



Independent Operational Review Napier Floods



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Disclaimer:

This document is constructed from consultation, debrief notes, and interviews with key personnel from agencies involved in the Napier flood emergency.

The information in this document is designed to support the agencies in Hawkes Bay to learn and improve for future emergencies.

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The following conducted this Review on behalf of the Hawkes Bay Emergency Management Coordinating Committee:

- Trevor Brown – Fire and Emergency New Zealand
- Darryl Papesch – Fire and Emergency New Zealand
- Des Hosie – Fire and Emergency New Zealand

The Review team would like to thank those who freely gave up their time and spoke openly with the Review members. The Review benefitted from the input of representatives of Napier City Council involved in the Incident Management Team, NZ Police, Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fire and Emergency), Officials from the Hawkes Bay Civil Defence and Emergency Management Group including the Chairperson, the Mayor of Napier, and personnel who were involved in an advisory capacity.

The Review spoke to over 16 individuals or groups as well as reading operational debriefs and other written materials relating to the management of the emergency. We have not attempted to respond to each point made to us, but we have had regard to the major themes that emerged.

1. Executive Summary

On Monday, 9 November 2020, Napier experienced severe rainfall with a maximum recorded total of 250.2 mm at Nelson Park (9am Monday – 9am Tuesday), with lesser amounts falling at Taradale, the Airport and Awatoto. This was Napier's wettest day since 1963 and the second wettest on record. Most of this rainfall was received in the late afternoon, with an hourly peak of 54 mm from 5.00-6.00 pm on Monday, and a 6-hour total of 210.6 mm from 2.00-8.00 pm Monday.

The downpour brought landslips and power outages and trapped some people in cars. The Hawke's Bay Civil Defence Emergency Management Group (CDEM), Fire and Emergency, Police and Napier City Council's Incident Management Teams were mobilised, resulting in a local State of Emergency being declared for Napier by the Mayor at 8.10 pm.

The 24-hour rainfall total for this event was initially considered to have a return period of 1 in 250 year, however, subsequent analysis showed that with this event included in the analysis, the 24-hour rainfall total has a return period of approximately 100 years. Analysis of the 6-hour duration is limited due to the short period of record, with the return period estimate ranging from 100 years to over 500 years. The flood level return period was determined to range from less than a 50-year event in Taradale and Tamatea, to between 50 and 100 years in Pirimai, Maraenui and Napier South.

Several homes and businesses were affected by flooding and slips in various locations across the city. Most of the slips were on the Bluff and Hospital Hills, with flooding centred in the Pirimai and Marewa areas. Onekawa, Taradale and the CBD also felt the effect of the rainfall. There were over 10,000 power outages, ranging from a few minutes to 26 hours. Napier City Council building assessment data initially identified 115 uninhabitable dwellings, and the number of known flood evacuees peaked at 173. There were several additional homes with unreported minor damage that would have gone directly to their insurance provider. Furthermore, several people stayed with family and friends, so they were not captured in the official reports of people at the Evacuation Centre. Some of these people may not have needed services or support.

We trust that the learnings, recommendations and observations in this report will contribute to the CDEM Group in its journey of continuous improvement in support of the Hawkes Bay community.

This Review makes five recommendations for Improvement, with rationale contained in detail within the report:

- The CDEM Group and affiliated Territorial Authorities agree on a 'common operating platform' (COP) to facilitate the sharing of information between agencies and teams.
- During all emergencies, consider the impact on the community and appoint a Recovery Manager within the Incident Management Team (IMT) at the earliest opportunity to support a local and/or the Group IMT.
- That the CDEM Group and affiliated Territorial Authorities adopt and support the training pathway developed for Hawkes Bay IMT's.
- Rosters are developed to ensure an IMT can be activated at any time. Those who participate in the roster are recognised both in terms of time committed and are provided with regular training. The adopted rostering system must include surge capacity for IMT roles in case of a prolonged event.
- The role shared (Planning Manager for Napier and Advisor for the CDEM Group) is separated to assign each position to an individual.

