

Emergency waste management at MFE

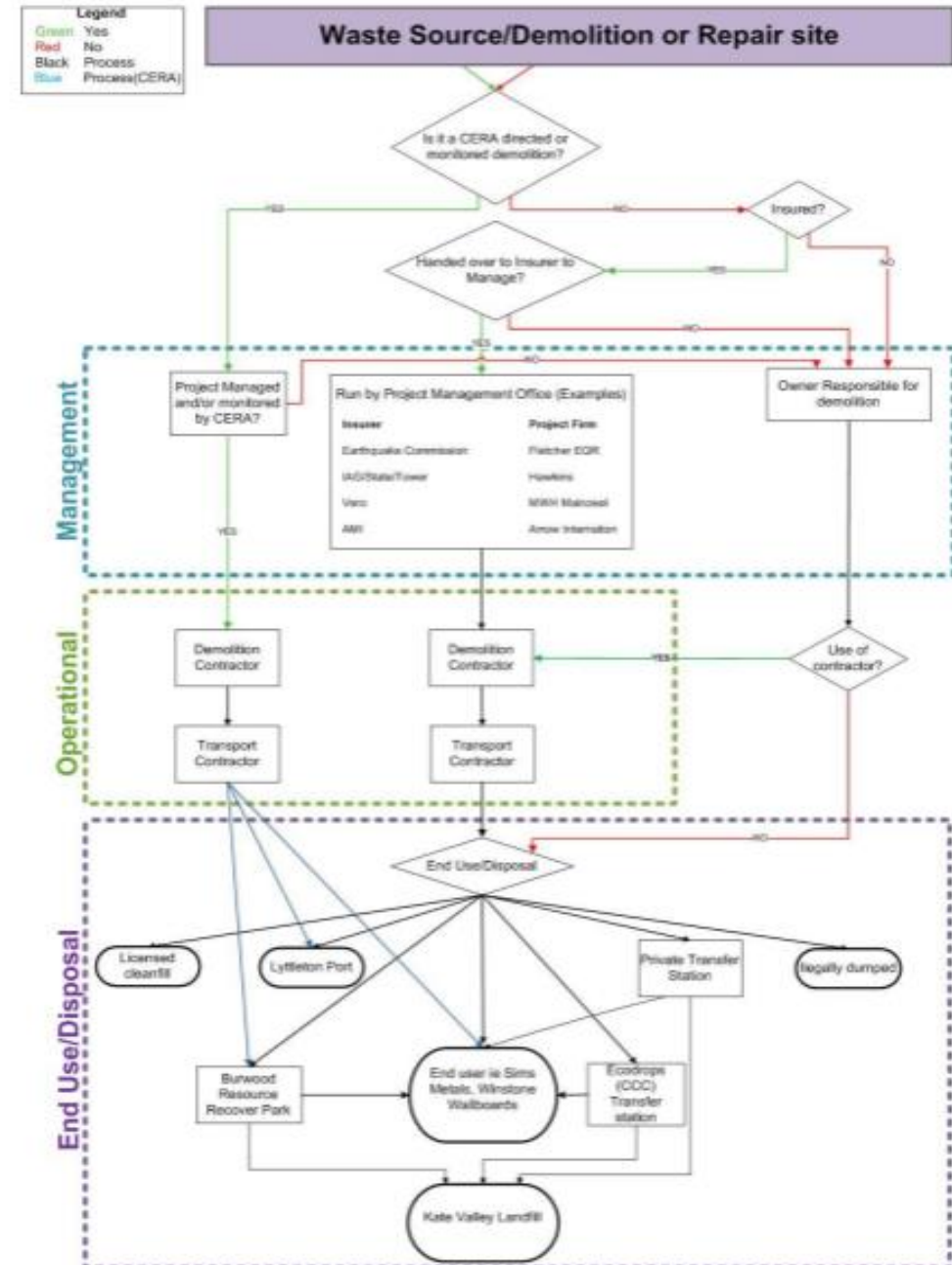
How the Ministry's role has evolved over the last 20 Years.

Christchurch Earthquakes

September 2010 / February 2011

- National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) led response and recovery
- Order in Council (OIC) and funding for Burwood resource recovery Park
- OIC for Port Lyttleton reclamation
- WMF funding for household hazardous waste management

Emergency waste management decision tree



- Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) led response and recovery.
- MFE staff supported MNZ with communications and recovery
- Coordinated and funded the development of the environmental recovery plan

MV Rena

October 2011



Rena on Otaiti (Astrolabe Reef).
Source: Maritime New Zealand.

