



15 October 2024

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Ref: OIA-2024/25-0256

Dear [Redacted]

Official Information Act request for copies of documents received by the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery for the week starting 30 August 2024

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 18 September 2024. You requested:

*“Can I please request the following titles under the OIA:
[1]. NEMA Fortnightly Status Report to the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery - 3 September 2024
[2]. North Island Weather Events: Progress Update on Categorisation, Buyouts, and Sediment Removal - 4 September 2024
[3]. Update on North Island Weather Events (NIWE) recovery activities in Te Tairāwhiti - 5 September 2024
[4]. Annual Preparedness Survey Findings - 5 September 2024.”*

Documents [2] and [3] of your request are held by the functional Chief Executive, Cyclone Recovery. The Cyclone Recovery Unit is a business unit within Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) which supports the Chief Executive, Cyclone Recovery to deliver the Chief Executive’s functions. I understand the Chief Executive, Cyclone Recovery will respond to you directly.

With regards to your request for documents [1] and [4]:

*[1]. NEMA Fortnightly Status Report to the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery - 3 September 2024
[4]. Annual Preparedness Survey Findings - 5 September 2024*

I have decided to release the documents subject to information being withheld under the following sections of the Act:

- section 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of individuals
- section 9(2)(f)(iv), to maintain the confidentiality of advice tendered by or to Ministers and officials
- section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion
- section 9(2)(h), to maintain legal professional privilege
- section 9(2)(j), to enable negotiations to be carried on without prejudice or disadvantage.

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	3 September 2024	Fortnightly Status Report to the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery	Released with some information withheld under sections 9(2)(a),

			9(2)(f)(iv), 9(2)(g)(i), 9(2)(h), and 9(2)(j).
4	5 September 2024	Annual Preparedness Survey Findings	Released with some information withheld under section 9(2)(a).

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act. No public interest has been identified that would be sufficient to outweigh the reasons for withholding that information.

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 DPMC’s website during our 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



Stefan Weir
Chief of Staff



Fortnightly Status Report to the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery

Date:	3/09/2024	Priority level:	Routine
Security classification:	[IN CONFIDENCE]	Report number:	NEM-AGS-3-9-1-22

	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Mark Mitchell Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery	Note contents	

Contact for telephone discussion (if required):


Name	Position	Telephone	1 st Contact
Stefan Weir	Chief of Staff National Emergency Management Agency	s9(2)(a)	✓
Tayla Kiel	Senior Advisor Strategic Communications	s9(2)(a)	

Minister's Office

Status:

Signed

Withdrawn



Stefan Weir
Chief of Staff National Emergency Management Agency

3 September 2024

Hon Mark Mitchell
Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery

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Fortnightly Status Report

To: Hon Mark Mitchell
Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery

Date	3/09/2024	Security Classification	[IN CONFIDENCE]
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1 Here are some things we think you should know about

1.1 National Emergency Management Facilities (NEMF) and Operational Systems

Relates to Ministerial priority: Strengthen New Zealand's readiness for a major event.

s9(2)(j)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

s9(2)(g)(i)

[Redacted]

Contact: Eddie Thompson, s9(2)(a) [Redacted]

1.2 Catastrophic Planning Programme

Relates to Ministerial priority: Strengthen New Zealand's readiness for a major event.

Draft version 0.3 of the Catastrophic Event Handbook is nearing the end of the external consultation phase. Significant feedback has been received across the sector that will inform the handbook's development. Current priority workstreams are:

- Intelligence
- Mass Relief
- Logistics
- International Assistance.

Delivery of the first published release of the Handbook remains on schedule for early December 2024, and prioritisation of the remaining seven workstreams will be conducted through the Steering Group.

Contact: Paul Renshaw, s9(2)(a)

1.3 Space Weather Programme

Relates to Ministerial priority: Strengthen New Zealand's readiness for a major event.

August represented a significant milestone for the Space Weather programme with three deliverables completed:

- 14 August 2024 – NEMA internal readiness seminar and SME workshop to define the response structure
- 20 August 2024 – NEMA Day building awareness and preparation for space weather
- 28 August 2024 – Strategic planning table-top exercise including AoG, partners, science and technology. Approximately 45 stakeholders gathered to inform the production of the Space Weather Response plan, due 1 November 2024.

Contact: Paul Renshaw, s9(2)(a)

1.4 Workforce Capability Development

Relates to Ministerial priority: Strengthen New Zealand's readiness for a major event.

Last year, 543 learners participated in either the face to face or virtual Knowledge of CIMS courses delivered by the System Capability unit. Courses this year have already been held virtually and in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Niue, our first venture to support our pacific neighbours. The courses continue to attract a diverse range of learners from over 46 public and private sector organisations, volunteer groups and universities.

