

AUCKLAND FLOOD RESPONSE REVIEW



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INDEPENDENT, EXTERNAL REVIEW OF EVENTS, JANUARY 27-29, 2023

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Mayor Wayne Brown

Mayor of Auckland

By email

31 March 2023

Dear Mayor Brown

Please find our independent, external review of the response to the Auckland Flood Event, January 27-9, 2023. We have undertaken this work in accordance with the 'rapid review' Terms of Reference provided to us on February 5.

We believe that this devastating event offers important lessons that can be used to improve the timeliness and quality of future emergency response in Auckland. Such improvements will go to both increased public safety and confidence in the City's leadership.

Consequently, this review attempts to be forward looking, in that, while it traverses the events of Auckland Anniversary weekend 2023 in some detail, it also identifies opportunities for improvement in both Auckland's emergency preparedness and in future emergency responses.

We are grateful for the support we have received from Auckland Council leaders and staff and for the constructive and candid spirit in which they, and other stakeholders have participated in this review process. This was particularly impressive given that at the time our work was undertaken, Council emergency management teams were also responding to further severe weather events.

Thank you for the opportunity to undertake this important work.

Yours sincerely

Michael Bush

Mike Bush

Bush international Consulting

It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark

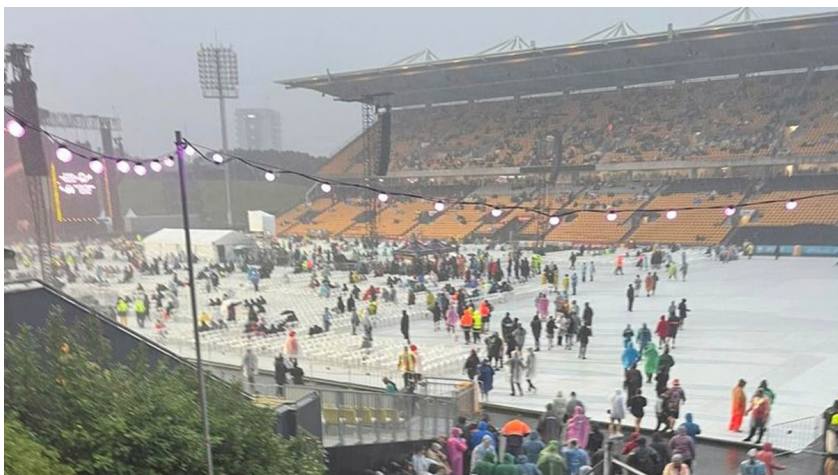
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Flooding at Auckland Airport on January 27. Photo / Pamela Mills, Twitter



Picture attribution: Fans leave Mt Smart Stadium after the Elton John concert was cancelled. New Zealand Herald via AP

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the passionate and dedicated people who work in the Auckland and national emergency management systems.

Respondents, including those from the Auckland Emergency Management (AEM) team, Office of the Mayor, elected members, Auckland Council and its many partner agencies have generously made time for interviews. They have helped us to reconstruct a complex and fast-moving emergency event and their parts in it, answered challenging questions, reflected on lessons learned, and made suggestions about what could be improved in the future.

Thank you for your trust in the review team and for your commitment to ongoing improvements in emergency management and response.

We thank the iwi, tangata whenua, and community groups who contributed insights to this report.

We want to specifically acknowledge the efforts of the executive support staff in the Office of the Mayor and Auckland Council to manage the logistics and otherwise enable this review within a short timeframe. We are also grateful to the Council's legal team for their timely and fulsome disclosure of the relevant documentation.

LIMITATIONS

This review was always intended to be a short, sharp 'rapid' examination of what happened during a crucial time in Auckland city's history.

Launched on 5 February 2023, the review team was asked to complete their work by 6 March 2023, which is an exceedingly tight timeframe for a review of any kind.² To accommodate this timeframe, and in keeping with the Terms of Reference, the review is purposefully not a forensic investigation. Rather, the approach we took was exploratory and inquisitive, based on the materials available to us at the time, such as the recorded meetings of the Auckland Emergency Management team's meetings over the period in question.

However, after reviewing several thousand relevant documents, interviewing the Mayor and his staff, the Auckland Council Chief Executive and executives, members of AEM, elected members of Auckland Council and emergency management and first response staff in partner agencies, both locally and nationally, we have been able to identify broad patterns and themes that address the questions posed in the Terms of Reference.

To the judgement and observations we have made in this report, we bring our collective experience as a review team in crisis and disaster response, executive leadership and organisational performance.

² Due to the demands on Council staff in the aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle, which struck Auckland on 13 and 14 February, this deadline was subsequently extended.

Although this report includes our best efforts at a reconstruction of the relevant timeline of events, the supporting materials were partial or conflicting in places, and the recollections of participants differ. While the Council has been generous with the release of documents, we are also not convinced we have seen all relevant materials, given the rapid timeframe of the review.

The timeline is weighted towards the first 12 hours of the target period, during which time the more significant issues appeared to arise. Over Saturday and Sunday, during the subsequent 36 hours, the overall effectiveness of the emergency response improved.

In the timeframes available, and given our focus on identifying lessons learned, the timeline does not necessarily record the myriad of activities undertaken over this latter period, including all briefings to elected members, clean up and repair efforts to reopen roads, restore services and expand community support.

Consequently, the timeline In Appendix 4 should not be relied upon as fully definitive. It does, however, offer insight into the way the emergency was managed, particularly in the key hours leading up to the declaration of a local emergency.

Each person interviewed for this review was given an assurance that individual responses would be treated in confidence and that documentary materials shared with us would be held only by the review team for the purposes of this review.

Lastly, the Terms of Reference required us to look at the immediate official response to this extreme weather event and identify any actions that need to be implemented immediately to ensure better preparation for the next event. Matters we were specifically required to consider included how well procedures and operating models performed during the relevant time period and whether sufficient decision-making procedures, among other things, were in place and known to be available.³

In order to evaluate these matters, and identify any immediately required improvements, we have considered the extent to which these policies and procedures have been prepared in accordance with relevant statutory frameworks, guidance and plans.

We have also considered the Council's general preparedness and if and to what extent officials may have already been on notice about their emergency response plans and procedures. We consider these matters are all relevant to how the Council responded on the actual night of the floods.

This report should be read with the above limitations in mind.

³ The Terms of Reference also provide that we may consider any matters that emerge from our inquiries, which we consider, in the public interest, to require immediate review. The full Terms of Reference can be read at Appendix 2.

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE: KEY ROLES IN THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Auckland Council is governed by the Mayor and elected Council Members, with a Chief Executive responsible for managing Council business and providing the link between the Council members and the executive and staff.

Governance and executive leadership have central roles in ensuring Auckland civil defence and emergency management (CDEM) functions can be properly and effectively performed and the required capability is in place. However, once a civil defence emergency arises, a different framework and set of hierarchies, roles and responsibilities applies, involving multiple agencies. The usual decision-making processes are superseded. Management of response operations falls to appointed Controller(s), although the Mayor and the executive retain a role communicating and influencing strategic direction outside the operational response and can be held accountable for the response outcomes.⁴ The Mayor has a specific legislative role in relation to the declaration of a state of emergency.

The relevant Auckland CDEM roles and responsibilities are set out in summary form in the table below.

An additional glossary of technical terms is provided at Appendix One below.

Key CDEM roles for Auckland	
CDEM Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auckland Council's CDEM Committee is the CDEM Group for Auckland (ACDEM Group) and is comprised of governing body elected representatives, two members of the Independent Māori Statutory Board and observers from CDEM key partners and stakeholders.⁵ • Responsible for overseeing the delivery of coordinated and collaborative CDEM arrangements across the Auckland region.⁶ • Must develop, approve, monitor and review the ACDEM Group Plan.
Coordinating Executive Group (CEG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides executive and management support to the ACDEM Group. Comprised of the Chief Executive of Auckland Council and senior executives from other key agencies. Among other things, the CEG is responsible to the ACDEM Group for overseeing the implementation, development, maintenance, monitoring and evaluation of the ACDEM Group Plan.
Auckland Emergency Management (AEM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a department in Auckland Council and the coordinating agency for CDEM in Auckland. It reports to the Auckland Council Director Governance. AEM works with a wide range of partner agencies to ensure effective coordination of civil defence and emergency management within its area. • AEM roles include Control and Coordination. It has dedicated staff (usually including the Controller) and primary and back up Emergency Coordination Centres (ECCs). • It provides advice and technical support to the CEG and ACDEM Group.⁷
Director, Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Auckland Council Tier 2 position and, under delegations at Auckland Council, is responsible for emergency management functions.

⁴ Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Coordinated Incident Management System* 3 ed, August 2019 (CIMS), at page 37 – 38.

⁵ ACDEM Group Plan at p 94.

⁶ ACDEM Group Plan at p 94.

⁷ See the ACDEM Group Plan for a summary of the AEM roles and responsibilities at p 95.

General Manager Emergency Management (GM EM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Auckland Council Tier 3 position, the General Manager of AEM reports to the Director, Governance.
Controller(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointed by the ACDEM Group. Usually an employee within Auckland Council. In Auckland, the decision was apparently taken, following the 2018 Smol Report, to separate the Director CDEM and Controller roles. • A Group Controller is appointed by the ACDEM Group. • The person(s) in charge of the response who directs response activities and fulfils management functions and responsibilities. • The Group Controller can delegate a Deputy Controller or Controllers but maintains primary responsibility. • Response Manager – appointed by the Controller and assists in the management of tasks, operation of the Coordination Centre and resolve internal conflicts. • Responsibility begins as soon as it is apparent there is an incident that may require a CDEM response. • Sets up an Incident Management Team (IMT) which usually consists of the Controller and CIMS functional managers. The IMT plays a key role in determining when an incident moves to an emergency as defined in the CDEM Act (and advises the Mayor accordingly). • The Controller also has statutory functions and powers that come into effect if and when a declaration of a state of emergency is declared.
Mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In relation to CDEM, the Mayor has an important role, in terms of both planning and response. Specifically, the Mayor:⁸ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ has the legislative power to declare a state of local emergency that covers Auckland, as well as a leadership role in responding to emergencies ○ may be a spokesperson; and ○ is an ex officio member of the ACDEM Group.
Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the principal executive officer for Auckland Council, is responsible for ensuring the efficient and effective management of Auckland Council’s staff, resources and budget. In this context, the Chief Executive also provides the effective link between Council members, the executive and administrative staff. • At Auckland Council, the Chief Executive’s governance and emergency management functions are delegated to the Director Governance. In relation to CDEM, the Chief Executive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has a key role as a member (and in this case the Chair) of the CEG; and ○ should ensure the proper performance and exercise of Auckland Council CDEM functions, including by ensuring there is sufficient capability and resources available to support these operations (within budgetary constraints).⁹
Key documents, processes	
Coordinated Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIMS provides a common methodology on a national level to guide response to emergencies. It is critical that processes and procedures reflect CIMS, providing a common language, systems and approach across all agencies.

⁸ See *Auckland Council Governance Manual*, Mayor of Auckland, Role and Functions 4.1.7. Exercising civil defence and emergency management powers.

⁹ The Chief Executive remains responsible for ensuring the proper performance and exercise of all responsibilities delegated to him or her or any council employee, including the Director, Governance (see Local Government Act 2002, s 41(2)(c). See also the *Auckland Council Governance Manual*, The chief executive and staff, 9.1.2 (g).

Management System (CIMS)	
ACDEM Group Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the primary high level response document prepared by the ACDEM Group (and references the application of the CIMS framework).
Auckland specific processes and Standard Operating procedures (SOPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be developed based on the CIMS and cover specific hazards/detailed operational arrangements. For example, these should cover the agreed approach to CIMS, Emergency Coordination Centres(ECCs), evacuation centres, communications etc.
National Civil Defence and Emergency Management (NCDEM) Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to the CIMS, there is a wide range of guidance available on the NCDEM website, including on declaring a local statement of emergency.

SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

THE FLOOD EVENT

Over the 48-hour period beginning Friday 27 January 2023 - the beginning of the Anniversary holiday weekend - Auckland experienced a widespread flood event, involving significant transport and infrastructure disruption, mass evacuations and loss of life and property.

This unprecedented event unfolded with extraordinary speed. Minutes mattered.

From the time Auckland Council emergency managers stood up an incident team at 4.30pm on that Friday, to the end of that team's first, virtual meeting at 6.15pm, much of the damage was done.

The later declaration of emergency, establishment of evacuation centres and related public messaging came too late to provide Aucklanders with timely public safety advice and reassurance. Given this, the flood event offers critical insights for the future management and leadership of complex and unpredictable emergencies in New Zealand's super city.

THIS REVIEW

As reviewers, we were tasked by the Mayor of Auckland to undertake an independent, 'rapid review' of four particular dimensions of Auckland Council's emergency management response over the first 48-hours of this event, (paraphrased below for simplicity)¹⁰:

- The performance of Auckland Emergency Management (AEM) and emergency services including operating models and procedures - how well did they do?
- The declaration of the statement of emergency – what were the key legislative, regulatory, operational and policy considerations and should it have been considered earlier?
- Related communications with partner agencies, central government, elected members and the public – how effective and timely were they?
- Decision making procedures, communications templates – were they sufficiently clear and known to be available to decision-makers and communicators?

We did so by reviewing relevant records and interviewing those who had roles to play on that Friday and over the weekend that followed.

We brought to the task our own experience in crisis and disaster response, leadership, organisational performance and organisational culture. We did not conduct a formal or forensic Investigation or Inquiry. Rather, this was an exercise to determine how well the system operated under the extreme stress of the initial response stages of this flood event, and to identify opportunities for improvement in response to future emergencies.

Our analysis is weighted to the first 12 hours of the event response. This was the critical period in which most flooding, disruption and loss occurred. It is also the period during which critical decisions relating to our Terms of Reference were taken.

¹⁰ Our full Terms of Reference is included at Appendix 2 below.

HIGH LEVEL, THEMATIC FINDINGS

In the report that follows, we discuss our findings and offer suggestions for improvement in the four specific areas we were tasked to explore. We note here, in summary, a number of high-level findings that cut across all four areas, including:

- Auckland Council’s emergency management system, its operating model and the relevant plans, policies and procedures, was not prepared for an event of this magnitude and speed
- Gaps in preparedness, including for flood and superstorm emergencies, were known to key Council decision makers in advance, but, at the time of this flood event, they remained works in progress
- Relationship and communication protocols between the key players at Auckland Council with CDEM roles - including the Mayor, Chair of the Council’s CDEM Committee, Chief Executive and emergency management staff - were not sufficiently inclusive in the critical early stages of the event
- Senior leaders underestimated the importance of their visible leadership roles. This had adverse impacts on communications and public confidence
- The Council’s emergency management team appeared to lack the command, crisis leadership skills and operational experience to deal with an event of this complexity, particularly in driving mission clarity and taskings during the initial response
- Critical Council emergency management roles and delegations were unclear, both within the Council and to partner response agencies
- The crisis exposed weaknesses in the Council’s emergency management systems, tools and agency/community/tangata whenua relationships, which slowed the response, reduced situational awareness and led to inadequate early intelligence to support public safety information and decision making
- The move to supercity planning for emergencies seems to have contributed to an optimism bias that Auckland Council’s size and systems could handle anything; and
- Rather than a model based on central planning and localised delivery, the Council’s emergency response was premised largely on centralised coordination and delivery of response. In the event, this weakened the localised intelligence flows that could have supported better targeted community responses.

SYSTEM DEFICIENCY

The well-known Swiss cheese model¹¹ developed by James Reason and often applied to safety and risk management, was initially developed to illustrate how analysis of major accidents and catastrophes tends to reveal multiple, smaller failures that allowed a hazard to manifest as a risk.

Each slice of cheese represents a barrier, any one of which is sufficient to prevent a hazard turning into consequences. Swiss-cheese theory works on the assumption that no single barrier is fool proof.

¹¹See, for example, D’Amore, R. (2020). “What is the ‘Swiss cheese model’ and how can it apply to coronavirus?” *GlobalNews.ca*. <https://globalnews.ca/news/7393839/coronavirus-swiss-cheese-model/>

They all have failings or ‘holes’. When these holes align, a risk event can manifest as negative consequences.

In the Auckland flood event, the problems noted above aligned to create system failure, particularly in the initial 12 hours of the emergency management response. Aucklanders did not receive the timely communications, leadership and practical support they had a right to expect in a crisis of this magnitude.

That many of these problems were known in advance is troubling. From 2016 onwards, the Council’s Auckland CDEM Group Plan recognised the issues that Auckland faced as a result of infrequent testing and lack of understanding of its emergency response frameworks.

The Plan raised the concern that Auckland’s capability to respond to a large-scale or widespread events – such as occurred on 27-29 January 2023 – had not been tested, and that operational emergency management plans were not sufficient. The need to develop specific contingency plans for flood and superstorm events was also identified.

Yet by the time of this event, some of the key issues that had been identified had not been actioned by the Council’s executive. Nor does it appear that the Committee demanded, via the Council’s CEG, that they be prioritised and actioned.

The 2018 Smol Report into earlier weather events made a number of related recommendations which also do not appear to have been fully implemented.

LESSONS LEARNED

In this report, we suggest a number of specific areas in which the operating model for Auckland emergency management can be improved.

Most importantly however, the issues of leadership exposed by this crisis must be addressed.

Key leaders in Auckland City failed to appreciate the vital importance of visible leadership and frequent public communication during a time of crisis.

Effective leadership in a crisis goes directly to public confidence in elected leaders, and thus to the overall health of our democratic institutions.

Within Auckland Council, there was opportunity for better advice and support to the Mayor’s office – both before and during the event – by the Chief Executive and his officials about how to provide leadership, information and assurance to the public during emergencies.

During the weather emergency, the Mayor and his team should also have been more active in demanding information and asking questions of the Chief Executive, his officials and the emergency management team.

All those in key roles needed to view and react to the developing emergency through both a strategic leadership *and* a tactical response lens (and noting the differing roles that applied prior to and after the emergency being declared). Doing so may well have resulted in an earlier declaration of emergency.

As the night of Friday January 27 unfolded, Aucklanders expected and needed clear and regular messaging, delivered with empathy via multiple channels, to understand the seriousness of the event, to know where to go and how to get help, and to gain assurance that the crisis was being actively managed by their elected and professional leaders.

THE WAY FORWARD

None of these thematic findings should be seen to denigrate the well-intentioned efforts of the AEM staff. They were doing their best under difficult conditions.

Nor should these findings be taken as criticism of partner agencies or first responders. The latter, along with community leaders, volunteers and the many ordinary Aucklanders who did extraordinary things to help their fellow citizens, were the true heroes of this event.

We are also convinced that the city's leaders, and the key players in Auckland's emergency management system, are strongly committed to exploring the opportunities for improvement we suggest here. We have formed the impression that some of the lessons of the Anniversary weekend floods were applied to the subsequent response to ex tropical Cyclone Gabrielle.

It will be vital, going forward, that leaders not only continue to prioritise improvements but are also able and prepared to invest in these. The Auckland emergency management team in particular, needs support to embed the changes that will ensure improved future response to unpredicted emergencies.

This flood event has been an important wake up call for Auckland Council and its civil defence and emergency management systems. Severe weather events are becoming more severe with climate change. Disasters often happen without warning. Aucklanders deserve and should expect a plan for remedial action in order to ensure that these system deficiencies are not replicated in future super city emergencies.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the following actions should all be immediately commenced in order to ensure better preparation for the next event which could occur at any time.

1. That a separate review be undertaken to examine Auckland Emergency Management's (AEM) prevention, preparedness and planning, (also referred to as Reduction and Readiness) for an emergency in Tamaki Makaurau and that this review be undertaken with urgency (noting that the subject of this review was Response).
2. Finalise with urgency the current review of the Auckland Civil Defence and Emergency Management (ACDEM) Group Plan.
3. Include in the ACDEM Group Plan supporting plans for high priority hazards and events and detailed documentation of the Operating Model for emergency response.
4. As recommended in the 2018 Smol Review, the CDEM Committee should agree a common approach for use of the CIMS system methodology as the basis for planning for response and implement each of the structured elements of the CIMS in any major response.
5. In the context of the CIMS, revise and promulgate new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for emergency response in Auckland, including specific SOPs for high priority hazards such as floods and superstorms.
6. Guided by the CIMS, clarify and communicate the Auckland emergency management organisational structure including in particular the operational relationships between and respective accountabilities of the Group Controller, Deputy Controller, Director CDEM, General Manager Emergency Management, Director Governance, Chief Executive and the Mayor and Mayor's Chief of Staff. Reflect these in updated policies and instruments of delegation.
7. Ensure that AEM members, including the PIM team, have the resource, training and capability to exercise their function relating to internal and external communications.
8. Establish a standard cadence for the CDEM Coordinating Executive Group (CEG) to provide reporting and advice to the Council's CDEM committee in regard to progress made on implementing its decisions and overseeing the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the ACDEM Group Plan.
9. Deliver a more frequent schedule of emergency management exercises, based on the CIMS and including complex scenarios, with multiple partner agencies, including CCOs and lifeline utilities. Involve the Office of the Mayor in these training events.

10. Ensure all Auckland Council staff with dedicated emergency management accountabilities have expertise in and are qualified in both CIMS *and* crisis leadership protocols and principles.
11. Consider changing organisational arrangements and reporting lines for the GM EM position and its reports, including the establishment of additional, qualified full time emergency response experts, including experts in public information.
12. Develop a centralised approach to and system for intelligence capture and analysis, reflecting CIMS protocols, to ensure improved situational awareness in emergency response events.
13. Revise SOPs to ensure that, while emergency response can be run remotely if required, the default preference is for a physical Emergency Operations Centre to support coordinated command and response.
14. Ensure that the induction/onboarding process for a new Mayor and Mayoral Office staff includes advice and briefing materials on both the AEM system and how to inform, advise, and provide assurance during emergency response.
15. Review, update, test and better communicate the database of prequalified CDCs and related logistics hubs and welfare arrangements. Ensure key partnering relationships, such as those with local marae and community providers, are explicit and proactively managed.
16. Acquire or develop a common IT operating system for AEM and partner agencies to utilise during emergency response to facilitate sharing of intelligence and support improved real time communications and decision making.
17. Establish and actively manage strong connectivity with critical external stakeholders, as required under the CIMS framework, including mana whenua, Pasifika, community groups, infrastructure providers, and lifeline utilities.

CONTEXT FOR THIS REVIEW: AN OVERVIEW OF THE AUCKLAND CIVIL DEFENCE EMERGENCY FRAMEWORK

All local authorities, emergency services and lifeline utilities have emergency management responsibilities under the Civil Defence and Emergency Management Act 2002 (CDEM Act) and other related legislation. Auckland Council, emergency services, local utility providers and welfare agencies are responsible for working in partnership to implement the '4 Rs' of civil defence: Reduction, Readiness, Response and Recovery, as well as the fifth 'R', the Auckland-specific goal of Resilience.¹²

COORDINATED INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CIMS)

The CIMS is New Zealand's official framework to achieve effective coordinated incident management across responding agencies. It has been used as the methodology to underpin emergency responses since 1998. It provides local bodies with guidance and a framework for response and incident management. As such, the CIMS constitutes the best practice model for Auckland Council's response to this event.

The latest (3rd) edition has applied since July 2020. It incorporates Government decisions announced in August 2018 relating to the Ministerial review into *Delivering better responses to natural disasters and other emergencies*.

The purpose of the CIMS is to provide:

- a framework of consistent principles, processes, and common language that is modular and scalable; and
- a framework for organisations to develop their own CIMS-aligned processes and procedures.

The core CIMS functions are control, intelligence, planning, operations, logistics, PIM (public information management) and recovery (including welfare). There should be a functional lead for each of these functions.

A diagram reflecting the relevant control structure for a local/regional response is set out in the CIMS as follows:¹³

¹² As set out in [Working Together to Build a Resilient Auckland: Auckland Civil Defence and Emergency Group Plan 2016-2021](#) (Auckland Council, 2016) (Group Plan) at 9.

¹³ CIMS at p 79.

