

Cook Islands
National Disaster Risk Management Plan
2017
FINAL

27.02.2017

FORWARD

(Words from the Prime Minister)

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Definition

Agency: means a government agency or non-government agency, Essential Services, Island Councils and includes all their employees, agents, consultants and contractors

Climate Change Adaptation: the reduction of vulnerability to the increasing risks of climate change and climate variability through adaptation processes and strengthening human and institutional capacities to assess, plan and respond to the challenges.

Command: the direction of members and resources of an organisation in the performance of its agreed roles and tasks. The authority to command is established in legislation or by agreement within an organisation.

Control: the direction of emergency management activities in a designated emergency situation. The authority for control is established in legislation or in an emergency (or disaster) plan, and carries with it responsibility for tasking and coordinating other organisations in accordance with the needs of the situation.

Contingency Planning: the process of describing roles/responsibilities and arrangements for the performance of key response functions specific to a designated major threat (e.g. cyclones, floods, major fires, hazardous materials incidents, airport/port emergencies, animal/plant disease, marine pollution etc.).

Coordination: the bringing together of organisations to ensure effective emergency management response and recovery, and is primarily concerned with systematic acquisition and application of resources (people, material, equipment etc) in accordance with requirements imposed by the threat or impact of an emergency or disaster.

Disaster: a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources. A disaster is a function of the risk process. It results from the combination of hazards, conditions of vulnerability and insufficient capacity or measures to reduce the potential negative consequences of risk.

Disaster Management (also known as Emergency Management): the organization and management of resources and responsibilities for dealing with all aspects of emergencies/disasters, in particular preparedness, response and recovery.

Disaster Risk Management: the performance of all forms of activities, including structural and non-structural measures to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) risks and lessen the impacts of natural, man-made, environmental and technological disasters.

Disaster Risk Reduction: the minimizing of disaster risks to avoid or reduce the adverse impacts of hazards within the broad context of sustainable development.

Emergency: an actual or imminent event that endangers or threatens life, property or the environment and which requires a significant coordinated response

Emergency Operations Centre EOC: the facility from which the control and coordination of emergency operations is carried out.

Essential Services: means any entity referred to in section 23 of the DRM Act, and listed in the Schedule or notified by the Director of EMCI pursuant to section 6(9). These are entities or

agencies that have essential services to the public as a whole before, during and after a disaster.

Hazard: a potential or existing condition that may cause harm to people, or damage to property or the environment. (Source of risk)

Incident: an event, which can be dealt with by one or more agencies. Incidents may involve a threat to life and property, but are generally small scale, and have consequences that can be relatively easily contained.

Institutional Arrangements: the institutional framework - the relationship and the mechanisms of coordination among organisations, institutions, and government and non-government organisations. This includes their human resources, funding, equipment and supplies, leadership and effectiveness.

Lead Agency: an agency nominated in a plan as primarily responsible for the management of a specific function or for the control role in a specified type of event.

Joint National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation: A roadmap for the implementation of the strategy of “establishing a coordinated and effective national disaster risk reduction and disaster management system for all hazards” as articulated under Goal 6 of the National Sustainable Development Plan 2007-2010.

National Emergency Operations Centre NEOC: a facility from which the control of national emergency or disaster operations and coordination of resources is carried out.

Preparedness: the arrangements and systems to ensure that, should an emergency occur, communities are prepared and all those resources and systems which are needed to cope with the effects can be efficiently mobilised and deployed.

Prevention: the regulatory and physical measures to ensure that emergencies are prevented, or their effects mitigated.

Recovery: the coordinated process of supporting emergency-affected communities in reconstruction of the physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical well-being.

Relief: the coordinated process of providing humanitarian relief and basic community support services during and immediately after the impact of a disaster.

Residual Risk: the remaining level of risk after risk treatment measures have been taken.

Response: the actions taken in anticipation of, during, and immediately after an emergency to ensure that its effects are minimised, and that people affected are given immediate relief and support.

Responding Agency Plans: the designated plans that described specific organisational response and business continuity arrangements.

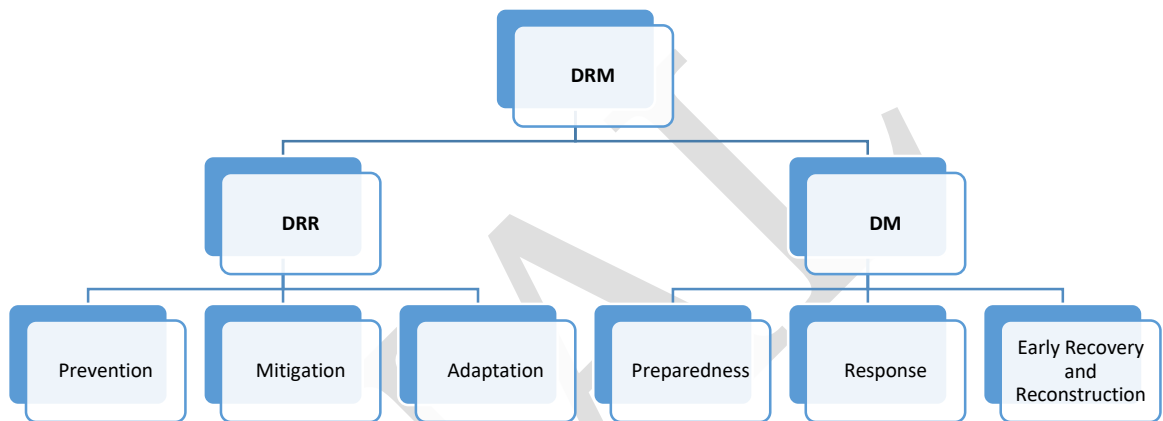
Risk: the likelihood of harmful consequences arising from the interaction of hazards and vulnerable elements (people, infrastructure or the environment).

Standard Operating Procedures: the prescribed routine action to be followed by staff during emergency operations.

Support Agency: an agency allocated in a plan as undertaking a support role to the Lead Agency in relation to a specific function or in a specified type of event.

Vulnerability: the extent to which a community's structure, services or environment is likely to be damaged or disrupted by the impact of a hazard.

Fig. 1. Disaster Risk Management



PART 1

INTRODUCING THE PLAN – THE BASICS

1.1 Let's keep our people safe and secure

All of us want to live safe, secure, lives. The only purpose of the state is to promote the welfare and interests of its people – Government has no other purpose.

Hazards and risks are part of daily life. Government must provide leadership and guidance to make sure our people and their property are kept safe and secure.

Parliament has passed the Disaster Risk Management Act 2007 (“the DRM Act”). But Disaster Risk Management (DRM) is not just Parliament’s business – **it is everyone’s business.**

The DRM Act is the backbone of disaster risk management in the Cook Islands. But it is just that – the bare bones. The challenge for Government is make sure all areas of central and local government and essential services to the public take a close and detailed look at their own operations, resources and outputs. The DRM Act assumes that **all agencies, at all times** are mindful of the need to keep this country’s people, their properties and essential infrastructures safe and secure from hazards and risks that threaten to become emergencies or disasters.

This Plan is designed to help agencies achieve that. It focuses on establishing the structure - institutional arrangements and operational procedures – to change mind-sets and prepare for these challenges.

1.2 Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)- Disaster Management (DM); the role of all agencies

The Plan centres around two important ideas:

- that we can either prevent or lower the risk of disaster in the first place – *disaster risk reduction*; and
- that we can minimise harm to people and property if disaster does strike – by properly managing our preparedness, response and recovery - *disaster management*.

These are simple concepts; two examples illustrate their relationship to each other and the role of relevant

- If we put a fence at the top of a cliff, people are less likely to fall over – this is the idea of disaster risk reduction.
- If we have a fully equipped ambulance at the bottom of the cliff, we have the best chance of saving lives – minimising injury and loss and promoting recovery is the aim of disaster management.
- And while fence building may be the work of CIIC and ambulance services the work of the Ministry of Health, public health and safety is best achieved if the two arms of Government deal with the hazards and risks in a consistent and complementary way.

In brief;

- this Plan describes the structure and processes for disaster risk reduction and disaster management decision-making for the Cook Islands
- These, in turn, guide the agencies who must prepare the plans, procedures and programmes that are necessary to strengthen the resilience of the nation and its communities.

1.3 This Plan - where it fits into the overall scheme of things

This plan has been developed under the DRM Act. It has been endorsed by the National DRM Council (“DRM Council”) established under that Act.

The DRM Council has the power to review and to amend any part of this Plan during its life. Amendments, though, must be approved by Cabinet.

A mid-term review of this Plan must be carried out by the DRM Council, through EMCI, on the third anniversary of the Plan.

This plan replaces the Cook Islands National Disaster Risk Management Arrangements 2009. Those Arrangements have been useful, but agencies particularly in the Outer Islands and at Vaka (Puna) level (in Rarotonga) are still struggling to come to grips with DRM.

Also, those Arrangements had a strong focus on cyclone-related disaster – the current Plan is designed to help all agencies understand their role as measured across the full range of hazards and risks

Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation are interrelated. Both concepts have a risk reduction focus. For now, DRM has strong legal arrangements as outlined in the DRM Act while Climate Change Adaptation is simply a policy and has very little domestic legal underpinning. For this reason, where risk reduction efforts overlap with climate change adaptation policy initiatives, this Plan (and its associated sub-plans) must take precedence.

For future reference, it is important to note that at the national policy level (and at regional level), the two concepts of DRM and CCA are integrated. It is likely that during the life of this Plan that commitment to integration (currently found only in the National Climate and Disaster Compatible Development Policy and the National Joint Action Plan for DRM and CCA) will take full legal effect. This plan and all sub-plans will need to be modified at that time.

Public officials who use the Plan will find that it helps them prepare for and manage hazards and risks associated with Climate Change. See too the comments below about the JNAP – at a policy level at least, steps are underway to combine and coordinate responses.

The Plan is also an important tool to help public officials comply with their obligations under section 23 of the MFEM Act 1995. Every public official is bound by the principles of fiscal prudence to “prudently manage the fiscal risks facing the Crown. Disasters pose huge fiscal risk so the Plan is an important part of that “prudent management”.

Also, although the Cook Islands is not actively pursuing “loss and damage” claims in connection with Climate Change, if it wishes to do so in the future, it must likely show that, as a country, it has taken reasonable steps to mitigate the damage caused to it by others. Disaster risk management is a key element in demonstrating this – and this Plan is important for this reason too.

1.4 Threats – all hazards approach

The Cook Islands has several possible natural and man-made threats. This plan will focus more on the range of natural threats that, from history, have been of greatest threat to lives and property in the Cook Islands.

However, the DRM Act covers all possible disasters, however caused – and history is not a guarantee of the future. No ship has ever sunk in the Avatiu harbour mouth – but if one were to do so, denying access to wharf facilities, the consequences could be devastating for the economy.

A fatal outbreak of disease of epidemic proportions has not occurred in our lifetime but – again – its consequences could be truly disastrous.

All agencies, all the time need to be considering:

- The risks and hazards that may affect their efficient functioning, even if their mandates and outputs are totally unrelated to disaster; and
- Their expected roles, mandates and outputs that are directly, or indirectly, related to disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management.

This Plan does not set out all hazards; it is the job of each agency to identify those hazards that may touch their roles, mandates and outputs in any way; it is for them to rank those hazards. The table, below, is given as an example only

Fig. 2. Table of Hazards

HAZARD CHART	Levels of Risk	Leading Agency
1. Cyclone	High	Cook Islands Meteorological Service (MoT) and Cook Islands Police
2. Drought	High	Infrastructure Cook Islands
3. Food Security	High	Ministry of Agriculture
4. Pest/Fruit Fly	High	Ministry of Agriculture
5. Invasive Species	High	Ministry of Agriculture
6. Climate Change (sea level rise, etc)	High	Climate Change Cook Islands (OPM)
7. Epidemics/Pandemics	Medium	Ministry of Health
8. Flooding	Medium	Infrastructure Cook Islands
9. Sea Surge	Medium	Infrastructure Cook Islands
10. Hazardous Materials (Dangerous goods)	Medium	National Environment Services
11. Marine resources disaster – e.g. (seabed, fish stock, Muri lagoon issue etc)	Medium	Ministry of Marine Resources
12. Erosion	Medium	Infrastructure Cook Islands
13. Landslide	Low	Infrastructure Cook Islands
14. Fire	Low	R Emergencies Services

15. Tsunami	Low	Cook Islands Meteorological Service (MoT) and Cook Islands Police
16. Transport Accident (Aircraft)	Low	Airport Authority
17. Transport Accident (Shipping)	Low	Ministry of Transport
18. Terrorism Attack	Low	POLICE
19. Animal Disease	Low	Ministry of Agriculture
20. Oil Spill	Low	Ministry of Transport
21. Earthquake	Low	Ministry of Transport

All agencies must think in broad terms. In addressing the Plan, every agency needs to consider the full range of effects that any sort of disaster can inflict on the country and its people. These include:

- Loss of life
- Injury
- Damage to and destruction of property
- Damage to subsistence and cash crops
- Disruption of life-style
- Loss of livelihood
- Disruption of services
- Damage to infrastructure and disruption of government systems
- National economic loss
- Sociological and psychological after-effects

Let's now take a closer look at disaster risk management governance across Government as a whole

PART 2

POLICY, PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

National Policy and the Plan – how it all fits together

2.1 National Policy

The national policy is simple and easy to understand. All relevant stakeholders in DRM are bound to take this policy into account in their decision making and planning

Climate & Disaster Compatible Development Policy 2013-2016

Policy Statement

“Ensure that the sustainable development of the Cook Islands is actively pursued by our people through a climate and disaster resilient approach that has the capacity to manage climate and disaster risks and reduce our emissions in the context of sustainable development”

Goals and Objectives

- Climate and disaster resilient development (adaptation and disaster mitigation linked to development)
- Strengthening the enabling environment for ensuring development that is climate and disaster resilient and reduces the carbon footprint of the Cook Islands.

Strategic Outcomes include:

- Sustainable water, food, energy and social security
- Increased community preparedness and adaptation to risks and impacts
- Effective and sustained use of land, sea and natural resources
- Enhanced coordination and strengthened implementation through integrated institutional and implementing arrangements across communities and sectors.

2.2 DRM Model in the Cook Islands

Out of the national policy a number of key elements have become clear over recent years. Agencies wishing to develop their own DRM plans may find it helpful to understand what those elements are.

- Disaster Risk Reduction arrangements

Under the national policy, these arrangements are tied to the idea of strengthening sustainable development. Four key factors that agencies should build into any DRM plan are;

- The goal of increasing the Community’s understanding of hazards and risks.

