*

31.2 Objective

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The objective of international assistance is to enhance New Zealand's response capacity and capability where required following a large-scale emergency.

31.3 Principles

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The principles underlying international assistance are to—

- (a) *ensure that any international assistance is consistent with New Zealand laws and regulations; and*
- (b) *ensure that international assistance is based on requests made by the New Zealand Government or the acceptance of offers of assistance by the New Zealand Government; and*
- (c) *maintain, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, effective lines of communication with foreign governments and international organisations on all aspects of an emergency via New Zealand's overseas posts and foreign diplomatic missions accredited to New Zealand; and*
- (d) *understand that the ODESC may authorise the National Controller to provide daily situation reports to the international community; and*
- (e) *ensure that requests for and offers of international assistance are co-ordinated by the National Controller through the international assistance function managed by the MCDEM; and*
- (f) *use the following links to the international community:*
 - (i) *existing lines of communication between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and foreign governments and international organisations; and*
 - (ii) *New Zealand's overseas diplomatic posts; and*
 - (iii) *foreign diplomatic missions resident in and accredited to New Zealand; and*
 - (iv) *the UNOCHA; and*
 - (v) *the Non-Governmental Organisations Disaster Relief Forum; and*
- (g) *ensure that all international assistance is, upon arrival in New Zealand, co-ordinated by the National Controller (who may request other agencies or officials to co-ordinate particular aspects of this assistance); and*
- (h) *ensure that once an international resource has been requested, and the resource has been mobilised (even if a domestic resource becomes available), the international resource arrives in New Zealand; and*

- (i) ensure that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (with the assistance of the New Zealand Red Cross, the New Zealand Police, the Ministry of Health, and the New Zealand Customs Service) keeps the international community informed of the safety and whereabouts of foreign nationals.

31.4 National roles

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- (1) During an emergency where the MCDEM is the lead agency, the Director or the National Controller may activate an international assistance function to work with relevant agencies to co-ordinate international assistance.
- (2) The international assistance function—
 - (a) facilitates the communication and co-ordination of actions across agencies in respect of international assistance during an emergency in New Zealand; and
 - (b) receives and collates offers of international assistance; and
 - (c) receives and collates requests for international assistance; and
 - (d) when required, matches requests for international assistance with offers of assistance; and
 - (e) communicates through the appropriate channels requests for, and acceptance of, international assistance.
- (3) The international assistance function is co-ordinated by the MCDEM and includes representatives from the following agencies:
 - (a) the DPMC;
 - (b) the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade;
 - (c) the Ministry of Health;
 - (d) the Ministry for Primary Industries;
 - (e) the New Zealand Customs Service;
 - (f) the New Zealand Defence Force;
 - (g) the New Zealand Fire Service;
 - (h) the New Zealand Red Cross;
 - (i) the Non-Governmental Organisations Disaster Relief Forum.

31.5 Approval to accept or request international assistance

148 Approval to accept or request international assistance

International assistance may be initiated by a request—

- (a) for immediate support for lifesaving activities (specifically medical and urban search and rescue resources, which can be approved immediately by the National Controller); or
- (b) from the National Controller, or the Director, via the ODESC to the NSC, seeking approval to activate international assistance arrangements to support the New Zealand response for the duration of the emergency (if the NSC is unable to meet, approval will be sought from a senior Minister, or the chair of the ODESC).

Any international assistance must be able to operate within the New Zealand regulatory and legal framework.

31.6 Requests for international assistance

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- (1) All requests for international assistance are to be provided to the National Controller for consideration.
- (2) The process for making requests for international assistance is detailed in *The Guide*.

The principle of requesting international assistance is to be considered by the NSC, via the ODESC system. The National Controller has standing arrangements to seek international response assistance through the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Geneva, or for immediate support for lifesaving activities (see 31.8 on page 7 for more information).

Types of assistance

The type of assistance sought could be:

- ◆ a United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team
- ◆ urban search and rescue personnel and assets
- ◆ logistical support, or
- ◆ other support not available through bilateral government-to-government arrangements.

Bilateral arrangements

Agencies are to activate their bilateral response arrangements in consultation with the National Controller.

