



COOK ISLANDS

Ministry of Education

Maraurau o te Pae Api'i

Policy ID No: GMP 02 004

# DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

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## REVISION RECORD

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September 2017	1	Draft

## DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

A disaster is a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources. A disaster is a function of the risk process. It results from the combination of hazards, conditions of vulnerability and insufficient capacity or measures to reduce the potential negative consequences of risk, as defined by the Cook Islands National Disaster Risk Management Plan, 2017.

Similarly, an emergency is defined as an actual or imminent event that endangers or threatens life, property or environment and which requires a significant coordinated response.

The MoE has a role in ensuring the safety and well-being of its employees and institutions as well as providing resources to assist in the national response to any event. The MoE recognises that such plans centre on both Disaster Risk Reduction (preventing or lowering of risk of a disaster) and Disaster Management (preparedness, response and recovery to a disaster).<sup>1</sup>

The MoE DRMP includes an understanding of the unique and isolated locations in the Cook Islands, and seeks to undertake all measures to avoid or limit risks, and build resilience to lessen the impact of any disaster or emergency. This requires plans to be clear, concise, effective and understood by all.

### 1. STATEMENT OF POLICY

In order to mitigate the impact of an emergency or disaster, the Cook Islands Ministry of Education (MoE) will ensure the currency and dissemination of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) within Disaster Risk Management Plans (DRMP), across all educational institutions.

### 2. PURPOSE

The MoE is committed to meeting the following legislation and guidelines:

- i.) 'Learning for Life' - Cook Islands Education Master Plan 2008-2023  
Infrastructure and Support  
*Focus: The provision of appropriate legislation research, guidelines and standards which support and enhance opportunities for learning.*  
*Goals:*
- *Adequate budget resource for education*
  - *High quality buildings, grounds and facilities*
  - *Well qualified and resourced teachers, administrators and support staff*

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<sup>1</sup> Cook Islands National Disaster Risk Management Plan, 2017

- ii.) 'Te Kaveinga Nui' - National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2020  
*Goal 8 - Inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities*  
*Goal 13 – Strengthen resilience to combat the impacts of climate change and natural disasters*
- iii.) Cook Islands Administration Guidelines – Cook Islands Ministry of Education, 2002. Section Five, Health and Safety  
*To provide a safe physical and emotional environment for staff and students and comply in full with any legislation currently in force or that may be developed to ensure the safety of students and employees.*
- iv.) Disaster Risk Management Act, 2007, Government of the Cook Islands,  
*17 - Disaster Risk Management Plans of other Agencies*
- v.) Risk Management Policy 2015, Government of the Cook Islands
- vi.) Cook Islands National Disaster Risk Management Plan, 2017
- vii.) JNAP II – Are we resilient?  
The Cook Islands Second Joint National Action Plan – A sectoral approach to climate change and disaster risk management 2016-20
- viii.) Climate and Disaster Compatible Development Policy, 2013-2016

### **3. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all parties who are bound by the requirements of the Education Act (2012).

### **4. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES and OUTCOMES**

- Raise awareness that a safe environment supports and enhances educational development, personal growth, as well as staff and student well-being and success.
- Demonstrate that continuity of education after an emergency is crucial
- Strengthen community management of disaster through the development of DRMP by individual learning institutions that are specific to their needs
- Recognise the importance of Disaster Risk Reduction in reducing the impact of a disaster or emergency.
- Recognise the four phases and appropriate responses of Disaster Management
- Ensure its DRMP demonstrates equity and inclusion and is based on facts and knowledge
- To monitor and review management of disasters and emergencies within the MoE
- To strengthen the MoE's relationship with primary disaster relief supporting agencies

## 5. POLICY DETAIL

### 5.1. Types of Emergencies/Disasters

A disaster is not a single event - it may have various causes and consequences, and so each disaster is unique and can have a cascade effect. eg cyclones resulting in food security and biological hazards.

Disasters may be described as:

- Natural – naturally occurring physical phenomena caused either by rapid or slow onset events. Many of these natural events are associated with human induced climate change.
- Human induced/man-made – events caused by humans that occur in or close to human settlements.

