



Hawke's Bay Civil Defence
and Emergency Management

Transformation Strategy

Together, as a community, we aim to create a safe, informed and resilient Hawke's Bay that is prepared for, responds to, and recovers from emergencies and disasters well. Our community is at the heart of our civil defence system. We will build stronger connections, trust and empower local voices, and enhance collaboration across the region.





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Hawke's Bay Key Facts

184,800

people live in Hawke's Bay

3.5% of
New Zealand's
population

In summer months
the population surges
by up to 25,000

135,000
live in the
main
urban cities

This means that 75%
live within a 10km
radius and could
be impacted by
a single event

29%
of the
population
is Māori

There are
11 iwi groups,
91 hapū and
79 marae throughout
Hawke's Bay



2 Major Faultlines

making Hawke's Bay one of the most seismically active regions of New Zealand

HBCDEM Transformation Strategy Summary

Te Matau a Māui – Hawke’s Bay Civil Defence Emergency Management Group

Together, as a community, we aim to create a safe, informed and resilient Hawke’s Bay that is prepared for, responds to, and recovers from emergencies and disasters well. Our community is at the heart of our civil defence system. We will build stronger connections, trust and empower local voices, and enhance collaboration across the region.

Themes that will guide our investment and focus:

**A SYSTEM THAT
PLACES THE
COMMUNITY
AT ITS HEART**

**A SYSTEM THAT
IS PREPARED
AND READY**

**A SYSTEM
THAT IS HIGHLY
EFFECTIVE,
CAPABLE AND
ASSURED**

**A SYSTEM
THAT IS
BALANCED AND
RESPONSIVE
TO LOCAL NEEDS**

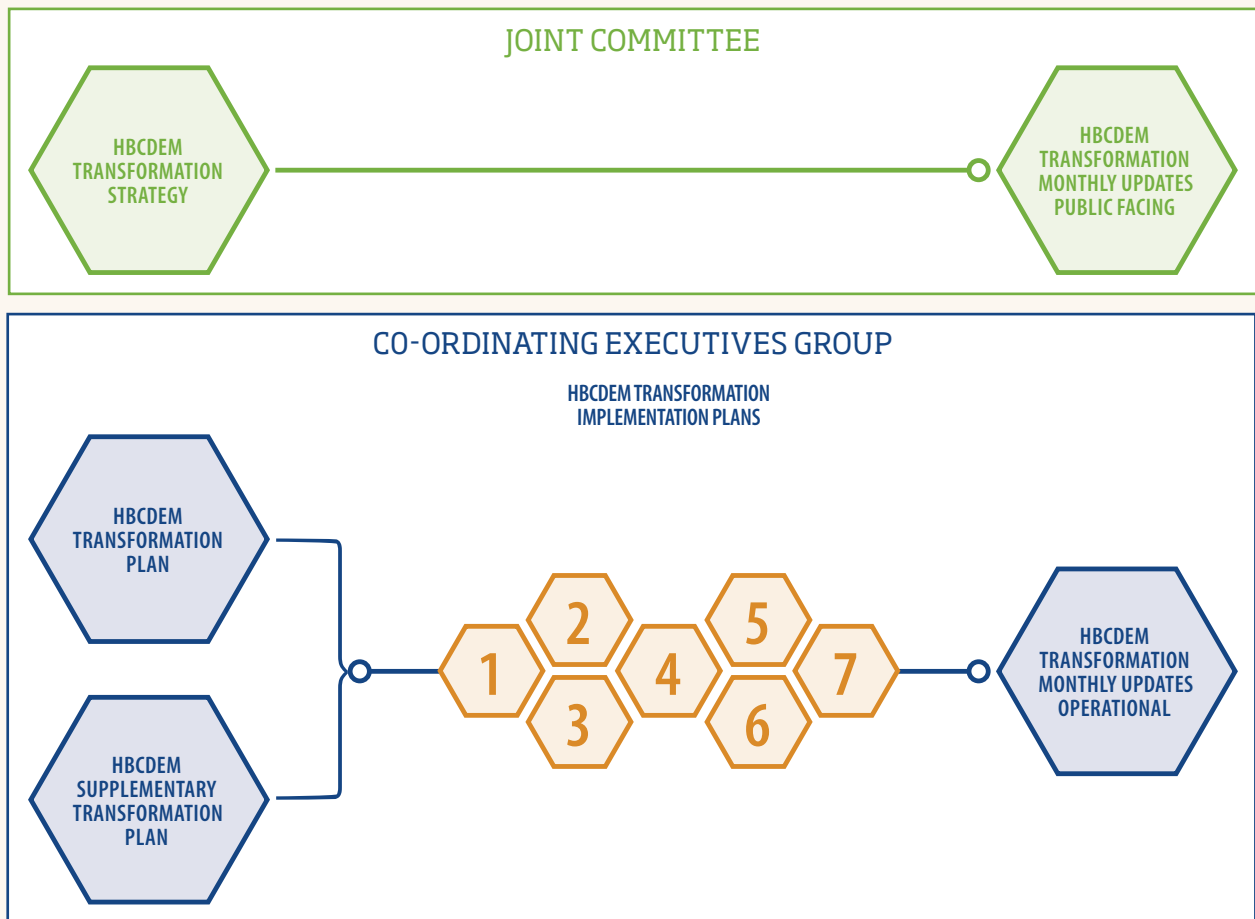
We’ll focus on seven key areas to deliver on these themes:

	KEY AREAS	SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE
	Māori Partnership – A system that connects with Mana whenua.	Mana whenua can see themselves inside the HBCDEM system, their voice is heard, their insights listened to and the system responds to their perspectives and needs
	Community Connections – A rebalanced and effective HBCDEM system built from the community up, that places the community at the heart.	The community is at the heart of a HBCDEM system that rebalances its capabilities from the bottom up, community, local and regional.
	Infrastructure and Assets – Investment ensures Hawke’s Bay possesses resilient CDEM assets, capable of responding to any emergency event.	All HBCDEM infrastructure and assets are reviewed, and business cases submitted for investment consultation as part of the 2027 Local Government Long Term Plan.
	Training and Exercising – Councils possess and have access to sufficient trained and exercised people to sustain response for a lengthy period of time.	Community, local and regional capabilities are capable of responding to an emergency event for a lengthy period of time.
	Performance and Assurance – Stakeholders have assurance their HBCDEM system is performing, and they understand where improvement is required.	The community has assurance that the HBCDEM system is ready and capable to respond locally and regionally.
	Planning – Delivering a set of regional, local, hazard and reduction plans	The HBCDEM system possesses the necessary emergency management plans to enhance local and regional preparation for emergency events.
	Service Level Agreements – Clarity exists between the functions, roles and responsibilities of each Council, their respective HBCDEM teams, the Regional Council and Regional HBCDEM Group.	There are clear roles and responsibilities and functioning Service Level Agreements that enhance the performance of the HBCDEM system.

Purpose

The Hawke's Bay Civil Defence Emergency Management (HBCDEM) Transformation Strategy outlines the approach to drive and strengthen community resilience and foster a generational shift toward excellence in emergency management in the region.

HBCDEM Transformation



Background and Context

Cyclone Gabrielle Independent Review

In the last ten years there have been several emergency events within the Hawke's Bay Region, significantly impacting people, community and the region, and tragically the loss of lives.

Following the tragic events of Cyclone Gabrielle, the same cycle followed previous events. An independent review was conducted, a significant number of recommendations were made, and a plan has been commissioned to operationalise the findings from the review to transform the HBCDEM system.

In receiving the Independent Review into the HBCDEM Group response to Cyclone Gabrielle, the Hawke's Bay CDEM Joint Committee, consisting of the Hawke's Bay Regions Mayors, Regional Chair and Post-Settlement Governance Entities and Iwi Leaders, committed to making transformational system change – adopting all of the recommendations unanimously.

