



Proactive Release

The following document has been proactively released by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet on behalf of Hon Mark Mitchell, Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery:

Recovering from significant natural hazard events – decision-making tools

The following documents have been included in this release:

Title of paper: Recovering from Significant Natural Hazard Events: Decision-Making Tools (ECO-25-SUB-0067 refers)

Title of minute: Recovering from Significant Natural Hazard Events: Decision Making Tools (ECO-25-MIN-0067 refers)

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant section of the Act that would apply has been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction code:

- section 9(2)(f)(iv), to maintain the confidentiality of advice tendered by or to Ministers and officials.



Cabinet Economic Policy Committee

Minute of Decision

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.

Recovering from Significant Natural Hazard Events: Decision Making Tools

Portfolio **Emergency Management and Recovery**

On 14 May 2025, the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee (ECO):

Decision-making tools for use following a significant natural hazard event

- 1 **noted** that in October 2024, ECO:
 - 1.1 agreed to the scope of a suite of tools to guide immediate Ministerial decision-making for recovery following significant natural hazard events, and to consultation beginning in November 2024 to inform the development of decision-making tools;
 - 1.2 invited the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery to report back by 31 May 2025 with a proposed suite of decision-making tools;[ECO-24-MIN-0237]
- 2 **noted** that feedback from the consultation referred to in paragraph 1.1 above has informed the final suite of decision-making tools;
- 3 **agreed** to the content of the final suite of recovery settings, attached as Appendix 1 under ECO-25-SUB-0067;
- 4 **agreed** to the content of the suite of decision-making tools, attached as Appendix 2 under ECO-25-SUB-0067;
- 5 **noted** that officials will report to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery on policy matters relating to the tools and will work with relevant agencies to update the tools as necessary to reflect policy decisions made by Cabinet;

Ministerial responsibilities from 1 July 2025 for remaining North Island Weather Events (NIWE) work

- 6 **noted** that the Prime Minister's approval will be sought to the following Ministerial responsibilities from 1 July 2025:
 - 6.1 the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery will continue to lead all aspects of the Crown's involvement in the NIWE recovery until the work is completed;

- 6.2 the Minister of Climate Change and Minister of Local Government will be responsible for oversight of the flood risk mitigation projects.

Rachel Clarke
Committee Secretary

Present:

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Hon Nicola Willis (Chair)
Hon Chris Bishop
Hon Simeon Brown
Hon Brooke van Velden
Hon Paul Goldsmith
Hon Louise Upston
Hon Judith Collins KC
Hon Mark Mitchell
Hon Simon Watts
Hon Chris Penk
Hon Penny Simmonds
Hon Andrew Hoggard
Hon Nicola Grigg
Hon Scott Simpson
Hon Mark Patterson
Hon James Meager
Simon Court MP

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Office of Hon Judith Collins KC
Office of Hon James Meager
Officials Committee for ECO

Proactively Released

Office of the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery

Cabinet Economic Policy Committee

Recovering from significant natural hazard events – decision-making tools

Proposal

- 1 This paper seeks Cabinet's approval of a suite of tools to support immediate government decision-making about recovery settings following a nationally significant natural hazard event.

Relation to government priorities

- 2 This paper relates to the recovery from the 2023 North Island Weather Events (NIWE).

Executive Summary

- 3 I seek approval of a suite of tools to support immediate Ministerial decision-making about recovery settings following a significant natural hazard event ("the tools"). The tools are for use where government involvement beyond what is provided under existing settings may be warranted. This would be in situations where the impacts of an event are nationally significant and the recovery is expected to be complex, lengthy and costly.
- 4 Two years on from the NIWE, the tools consolidate lessons learned from the recovery to support quick post-event decisions that will help deliver future recoveries.
- 5 The tools consist of decision trees with criteria to respond to two questions. Firstly, should government provide additional support to recovery beyond what is provided under existing settings. Second, if it decides to do so, in what areas and to what extent will that support be provided. These decisions will be supported by information from the affected regions including from government agencies working with the regions, industry groups, the insurance industry and emergency response teams (for example, local authorities, businesses and infrastructure damage assessment data).
- 6 The tools will be used by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) to support conversations with Ministers during the first days and weeks following an event. These early decisions could inform public announcements about government's approach to the recovery. Further decision-making can be staged to align with the evolving situation as impacts are better understood.

- 7 Cabinet decided that following disestablishment of the Chief Executive Cyclone Recovery role on 30 June 2025, DPMC will be responsible for ownership of this suite of recovery policy settings and tools [ECO-24-MIN-0274 refers]. The tools are dynamic and will be updated to reflect policy decisions and as evidence of what works well builds over time.
- 8 At that meeting, I noted that I would report back in early 2025 with decisions on Ministerial responsibilities for those parts of the NIWE recovery that will continue after 30 June 2025. I can confirm that existing arrangements will continue until the completion of the work under the Crown Funding Agreements, except for oversight of the flood risk mitigation projects, which the Minister for Climate Change and Minister for Local Government will be responsible for.

Background

- 9 On 23 October 2024, Cabinet invited the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery to report back to the Cabinet Economic Development Committee by 31 May 2025 with a proposed suite of decision-making tools to support immediate recovery decisions by government after significant natural hazard events [ECO-24-MIN-0237].
- 10 Cabinet approved a suite of recovery settings to be consulted widely on and which the decision-making tools would apply to. The final set of recovery settings is attached for approval (**Appendix 1**).
- 11 The decision-making tools attached to this paper (**Appendix 2**) incorporate the recovery settings into decision trees. They are intended to be used after nationally significant events where existing recovery settings may not be appropriate and government is considering providing additional support.
- 12 This proposal aligns with the intent of the Cabinet-agreed National Risk and Resilience Framework [CBC-24-MIN-0112], led by DPMC, for a more strategic and proactive approach to national risk management and resilience building to reduce New Zealand's exposure to the cost and harm of crises.

The NIWE recovery required significant government support

- 13 The NIWE caused widespread flooding and landslips across large parts of the North Island. Fifteen people died, and many thousands of people were displaced from their homes. The events caused widespread disruption to communities, land and infrastructure – especially electricity, communications and roading.
- 14 The government entered into Crown Funding Agreements at a cost to the Crown of \$1.6 billion with the three worst affected regions – Auckland, Tairāwhiti and the Hawke's Bay. These agreements covered a Crown contribution to the cost of buying out residential properties where the councils had determined there to be an intolerable risk to life from a future event, flood risk mitigation projects to protect communities, and reinstatement of local roading infrastructure. Crown funding was also provided to 13 other councils

in six other regions affected, as was significant funding to repair the state highway network in the North Island.

- 15 The scale of impact created significant recovery challenges for affected communities, industries, councils, and agencies responsible for response and recovery efforts. Lessons learned from the NIWE recovery have been incorporated into the tools through criteria and considerations to support decision-making. The Cyclone Recovery Unit has communicated relevant feedback on the recovery efforts to lead portfolio agencies.

Decision-making tools will help to improve recovery outcomes

- 16 I seek Cabinet's agreement to the attached suite of tools to support Ministers to make decisions about the recovery approach following a significant natural hazard event. The tools are designed to be used for events where the impacts are nationally significant and recovery is likely to be complex, lengthy, and costly.
- 17 There is some existing guidance for recovery support following a natural hazard event¹. There is also a range of existing recovery policy settings such as pre-arranged or discretionary financial contributions and support programmes that can be scaled up after an emergency. In most recoveries, these existing settings will be sufficient and may not require further government involvement.
- 18 However, some events have unique features and far-reaching impacts that may warrant government involvement in recovery beyond business-as-usual arrangements. For example, after the Canterbury Earthquake Sequence in 2010/2011 a government department with significant powers was established to lead and deliver the recovery.²
- 19 The tools provide a starting point to guide critical, early decisions in situations where government might consider providing additional support. They will assist Ministers to make decisions during the first days and weeks following an event that consider options, trade-offs, and implications of government involvement above existing recovery settings. The tools are flexible and do not preclude other options being considered. They do not bind governments to make decisions or to make them within a particular timeframe.
- 20 There is a range of related work underway across government to improve national risk management, build greater resilience, and improve New Zealand's ability to recover from significant events (**Appendix 3**). As policy decisions are made (for example, decisions are expected on 9(2)(f)(iv) [REDACTED])

¹ For example, there are arrangements set out in the Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) Act 2002 and the National CDEM Plan 2015 that provide some direction on roles and responsibilities and specify some cost-sharing arrangements (e.g., the CDEM Plan sets out a 60:40 split between central and local government for essential infrastructure repair and recovery).

² The Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) was established as a government department on 29 March 2011 to lead and coordinate the Government's response and recovery efforts following the earthquakes of 2010 and 2011 in Canterbury.

9(2)(f)(iv)

the DPMC Risk and Systems Governance Group will update and strengthen the tools as necessary.

Structure and content of the suite of tools

- 21 Following a significant natural hazard event, the government is called upon to provide significant support and or funding for recovery. In most of these situations, the government already has a role in the Response phase, and in the Recovery phase under existing settings. The government will be expected to make quick decisions about whether to provide additional support, and if so, the approach to that support. Doing so does not preclude decisions being made in a staged way depending on the information available at the time.
- 22 The tools attached in **Appendix 2** will guide Ministers through these decisions. There are three key steps for making decisions.

Step One - Initial assessment of whether government should get involved

- 23 The tools set out five criteria to inform an initial assessment of whether government should provide support beyond what it, councils, private property owners, and businesses are normally responsible for in disaster recovery. The criteria include consideration of the impacts of the event, capacity and capability, and whether the type of additional support needed is something government should assist with. Assessment against the criteria will be informed by a range of sources of intelligence including from affected regions and emergency response teams.
- 24 There may be situations where, after applying the criteria, it is unclear if existing settings are sufficient. This could be where the situation is evolving, and the full extent of the impacts is not yet evident. In this instance, government could commission further advice and/or provide immediate support for the recovery (for example, providing seed funding to kick-start the local recovery) and make further decisions later.

Step Two – What government should get involved in, and to what extent

- 25 If the initial assessment (Decision tree 1) indicates that government involvement beyond existing settings may be appropriate, decisions then need to be made on the nature and extent of that support. The tools are focussed on government involvement that encourages or supplements – not replaces – market-led approaches where necessary.
- 26 The tools focus on five categories that were important aspects of previous recoveries where government provided additional support for recovery over and above existing settings. While support may also be needed in other areas (e.g., access to social services), existing settings continue to apply and may be sufficient or scalable without going through this process. New categories could be added to the tools in future if required.

- 27 The five categories are:
- 27.1 infrastructure remediation (Decision tree 2);
 - 27.2 supporting affected residents and dwellings (Decision tree 3);
 - 27.3 stabilising national or regional economies (Decision tree 4);
 - 27.4 mechanisms to enable government's recovery priorities (Decision tree 5), i.e. facilitating solutions to remove or reduce obstacles to an efficient and effective recovery; and
 - 27.5 approach to recovery leadership (Decision tree 6), i.e., the extent to which the recovery should be locally or centrally led, Ministerial arrangements, and the organisation of central government.
- 28 As decisions are made across the first three categories, this will inform decisions about which enabling mechanisms and leadership arrangements are appropriate. For example, if government decides to provide a low intensity support in a single category (e.g., providing funding for additional technical capability to local authorities) the existing approach to recovery leadership would likely be appropriate without adjustment.
- 29 The tools will help to ensure that decisions in these categories consider the implications and trade-offs of different approaches, and lessons learned from the NIWE recovery, for example:
- 29.1 a locally led approach to recovery is an effective way to encourage communities to develop their own solutions, but unless it is clear what the dimensions are, it can lead to inconsistency across regions and reduce government's ability to influence the pace and timing of medium and long-term outcomes;
 - 29.2 entering into funding agreements for infrastructure projects supports local investment, but can cause delays if negotiations are protracted or finalised without appropriate information about the work required and its cost; and
 - 29.3 providing financial support for property owners whose houses have been destroyed helps to manage ongoing risks to lives and property but can raise expectations that this approach sets a precedent and remove incentives to manage that risk in other ways (e.g., through insurance).

Step Three – Consider coherence, appropriateness and next steps

- 30 Before finalising and communicating decisions to affected communities, the final step is to consider whether these decisions – when considered together – form a coherent approach that aligns with government's recovery objectives and broader priorities.

- 31 Depending on which settings are agreed to, Ministers may need to make additional decisions to confirm specific policy direction. These decisions would be supported by detailed advice from relevant agencies on the costs, benefits and implications of specific recovery settings and how they operate alongside other settings. This will help to ensure that the chosen settings are coherent, and that government funding is appropriately sequenced to align with delivery plans.
- 32 As new information becomes available and the impacts of the event or the nature of, and options for, the recovery work required are better understood, decisions may need to be revisited using the decision trees.

The tools incorporate feedback from consultation and lessons learned

- 33 On 23 October 2024, Cabinet agreed that consultation begin in November 2024 to inform the development of decision-making tools, drawing on lessons from the NIWE and recoveries from other significant natural hazard events [ECO-24-MIN-0237].
- 34 The Chief Executive Cyclone Recovery approached a wide range of stakeholder groups that have been involved in the NIWE and previous recoveries where government played a significant role. Other interested groups such as industry representatives were also consulted. This included inviting submissions on written material, attending relevant stakeholder events and providing information to existing networks for wider distribution.
- 35 There was broad support for the tools. Those consulted see the value of settings and tools in helping to achieve better results for affected communities and ensuring that any additional involvement from government is well planned, targeted and effective. Feedback was also provided that the tools could be expanded to include decision trees and settings for the social and natural environments.
- 36 Some key messages from private sector groups include:
- 36.1 Government should not be the insurer of last resort. While it may be appropriate to help affected individuals, shifting risks to government after an adverse event poses risks to the wider industry and taxpayers. The tools include considerations such as maintaining incentives to manage risks, availability of insurance products, and access to capital to recover.
- 36.2 Decision-making should include affected communities and key stakeholders where possible. In response to this feedback, the tools include examples of useful information sources, including local and industry input.
- 36.3 Certainty and consistency in decision-making should be balanced with flexibility to respond to local needs – one size does not fit all. While existing settings can be useful in providing certainty in some situations, the tools support a more flexible approach where needed.

