

**INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL REVIEW OF THE CIVIL DEFENCE
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE TSUNAMI THREAT
FROM THE SAMOAN EARTHQUAKE ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2009**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background:

1. An earthquake exceeding magnitude 8.0 occurred in the Pacific Ocean south of Samoa early on the morning of 30 September 2009 (NZDI) and generated a tsunami that caused considerable damage to Samoa, American Samoa and remote islands in the Tonga group.
2. Civil defence emergency management (CDEM) authorities in New Zealand were alerted to the earthquake and the potential for a tsunami to strike parts of the New Zealand coastline. The National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC) was activated at 0725 on 30 September to manage the situation. The NCMC was stood down by 1700 that day.

Purpose:

3. The external review will identify the key issues in the public information management undertaken during the response operation, in order to identify those aspects that worked well and the areas that may need improvement.

Focus of the external review:

4. The external review is to report on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the public information component of the New Zealand response to the event, in terms of:
 - The development and distribution of public information messages by the NCMC.
 - Clarity, timeliness and content of warnings, advisories and messages.
 - Use of information and distribution of warnings, advisories and messages at the local level.
 - Distribution of the public information messages by the media.
 - Responding and managing requests for media information and the timeliness of media engagement.
 - Communications with Ministers and other Government agencies.

- The source of the expert advice relied upon by CDEM authorities.
 - Any other issues the external reviewer considers to be relevant to the handling of public information during the event.
5. The external review will identify lessons to be learned, good practices to be reinforced, and arrangements and processes that can be improved, including any capability investments that may be required.

Reviewers:

6. The review is to be undertaken by an independent external reviewer appointed by the Minister of Civil Defence.
7. The external review will draw on the internal report completed by the Director of CDEM, input from the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management, other business groups of the Department of Internal Affairs, government agencies, the CDEM sector and media organisations.

Deliverables:

8. A report is to be provided to the Minister of Civil Defence that includes advice, options and supporting background material, including a timeline to show the sequence of the response operation.

Timeline:

9. Throughout the external review process, the Director of CDEM will update the Minister of Civil Defence on the progress of the work as required.
10. The timeline for the external review will be determined following the appointment of the external reviewer.