

Wellington Region CDEM Group Plan 2026-2031

Draft for Public Consultation

10 March - 10 April 2026

DRAFT - Public Consultation

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Introduction

About the Wellington Region CDEM Group

The Wellington Region Civil Defence Emergency Management Group (CDEM Group) is made up of those who work together to provide civil defence and emergency management to the region. This includes the nine councils (including the Wellington Region Emergency Management Office (WREMO)), iwi/Māori, emergency services, lifeline utilities, government and non-government organisations and our communities.

Formally, the Wellington Region Civil Defence Emergency Management Group is governed by the Joint Committee with support from the Coordinating Executive Group (CEG) who provides advice to the CDEM Joint Committee and implements their decisions.

Purpose of the CDEM Group Plan¹

This Group Plan is Based on a 10-Year Strategy

This Group Plan (the Plan) is designed to be an actionable framework that is fully aligned with the Wellington CDEM Group 10-year Strategy (the Strategy) for emergency management in the Wellington Region. The Strategy serves as the foundational blueprint for our ongoing efforts to manage risks, strengthen response and recovery capabilities and build resilience over the long term.

The Plan draws directly from the overarching goals and objectives set in the Strategy, ensuring a cohesive, sustainable approach to managing hazards and building resilience. The Strategy guides the short, medium, and long-term actions, while also ensuring that our emergency management processes are adaptable and future focused.

Key elements of the CDEM Act, the National Disaster Resilience Strategy (NDRS), and numerous government reviews are integrated into the Strategy, ensuring alignment with national goals, legislative frameworks, and community resilience priorities. This Plan provides the operationalisation of the strategic direction, vision and framework outlined in the Strategy to achieve what is required over the next five years.

This Plan represents Phase One of a two-phase approach to strengthening emergency management in the Wellington Region. Phase One focuses on building the foundations of the system—clarifying roles, strengthening governance, improving risk understanding, growing workforce capability, and enabling communities to play an active role. These elements are essential to lift the region’s baseline performance and address known gaps.

Phase Two will build on these foundations to further mature capability and capacity, with the clear long-term objective that, within ten years, the region can effectively manage a “Most Likely Plus” event—one that places sustained pressure on people, infrastructure, and coordination across the system.

In summary, the Plan seeks to:

- Describe the hazards and risks that affect the Wellington Region and the potential impacts on people, communities, infrastructure, and the environment.
- Set a shared framework for working together, strengthening relationships and trust between local authorities, iwi Māori, emergency services, lifeline utilities, welfare agencies, non-government organisations, and central government.

¹ The Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (CDEM Act) requires every regional council and every territorial authority within the region to establish a Civil Defence Emergency Management Group (CDEM Group). Section 48 of the CDEM Act requires every CDEM Group to prepare and approve a CDEM Group Plan.

- Enable coordinated and collaborative planning and action across readiness, response, recovery, risk reduction and governance, recognising the complementary roles of agencies, partners, and communities.
- Demonstrate collective commitment to be able to deliver an effective response and recovery to emergencies across the Wellington Region.

This Plan has been developed through a series of workshops with emergency services, local government, welfare services agencies, lifeline utilities, central government, non-government agencies and the public. It sets the context, identifies the region's hazards and risks and the region's current and future risk reduction practices. The residual risks are then used to inform the Group's readiness, response and recovery actions for the next five years. This Plan has seen a shift from output to outcomes, and from individual hazard management to risk management and resilience. This change is to ensure the Group is addressing key consequences which pose risks to the region and has prioritises our work programmes accordingly.

Audience of the Group Plan

The Plan is written for a wide range of audiences who have a role in, or are affected by, emergency management in the Wellington Region.

The primary audiences for this Plan are:

- local authorities.
- partner agencies with roles and responsibilities under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002, including emergency services, welfare agencies, lifeline utilities, and central government agencies.
- iwi Māori and Māori organisations, as partners in emergency management and as leaders within their communities, with roles across readiness, response, recovery, and resilience.
- non-government organisations and community-based groups that support communities before, during, and after emergencies; and
- communities and the wider public, including individuals, whānau, households, businesses, and community networks across the Wellington Region.

Alignment of the Group Plan

This Plan is designed to align with the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (CDEM Act) and the National Disaster Resilience Strategy (NDRS), ensuring compliance with legislative requirements while fostering long-term community resilience and effective disaster management. The CDEM Act outlines the 4 Rs framework — Risk Reduction, Readiness, Response, and Recovery — and the plan integrates these principles within a goal-oriented approach that reflects both the CDEM Act and the NDRS.

While this plan does not structure actions solely around the 4 Rs, it incorporates these principles in a flexible, outcomes-driven manner that addresses the broader goals of resilience, risk management, and community resilience, as outlined in both the Act and the NDRS.

Aligning with the CDEM Act

The CDEM Act lays out clear responsibilities and frameworks for risk reduction, readiness, response, and recovery, and this plan ensures alignment with these principles across the region. While the 4 Rs are traditionally seen as distinct phases, our strategic framework integrates them holistically through goals that address the region's long-term resilience needs.

Risk Reduction:

This plan focuses on reducing risk by strengthening how hazards, vulnerabilities, and consequences are understood and managed across the region. Risk-informed decision-making is built into planning and investment, supported by better data, community-based approaches, climate resilience thinking, and

improved hazard and consequence assessment. Together, these actions help reduce avoidable impacts and support more resilient development over time.

Readiness:

Readiness is embedded across all strategic goals, recognising that preparation happens well before an emergency occurs. This includes building workforce capability, strengthening coordination between agencies, improving access to resources and information, and supporting communities to be better prepared. These activities ensure the system is equipped to respond effectively when emergencies occur.

Response:

The plan strengthens response by clarifying roles, improving coordination, and supporting effective leadership during emergencies. It focuses on ensuring agencies and communities can work together in a coordinated way, with shared systems and clear decision-making arrangements that support timely and effective action.

Recovery:

Recovery is treated as a core part of the system rather than an afterthought. The plan supports community-led recovery, with a focus on addressing immediate needs while also enabling long-term social, economic, and infrastructure recovery. By embedding recovery thinking early, the region is better positioned to recover in ways that are sustainable and strengthen resilience for the future.

Aligning with the National Disaster Resilience Strategy (NDRS)

The National Disaster Resilience Strategy (NDRS) emphasises three priorities for building resilience in New Zealand:

1. Managing Risks
2. Effective Response and Recovery
3. Enabling, Empowering, and Supporting Community Resilience

Each of these priorities support and align with the principles of the 4 Rs, and this Plan integrates these priorities to ensure comprehensive resilience across the Wellington Region.

Managing Risks:

This plan takes a proactive approach to managing risk by building risk-informed thinking into everyday planning and decision-making. Risk reduction is supported through long-term governance, infrastructure planning, and improved understanding of hazards and consequences. Readiness is strengthened through community engagement, training, and clear public information, helping ensure the region is better prepared for future events.

Effective Response and Recovery:

The plan strengthens the region's ability to respond to emergencies and recover well afterwards by improving coordination, clarifying roles, and supporting shared ways of working. Response arrangements focus on timely, coordinated action, while recovery planning emphasises community-led approaches that support people, restore services, and enable longer-term social and economic recovery.

Enabling, Empowering, and Supporting Community Resilience:

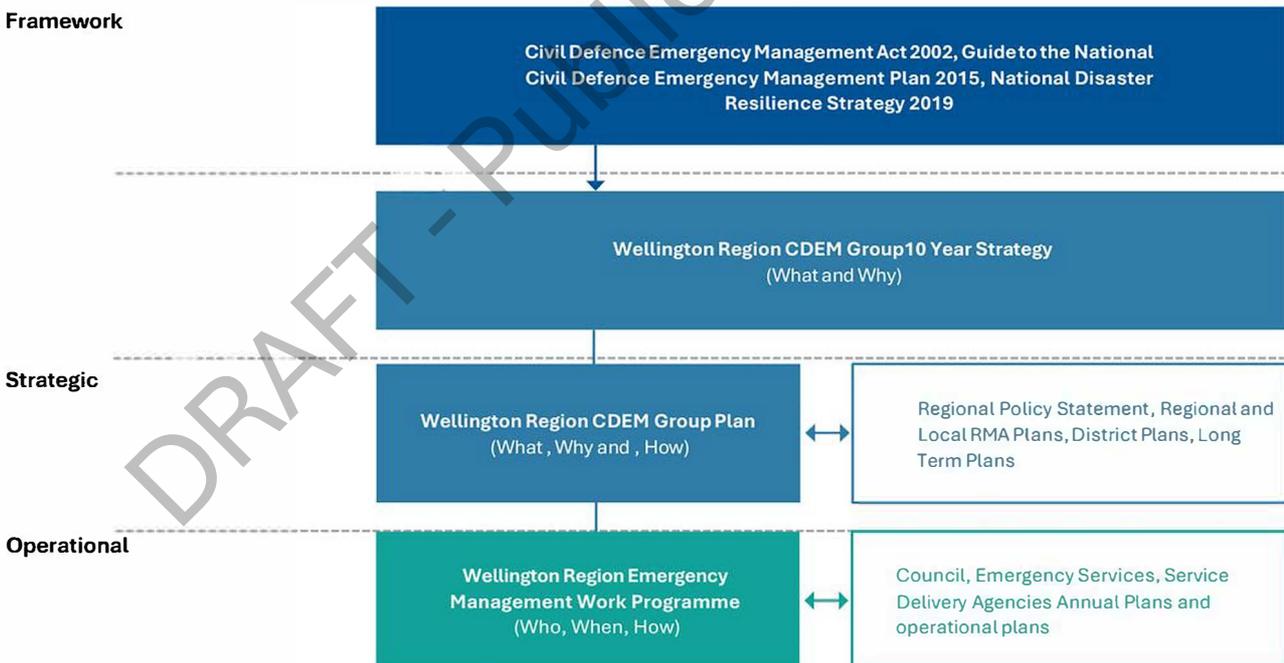
Community resilience is placed at the centre of the plan. Communities are supported to understand their risks, build connections, and take practical steps to prepare. Through strong partnerships, inclusive approaches, and support for local leadership, communities are enabled to play an active role before, during, and after emergencies, with the formal emergency management system providing support where it is most needed.

Connecting the 4 Rs Framework to Our Strategic Goals

While this plan is structured around goal-oriented outcomes rather than the traditional 4 Rs phases, we explicitly integrate the 4 Rs within each of our goals. The CDEM Act requires that each phase of emergency management is addressed, and the NDRS aligns these principles with broader resilience goals. This plan ensures that each of the 4 Rs is embedded in the strategic framework and operationalised throughout the region.

4 Rs Phase	How It Aligns with Our Goals	CDEM Act & NDRS Alignment
Risk Reduction	Our goals focus on data-driven risk assessments, climate resilience, and community risk management.	The CDEM Act and NDRS emphasize proactive risk management, community involvement, and long-term mitigation strategies.
Readiness	Preparedness is embedded in training, exercises, and inter-agency coordination, ensuring operational readiness.	The CDEM Act and NDRS both stress readiness through agency preparedness, community engagement, and resource management.
Response	This Plan defines response roles, coordination mechanisms, and clear decision-making protocols to ensure an efficient response.	The CDEM Act outlines the response framework, while the NDRS emphasizes effective and coordinated emergency management.
Recovery	Recovery planning is integrated into long-term community resilience, socio-economic regeneration, and building back better.	The CDEM Act and NDRS require coordinated recovery that enhances resilience, restores infrastructure, and supports disproportionately affected communities.

Relationship between the National CDEM Framework and the Group Plan



Supporting documents

The Group Plan is supported by a range of procedures, policies, plans and other documents that provide detailed information about how the region functions in an emergency. These documents are periodically reviewed and updated by the relevant partner agencies.

Group Plan development and consultation process

Local authorities, iwi/Māori, emergency services, welfare services agencies, lifeline utility agencies, central government and non-government agencies, community groups and other organisations with a role in emergency management in the Wellington Region participated in the development of this Plan.

The key steps were:

- **Approval of the Wellington Region CDEM Group 10-year Strategy** (30 June 2025)
- A series of workshops to identify 13 workshops with a cross-section of over 250 partners including councils, iwi/Māori, emergency services, welfare agencies, lifelines, government and non-government organisation (including private sector organisations). These workshops identified the key risks and consequences that our region faces, key programmes of work required to address these and how these should be prioritised and sequenced.
- Confirmation of direction from governance November – December 2025 (Coordinating Executive Group and Joint Committee)
- Development of the draft Group Plan Document (December 2025 – June 2026)
- Emergency Management sector consultation and adjustment (January 2026-February 2026)
- **Public consultation and adjustment (April 2026)**
- **Ministerial review (May – June 2026)**
- **Joint Committee approval (June 2026)**

Period for which the Group Plan remains in force

This Plan will remain in effect for five years from the date of approval by the Joint Committee until reviewed by the Group and either amended, revoked, replaced or endorsed for a further period of time. The Plan can be reviewed within the five years pursuant to the Act.

This five-year period represents Phase One of a two-phase approach to implementing the region's long-term emergency management direction outlined in the Strategy. Phase One focuses on strengthening the foundations of the system and delivering the priority improvements set out in this Plan. A second phase will build on this work, using the progress made during this period to further mature capability and capacity over time.

Risk profile

Key characteristics of the Wellington Region

Across the Wellington Region, risk comes from the mix of natural hazards and how and where people live, work, and travel. Earthquakes, flooding, landslides, tsunamis, and severe weather affect much of the region, but the impacts are different in different places depending on geography, land use, and how areas are connected to each other.

In the western urban areas—Wellington City, the Hutt Valley, and Porirua—many homes, workplaces, and key services are in narrow coastal areas, river floodplains, and enclosed valleys. These areas are densely populated and rely on shared transport routes and infrastructure. Damage to roads, rail, or utilities from an earthquake or flood could quickly disrupt daily travel, access to jobs, and essential services. Because people and services move across council boundaries every day, disruption in one area can quickly affect neighbouring areas.

Along the Kāpiti Coast, communities are spread along a narrow coastal strip with few alternative routes. Flooding, landslides, or damage to road and rail links can cut off communities and interrupt one of the main north–south transport routes in the lower North Island. As the population grows, the impacts of these disruptions increase, especially where access to services, emergency response, and supplies depends on a small number of vulnerable routes.

In Wairarapa, risk looks different again. Towns and communities are more spread out, and the area is shaped by large river systems, fault lines, and Lake Wairarapa. Flooding can affect wide areas at the same time, including towns, rural roads, and farmland. While impacts may be less concentrated than in urban areas, recovery can take longer—particularly if routes across the ranges are damaged or if farming and food supply are disrupted for extended periods.

These local risks are closely linked across the region. People commute daily between districts, goods move from rural areas to urban centres, and services such as health, education, and emergency response operate region wide. This means the effects of an emergency are rarely limited to one place. For example, damage to transport routes in the Hutt Valley or along the Kāpiti Coast can affect access to Wellington City, while flooding in Wairarapa can disrupt supply chains and services across the region.

Climate change is expected to increase these pressures over time, particularly through heavier rainfall, higher flood risk, and ongoing coastal change. This will place extra strain on infrastructure, emergency response, and recovery, making long-term resilience increasingly important.

Overall, the Wellington Region faces risk as a connected system. Geography, development, and daily movement are closely linked. Understanding how impacts differ across urban, coastal, and rural areas—and how problems in one place can flow into others—is essential for good planning, coordinated preparedness, effective response, and faster recovery across the region.

Geographic characteristics of the Wellington Region

Wellington

Wellington City is built in a narrow area between steep hills and the harbour. This geography has shaped a compact, high-density city, with homes, workplaces, and critical infrastructure located close together. The city has a large central business district and is the nation's capital and seat of government, hosting Parliament, central government agencies, national institutions, and key services that support decision-making across the country.

Each weekday, tens of thousands of people travel into the city for work, study, and services. Transport routes, utilities, and digital networks are tightly constrained by the surrounding terrain, and in some places there are few alternative routes or backup systems. This means disruption in one location can quickly affect movement, services, and daily activity across the city and beyond.

Wellington City sits close to several active fault lines. Earthquakes could cause strong shaking, liquefaction in low-lying and reclaimed areas, landslides on steep hillsides, and local tsunamis with very short warning times. Damage to buildings, transport routes, or lifelines could limit access to the city, interrupt essential services, and disrupt the national functions carried out there. Experience from earthquakes elsewhere in New Zealand shows that Wellington could be significantly affected even by events centred outside the region.

Because of its role as a major CBD and national centre, disruption in Wellington City can have wider regional and national impacts, affecting government operations, business continuity, transport connections, and public confidence.

Key demographics

- Resident population of approximately 203,000
- Large proportion of residents aged 20–39 years
- High number of apartment dwellers and renters
- Many single-person and couple-only households
- Significant weekday commuter inflow of approximately 70,000–80,000 people

Population trends

- Growth mainly through inner-city intensification
- Slower overall growth compared with earlier decades
- Increasing residential density in central and inner suburbs
- Large difference between daytime and night-time population

Distinctive hazard exposure

- High exposure to earthquake shaking and liquefaction, particularly in reclaimed and low-lying areas
- Local-source tsunami risk with very short warning times
- Landslide risk on steep hillsides
- Limited redundancy in transport routes and lifelines, increasing the impact of disruption

Hutt Valley

The Hutt Valley is built largely across the Hutt River floodplain, with homes, businesses, industry, and major transport routes spread along the valley floor. This flat land has supported growth and development, but it also means a very high concentration of people, buildings, and infrastructure in flood-prone areas.

The Hutt Valley is the most densely populated floodplain in New Zealand, which significantly increases the consequences of major flooding.

The western side of the valley follows the Wellington Fault, increasing exposure to earthquake shaking, ground rupture, and landslides on surrounding hills. Coastal communities near the harbour, such as Petone and Eastbourne, also face tsunami risk. Because the valley contains key transport corridors and employment areas, disruption here can affect movement and services across the wider region, including access to Wellington City.

Key demographics

- Combined population of approximately 154,000
- Lower Hutt: ~108,000
- Upper Hutt: ~46,000
- Mix of families, working-age adults, and older residents
- Generally larger household sizes than Wellington City
- Large resident workforce living and working in the valley

Population trends

- Steady growth through suburban infill and redevelopment
- Ongoing residential intensification, particularly in Lower Hutt
- Strong daily commuting within the valley and south to Wellington City

Distinctive hazard exposure

- Extensive development on the Hutt River floodplain, creating significant flood risk
- Elevated earthquake risk due to proximity to the Wellington Fault
- Tsunami exposure in coastal areas such as Petone and Eastbourne
- Linear geography concentrates transport and lifelines along the valley floor

Wairarapa

The Wairarapa covers a large area east of the Remutaka Range, with towns and rural communities spread across plains and hill country. The area is shaped by several major river systems, fault lines, and Lake Wairarapa. Flooding can affect wide areas at the same time, including towns, rural roads, and productive farmland.

Because communities are spread out, emergencies can be harder to access and take longer to recover from. Flooding, earthquakes, and landslides can disrupt transport routes, farming activity, and supply chains for extended periods. Connections to the rest of the region rely on a small number of routes across the ranges, which can be cut off during major events.

Key demographics

- Population of approximately 50,000
- Largest centre: Masterton (~28,000)
- Smaller, dispersed rural communities
- Higher proportion of residents aged 65 years and over
- Employment strongly linked to agriculture and rural services

Population trends

- Modest and uneven growth

- Growth mainly in larger towns rather than rural areas
- Gradual population ageing
- Continued reliance on private vehicles for travel

Distinctive hazard exposure

- Widespread river flooding across plains affecting towns, roads, and farmland
- Earthquake and landslide risk in hill country
- Potential for prolonged recovery due to spatial scale of impacts
- Limited transport routes across the Remutaka Range increases isolation risk

Porirua

Porirua is located within a basin surrounded by steep hills, centred on Porirua Harbour. This geography limits how the city can expand and funnels transport routes through a small number of entry and exit points. Low-lying areas around the harbour and inlet are exposed to flooding and coastal hazards, while surrounding hills are prone to landslides during heavy rain or earthquakes.