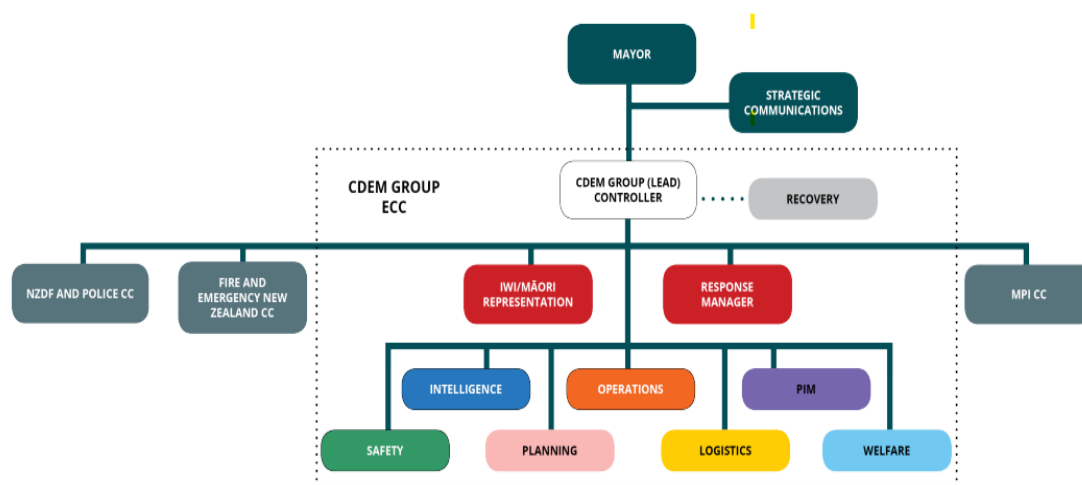


Figure 18: A local/regional level response

GROUPS AND ROLES RELEVANT TO AUCKLAND'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE ON 27-29 JANUARY 2023

AUCKLAND CIVIL DEFENCE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (ACDEM) COMMITTEE AND THE ACDEM GROUP PLAN

The ACDEM Committee of Auckland Council is responsible for performing the statutory functions of a CDEM Group. These are to identify and manage hazards and risks and take all steps necessary to maintain and provide personnel, organisational structures, material, services, information, and resources for effective civil defence and emergency management in the area.¹⁴ The ACDEM Committee is also required to respond to and manage the adverse effects of emergencies in its area. As a CDEM Group, the ACDEM Committee has all powers necessary to enable it to perform its functions.¹⁵

In the current term of the Council (including on 27 January 2023) the Chair of the ACDEM Committee is Councillor Sharon Stewart and the Deputy Chair is Councillor Kerrin Leoni. Councillor Stewart was also the Chair of the Committee for several previous terms. There are four other Councillor members of the CDEM Committee, and the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are *ex-officio* members. The Independent Māori Statutory Board appoints two members to the Committee.¹⁶

The ACDEM Committee is intended to meet quarterly.¹⁷ However, during the previous Council's term (from November 2019 to October 2022), the Committee met eight times rather than the anticipated 12. This may have in part been due to Covid disruptions. Prior to the severe weather event on 27-28 January 2023, the ACDEM Committee's last meeting was on 30 August 2022, during

¹⁴ CDEM Act s 17.

¹⁵ CDEM Act s 18.

¹⁶ [Terms of Reference](#) at 19 sets out the full membership and delegations to the CDEM Committee.

¹⁷ [Terms of Reference](#) at 19.

the previous term of the Council and before the local body elections of October 2022. The ACDEM Committee is obliged by the legislation¹⁸ to prepare, approve, monitor and regularly review a civil defence and emergency management group plan. The ACDEM Group Plan was prepared for the period 2016-2021¹⁹ but remained in force on 27 January 2023.²⁰

Under the CDEM Act, the ACDEM Committee must commence a review of the ACDEM Group Plan if it has been operative for five years or more. Accordingly, a review was due from 2021.

While commenced by notice in October 2021, the review timeframe was extended by the Committee in November 2021 to the end of the 2022-2023 financial year as a result of upcoming local body elections.²¹

The timeframes were extended again in June 2022 to 20 November 2023, to accommodate the later introduction of the Emergency Management Bill.²² The AEM website notes that the ACDEM Group Plan is currently under review and that a draft document will be available for public consultation in due course.²³

CIVIL DEFENCE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATING EXECUTIVE GROUP (CEG)

The legislation requires that the CDEM Committee must maintain a Civil Defence and Emergency Management Coordinating Executive Group (CEG), which consists of the Chief Executive Officer of the local authority (or person acting on their behalf), a senior Police employee assigned by the Commissioner of Police, a senior Fire Service representative, the Chief Executive or senior member of the local provider of health and disability services; and any other persons co-opted by the CDEM Group.²⁴

The legislation makes the CEG responsible for providing advice to the ACDEM Committee, implementing its decisions, and overseeing the implementation, development, maintenance, monitoring, and evaluation of the Auckland civil defence emergency management Group Plan.²⁵

In Auckland, the membership of the CEG is:²⁶

- Chair: Auckland Council Chief Executive
- NZ Police
- NZ Fire Service

¹⁸ CDEM Act ss 17(1)(i), 48.

¹⁹ ACDEM [Group Plan](#).

²⁰ The CDEM Act requires that the ACDEM Group Plan remains operative for the period specified in the plan (being 2021). Accordingly, the Auckland Group Plan remains in force despite its stated period of operation being 2016-2021.

²¹ https://infocouncil.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/Open/2022/06/CIV_20220614_MIN_11013.PDF - Kōmiti Ārai Tūmatanui me Te Toko Raru Ohore / Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee Minutes at 6, Item 12.

²² https://infocouncil.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/Open/2022/06/CIV_20220614_AGN_11013_AT_WEB.htm - Kōmiti Ārai Tūmatanui me Te Toko Raru Ohore / Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee Minutes, Item 12

²³ Auckland Emergency Management website, accessed on 9 March 2023 at

<https://www.aucklandemergencymanagement.org.nz/auckland-emergency-management/our-group-plan>. Council officials had sought advice from NEMA on this matter and from colleagues working to a similar Group Plan review timeline in the Bay of Plenty CDEM Group.

²⁴ CDEM Act s 20.

²⁵ CDEM Act s 20.

²⁶ ACDEM [Group Plan](#) at 94.

- St John Ambulance
- Health Coordinating Executive Group Chair
- Auckland Welfare Coordination Group Chair
- Auckland Lifelines Group Chair
- NZ Defence Force
- Auckland Harbourmaster
- Auckland Principal Rural Fire Officer
- Auckland Controller; and
- Auckland Transport Operations Centre(s).

There is no publicly available record of the meetings of the CEG. However, updates of the group's meetings are periodically provided to the CDEM Committee, as are briefings on the CEG's Forward Work Programme. Members of the CEG also regularly attended meetings of the ACDEM Committee

AUCKLAND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Auckland Emergency Management (AEM) is a department of Auckland Council. It works in partnership with emergency services and other organisations to ensure coordination of civil defence and emergency management within Auckland. It supports the CEG and ACDEM Committee. The team has a small number of staff in dedicated, full time emergency management positions. It is supplemented, during events, by Council staff, trained in the CIMS framework, who undertake these roles in addition to their full-time positions.

GROUP CONTROLLER

The legislation requires that the ACDEM Committee appoint a 'suitably qualified and experienced' person as Group Controller for the area.²⁷ The Group Controller's function is to direct and coordinate personnel, material, information, services and resources during local emergencies.²⁸ The Group Controller must fulfil this statutory duty once a state of emergency has been declared, using the resources that the ACDEM Committee and others make available.²⁹

The ACDEM Committee must also appoint alternative suitably qualified person(s) to perform the functions of the Group Controller in the event of a vacancy in the office or the absence from duty of the Group Controller.³⁰ Additionally, the Group Controller is able to authorise a suitably qualified and experienced person to perform his or her functions.³¹

²⁷ CDEM Act s 26.

²⁸ CDEM s 28.

²⁹ CDEM s 28(1).

³⁰ CDEM Act s 26(2).

³¹ CDEM Act s 28(3).

The (National) Director of Civil Defence and Emergency Management has issued a Guideline under the CDEM Act on response management for Controllers.³² It notes that, while it can sometimes be difficult for Controllers to be actively engaged in all phases of emergency readiness and preparation – at times due to other work commitments – it is ‘essential for the Controller to ensure they know the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the CDEM councillor pre-emergency. It is also useful to have established relationships with other councillors’.³³

MAYOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The primary role of the Mayor is one of strategic leadership, specifically, to articulate and promote a vision for Auckland and provide leadership for the purpose of achieving objectives that will contribute to that vision.³⁴

The Mayor’s powers include establishing processes and mechanisms for the Auckland Council to engage with the people of Auckland, establishing committees, appointing chairpersons and establishing and maintaining an appropriately staffed office. When staffing his office, the Mayor must consult and act through the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive is the principal executive officer of Auckland Council and is responsible for implementing Council decisions, employing staff, providing advice to the Council members and ensuring the effective efficient management of the Auckland Council. The Chief Executive is the effective link between Auckland Council members in their governance capacity and the executive and administrative staff.

In relation to CDEM, as explained in the Auckland City Governance Manual, the Mayor:

- Has the power to declare a state of local emergency³⁵ – this role can only be exercised by another designated person if the Mayor is absent; and
- In addition, has a leadership role in responding to emergencies.

As set out above, the Chief Executive chairs the CEG, and the CEG has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Group Plan, among other things. More broadly, the Chief Executive should ensure, within available budgets, that sufficient resources are assigned (including staffing capacity and capability) to enable the effective operation of Auckland Council’s CDEM functions.

The Chief Executive’s emergency management functions are currently delegated to the Director Governance, and the General Manager Emergency Management reports to the Director Governance. Such delegations reflect the fact that Auckland Council is a large and complex unitary authority and that the Chief Executive is expected to have delegations in place to ensure effective and efficient conduct of Council business.³⁶ However, the Chief Executive remains ultimately

³² The Director of Civil Defence Emergency Management (who is appointed by the chief executive of the responsible department) may issue guidelines, codes or technical standards for the operational role of Controllers, Recovery Managers, and other persons with responsibilities under the CDEM Act (CDEM Act s 9(3)(d)).

³³ [Response Management: Director’s Guideline for CDEM Group and Local Controllers \[DGL06/08\]](#) (Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management, October 2014) (Director’s Guideline) at 88.

³⁴ Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009, s 9.

³⁵ A CDEM Group must also appoint a person as a person authorised to declare a statement of emergency for its area. For Auckland, that person is the Mayor.

³⁶ See Auckland Council Governance Manual, Chief Executive, Roles and Responsibilities, 9.1.2.

responsible for ensuring the proper performance and exercise of all responsibilities, duties and powers delegated to him or any other Council employees.³⁷

³⁷ See Local Government Act 2002, s 41(2)(c). See also the *Auckland Council Governance Manual*, The chief executive and staff, 9.1.2 (g).

THE RESPONSE BY HIGH LEVEL THEMES FROM THE REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE

WHAT WAS THE STATE OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PRIOR TO JANUARY 27? ³⁸

As noted, our review TOR do not specifically include an assessment of advance ‘preparedness’ for emergency events. However, the TOR do require us to assess the effectiveness of procedures and operating models leading up the response and to make recommendations on any actions that need to be immediately undertaken.

It has not been possible to explore these matters or make recommendations in regard to the other themes without outlining the pre-event state of preparedness (called, in the context of the Group Plan ‘Reduction’ and ‘Readiness’), and our impressions in regard to its sufficiency and effectiveness.

ACDEM GROUP PLAN

The primary document that would be expected to contain the plan for civil defence and emergency management in Auckland is the ACDEM Group Plan. As noted in the section on context above, it is a statutory requirement and responsibility of the ACDEM Group that they approve a Plan. In addition to the matters to be included required by statute, there are a number of guiding documents to assist a CDEM Group in developing the Group Plan and ensuring it remains up to date and fit for purpose.

The Group Plan is a high-level strategic plan, covering, among other things, risk reduction, readiness, response, recovery, management and governance and a summary of proposed actions. While the detail of specific action plans do not need to be included in the Group Plan, the existing tools, processes and arrangements should be identified, and future actions required set out.

As noted above, the Group Plan is titled ‘Working Together to Build a Resilient Auckland: Auckland Civil Defence Management Group Plan 2016-2021’³⁹ and, although technically past its end date, it was in the process of review (under extended timeframes since 2021). Under the CDEM Act, the Plan remained in force on 27 January 2023.⁴⁰

As would be expected, the Group Plan confirms that the CDEM Committee and support agencies are guided by the CIMS and summarises the core CIMS functions. Although the AEM, the Controller and other services applied aspects of the CIMS over the period 27 to 29 January 2023, we have been unable to locate Auckland specific CIMS-aligned processes and procedures developed to support the Group Plan.⁴¹

The ACDEM Group Plan presents, as described in its Executive Summary, ‘the vision and goals of the Auckland CDEM Group ... how Auckland will achieve this vision, and a framework for measuring

³⁸ Note that this initial question is not part of our formal Terms of Reference. We consider that preparedness matter provides essential context for the following questions, and accordingly, we traverse it in this section.

³⁹ ACDEM [Group Plan](#).

⁴⁰ See footnotes 20, 22 above.

⁴¹ This is despite the 2018 Smol Review recommendation that the CDEM Committee “[a]gree a common approach amongst [CDEM Committee] members for use of the [CIMS] methodology as the basis for planning for response and implement each of the structured elements of CIMS in any major response”

progress'.⁴² The Plan is aspirational rather than operational in nature. It states at page 10 that it is 'a strategic document, supported by a range of processes, procedures, policies and documents which provide more detailed information' (emphasis added).

The ACDEM Group Plan recognised that Auckland's natural hazards include flooding (river and catchment) and a super storm.⁴³ It described these hazards as follows:⁴⁴

'Auckland's weather is diverse

'Auckland's weather can change quickly. Most weather systems originate in the Tasman Sea, but during summer and autumn, Auckland can also be affected by subtropical storms. Our most common weather hazard is flooding, followed by damaging winds and rough seas. Severe weather that affects a large part of the Auckland region is generally well-forecast a day or two ahead of time, but localised severe thunderstorms have shorter warning times (hours rather than days).

'Intense storm events can produce localised and regional flooding. A 'super storm' would have a significant negative impact on the Auckland region, which could include a combination of severe winds, heavy rain, flooding, land instability, power outages, storm surge and coastal erosion.

[...]

'Super storm

'A 'super storm' highlights the combination of several circumstances occurring at one time. For example, a super storm could include strong winds, heavy rain, floods, landslides, and infrastructure failure occurring at one time. As a result, such an event has the potential to cover a widespread area and will have significant impacts to the region, presenting a high risk to Auckland. A super storm has not occurred in Auckland for a number of decades.

'Because a super storm event incorporates numerous hazards, which collectively result in more significant consequences, it has a very high-risk rating in the Auckland region. These events have occurred internationally, such as the super storm in Australia in 2016 and Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005. In 2008, in Auckland, several storm events occurred which had the potential to develop into a super storm event [...]. '

The ACDEM Group Plan classified flooding (river and catchment) and a super storm as 'very high priority' for Auckland and stated that specific contingency plans for these hazards were required.⁴⁵

Based on our review of available documents and discussions with relevant staff and elected members, no such specific contingency plans appear to have been developed in advance of the weather event of January 27-29, 2023.

⁴² ACDEM [Group Plan](#), at 5.

⁴³ ACDEM [Group Plan](#), at 48, 58.

⁴⁴ ACDEM [Group Plan](#), at 46, 50.

⁴⁵ ACDEM [Group Plan](#), at 59.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS AND PROCEDURES

As to the response phase, the ACDEM Group Plan provides:⁴⁶

'Statement of expectations

'The CDEM Group, key partners and stakeholders will have response capacity, capability and arrangements before, during and after an emergency. This is coordinated through consistent and scalable structures, processes and procedures. By working with our communities, we ensure there is an agreed and clear understanding of current and future needs in order to respond to and recover from an emergency effectively and efficiently.'

'Issues and challenges

- *There are varying levels of consistency, integration and coordination between response agencies in an emergency.*
- *Resources are not effectively utilised, managed or shared across responding agencies; for example, personnel, equipment and coordination centres.*
- *CDEM Group partner agencies and political stakeholders must have confidence in the CDEM response and recovery.*
- *Capability and capacity across the CDEM Group and stakeholders to a large-scale Auckland event are not tested regularly and well-understood.*
- *Responding to large-scale, widespread emergencies is not tested regularly enough and lessons learned are not incorporated into annual work programmes.*
- *Operational emergency management plans do not always meet the coordination needs required in an emergency.*
- *Public alerting systems and associated public education messages are ineffective, and warnings do not reach the required number of people in the affected population.*
- *Auckland's size and complexity make it difficult to understand what is happening in a large-scale emergency; therefore, organisations and agencies are not responsive to community needs.'*

Accordingly, from 2016 onwards, the ACDEM Group Plan recognised the issues that Auckland faced as a result of infrequent testing and understanding of emergency response frameworks.

The ACDEM Group Plan raised the concern that Auckland's capability to respond to a large-scale or widespread event – such as occurred on 27-29 January 2023 – had not been tested, and that operational emergency management plans were not sufficient.

The ACDEM Group Plan also recognised the importance of the CIMS framework, and states at page 84 that 'to ensure an effective response, agencies will be guided by the [CIMS] framework with enhancements and adjustments to reflect the operating business model'.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ ACDEM [Group Plan](#), at 85.

⁴⁷ [Coordinated Incident Management System \(CIMS\)](#) (Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 3 ed, August 2019). See internal page 77 for a worked example of a local/regional response. The CIMS framework is outlined in the ACDEM [Group Plan](#), at 84 and 128, Fig 9.

However, we have not been able to identify Auckland-specific documents based on the CIMS framework, which anticipates safety, intelligence, planning, operations, logistics, public information management and welfare branches.

In addition, the ACDEM Group Plan anticipated a number of additional plans and procedures to be used during a response, including:⁴⁸

- Auckland Evacuation Framework
- Auckland Welfare Plan
- Auckland Recovery Framework
- Lifeline Utility Vulnerability plans
- Hazard Specific Contingency Plans
- Standard Operating Procedures; and
- Evaluation Action Plans.

As reviewers, we have reviewed a folder of materials entitled Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for emergency response in Auckland. These constitute action checklists and some decision trees for specific events. Based on our operational and crisis management experience, we do not consider these to constitute full SOPs.

Despite the ACDEM Group Plan identifying the need for hazard-specific contingency plans for high priority hazards including flooding and super-storms,⁴⁹ such plans do not appear to exist (apart from a 2015 Volcanic Field Contingency Plan⁵⁰). The Auckland Welfare Plan addresses the response to individuals' welfare and needs after an emergency.⁵¹

Part D of the ACDEM Group Plan sets out a Framework for Action. It follows a format consistent with NEMA guidance, identifying issues, activities, planned actions, delivery leads and support and delivery dates and each of the 4Rs, with the addition of Auckland Council's fifth 'r', for Resilience. Many of the issues identified under the Response heading reflect the same issues we have identified in this Review. It is notable that many of the proposed actions do not appear to have been progressed.⁵²

In summary, while the ACDEM Group Plan⁵³ is a strategic document primarily focused on an intention to increase Auckland's resilience,⁵⁴ its objectives, issues and proposed actions require

⁴⁸ ACDEM [Group Plan](#), at 68.

⁴⁹ ACDEM [Group Plan](#), at 59.

⁵⁰ [Auckland Volcanic Field Contingency Plan](#) (Civil Defence and Emergency Management, Auckland Council, March 2015). Note it is dated 2015.

⁵¹ [Welfare coordination in emergencies: Auckland Welfare Plan](#) (Auckland Emergency Management, Auckland Council, February 2019).

⁵² See for example ACDEM Group Plan, Part 4, page x, which in response to the identified issue '*Capability and capacity across the CDEM Group and stakeholders to a large-scale event in Auckland is not tested regularly nor well-understood*' sets the following action: '*Develop and implement a multi-agency capability and development strategy and training programme and align with national and Auckland-specific competency frameworks*'. To be completed by 2017. This is one of a number of actions that does not appear to be progressed.

⁵⁴ It is notable that the [Auckland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan 2010-2015](#) (Civil Defence and Emergency Management, Auckland Council, 2010) set out the nature of the response in somewhat greater operational detail, for example stating the levels of response that exist, the nature of escalation, the expectations placed on emergency services, and the mechanism through which resources and support for emergency services, other agencies and welfare are coordinated.

⁵⁴ It is notable that the [Auckland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan 2010-2015](#) (Civil Defence and Emergency Management, Auckland Council, 2010) set out the nature of the response in somewhat greater operational detail, for example stating the

substantial operational support from subordinate policy, procedure and practice manuals in order to execute the plan in practice.

In particular, we would expect it to be supported by detailed operating model documentation in regard to the four or five Rs, consistent with the CIMS and including specific SOPs covering the agreed approach to CIMS functions. This would include the approach to ECC, Civil Defence (Evacuation) Centres, evacuations and communications, among other things. We have not been able to source these underlying documents. Nor do actions identified to address known issues appear to have been progressed.

On the basis of this evidence, it does not appear to us that all of the necessary emergency organisational structures and operational procedures were in place in Auckland as of 27 January 2023.

2018 SMOL REPORT

Following a significant storm on 10 April 2018, the CEG commissioned Mr David Smol to review each of the main elements of the CDEM response, assess the effectiveness of the response and recommend actions to be undertaken in Auckland, and considered nationally, to ensure that risk is mitigated or minimised for events of similar or greater magnitude in the future.

The 2018 Smol Report was wider ranging than the current review, covering all aspects of the response, (including recovery) and with longer time frame to report back (it was published in November 2018). Other points of difference are that the 10 April 2018 event did not require a declaration of emergency and was primarily a severe wind event without heavy rainfall.

Noting these differences, the assessment of, and recommendations related to, the response phase of the CDEM event are relevant to our current review. In particular, they demonstrate that there were gaps in the CDEM response phase which required specific actions to be taken. Accordingly, the ACDEM Group, CEG and AEM were on notice of the issues and the actions required.

Based on our interviews and assessment of the documents, some recommendations relating to the response phase (which is the phase this review is primarily concerned with) do not appear to have been progressed. Examples of recommendations that do not appear to have been actioned, and which if actions had been taken, would likely have improved CDEM responses in January 2023, include that the ACDEM Group:

- Continue to invest in the building and maintenance of constructive relationships amongst ACDEM members, at both operational and governance levels
- Agree a common approach amongst ACDEM members for use of the CIMS methodology as the basis for planning for response and implement each of the structured elements of CIMS in any major response
- Review the resources available for major responses (both core AEM staff and Auckland Council Emergency Support (ACES) with a view to ensuring, among other things, that:

levels of response that exist, the nature of escalation, the expectations placed on emergency services, and the mechanism through which resources and support for emergency services, other agencies and welfare are coordinated.

- the Controller(s) is able to focus on leadership of the response, including a structured implementation of the CIMS model
- each of the critical functions within the ECC has sufficient support, and alternates to enable 24/7 rostering as required; and
- Consider a potential role for the Coordinating Executive Group (CEG) in response, including the possibility of convening at least one CEG meeting early in any major response, to support the Controller in a real-time review of the response to date, and to ensure that all ACDEM organisations are engaged as appropriate, with shared clarity as to roles and responsibilities.

DRAFT OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL REPORT

We understand the Council's AEM function in relation to disaster preparedness and resilient communities is also the subject of a 2021 draft report (Review of Service Performance) by the Office of the Auditor-General (OAG). This report currently remains in draft and is confidential. We understand it does not yet reflect the feedback received from the Council or subsequent work on the audit.

The draft was not able to be provided to the Review team.

We have been informed that the OAG's intention is to finalise the report as soon as possible.

DEVELOPMENT OF NECESSARY POLICY AND PROCEDURE BY THE ACDEM GROUP

We have examined the work programme of the CDEM Committee prior to 27 January 2023 to address Auckland's preparedness for a significant emergency or disaster.

From our review, it appears that the preparation of a response plan for a large-scale emergency was not progressed through the CDEM Committee in the last term of the Council, although concerns about Auckland's lack of preparedness for such an emergency were periodically raised.

We have surveyed the CDEM Committee's agendas and minutes from the last meeting in 2019 to the last meeting in August 2022 (which was the final meeting which took place prior to the severe weather event on 27 January 2023).

Throughout this time frame, the CDEM Committee demonstrated awareness that there was a lack of clarity of responsibilities during an emergency response phase. The record shows that the CDEM Committee was aware of, and had concerns regarding, the lack of practical, operational preparedness for response, the delineation of roles between different parts of the response framework, and the absence of hazard-specific plans. Business set out in the CDEM Committee records included the following:

- 28 August 2019: the CDEM Committee provided feedback on CIMS. The documents record recommendations including ‘better explaining the relationship between the Controller, Deputy Controller, and Response Manager / Chief of Staff’.⁵⁵
- 10 November 2020: a report from the General Manager of AEM stated ‘I have asked NEMA to support AEM by facilitating a piece of work that will focus on roles and responsibilities within the Auckland CDEM Group, with the aim of providing greater clarity both in and out of response. This is part of the groundwork for the review of our operating model and also our review of the Group Plan.’⁵⁶
- 11 May 2021 and 16 November 2021: the CDEM Executive Group Forward Work Programme, presented to the CDEM Committee, includes a plan to ‘Review and/or develop hazard specific joint response plans to ensure the delivery of effective and coordinated regional responses’. It specifies ‘Activities: Establish a joint planning working group; Two event/hazard specific regional joint plans to be developed or reviewed each financial year. Outcomes: Response plans are developed, shared and implemented.’ AEM is described as the owner of this task.⁵⁷
- However, in 2022, the CDEM Executive Group Forward Work Programme was reprioritised, and no longer included the development of hazard-specific joint response plans.⁵⁸ It is not clear from the records whether any hazard-specific response plans were developed.

