

## Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Meeting Minutes

Meeting held in the Council Chamber  
36 Water Street, Whangārei  
on Tuesday 9 December 2025, commencing at 10:00 am - 11:30am

### Tuhinga/Present:

NRC Councillor, Colin Kitchen  
FNDC Councillor, Kelly Stratford  
WDC Mayor, Ken Couper (from 10.04am)  
KDC Councillor, Gordon Lambeth  
NEMA Representative, Shona Morgan  
FENZ Representative, Denis Cooper (proxy)  
NZ Police Representative, Wayne Ewers (proxy)

### I Tae Mai/In Attendance:

#### Full Meeting

CEG Chair, WDC CE Simon Weston  
NRC Councillor, Pita Tipene (from 10.50am)  
WDC Alternate member, Nicholas Connop  
NRC Alternate member, Arama Morunga  
NRC GM Community Resilience, Louisa Gritt  
NRC Secretary, Haylee Labelle  
NRC CDEM Manager, Damian Rio  
NRC Emergency Management Partnership Manager, Brendon Gray  
NRC Governance Manager, Jane Hickmott  
NRC Welfare Specialist, Kylie Cox  
Emergency Management Recovery Specialist, Mark Trudinger  
Emergency Management Specialist, Bill Hutchinson (online)  
Emergency Management Specialist, Kori Puckey (online)  
Emergency Management Specialist, Rongomaiwahine Glassie  
Emergency Management Specialist – Lifelines, James Harvey  
Emergency Management Specialist, Tony Devanney  
Emergency Management Response Specialist, Jenny Calder  
Emergency Management Iwi Engagement, Papanui Polamalu  
Emergency Management Specialist, Laura Exton (online)  
Emergency Management Communications Specialist, Zach Woods –  
(online)  
Emergency Management Specialist, Laura Exton  
FNDC GM Community & Engagement, Ruben Garcia

The meeting was declared open at 10am by Civil Defence Co-ordinating Executive Group chairperson Simon Weston with a karakia.

## **Ngā Mahi Whakapai/Housekeeping (Item 1.0)**

## **Ngā whakapahā/Apologies (Item 2.0)**

### **Moved (Stratford / Weston)**

That the apologies from Wipari Henwood (FENZ) and Matthew Shroj (NZ Police) for non-attendance be received.

**Carried**

## **Nga whakapuakanga/Declarations of Conflicts of Interest (Item 3.0)**

It was advised that members should make declarations item-by-item as the meeting progressed.

## **Presentation of Minutes - 2 September 2025 (Item 4.1)**

**Report from Haylee Labelle, Personal Assistant Community Resilience**

### **Moved (Connop / Stratford)**

1. That the minutes of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Meeting held on 2 September 2025 be noted.
2. Note that in accordance with Northland Regional Council Standing Orders, the last minutes of the triennium have been approved by the Chair and the Chief Executive Officer.

**Carried**

*Secretarial note: Mayor Couper arrived at this juncture, resuming the responsibilities of Committee member from Councillor Connop.*

## **Receipt of Action Sheet (Item 5.1)**

**Report from Haylee Labelle, Personal Assistant Community Resilience**

### **Moved (Stratford / Lambeth)**

That the action sheet be received.

**Carried**

## **Election of Civil Defence Group Chair and Deputy Chair (Item 6.1)**

**Report from Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager**

### **Moved (Stratford / Kitchen)**

1. That the report 'Election of Civil Defence Group Chair and Deputy Chair' by Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager and dated 28 November 2025, be received.
2. That in the event more than one nomination for Chairperson is received, "System A" as specified in Clause 25 of Schedule 7 to the Local Government Act be used for the election of the Chairperson.

