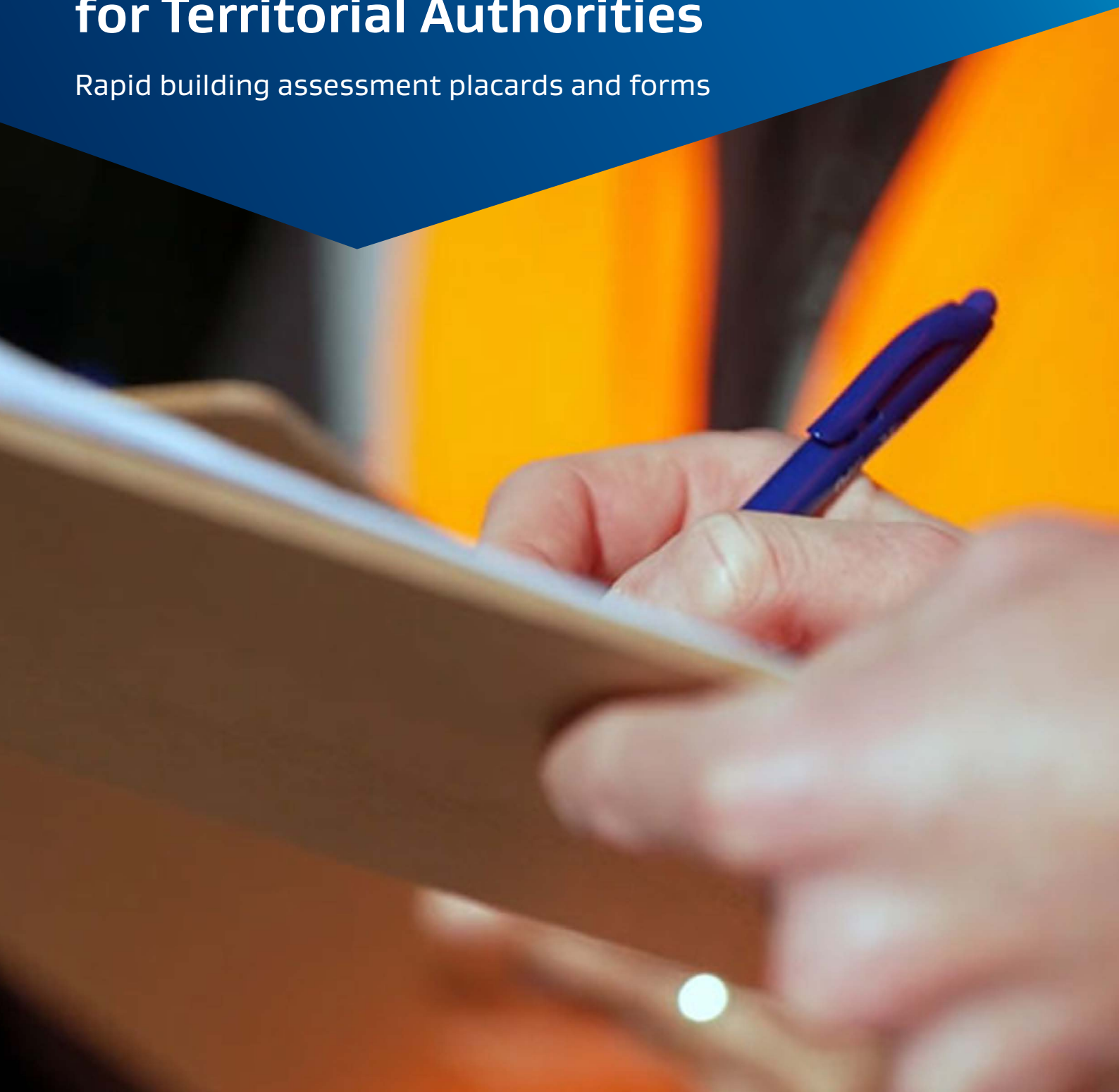


**BUILDING  
PERFORMANCE**

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# Building Emergency Management Quick Guide for Territorial Authorities

Rapid building assessment placards and forms





**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,  
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**  
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

## **Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) Hīkina Whakatutuki – Lifting to make successful**

MBIE develops and delivers policy, services, advice and regulation to support economic growth and the prosperity and wellbeing of New Zealanders.