Additionally, we've seen a steady increase in our pool of Knowledge of CIMS trainers, who now total 20 individuals from 11 different organisations, enhancing our capacity to deliver CIMS training across the country.

Contact: Gill Genet, s9(2)(a)

1.5 National Fuel Plan

Relates to Ministerial priority: Strengthen New Zealand's readiness for a major event.

The National Fuel Plan has been refreshed and will be published on the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) website on 6 September 2024.

The Plan must be updated by MBIE and NEMA every three years. This update covers industry changes, such as the closure of Marsden Point refinery, changes to coastal shipping, new entrants to the import market, and includes aviation fuel for the first time.

The updated Plan also reflects the new fuel Minimum Stockholding Obligations introduced in the Fuel Industry (Improving Fuel Resilience) Amendment Act 2023. Regulations on these requirements are in development, are signposted and will be required to be updated in future editions of the Plan once they have been formalised.

In depth engagement with fuel industry participants, major users, government agencies and regional representatives has been undertaken to update the Plan.

Contact: Malcolm Johnstone, s9(2)(a)

1.6 Waitangi Tribunal – *Note the below is subject to litigation privilege*

Relates to Ministerial priority: Strengthen EM system.

The Climate Change Priority Inquiry before the Waitangi Tribunal (Wai 3352) includes matters relating to emergency management. s9(2)(h)

We will keep you updated on this process.

Contact: Annabel Ritchie, s9(2)(a)

2 Upcoming briefings

Title	Date to Minister	Action for Minister
Aide Memoire for meeting with FMG Insurance	17 Sep	Noting
Review of reviews into the 2023 North Island Severe Weather events	Mid Sep	Discuss

3 Cabinet papers the Minister may be consulted on

s9(2)(f)(iv)

4 Chief Executive and Director travel

Chief Executive	
Contact: Dave Gawn, s9(2)(a)	
Event	Date
Annual leave	1 – 29 September
Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk reduction, Manila	13 – 18 October

Director of Civil Defence Emergency Management	
Contact: John Price, s9(2)(a)	
Event	Date
Annual leave	6 September
South Island Emergency Management Conference	12 – 13 September

5 Event related items

In the period covered by this report, NEMA has monitored and responded to: Continued Whakaari volcanic activity, Wellington weather, August thunderstorms, Tonga earthquake, Kermadec Islands earthquake and Bougainville earthquake.	
Continued Whakaari volcano low level eruption	On 22 August, media reports indicated aviation disruptions due to the Whakaari Volcano continued heightened activity. Following the MetService ash advisory forecast Air New Zealand opted to cancel and delay morning departures from Rotorua and Tauranga airports, based on the proximity of these airports and aviation ash advisory polygons. NEMA, GNS, CAA, Air New Zealand and MetService established communications for a common understanding of Whakaari's aviation impacts. Gisborne Airport was also briefly impacted on 23 August. A unified monitoring approach continues, and any significant developments will be escalated appropriately. No change in Volcanic Alert Level – 3 or Aviation code Orange.
Wellington Weather	On 26 August, weather impacted the Wellington Region causing public transport disruptions and power outages to 105 houses. Surface flooding prompted Emergency Operations Centre activations in Kāpiti, Porirua, and Hutt City councils. Meanwhile in Greymouth, a landslide obstructed access to Arnott Heights, a suburb in the West Coast region.

	The impacts were dealt with at local council and CDEM group level, with community access quickly restored. The landslide threat remains a concern as a large amount of unstable soil has been identified by geophysics experts. This is an ongoing event under council control, with residents having restricted vehicle access and foot access in and out of the suburb.
Tonga Earthquake	On 26 August, a magnitude 6.9 earthquake struck near Tonga at a depth of 106km. The earthquake did not meet distant tsunami thresholds and the event was subsequently closed. Two aftershocks measuring magnitude 6.1 and 5.3 occurred shortly afterwards. No further action was required by the MAR Centre.
Kermadec Islands Earthquake	On 28 August, a magnitude 6.2 earthquake occurred in the Southern Kermadec zone. Although the initial magnitude did not meet local source tsunami thresholds, the earthquake did prompt the National Geohazards Monitoring Centre (NGMC) to contact the MAR Centre and provide an Earthquake Analysis Template (EAT) with their initial assessment of the earthquake. The earthquake was later downgraded to magnitude 5.8 and assessed as posing no tsunami threat. The Tsunami Evaluation Panel was not activated, and the NEMA duty team was updated by the MAR Centre throughout the event.
August Thunderstorms	On 29 August, Wellington Airport experienced flight disruptions from strong winds. There were roughly 30,000 lightning strikes nationwide which caused isolated power outages. Further thunderstorm activity occurred overnight on 31 August with over 88,000 lightning strikes, and strong wind and heavy rain causing surface flooding and isolated power outages throughout the country. The MAR Centre posted reassurance and readiness messaging on social media throughout these thunderstorms. CDEM Groups monitored but no group activations were required.
Bougainville Earthquake	On 2 September, a magnitude 6.4 earthquake occurred near Bougainville at 41kms deep. This earthquake did not meet distant tsunami thresholds and the event was subsequently closed. No further action was required by the MAR Centre.