The Joint Committee are unified in their commitment to ensure our region recovers from Cyclone Gabrielle, being more resilient, better prepared, and ready to effectively respond to the next event. Transformation of this scale is significant and it will require Council's, Treaty Partners, local Central Government agencies, Community Organisation's and HBRC to consider the role they play in this transformation, and resource it appropriately to ensure a successful transformation.

Key Themes from the Independent Review

In considering the recommendations of the latest review, we have identified strategic themes that link past events and findings to this latest review. With the region being subject to significant emergency events in every generation for over 140 years, with major emergency events occurring on average every 10 years, the Hawke's Bay region is exposed to a hazardscape of complex and varying risks.

This provides the momentum for Hawke's Bay to lead and operate the most effective emergency management system in New Zealand. In the last ten years of emergency events, reviews and change, highlights four key ideas that must be considered when conducting HBCDEM transformation. These are:

- Emergency events are occurring more frequently and are increasingly more complex – this drives the need for a system that is prepared and ready
- There is a public expectation that the HBCDEM response is of the highest standard - this drives the need for a system that is highly effective, capable and one that the community can be assured of
- There is an expectation that HBCDEM response is tailored and bespoke for every community, rural and urban, manawhenua and non-manawhenua, resident and visitor and so on – this drives the need for a system that is balanced and responsive to local needs
- The connection between the community, manawhenua and the HBCDEM system is integral – this drives the need for a system that places the community its heart

Driving Systemic Change

The success of this HBCDEM Transformation Strategy lies in driving systemic change. We must significantly enhance the HBCDEM system to ensure it can effectively respond to the major emergency events that are likely to impact future generations.

Achieving this requires a substantial investment in local and regional emergency management, along with strong, focused governance and leadership to set Hawke's Bay on a sustainable path forward. The future HBCDEM system must prioritise enhancement, foster positivity and resilience, engage the community, and build a high-performing emergency management network.

The HBCDEM Transformation Strategy will outline the approach to significantly improving and transforming the HBCDEM system. This will be guided by the recommendations contained within the latest review post Cyclone Gabrielle, but also informed by previous reviews over the last ten years.

Cyclone Gabrielle Review Findings

While the broad themes of the last ten years have been identified it is equally important to focus on the Joint Committee initiated review of the HBCDEM Group's response to Cyclone Gabrielle.

The review identified critical deficiencies in HBCDEM's capacity to manage large-scale events and proposed several significant recommendations. These recommendations highlight the urgent need for major transformational change to enhance the region's readiness and response capabilities for future crises. There were 70+ recommendations detailed within the review. These are summarised and matched to the four key HBCDEM transformation themes:

A SYSTEM THAT PLACES THE COMMUNITY ITS HEART

- Deepen connections with manawhenua
- Listen and learn from community insights
- Improve public engagement

A SYSTEM THAT IS PREPARED AND READY

- Enhance community resilience
- Train and exercise often, and thoroughly
- Collaborate with NEMA and Central Government agencies to integrate a transformed HBCDEM system with Central Government
- Develop a unified operational view
- Establish a Reduction Plan
- Improve resilient communications
- Identify critical elements and tasks to develop Hawke's Bay Disaster Plan (Group Plan and Hazards Plan)
- Review and improve early warning systems

A SYSTEM THAT IS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE, CAPABLE AND ASSURED

- Establish an assurance function
- Clarify Service Level Agreements, the operating model, and the roles and responsibilities
- Mandate, recognize and reward those involved in readiness and response

A SYSTEM THAT IS BALANCED AND RESPONSIVE TO LOCAL NEEDS

- Build Local Territorial Authorities CDEM capacity

Hawke's Bay Independent CDEM Civil Defence and Emergency Management Group Response to Cyclone Gabrielle

*The purpose of the (<https://www.hbemergency.govt.nz/cyclone-gabrielle-review/>) **Independent Review** was to assess the operational performance of the Hawke's Bay Civil Defence Emergency Management Group's immediate response to Cyclone Gabrielle, with a particular emphasis on the systems and processes, and roles and responsibilities of Group members and partners.*

The Review makes nine priority recommendations and 66 suggestions for change.