As the city grows, more people and infrastructure are concentrated within this constrained area. Damage to access routes, utilities or services can quickly disrupt daily movement and connections with neighbouring districts.

Key demographics

- Population of approximately 59,000
- One of the youngest populations in the region
- High ethnic diversity, including larger Māori and Pacific populations
- Larger average household sizes

Population trends

- Growth through urban intensification and redevelopment
- Increasing residential density near transport corridors and the city centre
- Continued growth within a geographically constrained basin

Distinctive hazard exposure

- Flooding risk in low-lying harbour and inlet areas
- Landslide risk from surrounding steep hills
- Earthquake shaking amplified by basin geology
- Limited transport access increases disruption risk

Kāpiti Coast

The Kāpiti Coast runs along a narrow strip between the Tasman Sea and the Tararua Ranges. Most towns are built on coastal dunes and river plains. Many residents travel south for work, making the areas closely tied to road and rail connections.

The coastal and river setting exposes communities to earthquakes, tsunamis, flooding from fast-flowing rivers, and coastal erosion. Road and rail connections run close to the coast and through areas of steep terrain, meaning damage can quickly limit access to and from the area. Ongoing population growth increases pressure on infrastructure and emergency management capacity.

Key demographics

- Population of approximately 56,000
- Higher-than-average proportion of residents aged 60 years and over
- Smaller household sizes
- Higher rates of home ownership
- Growing commuter population

Population trends

- Consistent long-term population growth
- Lifestyle and retirement migration
- Increasing residential density within existing towns
- Continued reliance on road and rail connections to the south

Distinctive hazard exposure

- Exposure to coastal hazards, including tsunami and erosion
- Flooding from short, fast-flowing rivers
- Transport vulnerability due to limited north–south routes
- Landslide risk along coastal cliffs and transport corridors

Implications for Emergency Management

This section explains what a Most Likely Plus view of risk means for how emergency management needs to work in the Wellington Region. Instead of planning mainly for very rare disasters, this approach focuses on the emergencies that are most likely to happen and most likely to stretch the system, while still recognising that these events can have major consequences for people, communities, infrastructure, and decision-making. The implications below describe the conditions under which the system is most likely to be tested and where strong capability, coordination, and resilience is most critical.

A Most Likely Plus event for the Wellington Region is not a small or easily managed emergency. It is a high-probability event, such as severe weather, flooding, landslides, prolonged lifeline outages, or system disruption, that can affect multiple districts at once and last for weeks rather than days. These events commonly result in widespread loss of water, power, communications, and transport; large-scale evacuation and prolonged displacement; community isolation; significant disruption to health, education, and social services; business interruption and economic loss; environmental damage that increases future risk; and uneven impacts on communities with the least capacity to cope.

When events overlap or occur in quick succession, these consequences compound, placing sustained pressure on leadership, coordination, and public confidence. These types of scenarios already stretch, and in most cases exceed, today's emergency management and recovery capability, which is why the Strategy (and therefore this Plan) focuses on strengthening system performance under these conditions rather than planning only for rare, worst-case disasters.

The system must be designed for sustained, regional-scale emergencies

Emergency events in the Wellington Region are likely to create prolonged and simultaneous demands across multiple districts. These events are not short, discrete incidents; they involve extended response operations, ongoing coordination across agencies, and complex transitions into recovery. Many scenarios unfold over weeks rather than days, placing sustained pressure on leadership, coordination arrangements, and the people and organisations involved, including cumulative fatigue across communities and responders.

Climate-driven hazards will be the primary and recurring stress test

Severe storms, extreme rainfall, flooding, coastal inundation, landslides, and drought are expected to occur more frequently and with greater intensity, often in combination. These hazards can generate overlapping impacts and repeated activations, with limited opportunity for the system or communities to fully return to baseline between events. Over time, this creates a pattern of persistent disruption rather than isolated emergencies.

Displacement, welfare, and housing impacts will be central to response and recovery

Large-scale evacuation and prolonged displacement are likely features of many emergency scenarios. In some cases, homes remain structurally intact but are uninhabitable due to loss of essential services or access constraints. As a result, welfare, shelter, and housing pressures extend well beyond the initial response phase and become defining factors in recovery outcomes.

Lifeline dependency will shape the scale and duration of impacts

Disruption to water, wastewater, power, communications, and transport is expected to be a defining feature of major emergency events. In many scenarios, it is lifeline failure rather than direct hazard damage that drives health risks, displacement, and economic disruption. Extended periods of degraded service are a realistic expectation and significantly influence the duration and severity of impacts on communities and businesses.

Transport disruption and community isolation are likely and consequential

Flooding, landslides, and storm damage are likely to disrupt key road, rail, port, and airport connections. These disruptions can isolate communities, constrain response activity, and delay recovery. The effects are particularly pronounced for coastal, rural, and hill-country communities, where alternative access routes are limited and reliance on a small number of transport corridors is high.

Social impacts will be uneven and may compound over time

Emergency impacts are not experienced equally. Disruption is likely to disproportionately affect disproportionately affected communities, including those with limited financial resources, insecure housing, reduced mobility, or existing health and wellbeing challenges. When events are repeated or prolonged, these impacts can compound over time, increasing inequity and slowing recovery for some groups.

Cultural impacts and Māori partnership are integral to effective emergency management

Flooding, coastal hazards, and other emergencies can affect marae, urupā, wāhi tapu, and culturally significant landscapes, as well as disrupt tangihanga, hui, and customary practices. Marae also play a critical role as places of connection, support, and coordination during emergencies. Cultural impacts and Māori partnership are therefore central to understanding how emergencies affect communities and how recovery unfolds.

Leadership, coordination, and public confidence will influence outcomes

Emergency events place sustained pressure on leadership, decision-making, and coordination arrangements, often in conditions of uncertainty and degraded information. Clear roles, timely decisions, consistent communication, and visible leadership strongly influence public confidence and community action. Where these elements are weak, the consequences of an event can escalate significantly, even when resources are available.

Taken together, these implications point to the importance of an emergency management system that is enduring, adaptable, and people-centred, capable of operating under frequent, high-impact conditions and supporting communities through prolonged disruption and recovery. Strengthening

the system for Most Likely Plus conditions improves outcomes across the full range of risks faced by the Wellington Region.

Hazards

Incidents occur across the region every day; however, an incident becomes an emergency when the consequences of a hazard event have a significant adverse effect on people, property, the environment, or the functioning of communities. Hazards considered in this plan include both natural and human-induced hazards. Natural hazards arise from environmental and geological processes such as flooding, earthquakes, and severe weather, while human-induced hazards result from activities such as infrastructure failure, hazardous substances incidents, or system disruption.

A broad range of hazards relevant to the Wellington Region has been examined. This includes hazards that CDEM would typically lead the response to, as well as hazards—such as pandemics, fire, and hazardous substances incidents—where CDEM may play a significant supporting or coordinating role due to the scale or complexity of the consequences.

Risk analysis

Risk reflects the interaction between the likelihood of a hazard occurring and the consequences for communities if it does occur. For example, the risk associated with flooding is influenced not only by how often a river may overtop its banks, but also by the extent and nature of development within flood-prone areas and the vulnerability of affected communities and infrastructure. Events that are more likely to occur, or that produce more severe impacts, present higher overall risk.

Risk identification and assessment have been undertaken across the Wellington Region for the major hazards within the CDEM Group's scope. While the assessment considers a wide range of hazards, the analysis deliberately focuses on the consequences that are most likely to be experienced and managed over the life of this plan. This approach recognises that different hazards often generate similar patterns of impact, such as displacement, lifeline disruption, community isolation, and prolonged recovery.

The results presented reflect the risk profile of the region. Local variations in exposure and vulnerability mean that impacts will differ across territorial authorities; however, the consequence-based approach provides a consistent foundation for regional planning, coordination, and prioritisation.

Risk evaluation

Risk evaluation for the Wellington Region has been undertaken using a scenario-based approach, drawing on a series of Most Credible Events (MCE) across a wide range of hazards. These scenarios reflect current scientific understanding, infrastructure vulnerability, demographic change, and recent emergency management experience in New Zealand, including large-scale and compounding events.

Rather than relying on single hazard events or average impacts, the risk evaluation considers credible scenarios that represent the upper end of what the region is likely to experience, including earthquakes, tsunami, severe weather, flooding, landslides, lifeline failures, pandemics, and emerging risks such as cyber disruption. Each MCE was assessed across multiple impact environments, Built; Social; Economic; Natural and Cultural. In addition, each of the scenarios identified the impact of climate change, whether climate change is likely to increase the impacts over time.

Summary of risk analysis (scenario based)

Hazard Type	Scenario	Most Credible	Likelihood	Impact of Climate Change	Rating
Earthquake	Wellington Fault Earthquake	Mw 7.5 rupture of Wellington–Hutt Valley segment	Low	↔ (N/A)	Extreme
	Hikurangi Subduction Earthquake + Local Tsunami	Mw 8.8–8.9 rupture + 10–20 m run-up south coast	Very Low	↑ (Moderate) (higher coastal inundation baseline)	Extreme
	Alpine Fault Rupture	A magnitude 8+ multi-segment ruptures on the Alpine Fault	Moderate	↔ (N/A)	Medium-High
Tsunami	Local Source Tsunami	Cook Strait or Kaikōura Canyon rupture with minutes of warning.	Low - Moderate	↑ (Moderate)	High
	Distant Source Tsunami (South America / Pacific Rim)	Mw 8.5–9.0 earthquake off South America; tsunami arrives 12–16 hours later.	Moderate	↑ (Moderate)	Medium-High
Severe Weather and Flooding	Severe Storm & Extreme Rainfall (Cyclone Gabrielle-type)	Slow-moving ex-tropical system delivering 250–350 mm rain in 24–48 hours.	High	↑↑ (High)	High
	River Flooding – Major Catchment Event (Hutt River)	1% AEP flood with stopbank overtopping or breach.	Moderate	↑ (Moderate)	High
	Coastal Storm Surge & Sea-Level Rise	Storm surge + king tide + elevated sea level.	Moderate	↑↑ (High)	Medium-High
Landslides	Landslides blocking SH1/SH@ / Rail	Multi-corridor landslide chain (rainstorm or quake-triggered)	Moderate	↑ (Moderate)	High
Lifelines	Long duration lifeline failure (water/power/comms)	Major water, power, or telecom failure unrelated to natural hazard.	Moderate	↑ (Moderate)	High
Biological	Pandemic	COVID-level transmissibility, 25–40% attack rate	Moderate	↔ (N/A)	High
Drought	Drought	Multi-year drought with extreme heat days.	Moderate	↑↑ (High)	Medium
Volcanic	Ashfall	Ruapehu VEI-3 eruption with 1–5 mm ash in Wellington	Low - Moderate	↔ (N/A)	Medium
Hazardous Substances	Hazardous Substances Incident	Seaview petrochemical tank fire or spill	Moderate	↑ (Moderate) (flood/erosion risk)	Medium
Emerging Hazards	Space Weather	Major coronal mass ejection disrupting power and satellites.	Low-moderate	↔ (N/A)	Medium
	Cyber Attack	Ransomware/system compromise affecting councils or lifelines.	Moderate-high	↔ (N/A)	High

While the hazards assessed vary significantly in likelihood, scale, and mechanism, the evaluation showed that they consistently produce similar patterns of consequence. Across the MCEs, impacts tend to cluster around a small number of recurring outcomes, such as prolonged loss of essential services, displacement of people

from their homes, isolation of communities, disruption to coordination and decision-making, and long recovery periods with uneven social and economic effects.

This supports a deliberate shift from a hazard-led risk evaluation to a consequence-focused approach. The evaluation recognises that effective emergency management is less about preparing for every possible hazard in isolation, and more about reducing the severity, duration, and inequity of the consequences that are most likely to arise across multiple hazards.

Heat Map of risk analysis

Hazard	Most Credible	Social	Built	Economic	Natural	Cultural
Earthquake	Wellington Fault Earthquake	E	E	E	Ma	E
	Hikurangi Subduction EQ + Tsunami	E	E	E	E	E
	Alpine Fault Rupture	Mo	Mo	Ma	Mi	Mo
Tsunami	Local Source Tsunami	E	Ma	Ma	Ma	Ma
	Distant Source Tsunami	Mo	Mo	Mo	Mi	Mi
Severe Weather and Flooding	Severe Storm / Extreme Rainfall	Ma	Ma	Ma	E	Mo
	Major River Flooding (Hutt)	Ma	Ma	Ma	E	Mo
	Coastal Storm Surge + SLR	Mo	Mo	Mo	E	Ma
Landslide	Landslide Event (Multi-corridor)	Mo	Mo	Mo	Mo	Mi
Lifelines	Long-Duration Lifeline Failure	Ma	Ma	Ma	Mo	Mo
Biological	Pandemic / Health Emergency	E	Mi	E	I	Ma
Drought	Drought & Heatwave	Mo	Mi	Mo	E	Mo
Volcanic	Volcanic Ashfall	Mi	Mi	Mo	Mi	Mi
Hazardous Substances	Hazardous Substances Incident	Mo	Mi	Mi	Mo	Mi
Emerging	Space Weather	Mi	Mo	Mo	I	I
	Cyber Attack	Mo	Mo	Ma	I	Mo

Legend:

E	Extreme
Ma	Major
Mo	Moderate
Mi	Minor
I	Insignificant

The consequence heat map shows that the most severe and persistent impacts on communities, lifeline services, and the regional economy are most often caused by moderate-to-high likelihood events such as severe weather, flooding, landslides, lifeline failures, and cyber disruption. These are not low-impact scenarios for the current system; they already stretch, and in many cases exceed, our current capability. While low-likelihood catastrophic hazards remain essential planning scenarios, this Plan prioritises strengthening system performance against the consequences most likely to occur, recur, and compound over time, where the greatest resilience gains can be achieved.

As a result, ten key consequences have been identified that consistently emerge across the scenarios and represent the outcomes that place the greatest strain on communities, infrastructure, and the emergency management system.

Key Consequences to be Managed

The risk evaluation demonstrates that, while the Wellington Region faces a wide range of hazards with differing likelihoods and characteristics, these hazards consistently generate a common set of consequences. These consequences place the greatest strain on people, communities, infrastructure, and the emergency management system, and they shape the scale, duration, and equity of recovery.

The ten consequences outlined below represent the outcomes that most frequently and severely affect the region across a number of different scenarios. They provide a common reference for prioritising effort, guiding investment, and aligning activities across preparedness, response, recovery, and risk reduction. Managing these consequences effectively will reduce risk across multiple hazards simultaneously.

Prolonged loss of lifeline services

Loss of essential services—particularly drinking water, wastewater, electricity, telecommunications, and fuel—emerges as the most consistent and far-reaching consequence across hazard scenarios. Extended outages can render homes uninhabitable, disrupt health and welfare services, constrain response operations, and significantly slow recovery, even where physical damage is limited.

Large-scale displacement and housing uninhabitability

Many scenarios result in significant numbers of people being displaced from their homes for extended periods. Displacement may arise from flooding, coastal inundation, earthquake damage, or the loss of essential services and access. This places sustained pressure on welfare systems, temporary accommodation, and the wider housing market, and can extend recovery timeframes from months into years.

Isolation of communities and loss of access

Disruption to road, rail, port, and airport networks can isolate communities, restrict the movement of people and goods, and delay response and recovery activities. Geographic constraints and limited redundancy mean that some communities are particularly vulnerable to isolation lasting days or longer, increasing reliance on local self-sufficiency and community-led response.

Breakdown of emergency coordination and situational awareness

Emergency events can degrade the systems and information flows required for effective coordination and decision-making, particularly when power, communications, or digital platforms are disrupted. Reduced situational awareness and coordination capacity can significantly amplify impacts, even when resources and personnel are available.

Severe and unequal social impacts

Emergency impacts are not evenly distributed. Disruption disproportionately affects people and communities with fewer resources, limited mobility, insecure housing, or existing health and wellbeing challenges. Repeated or prolonged events can compound disadvantage, deepen inequities, and undermine long-term community resilience.

Long-term economic disruption and business failure

Major emergencies can result in extended business interruption, workforce disruption, supply chain impacts, and insurance retreat. Small and medium enterprises are particularly vulnerable. Economic recovery often lags behind physical repair, with lasting effects on employment, productivity, and regional prosperity.

Environmental degradation that increases future risk

Flooding, erosion, sedimentation, wastewater overflows, and coastal change can damage natural systems that provide protection against future hazards. Environmental degradation can therefore increase exposure and vulnerability over time, reinforcing a cycle of escalating risk if not addressed through recovery and adaptation.

Damage to cultural sites and loss of cultural continuity

Hazard events can damage marae, urupā, wāhi tapu, heritage buildings, and culturally significant landscapes, as well as disrupt tangihanga, hui, and customary practices. Cultural harm can persist long after physical rebuilding and may weaken social cohesion and recovery capacity if not appropriately recognised and addressed.

Erosion of public confidence and trust

Delays, unclear communication, perceived inequity, or unmet expectations during emergencies can erode public confidence in institutions and emergency management arrangements. Loss of trust can reduce compliance with future warnings, undermine preparedness efforts, and complicate recovery.

Compounding and cascading system failures

The most damaging scenarios involve multiple, interacting failures across systems—such as lifeline outages coinciding with transport disruption, digital system failure, or social stress. These cascading effects can escalate rapidly and overwhelm single-hazard or siloed planning approaches, requiring system-wide resilience and coordination.

Together, these ten consequences describe the outcomes that matter most for the Wellington Region. They provide the foundation for the Group's work programme, enabling actions to be prioritised based on their ability to reduce harm, shorten disruption, and support faster and more equitable recovery across a wide range of hazards.

Risk management approach

The Wellington Region CDEM Group manages risk through a consequence-based, system-focused framework, informed by scenario analysis and a Most Likely Plus view of future emergencies. This framework reflects the types of emergencies most likely to occur during the life of this Plan and the impacts they are expected to have across the region.

The framework does not manage hazards in isolation. Instead, it focuses on reducing the severity, duration, and inequity of consequences that occur across a wide range of credible scenarios. Different hazards often result in similar outcomes, such as disruption to lifeline services, displacement, community isolation, economic interruption, and pressure on coordination and decision-making. Addressing these shared consequences reduces risk across multiple hazards at the same time.

The ten key consequences identified through the risk assessment form the primary basis for risk management and decision-making. They are used to guide priorities, support coordinated planning across preparedness, response, recovery, and risk reduction, and inform investment toward actions that deliver system-wide benefit. Actions and initiatives are assessed based on their ability to prevent, reduce, or manage these consequences, rather than on the likelihood of individual hazard events alone.

The framework places emphasis on system performance under sustained pressure. Experience indicates that significant harm often results from system overload or loss of function, rather than from the hazard itself. Risk management therefore considers how the emergency management system operates during prolonged and overlapping events, including leadership and coordination arrangements, lifeline interdependencies, community preparedness, welfare and recovery capability, and equity and cultural considerations.

Risk is managed over time and across the full emergency management spectrum. This includes reducing exposure and vulnerability where practicable, strengthening readiness and response capability for unavoidable impacts, supporting recovery approaches that reduce future risk, and incorporating learning from events and exercises to improve system performance. While risk cannot be eliminated, effective consequence management reduces harm and supports faster and more equitable recovery.

The Group’s work programme is structured to give effect to this framework. It focuses on addressing the ten key consequences through capability development, partnerships with lifeline utilities, iwi, councils, and communities, investment in system enablers such as information, coordination, and leadership, and monitoring progress against consequence-focused outcomes. Together, this provides a consistent and adaptable approach to managing risk in the Wellington Region.

