

# Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Workshop, 3 March 2026

- Information considered in the workshop.





WELLINGTON REGION  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

# Wellington Region CDEM Group Joint Committee

3 March 2026



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# Workshop

# Session outcomes

- Mayors understand processes around SOE and EMA
- Why or why not declare/send EMA
- Precautionary approach vs reactive approach





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# Declaring a State of Emergency



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GROUP

# The CDEM Act 2002

**emergency** means a situation that—

- (a) is the result of any happening, whether natural or otherwise, including, without limitation, any explosion, earthquake, eruption, tsunami, land movement, flood, storm, tornado, cyclone, serious fire, leakage or spillage of any dangerous gas or substance, technological failure, infestation, plague, epidemic, failure of or disruption to an emergency service or a lifeline utility, or actual or imminent attack or warlike act; and
- (b) causes or may cause loss of life or injury or illness or distress or in any way endangers the safety of the public or property in New Zealand or any part of New Zealand; and
- (c) cannot be dealt with by emergency services, or otherwise requires a significant and co-ordinated response under this Act

Unlike the emergency services, our definition of an emergency includes a consideration of the scale in part (c)



# The CDEM Act 2002

## 68 Declaration of state of local emergency

- (1) A person appointed for the purpose under [section 25](#) may declare that a state of local emergency exists in the area for which the person is appointed if at any time it appears to the person that an emergency has occurred or may occur within the area.

We are allowed to do a pre-emptive declaration, which allows us to get ahead of potential situations even if we're not sure they will eventuate.



# The CDEM Act 2002

## 27 Appointment of Local Controllers

- (1) A Civil Defence Emergency Management Group may appoint 1 or more persons to be a Local Controller, and direct that person or persons to carry out any of the functions and duties of, or delegated to, the Group Controller of the Group and to exercise the powers of Controllers in the area for which the Group Controller is appointed, including, but not limited to, the powers in sections 86 to 94.
- (2) Despite anything in subsection (1), a Local Controller must follow any directions given by the Group Controller during an emergency.



# The CDEM Act 2002

## 84 Minister's power of direction

- (1) This section applies if—
  - (a) a state of emergency is in force, or the Minister considers that an imminent threat of an emergency exists; and
  - (b) the Minister considers that, having regard to all the circumstances, it is expedient to exercise the power in subsection (2).
- (2) If this section applies, the Minister may direct the Director or any Civil Defence Emergency Management Group or person—
  - (a) to perform or exercise any of the functions, duties, or powers conferred on that person or Group under this Act;  
or
  - (b) to cease to perform or exercise any of the functions, duties, or powers conferred on that person or Group under this Act.
- (3) If, under this section, the Minister directs any Civil Defence Emergency Management Group or person to perform any function or duty or exercise any power, the Minister may direct that the function, duty, or power must be performed or exercised under the control and to the satisfaction of the Director.

The minister retains power over the group controllers.



# Delegation of powers

- **National Controller**

*CDEM Act*

- **Group Controller**

*Wellington CDEM Group Plan*

- **Local Controller**



# Wellington CDEM Group Plan delegations

Authority delegated to:	Description of Delegation	CDEM Act Refs
Local Controller	Wellington Region CDEM Group may appoint 1 or more persons to be a Local Controller, and direct that person or persons to carry out any of the functions and duties of, or delegated to, the Group Controller of the Group and to exercise the powers of Controllers in the area for which the Group Controller is appointed (note: all Controllers are appointed and authorised to act as a Local Controller in any district or city within the Wellington Region CDEM Group).	Section 27 (1)
	Despite anything in Subsection (1), a Local Controller must follow any directions given by the Group Controller during an emergency.	Section 27 (2)
	In accordance with Section 18 (1) of The CDEM Act 2002, the Wellington Region CDEM Group authorises the Local Controller to carry out the powers conferred by Section 76 of the CDEM Act. That is, the power to require information that in their opinion is necessary for the exercise of civil defence emergency management.	Section 18
	In accordance with Section 88 of the CDEM Act 2002, the Wellington Region CDEM Group authorises Local Controllers to close roads and public places in areas where a state of emergency is in force.	Section 88

(Page 106)



# Consultation required by the Group Plan

## Procedure for declaring a state of local emergency<sup>16</sup>

Under Section 68 of the Act, a state of local emergency may be declared by those persons authorised under Section 25 of the Act.

