

Decision released from public excluded session

Recommendation from Committee:

Civil Defence Emergency Joint Committee

Date of Meeting:

Extraordinary meeting held on 18 October 2021

Report title and number:

Appointment of CDEM Regional Manager/Group Controller

Documents released:

Committee report and attachment

Decision:

RESOLVED:

That the Canterbury Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Joint Committee:

1. approves the panel recommendation to appoint Sean Poff as the CDEM Regional Manager/Group Controller
2. approves the proposed attached media release associated with the appointment
3. agrees to make the report publicly available once the media release has been issued.

Carried

Appointment of CDEM Regional Manager/Group Controller

Canterbury Civil Defence Emergency Management Group

Joint Committee

Date of meeting	18 October 2021
Author	Giles Southwell, Director Finance & Corporate Services, Environment Canterbury
Endorsed by	Dr. Stefanie Rixecker, Chief Executive, Environment Canterbury

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Canterbury Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Joint Committee with recommendations in relation to the appointment of a new CDEM Group Controller/Regional Manager.

Recommendations

That the Canterbury Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Joint Committee:

1. **approves the panel recommendation to appoint Sean Poff as the CDEM Regional Manager/Group Controller**
2. **approves the proposed attached media release associated with the appointment.**

Background

2. Section 26(2) of the Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) Act requires the CDEM Group to:
“A Group must appoint, either by name or by reference to the holder of an office, at least 1 suitably qualified and experienced person to ...perform the functions and duties and exercise the powers of the Group Controller ...”
Section 6.1 of the CDEM Group Plan gives effect to s26(2) of the CDEM Act, and outlines the powers delegated to Group Controllers by the CDEM Group Joint Committee.
3. The previous CDEM Group Controller, Neville Reilly, retired in June 2021, after almost 10 years in the role. James Thompson was appointed Alternate Group Controller at the meeting of the Joint Committee on 28 May 2021 in preparation for Neville Reilly's departure.

Recruitment Process

4. While the appointment for this role is made by the Joint Committee, the employing authority is Environment Canterbury.
5. The CDEM Co-ordinating Executive Group (CEG) considered the recruitment of a new Group Controller/Regional Manager at its meeting on 3 May 2021 and

recommended that a panel of CDEM Group representatives be appointed to facilitate the recruitment process.

6. The panel membership consisted of:

Panel Member	Representation
Hon. Lianne Dalziel	Joint Committee
Bede Carran	CEG
Giles Southwell (on behalf of Dr. Stefanie Rixecker)	Environment Canterbury
Jamie Ruwhiu	Ngāi Tahu
Simon Chambers	NEMA
Paul Henderson	Fire & Emergency NZ – Partner Agency

7. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 lockdown, there were unavoidable delays to the recruitment process, however interviews took place on 28 September 2021, and attracted a significant number of high calibre applicants. Three applicants were interviewed by the panel.

Preferred Candidate

8. Mr Sean Poff has been selected by the panel as the most suitably qualified and experienced candidate. Mr Poff has been engaged as the CDEM Group Controller designate, pending confirmation of the appointment by the CDEM Group Joint Committee.
9. Mr Poff is currently the Director of Science, Data & Insights for Ministry for the Environment, based in Wellington, however has previous relevant experience throughout military and central government sectors, both in New Zealand and abroad. Mr Poff is passionate about Emergency Management, and his leadership experience, combined with his cultural awareness as well as strong relationship and strategic qualities, will be invaluable to CDEM in the Canterbury Region, and beyond.

Next steps

10. Should the Joint Committee agree to the appointment of Mr Poff into the role of Regional Manager/Group Controller, the attached media statement will be released.

Attachments

1. CDEM group controller announcement - media release [1.1.1 - 1 page]

Sean Poff named Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Controller

DATE OF RELEASE, 2021

MEDIA RELEASE

Canterbury's Civil Defence Emergency Management Group has a new Group Controller – Sean Poff.

Mr Poff is currently the Director of Science, Data & Insights for Ministry for the Environment, based in Wellington. He has previous experience throughout military and central government sectors, both in New Zealand and abroad.

The Group Controller position is required under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act. The Group Controller supports, leads, direct and co-ordinates local multi-agency responses to emergencies and in the transition to recovery.

Mr Poff is passionate about emergency management. This passion, combined with his leadership experience, cultural awareness, strong relationship and strategic qualities, will be invaluable to CDEM in Canterbury and beyond.

Chair of the Canterbury Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Lianne Dalziel received endorsement for the appointment at the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Joint Committee meeting today.

"We're thrilled to have acquired Sean's leadership skills in high pressure situations, combined with his extensive strategic knowledge, which will be so valued in Civil Defence operations and to the people of Canterbury," she said.

Outside of emergency situations, the Group Controller helps ensure our communities, and the agencies that support them, are resilient and prepared to deal with the risks they face.

Being able to communicate clearly and decisively under pressure, and show political acumen are important requirements, Ms Dalziel said.

Mr Poff said: "I am honoured to have been appointed and look forward to working with officials and staff from local authorities and partner agencies towards building resilient communities across Canterbury.

"I was impressed by the initiative and community spirit shown by emergency services staff, volunteers and the public during recent emergencies across the region, including flooding and the Covid-19 response."

Environment Canterbury will continue to be the administrative authority for the Emergency Management Office and the role of Group Controller.

Mr Poff's appointment follows the retirement of Neville Reilly, who held the position for 10 years.

For further information, contact Environment Canterbury media on 027 221 5259.