Kaikoura Earthquakes

November 2016



Landslides at Ohau Point. Source GeoNet

- Response and recovery actions led by NEMA
- **OIC waste management**
 - Reclaimed land
 - Temporary depots, storage
 - Excavation and filling
 - Contaminated land management
- **Waste Minimisation Fund**
 - Community assistance
 - Repair and upgrade of waste infrastructure
 - Asbestos surveys
 - Hazardous substance management

COVID

2020-2021

- Ministry of Health led response
- Working with central government to allow waste contractors to operate during lockdowns
- COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF)
- Fast-track Consenting



Cyclone Gabrielle

February 2023



- **NEMA led** response and recovery
- Working with NEMA to get **funding for emergency waste collections and disposal**
- Working with DIA and MPI on **funding for debris clearance** from agricultural land and woody debris from rivers and beaches
- **OIC under the RMA** for open burning, landfills and temporary storage/sorting sites
- **OICs under the WMA** for extensions to waste minimisation plan development
- **WMF Funding** for increased waste management infrastructure

2026 severe weather events

Jan – April 2026

Local CDEM Group coordinating response and recover actions.

Working with Council on the need for OICs

Supporting applications to Emergency Waste Fund

Reflections

- No statutory responsibilities in emergencies
- A supporting role helping NEMA, lead agencies and Councils
- Develop Orders in Council
- Funding emergency waste management
- Limited resources for response and recovery actions

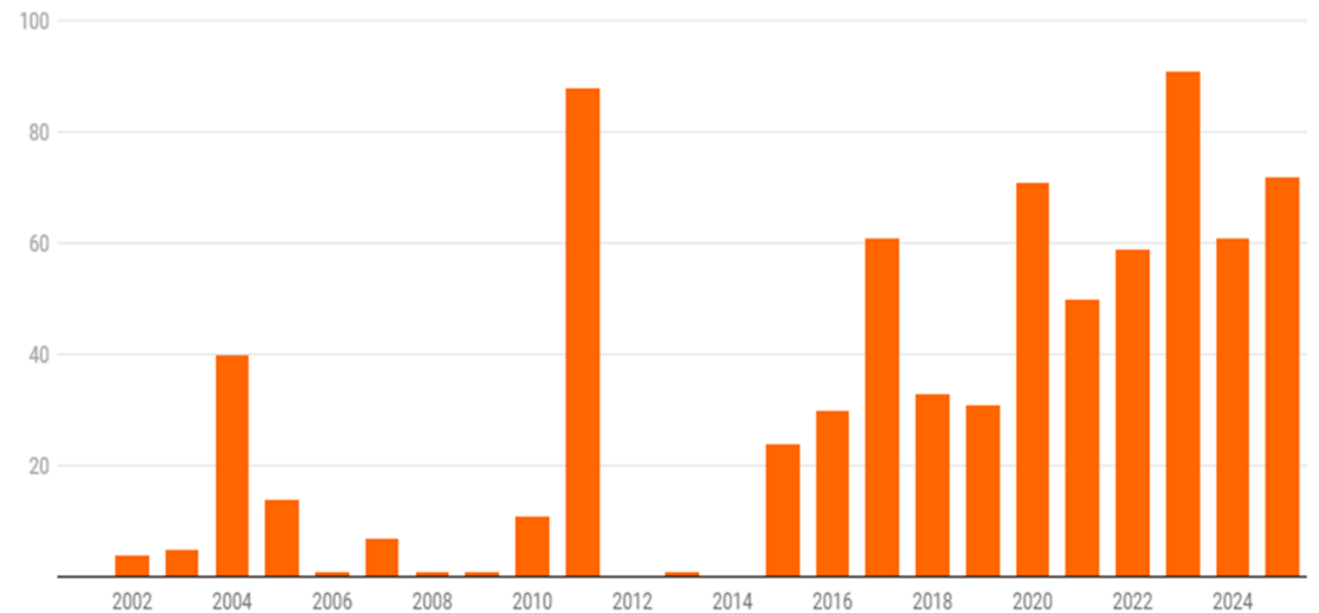


Looking forward

- Natural Environment and Planning Bills
- Waste Minimisation Act Amendments
- Emergency Management Bill
- Merging into MCERT
- National Disaster Waste Management Guidelines

Chart 1: More emergencies hitting, more frequently

Number of days somewhere in NZ was under a State of Emergency



Up to 24 November 2025

Chart: Brad Olsen/Infometrics • Source: Infometrics, NEMA • Created with [Datawrapper](#)



Pātai | Questions?



Ministry for the
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