Accordingly, although the CDEM Committee was on notice that Auckland’s operational emergency plans may not meet the coordination needs that arise during an emergency response, concrete steps to remedy this deficit remained a work in progress.

As noted earlier, it is the role of the CEG, chaired by the Council Chief Executive, to provide advice to the CDEM Committee, implement its decisions, and oversee the implementation and evaluation of the civil defence and emergency management ACDEM Group Plan.⁵⁹

Council Chief Executive Jim Stabback was present at ACDEM Committee meetings in May 2021, November 2021, June 2022 and August 2022, along with the Director of Governance Phil Wilson, (to whom the AEM team reports).

Neither the Chief Executive (in his CEG Chair role) nor the CEG presented a paper to the CDEM Committee during the period from at least 2021 until the extraordinary meeting that took place after the severe weather event, on 9 February 2023.

⁵⁵ [Kōmiti Ārai Tūmatanui me Te Toko Raru Ohorere / Civil Defence and Emergency Management Group Committee Agenda](#) (28 August 2019) at 199, Item 16.

⁵⁶ [Kōmiti Ārai Tūmatanui me Te Toko Raru Ohorere Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee Minute Item Attachments](#) (10 November 2020) at 6, Item 8.

⁵⁷ [Kōmiti Ārai Tūmatanui me Te Toko Raru Ohorere / Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee Agenda](#) (11 May 2021) at 16 and [Kōmiti Ārai Tūmatanui me Te Toko Raru Ohorere / Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee Agenda](#) (16 November 2021) at 64, Item 10.

⁵⁸ The Forward Work Programme was not discussed at the meeting CDEM Committee in February 2022. See discussion of update on the Forward Work Programme in August 2022, [Kōmiti Ārai Tūmatanui me Te Toko Raru Ohorere / Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee Agenda](#) (30 August 2022) at 27.

⁵⁹ CDEM Act s 20.

CEG Forward Work Plans and reports on CEG meetings were instead presented to the Committee by the General Manager of AEM, who is a tier three staff member.

Similarly, we have been unable to locate documents that indicate a briefing to the incoming Mayor by the CDEM Committee or CEG, between his assumption of office in October 2022 and the event of 27 January 2023, as to what was expected of the Mayor during an emergency.

The Mayor was provided with an email memorandum on 21 December 2022, which noted the Mayor's ability to declare a state of emergency, attached a template for a declaration and enquired as to his availability over the Christmas break.

At 7.32pm on the night of the severe weather event, the Mayor was also emailed a copy of NEMA's Factsheet: Declaring states of local emergency and a blank emergency declaration template.

However, it seems clear that the Mayor did not receive formal advice as to Auckland's emergency operational plans, procedures and contacts, nor where these may be located, prior to 27 January 2023. Nor did we come across any protocols or procedures that identified who was responsible for advising the Mayor on CDEM.

NEMA guidance places some expectation on elected officials in this respect, for example, the NEMA document: 'Top Tips for elected officials' states, among other things, *'Mayors – know your CDEM response arrangements – particularly for declaration and recovery transition'*.⁶⁰

PRACTICAL AND INFRASTRUCTURAL PREPAREDNESS

Many respondents to this review raised issues relating to the pre storm state of the drains, culverts and soak pits that variously drain Auckland's streets. Elected members reported receiving communications from their constituents that drains were not being regularly cleared and that some soak pits appeared obstructed.

Further investigation of this matter is not part of our Terms of Reference. However, we strongly suggest that a review of the pre-event condition of Auckland's horizontal infrastructure be undertaken if this has not already been initiated.

From our overview of event-related correspondence, including to the Mayor, there is considerable public interest in Council confirming that any maintenance issues have been identified and a plan of on-going maintenance is in place.

WEATHER DATA

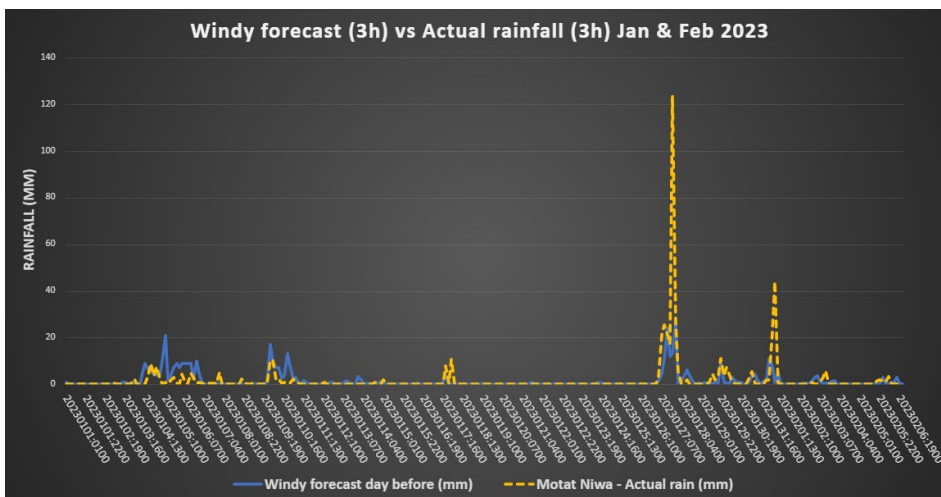
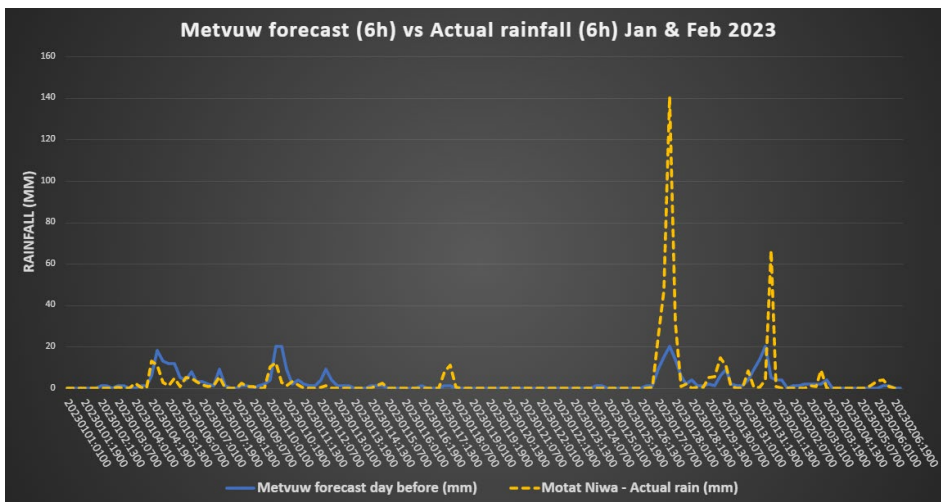
A number of respondents suggested that MetService 'undercooked' the rain and storm warning for Auckland on Thursday 26 and Friday 27 January. Severe weather warnings and warnings in regard to torrential rain were not issued until the evening of Friday 27, at 5.50pm.

⁶⁰ <https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/publications/Elected-officials/Tips-for-elected-officials-Nov2019.pdf>

During the first recorded IMT/weather event meeting, some team members indicated that they believed the rainfall was diminishing. This incorrect assumption/anticipation may have been an additional factor in the failure to move to an early declaration, as well as a driver for not having the next ITM for another two and half hours.

Thereafter, during the second IMT meeting that night, Metservice advised AEM in real time of the developing weather situation.

On this matter Metservice may well undertake its own review. There was certainly a significant difference between the quantity and speed of rain and wind forecast and what actually occurred, as shown in the post event, AEM supplied data below.



In this context, it is also worth noting that the Council had independent sources of rainfall and water flow data in the form of its own gauges. These trigger Hydrotel alarms at certain thresholds and these notifications go via the Council's Whisper system to the AEM Duty Manager. While these information sources helped trigger the initial decision to stand up the AEM and call an initial IMT meeting on the afternoon of Friday 27 January, it is not clear to us how this data was subsequently managed or how it may have informed later decisions.

AN UNPRECEDENTED EVENT

The flooding that occurred on January 27 could be likened to a set of flash floods, unlike any Auckland had previously experienced⁶¹. Under these circumstances, any state of prior preparedness would have been tested by the speed and extent of the event. However, it is the nature of emergencies that they often occur without warning. The Council's CDEM plans, policies and systems need to be ready for a significant disaster, whether forecast or not.

⁶¹ See the recent New Zealand Infrastructure Commission report, *The 2023 Auckland Anniversary weekend storm: An initial assessment and implications for infrastructure*, for an early analysis of the event.

THE DECLARATION OF THE STATEMENT OF EMERGENCY – WHAT WERE THE KEY LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY, OPERATIONAL AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS AND SHOULD IT HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED EARLIER?

In considering this question, and in addition to interview and other data, we reviewed the following:

- Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (the CDEM Act)
- Auckland Council’s Governance Manual, sections 4.1.7 and 5.4⁶²
- Resilient Auckland – Auckland Civil Defence and Emergency Management Group Plan 2016 2021 (ACDEM Group Plan); and.⁶³
- Factsheet: Declaring states of local emergency, dated January 2023 and published by NEMA.

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WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF A DECLARATION OF A STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY?

Under section 4 of the CDEM Act, an ‘emergency’ is defined as:

- ‘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 any 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 co-ordinated response under this Act.’

The purpose of declaring a state of local emergency is to give the CDEM Group (discussed further below) special powers to deal with the emergency (under section 85 of the CDEM Act). These emergency powers include:

- providing for the rescue of endangered persons and their removal to areas of safety
- providing emergency food, clothing and shelter
- conservation and supply of essential supplies; and
- disseminate information and advice to the public.

⁶² See section 4.1.7 <https://governance.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/4-the-mayor-of-auckland/role-and-functions/exercising-civil-defence-and-emergency-management-Powers/> and 5.4 <https://governance.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/5-the-governing-body/civil-defence-and-emergency-management/>

⁶³ Auckland Council’s CDEM Group plan first came into effect in August 2016, and was signed by former Mayor Len Brown. The Auckland Emergency Management Website (<https://www.aucklandemergencymanagement.org.nz/auckland-emergency-management/our-group-plan>) notes that the plan is currently being reviewed by

the CDEM group (noting that the CDEM Act requires that group plans be reviewed if they have been operative for 5 years or more).

⁶⁴ 3 See <https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/publications/Declarations/Factsheet-declaring-states-of-local-emergency.pdf>.

WHO HAS THE POWER TO DECLARE A STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY?

Under section 13 of the CDEM Act, every local authority must be a member of the CDEM Group. As a collective, the CDEM Group has responsibility, essentially, for emergency management (see section 17 of the CDEM Act).

Under section 25 of the CDEM Act, a CDEM Group must appoint at least one person as a person authorised to declare a state of local emergency for its area. Section 25(5) clarifies that despite who is chosen as the person authorised, the ‘mayor of a territorial authority, or an elected member of that territorial authority if the mayor is absent, may declare a state of local emergency, or give notice of a local transition period, which covers the district of that territorial authority’.

In any event, the person authorised by the ACDEM Group is the Mayor as the first in a hierarchy of persons authorised to declare a state of local emergency and listed in the ACDEM Group Plan as follows:⁶⁵

- The Mayor
- Chair of the Auckland CDEM Group committee
- Deputy Chair of the Auckland CDEM Group committee; and
- Other councillors who are members of the Auckland CDEM Group committee.

The CDEM Act provides no ability for the Mayor to delegate the power to declare a statement of emergency, beyond the exercise of the hierarchy in his absence.⁶⁶ As set out in the ACDEM Group Plan, ‘best endeavours will be made to follow the hierarchy, however, if time is of the essence, the signature of any of those authorised to declare will over-ride this hierarchy’.

Section 4.1.7 of the Governance Manual allows the Mayor to delegate his role on the ACDEM Group, but, as noted above, there is no ability to delegate the declaration of an emergency other than in the case of the Mayor’s absence.

WHEN SHOULD A STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY BE DECLARED?

The CDEM Act provides little guidance about when a state of local emergency should be declared, beyond the definition of emergency itself. The question is likely to be a factual one – focussing on the question of whether the emergency ‘cannot be dealt with by emergency services or otherwise requires a significant and co-ordinated response under this Act’.

NEMA’s Quick Guide: Declaring a state of Local Emergency, notes that an element of judgement is involved when deciding whether a state of emergency should be declared. However, if access to

⁶⁵ We note that section 5.4 of the Governance Manual includes a slightly different hierarchy, with the Deputy Mayor second. For the purposes of this review, we have preferred the hierarchy set out in the ACDEM Group Plan but note that there is no question that the Mayor was available and did in fact issue the declaration on 27 January.

⁶⁶ Note that, under section 25(3) of the CDEM Act, where the ACDEM Group appoints more than one person it must clarify whether they have equal status to declare a state of emergency or can only act in the absence of another person. The ACDEM Group has adopted the latter approach.

extra-ordinary powers is required, for example if people need to be evacuated, it says that a state of emergency should be declared.⁶⁷

The Quick Guide also sets out the following additional indicators that an emergency may require ‘a significant and coordinated response’:⁶⁸

- Many agencies involved in responding to the emergency
- Lifeline utilities aren’t functioning or are having difficulty functioning; and
- Social utilities such as schools are closed.

It is worth noting that the ACDEM Group Plan should include the ‘arrangements for declaring a state of emergency’ (section 49 CDEM Act). From our review, Auckland’s ACDEM Group Plan appears to be light on these details. While it clearly establishes who has the power and has general provisions for ‘modes of activation’ (see page 133) there do not appear to be any arrangements establishing the process for declaring a state of emergency in the Plan.

NEMA’s Factsheet: Declaring states of local emergency sets out the following process for declaring a state of local emergency (paraphrased for convenience):

- Mayor considers if an ‘emergency’ (as defined under the CDEM Act) has occurred or may occur, and seeks advice from:
 - CDEM Controller.
 - NEMA Regional Emergency Management Advisor (NEMA REMA).
 - Emergency services.
 - Lifeline utility Managers.
 - Note the CDEM Controller can also help determine if the definition of emergency is met.
- If a national state of emergency is in force, no further action is required.
- If the definition is met, having sought advice from the relevant groups listed above, the authorised person decides to declare a state of local emergency and completes the prescribed form, or form of similar effect (see section 73 of CDEM Act).
- At this stage, the CDEM Controller should be advised immediately, who should then liaise with emergency services, key council staff and other appropriate agencies.
- The decision must then be made public and published in the Gazette (section 73(3)) as soon as practicable.

⁶⁷ NEMA, Quick Guide: Declaring a state of local emergency, January 2023, <https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/publications/Declarations/Quick-Guide-to-declaring-a-state-of-local-emergency.pdf>.

⁶⁸ See above.

WHO ARE THE KEY PERSONS TO SEEK ADVICE FROM?

We set out below information about each of the key officials the Mayor should have sought advice from when deciding whether to issue a state of local emergency.

CDEM CONTROLLER

Under section 27 of the CDEM Act, a CDEM Group must appoint a ‘Group Controller’ for its area.

Under section 28, the Group Controller ‘must, during a state of local emergency... direct and co-ordinate... the use of personnel, material, information, services, and other resources’.

The CIMS states that there must only be one Lead Controller who directs the overall response to an emergency. Even when the Deputy Controller is standing in, the Lead Controller must retain primary oversight and decision-making.⁶⁹

The ACDEM Group Plan states that the Director of the CDEM is the ‘primary’ Group Controller, with a series of alternative controllers (page 97). We were unable to locate the details of the current Director but found a detailed list of current alternative controllers.⁷⁰

We have been advised that the role of CDEM Director was replaced by the current GM EM following a restructure. Further, we are advised that, following the 2018 Smol report, the ACDEM Group resolved to separate the Director CDEM role from the Group Controller function (noting that this has not been updated in the ACDEM Group Plan). While we sighted no instruments of delegation to this effect, Council maintains that these appointments have been validly made and that the operation of a roster system of alternative duty controllers is appropriate and necessary.

As of 27 January 2023, the most recently appointed lead Group Controller in Auckland was appointed as lead Group Controller, effective 3 December 2021, by the ACDEM Committee on 16 November 2021.⁷¹ At the time the appointee already held a senior role at Auckland Council as a General Manager.

However, despite this appointment as Group Controller at the end of 2021, the CDEM Committee’s published list of civil defence emergency statutory appointments did not indicate this. That list was published as Appendix 1 to the ACDEM Group Plan⁷² and noted a series of Alternative Controllers, including the 2021 appointee, without indication of a lead or primary Group Controller.⁷³ This issue persisted through to 27 January 2023 in the Appendix 1 to the ACDEM Group Plan published at that

⁶⁹ CIMS, p 38 where it states ‘Only one Controller can be the Lead Controller who directs the overall response to the incident, and at p 39, ‘The Controller may delegate a Deputy Controller or Controllers to fill in when the Controller undertakes a rest period or to manage specific responsibilities or areas of complexity. The Controller always retains the primary oversight and decision making — Deputy Controllers must follow the direction and priorities set by the Controller’.

See <https://www.aucklandemergencymanagement.org.nz/media/evnmc3ks/group-plan-appendix-1-title-updated-list-14-06.pdf>.

⁷⁰ [Kōmiti Ārai Tūmatanui me Te Toko Raru Ohorere /Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee Agenda](#) (16 November 2012) at 73-77, Item 11; [Kōmiti Ārai Tūmatanui me Te Toko Raru Ohorere /Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee Minutes](#) (16 November 2021) at 4, Item 11. The previous Group Controller was Kate Crawford, General Manager of Auckland Emergency Management.

⁷¹ [Kōmiti Ārai Tūmatanui me Te Toko Raru Ohorere /Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee Agenda](#) (16 November 2012) at 73-77, Item 11; [Kōmiti Ārai Tūmatanui me Te Toko Raru Ohorere /Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee Minutes](#) (16 November 2021) at 4, Item 11. The previous Group Controller was Kate Crawford, General Manager of Auckland Emergency Management.

⁷² [Kōmiti Ārai Tūmatanui me Te Toko Raru Ohorere /Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee Agenda](#) at 77 includes a proposed Appendix 1 Updated list: Group Controller, Group Recovery Manager, Group Welfare Manager and alternatives”.

⁷³ [Kōmiti Ārai Tūmatanui me Te Toko Raru Ohorere /Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee Agenda](#) at 77 includes a proposed Appendix 1 Updated list: Group Controller, Group Recovery Manager, Group Welfare Manager and alternatives”.

time on AEM's website.⁷⁴ It too notes a series of Alternative Controllers, without indication of who is the primary Group Controller.

The ACDEM Group Plan states that the 'CDEM Director is the Primary Group Controller and will be the first contact in the event of an emergency'. It further states that 'If the Director is absent, alternate controllers will be contacted (Appendix 1)'.⁷⁵ The Plan lists a CDEM Director.⁷⁶

However, we understand that this was not accurate as of 27 January 2023, as the Director listed had not been at the Council since 2020 and the role of CDEM Director was not held by any person. We have been advised that a decision was made after the 2018 Smol Report to separate the Director and Group Controller roles. While it has been advised to us that the role is now held by the GM EM, we could not locate documentation to this effect.

As of 27 January 2023, there was no indication on the AEM website of the name or contact details of the Group Controller nor any other AEM staff.

Also as of 27 January 2023, the Office of the Mayor had not been provided, and we could not locate publicly, an operational contact list for use during an emergency - for example, a document that sets out which Alternative Controller is on duty as Group Controller at any given time and how to contact them, or emergency contact details for the Alternative Controllers.

In these circumstances it is unclear to us whether, on 27 January 2023, a lead Group Controller, and alternative controllers, had been sufficiently appointed and identified as required by the legislation.

Throughout this event, it did not appear any individual, as Controller, retained primary oversight. We base this observation on our viewings of the recorded IMT meetings, which in totality, extended over a considerable period of time.

As the timeline attached as Appendix 4 shows, around 5pm on the afternoon of January 27, the Council's AEM group stood up an initial meeting of the incident management team. This virtual (Teams) meeting was initially 'chaired' by the 'Duty Manager' for AEM, who handed over to the person referred to as the 'Duty Controller' during the meeting, because the latter was driving home through floodwaters for the first part of the session. Neither the recordings nor meeting logs include specific language describing any formal handover to a 'Group Controller'.

As noted above, the Director of Civil Defence and Emergency Management has issued a Guideline under the CDEM Act on response management for Controllers.⁷⁷ It notes that, while it can sometimes be difficult for Controllers to be actively engaged in all phases of emergency readiness and preparation – at times due to other work commitments – it is essential for the Controller to

⁷⁴ <https://www.aucklandemergencymanagement.org.nz/auckland-emergency-management/our-group-plan; Group Plan Appendix 1>.

⁷⁵ ACDEM [Group Plan](#) at 96.

⁷⁶ ACDEM [Group Plan](#) at 171 and 178 footnote 40.

⁷⁷ The Director of Civil Defence Emergency Management (who is appointed by the chief executive of the responsible department) may issue guidelines, codes or technical standards for the operational role of Controllers, Recovery Managers, and other persons with responsibilities under the CDEM Act (CDEM Act s 9(3)(d)).

ensure they know the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the CDEM councillor pre-emergency. It is also useful to have established relationships with other councillors.⁷⁸

We understand that the ACDEM Committee Chair and Deputy facilitated a meet and greet in early December 2022, between committee members and key AEM staff.

On the night of 27 January 2023, however, it appears that the Auckland Group Controller, and Alternative Controllers, had not established relationships with, and were not adequately contactable by the Mayor and ACDEM Chair (and vice versa) as is suggested by the Guidance referred to above.

We also understand that the night of January 27 was the first time the Mayor had met the GM EM and the alternative Controller who was on duty (noting that we have been advised that the Lead Group Controller was known to the Mayor). The General Manager said in the initial IMT meeting that he needed to track down contact details for the Mayor.

NEMA REMA (REGIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADVISOR)

NEMA is the National Emergency Management Agency, the government lead for emergency management. Among other things, it administers the CDEM Act.

The NEMA REMA does not appear to be a statutory role. There is little information about them available online, and we have been unable to establish whether Auckland Council has any policies or procedures about the NEMA REMA and their advisory role with regard to a declaration.

During the first meeting of the IMT on the afternoon of January 27, the NEMA REMA suggested, around 5.30 pm, that there should now be a briefing for the Mayor, along with a '...back pocket declaration. If the situation worsens, just sign it off and go'.

Later in that first IMT meeting, the NEMA REMA suggested that, if a declaration were to be made, it would be easier to do so 'before dark' and further suggested that the IMT should seek an update from Metservice.

Around the same time, the Controller noted that 'We could declare now but we are still getting an assessment. Reports of people being trapped underwater are not corroborated. Need to chase that down as soon as possible.'

The GM EM asked, 'What additional powers do we need?' A declaration, he said, 'seems premature based on advice from FENZ/Police that they have what they need at the moment'.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency services are defined in the CDEM Act as: the New Zealand Police, Fire and Emergency New Zealand, (FENZ), Taumata Arowai, and providers of health and disability services.

⁷⁸ [Response Management: Director's Guideline for CDEM Group and Local Controllers \[DGL06/08\]](#) (Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management, October 2014) (Director's Guideline) at 88.

Recordings show that, at the initial IMT meeting on January 27, the Controller asked, shortly after 6pm, for first responders to be proactive if they were overwhelmed, given that the declaration decision was, at that time, ‘finely balanced’.

Early in the second IMT meeting, after 8.30pm, Fire and Emergency (FENZ) reported over 1000 calls for service. Police reported over 300 calls and St John advised that the ambulance service was at ‘extreme pressure’ status for Auckland City. Police said that they were now overwhelmed and suggested a declaration should be made.

The Controller then asked what extra powers a declaration would provide. Police discussed powers to secure properties, force evacuations if required and prevent people returning to unsafe properties.

Towards the end of that meeting, the Controller advised the Mayor that the threshold for a declaration for a state of emergency had been reached. Shortly thereafter, the declaration was sent to the Mayors’ office for signing.

