

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SOUTHLAND
Te Rākau Whakamarumaru Murihiku

RAKIURA STEWART ISLAND

Community Response Plan



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Printed version is no longer controlled, check EMS website for current plan.

Stewart Island Community Response Plan

Emergency Management Southland contact details

- ***Website:*** https://www.cdsouthland.nz
- ***Phone:*** 0800 76 88 45
- ***Email:*** ems@cdsouthland.nz
- ***Facebook****:* @cdsouthland (Emergency Management Southland)
- ***Instagram:*** @southlandcdem

If you would like to become part of the Stewart Island Community Response Group or have any questions, please contact Emergency Management Southland.

How to Stay Informed During an Emergency

Visit https://cdsouthland.nz/useful-things/ for information on:

- Helpful resources
- Tsunami maps
- Weather
- River status
- Power outages
- Roads
- Geonet (Earthquake information)

Local radio stations to listen to during an emergency

Station	**Frequency**
The Hits	Te Anau 90.4FM & rest of Southland 98.8FM
Hokonui	All of Southland 94.8FM
More FM	Te Anau 96.0FM & rest of Southland 89.2FM
Newstalk ZB	All of Southland 864AM
Radio New Zealand	Te Anau 101.6FM, Milford Sound 92.0FM & rest of Southland 101.2FM
Radio Southland	All of Southland 96.4FM

Antenno

Receive notifications direct to your phone on council services, flood warnings, hazards, roadworks, service disruptions, community events, and more. Setup is easy and doesn't require signing-up. You can also use Antenno to tell us about things that need our attention, or give us feedback, direct through the app. Antenno is available for free for iPhone and Android devices.

Purpose of the Community Response Groups

Community Response Groups before an emergency

The more prepared a community is, the better placed it will be to look after itself and support others during an emergency.

The Community Response Group helps prepare the community by:

- Developing and maintaining this Community Response Plan.
- Identifying local hazards, risks, and community vulnerabilities.
- Providing information on Community Emergency Hubs and community gathering places.
- Maintaining important local contact information.
- Working with Emergency Management Southland to strengthen community preparedness and resilience.
- Reviewing and updating this plan as community needs and circumstances change.

This plan is a living document and can be updated at any time in partnership with Emergency Management Southland.

Community Response Groups during an emergency

During an emergency, the Community Response Group acts as Emergency Management Southland's primary point of contact within the community and provides local community support.

The Community Response Group may:

- Consider activation when local conditions indicate community support may be needed. Emergency Management Southland may discuss the situation with the Community Response Group, however the decision to activate remains with the Community Response Group based on local needs and available capacity.
- Self-activate to provide community assistance when required.
- Share local information and situational awareness with Emergency Management Southland.
- Support communication of key messages to the community.
- Help identify vulnerable people who may need additional support.
- Assist with coordinating available local resources and community-led initiatives.
- Provide a safe and trusted point of contact for community members.
- Support community resilience through local leadership and coordination.

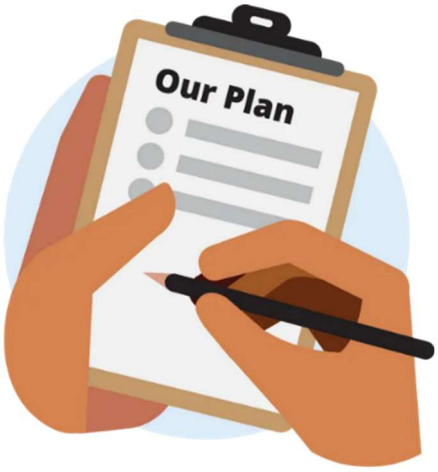
Community Response Groups after an emergency

Community Response Groups play an important role in supporting community recovery and helping communities return to normal functionality.

The Community Response Group may:

- Act as a link between the community and recovery agencies.
- Provide local knowledge to support recovery planning and decision-making.
- Identify community recovery needs and priorities.
- Help communicate recovery information and opportunities to the community.
- Advocate for community concerns and aspirations.
- Support initiatives that contribute to long-term community wellbeing and resilience.

