

# Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

## Proactive Release of Government Response to Ministerial Review: Better Responses to Natural Disasters and Other Emergencies in New Zealand August 2018

The document below is one of a suite of documents released by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) to the Government's response to the Technical Advisory Group's report **Better Responses to Natural Disasters and Other Emergencies**

Some parts of this document would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the Act that would apply have been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

**Date:** 30 August 2018

**Title:** Proposed Government response to the Technical Advisory Group's report **Better Responses to Natural Disaster and Other Emergencies** (to Cabinet Economic Development Committee (DEV)).

**Information withheld with relevant section(s) of the Act:**

s 9(2)(f)(iv) – confidential advice under active consideration  
s 9(2)(g)(i) – free and frank expression of opinions



# Cabinet Economic Development Committee

## Minute of Decision

*This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.*

### Better Responses to Natural Disasters and Other Emergencies: Proposed Government Response to the Technical Advisory Group's Report

Portfolio                      Civil Defence

On 15 August 2018, the Cabinet Economic Development Committee:

#### Background

- 1        **noted** that 'emergency management' describes how to organise and manage the people, plans, infrastructure, and assets needed to reduce and manage the consequences of all hazards and risks (e.g. pandemic, pests and diseases, cyber incidents, natural hazards, infrastructure failure, and food safety incidents);
- 2        **noted** that New Zealand's emergency response system takes an all-hazards approach and requires collaboration between a wide range of organisations nationally and locally, and that many portfolios are involved, not just those traditionally considered as 'Civil Defence';
- 3        **noted** that emergencies can affect all New Zealanders, and that they can have an enormous impact on people and communities, the economy, and the environment;
- 4        **noted** the Minister of Civil Defence's vision that people get a consistent level of support in an emergency wherever they are;
- 5        **noted** that a recent review of New Zealand's system of response to emergencies found that while the system has worked, there are vulnerabilities in the system that:
  - 5.1        put people, their communities, property, and businesses at risk; and
  - 5.2        slow down recovery, which leads to longer-term costs to communities and the Crown;
- 6        **noted** that these vulnerabilities are concerning in the face of the increasing number of events New Zealand is experiencing, and if a major emergency were to occur;

**Government response to the Technical Advisory Group's report**

7 **noted** that the Minister of Civil Defence has developed a government response to the report *Better Responses to Natural Disasters and Other Emergencies* produced by the Technical Advisory Group that was established to provide advice on the most appropriate operational and legislative mechanisms to support effective responses to natural disasters and other emergencies in New Zealand;

8 **noted** that the proposed government response, attached to the paper under DEV-18-SUB-0169, sets a direction with actions to improve New Zealand's emergency response system;

9 **noted** that substantial policy work, including legislative change, and some investment will be needed to implement these actions;

10 s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(g)(i)

11

12 **noted** that the Hazard Risk Board has a role in managing civil contingencies and hazard risks through appropriate governance, alignment, and prioritisation of investment, policy and activity, and is the most appropriate governance body to provide stewardship for the system;

13 s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(g)(i)

14 **noted** that the Minister of Civil Defence disagrees with the TAG recommendation that the Ministry of Social Development should have lead agency responsibilities for welfare aspects of a response, and that these should remain with the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management;

**Establishing Fly-in Teams**

15 **agreed** to the establishment of Fly-in Teams to support responses to emergencies in New Zealand;

- 16 **approved** the following changes to appropriations and departmental capital injections to give effect to the policy decision in paragraph 15 above, with a corresponding impacts on the operating balance and debt:

Prime Minister and Cabinet Minister of Civil Defence	\$m – increase/(decrease)				
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 & Outyears
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure: Emergency Management MCA Departmental Output Expenses: Management of Emergencies (funded by revenue Crown)	0.941	1.303	1.121	1.121	1.121
Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet Capital Injection	0.368	0.368	-	-	-
<b>Total Operating</b>	<b>0.941</b>	<b>1.303</b>	<b>1.121</b>	<b>1.121</b>	<b>1.121</b>
<b>Total Capital</b>	<b>0.368</b>	<b>0.368</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

#### Common Operating Picture

- 17 **agreed** to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet developing a business case for a Common Operating Picture;
- 18 **approved** the following change to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision in paragraph 17 above, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance:

Prime Minister and Cabinet Minister of Civil Defence	\$m – increase/(decrease)				
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 & Outyears
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure: Emergency Management MCA Departmental Output Expenses: Policy Advice - Emergency Management (funded by revenue Crown)	0.400	-	-	-	-

#### New national emergency management facility

- 19 **agreed** to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet developing a stage 1 business case for a new national emergency management facility;

20 **approved** the following change to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision in paragraph 19 above, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance:

Prime Minister and Cabinet Minister of Civil Defence	\$m – increase/(decrease)				
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 & Outyears
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure: Emergency Management MCA Departmental Output Expenses: Policy Advice - Emergency Management (funded by revenue Crown)	0.250	-	-	-	-

**Commencing work on legislative change**

21 **agreed** to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet commencing work on the legislative change necessary to support the proposals in the response to the review;

22 **approved** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to the policy decision in paragraph 21 above, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance:

Prime Minister and Cabinet Minister of Civil Defence	\$m – increase/(decrease)				
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 & Outyears
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure: Emergency Management MCA Departmental Output Expenses: Policy Advice - Emergency Management (funded by revenue Crown)	0.200	0.200	-	-	-

**Financial implications**

23 **agreed** that the changes to appropriations and departmental capital injection for 2018/19 above be included in the 2018/19 Supplementary estimates and that, in the interim, the increases be met from Imprest Supply;

24 **agreed** that the expenses and department capital injection incurred under paragraphs 16, 18, 20 and 22 above be charged, respectively, against the between-Budget contingency established as part of Budget 2018, and as a pre-commitment against the Budget 2019 capital allowance;

25 s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(g)(i)



26 s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(g)(i)

**Release of government response**

- 27 **agreed** that the Minister of Civil Defence discusses the proposed government response with a cross-parliamentary reference group, prior to its public release;
- 28 **authorised** the Minister of Civil Defence to make editorial and non-substantive changes to the government response prior to its release;
- 29 **agreed** that the Minister of Civil Defence publicly releases the government response.

Janine Harvey  
Committee Secretary

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**Present:**

Hon Grant Robertson (Chair)  
Hon Phil Twyford  
Hon Dr Megan Woods  
Hon David Parker  
Hon Nanaia Mahuta  
Hon Iain Lees-Galloway  
Hon Jenny Salesa  
Hon Damien O'Connor  
Hon Clare Curran  
Hon Shane Jones  
Hon Kris Faafoi  
Hon Meka Whaitiri  
Hon James Shaw  
Hon Eugenie Sage

**Officials present from:**

Office of the Prime Minister  
Officials Committee for DEV

**Hard-copy distribution:**

Minister of Civil Defence

Released by the Minister of Civil Defence