- Encouraging the Community to learn how to (and to appreciate the need to) manage those risks
 - The underlying idea of a “whole of Government”, “whole of country” approach, aiming to reduce risks in communities across all sectors – agencies should be actively reaching out and cooperating with other agencies to provide a single, united, message to our people.
 - The idea of establishing public/private partnerships and relationships with the aim of encouraging risk reduction activities and of discouraging risk contributing activities
- Disaster Management Arrangements
 - Cyclones – and particularly in the outer islands – have taught all of us that *immediate* response is typically a *local* response. For this reason, agencies should aim to
 - strengthen community management of disaster through preparedness for response and recovery
 - setting institutional arrangements for coordinating response, assessing impacts, and for receiving relief support into the community level.

2.3 Principles guiding the development of the plan

Both the DRM Act and this Plan assume that all agencies will, and public officials across Government, develop a whole range of interrelated plans for disaster risk management. For this reason, it is helpful to set out the principles that have guided the development of this Plan. Ideally, an agency should make sure any related or sub-plan is based on these same principles. They are:

- Making clear provision for leadership and partnership
- Setting out clear roles and responsibilities and allowing for effective cooperation
- Aiming for consistency of plans
- Building a culture of proactive management
- Ensuring the plan is people focused
- Making sure the plan demonstrates both equity and inclusion
- Making sure that action is based on facts and knowledge
- Linking implementation of various activities and allowing for performance to be measured (so lessons can be learned)
- Be both relevant and cost effective

2.4 Vulnerable groups and communities

The DRM structure and plans under this Plan recognise the need for vulnerable groups and communities to be integrated into all the DRM structure and plans - in particular the disabled, elderly and children. The role of women must be recognised and highlighted in each DRM Plan. Gender equality should also be taken into consideration when developing all plans and sub-plans for DRM. In terms of vulnerable communities, the different needs of our Northern Group islands must be taken into account.

To be clear; this is not “political correctness”; history and research tells us that vulnerable groups and communities suffer disproportional injury, loss and damage when disaster

strikes. Agencies fail all of us if their DRM plans fail to take special note of those who are uniquely at risk.

How Agencies should understand this Plan as it relates to their roles and responsibilities

2.5 Purpose of the Plan

The ultimate purpose of this Plan is “to ensure it properly protects life, property and essential infrastructure from the potential or actual impact of an Emergency or Disaster”

It is helpful to think of this Plan as being designed to:

1. Set institutional arrangements in the National, Outer islands and Rarotonga Puna level
2. Allocate roles and responsibilities for different level of stakeholders and agencies in DRM
3. Set structures for preparation, managing and recovering from disasters
4. Set mechanisms for understanding hazards and addressing DRR within National, Outer Islands and Rarotonga Puna plans and budgetary processes
5. Provide guidelines for the development of disaster risk management plans of all agencies in the national, outer islands and Rarotonga Puna levels.
6. Promote the need to manage risks and disasters in vulnerable islands and communities, in development and in sector planning.
7. Promote initiatives in DRM that are gender/child specific, recognising particular roles of women and vulnerabilities in communities.

2.6 Scope

As to its scope; the Plan covers:

- institutional arrangements in DRM, including the connection with Climate change
- roles and accountabilities of all agencies working in DRM
- processes for declaration and activating a state of disaster, special powers available during a state of disaster

2.7 Agency Accountability and Resourcing

An agency with a role under this Plan must ensure it can fulfil that role. The agency must plan and develop capacity for it.

Agencies are responsible for resourcing their role.

It should be noted that during and following a disaster, agencies may submit requests through the Council to Government for funding from the National Disaster Response Trust Funds. The purpose of this Trust Funds is to enable a swift and coordinated response by the Disaster Response Executive once a State of Emergency or Disaster is activated. The fund is limited to emergency responses as typified by the following:

- deployment of Initial Damage Assessment team (s) to provide an immediate assessment of the situation;
- reestablishment of essential services such as communications, power, health, water supplies;
- support to the Cook Islands Red Cross, if required, for provision of temporary shelter (e.g. Tents), food, water, blankets and clothing;

- deployment of appropriate ministry staff from Rarotonga to assist or relieve staff on the Outer Islands;
- deployment of skilled volunteers, tools, parts and machinery to assist or relieve staff on the Outer Islands;
- deployment of skilled volunteers, tools, part and machinery to assist with clearance, immediate repairs, and get essential services back into operation;
- transport, accommodation, food, water for volunteers and relief workers; and
- all costs associated with either air or sea freight.

This is discussed below under Part 5 and other detail of the Trust Funds is annexed to this Plan as **Annex 1**.

At other times and in other areas of their DRM Plan, agencies must take into account their obligations (which as imposed under this Plan are mandated by the DRM Act) in each budget round – or seek funding from elsewhere. Doing nothing, though, is not a lawful option.

2.8 Joint National Action Plan for DRM and CCA (JNAP)

The JNAP is an integrated Plan of DRM and CCA initiatives that stakeholders are planning to achieve over a period of time. The initiatives under the JNAP should complement the implementation of this National DRM Plan and the DRM plans of all agencies.

All agencies, especially leading and essential agencies, are encouraged to use the JNAP planning process to help to develop capacity, address resourcing issues and to effectively implement their roles and responsibilities under this Plan and their own DRM plans.

2.9 Relationship with other legislation and plans

The DRM Act and this Plan sets out roles, powers and coordination mechanisms for agencies with roles in disaster risk management. During and following a disaster the DRM Act and this Plan take precedence over other plans and legislation in relation to *powers, priorities* and *coordination* for the disaster.

Any agency plans, hazard specific contingency plans or community plans for addressing disasters must be consistent with this Plan.

However, nothing in this Plan removes the accountability of an agency to carry out its functions under its own legislation.

For instance, this Plan becomes a supporting plan in the event of a health disaster or an agriculture pest or disease disaster. In those cases, the leading agency of those disaster will lead the response according to its plans; that plan, though, must be consistent with this Plan.

As seen below, EMCI has an important coordinating role to make sure that Government agencies and all other agencies achieves this consistent approach across different sectors and levels

2.10 Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's)

Each leading agency identified under the DRM Act and this Plan, must prepare Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for each area of its work. All SOPs must be approved by the NDRM Council and will become part of this Plan as an Annex 2.

Each SOP must set out the following:

- membership
- terms of reference
- mode of activation
- operation of the committee, sub-committee or cluster.

2.11 Associated DRM Plans linked to the National DRM Plan

The National DRM Plan must be used by Outer Island Councils, Puna Committees and all Government Departments, and agencies as the overarching framework for the development of specific disaster risk reduction and disaster management plans.

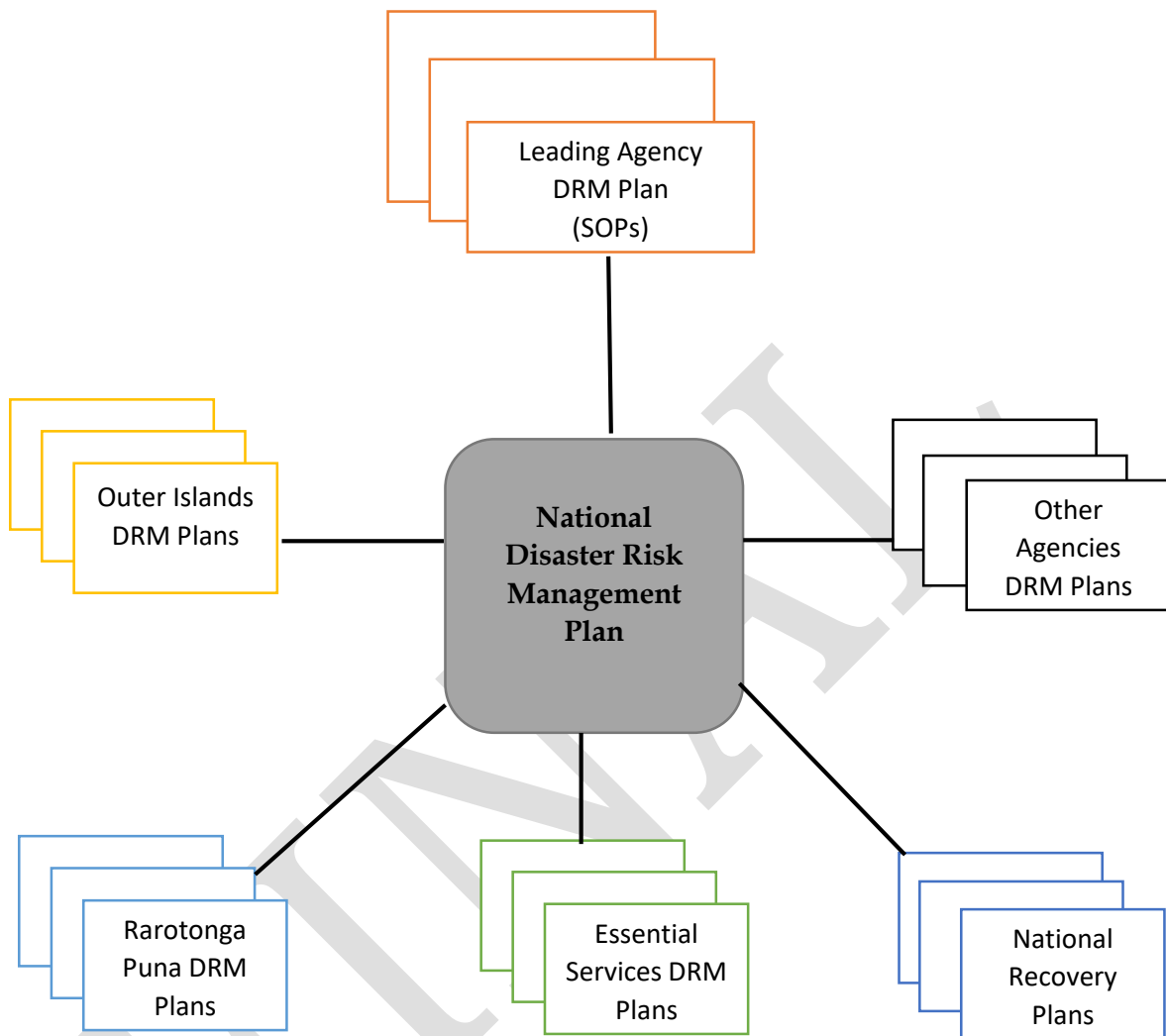
To be clear; under the old DRM Arrangements and under this Plan, a wide range of public officials must prepare plans that address disaster risk management. A huge amount of work remains undone in this area and the aim of this Plan is to encourage greater compliance in this important area.

The range of plans is extensive; it includes:

1. Outer islands DRM Plans
2. Rarotonga Puna DRM Plans
3. Leading Agency DRM Plans
 - Including SOPs for Disaster Response in their area of work
4. Essential Services DRM Plans to ensure continuity of vital services
5. Other Agencies DRM Plans to protect lives and assets
6. Recovery Action Plan to ensure effective recovery and rehabilitation

This may sound confusing. However, if all public officials at all times have a mind-set of *identifying, evaluating and managing hazards and risks*, it is easy to understand that a range of plans will result. The chart below shows how these Plans relate to each other:

Fig.3.: Diagram showing link with associated plans

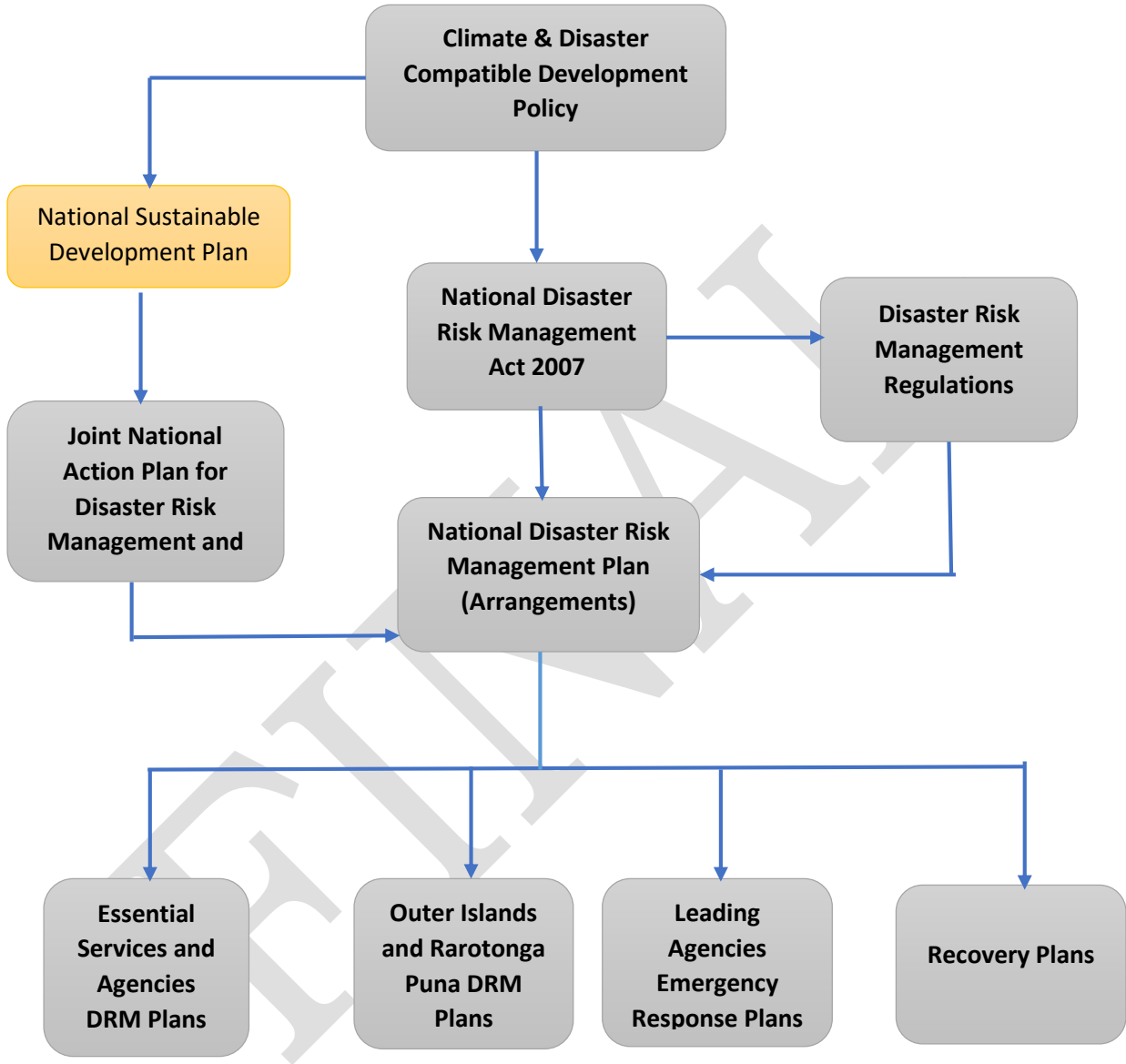


2.12 International Relationships

The Plan recognises that international agencies are key partners in disaster management in the Cook Islands (especially in time of disaster response). This Plans outlines in detail where each international agency can fit in the overall structure

International agencies are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this Plan and build a relationship with relevant cluster that leads response. (See Fig.5. for structure on Disaster Response for detail on clusters)

Fig.4.:Cook Islands DRM Policy and Plans Framework



With multiple hazards, multiple plans, multiple agencies, and the added complication of international agencies, how does this all fit together? In the next section the Plan answers that question.