But throughout the report the review team have made observations or comments that we trust will assist the CDEM Group to learn from this event and implement improvements for any future event.

2. About the review

Introduction

The Hawkes Bay Controller requested this report on behalf of the chair of the Hawkes Bay Coordinating Executives Group to give an independent assessment of the strengths and improvement areas of the response during the Napier Floods emergency in November 2020.

The Fire and Emergency Operational Efficiency and Readiness team were utilised to facilitate the review. This team is used at conducting operational reviews and debriefs and has ensured neutrality throughout this review despite Fire and Emergency being involved in the emergency. This team works under a charter to define its independence, is affiliated to the Institute of Internal Auditors NZ, and are members of the "LessoNZ" community of practice.

The report is prepared for learning purposes and does not apportion blame or criticism to any agency or individual.

The Chair of the Hawkes Bay Coordinating Executives Group (CEG) is the sponsor of the review.

Methodology

The Review team met with key members of the Hawkes Bay Civil Defence and Emergency Management Group (HB CDEMG) and facilitated a workshop to discuss:

- What worked well
- What didn't work well
- Suggestions for improvement

The review has intentionally adopted the following principles:

- We have not tried to read and digest every document produced concerning the management of the emergency. We have been provided with a significant amount of documentation by participating agencies, and we have reviewed key documents that have assisted our understanding of the circumstances of the emergency.
- We have intentionally stayed focused on issues that can be seen as strengths and problems that, if resolved, will provide continuous improvement.
- We have endeavoured to provide detailed insights to assist the Hawkes Bay Emergency Management community in focusing on improvement opportunities.

Language

We may use language in this report, such as 'we were told', which sets the context for the conclusions that follow but does not imply that we investigated and confirmed the truth of the statement. We believe that everyone we spoke with engaged with us in good faith, and the very fact that we were told certain things may indicate a need for discussion and reflection, even if it later turns out that what we were told is only a point of view or that there is more to the story. If we use phrases such as 'we found' or 'we conclude' these should be taken as conveying our opinion on the matter based on the best evidence available to us.

Recommendations

Arising out of our review we have identified certain 'opportunities for improvement' for the Hawkes Bay emergency community. We invite them to consider our recommendations while acknowledging that it is a matter for them to deliberate and prioritise these as they see fit. Within this report, we have made comments or suggestions not deemed to be recommendations; however, we invite the agencies to take account of in their future business planning.

Information sources

The reviewers facilitated a workshop with personnel in key roles in the CDEM Group and conducted several interviews with selected stakeholders and personnel involved in the emergency.

The reviewers were provided with the following information sources:

- After Action review of the Covid-19 response in Hawkes Bay (noted as this emergency impacted on staff available to support the IMT and CDEM Group resources)
- After Action Review of the CDEM Group
- Napier City Council Debrief Report
- ICAD report
- Recovery plan and report
- Hawkes Bay CDEM Group operating framework
- Situation Reports
- Welfare Response PowerPoint
- Rapid impact assessments
- Media reports

Relationship to other review activities

While this review focused on strategic and higher-level issues, it also considered operational debriefs or after-action reviews that focused on some of the more tactical emergency response issues.

This report is free-standing and based on the evidence that the Review Team gathered during the fieldwork phase of the review. It deliberately does not deal with the detailed operational issues that will have been addressed in internal after-action reviews. Our intent has been to maintain the discussion and conclusions of this report at a more strategic level.

Scope

The following were explicitly out of scope:

- The regulatory framework per se (i.e. any review of Civil Defence Emergency Management statutory functions or powers)
- Any subsequent investigations into the floods
- Legislative policy and legal issues, such as any potential fault or liability in connection with the floods
- The operations and performance of agencies other than those involved in the emergency.

3. Chronology and response

This section briefly outlines the critical decisions and actions for the incident. It does not detail all emergency operations that occurred. Instead, it intends to give a high-level picture of the incident as it developed overnight and the ensuing days.

