

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2019/20

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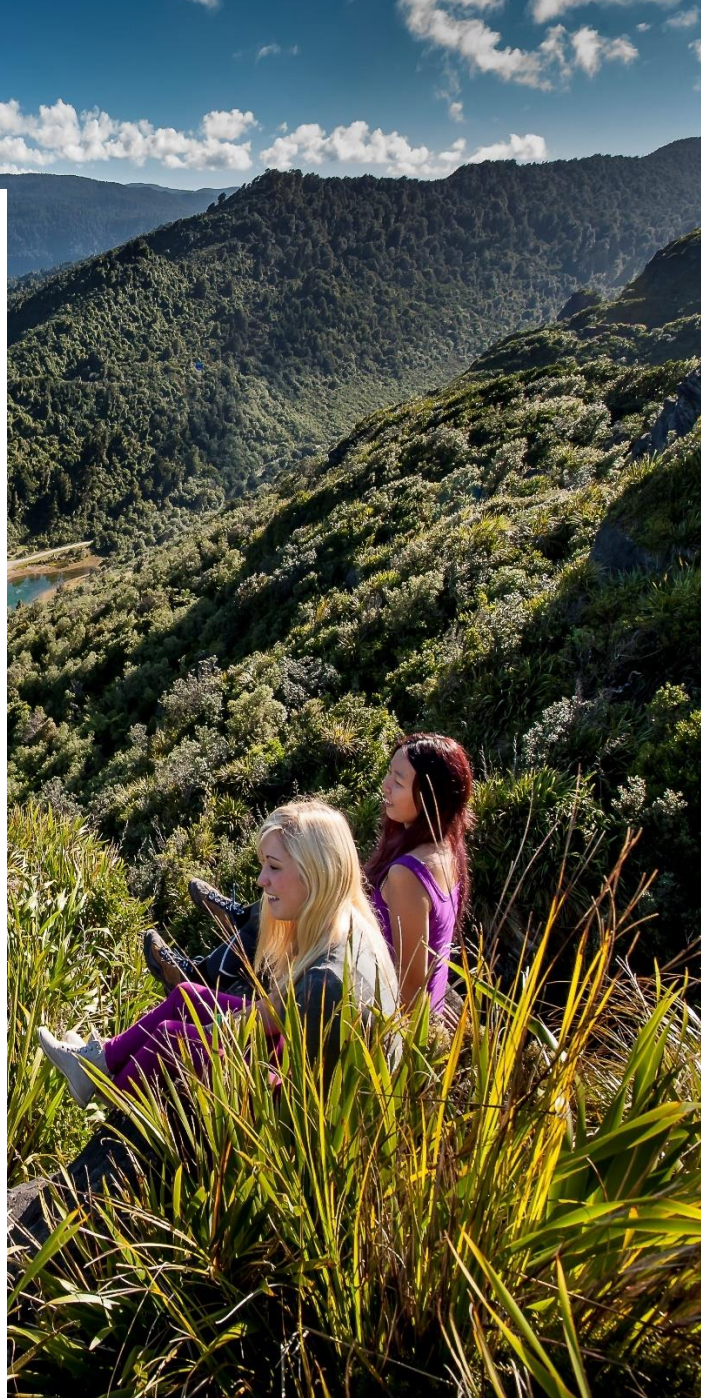
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HAWKE'S BAY  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

GROUP



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# Foreword

## A message from the Chairs of the Joint Committee and Coordinating Executive Group

This year has been unprecedented in terms of a once-in-a-generation global, national and local emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A national state of emergency was in place in New Zealand for more than a month, while in Hawke's Bay our regional and local coordination centres were activated for more than 70 days. The CDEM Group role in the response was to support the Hawke's Bay District Health Board in the clinical response, while leading the coordination across agencies and communities to provide for the welfare needs of our people.

This was also a year of neighbours helping neighbours, strangers helping strangers, and Hawke's Bay communities working together on response and recovery efforts. As regional leaders, we said back in March that Hawke's Bay's sense of community and trust would give us a very strong foundation to carry us through these troubled times. We're proud to say this was the case.