Further information on recovery arrangements can be found in the Southland Recovery Plan at: www.cdsouthland.nz



Community Details

Demographic details

Part of the Southland District, Stewart Island/Rakiura is the third largest Island of New Zealand. Over 85% of the island is protected as Rakiura National Park, making it a sanctuary for native flora and fauna and a popular destination for visitors.

Oban is the island's only township and is located in Halfmoon Bay with a population of approximately 486 residents (2023 Census). The island also welcomes more than 30,000 visitors annually, attracted by its tramping tracks, birdwatching, fishing, and scenic landscapes.

The local economy is primarily supported by tourism, fishing, and conservation. Blue cod and crayfish are key species in the island's fishing industry, while conservation efforts focus on protecting native species and habitats. Many residents are involved in environmental work, including pest control and ecological research, reflecting the community's strong commitment to sustainability and stewardship of the land.



Identified potential vulnerable sub communities

Emergencies affect all of us. Depending on the nature, extent and timing of an emergency, some people can be more affected than others. We need to ensure equity in response to improve assistance to all in the community. Groups who may need consideration include:

- Halfmoon Bay School & Rugrats Kindergarten in the tsunami evacuation zone
- People with disabilities including mobility issues
- Elderly living on their own, including the new block in the tsunami evacuation zone
- Elderly living in the community with no phone/internet
- Tourists – trampers, hunters, visitors
- People with high-risk medical and health conditions
- People of surrounding islands e.g. Ulva Island and Whenua Hou/Codfish Island
- Staff working on the fish farms

Neighbouring communities

In an emergency, it's important that neighbouring communities work together to support each other. Nearby communities can provide help if your own community is overwhelmed or unable to meet all its needs. This might include sharing resources like emergency shelters, equipment, vehicles, or trained personnel. Likewise, your community may assist others by sending support when they are in need.

- Ruapuke Island
- Bluff

Significant local treasures/assets

Every community has special places, items, or traditions that are important to its identity — such as marae, historic buildings, taonga, community centres, or natural landmarks. These are considered significant local treasures, and while protecting people is always the top priority during a natural disaster, it's also worth planning how to protect these treasures if it's safe to do so. The following local treasures have been identified by the community:

- Rakiura Museum
- The Neck
- Native wildlife

Hazard Identification and Risk Summary

Hazard and risk information provide a clearer understanding of the potential dangers that could impact the community. These hazards and risks outline the nature, characteristics, and potential effects of the hazard, which is crucial to gain an understanding of the dangers the community faces.

Flooding

- **Risk Level (Priority):** Low
- **Description:** The island's steep terrain, extensive forest cover, and low population density reduce widespread flood risk. However, localized flooding can occur in low-lying coastal areas, particularly around Oban and Halfmoon Bay, during heavy rainfall or storm surge events.
- **Impacts:**
    - Temporary road closures and access issues
    - Damage to property and infrastructure in low-lying areas
    - Disruption to tourism and local services
    - Increased sedimentation and runoff affecting marine ecosystems
- **Mitigation Strategies:**
    - Maintain drainage systems.
    - Use of natural vegetation and forest cover to reduce runoff.
    - Avoidance of development in flood-prone zones.
    - Community awareness and preparedness initiatives.
    - Be prepared to evacuate.

Earthquake

- **Risk Level (Priority):** Moderate
- **Description:** Rakiura/Stewart Island is influenced by the Puysegur Trench, a major offshore subduction zone and part of the Australian–Pacific plate boundary. While the hazard posed by onshore earthquake activity on the island is of low, large offshore events in the Puysegur Trench could pose greater secondary hazards such as tsunami.
- **Impacts:**
    - Logistics: isolation could hinder response and recovery
    - Mid-moderate shaking could affect older or poorly constructed buildings
    - Limited road networks and ferry service could be temporarily affected
    - Landslides or minor liquefaction could occur in specific soil conditions, though these are less likely than in other parts of New Zealand.
- **Mitigation Strategies:**

- Secure heavy furniture and appliances.
- Prepare emergency plans and household supplies.
- Practice "Drop, Cover, Hold" drills.