### **MORE INFORMATION**

Information, examples and answers to your questions about the topics covered here can be found on our website: [www.mbie.govt.nz](http://www.mbie.govt.nz).

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# Purpose

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The purpose of this quick guide is to provide information on the new rapid building assessment forms and placards that have been approved by the Chief Executive of MBIE under section 133BQ of the Building Act 2004.

This quick guide:

- › outlines the changes to the new placards (what has changed and why)
- › outlines the changes to the new rapid building assessment forms (what has changed and why)
- › provides information on how to implement the new placards and forms.

MBIE has published information on managing buildings in an emergency at [www.building.govt.nz](http://www.building.govt.nz).

For more detailed guidance on building emergency management, see: [Managing buildings in an emergency - guidance for decision-makers and territorial authorities](#)

## New placards and rapid building assessment forms

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Following an event that has caused damage to buildings, rapid building assessments are carried out where a state of emergency or designation is in place. In most cases, the responsibility for conducting rapid building assessment operations sits with the relevant territorial authority or CDEM Controller.

Rapid building assessments are brief visual inspections intended to quickly establish the usability of buildings and associated infrastructure where functions may be compromised by a severe weather event or emergency event. During an assessment, Rapid Building Assessors assess a building for damage and existing or potential hazards, record details of the damage on an assessment form and assign an appropriate placard. The focus of the rapid building assessment process is on immediate public safety; they do not provide an engineering assessment service to building owners.

As part of MBIE's continuous improvement programme, the current rapid building assessment forms and placards have been revised. The placards have been amended to ensure they are precise and easy to understand, while the assessment forms have been reduced from three separate forms to two.

The revisions to the placards and forms are intended to simplify where practicable and provide ease of use. All changes are in line with the current provisions of the Building Act and there is no legal implication for the changes made.

# Implementing the new placards and forms

The General Manager of Building System Performance (through his delegated authority from the Chief Executive of MBIE) has approved forms and signs under sections 133BQ and 133BT of the Building Act 2004, with that approval coming into effect on 1 November 2023.

From 1 November 2023, any placards issued under section 133BT, or any post-event assessment prepared for the purposes of section 133BQ should be in the approved format.

MBIE will provide each territorial authority in Aotearoa/New Zealand with the information below before this approval comes into effect:

- › physical copies of the new placards
- › access to the digital files of the placards
- › access to the digital versions of the rapid building assessment forms.

These will be provided in advance of the 1 November date, to allow sufficient time for each territorial authority and [responsible persons](#) to receive and understand them and prepare to use them. We recommend that by 1 November 2023, all physical copies of previous versions of the placards and forms are removed from your readiness packs, and the digital version of the new rapid building assessment forms are loaded onto Survey 123 or a similar application if used.

The new forms and placards can be used in advance of 1 November 2023, but this is not required by MBIE or the Building Act. Additionally, the forms and placards can be used in relation to rapid building assessments and placards placed under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002.

## What the law says:

### 133BT Notices and signs on buildings

- (1) A responsible person may place 1 or more signs or notices on or near a building in a designated area prohibiting or restricting the use of the building if –
  - (a) the responsible person believes that it is reasonably necessary to remove or reduce risks of injury or death; or
  - (b) an evacuation of the building has been directed under section 133BR.
- (2) A responsible person may place signs or notices on or near a building informing the public of the risks posed by the building.
- (3) A sign or notice under this section must be in writing and in the form (if any) approved by the Chief Executive of MBIE, and state –
  - (i) the nature and extent of any damage to the building; and
  - (ii) in the case of a sign or notice under subsection (1), whether, how, and to what extent the building can safely be used.

### 133BQ Post event assessments (rapid building assessments)

- (1) A responsible person may inspect the exterior and interior of a building or any land in a designated area and prepare a post event assessment of any risks posed by or to the building.
- (2) The post event assessment must be prepared –
  - (a) in accordance with the methodology (if any) approved by the Chief Executive of MBIE; and
  - (b) in writing and in the form (if any) approved by the Chief Executive of MBIE.