The following tables outlines how the above risk assessment has directly influenced the Group’s strategic goals for the region:

Link of key consequences to strategic goals and objectives

Top 10 Consequence	Goal 1: Managing Risk	Goal 2: Effective Response and Recovery	Goal 3: Community Resilience
Prolonged loss of lifeline services	G1.1 Risk Information G1.2 Risk Integration G1.3 Risk Investment	G2.2 Interoperable Workforce G2.4 People focused recovery	
Large-scale displacement and housing uninhabitability		G2.4 People focused recovery	G3.5 Disproportionality affected people
Isolation of communities and loss of access		G2.1 Community-led Response	G3.3 Capability Building
Breakdown of emergency coordination and situational awareness	G1.1 Risk Information G1.2 Risk Integration	G2.2 Interoperable Workforce	
Severe and unequal social impacts		G2.4 People focused recovery	G3.1 Social Cohesion G3.5 Disproportionality affected people
Long-term economic disruption and business failure	G1.3 Risk Investment	G2.4 People focused recovery	
Environmental degradation that increases future risk	G1.1 Risk Information G1.2 Risk Integration G1.3 Risk Investment G1.4 Te Ao Māori Integration	G2.4 People focused recovery	
Damage to cultural sites and loss of cultural continuity	G1.4 Te Ao Māori Integration	G2.3 Partnerships with iwi/ Māori	G3.2 Culturally grounded initiatives
Erosion of public confidence and trust	G1.2 Accessible risk information	G2.1 Community-led Response	G3.4 Household preparedness
Compounding and cascading system failures	G1.5 Risk Governance	G2.5 Continuous Improvement	

Vision and goals of the CDEM Group Plan

The vision of the Wellington Region CDEM Group is:

Resilient Communities: Connected, Capable and Ready

For the purposes of this Group Plan, the following definitions apply:

- Resilience means ability to anticipate, resist, minimise, respond to, adapt to, and recover from disruptive events.
- Communities means a group of people connected by geography, shared interests, or collective identity. This involves the people we serve and the people working within the emergency management system.
- Connected means partnerships that are based on trust and reciprocity across councils, iwi, agencies, marae, schools, and neighbourhood groups
- Capable means we have trained, diverse, and scalable teams, practiced plans, robust infrastructure, and prepared communities.
- Ready means everyone knows their risks and has plans in place to respond and recover.

Strategic Goals and Objectives

The strategic goals outlined in this plan are directly derived from the Wellington Region CDEM Group Strategy 2025–2035 and give effect to its long-term vision and priorities. They reflect a clear and deliberate alignment with national emergency management direction, including the National Disaster Resilience Strategy, by adopting the same overarching goal structure. This ensures that regional actions are consistent with national expectations while remaining grounded in the Wellington Region’s specific risk profile, system challenges, and community context. Together, these goals provide a coherent framework that connects local delivery with regional outcomes and national resilience objectives.

Managing Risk

We actively and consistently manage risk across the region through aligned frameworks, shared data, and a forward-looking risk culture.

Effective Response and Recovery

We have an effective and efficient end-to-end emergency management system that delivers on the CDEM Group’s collective requirements and responsibilities.

Community Resilience

We enable, empower and support communities to prepare, respond and recover with confidence and to act for themselves and others during an emergency.

Priority Areas of Work

The priority work programmes translate the long-term intent of the 10-year Strategy into practical, coordinated actions for the Group Plan period. Together, these programmes strengthen how risk is identified, understood, communicated, and acted on across agencies, sectors, and communities.

These programmes:

- Address known system gaps identified through environmental scanning, workshops, and lessons from past events;

- Support consistent, region-wide approaches to risk analysis, investment, and governance;
- Enable better alignment between risk reduction, readiness, and downstream response and recovery outcomes; and
- Are designed to be delivered collaboratively, reflecting the whole-of-society approach embedded in both the CDEM Act and the NDRS.

How these priority areas will be delivered

Each priority area is supported by one or more projects that translate the Strategy into practical, coordinated action.

Delivery will be achieved through:

- Clear leadership and accountability, with identified lead agencies responsible for coordination and delivery;
- Active participation from partner agencies, including commitment of people, time, expertise, and resources;
- Use of established governance arrangements to monitor progress, manage risks, and provide strategic direction;
- Partnerships across councils, mana whenua, community organisations, and local leaders to support shared ownership and delivery;
- Investment in communication, capability development, and relationship-building to strengthen system performance;
- Recognition and support of existing community initiatives as part of the regional approach;
- Alignment with existing operational arrangements and capability programmes to avoid duplication and strengthen integration; and
- Ongoing coordination monitoring, and learning to ensure effectiveness, adapt to new information, and embed continuous improvement.

How to Read this Group Plan alongside the 10-Year Strategy

This Plan is designed to be read alongside the Strategy. Together, the two documents form a single, connected framework for strengthening emergency management and resilience across the region.

The 10-year Strategy sets the long-term direction.

It describes the outcomes the region is working towards over the next decade and the strategic goals that guide decision-making and investment.

This Group Plan gives effect to that Strategy.

It explains how the Strategy will be implemented in practice through agreed priorities, work programmes, roles, and arrangements during the life of the Plan.

From Strategy to Action

The Plan translates the Strategy into delivery by:

- Structuring activity under the three strategic goals of the Strategy;
- Identifying priority work programmes that will drive progress against those goals;
- Clarifying how responsibilities are shared across councils, agencies, partners, and communities; and
- Providing a clear basis for coordination, monitoring, and continuous improvement.

This ensures that day-to-day planning and operational decisions remain aligned with the long-term outcomes set out in the Strategy.

An Integrated, Goal-Based Approach

The Plan does not organise work into separate phases. Instead, it uses a goal-based approach that reflects how emergency management operates in practice—where risk management, preparedness, response, and recovery are closely connected and often occur in parallel.

This approach:

- Supports joined-up decision-making;
- Reduces duplication across agencies;
- Encourages collaboration across the system; and
- Maintains a clear line of sight from strategic intent to operational delivery.

Governance, Resourcing, and Accountability

Delivery of the projects set out in this Plan will be actively monitored through established governance arrangements. Progress, risks, and outcomes will be regularly reported to governance to provide visibility, assurance, and direction where required.

All lead agencies are responsible for coordinating delivery of the programmes they lead, and all support agencies are expected to actively participate and contribute as agreed. This includes committing the appropriate people, time, expertise, and resources necessary to undertake the work and support collective delivery. These programmes are intended to be delivered as shared system priorities, and their success depends on sustained commitment and collaboration across all participating organisations.

Goal 1: Managing Risks

This strategic goal focuses on improving how the Wellington Region understands, manages, and makes decisions about risk.

Managing risk is not just about identifying hazards. It is about understanding the consequences those hazards create for people, communities, infrastructure, and services—and using that understanding to guide planning, investment, and preparedness decisions across the system.

The priority areas of work under this goal strengthen the foundations that sit beneath effective emergency management, recognising that strong risk governance before emergencies occur reduces avoidable impacts and improves response and recovery outcomes.

Strategic Objectives

The following identifies the strategic objectives to address the above areas of concern and to effectively manage risk:

1. Integrate emergency management-related risk data into strategies and operational planning.
2. Deliver consistent and accessible regional risk communication through local channels, platforms, and partnerships.
3. Strengthen regionally consistent risk information to guide investment in resilience.
4. Embed Te Ao Māori values and mātauranga Māori in local hazard, risk, and resilience planning across the region.
5. Strengthen cross-boundary CDEM governance to align priorities and share risk planning resources.

Priority Areas of Work for Managing Risk

The priority areas of work under this goal are designed to create a shared, trusted, and usable understanding of risk across the region.

They focus on:

- Strengthening leadership, governance, and accountability for risk decisions.
- Improving the quality, consistency, and accessibility of risk and consequence information.
- Embedding Te Ao Māori perspectives and mātauranga Māori into risk thinking.
- Supporting more consistent, risk-informed investment decisions; and
- Improving how risk and readiness information is communicated to communities.

Rather than treating risk as a technical or siloed activity, these priority areas take a system-wide approach, recognising that effective risk management depends on collaboration across councils, agencies, partners, and communities.

What success looks like

Collectively, the priority areas of work under this goal aim to achieve:

- A shared regional understanding of risk and consequences used consistently for planning and decision-making.
- Clear accountability for risk-related actions and investment decisions.

- Stronger partnerships with mana whenua, with Māori perspectives meaningfully reflected in how risk is understood and managed.
- More transparent and consistent investment decisions based on agreed risk tolerance.
- Improved public understanding of local risks and readiness expectations; and
- Reduced duplication and better use of data, modelling, and expertise across organisations.

Over time, this will result in fewer avoidable impacts, better preparedness, and stronger foundations for effective response and recovery.

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The following table identifies the key projects that are to be delivered over this cycle of the Group Plan. Further details on the projects are shown in Appendix 1.

Table: Managing Risk - Priority areas of work

Project details					System		When the project starts		
Project	Project aim	What success looks like (2031)	Priority Strategic Objective	Lead agency	Estimated lift ²	Resource required	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
Clear accountability and transparent reporting	Put simple systems in place so it is clear who is responsible for what, how work is progressing, and how agencies are working together on shared priorities.	Governance has a clear view of progress and agencies are accountable for agreed actions.	Strengthen cross-boundary governance and accountability	Council (WREMO)	Medium	Medium			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Clear roles and responsibilities across the system	Clarify who does what from governance through to operations so agencies understand their role before, during, and after emergencies.	An integrated system with fewer gaps, overlaps, and delays.	Strengthen cross-boundary governance and system clarity	Council (WREMO)	Medium	Medium			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Kotahitanga – building trust with mana whenua	Invest time in building strong, trusted relationships with mana whenua and supporting shared leadership and decision-making.	High-trust relationships that enable faster coordination and better decisions.	Strengthen partnerships and shared leadership	Mana whenua (co-ordinating Iwi TBD)	Medium	Low			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Embedding Te Ao Māori and mātauranga Māori in risk planning	Build shared understanding of Te Ao Māori values and mātauranga Māori and co-design how these are applied in emergency management and risk planning.	Māori perspectives and knowledge are meaningfully reflected in risk decisions.	Embed Te Ao Māori in risk and resilience planning	Iwi / Māori (co-ordinating Iwi TBD)	Medium	Low			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Regional hazard and consequence risk register	Develop a single, shared picture of the hazards and consequences the region faces that everyone can use for planning and decisions.	Agencies and communities work from the same understanding of risk.	Provide consistent and accessible regional risk information	Council (WREMO)	Medium	Medium			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Best practice modelling and sharing network	Create a regional network to share risk modelling methods, data, and expertise to reduce duplication and improve consistency.	More consistent analysis and stronger capability across organisations.	Improve risk data integration and consistency	Council (GWRC)	Low	Low			Project expected to continue year 3
Regional risk tolerance and investment framework	Agree how much risk is acceptable and how to prioritise investment across the region using clear, shared criteria.	Transparent and consistent investment decisions across councils and partners.	Enable risk-informed investment decisions	Council (GWRC)	Medium	Medium			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Public risk and readiness communication campaign	Deliver a shared “Know Your Risk” campaign that explains risks, preparedness, and likely service outages in clear, accessible language.	Better public understanding, trust, and preparedness.	Improve public access to risk and readiness information	Council (WREMO)	Low	Medium			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3

² Note on “Estimated Lift” and “Resource Required” (Indicative Only)

The Estimated Lift and Resource Required columns are included to provide a high-level sense of relative impact and effort only. They are conceptual indicators, not commitments, costings, or funding decisions.

They are intended to support prioritisation and sequencing discussions, rather than to pre-judge detailed business cases or delivery models.

Continuous improvement for risk governance	Embed learning from events, exercises, and reviews into governance so improvements are tracked and acted on.	Evidence that lessons are learned and changes are made.	Strengthen system learning and assurance	Council (WREMO)	Medium	Low		Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Improved access to data and insights during emergencies	Improve shared data and analytics platforms so agencies have better, faster information during emergencies.	A shared, trusted picture to support timely decisions.	Integrate risk and operational data across the system	Council (WREMO)	Medium	Medium		Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Advocating for lifelines resilience	Work with lifeline utilities to identify high-risk areas and advocate for investment that reduces outages and speeds up restoration.	Fewer and shorter lifeline outages; faster recovery of essential services.	Support risk-informed resilience investment	Joint Committee (Chair)	Medium	Low		Project expected to continue years 2 & 3

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Goal 2: Effective Response and Recovery

This strategic goal focuses on ensuring the Wellington Region can respond effectively to emergencies and recover in a way that is timely, coordinated, and equitable.

Effective response and recovery depend on more than plans and structures. They rely on people, relationships, shared systems, and the ability to adapt quickly as situations change. This goal recognises that response and recovery are part of a continuous system that begins before an event and continues well after immediate response activity has ended.

Strategic Objectives

The following identifies the strategic objectives to address the above areas of concern and to effectively manage risk:

1. Strengthen community-led emergency response and recovery across the region.
2. Build a regionally capable, interoperable, and scalable emergency management workforce.
3. Embed mana whenua partnerships and Te Ao Māori principles into local and regional response and recovery systems.
4. Embed comprehensive and people-focused pre-disaster recovery planning.
5. Use locally driven evidence and after-action processes to learn and continuously improve the region's emergency systems.

Priority Areas of Work for Effective Response and Recovery

The priority areas of work under this goal are designed to strengthen how the system performs under pressure.

They focus on:

- Improving coordination and interoperability across agencies and partners.
- Building a scalable, networked emergency management workforce.
- Embedding mana whenua as trusted response and recovery partners.
- Improving how needs are identified and prioritised, particularly for disproportionality affected groups; and
- Strengthening learning, assurance, and continuous improvement.

Together, these priority areas address known coordination gaps and capability constraints identified through events, exercises, and reviews.

What success looks like

Collectively, the priority areas of work under this goal aim to achieve:

- A workforce that can scale quickly and operate consistently across the region.
- Clear roles and trusted relationships that support faster decision-making.
- Better identification of community needs and impacts, enabling more equitable outcomes.
- A seamless relationship between the official response and communities, working in tandem to achieve positive outcomes.
- Stronger transitions from response into recovery, with fewer delays and handover issues.
- Shared systems and tools that support situational awareness and coordination; and

- A system that learns and adapts before the next emergency.

Over time, this will result in faster, more coordinated response and recovery, and greater confidence across agencies and communities.

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The following table identifies the key projects that are to be delivered over this cycle of the Group Plan. Further details on the projects are shown in Appendix 2.

Table: Effective Response and Recovery - Priority areas of work

Project details					System		When the project starts		
Project	Project aim	What success looks like (2031)	Primary Strategic Objective	Lead agency	Estimated lift ³	Resource required	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
Continuous improvement and assurance	Use shared after-action reviews and learning processes so the system adapts and improves after events and exercises.	Lessons are shared, acted on, and lead to real system improvements.	Strengthen continuous improvement and system learning	Council (WREMO)	Low-Medium	Low			Project expected to continue year 3
Regional training and exercises framework	Create a coordinated regional approach to training and exercising so agencies can work together more effectively.	A workforce that trains together and operates consistently across the region.	Build an interoperable regional workforce	Council (WREMO)	High	Medium - High			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
CIMS capability and capacity uplift programme	Implementation of a work programme to address gaps in capability across all CIMS functions to improve the system's operational performance.	Demonstrated uplift in capability and capacity across all CIMS functions result in a improved system performance.	Strengthen operational response capability	Council (WREMO)	Medium	Medium			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Embedding mana whenua partnerships in response and recovery	Co-develop a mana-enhancing framework that recognises and enables Māori roles in response and recovery.	Iwi/Māori are recognised and supported as response and recovery partners.	Embed mana whenua partnerships into response and recovery	Iwi/Māori (coordinating Iwi TBD)	Medium	Low			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Rapid needs assessment for response and recovery	Integrate needs assessment across agencies to prioritise support, especially for disproportionately affected communities.	Faster, more equitable support during response and recovery.	Enable people-focused recovery planning	Chair - Regional Welfare Advisory Group	Low-Medium	Medium			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
System capability information access platform	Create a shared digital hub for training materials and workforce capability information.	Improved access to training and visibility of regional capability.	Support an interoperable and scalable workforce	Council (WREMO)	Low-Medium	Low-Medium			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Community insights are integrated into response and recovery	To ensure response and recovery are informed by an understanding of each community, enabling timely and effective support that builds on local strengths and addresses real needs.	Communities are well understood, and support is timely, appropriate, and based on real needs and strengths.	Enable community-led response	Council (WREMO)	Low-Medium	Low-Medium			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Review and enhance Community Emergency Hubs	Review and strengthen Community Emergency Hubs so they are better integrated and connected to existing community organisations	Hubs operate effectively as community-led response and recovery resources.	Strengthen community response capability	Council (WREMO)	Medium	Low-Medium			Project expected to continue year 3

³ Note on "Estimated Lift" and "Resource Required" (Indicative Only)

The Estimated Lift and Resource Required columns are included to provide a high-level sense of relative impact and effort only. They are conceptual indicators, not commitments, costings, or funding decisions.

They are intended to support prioritisation and sequencing discussions, rather than to pre-judge detailed business cases or delivery models.

Recovery transition systems and tools	Identify and implement the systems and tools needed to manage the transition from response into mid-term recovery.	Smoother, faster transitions from response to recovery with clearer leadership.	Strengthen recovery readiness and leadership	Council (WREMO)	Low	Low			Project expected to continue year 3
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Goal 3: Enabling and Supporting Community Resilience

This strategic goal focuses on strengthening the ability of communities, whānau, and households to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies, with support from—but not dependence on—the formal emergency management system.

Communities are not just recipients of assistance. They are active partners, with existing strengths, relationships, and resources that play a critical role in reducing impacts and supporting recovery, particularly in the early stages of an emergency.

Strategic Objectives

The following identifies the strategic objectives to address the above areas of concern and to effectively manage risk:

1. Support and enable social cohesion among people and communities.
2. Iwi and Māori communities lead culturally grounded resilience initiatives in collaboration with Emergency Management.
3. Facilitate capacity building initiatives that enables individuals, whānau, businesses, NGOs and community groups to be ready to respond and recover.
4. Increase household readiness through evidence-based public education and support access to relevant resources that enable preparedness.
5. Improve the resilience of disproportionately affected communities to respond and recover.

Priority Areas of Work for Community Resilience

The priority areas of work under this goal are designed to support a more community-led and inclusive model of resilience.

They focus on:

- Strengthening partnerships with mana whenua and supporting marae as resilient community anchors.
- Improving household and neighbourhood preparedness through clear, inclusive communication.
- Supporting isolated and disproportionately affected communities.
- Making visible and better connecting existing community networks; and
- Clarifying how community-led action fits alongside formal emergency management roles.

This approach recognises that resilience is built before emergencies occur, through trust, connection, and shared responsibility.

What success looks like

Collectively, the priority areas of work under this goal aim to achieve:

- Communities that are better prepared, more connected, and more confident to act.
- Marae supported as recognised as response and recovery sites.
- Improved household preparedness, reducing pressure on response systems.
- Stronger social cohesion, with neighbours supporting one another.
- Better outcomes for isolated and disproportionately affected communities; and
- A shared understanding of how community-led action and formal response work together.

Over time, this will result in communities that recover more quickly and experience fewer long-term impacts.

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The following table identifies the key projects that are to be delivered over this cycle of the Group Plan. Further details on the projects are shown in Appendix 3.