Contact: Wendy Wright – Manager, National Operations s9(2)(a)

Official Information Act requests

Departmental Official Information Requests		
Requestor	s9(2)(a)	I would like to ask if NEMA has any prepared plan for if a large solar flare or similar event took out electricity or communications technology? If so, RNZ would like to request the document under the Official Information Act, as well as any briefings to Ministers
Date Received	26/08/2024	

Reply Due Date	23/09/2024	on the topic.
Status	n/a	
Requestor	s9(2)(a)	s9(2)(a)
Date Received	27/08/2024	
Reply Due Date	24/09/2024	
Status	Drafting	

Released under the Official Information Act 1982



Aide Memoire

Annual Preparedness Survey Findings

Date:	5/09/2024	Priority level:	Routine
Security classification:	[IN CONFIDENCE]	Report number:	NEMA-2024/25-40

	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Mark Mitchell Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery	Note contents	10/09/24

Contact for telephone discussion (if required):


Name	Position	Telephone	1 st Contact
Jenna Rogers	Deputy Chief Executive, Strategic Enablement	s9(2)(a)	
Andy Hammond-Tooke	Team Leader, Public Education and Digital Channels	s9(2)(a)	✓

Minister's Office

Status:

Signed

Withdrawn



Jenna Rogers
Deputy Chief Executive, Strategic Enablement

05 / 09 / 2024

Hon Mark Mitchell
Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery

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Attachments: Yes



Aide Memoire

Annual Preparedness Survey Findings

To: Hon Mark Mitchell
Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery

Date	5/09/2024	Security Classification	[IN CONFIDENCE]
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Purpose

This memo is to update you on the findings of the 2024 Annual Preparedness Survey and proposed next steps.

NEMA has commissioned an annual preparedness survey since 2006

1. NEMA has commissioned an annual preparedness survey since 2006 and the results are released publicly each year.
2. The survey canvasses around 1700 people. It assesses preparedness in New Zealand and helps inform our public education and public information management activities, while also providing relevant performance measures.
3. NEMA operates a number of campaigns through its public education programme to drive awareness of how to stay safe during an emergency, and how to prepare.
4. NEMA's communications unit operates a modest baseline promotional budget of around \$600k per year and takes a staggered approach to running its campaigns in order to manage costs.
5. NEMA's key public education priority over the last 12 months has been to raise awareness of tsunami risk and the correct life-safety actions through our *Long or Strong, Get Gone* campaign.
6. The North Island Severe Weather Event Inquiry commented on the public's lack of awareness of their own role during an emergency and recommended a comprehensive and ongoing public education programme to address this.

Summary of key findings

Preparedness

7. 53% of people feel they are not prepared for an emergency, despite 94% of people acknowledging that being prepared is important.
8. Only 38% of people have taken steps to get prepared in the last 12 months. This is a decline from 43% last year, and reflects the usual pattern we see following a large emergency in which preparedness experiences a brief uplift before tailing off as complacency creeps in.
9. The most effective motivation for getting prepared is an actual emergency. 48% of those who had taken steps to be prepared this year, had been prompted by past emergencies (e.g., 2023 North Island Severe Weather Event). This means that household preparedness tends to be done in a reactive way rather than through proactive planning.
10. NEMA launched its Prep Talk preparedness campaign last year shortly before Cyclone Gabrielle and operates the Get Ready preparedness website.

Understanding the correct action to take during and after an earthquake

11. Most New Zealanders continue to know what actions they should take in the event of an earthquake or a tsunami.
12. 86% of people know to self-evacuate following a 'Long or Strong' earthquake that could cause a tsunami (up from 75% in 2023). This suggests our recent focus on tsunami safety advertising may have been effective.
13. 59% of people know to Drop Cover and Hold during an earthquake (up from 52% in 2023). NEMA is currently running its ShakeOut national earthquake drill campaign to encourage people to practice Drop Cover and Hold, and to do a tsunami hikoi.

