

This policy outlines the role of Government and the principles and standards for offers of assistance activities to assist people, communities, non-government organisations and the business sector to rebuild local communities affected by a disaster event.

Introduction

Following disaster events the broader community generously offers assistance to affected people and communities in the form of financial donations, volunteers, goods and services. These offers of assistance provide significant support to the people and local communities affected by a disaster event.

Every disaster event is unique and presents its own challenge. This policy outlines the role of Government and the principles and standards for offers of assistance activities to assist people, communities, non-government organisations and the business sector to rebuild local communities affected by a disaster event.

Scope

In this document, “offers of assistance” is understood to include the following:

- Corporate offers of assistance directed to government (this includes financial, goods, services and offers of staff time);
- Public offers of assistance directed to government (this includes financial, goods and services);
- Members of the public offering to volunteer their time to assist affected communities, government or non-government organisations involved in the response and recovery effort; and
- Community groups or organisations offering to assist affected communities, government or non-government organisations with the response and recovery effort.

This policy applies to the preparation, planning, response and recovery phases of a disaster.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- articulate the Queensland Government’s role in the management and coordination of offers of assistance;
- aim to ensure that offers of assistance are managed in a manner that meets the needs of the affected people and local communities following a disaster event; and
- set out the principles and standards that guide the implementation of this policy.

Government’s Role

The role of government in offers of assistance is to:

- manage financial donations;
- facilitate activities that assist in the coordination of offers of goods and services;
- direct offers of volunteering through appropriate channels;
- ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place for the registration, referral, training and health and safety of volunteers and community groups; and
- provide consistent and accurate messages to the public.

Authority and Responsibility

The authority of this policy rests with the chairperson of the State Disaster Management Group (SDMG) who has the function and authority under section 18 of the *Disaster Management Act 2003*.

At the time of a disaster event, and following consideration of the scale of the event, the SDMG chairperson may appoint a person with the responsibility to coordinate the implementation of this policy.

Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements

This policy is consistent with Queensland's disaster management arrangements, with local government at its cornerstone. It aligns with the:

- *Disaster Management Act 2003* which sets out Government's broad ranging influence in managing disasters to preserve lives and property. This is achieved through Queensland's unique All Hazards arrangement, based on a whole-of-government approach that utilises the three tiers of Government.
- State Disaster Management Plan in delivering a whole-of-government approach in managing and coordinating offers of assistance during disaster events under the phases of Prevention, Preparation, Response and Recovery.
- Queensland Recovery Guidelines that require the coordination of all activities and recognises the need to designate functional lead agencies in the recovery phase.

Principles

The following principles underpin the Queensland Government's approach to coordinating offers of assistance:

- The needs of affected people and local communities will always be the first consideration.
- The response will be scalable and in line with the size and location of the disaster.
- All tiers of government, non-government organisations, businesses and communities share a sense of responsibility in rebuilding communities and promoting self management.
- Clear and consistent messages will be communicated to the community at all times. In particular, advice on what goods and services are needed by affected people and communities at any given time.
- Government and non-government sectors will ensure a coordinated and integrated approach to the management of offers of assistance.
- Activities will be consistent with the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements and Queensland Recovery Guidelines.

Standards

The principles are supported by a set of standards to ensure that the implementation of this policy is for the benefit of people and local communities affected by the disaster:

- Offers of assistance are channelled through the appropriate entry point.
- There is an integrated system for coordinating offers of assistance.
- There are clear and consistent messages.
- All dealings with affected people and local communities are undertaken in a courteous, helpful and ethical manner.
- All offers of assistance are handled in a timely and effective manner.

Implementation

The Offers of Assistance Implementation Guidelines will guide the implementation of this policy.

Lead agencies across government will have responsibility for either managing or coordinating the key areas of this policy.

Privacy Policy

This policy and its associated Implementation Guidelines are consistent with the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld).

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

The SDMG chairperson, or a person appointed by the chairperson, is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

