J Kay Jones - Web form submission

Critical Infrastructure Resilience

What is your name?

J Kay Jones

What is your email address?

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.

Please withhold email address from public view. OK to share with public sector agencies.

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

Yes, not just in terms of what government provides but also in terms of enabling communities to build and amintain their own reslience. In some cases this may need legislative support as with emergency powers granted to and exercised by local authorities to limit and repair damage done by actions or inactions of businesses or individuals in particular localities.

One of the current needs for Emergency Management and Future Resilience would be a power akin to the Public Works Act to take control of resources to reduce and mitigate harms, particularly where associated with particular industries and where inadequate action has been taken.

A clear example is the forestry sector and the forestry waste (slash) that has caused costly harm to rivers, roads, bridges and land. This is still a problem and should not be a burden on landowners and ratepayers in areas where the slash has landed.

If local authorities could be empowered to exercise clean up orders, using equipment and workers of forestry companies and others in the area, then resource requirements for clean up work could be coordinated for faster action and less loss to farmers in the areas. Payment for services is a matter for government allocation of cost - how much per forestry company and how much from central and local government is a matter for discussion AFTER the clean up is done.

Another much needed area for work (some of which has started) is how to address misinformation and disinformation undermining public trust and community resilience.

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

If we include misinformation and disinformation undermining public trust and community resilience, then I like many Wellington based people, experienced the critical infrastructure failure that led to the Occuptation of Parliament grounds. How much was a public trust failure, and how much inadequate responses, has been subject of some review.

What would prevent similar failures?
What would contribute to similar failures? Some political statements in the current election campaigns foreshadow undermining of trust in the public service itself (ACT attacks on MBIE, National attacks on sex education coordinated by the Ministry of Education etc).

I have encountered other examples of resistance to health messaging like aggressive anti vaccination efforts. This is not to blame the Ministry of Health but to note that "Critical Infrastructure" isn't just a road or power station or internet supply.

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

Chain of command should operate in many directions, not just top down.

Effective communications and ability to act should have an up and down flow from "leaders" to frontline and back, and also a sideways flow in communities. That sideways flow and ability for communities to be responsive and resilient also needs advance preparation and resourcing. Local hubs and centres of knowledge whether at marae or community centre level need to have self contained and transportable communications and knowledge. Mobile phones are great but rely on infrastructure that failed in Hawkes Bay.

Critical minimum infrastrucutre for communications should include AM network on radio. Like passing buckets along a chain to put out fires, there should be easy, quick and simple messaging in modes people can understand.

Local communities may know what comms are needed for disabled people in areas, leaders at the top won't know. Tapping into local knowledge is essential.

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

What do you mean by "higher prices"? Taxes? Rates? Prices of goods or services for companies levied to do their share like forestry companies? Everyone needs to contribute but method of payment and cost allocation needs a bigger discussion. For example, fossil fuel companies have profited from their product sales but have contributed little if anything towards climate change harms. That needs to change. Same with other contributions to climate harms. Maybe a climate tax on good, services and companies, starting with those who have caused the most harm like fuel companies.

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?

Broad objectives sound fine but
 - Aotearoa New Zealand not just New Zealand;
- critical infrastructure system to include communications at many levels and public trust
- wellbeing and sustainability, Yes
- inclusiveness - Yes, especially in relation to Aotearoa doing its fair share globally to accept refugees or displaced people.

Growth? Not necessarily. Bigger isn't alway better. As Minister Parker has said, we've reached Peak Cow and we need to look at policieis that limit growth and the expense of wellbeing. As a small agricultural nation Aotearoa NZ needs to focus on delivering quality produce and products not mass production of low return items like raw milk power or bulk timber.

Infrastructure planning needs to have a broader focus on a sustainable economy which may include restrictions on land and resource use. Look at both supply and demand sides of production economies. Investment in lower emission sectors like computer game technology and products could fit better with future resilience than continued dairy farming expansions, especially in land areas not well suited to this. Wetlands and native forests need to be sustained for environmental and future economic resilince, not drained or clearfelled for dairy farms or housing.