- 37 The consultation process, key themes from feedback and how the tools have addressed it is summarised in **Appendix 4**.

Consultation feedback included broader messages about recovery

- 38 There was a strong message during consultation that the role of insurers and re-insurers in recovery is critical. While work is underway to strategically reset the approach to risk financing for public assets, those consulted saw benefits in an examination of mechanisms to incentivise risk mitigation and resilience investment from the private sector.
- 39 Another theme from consultation was about how significantly capability and capacity can drive different recovery outcomes. Work underway through the Emergency Management System Improvement Programme and local government reform will lift capability. However, capability and capacity considerations for the nature and timing of the recovery work required will be important after significant natural hazard events.

Ministerial responsibilities from 1 July 2025 for remaining NIWE work

- 40 On 20 November 2024, Cabinet agreed that following disestablishment of the Chief Executive Cyclone Recovery function from 30 June 2025 remaining responsibilities and associated funding will be transferred to the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) and DPMC, with decisions on Ministerial responsibilities to be made in early 2025 [ECO-24-MIN-0274 refers]. The responsibilities transferred to DIA include the contract between the Crown and National Infrastructure Financing and Funding Limited (NIFFCo) to administer the Crown Funding Agreements.
- 41 DPMC will be responsible for ownership of this suite of recovery policy settings and tools. This includes maintaining the tools and working with relevant agencies to update them and develop any new support categories if required. DPMC considers that the tools could also be used, or adapted, to guide decision-making on recovery from other types of events that are nationally significant. This broader use aligns with its existing role in co-ordinating government crisis responses by convening the Officials Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination (ODESC) and leading the National Risk and Resilience Framework.
- 42 I can confirm that I will continue to lead all aspects of the Crown's involvement in the NIWE recovery until the work is completed, except for the flood risk mitigation projects. The Minister for Climate Change and Minister for Local Government will be responsible for completion of flood risk mitigation projects as these relate to building future resilience rather than reinstating mitigation measures destroyed by the NIWE.
- 43 I will continue to make decisions on matters relating to the Whenua Māori and Marae Pathway jointly with the Minister of Māori Crown Relations and, if any significant financial decisions are required, the Minister of Finance.

- 44 I will continue to make any decisions that are required on significant changes to the Crown Funding Agreements for Auckland, Tairāwhiti or Hawke's Bay jointly with the Minister of Finance and the Minister for Local Government (for flood risk mitigation projects). Two-thirds of the local transport projects are due to be completed by the end of 2025. Risk mitigation projects are more complex and will take longer to deliver. The agreements remain in force until 30 June 2033 to allow for completion of the remaining work.

Implications

- 45 There are no cost of living, financial, legislative or human rights implications.

Impact Analysis

- 46 The impact analysis requirements do not apply because this paper does not include a regulatory proposal.

Use of External Resources

- 47 No external resources were used in the development or drafting of this paper.

Consultation

- 48 The following agencies were consulted in the development of this paper and feedback has been incorporated: the Ministries of Housing and Urban Development; Social Development; Business, Innovation and Employment; and Transport; the Ministries of the Environment; Primary Industries; Ethnic Communities; the Departments of the Prime Minister and Cabinet; Internal Affairs; Conservation; Land Information New Zealand; National Emergency Management Agency; Te Puni Kōkiri; the Office of Treaty Settlements and Takutai Moana; Te Tari Whakatau; Public Service Commission and the Treasury.

Communications

- 49 My office will work with the Cyclone Recovery Unit and DPMC to ensure that relevant agencies and stakeholders are aware of the tools and their purpose.

Proactive Release

- 50 I intend to proactively release this paper and its associated minute within the standard 30 business days from the decision being made by Cabinet.

Recommendations

- 51 The Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery recommends that the Committee:

Decision-making tools for use following a significant natural hazard event

- 1 **note** that on 23 October 2024, Cabinet;
- 1.1 invited the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery to report back to the Cabinet Economic Development Committee by 31 May 2025 with a proposed suite of decision-making tools to support immediate recovery decisions by government after significant natural hazard events; and
- 1.2 agreed that consultation begin in November 2024 to inform the development of decision-making tools, drawing on lessons from the NIWE and recoveries from other significant natural hazard events [ECO-24-MIN-0237]
- 2 **note** that feedback from consultation referred to in Recommendation 1.2 has informed the final suite of decision-making tools
- 3 **agree** to the content of the final suite of recovery settings attached at Appendix 1
- 4 **agree** to the content of the suite of decision-making tools referred to in Recommendation 1.1 and attached at Appendix 2
- 5 **note** that DPMC will report to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery work on policy matters relating to the tools and will work with relevant agencies to update the tools as necessary to reflect policy decisions made by Cabinet

Ministerial responsibilities from 1 July 2025 for remaining NIWE work

- 6 **note** that from 1 July 2025 the Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery will continue to lead all aspects of the Crown's involvement in the NIWE recovery until the work is completed, except for oversight of the flood risk mitigation projects, which the Minister for Climate Change and Minister for Local Government will be responsible for.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Mark Mitchell

Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Recovery settings – suite of options

Appendix 2 – Decision-making tools

Appendix 3 – Related work programmes

Appendix 4 – Overview of consultation

Proactively Released

Involvement in infrastructure remediation (Decision tree 2)

Under existing recovery settings, local authorities (councils) are responsible for decisions about restoring, reducing, or discontinuing community service levels (e.g., stopbanks, local roads, water assets) and private companies are responsible for restoring their own assets (e.g., telecommunications and power assets). Government repairs its own assets (e.g., state highways, public hospitals, and schools). Government provides pre-arranged contributions to support the recovery of council assets (e.g., the Civil Defence Emergency Management 60:40 essential infrastructure repair cost-sharing arrangement) and contributes no additional support to the private sector. Councils deliver infrastructure projects with limited shared services arrangements.

Scope of additional Government involvement

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Targeted support for restoration of specific essential service	Support for a more rapid restoration of infrastructure	Support to reduce future risk and provide increased resilience
Example	In the Hurunui/Kaikōura recovery, the Government provided a grant of \$2.6 million for the Hurunui and Kaikōura district councils to repair waste facilities, recycle earthquake debris and manage hazardous waste.	In the Canterbury recovery, the Government supported 'anchor projects', including the bus interchange to support a more rapid resumption of service than would have been achievable without Government support.	In the NIWE recovery, the Local Government Flood Resilience Co-investment Fund enabled stop banks and other capital works to be restored to reduce future risk and raise the overall level of resilience for the affected communities.

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Provide additional capability/capacity	Change legislative settings	Raise debt cap for councils	Provide a low/no interest line of credit	Establish and/or participate in an alliance model	Provide alternative service	Centrally coordinated delivery organisation
Example	In the Hurunui/Kaikōura recovery, alongside direct funding for water services and harbour remediation work, a combined steering group comprised of local and central government staff was established to support the recovery effort.	In the NIWE recovery, Orders in Council were passed to allow for quicker consents for complex road transport projects in Hawke's Bay. This was also true of the Hurunui/Kaikōura Earthquake recovery.	While there is not a recent natural hazard recovery example, Government could work with the Local Government Funding Agency to enable higher debt to revenue limits, which would allow for the spreading of costs over time and reduce reliance on rate funding.	In the NIWE recovery, the Government facilitated a zero interest, 10-year, \$30 million loan for the Gisborne District Council. This recognised the cashflow challenges the council faced as it remediated the worst of the flood damage for its infrastructure.	In the NIWE, Canterbury, and Hurunui/Kaikōura recoveries, alliance models have been used to bring together clients, consultants and contractors from several organisations work together to meet quality, cost and time targets.	While there is not a recent natural hazard recovery example, this type of intervention could include providing alternative communications (e.g., deploying satellite internet systems such as Starlink) while the private sector rebuilds phone and internet infrastructure.	In the Hurunui/Kaikōura recovery, the NZ Transport Agency took over the management of the Inland Road (Rt 70) between Waiiau and Kaikōura before returning the road back to councils.

Financial support

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Increase/extend existing financial supports	Provide funding for capability/capacity for local delivery of infrastructure	Contribute to costs of locally owned infrastructure beyond the essential infrastructure repair and recovery contribution	Contribute to costs of restoring private infrastructure
Example	In the NIWE, Hurunui/Kaikōura, and Canterbury recoveries, increased Government funding above pre-determined funding assistance rates (FARs) from the National Land Transport Fund was provided for local roads.	In the NIWE recovery, a contestable fund was provided to support local government capabilities to expedite recovery efforts, ensuring certainty for people and preventing cost escalations of infrastructure projects due to delays.	In the NIWE recovery, the Local Government Flood Resilience Co-investment Fund provided support for stopbanks and other capital works with varied amounts of council co-investment. In the Hurunui/Kaikōura recovery, Government provided funding to restore the Kaikōura Harbour.	While there is no direct precedent in New Zealand, after Hurricane Katrina in the United States of America, funding was provided directly to support utility companies to restore services.

Involvement in supporting affected residents and dwellings (Decision tree 3)

Under existing recovery settings, Government supports affected residents by offering temporary support for those that have been displaced from their damaged homes through the Temporary Accommodation Service and access to natural hazards cover (via the Natural Hazards Insurance Scheme for homes with an insurance policy that pays the Natural Hazards Insurance levy). Property owners draw on insurance payments, and their own financial resources to remediate damage, mitigate future risk or relocate. It is up to local authorities (councils) to decide if and how to deliver support.

Scope of additional Government involvement

The Adaption Framework aims to provide clarity on how New Zealand manages and shares the costs of adapting to climate change, which includes considering options for investing in risk mitigation and/or relocation. Decisions on the framework can help inform the scope Government involvement.

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Community-level remediation or increased resilience at-place, if viable	Individual-level remediation	Residential relocation
Example	In the NIWE recovery, the Future of Severely Affected Locations (FOSAL) approach addressed intolerable risk to life through risk mitigation interventions, buyouts of residential properties, and relocation of marae and residences on whenua Māori. In the Canterbury recovery, cost-sharing arrangements and delivery through the Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team (an alliance of central, local and private sector organisations) supported some residents to continue working, travelling, and living by repairing and rebuilding water, storm water and wastewater systems, roads, bridges, water reservoirs and retaining walls.	In the Hurunui/Ka kōura recovery, financial assistance was provided for seven properties (e.g. mitigation, removal of hazard, relocation of buildings within property boundaries). In the Canterbury recovery, the Canterbury Home Repair Programme aimed to balance cost, quality, and safety of repairs to residential dwellings.	In the Canterbury recovery, the Government red zoned and bought out residential properties affected by the earthquakes. This included negotiating buyouts and dispute resolution.

Non-financial support

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Provide additional capability/capacity through increases to (or new) central government services	Provide additional capability/capacity to councils	Adjust policies or processes	Pass legislation to reduce/remove certain legislative/regulatory requirements or enable Orders in Council	Administer remediation/resilience policy or project
Example	In the NIWE recovery, the Government provided additional positions in Ministry for Primary Industries, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry of Social Development to have a dedicated presence for two years in the worst-affected areas.	In the NIWE recovery, the government sent secondees to Gisborne District Council to help with consenting and compliance.	While there is not a specific natural hazard recovery example, Government could enable councils to prioritise and reduce timeframes for processing building consents that are required to repair natural hazard damage.	In the Canterbury recovery, amendments to the circumstances for altering rating values between general revaluations meant that owners of homes that had been/to be demolished would only be required to pay rates on the land itself.	In the Canterbury recovery, residential property categorisation was led by the Government. The Government (through the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority) developed policy and negotiated voluntary buyouts with property owners.

Financial support

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Increase/extend existing financial supports	Provide funding for capability/capacity	Contribute to costs
Example	In the NIWE recovery, The Temporary Accommodation Assistance payment helped homeowners who could not live in their home due to specific events and were responsible for paying both for the costs for the damaged home (e.g. mortgage, rates, insurance) and temporary accommodation costs.	In the NIWE recovery, the Government provided funding to increase local capacity and capability. For example, funding from the Ministry of Social Development supported Storm Recovery Navigators to help affected Aucklanders access information, services and support (e.g., support with housing, tenancy issues, temporary accommodation and resettlement).	In the NIWE recovery, the Crown provided funding support through the National Resilience Plan and Local Government Flood Resilience Co-investment Fund for stopbanks and other capital works.

Involvement in stabilising national or regional economies (Decision tree 4)

Under existing recovery settings, businesses rely on payments from insurance and their balance sheets to manage uninsured losses or drops in revenue. Businesses operate in the standard regulatory environment when navigating post-event disruptions to trading and/or access to markets. Additional support from lenders (e.g., as happened in the recovery from the 2010/2011 Canterbury Earthquake Sequence) is possible, but not assured.

Scope of additional Government involvement

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Support for key regionally or nationally significant business(es)	Support to a regionally or nationally significant sector	Broad support to businesses in affected area	Incentives for economic activity
Example	In the NIWE recovery, the Government provided loans from the Regional Strategic Partnership Fund to restore stability to three regionally significant businesses in Tairāwhiti (all substantial local employers in the primary sector).	In the NIWE recovery, Government provided loan guarantees and grants to farmers to help with initial recovery (e.g., repairs to water infrastructure and fencing). The Government also developed a Primary Producer Finance Scheme for significantly impacted businesses, orchards, and farms.	In the NIWE recovery, the interim business support package met the immediate cash-flow needs of impacted businesses. In the Canterbury and Hurunui/Kaikōura recoveries, Government provided subsidies to help businesses cover wages.	In the Canterbury recovery, the business support package included funding for international visits for exporters to key client and money for workshops and business training.