HBCDEM Transformation Vision

The vision for the transformed HBCDEM system is:

Together, as a community, we aim to create a safe, informed and resilient Hawke's Bay that is prepared for, responds to, and recovers from emergencies and disasters well. Our community is at the heart of our civil defence system. We will build stronger connections, trust and empower local voices, and enhance collaboration across the region.

HBCDEM Transformation Themes

We will achieve the vision of HBCDEM transformation by focusing on four themes that will guide our investment and focus:

#1. Our Community is at the heart of the system

In response to tightening the linkage between Mana whenua, the Community and emergency management, the HBCDEM system will look to formalise leadership across the region from governance leadership to readiness to response. At all times the community is to be placed at the heart of the HBCDEM system. In addition, engagement will occur in 2025 and beyond to kōrero with Mana whenua to create system enhancements and approaches that deliver on their aspirations for a future HBCDEM system.

#2. We are Prepared and Ready

In response to emergency events occurring becoming more frequent and increasingly complex, the HBCDEM system will look to improve its investment in monitoring and warning systems, processes and structure. Further, investment will be made into the development and refreshing of local and regional emergency plans to ensure our response, when required, is effective, deliberate and managed.

#3. Our system is highly effective, capable and assured

In response to the public expectation is that our emergency response is first class, the HBCDEM system will significantly require increased investment in community capability, emergency management recruitment, training and exercising. In addition, investment will be required into an assurance function supported by enhancements to performance and monitoring of the system at a local and regional level by Councils, the Co-ordinating Executive Group and the Joint Committee. Lastly the HBCDEM system with add clarity to the Service Level Agreements between each Council and the HBCDEM Group and ensure all Roles and Responsibilities throughout the system are detailed and unambiguous.

#4. Our system is balanced and responsive to local needs

In response to the community's expectation for a more tailored and localised emergency response, the HBCDEM system will shift from a centralised operating model to one that is more balanced and responsive to local needs. The rebalancing will focus on readiness and response, in line with the recently announced national priorities for CDEM from the National Emergency Management Agency. The re-balancing will see the HBCDEM Regional Group change in size, and correspondingly the scale of responsibility, and in turn will see local Council CDEM teams grow in size and scale of responsibility.

The HBCDEM Transformation Strategy

To operationalise the HBCDEM Transformation Strategy, seven key areas of focus will be developed. These are:

The HBCDEM Transformation Implementation Plans



Māori Partnership

The purpose of the Māori Partnership focus area is to design a transformed HBCDEM system that ensures a strong Māori perspective is integrated throughout. Hui and kōrero will occur, starting in 2025, with Mana whenua from across the Hawke's Bay to discuss the HBCDEM Transformation Strategy and how best to incorporate te ao Māori into the HBCDEM system, at all levels from governance, in reduction, to readiness and response and lastly in recovery. The goal will be to deliver a HBCDEM system that connects with Mana whenua and responds to their perspectives and needs.

2025 will see Mana whenua formally included in all levels of Hawke's Bay regional and local emergency management and governance.



Community Connections

The purpose of the Community Connections area of focus is the creation of a rebalanced and effective HBCDEM system built from the community up that places the community at the heart of the HBCDEM system. A number of initiatives will be delivered to achieve this. Firstly a structure that increases the staffing and readiness of each local Council CDEM capability and enhancing their ability to respond effectively will be created. Secondly a regional structure will be formed that can support readiness and where required quickly and effectively scale up to respond to regional emergency events. Thirdly a greater emphasis will be placed on volunteers, outside of Councils, to assist in the staffing of EOC and the continued increase in community hubs across the region, increasing from the 40+ the region current possesses. The goal will be to deliver to the Hawke's Bay a CDEM system that supports empowered local voices, and enhances collaboration among residents, agencies, and organisations across the Hawke's Bay whilst concurrently delivering tailored, local response capable of scaling up where and when required.

By 2027 the Hawke's Bay will have increased its emergency management volunteers work force from 149 trained volunteers to 700 trained volunteers.

