

N3-4 GD National Commander's Group response guide

This document outlines how the National Commander's Group (NCG) may be activated, and the responsibilities of the group in response to the following types of events/occurrences:

- 4th alarm or higher fire events and K41 notifications for fire fatalities
- national Civil Defence notification or response
- national tsunami response
- National Counter Terrorism Plan (NCTP) activation
- National Health Emergency Plan (NCHEP) activation
- significant domestic or international event necessitating the activation of ODESC or a Watch Group
- activation of national media management arrangements
- firefighter fatality or serious injury.

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Record of amendments

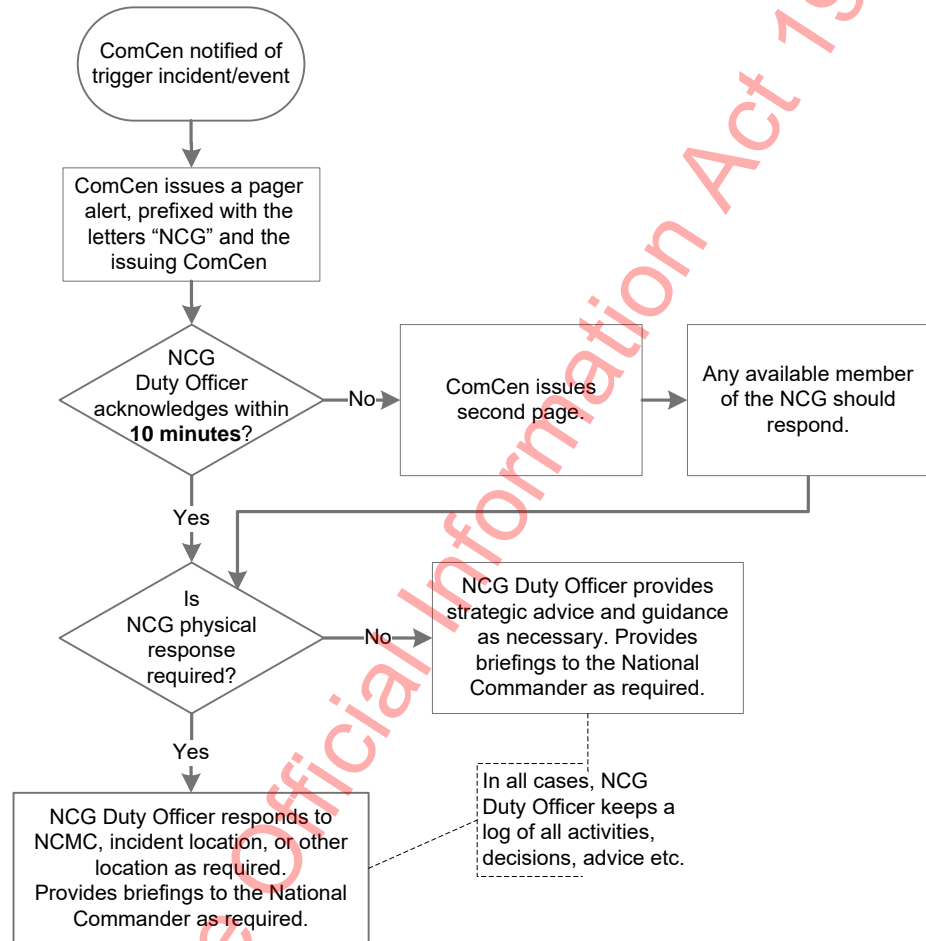
Date	Brief description of amendment
May 2013	Clarification that K41 notifications are for fire fatalities only (pg 1 and 3). Pg1 wording changed to "firefighter fatality or serious injury".

Activation

NCG activation

NCG activation process

The diagram below shows how the National Commander's Group (NCG) is activated, following a trigger incident or event.



NCMC and NCC activation

NCMC activation

If the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC) is activated, the NCG Duty Officer will be notified via their pager and will:

- advise the National Commander of the NCMC activation
- determine what role is required by the NZFS at the NCMC
- ensure that a suitably authorised NZFS officer takes up the position of NZFS Liaison at the NCMC if required.

Further information on access to and use of the NCMC is found in the *NZFS NCMC User Guide*. All members of the NCG are to be familiar with this guide and have access to it at all times whilst on duty.

NCC activation

If the National Commander or Deputy National Commander determines that the National Coordination Centre (NCC) is required for an incident/event, they will appoint a National Coordinator. This may be a member of the NCG.

Refer to *M5 PL National Response Plan* and *M1-4 POP Operations Centres* for more information on this role and the NCC.

4th alarm or greater fire events and K41 notifications

Introduction

This section outlines the role of the NCG with regard to 4th alarm or greater fire events and K41 notifications for fire fatalities.

