



**engineering
new zealand**
Institute of Engineering Professionals

Submission to National Disaster Resilience Strategy Consultation

Engineering New Zealand (formerly IPENZ) is New Zealand's peak professional body for engineers. We are New Zealand's strongest and most influential voice on engineering issues. Our membership is growing, with more than 22,000 members who want to help shape the public policy agenda.

AN ENGINEERING VIEW OF RESILIENCE

This year we released [*Engineering A Better New Zealand*](#), which sets out an expert engineering vision for a healthier, more prosperous New Zealand – and the steps we must take together to get there. Community resilience sits at the heart of this vision – a more resilient and sustainable New Zealand that can thrive in the face of climate change, natural disasters and the effects of growing urbanisation. This means valuing resilience and creating buildings, infrastructure and processes that protect people and property. Much of what we discuss and recommend in our report is relevant to the National Disaster Resilience Strategy. For example, in our report, we discuss how communities expect safety, but safety is a difficult concept. Safety can never be guaranteed. We suggest let's talk about risk, not safety. We ask that you consider our report as part of our submission.

VISION

He matakiteinga o te Aotearoa manawaroa would appear to be the proposed strategy vision, but the document doesn't make a single vision completely clear.

In our view, the initial vision of a "safe and prosperous nation" in section 2 (page 9) does not promote an informed risk conversation. 'Safe' is an absolute statement – the reality is that we can only ever be 'safe enough'. We can however be a resilient and prosperous nation, as the strategy outlines. Indeed, the strategy says in section 4 (page 14) headed "our goal: a resilient future" that the vision is of "a resilient nation". The vision is restated as "a resilient New Zealand" (page 20). Appendix 1 has yet another and presumably final version of the vision, "New Zealand is a disaster resilient nation that acts proactively to manage risks and build resilience in a way that contributes to the wellbeing and prosperity of all New Zealanders" and another statement of the goal.

We suggest the strategy adopt a single, strong vision that is referred to consistently throughout the document, and that this vision is focussed on resilience not safety.

OUTCOME INDICATORS

We support and agree with the intent and much of the content of the strategy, which is a high-level document with broad objectives and descriptions of success. But there are no resilience outcome indicators. We suggest that we need a resilience index to measure resilience attributes. At this stage we would expect to see some high-level indicators as part of the proposed strategy

INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCE

As we highlight in Engineering a Better New Zealand, progressively enhancing the resilience of our infrastructure is vital for the economy and wellbeing of the country. We consider this doesn't receive sufficient emphasis in the strategy, being somewhat lost within section 7 on strengthening societal resilience. We would like to see infrastructure resilience given further attention, perhaps in a dedicated section.

THE ROLE OF ENGINEERS

Finally, we note that engineers are not identified as a strength in Appendix 3. We have led the world in many aspects of safety engineering and resilience. As is noted, we have seemingly had more than our fair share of crises, emergencies, and disasters over the last ten years. When a disaster occurs, it is our engineers who are on the ground working as a key part of the Civil Defence Emergency Management response from the outset. We are committed to doing all we can to engineer a more resilient New Zealand.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet and discuss our work together to increase resilience to disasters.



Helen Davidson

Acting Chief Executive

Contact:

Neil Miller, Senior Policy Advisor

neil.miller@engineeringnz.org

P :: 04 460 3575

M :: 022 061 1507