# Summary of the changes made to the placards and forms

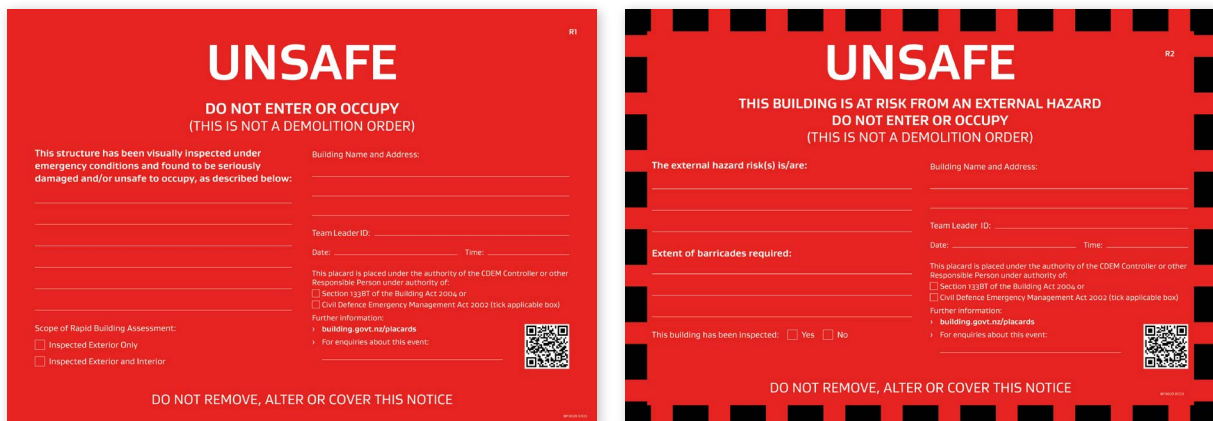
## The new placards are more precise and easier to understand

The key changes made to the placards are:

- › separate placards for R1 red (building hazard) and R2 red (external hazard) and Y1 yellow (restricted access to part(s) of building) and Y2 yellow (short term entry)
- › simplified wording throughout
- › changes to font size for clarity
- › addition of chevron borders as a clear visual identifier between red R1/R2 and yellow Y1/Y2 placards
- › addition of a QR code on all placards, which links to further information hosted on [www.building.govt.nz](http://www.building.govt.nz). An educational placard video has been developed to provide information for building owners/occupiers on what the placards mean and their responsibilities after a rapid building assessment.

## New red placards

A red placard indicates that a building is unsafe and poses a risk and must not be entered or occupied. The current placard requires an assessor to indicate whether the building is at risk from an external hazard or whether the building itself has been seriously damaged. The new placards separate the two hazards to make it clear whether the building itself has been seriously damaged, or whether the building is at risk from an external hazard like a landslip or rockfall. The placard is double sided, and a chevron border added to the external hazard placard to make it distinct. The Rapid Building Assessor will need to cross out the placard side that is not being used to ensure clarity.



Other changes include:

- › the main header of the red placard has been changed from 'Entry Prohibited' to 'Unsafe – Do not enter or occupy' to clarify the specific risk
- › a section has been added to the R1 (building hazard) placard specifying that the structure has been visually inspected under emergency conditions and found to be seriously damaged and/or unsafe to occupy, with space for the assessor to add details of the damage. The R2 (external hazard) placard has space for the assessor to describe the external hazard(s) and any required barricades
- › 'Do not remove, alter or cover this notice' has been added
- › white font instead of black for readability
- › a QR code has been added, which will link to detailed placard information on the [Managing Buildings in an Emergency](http://www.building.govt.nz) webpage at [www.building.govt.nz](http://www.building.govt.nz).

## New yellow placards

A yellow placard indicates that access to the building is restricted. The current placard requires an assessor to indicate whether access is restricted to part(s) of the building or if access is short term entry only. The new placards separate the two types of restricted access to ensure the assessor can provide specific detail about the access that may be permitted (eg short term entry to remove essential documents, or if access is restricted to specific parts of the building). The placard will be double sided, and a chevron border has been added to the short-term access placard to make it distinct. The Rapid Building Assessor will need to cross out the placard side that is not being used to ensure clarity.

Other changes include:

- › Y2 (Restricted access – short term only): diagram of restricted area has been removed. The new placard just requires details of the areas which must not be entered
- › **'Do not remove, alter or cover this notice'** has been added
- › **'Caution: future events may cause more damage that may change this assessment'** has been bolded for emphasis
- › a QR code has been added, which will link to detailed placard information on the [Managing Buildings in an Emergency](http://www.building.govt.nz) webpage at [www.building.govt.nz](http://www.building.govt.nz).