Table: Community Resilience - Priority areas of work

Project details					System		When the project starts		
Project	Project aim	What success looks like (2031)	Primary Strategic Objective	Lead agency	Estimated lift ⁴	Resource required	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
Kotahitanga – marae capability and resilience programme	Support marae to act as trusted, resilient response and recovery sites, including building capability where needed.	Marae operate safely and effectively during emergencies.	Support iwi and Māori-led, culturally grounded resilience	Iwi/Māori / (co-ordinating iwi TBD)	Low	Low			Project expected to continue year 3
Preparedness communications campaign	Deliver targeted and inclusive preparedness campaigns that are tailored to different audiences, supporting households and communities to be ready and self-sufficient.	Increased household preparedness and reduced response pressure.	Increase household preparedness and self-reliance	Council (WREMO)	Low	Low			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Connecting isolated communities	Identify isolated (both physically and socially) areas and support community-led planning for emergencies.	Isolated communities are better prepared and connected.	Reduce disproportionate impacts on disproportionately affected communities	Council (WREMO)	Medium	Medium			Project expected to continue year 3
Strengthening neighbourhood-level social cohesion	Create opportunities for neighbours to connect and build local relationships.	Stronger neighbourhood connections and mutual support.	Strengthen social cohesion at a local level	Council (co-ordinating council TBD)	Low	Low			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Community support networks mapping	Identify and connect existing community organisations and networks that support resilience.	Visible, connected networks that can be activated in response and recovery.	Facilitate community capacity building	Council (co-ordinating council TBD)	Low - Medium	Medium			Project expected to continue years 2 & 3
Community-led emergency management system design	Develop a framework that recognises and supports community-led action alongside formal emergency management.	Communities act as system partners, not just recipients of support.	Facilitate community capacity building	Council (WREMO)	High	High			

⁴ Note on “Estimated Lift” and “Resource Required” (Indicative Only)

The Estimated Lift and Resource Required columns are included to provide a high-level sense of relative impact and effort only. They are conceptual indicators, not commitments, costings, or funding decisions.

They are intended to support prioritisation and sequencing discussions, rather than to pre-judge detailed business cases or delivery models.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This section of the Group Plan outlines how the Wellington CDEM Group will carry out monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the Group is meeting its obligations, achieving its outcomes which contribute towards the Group achieving its strategic goals and vision. In addition, it provides the opportunity to identify any emerging issues and allows for these to be addressed during the life of the Group Plan rather than waiting until the next iteration.

To ensure that progress is being made towards the Group Plan vision and goals it is essential that the effectiveness of the implementation of the Group Plan be evaluated. The Group will do this through several ways:

- Regular reporting to the CEG and Joint Committee on progress against the projects outlined in the Plan
- Biennial (every two years) monitoring of the indicators.
- External monitoring and evaluation by the National Emergency Management Agency

Key Indicators

The indicators in this section have been developed to show whether the Wellington Region CDEM Group Plan is delivering meaningful change over time, rather than simply measuring activity or compliance. They focus on outcomes that matter most: reducing risk before emergencies occur, ensuring the response and recovery system functions clearly and sustainably under pressure, and strengthening the ability of communities to meet their own needs and support each other. The indicators are deliberately designed to reflect how the emergency management system operates in practice, rather than the existence of plans, policies, or processes. Together, they provide a clear line of sight from the Group Plan's objectives and projects to measurable progress, supporting transparent monitoring, learning, and accountability across the life of the Strategy.

Proposed baselines and targets for each indicator are set out in the Appendix and will be used to track progress and guide continuous improvement over time.

Goal 1: Managing Risks

Managing risk is about reducing harm before emergencies occur, not just responding well when they do. The indicators under this goal focus on whether risk information is understood, trusted, and acted on, and whether the emergency management system is learning and improving over time.

These indicators do not measure the existence of plans or frameworks. Instead, they show whether:

- decisions are being informed by risk information,
- early protective actions are taken before impacts occur,
- learning prevents the repetition of known failures, and
- communities have confidence that risks are being actively managed.

Progress under this goal will be demonstrated when:

- early actions happen more often and earlier,
- risk priorities are consistently reflected in decisions and investment,
- learning leads to real system change, and
- public understanding and trust increase over time.

Together, these indicators provide a clear picture of whether the Group is moving from reactive risk management to anticipatory, evidence-based decision-making, aligned with the intent of the Group Plan and its risk-focused projects.

Goal 2: Effective Response and Recovery

Effective response and recovery are about whether the emergency management system functions clearly, consistently, and sustainably under pressure, and whether recovery begins early and minimises long-term disruption.

The indicators under this goal focus on system performance during real events and exercises, rather than internal processes. They show whether:

- emergency operations are activated at the appropriate scale,
- agencies work together with clear roles and responsibilities,
- leadership and decision-making are effective,
- the workforce can sustain operations over time, and
- communities experience reduced disruption.

Progress under this goal will be demonstrated when:

- coordination is faster and clearer,
- operational roles are consistently understood across agencies,
- governance provides effective stewardship while enabling operational leaders to carry out their roles, and
- recovery outcomes improve, particularly for affected communities.

These indicators provide confidence that the Group Plan is strengthening the whole-of-system response and recovery capability, not just individual organisations, and that lessons from events are leading to measurable improvement.

Goal 3: Community Resilience

Community resilience is about whether people, whānau, businesses, and communities can meet their own needs and support each other in the first days of an emergency, reducing harm and pressure on response agencies.

The indicators under this goal focus on real-world readiness and social connection, rather than awareness campaigns or participation numbers. They show whether:

- households are prepared for at least seven days,
- people understand and act on life-saving natural warnings,
- neighbours are connected and able to support each other,
- communities know where to access local support, and
- businesses are better prepared to recover.

Progress under this goal will be demonstrated when:

- more households can cope without immediate external assistance,
- life-safety knowledge improves and is retained over time,
- social connections strengthen, and
- preparedness gaps between communities reduce.

These indicators reflect the Group Plan's emphasis on shared responsibility, community-led resilience, and equity. They also recognise that strong communities are a critical part of an effective emergency management system.

A full list of detailed indicators is included in Appendix 4.

External Monitoring and Evaluation

Under Section 8 of the CDEM Act, the Director of Civil Defence Emergency Management has a function to 'monitor the performance of CDEM Groups and persons who have responsibilities under this legislation'. This will be undertaken primarily via the NEMA Capability Assessment Tool which aims to create a standard assessment of emergency management capability in New Zealand. It consists of a set of key performance indicators and performance measures against which organisations can assess themselves or be externally assessed.

Legislation compliance

The Wellington CDEM Group Plan complies with the CDEM Act (2002), the National Disaster Resilience Strategy 2019, National CDEM Strategy and the National CDEM Plan Order 2015 and all other relevant legislation. The Joint Committee, supported by the Coordinating Executive Group are responsible for monitoring the ongoing legislative compliance of the Group Plan.

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Operational Arrangements

This section describes the Wellington Region CDEM Group's operational arrangements for response and recovery. It aligns with the National CDEM Plan Order 2015, the Guide to the National CDEM Plan, and the CDEM Group Planning Director's Guideline (DGL 09/18). It sets out:

- roles and responsibilities of the CDEM Group and partner agencies
- lead and support agency arrangements
- coordination and control structures
- arrangements for escalation, declarations, and transition to recovery
- how agencies work together during response and recovery.

Lead and support agency roles

CDEM as lead agency

For emergencies where CDEM has legislative responsibility, the Wellington Region CDEM Group is the lead agency. As lead agency, the Group is responsible for coordinating and managing the response, including setting priorities, coordinating agencies, and enabling the use of CDEM powers where required. All agencies are expected to operate consistently with the National CDEM Plan Order and the Guide to the National CDEM Plan.

CDEM as support agency

Where another agency is the lead, the Wellington Region CDEM Group acts as a support agency, providing coordination capability, welfare services, public information management, and operational support as requested. Support is delivered through local Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) and/or the Group Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC), as appropriate.

Lead agencies by hazard

Lead agency responsibilities are determined by legislation or inter-agency agreement. The Wellington Region CDEM Group recognises the nationally defined lead agency framework in the National CDEM Plan Order. Where events are complex or multi-hazard, lead agency arrangements may evolve as the situation develops, with transitions agreed between agencies.

Table showing Lead Agencies in an emergency (based on hazard)

Hazard Type	Scenario (Most Credible)	Lead Agency for Emergency Management (within region)	Primary Legislation / Framework
Earthquake	Wellington Fault Earthquake (Mw 7.5)	Wellington Region CDEM Group - Local Authorities - regional and local coordination;	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002
	Hikurangi Subduction Earthquake + Local Tsunami (Mw 8.8–8.9)	Wellington Region CDEM Group; - Local Authorities - regional and local coordination;	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002; National CDEM Plan Order
	Alpine Fault Rupture	Wellington Region CDEM Group; - Local Authorities - regional and local coordination;	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002; National CDEM Plan Order
Tsunami	Local Source Tsunami (Cook Strait / Kaikōura Canyon)	Wellington Region CDEM Group; - Local Authorities - regional and local coordination	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002; National Tsunami Advisory and Warning Plan
	Distant Source Tsunami (South America / Pacific Rim)	Wellington Region CDEM Group; - Local Authorities - regional and local coordination National Emergency Management Agency (national warnings & coordination);	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002
Severe Weather & Flooding	Severe Storm & Extreme Rainfall (Cyclone Gabrielle–type)	Wellington Region CDEM Group; - Local Authorities - regional and local coordination;	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002; Local Government Act 2002
	River Flooding – Major Catchment Event (Hutt River)	Wellington Region CDEM Group; - Greater Wellington Regional Council (flood management functions)	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002; Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941
	Coastal Storm Surge & Sea-Level Rise	Wellington Region CDEM Group; - Local Authorities - regional and local coordination;	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002
Landslides	Landslides blocking SH1/SH2 / Rail	Wellington Region CDEM Group; - Waka Kotahi (state highways); - KiwiRail (rail corridor)	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002
Lifelines	Long-duration lifeline failure (water/power/comms)	Wellington Region CDEM Group; - Local Authorities - regional and local coordination; - Lifeline Utilities retain operational control	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002; Lifeline Utilities obligations under National CDEM Plan
Biological	Pandemic (COVID-level transmissibility)	Wellington Region CDEM Group; - Local Authorities - regional and local coordination; Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora (health response); Ministry of Health (system stewardship); NEMA for all-of-government coordination if escalated	Health Act 1956; Epidemic Preparedness Act 2006; Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (if emergency declared)
Drought	Multi-year drought with extreme heat days	Territorial Authorities and Regional Council (water management); CDEM if emergency impacts occur	Local Government Act 2002; Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002

Volcanic	Ashfall (Ruapehu VEI-3; 1–5 mm in Wellington)	Wellington Region CDEM Group; - Local Authorities - regional and local coordination; Earth Sciences New Zealand provides scientific advice	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002
Hazardous Substances	Hazardous Substances Incident (Seaview petrochemical fire/spill)	Fire and Emergency New Zealand (incident control);	Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017; Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996; Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002
Emerging Hazards	Space Weather (major CME)	Wellington Region CDEM Group; - Local Authorities - regional and local coordination; National Emergency Management Agency (national coordination); lifeline utilities	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002
	Cyber Attack (councils or lifelines)	National Cyber Security Centre / CERT NZ (cyber response); affected organisations; NEMA if consequences escalate	Intelligence and Security Act 2017; Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002

Roles of key agencies in response

- **Local authorities:** Manage and coordinate responses at the local level for CDEM-led emergencies; support other lead agencies when CDEM is not the lead.
- **National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA):** Supports regional coordination and provides national-level direction, guidance, and escalation pathways where required.
- **Emergency services (Police, Fire and Emergency New Zealand, Health):** Deliver statutory response functions and integrate with CDEM coordination arrangements through liaison and CIMS structures.
- **Lifeline utilities:** Maintain and restore essential services, supported by coordinated information sharing through the Lifeline Utility Coordinator.
- **Welfare agencies:** Deliver welfare services through agreed sub-functions, coordinated locally and regionally.
- **Mana whenua / iwi Māori:** Contribute to response through partnership with CDEM and local authorities, providing leadership, local knowledge, community connection, and support to affected whānau, and supporting welfare, communications, and recovery-related activities in alignment with agreed coordination arrangements.
- **Non-government organisations (NGOs):** Support response through delivery of welfare and community services, including shelter, food, psychosocial support, and assistance to vulnerable people, operating within coordinated local and regional arrangements.
- **Communities:** Provide immediate local support and self-help, including neighbour-to-neighbour assistance, information sharing, and support to vulnerable people, and engage with CDEM through Community Emergency Hubs and other agreed local coordination mechanisms.

CDEM agencies roles in response

Entity (Wellington Region)	Role in response (what they are expected to do)	CDEM Act 2002 – specific section(s)
National Emergency Management Agency (Director of CDEM / National coordination)	Provide national leadership, coordination, and support where events exceed regional capacity; enable national emergency management arrangements.	S8 (Functions of the Director); s9 (Powers of the Director)
Wellington Region CDEM Group (GWRC + Territorial Authorities)	Coordinate and manage emergency response across the region; integrate agencies, lifelines, welfare, iwi, NGOs, and communities.	S17(1)(a)–(d) (Functions of CDEM Groups and members)
Group Controller / Local Controllers	Direct and coordinate CDEM response; exercise emergency powers when a state of emergency is in force.	S26 (Appointment of Controllers); s91 (Powers of Controllers during a state of emergency)
Mayors / delegated elected representatives	Declare and terminate states of local emergency to enable emergency powers and escalation.	S68 (Declaration of state of local emergency); s69–s72 (Duration, extension, termination)
Government departments (central government agencies)	Participate in planning, coordination, and response; provide resources and capability consistent with their mandates.	S59 (Obligations of government departments and organisations)
Emergency services (Police, Fire, Health acting as a system)	Deliver frontline emergency response and specialist capabilities within coordinated CDEM arrangements.	S59 (Departments’ obligations); s17(1)© (Coordination of resources for response)
New Zealand Police	Maintain law and order; support emergency powers; coordinate with Controllers during emergencies.	S91 (Powers of direction – Controllers and constables)
Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ)	Firefighting, rescue, USAR, and hazardous substance response; support consequence management.	S17(1)© (Coordination of resources); s59 (Departmental obligations)
Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora / health sector	Maintain and deliver health and disability services during emergencies; lead health response within coordinated arrangements.	S59 (Departmental obligations); s17(1)© (Coordination of response resources)
Lifeline utilities (water, power, transport, telecoms, fuel)	Maintain services to the fullest possible extent; restore services; participate in coordination and information sharing.	S60 (Duties of lifeline utilities)
Welfare services agencies (incl. MSD and partners)	Coordinate and deliver welfare sub-functions (needs assessment, shelter, food, psychosocial support, financial assistance).	S17(1)© (Coordination of response); s59 (Departmental obligations)
Science and technical agencies (e.g. GNS Science, MetService)	Provide hazard, impact, and forecasting advice to support decision-making and public information.	S59 (Departmental obligations); s17(1)© (Coordination of response resources)
Mana whenua iwi Māori (Wellington Region)	Provide leadership, mātauranga Māori, community mobilisation, welfare support, and recovery leadership; participate in coordination forums.	S3 (Purpose of the Act – community participation); s4 (Principles – involvement of communities); s17(1)(a) & (d) (Planning and coordination with communities)

Non-government organisations (NGOs)	Deliver community support services; connect and operate within coordinated response arrangements.	S3 (Purpose – community participation); s4 (Principles – coordination); s17(1)© (Coordination of response)
Communities (incl. Community Emergency Hubs, marae, local networks)	Provide immediate local response, welfare support, information sharing, and support to vulnerable people; interface with councils and WREMO.	S3 (Purpose – community participation); s4 (Principles – community involvement); s17(1)(d) (Public education and participation)

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Levels of response and escalation

The Wellington Region CDEM Group operates a graduated response framework, aligned with national arrangements:

- Local coordination through EOCs for localised events
- Regional coordination through the Group ECC for multi-area or complex events
- National coordination through the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC) for nationally significant emergencies.

Escalation is based on impact, complexity, resource requirements, and the need for CDEM powers.

Summary of the levels of response

Level	Description	Declaration status	EOC/ECC role	Control
Level 1 National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC) Mode: Monitor	Day-to-day emergency events are managed on site by emergency services and specialist agencies.	No declaration.	No EOC involvement. Some monitoring by local CDEM staff possible.	Lead agency using the Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS).
Level 2 NCMC Mode: Engage	Multiple agencies – coordination by local EOC in the affected area or CDEM assistance required by lead agency.	No declaration.	Local EOC may be partially or fully activated. This includes EOC's operating as both lead agency and in support of the lead agency. Group ECC will monitor and may be active in support.	Lead agency or response coordination by CDEM Local Controller with Group Controller in support.
Level 3 NCMC Mode: Engage	Multiple agencies – coordination by local EOC in the affected area or CDEM assistance required by lead agency. CDEM powers may be required.	Possible declaration for one territorial authority.	Multiple Local EOC's may be partially or fully activated. This includes EOC's operating as both lead agency and in support of the lead agency. Group ECC will be active in support.	Lead agency or response coordination by CDEM Local Controller with Group Controller in support.

Level 4 NCMC Mode: Assist	Multiple agencies – coordination by Group ECC, with local EOC activated in the affected areas. CDEM powers may be required.	Possible Group-wide declaration.	Group ECC fully active and affected local EOCs fully active. NCMC may activate in support.	Group Controller, with Local Controllers in support. National Controller in support of the Group Controller.
Level 5 NCMC Mode: Direct	This is a national emergency or a localised emergency that is of national significance.	Possible national declaration.	NCMC fully active Group ECC fully* active and local EOCs fully* active. *may be partially active if emergency is outside the Wellington Region.	National Controller in place. Group Controller in support of the National Controller. Local Controllers in support of the Group Controller.

Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs)

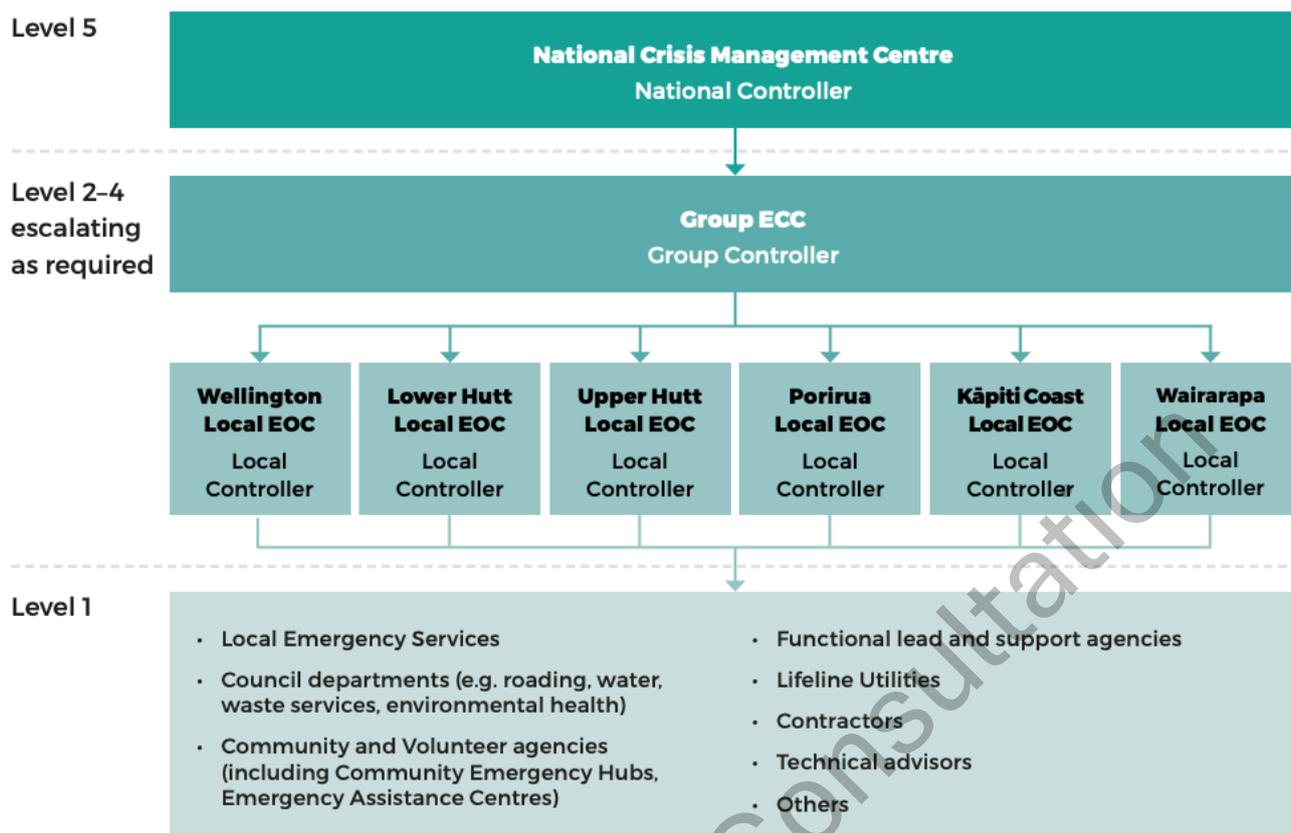
Local EOCs manage and coordinate CDEM responses within their territorial authority areas, operating under the Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS). EOCs focus on operational management, community coordination, and delivery of welfare services.

Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC)

The Group ECC coordinates and supports one or more activated EOCs, manages regional priorities, interfaces with NEMA and the NCMC, and supports the Group Controller. The ECC focuses on coordination rather than direct operational control.

Level of emergency response

CDEM Group response Framework



Coordination and governance groups

The Wellington Region CDEM Group maintains a set of standing coordination, readiness, and advisory groupings that support a coordinated, multi-agency approach to emergency management. These groupings bring together statutory agencies, lifeline utilities, iwi Māori, non-government organisations, and community partners to maintain shared readiness and enable effective coordination during emergencies.

These groups are part of the normal operating model for emergency management in the Wellington Region. They support planning, information sharing, assurance, and relationship management in readiness, and provide established mechanisms for coordination, situational awareness, prioritisation, and escalation during response. Together, they ensure the regional emergency management system can operate at scale and are utilised as required to support effective response and recovery.

Welfare Coordination Group (WCG)

The Wellington Region CDEM Group maintains a Welfare Coordination Group (WCG), chaired by the Group Welfare Manager, to provide regional coordination, planning, and assurance for welfare service delivery. The WCG brings together welfare agencies, NGOs, iwi, and community partners to maintain shared readiness, clarify roles and escalation pathways, and ensure consistent welfare delivery during emergencies. During a response, the WCG supports region-wide coordination, resolves cross-boundary welfare issues, prioritises resources, and escalates system-level matters to the Group Controller or national level as required.

Local Welfare Committees (LWCs)

Local Welfare Committees operate at the territorial authority level to coordinate local welfare arrangements and maintain agency and community readiness. LWCs bring together welfare providers, NGOs, iwi, and local partners to confirm roles, facilities, and delivery arrangements, and to identify and address local capability gaps. During emergencies, LWCs coordinate day-to-day welfare service delivery, manage local issues, and escalate unresolved or capacity-exceeding matters to the WCG.

Lifeline utility groups

The Wellington Lifelines Group and the Wairarapa Engineering Lifelines Association provide a regional coordination mechanism for lifeline utilities, supporting collective planning, information sharing, and management of interdependencies. These groups strengthen lifeline readiness by sharing risk and resilience information and aligning planning with regional hazards. During a response, they support coordinated situational awareness, share outage and restoration information, manage cross-sector dependencies, and provide lifeline intelligence to EOCs and ECCs to support prioritised restoration.

Emergency Services Coordination Committees (ESCCs)

Emergency Services Coordination Committees operate at local and regional levels to support joint planning, interoperability, and coordination between Police, Fire and Emergency New Zealand, Health, and CDEM partners. ESCCs strengthen relationships, shared understanding, and alignment of emergency services planning with CDEM arrangements. During emergencies, ESCCs support coordinated operational decision-making, information sharing, and alignment between emergency services and the wider CDEM response.

Regional Transport Response Team (RTRT)

The Regional Transport Response Team provides a transport-sector coordination forum for Waka Kotahi, councils, public transport operators, ports, and airports across the Wellington Region. The RTRT supports shared planning for transport disruption and clarifies roles, priorities, and information flows. During a response, the RTRT supports coordinated management of the transport system, including network status reporting, route prioritisation for emergency and welfare access, and alignment of restoration activities across transport modes.

Severe Weather Technical Advisory Group (SWTAG)

The Severe Weather Technical Advisory Group provides technical advice and shared situational awareness for severe weather events affecting the Wellington Region. SWTAG brings together forecasting, hydrological, and hazard expertise to support early risk identification and decision-making. During emergencies, it provides advice on forecast confidence, impact thresholds, and escalation risks to support Controllers, EOCs/ECCs, and public information decisions.

Regional Multi-Agency Readiness (RMAR)

Regional Multi-Agency Readiness (RMAR) provides a cross-system forum for collective readiness assurance across the Wellington Region emergency management system. RMAR brings together key agencies, lifelines, iwi, welfare partners, and CDEM to identify readiness gaps, test assumptions, and align preparedness activities across hazards. It supports shared understanding of regional risks and capabilities and provides a mechanism for escalating systemic readiness issues and coordinating improvement actions ahead of, and during, emergencies.

Current arrangements

Warning procedures

Many response actions are initiated by the receipt of a warning. The following outlines the Wellington Region CDEM Group’s processes upon receipt of a warning:

National Warning System

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is responsible for issuing nationally significant emergency warnings for some natural hazards through the National Warning System, such as a distant and regional source tsunami. The Wellington Region CDEM Group must respond to

NEMA within 30 minutes of receiving a warning and have appropriate procedures in place to ensure an effective response.

Other sources for warnings

In addition to the National Warning System, the Wellington Region CDEM Group will also receive warnings from other credible sources like those shown in the table below.

Agencies responsible for warnings

<p>Flood warnings</p> <p>Greater Wellington Regional Council</p>	<p>Severe weather</p> <p>MetService</p>	<p>Regional and distant source tsunami</p> <p>NEMA</p>	<p>Volcanic</p> <p>Earth Sciences NZ</p>
<p>Public health warnings</p> <p>Ministry of Health (MoH), Te Whata Ora Health NZ</p>	<p>Fire</p> <p>Fire and Emergency NZ</p>	<p>Animal and plant diseases, outbreaks and pest invasions</p> <p>Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)</p>	<p>Terrorism</p> <p>NZ Police</p>

Wellington Region CDEM Group Duty Officer

Within the Wellington Region, warnings are initially coordinated through the WREMO Duty Officer. The Duty Officer is responsible for notifying appropriate partners and agencies. The Duty Officer is the first response of the Wellington CDEM Group to any warnings.

Capability development and exercising

Professional development, training, and exercising underpin effective response. The Group maintains a coordinated programme for Controllers, EOC/ECC staff, partner agencies, and elected members, ensuring alignment with national doctrine and continuous improvement.

Appointment of Controllers and Recovery Managers

The Wellington Region CDEM Group appoints Group and Local Controllers, and Group and Local Recovery Managers in accordance with the CDEM Act. Controllers and Recovery Managers exercise statutory powers where required and operate within agreed delegation and escalation arrangements. Local Controllers and Recovery Managers manage local responses while supporting the strategic direction set by the Group Controller and Group Recovery Manager.

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Activation of local Emergency Operation Centres and the Emergency Coordination Centre

An Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) and the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) may be partially or fully activated as the circumstances of a developing incident dictate. For each emergency response, the Group Controller and Local Controllers will determine the number and location of the EOCs to be activated and whether the ECC will be activated.

The following may result in a local EOC being activated:

- An alert or warning has been received that requires action within a localised area
- Local emergency agency notifies emergency management staff of a developing incident
- Local emergency agency requests EOC to coordinate response to an incident
- Local emergency agency requests the use of CDEM facilities
- CDEM personnel determine that CDEM assistance is required
- A declaration is made that affects the territorial area

The following may result in the Group ECC being activated:

- One or more local EOCs have been activated
- Group CDEM personnel are notified of a developing incident that may require regional monitoring and/or coordination
- Lifeline utilities information is required by one or more local EOCs
- A declaration of a state of local emergency is made in one or more territorial authority areas

Group Controller

The Wellington CDEM Group has appointed a Group Controller and Alternate Group Controllers in accordance with Section 26 of the CDEM Act. The people currently appointed in these positions are deemed to be suitably qualified and have been formally appointed to these roles.

In addition, Local Controllers have been appointed and directed to carry out the functions and duties of, or delegated to, the Group Controller and to exercise the powers of the Controller in the area for which the Controller is appointed. The Local Controller will always support and implement the directives of the Group Controller as per the CDEM Act 2002 s27(2), noting that the Group Controller may not activate for a small response operation, although the Group Controller maintains overall responsibility.

Role of local Emergency Operations Centres

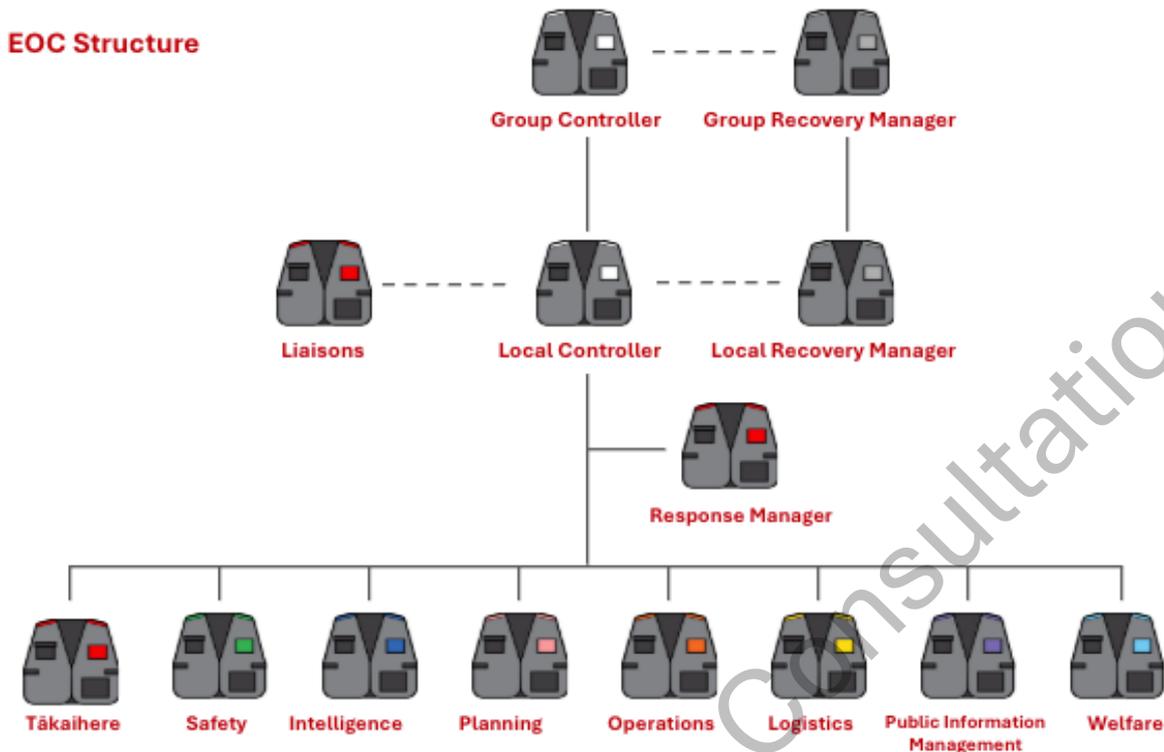
Under the direction of the Local Controller, the local Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) will:

Manage and coordinate the local CDEM response by:

- Operating according to the Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) framework
- Monitoring events and escalate response as required
- Ensuring local emergency response agencies are involved in the local response, and emergency services liaison officers available in the EOC
- Ensuring communications are in place with key local response agencies
- Arranging for community welfare and support facilities and services
- Managing the delivery of welfare services to affected communities as needed
- Receiving, assessing and disseminating information for local emergency response agencies
- Providing information to the media about the event and the local response
- Escalating requests/issues and reporting to the ECC (as required)

- Community response coordination and volunteer management (as required).

Local EOC Structure



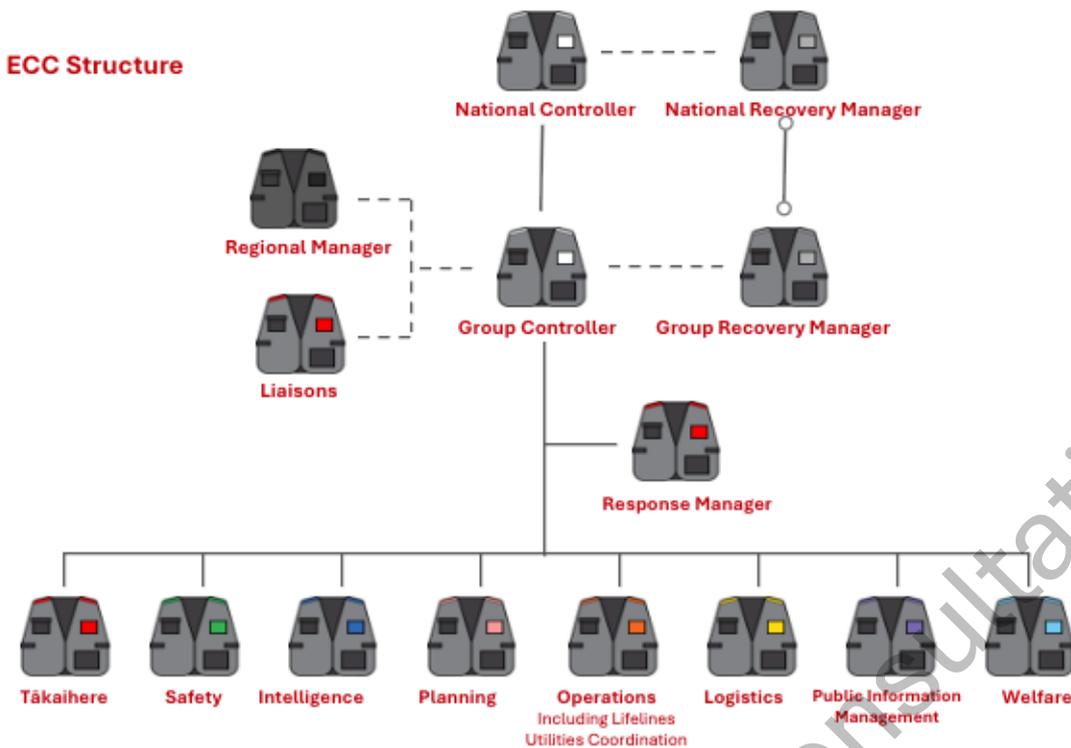
Role of the Group Emergency Coordination Centre

Under the direction of the Group Controller, the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) will:

Coordinate the regional CDEM response by:

- Operating according to the Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) framework
- Coordinating and/or supporting activated local EOCs
- Receiving, assessing and disseminating information for emergency response agencies
- Where possible, providing logistical support when requested by a local EOC
- Ensuring major emergency response agencies are involved in the Group response, and major support agencies have liaison officers available
- Ensuring communications are in place with key regional response agencies
- Receiving, assessing and disseminating information about lifeline utility services through a Lifeline Utilities Coordinator (LUC) within the ECC
- Providing information to the media about the event and the Group response
- Escalating requests/issues and reporting to the NCMC (as required)

ECC Structure



Integrating with CDEM partners

The primary function of an ECC is to ‘coordinate’ emergency response activities. The primary function of an EOC is to ‘manage’ emergency response activities. An important component of this is the integration of the response with other CDEM agencies. This is achieved by ensuring communication is established and maintained throughout the response. In addition, the role of liaison enhances the ability of other CDEM agencies to integrate into the operation of the EOCs/ECC who are not connected directly to the EOC/ECC via a CIMS function desk.

Wellington Region CDEM Group Regional Manager

The primary role of the Regional Manager in response is to support the Group Controller to coordinate the Group’s response to the emergency. Specific responsibilities include engaging with the media as a spokesperson, ensuring the governance groups are kept informed, and ensuring that the overall operation (including the inclusion and transition to recovery) is implemented effectively.

Public information management

The Local/Group Controller, with assistance from the Public Information Manager, is responsible for providing accurate and timely information to the public. This will be achieved by utilising all suitable media that is available for use at the time of the response and the Regional Manager as a spokesperson of the Group ECC.

Volunteer management

Volunteers have a significant role in an emergency. The coordination and management of these volunteers in an emergency will be done through the EOCs and/or ECC.

Welfare services

In an emergency, welfare is a significant part of the response as it provides support directly to our communities. Welfare services are delivered locally under the management of the Local Welfare Manager and coordinated and supported at the regional level (ECC) by the Group Welfare Manager in liaison with the Local Welfare Managers and Local Welfare Committees, the Welfare Coordination Group and the Wellington Rural Advisory Group.

The Welfare Coordination Group (WCG), chaired by the Group Welfare Manager provides a forum for planning for longer-term welfare responses. The members of the WCG provide support and advice, to ensure the welfare services response for communities is supported throughout the duration of the emergency.

Lifeline utility coordination

Lifeline utility coordination is provided by the Lifeline Utility Coordinator (LUC) based in the ECC. The LUC is appointed by the Wellington Region CDEM Group Joint Committee and has the following role:

- Coordinate the information between the ECC and lifeline utilities
- Provide advice to the Group Controller about lifeline utilities
- Ensure lifeline utility agencies are aware, and acting on, the Group Controllers priorities in relation to lifeline utilities
- Provide early identification of a lifeline utility issue to the Local/Group Controller

Response Teams

New Zealand Response Teams (NZRTs) provide a trained volunteer capability that supports emergency response operations in the Wellington Region. NZRT members are deployed to assist with tasks such as community support, logistics, information gathering, site support, and other response activities as directed, helping to extend and sustain response capacity during emergencies. NZRTs operate under the coordination of the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC/ECC) and work alongside councils, emergency services, and partner agencies.

NZRT capability is coordinated regionally through WREMO in liaison with NEMA, local councils, and response partners. NZRTs are integrated into local and regional response arrangements, including readiness activities, training, and exercises, to ensure they can be effectively and safely deployed when required. Their use supports a scalable, flexible response and helps ensure communities receive timely support throughout the duration of an emergency.

Declaring a state of local emergency

A declaration means instituting a 'state of emergency' in one particular territorial area or across the entire Wellington Region. During a declared emergency, the Local and Group Controller gains a range of legal powers outlined in the CDEM Act.

Consistent with the Director's Guidelines for Declarations, some of the reasons for declaring may include the fact there is an emergency as defined in the CDEM Act 2002. Specifically, the event:

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

causes or may cause loss of life or injury or illness or distress or in a way endangers the safety of the public or property in New Zealand or any part of New Zealand; and

cannot be dealt with by emergency services, or otherwise requires a significant and coordinated response under this Act.

Procedure for declaring a state of local emergency

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, Group Controller, 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.

The state of local emergency will stay in place for seven days from signing unless it is extended or terminated within that time. People authorised to make the declaration of a state of local emergency are also able to extend or terminate the state of local emergency⁵.

External support

In a large-scale emergency, the Wellington Region CDEM Group will require resources and support from outside of its regional boundaries.

Neighbouring CDEM Groups

It is expected that, where possible, other CDEM Groups will provide support and assistance during an emergency. This assistance will be coordinated by the ECC.

⁵ For more detailed information on the declaration process, refer to the Director's Guidelines for the CDEM sector: Declaring states of local emergency fact sheet. Wellington Region CDEM Group Plan 2026-2031
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Where other CDEM Groups require support from the Wellington Region CDEM Group, the Wellington Region CDEM Group will support other Groups as much as possible whilst still maintaining the ability to respond effectively should an emergency occur within the Wellington region.

National assistance

In a large emergency in Wellington, resourcing for the Wellington Region CDEM Group will be heavily supported by the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC). This support will be provided through the NCMC following national assistance protocols. Representation in the ECC from NEMA, will be through the NEMA Regional Emergency Management Advisor (REMA), who will provide the liaison link between the NCMC and the ECC. In addition, the Group Controller will work with the National Controller to ensure an effective response operating in accordance with the National Controller's directives.

International assistance

If international assistance is required, this will be coordinated via the NCMC. Any offers of international assistance offered directly to the Wellington CDEM Group will be forwarded to the NCMC to coordinate.

Debriefing

A debrief will take place following any activation of an EOC or the ECC. This is an essential process to ensure that areas of excellence, improvement and remedial actions are identified. The results of any debrief and associated areas for further planning and development will be collated into a report for the Joint Committee and relevant agencies.