Our communities responded to the impacts of the lockdown by caring and providing for our most vulnerable. At this level, the response was led by individual communities with the support of our Civil Defence Emergency Management structures, emergency services, local government, central government agencies and various non-government organisations. The community-led response reinforced the value of the work we've been doing as part of our community engagement programme.

The CDEM Group also supported the drought response, led by the Civil Defence Rural Advisory Group (RAG), in partnership with the Hawke's Bay Regional Council, Central Hawke's Bay District Council and Hastings District Council. CDEM provided planning, welfare and public information management services, to help Hawke's Bay farmers get through some of the harshest drought conditions in living memory.

These responses had a big impact on the rest of the work programme. We're still involved in planning for COVID-19 resurgence with government agencies, as well as working through the significant backlog of projects we put on hold while we were responding to these events.

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The Hikurangi Response Planning Project was a substantial piece of work completed this year, and has provided Hawke's Bay's with a suite of resources to aid our future response planning to manage the impacts of such an event.

Our next year will be busy implementing the recommendations from the COVID-19 response review, focusing on how we can enhance our support to our communities to build their resilience in a shared responsibility manner. We will also continue to focus on enhancing our own capability and capacity to respond on behalf of our communities during emergencies, to ensure that our coordinated efforts with our partners can more effectively meet the needs of communities and individuals who may be affected. We will also continue our efforts to understand how we can enhance the resilience of our communities given the stresses that are being placed upon them through climate adaptation.

**Rick Barker**  
**Chair Joint Committee**

**Monique Davidson**  
**Chair Coordinating Executive Group**

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# Highlights over the year

## Our reduction highlights

**Reducing risk is one of the most important things we can do to protect people, property and the environment.**

We keep communities safe by helping people identify and reduce their risk of emergencies at home, at work and in their community.

### Ongoing research

Our ongoing research this year focused on landslide risk, and we commissioned this research in accordance with the 10-Year Hazard Research Plan. The findings from the GNS region-wide earthquake-induced landslides risk assessment report and GNS Bluff Hill earthquake-induced landslide forecast and hazard assessment are available on the Hawke's Bay Hazard Portal: <https://hbmaps.hbrc.govt.nz/hazards/>

### Hikurangi Response Planning Project

The two-year Hikurangi Response Planning Project concluded in 2019-20 with the launch of a toolbox designed to support regional and national planning for a Hikurangi subduction zone earthquake and tsunami. The Hawke's Bay CDEM Group led this project.

The toolbox, developed by East Coast Life at the Boundary in collaboration with five Civil Defence Emergency Management groups from across the North Island's east coast, includes a credible magnitude-8.9 earthquake and tsunami scenario developed by GNS Science, to be

used as a planning tool to identify the consequences of a large Hikurangi subduction zone earthquake and tsunami. This work has provided Hawke's Bay's with a suite of resources to aid our future response planning to manage the impacts of such an event.

*"There's no avoiding the fact that all of Aotearoa New Zealand is at risk of earthquakes, and all of our coasts are at risk of tsunami. We need to be aware of this risk, and we need to plan how to best get our communities through such an event." – Hikurangi Response Planning Project Leader Natasha Blunden*



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## Our readiness highlights

**Resilience in readiness means people and communities are ready and prepared to react when an event occurs.**

We build greater resilience within our diverse communities, particularly those most vulnerable, by helping them identify their own strengths, risks and needs, and supporting them to plan for emergencies.

### Community preparedness events

In 2019-20, we took part in two nationwide events designed to remind people of the right actions to take during an earthquake and potential tsunami – the Tsunami Hīkoi in March, and the ShakeOut earthquake drill in October.



### Partnering with communities

During 2019-20, one of our focuses was stronger engagement with communities. We completed our community resilience programme 2019–2026, and worked with several rural coastal communities to develop resilience plans.

