

Building a robust and sustainable volunteer capability and capacity for emergency management in New Zealand

Options for establishing governance arrangements

1. Introduction

This paper seeks a mandate to progress, in more detail, a recommended option for establishing governance arrangements for response teams¹ in New Zealand.

The paper outlines the benefits of establishing governance arrangements and what should be achieved through any arrangements. It then describes the two parts needed in the governance arrangements and presents a recommended option, before describing the process for gaining a mandate to progress with the recommended option and next steps. The paper also provides a background and the current state of response teams before describing all the governance arrangements options that were explored.

1.1. Benefits of establishing governance arrangements

The key benefits of establishing robust and sustainable governance arrangements for volunteer capability and capacity for emergency management include:

- Strengthened buy-in and support from all stakeholders
- Stronger engagement and relationships across the emergency management system including between response teams (existing and future), tasking agencies, CDEM Groups and relevant national agencies.
- Assurance for tasking agencies in relation to their *Health and Safety at Work Act* obligations
- Ability to provide direction and guidance to response teams, improving national consistency and strengthening the capability of teams through the development of an accreditation framework that meets the needs of stakeholders.
- Better recognition and support of the capability and capacity response teams provide.

1.2. What we are trying to achieve

Developing and implementing governance arrangements will ensure a robust, organised and sustainable volunteer capability and capacity for emergency management. When exploring options for governance arrangements, the Steering Group considered the following factors:

- **Representation** from all key stakeholders including response teams, response team owners, CDEM Groups, NZ Police, Fire and Emergency NZ, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (MCDEM).
- Gain and maintain **buy-in from all** interested parties including response teams, response team owners, CDEM Groups, and other tasking agencies including NZ Police, Fire and Emergency NZ, Ministry of Health and MCDEM.

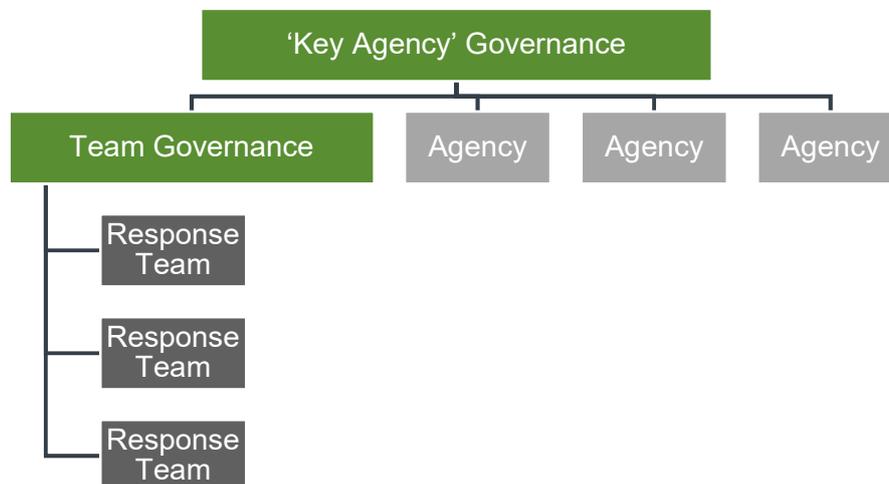
¹ The term 'response teams' is used throughout this document to refer to both existing New Zealand Response Teams (registered under the retired MCDEM-led registration system), and other teams that identify as response teams in that they intend to or are interested in, 'registering'/being accredited under a future accreditation framework.

- Enable **consistency** across the country while ensuring capability and capacity is fit for **local needs**
- Maintain **local identity** of teams - some teams are well known/recognised and valued in their communities.
- Ensure all relevant **legal requirements** such as health and safety and liability are met
- Provide an ability, through governance arrangements, to set **national policy** (both strategic and operational) and regulate it
- Provide strategic national direction
- Ensure governance arrangements allow for the oversight of a **national accreditation framework** (to be developed)
- Increase **understanding of capability and capacity** of teams.

