

STATE DISASTER
MANAGEMENT
GROUP

Disaster Management Strategic Policy Framework



Acknowledgements

The Department of Community Safety would like to acknowledge and thank all agencies, organisations and individuals involved in the development of the first *Disaster Management Strategic Policy Framework* (the Framework) produced in 2005.

The Framework was originally developed based on the principles of the Council of Australian Governments' report *Natural Disasters in Australia: Reforming mitigation, relief and recovery arrangements (2002)*. The report identified the need for a comprehensive, all hazards, all agencies approach to disaster management, especially with the emergence of new threats such as terrorism. This approach, including the disaster management elements and definitions used in the report, were adopted in the development of the Framework and remain at its core.

This 2010 version of the Framework supports the Council of Australian Governments' resilience based approach to natural disaster policy and programs adopted in December 2009. This approach recognises that a disaster resilient community is one that works together to understand and manage the disaster risks that confront it.

In addition, the Framework now reflects the outcomes of the review of Queensland's disaster management legislation and policy conducted in 2009, including amendments to the *Disaster Management Act 2003* and agreed policy changes to the Queensland disaster management arrangements.

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Foreword

Queensland's diverse landscape, with its extensive coastline, abundant river catchments and low lying plains, and our predominantly tropical climate and decentralised population results in our high level of vulnerability to a range of natural hazards. Additionally, the impact of climate change has the long term potential to further increase the risk of weather-related disasters.

In recent years cyclones have threatened our coastal towns and cities from Cooktown to Hervey Bay, and have badly damaged infrastructure around Innisfail, Airlie Beach and Mackay. Floods have caused extensive damage to inland communities in the Gulf region and northern, central and south west Queensland. Animal and plant diseases, such as Citrus Canker and Equine Influenza have affected our rural and recreational industries, and human frailty has resulted in damage through oil spill, or the very real threat of it, to our pristine marine environment.

In such circumstances it is essential that Queensland has effective disaster management arrangements. These start with setting the right strategic framework.

Queensland's *Disaster Management Strategic Policy Framework* (the Framework) sets out our key objectives for disaster management and guides the development and implementation of disaster management policy and programs that align with Queensland government priorities.

Earlier versions of the Framework have guided the strategic level approach to disasters, such as those caused by Severe Tropical Cyclone Larry and Sugar Cane Smut. The Framework has been updated in 2010 to reflect the amendments to the *Disaster Management Act 2003*, aimed at strengthening Queensland's disaster preparedness, resilience and capacity to implement coordinated initiatives to reduce the impact of disasters on our State and our communities.

The Framework also reflects Queensland's commitment to the Council of Australian Governments' resilience program, including the *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience*, and ongoing reforms for natural disaster mitigation, relief and recovery arrangements.

The *Disaster Management Strategic Policy Framework* has my absolute endorsement. It should be the first point of reference for all of us involved in disaster management.

The Hon Anna Bligh MP

Premier of Queensland and Minister for the Arts



Introduction

The Queensland Government is committed to safer, and more secure and resilient communities in Queensland through world-class disaster management arrangements.

Legislation

The Queensland *Disaster Management Act 2003* forms the legislative basis for disaster management activities within all levels of Government and the Queensland disaster management arrangements. One of the key responsibilities outlined in the Act is for the establishment of a State Disaster Management Group. A key function of this Group is to develop a strategic policy framework for disaster management for the State. The Framework:

- articulates the policy, principles and objectives for disaster management for the State in line with the guiding principles and objectives of the *Disaster Management Act 2003*; and
- supports the development and introduction of climate change adaptation and sustainability initiatives.

Approach

The Framework is based on the elements of disaster management in the Council of Australian Governments' report *Natural Disasters in Australia: Reforming mitigation, relief and recovery arrangements (2002)* and it supports and builds on the four guiding principles outlined in the *Disaster Management Act 2003*:

1. disaster management should be planned across the four phases – prevention, preparation, response and recovery;
2. all events, whether natural or caused by human acts or omissions, should be managed in accordance with the strategic policy framework, the State disaster management plan, and any disaster management guidelines;
3. local governments should primarily be responsible for managing events in their local government area; and
4. district groups and the State group should provide local governments with appropriate resources and support to help the local governments carry out disaster operations.

The Framework also:

- provides a comprehensive, all hazards, all agencies approach by achieving the right balance of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery;
- supports the mainstreaming of disaster preparedness and mitigation into relevant areas of activity of government, non-government, small business and corporations; and
- aligns disaster risk reduction, disaster mitigation, disaster resilience and climate change adaptation policy and actions with international and national reforms.

Governance

The underlying basis for development of the Framework is the need for effective policy objectives and tools to enhance governance and accountability, and to promote integrated whole-of-government solutions to complex issues. A further influence has been the shift in national and international disaster management thinking toward disaster risk reduction, and community resilience. The Framework:

- strengthens the governance accountability and transparency of government by establishing strategic priorities to guide the application of resources and reporting on achievement of priorities and outcomes;
- gives guidance to all levels of government to apply effective corporate governance and commitment to continuous improvement of policy, programs, practices and service delivery to improve community safety; and
- promotes a transparent, systematic and consistent approach to disaster risk assessment and management, based on the *National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines* and the *Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 Risk management – Principles and guidelines*.

Stakeholders

Disaster management involves engaging with those who contribute to risk and those who are responsible for mitigating risk, preparing communities to respond, responding to events and engaging those supporting the recovery from disasters. Disaster management will contribute to disaster resilience through effective, integrated planning and management arrangements, strong capabilities and dedicated career and volunteer personnel.¹ The Framework:

- acknowledges the relationship between Queensland and other states, territories and countries in major disaster events;
- recognises the commitment of stakeholders and the need for collaboration across all levels of government, community, industry, commerce, government owned corporations, private and volunteer organisations, and local communities in all aspects of disaster management; and
- emphasises building and maintaining sincere relationships, trust, teamwork, consultative decision-making and shared responsibilities among stakeholders.

Resilience

Learnings identified from recent world disaster and emergency events continue to reinforce the current principles of disaster management and the importance of prepared, resilient communities. The Framework:

- represents a key component of Queensland's commitment to the Council of Australian Governments' resilience program, including the *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience*, and ongoing reforms for natural disaster mitigation, relief and recovery arrangements;
- promotes community resilience and economic sustainability through disaster risk reduction; and
- promotes prepared, resilient communities that understand their role in disaster management arrangements.

Purpose

The Framework guides the development and implementation of disaster management policy and programs at State and local government level to achieve the State government's priorities, in particular the promotion of safer, and more secure and resilient communities.

It is a tool for the effective integration of disaster management planning and programming across agencies and sectors. It also provides a strategic benchmark against which reporting and evaluation of outcomes can be undertaken.

Scope

The Framework applies to all Queensland Government departments and local governments.

Government owned corporations and non government organisations, partners and stakeholders are encouraged to support the objectives and strategies of the Framework.

¹ National Emergency Management Committee (Australia) Vision Statement



Elements of the disaster management strategic policy framework

The Framework is based on eight elements, being:

- Research
- Policy and Governance
- Risk Assessment
- Mitigation
- Preparedness
- Response
- Relief and Recovery
- Post-Disaster Assessment

The Framework's elements outline how a comprehensive, all hazards, all agencies approach including better prepared and resilient communities, will be applied in Queensland. The elements are consistent with national and international best practice disaster management.

A continuous improvement approach will be applied to the Framework through the application and practice of the elements. This will enable regular enhancement of the Queensland disaster management arrangements.

The definitions of *disaster management*, *disaster* and *serious disruption* from the *Disaster Management Act 2003* are used in the Framework.

Disaster management means arrangements about managing the potential adverse effects of an event, including, for example, arrangements for mitigating, preventing, preparing for, responding to and recovering from a disaster.

A **disaster** is a serious disruption in a community, caused by the impact of an event, that requires a significant coordinated response by the State and other entities to help the community recover from the disruption.

A **serious disruption** is the loss of human life, or illness or injury to humans; and/or widespread or severe property loss or damage; and/or widespread or severe damage to the environment.



Disaster Research

Disaster research may be broadly understood as a systematic inquiry, before and after a disaster, into a relevant disaster management problem.

Greater investment in research has significant potential for high ratios of benefit to cost. Disaster research allows for continuous improvement through testing and analysis. Lessons identified through post-disaster assessment and disaster management exercises can also contribute to the identification of best practice disaster management practices.

Policy Objective

Use collaborative and best practice research to inform disaster management and improve the effectiveness of disaster management principles, policy development and practices.

Strategies

- Identify, support and resource research priorities.
- Capture lessons identified to develop policy, manage research allocation, planning and resources.
- Establish a web based, good practice clearing house that is accessible to stakeholders to share disaster management information.
- Translate knowledge into practice through review of plans and procedural systems and processes.
- Enable access to research.
- Establish formal relationships with researchers and research institutions to turn disaster management knowledge into effective policy and practice.
- Recognise and incorporate the principles of intellectual property in all research activities.
- Use an evidence-based methodology to measure, monitor and improve community engagement and community education.

Key Performance Indicators

- Formal partnerships established with researchers and research institutions.
- Research tools are used in the development of disaster management strategies.
- Research outcomes inform disaster management policy and practice.



Policy and Governance

Policy and governance elements ensure clear direction of disaster management priorities, resource allocation and accountability, supported through sound business continuity, performance management reporting and corporate risk management processes.

Policy Objective

Disaster management outcomes are achieved through the development and implementation of sound policy, practice and effective corporate governance.

Strategies

- Implement effective governance through sound performance management and a focus on continuous improvement.
- Ensure consistent application of legislation, regulations and supporting policies.
- Establish a formal reporting system that ensures that evaluation analysis is captured and communicated.
- Monitor and evaluate the disaster management arrangements to:
 - streamline arrangements;
 - develop clear accountability, including defined roles and responsibilities at all levels of the disaster management arrangements;
 - improve the communication flow process; and
 - develop whole-of-government media and community engagement arrangements.
- Integrate effective disaster risk reduction initiatives into strategic and corporate plans at all levels of government, industry and commerce.
- Ensure clear and transparent decision making through collaboration, cooperation and communication.

Key Performance Indicators

- Legislative requirements are supported by disaster management arrangements, plans and guidelines.
- Roles and responsibilities of organisations involved in the disaster management arrangements are clearly defined.
- Performance evaluation results in improvements to the disaster management arrangements.



Disaster Risk Assessment

Disaster risk assessment is the process used to determine risk management priorities by evaluating and comparing the level of risk against predetermined standards or other criteria.

Disaster risk assessments determine community vulnerability through the identification of hazards, analysis of risks, and the likelihood and consequence of a disaster occurring. These assessments allow for the targeting of mitigation, preparation, recovery and resilience actions to achieve safer and more sustainable communities.

Policy Objective

Disaster risk assessments are used to identify and reduce vulnerability and improve preparedness and resilience to protect life and property and contribute to sustainable communities.

Strategies

- Develop and share risk registers at all levels of the disaster management arrangements that clearly identify community vulnerabilities, the broader social and economic risks associated with disasters and provide the basis for mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery initiatives.
- Develop and maintain a Hazardscape to inform risk assessment.
- Develop a state-wide natural hazard risk profile to prioritise mitigation strategies.
- Ensure the integrity of risk assessments through alignment to the National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines, the provision of best practice models and rigorous evaluation.
- Ensure outcomes of disaster risk assessments are transparent and clearly articulated into disaster and corporate plans transparent at local community level.
- Improve the understanding, coordination and resource allocation of disaster risk management at all levels through informed research and education.
- Assist all communities, particularly vulnerable communities, including culturally and linguistically diverse and Indigenous communities, to implement disaster risk management processes.
- Include the impact of climate change on disaster risk assessment.

Key Performance Indicators

- Comprehensive disaster risk assessments are complete, relevant and updated regularly and inform other elements of the Framework.



Disaster Mitigation

Disaster mitigation is the means taken in advance of, or after, a disaster aimed at decreasing or eliminating its impact on communities, the economy, infrastructure and the environment.