MCDEM, in cooperation with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), is to maintain a database of government agency bilateral response arrangements. It is the responsibility of any New Zealand government agency with bilateral arrangements or any government agency in the process of developing arrangements with bilateral response partners to notify MCDEM of any changes to the arrangements.

Requirements for requesting international assistance

Requirements for requesting international assistance include:

- ◆ All requests for international assistance must be provided to the National Controller for consideration.
- ◆ Any request must be accompanied by a recommendation about which country/partner/organisation will be sent the request.
- ◆ The Director or National Controller may discuss requests for international assistance with the NSC (via the ODESC system) before making a decision on any requests to be made.
- ◆ Any requests to be made must be signed off by the National Controller with a recommendation about which country/partner/organisation will be sent the request. Requests will be coordinated through the International Assistance Cell.
- ◆ MFAT operates an Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) to receive queries from, and provide information to, the international community. The ECC conveys offers/requests for assistance to/from foreign governments and international organisations.

The process for requests for international assistance is shown in **Figure 31.1** on the next page.

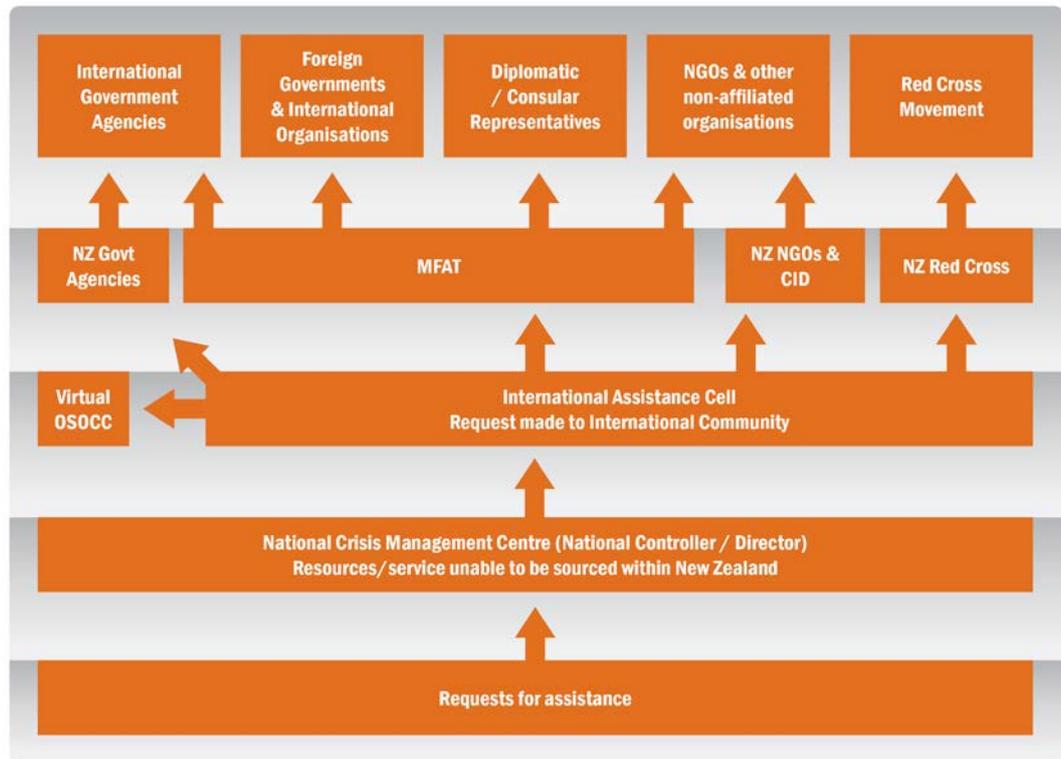


Figure 31.1 Process for requests for international assistance.

31.7 Offers of international assistance

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- (1) All offers of international assistance are to be provided to the National Controller for consideration and agreement before acceptance of that assistance.
- (2) The process for accepting offers of international assistance is detailed in *The Guide*.
- (3) Any international assistance must be able to operate within the New Zealand regulatory and legal framework.