FINAL

PART THREE

DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR WORKING TOGETHER

3.1 Institutional Arrangements

This part *describes* and *outlines* the institutional arrangements for DRM in the Cook Islands, from governance to operations on the ground. Like a map, its aim is to help anyone who is engaging with disaster risk management “find their way”

“Institutional arrangements” means the institutional framework - the relationship and the mechanisms of coordination among organisations, institutions, and government and non-government organisations. This includes their human resources, funding, equipment and supplies, leadership and effectiveness.

For anyone who is developing a sub-plan under this Plan, this “map” sets out the landscape in which that plan will operate, identifying the key place markers in the DRM “environment”.

In times of disaster, a clear, common, understanding of everyone’s roles and responsibilities can speed response and effectiveness.

For any international agency wishing to engage, a roadmap through the layers of governance will make that task easier and more efficient.

3.2 The DRM Act

The key legal document is the DRM Act. The Act established the main institutional structure to support the implementation of DRM in the Cook Islands. It covers DRM:

- at the national level, and
- at the Outer Island level; and
- at the (Rarotonga) Puna level.

The DRM Act also defines roles and responsibilities in DRM and creates committees and sub-committees to carry out these roles. Note though, that most of the roles and responsibilities are in disaster management; the Act has less to say about disaster risk reduction.

This Plan, following the Act, addresses each level of those arrangements.

3.3 The National Level

Governance arrangements:

Cabinet and Minister responsible for DRM

Cabinet is responsible for

- Approving all policies and the regulatory framework for DRM in the Cook Islands
- Approving this National DRM Plan
- Committing resources for government activity in DRR and DM
- Making decisions on whether international assistance is needed

The Minister responsible for DRM is responsible for making sure the NDRM Council are well informed of all DRM activities in the Cook Islands. The Minister appoints the Director for EMCI and is also responsible to make sure EMCI is efficiently resourced to coordinate DRR and DM across the Cook Islands.

Special mention should be made of health epidemics and agriculture pests and diseases. In those areas it is the Ministers responsible for Health and Agriculture respectively who are responsible for the arrangements to address those hazards.

Under section 19 of this Plan, the Prime Minister (currently responsible for DRM) may, on the advice of the Council declare a state of disaster and activate the Plan to support its management.

National Disaster Risk Management Council

The NDRMC formulates policies for DRM and endorses the National DRM Plan and approves all sub-plans. It advises Cabinet on DRM matters and reviews performance of stakeholders in implementing their roles and responsibilities [under](#) the National DRM Plan.

The Council also approves and establishes all sub-committees that are required under the DRM Act.

In terms of each hazard, the primary advisor to the Council is the secretary (or head) of the relevant Leading Agency

Members of the National DRM Council are:

1. Prime Minister (or his delegate) chairs the Council
2. Financial Secretary
3. Police Commissioner
4. Director of EMCI
5. Public Service Commissioner
6. Director of outer islands services (currently under Office of the Prime Minister)?
7. Secretary of Infrastructure Cook Islands
8. Director of Meteorological Services

Summary of the roles NDRM Council

On matters of policy, it

- formulates policy for Disaster Risk Management affecting the community
- provides advice and support to Cabinet in relation to DRM for national planning

In terms of sub-delegation

- it establishes all committees and sub-committees required under the Act and the National DRM Plan

With regard to DRM Plans, it

- endorses the National DRM Plan before it is tabled with Cabinet;
- approves all Agencies DRM Plans and all sub-plans intended to apply to the Cook Islands;
- directs the implementation of the National DRM Plan

In the area of Disaster Response, it

- provides advice to the Prime Minister in relation to the declaration of the State of Disaster and its subsequent revocation;
- evaluates and monitors the direction and coordination of activities of Agencies by the Response Executive and National Controller relating to the mitigation of, preparedness for, response to and recovery from an event;
- establishes the National Emergency Operation Centre in a chosen location and ensures that all required support is provided
- issues notices to any party including members of the public relating to mitigation of, preparedness for, response to and recovery from an event

Its reporting requirements are to

- provide directions and receive report from the Director of EMCI;
- prepare an annual DRM Report to be presented to Cabinet by the Minister detailing the activities of the Council and the implementation of the National DRM Plan

Meetings of the Council are as follows:

- Ordinary meetings must be held every 3 months
- Emergency meetings are convened by the Prime Minister or the Director for EMCI
- A quorum is 4 members

Operational arrangements:

Emergency Management Cook Islands (a division under Office of Prime Minister)

EMCI is the central coordination agency for DRM with the NDRM Council as its governing body under Cabinet.

Basically EMCI coordinates and facilitates the development, monitoring and implementation of the NDRM Plan and sub-plans and is the secretariat for the NDRM Council.

The specific role of EMCI in disaster management and risk reduction is specified under Parts 3 and 4.

Outline of EMCI's roles and responsibilities

EMCI roles and responsibilities include:

As to the NDRM Plan and necessary sub-plans, its role is to

- prepare, review and check the NDRM Plan to ensure it properly protects life, property and essential infrastructure from the potential or actual impact of an Emergency or Disaster
- coordinate the maintenance and review of the NDRM Plan and all necessary sub-plans for endorsement by the Council;
- facilitate implementation of the NDRM Plan; this includes providing necessary guidelines for the development of the DRM Plans for the Outer Islands, the Rarotonga Punas, and other plans required under the DRM Act

- coordinate any necessary improvements to the NDRM Plan

In disaster response, its role is to

- facilitate a coordinated village, district or island based system of Disaster Response teams, which, in consultation with the Response Executive, must implement the DRM Plan applying to that area

As Secretariat to the NDRM Council, it must

- provide Emergency Management and Disaster Response advice, secretarial and administrative support to the NDRM Council;
- make recommendations to the NDRM Council in relation to the establishment and constitution of any Advisory Committee;
- prepare all necessary reports to the NDRM Council;
- facilitate the preparation of the DRM Report on the activities of the NDRM Council and the implementation of the National DRM Plan to be presented by the Minister to the Cabinet and tabled in Parliament;
- provide advice and regular reports to the NDRM Council on the activities of the Committees established under the Advisory Committee;
- report to the NDRM Council on the performance of all agencies on their preparedness for an Emergency or Disaster;
- prepare and submit an Annual Report to the Minister and NDRM Council;
- perform or undertake any other function as directed by the NDRM Council.

In terms of the National Emergency Operation Centre, it is to

- assist the National Controller in coordinating the effective management of the Centre.

Training responsibilities of EMCI require it to

- facilitate all necessary training exercises, post-disaster and post-exercise debriefs as required by the Director; and
- undertake education and awareness programs as may be considered necessary by the NDRM Council.

In collecting information, EMCI must

- co-ordinate the development of a database of Emergency Management information including but not limited to hazard maps, training information, exercise reports, disaster management resources and emergency contact details.

EMCI must undertake such other functions as the Minister may determine by notice in the Gazette

Director for EMCI

The Director for EMCI is appointed by the Prime Minister for DRM and is responsible to and reports directly to, the Prime Minister.

Roles of the Director for EMCI

The role of the Director for EMCI includes:

DRM Plans

- reviewing the National DRM Plan and related plans following an event and providing a report to the NDRM Council;
- undertaking periodic DRM related audits of all Government Agencies and Essential services and of their ability to provide effective services to the community before, during and after an event; and, further, report its findings and recommendations to the Council;
- preparing a written notice of the list of Essential Services;
- assisting Essential Services to develop Disaster Risk Response Plans, within their DRM Plan.

Leading Agencies

A leading agency will lead all risk reduction and disaster management activities in its particular area of work.

The NDRM Council has responsibility for oversight of arrangements for all hazards through these Leading Agencies. See table above Fig. 2. for detail on who is leading identified priority hazards in the Cook Islands.

In terms of other hazards not foreseen, unless clearly the responsibility or a particular sector of Government, EMCI and Police will lead disaster response for this.

These leading agencies must be sure to include in their DRM Plan hazards mitigation or risk reduction plans and emergency response plans for their particular area of responsibility. Their DRM Plans must, in turn, be consistent with the NDRM Plan. It must also show a list of supporting agencies and outline their roles and responsibilities under that Plan.

Each leading agency plan must link and coordinates well with the Island's DRM Plans, the Puna DRM Plans and Essential DRM Plans. The aim is to make sure that plans are both inclusive and complementary with those of other agencies.

Each Leading agency must make sure that it has the capacity to implement its DRM Plan effectively. As needed, it should work together with EMCI and other DRM stakeholders to source funding and build capacity.

As suggested above, the JNAP process is a good mechanism for resourcing the DRM obligations of each agency.

Essential Services

All Essential services listed in the schedule produced by the Director for EMCI as Essential services to disaster management must have a satisfactory DRM Plans relating to their operation.

It is important to note that although most of the DRM Act speaks to public sector agencies, essential services that are in the NGO or private sectors are bound to comply with these provisions of the DRM Act.

Their DRM Plans must include disaster risk reduction and prevention, preparedness, response and recovery measures.

Each Essential Service is responsible for resourcing its DRM Plan and ensuring capacity for effective implementation

3.4 Outer Islands Level

There are special challenges in extending institutional arrangements to the outer islands and making sure they connect well with the NDRM Plan and other DRM Plans.

The outer islands, especially the Northern Group are quite a distance from the main island of Rarotonga where central government and most essential services are based. Therefore, the structure established in this Plan aims to make sure that the outer islands can address the issues of risk reduction and disaster management effectively on their own island.

There are 15 outer islands in the Cook Islands and 12 of those are inhabited. All 12 islands must have DRM structures and Plans in place.

Governance arrangements:

Island Councils

Each Island Council - working closely with EMCI - is responsible for overseeing the structure for DRM on the islands in accordance with the DRM Act and the NDRM Plan. They are also responsible for making sure that its Island DRM Plan is effectively implemented across the island and all its villages.

Partnership with local organisations on the island is crucial, so Island Councils are encouraged to work *together with existing agencies on the island*.

Operational arrangements:

Islands Disaster Risk Management Committee

Each outer island must establish a DRM Committee; that is the responsibility of its Island Council; The chair of the Island Council will chair the DRM Committee.

The number of committee members are five including the chairman. The other four are to be appointed by the Island Council in consultation with the Director of EMCI.

Role of the Islands DRM Committee

The role of an island's DRM Committee is to

- develop the Island DRM Plan for its island of responsibility in close consultation with EMCI. All relevant agencies, in particular leading agencies and essential services must also be consulted in this process to ensure consistency amongst relevant DRM Plans.
- coordinate DRM activities within that island.
- report to the National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) during State of Emergency and Disaster

Island Disaster Coordinator

The Island Council, after consultation with the Director of EMCI, must appoint an Island Disaster Coordinator for the Island.

Role of Island Disaster Coordinator

The role of the Island Disaster Coordinator is to:

- implement the Island DRM Plan
- assist the National Controller to coordinate resources to be used in response and recovery relating to an event; and
- be responsible for the Safety Shelter in his or her area

Islands Disaster Risk Management Plan

Each Island DRM Plan must

- identify high threat hazards and vulnerability areas on the island;
- specify the risk reduction strategies to be adopted to reduce the risks of the Disaster or Emergency in those areas of hazards and the island generally;
- contain preparedness activities and SOPs response and recovery from a disaster or emergency; this SOP must be consistent with leading agencies SOPs in the various specific areas of hazard;
- identify all relevant agencies and their roles before, during and after an emergency or state of disaster;
- identify resources available for use for Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Management;
- specify how such resources are to be used;
- keep current the contact details of EMCI, National Controller, Leading agency for each hazard, the Island DRM Committee members, and the Island Disaster Coordinator.

3.5 Rarotonga Puna Level

For disaster management purposes, Rarotonga is divided into 10 Puna

1. Ngatangiia
2. Matavera
3. Tupapa Maraerenga
4. Takuvaine Tutakimoa
5. Titikaveka
6. Murienua
7. Akaoa
8. Ruaau
9. Nikao Panama
10. Avatiu, Ruatonga, Atupa

This Plan establishes structures for the Puna and outlines how it connects to the national level structure. It also identifies relevant bodies and their roles and responsibilities in that level.

Governance arrangements:

The Puna DRM Committee working closely with EMCI is responsible for overseeing the structure for DRM in each Puna and in accordance to the DRM Act. They are also responsible for making sure that the DRM Plan is effectively implemented across the Puna and all its villages.

Operational arrangements:

Puna Disaster Risk Management Committee

EMCI through a public meeting with the Puna shall appoint a Puna Disaster Risk Management Committee. This meeting must be publicly advertised through a reasonable period of time. However, unlike the Outer Islands there is not legislation that establishes local governance at this level; it will be for the Director of EMCI to give this aspect of the Plan realistic meaning on the ground in each of these areas of Rarotonga, perhaps by regulations that give definition and clarity on appointment and removal criteria.

The roles and responsibilities of each Puna DRM Committee are to:

- Together with EMCI, developed the Puna DRM Plan. All relevant agencies, in particular leading agencies and essential services must be consulted in this process to ensure consistency amongst relevant DRM Plans.
- ensure the Puna DRM Plan is kept current and reviewed every two years;
- disseminate information on risk reduction, prevention, preparedness and response to the villages as required;
- maintain on-going communication and association with EMCI during ordinary time and during a national emergency or a disaster;
- in consultation with EMCI and consistent to the NDRM Act, decide on the priority roles and responsibilities of the village organisations on its Puna DRM Plan;
- provide regular situation reports to EMCI during an event as required;
- report directly to the National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) once a State of Emergency or a State of Disaster is declared;
- provide regular situation reports to the NEOC during an event.

Puna Disaster Coordinator

Each Puna DRM Committee in consultation with the Director for EMCI, must appoint a Puna Disaster Coordinator for the Puna. Again, in the absence of local government legislation for Rarotonga, the means to do this in an effective way could be difficult, and it may require regulations passed to give this meaning and substance.

The roles and responsibilities of a Puna Disaster Coordinator are to:

- chair the Puna DRM Committee;
- take leadership in coordinating and managing all activities from risk reduction, prevention, preparedness to response in the area;
- maintain on-going communication and association with the Director of EMCI during ordinary time and during a national emergency or a disaster
- report directly to the National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) and National Controller once a State of Emergency or a State of Disaster is declared;
- ensure regular situation reports (or damage assessments) are posted to EMCI and/or the NEOC as required.

Tapere (Village) Coordinator

Within each Puna, there must be a Tapere or village Coordinator for each Tapere of the Puna. Again, the legal underpinning for this needs to be strengthened.

