



SIAM-2, C-4 Component
Environmental, Risk and
Resource Management

Disaster Management

Discussion Document

3

Options Regarding Organisational and
Physical Location of the Disaster
Management Office

Prepared for
**Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and
Meteorology**

by

BECA International Consultants Ltd.



▪ report

Discussion Document 3 - Options Regarding Organisational and Physical Location of the Disaster Management Office

Prepared for

Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment
and Meteorology

By

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Attention: Vitaua Peleiupu Fuatai

Dear Sir

Discussion Document 3 - Options Regarding Organisational and Physical Location of the Disaster Management Office

Please find enclosed a Discussion Document on Options Regarding Organisational and Physical Location of the DMO. This is the third in a series of four discussion documents which are intended to inform discussion at the Emergency Management Review Workshop on 20 June 2005.

Feedback on the issues and options presented in this paper will be used to help develop the DMO business plan, including office specification, professional development strategy and position descriptions.

Feedback is welcomed ahead of the workshop on the 20th June.

Yours faithfully
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Action	Name	Signed	Date
Prepared by	Debbie Cunningham, Kestrel Group Ltd		12 June 2005
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Appendices

Appendix A - NDMO Roles and Functions

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This discussion document is the third in a series of four discussion documents which are intended to inform discussion at the Disaster Management Review Workshop on 20 June 2005. The discussion documents are:

1. Proposed improvements to national disaster management structures (key committees and working groups, their membership and terms of reference etc),
2. Key features and best practice principles of generic disaster / emergency management legislation,
3. Options regarding organisational and physical location of the NDMO, (*this discussion document*),
4. Key elements of agency response plans.

The Disaster Management Review Workshop is being held as part of the Disaster Management component of the SIAM-2 project, which is a Government of Samoa project supported by the World Bank.

This discussion paper focuses on the role of the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and its location both organisationally and physically.

The workshop of June 20th is the first opportunity to gather feedback on the available options and determine which approaches should be further pursued.

1.2 Purpose of this Discussion Document

The purpose of this paper is to outline possible options for the organisational and physical location of the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO).

The document outlines the functions and requirements of the NDMO during disaster and day-to-day activities, best practice in other Pacific Island nations and benefits and disadvantages of the available options.

Feedback on issues presented in this paper will be used to further define the role of the NDMO, to ensure it is consistent with Pacific best practice, and will meet the needs of disaster management in Samoa.

The end deliverables of this component of the project include job descriptions for NDMO staff, a professional development and mentoring plan, NDMO fit out specifications (including the NCC if expanded scope is agreed), and a clearer definition of the role of the NDMO in the National Disaster Management Plan and the NDMO Business Plan.

The project aims to ensure that the NDMO is located physically and organisationally in the optimum position to deliver disaster management in Samoa.

1.3 Definitions

The following definitions and abbreviations are used in this report:

ACEO	Assistant Chief Executive Officer
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office (part of MNREM)
MCDEM	Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management (NZ)
MNREM	Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Meteorology
MWTI	Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure
NDMP	National Disaster Management Plan
PUMA	Planning and Urban Management Agency
SOPAC	South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
SIAM-2	Second Infrastructure Asset Management Project

2 Functions of the NDMO

2.1 Functions of the NDMO - Pacific Best Practice

The recently released Pacific Island Disaster Management Guide¹ describes the role of a National DMO as:

“Responsible for the management and co-ordination of all activities for national disasters”.

The guidelines suggest the outline tasks of a NDMO should include:

- Assist planning and promotion of disaster risk reduction with planning department(s)
- Evaluate and monitor risks which have the potential to create disasters
- Develop preparedness, response and relief activities to deal with such risks
- Establish necessary disaster management systems
- Develop and maintain the National Disaster Management Plan and associated plans.

The view of the guidelines is that the NDMO is primarily focused on preparedness, response and recovery/relief activities. Disaster risk reduction (mitigation) is primarily carried out within the government departments responsible for planning and sustainable development, although the NDMO has a role in promoting risk reduction and coordinating risk reduction activities.

2.2 Current Structure and Functions of NDMO

The NDMO currently has two staff:

- Principal National Disaster Management Officer (Filomena Nelson)
- Senior National Disaster Management Officer (Saolotoga Fasavalu)

Currently the major focus of the Principal NDMO is development of the NDMO (through the SIAM-2 project and working with other Pacific Island DMOs), education and awareness (including developing materials), and disaster planning with other agencies with a role in disasters.