Accepting offers for international assistance

Requirements for accepting offers of international assistance include:

- ◆ All offers of international assistance must be provided to the National Controller for consideration.
- ◆ Some agencies may have existing international response arrangements. These agencies must ensure that the International Assistance Cell, in the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC), is aware of any offers of international assistance received from partners. Even when international arrangements exist between agencies, any offers of international assistance must be considered and agreed by the National Controller before acceptance of that assistance.
- ◆ The Director of CDEM or National Controller may discuss offers received with NSC (via the ODESC system) before making a decision on any offers to be accepted.
- ◆ Any offers to be accepted must be signed off by the National Controller.
- ◆ MFAT, through its ECC, will use existing lines of communication to foreign governments (including through foreign diplomatic missions), partners and international organisations regarding agreed offers of assistance.

Note: New Zealand non-government organisations (NGOs) have their own arrangements for surge capacity and mutual assistance from their international partners. These arrangements are considered to be internal support arrangements.

The process for receiving offers of international assistance is shown in Figure 31.2.

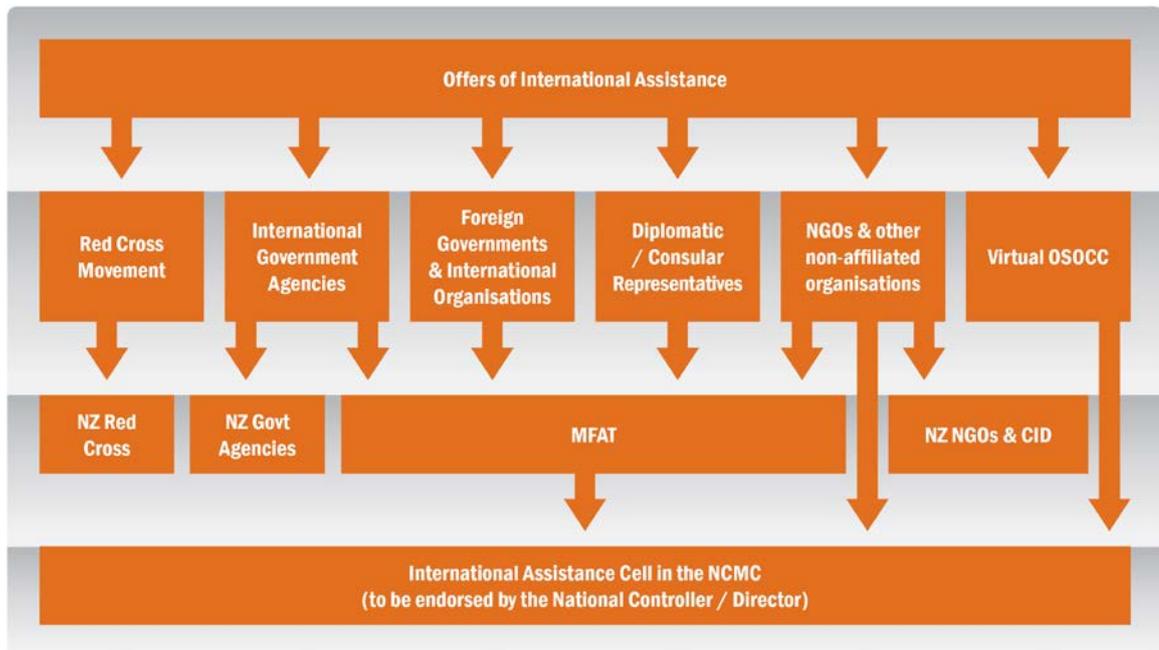


Figure 31.2 How offers of international assistance are received.

31.7.1 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

MFAT operates an ECC to coordinate its response. The ECC:

- receives queries from, and provides information to, the international community
- conveys offers/requests for assistance to/from foreign governments and international organisations (directly, via MFAT posts, Foreign Missions resident and accredited to New Zealand), and
- channels New Zealand's response to offers of international assistance from foreign governments and non-government organisations when offers have been put on hold, declined, or accepted.

31.7.2 Non-governmental organisations

Non-governmental organisations, represented in New Zealand, will provide support to their international partner agencies. This is to include:

- communications and information management, and
- links to the NCMC and CDEM Group ECCs.

In New Zealand, the domestic (local) NGO umbrella body is the Association of Non-Government Organisations of Aotearoa. The international NGO umbrella body is the Council for International Development.