In 2025 the Hawke's Bay will have increased its professional emergency management workforce by 45%.



Infrastructure and Assets

The purpose of the Infrastructure and Assets area of focus is to ensure that locally and regionally the Hawke's Bay possesses an affordable, resilient and capable suite of CDEM infrastructure and assets that enables effective response. A review of key local and regional CDEM infrastructure will occur, including, but not limited to, resilient emergency communication, warning systems, local emergency operation centres, digital hardware, software and vehicle fleet. As a result of the review, appropriate business cases will be produced and investment sought. The goal will be to see investment made, where required, in ensuring the Hawke's Bay possesses resilient CDEM assets capable of responding to future emergency events.

2025 will see all HBCDEM infrastructure and assets reviewed and business cases submitted for investment consultation as part of the 2027 Local Government Long Term Plan process.



Training and Exercising

The purpose of the training and exercising focus is two-fold. Firstly, to train Council CDEM staff, Mana whenua and volunteers from around the Hawke's Bay to develop the skills required to respond in an emergency event. Secondly, develop and conduct a range of local and regional tabletop workshops and physical scenario-based exercises in emergency management. The goal is for all Councils and partners to have sufficiently trained and exercised people, capable of sustaining a response over an extended period.

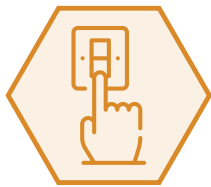
2025 will see 10 local emergency management exercises occur across the Hawke's Bay with a major combined exercise involving all levels of the HBCDEM system from community to local and regional Council to emergency services.



Performance and Assurance

The intent of the performance and assurance area of focus is to review, create, structure, monitor and report performance of each Council CDEM systems objectively. Firstly a review of the governance system will occur to ensure the Joint Committee and Co-ordinating Executive Groups, mandated by legislation, are supported effectively and are as tightly connected to the community and manawhenua as possible. Secondly an assurance role will be created within the regional CDEM team and then more deliberate and regular monitoring, and evaluation activities will occur and reported on quarterly to the Co-ordinating Executives Group and Joint Committee. The system will align with recently established NEMA assurance systems and processes. The goal will be to provide the public with assurance that the HBCDEM system is performing, and where it requires improvement signal that through regular engagement. The first assurance review will occur in 2025 and will focus on the HBCDEM Warning System.

In 2025 the Hawke's Bay will be one of the first in New Zealand to possess a regional assurance function. The role will provide objective measurement of the readiness of all local and regional CDEM capabilities.



Planning

The intent is to consult and deliver regional, local, hazard and reduction plans. Each Council will be responsible for producing local emergency management plans. The HBCDEM Group, through the Regional Council will be responsible for producing a regional emergency management plan (the Group Plan). In addition the HBCDEM Group, on behalf of all Hawke's Bay Councils will produce hazard and reduction plans. The goal will be to develop, consult and deliver a modern set of emergency management plans that support the HBCDEM system into the future.

By 2027 the Hawke's Bay region will possess up to date and modern local, regional, hazard and reduction emergency management plans.



Service Level Agreements

The intent of the Service Level Agreement focus is to clarify and formalise the roles and responsibilities and service levels of each Council, locally and regionally as it relates to the CDEM system. A draft Service Level Agreement will be produced for use in early 2025 before subsequent validation and formalisation in 2027. The goal will be to see clarity between the functions and responsibilities of each Council, their respective CDEM teams, the Regional Council and Regional CDEM Group and other partners.

In 2025 DRAFT Service Level Agreements will provide clarity to the roles and responsibilities of each local and regional council and their CDEM teams. In 2027 these agreements will be formalised after being tested and reviewed in 2025.

HBCDEM Transformation Outline Plan

The HBCDEM Transformation Strategy will be implemented by an establishment period followed by three Phases over the next 3-years.



The HBCDEM Transformation Strategy will set the Hawke's Bay region on a lasting course towards, creating a safer, more informed, and resilient community that is prepared for, responds to, and recovers from emergencies and disasters. The major milestones for these three phases are summarised below:

