



## **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:

### **Status of core NIWE Recovery Actions and Transition Arrangements**

The following document has been included in this release:

#### **Title of aide-memoire:** Status of core NIWE Recovery Actions and Transition Arrangements

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)(a), to protect the privacy of individuals.

# Aide-Mémoire

## Status of core NIWE Recovery Actions and Transition Arrangements

To: Hon Mark Mitchell  
Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery

Hon Tama Potaka  
Minister for Māori Development  
Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti

Hon Simon Watts  
Minister of Local Government  
Minister of Climate Change

Date	27/06/2025	Priority level:	Medium
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### Purpose

1. The purpose of this aide memoire is to provide an update on the status of the delivery of the central Government's NIWE Recovery Programme and to summarise the arrangements for the remainder of the work from 1 July 2025.

### Background

2. In March 2023 the Government put in place a range of mechanisms to manage the recovery from the Auckland Anniversary weekend flooding and Cyclones Hale and Gabrielle which had caused significant disruption and damage across much of the North Island. One of the mechanisms was a functional Chief Executive Cyclone Recovery (CE CR) supported by a Cyclone Recovery Unit (CRU) hosted by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC).
3. This arrangement was short term with much of the central Government part of the Recovery expected to be completed by 30 June 2025. This and other mechanisms were based on the premise that the recovery would be locally led and centrally supported – in effect a partnership between central and local Government.

### Focus of the Central Government approach

4. The primary focus of the Government's approach was to ensure that people had the opportunity to be moved out of harms way from future events and to support the recovery of local economies, particularly in the worst affected regions. A feature of the approach was to wherever possible ensure that the benefit of funding was not solely focused on reinstatement of infrastructure but building in future resilience.
5. A framework was developed to support the categorisation of residential properties affected. This was based on categorising land where there was a risk to life from a future event, with the action to be taken being based on whether there was a property or community level mitigation possible, or no risk mitigation.
6. This framework then formed the basis of negotiated Crown Funding Agreements with the Auckland, Tairāwhiti and Hawke's Bay Regions. These were cost sharing Agreements,

with the Crown contributing \$1.6 billion and Councils contributing \$873.24 million for a combination of voluntary buyouts of residential properties, risk mitigation projects and local transport projects. The voluntary buyout scheme was offered to all affected Councils in the North Island, with Tauranga and Masterton taking up the offer for a very small number of properties.

7. \$100 million was made available for a range of smaller risk mitigation projects across the North Island with 15 councils undertaking projects within this funding.
8. The Government's support for local economies involved providing \$333 million for sediment and debris removal in the Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti regions to return land to productivity as fast as possible, a financial business support package worth over \$2.24 billion to the primary production sector, and significant investment in the repair of state highways.

#### *Role of the CE CR and CRU*

9. The CE CR was charged with leading the central Government's role in the recovery, coordinating across government agencies and supporting the regions to deliver against the Projects specified in the Crown Funding Agreements and against other pools of funding – coordinating with local authorities to seek decisions from Ministers against funding, and funding and other decisions needed as the work proceeded. This included being part of Governance arrangements and monitoring and reporting.
10. The CE CR contracted with National Infrastructure Funding and Financing Limited (NIFFco formerly Crown Infrastructure Partners) to administer the funding against the Crown Funding Agreements and to provide assurance over the Project Delivery Plans (PDPs) and support, monitor and report on delivery. This is a ten-year contract in line with the term of the Crown Funding Agreements which go to 2033.
11. The Government also provided in total \$136 million to support the relocation of any marae and residential whenua that councils categorised as having a risk to life from a future event. The CE CR was subsequently given responsibility for implementing this Whenua Māori and Marae Relocation Programme.
12. The CE CR was also responsible for facilitating legislation changes and associated Orders in Council enabling local authorities to undertake recovery work faster than would otherwise have been the case.
13. Government also sought advice from the CE CR on what could be put in place to facilitate robust timely decisions on the role that central Government would play in recovery from nationally significant natural hazard events.

#### **Status of Recovery Delivery as at 30 June 2025**

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14. This section outlines the main delivery achievements from the central Government aspects of the Recovery. Local authorities, government agencies, NGOs and many others have done a lot more than what is represented in this document to support recovery and there is more still to be done, reflecting the scale and complexity of the impacts of NIWE.
15. Attachment A provides the total NIWE Crown funding administered by the CE CR by Council.