Tsunami

- **Risk Level (Priority):** High
- **Description:** Tsunamis affecting Rakiura/Stewart Island can be triggered by:
  - **Local earthquakes** (e.g. near the Puysegur Trench)
  - **Regional source** (eg earthquake near Auckland Island or Antarctica)
  - **Distant-source** (e.g. earthquakes off Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula or South America)
- **Impacts:**
  - Potential for flooding in low-lying areas.
  - Strong currents and surges are dangerous for swimmers, boaters and fishers.
  - There could be temporary closures or delays to marine and ferry services.
  - Residents and visitors may need to evacuate and move to higher ground.
- **Mitigation Strategies:**
  - Inform visitors and tourists of hazard zones and evacuation procedures.
  - Education on natural warning signs: After a long or strong earthquake, evacuate immediately to higher ground. Do not wait for an official warning.
  - Participation in tsunami drills.
  - Know the tsunami evacuation zones for your area: https://southmaps.es.govt.nz/localmaps/viewer/?webmap=655b827f35344af5b282060559ff4eb5

Severe Weather (Wind, rain, snow, and storms)

- **Risk Level (Priority):** Moderate – High (Seasonal and event based)
- **Description:** Rakiura/Stewart Island can be exposed to heavy precipitation (rain, snow or hail) and strong wind associated with storms and fronts especially during winter and spring.
- **Impacts:**
  - Utilities/lifelines disruption (especially power)
  - Transport: Ferry services and flights may be delayed or cancelled.
  - Risk to outdoor activities: (trampers, boaters, fishermen and residents) from, wind, falling debris, rough seas and poor visibility.
  - Disruption: to essential services and economy.
  - Damage to property.
- **Mitigation Strategies:**
  - Encourage residents to secure outdoor items and prepare for outages
  - Promote emergency preparedness kits with food, water, torches, radios

- Check the forecast before undertaking outdoor activities especially in remote areas.

Fire (Urban and Rural)

- **Risk Level (Priority):** Moderate (Seasonal and vegetation-dependent)
- **Description:**
  - Urban Fire Risk: Low, due to small population and limited built-up areas.
  - Rural/Wildfire Risk: Moderate during dry periods. The island's terrain and vegetation (native forest, scrub) can sustain fire spread if ignition occurs.
  - Ignition Sources: Campfires, fireworks, powerlines, and human activity.
- **Impacts:**
  - Threats to homes, livestock, and human safety.
  - Loss of native forest and wildlife habitat.
  - Limited firefighting resources and challenging terrain can delay suppression
  - Air quality impacts for residents and visitors
- **Mitigation Strategies:**
  - Create defensible space around properties.
  - Develop and practice fire evacuation plans.
  - Comply with fire bans and restrictions:
  - https://fireweather.niwa.co.nz/region/Southland

Health Emergencies

- **Risk Level (Priority): Moderate**
- **Description:** Stewart Island has a small permanent population (around 400) but experiences seasonal influxes of tourists, cruise ship passengers, trampers and hunters. The island has limited medical facilities: a single small health centre.
  - Evacuation or transfer to mainland hospitals depends on ferry or air transport, which can be disrupted by severe weather.
  - Vulnerable groups include elderly residents, people with chronic conditions, and visitors unfamiliar with local health services.
- **Impacts:**
  - Limited on-island resources mean serious cases require evacuation.
  - A surge in cases (e.g. during an outbreak) could overwhelm the health centre.
  - Isolation and stress during emergencies can affect mental health.
  - Health crises can disrupt visitor safety and confidence.
- **Mitigation Strategies:**
  - Promote good hygiene practices.
  - Encourage vaccination.
  - Strengthen community support networks for coordinated outreach.