LIFELINE UTILITY MANAGERS

Lifeline utilities are entities set out in Schedule 1 of the CDEM Act.⁷⁹ They include:

- Radio New Zealand and TVNZ
- Airports
- Port companies; and
- Entities that provide or supply gas, electricity, water, wastewater or sewage networks, telecommunications, roads, petroleum and rail networks.

They have duties under section 60 of the CDEM Act to:

- ensure that it is able to function to the fullest possible extent, even though this may be at a reduced level, during and after an emergency
- make available to the Director in writing, on request, its plan for functioning during and after an emergency
- participate in the development of the national civil defence emergency management strategy and civil defence emergency management plans
- provide, free of charge, any technical advice to any Civil Defence Emergency Management Group or the Director that may be reasonably required by that Group or the Director; and
- ensure that any information that is disclosed to the lifeline utility is used by the lifeline utility, or disclosed to another person, only for the purposes of this Act.

⁷⁹ Lifeline utility managers are not defined in the CDEM Act, but we assume this simply means the managers of the relevant utilities listed above.

NEMA's website includes information about CDEM work with lifeline utilities. ⁸⁰

On the night of January 27, the responsibility for liaison between AEM and the lifeline utilities lay with an AEM lifeline utility coordinator. At the time of the first IMT meeting, the duty coordinator could not be contacted. An alternate was present for two of the IMT meetings that night, phoning in remotely from Dubai. The coordinator attempted to liaise with relevant utilities by the 'default channel' of emails. They received few responses on the night. The coordinator found it difficult to gauge the severity of the crisis from the meetings and suggested in retrospect it would have been good to have 'picked up the phone'. Some respondents told us that lifeline representatives were present in the early IMT meetings, but they did not contribute, and we cannot confirm their role.

It is unclear to us whether pre-existing relationships at the right levels with key response personnel in the lifeline utilities were in place and had been adequately tested in prior training events.

Although the AEM was receiving queries during the early part of the evening from TVNZ and Radio New Zealand, (RNZ), and the incident controller gave two brief interviews during the evening, it is not clear to us that these queries were treated as key lifeline partnerships to help enable public communications. At the time the Mayor gave a short interview to RNZ at around 8pm that evening, he had not been briefed with key messages from the AEM, either with regard to the event itself or to provide public information and reassurance.

This lack of contact with the lifeline utilities appears to have significantly reduced overall situational awareness. The early IMT meetings for example, show no awareness of the flooding at Auckland airport and the runway excursion event that occurred there. The Council told us that there is an expectation, given the airport has its own emergency management function, that it will be able to manage its own emergencies. However, this default assumption may have reduced sense making on the night.

There also seems to have been limited contact with the Auckland Transport Operations Centre (ATOC) which, in conjunction with Waka Kotahi, had activated a special incident team for the night to manage traffic flows to and from the planned Elton John concert at Mt Smart stadium.

Some contact between the Duty Manager and the ATOC appears to have occurred in the afternoon of Friday 27. Later, senior ATOC staff made calls to the AEM around 8pm to ask if they had stood up a response and to enquire about anything they needed. The response from AEM was that they were going into a briefing and would advise later. Although the ATOC control room leader was in touch with the AEM Duty Manager periodically, phone calls requesting updates later in the night went unanswered. AEM finally contacted ATOC leads on Saturday morning. ATOC staff formed the impression that AEM had not stood up a formal response until 28 January.

⁸⁰ <https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/cdem-sector/lifeline-utilities/cdem-work-with-lifeline-utilities/>.

WHAT PROCESSES WERE IN PLACE FOR MAKING A DECLARATION?

We have not been able to locate documents that indicate the operational mechanism through which the Mayor was expected to seek the advice of the Group Controller, or members of emergency services, at the time of an emergency. Nor do there appear to be established protocols by which the Chief Executive and his executive team should engage with the AEM to coordinate or provide advice.

As noted, the Mayor was provided with a brief e-mail and memorandum on 21 December 2022. This memorandum noted the Mayor's ability to declare a state of emergency, enquired as to his availability over the Christmas break and attached a template for declaration of a local state of emergency. The memorandum did not offer guidance as to the operational process for such a declaration, how engagement with Auckland emergency management resources should occur in an emergency scenario, nor the identity and contact details of the CEG members, AEM personnel or Group Controller.

On the evening of January 27, the Mayor and some of his staff were in his office from 4pm onwards. His first indication of a flooding event came at 4.30pm via a call from a Council member that flooding in Ranui in West Auckland was 'pretty bad'. The Mayor received a text from the Chief Executive regarding 'some flooding' in Swanson and Ranui at around the same time. The text said that the weather was 'expected to abate.'

At 6.15 pm, the Mayor and his Chief of Staff took a Teams call with AEM staff, including the General Manager Emergency Management. The Mayor was advised of flooding in West Auckland and that the emergency services were responding in the area. He was told that AEM had decided not to ask for a state of emergency as they did not need to use emergency powers and emergency services were coping at that stage. AEM advised that they had made this assessment with the involvement of FENZ, Police and NEMA. They said that the IMT was unanimous on the matter. The Mayor was told that the AEM would meet again around 8.30pm and would provide further advice then as to whether a declaration was required.

During the late afternoon, and again later in the evening of Friday 27, the Mayor was in contact with the Director Governance (who has been delegated the Chief Executive's emergency management functions), and with Councillor Stewart as Chair of the ACDEM committee. Aside from the text message noted above, he was not briefed by the Chief Executive that night, nor did he seek such a briefing.⁸¹ From the Chief Executive's point of view, he was in contact with the Director Governance, felt sufficient support to the Mayor's office was in place and believed that direct contact was not required.

At 7.32pm, the General Manager for Emergency Management emailed the Office of the Mayor a copy of NEMA's Factsheet: Declaring states of local emergency⁸² and a blank template for

⁸¹ Mayoral office staff told us that they were seeking situation reports, evacuation and community information from AEM staff from this point in the evening. We cannot confirm this as there are no recordings of the content of calls made by the mayoral office on Friday 27.

⁸² [Factsheet: Declaring states of local emergency](#) (National Emergency Management Agency, January 2023) (Factsheet); [Quick Guide: Declaring a state of local emergency](#) (National Emergency Management Agency, January 2023) (Quick Guide). The Factsheet replaced the Director's Guideline - Declarations [DGL 13/12], which is no longer operative, and explains why declarations of states of local

declaration of a local state of emergency. A copy of the email and attachments is attached as Appendix 3. In the circumstances this appears to be the first formal guidance the Mayor received as to the process for such a declaration.

We consider that communications between the Office of the Mayor, elected members, the Chair of the ACDEM Committee, the executive team and the AEM on the night were disjointed and suboptimal. They relied too heavily on individual initiative – such as that shown by the Director Governance - rather than on predesigned and pretested protocols.

They also appear to have relied on assumptions. For example, Council executives and AEM staff appeared to assume that the Mayor already understood the Auckland emergency management model, the process for making a declaration and the roles of key personnel. The Mayor assumed that AEM was working the event from a sophisticated physical command centre; that they would brief him as needed and that roles and accountabilities in a time of crisis were clear and well understood.

We also consider that the criteria for making the declaration were considered quite narrowly by the AEM and that the Mayor's briefing as to the rationale and implications was overly technical. For example, in the Teams call to the Mayor's office at 6.15pm, on Friday 27, AEM's advice was that emergency services were already fully engaged with the weather event and did not require additional powers. In fact these factors reflect only one limb of the grounds for declaring an emergency. The other element - 'whether the event requires a significant and coordinated response' - , was far more relevant at the time, but was not advised on.

From a legislative point of view, the threshold for a declaration requires judgement against the criteria in the CDEM Act considering a range of factors and advice. The first two criteria were clearly met given there was serious flooding, and it was soon apparent that this flooding could cause loss of life, injury or distress and could endanger the safety of the public or property. The key criterion to be met was whether the event could not be dealt with by emergency services, **or** otherwise required a significant and co-ordinated response under this Act. As noted above, and for reasons outlined further below, we consider there was insufficient focus on the second limb with reference to all of the available information.

If access to extraordinary powers is required, such as in the case of an evacuation being required, a state of emergency should be declared. In hindsight, the suggestion from NEMA to consider a 'declaration before dark' was a good one in that it may have provided the public with safer options for self-evacuation or precautionary action with regard to holiday travel.

The early intelligence AEM was working from was limited, in part because of low engagement with partner agencies outside the inner circle of first responders and NEMA. In focussing on the 'extra powers' the declaration would give, AEM underestimated the power of a declaration to inform and warn the public of the seriousness of the threat. A declaration would also reassure the public that the event was being actively managed and led.

emergency should be made, who should make them and how they should be made. The Quick Guide includes guidance for declaring a state of local emergency including key tests and considerations.

TIMING OF THE DECLARATION: SHOULD IT HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED EARLIER?

WHAT HAPPENED AND WHEN WITH THE DECLARATION?

On receipt of the declaration template in the Mayor's office at 7.32pm on Friday 27, the declaration was printed ready for signing.

The Mayor received further advice via a Teams call that commenced around 9.15pm, this time that a declaration was needed. A completed declaration template was emailed to the Mayor's office at 9.25pm and signed by 9.27pm.

The signed declaration was then provided by the Mayor to the Public Information Manager (PIM) of AEM but was not posted until 10.17pm. The delay appears to have been because communications staff were waiting for approval of the accompanying media advisory and a quote from the Mayor. The Mayor's staff were not aware of this until 10.02pm. The statement was approved, and a quote provided by 10.07pm.

We are confident that, once the Mayor was informed of the need for the declaration of emergency, he signed it immediately and returned it to officials.

Thereafter, AEM PIM staff showed a lack of urgency, both in posting the notice publicly and in communicating it to elected members.

The Mayor's Chief of Staff communicated the declaration to elected members at 9.41pm.

When the Mayor signed the declaration, he did so largely in the absence of situation reporting or any data provided by the AEM.

The Mayor had every right to expect proactive briefing in regard to his statutory obligations in emergencies, both at the time of his induction and at the time the emergency was in progress. That he did not receive this suggests that communication protocols were poor.

Emergency preparation is a critical statutory function for local government. Briefing and provision of information to a Mayor cannot be dependent on the quality of the political or working relationships within a Council. It is an essential duty of public officials on which lives, and property depend.

Whatever the state of the key relationships, we would also have expected the Mayor and his staff to have been demanding more information and asking probing questions of Council leadership and the AEM team earlier and more extensively than they did.

SHOULD A DECLARATION HAVE BEEN MADE EARLIER?

We also consider that the declaration of emergency could and should have been made earlier than it was on the night of Friday 27 January.

Fire and Emergency (FENZ) had established their Regional Command Centre (RCC) from mid-afternoon on Friday January 27, and they, Police and St John Ambulance clearly communicated the seriousness and speed of the event to their partner agencies and AEM staff.

NEMA provided sound advice in regard to the need to prepare for a possible declaration and the wisdom of declaring early.

During the critical period of Friday January 27, the AEM held virtual incident management meetings (IMTs) at 5pm, 8.30pm and 10.15pm. In the event, most damage was done in the period from 4-7pm. The two-and-a-half-hour gap between the first and second meetings was too long, given the speed of the event.

From 5pm emergency services advised the IMT of multiple calls, people stuck on roofs, Westpac chopper and surf lifesaving rescues, evacuations underway and elderly being stuck in rest homes. FENZ was advising the public to call 111 only in a life-threatening situation and requested evacuation centre details from the IMT, as these were 'needed now as multiple locations are affected'. FENZ noted the need for greater response coordination (stating that at present they were able to get the resources they needed). Advice was also received at this time that motorways were flooding.

From 5.30 pm onwards, it was clear emergency services were stretched, evacuations were underway, evacuation centres were required, and lives were potentially at risk. It was also apparent there were difficulties setting up evacuation centres. A proposed centre in Ranui, for example, was a 'no go' because of conditions in the West.

At 5.53pm advice was to stay home if safe, and another severe thunderstorm warning was issued by the MetService. NEMA advised that a declaration should be considered 'before dark.' It was also clear that Aucklanders were seeking information, leadership and support.

By 5.58pm, FENZ was reporting mass evacuations and additional weather warnings. In our view, this would have been the time to declare.

By 6.07pm people were again being advised against non-essential travel. Efforts to evacuate people and secure evacuation centres continued, with ongoing information coming in about the severity of the event, including the loss of life.

Emergency services (Police) stated a preference for a declaration at 8.40pm. However, in our view it was clear well before this that the event was sufficiently serious to require a significant and coordinated response. Importantly, is not a requirement to wait for emergency services to explicitly ask for a declaration before a decision is made.

A timely declaration during daylight hours, accompanied by an emergency mobile alert⁸³, would have assisted the operational response and increased public safety by ensuring that Aucklanders understood the seriousness of the event.

⁸³ We address the mobile alert issue more fully in the section on communication below.

While providing public confidence is not a formal criterion for making a declaration⁸⁴, an earlier declaration, communicated with empathy, would also have demonstrated that leaders were committed to providing people with information and additional resources and thus boosted both safety and confidence.

As noted earlier, we suggest that AEM may also have been more proactive with regard to the timing of the declaration if they had considered it more strategically. An overall lack of situational awareness and joined up intelligence was part of the problem, as was distraction by the challenges in setting up evacuation centres, discussed in more detail below.

More fundamentally however, the ‘sensemaking’ at the IMT meetings on the night of Friday 27 was tactical. The General Manager and Controller did not appear to step back and consider matters from a strategic viewpoint. Nor did large or small political considerations appear to be within their purview, in spite of prompting on the former by NEMA.

As the emergency was clearly escalating on Friday 27, with large numbers of evacuees reported and storm related deaths being confirmed, those AEM staff in control of the meetings also, in our view, needed to pivot away from the informal, ‘coordinating’ style of leadership they had used in the early discussions to a more crisis appropriate style of leadership. Meeting communications in these initial IMT sessions were loosely controlled, with people talking over each other on a range of matters of varying seriousness, uninformed by clear mission priorities. There was little of the appreciation process, crispness, urgency and clear tasking that are characteristic of crisis leadership situations.

Above all, the overall process for the declaration illustrates that multiple players; AEM staff, the GM EM, the Controller, the Council Chief Executive, and the Mayor and his office, need, in future, to place the need to provide visible leadership front and centre of their decision making, in addition to the more technical aspects of the decision to declare. Even though emergency services had said, earlier in the evening, that they did not require supplemental powers, by this time large numbers of Aucklanders were at risk and a public assurance gap was already starting to emerge.

This was also one of the key lessons learned from the Christchurch Port Hills Fire review in 2018⁸⁵. An earlier declaration, supported by empathetic communications from leaders, would have provided assurances that the event was being taken seriously and would have lifted public confidence in local leadership.

⁸⁴ Noting that we consider the statutory criteria for a declaration were met earlier on the night.

⁸⁵ See, for example [/https://www.ccc.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Environment/Fire/Port-Hills-Fire-Lessons-Learnt-February-2018.pdf](https://www.ccc.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Environment/Fire/Port-Hills-Fire-Lessons-Learnt-February-2018.pdf)

RELATED COMMUNICATIONS WITH PARTNER AGENCIES, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, ELECTED MEMBERS AND THE PUBLIC – HOW EFFECTIVE AND TIMELY WERE THEY?

In this section we first examine the role of the AEM’s public information function in the flood event and identify opportunities for improvement. We then consider communications with key audiences more broadly.

A number of relevant matters are also addressed in other sections. The role of the PIM in communicating the declaration of emergency was addressed in the previous section.

THE ROLE OF THE PIM IN THE CIMS MODEL

Under the CIMS framework, the AEM Public Information Management (PIM) function primarily provides information and safety messages to the public. PIM is responsible for informing the public about the incident and the response (including actions they need to take), media liaison and monitoring, community engagement, stakeholder liaison, giving and receiving information via social media channels, and internal communication. On the Controller’s direction, PIM also issues warnings and advisories⁸⁶.

The Auckland PIM staff - who, as with most other AEM staff, have day jobs - appear to have been seriously overloaded during this event, with responsibilities for communication to lifeline utilities, media, the Mayor’s Office, the public, key stakeholders and elected members via multiple channels. During the initial stages of the response, they were also working remotely.

The CIMS indicates that, in an event of this significance, a Strategic Communications system should have been set up. This does not appear to have formally occurred.

In view of the overall lack of joined up situational data in the initial stages of the response, PIMs were also at times hamstrung by the inability of AEM to provide verified information, such as the location of evacuation centres or other key data points.

They clearly also struggled with the multiple websites and social media channels that had to be utilised and aligned, not all of which were under their direct control or ability to remediate. The AEM twitter account, for example, failed at a critical point in early public communications.

There was an apparent lack of clarity as to who could sign off what for public release. Here again, communications interfaces with the executive, Mayor and elected members appear to have been more a matter of individual initiative than of following pre-planned protocols.

The PIM staff were forced to juggle between dealing with media enquiries and the provision of public information. In this there was perhaps a lack of role clarity between managing media and engaging with media agencies as lifeline utilities and channels of critical public information.

With regard to the issuance or otherwise of emergency mobile alerts, which is discussed more fully below, the PIM seemed to have little input into decision making.

⁸⁶ For more detail on this function, see Section 4.2 of the CIMS Manual, (3rd Edition, 2019).

There were some critical delays in PIM action on the night of Friday 27, most notably in communicating the declaration of the state of emergency. These appear largely attributable to overload and a lack of pretested and pre-prepared systems and tools.

For the future, we suggest:

- work on pre-planned and approved emergency messages and alerts so that, with the insertion of relevant details, messages can be quickly despatched on a regular cadence. In this emergency an ideal frequency would have been every 30 minutes, even if similar messages were repeated. This would have provided Aucklanders with the facts about what to do and where to go for help
- pre-agreed and tested strategies for the use of social media and other communications channels for emergency response communications, along with easy to access IT support for PIMs
- better preparation for the public in emergencies by ensuring a regular flow of Auckland's 5 'R's updates⁸⁷ outside specific emergency events. A better prepared public will be less reliant on emergency messaging. This is a critical element in Auckland's fifth 'R' of Resilience; and
- consideration of additional PIM resourcing, including full time, specialist resource, to ensure that communications relationships, channels, systems, templates and strategies are well planned and proactively maintained outside emergency response events.

PARTNER AGENCIES

AEM initially appeared to liaise well with first response agencies and NEMA during the afternoon of Friday January 27 and on the following day. However, engagement with the wider circle of Council CCOs, lifeline utilities and other external agencies such as Auckland Airport, Waka Kotahi and others was less systematic on the part of AEM.

And, as the weather event grew more severe and widespread on the night of Friday 27, the frequency and style of almost all partner agency communications was inadequate to the crisis. This meant that AEM was unable to effectively leverage its agency partnerships to help build situational awareness and communicate via multiple channels to a wide range of audiences.

Membership of the early and virtual AEM incident meetings on the afternoon and evening of Friday 27 appears to have been driven by pre-existing AKGEOC email lists held by the AEM team. The first meeting included FENZ, Police, and the NEMA REMA. Other lifeline utilities, Metservice, CCOs (such as AT), Health representatives and other agencies that contributed to the CDEM Coordinating Executive Group were not consistently present.

It is not clear if these gaps were due to problems with the email address lists, (though these were certainly flawed in that, for example, they did not include the Mayor and most of his staff), or due to limited responsiveness to emails on the Friday preceding a holiday weekend.

⁸⁷ Refer the five 'R's of the Auckland CDEM Group Plan , as noted earlier.

By the time of the second and third IMT meetings on the Friday, Metservice, the lifeline utility coordinator⁸⁸, further NEMA personnel and a health representative had been added to the mix. By Saturday 28, the team had widened still further.

The approach to and products of inter-agency communications became more joined up and robust over the ensuing days. Press conferences were later coordinated and fronted by the AEM to include a line-up of partner agencies and the relevant experts. By the time of Cyclone Gabrielle (outside these ToR) significant improvements appear to have been made, and a better joined up, data driven narrative was being presented to the public.

However, at the time when it really mattered, during the afternoon and evening of Friday 27, the list of partner agencies engaged with AEM was partial. As noted above, this hampered the development of full situational awareness and reduced the timeliness and quality of early intelligence products.

As the night unfolded, elected members and the Office of the Mayor were getting most of their information from their local communities, personal contacts and external media, rather than receiving quality intelligence contributed to by multiple agencies.

Within the AEM's incident meetings, first response agencies consistently provided the group with excellent quality, real time information and advice. Police, FENZ and St John were clear about what they knew and could confirm, what they needed and when and what they regarded as priority areas for decision and action. The latter included placing priority on messaging the public, particularly with regard to the location of evacuation centres. As the meetings progressed, these first responders were repeatedly stressing the urgency of this information.

Once Metservice was engaged in the IMT meetings, its representatives also provided balanced real time information to support AEM decision making and communications. In hindsight however, it would have been useful to have had Metservice involved in the first IMT meeting from 5-6pm, (during which Metservice had issued a severe thunderstorm warning, including expectations for torrential rain) rather than bringing them in near to the point at which the emergency declaration was made.

The lack of lifeline utility engagement and information, including the lack of connection on the night of January 27 to the Airport, the ATOC, Watercare, power providers and Waka Kotahi, meant that it was difficult to provide public communication that reflected a broad overview of the crisis and its implications for the public as well as for specific communities. Those lifelines that reported contact from AEM told us that it was not always clear why specific questions were being asked and what the requested information was to be used for, which in some cases slowed or inhibited their response.

Although at various points in the first two IMT meetings on Friday 27, for example, questions were raised about whether the Elton John concert at Mt Smart stadium should continue, tasking instructions in the meeting were not of sufficient clarity to understand who was to contact concert organisers or the stadium. Nor was liaison with Waka Kotahi and the ATOC on this matter explicitly

⁸⁸ See the Context section above for discussion of lifeline utilities under the CDEM Act. A lifeline utility coordinator is required under the CIMS. For a description of the role see p 51, CIMS, 3rd edition, August 2019.

suggested in the meeting. Failure to act decisively on this matter is likely to have increased public safety risks.

Interagency communication was in general hampered by AEM's apparent default mode of making contact by email. Some AEM respondents told us that this was the preferred mode to ensure a robust post event record.

On a stormy Friday night in advance of a holiday weekend it was easy for partner agencies to miss these emails, and when this happened, AEM was not always well placed to follow up with a phone call. Part time emergency staff did not typically have relationships at senior levels in partner agencies and contact lists and email addresses were not consistently current.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

As the weather event progressed, NEMA staff were keeping central government Ministers, Members and officials informed. NEMA had first provided an alert, through its Monitoring, Alerting and Reporting (MAR) Centre briefing, on the morning of Friday 27.

The NEMA REMA, and later other NEMA officials, provided IMT meetings and AEM officials with a steady flow of both operational advice and suggestions about what messages to escalate into central government, particularly in the early stages of the response.

The Minister for Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM), who had received advice from NEMA earlier via the emergency signal channel, phoned the Mayor at approximately 7pm, to offer support and check on any plans for a declaration.

Just after 9pm the Minister of Transport instructed Waka Kotahi officials to reopen communications channels on social media on the state of the roading network. Shortly afterwards, this Minister tweeted as to the seriousness of the weather situation and said that Ministers and MPs were mobilising. He stressed that any declaration of a state of emergency sat with the Mayor.

Once the emergency was declared, (but prior to its public communication by the AEM) the Minister for CDEM communicated the declaration and said that NEMA was ready to send resources from around New Zealand to assist with the response. Shortly thereafter the Prime Minister announced the Government was 'ready to assist.'

At this time, during the third IMT meeting of Friday 27, NEMA officials asked for material in support of communication to central government to increase in frequency, cadence and quality. They indicated that the national emergency coordination centre in the Beehive bunker was being prepared.

NEMA officials also reiterated a request they had initially made some hours earlier for more regular messaging to allay the fears of the public. They discussed possible perceptions by central government decision makers that the crisis was not being gripped up sufficiently well. They stressed the need for a more strategic approach, supported by better coordinated data. A degree of frustration was expressed that the AEM was being overly tactical in its response and that tasking was unclear.

In our view, AEM failed to fully appreciate the wider advisory role and obligations of NEMA and the importance of providing quality intelligence that could be used to inform Ministers and central government agencies. Central government officials needed information to support them in briefing Ministers and preparing to assist in the event of a state of emergency being declared.

AEM also appeared, at least in the IMT meetings and related chat messages, not to be fully cognisant of the large and small 'p' political implications of the event and the declaration. Perhaps they could have been better informed and supported in this by senior Council executives.

