

## **Emergency Management Bay of Plenty (EMBOP)**

Emergency Management Bay of Plenty (EMBOP), the Group Emergency Management Office for the Bay of Plenty CDEM Group, supports this work to strengthen the resilience of Aotearoa critical infrastructure.

As we have seen in the Bay of Plenty and across New Zealand in recent years, the resilience of or infrastructure has a direct impact on our communities during emergencies. Communities rely on this infrastructure for the services it provides, and because its failure has direct impacts on livelihoods, education, healthcare delivery and community cohesion etc.

When this infrastructure fails emergency services, CDEM, government agencies, marae, community group and others are expected to step up/in to support impacted communities. This means government agencies are often absorbing costs to back-fill gaps in infrastructure services. This is expected and anticipated in the short term, however, is not a sustainable model when outages can span weeks.

Failure of this infrastructure also impacts on Councils and CDEM Groups ability to respond to an emergency. This is due to:

- Failures often covering large geographic areas;
- Interdependencies between different infrastructure
- the challenges of emergency response without road access or communications into communities; and
- the financial, human, and physical resources Councils are required to put into the restoration of this infrastructure.

In addition to our general support of the intent of this work, the following specific comments were identified

### **Minimum Standards**

If minimum standards are implemented, who will monitor and regulate these standards and how will these be communicated to the CDEM sector? It is important that Emergency Management professionals have a clear understanding of the critical infrastructure standards for their region so this can be incorporated into planning for emergency response.

### **Cost implications**

In addition, the cost of investing in critical infrastructure does need to be reviewed and serious considerations taken into account. Cost of living is already high and costs for services are already increasing without this investment. Further cost increases to the consumer may create an additional financial burden which consumers are unable to carry and may mean they become more reliant on already stretched government services and decrease overall levels of resilience.

### **Criticality assessments**

We would also be keen to gain an understanding of how the holistic model for determining infrastructure critically was developed and how it will be utilised. Some of the indicators for the scale of consequence don't reflect the real impacts that events have on communities and the long-term effects these can have no matter the number of people impacted.

It is understood that this model is designed for national criticality assessments, however, when you bring this assessment down to the local level the picture changes substantially. For example, the Opotiki District has a population of approximately 9000. By this model the entire district could be in series hardship, and it be considered a Moderate event under this assessment. We suggest reviewing a model such as the Coordinated Incident Management System Incident classification for an example on how a model like this can be applied locally, regionally and nationally.

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