MEDIA RELEASE

A Government Inquiry is looking into the lessons that can be learnt from the emergency management response to the three severe weather events that devastated parts of the North Island earlier this year.

Cyclones Hale and Gabrielle, and the heavy rainfall in Northland, Auckland, Waikato, and Bay of Plenty, resulted in loss of life, and damage to property and infrastructure in the billions of dollars.

Chaired by former Governor-General, Sir Jerry Mateparae, the Inquiry looks at the readiness and response activities of local and central governments, communities and businesses disproportionately impacted, the support provided by Māori responders, and the roles played by lifeline utilities and support groups. It will identify what went well and what didn’t to ensure the country’s emergency management system is ready to cope with future natural disaster events.

Sir Jerry Mateparae said the impacts of the cyclones are still fresh in the minds of all New Zealanders.

“These weather events had a terrible impact on individuals, families, businesses, and communities.  “Our emergency services swung into action, as did our community groups. But as we continue our recovery efforts, we should not lose sight of the opportunity to ask what we could have done better.

“With the increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events, we need to be prepared for future events. The best way to do that is to look at how ready we were, and how we responded,” he said.

Sir Jerry is joined by Julie Greene, Rangimarie Hunia and John Ombler on the panel. The Inquiry panel is interviewing critical agencies and entities involved in readiness and response, and meeting community groups, businesses, iwi, and marae in the affected regions. The regional engagement starts this week in the Hawke’s Bay.

Sir Jerry urged people to make a submission. “Whether you were directly impacted, or you have ideas that could make the emergency management system better, we want to hear your voice and your stories. I encourage you to have your say.” Anyone can make a submission, through the Inquiries link through [www.dia.govt.nz](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dia.govt.nz%2F&data=05%7C01%7CAnita.Balakrishnan%40dia.govt.nz%7C021d53c184f34486538208dba5111e1b%7Cf659ca5cfc474e96b24d14c95df13acb%7C0%7C0%7C638285265155777835%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=3Z0sfNxsBfrz4I4efvzQFXmDD0GZ0K9mr1KWGEwlLOQ%3D&reserved=0). Submissions can be made by email or a portal which will go live shortly on the webpage.

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For more information contact: weatherevents@dia.govt.nz