



28 August 2025



Reference: OIA-2025/26-0095

Tēnā koe 

Official Information Act request relating to emergency alerts and the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 4 August 2025. You requested:

“Please include these types of information (not limited to just these):

- 1. Assessments, analyses, evaluations, benchmarks, and audits that assess the system's alignment with the principles of the Treaty (such as research, participation/access, safeguarding/prevention, equality, independence, organisational safeguarding, choice), as well as passive institutional reviews and corrective strategies.*
- 2. Policies, operational frameworks, guidelines, processes/SOPs, standards that incorporate the ideas of the Treaty into the design, administration, and process of issuing notices (including content, language, purpose, accessibility, and approval processes).*
- 3. Communication/communication records with tribes, hapū, Maori groups or Te Bridge for the emergency notification system (e.g. meeting documents, letters, response statements, decisions, and the manner in which those responses were incorporated).*
- 4. Risk assessments, impact assessments, and benefit analyses that define the impacts on Maori communities (such as outreach, access, language, delivery time, mobile/technology connectivity, dependency, and the risks of too much coverage or too little coverage), and the manner in which these have been justified under Treaty principles.*
- 5. Training materials, skills standards, job role descriptions for employees/contractors who have the right to authorise and issue notices and speak about the obligations of the Treaty and about cultural capability.*

"information retained" covers final and draft documents, emails, attachments, application messages (if used for office work), notes, meeting minutes, data tables, data sets, designs/photographs, and information held by employers/contractors through NEMA (see OIA section 2(5)).

Search time: Please check from 1 January 2017 till the date of your reply. If it is contended that it will be repealed under section 18(f) (excessive collection/grouping), please contact me in advance (section 18B) so that it can be exempted/reduced. A document schedule can also help with reduction.”

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has a statutory responsibility to alert the public to tsunami risk. Every decision to alert the public is based on best advice available including scientific evidence, international best practice, the observable conditions, and the life safety risks.

Following a detailed search of our records management system I can confirm that no material has been identified that falls within the scope of your request. Accordingly, I am refusing your request in full under section 18(e) of the Act as the information requested does not exist.

Currently there is no specific requirement under the CDEM Act 2002 to engage with iwi Māori for emergency management planning. A recently released Cabinet paper shows the government intends to introduce a Bill which proposes to require CDEM Groups and the Director CDEM to better engage with iwi Maori, including to engage with iwi Māori when developing CDEM Group plans and the National CDEM Plan, and to have a Māori member on each Coordinating Executive Group to assist in developing and implementing the Group Plan.

The Cabinet Paper is available at: <https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/publications/proactive-release-eco-25-sub-0117-strengthening-emergency-management-legislative-reform>

We note that Emergency Mobile Alert is one of a number of channels that NEMA and other lead agencies use to issue information to communities, noting that no single mass communications channel is 100% failsafe, and some communities may have differing access to some forms of communications. For example, radio is a critical, widely available and highly resilient emergency information channel. I also note that we have recently brought Whakaata Māori and Te Whakaruruhau o Ngā Reo Irirangi Māori into NEMA's Memorandum of Understanding with Broadcasters. This is an agreement through which NEMA works closely with broadcasters to ensure critical emergency information is disseminated to communities.

Regarding question 5 of your request, there are no specific roles that are designated as authorised to approve these alerts. All NEMA staff are trained on Coordinated Incident Management Systems (CIMS) and every decision to utilise the Emergency Mobile Alert follows our protocol and training.

It would require substantial collation to provide all job descriptions that have been utilised since 1 January 2017. I note your request for us to consult with you if we were considering declining under section 18(f) of the Act and thank you for your openness to discussion. While we have not contacted you to refine this, we have determined to provide an excerpt from our job descriptions which relates to cultural competency. This is reproduced below for your reference and is contained in all job descriptions for NEMA.

NEMA recognises Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the continuing partnership between Māori and the Crown. We are committed to growing the role iwi Māori play in the emergency management system and integrating te ao Māori into emergency management.

Further, all public servants in New Zealand are expected to have a level of cultural competency and you can read more about this here: [Cultural competence - Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission](#)

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Nāku noa, nā



Sarah Holland
**Chief Advisor to the Chief Executive
National Emergency Management Agency**