

Report **05.236**
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Committee **Environment Committee**
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Changes to Regional Civil Defence functions

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee that the Council is no longer required to have a Regional Civil Defence Committee and, as a consequence, to recommend some changes to the Environment Committee's terms of reference.

2. Significance of the Decision

The matters in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76 (3) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

The Civil Defence Act 1983 required regional and united councils to appoint and maintain Regional Civil Defence Committees, prepare regional civil defence plans, provide for the maintenance and operation of regional civil defence organisations, and appoint a Regional Controller. The Environment Committee has been serving as the Regional Civil Defence Committee.

The new Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (the Act) requires the establishment of Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Groups - consortia of local authorities based on existing regional council boundaries, working in partnership with emergency services (Police, Fire, Health), lifeline utilities and others - to deliver CDEM at the local level. The Wellington Region CDEM Group was established on 15 May 2003.

The Act also requires the preparation and implementation of a Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan (CDEM Group Plan) within two years of formation. The Wellington Region CDEM Group Plan was approved by the CDEM Group on 5 May 2005 and became operative immediately.

Section 118 (2) of the Act requires existing regional civil defence plans to remain in force until the first CDEM Group Plan for the area becomes operative. Section 119 (1) of the Act requires sections 23 to 42 of the Civil Defence Act 1983 (which relate to the functions, duties and powers of the

regional councils) to continue to apply until the first CDEM Group Plan for the area become operative.

As the Region now has an operative CDEM Group Plan, all civil defence arrangements and provisions under the Civil Defence Act 1983 are now obsolete. However, under the new Act, Greater Wellington Regional Council (GW) has a number of roles and responsibilities for emergency management in the Wellington region. These are outlined below.

4. Greater Wellington's Emergency Management obligations

4.1 Administering Authority

Greater Wellington Regional Council is the administering authority for the Wellington Region CDEM Group (s.23(1) of the CDEM Act 2002).

As such, it:

- Serves as the CDEM Group and CEG secretariat, including developing meeting agendas, preparing order papers, arranging meeting venues and taking and disseminating minutes of meetings.
- Provides financial management for the CDEM Group, including budgeting and reporting.

4.2 CDEM Group Emergency Management Office (Group EMO)

Greater Wellington Regional Council provides the Group EMO for the CDEM Group. The role of the Group EMO is to:

- Co-ordinate the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the CDEM Group Plan
- Publish the CDEM Group Plan
- Provide professional and technical advice and services to the CDEM Group and CEG
- Carry out functions specified for the Group Emergency Management Office by the Group Plan or the CDEM Group
- Co-ordinate reporting of CDEM Group work programmes to the CEG and CDEM Group, and
- Provide a Group response capability, including the Group EOC facility, staff and resources.

4.3 CDEM Group Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)

Greater Wellington is responsible for providing the CDEM Group EOC. It is currently located on Level 4 of the Regional Council Centre. In an emergency event, the role of the Group EOC, under the direction of the Group Controller is to:

- Co-ordinate and/or support activated Local EOCs
- Receive, assess and disseminate information for emergency response agencies
- Where possible, provide logistical support when requested by Local EOC
- Ensure major emergency response agencies are involved in the Group response, and major support agencies have liaison officers available in the EOC
- Ensure communications are in place with key regional response agencies
- Receive, assess and disseminate information about lifeline utility services through a Lifelines Co-ordination Centre within the EOC
- Provide information to the media about the event and the Group response
- Report to Central Government

4.4 CDEM Group Plan work programme

The EMO, as well as Greater Wellington, are identified as the lead agency for a number of projects identified in the CDEM Group Plan work programmes, for example, the CDEM Group Recovery Plan.

4.5 CDEM Group appointments

In the CDEM Group Plan, the following Greater Wellington staff have been appointed:

- Group Controller: Dr Wayne Hastie
- Alternate Group Controllers:
 - Colin Wright (1st alternate)
 - John Allard (2nd alternate)
 - Rian van Schalkwyk (3rd alternate)
- Group Recovery Manager: Dr Jane Bradbury
- Alternate Group Recovery Manager: Barry Leonard

5. Changes to the terms of reference for the Environment Committee

The above shows that Greater Wellington still has a major responsibility for civil defence emergency management in the Region. It is suggested therefore, that the Environment Committee continues to have a role in emergency management, but that its terms of reference be changed to reflect the new circumstances.

The relevant parts of the Committee's terms of reference are shown below, along with recommended changes:

5.1 Membership

In addition to Councillors, to include:

- (1) A statutory appointee as required by the Civil Defence Act 1983 when considering emergency management matters.*

Section 5.1(1) can now be deleted:

5.2 Objectives of the Environment Committee

5.2.3 Objective C

To promote and enhance comprehensive emergency management, including mitigation, awareness, response and recovery programmes, within the Region;

Section 5.2.3 should be replaced by the following:

“To carry out the Council's roles and responsibilities under the CDEM Group Plan and the CDEM Act 2002.”

5.3 Specific responsibilities of the Environment Committee

- 5.3.4 Reviewing and approving civil defence plans submitted by city and district councils*

Section 5.3.4 can now be deleted as it is no longer a Greater Wellington function.

6. Communication

No separate communication is required.

7. Recommendations:

That the Committee recommends to Council that it:

1. *receive the report and note its contents; and*
2. *amend the terms of reference for the Environment Committee as outlined in this report.*

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