The implementation of appropriate and targeted mitigation initiatives can offer more sustainable cost savings to communities and government in the event of a disaster. They should be subject to rational cost/benefit and social investment decisions, with special provision for remote, Indigenous and other vulnerable communities.

Policy Objective

Reduced risk and vulnerability through disaster mitigation/climate change adaptation initiatives to enhance community resilience and sustainability.

Strategies

- Ensure that disaster risk assessment drives disaster mitigation priorities and policy.
- Mainstream disaster mitigation into development planning, built environment / infrastructure design and disaster management practice.
- Incorporate disaster mitigation into business continuity and corporate planning at all levels.
- Work with communities to focus on mitigation strategies as part of long term recovery so as to develop community and business resilience and sustainability.
- Strengthen regionally coordinated mitigation initiatives through whole-of-government leadership and targeted programs.
- Ensure State planning policies are complied with for new developments.
- Amend building codes and standards to reduce vulnerability to hazard impacts and improve environmental sustainability.
- Government agencies consider and design for the impacts of disasters and climate change adaptation where appropriate in the design and construction of public buildings and infrastructure.
- Share knowledge and innovative solutions to build community resilience and self-reliance.
- Examine cost-effective options to reduce relief and recovery costs by building community resilience through strategic mitigation interventions.
- Conduct evaluation of programs to assess return on investment.

Key Performance Indicators

- Mitigation priorities are determined by evidence of disaster risk assessments.
- Mitigation strategies result in reduced financial and social costs to communities over time.
- Mitigation strategies reduce infrastructure and environmental damage.



Disaster Preparedness

Disaster preparedness includes arrangements that ensure that a community is aware of and prepared for any disaster and, that should a disaster occur, all those resources and services which are needed to cope with the effects can be efficiently mobilised and deployed.

Community, business, volunteer, agency and individual preparedness is critical to assist in minimising the impact of an event on the community and to ensure effective and timely operational response in the event of a disaster.

Disaster preparedness is carried out in the context of a framework that defines hazards likely within the State and the functions necessary to respond to the risks they pose to communities.

Agencies with disaster management responsibilities must have appropriate capability in terms of staffing, planning, training, equipment, capacity, readiness, sustainability, logistics and command and control to support disaster response and recovery and continue their usual functions, with minimal disruption.

Disaster preparedness involves building on the existing awareness, participation and engagement of individuals to enhance individual and community resilience and empowerment.

Policy Objective

Ensure prepared and disaster resilient individuals, communities, businesses and industries.

Build the capability and involvement of agencies, partners and stakeholders.

Strategies

- Establish a framework for hazards and functions that defines service delivery in disaster operations.
- Ensure effective operational capabilities exist within the disaster management arrangements.
- Develop knowledge and expertise in disaster management staff of activities involved in disaster operations.
- Ensure alignment and appropriateness of State, district, local, agency and hazard specific disaster management plans.
- Enhance the understanding of and planning for catastrophic events.
- Drive behavioural and social change through targeted community disaster resilience and preparedness education and awareness initiatives.
- Enhance community volunteer capability.
- Ensure appropriate resources for communities for the level of disaster risk through continual review and improvement.
- Ensure agencies apply sound business continuity practices and promote these practices to businesses, industries and communities.
- Utilise community networks to enhance disaster resilience and sustainability.
- Exercise disaster management plans and procedures.

Key Performance Indicators

- Contemporary disaster management plans are in place at all levels of the disaster management arrangements.
- Annual tests of the effectiveness of plans and arrangements are undertaken.
- Increased level of individual and community disaster awareness.
- Increased level of community and agency disaster preparedness.
- Increased level of community resilience.



Disaster Response

Disaster response includes the activities taken in anticipation of, during, and immediately after an event to ensure that its effects are minimised. Disaster response activities are undertaken during disaster operations.

The importance of a timely, adequately resourced and coordinated approach to disaster response is essential with greater demands being placed upon available resources due to the increase in urbanisation, proximity of industry to high-density areas, and urban congestion. This timely, coordinated approach requires the clear definition of roles and responsibilities of those involved in response activities and their understanding of the functions that contribute to those activities.