2. Two parts of governance

In exploring the options for governance arrangements, it became clear that two distinct parts of governance arrangements were needed. For teams to be able to interact and build relationships with key agencies at a national level, they need to have some form of body that represents them and can speak on behalf of them. For this body to then be able to interact at the national level there is a need to have a 'key agency' governance level, where stakeholder representatives can work together.

In exploring options for governance arrangements, the Steering Group split options into these two parts; team governance and 'key agency' governance (as illustrated in the diagram below).



3. Recommended option

The Steering Group recommend the following option for establishing governance arrangements for response teams:

National Group/Board of Stakeholders

Plus

Non-government charitable organisation providing governance and support when needed

Plus

MCDEM based secretariat

The recommended option is to establish:

- A national group/board of stakeholders that consists of senior officials/representatives from key tasking agencies, CDEM Groups and Response team owners.
- A non-government charitable organisation that represent response teams and provide governance and support when needed. Any team, regardless of their ownership model could be a member of the organisation, with team owners holding voting rights. MCDEM would also be a member of the organisation. Members of the organisation will decide on who will represent them in the national group/board of stakeholders. Ownership of teams will remain as is (in other words, teams could be owned by local authorities, businesses, trusts etc) with health and safety responsibilities and liabilities remaining with the owner. The organisation could have the ability to support teams when necessary by either advocating or supporting them or if necessary, owning them.
- A MCDEM-based secretariat to support the national group/board of stakeholders and the non-government charitable organisation. The secretariat would also develop, implement and administer a national accreditation framework and develop national policy.

Further work is needed to understand and provide detail on:

- Responsibilities of, and working relationships between, the three governance components including, responsibility for developing and administering a national accreditation framework
- Form of the national group/board of stakeholders including whether it is a group, board, committee or other.
- Legal structure of the non-government charitable organisation, i.e. whether it is a charitable trust, or trust-based or society-based incorporated society
- How the non-government charitable organisation will be represented on the national group/board of stakeholders, i.e. number of response team owners that are part of the group, how they are elected etc.
- Structure of MCDEM-based secretariat
- Possible funding partnerships
- Incentives to strengthen relationships locally, regionally and nationally through governance arrangements, and the role of the Coordinating Executive Group to incentivise relationships between teams and tasking agencies and, capacity and capacity meeting local hazards and risks.

3.1. Funding partnerships

The recommended option would benefit from seeking funding partnerships with private organisations or businesses to fund specific areas, for example, national uniforms, particular

training or nationally consistent equipment. This should be considered when further developing and implementing the recommended option.

4. Gaining mandate

To gain this mandate to progress the recommended option for establishing governance arrangements in more detail the Steering Group have agreed to:

- Send the paper to:
 - Response team owners
 - Response team managers
 - Response team leaders
 - Chief Executives of team owners
 - Group Managers
 - Coordinating Executive Group Chairs
 - MCDEM
 - Fire and Emergency New Zealand
 - New Zealand Police
 - Ministry of Health
 - New Zealand Search and Rescue
 - Workshop attendees
- Encourage response team owners to discuss the recommended option with their Chief Executive, response team manager and team leaders.
- Ask response team owners to respond stating:
 - Whether they support or do not support the recommended option and particularly the response team governance element
 - If they do not support the option, they must state the reasons why and may provide an alternative option.
- Ask agencies to respond stating:
 - Whether they support or do not support the recommended option and particularly the key agency governance element
 - If they do not support the option, they must state the reasons why and may provide an alternative option.
- Ask Group Managers and Coordinating Executive Group Chairs to respond stating whether they support or do not support the recommended option. This could be a combined response if appropriate.
 - If they do not support the option, they must state the reasons why and may provide an alternative option.
- Team Managers and team leaders may respond stating whether they support or do not support the recommended option.

4.1. Threshold to progress with recommended option

To progress and develop the recommended option to a more detailed level, the Steering Group need:

- Two thirds of response team owners (who respond) to support the recommended option, and in particular, response team governance option.
- Key agencies to support the recommended option, and in particular, the key agency governance option.

5. Next steps

If there is a mandate to progress the recommended option (i.e. the threshold is met), the Steering Group will develop the recommended option in more detail including seeking advice on the structure of the charitable organisation, discussing the detail of the national group/board of stakeholders with agencies, and the MCDEM-based secretariat with MCDEM. A more detailed final option will then be circulated.