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Recovery arrangements

The Wellington Region CDEM Group has a statutory function to plan and carry out recovery activities (s.17(1)(e) CDEM Act 2002). This includes the facilitation, coordination and monitoring of recovery activities to ensure the recovery is effective and provides the best outcomes for the community.

Transitional arrangements

The CDEM Act 2002 allows for certain authorised persons to give notice of a local transition period. This will generally follow the end of a state of emergency. However, notice of a local transition period can be given without there being an initial state of emergency, providing the Minister's approval is obtained first.

Powers during a transition period include the ability to enter, examine and mark buildings, close roads, require assessments of buildings, carry out works and keep areas clear of the public.

The move from response to recovery is led by the Group Controller in consultation with the Group Recovery Manager. It is overseen by the Regional Manager.

Some of the reasons why the decision to move to recovery may include:

- immediate threat to people and property has passed.
- focus shifted to restoration.
- Declaration powers no longer required.
- recovery agencies are able to meet their requirements in their business-as-usual roles; and
- Controllers and Recovery Managers agree that it is time for the transition.

Some factors that may inhibit the transition are:

- re-escalation of response issues (for example continuing large aftershocks).
- recovery agencies do not have the capacity to meet their responsibilities.
- significant social wellbeing issues – loss of services (power, water) and displacement of people.
- the CDEM Act powers are still required; and
- Recovery Manager cannot accept transition to recovery.

Notice of transition period

The purpose of a transition period is to support recovery by invoking statutory powers to manage, coordinate, or direct recovery activities where this is in the public interest and necessary to ensure a timely and effective recovery. A local transition period has a maximum duration of 28 days and may be extended once for a further period of up to 28 days or terminated at any time.

The Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 provides for either a national or local transition period.

1. **Notice of national transition period** - Under section 94A of the Act, the Minister of Civil Defence may, after a state of emergency has been declared for any area or after a state of emergency arises for any area, give notice of a national transition period for the whole of New Zealand or for any specified areas. A national transition period may be declared if it appears to the Minister that it is required to support recovery, enabling the exercise of powers to manage, coordinate, or direct recovery activities

in the public interest.

2. **Notice of local transition period** - Under section 94B of the Act, a person authorised under section 25 (including a Group Recovery Manager) may give notice of a local transition period for the area of the CDEM Group, or for one or more districts or wards within that area. A local transition period may be declared after a state of emergency has been declared, or—where no state of emergency has been declared—with the permission of the Minister.

A notice of local transition period must not be given unless the authorised person is satisfied that:

- it appears that a local transition period is required (s94B(1)); and
- invoking the powers to manage, coordinate, or direct recovery activities is:
- in the public interest; and
- necessary or desirable to ensure a timely and effective recovery (s94B(4)).

The person authorised must also have regard to the areas, districts, or wards affected by the emergency and whether the focus is moving from response to recovery, including if the state of emergency is about to expire or be terminated (s94B (5)).

Controller handover to Recovery Manager

Following any emergency response where recovery activities are required, the Controller and Recovery Manager will follow an agreed transition process to support the shift from response to recovery. This process typically includes a transition briefing, preparation of an initial Group Recovery Action Plan, and communication of the transition arrangements.

Where a state of emergency is in force, the declaration must be terminated before a transition period can take effect. Recovery planning and preparatory activities may occur prior to termination, but the statutory transition period commences only once the declaration has ended and notice of transition has been given.

Group Recovery Manager

The Joint Committee must appoint a Group Recovery Manager, being a suitably qualified and experienced person to perform the functions, duties, and powers of the role, and at least one other suitably qualified and experienced person to act if the Group Recovery Manager is absent (CDEM Act 2002, s29).

Under section 30A, the Group Recovery Manager is authorised to perform the following functions during a local transition period:

- direct and coordinate the use of personnel, material, information, services, and other resources made available by departments, CDEM Groups, and other persons for the purpose of carrying out recovery activities.
- perform any functions or duties delegated by the CDEM Group or conferred by the Act; and
- exercise any power delegated or conferred on the Group Recovery Manager under the Act.

A Group Recovery Manager may request an authorised person appointed under section 25(1)(b) to give notice of a local transition period where the criteria in section 94B are met, including that:

- it appears a local transition period is required (s94B(1)); and

- invoking recovery powers is in the public interest and necessary or desirable to ensure a timely and effective recovery (s94B(4)).

Local Recovery Managers

The Joint Committee may appoint Local Recovery Managers to support recovery preparation and delivery within territorial authority areas. A Local Recovery Manager may be directed to perform any of the functions or duties of, or delegated to, the Group Recovery Manager, and to exercise the powers of the Group Recovery Manager within the relevant area, including powers under sections 94H, 94I, and 94K–94N.

These powers include the ability to enter, examine, and mark buildings; close roads and public places; require building assessments; carry out works; and keep areas clear of the public during a transition period.

A Local Recovery Manager must comply with any directions given by the Group Recovery Manager during a transition period.

Under section 30A, a Group Recovery Manager or Local Recovery Manager may:

- authorise any suitably qualified and experienced person to perform any function or duty or exercise any power of the Recovery Manager (except the power to further delegate); and
- remains responsible and accountable for the performance of those functions or the exercise of those powers.

No Group Recovery Manager, Local Recovery Manager, or authorised person may exercise any power during a national transition period in a manner inconsistent with priorities for the use of resources and services determined by the Director or National Recovery Manager.

Group Recovery Structure

CDEM Group's role in recovery

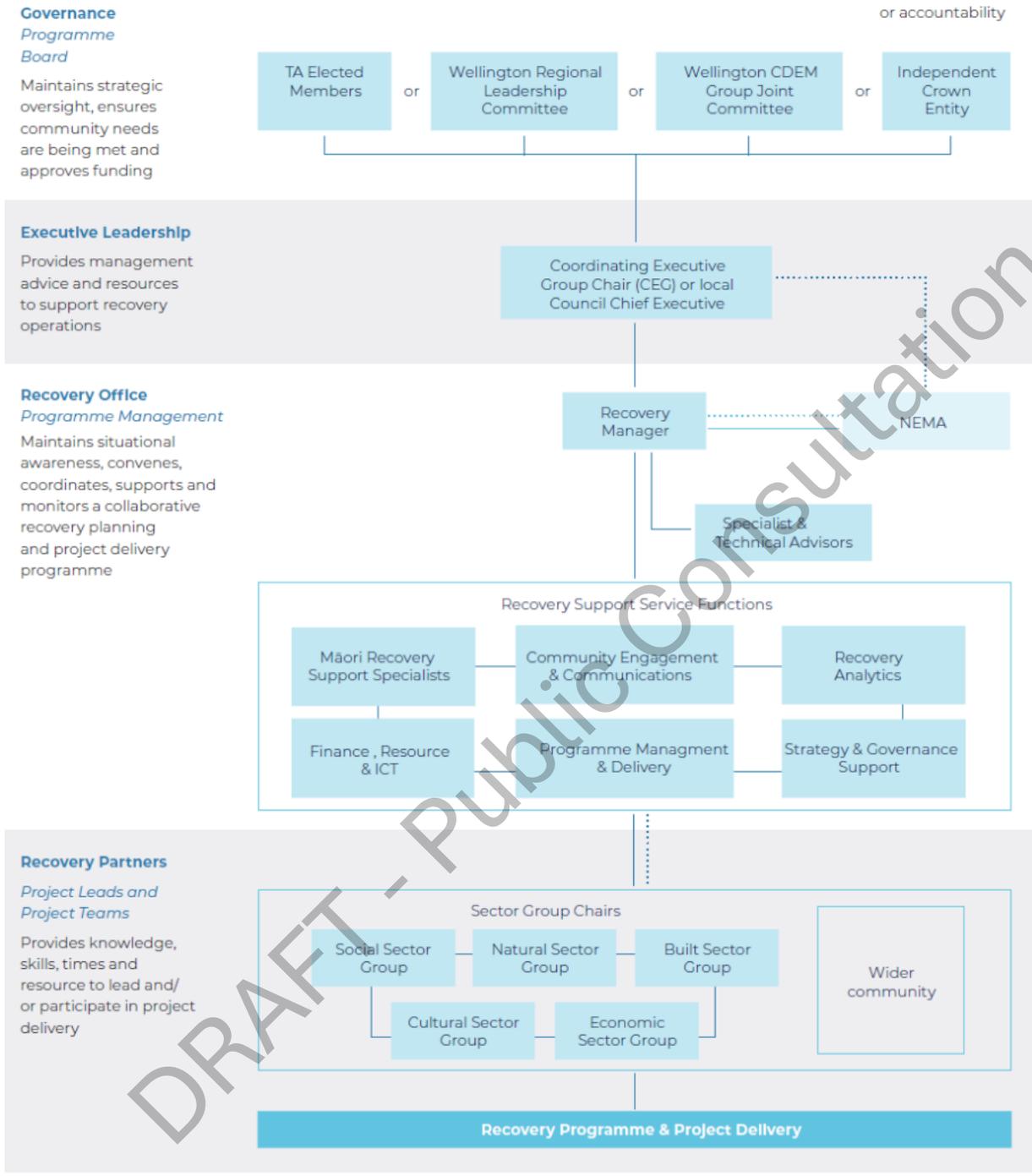
Recovery is led by the Joint Committee, who determines the priorities and policy. This is supported at the operational level by the Coordinating Executive Group (CEG), who supports and assists the Joint Committee in the determining the priorities and allocating resources.

Operationally the Group Recovery Manager coordinates the recovery efforts between agencies and local authorities and ensures the directives and priorities set by the Joint Committee and CEG are implemented accordingly.

The diagram below shows the CDEM Group recovery structure at the operational level.

Diagram 1: Wellington CDEM Group Recovery Structure

..... Communication and support
 ——— Coordination and/or accountability



Roles and responsibilities in recovery

Group Recovery Manager

The Group Recovery Manager is responsible for coordinating the recovery activities for the CDEM Group area. The Group Recovery Manager role will commence during the response and will most likely cease upon completion of the exit strategy. The Group Recovery Manager may establish workgroups to assist with implementing the Recovery Action Plan.

To ensure an effective recovery, the Group Recovery Manager must be engaged before an emergency to ensure relationships are developed, enhanced and maintained and to contribute to and participate in Group recovery planning.

Local Recovery Manager

Local Recovery Managers are responsible for leading the coordination of recovery activities within their local area. Local Recovery Managers are usually appointed from a territorial authority's senior management team. The Local Recovery Manager will work very closely with the Group Recovery Manager to ensure that the appropriate priorities are implemented as required at the local level. In addition, the Local Recovery Manager has the responsibility to raise any significant local issues that have the potential to become regionally significant or require regional support.

As with the Group Recovery Manager, Local Recovery Managers must be engaged before an emergency to ensure relationships and capability are developed, enhanced and maintained and contribute to and participate in local recovery planning.

Levels of recovery

The following levels of recovery describe the overall level of coordination required post-event. The intent is to provide a formal degree of definition to the scope of a given event, to signal the Group's actions and support needs, and to communicate within the Group and to external partners what is being done to coordinate recovery actions.

Recovery Level	Criteria	Recovery Coordination	Recommended Governance Structure ¹¹
Level 1 Single council incident Moderate event, single TA (Territorial Authority) impacted	Moderate event, one TA impacted (e.g., 1-in-20-year flood). TA has capacity in BAU.	Local Recovery Office may partially activate; most tasks handled as BAU. Minimal Group support (advice only).	Local elected members.
Level 2 Local emergency Medium event, one or more TA impacted	Medium event, one or more TAs impacted (e.g., 1-in-50-year flood). TA(s) may need Group advice or support.	Partial/full activation of local Recovery Offices; Group Office monitors and supports.	Local elected members; Regional Leadership Committee provides advice.
Level 3 Local or regional emergency Medium to severe event, one or more TA impacted	Medium–severe event (e.g., moderate earthquake, large rural fire). TA(s) need regional assistance.	Full activation of local Recovery Offices; partial Group activation; regional support services engaged.	Regional Leadership Committee (with iwi and key agencies) or enhanced BAU structure.
Level 4	Severe event (e.g., tsunami, 1-in-100-	Full activation of local and regional offices; possible national support.	Expanded Regional Leadership

Regional emergency Severe event, one or more TA impacted	year flood). TA(s) capacity stretched or overwhelmed.		Committee or dedicated recovery governance structure.
Level 5 State of national emergency Extreme event, one or more region impacted	Extreme event (e.g., severe earthquake, pandemic). National coordination required.	Full activation of local, regional, and national offices; long-term recovery organisation may be needed.	Joint central-local governance (e.g., Independent Crown Entity).

The Group Recovery Manager is responsible for making a recommendation on the level of recovery, in consultation with Local Recovery Managers. The Group Recovery Manager’s Recovery Level recommendation will ultimately be reviewed and approved by the Coordinating Executive Group (CEG).

Regional and Local Recovery Coordination Offices

The Regional Recovery Coordination Office (RRCO) is the responsibility of Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC). GWRC provides a suitable facility and the necessary resources, including staffing, to operate the RRCO in support of recovery activities across the Wellington Region. The RRCO provides regional coordination, oversight, and assurance of recovery activities undertaken by territorial authorities and partner agencies, and supports consistent recovery objectives, priorities, and reporting across the region.

The Group Recovery Manager uses the RRCO to coordinate recovery planning, reporting, and financial management. A Group Recovery Action Plan sets out regional recovery objectives, priorities, roles, and timeframes, supported by Local Recovery Action Plans where local recovery arrangements are activated. Recovery reporting is provided to the Coordinating Executive Group and the Director of NEMA, as appropriate, and supports transparent communication with partner agencies and the public.

Financial management for recovery is coordinated through the RRCO. Recovery-specific financial arrangements are established at the transition from response to recovery. GWRC finance systems and staff manage Group-level recovery financial transactions, while territorial authority finance systems and staff manage local recovery financial transactions. Where recovery operations are of sufficient scale or duration, financial management may be integrated into a Finance, Resource Allocation, and Logistics Recovery Support Service to provide transparency and oversight.

The Group Recovery Manager recommends the deactivation of regional recovery arrangements to the Coordinating Executive Group and the Joint Committee. Formal dissolution of the RRCO is determined by the Joint Committee, based on progress against recovery objectives and community wellbeing.

Local Recovery Offices

Local Recovery Offices (LROs) are established by territorial authorities to coordinate and deliver recovery activities at the local level. LROs provide a focal point for community engagement, local recovery planning, and the coordination of council services, iwi Māori, community organisations, and partner agencies within the affected area.

Local Recovery Managers operate LROs in alignment with regional recovery arrangements and under the strategic direction of the Group Recovery Manager during a transition period. LROs develop and implement

Local Recovery Action Plans, manage local recovery reporting and financial transactions, and provide local intelligence and issues for escalation to the RRCO.

The deactivation of Local Recovery Offices is recommended by the Local Recovery Manager, in consultation with the Group Recovery Manager, to the relevant Chief Executive and council. Formal dissolution occurs once recovery activities can be managed through normal council business-as-usual processes and dedicated recovery coordination is no longer required.

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Wellington CDEM Group Governance

CDEM Group Joint Committee membership and functions

Each local authority in the Wellington Region is a member of the Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Group. The Group's functions, duties, and powers are those of a CDEM Group as set out in the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002. The CDEM Group is also established as a joint standing committee under clause 30(1)(b) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002.

The CDEM Group Joint Committee is comprised of the Mayor or Chairperson of each member local authority, or an alternate elected representative who has been delegated authority to act on their behalf. In addition, two mana whenua representatives have been co-opted onto the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee's Terms of Reference, which set out its roles and responsibilities, are available from the Wellington Region Emergency Management Office (WREMO).

Coordinating Executive Group (CEG) membership and functions

The Coordinating Executive Group (CEG) is a statutory group established under section 20 of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002. The CEG is responsible for:

- providing advice to the CDEM Group and any subgroups or committees.
- implementing, as appropriate, the decisions of the CDEM Group; and
- overseeing the development, maintenance, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the CDEM Group Plan.

The CEG's Terms of Reference, which provide further detail on its roles and responsibilities, are available from WREMO.

CEG membership

The following organisations are represented on the CEG, generally at Chief Executive or senior management level, in accordance with section 20 of the CDEM Act 2002:

- Carterton District Council
- Greater Wellington Regional Council
- Hutt City Council
- Kāpiti Coast District Council
- Masterton District Council
- Porirua City Council
- South Wairarapa District Council
- Upper Hutt City Council
- Wellington City Council
- Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora
- Fire and Emergency New Zealand
- New Zealand Police

The following organisations are co-opted members of the CEG to support effective coordination and system integration:

- St John Ambulance

- Wellington Free Ambulance
- Wellington Region Lifelines
- Ministry of Social Development
- Regional iwi Māori representatives

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Administrating Authority

The administering authority of the Wellington Region Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Group is Greater Wellington Regional Council, in accordance with section 23(1) of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002.

Wellington Region Emergency Management Office (WREMO) is funded by all councils to carry out the roles of the CDEM Group Office. From a governance perspective, the role of the Wellington Region Emergency Management Office (WREMO) is to:

- carry out the Group Emergency Management Office functions on behalf of the CDEM Group.
- deliver agreed CDEM functions and services on behalf of member local authorities under established arrangements.
- oversee and coordinate the implementation and reporting of the CDEM Group Plan on behalf of the Group.
- provide professional advice and services to the CDEM Group and the CEG.
- carry out functions specified in the CDEM Group Plan.

Delegated authorities

The CDEM Group can delegate its functions under the CDEM Act to members of the Group, the Group Controller or other persons.

This table summarises the delegations and statutory powers that apply within the Wellington Region Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Group under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002. It clarifies which authorities are formally delegated by the CDEM Group and which powers are conferred directly by statute on Controllers and Recovery Managers.

Authority delegated to	Delegation / power exercised	Nature of authority	CDEM Act 2002 section(s)
Group Controller	Appointment as Group Controller	Statutory appointment by CDEM Group	s26
	Exercise of CDEM Group emergency powers during a state of emergency (e.g. works, rescue, welfare relief, public information, resource coordination)	Delegated by CDEM Group	s18(1); s85
	Power to require information necessary for the exercise of CDEM functions	Statutory power (no delegation required)	s86
	Controller powers during a state of emergency, including evacuation, entry, closing roads and public places, requisitioning, directing activities, inspections, and entering contracts	Statutory powers	ss87–92
Local Controller	Appointment as Local Controller and authority to exercise the functions, duties, and powers of the Group Controller within a district or city	Statutory appointment by CDEM Group	s27(1)

	Requirement to comply with directions from the Group Controller during an emergency	Statutory requirement	s27(2)
	Exercise of CDEM Group emergency powers during a state of emergency	Delegated by CDEM Group	s18(1); s85
	Power to require information	Statutory power	s86
	Power to close roads and public places during a state of emergency	Statutory power	s88
Group Recovery Manager	Appointment of Group Recovery Manager and alternate(s)	Statutory appointment by Joint Committee	s29
	Direction and coordination of recovery activities and resources during a local transition period	Statutory function	s30A(2)
	Exercise of recovery powers during a transition period (entry, inspection, closure of places, carrying out works, keeping areas clear)	Statutory powers	ss94H, 94I, 94K-94N
Local Recovery Manager	Appointment of Local Recovery Manager and authority to act within a district or city	Statutory appointment	s30
	Exercise of functions and powers of the Group Recovery Manager within the local area, subject to direction	Delegated / directed by Group Recovery Manager	s30; s30A(2)
	Exercise of recovery powers during a transition period	Statutory powers	ss94H, 94I, 94K-94N
Joint Committee Chairperson / Deputy Chairperson	Authority, in consultation with two or more Joint Committee members, to replace the Group Controller if they are not adequately discharging their duties	Statutory power	s26(4)
Wellington Region Emergency Management Office (WREMO)	Exercise of delegated CDEM Group functions to support the performance of the Group's responsibilities (does not include Controller emergency powers)	Delegated functions	s18(1); s18(2)

Key Appointments

The Wellington Region CDEM Group statutory and non-statutory appointments associated with this Plan to meet the requirements of the CDEM Act. Such appointments include:

- Group and Alternate Group Controllers
- Local and Alternate Local Controllers
- Group and Alternate Group Recovery Manager
- Local and Alternate Local Recovery Managers
- Group and Alternate Group Welfare Managers
- Local and Alternate Local Welfare Managers
- Lifelines Utilities Coordinator

A list of current statutory and non-statutory appointments for the Wellington CDEM Group are available from WREMO.