Policy Objective

The impacts of a disaster are minimised by effective and efficient disaster response.

Disaster response is underpinned by the primary responsibility of local governments to manage events.

Local governments are supported by appropriate expertise and resources from district groups and the State group.

Strategies

- Implement an incident management system that enables all agencies and organisations to work in a coordinated manner during disaster operations.
- Ensure a coordinated approach exists across all levels of the disaster management arrangements through the clear definition of roles and responsibilities across an established set of functions.
- Develop and implement an effective communication strategy that enhances public warning and information.
- Implement the interoperability of information and communications system across all levels of the disaster management arrangements.
- Implement consistent application of standard operating procedures and other response planning tools.
- Ensure the readiness of personnel and equipment and the pre-deployment of personnel and assets in anticipation of a disaster.
- Ensure planning incorporates an immediate assessment of the scale and scope of damage and priority needs.
- Utilise technology to support operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- Scale and deployment of capability to be based upon prevailing risk.

Key Performance Indicator

- All disasters are responded to in a timely, effective and appropriate manner.



Disaster Relief and Recovery

Disaster relief is the provision of immediate shelter, life support and human needs to persons affected by, or responding to, a disaster. Disaster relief activities are undertaken during disaster operations.

Disaster recovery is the coordinated process of supporting affected communities in the reconstruction of the physical infrastructure, restoration of the economy and of the environment, and support for the emotional, social, and physical wellbeing of those affected.

Timely coordinated establishment of disaster recovery is as equally important as effective disaster response in minimising the impact on, and supporting the resilience of, communities affected by a disaster. Clear transition arrangements from response and recovery to recovery are necessary. The scope of disaster recovery operations are to be identified and clearly articulated.

The application of a holistic approach to relief and recovery requires the clear identification of the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in the process.

Policy Objective

Delivery of effective immediate and on-going support to the emotional, social and physical wellbeing of communities affected by a disaster.

Sustainable reconstruction of physical infrastructure affected by a disaster.

Sustainable restoration of the economy and the environment affected by a disaster.

Strategies

- Early establishment of a transition strategy, from response and recovery to recovery, to ensure the appropriate withdrawal of response functions and activities.
- Establishment of a recovery strategy consistent with the level of residual risk, recovery issues and priorities.
- Ensure lead agencies are identified and appointed to coordinate each of the four functions of recovery – *human/social; economic; infrastructure; environment*.
- Ensure a holistic approach to community relief and recovery inclusive of social, economic, infrastructure (including power, water and sewerage) and environmental considerations.
- Ensure the preparation of State, District and Local recovery plans addressing immediate, medium and long term recovery needs.
- Appointment of a State Recovery Coordinator.
- Coordinators are to be appointed for each recovery function by Local Disaster Management Groups.
- Ensure a proactive communication strategy to keep the community fully aware of actions being taken.
- Ensure recovery arrangements remain flexible and adaptable for all communities, particularly vulnerable communities, including culturally and linguistically diverse and Indigenous communities.
- Lead agencies maintain strong relationships with counterparts at Australian Government level.
- “Betterment” – strengthen the connection between mitigation and recovery so that the same disaster event consequence is mitigated in future.

Key Performance Indicators

- Relief and recovery agencies are appropriately trained and properly integrated into disaster management arrangements.
- Relief and recovery efforts and programs satisfy community needs.
- Dependence on relief and recovery provisions to build resilient communities is reduced.



Post-Disaster Assessment

Post-disaster assessment evaluates performance before, during and after a disaster event and the risks exposed by the event in order to improve future development of preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation measures. Post-disaster assessment forms part of continuous improvement of the disaster management arrangements. It is linked to, but broader than, the more immediate impact assessment, undertaken during disaster response operations and early recovery periods.

Analysis of the Queensland disaster management arrangements can lead to confirmation of good practice or identification of issues that require improvement for future disaster events. This analysis can also provide particular lessons relating to mitigation to improve community resilience, safety and sustainability for the future.