Biosecurity

- **Risk Level (Priority): Medium**
- **Description:** Biosecurity risks in the Stewart Island area are associated with the marine and land environment. They may include new or existing pests, invasive species or contagions like bird flu. A loss of biodiversity may affect the environment and local livelihoods which rely upon fishing or tourism.
- **Impacts:**
  - Economic losses
  - Environmental damage,
  - Impacts on community wellbeing
  - Restrictions on the movement of people, animals, and goods.
- **Mitigation Strategies:**
  - Promote community pest management in land and marine environment
  - Report any unusual flora or fauna.
- For biosecurity threats, responses and reporting refer to Biosecurity New Zealand (MPI)**:** https://www.mpi.govt.nz/biosecurity

Hazard risk summary table

Hazard	Likelihood	Impact	Priority
Flooding	Low	Low	Low
Earthquake	Low	Moderate	Medium
Tsunami	Low	High	High
Severe Weather	High	Moderate	High
Fire (Rural/Urban)	Moderate	Moderate	Medium
Health Emergency	Moderate	High	Medium
Biosecurity	Moderate	Moderate	Medium

Likelihood: Probability that the hazard will occur in or impact Stewart Island/Rakiura.
Impact: The scale of consequences the hazard would have on the community (people, infrastructure, economy, environment).
Risk: The cumulative result of a hazard's likelihood and impact, representing its relative significance and potential effect on the community compared to other assessed hazards.
***Note**: This assessment has been based on qualitative judgment and local context to guide how likelihood and impact are rated.*

Maps and diagrams (Useful links)

- **Environment Southland Hazard Summaries:** Comprehensive summaries of various hazards affecting towns in Southland, including Oban. It provides detailed flood risk

maps for Southland, illustrating areas susceptible to flooding: https://maps.es.govt.nz

- **Seismic Hazard Maps:** The New Zealand National Seismic Hazard Model offers maps indicating earthquake probabilities across regions: https://www.gns.cri.nz
- **Natural Hazards Portal:** The Natural Hazards Portal allows exploration of various hazard risks and historical claims data: https://www.naturalhazardsportal.govt.nz
- **Biosecurity**: For biosecurity threats, responses and reporting refer to Biosecurity New Zealand (MPI)**:** https://www.mpi.govt.nz/biosecurity

Identified local critical infrastructure/ vulnerabilities

Critical infrastructure refers to essential facilities and systems that support the functioning and wellbeing of the community. Damage to or disruption of these assets during an emergency could significantly impact Stewart Island/Rakiura's ability to respond and recover.

- Marine access: Boats, ferries & wharves
- Air access: Stewart Island Emergency Helipad, Ryans Creek Aerodrome
- Temporary Accommodation: South Seas Hotel, Stewart Island Backpackers
- Food supply: Four Square, ferry.
- Fuel supply (located on the wharf)
- Stewart Island Medical centre
- Stewart Island Fire Station
- Lifeline utilities: Starlink, wastewater plant (limited capacity), power station and lines
- Service Station (Pete Ross Automotive)
- Limited roads

Key Local Resources

The resources listed in this plan are key examples intended to support community preparedness and response. While they represent a broad range of services and support networks, they are not a comprehensive list. Communities are encouraged to identify and connect with additional local organisations, cultural groups, and informal networks that play vital roles in resilience and wellbeing.

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Key Local Emergency Services

Organisation	Phone	Address	Other details
Stewart Island Police	03 219 0020	2 View Street, Oban	Justin Schwarz
Stewart Island Fire		Argle Street, Oban	Jarrod Baird (Fire Chief)