Monday 9 November 2020

Around 10:00 am on the morning of 9 November, the Fire and Emergency Area Commander received a "green warning" on his pager of the potential of heavy rainfall impacting Hawkes Bay. He contacted the Fire and Emergency Regional Coordinating Centre in Wellington to advise them and advised brigades that may be affected and his team of the potential for flooding. He continued to monitor the weather warnings throughout the day.

Around 4:30 pm in the afternoon, concerned at the deteriorating weather to be seen outside, he contacted the Controller for the Hawkes Bay Civil Defence and Emergency Group and the acting Controller for the Napier City Council. His advice at the time was that they were coping with the volume of calls being received. This was the first indication that the Group Controller (based in Hastings) that there were impacts from the rain.

At around 4:30 pm the Fire and Emergency Area Commander was advised by the Fire and Emergency Central Communications Centre, they were beginning to receive 111 calls regarding properties starting to flood. He decided to establish a local coordination centre at the Napier fire station to prioritise emergency calls to Fire and Emergency based on life risk. In total, more than 700 calls were received during the event.

He then contacted the Group Controller again at 5:15, who was now in Napier, and established communications with the Napier City Council call centre. To this point, the Napier City Council Civil Defence Deputy Controller had not realised the extent of flooding. However, when contacted this time, he went back to the Napier office and established their Incident Management Team (IMT) in a large room at the council building. The Deputy Controller also sent members of his consents team to work with Fire and Emergency on assessing safety issues. He also allocated other members to manage the pumps to try to contain the flooding.

At the same time, the CDEM Group controller had contacted the Emergency Management Advisor supporting Napier City Council (who had been on leave) and asked her to contact the Napier Controller for information and deploy to the NCC EOC. She then remained supporting the Napier IMT throughout and provided liaison to the GECC.

After establishing that Napier were activating, at about 6:00pm the decision was made to activate the Group Emergency Coordination Centre (GECC) in Hastings. This remained operational until all 3:00am the next day and all evacuated persons had been accommodated. The GECC then reopened at 6:00am and remained operational during working hours until 20 Nov.

A meeting of the Emergency Services Coordination Committee was called at 7:30pm by the Group Controller to gain shared situational awareness and to confirm from emergency services partners whether a local state of emergency should be recommended to the Mayor. This was agreed. After discussions with the Mayor this occurred at 8:10.

Meanwhile, an IMT was established at Napier fire station to manage many issues coming in through the 111 system. Partner agencies that eventually located at the fire station included CDEM Group staff, Red Cross, CDEM Group Civil Defence Light Rescue, the Recovery Team, NZDF, NZ Police, and Housing NZ. The Incident Controller at the fire station requested Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) support, and when a team arrived, they began doing Rapid Impact Assessments to build up a picture of both damage and priority areas.

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Image 1: Aerial photo showing flooded residential streets

Many homes and businesses were affected by flooding and slips in various locations across the city. Most slips were on Mataruahou (Bluff and Hospital Hills), and flooding was centred in the Pirimai and Marewa areas, with some impacts felt in Onekawa, Taradale and the CBD. There were over 10,000 power outages, ranging from a few minutes to 26 hours. Napier City Council building assessment data initially identified a total of 115 uninhabitable dwellings. The number of known flood evacuees peaked at 173. At the time of this report, it is recognised that there was an unknown number of additional homes with unreported minor damage and an unknown number of people who stayed with family and friends as a result of the floods. Some of these people may not have needed services or support.

4. Insights and recommendations

In this section of our report we discuss the issues that we found worked well, did not work well, and the suggestions for improvement. This is done through the identification of the 10 insights listed below. At some stages of the report, we have made observations on issues that we have not considered significant enough to warrant a specific recommendation. We encourage the CDEM Group to take these observations into account, along with other actions they may take in response to this report or, more generally, in the course of standard doctrine review cycles.

Where we have discussed possible improvements to future operations, these are not necessarily intended as criticisms of the way the emergency was managed. Few reviews of emergencies, working with the benefit of hindsight, would not identify lessons for the future, and this is one of the main reasons to carry out reviews of this nature. Therefore, our comments and recommendations should be read in the spirit that they are intended, which is to support continuous improvement of the delivery of Civil Defence and Emergency Management support for the communities of Hawkes Bay.