In addition, at times, the Principal NDMO is required to fulfil additional general management roles (e.g. oversight role in the Meteorological Division climate change project; management cover during absence of other key managers).

The current major focus of the Senior NDMO is education and awareness, working with community groups, government departments and other agencies. Another current project is the development of a database of relevant hazard and disaster management information.

The activities of the NDMO staff reflect the outcomes listed in the MNREM Corporate Plan. This focus of the current Corporate Plan is primarily in the area of preparedness and response (public awareness, sector response and preparedness planning).

¹ Pacific Disaster Management Planning: Guideline for Pacific Small Island Developing States. MCDEM and SOPAC, June 2005

2.3 Options for Future Development of NDMO

The current focus of the NDMO, as reflected in their activities and the Corporate Plan, is somewhat narrower than that suggested in the Pacific Disaster Management Planning Guide. In order to cover the full range of responsibilities suggested in the guidelines, the NDMO will need to increase and strengthen their activities in the following areas:

- Co-ordination and promotion of risk reduction with relevant government departments
- Supporting national disaster management structures and committees
- Development, maintenance and implementation of the National Disaster Management Plan
- Operational response co-ordination including set-up of the National Co-ordination Centre, and co-ordination of the facility during a disaster
- Planning for recovery and establishing links with government relief activities
- Training and development (including exercises) of NDMO personnel and agencies with a role in disaster response

In addition, implementing the SOPAC Framework for Action 2005-2015:²

“Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters” would also require additional effort in:

- Establishing early warning systems
- Hazard analysis

The full range of expected NDMO functions (incorporating these areas of development) is outlined in Appendix A.

It is likely that in order to deliver the full range of functions the NDMO will require additional personnel in the future. Current personnel will need to undergo professional development and training to expand their range of skills.

The role of the NDMO will be further refined as the national disaster management structure is refined, and will be reflected in new legislation to be developed (See Discussion Documents 1 and 2).

Initial detailed job descriptions of current NDMO roles and possible future positions have been developed for feedback. These will continue to be updated as clarity is gained on the national disaster management structures.

² An investment for Sustainable Development in Pacific Island Countries. Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management: Building Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters: A Framework for Action 2005-2015. SOPAC June 2005

3 Organisational Location of the NDMO

3.1 Current Organisational Location of Samoa NDMO

The National Disaster Management Office is currently located within the Meteorological Division of the Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Meteorology. The Meteorology Division was moved into the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (subsequently renamed MNREM) in early 2005.

Prior to being within the Meteorology Division, the NDMO was located within the Planning and Urban Management Division within MNRE. In 2005 PUM was moved to the Ministry of Works Transport and Infrastructure, but the NDMO was left within MNRE and placed under the Meteorology Division.

Prior to being located within MNREM, the NDMO was located within the Prime Ministers' Department.

3.2 Organisational Location of NDMO - Pacific Best Practice

The NDMO function may be located within a Ministry, or as an independent organisation or Ministry. These options are discussed further in the following sections, and will be discussed further during the workshop.

3.2.1 Establishing the NDMO as an Independent Organisation or Ministry

If the NDMO were to become a separate organisation or Ministry the benefits may include a better ability to co-ordinate responses across the range of government agencies. However, the potential disadvantages may include difficulty in getting action from other Ministries and duplication of administrative systems.

The Pacific Disaster Management Planning Guide recommends that the NDMO should not be a stand alone office.

3.2.2 Locating the NDMO within a Ministry

The benefits of being located within a Ministry include access to administrative, and financial systems, as well as potential for alignment with other Ministerial functions relevant for disaster management.

The disadvantages of the NDMO being positioned within a Ministry include the potential for disconnection with other Ministries and difficulty in co-ordinating across Ministries during an emergency.

Within the current structure of Samoan government, the following Ministries would be options to house the NDMO:

- Within a Ministry which has planning responsibilities such as MNREM (the current situation) or MWTI (PUMA function). This option has benefits for ensuring disaster management is considered in the planning and sustainable development processes.

