

Whakaari/White Island RECOVERY PROJECT



BAY OF PLENTY
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GROUP



Message from the Group Recovery Manager

**Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi.
Engari, he toa takitini.
Strength is not that of an individual.
But, that of the collective.**

Bay of Plenty Emergency Management Group coordinated the multi-agency response to the Whakaari/White Island eruption event with NZ Police leading search and recovery operations.

On 20 December, we moved to the Emergency Management Recovery phase, which coordinates effort and processes to bring about immediate, medium-term and longer-term enhancement of a community after an emergency.

In the Whakaari Recovery we are looking at activities across three 'environments' – social, economic, and natural. We are working with more than 15 partners and support organisations, including Whakatāne District Council, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Awa Social and Health Services, District Health Boards, the National Emergency Management Agency, Tourism Bay of Plenty, Eastern Bay Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment – among six government agencies.

We will regularly update the community on progress through the course of this important recovery.

Craig Morris

Finfish OK – in moderation

The Ministry for Primary Industries has updated its advisory around eating fish caught near Whakaari/White Island.

Finfish caught in the 1 kilometre buffer zone around the island may now be eaten, but people are advised to limit consumption to one serving every one to two weeks. Other kaimoana should not be eaten however, due to higher levels of environmental contaminants entering the sea following the eruption and ongoing volcanic activity.

You should not eat the following seafood from the area:

- › crayfish
- › mussels, oysters, tuatua, pipi, toheroa, cockles, scallops, cat's eyes, kina and all other shellfish.

Cooking shellfish or crayfish will not remove the contaminants.

Kei te hiahia kōrero koe mo taua mea? Need to talk?

After a traumatic event, for people directly involved, who have family and friends impacted, who work in services that are part of the response to the event, and for the wider community, it is normal to feel distressed, and to experience symptoms of stress.

It could be that you felt you were managing at the time of the incident, but as the busy holiday period passes, children head back to school and things return to 'business as usual', some people may find delayed symptoms of stress start to surface.

WorkSafe team locally based

A team of WorkSafe staff is based in Whakatāne as investigators carry out a health and safety investigation into the harm and loss of life caused by the eruption.

As the workplace health and safety regulator, WorkSafe will be investigating and considering all of the relevant work health and safety issues surrounding this tragic event. This investigation could take up to a year from the date of the eruption to complete.

WorkSafe investigates incidents for a range of reasons, including preventing similar incidents happening again, identifying and responding to breaches of the law, learning from the incident and determining what actions they may want to take.

A WorkSafe investigation involves a number of steps and considerations; these will generally include:

- › examining the scene where possible and collecting evidence,
- › interviewing relevant people,
- › reviewing documents relating to the incident,
- › engaging experts to help us understand what's happened and why, and
- › liaising with other agencies and regulators.

More about WorkSafe is available at www.worksafe.govt.nz.

Remembrance ceremony discussions

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa Manahautū Leonie Simpson says they remain committed to caring for whānau affected by the Whakaari eruption and with that in mind any public remembrance ceremony will be held with the wishes of those most impacted being paramount.

"We will take direction from the affected whānau, at present discussions are signalling that such a gathering would be best timed around the anniversary of the event. Among other considerations, this will allow a period for the injured and bereaved to rest and recover.

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa will work with our partners and whānau and looks forward to sharing details with the community in coming months."

If so, please make use of the many organisations that are here to help:

- › **Free call or Txt 24/7 counsellor service:** 1737
- › **Ngāti Awa Social and Health Services:** 07 306 0096
- › **Victim Support:** 0800 542 846
- › **Community Mental Health:** 0800 774 545
- › **Pou Whakaaro:** 07 308 9430
- › **Salvation Army Chaplaincy Services:** 07 308 6923
- › **Healthline:** 0800 611 116



Business support information

The Eastern Bay Chamber of Commerce is actively contacting potentially impacted businesses to make them aware of recovery services, including the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) funded Business Support Grants Programme.

A panel, comprising representatives from the Whakatāne District Council, Government, and Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa has started meeting weekly to assess applications.

To find out about the details and the grants criteria, please call the Whakaari/White Island Business Support line: 0800 999 030 or visit www.ebopchamber.co.nz

Work and Income

Contact Work and Income if you:

- › would like assistance
- › aren't sure if you can get assistance
- › are struggling to support yourself, or your family
- › would like more information.

Visit the Work and Income website:

www.workandincome.govt.nz or phone 0800 559 009.

Work and Income may be able to help over the phone, without you coming into an office. If you do need to come in, Work and Income will make an appointment and tell you what to bring.

GNS

GNS Science and the National Geohazards Monitoring Centre continue to closely monitor Whakaari/White Island and provide expert advice to the Recovery project.

GNS updates are available to everyone via the GeoNet app or www.gns.cri.nz