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

Broader considerations are needed. Echo chambers won't design the right measures or tools. More advisory group input and discussion is needed with a range of groups and interests. For example, The Disinformation Project on Public Trust. Ora Taiao on Public Health and Climate issues. Hold inperson community based events for roundtable discussions and networking over full days to scope criteria and definitions.

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

Yes. Trend two needs expansion from "a more complex geopolitical and national security environment" to include not only cyber attacks but the results of targetted misinformation and disinformation campaigns.

There such campaigns are operating within Aotearoa New Zealand, with some overlap of the players

- racist campaiging as shown by Julian Batchelor and his Stop Co-Governance tour, enabled by white rights activisits with National Front links like Kyle Chpaman providing security in some areas. The distribution of 350,000 x 12 page glossy booklets isn't cheap or harmless.

- anti-Islamic rhetoric - less visible currently but still a concern;

- anti-trans / anti gender minority campaigning, including the paid visit of Posie Paker aka Kellie-Jay Keen-Minshull on her "Adult Human Female" tour, and also the campaigning against Gender and Sex Education in schools having spread from the New Conservative Party to now influencing National

Party policies. Examples of such intolerance have shown violence against drag events and arson of a Rainbow Youth centre in Tauranga.

- anti-vaccination and anti-mandate campaigns against public health initiatives.

There is an overlap of the same disaffected people in communities concverned about any one of these issues who then turn up to support othes. This is a democracy so they're entitled to their views but there is still a concerning degree of factual misinformation being fed to these people to fuel discontent and concern over the actions they may take. When our country relies on Rule by Consent, what happens when people withdraw consent (like the Sovereign Citizens), and when some of them turn to vandalism or violence to express their views? Electorate offices of MPs have suffered already. What happens if their more tech savvy members start attacking digital infrastructure? Or construction workers use their equipment to attack utilities?

What work is being amplified after the Christchurch Call Enquiry to reach out to disaffected communities and individuals? For more on this issue, please include Inclusive Communities Aotearoa and Anjum Rahman in your discussions, and Disinformation Project, and Inside Out and Gender Minorities Aotearoa.

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

See answer in 1.

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

The costs to many people on low or no income can't be overstated. Also costs to disabled people and people with complex health issues. Every disruption to infrstructure poses a risk to people relying on supply chains, particularly for overseas sourced medicines and devisves. The cost of medications are rising and some previously suitable medicines are no longer available in Aotearoa New Zealand. Pharmac can provide a list of such medicines but it's worth hearing from people on how it affects them. Health advocacy organisations including Disabled Persons Assembly, Gender minorities Aotearoa, and Rare Disorders New Zealand all have members who face significant challenges in trying to be healthy or survive.

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?

Vitally important but this needs to be at least a two way conversation not just a top down flow of poorly communicated ideas with no story catch. It would be better to have round table sharing to add personal experiences to messages.

People in my geographic community may have little understanding of hazards and threats experienced by others in the same area but with different abilities or resources. For example, an able bodied user of an e-scooter may have no thought of the trip hazards that a badly parked scooter poses to blind or low vision pedestrians in their area.

Forestry company executives may have no thought for the impact of slash upon beaches, farms and river infrastructure like bridges despite how many times local write to their local authority about the problem.

Listening to others is crucial. Messages will be ignored unless they include common ground of issues of relevance to the listeners.
https://www.1news.co.nz/2023/08/05/john-campbell-politicians-arent-there-to-hear-our-people-cry/

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

N/A

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

For any communications, build relationships, ensure language and ideas have relevance and that they're reaching the right people. When building netowrks, in person with food provided is a good starter. Once network is achieved having a clear coordinator in government to handle messages and actions can help. Assume good will but limited resources and identify what owners and operators need to hhelp them comply. Is it information or resources? What do they need to do to be seen to comply? Why should they comply? Legal requirement? Reputational? Save them money and if so how and when?