Non-financial support

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Adjustments to policies or processes	Underwrite banks and lenders / loan guarantees	Change legislative settings	Support to redeploy resources	Provide indirect support to businesses
Example	While there is not a recent natural hazard recovery example, procurement policies and processes could be adjusted to incentivise contracting of local businesses to deliver recovery projects, ensuring funding injections support the impacted economy.	In the NIWE recovery, the Business Loan Guarantee Scheme supported commercial lenders to provide loans to highly impacted businesses across all sectors with more favourable terms (e.g., with reduced interest rates).	In the Canterbury recovery, the Government took over the district plan, including delivery of 17 civic projects (including the bus shelter, cultural centre, stadium, sports facilities and library).	While there is not a recent natural hazard recovery example, during the Covid-19 response, funding was available for redeployment of workers. This included forestry workers being redeployed to local roading work or tree removal.	In the NIWE recovery, Government provided funding for disposal of sediment and debris to support recovery for farmers and growers. In the Canterbury recovery, the Christchurch Market Connections Fund supported international visits to help reassure international clients that the region was open for business.

Financial support

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Increase/extend existing financial supports	Contributions to businesses	Direct financial support to individuals
Example	In the NIWE recovery, Business Support Grants sat alongside funding support from the Ministry of Primary Industries to farmers and growers. The grants were targeted to non-primary producing businesses that needed immediate cashflow support to assist with recovery.	In the NIWE recovery, Government provided funding for disposal of sediment and debris to support recovery for farmers and growers.	In the Canterbury recovery, Earthquake Job Loss Cover provided a direct payment for six weeks to employees who were unable to contact their employer, or the business has closed permanently.

Mechanisms to enable Government's recovery priorities (Decision tree 5)

Government has a range of levers when considering how to facilitate solutions to remove or reduce obstacles to the recovery. If Government determines that additional financial support is appropriate, decisions will need to be taken about what contributions are required from others. Under existing recovery settings, recovery costs are the responsibility of the asset owners/service providers (i.e., individuals, businesses, councils, government), with some portion potentially covered by insurance and natural hazards cover. Government provides emergency support, including council co-investment schemes (e.g., the Civil Defence Emergency Management 60:40 essential infrastructure repair cost-sharing arrangement) and support to individuals (e.g., Temporary Accommodation Service).

Settings to address legislative or regulatory obstacles

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) or Approved Information Sharing Agreements	Legislation to remove requirements	Legislation to enable Orders in Council	Legislation to give powers to Government	Legislation to give powers to a specially appointed commissioner
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Settings to address capability or capacity obstacles

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	(Re)deploy resources across government agencies	Increase funding for services to affected people/communities	Technical support from central government agencies	Legislation to remove requirements	Establish and/or participate in an alliance model	Contribute funding for local capability/capacity
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Settings to address financial obstacles

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Increase/extend existing financial supports	Raise debt cap for councils	Underwrite banks and/or lenders	Provide a no/low interest line of credit for councils	Provide bespoke financial support
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Who pays for which elements of recovery

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Increase percentage of contribution through existing schemes	Set funding envelope	Contribute to costs	Negotiate a funding agreement
Example	In the NIWE, Canterbury, and Hurunui/Kaikōura recoveries, additional funding was provided for state highway remediation.	While there is not an example of a funding envelope being set for recovery from a significant natural hazard event, Government often makes a lump sum contribution to mayoral relief funds that are administered by local authorities for rapid mobilisation of financial assistance in the response. Similarly, a lump sum contribution could be made from which community recovery priorities can be financed.	In the NIWE and Canterbury recoveries, funding arrangements varied by project.	In the NIWE recovery, the Government entered into cost-share negotiations with Auckland, Tairāwhiti and Hawke's Bay councils. While there was a common position of a 50:50 share of the Future of Severely Affected Locations (FOSAL) Category 3 buyout costs, support for FOSAL Category 2 interventions and for transport funding was variable, depending on the needs and the financial position of the affected region.

Government's approach to recovery leadership (Decision tree 6)

Under existing recovery settings, local authorities (councils) are responsible for identifying, assessing, and managing hazards and risks. Territorial authorities have responsibility for land-use decisions. Regional authorities are responsible for hazard and flood planning and management. Government is responsible for any changes to primary legislation. Post-event, Government helps territorial authorities manage resources to protect lives, buildings, and infrastructure (e.g., Building Act 2004 rapid building assessment placarding system). Communities are at the centre of emergency management. The Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Act 2002 requires councils to coordinate CDEM. Capability and capacity to recover from natural hazard events is varied across the country. The Government works with councils to understand their capacity and capability. The Minister of Local Government has intervention powers in certain circumstances.

To what degree should the recovery be locally or centrally led?

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Locally led, centrally supported	Shared recovery structure	Centrally led, locally informed
Example	In the NIWE recovery, where possible, decisions were made locally. Statutory responsibilities remained in place, as did responsibility for related decisions. Decisions made by central government were those that required nationwide trade-offs such as injections of taxpayer funding.	In the Hurunui/ Kaikōura recovery, a steering group was established, including representation from central and local government and iwi. Following floods in July 2021 and February 2022 in Westport, the Resilient Westport Steering Group was appointed by Ministers to oversee and synchronise the various packages of flood resilience work that the Government is co-investing in that will be delivered by councils. The group is independently chaired and comprises representation from district and regional councils, iwi, and government agencies.	In the Canterbury recovery, the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) had significant powers to relax, suspend or extend laws and regulations for clearly defined purposes related to earthquake recovery. CERA was disestablished after five years as the Government transitioned from leading the recovery to establishing long-term, locally led recovery and regeneration arrangements.

Ministerial arrangements

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Appoint special local representation	Identify different lead responsible Minister(s) and portfolio(s)	Establish temporary Cabinet committee	Grant group of Ministers Power to Act
Example	In the early NIWE recovery, regional ministerial leads were appointed to work directly with local councils. As the recovery progressed, Parliamentary Private Secretaries were appointed to interface between the community and Cabinet.	In the Canterbury recovery, a dedicated Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery was created. In the NIWE recovery, a Minister for Cyclone Recovery was established separate from the ministerial emergency management portfolio.	The Cabinet Extreme Weather Recovery (EWR) Committee coordinated and directed the first several months of NIWE recovery, and helped establish broad policy approaches. In a separate but related decision, EWR was granted Power to Act.	In the response to Covid-19, Cabinet authorised the Covid-19 Ministerial Group the Power to Act. Because the power was granted to a group of ministers rather than to a Cabinet committee, they did not need to follow standard committee processes.

Central government organisation

LOW (most like existing settings)

(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH

Setting	Direct different agency to coordinate aspect(s) of the recovery	Establish funders forum	Establish independent advisory group to inform decision making	Establish integrated National Recovery office to coordinate and support	Establish central body to lead, coordinate, and implement policy	Establish central body to lead and to deliver
Example	In the NIWE recovery, responsible Ministers agreed that the Ministry of Social Development be assigned responsibility to lead the NIWE social recovery coordination.	While there is not a recent example of Government establishing a funders forum in the recovery from an event, the Hawke's Bay Funders Forum enables members to collaboratively initiate or contribute to projects and to identify and discuss key regional opportunities.	In the Canterbury recovery, Government established a Recovery Community Forum – made up of mainly non-elected people – to provide the Minister with information and advice. In the NIWE recovery, the Cyclone Gabrielle Recovery Taskforce was established to provide an independent perspective to the Minister and Cabinet.	In the Hurunui/ Kaikōura recovery, Government established a National Recovery Manager and Office in the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management.	In the NIWE recovery, a Chief Executive Cyclone Recovery (CE-CR) was established under the Public Service Act 2020 to lead and coordinate the Government's recovery work programme. The CE-CR is supported by a unit hosted within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.	In the Canterbury recovery, CERA (a government department with significant powers to centrally lead and deliver) was established using bespoke legislation. After CERA was disestablished, the Greater Christchurch Group hosted within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet led and coordinated central government's ongoing role.

Critical path for making immediate recovery decisions after a nationally significant natural hazard event

PURPOSE:

When a nationally significant natural hazard event occurs, the Government often needs to make quick decisions about whether to get involved beyond the existing recovery settings, and if so, the approach and extent of involvement.

The decision-making tools have been designed for events that have a major impact in a single region (e.g., 2010/11 Canterbury Earthquake Sequence) or across multiple regions (e.g., the 2023 North Island Weather Events). They could also be applicable to more moderate scale events (e.g., Hurunui/Kaikōura) or more severe scale and complexity events (e.g., Alpine Fault magnitude 8). Existing recovery settings, such as those in the CDEM Act 2002, are focused on the initial recovery period and tend to focus on recovery from small to medium events.

The tools will support decisions by the Government that match the scale, nature, and impacts of the event, and the local characteristics of the affected communities.

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) will coordinate the provision of advice to support Government decisions. DPMC will work with lead portfolio agencies on relevant issues.

This page shows the overall process for making key recovery decisions in the first days and weeks following an event.

New Zealand has a range of pre-arranged provisions, policies, and support programmes to support recoveries from natural hazard events. Some are automatically triggered (e.g., emergency provisions in certain pieces of legislation) and some have Ministerial discretion or require Ministerial activation or authorisation (e.g., contributions to Mayoral relief funds).

Under existing settings, the Government provides certain emergency support – including financial support to local authorities (e.g., the Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) 60:40 essential infrastructure repair cost-sharing arrangement) and support to individuals (e.g., Temporary Accommodation Service).

When faced with natural hazard event impacts that are nationally significant and a recovery that is expected to be complex, lengthy, and costly, the Government often needs to tailor recovery settings to reflect the unique nature, scale, and impacts of the event that has occurred.

How to use these tools:

The process below shows how to work through the decision trees on pages 1-7.

The first decision is whether to get involved beyond the existing recovery settings. Some situations will obviously meet the criteria, indicating that some discretionary involvement may be appropriate. In other cases, it will be clear that the existing settings are appropriate. In other situations it may be too early to tell whether the existing settings will deliver Government's

recovery priorities, in which case the decision may be to monitor before taking a final decision.

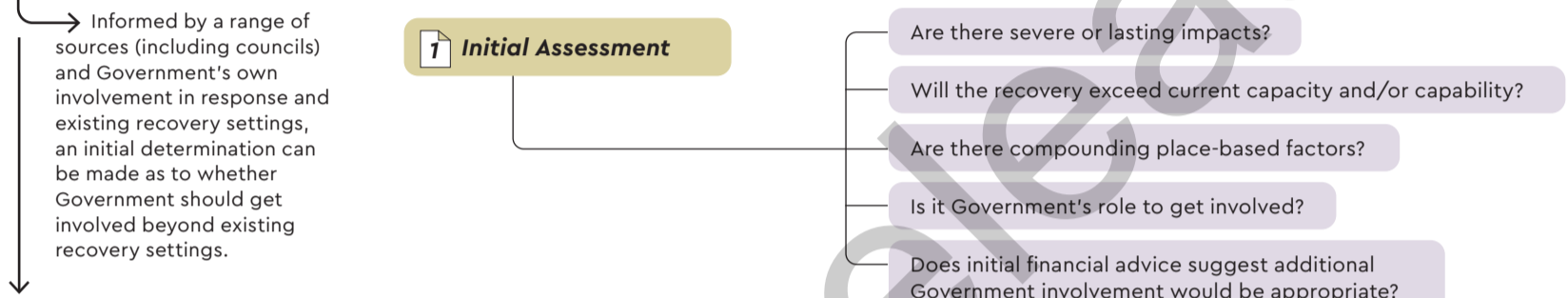
The next decisions are about which categories to get involved in and to what extent. Decisions about infrastructure remediation, affected residents and dwellings, and national/regional economies will influence whether the existing mechanisms, leadership settings, and coordination of central government are fit for the situation. Before confirming these decisions, the settings will be assessed together alongside existing

settings to ensure they form a coherent approach.

