



# Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee

## Minute of Decision

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*This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.*

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### Oral item: Update on Northland Flooding

**Portfolio**                      **Civil Defence**

On 5 August 2020, the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee **noted** the update from the Minister for Civil Defence on the Northland flood recovery efforts.

Vivien Meek  
Committee Secretary

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**Present:**

Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Hon Kelvin Davis  
Hon Grant Robertson  
Hon Chris Hipkins  
Hon Carmel Sepuloni (Chair)  
Hon Stuart Nash  
Hon Jenny Salesa  
Hon Damien O'Connor  
Hon Tracey Martin  
Hon Peeni Henare  
Hon Willie Jackson  
Hon Aupito William Sio  
Hon Poto Williams

**Officials present from:**

Office of the Prime Minister  
Officials Committee for SWC

## **Talking Points: Update on Northland Flood Recovery Efforts**

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*In recent weeks, heavy rainfall resulted in flooding of communities in Northland.*

1. Significant rainfall on Friday 17 July led to the closure of roads, damage to property and various slips across the Upper North Island. Businesses, families and individuals across the region were affected. Flood waters have largely receded over the past week but the clean-up is expected to take some time. State Highway One through the Mangamuka Gorge remains closed.
2. Northland CDEM Group is ready to respond should further adverse weather exacerbate the situation, however the focus is now on recovery: ensuring that welfare needs are being met, assessing damage, and repairing homes, sewerage, water supply and roading.

*Recovery efforts are well underway*

3. The Northland CDEM Group is working with other agencies to respond to the welfare needs of the community. Skip bins have been organised for residents to dispose of water-damaged property and repair to septic tanks on local properties is underway.
4. In the immediate aftermath of the event, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE) Temporary Accommodation Service worked closely with the Northland CDEM Group and the Ministry for Social Development (MSD) to help two families with accommodation. Twenty-five households have been displaced but most of these are staying with friends or whanau.
5. No significant production animal issues have been reported to the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). However, flooding around the Hikurangi Swamp has led to pasture damage which could result in feed problems. The Feed Coordination Service will be actively promoted to assist any farmers short of feed.
6. As at 30 July, the Mangamuka Gorge remains closed. The three slips on the northern side of the Gorge are the most severe. Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency contractors have cleared much of the slip material, however, the road remains closed to the public.

*Financial support is being provided to the Northland region*

7. A range of government agencies have provided financial support to Northland in the aftermath of the floods.
8. Northland Regional Council has received a Government contribution of \$30,000 (incl. GST) to support them to manage the impact of flooding. Approximately \$21,000 of this funding has now been allocated. The Council is also able to claim any welfare-related expenses from the Government.

## IN CONFIDENCE

9. The Lotteries Grants Board (the Board) has agreed to a contribution of \$500,000 to Northland. This funding is intended for distribution to community groups. As of today, this has not yet been publically announced.
10. The impacted District and Regional Councils are managing a number of issues relating to the damage caused by this recent flood event. NEMA officials are working with the Councils to fully understand these issues and to identify the most appropriate mechanisms to provide further support going forward.
11. Once additional support mechanisms have been identified and the criteria surrounding the allocation of the Lotteries Grant is understood, officials will be able to identify if any additional support is required and whether a further contribution to the Mayoral Relief Fund is appropriate.
12. MSD is providing financial assistance for individual clients through their local Service Centres.
13. The flooding was localised and occurred on land which is known to be flood-prone. MPI therefore did not classify this event as Medium Scale, which would have triggered a range of support measures to assist farmers. However, farmers still have access to a broader package of support already available to mitigate the impacts of the drought and COVID-19. For example, any farmer or livestock owner who is struggling should seek help and advice through their local Rural Support Trust by calling 0800 RURAL HELP, or sector groups such as Beef + Lamb New Zealand, Federated Farmers or DairyNZ.
14. In addition, on 27 July the Cabinet Economic Development Committee agreed to allocate \$4m from the Worker Redeployment Package. This funding is intended for worker redeployment and capital expenditure to address flood damage to Northland infrastructure.



# Cabinet

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### **Report of the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee: Period Ended 7 August 2020**

On 10 August 2020, Cabinet made the following decisions on the work of the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee for the period ended 7 August 2020:

not relevant to release



Proactively Released by the Minister of Civil Defence

not relevant to release



SWC-20-MIN-0135

**Oral item: Update on Northland Flooding**  
Portfolio: Civil Defence

CONFIRMED

Michael Webster  
Secretary of the Cabinet

Proactively Released by the Minister of Civil Defence