

1 October 2003

EN20-02

The Director
Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management
PO Box 5010
WELLINGTON

Dear Sir

**NATIONAL CIVIL DEFENCE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY:
PROPOSAL FOR DISCUSSION**

1. Thank you for forwarding a copy of your “National Civil Defence Emergency Management Strategy: Proposal for Discussion” dated August 2003. Thank you also for extending the time available within which to make comments.
2. *Local Government New Zealand* invited member councils to forward their comments on the “Proposal for Discussion” to us. A limited number of responses were received. These responses have been drawn upon in compiling this submission.
3. In general terms, we find the document to be relatively well pitched and structured. The principles, goals and indicative actions are largely sound.
4. The success of the Strategy, in the end, will depend on the degree to which the identified actions are achieved. In this regard, we are disappointed that the requirements of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act have not been adhered to. Before adoption we would like to see the “achievement indicators” amended to more clearly reflect measurable targets: in particular, who, what, when, and how each of the actions objectives, and goals will be achieved and exactly how these will be measured.
5. We are pleased to see that the Strategy includes many references to government departments. In our view, one of the key benefits of the Strategy is that it might give rise to a “whole of government” response to emergency and disaster management. The document goes some way down this track, but could go further. For example, a measurable target could be included relating to the particular actions and particular funds that are committed by government departments to the goals, objectives, and actions required of them.

6. The Strategy cannot, in law, be used as an instrument to direct local government to undertake actions that have not been defined in the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act. We suggest that the document be reviewed to remove the language of direction. By way of particular example, we draw your attention to objectives B and C under Goal 1.
7. The Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) prepared under the Local Government Act 2002 is a vital new instrument for defining community outcomes. We would like you to consider including an objective in the Strategy that more explicitly obliges government departments to actively participate in the emergency and disaster management outcomes that may be defined in these plans.
8. There are many matters of minor concern about the Strategy that have been drawn to our attention by individual local authorities. We recommend that you examine submissions forwarded by Environment Bay of Plenty and another forwarded by the Southland Civil Defence Officers Committee, as two examples of good submissions that provide clear recommendations about the language changes that could be adopted to tighten the Strategy up.
9. We look forward to seeing an amended Strategy in due course.

Yours sincerely

John Hutchings
Manager, Environment
Local Government New Zealand