AEM did not provide advice to the Mayor on the need for central agency and Ministerial engagement, nor any intelligence reports to support the Mayor in such discussions or meetings. Nor did the Council's executive do so. While the Mayor was supported by the Director Governance during the evening of 27 January 2022, there did not appear to be clear protocols in place for engagement and advice.

Executive to executive agency engagement might have expedited situational awareness and better enabled joined up public messaging. It is surprising to us that such channels did not already exist, or, if they did, were not relied upon.

Even on Saturday 28, when the Mayor was to attend a joint press conference with the Prime Minister and other ministers, neither the Mayor nor his staff was provided with a situation report and accompanying advice, in spite of the fact that an initial incident report had, by that time, been drafted. However, the Mayor's office could also have actively sought such information.

ELECTED MEMBERS

On Thursday January 26, an email message from AKGEOC was sent to all councillors regarding a heavy rain warning for Auckland. Another such mail was sent at 10.11am on Friday 27 as the Met service update was communicated. Elected members were used to receiving such mails as a matter of routine.

On the afternoon of Friday 27 January, elected members of Auckland Council were sending emails and texts to each other regarding the weather. They were also receiving information from their own constituents in local areas.

At 2.48pm for example, a local board member sent an email to AEM managers about 'extreme flooding and impassable roads in Rodney'. Some councillors were exchanging photos received from their communities.

At 3.36pm, councillors received another Metservice update, accompanied by a set of messages from NEMA regarding generic safety measures as storms approach.

Shortly after the first ITM meeting had been called by the AEM, the PIM drafted an email to elected members regarding the weather event and sent this to councillors at 5.48pm. It informed them that the AEM had been activated. It asked members to keep an eye on phones and inboxes for further updates.

At 7.16pm elected members were copied into a media advisory from AEM saying that the AEM was preparing to assist emergency services.

At 7.58pm Councillor Stewart, the Chair of the ACDEM Committee, called the GM EM asking for information and spoke to him for a few minutes. She would try a number of times throughout the night to contact him for additional advice and information.

At 9.41pm elected members received an email from the Mayor's office that the declaration of emergency had been made. Somewhat surprisingly, this did not come from the PIM.

At 9.49pm members were copied into another media advisory noting that a Civil Defence Centre had been opened in West Auckland. They received another advisory regarding the declaration of the state of emergency at 10.17pm. In the early hours of Saturday 28 they were sent various media advisories about other evacuation centres and, at 4.12am, a 'storm update' from the Duty Controller.

At 1pm on Saturday 28, elected members received a full 'emergency update' via a Teams call. The Mayor was not present, as he was viewing flood damage by helicopter, and, later, travelling to a meeting with the Prime Minister and other Ministers. These updates were repeated on a regular schedule over the ensuing days. Elected members commented favourably on the improvements in the information they received over the following week.

Throughout this period, councillors were in contact with each other and were dealing with queries from members of the public, local MPs and community leaders.

AEM missed an opportunity to enrich situational awareness and assist local communities by equipping local councillors and board members with more fulsome key messages and, in reverse, engaging with communities *through* elected members as vital sources of localised intelligence.

There was no communications mechanism for activating community resources at the local level and for capturing local insights and suggestions in a central place. The result was a great deal of elected member activity, much of which was undertaken in the absence of central coordination and leadership.

THE PUBLIC

Aside from MetService weather warnings, the initial warnings to the public with regard to the severity of the weather event came via Police messages on 'wild weather' in the late afternoon of Friday 27 January. Media were also reporting images of flooding in localised areas of Auckland.

Between 5 and 6pm, FENZ was reporting flooding and advising Aucklanders to call 111 only in the event of a life-threatening emergency. Waka Kotahi was reporting flooding on key arterial roads.

At around 5.30pm, the AEM, as it conducted its initial IMT meeting and via its PIM, was receiving requests from RNZ and TVNZ for an update. The Controller was asked to front this update and spoke with RNZ at 6.05pm and Radio ZB at 7pm.

At 5.45pm, AEM posted on Facebook about the storm and said it would 'stay in touch'. It received 340 responses. The post was not updated until 10.01pm.

The first message from AEM to the public was issued by tweet at 6.11pm advising that the severe weather was causing problems in North, North-West and West Auckland. The tweet advised, '...if it's safe, stay home, call 111 if your life is at risk, don't drive through floodwaters. We will continue to provide updates.'

Shortly after this update the PIM told the IMT meeting that her twitter account was not functioning and asked for IT support.

At 7.22pm the AEM, via the PIM, released a media advisory, including a quote from the Mayor. This was the message, noted in the section above, to the effect that the AEM was preparing to assist emergency services.

The second media advisory, at 9.49pm, related to the establishment of the West Auckland CDC.

Its next public message was issued at 10.18pm, when it confirmed that a state of emergency had been declared. Following that, around 11.15pm a short media conference was held at the Auckland Council building, though relatively few media attended.

At 12.43am on Saturday 28 January, a media advisory reported on the opening of two further CDCs and at 3am, a further advisory noted that one of these had been moved to an alternative location. Website information on the location of CDCs was not updated until a few hours later.

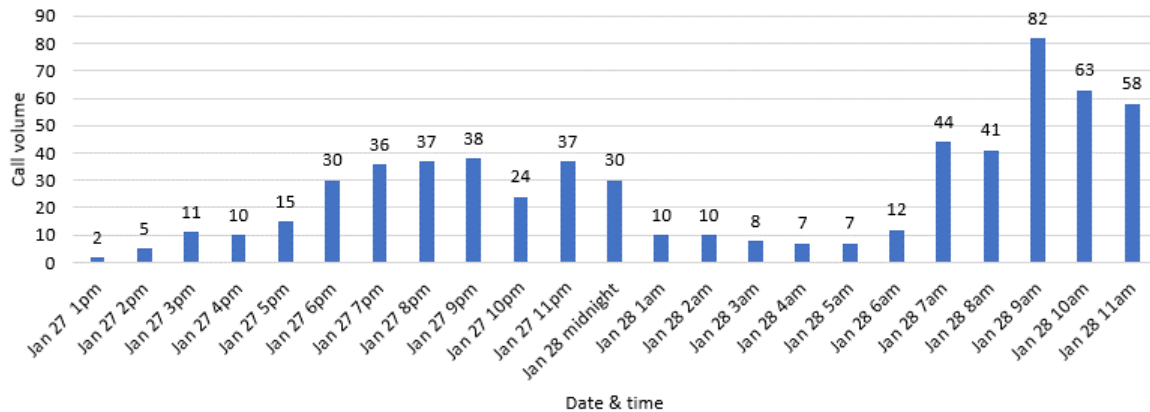
At 5.38am that morning the Office of the Mayor issued a media update from its @mayorAuckland address describing a 'terrible night for thousands of Aucklanders'.

This was followed by an AEM media release at 10.04am titled 'Auckland wakes to storm's impact and clean up', with similarly themed releases at 1.38pm and 8.25pm on Saturday. On Sunday 29, three advisories noted another heavy rain watch. On Sunday evening, the Mayor issued a media advisory on 'preparation for tonight' and recovery. Three media stand-ups were also held that day.

A number of these messages directed Aucklanders to the AEM website for information and advice. Over the Friday and Saturday, however, officials struggled to update the website with key messages, given it was externally hosted by a third-party provider. Some respondents commented that, even had it been current, the website was challenging to navigate.

As the emergency increased in severity, inbound call volumes to the Auckland Council call centre increased consistently, with peaks on the evening of Friday 27 and the morning of Saturday 28, as shown in the table below.

Emergency Calls Received on Jan 27-28



Calls from Civil defence and Emergency services skills

By 9.20pm the IMT meeting was advised that the call centre had over 200 calls in its queue. A variety of issues led to problems in handling these calls, including:

- Lack of a system to provide visibility to AEM on call volumes and type, (this had existed in the past but seems not to have been operational during this event). This information would have assisted AEM to understand the scale and seriousness of the event
- Call centre staff had to scan the AEM website and various emails to find data with which to assist callers
- Welfare requests were being managed by email which slowed the process and meant callers chased up multiple times on the same matter
- A lack of clear response timeframes and targets, which meant the call centre could not communicate a time frame for responses to queries; and
- A lack of digitised end to end systems, such as, for example, that for reporting storm water problems.

Over the weekend, the call centre had to follow up on a significant backlog of calls.

Throughout this period, AEM partner agencies also repeatedly asked for additional information to be provided to the public. In the second IMT meeting on Friday 27, FENZ advised that media were seeking key messages and that it was important to coordinate these. They asked for urgency about information on CDCs, noted the need to provide information telling people what to do and the need to communicate special services for those with disabilities.

At around 9pm in the course of the second IMT meeting that day, the Regional Coordination centre (RCC) asked if it was time to consider an emergency mobile alert (EMA). Little response to the suggestion was made in the meeting. A mobile alert at this point, or immediately after the emergency declaration was made, would have underscored the seriousness of the event to the public. An EMA could also have been issued in response to the Metservice's red warning.

Pressure to release public information, particularly regarding evacuation centres, came from multiple partner agencies over the course of the evening of Friday 27, including a request from

NEMA for more social media communications and a comment on the importance of not leaving a communications vacuum.

On the morning of Saturday 28 January, the Mayor was interviewed by Kim Hill for RNZ. It is unclear who arranged this interview. At this time, he had no situation report with which to provide the public with information. When he was asked if Auckland water was safe to drink, he had no information on the point. This was subsequently clarified with Watercare and recommunicated by the Mayor's office to RNZ.

Almost all respondents to this review felt that public messaging over the first 48 hours of the emergency was inadequate. Multiple channels were not well deployed, timeliness was poor and communications content was light. There was little utilisation of mainstream media, as lifeline utilities, to amplify critical safety messages. Early messaging lacked empathy to assuage people's fears and show sympathy and support for those who had been impacted by loss of life and property.

Auckland Council, outside the Mayor, initially provided no single 'face' of the response, who could be seen by the public to be coordinating the work of multiple agencies. On Saturday 28, this effectively defaulted to the Prime Minister and the central government response.

Over the subsequent days, the Office of the Mayor did identify a front person to play a lead spokesperson role. As public briefings continued over the following weeks, they reflected an increasingly well organised array of information from coordinating agencies.

Thus, early shortfalls in performance were ultimately corrected, but on the critical night and during the night-time hours of Auckland's worst ever rainfall event, information was insufficient to either inform or reassure the public.

The failure to carefully consider an emergency mobile alert appears to go to a lack of training and scenario planning by key AEM personnel about the process and thresholds for using such alerts. This is another matter that had been flagged in advance by the ACDEM Committee as requiring further action. As was so often the case in the early IMT meetings, the matter was briefly raised then dropped, with no clear tasking as to where the responsibility lay for investigating and actioning such an alert.

AEM leaders, Council executives and the Office of the Mayor appear not to have fully appreciated the power of official public announcements, delivered with empathy, in providing reassurance, as well as practical information, to those impacted by frightening and dangerous events.

The AEM appears not to have done so because it was busy looking down and in, focussing on the tactics of response rather than across and out to the big picture. The Office of the Mayor did not do so because it was struggling to find reliable information about its emergency management responsibilities and the nature and extent of the crisis. The Council executive appears not to have done so as members - with the exception of the Director Governance - appear to have been largely absent on the night of Friday 27 January.

Instead, early-stage public communications and reassurances were left to overburdened PIM staff, using cumbersome communications tools and technologies, without deep experience in complex crisis management and lacking solid intelligence on which to base their messaging.

IWI PARTNERSHIPS, TANGATA WHENUA AND MAORI ORGANISATIONS

It is unclear to us how relationships with key Māori stakeholders and community organisations, and partnerships with tangata whenua and iwi Māori, formed a part of Auckland Council emergency preparedness and response.

The CIMS framework suggests that, as Treaty partners to the Crown and members of the wider community, it is essential that whānau, hapū and iwi are involved in response and recovery (as appropriate to the scale of the incident). The CIMS notes that iwi/Māori engagement is 'often indispensable to effective response and recovery'⁸⁹.

The CIMS suggests that engaging iwi/Māori in response and recovery should be based on:

- a partnership that is built on mutual respect and shared values, and that follows the Treaty Principles of Participation, Protection and Partnership
- recognition of the capability and capacity of iwi/Māori and marae to support response and recovery; and
- collaboration between iwi/Māori and emergency management organisations before, during and after an event, and across all four Rs.

Although we were told that AEM has a Māori Responsiveness Plan and engages with the Mana Whenua Kaitiaki Forum and Māori Wardens, we found little evidence of Māori interests, or te ao Māori approaches to emergency management, in the ACDEM Group Plan. Nor did we find that the AEM team had cultivated deep and long-standing relationships with Māori organisations or iwi Māori as a part of their preparedness for emergencies. While extensive relationships existed at local community and ward level, often with elected members, these do not appear to have translated into a detailed and proactive engagement plan for the AEM.

Thus, the list of available CDCs did not appear to include some obvious marae or community-based providers with considerable experience and maturity in regard to community welfare mobilisation and delivery.

Local iwi leaders told us that the relationships with Auckland Council generally and AEM specifically, were underdeveloped and that they would welcome further engagement.

Over the period encompassed by this review, Māori and Pasifika organisations mobilised on the ground to support community responses. Marae provided support to local whānau in need. Community organisations activated to support those displaced from their homes. Police iwi liaison staff helped activate a local information centre in Mangere as an evacuation centre.

⁸⁹ Page 12 CIMS 3rd Edition August 2019

This community mobilisation appears to have been largely in spite of AEM rather than because of it. In the initial IMT meetings on Friday 27 January, Auckland Council logistics and welfare staff appeared somewhat reluctant to use marae-based facilities. This in part seems to explain the slowness to open a CDC in Mangere, an area of high community needs, which is addressed in the section on CDCs below.

This is in contrast to the approach taken in Northland, for example, where iwi/Māori regularly contribute to and review specific local response plans and where the use of marae as CDCs is standard.

We suggest that enhancing a wide network of relationships with iwi leaders and key Māori partners, stakeholders and organisations should be treated as a priority matter by Auckland Council and the Office of the Mayor. As a practical matter, the Council lost an opportunity, during this event, to utilise and leverage an experienced and well-prepared set of community providers and facilities to support Aucklanders in distress.

DECISION MAKING PROCEDURES, COMMUNICATIONS TEMPLATES – WERE THEY SUFFICIENTLY CLEAR AND AVAILABLE TO DECISION-MAKERS AND COMMUNICATORS?

In this section we comment on general decision-making approaches over the period. These go to the section on emergency management control in the CIMS⁹⁰. In this section, the responsibilities of the incident Controller include:

- taking charge through the setting of response intent and objectives and providing (or approving) an Action Plan that sets out how the objectives will be achieved;
- establishing the response structure and incident classification
- directing and monitoring the response
- maintaining situational awareness
- keeping the affected people, animals and communities at the forefront of the response
- applying a risk management approach, ensuring responder, public and animal wellbeing and safety
- determining and obtaining critical resources, facilities and materials
- establishing and maintaining liaison, cooperation, and communications with support agencies, affected businesses and enterprises, communities and Controllers at other response levels; communicating with Governance; and
- acting as an operational spokesperson if a dedicated spokesperson has not been appointed.

Under the CIMS, emergency management teams are also expected to apply standardised templates to aid the creation of intelligence products through information management, information collation and analysis, planning and decision making. The CIMS outlines templates for Status Reports, Situation Reports (SitReps), Action Plans, Resource Requests and Response to Recovery Transition Reports.

DECISION FLOWS AND SOPS

Our review of the IMT meetings during the critical hours of Friday 27, in particular, suggests that it was quite difficult for participants to follow when, how and by whom decisions were made, who was accountable for actioning them and what specific tasks they entailed. The meetings were loosely coordinated, as opposed to tightly controlled in line with the requirements above. As noted, on this night, meetings were virtual, which made control more difficult⁹¹.

At the three meetings on the night of Friday 27, the mission or intent of the meeting was not clearly stated. There appeared to be a lack of clarity as to what decisions were required and what outcomes coordinated effort needed to achieve, and by when.

Throughout these early but critical sessions, questions were repeatedly asked by participants, but they were not often crisply answered. For example, early in the initial IMT meeting, first responders raised the issue of the Elton John concert. The suggestion was made that AEM needed to 'lean in' to the organisers, as it may 'just add to our troubles if it went ahead'. No decision was then made,

⁹⁰ See CIMS Section 4.4.

⁹¹The AEM had experience of virtual meetings for response. They had used this approach previously, for the Kumeu flooding event and during Covid response.

action owner allocated, or tasking issued. The same matter was raised later in the meeting (by which time many ticket holders had been in the stadium for some time) with the question: ‘who should contact the venue?’ Again, no decision or tasking were evident.

Throughout IMT meetings on 27 and 28 January, Controllers repeatedly asked the AEM and partners what decisions needed to be made ‘right then’. They were sometimes passive recipients of the need for decisions, rather than actively driving prioritisation of decisions in the context of the overall mission.

In the meetings over the relevant period, we saw little reference being made to formal decision-making processes. Nor did we note the identification of specific thresholds and escalation points that would signal a changed approach to decision making. For example, throughout the recorded IMT meetings of Friday January 27, we were not clear, as post event observers, what emergency status the AEM team was operating at, or under what rules and protocols.

Some partner agencies told us that the use of first names, rather than position titles in the meetings made it hard for them to understand who was operating in what role in the CIMS framework.

As noted, decision making interfaces, communications, and command flows between the AEM Controller, GM EM, executive leaders and the Office of the Mayor seemed not to be clearly understood by participants.

We have been able to see little if any role played during the event by the ACDEM Committee or the CEG. We note in this context the recommendation of the earlier Smol review that the Council:

‘Consider a potential role for the Coordinating Executives Group (CEG) in response, including the possibility of convening at least one CEG meeting early in any major response.’

Even if neither was relevant to the tactical response phase of the event, we would expect these bodies to be briefed on the evolving event, in light of the role of the ACDEM Committee and the ultimate accountability for Council operations held by the Chief Executive.

We do not proffer this suggestion in the context of any technical or statutory requirements. There may be valid reasons to keep a Chief Executive away from the acute response phase, and we acknowledge that the Director Governance was present and involved on the night of 27 January 2023 (and holds the Chief Executive’s delegated emergency management role). Rather, we consider that had the Chief Executive had a more visible leadership role on the night, this may have assisted with overall leadership effectiveness.

We also note that, in the initial stages of the event, AEM decision log records were highly abbreviated, and far from the minute-by-minute records our experience has taught us to expect. While Controllers sometimes reiterated key decisions verbally, there appears not to have been a detailed report produced after each planning session to record the details of decisions, decision rationales, and related taskings, in addition to the higher-level initiation and SitRep reports. Such a record seems to us to be critical to ensuring accountabilities are clear.

Command clarity and control also tightened over the period Saturday 28-Sunday 29 January, and subsequently, during preparation for Cyclone Gabrielle. We suggest that these later sessions are closer to the optimal model for the future.

Finally, while we reviewed a number of documents entitled ‘SOPs’ for particular hazards and emergencies, these resembled action checklists, rather than guides to core processes, decisions and decision criteria, escalation trigger points and handoffs. Based on our experience in operational command and response, these SOPs are not sufficiently fulsome or detailed.

Future opportunities in these areas include:

- Clarification of key roles and delegations, as discussed elsewhere. The positions of Group Controller and GM EM must be clear and well communicated
- Additional training for AEM personnel in command or crisis style leadership techniques and communications protocols, including developing clear thresholds for when to pivot from a coordinating style to a command style during incident response
- Further work on SOPs and other AEM operating model documentation to support the ACDEM group plan. All AEM personnel, executive and elected members, including the Mayor, should be briefed on these as part of induction and onboarding; and
- More frequent engagement in scenario training and planning, outside real-world drills, in order that processes and decision protocols become muscle memory for AEM staff and incident controllers.

TEMPLATED INTELLIGENCE PRODUCTS

Under the CIMS framework, Intelligence is the function that provides the other CIMS functions with a detailed understanding of the incident and the ways in which the incident could potentially develop. It provides situational awareness and understanding for immediate action and forecasting and identification of emerging risks to assist planning.

The Intelligence function is performed through the application of the Intelligence Cycle⁹². Through this process, incident information is collected, analysed and intelligence products are produced and disseminated. Intelligence has four key questions to answer:

- What is happening now?
- Why is it happening?
- So what, i.e., what does it mean?
- What may happen next / in the future?

While the first two questions require accurate and timely information on what is actually occurring now, the third requires analysis of the information against the wider context, and the fourth is usually described through at least two scenarios: the most likely and the possible worst case.

⁹² See CIMS, 3rd Edition, 2019, Appendix B.

A key issue in the period covered by this review, especially until midday Saturday 29 January, when the first situation report was produced, was the lack of structured intelligence about the evolving situation and related analysis.

In the first IMT meeting, NEMA asked for a formal 'SitRep'. The representative was informed that an incident report would be circulated soon. While such requests were reiterated repeatedly though the night, it is not clear that a full situation report was provided to response partners or elected members until around midday on Saturday 28. Even then, it was not provided to the Mayor or his staff.⁹³

These early difficulties in collecting situation information and developing templated intelligence products appear offer a range of opportunities for future improvements, including:

- the development of more sophisticated mechanisms, (as opposed to the current use of shared drives and spreadsheets), for collecting critical data from multiple agencies at a central point
- more regular 'peacetime' engagement and relationship building with partners such as CCOs, Waka Kotahi, the Airport, and lifeline utilities
- more prearranged intelligence gathering protocols or Memoranda of Understanding with partner agencies
- increased iwi/Māori/local board level engagement to help collect and disseminate information at local and community levels
- greater clarity about when and how intelligence products should be shared outside the AEM, with the ACDEM, CEG and mayoral staff in particular; and
- default use of physical Emergency Operations Centres so that information can be shared in real time and multiple sources and channels can be monitored. Although the Mayor and some elected members assumed that AEM was operating throughout from a multi-agency command centre, no such centre was mobilised until the morning of Saturday 28 January. From that point, data sharing began to improve.

Once again, several days into the response, situation briefing templates improved markedly. These contained easily understandable and relevant data and key messages. Within a week, the quality of templates, reporting and intelligence appears to have improved considerably. Elected members in particular told us that, while the initial lack of information was frustrating, later reports were extremely useful.

⁹³ The Mayor did not receive a formal situation report until the late afternoon of Saturday January 28- after a press conference with the Prime Minister, for which such a report would have been helpful.

EVACUATION CENTRES – HOW WERE DECISIONS MADE ABOUT NUMBER AND LOCATION?

As the events of Friday 27 unfolded, with mass evacuations, including of elderly and vulnerable people and families, the AEM was slow in establishing Civil Defence or evacuation centres to support the needs of distressed and displaced Aucklanders.

It was not until the early hours of Saturday, January 28 that three CDCs were up and operating. This was too late to meet the needs of displaced families and the many elderly and disabled persons who were evacuated. It frustrated and placed undue pressures on first responders, which in turn risked their ability to respond to calls for service.

CDCS AND THE CIMS

Responsibility for the establishment of CDCs for evacuation goes, in the CIMS framework, to two AEM functions in particular: logistics and welfare.

Amongst other things, the Logistics function is responsible for:

- setting up and maintaining the Coordination Centre
- receiving authorised resource requests and requesting or procuring the resources and facilities
- receiving, storing, maintaining and issuing resources; and collating and matching offers of assistance
- notifying response elements of available resources
- identifying and managing critical resources
- arranging transport, catering, goods and accommodation for both response staff and for affected people, communities, and animals, including animals (in cooperation with the Welfare function); and
- attending IMT meetings and keeping the Controller and wider IMT informed of the Logistics aspects of the response.⁹⁴

Under the CIMS, the Welfare function is responsible for ensuring planned, coordinated, and effective delivery of welfare services to affected individuals, families/whānau and communities, including animals, affected by an incident. The welfare of responders is a responsibility of the Logistics function.

THE AEM CDC RESPONSE

Traditionally, the AEM has maintained a list of some 250 potential CDC buildings. In recent years, the idea is to use this menu of buildings as possibilities and then work through the list as the response unfolds and situational awareness increases. Centres are not typically pre-equipped with blankets or other resources, with the exception of very remote potential CDCs.

⁹⁴ See CIMS 3rd Edition August 2019 Page 53

Very early in the first IMT meeting, Police advised AEM of evacuations in progress and reports of elderly people 'stuck in rest homes'. A minute or two later, FENZ requested evacuation centre details from the AEM. They stated that these were needed as 'multiple locations are affected.'

Shortly thereafter the Controller tasked the functional AEM leads for logistics and welfare to 'get cracking' on a West Auckland evacuation centre and accommodation arrangements for displaced people. A centre in Ranui was initially suggested by the logistics lead and an onsite assessment by the Council's buildings team was ordered.