- Within a Ministry with an operational disaster response role, such as the Ministry of Police Prisons and Fire Service. This option would have benefits of better co-ordination during disaster response.
- Within a department with oversight of all government departments, such as the Prime Ministers Department. This option would have benefits in terms of being able to co-ordinate planning and response across multiple government departments.

No matter which Ministry the NDMO is placed within, it is important that it is afforded sufficient autonomy and authority to be able to carry out its functions. It is the view of the consultant team that this will only be achieved by the NDMO having adequate staff, a dedicated budget, and a position reporting directly to the CEO of the relevant Ministry.

This is supported by the June 2004 review of the NDMO carried out by MCDEM.³ This review commented that the NDMO did not have its own identity and that due to the NDMO's 'whole of government' responsibility it requires a degree of independence, without the overheads of a fully independent department.

The Pacific Disaster Management Planning Guide also suggests that the NDMO should be located in a position where it has political support, central authority for a 'whole of government' approach, and can assist and monitor departments and report to national committees and Ministers.

Within other Pacific Island nations there are a variety of approaches to the organisational location of the NDMO. For example:

- Tonga: NDMO is a division of the Ministry of Works and Disaster Relief Activities. It has its own Deputy Director (equivalent to ACEO)
- Fiji: In April 2005 NDMO agreed to relocate to the Ministry of Provincial Development from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration and National Disaster Management.
- Papua New Guinea: National Disaster Centre located within the Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs (Ministry of Inter-Government Relations).

Feedback and discussion is required as to which Ministry may be the most appropriate in the Samoa context.

³ Government of Samoa: Review of National Disaster Management Office, June 2004. Ministry of CDEM

4 Physical Location of the NDMO

4.1 Current Location

The NDMO currently occupies space in the National Mapping Service offices of MNREM on Beach Road.

The space allocated is a single office for the Principal NDMO, and shared office space for the Senior NDMO. No further office space is available at this location for additional NDMO staff.

4.2 Accommodation Requirements During Non-Disaster Periods

In order for the NDMO to be able to perform the full range of functions it would require accommodation with access to the following facilities and equipment:

- Office space (1 desk per staff member)
- Access to training and meeting rooms
- Communications systems for regular testing (may be a mobile facility)
- PCs (1 per staff member and at least 1 laptop for mobile operations) with mapping capability, databases, email and internet capability
- Alternative power supply for key equipment including PCs, lighting, communications equipment
- Administrative facilities (e.g. photocopiers, printers, kitchen facilities)

4.3 Accommodation Requirements During a Disaster

During a disaster it is essential that there is a central operational facility from which disaster response can be co-ordinated. This co-ordination role is facilitated by the NDMO. The NDMO therefore has the responsibility for ensuring that such an operational facility exists, is maintained, and is operational immediately during a disaster.

The operational facility must have all of the facilities described above plus the following additional capabilities:

- Ability to be operational immediately during a disaster
- Building capable of withstanding major hazard events (including earthquake, cyclone, storm surge, volcanic eruption) and continuing to be operational (e.g. continued accessibility, backup generators etc)
- Communications systems specifically for use during a disaster
- An alternate facility
- Space for displaying information, maps and logs of events
- Office space for NDMO and response agency personnel to operate from

4.4 Options for Future Location of NDMO

The options for the physical location of the NDMO are either:

- At an office of the Ministry within which it is housed (i.e. at a different location to the operational co-ordination facility)
- At the operational co-ordination facility (i.e. at the existing NCC or another facility specifically designated and set up for this purpose)

It is the view of the consultant team that the ideal situation would be for the NDMO to be physically located in the space which will be used during a disaster to co-ordinate response from. The reasons for this include:

- Staff are familiar with equipment, set up, operation of facilities as they are used day-to-day
- Equipment is likely to be more easily maintained, and breakdowns identified
- There is no delay in accessing and setting up co-ordination centre
- Responsibility for the functioning of the facility as the NCC is clear
- Day-to-day equipment of NDMO is better protected in a facility designed to withstand hazards
- The visible presence of the facility, which is used during and before disasters raises the profile of the NDMO and their role during a disaster
- Only one alternate site needs to be maintained (as opposed to having an office, a co-ordination facility, and a backup site to maintain)

The disadvantage of having the NDMO located in an operational facility for day-to-day purposes may include:

- Dislocation from the Ministry within which the NDMO is housed (unless the Ministry has an operational focus)
- More difficult access to administrative support
- Possible duplication and additional costs of setting up NDMO with all necessary equipment (as may previously share access to equipment such as printers, copiers etc with other Ministry staff)

If the NDMO were to be located in an operational facility the following options are available:

4.4.1 Locating the NDMO within the Existing NCC

The NCC was built by the Australian government to house the Maritime Safety Advisor and provide a facility for emergency co-ordination. It was gifted to the Government of Samoa for that purpose. The location of the NDMO at this location is consistent with the reason for which the building was built.