#### **Delivery against the Crown Funding Agreements**

##### *Land Categorisation and Voluntary Buyouts*

16. In total 1,441 (including 24 whenua Māori) residential properties across the North Island have been categorised by local authorities as having a risk to life from a future event where the risk cannot be mitigated by a property or community level intervention. Local authorities have therefore offered a voluntary buyout of the (general title) property or in the

case of mixed-use properties, the residential portion of the property. Within the Government's framework, Councils were responsible for developing their own policies, processes and review mechanisms for land categorisation and voluntary buyouts.

17. The Hawke's Bay Region has completed its voluntary buyout process, with 151 agreements now settled, and Tairāwhiti will shortly finish with an estimated 56 buyouts. Auckland Council has completed its property categorisation and has made voluntary buyout offers to 1083 of the 1193 property owners affected. 848 owners have agreed offers or settled and of those 767 have settled. It expects to have completed its voluntary buyout process by the end of December this year.
18. Masterton and Tauranga had a small number of properties to buyout. Tauranga has completed its process and settled with three property owners. Masterton has 9 buyouts for which offers have been accepted and two relocations that will be completed by October.
19. It is anticipated that the Crown will have spent \$695.522 million on its share of voluntary buyouts with Councils contributing \$695.522 million and a total cost of \$1.391 billion.

#### *Risk Mitigation Projects*

20. 963 properties were initially categorised as 2C which meant there was a risk to life that could be mitigated by a new community level mitigation.
21. There are 23 projects with a crown funding contribution of \$419.407 million. These projects are focused on building future resilience and protecting communities badly affected by the NIWE. Many of these projects are complex, will require access and acquisition of properties and are multiyear projects.
22. Councils have taken different approaches, with Auckland for example, adopting a policy to offer a voluntary buyout option where a property is 2C, but the mitigation projects will take more than three years. The Hawke's Bay Regional Council has decided to recategorise a 2C property to Category 1 when the project planning and design is completed.
23. Project Delivery Plans have been completed for all 23 projects and ministers have signed off the release of associated funding. Twelve projects are at the planning and design stage, ten have construction underway and one is complete. Completion dates for the remaining projects range from early 2026 to June 2031. Under the Crown Funding Agreements, all projects must be completed by 30 June 2033.

#### *Other mitigation projects*

24. There are 34 risk mitigation projects funded from the \$100 million Local Government Flood Resilience Co-investment fund. These projects are spread across 15 Councils. Of these 13 are complete, nine are expected to complete by 30 June 2025 and the remainder will be completed by December 2025.

#### *Local Transport Projects*

25. There are 31 local transport projects that are 100 percent funded by central Government. These are in Auckland, Tairāwhiti and the Hawke's Bay. The total funding from Government is \$487.593 million.
26. Project Delivery Plans have been completed for all 31 projects and the release of funding approved by Ministers. Three projects have been completed, with a further four on track to complete by 30 June 2025. All projects are expected to be completed by the end of 2027.

#### **Whenua Māori and Marae Relocation Programme**

27. Councils in Tairāwhiti and Hawke's Bay have identified seven marae and 24 residential whenua Māori as having an intolerable risk to life from a future event.