**RESTRICTED ACCESS**  
TO PART(S) OF THE BUILDING ONLY

**CAUTION:** This structure has been visually inspected and found to be damaged as described below:

Building Name and Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Scope of Rapid Building Assessment:  
 Inspected Exterior Only  
 Inspected Exterior and Interior

Team Leader ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

This placard is placed under the authority of the CDEM Controller or other Responsible Person under authority of:  
 Section 133BF of the Building Act 2004, or  
 Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (tick applicable box)

Further information:  
 › [building.govt.nz/placards](http://building.govt.nz/placards)  
 › For enquiries about this event: \_\_\_\_\_

**CAUTION:** FUTURE EVENTS MAY CAUSE MORE DAMAGE THAT MAY CHANGE THIS ASSESSMENT.

DO NOT REMOVE, ALTER OR COVER THIS NOTICE

**RESTRICTED ACCESS**  
SHORT TERM ENTRY ONLY

Access to be supervised by a person authorised by the Issuing authority:

**CAUTION:** This structure has been visually inspected and found to be damaged as described below:

Building Name and Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Scope of Rapid Building Assessment:  
 Inspected Exterior Only  
 Inspected Exterior and Interior

Team Leader ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

This placard is placed under the authority of the CDEM Controller or other Responsible Person under authority of:  
 Section 133BF of the Building Act 2004, or  
 Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (tick applicable box)

Further information:  
 › [building.govt.nz/placards](http://building.govt.nz/placards)  
 › For enquiries about this event: \_\_\_\_\_

**CAUTION:** FUTURE EVENTS MAY CAUSE MORE DAMAGE THAT MAY CHANGE THIS ASSESSMENT.

DO NOT REMOVE, ALTER OR COVER THIS NOTICE

## New white placards

A white placard indicates that the building has had a rapid building assessment and can be used (ie no restrictions on access). It does not mean the building is not damaged. The current placard specifies that the owner should organise for someone to look at the building more thoroughly. This has been changed to outline next steps for an owner/occupier: specifically, that an owner should organise a detailed building inspection and report any unsafe conditions to local authorities. This change is aimed at clarifying what an owner/occupier should do if they receive a white placard.

**CAN BE USED**  
NO RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS  
A VISUAL RAPID BUILDING ASSESSMENT

This building has undergone a rapid building assessment during or following an emergency and no significant hazards have been found. This does not mean the building is completely safe or has suffered no damage.

The following items have not been inspected:  
 › Utilities (electrical, gas, water, sanitary facilities, etc)  
 › Secondary elements (ceilings, windows, fittings, etc):

**Next steps:**  
 › The owner should organise a detailed building inspection  
 › Report any unsafe conditions to local authorities

**CAUTION:** FUTURE EVENTS MAY CAUSE MORE DAMAGE THAT MAY CHANGE THIS ASSESSMENT.

DO NOT REMOVE, ALTER OR COVER THIS NOTICE



Other changes include:

- › **'Caution: future events may cause more damage that may change this assessment'** has been bolded for emphasis
- › **'Do not remove, alter or cover this notice'** has been added
- › to further assist with the public's understanding of what a white placard means, the following has been added: **'This building has undergone a rapid building assessment during or following an emergency and no significant hazards have been found. This does not mean the building is completely safe or has suffered no damage.'**
- › a QR code has been added, which will link to detailed placard information on the [Managing Buildings in an Emergency](http://www.building.govt.nz/Managing-Buildings-in-an-Emergency) webpage at [www.building.govt.nz](http://www.building.govt.nz).

## The Rapid Building Assessment forms have been simplified

Previously, there were three rapid building assessment forms (earthquake, flooding and geotechnical) that Rapid Building Assessors could use when conducting an assessment. They have now been reduced to two – one rapid building assessment form and a geotechnical assessment form.

Combining the earthquake and flooding forms into one form makes them event-agnostic, acknowledging the multitude of events that can occur around Aotearoa/New Zealand. Some of the data fields have also been simplified. The form still allows for hazard identification, assessment of life safety risk, recommended further actions and assessment outcomes that are specific to the emergency event.

### **New rapid building assessment form**

The new rapid building assessment form requires details of the event type (ie flood, earthquake, cyclone) upfront.