Insights

Common Operating Platform

It is clear from the feedback received from all the agencies involved that the Hawkes Bay Emergency Management can benefit from a Common Operating Platform (COP). The feedback reflects confusion, delays and information flow difficulties. Different Councils and Agencies use other processes, forms, templates and acronyms to record and disseminate all manner of information and instructions. An example was during the Building Assessment process. Staff from Napier and the neighbouring Councils, and support agencies, had limited understanding of the Fire and Emergency USAR Rapid Damage Assessments, nor was everyone familiar with the Napier City Council's Building Assessment Procedure. This created unnecessary confusion and took extra time and resource to complete and create a common picture for all. While there has been some initial work completed on this, there is an opportunity for all Councils, Emergency Services and the CDEM to agree on a standard process, templates and forms to use during an Emergency Response. This should include a dictionary of acronyms used by all agencies to minimise any potential for confusion. However, at the same time, the USAR process needs to be shared with the emergency management community. It is an internationally recognised approach in disasters and is designed to provide an immediate picture to allow the IC to develop their initial incident action plan.

Recommendation 1

Adopt a common operating platform that will provide standard reporting templates and communication paths to ensure everyone shares the same picture and receives the complete information they need. This would also enhance communication flows to the mayors and support the communication flows for the information/social media space.

This will need to be considered in association with neighbouring Groups such as Horizons Manawatu whom Hawkes Bay may either support or request support from.

Training

There is an opportunity to improve training and training outcomes for staff from all the Territorial Authorities in Hawkes Bay who have functions and roles related to emergency response. This is especially important for staff who will be expected to undertake roles in an IMT, whether for their local council or the CDEM Group. We were told that emergency management training is not given enough priority by Council Managers. This is reflected in a perceived lack of confidence in roles by some staff and a preference to continue with business as usual (BaU) activities during an Emergency Response rather than step ultimately into emergency response roles. The Hawkes Bay CDEM Group Training Pathway is an excellent example of how this could be addressed. There is an opportunity for Councils to support staff in attending this training to develop their skills, build confidence in roles and increase resilience in an Emergency Response. Ensuring all relevant staff across all Hawkes Bay Councils have received this training allows for consistency in backfilling roles when there is a surge caused by long duration, multiple incidents, or a major Emergency Response. There is also an opportunity for all agencies to support each other if required, especially when a specific agency is not directly involved. We were also told that many of the people who are expected to fill key roles in an IMT are not necessarily in leadership positions in their everyday roles, so they lack the knowledge and experience to fulfil vital functions. Most roles stated in the CIMS manual are leadership roles. As examples, both the Planning Manager and Logistics roles are critical leadership roles, and for a large-scale event, both will have extensive personnel supporting the function. A Planning Manager may end up with a team of over 20 people for a very large-scale event.

Recommendation 2

Implement the training pathway already developed to support the Group, and ensure all Managers understand the importance of support this plan.

Fatigue Management

A factor noted in the Napier Flood Event was fatigue encountered by staff in emergency response roles. There is an opportunity to plan a relief roster of suitably trained and qualified staff from across Hawkes Bay when the extra capacity is required. Where these are in short supply, consideration could be given to requesting function role specialists from other agencies or regions. This should be given priority for discussion due to the current situation of staff having to work long hours and take on multiple roles during an Emergency Response. Fatigue in these roles can affect decision-making and have health and wellbeing consequences. We could see that some council staff are weary from the long involvement in the Covid-19 response and we were advised some were reluctant to be involved again. There needs to be a clear recognition of the people who give their time to support an emergency response. The staff survey clearly showed that some people felt let down by people who elected not to be involved, with some opting to work from home. Working from home was seen as an easy option compared to those directly involved in the emergency. Furthermore, there should be consideration given to staff who may have been personally impacted by the event.