**Moved (Couper / Stratford)**

3. That Councillor Colin Kitchen be elected Chair of the Northland CDEM Group Committee

**Moved (Kitchen / Couper)**

4. That Councillor Kelly Stratford be elected the Deputy Chair of the Northland CDEM Group Committee

**Carried**

*Secretarial note: Councillor Lambeth nominated Councillor Stratford for Chairperson, the Chair called for a seconder for the nomination of Councillor Stratford. There was no seconder forthcoming so the nomination lapsed. Mayor Ken Couper nominated Councillor Kitchen for Chairperson, this nomination was seconded Councillor Stratford.*

*Councillor Kitchen took the Chair at this juncture.*

*Councillor Kitchen opened by acknowledging the previous Chair, Councillor Stratford, and Council Officers, and emphasised the importance of collaboration, resilience, and working as a collective moving forward.*

## **National Emergency Management Agency Update (Item 6.2)**

### **Report from Shona Morgan, NEMA Representative - Senior Regional Emergency Management Advisor**

**Moved (Stratford / Couper)**

That the report 'National Emergency Management Agency Update' by Shona Morgan, NEMA Representative - Senior Regional Emergency Management Advisor and dated 24 November 2025 be received.

**Carried**

*Secretarial note: A recent trial involved deploying groups from the same region to the South Island severe weather event, introduced a new team based approach. Feedback indicated this method improved learning and support. It was noted that Northland (Kaipara District Council) staff participated in the deployment, and the team based approach provided valuable experience and strengthened regional capability*

*The Government expects to introduce the Emergency Management Bill before Christmas, then refer it to the Select Committee for a further round of consultation. However, the timing remains uncertain in relation to annual planning cycles*

*Shona clarified it was unlikely that the required information from the new legislation for annual planning and funding would be available prior to the annual plan, and further consultation would follow the bill's release*

## **Membership and appointments – Northland CDEM Group (Item 7.1)**

### **Report from Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager**

**Moved (Stratford / Couper)**

1. That the report 'Membership and appointments – Northland CDEM Group' by Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager and dated 18 November 2025, be received.

2. That CDEM Joint Committee note the appointment on the CEG of Medical Officer of Health – David Sinclair.
3. That CDEM Joint Committee note the resignation of Alternate Group Welfare Manager – Raewyn Smythe.
4. That CDEM Joint Committee approve the appointment of Tony Phipps as Local Recovery Manager, Whangārei District Council, pursuant to section 30 (1) Civil Defence Act 2002.

**Carried**

*Secretarial note: Concerns were raised about the Medical Officer of Health if they were not based in Northland.*

*Confirmed that Alistair Wells is currently the only group controller for Far North District Council (FNDC). FNDC reported that a new controller has been identified and is on a training pathway.*

*Whangārei District Council (WDC) has controller training sessions this week with 18 participants scheduled to attend in order to further build capacity.*

**Actions**

1. CDEM Manager arrange for the Medical Officer of Health to attend next CDEM meeting

**CEG Chair's Report (Item 8.1)**

**Report from; Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager**

**Moved (Stratford / Couper)**

That the report 'CEG Chair's Report' by Damian Rio, dated 10 November 2025 be received.

**Carried**

*Secretarial note: Members queried why the Section 17A review had been sent to the regional chief executives before being presented to the committee, emphasising that prioritisation should be a governance responsibility.*

*Council Officers agreed to provide the Section 17A review to Committee members prior to Christmas, for review and recommendations can be prioritised in line with upcoming planning processes.*

**Actions:**

1. CDEM Manager to provide the Section 17A review to Council members before Christmas

**Agency Updates (Item 8.2)**

**Report from Haylee Labelle, Personal Assistant Community Resilience**

**Moved (Lambeth / Couper)**

That the verbal updates from Fire Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) and Police be received.

**Carried**

*Secretarial notes: Police provided an update on preparations underway for the Waitangi day event expecting to draw a large crowd. Anticipating 180-200 Police will be onsite. Highlighted the challenges in recruiting officers in the mid north with efforts underway to address the shortages.*

*FENZ described an ongoing organisational restructure underway aimed at cost savings with industrial action taking place. Preparations are underway for the fire season (which is expected to be a*

*challenging season). No resource constraints. Currently experiencing an La Niña weather pattern anticipating a change in January.*

### **Whakamutunga (Conclusion)**

**The meeting concluded at 10.39am with karakia by Simon Weston.**

Unconfirmed