We completed the Clive and Cape Coast community resilience plans, and our community engagement team is looking to review existing plans to ensure they are up to date and relevant. This includes a digital approach to resilience plans using Storymaps, so the hazard data in the plans is always up to date. Our community engagement team is also focusing on developing community resilience plans for specific communities of interest, including Māori (including marae), Pasifika and multicultural communities.

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## Exercise Rūaumoko

In October 2019, we ran Exercise Rūaumoko, a full-scale activation of Hawke's Bay Civil Defence Emergency Management Group and its regional partners, to test Hawke's Bay's arrangements for preparing for, responding to, and recovering from a major emergency based on an earthquake. The exercise took place over five days immediately following New Zealand ShakeOut at 1.30pm on 17 October, and involved emergency services, local government, utility providers and volunteer organisations.



The exercise was a chance to test emergency processes at a local and regional level, and the new emergency coordination facility in Hastings. It also tested our region's volunteer emergency response teams, including their response facilities and communication channels, shift handover arrangements, and recovery management.

As part of the exercise, we stood up a Civil Defence Centre at Pettigrew Green Arena to practise and embed the use of regionally developed Civil Defence Centre Guidelines. This involved volunteers from the Hawke's Bay Emergency Response Team and the Red Cross Disaster Welfare Support Team coming together to share learnings, practise facility set up, and discuss best practice for CDC operations.

### On-all duty system

Our group's 24/7 duty on-call emergency system ensures someone is always available to support the group and initial response activities when national watches and warnings are issued. The group managed 468 after-hours calls, and issued 162 watches and warnings to regional response agencies over the year.

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## Our response highlights

**Emergencies happen, and we all rely on the people who respond in these events to be well trained to deal with the situation as it unfolds, ensuring lives and property are protected and well looked after.**

### **Hawke's Bay's COVID-19 response**

COVID-19 is the biggest and most complex challenge our global community has encountered in living memory, and prompted the largest ever emergency response in New Zealand.

We activated our Group Emergency Coordination Centre from 16 March to 5 July, after the New Zealand government declared a National State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

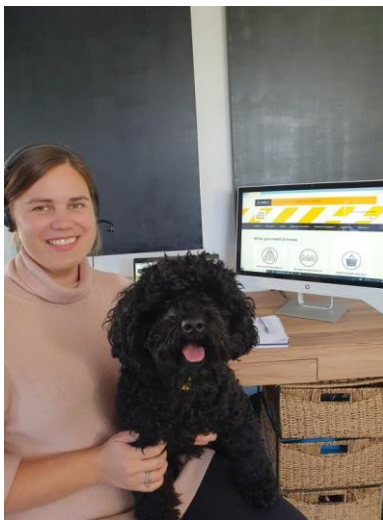
Our objective was to identify and connect our most vulnerable people with essential support services rapidly and safely, ensuring no one fell through the gaps. We provided welfare services to people most at risk to the impacts of COVID-19, and supported the Hawke's Bay District Health Board's clinical response by easing the burden on health services.

*"Our goal in this response was to help people who were most at risk of falling through the gaps – people who did not have ready access to the family and community support that many of us take for granted." – Hawke's Bay Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Controller Ian Macdonald*

Our welfare team quickly set up a regional emergency line in April at the request of the New Zealand Government, to meet the immediate basic needs of people until other services and supports could step in. The line was staffed by workers from Hawke's Bay's five councils and The Development Hub – a local organisation that provides employment, training and education opportunities to people, including young Māori and Pasifika women, sole parents and those returning to the workforce.



Our emergency welfare service mostly helped people who urgently needed basic food items and essential items such as toiletries as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown. We also helped people who didn't have winter clothing and were facing colder nights with no blankets or firewood. Additionally, we worked alongside the homeless network providing emergency accommodation to homeless people and families during the COVID-19 lockdown.



Our group tallied more than 7000 inbound and outbound calls and carried out more than 1600 needs assessment. Many callers just needed information and advice. For the people who needed more help, staff assessed their needs and provided welfare parcels to those who had no other



options. We directly delivered around 1600 welfare parcels, as well as providing funding to foodbanks, which went towards the more than 8400 welfare parcels they distributed over the response period.