The review observed that Hawkes Bay has an extensive resource to support either local, regional, or national emergencies when you consider the Regional Council and the four Territorial Authorities. The Napier flood was a localised event and it would appear that the resourcing of the Napier IMT in terms of numbers and training levels contributed to the challenges and a lack of clarity of roles. This was compounded by the fact that the primary controller for Napier City Council was out of the region. If a

single IMT had been established (in this instance at the Group Coordination Centre), many of the issues identified during the Group workshop could have been avoided. There would have been a single lead for PIM, Welfare, Logistics, Recovery and other positions as required. Given this was a sudden impact event it is recognised this would have been difficult in the first few hours of the response.

In the initial stages of the response, both the Group GECC and the Napier IMT struggled to appropriately staff their IMTs. The Group Controller requested support from other Groups and the first deployed staff from around the country began arriving in Hawke's Bay the next afternoon along with support from other Council staff within the Group. He had some conversations with the Napier Controller on staff resourcing, but he has identified that support should have been offered more formally to the Napier IMT as well.

The issue of appropriately staffing responses (both local and Group) beyond the CDEM Group office staff, remains an issue which the Hawke's Bay CDEM Group needs to urgently address. The review understands that a project to address this issue has commenced.

Recommendation 3

The Hawkes Bay Emergency Management Group need to consider how this recent experience can be used to ensure the IMT structure can better support localised emergencies and expand as the situation grows.

Emergency Management Structure

An Incident Control System (ICS) is recognised as international best practice in managing large scales emergencies. It suggests command and control are defined to recognise who has the authority to make decisions and the parameters of that authority. Command and control then assist with coordination by defining authority between and within organisations. It is essential to have a shared understanding and application of these terms. The Hawkes Bay Emergency Management Group Plan sets this out clearly.

In this event, it appeared the command and control structure was not fully understood or utilised as would be expected. There were disconnects between the Coordinating Executive Group (CEG), the CDEM Group, the IMT, the Local Emergency Coordination Centre, and the Fire and Emergency ICP. In our view, it was due to people wanting to address issues and resourcing directly rather than going through the process or procedure that is laid down and approved by CEG. In their BaU roles, staff often get things done by utilising local knowledge and contacts.

In an emergency response, there are pre-planned structures and processes that, if not followed, create gaps or double-ups and disrupt critical information flow. This occurred, resulting in a lack of consultation, cooperation and coordination in the early stages of the event. A key contributor was the shortage of people and resources in CDEM Group required to fully support the Emergency Response and an IMT in Napier with a divided focus that included some also trying to do their BaU. This resulted in the Fire and Emergency ICP at the Napier fire station becoming an alternate IMT for some agencies to fill these gaps.

An example of a critical role missed is the low priority placed on standing up the Recovery function in this event and focusing on operating BaU duties and regular work hours during an Emergency Response. There is an opportunity to build training, knowledge and experience by regularly programming exercises that simulate the actual events these teams will be required to respond to. Exercises should be designed to give a realistic appreciation of the importance of planning to hand off BaU to others or suspend BaU if not

critical until the emergency is resolved. This will allow people with response function responsibilities to get on with the Emergency Response as a priority. There also needs to be planning to support these people by rotating through other trained staff to relieve them when required. Evidence shows these events will become more frequent and more severe, so good structure and planning will now alleviate significant issues.

It should be recognised that in the early stages of an emergency, things can be chaotic. In a localised emergency as the flood, it may have been advantageous for CDEM Group to consider embedding into the IMT established at Napier City Council. This Napier IMT was very light, and at times it lacked the look of a solid, well-appointed and functioning team. CDEM Group should consider this and recognise that CDEM Group is a team rather than a specific site. With a more solid IMT, led by the Group and possibly located at appropriate Council facility, the communication and support of the ICP at Napier fire station would have been easily managed. Embedding the team would have also made the Welfare role better aligned and strengthened the Welfare team rather than the disconnect we heard about. In fact, this would have connected other teams and provided a clear structure for all agencies involved. Once the initial community safety and welfare issues had settled down, the complete structure could then be implemented.

