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**Report 02.707**

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Report to Environment Committee  
from Rian van Schalkwyk, Manager, Emergency Management

## **Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups**

### **1. Purpose**

To inform the Committee about the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 and the requirement to establish a Civil Defence Emergency Management Group in the region.

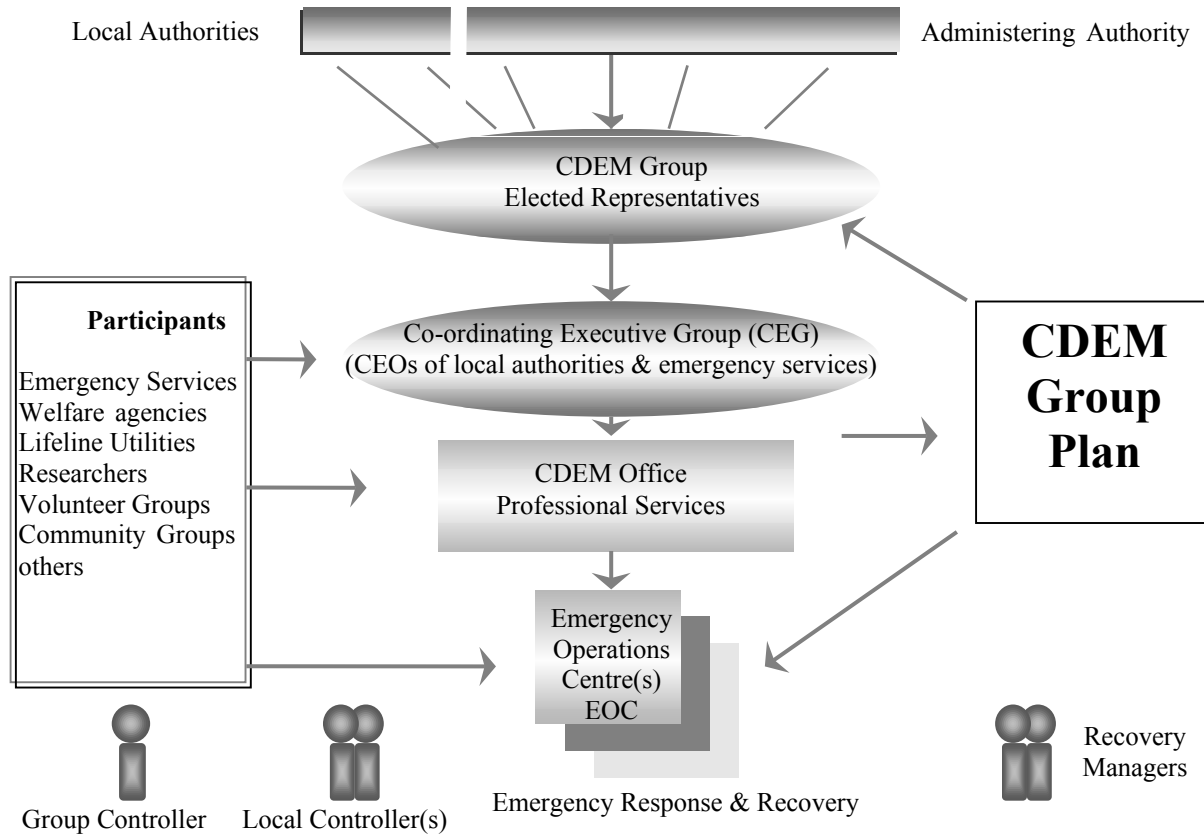
### **2. Background**

On 8 October 2002, Parliament passed the Civil Defence Emergency Management Bill. The new CDEM Act 2002, which repeals the Civil Defence Act 1983, seeks to improve the resilience of New Zealand communities to disasters through promoting a comprehensive and integrated approach to managing risk. The commencement date for the Act is set for 1 December 2002.

At the heart of the new arrangements is the establishment of Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups (CDEM Groups) which, in effect, are a consortia of local authorities working together with emergency services, the health sector, lifeline utilities and others to deliver civil defence emergency management on a regional basis.