The role of the Tapere coordinator is to assist the Puna Disaster Coordinator and coordinate activities at its village of responsibility under the direction of the Puna Disaster Coordinator and the DRM Committee.

Puna Disaster Risk Management Plan

This Plan must:

- identify high threat hazards and vulnerability areas around the Puna;
- specify the risk reduction strategies to be adopted to reduce the risks of the Disaster or Emergency in those areas of hazards; these strategies must be complimentary to the strategies under relevant leading agency's DRM Plan and/or Essential services plans.
- contain preparedness activities and SOPs response and recovery from a disaster or emergency; this SOP must be consistent with leading agencies SOPs in specific area of hazards;
- identify all relevant agencies and their roles before, during and after an emergency or state of disaster;
- identify resources available for use for Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Management;
- specify how such resources are to be used;
- keep current the contact details of EMCI, National Controller, Leading agency for each hazards, the Puna DRM Committee members, the Puna Disaster Coordinator and the Tapere Coordinator.

PART FOUR

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Understanding Hazards

In the Cook Islands it is important that communities are aware of, understand, and appreciate hazards and their potential impacts on people, properties and the environment.

The NDRM Act section 15 and 17, requires Island Councils and Agencies to specify the mitigation strategies to be adopted to reduce the risks of a disaster or emergency. The Act also requires that the plan also identify resources available for use for Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Management.

Understanding Hazards

Hazard information in a form that ordinary people can access and understand is very important. This Plan recognises that need. It encourages stakeholders and agencies that are developing their own plans to collect, analyse and monitor hazard information; it also aims to build a pool of knowledge on hazards patterns and changes. This information will help us to decide the right approach to mitigate and (where practical) prevent the occurrence of those hazards.

Special consideration should be given to traditional knowledge, especially as it relates to tropical cyclones - a high threat hazard in the Cook Islands and one that has occurred regularly over generations.

4.2 Why disaster risk reduction?

The aim of disaster risk reduction is to prevent or mitigate the impact of hazards on vulnerable communities and reduce underlying risks to national development that are created by changing social, economic, environmental conditions.

This requires that all national development policies and programmes be subject to the formal risk management process of *risk identification*, *risk analysis* and *risk evaluation*, and that appropriate *risk treatments* be applied to the evaluated risks. This aims to make sure that identified risks are either eliminated (prevented) or reduced (mitigated) as far as is practicable.

This process is key for management planning – at the most basic level, all public officials are bound to “prudently manage the fiscal risks” of Government. This Plan outlines the current high risk hazards in the Cook Islands. It is the role of every leading agency to make sure that it has a thorough plan that aims to prevent or mitigate the impact of hazards in its operations and area of responsibility.

An agency must carry out the following activities to effectively prevent or mitigate the impact of hazards that communities, properties and the environment are exposed to:

- identify risks;
- analyse risks;
- evaluate risks;
- take action to combat risks;
- communicate and consult at all stages;

- monitor and review with all interested parties.

Some common example of risk reduction measures are:

- Risk awareness and assessment including hazard analysis and vulnerability/capacity analysis
- Knowledge development including education, training, research and information
- Public commitment and institutional frameworks including organisational, policy, legislation and community actions.
- Application of measures including environmental management, land-use and urban planning, protection of critical facilities, application of science and technology, partnership and networking and financial instruments
- Early warning systems including forecasting, dissemination of warnings, preparedness measures and reaction capacities.

Source: UNISDP

4.3 Sources of knowledge

All disaster risk reduction plans must take into account all available facts and knowledge. As noted above, traditional knowledge may have a role to play, in particular in the event of tropical cyclone.

However, leading agencies must make sure that their risk reduction initiatives includes the gathering of all relevant knowledge from all readily available sources and, in some cases, seeking expert advice where issues are technical or specialised.

4.4 National level

Emergency Management Cook Islands

EMCI's roles and responsibilities in the area of disaster risk reduction is to:

- audit all leading agencies' DRM Plans to make sure the question of disaster risk reduction is being effectively addressed;
- develop policy on collecting and accessing hazards information to be endorsed by the NDRM Council;
- develop information systems to be used by relevant stakeholders, e.g. using technologies including GIS and satellite imagery (Geo-Portal);
- coordinate the development of capacity and tools for mapping, analysis and assessment;
- following disasters, with the Disaster Recovery Coordinator, coordinate disaster risk reduction advices for recovery purposes;

- assist leading agencies in the coordination and implementation of its risk reduction activities with the support of the NDRM Advisory Committee and working groups (established by the NDRMC).

Leading Agencies

Each Leading Agency, in its area of responsibility, must include in its DRM Plan activities and initiatives to:

- identify risks;
- analyse risks;
- evaluate risks;
- take measures and actions to combat risks;
- communicate information on risks and strategies to vulnerable groups and communities;
- monitor and review with all interested parties.

The process must be by thorough consultation and a participatory approach with all relevant stakeholders.

Essential Agencies

All essential agencies, in their area of services, must include, in their DRM Plan, activities and initiatives to:

- identify risks;
- analyse risks;
- evaluate risks;
- take measures and actions to combat risks;
- communicate information on risks and strategies to vulnerable groups and communities;
- monitor and review with all interested parties

The purpose of this requirement is to make sure that any associated risks or delay in providing its services during time of disaster is reduced or prevented.

All other agencies

All other agencies must include in its DRM Plan activities and initiatives to:

- identify risks;
- analyse risks;
- evaluate risks;
- take measures and actions to combat risks;
- communicate information on risks and strategies to vulnerable groups and communities;
- monitor and review with all interested parties

The passing and effective enforcement of safety legislation in key areas is key to long-term reduction of underlying risks. A list of safety legislation is annexed and mark 2.

4.5 Outer Islands Level

Each outer island DRM Committees is responsible to make sure its DRM Plan has activities and initiatives to:

- identify risks;
- analyse risks;
- evaluate risks;
- take measures and actions to combat risks;
- communicate information on risks and strategies to vulnerable groups and communities;
- monitor and review with all interested parties.

The DRM Committee is also responsible to disseminate risks information and make sure that reduction measures are actively promoted.

All aspects of an Island's risk reduction actions and measures must be consistent with the NDRM Act, NDRM Plan, the Leading Agencies DRM Plan, the Essential Services DRM Plan and any other relevant DRM related plans. For this reason, it is very important that when developing risk reduction activities and initiatives plan, the Island Council and the Island DRM Committee must consult with relevant stakeholders on each area of risk.

4.6 Rarotonga Puna Level

Each Puna DRM Committee is responsible to ensure that its Puna DRM Plan has activities and initiatives to:

- identify risks;
- analyse risks;
- evaluate risks;
- take measures and actions to combat risks;
- communicate information on risks and strategies to vulnerable groups and communities;
- monitor and review with all interested parties

The Puna DRM Committee is also responsible to disseminate risk information and make sure reduction measures are actively promoted.

All aspects of a Puna's risk reduction actions and measures must be consistent with the NDRM Act, NDRM Plan, the Leading Agencies DRM Plan, the Essential Services DRM Plan and any other relevant DRM related plans. For this reason, it is very important that when developing risk reduction activities and initiatives, the Puna DRM Committee must consult with relevant stakeholders on each area of risk.

PART FIVE

DISASTER MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

5.1. Understanding Disaster

Some disasters cannot be avoided; they have to be endured in the best way possible. Disaster Management is the name we give to the process of easing that experience for our people.

Disaster management requires agencies to organise and manage resources and responsibilities to deal with all aspects of major emergencies or national disasters.

An emergency or disaster event has a number of phases; the idea of disaster management is that in each phase, active management can keep people and property as safe as possible and can minimise the impact of the event on them.

The four phases are –

- **Preparedness;** in the run up to the disaster; evaluating it, deciding how best to prepare people for what is coming. In any plan, it is important to note that although disaster risk reduction strategies can have some elements of “preparedness”, in disaster management, we talk about preparedness in the sense of being prepared for the particular disaster that we see is coming; so a plan should address how best to match the preparation efforts to the features, hazards and risks of that particular event.
- **Response;** this describes the period during and immediately following the event – it is dominated by urgent and emergency measures aimed at minimising loss, damage, injury and death as the event is unfolding.
- **Early recovery;** emergencies and disasters can greatly dislocate people and services – there is often a psychological element to the days and weeks following the event; the idea is that “early recovery” is about normalising people and services so that day to day life can resume
- **Reconstruction;** disasters often tear down lives and property; agencies should aim to make sure that affected people can expect something more than “patch up and forget”. The idea of reconstruction is to build up what has been torn down – better, stronger, more resilient; plans need to address these challenges.

Although it is helpful, in preparing a plan, to think individually about these four phases, it is important to note that the cycle of disaster risk management is a continuous action – from risk reduction and mitigation activities to preparedness, response, early recovery and reconstruction. Therefore it is important that disaster management plans are seen as a continuation of risk prevention and mitigation plans.

5.2 National level

- ❖ **In the event of a State of Emergency and/or a State of Disaster, these arrangements must be followed.**

It is a legal requirement (section 15 & 17 DRM Act) that each leading agency develop within its DRM Plan a disaster management plan and SOPs for national emergencies and disasters in its area of responsibility.

A leading agency's disaster management plan should specify how people and agencies should prepare for disaster or emergency, contain SOPs to outline how a national response and a localised response will occur, and include a plan for recovery activities.

Each leading agency must recognise that while the National Controller is the commander on the ground, the National Controller does not necessarily have specialist knowledge in that agency's area of work. For this reason, the National Controller must understand, from the relevant plan, what roles and responsibilities are pre-assigned to personnel within the relevant agency and how those relate to the overall leadership expected of the National Controller.

Each leading agency, in its DRM Plan must therefore outline what the leading agency expects of a non-expert National Controller in time of response to disaster in its own area of work. It should also outline the support and advisory personnel who can guide, advice and assist the National Controller as needed. This is an important part of each plan; the aims are

- to make sure the National Controller is familiar with the response plan in that area
- is aware of the actions that need to be taken during the response and
- to ease coordination and communication between experts and specialists in the leading agency and the National Controller for effective response.

A leading agency must make sure its disaster management plan is consistent with the NDRM Act, NDRM Plan, Island DRM Plans, Puna DRM Plans, and any relevant DRM related plans. It must also identify each supporting agency's roles and responsibilities.

Each agency must make sure that its DRM Plan - so far as it deals with the particular hazards and risks that are the responsibility of a leading agency - is consistent with the leading agency's disaster response plan.

This is important - in times of disaster, we all pay the price of disconnected thinking or silo mentalities; if agencies are talking to one another when working up their plans, it becomes quicker, easier, and more natural for them to work together in the crisis and stress of a disaster.

Preparedness and Early Warning:

The preparedness function of a plan includes

- Planning - developing and testing plans and SOPs;
- Training and awareness raising - the aim is to build the capacity of relevant agencies and undertake public education and awareness programmes.

The early warning functions of a plan

We all understand the role of the Meteorological Office in collecting and analysing weather information – short and long term forecasts- in the run up to a cyclone event. However, plans need to address this same early warning dynamic across the full range of hazards – remember “to be forewarned is to be fore-armed”.

Plans should (in the case of leading agencies) aim to disseminate early warning information to relevant agencies and communities. Information should be people focused, timely and presented in a form that it can be understood by other agencies, by the community, and – especially - by vulnerable groups.

Plans should also address both the giving and receiving of training and awareness raising. Relevant agencies should plan to build capacity in this important area; the aim should be to reach out to other agencies and, also, to be in a position to undertake public education and awareness programmes especially with vulnerable communities

Leading agencies

Most disasters engage one, or a small number, of key agencies. These leading agencies are critical to making sure we come through a disaster in the best shape.

A leading agency will typically have both a national responsibility and a need to be able to target help to a particular affected community. For instance, in the case of cyclone, leading agencies are EMCI, Met Services and Police. They are responsible for the coordination of preparedness and early warning activities for tropical cyclones and wind storms; they need to be ready to deliver those services to any inhabited island anywhere in the country

If a leading agency cannot “lead” in time of emergency, then that can have flow-on effects that magnify the impact of a disaster. For this reason, each leading agency must:

- have a plan of how people and agencies prepare for emergencies and disasters in both a national level and how they can “lead” in the case of a localised emergency or disaster- wherever that may occur;
- have a plan that allows it to coordinate the preparedness activities with supporting agencies;
- conduct regular drills on preparedness and response plan and SOPs;
- make sure that early warning systems and refuge systems are in place for all hazards with high rating – for instance, in the case of cyclone and storm surge, to make sure that all Safety Shelters are ready to be used in response to a possible evacuation

Other agencies

Each agency must be able to activate its emergency response plan (within its DRM Plan) and ensure capacity to coordinate preparedness and early warning activities in its area of work, even if it is not a leading agency. For instance, the Ministry of Health is not a leading agency in time of cyclone or storm surge. However, it is responsible for coordinating the preparedness activities of a specific communities for any potential health outbreak or injuries during a cyclone.

No agency can simply sit by and be reactive to unfolding events; disaster management is all about anticipating needs and being ready to respond, even if that is simply in a supporting

role – each plan must reflect this mindset and must aim to make sure all in the agency are “on board” with that thinking.

Essential Services

By definition, essential services need to keep going. Those services may have their own vulnerabilities and performance limitations in times of emergencies and disaster; their plans need to address those.

An essential service should aim to activate its DRM Plans in good time before an emergency or disaster event wherever possible.

The essential service must make sure it has the capacity to respond to any possible disaster with sufficient resources – human and material – so that service disruption is minimised and there is early recovery from the impact of the disaster for the benefit of the public.

Contingency plans should address a range of scenarios; given limited material and human resources in-country, those plans should (ahead of time) reach out internationally as required.

Response:

Each leading agency must have a response plan and SOPs in place for a state of emergency and/or disaster in its area of responsibility.

The plan and SOPs of each leading agency will be annexed to the NDRM Plan as the Response Plan and SOPs that relate to that particular hazard. For instance, the Health response plan/SOPs for a disease epidemic would be annexed to the NDRM Plan as the national response plan and SOPs for that epidemic.

All response plans for states of emergency and/or disaster must work within the response structures established by the DRM Act, and this Plan.

The only exceptions to this are states of emergency relating to Health and Agriculture; in these cases, specific legislation takes priority over the more general terms of the DRM Act and so the NDRM Plan will reflect the mandate and procedures of that other legislation.

Leading agencies must hold regular drills with all supporting agencies identified in their response plan as having a role to play. EMCI must assist all leading agencies in this exercise.

The Emergency Operating Centre for each leading agency must report regularly to the NEOC.

Levels of Events and response

Disaster management is all about tailoring an agency response to the event that is unfolding. Resources are limited, so a “one size fits all” approach is wasteful and unnecessary.

On the other hand, to underestimate an event can have tragic consequences.

In disaster management, the first step to make sure all parties are using a common framework to measure an event – it is important to identify the level of response is needed. Different levels of response are called for depending on whether events involving threats to life, property or simply to the environment.