Southland District Council

Organisation	Phone	Address	Other details
Southland District Council – Oban Office	03 219 1049	Ayr Street, Oban	9am-12pm Mon-Fri 2-4pm Wed
Southland District Council – main office	0800 732 732	Forth Street, Invercargill	
Stewart Island Electrical Supply Authority (SIESA) Power Station	0800 732 732 24/7 Faults: 03 211 9300	Forth Street, Invercargill	Owned and operated by Southland District Council, contracted on island to NZ Energy
Wastewater Treatment Plant	0800 732 732		Southland District Council
Halfmoon Bay Library	03 219 1049	Ayr Street, Oban	9am-12pm Mon-Fri 2-4pm Wed
Rakiura Refuse Recovery Centre	03 219 1581	Horseshoe Point Road	
Southland District Councilor	03 219 1449		Jon Spraggon Jon.spraggon@southlanddc.govt.nz
Rakiura Community Board Representative			

Medical and support agencies

Organisation	Phone	Address	Other details
Stewart Island Health Centre	03 219 1098	Arglye Street	Clinic hours – 10 am- 12.30 pm daily (24 hour on call)
Rakiura Search and Rescue IMT lead	03 219 0020		Justin Schwarz (police) Andrew King

Utility services and supplies

Organisation	Phone	Address	Other details
NZ Post	03 983 1425	40 Elgin Terrace	
Stewart Island Helicopters	0800 234 890 03 219 1155		
RealNZ Ferry Terminal	0800 656 501	Main Wharf, Oban	

Service stations, supermarkets and food establishments

Organisation	Phone	Address	Other details
Four Square Supermarket	03 219 1069	20 Elgin Terrace	
South Sea Hotel	03 219 1059	26 Elgin Terrace	
Kai Kart	027 330 4044	7 Ayr Street	
The Snuggery		9 Ayr Street	
Allied Petroleum 24/7 Fuel	0800 383 566		
Pete Ross Automotive	03 219 1266	14 Ayr Street	
Old Butchers shop	027 496 7778		

Education providers, rest home, marae, faith and community organisations

Organisation	Phone	Address	Other details
Halfmoon Bay School	03 219 1179		
Rakiura Rugrats	027 774 0415		
Senior Citizens Group	03 219 1327		
Oban Presbyterian Church	027 455 2191	Kamahi Road, Oban	

Additional resources

Organisation	Phone	Address	Other details
Department of Conservation	03 219 0009	15 Main Road, Oban	
Real NZ	03 219 1449 03 219 0056		
Oban Visitor Centre	03 219 0056	12 Elgin Terrace, Oban	

Community Emergency Hubs

Community Emergency Hubs provide pre-identified places where the community can gather in the event of an emergency. Not all hubs will be suitable during an emergency, and it is up to the community to decide at the time. It is possible that a new venue will need to be found, but a location where the community gathers is vital during a response, as people seek immediate support, shelter, comfort and information.

Each pre-determined location will be provided with an Emergency Community Hub Guide and be able to access advice from Emergency Management Southland if they require further information or support. Contact information for the hubs will be available on the following page.

Community Emergency Hub key holders

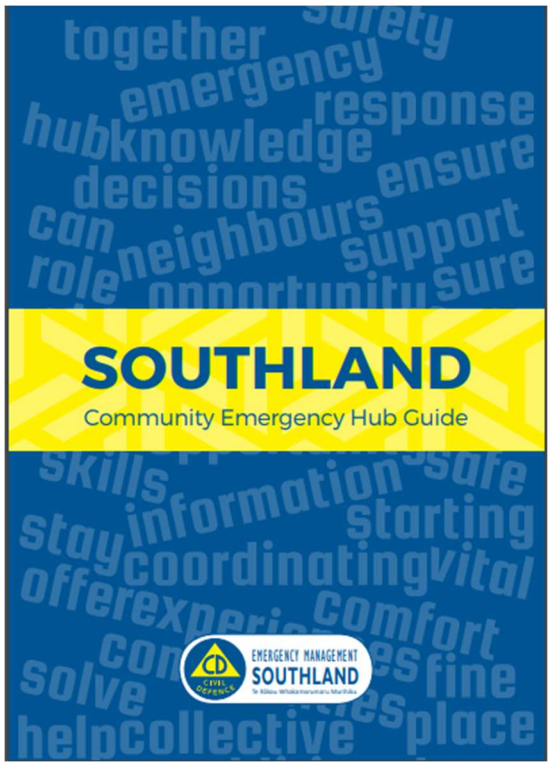
Name	Phone	Address	Key Holders
Traill Park			Kirsten Hicks
			Karen Lewis
			Kath Johnson
			Bruce Ford
	03 219 0020		Justin Schwarz
Stewart Island Library and Community Centre	03 219 1477		Sophie Connor