Dependent on the timeframes of each event, responses may be planned or immediate. Examples include but are not limited to:

<b>Planned Response</b>	<b>Immediate Response</b>
Cyclone	Tsunami
Drought	Fire
Biological Hazard eg. epidemics/pandemics	Flood or storm surge
Pollution – land and sea, including oil spill	Landslide
	Conflict/intruder
	Medical emergency – serious injury, death.
	Hazardous materials incident – eg. industrial accident
	Transport accident – air, sea, land

In broad terms these can result in, loss of life, injury, damage to and destruction of property, damage to subsistence and cash crops, disruption of lifestyle, loss of livelihood, disruption of services, damage to infrastructure, national economic loss and sociological and psychological after-effects. <sup>2</sup>

### 5.2. Disaster Risk Reduction

Disaster Risk Reduction reduces the impact of a disaster or emergency by ensuring MoE staff and institutions have an understanding of potential hazards and risks specific to their environment and the management of such hazards and risks. It follows three key principles of prevention, mitigation and adaptation.

Both Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management rely on strong and open relationships with other supporting agencies including Ministry of Health, Cook Islands Red Cross, Emergency Management Cook Islands (EMCI), Climate Change Cook

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<sup>2</sup> Cook Islands National Disaster Risk Management Plan, 2017

Islands (CCCI), Ministry of Agriculture, Infrastructure Cook Islands, Ministry of Marine Resources, National Environment Service.

### 5.3. Stages of Disaster Management

A disaster management plan is divided into four phases – before, during, early recovery and after. Each identifies the critical key steps in combating and preparing for an emergency or disaster.

- Before – preparedness and mitigation phase
- During – response phase
- Early Recovery
- After – rehabilitation and reconstruction phase

#### 5.3.1. Preparedness and Mitigation Phase

Disaster preparedness, according to JNAP II 2016-20, refers to having arrangements and systems in place to ensure that should an event occur, the resources required for are efficiently mobilised and deployed

Disaster preparedness involves the planning, development and testing of plans and SOP's, as well as training and awareness raising within the MoE.

The MoE DRMP plan will include an awareness of the Rarotonga Puna DRMP and Pa Enua DRMP, with specific learning institutions to be aware of DRMP relevant to their location when developing their own DRMP.

Disaster preparedness activities, combined with risk reduction measures, can prevent disaster situations and also result in saving maximum lives and livelihoods, and enable a return to normalcy within a short time period.

#### 5.3.2. Response Phase

Disasters impact on entire communities. The immediate effects include loss of life and damage to property and infrastructure, with survivors left traumatised by the experience. Dependent on the type of disaster and emergency, there can be inadequate shelter, food, water and other necessities to sustain life.

Response, according to JNAP II 2016-20, refers to activities undertaken during and immediately after an event to ensure that its effects are minimised and that the people affected are given immediate relief and support. Levels of response will vary depending on if the event is defined as an incident, emergency or disaster. Resources, including people, money and assets, needs to be mobilised in a coordinated manner, with the MoE working in cooperation with other agencies.

A National Emergency Operations Centre must be activated in the lead up to an event and if a State of Emergency or State of Disaster is declared. This will be located at BlueSky compound, Takuvaine, Rarotonga.

National Response Structure will be activated if a State of Emergency or State of Disaster is declared in any part of the Cook Islands, as per Cook Islands National DRMP. Under this structure the MoE will be part of the Public Services cluster, led by Public Service Commissioner.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Cook Islands National Disaster Risk Management Plan, 2017