If we classify different levels of response, we can best ensure a coordinated and integrated approach to response management across all responding agencies.

The Plan recognises three levels of response management within its structure. Agencies, in developing their own plans, must do the same. Those three levels reflect three levels of event. They are:

1. Incident
2. State of Emergency
3. State of Disaster

Fig.5. : Level of response



The three different levels are of scale and response

Incident

An incident is a routine event that is responded to by a single or small number of agencies, it is low in resource needs and is typically coordinated on scene.

Example - A traffic accident that involves a car and a motorcycle causing minimal casualties, responded to by police and ambulance. Little coordination is needed and tasks such as caring for the injured and recording the accident are carried out in a routine manner.

Emergency

An emergency is far larger and more complex than an incident and usually requires a multi-agency response. The management of an emergency requires a more coordinated and integrated approach and so it may require that a State of Emergency be declared (see below) but it is not a widespread event or on a scale that would involve a national response.

Example - An event on an outer island that involves a truck carrying a hazardous substance that goes off the road; it hits a tree, spills its contents onto the ground, and threatens the water catchments in the surrounding area. This requires a multi-agency response as there are a number of tasks to be dealt with as a result of this event -

- treatment of the injured;
- recording of the accident;
- closing the roads and surrounding areas;
- evacuating people to a safe area;

- caring for the evacuated people;
- containment of the hazardous substance;
- cleaning up of the hazardous substance.

This event would require a significant coordinated response for the responding agencies and therefore could require a declaration of a State of Emergency to provide the powers to carry out the tasks identified.

Declaration of a State of Emergency

Under the provisions of the DRM Act a state of emergency exists when:

1. it is declared by the Prime Minister;
2. the EMCI Director, in exceptional circumstances, determines that an immediate, coordinated multi-agency response is required to deal with an emergency event;
3. the National Emergency Operations Centre is mobilised for an event by the Council;
4. an event occurs which the Arrangements specify is to be treated as a State of Emergency.

Power of the Police during a State of Emergency

In terms of section 22 of the DRM Act, a police officer on duty in or near an event may exercise the following power:

- cause to be closed any road, footpath or open space;
- prohibit any person or vehicle from the area;
- direct any person or vehicle to immediately leave the area by the safest and shortest route;
- authorise a person to enter or remain in an area

To make sure coordination with leading agencies are effective and that Response Plans are followed, the Police must be aware of the response plan for that particular disaster and must work in collaboration with the leading agencies in every aspects of the response.

Disaster

A disaster is a widespread large-scale event involving national resources and would typically lead to a State of Disaster being declared.

Example - A cyclone impacts a large part of the southern Cook Islands and requires a major national and international response; this has to have a significant coordination and control response from a whole of Government level.

Declared State of Disaster

In the event of a disaster the Prime Minister may declare a State of Disaster to exist in the whole or part of the Cook Islands (section 19 DRM Act). Before declaring a State of Disaster the Prime Minister must:

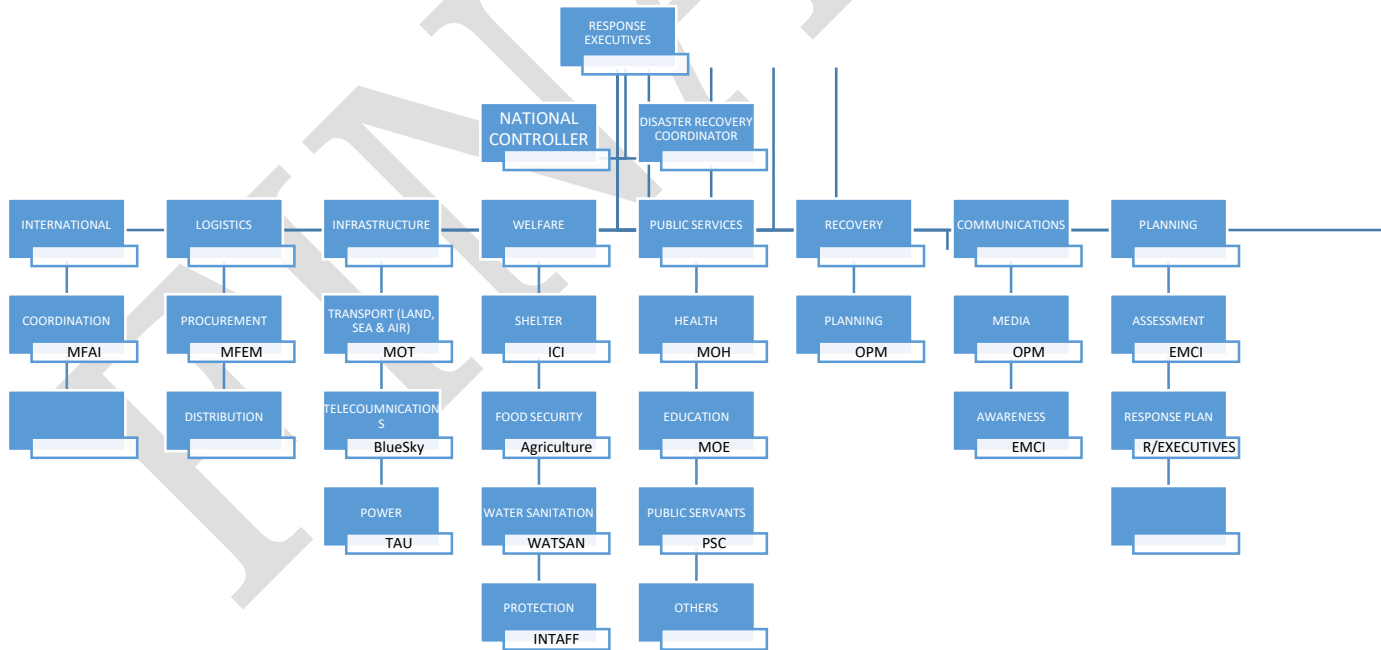
- where practicable consult with Cabinet;
- seek and obtain recommendations from the EMCI Director;
- be satisfied that the disaster is an actual event or highly probable risk involving serious disruption to the functioning of the community causing widespread human, material,

economy and environmental loss and which exceeds the ability of the affected community to cope using its own resources;

- be satisfied that the nature and type of disaster require a coordinated response, which cannot be dealt with as an emergency;
- be satisfied that the declaration is in the best interest of the Cook Islands.

At that stage, the relevant Leading agency (depending on the hazard) should already have activated its Emergency or Disaster Response plan in a way that is complementary to this Plan.

Fig.6. : National Response Structure



This structure can accommodate any hazards depending on what cluster the hazards need.

This National Response structure will be activated once there is a State of Emergency or Disaster is declared in any part of the Cook Islands.

The Response Executive

Its main roles are to:

- (a) direct the National Response to an emergency or disaster;
- (b) approve all contracts with any third party providing services to the Response;
- (c) appoint the Disaster Recovery Coordinator for the event.

The Response Executive must be convened when the following events occur:

- (a) there is a State of Disaster;
- (b) there is a State of Emergency;
- (c) a Disaster Risks Management Plan calls for the convening of the Response Executive;
- (d) when requested by the Director of EMCI

Membership of the Response Executive

The Response Executive consists of the following members:

- (a) National Controller (Police Commissioner) as chair
- (b) Financial Secretary
- (c) Secretary of Infrastructure Cook Islands
- (d) Director for outer islands services
- (e) Director for EMCI
- (f) Relevant Leading agency.

The National Controller

He or she is basically the commander on the ground during a response to an emergency or a disaster.

The National Controller in consultation with the Response Executive, has the following roles:

Agencies activities and resources

- determines priorities in the roles and responsibilities of each agency;
- directs and coordinates the activities of various agencies;
- allocates all available resources of government to the Response.

Those powers extend to the private sector; for instance, the National Controller has the power to take possession of anyone's property in order to respond effectively to an event. Every taking must be compensated as determined by the Director of EMCI in consultation with the Council (see s7 DRM Act).

Affected areas

- controls and restricts entry into, movement within and departure from Disaster and Emergency area or any part of it;

- compels the evacuation of any or all persons from the Disaster and Emergency area or any part of it.

General roles

- must work with Disaster Recovery Coordinator and the Disaster Coordinator for the affected area;
- must involve the Director of EMCI and the Disaster Recovery Coordinator in all relevant aspects before, during and following an event;
- may delegate any of his powers or functions with or without conditions to any person or class of persons working in the response;
- may perform any other activity required in order to respond effectively to the event and its effects;
- may exercise any other functions as the Minister may determine by notice in the Gazette.

National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC)

NEOC

- must be activated in the lead up to an event and upon the Declaration of a State of Emergency or Disaster;
 - is staffed by Police and operates under the supervision of the National Controller;
 - hosts the Response Executive which operates from the NEOC
 - looks to EMCI which must facilitate its maintenance.
- ❖ At the time of drafting this Plan, the NEOC for tropical cyclones is located at the BlueSky compound in Takuvaine, Rarotonga.

Clusters

Fig. 5. shows the clusters and the lead agency ("Cluster Lead") of each cluster. Coordination is key in disaster management and some agencies are a natural fit for certain purposes. The concept of clusters speaks to this.

All agencies must work to implement the Response Plan developed to address the specific disaster at the time. Each should pay special attention to others in its cluster.

There are 8 Clusters in the NEOC:

1. Logistics
2. International Assistance
3. Infrastructure
4. Welfare
5. Public Services
6. Recovery

7. Communication
8. Planning

Development of SOPs for each cluster is the responsibility of each cluster lead in consultation with its members and to be approved by the NDRM Council. SOPs must outline functions and members of each cluster. It must also align to the Response Plan of the leading agency leading the response.

Note that international partners who work in a cluster will be working with the cluster lead but within the scope of the response plan.

Assessment

Depending on the hazard, there will be three stages of the assessment:

1. Immediate Situation Overview
2. Initial Damage Assessment
3. Sector Damage Assessment

The following agencies will lead each stage:

- Immediate Situation Overview – EMCI, Police and the relevant Leading agency;
- Initial Damage Assessment – Relevant Leading Agency. For instance, in terms of tropical cyclone – Cook Islands Red Cross together with EMCI would lead this stage of the assessment;
- Sector Damage Assessment – Each sector will lead its own sector damage assessment.

All assessments will be reported to the NEOC for analysis by the Planning cluster and its report to the Response Executive for decision on the plan of action for the disaster.

Essential Services

Essential Services will take their lead from the National Controller and the Response Executive. Each Essential Service should, by this point have activated its response plan and be in a position to make sure that directions from the National Controller and Response Executive are addressed immediately.

Partners, NGO's and Civil Society

All agencies must work within the framework of this Plan and the response plan of the leading agency by identifying a relevant cluster to work under. Each must work within the SOPs of that cluster.

Cook Islands Red Cross Society

The CIRC is Government's strongest partner in disaster management. Under the laws of the Cook Islands, CIRC is auxiliary to the public authorities in the area of humanitarian services.

The CIRC is independent in its work in disaster management. However, the Society's Response plan must be consistent with the NDRM Act, NDRM Plan, Leading Agency DRM

Plans, Essential Services DRM Plans, Island DRM Plans, Puna DRM Plans and relevant DRM plans. Its response plan must be complementary to the actions plan directed by the Response Executive and the National Controller except to the extent that those are in some way contrary to the fundamental principles of the National Society and its Act.

Private Sector

The Private sector is an important partner during the response phase. Each cluster lead must make sure the cluster is open to partnering with the private sector in implementing the response plan.

International Assistance

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the cluster lead for International assistance. Once international Assistance has been requested by the Response Executive and Prime Minister in Cabinet, the SOPs for international assistance will be activated.

Leading agencies and all agencies must develop SOPs for international assistance in their area of responsibility that are consistent with the SOPs for International Assistance annexed to the NDRM Plan.

Annexed to this Plan and mark 3 is the SOP for International Assistance

Early Recovery and reconstruction:

Each leading agency must develop its recovery plan within the recovery structure established by the DRM Act.

These are the structures under the DRM Act.

The Disaster Recovery Coordinator

The Response Executive must appoint a Disaster Recovery Coordinator who must work under the direction of the Director for EMCI (section 13 of DRM Act). It is important for the Response Executive, in appointing the Disaster Recovery Coordinator, to take the following factors into consideration:

- the type of disaster;
- the appointee's level of expertise in the area;
- whether the person can appropriately work under and report to the Director of EMCI.

The NDRM Council must appoint a Recovery Committee which is to be chaired by the Disaster Recovery Coordinator to oversee the Recovery phase.

The Disaster Recovery Coordinator roles include:

- developing a Recovery Action Plan for the disaster with information from all levels of assessment and, in particular, the sector damage assessment.

- Assisting to coordinate all resources and services available for the recovery including the allocation and administration of financial and material aid.

The Disaster Recovery Coordinator must work closely with the relevant leading agency throughout the recovery and reconstruction phase.

Management of recovery activities after a disaster must take into account risk reduction considerations.

5.3 Outer Island level

All Island DRM Plans must have a disaster management component that is consistent with the disaster management structure established by the DRM Act, NDRM Plan, Leading Agencies DRM Plan, Essential Services Plans, and any relevant DRM plans.

Each Leading agency together with the Island Council and Island DRM Committee is responsible (in the case of a hazard for which that agency leads) for the implementation of disaster management activities on each inhabited island of the Cook Islands.

Preparedness and Early Warning:

The Island DRM Plan must outline the preparedness and early warning actions needed for each hazard. This part of the DRM Plan should be developed in consultation with the relevant leading agency of each hazard to ensure consistency of action and effective coordination.

Response:

Each island DRM Plan should have a disaster response component that must be activated during emergency or disaster response on the island.

An Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) will be established on the island. The EOC will report to the NEOC in Rarotonga.

If circumstances avoid or prevent the National Controller from effectively performing his functions on the affected outer island, then the Disaster Coordinator can exercise the powers of the National Controller for that area of responsibility.

Recovery and Reconstructions:

Each Island DRM Plan should outline procedures for recovery from emergency or disaster on the island. It should allow for the development of a recovery action plan after assessment is carried out. Typically, assessment will occur during and immediately after the disaster event.

The Island DRM Committee with the Island Council will work together with the Disaster Recovery Coordinator and the Committee to implement the Recovery plan on the island.

5.4 Rarotonga Puna level

The Puna DRM Plan must have a disaster management component that is consistent with the DRM Act, NDRM Plan, Leading Agencies Plans, Essential Agencies Plans, and other relevant DRM Plans concerning its geographical area.

The Puna DRM Committee with the assistance of EMCI and the relevant leading agency (depending on the hazard) are responsible for implementing the Puna disaster management plan.

Preparedness and Early Warning:

The Puna DRM Plan must outline the preparedness and early warning actions needed for each hazard. This part of the DRM Plan should be developed in consultation with the relevant leading agency of each hazard to ensure consistency of action and effective coordination

Response:

Each Puna DRM Plan should have a disaster response component that must be activated during emergency or disaster response on the island.

An Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) will be established in the Puna. The EOC will report to the NEOC in Rarotonga.

Recovery and reconstructions:

Each Puna DRM Plan should outline procedures for recovery from emergency or disaster in its area. Typically, assessment will occur during and immediately after the disaster event.

The Puna DRM Committee will work together with the Disaster Recovery Coordinator to implement relevant recovery plans.

PART SIX

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PLAN

6.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Agencies

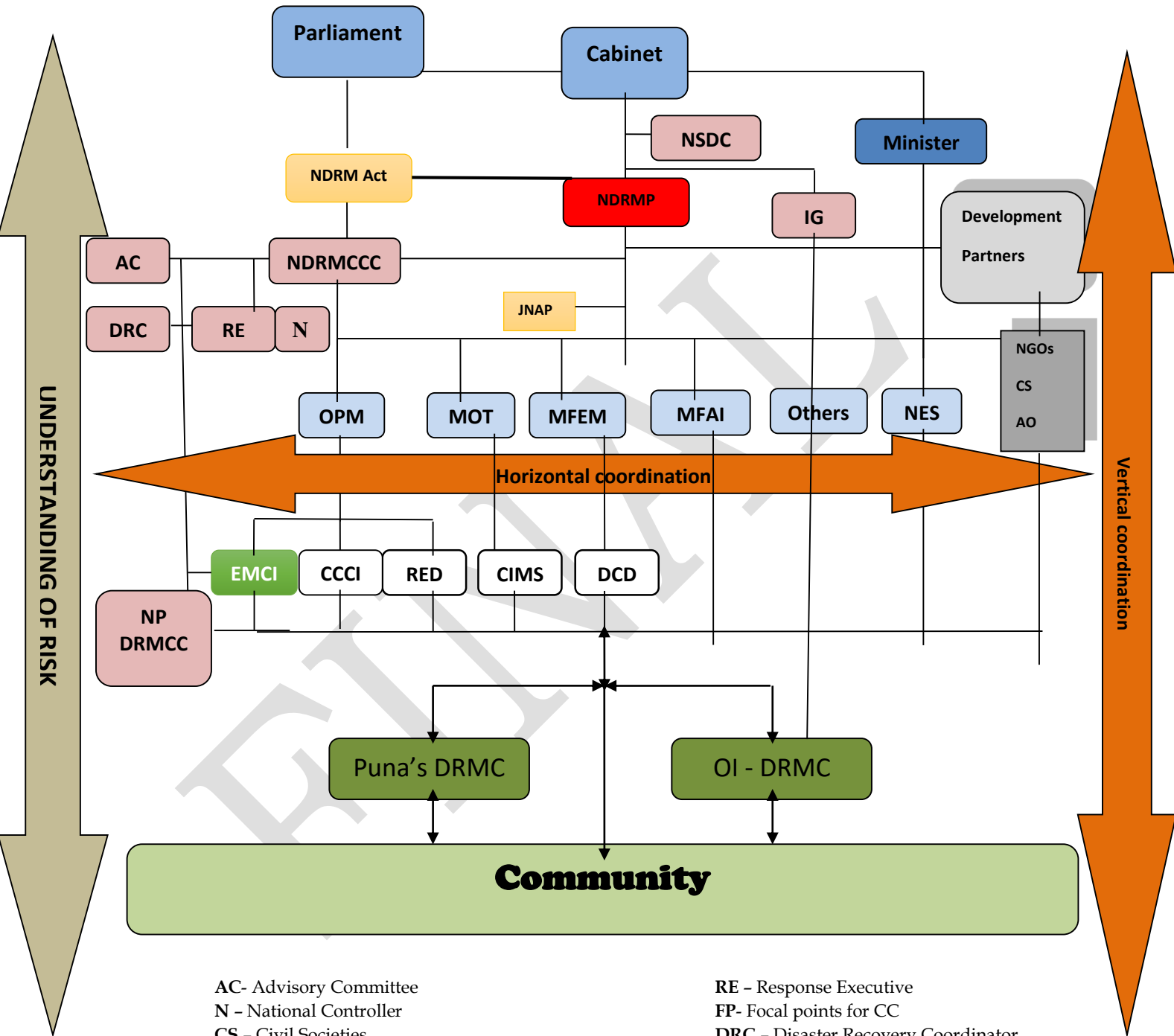
EMCI is responsible to monitor and evaluate the NDRM Plan. At the end of every financial year, EMCI must file a review of the implementation of the NDRM Plan to the NDRM Council.

The NDRM Council is responsible to report on the implementation of the NDRM Plan to Cabinet and to Parliament and must do so every year.

6.2 Review timeline

There must be a mid-term review of this Plan on its third Anniversary. Any changes to this Plan must be endorsed by the NDRM Council and this Plan must be amended, accordingly, by EMCI.

Fig.7. : The institutional arrangements for DRM in the Cook Islands is outlined in this diagram.



AC- Advisory Committee

N - National Controller

CS - Civil Societies

NPDRMCC - National Platform for DRM and CC

Puna's DRMC - Rarotonga Vaka DRM Committees

NSDC - National Sustainable Development Commission

AGO - Auxiliary Organisations (e.g. Cook Islands Red Cross Society),

OI DRMC - Outer Islands DRM Committee

RE - Response Executive

FP- Focal points for CC

DRC - Disaster Recovery Coordinator

IG - Island Government

Annex 1

National Disaster Response Trust Fund Policy

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Annex 2

List of Safety Legislation

Safety legislation and law enforcement processes relating to DRM and CC

These are sometimes referred to as “safety” legislation – in the sense that they all play their part in making people and communities “safer” and more resilient in terms of a range of hazards. Studies show that this safety legislation holds the key to long-term reduction of underlying risks¹.

These are the existing risk reduction related legislation in areas where DRM and CC

Building Controls and Standards 1991

This legislation is over 20 years old, predating current concerns with regard to climate change. However, it was brought into force just four years after Cyclone Sally hit the island of Rarotonga, and it established a National Building Code that reflects the need to design and build houses that will withstand high temperature, high humidity, a corrosive environment and – most importantly- that can withstand the wind speed likely to be encountered in cyclone conditions. Experience of cyclones suggest the Act is most strictly enforced on Rarotonga, serious damage to buildings in the outer islands is a periodic reminder of the need to ensure these standards are followed everywhere.

The office of the Building Controller may not have great “reach”, but both EMCI and CCCI have a mandate that extends to the outer islands. Unsafe buildings kill and injure. A close working relationship between the Building Controller’s office and these two agencies will inform personnel of EMCI and CCCI to empower them in educating and raising awareness in the outer islands of self-interested compliance with the Building Code.

Biosecurity Act 2008

The Biosecurity Act 2008 aims to regulate the country’s border to prevent animal and plant, pests and diseases entering the Cook Islands. Much of the Act is aimed at securing the borders. As an island nation far from other land the Act is focused on ships and aircraft coming into the country.

The Act takes a precautionary approach to risk reduction as it relates to the Cook Islands ecosystem. It recognises further, that where borders are breached internal controls will be needed along with the ability to declare biosecurity emergencies areas.

The Act does not speak to climate change, but the Act itself, represents current best practice that reflects increased world concerns over climate change and associated species migration. As the climate changes in the Cook Islands the environment will favour some plants and animals over others. Biosecurity has an interest in that message reaching a wide public audience. It is a climate theme message that can be coordinated between the work of CCCI and Biosecurity.

¹ “Better laws, safer communities? Emerging themes on how legislation can support disaster risk reduction, May 2013, IFRC

In terms of sudden onset emergency, there are obvious areas of common interest between EMCI and Biosecurity division, which suggests that institutional arrangement could be put in place between these two agencies. The lessons learnt from the recent fruit fly emergency should be taken notice of by both EMCI and MOA and lessons learned to make sure that institutional arrangements are well established and disseminated.

Marine Resources Act 2005

The Marine Resources Act 2005, is a comprehensive Act that recognises the valuable living and non-living resources within the Cook Islands Fishery waters. Its detailed provisions are focused on regulating the commercial exploitation of fisheries within the Cook Islands.

The Act assumes a finite resource and seeks to provide “for the sustainable use of the living and non-living marine resources for the benefit of the people of the Cook Islands”. Section 4 requires the Minister and the Secretary to take into account “environmental and information principles in relation to achieving the sustainable use of fisheries and the need to adopt measures to ensure the long term sustainability of the fish stocks...and to base decisions on the best scientific evidence available” and to have regard to relevant environmental and economic factors”. It is specifically required to apply the “precautionary approach”.

The Act requires the Ministry to take into account “the prevention, reduction and control of pollution and other hazards to the aquatic environment and of interference with the ecological balance of the Marine environment – along with the principle of “prevention of damage to the flora and fauna of the aquatic environment.”

Marine Resources has a limited jurisdiction that has DRR implications - sudden onset marine pollution Specifically section 34 - contamination of the fishery waters prohibiting non-biodegradable trash or debris, and the discharge of a poison, chemical or noxious substance, including but not limited to oil, petroleum, solvents, metals or sewage.

Annex 3

Standard Operations Procedure for International Assistance

**Standard Operating Procedure
for
International Assistance
during
Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Phase**

**Cook Islands
2013**

Overview and Activation

Introduction

This document describes the **International Assistance Focal Point (IAFP)** as suggested in the Cook Islands IDRL Report 2012. It sets out the Focal Points:

- Responsibilities; and
- Processes; and
- Procedures.

This document is intended to form part of the National Disaster Risk Management Arrangement 2009 (National DRM Arrangement). Specifically, it should replace that part of the Arrangement relating to International Assistance during immediate response and early recovery.

Main Functions and key responsibilities

The main function of the IAFP is to facilitate and coordinate international assistance. It does this under the direction of the Response Executive or, in their absence, the National Controller or Director of EMCI.

Specifically to:

- Facilitate communication between International Responders and the Response Executive and Essential Agencies and keep records of all correspondence
- May provide information updates on the list of goods, services and equipment required for the disaster response on the EMCI portal or United Nation's Virtual On Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC) and the Pacific Disaster Net.
- Receive, collate and, when needed match together:
 - offers of international assistance; and
 - requests for international assistance
- Seek approval to accept offers of, and subsequent requests for, international assistance from the Response Executive, and in their absence, the Director for Emergency Management Cook Islands (EMCI)
- Communicate (through the appropriate channels) requests for and acceptance of international assistance
- Facilitate the entry into the country and subsequent departure of:
 - Relief;
 - Initial recovery personnel;
 - Associated goods, equipment and transport.

- Monitors and records the arrival, movement and departure of approved international assistance
- Hosts the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team (if deployed) and the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT)

In terms of the Prime Minister issuing a directive under section 19 of the Disaster Risk Management Act 2007 (DRM Act) in relation to International assistance, the IAFP must communicate all necessary information to all international responders and facilitate the implementation of such a directive.

Communication

It is vital to the success of the IAFP that all members work together with full and open communication.

Specifically:

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration (MFAI) must assist the IAFP:
 - in keeping the international community informed of the Cook Islands Government's response and
 - notifying IAFP of international offers of assistance channelled through them
- Essential services and local humanitarian organisations must inform IAFP of any information or enquiry received regarding international assistance correspondence and offers of assistance channelled through them
- The Response Executive must keep the IAFP updated with the operation plan on the ground so that IAFP can provide feedback to international responders through the EMCI portal and the Pacific Disaster Net.

IAFP Manager

The IAFP will be managed by EMCI in close collaboration with the UNDAC and the PHT. The Manager will be from EMCI.

Activation

The IAFP can be activated whenever either:

- there is a National Declaration of State of Disaster; or
- it is activated by the Director for EMCI or National Controller during a State of Emergency

Staffing the IAFP

Depending on the scale and scope of the emergency, the IAFP may be staffed by representatives from these essential services:

Permanent members

- EMCI
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM)
(Development Coordination or Customs Services)

Depending on the scale of the disaster and the need for the IAFP to operate 24hours, each permanent member must provide staff for shift hours when necessary.

Co-opted members

Depending on the scale/type of disaster the IAFP can co-opt any essential agency or experts either recommended by the Response Executive or National Controller or the Director for EMCI to join the IAFP for the duration of the work of the IAFP for that particular disaster. For example: If it is a health epidemic the IAFP might benefit from co-opting someone from the Ministry of Health to help them identify relevant medication that might be needed or is being offered by international responders. The Ministry of Health might already has an established line of communication with their partners from overseas, like WHO, so it is helpful to have someone from Ministry of Health there to speed up the work of the IAFP.

Location

The IAFP is located at the EMCI or NEOC office

Request for international assistance

The initial damage and needs assessment report is forwarded to the NEOC where the Response Executive decides whether the country has the capacity to cope with the response or whether international assistance is needed.

Approval needed before requesting international assistance

The decision whether or not to request assistance from the international community must be made by the Prime Minister, in consultation with Cabinet and the Response Executive.

If in any case, an urgent international response (within 48 hours) is needed, and where Cabinet and/or Response Executive is unable to meet with Prime Minister, the National Controller and/or the Director of EMCI must communicate the need to the Prime Minister and ask for approval to send out immediate requests.

Request for International Assistance

Once the Prime Minister approves to request international assistance, there are two methods of initiating international assistance:

1. IAFP must immediately send out either general or specific request (depending on the information provided from the NEOC) for assistance to the international community.
2. In case of any Foreign Government who requires formal request from the Cook Islands Government, the request must be sent under MFAI.

The Cook Islands Red Cross Society has its own system of requesting international assistance from IFRC and other National Societies; Local NGOs may also request assistance from overseas partners, in both cases the Red Cross and local NGOs must provide the IAFP with information on their request.