NEMA reiterated the urgency of communicating evacuation centre details to the public. In response, the Controller asked for a 'plan b' evacuation centre to be identified. At this point, the focus of the meeting was on West Auckland.

Towards 6pm, the meeting was advised that the planned Ranui CDC was not an option due to flooding, and that 'conditions in the west are more complicated than first thought'. A Centre in Henderson was suggested, and the Council's site assessment team was redirected.

By this time FENZ was reporting 'mass evacuations' in Henderson. The Controller again asked that plan b centres be identified. A short time later the Recreation Centre in Henderson was suggested as a possible CDC. The site assessment team was redirected once again. The AEM welfare lead asked for confirmation on CDC locations before despatching staff.

Later in the evening, as the second IMT meeting opened, first responders briefed the AEM about additional evacuations, including from rest homes. FENZ, who by this time had over 1000 weather related calls for service, advised that their 'big thing' was that there was nowhere to send affected people. They asked for greater urgency in regard to CDCs. By this point it was clear that the event had extended across Auckland, with evacuations occurring in Remuera and Mangere.

The RCC also stressed 'absolute urgency' for CDCs. They noted that 50 people evacuated from a Pukekohe rest home had been taken to a hospital as no evacuation centre was available. Police had also taken displaced people to the Henderson police station.

At around this point in the meeting Police announced that their iwi liaison lead had joined the meeting. This person was not invited to contribute by the Controller at that time.

The AEM logistics lead then advised that the best option for a CDC was a school in Kelston. She said that AEM did not have sufficient staff to resource multiple centres across Auckland. She highlighted the challenges entailed in finding centres that could take the growing numbers of evacuees and that were not flooded or leaking. She indicated that the community facilities team did not have reliable information about the current state of the possible properties.

Various discussions followed, regarding the possible use of contractor facilities as evacuation centres, or the use of Eden Park, (AEM staff did not seem to be aware of flooding at the park). Managers noted that there were insufficient staff available to service such a large venue.

The health representative in the meeting noted that Red Cross was on standby to supplement staffing at CDCs. He also noted that evacuees had been dropped off at North Shore hospital and that this risked diverting health resources.

At this point Police offered to locate a suitable evacuation centre if AEM could staff it.

By this time, the Kelston CDC at St Leonards School was open and ready. The PIM advised that a media release on CDCs was ready but that location details were still required. Before leaving the meeting to take the declaration to the Mayor for signing, the Controller noted the need to 'scramble' for additional CDCs.

A short time later the AEM tweeted the location of the Kelston CDC, asking evacuated people to stay with family if possible.

As the Controller was briefing the Mayor about the declaration, he explained that the first three possible CDCs had been 'compromised' by flooding. He explained that this had created some delay in getting to the Mayor.

When the third IMT meeting on Friday evening commenced after 10pm, the meeting was advised that the Kelston CDC was sheltering people and that the North Shore events centre was being explored as another possibility. Locations in South Auckland were also being investigated.

The NEMA REMA asked for a data dashboard of key statistics, including numbers in CDCs, to help inform ministers. He again stressed that evaluation and welfare arrangements were the priority.

The functional manager was also asked, in that meeting, about the possible use of marae as CDCs. She indicated that AEM preferred not to use marae for a 'variety of reasons'.

The meeting was then advised that the North Shore event centre was still being assessed and that the CDC may need to be located in an alternative location nearby.

In the end, two additional evacuation centres, at North Shore and Manurewa, were announced via media advisory at 12.23am on Saturday 28. An additional message at 3am advised that the North Shore CDC had been moved to Massey University's Albany campus, although the AEM website did not reflect this move until several hours later.

By the next day, an additional marae-based 'pop up' facility had been opened in Mangere. AEM regarded this as an 'information centre' only, as it was not on its prepared list of CDCs. Nor was it fully staffed by AEM welfare teams.

From midday Saturday an iwi liaison functional lead began to attend IMT meetings and later assisted with needs assessments to support welfare needs.

As the weekend progressed, messaging about CDCs became clearer and additional staffing resources were accessed from partner agencies, including NZDF.

WHY WAS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EVACUATION CENTRES SLOW?

Based on our reviews of IMT meeting tapes, and the interviews we conducted, we suggest a number of factors which contributed to the slowness of CDC establishment during the critical period for evacuations. These present opportunities for future improvement. They include:

- The AEM prepared list of possible CDC locations did not appear to consider the possibility of a widespread event, with large or multiple locations needing to be established and serviced
- The possible CDC locations on the list were not sorted for specific hazard contingencies. Some were clearly unsuitable locations in a flood or storm event
- The list of possible locations does not appear to have been well informed by local and community held information. Prior to Auckland amalgamation, detailed plans were held at local board level and perhaps better reflected local conditions, resources and partnerships. Some of this detail appears to have been lost when lists were revisited from a super city perspective
- The need for site assessments prior to use made things challenging in that assessment teams had to travel across Auckland in the face of road closures and torrential rain to check possible sites. It would have been preferable – from both a timing and a health and safety perspective - had sites been pre-qualified for use in this specific storm scenario
- The need to find and transport Council welfare and security staff to sites during the worst of the storm was also challenging. An earlier declaration or request for resources may have enabled additional partner agency resources to be on site much earlier
- The previous experience of AEM staff was in setting up CDCs related to more localised events - tornado, the floods in Kumeu, events in Whakaari/White Island – rather than to region wide emergencies. Outside AEM roles in the early Covid response, these do not appear to have been trained for, or planned for from a CDC perspective; and
- The apparent reluctance to identify marae as CDCs meant that providers who were already experienced in emergency welfare support and service delivery (and who had been tested during prior emergencies such as Covid-19) were not utilised. This is contrary to other local models, such as that in Northland, where marae are often the default provider of CDC support.

In short, there was much juggling to identify, staff and communicate suitable CDCs. Multiple AEM members were making suggestions, contact information was being exchanged, rather than, as would be preferable, the meeting being informed of the activation of a prequalified plan, which anticipated and was specific to particular hazard scenarios, such as a flood and super storm event in multiple locations. Such a plan could have usefully built on community and iwi/Māori partnerships to ensure swift access to community-based welfare resources.

There is an opportunity to develop a pre-approved and pre-qualified and pre-equipped set of CDCs that are known and communicated to the public in advance via websites. For AEM purposes, these must be pre-sorted for type of hazard.

In advance of Cyclone Gabrielle, when AEM had the luxury of more time to prepare, a list of 28 fully equipped centres was communicated to the public in advance.

Such pre-planned CDCs would reduce the need to send out community service and buildings staff, mid-event, for site assessments. Welfare staff deployment lists and plans should also reflect this approach.

There is also opportunity to establish more broadly distributed logistics and warehousing hubs to ensure that, in the event of a region wide emergency, extra resources can be provided quickly to all CDCs.

The AEM appears to have acted throughout from a centralised service delivery model, when a more devolved response would have better aligned to the locations of displaced people and the available CDCs. For example, the southern CDC in Manurewa was not easy for evacuees to get to and ended up being very lightly used. The marae based 'information centre' in Mangere was much more convenient and was crammed with people. The school in Kelston was hard to find in the dark and had low capacity in the event of mass evacuations.

The failure to establish a full centre in Mangere and the tardiness in setting up any facility in this high needs area was unacceptable. It illustrates the lack of preparedness in terms of proactive advance engagement with iwi/Māori noted in the section on communications above. Once this CDC was stood up, it set the standard for evacuation centres, and demonstrated the value of briefing and involving local councillors in a crisis. As AEM increased its iwi liaison functional response from Saturday 28, engagement also began to improve.

In future, it will be critical that CDCs, while planned and tested centrally, are delivered locally, and through partnerships with community providers of all kinds. One of the factors slowing the CDC response on the critical night was the need not only to align Council logistics, welfare and buildings teams, but also the lack of available local knowledge to the AEM. A number of elected members had a good understanding of local conditions and options, but they struggled to know how to connect with AEM to offer suggestions. Their emails to AEM reflect considerable concern at the lack of alignment to community needs.

Finally, we note that AEM has recently announced that it has commissioned Toa Consulting to undertake the debrief to the response to this weather event and to ex tropical Cyclone Gabrielle. This will include a debrief on the operations of CDCs.

THE PERFORMANCE OF AUCKLAND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY SERVICES INCLUDING OPERATING MODELS AND PROCEDURES—HOW EFFECTIVELY DID AGENCIES PERFORM?

We have made comments that relate to the performance of the AEM and other agencies throughout this report. Accordingly, we take a selective lens to the performance of the AEM operating model in the narrative below.

We have also commented in multiple places in regard to the performance of partner agencies including first response agencies. We do not traverse these matters again here.

We are confident that AEM will reflect on lessons learned from this event. It should use the opportunity to refine and document its emergency management *operating model*, in accordance with both the CIMS and other matters raised here.

The term ‘operating model’ describes the way in which the Auckland emergency management strategy is delivered on the ground: simply put, how the team make the ACDEM Group Plan and its five ‘Rs’ happen. We see this as going beyond the technicalities of the CIMS and as a holistic model for executing on emergency management strategy. An operating model should always be explicitly designed in partnership, rather than left to evolve organically or through chance.

Given recent events, AEM is now well placed to take the opportunity to do this design work, in conjunction with the relevant partner agencies.

Any operating model has a number of facets including, but not limited to:

- Leadership
- Governance, structure and accountabilities
- Culture and values; and
- Enabling systems, tools and technologies

We briefly examine each of these below, in the context of the AEM, as they played out over the 48-hour period encompassed by this review. We also suggest specific opportunities for future work.

LEADERSHIP IN THE AEM

According to the current local government and Auckland emergency management operating model, first responders take the operational lead in the first phases of an AEM event, with Council staff, led by the Group Controller, coordinating the response in support of them. Once a declaration of emergency is made, overall leadership reverts to the Group Controller.

After the AEM had activated on the afternoon of Friday 27 January, briefings to the early IMT meetings by FENZ, Police and St John first responders were clear as to mission outcomes, resource needs and the available situational analysis.

Watching the recordings, of the later IMT meetings however, particularly after the declaration was issued and operational control formally went to AEM, it is not clear that anyone was decisively in the lead in terms of taking decisions, issuing taskings, adapting the response to different alert level

thresholds and ensuring that participants were being held to account for specific outcomes. The specific point at which control passed from FENZ to the AEM was not clear to some in the meeting.

As noted earlier, in the section on decision making, the AEM duty officer and then Controller(s) operated the IMT meetings of Friday 27 in a facilitative style, with little obvious structure. As responders were performing their roles and NEMA was providing advice on the event, it was AEM's role to provide overall leadership, even in the early stages.

The approach to leadership used within the AEM team, however, appears to have been similar to the style of leadership used in Auckland Council under business-as-usual conditions. It was informal and consensus based. At no point on Friday night, even after the emergency declaration had been made and the seriousness of the event was clear to all, did AEM's leadership style pivot from a facilitative to more of a command style. The latter would have been more appropriate to the nature of this crisis.

By command style, we do not refer to old fashioned command and control leadership. Instead, we suggest that a more incisive, urgent and highly structured approach became appropriate as events gained in severity and complexity. Modern command approaches also balance the on the ground tactics of response with the bigger strategic picture and required mission outcomes.

We expect people with operational experience and training in emergency management to be clear in stating mission goals and required outcomes, requiring situational awareness to support decision making, issuing taskings and driving urgency, focus and accountability.

IMT interactions on the Friday night, however, including chats, texts and emails, were unstructured. They lacked the crispness and directness we would expect to see in an emergency of this magnitude. While this improved on Saturday 28 and beyond, it is our view that communication and leadership styles remained somewhat lacking in rigour over the course of the period under review.

When crisis hits, response teams must have muscle memory around their response. Crises are by nature hard to predict and control. There is a need to have models such as CIMS *and* operational experience deeply embedded in AEM staff DNA in order that an effective response can be mounted fast and at scale.

First responders demonstrated this deep training and operational experience during the event. The AEM did not.

Although AEM staff and managers had CIMS training, no amount of training can substitute for operational experience and exercises based on complex scenarios and unpredicted, 'black swan' events.

The prior responses that AEM had managed over the period 2020-21, including multiple phases of Covid response to national and local lockdowns, the Papatoetoe tornado and Kumeu floods, appear to have given the team considerable confidence in their operational experience. These events seem to have been counted as 'training', rather than being supplemented by non-real time drills and practices.

From our perspective, these prior training events did not hold the same level of speed and inter agency complexity as this sudden weather event.

We also suggest that not all AEM staff have seen operational responses in action with specialist agencies, such as first responders. In some cases staff may not have a clear picture of the style of leadership that makes for successful response to fast moving, complex and unpredictable events.

In future, we suggest that AEM staff in critical leadership roles undertake additional scenario training – both field and tabletop based – designed to hone their operational command skills, in partnership with first response agencies.

We also suggest that the Council should invest in the leadership development of these personnel, to help ensure their ability to pivot to the right leadership style for the event. This development should be wider than that provided under the CIMS framework and could include coaching by experienced operational leaders.

There may also be an opportunity to utilise the Council’s wider talent management frameworks to attract, identify and develop those with the right skills and attributes and ensure clear and appropriate succession for future AEM leadership roles.

GOVERNANCE, STRUCTURE AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

As part of the operating model redesign work , it will be important that the operational and communications interfaces between the AEM (largely non dedicated staff) and the Council’s executive and governance bodies are clarified and documented.

We also suggest that the Council’s executive should consider the optimal organisational structure, reporting lines and capability mix for the future emergency management function.

In this process, the position of the CDEM Director must be clearly identified. The current CDEM Director and GM EM role confusion needs to be clarified. The person in this critical position must have business as usual relationships at senior levels, such as with Council executives, the Mayor and the ACDEM Committee Chair.

There is also an opportunity here to reflect on the more effective and sustainable mix of part time/volunteer and specialist positions in the emergency management organisational structure. While volunteers can be successfully utilised in some positions, operationally experienced experts, with a different team subculture and skills, are likely to be needed in others.

There will be challenges here in resourcing the right sized team of permanent staff, given the intermittent nature of emergencies.

Further work should also be undertaken on the role of the Group Controller. This person must be clearly appointed, and in our view, should also be a full time, emergency management expert with operational experience.

As noted in the section on the Context for emergency management above, Auckland’s current ‘alternative controller’ system means that there is insufficient clarity across the AEM and its partners

around who is in the role at any given time. Elected officials, the Mayor and executives must all know who the Group Controller is at all times.

CULTURE AND VALUES

Auckland Council organisational culture - within which AEM is nested - tends to be friendly and consensus seeking at middle management levels. Indeed, Council leaders have invested considerable effort in recent years in lifting the people management skills of managers and improving staff health, safety, wellbeing and engagement outcomes.

This approach does not always lend itself well to decision making and leadership in a crisis setting. As noted, decision making during the initial stages of this event tended to be slow and democratic, as opposed to decisive and directional. This led to poor command clarity and a lack of urgency.

There may also be a need to probe and question some of the implicit assumptions that appear to sit below the waterline of Auckland Council's cultural 'iceberg'⁹⁵. There appears to us, for example, to be a sense that Auckland Council's size means that it can do almost everything itself and does not have to rely too much on partners or its networks of Council Controlled Organisations, (CCOs) and utilities.

For example, the recent tornado event and Kumeu floods were handled with business-as-usual resources. This may have created a sense of complacency or optimism bias that Auckland was inherently 'big enough to cope with anything'. Such an implicit belief may also have partly contributed to the slowness in declaring the state of emergency, something that had not been done since the super city consolidation.

Another implicit assumption seems to centre on the value of centralisation, while in emergency management, a careful balance between centralisation of planning and localisation of service delivery seems likely to be necessary.

It is difficult for us, as externals, to fully penetrate such deeply held assumptions and norms. We suggest that as part of any internal lessons learned debrief, these questions must be confronted. The Council needs to be aware in advance of the cultural strengths and weaknesses it brings to the leadership of such an event.

ENABLING SYSTEMS, TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGIES

The crisis of January 27-8 also illuminated opportunities to improve AEM and Auckland Council's core systems, tools and technologies. These include, to name a few:

- the need to update non-current email address lists, such as the AKGEOC, which did not include the email address for the new Mayor
- reducing the fragmentation of websites, including some externally hosted sites, which resulted in multiple sources of sometimes conflicting information and led to challenges in

⁹⁵ A reference to the famous diagram by Edgar Schein, which illustrates that some cultural aspects of an organisation are visible while some are hidden and difficult for outsiders or even new members of an organisation to interpret. See *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (The Jossey-Bass Business & Management Series) Paperback – 27 Aug. 2010

ensuring consistent information updates, especially when some websites were not under the Council's direct management

- ensuring that the Council's use of social media and other communication tools can be supported by remote IT support after hours
- the need to ensure that all systems, even the most basic, are crisis ready. As an example, the Mayor and his staff did not have card access to the physical ECC when it was opened on the morning of Saturday 28
- opportunities to rationalise and combine multiple databases, files and spreadsheets. The highly distributed nature of the source material made it difficult, at least in the early stages of this response, to produce timely intelligence products from centralised data; and
- developing data sharing protocols and systems with partner agencies, including pre-established information sharing protocols with lifeline utilities and other key CDEM partners that balance privacy and public information imperatives.

In summary, we suggest a fundamental rethink and first principles redesign of the Auckland emergency management operating model, contributed to by executive leaders, AEM, external experts, partner agencies and Treaty partners. If the ACDEM Group Plan is in effect Auckland's emergency management strategy, the operating model is the framework for the successful execution of that strategy.

Once developed and documented in detail, it should constitute a critical supporting document for the ACDEM Group Plan and clearly reflect and align to all elements of the CIMS. It should become the key document through which the CEG and wider Council leadership hold AEM to account for effective and efficient performance.

APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

4Rs/5Rs	Reduction, readiness, response and recovery. The Auckland CDEM Plan refers to a fifth 'R' for resilience.
CDEM	Civil Defence and Emergency Management. This refers to all activities that guard against, prevent or overcome any hazard, harm or loss that may be associated with an emergency.
ACDEM Group	Auckland CDEM Group, established under section 12 of the Civil defence Emergency management Act 2002. All local authorities must be members of a CDEM Group that responds to and manages an emergency in their area and plans for and delivers recovery activities. For Auckland, the Auckland Council CDEM Committee is the ACDEM Group. The Group .
CEG	The Coordinating Executive group of the ACDEM Group which comprises local authority executives and representatives from emergency services.
GM EM	General Manager, Emergency Management (AEM)
CIMS	Coordinated Incident Management System
COP	Common operating picture
Controller	The person charge of a response who directs response activities and fulfils management functions and responsibilities.
ECC	Emergency Coordination Centre that operates at regional level to control one or more EOCs
EOC	Emergency Operations centre is a coordination centre at local level to manage a response.
CDC	Civil Defence Centre – in an emergency may be opened for evacuation, welfare needs, community hubs.
IMT	Incident management team
Logistics (function)	The function that supports a response through the provision of resources which support response to affected communities
NEMA	National Emergency Management Centre
NCMC	The National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC) is a secure, all-of government coordination centre used by agencies to monitor, support or manage a response at the national level. It can also be used as a National Coordination Centre
PIM	Public Information manager
SITREP	A brief description of an incident, usually given at regular intervals.
SOPs	Written practices adopted by an agency. Standard operating procedures describe how actions or functions are performed.
Welfare (function)	The function responsible for ensuring planned, coordinated and effective delivery of welfare



	services to individuals, families/whānau and communities, including animals that are affected by an incident.
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APPENDIX 2: REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE

TERMS OF REFERENCE: RAPID REVIEW OF THE IMMEDIATE OFFICIAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO AUCKLAND'S SEVERE WEATHER EVENT, 27 – 28 JANUARY 2023

The purpose of the review is to:

- report on the performance of the immediate official emergency response to the Auckland weather event of 27 – 28 January 2023; and
- identify any actions that need to be implemented immediately to ensure better preparation for the next event.

The review will consider:

- How well did Auckland Emergency Management and emergency services perform leading up to, and during, the weather event of Friday 27 January and the morning of Saturday 28 January?
- How well did the emergency management response operating model / procedures perform in response to the event?
- What were the key legislative, regulatory, policy and operational considerations that led to the recommendation to the Mayor, and the decision by the Auckland Council and Mayor, to declare a state of emergency in Auckland on 27 January 2023? Should the state of local emergency have been recommended and approved earlier than it was; and, if so, when and why, and why did this not happen; and what were the consequences?
- How effective and timely were related communications, including declarations and alerts, with partner agencies, central government, elected members (including the mayor) and the public?
- Were clear decision-making procedures and sufficient communications templates and draft materials available, and known to be available, to decision-makers and communicators to facilitate fast decision-making and communications to affected communities specifically and the public generally?
- How were decisions made about the number and location of evacuation centres /Civil Defence Centres set up on Friday 27 January and the morning of Saturday 28 January, and how effectively were these decisions communicated?

The review team may review any other matters that emerge from its inquiries, which it considers, in the public interest, to require immediate review.

The team should complete its work so that it can be made available to other reviewers, policy makers and the public by no later than Monday 6 March 2023.

The scope of the review includes actions and decisions of the Mayor and the Mayor's Office, as well as other local and national agencies. The Mayor's Office will fully cooperate with the review and expects other agencies to do the same, including by providing the review with whatever information it requests.

The review team is to take note of the fact that emergency services are still taking part in an emergency response. It must ensure its review is undertaken in a manner that does not disrupt or draw resources from that response.



APPENDIX 3: EMAIL TO THE MAYOR 27 JANUARY 2023 REGARDING EMERGENCY DECLARATION

Declaration of state of local emergency

I, WAYNE BROWN

declare that a state of local emergency exists in AUCKLAND CIVIL DEFENCE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
VGROUP AREA

[specify names of Civil Defence Emergency Management Group area, districts, or wards]

owing to SEVERE WEATHER EVENT JANUARY 2023

[describe emergency]

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

[signature]

Designation: [Select the applicable designation]

- Mayor of the district for which the state of local emergency is declared.

Time and date of declaration: _____

Notes

1. Calculating "7 days after the time and date on which the state of emergency comes into force": If a state of local emergency came into force at 9.35am on 1 January, it would expire at 9.35am on 8 January. If a state of local emergency came into force at 9.35am on a Friday, it would expire at 9.35am on the following Friday.
2. This declaration must be —
 - a. notified to the public immediately by any means of communication that are reasonably practicable in the circumstances; and
 - b. (published in the *Gazette* as soon as practicable. It is recommended that publication in the *Gazette* occur within 20 working days after the state of emergency is terminated.



Factsheet: Declaring states of local emergency

The Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002

The Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002:

- provides for a state of local emergency to be declared.
- provides for certain people to be authorised to declare a state of local emergency.
- provides powers to the CDEM Group when a state of emergency is in force.

Who is authorised to declare a state of local emergency (s25)?

The CDEM Group must appoint at least one person (a representative of the Group) to declare a state of local emergency for the Group's area (s25(1)(a)).

If the Group appoint more than one person to declare, they must state whether they have equal status to make a declaration, or whether they are only authorised in the absence of another named person. They must also include any conditions or limitations to the appointment (s25(3)).

If the person(s) appointed by the Group is not able to declare a state of local emergency, a representative of the Group can declare (s25(4)).

A Mayor can declare a state of local emergency for their territorial district, and if the Mayor is absent, an elected member designated on behalf of the Mayor may declare (s25(5)).

The Minister can also declare a state of local emergency if it appears to the Minister that it is required (s69(1)).

Authorised persons should refer to their CDEM Group plan as this must set out the arrangements for declaring a state of local emergency (section 49(2)(f)). It is important to know your Group's arrangements to avoid multiple declarations e.g. a district declaration and another declared by the CDEM Group person appointed to declare a state of local emergency.

When can declaration of state of local emergency be given?

A person who is authorised can declare a state of local emergency when an emergency (as defined in the CDEM Act 2002) has occurred or may occur within the area.

Emergency means a situation that-:

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

See the definition of emergency in section 4 of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002.

A state of local emergency provides access to powers that would not normally be available. Therefore, consideration should be given to whether emergency powers are required or likely to be required (e.g. the need to evacuate people from their homes).

The fact that an emergency exists does not necessarily warrant a declaration of state of local emergency.

An authorised person can also declare for an area that is not affected by an emergency if, in their opinion, the resources of that area are needed to assist any other area where a state of local emergency is in force (s68(3)). However, it is not necessary to do this if the additional areas willingly provide resources.



Who needs to be involved in the decision?