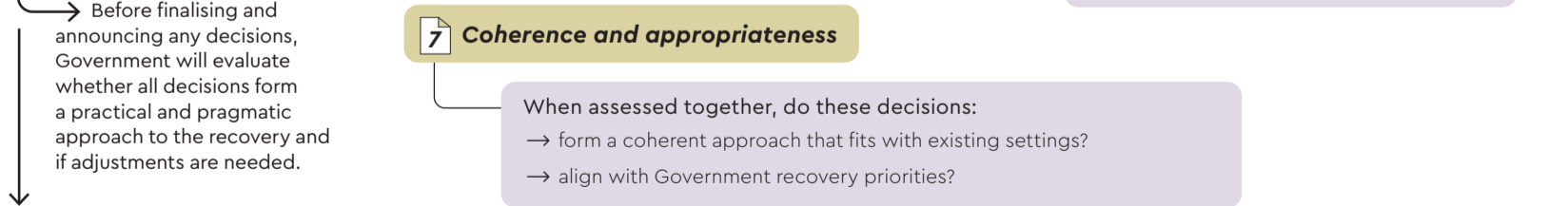
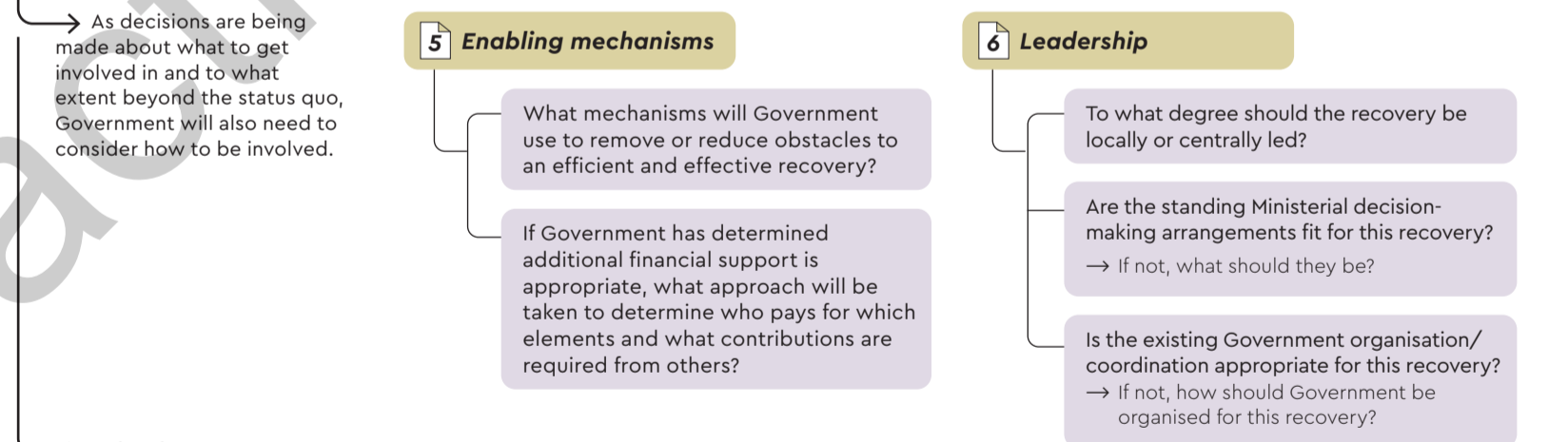
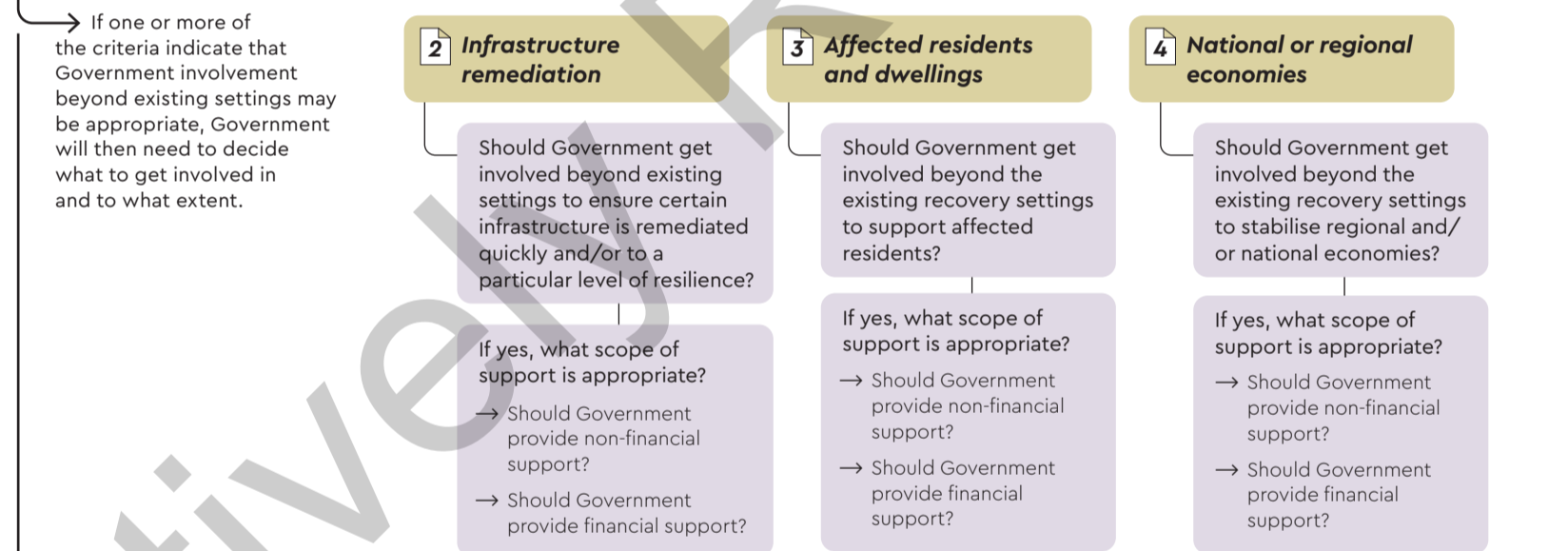
The result of working through the decision trees may be a single adjustment to an existing setting in one category that does not require any adjustments to existing leadership and decision-making arrangements. Alternatively, the result could be a combination of tailored settings across multiple categories.

As necessary, additional decisions will be made to confirm policy and/or to adjust decisions as impacts are better understood.

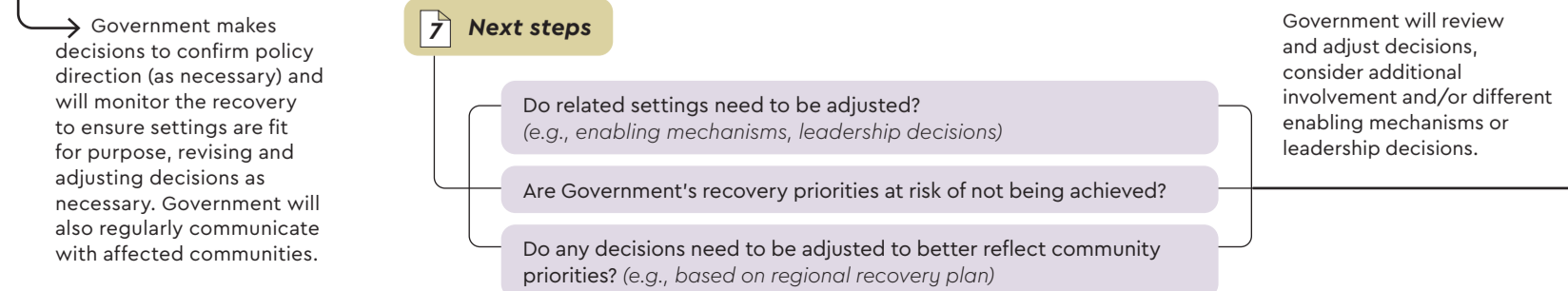
Should Government get involved beyond the existing recovery settings?



If so, what should Government get involved in and to what extent?



What are the next steps?



1

Initial assessment of whether Government should get involved beyond existing settings

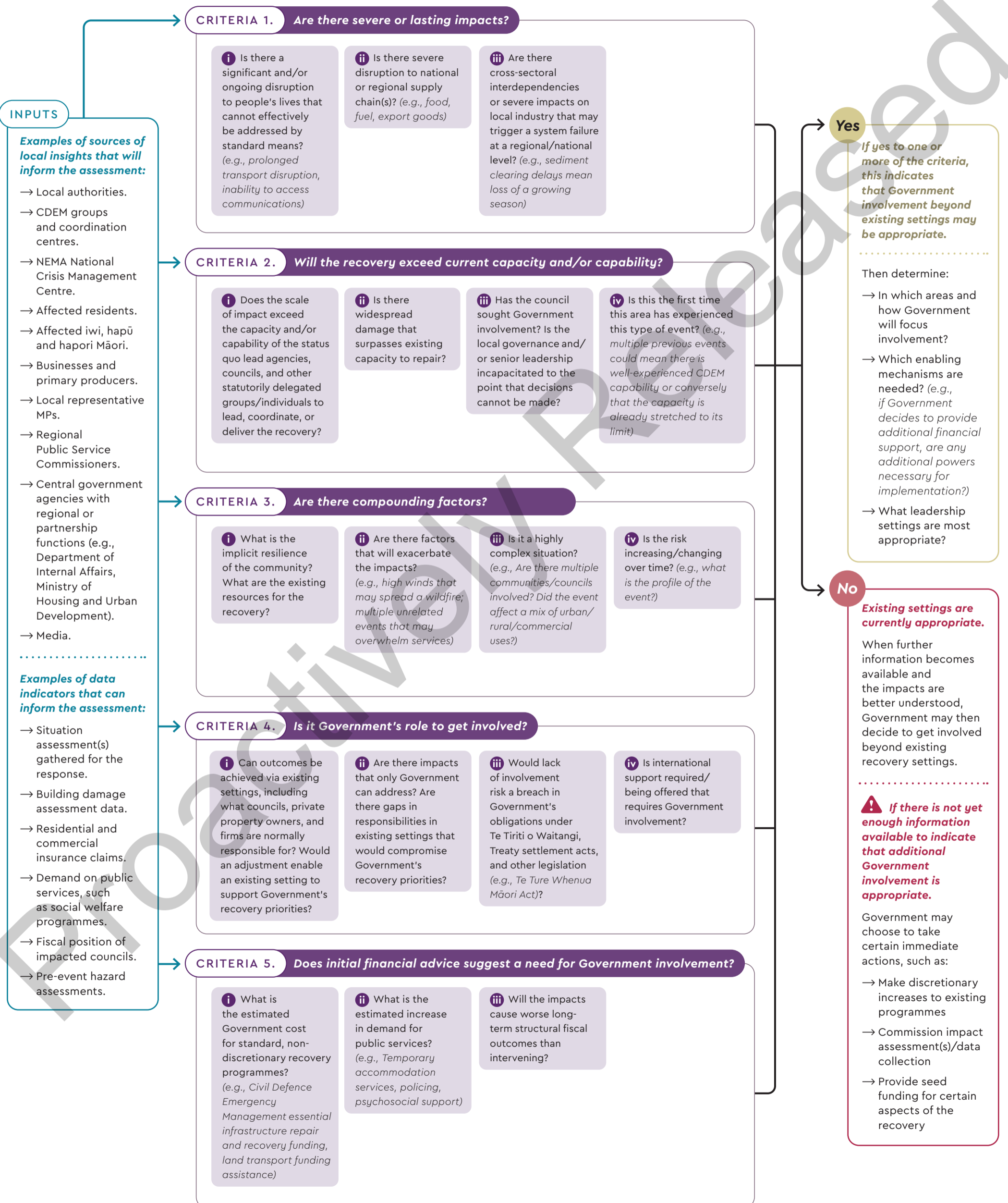
PURPOSE: An initial assessment will support timely, clear, and consistent communications. As the Government assesses whether to get involved beyond existing settings, advice will address the opportunities (e.g. for co-benefits) and risks (e.g., of setting precedent or exacerbating inequity across geography and time). This initial decision will enable the Government to respond to requests for assistance that go beyond response and existing recovery settings.

In some situations, it will be clear that additional involvement is appropriate. This initial decision will enable the Government to give affected communities some confidence straight away, even if there are additional decisions to be made about specific policies.

In other situations, there may not yet be enough information to indicate that additional involvement is necessary. In these cases, the Government may choose to take certain immediate actions (e.g., to make a discretionary increase to an existing programme) and revisit the criteria as impacts are better understood.

HOW TO USE THIS DECISION TREE: Based on information gathered through Government's involvement in response and a range of local inputs, assess the five criteria. The indicative questions are considerations to help guide the assessment, but not all will be applicable in all situations.

Agency officials will have a range of resources and tools to support provision of advice to Ministers.



2 Whether, and to what extent, to get involved in infrastructure remediation

PURPOSE: The Government may consider getting involved to ensure certain infrastructure is remediated quickly and/or to a particular level of resilience. Decisions will be informed by any relevant policy the Government is progressing or has recently made (e.g., Local Water Done Well, Infrastructure Funding and Financing Framework).

HOW TO USE THIS DECISION TREE: First, assess whether to get involved in this category by working through the initial series of questions. Where there is a clear 'yes', move on to Q2 to determine the scope of involvement. In some cases, the immediate decision may be to monitor the situation until it is clear whether or not additional involvement is appropriate.

A decision on scope would lead to decisions about whether (and if so, what type) of non-financial and/or financial support to provide.

Q1 Should Government get involved beyond the existing settings?

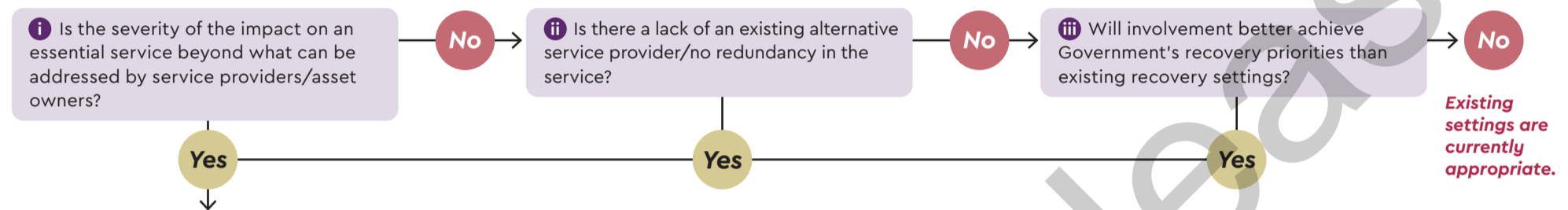
Under existing recovery settings, local authorities (councils) are responsible for decisions about restoring, reducing, or discontinuing community service levels (e.g., stopbanks, local roads, water assets) and private companies are responsible for restoring their own assets (e.g., telecommunications and power assets). The Government repairs its own assets (e.g., state highways, public hospitals, and schools).

The Government provides some pre-arranged contributions to support the recovery of council assets (e.g., the Civil Defence Emergency Management 60:40 essential infrastructure repair cost-sharing arrangement) and contributes no additional support to the private sector.

Councils deliver infrastructure projects with limited shared services arrangements.