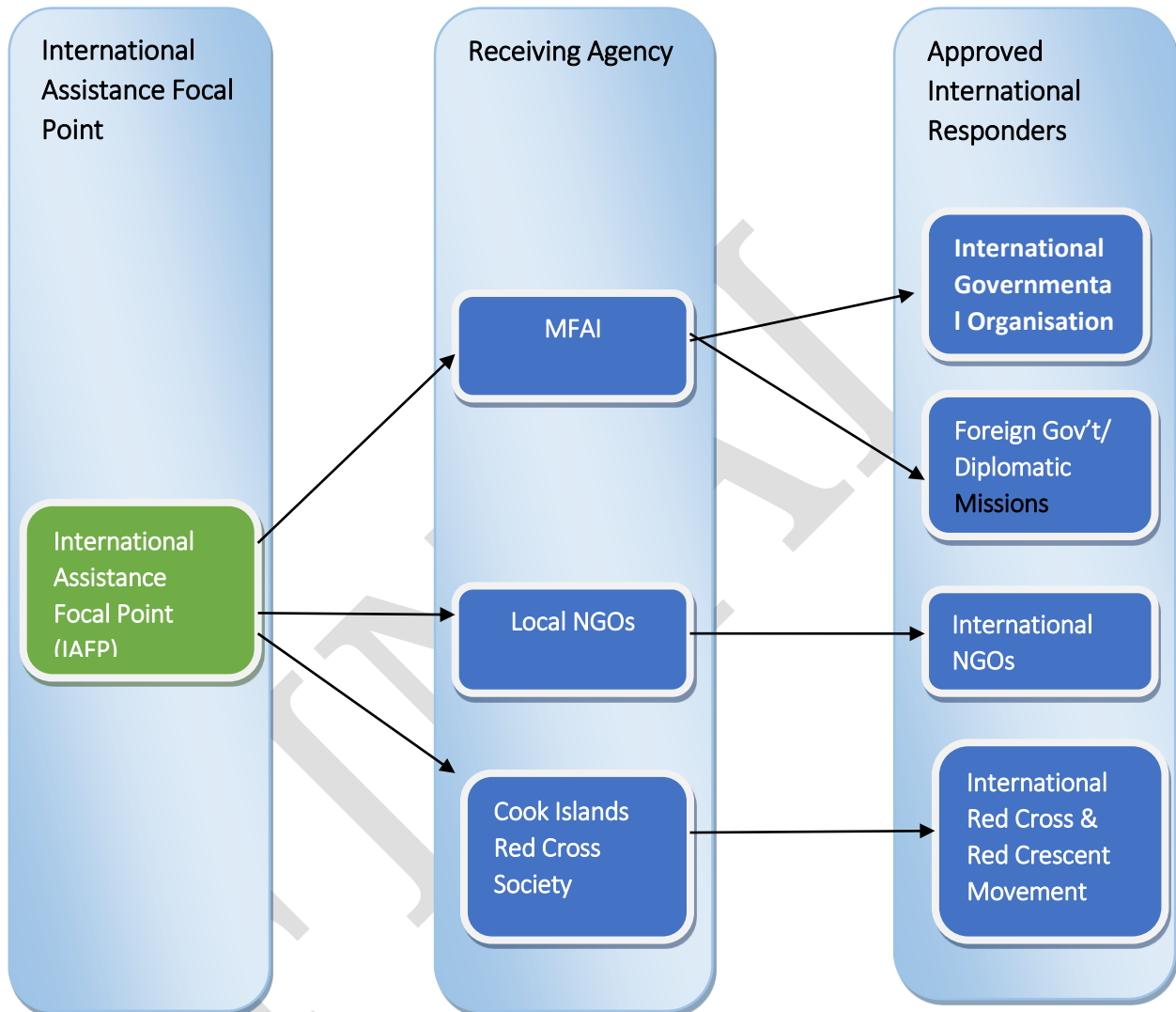
The IAFP with collaboration with the Response Executive must send out specific instruction on how Cook Islanders overseas (especially in New Zealand and Australia) could send assistance to the Cook Islands for disaster response. This instruction will depend on the type of disaster and the scale of disaster. In any case, the most convenient form of assistance will be monetary assistance. In case of monetary assistance, the member of the IAFP from the Ministry of Finance and Economic will be responsible for the forming of a Bank Account to receive monetary assistance from overseas Cook Islanders.

Role of the IAFP in the request process

- ✚ The IAFP is responsible to follow up on specific requests, and provide further information if required by the international community regarding the request.
- ✚ The IAFP must keep lines of communication open with potential International responders.
- ✚ The IAFP must keep a record of all correspondence with international responders.

The flow chart below shows how the request for international assistance should be conducted.

Figure 1: How request is made:



Specifics of the request:

- ✚ The request may be directed to particular approved international responder to make offers or provide assistance
- ✚ The request shall be accompanied by:
 - Information as to the extent and type of assistance required based on a list prepared by the Response Executives
 - Information on the procedures for different assisting international actors to make offers or provide assistance

Note: Once international resource have been requested and those resource have been mobilised, even if a domestic resources becomes available, the international resource should remain en route to the Cook Islands and not be cancelled.

UNDAC Team

The UNDAC Team may be an appropriate response tool.

Upon approval to request international assistance, the Response Executive will direct whether the scale of the disaster response warrant a request for the deployment of an UNDAC team.

Any request to the UNDAC team must be made through the UNOCHA in Suva, Fiji or the UN Resident Coordinator in Samoa.

If the UNDAC team is deployed to the Cook Islands, Terms of Reference will be agreed upon and those should include a responsibility for UNDAC to provide necessary support to the IAFP.

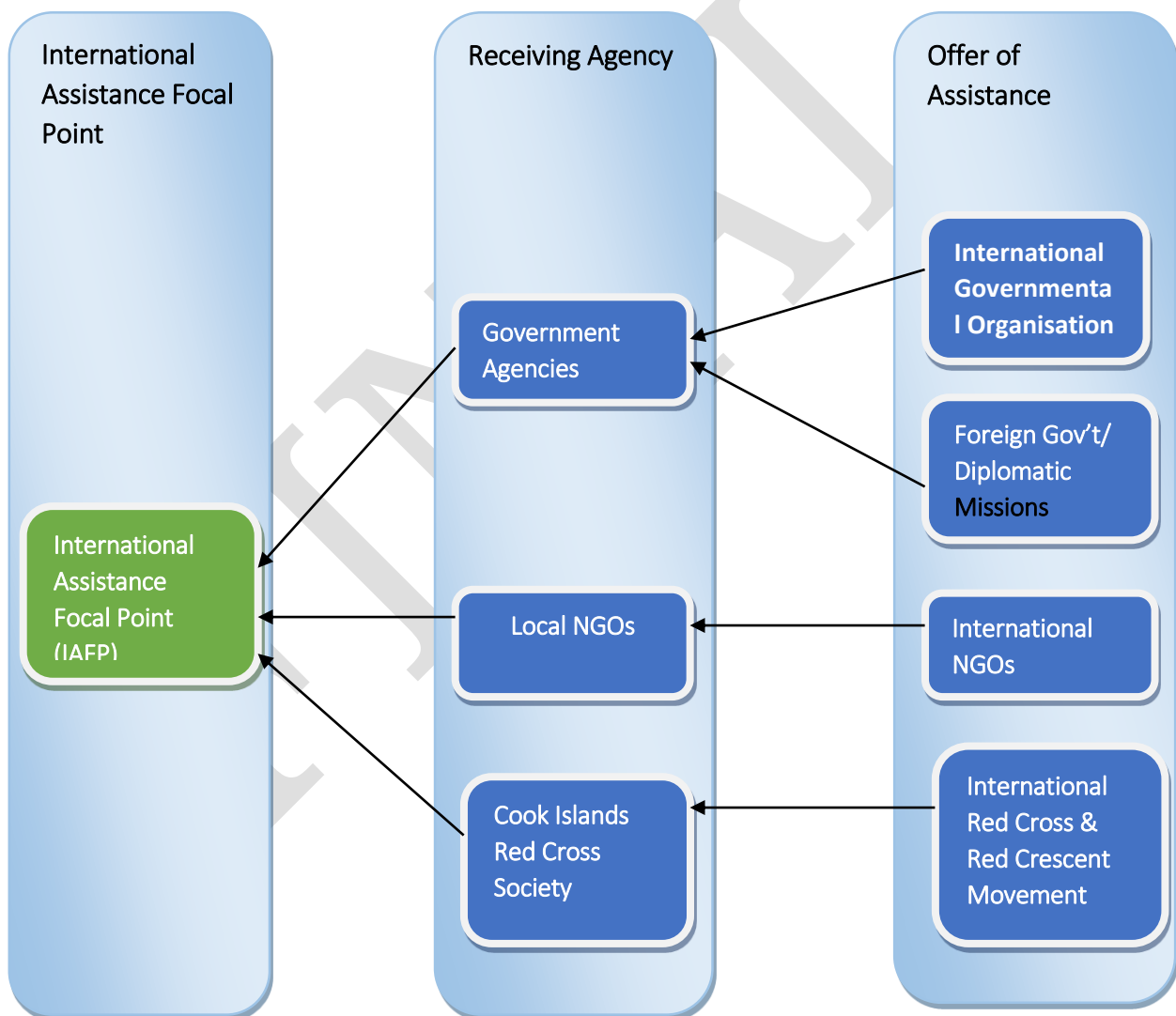
Offers of International Assistance

Offers of International assistance

If the IAFP is activated, offers of international assistance received during emergencies and disaster response must be forwarded to the IAFP.

If the IAFP is not activated, any offer being responded to from NEOC or MFAI or any Essential Services must be copied to EMCI

Figure 1: How offers of international assistance are received



Receiving offers of international assistance

When offers of international assistance are received, IAFP personnel will:

- Receive, collate and, when needed match together:
 - offers of international assistance; and
 - requests for international assistance
- Communicate immediately to the Response Executive all offers of international assistance for the immediate response and early recovery phase and if the Response Executive is not available at the time to make a decision, the National Controller and/or Director of EMCI will make a decision whether to accept the offer or not; The IAFP Manager is responsible for providing offers to the Response Executive or Director of EMCI and/or National Controller at least once daily for consideration
- Where required, seek advice from other agencies regarding unique offers of assistance;

Response to offer of assistance

- Once decisions are made regarding an offer of assistance, IAFP will be responsible to send a reply to the concerned international responder.
- In terms of Foreign Government who requires a formal reply, the reply will be through MFAI. The member of the IAFP from MFAI will be responsible for this.

Note: Some agencies may have existing international response arrangements with partner agencies. These agencies must ensure that the IAFP is aware of any offers of international assistance received from partners.

The table below sets out expected time frames and communication options to ensure that offers of assistance are dealt with systematically and efficiently.

Purpose	Content of message	Timeframe
Initial acknowledgement	Thanks/Confirm received/Hold	Within 24 hours
If offer related to immediate response	Accept/Decline or remain on hold	Within 2 days
If offer remains on hold and relates to early response	Accept/Decline or remain on hold	Provide update every 2-5 days
If offer related to early recovery, medium term or where need is unclear	Accept/Decline/update with new information remain on hold	Within 5 days

Accepting offers of international assistance

Requirements for accepting offers of international assistance are:

- The Response Executive (or in their absence the Director of EMCI and/or National Controller) may discuss offers received with relevant agencies before making a decision on acceptance
- IAFP must provide the Response Executive (or in their absence the Director of EMCI and/or National Controller) with a list of credible international responders base on their research or base on information from UNOCHA.
- Any offers to be accepted must be signed off by the Director of EMCI and/or National Controller
- The IAFP Manager is responsible for the sign-off process including record keeping (scanned copies of signed accepted offers are to be filed in the EMCI document management system), and communicating accepted offers to relevant international responder copied to relevant agencies.
- In terms of existing international arrangements between agencies, any offer of international arrangements must be considered and agreed to by the Director EMCI and/or National Controller before acceptance of that assistance.
- Cook Islands Red Cross Society, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS) have their own arrangements for surge capacity and mutual assistance from their international partners. These arrangements are considered to be internal support arrangements; however, they are still required to keep the IAFP informed of any arrangements with its international partners and deployment into the Cook Islands during the response and initial recovery phase.
- The Logistics team (recruited members from each Ministry or EMCI) must be informed of any accepted offers which may require a delivery or logistics component if that is not provided by the donating entity or relevant essential agency.
- MFAI, may assist the IAFP by using existing lines of communication to foreign governments (including through foreign diplomatic missions), partners and international organisations to facilitate the communications of the acceptance if needed.

Declining offers

Once the decision is made to decline an offer of assistance, IAFP will be responsible for sending the reply to the concerned international responder.

In case of Foreign Governments, the reply will be through MFAI. The member of the IAFP from MFAI will be responsible for this.

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Facilitation and coordination of the entry and departure of relief goods, equipment, including vehicles and aircraft.

- ✚ Once the decision is made to request assistance from the international community, the IAFP must communicate to all potential international responders all necessary border requirements for the entry and departure of goods, equipment including vehicles and aircraft, and international humanitarian personnel.
- ✚ IAFP must make sure that approved international responders have the necessary information about what is needed at the border for prompt clearance.
- ✚ The Prime Minister may suspend some legal requirements at the border, so it is very important to check if this has been done, under s19 of the Disaster Risk Management Act 2007 and make sure it is correctly communicated to the potential international responders.

Clearance of relief items from the airport and the harbour

- ✚ IAFP must keep a close communication with approved international responders on all relief items or personnel being sent to the Cook Islands for the disaster response.
- ✚ The IAFP must do what is needed to make sure relief items (goods and equipment including vehicles and aircraft) are processed in a fast and efficient manner at the border.
- ✚ One representative from the IAFP will be on hand at the port or airport of entry to facilitate the entry and departure of these items. IAFP can co-opt members from relevant agencies to facilitate this. He or she must have a list of all the relief items expected at the border from approved international responders.
- ✚ IAFP will give priority assistance to international responder's whose assistance has been accepted by the Response Executive (or in their absence the Director of EMCI and/or National Controller).
- ✚ The border control agencies will give priority clearance to relief items sent from approved international responders.

Collection point

If there is a need to move relief items from the Port immediately, all relief items must be moved to a collection point (to be identified by the National Controller or Director of EMCI). Distribution of these items will be carried out by the IAFP in collaboration with the Logistics Team at the NEOC under the direction of the National Controller or the Director of EMCI.

Licences and permission to operate vehicles and machinery in the Cook Islands

The IAFP will provide potential International responders with the relevant information for any requirements for licences and permissions needed to operate vehicles and machinery (as part of their disaster response operation) in the Cook Islands.

Annex 1: IAFP Member Agency Contact Details

Annex 2: Guiding responsibility of the IAFP staff

Annex 3: The Role of the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in Disaster Relief

Annex 4: The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations

Annex 5: Deploying an UNDAC Team into the Cook Islands

Annex 6: Diagram of Response Executive -

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Emergency Management Cook Islands

Name	Title	Telephone number	Address

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Name	Title	Telephone number	Address

Ministry of Finance and Economic Management - Coordination Management

Name	Title	Telephone number	Address

Responsibility of IAFP staff

Representative from EMCI

- Manages the operation of the IAFP during and after the response and recovery
- Responsible for communicating information on legal requirements at the border to international responders
- Co-opt any other member of the IAFP if needed
- Lead the communication with International responders
- Facilitate the operation of the UNDAC and PHT teams.

Representative from MFAI Sends requests for assistance to foreign Governments and international organisations either directly or through Cook Islands missions overseas.