If the threshold to progress is not met, the Steering Group will review the responses and the reasons for a lack of support, and then discuss a way forward.

6. Background of response teams

Response teams have been part of the Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) structure in New Zealand for over 30 years. Their role in response increased following the strengthening of responsibilities at the local government level under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002.

Response teams consist of community volunteers supported by, and accountable to, a specific local authority or parent organisation. They can provide specific capability and capacity to support emergency services or the CDEM sector during a local emergency.

Over time, the variability in the way Response Teams have been established, operated and the capability they provide has increased. For example, some existing teams are owned by local authorities while others are charitable trusts. Similarly, functions, capability, activation arrangements and agreements with tasking agencies vary considerably around the country.

Recognising this variability along with a need to clarify response team arrangements and improve local, regional and national relationships, the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management (MCDEM) held two workshops in April and July 2018 to explore options for building a robust, organised and sustainable volunteer capability and capacity for emergency management. These workshops also recognised the changes in the CDEM system over recent years including:

- the introduction of the *Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017*, which added performing rescues, including high angle line rescues, rescues from collapsed buildings, rescues from confined spaces, swift water rescues, and animal rescues as a function Fire and Emergency New Zealand could assist in to the extent that they have the capability and capacity to do so,
- changes to the *Health and Safety at Work Act 2015*, which introduced the requirement for person conducting a business or undertaking, a PCBU, to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers, and that other persons are not put at risk by its work, and
- an increasing requirement on tasking agencies to do due diligence to ensure the safety of groups they task (under the *Health and Safety at Work Act 2015*).

Actions resulting from the July 2018 workshop included:

- Issuing a Joint Agency Intent Statement demonstrating key agencies support of the capacity volunteers provide to tasking agencies, emergency services, CDEM Groups and communities, as well as their commitment to building a national framework for a robust

and sustainable volunteer capability and capacity for emergency management in New Zealand. This statement was issued on 20 September 2018.

- Establishing a steering group to explore options for governance arrangements. This group was established in September 2018.
- Implementing governance arrangements
- Developing and implementing a national accreditation framework.

Given the considerable amount of work needed to explore and implement governance arrangements and develop and implement a national accreditation framework, it was decided to focus on establishing governance arrangements first as the agencies and groups involved in the governance will need to collectively develop the accreditation framework. Therefore the current focus, and that of this paper, is exploring and recommending options for robust and sustainable governance arrangements. Work on developing a national accreditation framework will begin once governance arrangements are in place.

7. Current state of Response Teams

The Steering Group conducted a survey of response teams in September 2018 to better understand the current state of response teams. Below is an overview of the results.

Registration status

- 16 teams are registered NZRT teams (registered under the retired MCDEM-led registration system)
- 13 teams identify as response teams but are not registered

Owning authority

- Two teams are owned by regional councils
- 15 are owned by territorial authorities (City or District Councils)
- Five teams are owned by charitable trusts or societies
- One team is owned by a business

Written service agreements

- One team has a written memorandum of understanding with private business for provision of services
- Three teams have written memorandums of understanding or service level agreements with local councils.

Membership

The number of team members ranges from 11 to 69 with an average of 39 members per team. The majority of teams differentiate between operational and non-operational members with an average of 19 operational and 4 non-operational members per team. Operational status is largely based on achievement of training courses/unit standards/qualifications. The process for joining a team commonly consists of Police vetting, competency and cultural fit interviews, skills and fitness assessment and a probationary period.

Funding

Teams are either funded through the territorial authority that owns them, seek money from charities, or fundraise through event such as providing first aid or logistical services. Estimated operating budgets for teams varies between \$7,000 and \$60,000 per year.

Activation

Teams are activated by a variety of people including CDEM Group Controller, CDEM Group Manager, CDEM Group duty officer, territorial authority duty emergency management officer. Some teams are also tasked by Fire and Emergency New Zealand and New Zealand Police. Few teams have memorandums of understanding, service level agreements or formal agreements with tasking agencies, although a number are working towards these.