The existing NCC building is resilient to a number of hazards, has existing communications facilities and backup electricity and has dedicated administration, ablution and cooking facilities.

The NCC is currently occupied by the Australian Maritime Safety Advisor, the Police communications centre, and the Police Institutional Strengthening Project.

The Police communications centre and Maritime Safety Advisor are an integral part of the operational response structure during a disaster and it is therefore appropriate that the NDMO be housed alongside these functions.

However, if the NDMO were to occupy the NCC the Police Institutional Strengthening project staff would need to be relocated.

A benefit of this option is that the NDMO could then co-ordinate day-to-day management of the building along with the Police and the Maritime Safety Advisor. At the present time the responsibility for oversight of these facilities is not clear.

The June 2004 MCDEM review of the NDMO specifically recommends that the NDMO be located within the NCC. The view of that report is that the location of the NDMO at the NCC would significantly improve the preparedness and readiness of the NCC. It also states that if carefully managed this should not need to be seen as separating the NDMO from the Ministry within which is housed.

4.4.2 Locating the NDMO within a new facility

If an alternative to the existing NCC facility is favoured this would require either finding a suitable location (less vulnerable to hazards), or building a new facility. In either case the facility would need to be equipped for emergency co-ordination.

The benefits of this approach are that a facility can be purpose designed for the NDMO, less vulnerable to hazards and could be equipped to cater for its current and future needs.

However, the disadvantages are that it would require considerable expense, and may duplicate some of the facilities already provided in the existing NCC.

- Appendix A
**NDMO Roles and
Functions**

NDMO Roles and Functions

General

- Provide leadership and direction for the disaster management sector
- Monitor performance of disaster risk reduction and disaster management programmes and activities
- Implement regional best practice strategies and guidelines
- Implement professional development programmes for NDMO personnel
- Develop mechanisms to ensure community involvement across mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery activities

Mitigation

- Promote the mainstreaming of disaster risk management activities in all government departments.
- Identify hazards and risks that may cause a disaster in Samoa
- Work with other agencies to research and mitigate the possible effects of disasters in Samoa
- Develop, consult and submit for Cabinet approval, rules, regulations and administrative directives relating to mitigation (through normal Ministerial process)

Preparedness

- Develop and maintain the National Disaster Management Plan. Ensure NDMP is approved by the NDC
- Develop contingency plans for specific hazards when required
- Provide guidance to organisations with a disaster role to develop their own emergency response plans
- Co-ordinate, develop and implement disaster management programmes and activities
- Monitor the effectiveness of disaster management programmes and activities
- Work with other Pacific nations and organisations to implement best practice disaster management
- Develop and deliver community education and awareness programmes including a specific focus on cyclone preparedness in advance of cyclone season
- Manage and co-ordinate disaster management training activities
- Provide administrative support to the Disaster Advisory Committee
- Issue warnings when disaster threatens
- Maintain the National Co-ordination Centre and disaster management communications systems in a state of readiness for response
- Train staff to operate the National Co-ordination Centre

- Undertake simulations and sector training

Response

- Implement the decisions of the Director, Disaster Management and the NDC with the NCC team and agencies with a disaster role
- Lead the National Co-ordination Centre team in co-ordinating disaster response activities
- Ensure the smooth running of the National Co-ordination Centre
- Manage the NCC including SITREPS, disaster impact assessment, support to response agencies, emergency communications etc.
- Co-ordinate and provide reports to the NDC
- Issue information about the disaster and actions required of the public and response agencies

Relief/ Recovery

- Work with the Recovery Co-ordinator to implement recovery programmes and activities as directed by the NDC or Cabinet committees.
- Facilitate debriefs of disaster activities and develop reports on response activities.