Basic items for a Community Emergency Hub

When opening a Community Emergency Hub, it's essential to bring basic items to support coordination, communication, and community-led response. These items are critical to help the community self-organise, share information, and meet urgent needs during a disaster when emergency services may be delayed. These items may include:

- Water
- Tea, coffee, milk
- Food
- Toilet paper
- BBQ and/or LPG bottle
- Lighting
- Communications (Radios, Starlink)
- First aid kits
- Blankets
- Torches
- Lighters
- Games
- Generators/ fuel
- Anything else that you feel is appropriate

Refer to *Southland Community Emergency Hub Guide* for more information on the set up and running of a Community Emergency Hub during an emergency response.





HUB ROLES

1. Hub supervisor

It's important someone has an overview of what is going on. Decisions should be made by agreement, but it's helpful if someone can bring everything together. Remember you're a team, and as a group you'll be able to consider the immediate needs of those in the community, and what community assets and resources are available. The supervisor can change depending on the situation, and as people with more experience join the Hub team they may be willing to step into the role.

HUB SUPERVISOR

I am responsible for:

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY HUB

HUB SUPERVISOR KEY TASKS

- make sure other roles are allocated
- make sure everyone has what they need to do their job
- make sure new people joining the hub are invited to join the team
- make sure each area of the Hub works with the other areas as a team
- record major decisions for future reference, including what happened and any actions taken
- develop a roster to ensure people have adequate breaks and don't work too long
- close the Hub overnight when appropriate
- secure the property and provide information about open times to the community
- let the Emergency Coordination Centre know when the Hub has closed and when it is open again
- close the Hub when the community no longer needs it
- supervise the Hub clean-up when permanently closing
- work with media that show up:
  1. **do** provide any public or general information such as weather details, open hours, and copies of public information such as media releases
  2. **do not** give out private information such as details on injuries or deaths, addresses of evacuated homes or personal information you've received
- Ensure the Hub team understands the following legal information:
  1. if you don't have special legal powers in your normal life, you don't have any in a state of emergency either
  2. if a situation is life threatening, saving life is the priority, but remember usual laws apply

Community VHF Radio

A community VHF (Very High Frequency) radio is a key tool for communication during emergencies, especially when other forms of communication, like mobile phones or landlines, are unavailable due to network failures or power outages. This could be a community's only way to communicate with the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) if telecommunications have been disrupted. Training to become familiar can be provided. Instructions on how the VHF radio are attached to the radio.

Name	Place	Address	Key Holders
Stewart Island Community VHF Radio	Police Station	2 View St	Justin Schwarz

Community Response Group Contact Lists

Emergency Management Southland

Name	Phone	Email	Other details
EMS Duty Advisor	0800 76 88 45	ems@cdsouthland.nz	24/7 monitoring and on call for all enquiries
EMS Rakiura Liaison			

Community Response Group members

Name	Phone	Email	Other details
Aaron Conner (Squirt)			
Aaron Joy			
Alasdair Burns			
Andrew King			
Carol Joy			
Dale Chittenden			
Emma McDonald			
Garry Neave			
Gwen Neave			
Ian Fulguirinas			
Ian Herbert			
Jo Riksem			
Jon Spraggon			
Jules Retberg			
Justin Schwarz			
Kirsten Hicks			
Marilyn Spinks			
Mary Chittenden			
Mike Douglass			
Pete Ross			
Raylene Waddell			
Rosa Cleary			
Sue Graham			