A survey of 98 of the more than 7000 people who called our 0800 emergency number shows that around 70 per cent would have struggled without our help, and 15 per cent would have been in crisis.

Our group's welfare service was part of a region-wide, multi-agency and community-led effort that went into getting people the help they needed. This is a fundamental part of our response doctrine that

*"These statistics show us that without our emergency welfare service, many people who were already struggling before the lockdown would have been in even worse positions and faced real hardship." – Ian Macdonald*



communities are best place to respond to their people with our support and assistance if required.



More than 150 community organisations and agencies also joined forces to stop people slipping through the cracks. We formed a significant partnership with the Tihei Mauri Ora Emergency Response Centre, which was kick-started to provide a welfare response to whānau pounamu (the most vulnerable) when New Zealand went into the COVID-19 lockdown.

The Tihei Mauri Ora Emergency Response Centre is a Ngāti Kahungunu and Hawke's Bay District Health Board collaboration in partnership with central and local government. The purpose of the centre was to coordinate delivering food, firewood and blankets to whānau pounamu. The centre spanned an area covered by eight district councils and three district health boards, and provided manakitanga to all within those boundaries: Māori, Pasifika, multicultural communities and Pakeha.

We also worked closely with existing and bespoke foodbanks providing funding so they could maintain their food stocks and support those most in need in the community.



## COVID-19 snapshot



We tallied more than 7000 inbound and outbound calls and carried out more than 1600 needs assessments



62 per cent of callers could self-help after talking to us; 38 per cent needed more help



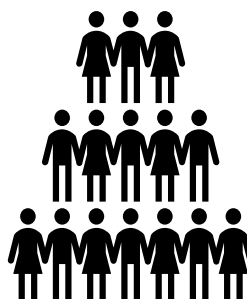
170 staff worked for the GECC, and 50 people worked as welfare needs assessors



92 per cent of callers got the support they needed



We housed 34 households in temporary accommodation service places, and accommodated 54 homeless people



We established a network of networks around 12 key populations. More than 150 community organisations and agencies also joined forces to stop people slipping through the cracks.



Our Public Information team sent 31 media releases and eight newsletters, arranged six media interviews and responses, and posted on Facebook 213 times.

At the peak of the response, our group's Facebook page reach spiked to 41,618 people – 24 per cent of Hawke's Bay's population, and our Facebook audience grew by more than 1500 over the response period.

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## **Tangoio fire**

On 6 January 2020, a fire started a forestry block on Tangoio Settlement Road. Fire fighters fought the blaze until 12.45pm on 17 January, when the fire was 100 per cent controlled. At its height, the fire had burnt through 350 hectares and involved 55 fire fighters plus support workers and Pan Pac fire staff, four helicopters and 30 vehicles.

We supported Fire and Emergency New Zealand by providing the Group Emergency Coordination Centre to manage the response. We also provided Public Information Management support.

## **Waipawa water mains break**

At 9.30am on 10 January 2020, a contractor working on private land hit the main water line that feeds the Waipawa reservoir and the main line to Otane with a digger. By 2.30pm, Waipawa and Otane had come dangerously close to running out of water.



Central Hawke's Bay District Council had no communications staff working that day and the council incident controller requested support. Our group provided support, deploying our Public Information Manager to manage the social media, media releases and media queries, and provide strategic communications advice as the event unfolded.

Additionally, the group provided support in the Planning and Response Management areas, deploying an additional two staff to provide expert advice.

The water pipe was repaired by 6.15pm.



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## **Tikokino fire**

On 5 February 2020, a 20-hectare fire just north of Tikokino forced Fire and Emergency New Zealand fire fighters to close State Highway 50.

On request from Fire and Emergency New Zealand, we deployed our Public Information Manager to manage the communications for the event, providing social media, media and stakeholder updates, and managing media queries.