- Local Authorities will consult with their Local Controller and Group Controller and Regional Manager and emergency services before making a declaration.
- If a single district declaration is required, the Local Controller following consultation with the Group Controller, the Regional Manager and emergency services will contact the local Mayor for that district to declare.
- If a multiple district or regional declaration is required, the Group Controller following consultation with the Regional Manager and emergency services will contact the chairperson of the CDEM Group Joint Committee or another delegated elected representative as outlined in this Plan to declare.
- As soon as possible, the public will be notified that there has been a declaration.



# Step 1: Checklist

In the Template Library: [05 State of Emergency Declaration Checklist.docx](#)

## Checklist for the consideration of a state of emergency

When considering a declaration, extension or termination of a state of local emergency the checklist below will aid in the decision making process. Always start by considering whether an emergency exists and the powers provided by the Act are required or may be required.

### Checklist for commencing, extending or terminating a state of emergency

**NB: this is not a declaration form**

		Yes	No	Comments
Is the situation within the definition of an emergency as stated in the CDEM Act 2002 Sect 4?	A. Is the result of any happening, whether natural or otherwise, including any explosion, earthquake, eruption, tsunami, land movement, flood, storm, tornado, cyclone, serious fire, leakage, dangerous gas or substance, technology failure, infestation plague, epidemic, failure of or disruption to an emergency service or a lifeline utility, or actual or imminent attack or warlike act; and			
	B. Causes or may cause loss of life or illness or distress or in any way endangers the safety of the public and property; and			
	C. Cannot be dealt with by emergency services; or			
	D. Requires a significant and coordinated response.			

Both **A and B** must be met, plus **C or D**



# Step 1: Checklist

<p>Are the emergency powers provided by the CDEM Act 2002 required or likely to be required? (s85 – s 94)</p>	<p>(s86 Evacuation of premises and places) Will current or potential hazard impacts require (a) the evacuation of any premises or place, including any public place; or (b) the exclusion of persons or vehicles from any premises or place, including any public place?</p>
	<p>(s87 Entry on premises) Will current or potential hazard impacts require entry on, and if <u>necessary</u> break into, any premises or place to save life, prevent injury, rescue injured or endangered persons?</p>
	<p>(s88 Closing roads and public places) Will current or potential hazard impacts require total or partial prohibition or restriction of public access with or without vehicles, to any road or public places?</p>
	<p>(s89 Removal of aircraft, vessels, vehicles, etc) Will current or potential hazard impacts require (a) the removal of any aircraft, hovercraft, vessel, train or vehicle or (b) use force or break into the above mentioned in (a)?</p>
	<p>(s90(1-6) Requisitioning powers) Will current or potential hazard impacts require the ability to requisition equipment, services, buildings, lifeline utilities, food, materials, medical supplies e.g. beyond the means of normal procurement and contracts?</p>
	<p>(s91 Power to give directions) Will current or potential hazard impacts require (a) the ability to direct any person to stop any activity that may cause or substantially contribute to an emergency or (b) request any person to take any action to prevent or limit the extent of the emergency?</p>
	<p>(s92 Power to carry out inspections) Will current or potential hazard impacts require the ability to examine, mark, seize, sample, secure, disinfect, or destroy and property, animal or thing to prevent or limit the extent of the emergency?</p>
<p>(s94 Contracts in urgent cases) Will current or potential hazard impacts require the ability to <u>enter into</u> any contract on behalf of a civil Defence Emergency Management <u>Group e.g.</u> beyond the means of normal procurement and contracts?</p>	

Good practice suggests that **at least one** of these powers should be required. It's not legislated, but it is in the NEMA guidance.



