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The Emperor's New Clothes: New Zealand's Whole of Government Approach to National Security

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Abstract

The *New Zealand's National Security System* (NSS) document is presented as the central framework for New Zealand's whole of government approach to national security and crisis management. Despite the terms regular use in New Zealand Government agency documentation, no clear articulation of what a whole of government approach means, has been forthcoming from central government. The author's experience at the operational level of New Zealand's national security system was characterized by a lack of coordination and leadership, duplication of effort, and differing agency priorities and objectives to national security issues. From these experiences, he proposed the hypothesis that the New Zealand Government's vertically structured government departments inhibit a whole of government approach to security. This paper explores this hypothesis through a textual analysis of the NSS that examines its suitability to New Zealand's unique security context and its effectiveness in addressing the risks and hazards to New Zealand's national security interests.

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