28. Five marae in Tairāwhiti and two in the Hawke's Bay have signed Relationship and Funding Agreements with the Crown, have secured new safe sites and are undertaking planning and design activities. One Project Delivery Plan has been approved by Ministers and four others are being worked through with NIFFco. The two Hawke's Bay marae will shortly begin working on their PDPs with NIFFco.
29. The CE CR and CRU was responsible for working with the five Tairāwhiti marae to reach a Relationship and Funding Agreement. Each of the marae carry with them significant history and it has been a challenging process for their whanau to make the decision to move to a new site. The CE CR and CRU made sure that marae trustees had the necessary space and time to consider their options, fully consult on multiple processes as needed and consider what the future would look like.
30. In all five cases time was spent establishing the relationship, listening and sharing information before approval was sought from Ministers for formal offers and presented to Marae Trustees. Only once the offers were accepted did the focus turn to the nature and content of the formal Relationship and Funding Agreement. In each case, marae trustees had acquired a new site prior to the Agreement being signed. Ownership of the existing sites remains where it currently sits.
31. The Marae Trustees of the two Hawke's Bay marae authorised their respective PSGE (Post Settlement Governance Entity) to go into negotiations on their behalf. Te Arawhiti led what were formal negotiations for the Crown. When the final offers were approved by Ministers and negotiations completed, the CE CR took over the work associated with Relationship and Funding Agreements being put in place and implementation getting underway.
32. Both the Hawke's Bay Marae Trustees have signed Agreements, and both have got new sites. A draft media release is with Ministers offices for consideration.
33. Six marae have received their first milestone payment and the seventh is scheduled to be paid on the 30 June 2025.
34. The CE CR has made offers to all 24 residential whenua Māori owners, 16 directly and eight via MTT in a papakāinga arrangement. Some of the 16 properties where offers were made directly, required multiple agreements to reflect the complexities of ownership arrangements. In total, 22 agreements have been reached across the 16 properties. The owners for all 16 properties have accepted and signed each of the Agreements offered. Of these all have received payment. The CRU has arranged asbestos testing and demolition for all properties requiring it and contracts are in place.
35. Completion of the Agreement for the papakāinga (eight properties) is very close to being signed and this may potentially still occur by 30 June 2025.
36. Attachment B provides an overview of the status of key cyclone recovery implementation activities.

#### **Orders in Council**

37. The CE CR and CRU have facilitated 19 Orders in Council (OIC) requested by Councils and was responsible for the Review Panel and associated reporting to Parliament. Government agencies that administer the originating legislation that councils seek to have relief from some provisions lead the content advice and Cabinet processes. There is one OIC in the process for one risk mitigation project.
38. No new OICs can be approved after March 2026. This will be three years after NIWE.

#### **Recovery Settings and Decision Tools**

39. In May 2025 Cabinet approved a suite of recovery settings and decision tools to assist Ministers to make robust timely decisions about the Government's involvement in recovery from nationally significant natural hazards.

40. The CE CR and CRU developed the recovery settings and tools over a period of months with very wide discussion and consultation. The aim was to involve not just those councils, agencies and other organisations involved in NIWE recovery but to recognise measures taken and options from previous significant natural disasters.
41. In total over 300 meetings were held, with the material being produced, widely available. Some Councils, Auckland Council for example is looking to adapt the settings and tools into a model that can be used for regionally significant natural disasters.

## **Responsibility for Remaining Government Recovery work from 1 July 2025**

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42. The CE CR supported by the CRU hosted by DPMC will be disestablished on 30 June 2025.
43. The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) and DPMC will be responsible for the remaining work from 1 July 2025. Cabinet agreed the responsibilities and transfer of funding in November 2024.
44. Responsibility for central Government oversight of the completion of the remaining activity under the Crown Funding Agreements with Auckland, Tairāwhiti and Hawke's Bay will be undertaken by the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA). DIA has employed two staff from the CRU until November 2025 to focus on the remaining work.
45. DIA will also oversee remaining activity under the Whenua Māori and Marae Relocation Programme. A Crown representative (Kararaina Calcott-Cribb) has been appointed to be part of the governance arrangements for the completion of each of the seven marae.
46. There is no additional work needed for the 16 individual whenua as all agreements have been signed and payment made. Contracts are in place for asbestos testing and demolition of residential structures. DIA will oversee the completion of these contracts.
47. The Agreement with Maungaharuru-Tangitū Trust (MTT) for the Papakāinga (8 residential whenua) is very close to being signed. The offer was agreed and a draft Agreement was sent to MTT on 4 February 2025. It took some time before MTT was able to provide its initial response (end of March). As a precaution if it is not signed before 1 July, we have arranged for DIA to contract the two staff who have been dealing with this for a limited number of days in July so that people not previously involved will not have to pick it up.
48. NIFFco will continue to exercise its responsibilities supporting Councils with the implementation of the three Crown Funding Agreements (risk mitigation and local transport projects). NIFFco will also support marae trustees to implement the relocation of the seven marae.
49. The Recovery Settings and decision tools will be transferred to the Risk Governance Group in DPMC. The remaining work on Orders in Council will be coordinated by DPMC as will the completion of any accountability requirements from 2024/25.
50. The CE CR and CRU have completed comprehensive transition documents and drafted anticipated reports for DPMC to use. A full copy of its files is being transferred to DIA, with the originals remaining in DPMC. All existing contracts have been novated.
51. The only change at ministerial level from 1 July 2025 is that responsibility for the risk mitigation projects in Auckland, Tairāwhiti and Hawke's Bay will be overseen by Minister Watts as Minister for Climate Change. This is because the ongoing work is about risk mitigation rather than reinstatement of existing infrastructure and more closely aligns with that portfolio. If any changes are required to the risk mitigation part of the Crown Funding Agreements, this will also involve Minister Mitchell as the Minister responsible for the CFAs and Minister Willis if financial changes are needed.