Role of the NCG

These events are managed using Area and Regional resources. The role of the NCG is to:

- contact the issuing COMCEN and speak to the Shift Supervisor, to:
 - capture key details
 - confirm whether Area/Regional Executive Officer(s) are in attendance/aware of the incident
 - consider contacting Area/Regional Executive Officer(s)
 - offer to assist in the coordination of inter-Regional support (where necessary)
 - consider whether the National Commander needs to be appraised of the incident (if out of hours, can it wait until the next working day?)
 - consider wider community and organisational implications (e.g. significant political/media interest in the event).
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National Civil Defence notification or response

Introduction	This section outlines the role of the NCG with regard to national Civil Defence advisories, alerts, warnings and responses.
NZFS responsibilities	<p>NZFS Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) roles and responsibilities are detailed in M4-1 GD NZFS Guide to civil defence emergency management.</p> <p>NZFS organisational responsibilities can be summarised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• firefighting - to control, contain, and extinguish fires• containment of releases and spillages of hazardous substances• Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)• limitation of damage - salvage of essential material from endangered locations• redistribution of water for specific needs - preservation of health and hygiene in stricken areas.
Role of the NCG	<p>On notification of a Civil Defence event, the role of the NCG is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• contact the issuing COMCEN and speak to the Shift Supervisor to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– capture key details– confirm the MCDEM point of contact and contact details (usually this is the MCDEM Duty Officer)• provide NZFS advice and support to the CDEM National Controller as required, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– advice on NZFS areas of operations– provision of DSI (data and spatial information) support– general staff support (e.g. staff to support MCDEM desk functions)• deploy to the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC) if required• activate and coordinate other NZFS resources as required• issue internal alerts and warnings where required.
NCMC support	<p>If MCDEM activates the NCMC, the NZFS may be asked to provide operational support to the NCMC (administrative and operational personnel).</p> <p>The NCG representative at the NCMC will consider requests on a case by case basis, and arrange to provide this support wherever possible.</p>
USAR support	<p>The NCG will forward any request to activate USAR to the NZ USAR Management Team (NZ-UMT).</p> <p>This is done by contacting Central COMCEN and asking them to alert the USAR Duty Officer.</p>

National tsunami response

Introduction This section details the initial activities required in responding to the a tsunami notification (advisory, warning, or threat).

Introduction New Zealand is a member of the Pacific Tsunami Warning System (PTWS) (an international system under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO) designed to provide timely and effective information and warnings about tsunamis generated in the Pacific Basin.

In New Zealand the system is complemented by GNS Science geological hazards and sea level monitoring.

The Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (MCDEM) is the agency responsible for disseminating national tsunami advisories and warnings to the communities of New Zealand.

National Warning System MCDEM uses the National Warning System (NWS) to disseminate official tsunami notifications in the form of national advisories and warnings on a 24/7 basis. MCDEM is supported in this function by the NZFS Communication Centres.

NCG responsibilities The National Commander's Group is responsible for:

- receiving pager and email notification of a tsunami advisory, alert or warning from MCDEM (the email will provide specific detail regarding the actual or potential event)
- assessing the information
- making decisions on appropriate response options, which may include:
 - no action required, or
 - issuing a national NZFS advisory, warning or cancellation.

NCG Duty Officer actions When a MCDEM tsunami notification is received by the NCG Duty Officer, they will:

1. Acknowledge the alerts.
2. If the information is unclear, or further advice is required, contact the MCDEM Duty Officer.
3. Assess the information received.
4. Determine the appropriate response. This could be to:
 - take no further action, or
 - issue one or more of the following notifications by pager alert and email:

Notification type	Code	Message
National Warning	Red	Tsunami Threat
National Advisory	Amber	Potential Tsunami Threat
National Advisory	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No Tsunami Threat, or• Cancellation of Advisory/ Warning

NCG Duty Officer actions (continued)

5. If issuing a tsunami notification, proceed as follows:
- contact [REDACTED] and ask to speak to [REDACTED] (NCG Duty Officer may not have access to a computer when first notified)
 - request that a National Advisory/Warning (include colour code) be:
 - o paged to the necessary Regions via the National Warning Pager RICs
 - o emailed to Regions via the National Fire Warning email account nationalfirewarnings@fire.org.nz.
6. Follow up any **Amber** or **Red** notifications sent as follows:

Notification type sent	Code	Follow up with
National Advisory	Amber	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a “National Warning – Code Red – Tsunami Threat” or <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a cancellation, once more information is known.
National Warning	Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• hourly (or more frequently if required) updates, then• a cancellation message, once it has been determined that there is no further threat.

