

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How prepared do you think we are in Wellington for a future disaster, which could happen tomorrow?

- Wellington faces multiple hazards, including earthquakes, tsunami, flooding and severe storms.
- Following the Christchurch earthquakes on 2011, the Wellington CDEM Group has invested in Emergency Management across the region and is considered a leader nationally and internationally in many areas.
- We work with partner agencies and communities to constantly improve our level of preparedness.
- The region regularly receives severe weather and other events. The regularity of these events allows us to practice and refine our processes.
- While we can never be 100% prepared for a large-scale event, we are confident in our capabilities to support the region during an emergency.
- We also have established plans and processes to request support from other parts of the country and central government if it should be required eg access to limited NZDF assets.

A large-scale flood is no longer unprecedented – it is now preceded - and it keeps happening. What are we learning from events like this and how are we applying these lessons here in Wellington.

- The Wellington CDEM Group and WREMO closely monitors emergency events from across the country and the rest of the world to learn from and refine our approaches.
- Everything we do has an evidence base to support what we do, how we do it and why we do it.
- The key takeaways for the public are to:
 - o know your risks and have a plan,
 - o store emergency water, and
 - o be active in your community by knowing your neighbours and knowing where your local Community Emergency Hub is.

What have we learned from last weekend's flooding in Auckland?

- This event has reinforced that events can occur unexpectedly, with little or no warning.
- Household, business and community preparedness, along with the efforts of the official emergency response, is critical.
- Everyone has something to offer and a role to play before, during and after an emergency.
- The more people know what their role is, the better off the region will be.

What are your plans to ensure Wellington is prepared for the future?

- We will always continue refining our planning and improving our level of preparedness with our partner agencies and communities.
- We are currently improving our partnerships with marae across the region as well as working more closely with community service organisations that play a critical role in supporting different communities in times of stress.

What does declaring a state of emergency do exactly?

- A state of emergency is declared when there is an event that has the potential to cause loss of life or property, which cannot be dealt with by emergency services using existing legislation.
- A state of emergency provides emergency services with a range of additional capabilities (legal powers) to deal with such events.
- These capabilities include such powers as the ability to direct large scale evacuations, to close off certain public areas, and requisition private property for public safety.
- They also include the ability to enter any premises to provide rescue, first aid and emergency assistance.
- A mayor must declare a state of emergency. Such decisions are made through a considered process in collaboration with emergency services.
- Regardless of whether a state of emergency has been declared or not, emergency services and communities will start responding to events as soon as they occur.