Name	Position	Telephone	1 <sup>st</sup> Contact
Katrina Casey	Chief Executive Cyclone Recovery	s9(2)(a)	✓

Attachments:	Title	Security classification
<b>Attachment A:</b>	Total Crown Funding Allocated Directly to Councils as at 30 June 2025	<del>IN-CONFIDENCE</del> UNCLASSIFIED
<b>Attachment B:</b>	Status of key cyclone recovery implementation activities as at 30 June 2025	<del>IN-CONFIDENCE</del> UNCLASSIFIED

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Attachment A: Crown funding allocated directly to councils

Region	Council	Category 3 Property Buyout	Category 2 Risk Mitigation	Local Transport	LGFCIF Projects	LGFCIF - Other	Cyclone Recovery Capability fund	Regional and Local Recovery Structures	Total Crown Funding (\$ million)
<b>Auckland</b>	Auckland Council	624.093	142.907	110.000	2.000		6.859	2.760	888.620
<b>Auckland Total</b>		<b>624.093</b>	<b>142.907</b>	<b>110.000</b>	<b>2.000</b>		<b>6.859</b>	<b>2.760</b>	<b>888.620</b>
<b>Hawke's Bay</b>	Central Hawke's Bay District Council		3.457	11.000	0.600		0.700		15.757
	Hastings District Council	50.000		227.593			1.470		279.063
	Hawke's Bay Regional Council		209.043			20.000	2.680	7.350	239.073
	Napier City Council	5.000							5.000
	Wairoa District Council			14.000			0.380		14.380
	Remaining Category 3 funding	3.500							3.500
<b>Hawke's Bay Total</b>		<b>58.500</b>	<b>212.500</b>	<b>252.593</b>	<b>0.600</b>	<b>20.000</b>	<b>5.230</b>	<b>7.350</b>	<b>556.772</b>
<b>Tairāwhiti</b>	Gisborne District Council	15.000	64.000	125.000	16.200		5.241	3.760	229.201
<b>Tairāwhiti Total</b>		<b>15.000</b>	<b>64.000</b>	<b>125.000</b>	<b>16.200</b>		<b>5.241</b>	<b>3.760</b>	<b>229.201</b>
<b>Bay of Plenty</b>	Bay of Plenty Regional Council						0.513		0.513
	Tauranga City Council	1.700			3.862				5.562
	Western Bay of Plenty District Council						0.820		0.820
<b>Bay of Plenty Total</b>		<b>1.700</b>			<b>3.862</b>		<b>1.333</b>		<b>6.895</b>
<b>Manawatū-Whanganui</b>	Horizons Regional Council				4.285				4.285
	Manawatu District Council				1.675				1.675
	Tararua District Council						0.220	0.900	1.120
<b>Manawatū-Whanganui Total</b>					<b>5.960</b>		<b>0.220</b>	<b>0.900</b>	<b>7.080</b>
<b>Northland</b>	Far North District Council						0.220		0.220
	Kaipara District Council				3.080		0.597		3.677
	Northland Regional Council				7.865	1.037		0.660	9.562
	Whangarei District Council				3.000				3.000
<b>Northland Total</b>					<b>13.945</b>	<b>1.037</b>	<b>0.817</b>	<b>0.660</b>	<b>16.459</b>
<b>Waikato</b>	Thames-Coromandel District Council				1.300		0.300	0.900	2.500
	Waikato District Council				4.430			0.220	4.650
	Waikato Regional Council				3.325				3.325
<b>Waikato Total</b>					<b>9.055</b>		<b>0.300</b>	<b>1.120</b>	<b>10.475</b>
<b>Wellington (Wairarapa)</b>	Carterton District Council				0.350				0.350
	Greater Wellington Regional Council				4.400				4.400
	Masterton District Council	2.500			6.511			0.700	9.711
<b>Wellington (Wairarapa) Total</b>		<b>2.500</b>			<b>11.261</b>			<b>0.700</b>	<b>14.461</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>701.793</b>	<b>419.407</b>	<b>487.593</b>	<b>62.883</b>	<b>21.037</b>	<b>20.000</b>	<b>17.250</b>	<b>1,729.963</b>