We would also suggest that contemporary practice recognises the support to the Controller by appointing an Assistant Controller as the team is getting established. This was instigated at the Group IMT and the Group Controller advised this worked well in ensuring continuity while he was dealing with VIPs and media. An assistant takes the pressure off the Controller and allows them to stay at a more strategic level, not getting into the detail. The Assistant can focus on getting a team established. At the same time, the Controller ensures they are getting good situational awareness and setting up communication with all the key leaders both internally and externally.

On the day of the event, the Mayor of Napier would have appreciated quicker support from the Group IC and the Napier City Council deputy Controller as she was prepared to declare a state of emergency earlier than transpired. This would also have allowed her to get her initial messages to her community sooner. It must be remembered that communities will be waiting for guidance and leadership. She also found that people she was advised who were going to turn up to support the local IMT did not arrive.

The review team's overall impression for this event was a lack of situational awareness at the start of the event between the Napier City Council infrastructure team, the Napier City Council IMT and the Group Emergency Coordination Centre.

Emergency Management Resources

Hawkes Bay can be resource-rich with personnel to support emergencies if properly utilising the resource available in its four Territorial Authorities, the Regional Council, and the CDEM Group. It can also get additional support from its Emergency Services. However, there is little evidence to show that sharing resources and trained personnel are prioritised or transparent in Emergency Response. There is an opportunity for Chief Executives to have their managers cooperate and coordinate to achieve an exemplary training system and share in the Emergency Response space to enhance surge capacity and efficiencies in systems. Positive examples we saw are the CDEM Training Pathway and the USAR Rapid Damage Assessment process with a corresponding emergency dashboard for collating building data. These tools are all currently under-utilised or misunderstood.

In analysing the debrief documents, we also found that many staff feel it is difficult when their BaU roles are not leadership roles but are positioned into key IMT roles with a strong leadership focus.

Recovery

The primary goal of incident and emergency management in New Zealand is to protect people and property from all hazards and risks, both natural and human-made. While emergency management in New Zealand operates across [Risk] Reduction, Readiness, Response and Recovery (the 4R's), CIMS primarily focuses on Response to incidents and emergencies, but it must also be factored into Readiness and Recovery. Evidence from this event shows that the transition to Recovery was not considered or enacted early enough. There is an opportunity to learn from this and appoint a Recovery Manager onto an IMT from the event's start. Appointing a Recovery Manager early is seen as the model to plan for and execute the Recovery phase. It puts the community front and centre of the emergency and lowers the risk of negative media attention.

Recommendation 4

Ensure the Hawkes Bay Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Controller appoints a skilled person into the Recovery role as soon as the IMT is established.

Engaging Iwi/Māori

As Treaty partners to the Crown and members of the wider community, it is essential that whānau, hapū and iwi are involved in response and recovery (as appropriate to the scale of the incident). Iwi/Māori involvement occurs within a framework of traditional knowledge, values and practices, and is often indispensable to effective response and recovery. In this event, the early engagement with Iwi/Māori worked well and valuable assistance was received from Marae and Māori Wardens.

The Group could consider having Iwi representation as a permanent member of the team, enhancing and cementing relationships that will pay dividends during future emergencies.

Emergency Management Advisor Role

Currently, the person in this position is part of the Group office; however, there can be confusion over where the role sits due to the current sharing arrangements. The individual works for the CDEM Group office as an advisor specialising in Operational Planning and has a role with Napier supporting the council IMT in readiness and response. For this event, the person held the role of Response Manager for the Napier IMT but was also expected to then support the Napier Recovery Manager in his planning after he was appointed. This created confusion and an intense workload for one person as each role has significant responsibilities. There is an opportunity to reorganise this to create better outcomes.

A Response Manager and a Planning Manager play vital roles for any large IMT and are critical support for the IC. These roles are both essential and need to be separated.

Recommendation 5

Consider where this role can be best utilised but avoiding the person having the dual responsibilities, or the perception of dual responsibilities. Whether as a Response Manager or Planning Manager training should be provided as these roles are vital ones for any incident controller when an IMT is established.

Communication

Feedback indicates that overall there is excellent communication between key personnel due to good peacetime relationships. This is positive and can be leveraged to improve understanding of different Councils and support agency's processes and requirements during Emergency Responses. However, there were confused or missed communications due to the structure implemented.