# Step 2: The Declaration Form

**Declaration of state of local emergency**  
Section 68, *Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002*

I, \_\_\_\_\_  
*[full name]*

declare that a state of local emergency exists in \_\_\_\_\_  
*[specify names of Civil Defence Emergency Management Group area, districts, or wards]*

owing to \_\_\_\_\_  
*[describe emergency]*

The state of local emergency comes into force immediately on the making of this declaration, and expires 7 days after the time and date on which it comes into force (unless extended or terminated at an earlier time).

Declared by: \_\_\_\_\_  
*[signature]*

Requires a physical signature on paper – **this may change with the review to electronic**



# Geographical Hierarchy

## Minister for EM - National or multiple regions

### 66 Minister may declare state of national emergency

- (1) The Minister may declare that a state of national emergency exists over the whole of New Zealand or any areas or districts if at any time it appears to the Minister that—

## Chair of the JC - Regional

- If a multiple district or regional declaration is required, the Group Controller following consultation with the Regional Manager and emergency services will contact the chairperson of the CDEM Group Joint Committee or another delegated elected representative as outlined in this Plan to declare.

## Mayor - District or Ward

- (5) Despite subsections (1) to (4), the mayor of a territorial authority, or an elected member of that territorial authority designated to act on behalf of the mayor if the mayor is absent, may declare a state of local emergency, or give notice of a local transition period, that covers the district of that territorial authority.

The Minister or Chair can declare for any area below them – for example the Minister for EM could declare for a single ward in Porirua if required.

### 69 Minister may declare state of local emergency in certain cases

- (1) If at any time it appears to the Minister that an emergency has occurred or may occur in the area of any Civil Defence Emergency Management Group and a state of local emergency has not been declared under [section 68](#), the Minister may declare a state of local emergency for that area.



# Extending, Ending, Recovery

- Default is for 7 days
- Should be reassessed as needed, using the same tests that were used to declare
- Separate forms for extending, ending or transitioning to recovery



# Activity – scenario discussions

3 – 4 groups:

## **Suggested grouping**

- Kapiti/Porirua
- Wairarapa
- Hutt City and Upper Hutt
- Wellington City and GWRC



# Scenario 1 – Regional source Tsunami

## Decision Points:

- Should we **wait** until a formal assessment is available and use around 20% of the available time to evacuate or take a precautionary approach and **advise** people not to travel and to prepare to evacuate should a tsunami be confirmed? Or **direct**?
- If not now, when is the last safe moment to take action?
- Is a State of Emergency needed?
- Will an Emergency Mobile Alert be used?



# Scenario 2 – M6.2 Wellington Earthquake

## Decision Points:

- Should people in the CBD and other built-up areas be **advised** to shelter in place or **directed to** evacuate?
- Focusing on the CBD as a case study, given the uncertainty around the structural integrity of buildings in the CBD and other hazards should the entire CBD be closed and cordoned off (Precautionary approach) or buildings inspected on a case by case basis?
- Is a State of Emergency needed?
- Will an Emergency Mobile Alert be used?



# Scenario 3 – Severe Weather

## Severe weather

### Decision points:

- Prior to the morning commute, should people be **advised** not to travel or **directed** not to travel?
- If the decision is to **direct**, would a State of Emergency be required?
- Should an Emergency Mobile Alert be used to warn the public about this event?



# Scenario 4 – Red wind warning

- Prior to the morning commute, should people be **advised** not to travel or **directed** not to travel?
- Should we declare a State of Emergency ?
- Should an Emergency Mobile Alert be used to warn the public about this event?



# Karakia

Tuia e runga

*Unite above*

Tuia e raro

*Unite below*

Tuia e roto

*Unite without*

Tuia e waho

*Unite within*

Ka rongo te pō

*Listen to the night*

Ka rongo te ao

*Listen to the world*

Hāumi e, hui ē, tāiki ē!

*Now we come together as one!*

