



Report **06.664**
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Committee **Landcare**
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Dissemination of flood hazard information

1. Purpose

To advise the Committee of the Council's policies related to the assessment and dissemination of flood hazard information.

2. Significance of the decision

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

3. Background

At its meeting on 22 June 2006 the Landcare Committee received a report on the Mangaroa River Flood Hazard Assessment, which advised that a copy of the Summary Report document for that study was to be forwarded to the Upper Hutt City Council. In their discussion on the results of the flood hazard assessment, the committee members requested that they be formally advised of the Council's policy for ensuring that such flood hazard information is appropriately disseminated to the local territorial authorities involved, their communities and directly affected landowners.

4. Regional policy statement

4.1 Policies

The 1995 Regional Policy Statement (RPS) provides the basis for identifying, assessing and informing the communities of the region on flooding, within the wider *Natural Hazards* context where flooding and earthquakes are identified as the hazards with the greatest potential to cause adverse effects in this region. The primary policy in the Natural Hazards chapter of the RPS in this regard is *Policy 1*, which is:

To ensure that there is sufficient information available on natural hazards to guide decision making.

Further policies ensure that appropriate matters for planning and decision making are considered and that people and communities are provided with relevant information and advice for this.

4.2 Methods

The RPS then provides for suitable methods to help achieve the natural hazards objectives and policies, which in relation to flooding states that flood hazard assessments will be completed for all major floodplains in the Region and that these assessments will include an analysis of the potential effects of flooding events (Method 1). The Regional Freshwater Plan (1999) provides a comprehensive list of the flood hazard assessments that will be carried out.

In regard to the dissemination of the results of those flood hazard assessments, *Method 7* in the Natural Hazards chapter of the RPS states that:

The Wellington Regional Council will make information it has on natural hazards available to the people and communities of the Wellington Region.

5. Assessment and dissemination of information

The RPS provides the Flood Protection Department with both a duty to investigate flood hazards and to make the resulting flood hazard information available to the people and communities of the region. This is consistent with the overall Natural Hazards objective of the RPS to ensure that *any adverse effects of natural hazards on the environment of the Region are reduced to an acceptable level.*

Flood *risk* combines the flood hazard with the vulnerability to that hazard, so that it is the potential risk that establishes the standard and extent of the current flood hazard assessment programme. This in turn explains why there have been a greater number of flood hazard assessments carried out in the Western part of the region.

5.1 Method 1 Flood hazard assessments

In the Western part of the region we have undertaken flood hazard assessments of the following floodplains:

- Hutt River
- Waikanae River
- Otaki River
- Porirua Stream
- Waiwhetu Stream
- Wainuiomata River
- Mangaone Stream
- Waitohu Stream
- Mangaroa River

The remaining stream programmed to be evaluated is the Pinehaven Stream.

This will complete all of the major assessments required in the western part of the region but leaves a number to be completed in the Wairarapa. With the merging of the flood protection functions into one department we propose a review of all floodplains in the region with a view to identify and prioritise the investigations necessary to complete flood hazard assessments on all floodplains with a significant existing community at risk and/or where development pressures may cause a future flood risk.

5.2 Method 7 – Dissemination of the flood hazard information

The flood hazard information is disseminated to the community in 4 key ways:

- a) The provision of flood hazard maps to the territorial authorities which they hold in their hazard registers and which may be reflected in their district plans.
- b) The provision of flood hazard advice when requested for resource consent applications or by members of the community seeking advice prior to purchase of a property.
- c) Through consultation undertaken as part of the preparation of floodplain management plans or scheme reviews. Our consultation is generally very extensive and is considered an effective way of advising the wider community of the flood risk.
- (d) The provision of flood warnings to TLA's and directly to the community in certain circumstances.

6. Comment

The Council is currently reviewing its RPS which will then lead onto reviews of the regional plans. The Flood Protection department will be taking an active part in these reviews with the aim of ensuring flood risk remains appropriately dealt with in these plans. We will investigate how other Regional and District Councils provide for flood risk management in their areas to ensure we are up with national best practice.

7. Communication

There are no specific communication requirements at this stage.

8. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***

Report prepared by:

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