Where possible, the authorised person should discuss the likelihood of a declaration with the Group Controller. They should also discuss it with the NEMA Regional Emergency Management Advisor to ensure that any necessary national level support is provided.

They should also consult with others to ensure an informed decision can be made and any relevant matters considered, including (as appropriate):

- Other members of the CDEM Group e.g. neighbouring Mayors
- Local Controller and Emergency Management Officers
- Local Authority Utility Managers
- New Zealand Police
- Fire and Emergency New Zealand
- Providers of health and disability services (e.g. District Health Boards, Primary Health Organisations, Ambulance Services)

What needs to be considered about the area affected?

Generally, as states of emergency provide for powers that are not normally available, declarations should be limited to the area(s) affected. For example, a declaration of state of local emergency does not need to be declared for the entire area of the Group if the emergency only affects one or two districts or wards.

The person appointed by the CDEM Group can declare for the area of the CDEM Group concerned, or for one or more districts or wards within the area (s68(2)).

The Mayor of a territorial authority, or the person designated to act on their behalf in their absence, may declare a state of local emergency that covers the district of their territorial authority (s25(5)).

Only one state of emergency (local or national) may exist at any time in any specified area (except as provided below where there is a state of national emergency for COVID-19), but several states of local emergency can be declared concurrently across the country.

If a state of local emergency is declared for a ward, but it is decided that a state of local emergency should be declared for a larger geographical area e.g. the district or areas of the CDEM Group, which includes that ward, then a new declaration is required. There is no requirement to terminate the original state of local emergency as it will cease to have effect (s68(2A)).

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What if the Minister declares a national state of emergency?

If the Minister declares a national state of emergency, any other declarations in force in the area or district ceases to have effect (s66(3)).

Likewise, a declaration of state of local emergency cannot be given for any part of New Zealand while a national state of emergency is in force (s68(5)).

How does the national response to COVID-19 relate to a state of local emergency declaration?

The CDEM Act has been amended to allow a state of local emergency to be declared for a **non-COVID-19 emergency** while a state of national emergency exists for COVID-19 (s68(7)). This is to enable response to concurrent emergencies that may occur (s68(8)).

Declaring a state of local emergency for non-COVID-19 reasons does not terminate any national transition period in place for COVID-19 related reasons (s94E(8)).

The approval of the Minister for Emergency Management is required for any declaration of a state of local emergency related to COVID-19 matters (s68(6)). This is to ensure that a nationally consistent approach continues to be taken to COVID-19.

What if the emergency is during local government elections?

Only elected representatives of the members of the Group are able to declare a state of local emergency (s25). Following a local election there may be no-one available to declare as members cannot act as an elected representative until they are sworn in (clause 14, Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002).

Therefore, if an emergency arises following a local election but before members are sworn in and emergency powers are needed, a state of local emergency can be declared by:

- The Minister for Emergency Management can declare a state of local emergency for a CDEM Group area or any district or ward within that area (s69); or
- In circumstances that provide a period of warning, such as an impending adverse weather event, a council meeting may be called as soon as practicable to have the new council sworn in (clause 21(3), Schedule 7, Local Government Act 2002), allowing the Mayor to declare a state of local emergency



under s25(5) of the CDEM Act 2002.

When does a declaration of state of local emergency come into force?

Form 8 in Schedule 2 of the CDEM Regulations 2003 must be used to declare a state of local emergency, or a form of similar effect. The form must specify the time and date on which the declaration is made; this is the date and time that it comes into force (s70(1) & (2)).

It is recommended that a person who is authorised to declare a state of local emergency carries a declaration of a state of emergency form with them (or version they can complete on their phone/tablet/computer) so if they are not in an office, they can complete the form.

How long does a declaration of state of local emergency last?

A state of local emergency expires seven days after the time and date on which the state of local emergency came into force (s70(3)).

This means that if a state of local emergency comes into force at 0935 on 1 January, it would expire at 0935 on 8 January.

How is a declaration of state of local emergency extended?

When deciding whether to extend the duration of a state of local emergency, the authorised person should consider:

- Whether the emergency still exists;
- Whether access to the powers are still required; and
- Whether the nature of the emergency is moving towards recovery where they may want to consider giving notice of a local transition period.

An authorised person can extend the duration of a state of local emergency before the expiry of the state of emergency that is in force at the time (s71(2)) using Form 9 in Schedule 2 of the CDEM Regulations 2003. It does not need to be the person who declared to do this.

If the state of local emergency expires, the authorised person must declare a new state of local emergency.

The Controller's powers cannot be exercised while there is no state of local emergency in place. In some cases, the powers will need to be re-exercised e.g. if

buildings have been placarded under s92, that placard expires with the expiry of the state of local emergency and the power will need to be exercised again to re-placard the building under the new state of local emergency.

What if the state of local emergency needs to be terminated?

The person who is authorised to declare the state of local emergency, may terminate the state of local emergency (s72(1)). It does not need to be the person who declared to do this.

Form 10 in Schedule 2 of the CDEM Regulations 2003 must be used to terminate a state of local emergency. The form must specify the time and date it is made, which is when the termination will come into effect.

If an authorised person intends to give notice of a local transition period, they must terminate the state of local emergency unless the local transition period comes into effect after the state of emergency has expired (s94C(a) & (b)).

However, if the Minister gives notice of a local transition period, the state of local emergency is automatically terminated (s72(3)).

What are the publication requirements (s73(3))?

A person who declares, extends the duration of, or terminates a state of local emergency must immediately notify the public of the declaration by any means of communication that are reasonably practicable in the circumstances.

The declaration of state of local emergency, extension or termination must also be published in the Gazette as soon as practicable.

Gazette publication

A copy of the signed declaration form(s) (in Microsoft Word format) must be sent to the New Zealand Gazette Office at:

New Zealand Gazette Office
Department of Internal Affairs
PO Box 805
Wellington 6140

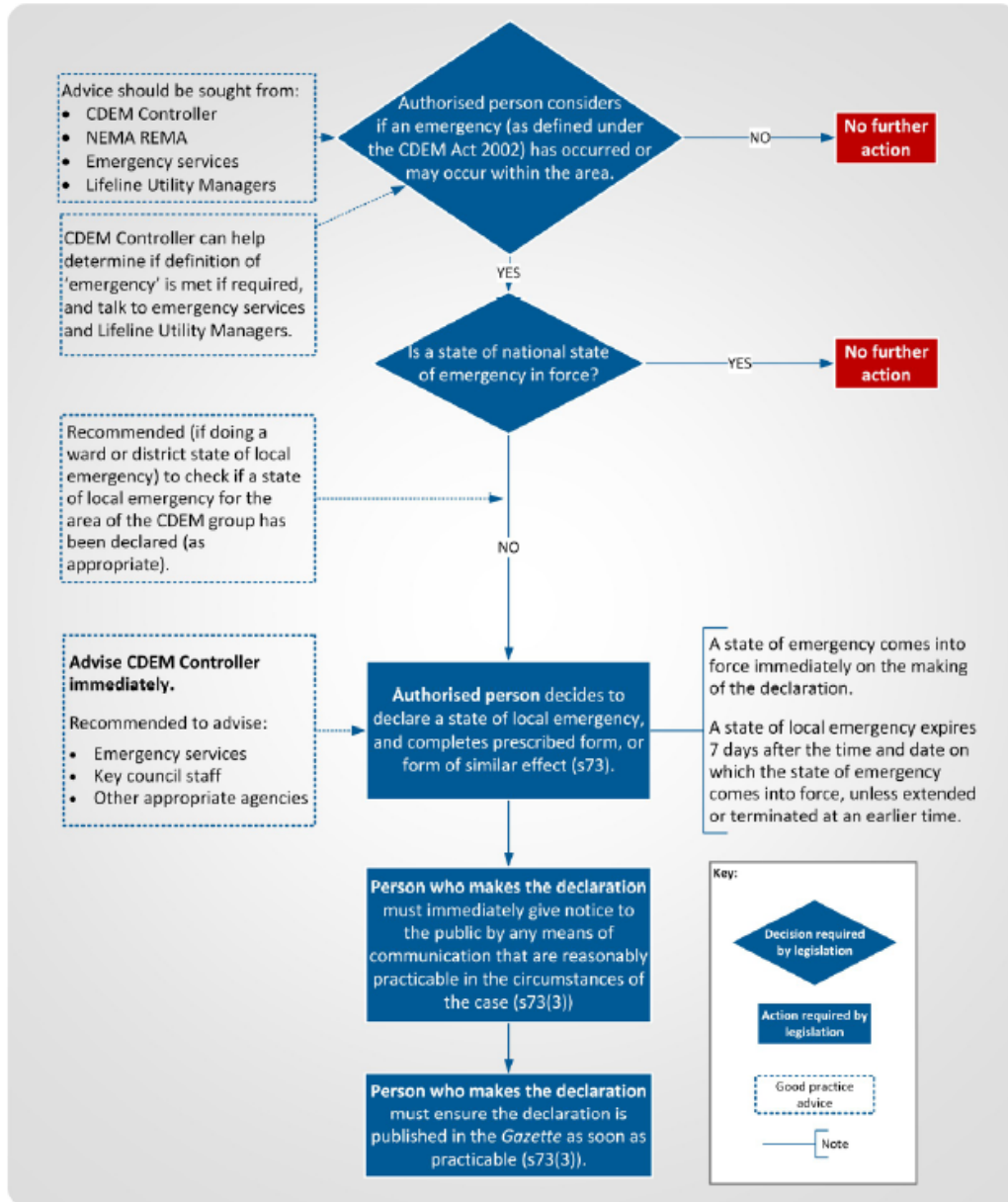
or

gazette@parliament.govt.nz

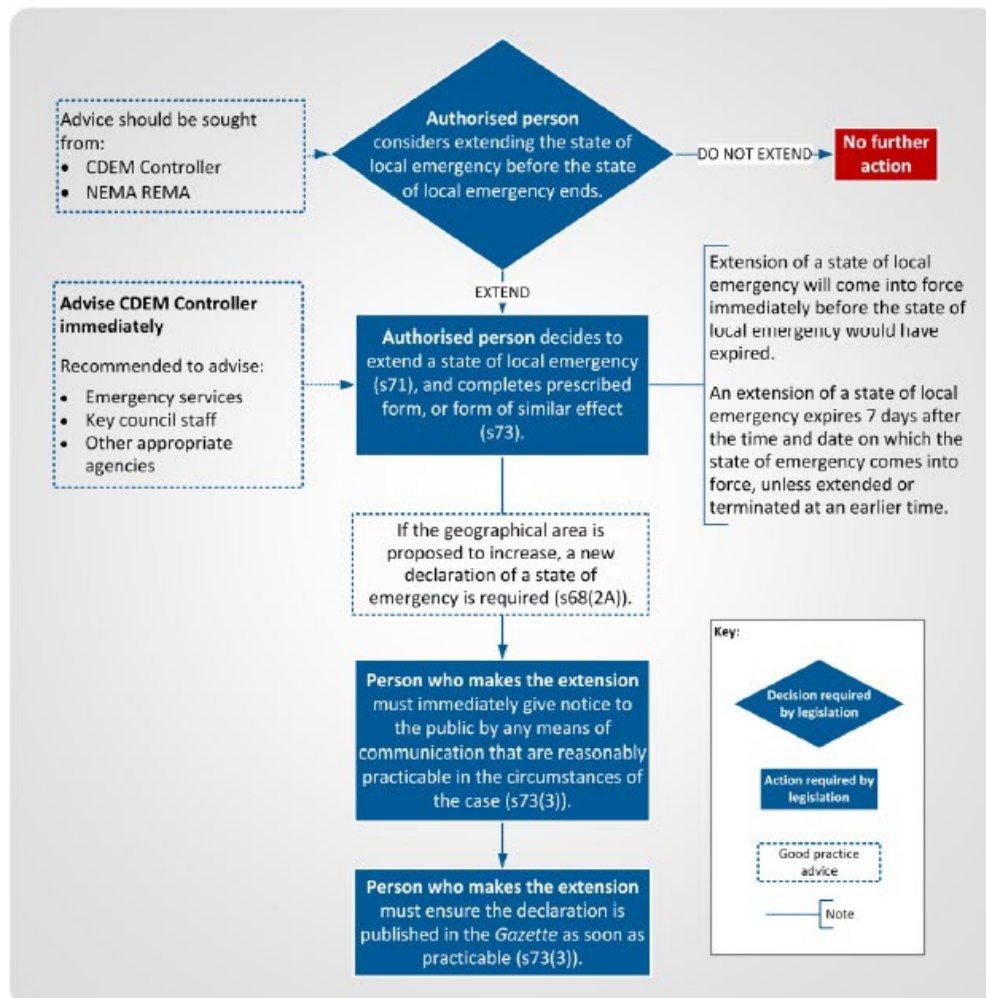
See <https://gazette.govt.nz/how-to-submit> or details on how to submit a notice for publication in the Gazette.

Process for declaring a non-COVID-19 state of local emergency (s70)

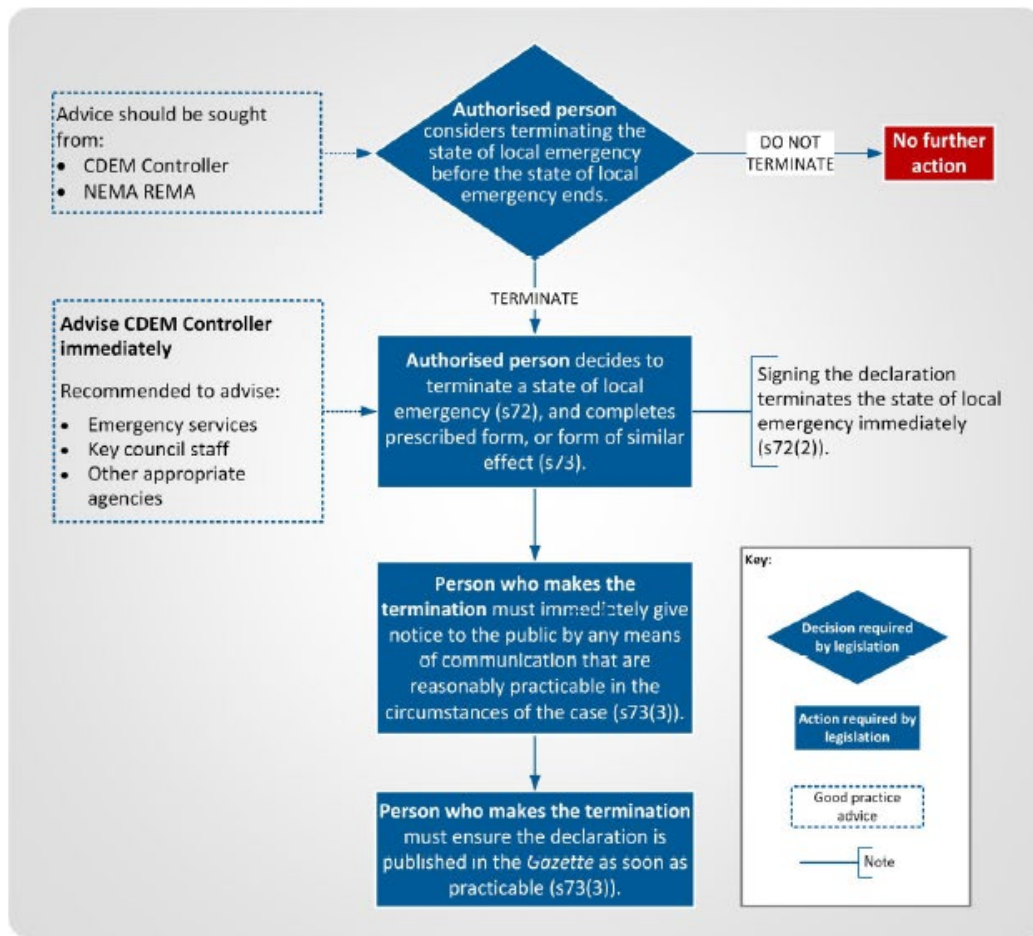
The approval of the Minister for Emergency Management is also required before a state of local emergency can be declared in relation to COVID-19. Contact your REMA immediately if you think you may need to make such a declaration.



Process for extending duration of a state of local emergency (s71)



Process for terminating a state of local emergency (s72)



APPENDIX 4: EVENT TIMELINE

This timeline is intended to show how the response to Auckland’s flooding event unfolded over the 48-hour period relevant to this review. It is based on multiple documentary sources, including recorded meetings, phone and text messages, meeting logs, individuals’ personal records submitted to us and publicly available information. In all, we reviewed over eight thousand separate records.

In spite of this, the timeline is unlikely to be fully comprehensive. Respondents referred at times to calls or texts that we could not find in the records we received. The timeline also does not show recipients of information sent. As an example, the Mayor and his office were not recipients of the AKGEOC email group for elected members until after this weather event.

As is also probably inevitable with such a large volume of documents, many of which were transmitted electronically, there are some conflicts in the materials with regard to the precise timings at which for example, media advisories were released, or emails were received. There are also varying recollections amongst interview respondents on some matters. These issues do not, in our view, take away from the overall narrative and key themes.

It should also be noted that this timeline does not include other, recovery-oriented Council activities during the period, such as clean up and repair efforts to reopen roads and restore services, the rapid assessments work undertaken by the buildings team and work done by regulatory staff.

An array of community-based activities, some led by elected members, were also undertaken over the weekend in question.

We refer to this timeline at multiple points in this report.

NOTE: AEM IMT MEETINGS ARE SHOWN IN RED TEXT

Time	Event	Participants/Reference
Tuesday Jan 24	AEM duty team and duty Controller for the relevant period come on duty.	
1605	Head of Response and Recovery AEM appoints Principal Advisor Recovery 27-29 January.	
Thursday Jan 26 2057	Metservice issues heavy rain warning for Auckland 6am to 10pm Friday 27.	
Friday Jan 27 0800	NEMA Daily Intelligence Briefing: Severe weather expected for Auckland.	MAR Report to ECC
1011	Metservice issues a heavy rain warning for Auckland and Great	

	Barrier Island. Strong wind watch also issued.	
1239	HWU contractors installing sandbags at Tamaki Drive.	Mail to Deputy Mayor
1440	AT advises no trains available for Elton John concert and limited bus services. Urges people to be seated by 7pm.	
1440	Reports of raw sewage overflowing 'Little Shoal bay car park for 4 hours'.	E mail from Council member
1448	Rodney local board member sends email to AC managers re 'extreme flooding and impassable roads in Rodney'.	
1552	Severe thunderstorm warning in place. Met service advises 60mm of rain has fallen per hour, causing surface flooding.	
1600-1700	More than 50 Council Hydrotel alarms triggered by heavy rainfall across Auckland.	
1621	AC Duty Manager advises GM Emergency Management of AEM IMT meeting at 1700.	
1626	Chief Executive AC advises Mayor that AEM is supporting FENZ and response agencies re 'some flooding in Swanson and Ranui'. Says weather is 'expected to abate'.	Text message CE to Mayor
1630	Email to AEM to invite CIMS functional leads to IMT meeting.	Email titled 'Weather event'
1630	Police issue a warning to drivers.	
1635	Mayor Brown tries to call Councillor Stewart (Chair ACDEM).	Mayor's call log. Does not appear on Chair's call log.
1641	Police public message on 'Wild weather'. Stuff story on flooding with images. Metservice bulletin updated.	
1647	'The duty manager has activated the IMT in response to severe flooding in west Auckland. An MS Teams meeting has been initiated.'	E mail PIM to AKGEOC list

1650	Virtual AEM IMT commences. Initially chaired Duty Officer and later by Controller. <i>Note first 10-15 minutes of meeting not recorded and timestamp is in error.</i>	AEM functional leads GM Emergency Management Duty Officer Controller Police FENZ NEMA REMA Source: recorded IMT meetings
1650	IMT Meeting Log notes that GM EM and Controller are to brief Mayor (not recorded).	
1658	Mayor's Chief of Staff asks Director Governance for communications to go out regarding the emergency. Told that IMT is now meeting.	
1700	Time later recorded in AEM Incident Report as time AEM activated at Alert level Orange (major event).	
1700	<i>FENZ advises IMT meeting of multiple calls, stuck vehicles, people on roofs, Westpac chopper rescue in progress and Henderson Command Post established. Advises USAR and surf lifesaving involvement in rescues.</i>	
1703	<i>Police advise IMT meeting of evacuations underway in ten homes, elderly stuck in rest homes, Police helicopter Eagle overhead for situational awareness.</i>	
1707	FENZ advises public with flooded homes to lift items from floor and call 111 only in a life-threatening emergency.	
1708	<i>FENZ requests evacuation centre details in IMT meeting. 'Needed now as multiple locations are affected.'</i>	
1710	<i>FENZ, Police ask about the 'threshold for declaration' of emergency. Controller 'it's an evolving situation'.</i>	

	<p>GM EM: 'declaration something we should consider as doesn't seem to be getting better, potential loss of life and need to evacuate.'</p> <p>NEMA REMA notes that a reason to declare would be to secure additional powers and additional coordination between agencies.</p> <p>FENZ notes need for greater coordination. State that, at present, they have the ability to get the resources needed.</p>	
1718	<p>FENZ raises Elton John concert issues. Suggest need to 'lean in' to organisers in the context of a discussion about whether organisers have indicated they will cancel the concert. If it goes ahead will be 'unsafe and may just add to our troubles'.</p>	<p>Meeting log notes that if a declaration is made the Elton John concert will be cancelled.</p>
1718	<p>Draft email to elected members re weather event sent by PIM for approval to GM EM.</p>	
1719	<p>PIM requests instruction to take over social media channels. Duty Controller agrees.</p>	
1720	<p>First discussion in IMT on evacuation centres.</p>	
1722	<p>Agreed ECC will be physically stood up 28th at 0800. Possible yellow alert status. Controller notes that 'the rain event is making transport a bit difficult, and we don't want to put our own people in harm's way.'</p>	
1725	<p>NEMA REMA advises briefing to the Mayor with 'back pocket declaration'. If situation worsens 'just sign it off and go'.</p>	
1727	<p>Controller and GM EM agree to brief Mayor together.</p> <p>GM EM notes he has briefed the CEO of AC.</p>	<p>Refer teams call to Mayor at 1815, see below.</p>
1727	<p>Controller says has signed off media release for elected members.</p>	
1728	<p>Controller instruction to functional leads to 'get cracking</p>	

	on west Auckland evac centre and accommodation arrangements’.	
1729	PIMs note TVNZ and RNZ requests for update. Controller asked to front. Mayor will be advised of requests.	
1730	Ranui community centre proposed as evac centre. On site assessment ordered.	
1740	NEMA conveys urgent RCC request for evac centre details and for media coordination re public information.	
1742	Controller instructs ‘plan b’ evac centre to be developed. ‘Got to deal with the emergency as a priority rather than talk to media. I know that’s important, so I think that’s the right order of events’.	
1743	Controller asks to be promptly informed of any requests from authorities (FENZ, Police etc) for additional resources as they will ‘inform the declaration decision’.	
1744	Intelligence functional lead requests maps etc from Police, FENZ re flooding. (these players have dropped from call at this time). Request for anyone talking to FENZ/Police to ask for intel to be given to ‘a central point’ and noted that a dedicated event folder has been opened.	
1745	Duty manager notes Hydrotel and Moata rain gauge levels reducing but more rain to come.	
1745	AEM posts on Facebook re weather saying it will ‘stay in touch’. Post receives 340 comments. No response until 2201.	
1748	AKGEOC email to Mayor and elected members sent re weather event and key messages. Promises ‘more fulsome response in due course’.	Note: Mayor not on AKGEOC email list at this point.
1748-53	Henderson Civic Centre suggested as CDC. Controller recaps:	



	<p>Standing up ECC at yellow virtually tonight and physically in the morning</p> <p>Will assess matter of declaration 'as we get more information'.</p> <p>Situation is 'serious but apart from one comment about people potentially being trapped underwater and that is not verified-I'd be keen to understand who said that and whether we can verify that as soon as possible'.</p> <p>Agencies seem to 'have resources at the moment'.</p>	
1750	Metservice issues severe thunderstorm warning for Auckland city, Albany, Rodney, Gulf, Kaipara and Waitakere. Says torrential rain expected.	
1750	Waka Kotahi tweets that northern motorway blocked by flooding southbound.	
1750	<p>GM EM asks, 'when should we update the Mayor?'</p> <p>Controller advises 'as soon as this call finishes.'</p>	
1751	NEMA REMA asks for SitRep. Told activation report will be circulated soon.	
1752	<p>Meeting advised Ranui evacuation centre no go as conditions in the west are more complicated than first thought.</p> <p>Controller asks for alternative locations to stand up as quickly as possible.</p>	
1753	Teams chat during meeting with key messages.' Stay home if safe etc...'	
1753	Metservice issues another severe thunderstorm warning.	
1753	NEMA REMA advises should consider a declaration 'before dark because it's a pain afterwards' and that IMT should seek an update from Met service.	
1754	Controller 'We could declare now but we are still getting an	

	<p>assessment. Reports of people being trapped underwater are not corroborated. Need to chase that down as soon as possible’.</p> <p>GM EM ‘What additional powers do we need?’ Declaration ‘seems premature based on advice from FENZ/Police that they have what they need at the moment.’.</p>	
1754	Councillor Parfitt emails Mayor and others ‘just a heads up that the low-lying areas of east coast bays are facing severe flooding’.	
1755	Waka Kotahi tweets that flooding on northern motorway near Northcote is causing delays	
1756	Controller instructs Police and FENZ to be proactive if they are overwhelmed given that declaration decision is ‘finely balanced’.	
1756	GM EM reports he is ‘trying to track a contact number for the Mayor down’.	
1758	Henderson Rec Centre suggested as CDC and site assessment team is redirected. Red Cross confirmed for deployment.	
1758	FENZ now reports ‘mass evacuations in Henderson’. Controller asks for ‘plan b’ evac centres.	
1800	Controller instructs all functional leads to contact five deep lists and place resources on standby.	
1801	GM EM advises that he has contacted Mayor who is expecting call from him and Controller.	
1802	Concert again raised. Noted stadium has been open for 90 minutes. Who will contact venue? 39 mm rain has fallen on Mt Smart area.	
1803	Controller ‘Unfair to put that decision [to cancel the concert] on the Mayor – it’s an operational decision’.	