Training

The majority of teams train on a weekly basis for between two and six hours. Formal training courses including unit standards are delivered through formal training providers.

Capabilities

Capabilities vary across the country but are largely based on NZQA unit standards.

Capabilities include:

- Storm response: for the majority of teams, capability is largely focused around storm response (23694) and height safety (17600) unit standards including temporary building repair, with a small number of teams trained in chainsaw operations.
- Flood response: focused largely around flood protection such as barriers and sandbagging, pump operations, and clean-up through NZQA unit standards
- USAR/Light rescue: the majority of teams have qualifications for locating and recovering surface and lightly trapped casualties from structural collapse, USAR awareness, general rescue, and the retired USAR Orange card – Responder level
- Rope rescue: five teams have specialist rope rescue capability, three have no rope rescue capability, and the remainder have limited capability largely focused on accessing a patient or team member.
- Swiftwater rescue: four teams hold advanced swiftwater rescue capabilities.
- Mass casualty: many teams hold NZQA unit standard ‘Manage mass casualty triage in a civil defence and emergency management emergency’.
- Medical: all teams have first aid training as a core skill for members and most teams have Pre-hospital Emergency Care trained members.
- Incident management: majority of teams have CIMS 2 and 4 qualifications with some able to support Emergency Operations Centres.
- Field support: some teams have capability to support field operations with advanced communication support, people movement and cordon management, and all are able to support agencies in the field by providing people power.
- Welfare: most teams have basis capabilities in welfare such as setting up and supporting welfare centres, welfare checks and needs assessment.
- Other capabilities: some teams are capable of supporting at rural fire incidents including pumping, and aerial operations, urban and rural based LandSAR operations, EOC supplementary staff and limited animal rescue.

8. The name

The name *New Zealand Response Team* was introduced through the original registration process. It reflected the purpose of teams at the time which was to provide an emergency response capability, to support emergency services or CDEM Groups. As the capabilities of emergency services and CDEM Groups have changed over time along with the primary

capabilities of teams, the Steering Group believe there is a need to consider the name of teams in the future to ensure it reflects the ongoing direction and capability of teams, both existing and new.

9. Governance arrangements options explored

The following options were explored for building robust, organised and sustainable governance arrangements.

9.1. Key agency governance

One option was explored for key agency governance.

9.1.1. National Group/Board of Stakeholders

This option is to establish a national group/board of stakeholders. The group will be chaired by the Director CDEM and consist of senior officials/representatives from key tasking agencies, CDEM Groups and the response team governance body.

Membership

Members of the group will consist of senior officials/representatives of:

- Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management
- Fire & Emergency New Zealand
- New Zealand Police
- Ministry of Health
- New Zealand Search and Rescue
- CDEM Group Managers
- Response Team Governance

Members from the first five agencies will be elected by their agency. A representative of CDEM Group Managers will be nominated by the National Emergency Management Development Group, and the 'Response Team Governance' will elect representative response team owner/s to be a member of the group. Members will be appointed for their interest and expertise in emergency management, and search and rescue. They will represent their respective agency or group (i.e. CDEM Group Managers or Response Team Governance), and need to be self-funded for meetings and follow up work.

Responsibilities

The national group/board of stakeholders will be responsible for:

- Developing a clear national vision and strategy with Response Team Governance
- Providing direction and advice to Response Team Governance including in relation to operational policy (i.e. turning policy into practice) developed by Response Team Governance
- Providing direction, and where appropriate, develop elements of a national accreditation framework
- Setting national policy (through the appropriate agency), especially in relation to an accreditation framework
- Oversight of the performance and activities of teams
- Oversight of any committees or sub-groups the Group may set up

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The national group/board of stakeholders may set up any committees or sub-groups to address particular issues. These committees or sub-groups may operate continuously and in conjunction with the Group, or be set up on an ad-hoc basis to address specific issues such as capability standards, and health and safety policy. Committees and sub-groups will allow issues to be explored in detail and decisions to be reached.

Decision-making

Members of the national group/board of stakeholders will be able (have the mandate) to make decisions on behalf of the agency or group they represent. The national group/board of stakeholders will consider the national picture when making decisions.