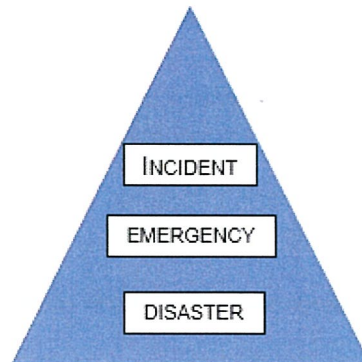


Figure 1 – Level of Response

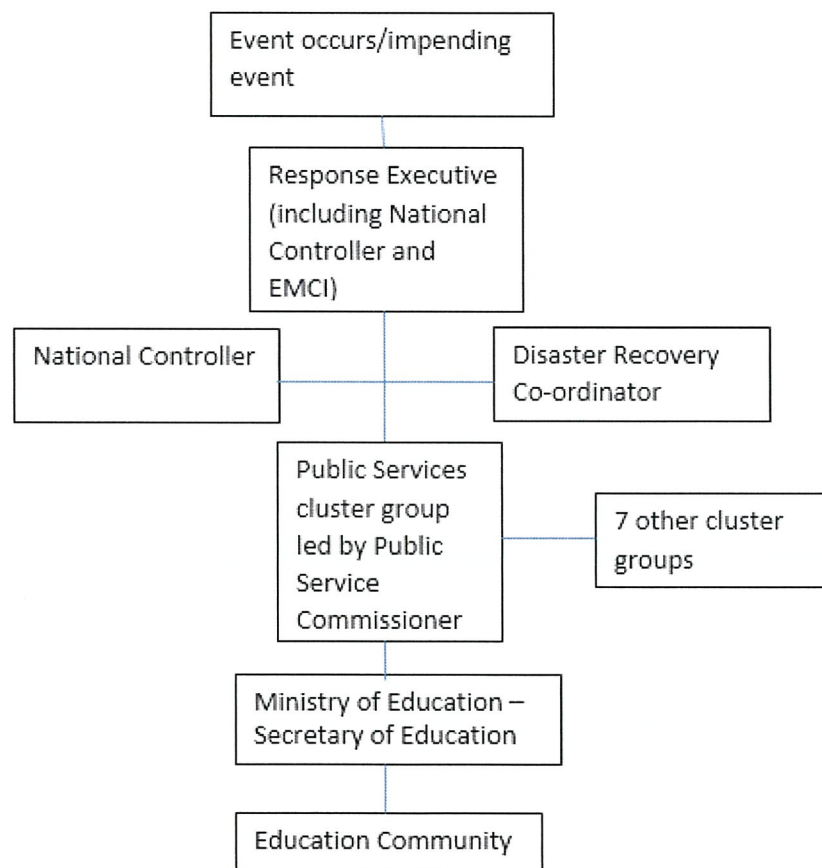


Figure 2 – National Response Structure

### 5.3.3. Early Recovery

Emergencies and disasters can greatly dislocate people and services – there is often a psychological element to the days and weeks following the event; the idea is that “early recovery” is about normalising people and services so that day-to-day life can resume.<sup>4</sup> For the MoE this includes enabling the continuity of education services at its institutions and at the Ministry itself.

### 5.3.4. Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Phase

This phase moves beyond immediate relief of a response and assists with long-term recovery from a disaster. It is the coordinated process of the MoE supporting its institutions affected by an event in reconstruction of physical infrastructure as well as restoring social and physical wellbeing of all employees and students.

Management of the implementation of the MoE DRMP will be reviewed after any event, and changes made to strengthen the capacity to cope with future events.

## 6. RISK and MITIGATION

The table below lists examples of possible consequences, along with mitigating actions, that relate to this policy not being adhered to:

<b>Issue/Risk - examples</b>	<b>Mitigation - examples</b>
Lack of knowledge by MoE staffin how to respond to a disaster/emergency	Clear and effective DRMP in practice Regular training drills for disaster situations
DRMP response inadequate – eg. essential services not returned in a timely manner, avoidable injury to personnel	DRMP to include coordinated response with other service providers Review of management of disaster/emergency by MoE and individual institutions to ensure individual DRMP meet institutional context and needs.

## 7. ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES

<b>Party/Parties</b>	<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>
MoE	Ensure a DRMP is in place in case of a disaster/emergency situation
MoE staff	An understanding of the processes involved in DRMP for the MoE

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<sup>4</sup> Cook Islands National Disaster Risk Management Plan, 2017

## 8. MONITORING, EVALUATION and REVIEW

Monitoring is to keep track of the enactment of expectations outlined in this policy. It is a formal process, which involves checking whether the policy is referred and adhered too.

Evaluation of the policy is to provide feedback on the efficiency and effectiveness of the policy, with a review to include implementing any required changes to strengthen the policy.

This will include evaluation of the following indicators:

- review of the management of any disasters and emergencies that have occurred within the MoE
- progress on development of DRMP by individual institutions that are specific to their needs

The Finance Division will monitor and evaluate the implementation and impact of this policy and report as required. The policy will be reviewed 1 year from the date of implementation and biennially thereafter.

## 9. DEFINITIONS and ABBREVIATIONS

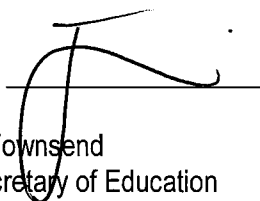
Term	Meaning
MoE	Ministry of Education
DRMP	Disaster Risk Management Plan
EMCI	Emergency Management Cook Islands – central coordination agency for Disaster Risk Management
Disaster Risk Management	The performance of all forms of activities, including structural and non-structural measures to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) risks and lessen the impacts of natural, man-made, environmental and technological disasters.
Disaster Risk Reduction	Minimising disaster risks to avoid or reduce the adverse impacts of hazards within the broad context of sustainable development.
Mitigation	Regulatory and physical measures to ensure that emergency and disaster events are prevented or their effects mitigated
Resilience	The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions.
Hazard	A potential or existing condition that may



	cause harm to people, or damage to property or the environment
Climate Change	A change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods

## 10. APPENDICES

- Cook Islands National Disaster Risk Management Plan, 2017 (attached)



G Townsend  
Secretary of Education

12-9-17.  
Date