## **Summer drought**

The Hawke's Bay drought was declared an adverse event in March 2020, following 10 months of very little rain.

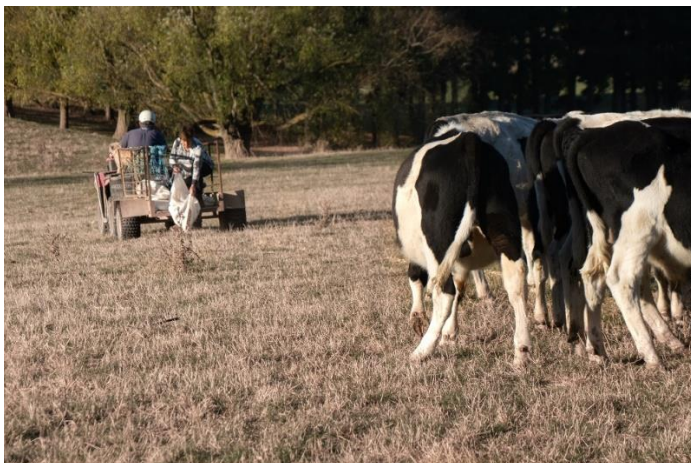
The drought, predominately affecting Central Hawke's Bay and rural Hastings was, for many farmers, the worst in living memory. Our farming community faced an enormous feed deficit because of the drought, which brought profound challenges including accessing feed and managing stock, and dealing with the mental hardship of working in those conditions with hungry animals.

These impacts were compounded by COVID-19, which resulted in the freezing works operating at a reduced capacity, trade impacts, and an inability for farmers to meet face-to-face when they needed support.





The Civil Defence Rural Advisory Group (RAG), made up of farmers, rural local councillors, the Hawke's Bay Regional Council, Beef and Lamb New Zealand, the Ministry for Primary Industries, East Coast Rural Support Trust, Fire and Emergency New Zealand and Federated Farmers, led the response in partnership with the Hawke's Bay Regional Council, Central Hawke's Bay District Council and Hastings District Council. The HBCDEM Group supported the response by providing planning, welfare and public information management services, to help Hawke's Bay farmers get through some of the harshest drought conditions in living memory.



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## Our recovery highlights

**Dealing with an emergency can be stressful and exhausting. Recovering from a disaster is a complex process that may take months, even years to overcome. We work to help people get back to acceptable quality of life as soon as possible.**

Local recovery managers from Hawke's Bay's local authorities met three times during the 2019/20 financial year, with a fourth meeting cancelled due to COVID-19.

The group used Exercise Rūaumoko to learn and test the transition from response to recovery, and consider key recovery issues that are likely to arise following such an event. The group held two meetings in the weeks after the exercise to focus on these issues.

We have supported the council and community-led recovery from the COVID-19 response and lockdown.

## Our local highlights

**The Hawke's Bay CDEM Group supports its members in their responsibilities under the CDEM and Local Government Acts in preparing and responding for emergency responsibilities.**

On 30 September 2020, Central Hawke's Bay District Council held an incident management team exercise simulating volcanic activity at Mt Ruapehu, causing significant ash fall in Central Hawke's Bay. This exercise, together with the council's participation in the regional exercise Rūaumoko, primed the council for a coordinated and swift response to the January 2020 Tikikino fire event and the Waipawa-Otane reservoir water main pipe damage. The water main damage had the potential to see Waipawa and Otane without water for days, but the pipe was replaced with 45 minutes of water left in the reservoir.

Napier City Council launched the Hill Hostee project, working with residents on the Napier Hill to promote the role they could play in an event where many people

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evacuate to the hill, such as after a large earthquake. Find out more at:  
[www.napier.govt.nz/napier/community-development/napier-hill-safe-zone/](http://www.napier.govt.nz/napier/community-development/napier-hill-safe-zone/)

Early in 2020 a Hastings District Council staff member completed the CDEM Controllers Development programme, establishing a total of three people within Hastings District Council that are trained to act as Controller during a Civil Defence activation.

