



29 April 2021



Reference: OIA-2020/21-0479

Dear [REDACTED]

**Official Information Act request relating to the role of Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups supporting schools in emergency plan creation**

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 30 March 2021. You requested:

*“Please provide a description of the role that Civil Defence plays in supporting pre-schools and schools to develop, test and practice tsunami evacuation plans in medium to high-risk areas around New Zealand.*

- *The role(s) in Civil Defence responsible for working with schools to develop tsunami evacuation plans.*
- *The process for working with schools to develop, test and practice tsunami evacuation plans, and how these are linked or checked against local or regional Civil Defence evacuation plans to ensure consistency.*
- *What, if any, process is in place for Civil Defence to work with schools to review tsunami evacuation plans after a drill and after an event.*
- *Outline what role or oversight function, if any, that Civil Defence has in ensuring school evacuation plans are robust.”*

I refer you to the National Public Education Programme published on the National Emergency Management Agency’s website (see link: [civildefence.govt.nz/cdem-sector/public-education/](https://civildefence.govt.nz/cdem-sector/public-education/)). This outlines how local Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Groups work with local communities to prepare for an emergency event and includes teaching children through the national schools programme – *What’s the Plan Stan?*

The website: [getready.govt.nz/](https://getready.govt.nz/) also has useful information about emergency preparedness including the ‘get your school ready for an emergency’ page (see link: [getready.govt.nz/school/](https://getready.govt.nz/school/)).

New Zealand ShakeOut, our national earthquake drill and tsunami hikoi (evacuation) is run by CDEM Groups with the support of the Ministry of Education. Each year schools are encouraged by Civil Defence to practise ‘Drop, Cover, and Hold’ and a tsunami hikoi if they’re near the coast. The next ShakeOut drill is on 28 October 2021.

In regard to developing specific evacuation arrangements for schools and ensuring they are robust, this is the responsibility of the school. Schools should engage with their Local CDEM Group to ensure their plans are fit for purpose.

I am therefore refusing your request pursuant to section 18(d) of the Act as the information requested is publicly available.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during the regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



Carolyn Schwalger  
**Chief Executive, National Emergency Management Agency**