

# Emergency Management Capacity Building: Case of New Zealand

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## **Abstract:**

With a global concern for climate change, vulnerability to natural hazards and environmental and man-made disasters, there is an increasing need for knowledge about emergency and disaster management, as well as an increasing demand for skilled and competent emergency managers and researchers in the disaster management field.

New Zealand is an island nation in the southwest Pacific. Its unique ecosystems evolved over millions of years in isolation from other land masses. Due to its unique geographical setting and landscape New Zealand has been shaped by earthquakes, volcanoes, storms, and glaciers and it has been popular as a natural incubator for disaster management. In New Zealand, The National Civil Defence Emergency Management Strategy sets the overall direction for the emergency and disaster management in the country. It has a vision: Resilient New Zealand: communities understanding and managing their hazards. This strategy also sets out principles and national level goals and objectives to be achieved collectively as a nation to better manage catastrophes and crisis. More importantly, towards achieving its vision, this strategy also highlights the crucial need for practice professionals working in allied fields to have specific knowledge of emergency management. New Zealand's Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Act 2002 directs all the related organisations and stakeholders to take steps to develop and maintain an effective level of capability across the 4Rs of reduction, readiness, response and recovery (comprehensive emergency management). Comprehensive emergency management in New Zealand is an all-hazards, all-risks, multi-agency, integrated, and community-focused approach. The CDEM Competency Framework (the Framework) has been developed as a strategic framework of key competencies required in order to successfully perform the functions of emergency and disaster management in New Zealand. It also promotes the professionalization of emergency management by recognising professional and personal development needs of emergency and disaster management stakeholders. Alongside these social and political spaces, Secondary and Tertiary institutes in New Zealand are highly committed to producing relevant and robust academic and professional qualifications. These qualifications are ranging from Undergraduate, Postgraduate and PhD qualifications to various other short and medium term professional development programs supported by the mainstream emergency management organizations and institutes.