Tsunami situation reports

Once the NCG Duty Officer has established IT and communications, they are also responsible for issuing Situation Reports and updates via email, as required.

Additional information

Additional information can be found in *M4-2 National Tsunami Alert Plan*.

NZFS functions

The NZFS may be required to provide the following functions during a counter terrorism incident:

- ODESC / Watch Group representation
- Fire Incident coordinator
- Fire Liaison Officer(s) within the Police EOC/NCMC
- Fire Liaison Officer(s) within the Police EOC/NCMC CT Media Centre
- Analyst within the Joint Intelligence Group or Scientific Technical Advisory Committee if requested
- Fire Liaison Officer(s) at scene/Police District Headquarters.

Some of these functions may be undertaken by the same individual, depending on workload.

Temporary clearance to a higher level

The NZFS National Commander/Chief Executive can authorise temporary access to material one level higher in the event of an emergency. Temporary clearance **will only be issued when necessary** and for a defined period of time on a one-level up basis as follows:

Staff who have undergone NZ SIS vetting, and have been granted routine access to...	<u>can be granted temporary clearance to access...</u>
CONFIDENTIAL (this also covers RESTRICTED) material	SECRET material
SECRET material	TOP SECRET material

The NCMC during terrorist incident response**Access**

All members of the NCG are registered with DPMC and the NZ Police as requiring access to the NCMC during the response to a terrorist incident.

The NCG Duty Officer will be asked by DPMC and the Police to confirm the names of the NZFS personnel required in the NCMC (being registered as an official representative of the NCG and/or carrying a parliamentary identity card does not guarantee access).

Electronic equipment

If responding to a terrorist or other security related event, you must not take any electronic items beyond the reception desk of the NCMC, including:

- mobile / smart phones / pagers
- USB or similar data storage device
- audio / visual recording media
- MP3 / MP4 devices or similar
- laptops.

If unsure whether something is appropriate for the NCMC, check with the NCMC reception team.

Secure communications

Introduction

A terrorist event is likely to generate a large number of notifications to the NCG, including phone calls, emails, texts and pages from the sector and from other agencies. Whilst elements of the incident will already be public, there will still be a need to utilise secure communications and security cleared staff as far as is possible.

Broadly speaking, there will be a much higher imperative to utilise secure communications during an intelligence-led incident than during the response to an incident that has already occurred.

Unclassified systems

[Redacted]

Classified systems

[Redacted]

Registry and handling of data

[Redacted]

Any data downloaded by the NZFS will either need to be read at the laptop, or disseminated to officials as appropriate, in compliance with the Security in the Government Sector Guidelines and the NZFS Security Policy.

[Redacted]

National health emergency

Introduction	This section details the initial activities required in responding to the activation of the National Health Emergency Plan.
NCG role	<p>The NCG will be alerted by the Ministry of Health Duty Officer, and is responsible for providing national Fire Service coordination and support to the lead agency in responding to a health emergency.</p> <p>Examples of health emergencies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• pandemics• mass fatalities• communicable diseases outbreak• actual or threatened release of a biological material.
NHCC	<p>The National Health Coordination Centre (NHCC) is located in No 1 The Terrace.</p> <p>The national health duty officer can be contacted via a 24hr duty number [REDACTED]</p>

ODESC / Watch Group activation

NCG role	<p>ODESC and Watch Groups are an integral part of the NZ national crisis coordination system.</p> <p>The NCG will be alerted by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) of ODESC and Watch Group meetings where NZFS representation is required.</p>
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Firefighter injury/death

Introduction	<p>This section details the initial activities required in responding to the notification of a firefighter injury or death.</p> <p>The NZFS Safety and Wellbeing Manual contains information about the protocols around contacting next of kin in the case of firefighter injury or death, as well as an emergency contact matrix.</p>
Firefighter injury	The NCG Duty Officer will contact the Comcen and ascertain the severity of the the accident. If minor then no further action required. If severe, then contact the relevant Fire Region Manager and discuss if any support needed from NHQ.
Firefighter death	<p>The NCG Duty Officer will contact the the relevant Fire Region Manager and discuss the level of support required from NHQ.</p> <p>If the death occurred on duty and is attracting significant media attention consider activating the National Coordination Centre (NCC) to provide support.</p>

Media management

NZFS policy and procedure

The NZFS policy *M1-1 POP Media at Incidents* applies to all media interactions during and following NZFS attendance at an incident.

The document *M1-1 SOP Media at incidents procedure* provides steps for media management at incidents.

National media support

Depending on the nature of the incident, the NCG should consider whether direct national support for media management is required, either during or after an incident.

Options include:

- national media interviews
 - press release
 - deployment of additional NZFS media support personnel
 - activation of agreements with NZ Police to utilise their media support staff.
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