1807	PIMs told to advise people against non-essential travel including to large events.	
1808	Decision to convene at 2030 for next IMT.	
1809	Welfare functional lead requests confirmation on location of evac centres before despatching staff.	
1810	SH12 closes near Brynderwyns detour.	
1810	PIM notes media will not be fronted by Mayor but by GMEM 'for the foreseeable'.	Mayor and his staff were unaware of this.
1811	AEM tweets that severe weather is causing problems in north, northwest and West Auckland. '...if it's safe, stay home, call 111 if your life is at risk, don't drive through floodwaters. We will continue to provide updates.'	
1812	PIM notes she has been locked out of twitter and asks for ICT help. Meeting recording stopped for 'tasking discussions'.	
1815	A teams meeting is held between AEM staff, Mayor and Mayor's Chief of staff. AEM advises the Mayor that a declaration of emergency is not needed, and that this advice is unanimously supported by other agencies. The Mayor's office staff ask for a template declaration to be provided to them, (received at 1932). Director Governance is in and out of the Mayor's office providing liaison with AEM from around this time.	
1821	FENZ calls for service now number five hundred.	
1824	Follow up email to GRP AC from Local Board member Parfitt. Confirmation of 'raw sewage flowing on Hibiscus Coast'. Warns of need to prepare for high tide. Response from AEM at 1829 with the standard key messages.	

1835	Metservice issues severe thunderstorm warning.	
1838	Mayor's Chief of Staff asks for confirmation of evacuation centres in west and asks if any planned for south. GM EM replies re need to make sure sites are safe.	Teams chat
1900	Teams meeting re weather recorded in Mayor's diary- one hour duration.	
1900	Elton John concert is cancelled due to weather. Most are already in stadium.	
1912	Mayor calls Councillor Stewart. 'Elton John concert should have been closed earlier'.	
1915	Media advisory stating AEM is preparing to assist emergency services. Official advice is to stay home or call 111.	
1915	Waka Kotahi issues 'final tweet' on the Brynderwyn route.	
1916	AT tweets re special buses to help fans get home from Elton John concert. News reports of problems at Mt Smart stadium as people leave.	
1916	Mayor's Chief of Staff says he is with Mayor awaiting advice. 'It's quite bad out there.'	Call logs
1917	Text from Chief Executive to Director Governance. 'I have not called the Mayor. He is getting updates from AEM and I'm sure others. Let me know if there is anything we need to do.' Reply is 'Will do. Lots of scrambling going on...'	Call logs
1930	Body found in the Wairau valley.	
1930	AEM issues Emergency Activation report. Status Orange. Says event is being managed virtually but ECC will be opened at 0800 Jan 28.	
1930	AEM has liaison staff embedded in FENZ RCC.	
1933	Waka Kotahi issues its 'final' briefing on social media.	Twitter

1935	Landslide in Remuera. One person missing.	
1940	Waka Kotahi issues motorway update.	
1942	Email from Councillor Sayers to GM EM, CEO and Director Governance. 'please be alert to severe flooding underway Kumeu/Huapai'.	Council email
1950	Waka Kotahi update on southern motorway closure.	
1955	Mayor speaks to RNZ. 'We just need the rain to stop'.	
2000	Images on news media of flooding on northern motorway, flooded buses and flooding that has closed the Waterview tunnel.	
2025	Chief Executive texts Director Governance asking if Councillor Stewart is required to do anything or chair meeting. Reply is 'She is briefed and nothing particularly for her to do.'	Cnr Stewart is Chair ACDEM Committee
2030	IMT meeting commences.	Functional leads plus Met service, Health, liaison for lifelines, additional NEMA personnel, ATOC and some utilities
2035	One thousand calls to FENZ. FENZ reiterates calls to only call 111 if life at risk. FENZ calls NZDF to assist.	
2036	Met service briefing predicts further torrential rain over next 2-3 hours up to 120mm, with localised downpours of high intensity. Thunderstorms will continue and red warning will be extended.	
2036	Discussion of high tide at midnight with king tide levels expected.	
2037	Surf lifeguards rescue sixty-nine people from North Shore using inflatables.	
2037	RCC briefing by FENZ, Police and St John. Over one thousand weather related calls to FENZ. Rescues continue with fifty evacuated from rest homes.	

	<p>Forty-three people trapped Kumeu. Weather events now spreading across Auckland city, North Shore. Forward control point in West Harbour with more to be established.</p> <p>All FENZ resources now fully utilised.</p> <p>FENZ advise that media are asking for key messages - need for coordination.</p> <p>The 'big thing;' is that there is nowhere to send affected people. Would 'like to see urgency in regard to safe havens.'</p> <p>Police advise over three hundred weather rated calls for service on wait list with all resources fully utilised. Police are 'overwhelmed with the event'. Evacuations continue from City and Remuera, now also in Mangere and expecting more evacuations.</p> <p>Evacuees being housed at Waitakere Fire Station and Henderson Police Station.</p>	
2037	<p>Runway excursion at Auckland airport. Airport car park flooded. Airport closed to all flights with people trapped in international terminal.</p>	
2040	<p>Police state preference for a declaration to be made to prevent people returning to unsafe homes and to allow them to secure property. Reiterate they are overwhelmed with calls for service.</p>	
2045	<p>St John advises pressure across Tamaki Makaurau is at major level and at extreme level in Auckland city. Ambulance staff are struggling to return home and vehicles are stuck. Request that locations of evacuation centres be advised urgently.</p>	
2050	<p>Police advise one unverified fatality, still being investigated.</p>	
2051	<p>RCC reiterate request for a declaration as are fully stretched. Need to be able to stand some</p>	

	staff down and require additional resources.	
2053	Controller advises that they are about to declare. Asks RCC what declaration will allow them to do. Response is 'to secure property, deal with those refusing to leave' and help with resourcing.	
2055	Controller advises that he alerted Mayor 'a couple of hours ago' re declaration and will 'call him straight away to set this in motion. And that's what my recommendation will be'.	
2058	FENZ reiterates need for messages to go to the public telling them what to do. Notes the need to provide special services to those with disabilities.	
2100	RCC stresses 'absolute urgency must be placed on centres to take evacuees' as the light is now reducing. Note that fifty evacuated from Pukekohe rest home and taken to nearby hospital as no evac centre available.	
2101	Minister of Transport instructs Waka Kotahi to reopen communication channels. Tweets that CDEM is best source of information.	
2102	Police note have invited iwi liaison into meeting.	
2102	Glenfield supermarket flooded.	
2104	Functional lead for logistics. advises that evac option is a school in Kelston. Says do not have enough staff to resource multiple centres across Auckland. Concerned about numbers of evacuees and availability of centres not flooded or leaking.	
2105	Logistics lead notes community facilities team does not have information on current state of the possible properties.	
2105	Response manager suggests Controller goes offline to get the declaration to the Mayor while	

	meeting continues. Controller agrees.	
2106	Discussion of possible use of contractor facilities as evac centres.	
2108	NEMA offers to support GMEM and Controller in the briefing to the Mayor. Discussion taken offline.	
2110	Email from Mayor's Chief of Staff to all Councillors. 'Mayor is awaiting imminent advice on whether a declaration of a state of local emergency is required or useful'.	
2110	Surf lifeguard rescues in Helensville including child and elderly woman.	
2111	RCC asks whether it is time to consider an Emergency Mobile Alert. Little response in meeting.	
2112	Discussion GMEM/Controller re declaration template. NEMA asked to check accuracy of template. Noted that messaging will be challenging re evacuation centres. GM EM to talk to Mayor.	
2014	Minister of Transport tweets that 'event is extremely serious.' Ministers and MPs are mobilising. 'A formal declaration sits with the Mayor'.	
2115	Eden Park suggested as evac centre. Functional logistics and welfare leads say insufficient staffing for large venue. NEMA requests number of people impacted and data on CDC locations.	
2115	Another teams meeting is held between AEM staff and the Mayor's office. Advice is provided to the Mayor that a declaration is now needed.	
2116	Email from Councillor Bartley to Mayor and Chief of Staff. 'Please declare an emergency now'. Says that people in Mangere are without homes and don't know	

	what to do. Says 111 services are overloaded.	
2116	Health rep notes that Red Cross are on standby to supplement staffing. Says that evacuees have been dropped at North Shore hospital which is diverting health resources.	
2117	Police offer to find evac centre if AEM can staff it.	
2118	Functional lead for logistics advises St Leonards School in Kelston is ready and open.	
2119	Request (from NCC?) for evac centre messages to go to public asap. PIM advises media release is ready but needs location details.	
2120	NEMA says conversation is 'very tactical' and people are busy. Should take offline and reconvene in an hour. Agreed next meeting at 2215.	
2120	Controller stresses need to scramble for evac centres. Will 'make sure declaration is actioned. Paul [GM EM] is doing that as we speak'.	
2121	Functional manager asked about possible use of marae for evacuation centres. Says they 'do not use marae as evac centre for a variety of reasons'.	
2122	Noted that AC call centre has over two hundred calls in queue. Meeting ends.	
2125	The completed declaration is emailed to the office of the Mayor.	
2127	AEM ECC is activated at alert level orange	AEM ECC Sitrep
2127	AT advises people to stay home given road closures and public transport cancellations.	
2127	Mayor signs declaration of emergency and provides the document to the PIM.	Time stamped photo
2130	Auckland Airport asks people to stay away. News media show	

	photos of international terminal flooding.	
2131	Metservice issues a red warning for Auckland until 3am, with more heavy rain due.	
2141	Mayor's Chief of staff emails declaration to all Councillors.	
2148	Auckland Councillor Hills calls for a state of emergency to be declared.	
2150	Councillor Bartlett tells media declaration has been issued.	
2156	Christopher Luxon urges Mayor to declare a state of emergency. 'We need a list of evacuation centres for folk to head to.'	
2157	Deputy Mayor tells Radio TodayFM that Mayor has signed declaration.	
2204	AEM tweets re evacuation centre in Kelson, asking people to stay with family if they can.	
Approximately 2200	The Controller arrives at the Mayor's office, with the PIM, to provide support. Remains there until 0400 Saturday 28 January.	
2214	Minister for Civil Defence says Mayor has declared. Says NEMA ready to send resources from around NZ to assist.	
2215	IMT meeting. Start of meeting not recorded. GM heard noting that he needs to brief Mayor re evacuation centres and communications.	Not listed in meeting log.
2217	Logistics lead advises Kelston CDC is open, and people are sheltering there. Advised that North Shore Events Centre being explored as another possibility and that locations in South Auckland are also being investigated.	
2217	AEM media release confirms state of emergency has been declared.	
2218	Meeting discusses H&S arrangements for AC staff and advises security in attendance at Kelston CDC.	

	Meeting told that media and MPs are also at also Kelston CDC.	
2219	NEMA REMA asks for 'data dashboard' re key statistics (such as numbers in CDCs) to help inform Ministers.	
2225	Update from Waka Kotahi on various road closures due to flooding	
2220	REMA asks if intel is being collected at a central point. Intelligence lead asks for Police and FENZ to please send information.	
2234	Email from Councillor Bartley to Chief of staff and GRP All Councillors offering her local marae as an evacuation centre PIM update to IMT re 'flurry of updates, media release around the CDC at St Leonard's, done one up about the state of emergency which is on our Facebook pages, and I've sent it off to NEMA so they can fulfil the processes their end. We'll try and monitor social, it's just a little but crazy and PIM is over at Albert street with the Mayor getting ready to do a press conference, I believe.'	Group email
2238	REMA stresses that evacuation and welfare arrangements are the priority. St John confirms second fatality in Remuera. RCC discusses need for defence personnel for CDCs and an intel update.	
2240	NEMA expresses concern re lack of coherent picture of situation and stresses need for intel to assist with 'sense making'. Says policy makers and politicians need intel. Also flags the need for more frequent upwards communications to NEMA 'every 30 minutes'. Says need numbers of casualties, evacuees, info on hot spots and on response. 'Need to say at, at, what, what, and what's next. In a regular rhythm'	

2241	Prime Minister says Government is 'ready to assist.'	
2243	NEMA stresses need for 'someone to pull all this together' so all agencies on the same page.	
2245	Response manager runs meeting as Controller called away to media briefing. Instructs urgent work on CDCs and asks for 2 NZDF pers per CDC.	
2248	Logistics functional lead confirms Kelston school and North Shore Events Centre as CDCs. Asks meeting for ideas re a southern CDC. Is told that the Deputy Chair CDEM Committee has called with a suggestion about a marae.	
2250	Meeting advised North Shore Event Centre is still being assessed/might need to be an alternative location nearby.	
2251	Intelligence led promises SitRep at 1200 Saturday. Says not getting intelligence through right now.	
2255	Controller returns to meeting. Stresses need for CDCs. Says rain abating and 'the worst is over in the central city'. Discussion around challenges entailed in getting people to CDC and the Controller highlighted this as an action to be prioritised.	
2300	GM EM asks for coordinated data to report to ministers as 'numbers are all over the place'. Noted that people were needed on the ground to prioritise this action.	
2303	Email Text message in IMT suggested Manurewa Sports centre as possible CDC	Chat record
2303	Intelligence lead requests status report 'from all desks. Says will prepare an action plan before midnight, with full SitRep 1200 Saturday 28 th .	
2305	RCC asks for confirmed numbers of evacuees etc.	

2308	Controller asks for 'recce' prior to next ITM at 0830 28 th . NEMA asks 'will you fly a recce first thing in the morning?'	
2309	<p>NEMA asks for more social media communications and suggest important not to leave a communication vacuum.</p> <p>Controller discusses need for abbreviated SitRep at 0830 and a more fulsome one at midday Saturday.</p> <p>Controller leaves meeting. Hands off to alternate. Stresses priority is CDCs and 'constant stream of information'. Thanks team and says, 'weather will have hopefully cleared by midnight.'</p>	
2314	Mayor hosts media briefing to discuss declaration. Controller also attends.	
2315	North shore CDC declared serviceable.	
2315	NEMA asks about the plan between the end of this meeting and the planned 0830 meeting. 'Is the AEM ECC to be activated overnight?' Says it is a big risk, given casualties, to 'close shop at midnight'.	
2318	<p>NEMA says Prime Minister and Minister have real concerns. Perception that this is 'not gripped up'. Need more regular messages to public and a plan. 'Every 2 hours doesn't cut it'. Advises National Coordination centre being stood up. Need to 'allay the fears of the public'. GM EM reiterates need for more frequent messaging.</p> <p>GM EM note that there is 'a lot of messaging going to our [local] politicians...through the platforms that we have'.</p>	
2320	<p>Meeting advised North Shore CDC will be operational in 30 minutes. A DCD will also be available in the south.</p> <p>NEMA says to bear in mind need to staff CDCs for an extended</p>	

	period. Need to use staff beyond AEM group.	
2321	Police ask for social media messaging re SH1 closure at Dome Valley. Asks for message telling people not to come into city from north.	
2321	FENZ advises they need a formal request from AEM to activate USAR resources.	
2322	RCC advises St John is now close to system collapse. 'Situation for medical events is very dire in terms of ambulance availability.'	
2325	Call for information to be sent to intel function. IMT Meeting closes.	
2231	CDC announced in St Leonards school, Kelston	Email to AKGEOC
2343	Prime Minister asks for public updates to increase. National coordination centre in the Beehive is being prepared.	
Saturday Jan 28 0003	Email from Councillor Bartley to all councillors and chief of staff. 'we really need coordination regarding evacuation centres.'	
0006	Email Chief of staff to councillors 'closest evacuation centre to Mangere will be Manurewa sports centre'	
0007	Mayor texts Chief Executive, Chief of staff and Director Governance. 'we need to meet in my office 830 tomorrow with your leadership group...'	Phone records Meeting later took place on Saturday with Mayor and his Office, plus Director Governance.
0030	Beehive bunker stood up with Minister Civil Defence in attendance.	
0038	Second body found in Wairau Valley.	
0039	Civil Defence directs people to additional evacuation centres in Randwick Park and on North Shore.	
0046	Controller (new) formally requests USAR support.	
0100	Airport rainfall measures show 249mm has fallen.	

0116	AEM initial action plan issued. Focus on CDCs, welfare needs, communication.... Note full action plan will be created by noon on 28 January.	
0122	Request from AEM Welfare lead for NZDF support to CDCs (18 pers).	
0130	Prime and Minister for Civil Defence hold press conference.	
0226	CDC moved from North Shore Events Centre to Massey University.	
0259	Media advisory issued re move of CDC sent.	Note Council website still lists Events Centre until 0800.
0309	Email from Rodney local ward member 'I have had to open the Warkworth Town hall as an emergency centre....no information shared or resources available..'	
0311	Email from same sender '100 people and many more in cars....Lots to improve.' Forwarded by GM EM to AEM welfare at 0313	
0412	Storm update from AEM Duty Controller. Details of declaration, 3 CDCs. Key messages.	
0541	Email from Mayor's office to media. 'It has been a terrible night for thousands of Aucklanders...' Gives Mayor and AEM contact details.	
0736	GM EM asks for incorrect CDC on website to be changed.	
0800	NEMA Daily Intelligence briefing issued	
0800	Mayor gives interview to Kim Hill on RNZ. Mayor is asked if the drinking water is safe.	Mayor's office thereafter received an update from Watercare that Auckland water was safe. This was advised to RNZ by mayoral staff.
0837	IMT meeting. Initial action plan sent to Controller at 1am. Response teams worked through the night to set up CDCs. Resource support being provided to CDCs. Fifty	

	<p>people stayed overnight. Notes that the 'normal portfolio' of CDCs was unavailable as they were compromised by the event.'</p> <p>Notes that CDCs are 'absolute top priority I think for us as a collective today, and if you need additional support to achieve that then please let us know what that is.'</p> <p>Controller notes 'full on last night...running into the early hours. Some of the challenges we had were the building intensity of the event and the breadth of it. Apparently, the intensity of the rainfall was the highest we have ever seen. And it was city wide.'</p> <p>Intel lead notes that initial SitRep is pending.</p> <p>GM EM notes that he will deal with the 'political front' to allow the IMT to 'focus on the response'. The Controller notes that GM EM is keeping elected members up to speed and he is keeping the Mayor informed.</p>	
0844	Email Stewart/Halliwell (Watercare) re IMT stood up. Significant impact on water and wastewater. Titirangi residents likely have no water for 48 hours.	
0936	Email from RNZ to Mayor's office asking for an update from the Mayor 'as the lifeline public utility broadcaster'.	
1000	Media release re CDC and information on how to clear up after a flood. 'Auckland wakes up to storm impact...'	
1021	Email from Councillor Filipaina to Mayor and others. '...can someone tell me why a CDC has not been set up in Mangere?' GM EM forwards to Welfare lead at 1105	
1100	Mayor and staff take privately paid helicopter flight over Auckland to survey flood damage, along with members of the media.	

1100	NEMA first Situation Report.	
1148	Email to deputy Mayor and some councillors with complaints about the AEM website.	
1230	AEM Situation Report: CDC information, actions carried out, predicted incident progression, intended actions and resources in place.	
1246	Email to all councillors and copied to Mayor and GM EM. 'Situation in Mangere is dire...Randwick park is 18km away...'	
1300	NEMA National Coordination Centre Initial Action Plan.	
1300	Mayor and Councillors. Emergency briefing on significant weather event. Mayor in transit to meet Prime Minister.	
1333	Request from logistics to NZDF for resourcing for CDCs.	
1337	Media release: 'Clean up begins...'	
1422	Update to AEM re drinking and storm water operations.	
1430	<p>IMT meeting.</p> <p>Duty ECC manager asks each functional lead to update re status of their function, current priorities and support required.</p> <p>Controller working on public information and reaching out to communities to access help, property stability and waste solutions. Logistics - accommodation is a priority. CDCs North 20 people, South 24 people, West 41 people. Getting a few animals. Require more welfare staff.</p> <p>Change of Controller at 1434.</p> <p>Confirmed that next IMT will be 0830 Sunday 29 January.</p>	
1500	Mayor's calendar shows media and then to West Auckland.	
1530	The Prime Minister, the Mayor and AEM hold a press conference.	

1535	Email confirming that comms relating to landslips is being prepared.	
1641	AEM staff note that 'Kelston is at capacity'.	
1711	AEM email re the approach to waste management.	
1724	AEM email re storm update.	
1800	AEM Situation Report. 372 welfare needs assessments, 329 calls to AC, 179 requests for accommodation. Fifty-seven overnight stays. Three confirmed deaths and one missing.	
1800	NEMA Second Situation Report.	
1810	Confirmation of a pop-up community centre in Mangere from Sunday 29, 11-3pm.	
1826	Email to Controller saying accommodation service is stepping up efforts.	
1852	AEM Media release re CDC and information links.	
Sunday Jan 29	IMT meeting held.	
0830	Regular media stand ups commence from this day.	
0942	AEM email update on wastewater operations.	
1000	At the request of mayoral office staff, Council begins a sequence of three public briefings per day, and one elected member briefing.	
1017	AEM briefing with Metservice.	
1100	AEM Situation Report. AEM at alert level orange. FENZ had twenty-two active calls at 830am 28 January down from 2000 overnight.	
1140	Email from NCC Operations to NEMA and CDEM Group. NEMA has established a deployment function. Surge staffing can be requested.	
1200	Third NEMA report on public safety messages and Government response.	

1300	Mayor's diary shows visit to Mt Eden.	
1345	Police advise AEM that fourth fatality is confirmed.	
1400	Mayor's diary shows visits to Mangere, Manurewa and emergency briefing update.	
1438	IMT meeting. Rostering issues and need more staff at CDCs. Airport needs additional accommodation for those stranded. Two thousand people may need to be accommodated. Some outages reported.	
1530	Mayor's calendar shows visit to Shore Road with Deputy Mayor.	
1600	Second National Action Plan from NEMA.	
1612	Metservice issues severe weather watch for Auckland.	
1654	Metservice issues severe thunderstorm watch for north Auckland.	
1700	AEM ECC issues situation report. 1221 calls to AC call centre. 316 people requiring assistance.	
1703	Email from Chief of Staff to all councillors confirming an expectation re Mangere centre.	
1717	Request AEM to MBIE for 30 additional building inspectors to support the response.	
1740	AEM issues storm update. Mayoral relief fund is available. Building assessors are on the ground. 98 % of Vector outages are restored.	
1802	AEM media advisory re heavy rain watch. Updates CDC information.	
1852	A community led hub is set up at Pukekohe High School.	
1924	Email from Councillor Dalton to Director Governance. 'Mangere needs a 24-hour service...'	
1939	Media release from Council on Mangere emergency hub.	
1946	EMA alert issued by AEM re high probability of worsening weather.	



2015	ECC issues a Flooding Action Plan.	
2043	Media release on Auckland Council response efforts.	
2213	Change in Duty Controller.	
Monday 30 January 1100	ELT Flood response meeting – operational updates.	
1630	ELT Flood response check in.	
1700	AEM Numbers at a glance document issued .	
Tuesday 31 January 1700	AEM Situation report.	
Wednesday 1 February	ELT Flood response actions register.	