Eg waste minimisation saves money long term but requires set up and systems. Local authorities can help. Need better coordination.

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

Yes, provided its done publicly or at least with input across sectors, and is a collaborative effort not top down only.

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?

What is meant by "the government investing in a model"? The use of digital twins such as the Smart city model for Wellington city is useful but models are only as good as the data they're built on. Garbage In/ Garbage Out. Sean Audain at Wellington City Council could help with advice on this. https://www.businesslab.co.nz/beyond-consultation-podcast/12 and https://wellington.govt.nz/news-and-events/news-and-information/our-wellington/2022/01/bloomberg-challenge

Working with diverse representative groups on principles is a good initial step. Ensure that local iwi are involved in discussions of local threats. Hackathons are also handy ways to develop rough working models.

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?

As above

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?

National security is too often used as an excuse to impose racist or xenophobic immigration barriers to reuniting families and to surveilling the wrong people. In the years before the Christchurch massacre, Muslim women regulatly complained about harassment against them. The main government response was to surveil Muslim people, not to keep an eye on or take any other action

against white supremacists.

There is a need for national security services and standards but they need to be proportionate. Members of many civil society groups are mistrustful of government motivations and actions.

Roundtable discussions with groups such as NZ Council for Civil Liberties, Amnesty International, Just Speak Aotearoa, NZ Human Rights Commission, and Inclusive Aotearoa Collective (examples not exhaustive list) could help identify what commitments are needed to honour civil and human rights obligations including international treaties.

Actions like legisltive proposals to lock up asylum seekers for lengthy periods add to discontent with and mistrust of government.
https://nzccl.org.nz/submissionimmigration-mass-arrivals-amendment-bill/

and heaps of issues highlighted by Amnesty NZ
https://amnesty.org.nz/latest

Don't try to extend powers beyond what is actually needed without discussing impacts first.

Unless - maybe - the action is against creators of biggest security threat - Climate Change. In that instance I'd be fine with the government using #ClimateEnergency as the reason to ban all coal mining and deep sea oil drilling and exploration now! That doesn't harm people probdived there is work on a Just Transition away from working for those fossil fuel industries.

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?

Umbrella agency to co-ordinate - probably DPMC or similar level.

Agree plan across separate agencies. Include advisory committees for different aspects, with those committees to include business and civil society representatives to discuss principles, gaps and work needed.

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?

Mandatory reporting is a good idea in theory but it needs to be simple, easy to measure and understand, easy to find and relevant to questions.

Please talk with Office of Auditor-General on relevance and improvements
https://oag.parliament.nz/2021/performance-reporting/overview.htm

What additional comments do you have?

As stated before, I reiterate the need for broad and inclusive thinking on these issues to be considered ad discussed with people in a range of sectors, not least those who would feel the impact

of failures.

Media people like John Campbell and Rod Oram and Mihirangi Forbes could play a useful role in ensuring relevant outreach and stories are shared. Capture the stories and (with consent) use them in video format to build the understanding. Use digital technology like videos on Youtube to enable more people to be part of discussions.

Also don't overlook previous hui that have come up with relevant material for this discussion.

Like work Pia Andrews and DIA's Service Innovation Lab aka Lab Plus did on Optimistic Futures https://www.digital.govt.nz/blog/labplus-exploring-optimistic-futures/

https://serviceinnovationlab.github.io/projects/optimistic-futures/

https://serviceinnovationlab.github.io/2018/08/01/Exploring-Optimistic-Futures-Workshop/

https://web.archive.org/web/20200119113457/https://www.optimisticfutures.nz/

Pia Andrews is regularly in Aotearoa New Zealand for work in her current role as Strategic Advisor - Public Sector, Amazon Web Services (AWS) and would almost certainly be happy to talk about this project and other models for developing resilience.
https://www.linkedin.com/in/pia-andrews/