



12 February 2026

Committee Secretariat
Governance & Administration Committee
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Email: ga@parliament.gov.nz

Dear Sir/Madam,

Emergency Management Bill (No.2), Submission from the Urban Task Force for Tauranga (UTF)

The Urban Task Force for Tauranga (UTF) has been incorporated as a Society with its purpose being to represent Tauranga property professionals and funders, developers, iwi and hapu, and owners and managers of property.

The UTF seeks to provide strong and informed leadership to central, regional and local authorities, promoting and fostering productive local networks around property and related issues and as an advocate for the property and development industry in the Bay of Plenty.

The UTF has previously provided feedback to Government on the need to update and reform legislation relating to Natural Hazards and Emergency Management.

UTF supports and endorses the Government's general intentions to reform emergency management in New Zealand to ensure that legislation is fit for purpose. We welcome the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed Bill.

UTFs submission on the Bill is as follows:

1. We generally support the objectives of the Bill in terms of how the Bill provides greater clarity around responses and recovery arrangement and processes associated with emergencies.
2. The definition of essential infrastructure is generally supported, however there is essential infrastructure which could be added including essential services such as solid waste, and computer services which in a modern world are relied upon by communities.
3. The purpose of the Bill requires the identification, assessment and management of risks, consulting and communicating about risks, and identifying and implementing cost effective risk reduction. Further guidance from Central Government will be required in relation to this risk based approach. It is critical that there is clarity in relation to the interrelationship of the purpose of this Bill with other current legislative changes which are underway, particularly those relating to RMA reform. The assumption in terms of the purpose of the Act is that all risks will be required to be managed regardless of the scale, intensity or nature of the risk. This should be clarified through amendments to the purpose by requiring that such risks are significant in that they impact on the social, economic, cultural, and environmental wellbeing and safety of the public.

4. The name of the Bill (Emergency Management) is a major change in branding from the previous “Civil Defence” legislation. Our concern is that this will result in significant costs and also the need to educate the public. Civil Defence is a well known brand to all New Zealanders and for that reason should be retained.
5. There are significant costs associated with the implementation of the changes proposed under the Bill and no clarity on how these are to be funded. The assumption is therefore that Local Government will need to fund the reforms proposed. The background documents prepared in support of the Bill identify an initial cost of \$82.8 million to local authorities to implement the Bill. Our concern is that these costs will simply be passed on to ratepayers. An alternative funding mechanism is required to ensure that costs associated with the implementation of the Bill by Local Government are not simply borne by ratepayers.
6. The Bill defines the meaning of emergency to include “(k) *an actual or imminent attack or war like act*”. In our view Local Government is not an agency which could manage such an occurrence. Consideration needs to be given to strengthening the the NZ Defence Forces role in the Bill on a wide front. The Defence Force has the necessary expertise, resources, and experience to deal with emergency management and should have a much greater involvement in the emergency management process.
7. Section 13 of the Act deals with precautionary approaches and notes that for persons performing functions in relation to developing or implementing an Emergency Management Plan that “(ii) *the person may adopt a cautious approach to managing risk under an Emergency Management Plan, even if there is scientific or technical uncertainty about the nature and extent of the risk*”. Our concern with this approach is that in terms of the principles of the Act, Councils may adopt a zero risk approach. This is not appropriate

We hope that the above feedback on the Bill is of some assistance to the Committee. We would like the opportunity to be heard in support of our submission and would be happy to answer any questions the Committee may have.

Ngā mihi,



Scott Adams
Chairman

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