Implementation

The following will be needed to implement this option:

- Development and approval of a Terms of Reference detailing the national group/board of stakeholders role and responsibilities and how they will operate
- Formal commitment from stakeholders of ongoing involvement and support of the national group/board of stakeholders
- Identification, and appointment of members
- Clarity of immediate and future work programme of the national group/board of stakeholders, including establishment of any sub-committees and what agency/group will be responsible for the work (see risks below)
- Inaugural meeting of the national group/board of stakeholders

Benefits

Benefits of this option include:

- The national group/board of stakeholders will provide a national strategic view, promoting team and national consistency, as well as strengthening relationships with tasking agencies.
- The national group/board of stakeholders will be responsible to a wide range of stakeholders and will allow team and framework performance to be monitored and evaluated.
- Increased buy-in and engagement from stakeholders and tasking agencies.
- Stronger relationships and easier, open communication between stakeholders.
- As well as providing a strategic governance role, the national group/board of stakeholders will advise on operational policy (i.e. how policy is implemented on the ground), improving national consistency.
- The national group/board of stakeholders will develop and oversee the national accreditation framework (once developed)

Risks

Risks of this option include:

- The national group/board of stakeholders itself will have no legal mandate to set, regulate or enforce policy. The national group/board of stakeholders will need to work through the member agencies and groups to set regulation, policy, and standards.
- The national group/board of stakeholders will not be a 'working' group. Any work identified as necessary will need to be done within the member agencies and groups or through committees or sub-groups set up by the national group/board of stakeholders. Agencies could provide staff to be part of these.

Overall assessment

This option will enable representatives from key stakeholders to provide national strategic direction and guidance to ensure national consistency, as well as strengthening relationships between tasking agencies and response teams.

9.2. Team Governance Options

A range of options were explored for team governance including status quo, a company, a support office, non-government organisation and MCDEM-based secretariat.

9.2.1. Status quo

Maintain the status quo, relying on collaboration and relationships and establish a volunteer-based steering group to represent response teams.

Overall assessment

This option was disregarded because it relies on collaboration, relationships and good will of volunteers to maintain and does not provide a formal structure to represent response teams.

9.2.2. A company

A company or business is a separate legal entity with one or more owners. A company normally keeps control and decision-making in the hands of just a few people and provides those people with limited personal liability. A company can do many of the same things as an actual person — hold property in its own name, enter contracts, sue and be sued.

Five company types were explored:

- limited liability companies
- cooperative companies
- unlimited companies
- sole trader
- partnership

Overall assessment

All company types were disregarded because:

- the Response Team Governance will not exist to make an income
- Teams could not be shareholders of a company – shareholders would have to be individuals from teams exposing them to liabilities and legal responsibilities.

9.2.3. Support office - NZSAR Secretariat-type model

A 'support office' of paid full-time staff, similar to the NZSAR Secretariat, could assist and support response teams through considering policy, and providing assurance to the Key Agency Governance. The support office would be funded by a club-funding model from response team owners. The required funds to operate the office would be determined and split among response team owners.

Current response team ownership would be retained (e.g. territorial authorities or charitable trusts) however teams would be required to comply with national policies and rules set by the support office.

Overall assessment

This option was disregarded because the costs of implementing and operating this model would be very costly for owners and funding could vary and be unsustainable with teams establishing and disestablishing.

9.2.4. Non-Government Organisation – Governance only

A non-government charitable organisation (either an incorporated society or a charitable trust) would provide governance and represent response teams. Response team ownership would be retained and owners would pay a subscription to be part of the society or trust.

A Management Committee, Trust Board or Trustees would focus on strategic governance of the society or trust, and a leadership team, or regional leaderships teams (e.g. northern, central and southern) could be tasked with delivering on the national vision and strategy as well as any other areas of work required from the Management Committee, Trust Board or Trustees.

Implementation

Implementation differs slightly depending on if an incorporated society (Incorporated Societies Act 1908) or a charitable trust (Charitable Trusts Act 1957) is established.

