

Gary Stevenson - Web form submission

Critical Infrastructure Resilience

What is your name?

Gary Stevenson

What is your email address?

gnstevenson@yahoo.com

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

Individual

Do you consent for your submission (including identifying information) to be published and shared in lines with terms for this public consultation?

Yes

Do you consent for your submission (including identifying information) to be published and shared in lines with terms for this public consultation? - Please note what should be withheld and for what reasons.

[Nil]

Does more need to be done to improve the resilience of New Zealand's critical infrastructure system?

Yes. The current state of underinvestment of most critical is affecting our resilience to events.

Have you had direct experience of critical infrastructure failures, and if so, how has this affected you?

Yes. In flooding at the Rakaia Bridge I was prevented from returning to work and family for 3 days. The Ashley Bridge in Rangiora was also closed for an extended period of time due to damage.

How would you expect a resilient critical infrastructure system to perform during adverse events?

This question is contingent on asset class. For example, I would expect road and bridge critical infrastructure to meet or exceed a 1 in 200 year flood or rainfall event and be reinstated within 1 month of a large earthquake.

Would you be willing to pay higher prices for a more resilient and reliable critical infrastructure system?

Yes

The work programme's objective is to enhance the resilience of New Zealand's critical infrastructure system to all hazards and threats, with the intent of protecting New Zealand's wellbeing, and supporting sustainable and inclusive growth. Do you agree with these objectives? If not, what changes would you propose?

Yes I agree in part. Where it is not financially feasible to provide critical infrastructure to areas prone to natural hazards the adaptation should be progressed. This is in conflict with wellbeing for these residents.

Do you agree with the proposed criteria for assessing reform options? If not, what changes you would propose?

Yes, but should be associated with urban development and adaptation policy.

Do you think the megatrends outlined pose significant threats to infrastructure resilience?

Yes, I agree. Supply chain logistics have proven to disrupt our economy and wellbeing.

Are there additional megatrends that are also important that we haven't mentioned? If so, please provide details.

Yes. Oil supply logistics is a huge issue for New Zealand as we are beholden to refining countries. Encroachment on our fisheries as a critical industry and the poor infrastructure we utilise to police our waters.

Do you think we have described the financial implications of enhancing resilience accurately? If not, what have we missed?

I agree. It will cost more to implement a system and regulate for minimum critical infrastructure standards. Ultimately this will be user pays.

How important do you think it is for the resilience of New Zealand's infrastructure system to have a greater shared understanding of hazards and threats?

It is critical. Cross industry and political party working groups should be set up to inform the proposed Natural Hazards Commission.

If you are a critical infrastructure owner or operator, what additional information do you think would best support you to improve your resilience?

I am not an owner but expect that government assistance whether research or financial is required to incentivise.

What do you think the government should do to enable greater information sharing with, and between, critical infrastructure owners and operators?

Cross industry and political party working groups should be set up to inform the proposed Natural Hazards Commission.

Would you support the government having the ability to set, and enforce, minimum resilience standards across the entire infrastructure system?

Yes, but only if informed by cross industry and political party working groups to inform the proposed system. This will hopefully flesh out any unintended consequences.

Would you support the government investing in a model to assess the significance of a critical infrastructure asset, and using that as the basis for imposing more stringent resilience requirements?

Yes, but only if informed by cross industry and political party working groups to inform the proposed system. This will hopefully flesh out any unintended consequences

What criteria would you use to determine a critical infrastructure asset's importance? Investing in a model to assess a critical infrastructure asset's criticality, and using that as the basis for imposing resilience requirements that are more stringent on particularly sensitive assets?

Consider probability and consequences of critical infrastructure failure on:
Emergency response time to reinstate to deliver aid (ports, airports, rail, road)
Number of people and businesses affected
Duration of loss of service
Environmental impact
Health impacts including wellbeing
Substitutes for loss of infrastructure I.e telecommunications.
Affect on GDP (local and national)
Cost and duration to repair/replace

Do you think there is a need for the government to have greater powers to provide direction or intervene in the management of significant national security threats against a critical infrastructure? - Is there a need for greater powers? If so, what type of powers should the government consider? What protections would you like to see around the use of such powers to ensure that they were only used as a last resort, where necessary?

Where a critical infrastructure provider refuses to meet minimum standards, as a last resort government powers should be invoked to insert commissioners to oversee critical upgrades at regional and local government. Private companies should be able to be fined as Worksafe does. The protections that I would like to see is commissioners are chosen by cross political party group and fines are handed down by the courts, not by a department of central government. This should hopefully prevent anticompetitive behaviour and prevent corruption or nepotism.

Do you think there is a need for a government agency or agencies to have clear responsibility for the resilience of New Zealand's critical infrastructure system?

I think this function should be done by the Department of Internal Affairs. Already they have worked on the 3 waters programme that has synergies with this proposal.

Do you think there is a need for compliance and enforcement mechanisms (eg. mandatory reporting, penalties, offences) to ensure that critical infrastructure operators are meeting potential minimum standards?

I do not believe these functions should all sit with the department. Critical infrastructure is typically large scale and it is highly unlikely that providers would abscond. Therefore commissioners for local government and regional government can be appointed by a cross party group and penalties handed down by the courts. I do not think that the executive or managers should have this power.

What additional comments do you have?

There is a need to provide a holistic and national approach to critical infrastructure. It is important to gain buy in from all dependent industries and lifelines, suppliers and users, and cross political parties. I think it important to keep assessment and policy development simple and within the remit proposed. All the best.