- In the event of urgent need for International Assistance, the IAFP upon direction from PM or National Controller or Director of EMCI, can mobilise the request. A formal request can be sent later from MFAI.
- Convey offers for assistance received by MFAI to the IAFP for facilitation
- Respond to correspondence from foreign governments and international organisations on the request made
- Facilitate the entry and departure of International Response personnel
- Lead the facilitation of visits of next-of-kin of foreign victims

Representative from MFEM - Coordination Management Collate requests for monetary assistance and facilitate the sending of the requests

- Collate monetary offers from international responders
- Match the needs on the ground to monetary assistance available in collaboration with Response Executive
- Facilitate the entry of relief items at the border, including departure of equipment used by international responders as part of their response operation

The Role of the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in Disaster Relief

1. The Cook Islands Red Cross Society (CIRCS) was established in 1989, and has been in operation in the Cook Islands in the area of disaster response since 1993. The CIRCS is Government's strongest partner in disaster response in the Cook Islands.
2. Under the Cook Islands Red Cross Society Act 2002, the National Society has an auxiliary role to public authorities in the Cook Islands in the humanitarian field (the purposes of the Society's object, and the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols)
3. The CIRCS is one of the 190 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies which provide global disaster management capacity and capability.
4. The CIRCS works alongside EMCI and other public authorities to reduce risk, mitigate the effects of, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters.
5. The CIRCS may receive offers of assistance from international donors, governments, corporate, other international institutions or National Societies directly or via the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
6. The CIRCS may manage its own international assistance; however, it must inform the IAFFP on assistance received and requests sent out to its partners.
7. Such assistance may be in the form of funding, logistics, procurement, assessments, relief supplies, surge personnel, response teams, technical advice or support and thematic response units e.g. water sanitation, field hospital, IT and telecoms.
8. All disaster management activities of the CIRCS are undertaken in line with the core International Red Cross & Red Crescent fundamental principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence as outlined in the CIRCS Act 2002, and in accordance with the Code of Conduct for the Movement and NGO's in disaster relief, relevant disaster law (IDRL) and movement statutory guidelines.

The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations

Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) are non-profit organisations or associations that stand independently of the State. NGOs are active in a wide spectrum of activities including development, environmental work, humanitarian response and relief, social welfare, advocacy and human rights. NGOs may be financed by private individuals, groups, governments, or inter-governmental organisations e.g. the European Union. They can be used by organisations (e.g. the UN) as channels for delivering humanitarian supplies (e.g. food aid) or services. NGOs may be divided into two main categories, namely international NGOs, i.e. those working in the international field (even though they may not be an international organisation in the strictest sense of the term) and local NGOs, i.e. those working within their own country. Many do both.

NGOs work in all areas of the humanitarian field and provide the greatest international capacity to implement relief on the ground. NGOs tend to specialise in one or two fields, or to target their efforts towards one vulnerable population group. They usually offer skilled staff, rapid deployment capacity (if they are not already in the area), operational flexibility, and resources that might not otherwise be available in an emergency.

NGOs can be an essential partner in disaster response because they are known locally and they themselves know the area, the culture, the population, etc. In many cases they work together with international NGOs, the UN and others. In any given emergency there may be a large proliferation of NGOs. They may organise themselves into NGO coordination bodies to meet their collective needs and integrate activities to maximise their impact. NGOs may be part of, or lead one of the eight clusters in the Cluster System (i.e. WASH, logistics, protection, early recovery, health and nutrition, shelter, emergency education and inter-cluster coordination)

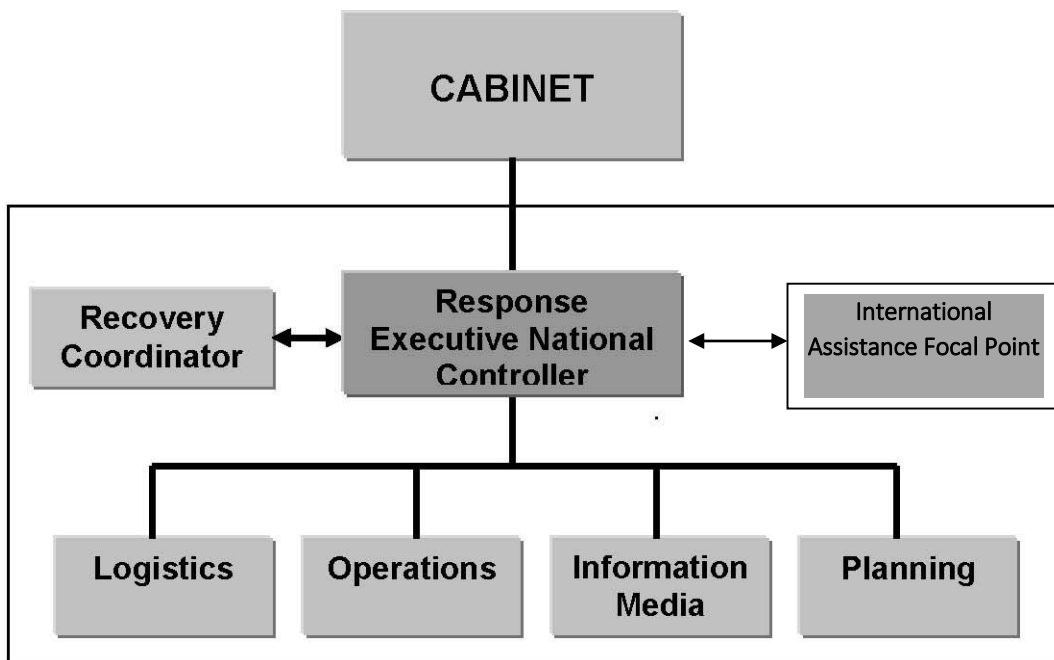
Although there are several NGOs in the Cook Islands, only a few who have established objectives in disaster response. So far, they are the Cook Islands Red Cross Society, ADRA and the LDS. ADRA and LDS are overseas based humanitarian organisations who work closely with their counterparts in Rarotonga, which are the Seventh Day Adventist Church for ADRA and the Mormon Church for the LDS.

For the purpose of the Customs Tariff, their assistance has been channelled through the Cook Islands Red Cross Society as it is so far the only approved organisation in the Cook Islands under the Customs Tariff Act 2012.

It is important to find out if there has been a directive issued by the PM under the section 19 of the DRM Act 2007, as it may allow other international organisations that have been approved by the Response Executive to send assistance and to be waived any customs tariff at the border.

Deploying an UNDAC team into the Cook Islands

1. In compliance with General Assembly Resolution 2816 (XXVI) and 46/182 on the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations, the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) was established by the Secretary-General.
2. UNOCHA is the office of the ERC who is also the UN Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Humanitarian Affairs and reports directly to the Secretary-General.
3. The resolution sets out the basic principles for humanitarian assistance to be provided by the organisation and recommends specific measures to facilitate a prompt and coordinated response to complex emergencies and natural and man-made disasters.
4. The ERC is mandated by the General Assembly to coordinate and direct all international response to disasters.
5. In the Pacific, the Resident Coordinator for UN is based in Samoa. Any request for the UNDAC team must be made to the Resident Coordinator either directly or through the UNOCHA office in Suva, Fiji.

National Emergency Operation Centre

Annex 4

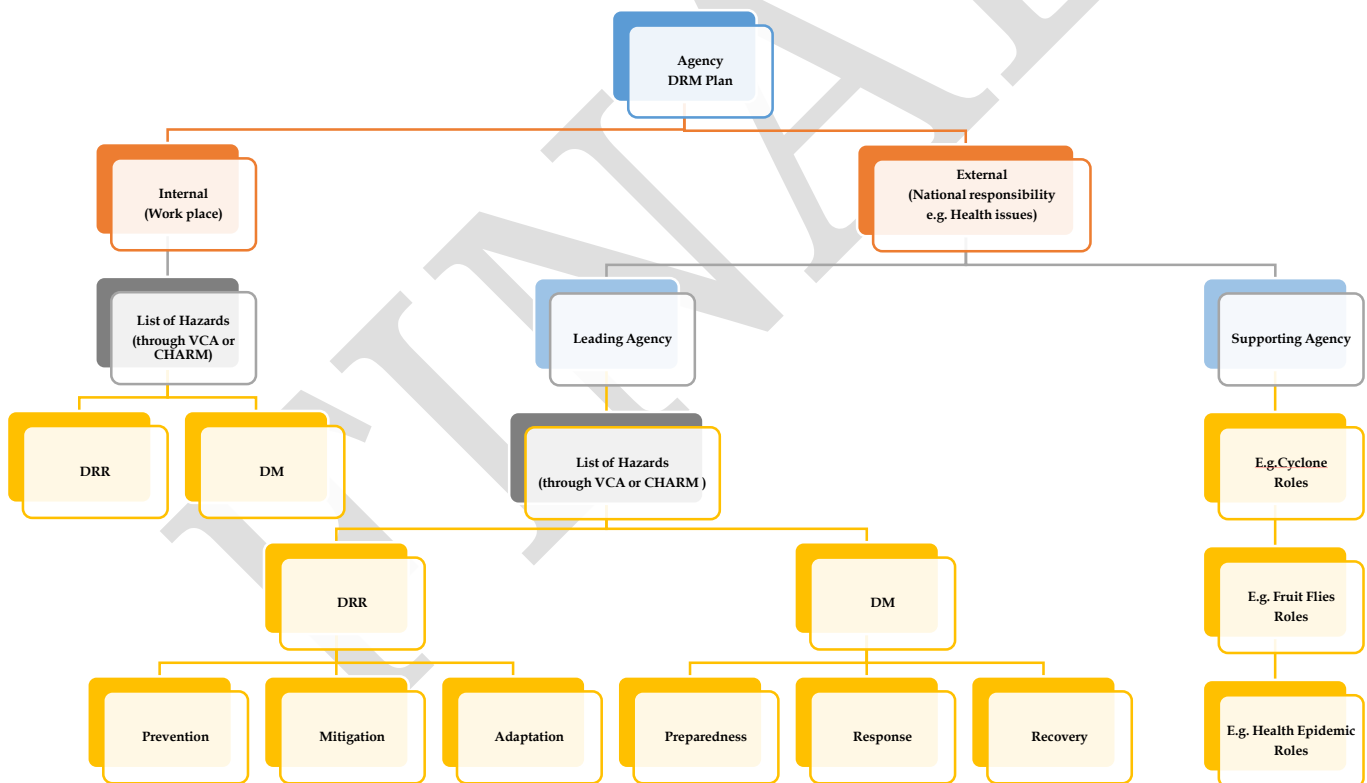
Guidelines for Developing Disaster Risk Management Plans

Under the National Disaster Risk Management Act 2006 and this National Disaster Risk Management Plan 2016, all Island Councils, Punas, Essential Services and other Government Agencies are required to develop a DRM Plan.

These guidelines are provided to help those who must develop these plans. In addition, EMCI will provide more formal guidance and training through planning workshops.

The NDRM Act sets out a number of basic requirements that each DRM Plan must meet. These requirements are summarised in the following flow chart.

Chart:



Basically each DRM Plan must have two components.

1. Internal

The internal part of your plan should set out how the agency and its staff are expected to deal with DRM in your own particular workplace. This is a simple, common-sense, exercise.

First; identify the risks of your workplace

The first step is to identify all risks that your agency and its staff are exposed to in your workplace. You do this by listing the hazards (sources of risks) to which you are exposed e.g. fire in the main building.

Second: Disaster Risk Reduction

The second step is to identify actions your agency could take to reduce or mitigate those risks. The aim is to manage each risk so it does not develop into a disaster or emergency. There are several strategies for achieving this; your agency can use one or more adaptation, prevention or mitigation activities. The key here is to do what you can to prevent disaster or emergency from happening.

Third: Disaster management

The key here is to remember that some emergencies and disasters will occur anyway – and to be Prepared to deal with those when they occur. So, the third step in drafting your agency DRM Plan is to identify actions when emergency and disasters happens. Important elements of this part of your agency plan will take into account preparedness, response and recovery activities.

2. External

This component sets up the plan and responsibilities of your agency in the particular area for which your agency has special responsibilities. E.g. Ministry of Health DRM Plan – The external part will deal with all health issues across the country.

Leading agency

An Agency that is identified under the NDRM Plan as a leading agency or a leading agency in a particular area of special responsibility must have - in its own DRM plan - a section that deals with its role when it is a leading agency. See 4.3.2 and under Definition section for more description of leading agency.

As a leading agency, an agency must, in that particular area, include in its DRM Plan, activities and initiatives to:

List of hazards

Identify risks

It must list all possible hazards that will impact on the activities of the agency or on communities. It must also list the elements at risk from these identified hazards, like people (lives, income or personal assets), infrastructure (roads, powerlines, buildings, or business assets) or the environment (built or natural).

Disaster Risk Reduction

(Refer to Part 4 of the National DRM Plan for more detail information on the arrangements on disaster risk reduction across the country)

Analyse risks

The agency must analyse all risks in terms of its likelihood for mitigation and reduction strategies and consequences for preparedness, response and recovery strategies. Remember; your agency is supposed to be the expert in this particular area – the rest of us depend on your expertise.

Evaluate risks

Evaluate the risks in order to establish priorities for action using the following ratings:

E – Extreme Risks will need immediate attention;

H – High Risks will require attention over the next few weeks or months;

M – Moderate Risks will require monitoring and review on a regular basis;

L – Low Risks require no action but need to be monitored.

Take measures and actions to combat risks; treat the risks:

Risk treatment is the selection and implementation of appropriate options for dealing with the risks. For each risk:

- Identify treatment options;
- Develop and evaluate treatment strategies;
- Plan and implement treatment strategies.

Evaluate the risk treatment options by asking these questions:

- Are they equitable (are they fair)?
- Are they effective (will they work)?
- Are they affordable and cost effective?
- Are there additional benefits?
- Will new risks be introduced?

Communicate information on risks and strategies to vulnerable groups and communities.

The plan must have identified activities in place on how to inform vulnerable groups and communities of the risks and strategies to address the impact of those risks.

Disaster Management

(Refer to Part 5 of the National DRM Plan for more detail information on the arrangements on disaster management across the country)

The Plan must set out steps to be taken when risk reduction and mitigation efforts fail to avoid emergencies and disasters or/and when there are residual risks that cannot be avoided or eliminated.

The Plan must have in place:

- A Preparedness Plan on how to prepare the communities or/and vulnerable groups to any possible emergency or disaster.

- **An SOP for a response to a State of Emergency or Disaster. This SOP will become the National Response Plan for that particular emergency or Disaster e.g. MoH Response Plan for Epidemic is the National Response Plan for the country in terms of health epidemic.**
- A Recovery Plan on how to quickly bring the communities and vulnerable groups to a recovery phase with minimum damage.

The Plan must set out the roles and responsibilities of supporting agencies in both risk reduction and mitigation measures and actions and also in terms of preparedness, response and recovery activities list down on this Plan.

❖ Monitor and review with all supporting agencies and interested stakeholders.

The Plan must be monitored by the responsible agency and reviewed regularly with interested stakeholders.

Regular drills must be carried out with all supporting agencies and interested stakeholders.

Supporting agency

The Plan should also identify situations of emergency or disaster where the agency is a supporting agency and set out its roles and responsibilities under that particular situation.

It is most important to note that your list of roles and responsibilities under this section match or align with what the leading agency of that particular emergency or disaster has incorporated in its own Plan.