For an incorporated society:

- Draft a set of organisation rules which is then taken to the first meeting.
- Call a meeting of at least 15 people willing to be the founding members. At this meeting the group needs to:
 - approve the rules
 - complete the application for incorporation documents
 - appoint a chairperson, secretary, treasurer and management committee
 - set a membership fee (or agree not to have one).
- Complete documentation and send to the Companies Office.

For a charitable trust:

- Decide whether it will be society-based or trust-based.
- Decide who will be the trustees or board members and how the trust or society will operate.
- Draft a trust deed (trust-based) or constitution (society-based) that includes the aims, powers and rules of the trust or board.
- Call a meeting of the trustees or trust board to:
 - approve the trust deed (trust-based) or rules (society-based)
 - approve the application for incorporation documents, including the registered office and statutory declaration
 - elect a secretary, treasurer and management committee (for a society).

Benefits

Benefits of this option include:

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- One national body providing the governance and direction for all teams allowing better cohesion between teams and promoting work together, skills transfer and sharing of lessons learnt
- A democratic, membership-based governance structure.
- Charitable status will allow the charitable organisation to benefit from income tax exemptions and provide access to a range of grants, donations, contracts, and loans and an ability to leveraging off supply agreements that provide discounts.
- A subscription fee from member teams would contribute to funding administration of the charitable organisation.
- The charitable organisation would represent response teams in the key agency governance level and could advocate for teams where appropriate.
- The charitable organisation would be able to set its own internal policy and policy that teams need to adhere too to be a member.

Risks

Risks of this option include:

- The charitable organisation could work in isolation from tasking agencies, and pursue misaligned visions, which could reduce buy-in and support from tasking agencies.
- It could be difficult to maintain the 15 members required in an incorporated society when relying on volunteers.
- Governance of the charitable organisation could change annually through an annual general meeting process, which could lead to short-term decision-making and limited succession planning.
- Governance and control of the charitable organisation would sit with the trustees/committee which could lead to:
 - a lack of accountability to the wider membership base
 - the organisation becoming controlled and governed 'by a few' dominating or vocal people and smaller or quieter teams could feel isolated.
- Teams would not be supported financial by the charitable organisation.
- The charitable organisation will have no legal mandate to set, regulate, or enforce national policy, regulation, or standards.
- Any work identified as necessary will need to be done by volunteers (either as part of a leadership team or other groups set up). This could slow progress towards achieving a national vision.

Overall assessment

This option provides a national body that can represent response teams at the key agency governance level. It would require either significant funding to employ staff to progress a work programme or be considered in combination with another option.

9.2.5. Non-Government Organisation – Owning authority

A non-government charitable organisation (either an incorporated society or a charitable trust) would own response teams.

Implementation

Refer to Non-Government Organisation - Governance only

Benefits

Benefits of this option include:

- One national body providing the governance and direction for all teams allowing better cohesion between teams and promoting work together, skills transfer and sharing of lessons learnt
- A democratic, membership-based governance structure.
- Charitable status will allow the charitable organisation to benefit from income tax exemptions and provide access to a range of grants, donations, contracts, and loans and an ability to leveraging off supply agreements that provide discounts.
- A subscription fee from member teams would contribute to funding administration of the charitable organisation.
- The charitable organisation would own teams taking the financial responsibility and day-to-day administration off existing owners.

Risks

Risks of this option include:

- Teams will no longer be self-governing or governed locally.
- Owning all teams would be a significant burden on the charitable organisation and expose it to significant legal responsibilities and risks.
- The charitable organisation would not be able to own all response teams, for example, teams owned by businesses or other national charitable organisations.

Overall assessment

This option was disregarded because of the significant legal responsibilities and risks the charitable organisation would be exposed to as well as the costs involved in operating the organisation.

9.2.6. Non-Government Organisation – Governance plus support when needed

A non-government charitable organisation (either an incorporated society or a charitable trust) provide governance and represents response teams but also have the ability to support teams when necessary through advocacy, support or ownership. Response team ownership would be retained and owners would pay a subscription to be part of the charitable organisation.