Where people get information BEFORE a disaster

14. The Civil Defence / NEMA website and other online sources continue to be cited (62%) as the leading source of information before an emergency.
15. 33% of participants specifically cited Civil Defence or the NEMA website. This suggests that Civil Defence is strongly perceived as a 'go to' source of preparedness information.

Where people get information DURING or immediately AFTER a disaster

16. Radio remains the leading channel that people turn to during or immediately after a disaster (50%), followed by the Civil Defence website (20%), and other online (18%). Just 5% cited social media as a reliable channel of information.
17. This underscores the value of radio as a critical emergency information channel.

Next steps

- 18. The results will be published on the Civil Defence / NEMA website and proactively shared with staff and partners to help inform their own work.
- 19. A draft media release has been attached for your consideration. We will liaise with your office as to whether you issue this, or whether it is reattributed to and issued by NEMA.
- 20. We will also seek to leverage the survey for further publicity opportunities with a view to using earned media to promote emergency preparedness.

Annexes:	Title	Security classification
Annex One:	Draft media release and reactive FAQs	In confidence

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Annex One: Draft media release

Survey shows Kiwis need to do more to get prepared for an emergency

Kiwi households are less prepared for an emergency than they were a year ago – but the good news is that getting prepared is easier than it looks, says Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery Mark Mitchell.

Mark Mitchell says that the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has released its annual preparedness survey [link to come], which shows that only 38% of Kiwis took steps to get prepared in the last twelve months – down from 43% last year.

“While 94% of people agreed that it’s important to get prepared for an emergency, that’s not being turned into action. This needs to change.

“We can’t predict when an emergency will happen, and we can’t afford to leave it too late.

Mr Mitchell says being prepared is everyone’s responsibility.

“In an emergency, authorities will always do everything in their power to assist impacted communities, but if we are well prepared, it means they can concentrate their efforts on those most in need.”

The survey showed that the high cost of living and perceived cost of preparing remains a key barrier.

The good news, says Mark Mitchell, is that getting prepared is surprisingly easy – and cheaper than you might think.

“Taking a few simple steps now can make getting through an emergency much easier. Think about what you will do at home, work, school or out and about.”

“People often think preparing for an emergency means spending money on supplies. What’s more important is talking with your household to make an emergency plan – and that’s free.”

“Talk about what you’d do if you can’t pick up the kids from school, or if power and phone lines went down. You can make a plan and get some simple, practical tips at www.getready.govt.nz.

“It’s easy to practice Drop, Cover and Hold - and you can [sign up](#) to next month’s ShakeOut national earthquake drill now. If you live, work, or play in a coastal area, [check NEMA’s tsunami evacuation zone](#) map, and plan your evacuation route. These steps cost nothing but could save your and your loved ones’ life.”

The independent survey was undertaken by The Research Agency (TRA) in late May and early June 2024 on behalf of NEMA.

Reactive FAQs:

What can people do to get prepared?

There's five simple ways to get prepared:

- Have a Prep Talk with your whānau or flatmates about what you'd do if an emergency happened.
- Check out the [Get Ready website](#) and make a plan. It's quick, easy, and available in multiple languages and alternate formats.
- [Sign up to take part in ShakeOut](#) the National Earthquake and Tsunami drill on October 24, 2024.
- [Check our tsunami evacuation zone](#) so you know your evacuation route.
- Put together a grab bag – you'll probably have most of what you need in the house already.

What is the Government doing to help people prepare?

Last year NEMA launched the Prep Talk campaign, which encourages people to have a “prep talk” with their whānau or flatmates. NEMA also operates the Get Ready website, which is loaded with simple and practical tips and advice, and is available in 14 languages, and is accessible for people with disabilities.

NEMA also operates a number of safety campaigns to raise awareness of the right actions to take in an emergency – Long or Strong Get Gone, ShakeOut, Drop Cover Hold, Get the Flood Out, and Floodwaters are Deep Trouble.

Local Civil Defence Groups also work closely with their communities to make sure they're prepared for their local hazards.

However, preparedness is everyone's responsibility. You can take the initiative yourself and talk to your whānau, your flatmates, your workplace, school, church, or community groups.

Any questions about the North Island Severe Weather Events

The Government is considering the recommendations of the Inquiry into the North Island Severe Weather Events and will be announcing decisions in the near future.

In terms of household and community preparedness, the Inquiry did raise concerns that there was a real gap when it comes to the public's awareness of what their role in an emergency is. It's important to stress that we all have a role to play, it's not all up to the first responders, they'll be prioritising rescues and people in dire need.

So we're taking a good look at those recommendations to see what more we can do to bring New Zealand to a “whole of society” approach to emergency management.