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Committee Civil Defence Emergency Management Group (Joint Committee)
Author Pat Dougherty, Outgoing CEG Chair

Process to appoint a replacement Regional Manager WREMO and Group Controller

1. Purpose

The current WREMO Regional Manager has advised that he intends to resign with effect from 15 May 2017 (Appendix 1). This report outlines the proposed process for selecting a replacement WREMO Regional Manager.

2. Background

The current Regional Manager was recruited in October 2011 with the intention that he manage the organisational change process and then lead the resulting organisation. He was subsequently appointed Group Controller in July 2012.

The 2011 appointment process was approved by the Joint Committee and managed by the CEG. A similar process is being recommended this time.

As part of the work that went on in 2011, it was agreed that GWRC would be the employer of all the CDEM staff. As part of that agreement a Reporting/Accountability/Employment Protocol was established between the CEG and GWRC (Appendix 2). That agreement states that “the process for future appointments into the position of Regional Manager will be defined by the Group Joint Committee at that time”.

3. Issues

3.1 The process of advertising the vacancy, developing a long list of applicants and running the interview process was managed by KCDC in 2011. As GWRC is now the employer, it would be simpler if they ran the process.

3.2 The current Regional Manager is also the Group Controller. While this seemed a logical arrangement in 2011, in hindsight there are some disadvantages:

- During peace time, the incumbent is still expected to manage business as usual and respond to every alert that is received. There is very little down time.
- During extended emergencies there is too much focus on one person (eg leading the response, handling media interviews, responding to elected members and managing WREMO staff).

It would be preferable to split the two roles by appointing a Regional Manager and then requiring that person as a top priority to nominate a new Group Controller (for formal appointment by the Joint Committee).

3.3 There was a lengthy discussion at the CEG meeting on 10 March regarding the possibility of carrying out a review of WREMO and, in particular, the desirability of expanding its role and the services it delivers. Some of the possible additional roles included an increased focus on resilience and provision of professional controllers.

3.4 Now that WREMO is firmly established and working well, it was envisaged that this review would be more of a look forward into the next five years. It was also acknowledged that any expanded focus may require additional resources as it would be important to ensure that the existing provision of services to Councils was not weakened.

3.5 Part of this discussion included whether such a review should be carried out before the Regional Manager role was advertised. The consensus was that this option left the organisation without a leader for too long at a critical time and the new Regional Manager would have more buy in to an expanded role if they were involved in setting that direction.

3.6 Eventually it was agreed that this review should be carried out by the new Regional Manager together with an external expert. Subject to support in principle from the Joint Committee, the review needed to be signalled in the job advertisement and job description. The Terms of Reference for the review could then be developed for approval by the CEG and Joint Committee in parallel with the recruitment process.

3.7 The CEG Subcommittee had a significant involvement in the 2011 process, being responsible for reviewing the job description and developing a short list of applicants for interview. The CEG has indicated that they would prefer to take on that responsibility this time.

3.8 In 2011 the interview panel was supposed to be the MCDem Director, CEO GWRC and CEG Chair. The CEG Chair was out of the country at the time, so it was agreed the CEO PCC would take his place.

3.9 This time the CEG preferred a panel of four to do the interviewing:

- The incoming CEG Chair (the CEO of Hutt City Council) who will be charged with establishing a working relationship with the successful candidate,
- The CEO of the Greater Wellington Regional Council (the employer),
- The CEO of Wellington City Council given the importance of WREMO to Wellington City in the event of a major earthquake and
- The CEO of Carterton District Council to represent the interests of the smaller outlying Councils.

4. Process

4.1 A recruitment process has been developed that should enable an appointee to be in place by mid-August. Even with this condensed time frame there would still be a requirement for someone to fill both roles (Manager and Group Controller) in a temporary capacity until the new Regional Manager takes up the role and then appoints a Group Controller.

4.2 Given the extent of the work going on at the moment (discussed elsewhere in the agenda) the role of Regional Manager is critical and could be hard to fill on a temporary basis. The role of Group Controller always carries considerable responsibility and could also be difficult to fill on short notice. Mr Pepperell has subsequently offered to defer his departure date by approximately three months until a new Regional Manager can take up the role. The CEG has already resolved to gratefully accept Mr Pepperell's offer.

5. Communication

No external communication is required.

6. The decision-making process and significance

Officers recognise that the matters referenced in this report will be of importance to affected or interested parties.

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions.

Significance of the decision

Part 6 requires the significance of the decision to be considered. The term 'significance' has a statutory definition set out in the Act.

Officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance.

7. Engagement

The following internal engagement processes have been followed:

The appointment of the Regional Manager/Group Controller was verbally communicated at the CEG Sub Committee and the CEG at their respective meetings of 24 February and 10 March 2017.

No public engagement is required in relation to these matters.

8. Recommendations

That the CDEM Group:

1. ***Receives*** the report;
2. ***Supports*** in principle the proposal to carry out a review of WREMO and, in particular, the desirability of expanding its role and the services it delivers and requests that the Terms of Reference for such a review be brought back to the next meeting of the Joint Committee for approval; and,
3. ***Endorses*** the process for the recruitment of the Regional Manager WREMO, which contains the following elements:
 - a. *GWRC develops a Job Description (with input from the CEs Forum and other CEG members), advertises the vacancy, develops a long list of preferably 8 – 10 names, and manages the interview process.*
 - b. *The job description will reflect the separation of roles of Regional Manager and Group Controller.*
 - c. *The job description will provide that an immediate priority for the new Regional Manager shall be to nominate an appointment to the position of Group Controller for Joint Committee approval on the recommendation of CEG.*
 - d. *The CEG has responsibility to develop a short list of preferably 3 – 5 names for interview.*
 - e. *An interview panel of the Chief Executives of Greater Wellington Regional Council, Hutt City Council, Wellington City Council and Carterton District Council shall conduct interviews and provide a recommendation to the CEG.*
 - f. *The CEG will review the recommendation and endorse it for negotiations with the preferred candidate to commence.*

Report prepared by:

Pat Dougherty

CEG Chair: Outgoing

Appendix 1: Letter of resignation from Regional Manager, WREMO

Appendix 2: 2011 Reporting/Accountability/Employment Protocol