Recommendations 1 and 3 will resolve this.

Public Information Management (PIM)

There is an opportunity to improve resourcing and messaging for PIM in Hawkes Bay Emergency Management. Under CIMS, the lead agency would coordinate and manage Public Information. It includes concise and consistent information to the public, media and other agencies and ideally creates 'one source of truth'. There seemed to be uncertainty about where messaging should be coming from and who was responsible for this event. This resulted in a Fire and Emergency PIM Team stepping up to fill the void as the Area Manager had requested a Communication Team from his NHQ very early in the incident. They, therefore, established themselves at Napier Fire Station. Although good communication was eventually established between Fire and Emergency, CDEM Group, the Napier Council IMT, and the other agencies involved, there is an unintended consequence. The public is now going to the Fire and Emergency social media sites looking for information before trying the Council or CDEM Group sites.

A Fire and Emergency PIM team arrived in Napier on Tuesday morning and worked to establish relationships with both the IMT's at Napier and for the Group. Simultaneously, they tried to support the Area Commander being bombarded by local media as they had identified this location was close to the action. They had no intention of trying to lead PIM functions but at times felt they were not welcomed.

Fire and Emergency have established a solid and experienced communications team nationally with local personnel in the field at several locations, who are becoming skilled at supporting Fire and Emergency IC's at significant incidents. In the past the CDEM Group has supported the area commander with PIM support for single agency events until the FENZ national team can deploy. This occurred in the recent Tangoio forest fire. This is a good example of inter-agency cooperation and can operate in the other direction in support of CDEM response such as this. In this case the FENZ national PIM support should have been in support of the CDEM Group PIM.

5. Conclusions

One of the big strengths observed by the review team in Hawkes Bay is the positive well-established relationships across the board. Everyone we spoke to know the other people involved well and what their day to day responsibilities are. This is fundamental to any team being able to establish quickly and get on with the job at hand. We found everybody we spoke to was very open and keen to ensure they can provide an excellent service to their community. The review team feels that overall, this was a well-managed event despite the issues identified.

The communication between each agency was positive and everyone involved was trying to do the best they could. But there were elements of confusion and duplication of effort and information being provided both within and externally. Everyone we spoke to agree that there needs to be a 'common operating platform' agreed upon that will help ensure everyone is working together and silos are eliminated.

It was clear some people were weary after the Covid-19 response meaning some did not make themselves available and this did cause some resentment for those that did put in the extra effort. It was also the view of many that they do not have leadership positions day to day but are then placed into leadership roles for an emergency so would appreciate some training. They would also appreciate training for the specific IMT tasks they may be assigned to. We found there has been a training pathway developed that needs to be supported by all agencies.

The Napier City Council does not have the best facilities to manage an event of this magnitude and should try to identify a suitable location until the CDEM Group is established. The review team feel that once the CDEM Group is established the functions should merge to support the common operating picture. But to this end we felt the IC should immediately appoint a deputy to establish the IMT while the IC coordinates with other agencies to ensure what they will need is understood and built into the planning. This will also provide more timely advice to the respective Mayors and allow quicker information being provided to the community. In this instance the IC could then have visited Napier and met with the Napier IC and Fire and Emergency Commander to gain accurate situational awareness.

We found that unfortunately some people in key roles tried to conduct business as usual along with roles in the local IMT. This does not work, and the Napier City Council needs to decide which roles are critical and must continue and which roles can be put on hold until the emergency is over. This will help decide who can be available to support the IMT. Some agencies located at the Napier fire station which was able to accommodate them but was also close to where Fire and Emergency were receiving 111 calls from the community.

In seeking lessons that should be focussed on for future events the review team feel the main areas for improvement relate to;

- communication, developing a common operating platform;
- appointing a recovery manager immediately embedded in the IMT;
- adopting the training pathway already developed;
- creating a roster to ensure an IMT can be activated at any time, even in holiday periods;
- provide training for personnel who will be expected to fulfill the Response Manager or Planning Manager roles.