The coordinating body for New Zealand NGOs involved in international humanitarian work is the NGO Disaster Relief Forum which is a standing committee of the Council for International Development and facilitated by a Council for International Development staff member. Non-governmental organisations not represented in New Zealand will be referred to the NGO Disaster Relief Forum, which is to provide the support outlined above in liaison with the National Controller.

31.8 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)

151 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)

- (1) *New Zealand joined the consensus on United Nations General Assembly Resolutions 46/182 and 57/150, which were adopted without vote.*
- (2) *General Assembly Resolution 46/182 strengthened the United Nations' capacity to respond to both complex emergencies and natural disasters worldwide.*
- (3) *General Assembly Resolution 46/182 also created the position of Emergency Relief Coordinator (USG/ERC), who is the head of UNOCHA and is responsible for co-ordinating the international response to disasters, natural and human-made, as well as acting as principal adviser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on humanitarian issues and concerns.*
- (4) *UNOCHA's mandate, under the direction of the USG/ERC, includes the co-ordination of humanitarian aid response, policy development, resource mobilisation, and humanitarian advocacy.*
- (5) *UNOCHA is able to deploy resources to New Zealand at short notice during an emergency if requested by the New Zealand Government.*

31.8.1 United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team

United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) teams offer coordination, assessment and information-management expertise consistent with New Zealand's CDEM skills and competencies. It aims to facilitate close links between country-level, regional and international response efforts

MFAT, in partnership with MCDEM, maintains New Zealand UNDAC membership and capability. Through this arrangement New Zealand contributes to UNDAC missions in other countries and UNDAC support is available to New Zealand.

MFAT is the New Zealand focal point for UNDAC.

31.8.2 International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG)

UNOCHA oversees the International Search & Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG). INSARAG operates within guidelines encouraging teams to achieve and maintain standards accepted globally. Teams may be assessed and classified using these guidelines, focusing on Management, Search, Rescue, Medical and Canine capabilities. Policy and process requirements endorse border security and immigration controls. New Zealand Fire Service maintains three USAR teams to form one INSARAG heavy classified National Taskforce, and is the operational focal point for INSARAG. MFAT is the political focal point for INSARAG.

31.8.3 Virtual On Site Operations Coordination Centre

The Virtual On Site Operations Coordination Centre is a secure web site managed by UNOCHA used for the coordination of international assistance and for keeping the international community informed of an emergency situation.

In New Zealand, the provision of information on the Virtual On Site Operations Coordination Centre is limited to NCMC staff, the UNDAC team and USAR team leaders.

31.8.4 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Central Register

MCDEM is to provide information to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to ensure that the New Zealand section of the register is current.

The central register includes:

- ◆ five directories of specific disaster management assets:
 - Search and Rescue Directory
 - Military and Civil Defence Assets Directory
 - Emergency Stockpiles of Disaster Relief Items
 - Rosters of Disaster Management Expertise
 - Advanced Technologies for Disaster Response Directory
- ◆ three directories of contact persons:
 - National Focal Points and Legislation for Customs Facilitation in International Humanitarian Emergency Assistance
 - contact points for disaster response, and
 - major donors of emergency humanitarian assistance.

31.9 References and links

Other sections of the Guide

- ◆ Section 3, Management of emergencies
- ◆ Section 5, Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (MCDEM)
- ◆ Section 6, Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups (CDEM Groups)
- ◆ Section 9, New Zealand Police
- ◆ Section 10, Fire services
- ◆ Section 12, New Zealand Defence Force
- ◆ Section 24, Response
- ◆ Section 25, National warnings and advisories
- ◆ Section 26, National Crisis Management Centre
- ◆ Section 27, Emergency information management
- ◆ Section 28, Public information management
- ◆ Section 29, Logistics
- ◆ Section 30, Mass evacuation
- ◆ Section 32, Recovery
- ◆ Section 33, Government financial support to local authorities

Other documents

- ◆ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2013) *United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Field Handbook, 6th Edition* (www.unocha.org – search for 'UNDAC')
- ◆ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs website (and access to the Virtual On Site Operations Coordination Centre) www.reliefweb.int
- ◆ National Crisis Management Centre: Standard Operating Procedures