Post-disaster assessment is closely linked with, and contributes to, the elements of Disaster Research and Policy and Governance.

Policy Objective

Outcomes of post-disaster assessments strengthen Queensland's disaster management capability.

Strategies

- Undertake post-disaster assessment across the phases of prevention, preparation, response and recovery to review the effectiveness of disaster management including the determination of the social and economic costs of disasters (tangible and intangible).
- Implement a knowledge management framework to capture and implement lessons identified.
- Maintain a log of strategies that work well and opportunities for improvement before, during and after a disaster event.

Key Performance Indicator

- Recommendations and lessons identified after disaster events and disaster management exercises are implemented through improved disaster management arrangements.



Application

Under the *Disaster Management Act 2003*, the State Disaster Management Group is responsible for ensuring that disaster management and disaster operations in Queensland are consistent with the Framework. However, the application of the Framework is a whole-of-government responsibility with the State Disaster Management Group overseeing the implementation of the Framework on behalf of the State.

The committees established by the State Disaster Management Group will develop mechanisms to comply with the directions and requirements included in the Framework and will report on strategy implementation and key performance indicators to the State Disaster Management Group.

Specific State government agencies and organisations have designated responsibilities for aspects and functions of disaster management. These designated responsibilities reflect their capabilities, with respect to both hazards and the functions necessary to carry out disaster operations. They show the differences between the primary agency responsibilities for hazards, and functional lead agency capabilities in relation to defined functions.

Additional policy instruments will support the Framework, enabling initiatives at the operational level to link with and deliver on the policy objectives. These instruments, including planning guidelines and strategic and operational plans, provide practical tools to mainstream risk reduction into policies, planning and programming at all levels. The Framework will inform development of the State Disaster Management Plan and the ongoing review and enhancement of the Queensland disaster management arrangements.

Review and evaluation

The Framework is a dynamic document and will be reviewed and evaluated bi-annually to ensure consistency with national initiatives and Queensland Government priorities and disaster management strategies.

Key performance indicators will be monitored and reported annually to the State Disaster Management Group to assess the progress of the implementation of the Framework. The key indicators will:

- measure the outcomes of the strategies;
- set benchmarks;
- measure the effectiveness of policies, strategies and programs and inform policy development;
- identify agency accountability and responsibility for each performance indicator; and
- identify opportunities for improvement that lead to enhancement of the disaster management arrangements.

Stakeholder commitments

The Queensland disaster management arrangements are based on commitments by a range of stakeholders.

Australian Government

The Australian Government provides guidance and support to the States and Territories in developing their capacity for dealing with emergencies and disasters including civil defence. The Australian Government also provides physical assistance to a requesting State or Territory in the event that a disaster occurs which is beyond its response capability and provides financial assistance in accordance with the established funding arrangements.

The Attorney General is responsible for disaster and emergency management matters.

There are a number of Australian Government disaster management committees. The peak national body for disaster management services is the Ministerial Council for Police and Emergency Management – Emergency Management. The Council is chaired by the Attorney-General of Australia and comprises all State and Territory emergency management ministers. Members of the Council also include the New Zealand Minister of Civil Defence and the president of the Australian Local Government Association.

In December 2009, the Council of Australian Governments agreed to a new national, resilience based approach to natural disaster policy and programs. It was agreed that the efforts of governments in this regard will be assisted by the establishment of a new National Emergency Management Committee which will work to bring together the views of governments, business, the non-government sector and the community into a comprehensive *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience*.

State Government

The State Government has primary responsibility to coordinate disaster management arrangements in Queensland. This includes disaster mitigation (prevention), preparedness, response and recovery. It is also responsible for the delivery of emergency services, including police, fire and ambulance services, medical and hospital services directly to the community and provide resources to effectively support a disaster affected community (ie in support of local government disaster management arrangements). The peak disaster management governing body at the State level is the State Disaster Management Group, established under the *Disaster Management Act 2003*. Functional and hazard specific planning responsibilities are placed on agencies with primary management and/or technical support responsibilities for hazards and lead agency capabilities in relation to defined functions.