Hastings District Council commissioned a contractor to undertake an independent review of the council's response capability. The review, completed just prior to COVID-19 Level 4 lockdown, and updated after returning to Level 1 to reflect the learnings during that activation, provides the council with a clear action plan to further enhance the preparedness and response capability. The overall assessment showed that the council's response facilities and resources are mature, the response staff and training are advancing and that there is scope to improve plans and procedures. To this end, the council has established a new role due to start early 2021 to focus on addressing the improvement opportunities identified in the report.

Hastings District Council was fully engaged in exercise Rūaumoko including activating a full Incident Management Team (IMT) of 11 people operating within the new Group Emergency Coordination Centre over two days. This tested communication channels between the IMT and business units, which provided valuable information to help support the operation during the COVID-19 activation.

A Wairoa District Council staff member completed the CDEM Controllers Development programme, which with the changing of staff at the council, means now Wairoa has a trained controller. The council's alternate controller is enrolled to complete the course in November 2020.

Wairoa District Council was fully engaged in exercise Rūaumoko including activating a full Incident Management Team (IMT) of 10 people operating within the Alternate Group Emergency Coordination Centre in Wairoa Hospital) over three days. This exercised the Emergency Operations Centre staff, who worked with limited communication (cell phones only) and limited internet connection, whilst maintaining contact with the HBCDEM GECC.

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In September 2019, as part of the Wairoa Township Community Resilience Plan, suggested tsunami evacuation routes were developed and circulated throughout the town. Eighty per cent of local shops put the evacuation maps in their store windows, and the routes were advertised in the Wairoa Star and included in local school newsletters. Wairoa District Council staff practiced the routes during the 2019 October ShakeOut.



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## Finances

**Our response to COVID-19 and the drought had a significant impact on our finances and work programme. However, we absorbed our additional COVID-19 and drought operational response costs through reduced activity in non-response areas such as risk reduction, hazard research, coordination and community engagement, and by using our existing reserve.**

Prior to the COVID-19 response, our budgets were on track for under-expenditure for the 2019-20 financial year, which also helped reduce the response's financial impact.

### **COVID-19 costs**

As part of the COVID-19 response, our group incurred two additional types of expenses: operational response and emergency welfare support expenditure.

Our provision of emergency welfare support and direct operational response costs resulted in \$1,692,324 additional expenditure in 2019-20. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has approved \$530,053 in reimbursement for our first welfare cost claim from, and NEMA team is assessing a further three claims totalling \$409,351.

Our operational response costs included:

- short-term contracts for additional welfare staff
- development and operation of the welfare 0800 number and the team of needs assessors
- personnel costs for extra staff hours
- miscellaneous response costs such as food for shifts, extra IT equipment and software licenses

Our emergency welfare costs included:

- grocery items
- household goods such as clothing and blankets
- delivery costs

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- emergency accommodation
  - reimbursement of food bank costs

### **How we managed these costs**

The gross result of the COVID-19 response would have been an approximately \$700,000 overspend.

However, as a result of reduced expenditure in non-response areas, our COVID-19 response resulted in a net overspend of \$374,077 (after Lifelines expenditure has been removed).

We have \$371,515 held in reserves, leaving a deficit of \$2562 in the reserve account. While we had significant unbudgeted expenditure year, our decision to hold under-expenditures in recent years as a reserve meant we have managed this expenditure, with some residual risk from future events, without the need to increase the regional targeted rate.

### **2020-21 financial year risks**

As our reserve account is now depleted, there is a risk that if another significant event was to occur we may incur a large deficit. By far the biggest risk now is any response required as part of a resurgence of COVID-19. Based on our previous experience and ongoing preparation, it is likely that any resurgence will not have as large impact and will be better managed. We're also confident that the demand on our welfare services would not be as high as it was in the first response.

As the 2020-21 rates have now been struck there are no real short-term options available to provide for a reserve. Therefore, any emergency expenditure over the next 12 months may require the reserve account to move further into deficit.