### 3. The Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002: Key Features

#### 3.1 The CDEM Group Structure



The Act requires organisational arrangements for CDEM management, incorporating:

3.1.1 A CDEM Group comprising elected representatives of the constituent local authorities formed as a joint standing committee within six months of the Act commencing. CDEM group functions include:

- Hazard management
- Providing resources
- Providing for emergency response and recovery

3.1.2 A Co-ordinating Executive Group (CEG) comprising chief executive officers of the constituent local authorities plus senior members of the emergency services. CEG functions include:

- Advising the CDEM Group
- Implementing CDEM Group decisions
- Overseeing the development and implementation of the CDEM Plan

- 3.1.3 An appropriate body of trained and competent personnel, organisational structures and process arrangements to ensure CDEM delivery to communities. In this regard CDEM groups have to decide on appropriate structures (e.g. emergency management office, emergency operations centres, etc. to carry out emergency response and recovery).
- 3.1.4 The CDEM Group must appoint a Group Controller (and to make provision for alternates to perform the functions and duties of the Group Controller in his absence) for its area to manage (direct and co-ordinate) the response to a declared emergency. The CDEM Group may also appoint one or more Local Controllers to carry out any of the functions of the Group Controller.
- 3.1.5 To return to normality as soon as possible after an event, CDEM Groups are encouraged to appoint Recovery Manager (s) to facilitate recovery activities.
- 3.1.6 Emergency Services (Police, Fire, Health) and Lifeline Utilities (Radio NZ and TVNZ, air and sea ports, water, sewerage and waste water, electricity and gas, roads, rail, telecommunications, petroleum industry) are required to plan for and be able to implement procedures to ensure continuity of business and response. They are also required to establish planning and operational relationships with CDEM Groups and to join, participate in, and benefit from regionally focussed utility activities such as Lifelines Groups.
- 3.1.7 One of the functions of the CDEM Group is to develop, approve and implement a CDEM Group Plan ( to be in place 2-years after establishing the CDEM Group). CDEM Group planning involves:
- sustainable management of hazards via risk reduction, readiness, response and recovery
  - managing all hazards – natural and man-made
  - integration of all agencies involved in delivering CDEM

### 3.2 **Declarations**

Every CDEM group must appoint at least one member to have the power to declare a state of emergency for all or part of the Group's area. Mayors have the right to declare a state of local emergency in their own district or a ward within that district.

When a local emergency is declared, the Group Controller will direct and co-ordinate the response. He or she may have any number of local controllers who also work to co-ordinate the response, but at all times they are subject to the direction of the Group Controller.

## 4. **The Role of the Wellington Regional Council**

The Act requires regional councils to be the administering authorities for CDEM Groups. An administering authority must provide the administrative and related services that the CDEM Group may require, with the agreed costs of these services being shared equally among members, unless agreed otherwise.

## 5. **Progress in this Region**

At a workshop of chief executives held on 12 November, it was decided to set up a Working Party to establish an action plan to progress the establishment of a CDEM Group in this Region. The working party will report back to the chief executives before Christmas.

## 6. **Transitional Arrangements**

Certain sections of the Civil Defence Act 1983, (which relate to the functions, duties and powers of local authorities, emergency powers and the appointment of disaster recovery co-ordinators) are still in force until the CDEM Group has been established and the CDEM Group Plan for the Group becomes operative.

The CDEM Act 2002 makes provision for transitional arrangements which requires the retention of adequate civil defence plans. Existing plans will remain in force until the new CDEM Group Plan for the area has been prepared and approved.

Review of regional and local civil defence plans is still required under the transitional arrangements outlined in s119(1) of the Act until the plans are superseded by the first CDEM Group Plan.

## 7. **Conclusion**

Progress is underway in the Region on the formation of the CDEM Group.

Although the Act is not prescriptive (something that also may be a disadvantage), it provides scope for a high degree of flexibility to suit local conditions, expectations and resources.

It will require territorial authorities, emergency services, lifelines utilities and other involved groups to work together co-operatively to ensure that the Region is ready to cope with a major emergency.

## 8. **Recommendation**

*(1) That the report be received and its contents noted.*

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission

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