Of the \$20 million Recovery Structures funding, \$2.680 was allocated to Toitu Tairawhiti Builtsmart Ltd, and \$0.7 million was unspent.

Of the \$100 million LGFCIF, \$62.883 m was allocated to projects; \$20 m was allocated to Hawke's Bay for sediment and debris removal; \$1.037 m to Northland Regional Council for a coordination centre; \$1.7 m to Tauranga City Council and \$2.5 m to Masterton District Council for Category 3 buyouts; \$3.898 m was transferred to top up the Capability funding (to \$20 m); the remaining approximately \$8 m is confirmed underspend and will be returned to the Centre, along with any further underspends once a final close out of the LGFCIF projects is done.

## Attachment B: Status of key cyclone recovery implementation activities as at 30 June 2025

Table B1: Status of Cyclone Recovery Implementation Activities with Councils

Region	Status	Comments
<b>Categorisation of impacted properties in regions that adopted FOSAL</b>		
All regions	Complete	Some minor re-categorisation may occur in Tairāwhiti and Auckland up until December 2025, particularly between 2P and 3.
<b>Category 3 Voluntary Buyouts under Crown Funding Agreements</b>		
Hawke's Bay, Tauranga, Masterton, Nelson	Complete	All properties settled and buyout programme closed.
Auckland	In progress	Due to complete December 2025. Final settlements may extend into early 2026.
Tairāwhiti	Complete except for 3 properties	An extension has been granted for 3 properties re-categorised in May 2025. Offers must be accepted by end of July and settled by end of September 2025.
<b>Risk Mitigation Projects funded in the Crown Funding Agreements</b>		
Auckland	On track	All 23 project PDPs approved. Work programme largely on track. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Complete</li> <li>• 22 In Progress:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 12 projects are in prework</li> <li>○ 10 in Construction</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Tairāwhiti	Cost and land access or acquisition issues for one project	
Hawke's Bay	Cost and land access or acquisition issues for four projects	
<b>Local Transport Projects in the Crown Funding Agreements</b>		
Auckland	On track	All 31 project PDPs approved. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Complete</li> <li>• 28 In Progress</li> <li>• 12 Due to be completed by 31 Dec 2025</li> </ul>
Tairāwhiti	On track	
Hawke's Bay	On track	
<b>Local Government Flood Resilience Co-investment Fund</b>		
15 councils impacted by NIWE	On track (with extensions for 12 projects).	34 projects in total. Delivery progress managed by NIFFCo. Of these: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 Complete</li> <li>• 9 forecasting completion by 30 June</li> <li>• 12 granted extensions between July and December 2025</li> </ul>

**Table B.2 Status of Whenua Māori and Marae Pathway at 30 June 2025**

Activity	Status	Comments
<b>Residential whenua Māori relocation packages</b>		
Relocation offers made	Complete	All offers for 24 whenua Māori properties have been accepted by owners
Relocation agreement signed	Substantially complete	22 of 23 agreements signed and paid out. The last agreement, to reestablish a papakāinga with 8 sets of owners, may be signed 30 June, but if not will be early July 2025
Demolition (including asbestos testing)	In progress	8 properties require Crown demolition. Three are completed. The other 5 have demolition contracts in place and work will be completed by 30 September 2025.
<b>Marae Relocation agreements</b>		
Relocation offers made	Complete	All seven marae have accepted offers.
Relationship and funding agreement signed	Complete	All seven marae have signed relationship and funding agreements with the Crown and NIFFCo. First funding instalment paid.
Project Delivery Plan (PDP)	In progress	One marae (Ōkuri) has completed its PDP and it has been approved by Ministers. NIFFCo is working with the other 6 marae to complete these so they can be submitted to joint Ministers of Finance and Emergency Management and Recovery over July and August 2025.