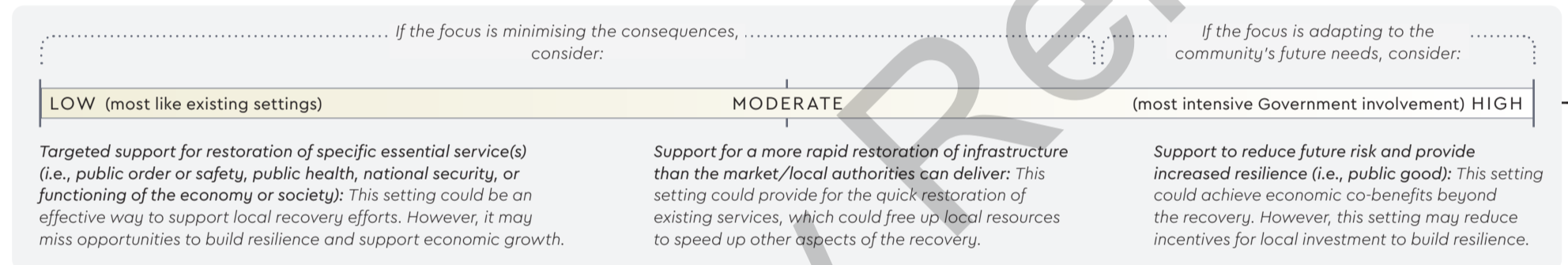
When making decisions, consider:

- Moral hazard risks (e.g., maintaining incentives on asset owners to manage risks).
- Whether the objective is restoration of service or a more resilient or sustainable outcome (e.g., projects in the Infrastructure Priorities Programme).
- Diverse rights and interests of affected Māori (e.g., iwi, hapū and hāpori Māori), including who to engage with and how.
- Impact(s) on the national interest.
- Potential co-benefits of getting involved.
- Any recent policy or funding decisions that might be brought forward (e.g., projects in the Infrastructure Priorities Programme).
- Trade-offs with other uses of Government resources (e.g., there are limits to how much can be done at once).

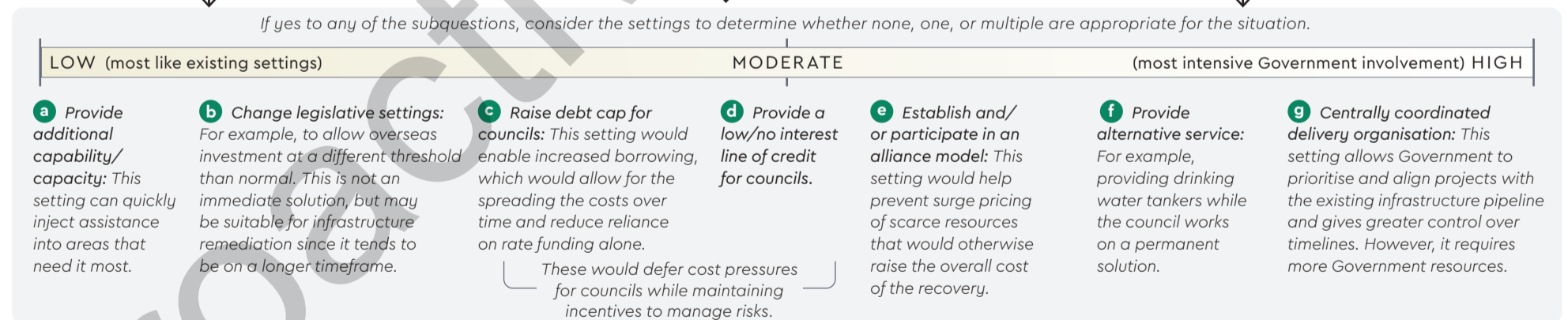
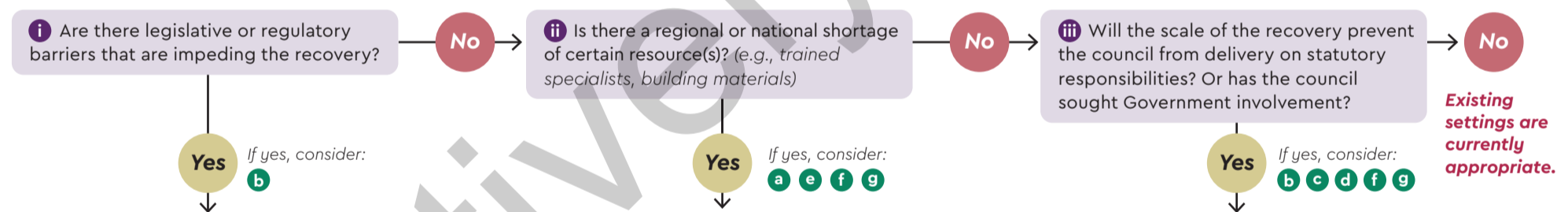


Q2 What scope of additional Government involvement is appropriate?

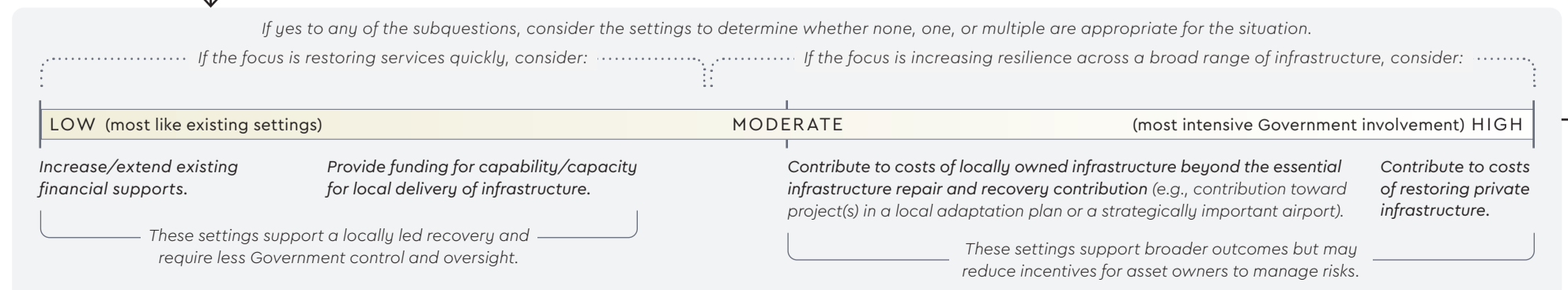
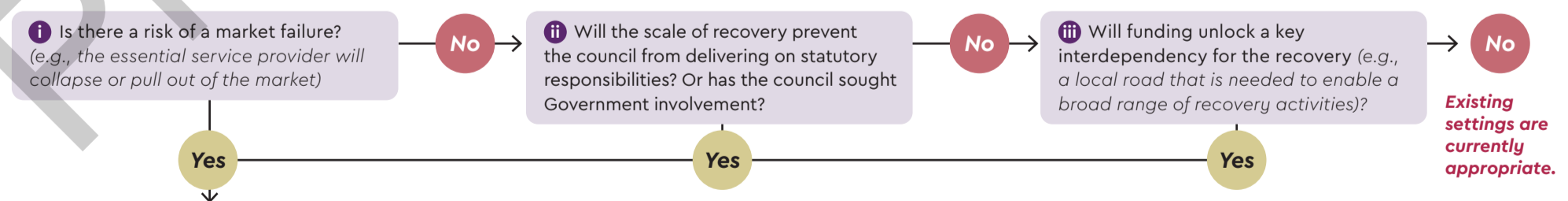
Examples are provided along the spectrum but other variations are possible.



Q3 Should Government provide non-financial support?



Q4 Should Government provide financial support?



3 Whether, and to what extent, to get involved in supporting affected residents and dwellings

PURPOSE: The Government may consider providing support to affected residents. If so, decisions about the scope and type of involvement will depend on what the critical issues are, the supports and levers that already exist, and what results the Government prioritises. Decisions will be informed by any relevant policy the Government is progressing or has recently made (e.g., the National Adaptation Framework). As increasing numbers of councils develop local adaptation plans, these may also be important context for the Government to consider when making decisions.

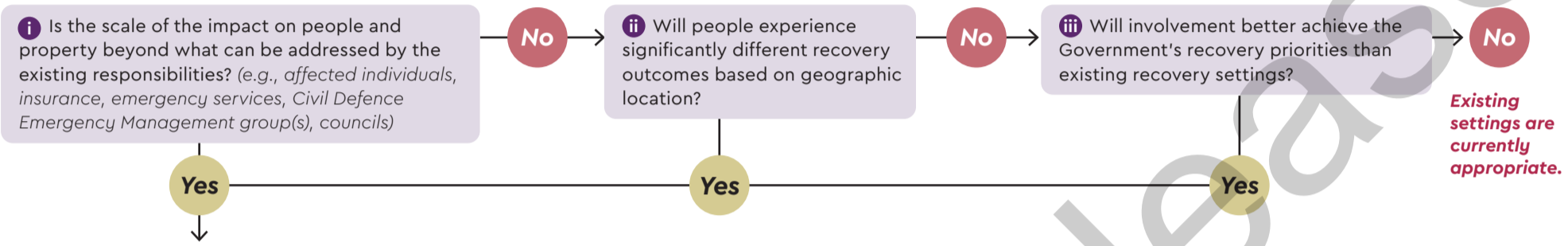
HOW TO USE THIS DECISION TREE: First, assess whether to get involved in this category by working through the initial series of questions. Where there is a clear 'yes', move on to Q2 to determine the scope of involvement. In some cases, the immediate decision may be to monitor the situation until it is clear whether or not additional involvement is appropriate. A decision on scope would lead to decisions about whether (and if so, what type) of non-financial and/or financial support to provide.

Q1 Should Government get involved beyond the existing settings?

Under existing recovery settings, the Government supports affected residents by offering temporary support for those who have been displaced from their damaged homes through the Temporary Accommodation Service and access to natural hazards cover (via the Natural Hazards Insurance Scheme for homes with an insurance policy that pays the Natural Hazards Insurance levy). Property owners draw on insurance payments, and their own financial resources to remediate damage, mitigate future risk or relocate. It is up to local authorities (councils) to decide if and how to deliver support.

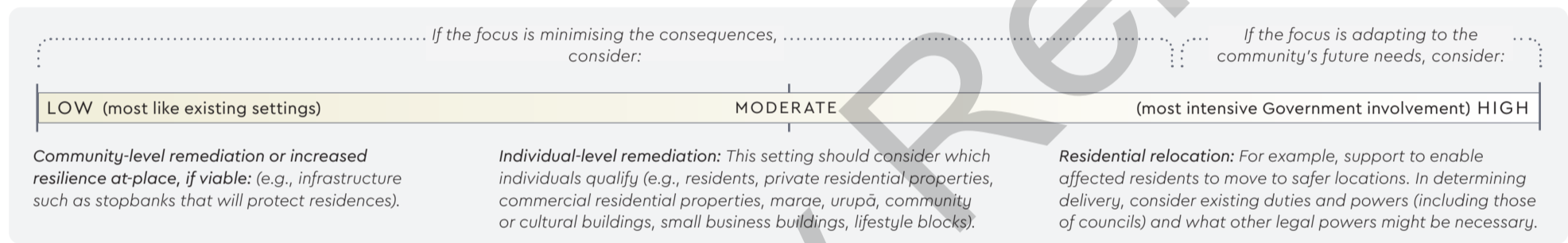
When making decisions, consider:

- Moral hazard risks (i.e., maintain incentives on individuals, communities, councils, and insurers to manage risks).
- Whether the focus is on those worst affected, with greatest future risk, with the least means to recover, or another characteristic.
- Whether the objective is to quickly minimise individual consequences or to ensure community resilience (e.g., rebuild or retreat).
- Diverse rights and interests of affected Māori (e.g., iwi, hapū and hapori Māori), including who to engage with and how.
- Potential co-benefits (e.g., building stopbanks to protect residents that will protect productive land and provide economic benefits).
- Any recent policy or funding decisions that might be brought forward.
- Trade-offs with other uses of Government resources (i.e., there are limits to how much can be done at once).

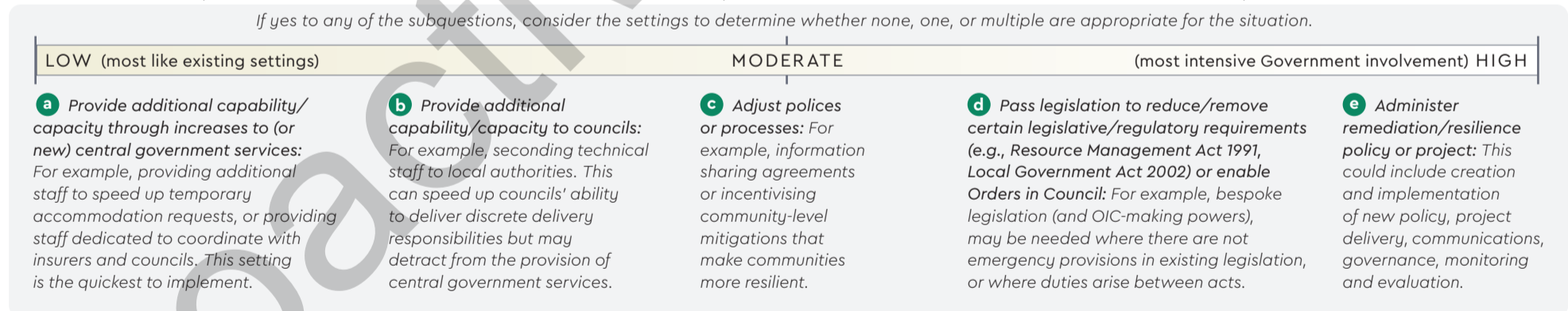


Q2 What scope of additional Government involvement is appropriate?

