

31 October 2019

Standing Orders Committee  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

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## **REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS 2020 - SUBMISSION ON STANDING ORDER 394 (CIVIL DEFENCE)**

### ***Who are we?***

Survey and Spatial New Zealand (S+SNZ, the trading name of the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors) represents surveyors and spatial professionals. We are a stakeholder across a wide range of government policy areas and the sector including housing development, land subdivision, construction, infrastructure, spatial information and resource management. Our members are involved in each stage of rural and urban development and infrastructure projects. They are the lead professionals enabling connections between the earth sciences, engineering and applied geography.

The survey profession supported the immediate response to the Canterbury earthquakes by assisting Civil Defence and partner organisations following the Canterbury earthquakes and went on to play a pivotal role in the residential, commercial and infrastructure rebuild. Our members are also involved in response and rebuild activities associated with floods, earth slips and other natural hazards.

### **STANDING ORDER 394 – CIVIL DEFENCE**

#### ***Why are we making this submission?***

As a result of members' involvement in the Canterbury earthquakes and having gained first-hand knowledge and practical insight, S+SNZ made a submission to the Governance and Administration Committee in February 2019 on the *National Disaster Resilience Strategy* that was prepared in accordance with Part 3 of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (the Act). In March 2019 S+SNZ was heard by that Committee.

This submission seeking an amendment of Standing Order 394 (which would need to be preceded by amendment of section 35(1) of the Act), is informed by that experience and, in particular, the unreasonably short time frame for submissions to be made on the *National Disaster Resilience Strategy* to the Committee and for it to report back to the House.

In February 2019 the Committee called for submissions on the *National Disaster Resilience Committee* to be provided within eight days. That did not allow national organisations sufficient time to widely

canvass members and for that input to be analysed and organised into a submission. In the remaining period the Committee had to hear oral submissions, analyse them, and report to the House.

These time frames are unreasonable where there is no actual emergency (which is catered for by Part 4 of the Act). Further, such short time frames do not provide for informed public input on matters of considerable national importance or for the consideration that they deserve from a Select Committee.

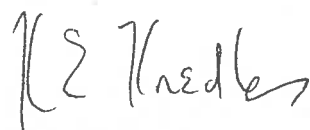
S+SNZ acknowledges that the short time frame of Standing Order 394 is necessitated by the requirement of section 35(1) of the Act. However, that is not justified given the time to develop a national civil defence emergency management strategy or a national civil defence emergency management plan (as provided for by Part 3 of the Act). Furthermore, the currency of a national civil defence emergency management strategy is up to 10 years and a national civil defence emergency management plan must be reviewed every five years if it has been operative for more than five years. Consequently, the rushed submission, consideration and reporting process is anomalous.

S+SNZ submits that a minimum four-week submission period is more reasonable and aligned to informed and democratic participation and that there should be a reasonable time allowed for Select Committee processing of submissions and reporting to the House.

### **Recommendations**

S+SNZ recommends that the Standing Orders Committee:

- 1 **note** that surveyors and spatial professionals have a long history of first responder and subsequent response and recovery roles following earthquakes, floods, slips and other natural hazards which inform submissions on civil defence matters made by their representative organisation, S+SNZ
- 2 **note** that the 12 sitting day provision of Standing Order 394 is too short to provide for informed submissions by national organisations on a national civil defence emergency management strategy or a national civil defence emergency management plan
- 3 **agree** that a four-week submission period and a reasonable time for the relevant Select Committee to process submissions and report to the House is desirable for Parliament to better represent New Zealanders
- 4 **note** that Standing Order 394 is constrained by section 35(1) of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 which would need to be first amended
- 5 **note** that S+SNZ would welcome the opportunity to be heard by the Standing Orders Committee.

  
Mark Dyer  
Acting Chief Executive