Implementation

Refer to Non-Government Organisation - Governance only

Benefits

Benefits of this option include:

- One national body providing the governance and direction for all teams allowing better cohesion between teams and promoting work together, skills transfer and sharing of lessons learnt
- A democratic, membership-based governance structure.
- Charitable status will allow the charitable organisation to benefit from income tax exemptions and provide access to a range of grants, donations, contracts, and loans and an ability to leveraging off supply agreements that provide discounts.

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- A subscription fee from member teams would contribute to funding administration of the charitable organisation.
- The charitable organisation would represent response teams in the key agency governance level and could advocate for teams where appropriate.
- The charitable organisation would be able to set its own internal policy and policy that teams need to adhere to to be a member.
- The charitable organisation would have the ability to support teams when necessary by either advocating or supporting them or if necessary, own them. Ownership would be a last resort where there is an agreed need for a team but one cannot be owned by another organisation or it is financial unsustainable.

Risks

Risks of this option include:

- The charitable organisation could working in isolation from tasking agencies, and pursue misaligned visions, which could reduce buy-in and support from tasking agencies.
- It could be difficult to maintain the 15 members required in an incorporated society when relying on volunteers.
- Governance of the charitable organisation could change annually through an annual general meeting process, which could lead to short-term decision-making and limited succession planning.
- Governance and control of the charitable organisation would sit with the trustees/committee which could lead to:
 - a lack of accountability to the wider membership base
 - the organisation becoming controlled and governed 'by a few' dominating or vocal people and smaller or quieter teams could feel isolated.
- The charitable organisation will have no legal mandate to set, regulate, or enforce national policy, regulation, or standards.
- Any work identified as necessary will need to be done by volunteers (either as part of a leadership team or other groups set up). This could slow progress towards achieving a national vision.

Overall assessment

This option provides a national body that can represent response teams at the key agency governance level with an ability to support teams when necessary through advocacy, support or ownership. It would require either significant funding to employ staff to progress a work programme or be considered in combination with another option.

9.2.7. MCDEM-based secretariat

A secretariat sitting in MCDEM to support a response team governance body, a national group/board of stakeholders and administer the national framework. The current ownership model would be retained with stronger ties and consistency between teams, owners, CDEM Groups, and tasking agencies.

The secretariat would be responsible for:

- Tracking progress towards achieving the national vision and strategy
- Supporting national policy development, especially in relation to health and safety standards and an accreditation framework

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- Developing, implementing and administering a national accreditation framework including an audit function (if this is agreed through the development of the framework)
- Oversight of the performance and activities of teams
- Administration of the national group/board of stakeholders
- Oversight of any committees the secretariat may set up

Implementation

Implementation of this option is connected to the Emergency Management System Reform process. The reform provides an opportunity to explore establishing a secretariat in MCDEM. The following will be needed to implement for this option:

- Advice into decisions related to strengthen the national leadership of the emergency management system in the Emergency Management System Reform process
- Establishment of a new team in MCDEM including recruitment
- Clarity of immediate and future work programme of the secretariat.

Benefits

Benefits of this option include:

- The secretariat would have legislative mandate (through Director CDEM powers) and an ability to develop national policy and regulate to achieve national consistency, and ensure capability and capacity is based on local hazards.
- Clear national reporting framework allowing teams, framework performance, and progress towards the national vision to be monitored, evaluated and reported.
- The secretariat would be integrated into the established CDEM system, with strong ties to CDEM Groups and tasking agencies.
- A dedicated secretariat focused on a work programme, allowing work and the national vision to be progressed.
- Potential to leverage existing purchasing contracts (through MCDEM).
- Ability of all tasking agencies and teams to inform the work of the secretariat.

Risks

Risks of this option include:

- This option is tied to the Emergency Management System Reform (EMSR) and decisions related to strengthen the national leadership of the emergency management system. Decisions on staffing levels would be a part of the EMSR decisions. An interim solution may need to be used until decisions are made regarding a new National Emergency Management Agency.
- Changes to government priorities could affect sustainability of the secretariat. This is a very low risk.

Overall assessment

This option provides a dedicated resource to support a both key agency governance level and response team governance level, as well as administer the national framework. It would best work if considered in combination with another option.