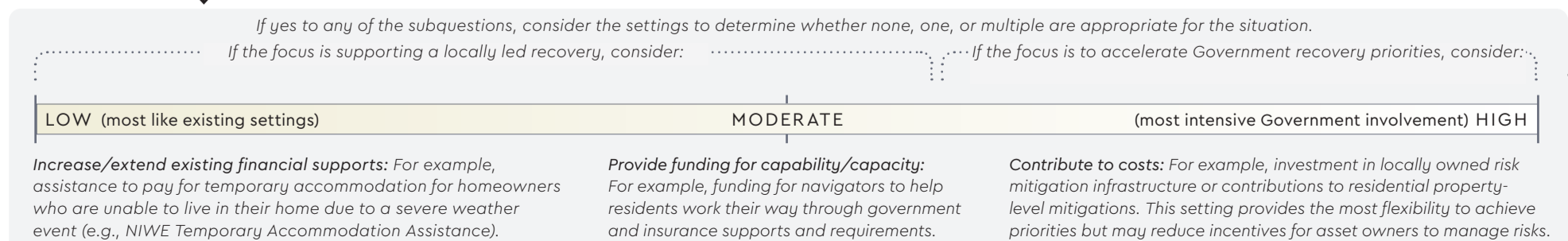
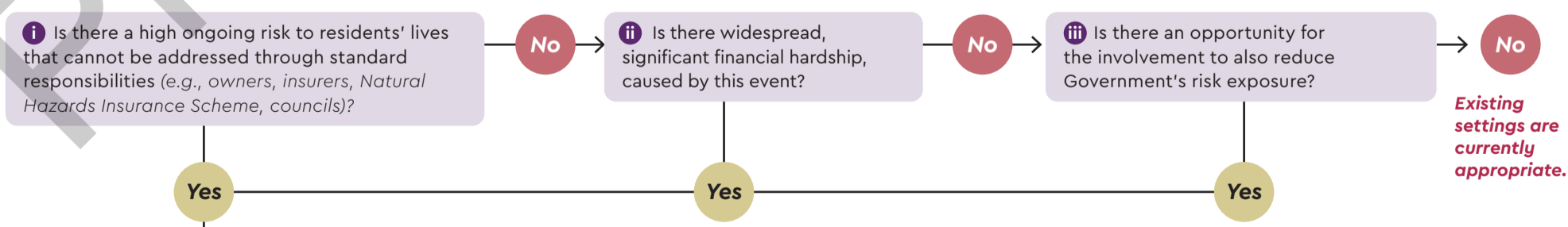
Examples are provided along the spectrum, but other variations are possible.



Q3 Should Government provide non-financial support?



Q4 Should Government provide financial support?



Then consider:
5
6
7

4 Whether, and to what extent, to get involved in stabilising national or regional economies

PURPOSE: The Government may consider supporting businesses to stabilise regional and/or national economies. While it is the long-standing principle that the Government does not compensate firms for loss in asset value or future earnings, the Government may choose to implement or develop mechanisms that change or create incentives. Decisions will be informed by any relevant policy the Government is progressing or has recently made (e.g., Fast-track Approvals Act, Government's economic growth strategy).

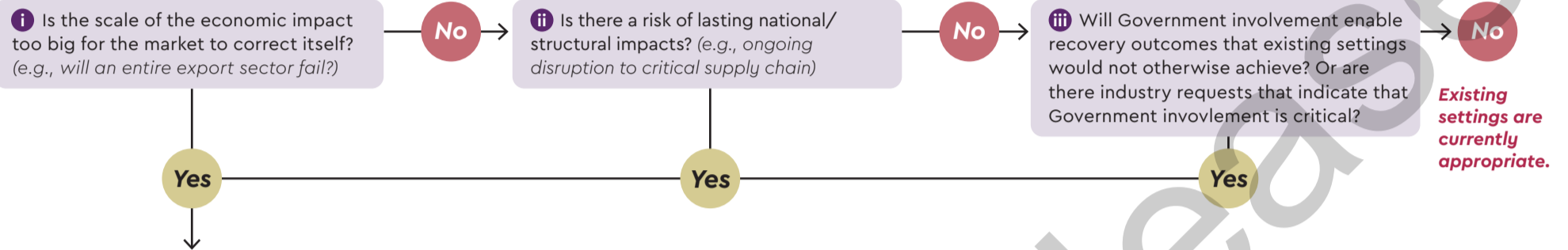
HOW TO USE THIS DECISION TREE: First, assess whether to get involved in this category by working through the initial series of questions. Where there is a clear 'yes', move on to Q2 to determine the scope of involvement. In some cases, the immediate decision may be to monitor the situation until it is clear whether or not additional involvement is appropriate. A decision on scope would lead to decisions about whether (and if so, what type) of non-financial and/or financial support to provide.

Q1 Should Government get involved?

Under existing recovery settings, businesses rely on payments from insurance and their balance sheets to manage uninsured losses or drops in revenue. Businesses operate in the standard regulatory environment when navigating post-event disruptions to trading and/or access to markets. Additional support from lenders (e.g., as happened in the recovery from the 2010/2011 Canterbury Earthquake Sequence) is possible, but not assured.

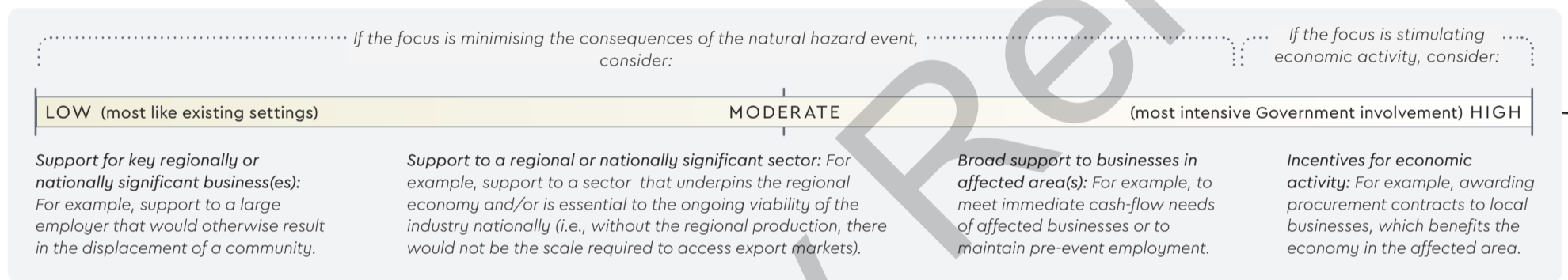
When making decisions, consider:

- Moral hazard risks (i.e. how to maintain incentives on businesses to manage risks).
- Impact(s) on the national interest.
- Diverse rights and interests of affected Māori (e.g., iwi, hapū and hāpori Māori), including who to engage with and how.
- Potential co-benefits of getting involved.
- Whether the goal is restoration of service or a more resilient/sustainable outcome (e.g., rebuild or retreat).
- Any recent policy or funding decisions that might be brought forward.
- Trade-offs with other uses of Government resources (i.e., there are limits to how much can be done at once).

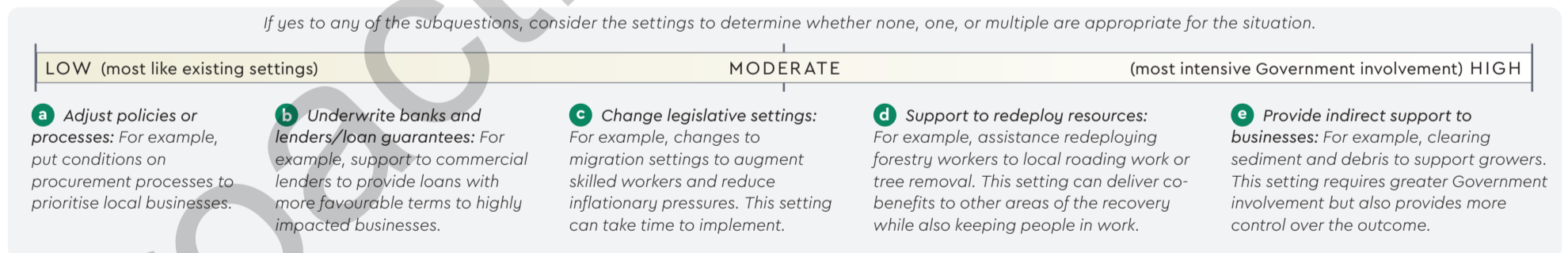
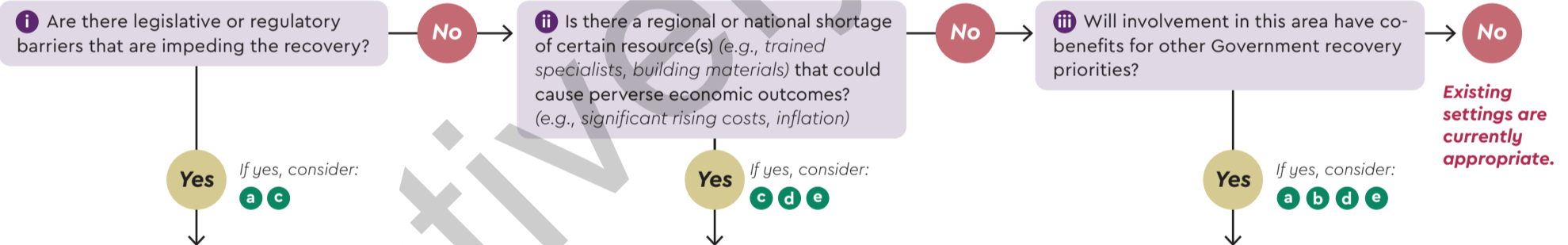


Q2 What scope of additional Government involvement is appropriate?

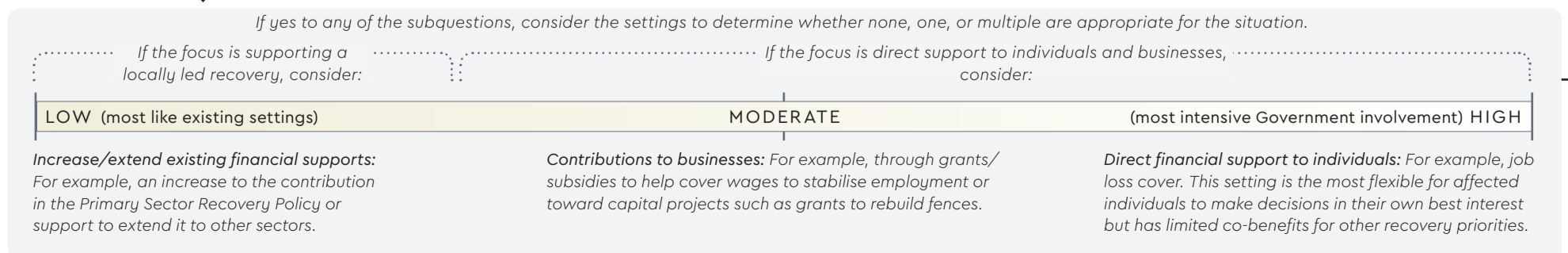
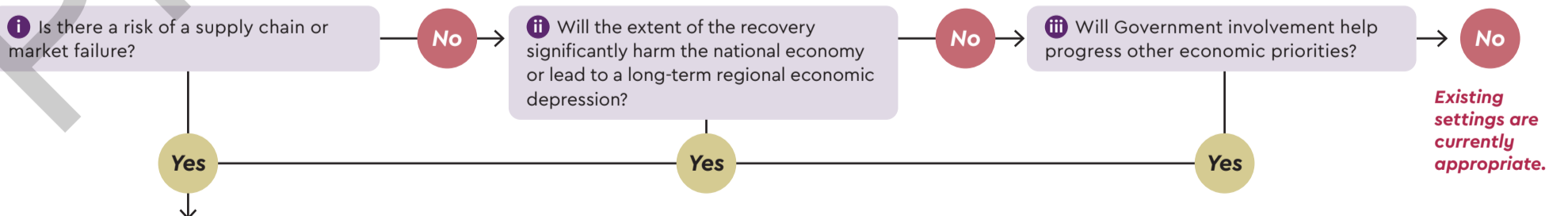
Examples are provided along the spectrum but other variations are possible.



Q3 Should Government provide non-financial support?



Q4 Should Government provide financial support?



5 Mechanisms to enable Government's recovery priorities

PURPOSE: The Government may choose to enable a more effective and efficient recovery by facilitating solutions to remove or reduce obstacles. If the Government determines that additional financial support is appropriate, decisions will need to be taken about what contributions are required from others.

HOW TO USE THIS DECISION TREE: Based on the information gathered through Government's involvement in response and a range of local inputs (including the initial assessment on page 1), examine barriers to achieving Government's recovery priorities. The indicative questions help guide the assessment, but not all will be applicable in all situations. This step will help ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place to enable the recovery.

Q1 What are the obstacles to an efficient and effective recovery?

For each area that applies, consider the settings to determine whether none, one, or multiple are appropriate for the situation.

When making decisions, consider:

- Impact(s) on the national interest.
- Moral hazard risks (e.g., maintaining incentives on asset owners to manage risks).
- Potential co-benefits of getting involved.
- Diverse rights and interests of affected Māori (e.g., iwi, hapū and hapori Māori), including who to engage with and how.
- Any recent policy or funding decisions that might be brought forward.
- Trade-offs with other uses of Government resources (e.g., there are limits to how much can be done at once).

LEGISLATIVE OR REGULATORY

- Consider:**
- i** Are the existing legal powers appropriate for the recovery? (e.g., does Government need additional powers to enable other recovery settings?)
 - ii** Are legislative/regulatory requirements appropriate for the recovery? (e.g., should consultative or planning requirements be reduced or are they necessary to spark critical conversations with communities and local leaders?)