*Assessor Name and ID* has also been changed to *Team Leader name and ID*. This is in keeping with the approach that Rapid Building Assessors take when conducting assessments as a team, but it still ensures accountability and tracking.

### **New geotechnical assessment form**

The geotechnical assessment form identifies the property, the area, the damage caused to land, and identified hazards. It also contains an assessment on the risk to life and health.

Only minor changes have been made to the geotechnical assessment form. The formatting has been changed to align with the new rapid building assessment form. This includes adding a field that defines the nature of the event.

The *Assessor Name* field is now the *Team Leader Name and ID* field, which is in keeping with the rapid building assessment form.

The section confirming the survey extent of the hazard has been moved within the assessment form to ensure that the technical focus is maintained. The welfare check field has been removed as it sits more appropriately in the rapid building assessment form. This does not remove the need for the welfare check assessment.

The updated forms will not include a space for sketches, as they have previously. Assessors will use a separate sketch pad and specific sketches will need a unique ID referenced to the relevant assessment form.

Territorial authorities and Rapid Building Assessors must use the assessment forms approved by the Chief Executive of MBIE as per section 133BQ(2)(b). This means the specified data fields must be used and completed during an assessment (digital or paper version).

Territorial authorities can add additional data fields to the forms for their use, as long as all information required in the approved forms is collected during an assessment.



## Printing placards

Under section 133BT(1)(a) the responsible person may place a placard when they believe that it is reasonably necessary to remove or reduce risks of injury or death, or an evacuation of the building has been directed under section 133BR. Therefore, it is important that any placard is filled out correctly and is placed in a visible location.

MBIE recommends that every territorial authority has sufficient stock of printed placards to cover a potential emergency event in their region. For additional printing requirements, please follow the below instructions:

- › the placards must be printed in A4 horizontal format, and in colour.
- › the colours of the placards must be set up in the following way using the CMYK coding below:

Placard	CMYK Coding
Red Placard	C:0, M:95, Y:91, K:0
Yellow Placard	C:0, M:0, Y:100, K:0

It is recommended that the placards be printed on waterproof paper. The placards must be affixed to the building for as long as the damage/risk to the building exists and therefore need to be durable. Permanent marker for filling in the placards and hard-wearing tape, such as masking tape or duct tape, is also recommended.

For more information on how to prepare for a rapid building assessment operation, see [Managing buildings in an emergency - guidance for decision-makers and territorial authorities](#).

This includes readiness checklists in Appendices 2 and 3.

PDF files of the placards can be also found at [www.building.govt.nz](http://www.building.govt.nz) – [Rapid Building Assessment Placard System](#).

### What the law says:

Placards under section 133BT of the Building Act must be:

- › placed 'on or near' the building (s 133BT(1) and (2)), and
- › be visible to people approaching the building (s 133BT(3)(c))

## Accessing the digital rapid building assessment form templates

The new rapid building assessment forms are available in both digital and printed format. It is recommended territorial authorities prioritise the use of the digitised forms if they are able, (eg loading the forms onto an ArcGIS platform such as Survey 123).

Enabling Rapid Building Assessors to complete assessment forms in a digital format ensures greater consistency, accuracy and efficiency of data collection and reporting. It also means that assessment and placard data can be visualised and utilised as a real-time operational tool by territorial authorities and shared easily with other response agencies, providing better situational awareness for response work.

The digital versions of the forms are also quicker and easier for Rapid Building Assessors to use than the paper forms, as each form will default to the required fields depending on the type of event and assessment required.

The digital version of the new forms can be found at: [www.arcgis.com](http://www.arcgis.com).

Additional technical guidance on how to set up the digital templates can also be found here.

PDF files of the new forms for physical printing can also be found at [www.building.govt.nz](http://www.building.govt.nz) – [Rapid Building Assessment Resources](#).

MBIE can provide advice for territorial authorities who wish to utilise digital assessment forms on an ArcGIS platform that is suitable to them and their needs.

## Further information

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Additional information and guidance on managing buildings in an emergency is available at [www.building.govt.nz/managing-buildings/managing-buildings-in-an-emergency/](http://www.building.govt.nz/managing-buildings/managing-buildings-in-an-emergency/)

For any questions on the implementation of the new rapid building assessments and forms, please contact the Building Emergency Management team at: [buildingemergencymanagement@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:buildingemergencymanagement@mbie.govt.nz)



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