Emergency expenditure

Expenditure during response and recovery

During an emergency, expenditure may be incurred during both the response and recovery phases by the Wellington Region Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Group, Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), territorial authorities, and partner agencies to support emergency response activities and the initial and ongoing recovery of affected communities.

Expenditure incurred during response and recovery must be necessary, reasonable, and directly related to the emergency, and must be authorised in accordance with the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002, relevant delegations, and each organisation's financial policies and procedures.

Authorisation of expenditure

During a state of emergency, the Group Controller or Local Controller, acting within their statutory powers and delegations, may authorise expenditure required to carry out emergency response activities. This includes expenditure necessary to protect life, property, and the environment, maintain essential services, and support welfare and response operations.

All expenditure authorisations remain subject to existing financial delegations and controls, except where statutory emergency powers are lawfully exercised.

Where no state of emergency is declared, or once response activities have concluded, expenditure must be authorised in accordance with normal council or agency delegations and financial controls.

Financial management arrangements

Greater Wellington Regional Council, as the administering authority for the Wellington Region CDEM Group, is responsible for the financial administration of Group-level response and recovery expenditure. WREMO supports this function by coordinating financial tracking, reporting, and assurance during response and recovery.

Territorial authorities are responsible for managing and recording local response and recovery expenditure incurred within their districts, in accordance with their own financial systems and procedures.

All agencies are responsible for maintaining accurate records of emergency-related expenditure, including staff time, contracts, equipment, and consumables, to support transparency, accountability, and any post-event cost recovery or reimbursement processes.

Transition to recovery expenditure

At the transition from response to recovery, response expenditure tracking is closed and recovery-specific financial arrangements are established. Where a transition period is in place, recovery expenditure is managed under the direction of the Group Recovery Manager, in accordance with approved recovery action plans and financial arrangements.

Cost recovery and reimbursement

Following an emergency, councils and agencies may be eligible for central government financial assistance in accordance with applicable government policies and arrangements. The Wellington Region

CDEM Group coordinates the provision of information required to support claims, but each organisation remains responsible for submitting and substantiating its own claims.

Accountability and reporting

Emergency response and recovery expenditure is subject to normal audit and accountability requirements. Consolidated reporting on Group-level response and recovery expenditure is provided to the Coordinating Executive Group and CDEM Group Joint Committee, as appropriate, to support governance oversight and assurance.

Emergency expenditure arrangements and financial performance across response and recovery will be reviewed as part of post-event debriefs and recovery reporting to inform continuous improvement.

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Appendix 1: Goal 1: Managing Risk – Further details on Priority Projects

Workshop Work Programme Title (Holding)	Scope / Intent	Expected Outcome (2031)	Connection to indicators	Primary Goal	Primary Objective (s)	Also Supports	Lead	Support	Link to Risk - 10 Consequences	EMSIP Focus Areas	Dependencies - Scheduled EMSIP Work
Clear accountability and transparent reporting	Put simple systems in place so it is clear who is responsible for what, how work is progressing, and how agencies are working together on shared priorities.	Governance has a clear view of progress and agencies are accountable for agreed actions.	Risk Priority Alignment; Repeat Failure Rate; Confidence in Risk Management; Role & Responsibility Clarity Under Pressure; Connected Community Action;	G1	G1.5 – Strengthening Cross-Boundary CDEM Governance	G2.5, G3.4	Council (WREMO)	Councils, Iwi/Māori, Emergency Services, Lifelines, Welfare agencies	<i>Impacts all consequences</i>	Drive a strategic focus on investment and implementation	Assurance and lessons framework – including standard performance expectations and reporting lines. National self-assessment toolkit for CDEM Groups that you can embed in your MEL/governance cycles.
Clear roles and responsibilities across the system	Clarify who does what from governance through to operations so agencies understand their role before, during, and after emergencies.	An integrated system with fewer gaps, overlaps, and delays.	Risk Priority Alignment; Repeat Failure Rate; Confidence in Risk Management; Duration of High-Impact Community Disruption; Tsunami Wave Arrival Time Understanding;	G1	G1.5 – Strengthening Cross-Boundary CDEM Governance	G1.5, G2.2	Council (WREMO)	Councils, Iwi/Māori, Emergency Services, Lifelines, Welfare agencies, NGOS	<i>Breakdown of Emergency Coordination and Situational Awareness</i>	Enable the different parts of the system to work better together at the national level; Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management	National work to clarify inter-agency roles and responsibilities in the EM system. NEMA’s coordination work across sectors (FENZ, Police, Health, MSD, etc.) that your regional collaboration framework can slot into.
Kotahitanga – building trust with mana whenua	Invest time in building strong, trusted relationships with mana whenua and supporting shared leadership and decision-making.	High-trust relationships that enable faster coordination and better decisions.	Connected Community Action; Operations Centre Activation; Speed to Functional Coordination; Role & Responsibility Clarity Under Pressure; Operational Sustainability; Interoperable Role Coverage; Support Expectation;	G1	G1.5 – Strengthening Cross-Boundary CDEM Governance	G2.4,	Mana whenua (co-ordinating Iwi TBD)	<i>Council (incl WREMO)</i>	<i>Impacts all consequences</i>	Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management	EM Bill and EMSIP framing that emphasises shared leadership and partnership rather than a purely command-and-control mindset. National iwi/Māori partnership commitments that signal to local leaders “this is the new normal”.
Embedding Te Ao Māori and mātauranga Māori in risk planning	Build shared understanding of Te Ao Māori values and mātauranga Māori and co-design how these are applied in emergency management and risk planning.	Māori perspectives and knowledge are meaningfully reflected in risk decisions.	Risk-Avoidance Decision Rate; Risk Priority Alignment; Risk-Driven Investment Ratio; Repeat Failure Rate; Confidence in Risk Management; Connected Community Action; Connected Community Action; Public Confidence During Emergencies;	G1	G1.4 – Embed Te Ao Māori in risk planning	G2.3, G3.2	Iwi / Māori (co-ordinating Iwi TBD)	<i>Council (incl WREMO)</i>	<i>Damage to cultural sites & loss of cultural continuity; Severe and unequal social impacts; Breakdown of Emergency Coordination and Situational Awareness</i>	Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management	EM Bill changes that recognise iwi/Māori as key partners in EM. National guidance on Te Ao Māori integration into risk and resilience planning.
Regional hazard and consequence risk register	Develop a single, shared picture of the hazards and consequences the region faces that everyone can use for planning and decisions.	Agencies and communities work from the same understanding of risk.	Early Action Activation Rate; Risk Threshold Use; Repeat Failure Rate; Near-Miss Learning Conversion; Role & Responsibility Clarity Under Pressure; Connected Community Action;	G1	G1.2 – Consistent and accessible risk information	G1.1, G1.3, G1.4, G1.5, G2.1, G3.3	Council (WREMO)	<i>Councils, Iwi/Māori</i>	<i>Impacts all consequences</i>	Drive a strategic focus on investment and implementation; Support and enable local government to deliver a consistent minimum standard of	National risk information improvements and consistent modelling approaches. Access to national hazard data and modelling guidance that you can “regionalise”.

										emergency management across New Zealand	
Best practice modelling and sharing network	Create a regional network to share risk modelling methods, data, and expertise to reduce duplication and improve consistency.	More consistent analysis and stronger capability across organisations.	Early Action Activation Rate; Risk Priority Alignment; Repeat Failure Rate; Public Understanding of Local Risk; Confidence in Risk Management;	G1	G1.1–1.2 – Risk information and integration	G2.2	Council (GWRC)	<i>Councils (incl WREMO)</i>	<i>Impacts all consequences</i>	Drive a strategic focus on investment and implementation; Support and enable local government to deliver a consistent minimum standard of emergency management across New Zealand	National investment in risk modelling capability, tools and methods. A national community of practice for risk practitioners that you can tap into and contribute to.
Regional risk tolerance and investment framework	Agree how much risk is acceptable and how to prioritise investment across the region using clear, shared criteria.	Transparent and consistent investment decisions across councils and partners.	Risk-Avoidance Decision Rate; Risk Priority Alignment; Risk-Driven Investment Ratio; Knowing Neighbours; Community Emergency Hub Awareness;	G1	G1.3 – Risk informed investment	G1.5	Council (GWRC)	<i>Councils (incl WREMO)</i>	<i>Impacts all consequences</i>	Drive a strategic focus on investment and implementation; Support and enable local government to deliver a consistent minimum standard of emergency management across New Zealand	National work on risk tolerance / risk appetite for public infrastructure and land use, which can inform your local thresholds.
Public risk and readiness communication campaign	Deliver a shared “Know Your Risk” campaign that explains risks, preparedness, and likely service outages in clear, accessible language.	Better public understanding, trust, and preparedness.	Risk Priority Alignment; Repeat Failure Rate; Confidence in Risk Management; Strategic Stewardship Effectiveness (JC/CEG); Tsunami Natural Warning Understanding; Tsunami Wave Arrival Time Understanding; Business Continuity Planning;	G1	G1.2 – Consistent and accessible risk information	G3.1	Council (WREMO)	Councils, Iwi/Māori, Emergency Services, Lifelines	<i>Erosion of public confidence and trust; Severe and unequal social impacts; Isolation of Communities and loss of access; Prolonged loss of lifeline services</i>	Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management	A national public readiness programme and campaign (EM-wide, all hazards) that you can localise. Nationally consistent risk language and messaging to avoid confusion.
Continuous improvement for risk governance	Embed learning from events, exercises, and reviews into governance so improvements are tracked and acted on.	Evidence that lessons are learned and changes are made.	Early Action Activation Rate; Risk Threshold Use; Risk-Avoidance Decision Rate; Risk Priority Alignment; Risk-Driven Investment Ratio; Repeat Failure Rate; Near-Miss Learning Conversion; Role & Responsibility Clarity Under Pressure; Connected Community Action;	G1	G1.5 – Strengthening Cross-Boundary CDEM Governance	G2.5	Council (WREMO)	Councils, Iwi/Māori, Emergency Services, Lifelines, Welfare agencies, NGOS	<i>Breakdown of Emergency Coordination and Situational Awareness</i>	Enable the different parts of the system to work better together at the national level; Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management	Linked to above.

Improved access to data and insights during emergencies	Improve shared data and analytics platforms so agencies have better, faster information during emergencies.	A shared, trusted picture to support timely decisions.	Early Action Activation Rate; Public Understanding of Local Risk; Confidence in Risk Management; Role & Responsibility Clarity Under Pressure; Connected Community Action; Tsunami Wave Arrival Time Understanding; Duration of High-Impact Community Disruption;	G1	G1.1 – Integrate risk data	G1.2, G2.2, G3.3	Council (WREMO)	Councils, Iwi/Māori, Emergency Services, Lifelines, Welfare agencies	<i>Breakdown of Emergency Coordination and Situational Awareness</i>	Enable the different parts of the system to work better together at the national level; Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management; Professionalise and build the capability and capacity of the emergency management workforce;	National Common Operating Picture (COP) – core platform and standards. Modernised National Warning System and risk data feeds
Advocating for lifelines resilience	Work with lifeline utilities to identify high-risk areas and advocate for investment that reduces outages and speeds up restoration.	Fewer and shorter lifeline outages; faster recovery of essential services.	Risk Priority Alignment; Repeat Failure Rate; Confidence in Risk Management; Strategic Stewardship Effectiveness (JC/CEG); Duration of High-Impact Community Disruption	G1	G1.3 – Risk informed investment	G2.2, G3.3, G3.5	Joint Committee (Chair)	Joint Committee, CEG (Chair), CEG, Councils, Lifelines (incl. WELG & WELA)	<i>Prolonged loss of lifeline services</i>	Drive a strategic focus on investment and implementation	

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Appendix 2: Goal 2: Effective Response and Recovery – Further details on Priority Projects

Workshop Work Programme Title (Holding)	Scope / Intent	Expected Outcome (2031)	Connection to indicators	Primary Goal	Primary Objective(s)	Also Supports	Lead	Support	Link to Risk - 10 Consequences	EMSIP Focus Areas	Scheduled EMSIP Work
Continuous improvement and assurance	Use shared after-action reviews and learning processes so the system adapts and improves after events and exercises.	Lessons are shared, acted on, and lead to real system improvements.	Role & Responsibility Clarity Under Pressure; Connected Community Action;	G2	G2.5 – Continuous improvement	G1.5, G3.5	Council (WREMO)	Councils, Iwi/Māori, Emergency Services, Lifelines, Welfare agencies, NGOS	<i>Breakdown of Emergency Coordination and Situational Awareness</i>	Professionalise and build the capability and capacity of the emergency management workforce; Enable the different parts of the system to work better together at the national level	Establishment of regional / national surge teams and deployment arrangements. National capability framework describing skills and standards for reserve personnel. NEMA's national training and accreditation system for EM roles (Controllers, Recovery Managers, EOC staff). A coordinated national exercise programme so your people can train and test against consistent standards.
Regional training and exercises framework	Create a coordinated regional approach to training and exercising so agencies can work together more effectively.	A workforce that trains together and operates consistently across the region.	Role & Responsibility Clarity Under Pressure; Connected Community Action; Duration of High-Impact Community Disruption	G2	G2.2 – Interoperable workforce	G3.3	Council (WREMO)	Councils, Iwi/Māori, Emergency Services, Welfare agencies, NGOS	<i>Breakdown of Emergency Coordination and Situational Awareness; Severe and unequal social impacts; Erosion of public confidence and trust;</i>	Professionalise and build the capability and capacity of the emergency management workforce; Support and enable local government to deliver a consistent minimum standard of emergency management across New Zealand	Connected to multiple - workforce, systems, planning
CIMS capability and capacity uplift programme	Implementation of a work programme to address gaps in capability across all CIMS functions to improve the system's operational performance.	Demonstrated uplift in capability and capacity across all CIMS functions result in a improved system performance.	Connected Community Action; Operations Centre Activation; Speed to Functional Coordination; Decision Effectiveness; Decision Effectiveness; Role & Responsibility Clarity Under Pressure; Operational Sustainability; Interoperable Role Coverage; Support Expectation;	G2	G2.2 – Interoperable workforce	G3.5	Council (WREMO)	Councils Iwi/Māori,, Emergency Services and other partner agencies	<i>Impacts all consequences</i>	Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management; Professionalise and build the capability and capacity of the emergency management workforce	National commitment to enable iwi and Māori participation across the 4Rs, including guidance on roles in response & recovery. Partnership templates / examples that can be adapted for your mana whenua relationships.

Embedding mana whenua partnership s in response and recovery	Co-develop a mana-enhancing framework that recognises and enables Māori roles in response and recovery.	Iwi/Māori are recognised and supported as response and recovery partners.	Role & Responsibility Clarity Under Pressure; Connected Community Action; Duration of High-Impact Community Disruption; Duration of High-Impact Community Disruption	G2	G2.3 – Embed Mana Whenua Partnerships into response and recovery	G1.4, G3.2	Iwi/Māori (coordinating Iwi TBD)	Council (incl WREMO)	<i>Damage to cultural sites & loss of cultural continuity; Severe and unequal social impacts; Breakdown of Emergency Coordination and Situational Awareness</i>	<i>Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management; Support and enable local government to deliver a consistent minimum standard of emergency management across New Zealand</i>	<i>National rapid needs assessment frameworks and tools. National guidance on welfare services and logistics for food and essential supplies. Implementation and enhancement of the National Needs Assessment system and standards, including how data is collected and shared post-event.</i>
Rapid needs assessment for response and recovery	Integrate needs assessment across agencies to prioritise support, especially for disproportionately affected communities.	Faster, more equitable support during response and recovery.	Risk Priority Alignment; Repeat Failure Rate; Confidence in Risk Management; Role & Responsibility Clarity Under Pressure; Connected Community Action;	G2	G2.4 – People-focused Recovery Planning	G2.2, G3.5	Chair - Regional Welfare Advisory Group	Council (incl WREMO), welfare agencies, emergency services	<i>Severe and unequal social impacts; Breakdown of Emergency Coordination and Situational Awareness</i>	<i>Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management; Support and enable local government to deliver a consistent minimum standard of emergency management across New Zealand</i>	<i>National training, exercising and competency systems with data interfaces you can connect to (e.g. training databases, accreditation records).</i>
System capability information access platform	Create a shared digital hub for training materials and workforce capability information.	Improved access to training and visibility of regional capability.	Risk-Avoidance Decision Rate; Risk Priority Alignment; Risk-Driven Investment Ratio; Connected Community Action; Public Confidence During Emergencies; Knowing Neighbours; Community Emergency Hub Awareness;	G2	G2.2 – Interoperable workforce	G1.5, G3.3	Council (WREMO)	Council	<i>Breakdown of Emergency Coordination and Situational Awareness</i>	<i>Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management</i>	<i>National guidance / tools on community risk & vulnerability mapping (e.g. social vulnerability indicators, etc.). Better access to nationally held data (Stats NZ, health, welfare) via EM agreements.</i>
Community insights are integrated into response and recovery	To ensure response and recovery are informed by an understanding of each community, enabling timely and effective support that builds on local strengths and addresses real needs.	Communities are well understood, and support is timely, appropriate, and based on real needs and strengths.	Connected Community Action; Public Confidence During Emergencies; Knowing Neighbours; Community Emergency Hub Awareness;	G2	G2.1 – Community-led response	G3.1, G1.2	Council (WREMO)	Council, Iwi/Māori, NGO, Welfare agencies	<i>Erosion of public confidence and trust; Severe and unequal social impacts; Isolation of Communities and loss of access; Prolonged loss of lifeline services</i>	<i>Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management</i>	
Review and enhance Community Emergency Hubs	Review and strengthen Community Emergency Hubs so they are better integrated and connected to existing community organisations	Hubs operate effectively as community-led response and recovery resources.	Duration of High-Impact Community Disruption; Support Expectation;	G2	G2.1 – Strengthen Community Response	G3.1, G3.3	Council (WREMO)	Councils and community based partner agencies.	<i>Breakdown of Emergency Coordination and Situational Awareness; Isolation of Communities and loss of access; Prolonged loss of lifeline services</i>	<i>Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management; Professionalise and build the capability and capacity of the emergency management workforce; Drive a strategic focus</i>	

										on investment and implementation	
Recovery transition systems and tools	Identify and implement the systems and tools needed to manage the transition from response into mid-term recovery.	Smoother, faster transitions from response to recovery with clearer leadership.	Connected Community Action; Operations Centre Activation; Speed to Functional Coordination; Decision Effectiveness; Role & Responsibility Clarity Under Pressure; Operational Sustainability; Interoperable Role Coverage; Support Expectation;	G2	G2.4 – People-focused Recovery Planning	G3.3	Council (WREMO)	Councils	<i>Impacts all consequences</i>	<p><i>Professionalise and build the capability and capacity of the emergency management workforce; Enable the different parts of the system to work better together at the national level</i></p>	<p><i>Establishment of regional / national surge teams and deployment arrangements. National capability framework describing skills and standards for reserve personnel.</i></p> <p><i>NEMA's national training and accreditation system for EM roles (Controllers, Recovery Managers, EOC staff).</i></p> <p><i>A coordinated national exercise programme so your people can train and test against consistent standards.</i></p>

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Appendix 3: Goal 3: Community Resilience – Further details on Priority Projects