LOW (most like existing settings)	MODERATE		HIGH (most intensive Government involvement)	
Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) or Approved Information Sharing Agreements.	Legislation to remove requirements.	Legislation to enable Orders in Council.	Legislation to give powers to Government.	Legislation to give powers to a specially appointed commissioner.

CAPABILITY OR CAPACITY

- Consider:**
- i** Can the system handle the extra demand of the recovery on public services provided by central or local government? (but existing settings are generally appropriate)
 - ii** Are there sufficient resources in the impacted areas? Or are resource needs driving surges in costs?

LOW (most like existing settings)	MODERATE		HIGH (most intensive Government involvement)		
(Re)deploy resources across government agencies.	Increase funding for services to affected people/communities.	Technical support (e.g., secondments into councils).	Legislation to remove requirements.	Establish and/or participate in an alliance model.	Contribute funding for local capability or capacity.

FINANCIAL

- Consider:**
- i** Will access to, or commitment of, financial support unlock a key interdependency for the recovery?
 - ii** Is local authority (council) affordability concerns preventing an effective recovery?

LOW (most like existing settings)	MODERATE		HIGH (most intensive Government involvement)	
Increase/extend existing financial supports.	Raise debt cap for councils.	Underwrite banks and/or lenders.	Provide a no/low interest line of credit for councils.	Provide bespoke financial support.

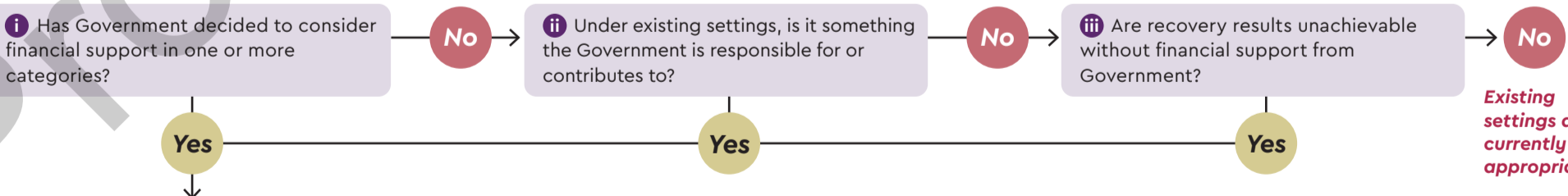
Q2 Who pays for what?

Different approaches can be taken for different settings, or a consistent approach could be set across all settings.

Under existing recovery settings, recovery costs are the responsibility of the asset owners/service providers (i.e., individuals, businesses, local authorities, central government),

with some portion potentially covered by insurance and natural hazards cover. The Government provides a range of emergency supports, including council co-investment

schemes (e.g., the Civil Defence Emergency Management 60:40 essential infrastructure repair cost-sharing arrangement) and support to individuals (e.g., Rural Assistance Payments).



WHAT APPROACH WILL GOVERNMENT TAKE TO DETERMINING ITS CONTRIBUTION?

If the focus is providing certainty quickly to affected communities, consider:

If the focus is shared priority setting, consider:

LOW (most like existing settings)	MODERATE		HIGH (most intensive Government involvement)	
Increase percentage of contribution through existing schemes: This setting is straightforward to implement but does not give Government as much control over timing and delivery.	Set funding envelope: This setting quickly gives communities confidence in Government's involvement. It allows the receiving entity (e.g., a local authority) to prioritise and make local trade-offs in recovery efforts. This setting can limit the degree to which Government can set priorities or control timing and delivery.	Contribute to costs: For example, a set percent of the cost to bring affected stopbanks to a higher resiliency or to deliver a specific priority project, such as a critical local road.	Negotiate a funding agreement: This setting can support shared priorities, but can cause delays in the recovery if negotiations are protracted. This setting may reduce incentives for asset owners to manage risks.	

6 Government's approach to recovery leadership

PURPOSE: Decisions on the previous pages will influence whether the existing leadership settings are fit for the situation. The Government involvement may change over time. For example, some councils may need more support for core functions in the initial recovery, which may be scaled back as the recovery effort proceeds and governance structures are established.

HOW TO USE THIS DECISION TREE: Based on information gathered through Government's involvement in response and a range of local inputs (including the initial assessment on page 1), work through the first series of questions to assess whether the existing leadership approach is appropriate. The second series of questions guides assessment of whether the standing Ministerial arrangements are fit for this recovery. The final series of questions on this page examines whether central government needs to be organised differently for this particular recovery.

Q1 To what degree should the recovery be locally or centrally led?

Different approaches can be taken for different settings, or a consistent approach could be set across all settings.

Under existing recovery settings, local authorities (councils) are responsible for identifying, assessing, and managing hazards and risks. Territorial authorities have responsibility for land-use decisions. Regional authorities are responsible for hazard and flood planning and management. The Government is responsible for any changes to primary legislation. Post-event, the Government helps territorial authorities manage resources to protect lives, buildings, and infrastructure (e.g., Building Act 2004 rapid building assessment placarding system).

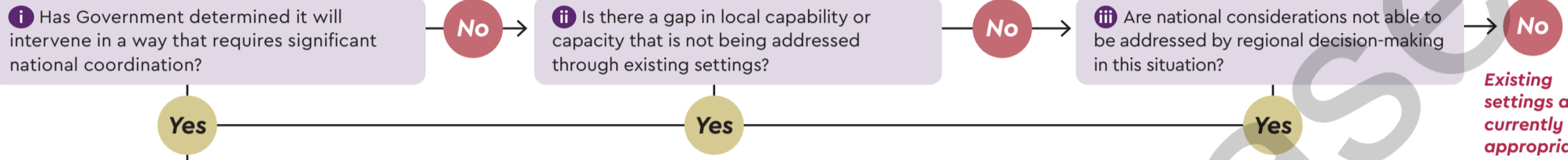
Communities are at the centre of emergency management. The Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Act 2002

requires councils to coordinate CDEM. Capability and capacity to recover from natural hazard events is varied across the country. The Government works with councils to understand their capacity and capability. The Minister of Local Government has intervention powers in certain circumstances.

Generally, the greater the level of Government involvement would necessitate stronger Government leadership. Regardless of where the decision is made on the leadership spectrum, it is vital to be clear about how it applies to decision-making and priority-setting, policy, implementation and delivery, public communications, governance, monitoring and evaluation.

When making decisions, consider:

- Strengths and limitations of council(s) in the affected area.
- Impact(s) on the national interest.
- Nationwide trade-offs (e.g., prioritisation of a significant amount of taxpayer funding).
- Consistency of outcomes across affected communities/districts/regions.
- Diverse rights and interests of affected Māori (e.g., iwi, hapū and hapori Māori), including who to engage with and how.



Existing settings are currently appropriate.

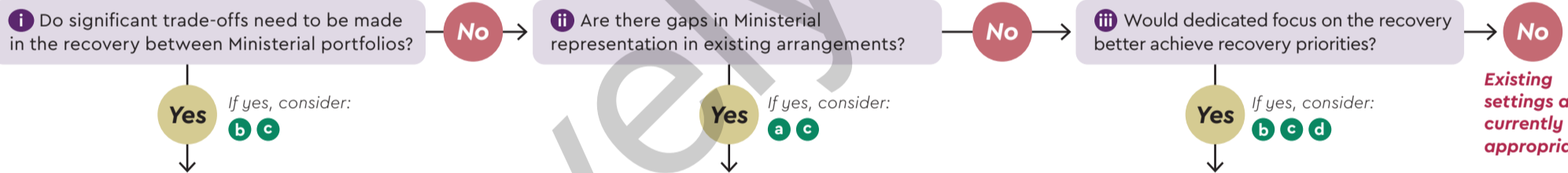
<p><i>If the focus is preserving as many existing roles and responsibilities as feasible, consider:</i></p> <p>LOW (most like existing settings)</p> <p><i>Locally led, centrally supported:</i> For example, the recovery from the North Island Weather Events. This approach would mean that wherever possible, councils would be responsible for functions but would be accountable for timely delivery of projects with a Government funding contribution. This approach gives Government fewer levers if recovery outcomes are not being achieved in a timely manner.</p> <p><i>In determining how this setting should be delivered, consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the priority is consistency, consider prescribing outcomes in legislation. • If the priority is locally developed solutions, outcomes and timings may vary. • If accompanied by significant Government spending, assurance work will be needed for implementation and accounting. 	<p><i>If the recovery requires nationwide trade-offs such as prioritisation of a significant amount of taxpayer funding, consider:</i></p> <p>MODERATE</p> <p><i>Shared recovery structure:</i> This approach could include shared decision-making and/or governance. This can be effective where there is a strong element of co-investment.</p>	<p><i>If the recovery requires nationwide trade-offs such as prioritisation of a significant amount of taxpayer funding, consider:</i></p> <p>(most intensive Government involvement) HIGH</p> <p><i>Centrally led, locally informed:</i> For example, the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority. This approach can be effective in delivering consistent outcomes if the recovery spans multiple jurisdictions. It likely requires longer Government involvement and can undermine local accountability and incentives to manage risks.</p> <p><i>In determining how this setting should be delivered, consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will Government transition assets back to communities? • Are there appropriate incentives for future risk management?
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Q2 Are the standing Ministerial arrangements fit for this recovery?

Under existing recovery settings, Ministers take proposals on matters within their portfolios to the appropriate standing

Cabinet committee. The Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery has the primary responsibility for leading the

Government recovery from meteorological- and geological-related emergencies (i.e., natural hazard events).



Existing settings are currently appropriate.

If yes to any of the subquestions, consider the settings to determine whether none, one, or multiple are appropriate for the situation.

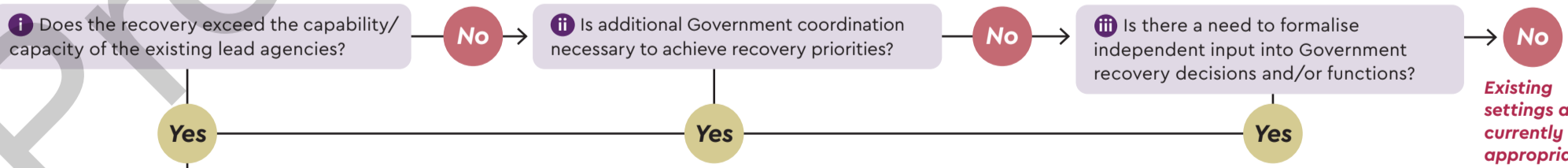
<p>a <i>Appoint special local representation</i> (e.g., Regional Ministerial leads in North Island Weather events): This setting can be effective where multiple areas have been affected, who all need representation in decision making. Creating this function can raise expectations of the influence of individual decision-makers.</p>	<p>b <i>Identify different lead responsible Minister(s) and portfolio(s)</i> (e.g., Minister for Cyclone Recovery and the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister): This setting can provide the relevant Minister with more capacity to focus on the specific event. This setting may be appropriate if the recovery is infrastructure based, and the relevant portfolio minister is able to take on a recovery role.</p>	<p>c <i>Establish temporary Cabinet Committee</i> (e.g., the Extreme Weather Recovery Committee): This setting can be useful where existing Cabinet schedules do not allow sufficient time to consider recovery needs. This setting may not be needed if all relevant decision makers have an appropriate committee structure already.</p>	<p>d <i>Grant group of Ministers Power to Act:</i> This setting would empower a smaller group of Ministers to act quickly. This may not be appropriate where there are many nationally significant decisions to be made.</p>
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Q3 How should Government be organised for this recovery?

Under existing recovery settings, various central government agencies are responsible for specific aspects (e.g., NZTA is

responsible for transport infrastructure). NEMA chairs the cross-agency National Recovery Coordination Group). Certain events

may require different leadership and coordination structures to better streamline the processes for affected communities.



Existing settings are currently appropriate.

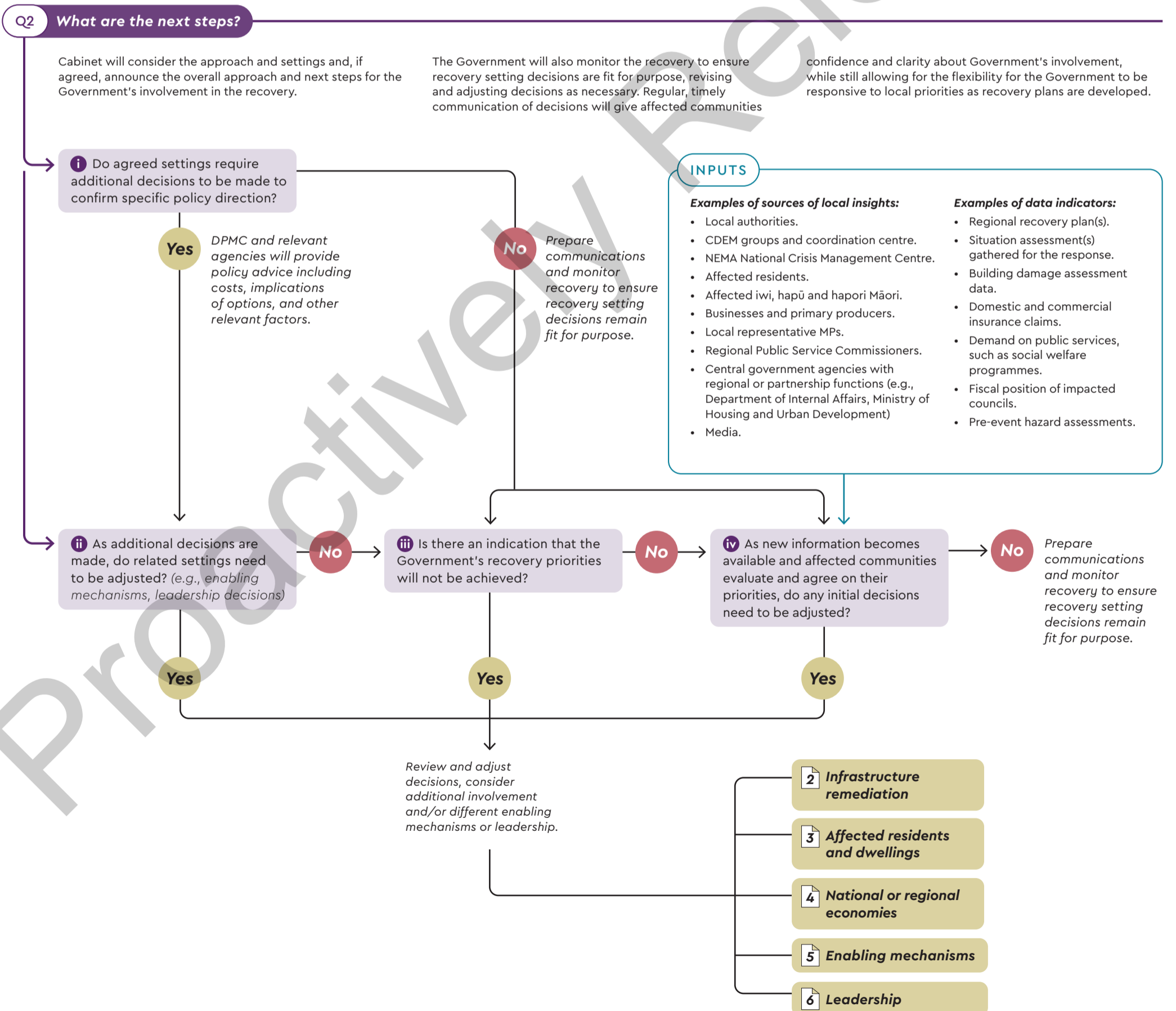
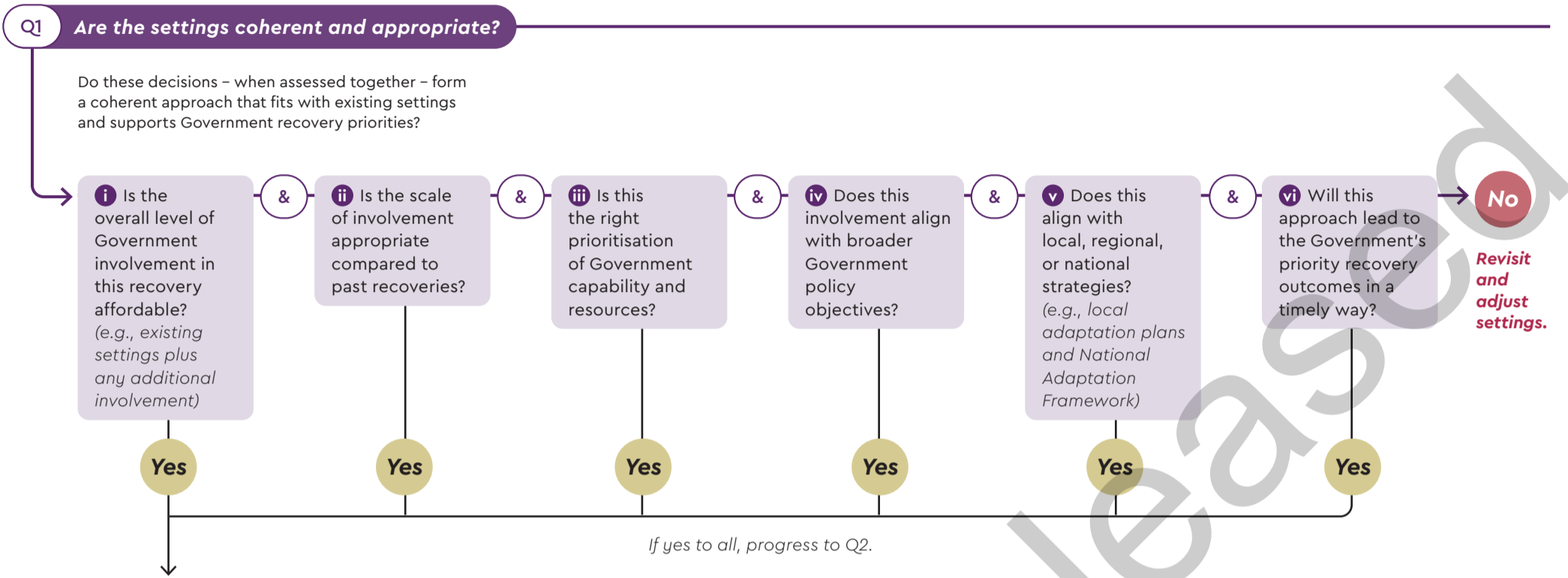
If yes to any of the subquestions, consider the settings to determine whether none, one, or multiple are appropriate for the situation, except where mutually exclusive options are indicated by: ★

<p><i>If the recovery is being locally led, consider:</i></p> <p>LOW (most like existing settings)</p> <p><i>Direct different agency to coordinate aspect(s) of the recovery:</i> This setting can be effective where the recovery is primarily driven by a single category (e.g., transportation).</p>	<p><i>If the recovery is being centrally led, consider:</i></p> <p>MODERATE</p> <p><i>Establish funders forum:</i> This setting could be used to work more collaboratively across government agencies and external organisations. Forums can share knowledge and coordinate funding sources and communications.</p>	<p><i>If the recovery is being centrally led, consider:</i></p> <p>MODERATE</p> <p><i>Establish independent advisory group to inform Government decision making</i> (e.g., Cyclone Gabrielle Recovery Taskforce): This setting is most valuable when Government is heavily involved beyond existing settings.</p>	<p>★ <i>Establish integrated National Recovery Office to coordinate and support the recovery</i> (e.g., Hurunui/Kaikōura National Recovery Office): This setting can be effective to coordinate Government support, while retaining features of the existing settings. This setting may not provide the level of support necessary for severe or complex recoveries.</p>	<p>★ <i>Establish central body to lead, coordinate, and implement policy</i> (e.g., Cyclone Recovery Unit): This setting is most appropriate if the priority is coordinating coherent and joined up approaches between Government policy objectives and locally led recovery policy and delivery.</p>	<p>★ <i>Establish central body to lead and deliver</i> (e.g., Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority). This setting is most appropriate for highly complex recoveries and/or if Government is exercising additional powers. This setting likely requires longer Government involvement and can undermine existing roles and responsibilities.</p>
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7 Coherence, appropriateness, and next steps

PURPOSE: A range of provisions, policies, and support programmes exist to support the recovery. If the Government decides to get involved beyond the existing settings, it is important to consider how the bespoke involvement fits with what already exists. It is also valuable to evaluate the settings together to ensure they come together to form a practical and pragmatic approach to the recovery that matches the scale, nature, and impacts of the event, the local characteristics of the affected communities, and the Government's recovery priorities.

HOW TO USE THIS DECISION TREE: Before confirming decisions, review the initial assessment on page 1 and assess the first series of questions on this page to determine whether decisions made about settings on pages 2-6 fit together in a logical way. If they do not, adjust decisions before progressing to the next steps. As the recovery progresses, additional decisions and/or adjustments to settings may be needed.



Overview of work programmes that influence recovery settings

New Zealand has pre-arranged provisions, policies, and support programmes to support recoveries from natural hazard events, some of which are automatically triggered (e.g., emergency provisions in certain pieces of legislation) and some have Ministerial discretion or require Ministerial activation or authorisation (e.g., contributions to mayoral relief funds). Any amendments to the existing settings, including the changes below, may affect the range of recovery settings available and/or the criteria for decision-making.

Portfolio	System-level recovery-related work programmes	Apr - Jun 2025	Jul – Sept 2025	Oct – Dec 2025
Climate Change	Adaptation framework: Includes investment, cost-sharing and decision-making principles to guide proactive actions to reduce risk before a major event, and longer-term recovery decisions for residential properties, services and infrastructure following a major severe event.	9(2)(f)(iv)		
Emergency Management and Recovery	Emergency Management Bill: Addresses issues and gaps across the 4 Rs of emergency management (reduction, readiness, response, and recovery) including those considered through reviews into emergency events.			
	Emergency Management System Improvement Programme: Responds to the <i>Inquiry into the Response to the North Island Severe Weather Events (NISWE)</i> that will strengthen national and regional emergency management.			
	9(2)(f)(iv)			
Housing/Local Government/ Infrastructure	Infrastructure Funding Settings (via Going for Housing Growth work programme): Replaces development contributions with a new development levy system and makes improvements to targeted rates to better recover the costs of growth infrastructure from beneficiaries to support urban growth.			
Local Government	Local government reform: Includes Local Government System Improvements Bill and City and Regional Deals, both working to make the local government system more efficient and effective.			
	Local Water Done Well: Is the Government’s plan to address New Zealand’s long-standing water infrastructure challenges.			
Prime Minister	National Risk and Resilience Framework: Adopts a stronger and more proactive approach to national risk management and resilience building.			
RMA Reform	National Direction on Natural Hazards & Resource Management Act reform (phase 2 and 3): Includes the fast-track approvals legislation, replaces the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) with new legislation, and develops or amends RMA national direction (including natural hazard policy and an integrated national direction package).			
Other policy and operational recovery-related work programmes				
Agriculture/ Forestry	Primary Sector Recovery policy: Review of policy—the funding that was originally set aside for adverse events has not kept pace with the frequency or severity of events experienced.			
Emergency Management and Recovery	Enhancing national recovery arrangements: Progress the scalable National Recovery Operating Model, including developing national thresholds for recovery and indicators to inform a recovery outcomes framework, clarifying government agency recovery funding mechanisms, roles and responsibilities and stakeholder networks; embedding processes to track central government expenditure during recovery; developing a Tripartite Insurance Memoranda of Understanding; developing recovery training and pre-event recovery templates and resources to uplift capability.			
	Waste management: Develop a National Waste and Debris Management Plan.			
Transport	Funding Assistance Rates: Funding assistance rates are applied through the National Land Transport Plan. These plans are set every three years for a ten-year period. The last plan was adopted in 2024.			
Infrastructure	Infrastructure reform: Establish a 30-year National Infrastructure Plan, developing a coherent pipeline of infrastructure projects, and establish the National Infrastructure Agency (NIA).			
Regional Development	Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF): Fund Government and regional assets through a mix of loan, equity and grant investments filling critical gaps in regional infrastructure development.			

Overview of consultation and feedback

Consultation took place in two phases between November 2024 and March 2025. Face-to-face and online meetings were held with individuals and groups – engagement occurred with nearly 300 individuals and written feedback from 37 organisations.

- The first phase of consultation took place between November 2024 and February 2025 and was focused on the recovery settings and asked:
 - Has everything been captured? If not, what else? Are there settings that shouldn't be there, if so what and why?
 - What are the pros and cons of each of the settings? Are there any settings that are more critical than others? And in what situations?
 - Do you have ideas about the criteria that should be applied to help Ministers choose between setting options?
- The second phase of consultation took place between February and March 2025. The consultation document set out draft criteria and asked questions about whether there were other key considerations in decision-making and how the criteria should be applied.
- Key themes from consultation and how the tools have addressed the feedback is summarised below.

<p>Individuals, communities and businesses should continue to manage their own risk.</p>	<p>Scale of impact is an important factor in setting the threshold for when government should intervene.</p>	<p>Quick decisions should still be evidence based and made informed by clear analysis.</p>	<p>Capacity and capability are critically important. When hit by a significant event and dealing with extensive impacts, local government cannot do it alone.</p>	<p>Government plays a useful role in co-ordinating agencies and managing demand for the same resources.</p>
<p>The tools have been designed to ensure that government is aware of who holds risk and maintain appropriate incentives for managing that.</p>	<p>The tools include severity of impact in the criteria for the initial assessment. This and other criteria recognise that existing settings are suitable for most recoveries.</p>	<p>The recovery setting options were developed drawing on experiences of what worked well in previous recoveries. The tools provide for Ministers to seek advice from agencies on costs, benefits and implications.</p>	<p>The decision-trees guide Ministers to consider local capability and capacity in assessing what type and level of support to provide.</p>	<p>The decision trees support Ministers to consider the most useful role for government in the context of the impacts of the event, the needs of affected communities and broader national and economic considerations.</p>
<p>There needs to be a clear pathway to embed the tools in business-as-usual.</p>	<p>Certainty and consistency in decision-making needs to be balanced with flexibility to respond to evolving situations and local needs – one size does not fit all.</p>	<p>Decision-making should include affected communities and key stakeholders where possible.</p>	<p>There are stages in major recoveries, and decisions should be made in relation to the information that is available at the time.</p>	<p>Government funding should be sequenced to match the delivery of recovery activities and other sources of funding for those activities.</p>
<p>The DPMC Risk and Systems Governance Group will be responsible for ensuring the tools are updated and co-ordinating advice across agencies. This includes developing any new support categories if required. The tools could also be used, or adapted, to guide decision-making on recovery from other types of events that are nationally significant.</p>	<p>The tools provide a clear decision pathway in the first few days following an event. This gives some early certainty on whether, and how, government will be involved. The tools provide for more detailed decisions as the situation evolves.</p>	<p>The tools support Ministers to make quick decisions based on the best information available from the emergency response, while allowing for further advice to be sought and decisions to be reviewed as more information from affected communities becomes available. The tools provide options to build in local input to decision-making.</p>	<p>The tools are designed for decisions to be made in the first few days following an event, but revisited as more information about specific recovery needs becomes available.</p>	<p>The tools prompt Ministers to consider the coherence of the overall support package, which includes sequencing of funding support.</p>