Workshop Work Programme Title (Holding)	Scope / Intent	Expected Outcome (2031)	Connection to indicators	Primary Goal	Primary Objective(s)	Also Supports	Lead	Support	Link to Risk - 10 Consequences	EMSIP Focus Areas	Scheduled EMSIP Work
Kotahitanga – marae capability and resilience programme	Support marae to act as trusted, resilient response and recovery sites, including building capability where needed.	Marae operate safely and effectively during emergencies.	Early Action Activation Rate; Risk Threshold Use; Near-Miss Learning Conversion; Connected Community Action; Public Confidence During Emergencies; Knowing Neighbours; Community Emergency Hub Awareness;	G3	G3.2 – Iwi and Māori lead culturally grounded initiatives.	G2.3, G1.4	Iwi/Māori / (co-ordinating iwi TBD)	Iwi/Māori, Councils (incl WREMO)	Damage to cultural sites & loss of cultural continuity; Severe and unequal social impacts; Breakdown of Emergency Coordination and Situational Awareness	Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management; Professionalise and build the capability and capacity of the emergency management workforce	NEMA’s commitment to support iwi/Māori and marae as recovery partners, including guidance and potential funding support via national programmes.
Preparedness communications campaign	Deliver targeted and inclusive preparedness campaigns that are tailored to different audiences, supporting households and communities to be ready and self-sufficient.	Increased household preparedness and reduced response pressure.	Early Action Activation Rate; Risk Threshold Use; Near-Miss Learning Conversion; Connected Community Action; Public Confidence During Emergencies; Knowing Neighbours; Community Emergency Hub Awareness; Tsunami Natural Warning Understanding; Tsunami Wave Arrival Time Understanding; Emergency Communication Arrangements; Business Continuity Planning; Emergency Water; Emergency Shelter; Emergency Toilet; Duration of High-Impact Community Disruption	G3	G3.4 – Household preparedness	G1.1, G2.1, G3.1	Council (WREMO)	Council, Iwi/Māori, Emergency Services, Welfare Agencies, NGOs	Erosion of public confidence and trust; Severe and unequal social impacts; Isolation of Communities and loss of access; Prolonged loss of lifeline services	Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management	National public education materials, campaigns and toolkits which you can adapt to local context. Evidence from national research on what messages actually shift preparedness behaviour.
Connecting isolated communities	Identify isolated (both physically and socially) areas and support community-led planning for emergencies.	Isolated communities are better prepared and connected.	Knowing Neighbours; Community Emergency Hub Awareness; Support Expectation; Emergency Communication Arrangements; Emergency Water; Emergency Shelter; Emergency Toilet;	G3	G3.5 – Disproportionately affected people	G2.1, G1.1, G3.1	Council (WREMO)	Council, Iwi/Māori, NGOs	Isolation of Communities and loss of access; Severe and unequal social impacts;	Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management; Professionalise and build the capability and capacity of the emergency management workforce	Expanded Resilience Fund and community-resilience investment settings, so you can actually support and sustain the community actors you map. National templates for partnerships with NGOs, iwi and businesses.
Strengthening neighbourhood-level social cohesion	Create opportunities for neighbours to connect and build local relationships.	Stronger neighbourhood connections and mutual support.	Risk-Avoidance Decision Rate; Risk-Driven Investment Ratio; Operations Centre Activation; Speed to Functional Coordination; Decision Effectiveness; Role & Responsibility Clarity Under Pressure; Operational Sustainability; Interoperable Role Coverage; Emergency Communication Arrangements; Emergency Water; Emergency Shelter; Emergency Toilet;	G3	G3.1 - Social Cohesion	G2.1	Council (coordinating Council TBD)	Council (WREMO), NGOs	Isolation of Communities and loss of access; Severe and unequal social impacts;		

Community support networks mapping	Identify and connect existing community organisations and networks that support resilience.	Visible, connected networks that can be activated in response and recovery.	Risk Priority Alignment; Repeat Failure Rate; Confidence in Risk Management; Connected Community Action; Public Confidence During Emergencies; Emergency Communication Arrangement; Business Continuity Planning;	G3	G3.3 – Facilitate capacity building	G1.2,G2.3	Council (coordinating Council TBD)	Iwi/Māori, NGOs, Council (WREMO)	Isolation of Communities and loss of access; Severe and unequal social impacts; Breakdown of Emergency Coordination and Situational Awareness	Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management; Professionalise and build the capability and capacity of the emergency management workforce	
Community-led emergency management system design	Develop a framework that recognises and supports community-led action alongside formal emergency management.	Communities act as system partners, not just recipients of support.	Connected Community Action; Public Confidence During Emergencies; Knowing Neighbours; Community Emergency Hub Awareness; Emergency Communication Arrangements; Business Continuity Planning; Emergency Water; Emergency Shelter; Emergency Toilet; Duration of High-Impact Community Disruption	G3	G3.3 – Facilitate capacity building	G1.5; G2.1	Council (WREMO)	All of system	Erosion of public confidence and trust; Severe and unequal social impacts; Isolation of Communities and loss of access; Prolonged loss of lifeline services	Give effect to the whole of society approach to emergency management;	

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Appendix 4: Group Plan Indicators

Goal 1: Managing Risk

Indicator	What it Measures & Why?	Strategy Objective(s) Demonstrated	What is Measured	How is it Measured?	Baseline (2025–26)	2031 Target	Rationale	Strategy Objective(s)
Early Action Activation Rate	Whether protective actions occur before major impacts. Early action is the clearest sign that risk information is being used.	Shows risk information is acted on <i>before</i> impacts occur, not retrospectively	% of qualifying events/exercises with early protective action before peak impact	Post-event/exercise review: % of relevant events where pre-impact protective actions were taken (e.g. evacuations, welfare escalation).	Establish 2026 baseline	+20 percentage point improvement	Early action reduces harm and recovery costs	G1-O1, G1-O3
Risk Threshold Use	Whether agreed triggers and thresholds are actually applied in decisions.	Demonstrates anticipatory risk management and improved use of warnings and triggers	Proportion of decisions referencing agreed risk thresholds	Decision logs and post-event reviews confirming threshold-based decisions were used.	Establish 2026 baseline	≥80% of qualifying decisions	Shows risk frameworks are operational	G1-O1
Risk-Avoidance Decision Rate	Whether higher-risk options are deliberately avoided. Shows risk influences real trade-offs.	Confirms risk frameworks are operational and shaping real decisions	Review of strategic decisions avoiding higher-risk options	Annual review of significant decisions documenting explicit avoidance of higher-risk options.	Establish 2026 baseline	Year-on-year improvement	Reveals real risk trade-offs	G1-O2
Repeat Failure Rate	Whether the same risk failures recur. Repeat failure indicates unmanaged risk.	Shows risk priorities influence choices and trade-offs, not just plans	% of high-significance issues recurring within 24 months	Thematic analysis of AARs and exercises tracking recurrence of known failure themes.	Establish 2026 baseline	≥50% reduction	Repeated failures indicate unmanaged risk	G1-O1, G1-O5
Near-Miss Learning Conversion	Whether near misses lead to system change before harm occurs.	Demonstrates that known risks are being reduced, not repeatedly tolerated	% of near misses leading to corrective action	% of identified near misses with corrective action implemented before next event/exercise.	Establish 2026 baseline	≥75% conversion	Learning before harm is best practice	G1-O1
Risk Priority Alignment	Whether councils and partners share the same priority risks.	Shows the system learns from emerging risk before harm occurs	Degree of alignment of priority risks across councils	Periodic comparison of organisational risk priorities against agreed regional priorities.	Establish 2026 baseline	High alignment sustained	Cohesion reduces gaps and duplication	G1-O2, G1-O5
Investment Ratio	Whether Emergency management is funded proportionate to the risks. Funding reveals true priorities	Shows risk priorities influence choices and trade-offs	% of rate spend on emergency management per capita.	Annual analysis of emergency management spend per council (budgeted and actual)	Establish 2026 baseline	TBD	Funding reveals true priorities	G1-O2
Public Understanding of Local Risk	Whether people understand the risks where they live. Informed people act earlier.	Demonstrates that funding decisions reflect agreed risk priorities	Survey % identifying local hazards and actions	Regional community survey measuring correct identification of local hazards and risks.	60–65% (NZ proxy)	≥70%	Informed communities act earlier	G1-O3; G3-O5
Confidence in Risk Management	Whether risk management is visible and trusted.	Shows risk communication is effective and actionable	Community and stakeholder confidence survey	Stakeholder and community survey measuring confidence that risks are being actively managed.	Establish 2026 baseline	+10 percentage points	Trust reflects credible risk management	G1-O3, G1-O5
Business Continuity Planning	Business preparedness to continue and recover.	Demonstrates economic resilience and recovery capacity	% businesses with continuity plans	Business survey measuring presence of continuity plans.	55–60%	≥75%	Economic resilience speeds recovery	G3-O2

Goal 2: Effective Response and Recovery

Indicator	What it Measures & Why?	Strategy Objective(s) Demonstrated	What is Measured	How is it Measured?	Baseline (2025–26)	2031 Target	Rationale	Strategy Objective(s)
Operations Centre Activation	Whether the system activates at the right scale. Activation is a clear, observable system response.	Shows the system activates at the right scale and level	% of events with correct EOC/ECC activation level	Event/exercise records confirming appropriate EOC/ECC activation level.	Establish 2026 baseline	≥90% appropriate	Correct activation underpins coordination	G2-O3
Speed to Functional Coordination	How quickly coordination across agencies is functioning. Coordination quality matters more than clock speed.	Demonstrates multi-agency alignment and operational coherence	Time/period until shared coordination is functioning	Operational period review confirming when shared priorities, liaison, and coordination were functioning.	Establish 2026 baseline	20–30% faster	Coordination quality matters most	G2-O3
Duration of High-Impact Community Disruption	How long key community functions remain disrupted. Reflects response and recovery effectiveness.	Shows effectiveness of response and early recovery	Days of major disruption (severity-adjusted)	Tracking days until critical services (e.g. access, welfare, utilities) return to agreed functional levels.	Establish 2026 baseline	10–20% reduction	Faster stabilisation reduces harm	G2-O4; G3-O5
Decision Effectiveness	Whether decisions are made at the right level, clearly, and acted on.	Confirms decisions are made at the right level, clearly, and acted on	Post-event assessment of decision clarity and follow-through	Post-event/exercise review of critical decisions against clarity, level, and follow-through criteria.	Establish 2026 baseline	≥80% effective	Poor decisions cause cascading failure	G2-O3
Role & Responsibility Clarity Under Pressure	Whether people understand who is in charge and who does what.	Demonstrates clarity of leadership and accountability	Responder survey during first operational period	Short post-event/exercise survey of responders and partners during first operational period.	Establish 2026 baseline	≥85% clarity	Role clarity enables performance	G2-O3; G3-O3
Strategic Stewardship Effectiveness (JC/CEG)	Whether governance provides clear strategic direction and drives improvement without operationalising itself.	Shows governance enables, aligns, and improves the system	Governance self-assessment and independent review	Stewardship review assessing escalation handling, strategic clarity, and follow-through on system improvements.	Establish 2026 baseline	Consistently effective	Good governance enables the system	G2-O5; G3-O3
Operational Sustainability	Whether operations can be sustained without critical failure.	Confirms the system can sustain long-duration events	Ability to sustain operations without workforce failure	Review of staffing continuity, fatigue management, and system stability during extended operations.	Establish 2026 baseline	Demonstrable improvement	Burnout equals system failure	G2-O3
Interoperable Role Coverage	Whether core roles can be filled across organisations.	Demonstrates workforce depth and flexibility	% of critical roles with multi-agency cover	Workforce capability assessment identifying % of roles with multi-agency coverage.	Establish 2026 baseline	≥80–90% coverage	Reduces single-agency risk	G2-O3
Connected Community Action	Whether community or iwi action occurs with system visibility and coordination.	Shows communities are partners, not passive recipients	% of events with iwi/community action linked to coordination	Post-event review confirming community/iwi actions were linked into coordination structures.	Establish 2026 baseline	Consistent integration	Shows real partnership in action	G2-O1, G2-O2; G3-O3, G3-O5
Public Confidence During Emergencies	Whether people feel the emergency was well managed. Confidence reflects visible performance.	Indicates visible, trusted system performance	Post-event public confidence survey	Post-event community feedback surveys focusing on confidence (not satisfaction).	75–80% (NZ proxy)	≥85%	Reflects lived experience	G2-O1; G3-O1, G3-O5

Goal 3: Community Resilience

Indicator	What it Measures & Why?	Strategy Objective(s) Demonstrated	What is Measured	How is it Measured?	Baseline (2025–26)	2031 Target	Rationale	Strategy Objective(s)
Support Expectation	Whether people see preparedness as their responsibility.	Shows realistic expectations and shared responsibility	% agreeing preparedness is personal/whānau responsibility	Community survey question on responsibility for preparedness.	55–60%	≥70%	Shifts reliance away from responders	G3-O2
Tsunami Natural Warning Understanding	Understanding of “Long, Strong, Get Gone”. Saves lives.	Demonstrates life-safety knowledge	% correctly identifying 'Long, Strong, Get Gone'	Survey testing recognition of natural tsunami warnings and correct response.	80–85%	≥90%	Life-saving knowledge	G3-O2
Tsunami Wave Arrival Time Understanding	Understanding urgency of tsunami arrival.	Shows ability to act quickly and correctly	% understanding rapid wave arrival	Survey testing awareness of likely arrival times and evacuation urgency.	Establish 2026 baseline	≥80%	Reinforces urgency to evacuate	G3-O2
Emergency Water for 7 Days	Household water self-sufficiency.	Demonstrates household self-sufficiency	% households meeting true 7-day water standard	Survey/self-report of households with seven-day water supply.	35–40% (proxy)	≥50%	Water is the most critical need	G3-O4
Emergency Shelter Supplies	Ability to shelter safely.	Shows readiness to remain safely housed	% households with adequate shelter supplies	Survey/self-report of households with adequate shelter supplies.	≈60%	≥75%	Reduces displacement	G3-O4
Emergency Toilet Arrangements	Sanitation preparedness.	Demonstrates practical preparedness	% households with emergency sanitation	Survey/self-report of households with emergency toilet arrangements.	40–45%	≥65%	Protects health and dignity	G3-O4
Emergency Communication Arrangements	Ability to receive information.	Confirms ability to receive information	% able to receive emergency information	Survey on access to alerts, radios, and trusted information sources.	70–75%	≥85%	Enables all other action	G3-O2
Knowing Neighbours	Social capital and mutual aid.	Demonstrates social capital and mutual aid	% knowing 3+ neighbours by name	Survey measuring whether people know neighbours by name.	50–55%	≥65%	Social capital drives mutual aid	G3-O1
Community Emergency Hub Awareness	Awareness of local support options.	Shows connection to local support structures	% aware of nearest Community Emergency Hub	Survey measuring awareness of nearest Community Emergency Hub.	≈50%	≥70%	Enables community-led response	G3-O1
Business Continuity Planning	Business preparedness to continue and recover.	Demonstrates economic resilience and recovery capacity	% businesses with continuity plans	Business survey measuring presence of continuity plans.	55–60%	≥75%	Economic resilience speeds recovery	G3-O2

Appendix 5: Glossary

Aotearoa New Zealand

The Māori name for New Zealand.

Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM)

The coordinated approach to managing emergencies across the four Rs: Risk Reduction, Readiness, Response, and Recovery, as set out in the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002.

CDEM Group

A regional grouping of local authorities and partner agencies established under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 to deliver coordinated emergency management across the Wellington Region.

CDEM Group Plan (Group Plan)

A statutory plan prepared under section 48 of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 that sets out how the Wellington Region CDEM Group will manage risks and deliver emergency management outcomes over a five-year period.

Controller

A person appointed under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 to direct and coordinate response activities during a state of emergency.

Coordinating Executive Group (CEG)

A statutory group established under section 20 of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002, comprising chief executives or senior managers of member local authorities and key partner agencies. The CEG advises the CDEM Group Joint Committee and oversees implementation of the Group Plan.

Disproportionately Affected Communities

A disproportionately affected community (or person) refers to individuals or groups who are likely to suffer greater negative impacts from emergencies than others because of factors such as: age (e.g. older adults, disability or health needs, language or cultural barriers, socio-economic vulnerabilities and other circumstances that reduce their capacity to prepare for, respond to, or recover from emergencies.

Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC)

A facility activated at the regional level to coordinate emergency response activities across the Wellington Region.

Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)

A facility activated by a territorial authority to manage and coordinate emergency response activities within its district or city.

Emergency services

Statutory response agencies including Fire and Emergency New Zealand, New Zealand Police, and ambulance services.

Group Controller

The Controller appointed to coordinate emergency response across the Wellington Region.

Group Emergency Management Office (GEMO)

The organisational unit responsible for supporting the delivery of CDEM functions on behalf of a CDEM Group.

Group Recovery Manager (GRM)

A person appointed under section 29 of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 to lead and coordinate recovery activities during a transition period.

Isolated Communities

Isolated communities are groups of people whose location, circumstances, or social conditions limit their access to services, information, support networks, and emergency assistance.

Iwi

A Māori tribal group with shared ancestry and whakapapa. Iwi are key partners in emergency management and community resilience in the Wellington Region.

Joint Committee

The governance body of the Wellington Region CDEM Group, established as a joint standing committee under the Local Government Act 2002, comprising elected representatives from each member local authority.

Lifeline utilities

Organisations that provide essential services such as electricity, water, wastewater, telecommunications, fuel, and transport, whose continued operation is critical during and after emergencies.

Local Controller

A Controller appointed to coordinate emergency response within a specific district or city.

Local Recovery Manager (LRM)

A person appointed to manage recovery activities at the local level, operating under the strategic direction of the Group Recovery Manager.

Mana Whenua

Mana whenua means territorial authority, rights, and power held by an iwi or hapū over a particular area of land or territory — derived from ancestral occupation, whakapapa (genealogy), and continued connection to that whenua (land). It reflects customary authority and responsibility to care for (kaitiaki) and make decisions about that land and its resources.

Māori

The indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Mātauranga Māori

Mātauranga is the body of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom developed by Māori over generations, grounded in whakapapa (genealogy), observation, experience, and lived connection to the natural and spiritual worlds.

Readiness

Activities undertaken before an emergency to ensure people, organisations, and systems are prepared to respond effectively, including planning, training, exercises, and public education.

Recovery

The coordinated process of restoring and enhancing the social, economic, built, and natural environments of affected communities following an emergency.

Response

Actions taken immediately before, during, or directly after an emergency to save lives, protect property, and reduce harm.

Risk

The combination of the likelihood of a hazard occurring and the consequences for people, communities, infrastructure, and the environment.

Risk reduction

Measures taken to avoid, eliminate, or mitigate risks before an emergency occurs.

State of emergency

A declaration made under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 that enables the exercise of special powers to manage and coordinate emergency response activities.

Te Ao Māori

Te Ao Māori refers to the Māori world view — the way Māori understand, interpret, and interact with the world.

Transition period

A period declared under Part 5B of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 that enables statutory powers to be used to manage, coordinate, or direct recovery activities following an emergency.

Whānau

Extended family networks that play an important role in community support, wellbeing, and resilience before, during, and after emergencies.

Wellington Region Emergency Management Office (WREMO)

The Group Emergency Management Office for the Wellington Region, responsible for supporting the CDEM Group, Joint Committee, and CEG, and for coordinating regional emergency management arrangements.

The following abbreviations are used in the Group Plan:

- **CEG**
Coordinating Executive Group
- **CDEM**
Civil Defence Emergency Management
- **ECC**
Emergency Coordination Centre
- **EOC**
Emergency Operations Centre
- **FENZ**
Fire and Emergency New Zealand
- **GEMO**
Group Emergency Management Office
- **GRM**
Group Recovery Manager
- **GWRC**
Greater Wellington Regional Council
- **LGA**
Local Government Act 2002
- **LRM**
Local Recovery Manager
- **MSD**
Ministry of Social Development
- **NEMA**
National Emergency Management Agency
- **NZRT**
New Zealand Response Team
- **RRCO**
Regional Recovery Coordination Office
- **TA**
Territorial Authority
- **WCG**
Welfare Coordination Group
- **WREMO**
Wellington Region Emergency Management Office