The State of Queensland uses a system of disaster districts to coordinate State level support in areas more relevant to affected local governments. Coordination at the district level is based on Police districts and provided through a District Disaster Management Group. The District Disaster Management Groups are comprised of the Chairperson (also the District Disaster Coordinator), Deputy Chairperson and an Executive Officer appointed by the Commissioner, Queensland Police Service, representatives from local governments in the district, and members from public sector and other agencies that provide functional and hazard specific services in that disaster district.

Where it is likely that a disaster will encompass two or more disaster districts the *Disaster Management Act 2003* includes provisions allowing the Chairperson of the State Disaster Management Group to establish, after consulting with the Commissioner, Queensland Police Service, a temporary disaster district group to manage the disaster across all affected disaster districts.

Local Government

Local governments have a key role in identifying and understanding the credible hazards and risks that could impact on the safety and sustainability of their communities. Their role is to put in place mitigation, preparation, response and recovery strategies and arrangements, within the capability of their resources and responsibility. This is achieved through Local Disaster Management Groups and the development of local disaster management plans that enhance their community's preparedness to manage the consequences of a disaster and provide a vital link to individuals, voluntary organisations and community organisations that are integral to the execution of disaster management strategies. Local level capability is recognised as the frontline of disaster management and is supported by the levels of government above.

The *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* seeks to achieve sustainable planning outcomes through managing the process by which development takes place, managing the effects of development on the environment and providing for the coordination and integration of local, regional and State planning. Policies, guidelines and fact sheets are available covering development in areas prone to natural disasters. These include the *State Planning Policy 1/03: Mitigating the Adverse Impacts of Flood, Bushfire and Landslide* and State and Regional Coastal Management Plans. More information is available from www.dip.qld.gov.au

Volunteer Organisations

Queensland State and local government have developed close partnership arrangements with a range of volunteer organisations for their involvement in disaster management and emergency services.

The State Emergency Service (SES) is an integral part of the Queensland disaster management arrangements by virtue of its core responsibilities under the *Disaster Management Act 2003*. SES units are established by the Chief Executive of the Department of Community Safety in consultation with local government and other community entities. The SES provide assistance to the community immediately after a disaster impact, as well as providing education programs to the community to lessen the impact of a disaster event. This does not preclude SES providing support to statutory services in respect to their day-to-day incident responsibilities.

Other non-government organisations such as Red Cross, St Vincent de Paul and local community volunteer groups contribute significantly to the provision of welfare support services during the response and recovery phases of disaster management. The contribution of all these organisations is coordinated within the established disaster management framework.

Media

Media organisations, particularly public and private radio and television organisations have responsibilities in ensuring that timely and appropriate warnings and advice on disasters is broadcast to communities at the request of relevant authorities. The media also provide a vital role in the dissemination of community education messages.

Industry

Industry organisations including critical infrastructure providers, transport, information technology, communications, insurance, town planning, building and construction; and primary producers all have a key role to play in disaster management, particularly their role in continuing to provide resources and services during and after a disaster event.

Research Community

The research community has a key role in advancing knowledge of natural disasters, understanding and analysing their costs and consequences, and recommending cost-effective mitigation measures, so that disaster management decision-makers can take the most effective action in planning, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. In particular the research community can contribute by:

- playing a leading role in systematic data collection and analysis;
- playing a leading role in systematic development of an evidence base to inform disaster management arrangements and policy;
- playing a leading role in a systematic national programme of disaster risk assessments; and
- developing innovative ideas about better measures to mitigate and respond to disasters.

Communities

A number of actions can be taken by local communities and individuals to become more resilient, and in particular, they should:

- be empowered to take responsibility for their own risks by having the relevant knowledge, skills and abilities to make informed decisions to take action;
- provide active support for government and community efforts to minimise the possible consequence of disasters, such as natural hazard risk reduction measures; and
- provide a culture of support and recognition for volunteers.



Glossary

Community resilience	The adaptive capacity of its members to respond to and influence the consequences of disasters to continue an acceptable level in functioning and structure. (Adapted from the <i>United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction; 2002 and The Community Resilience Manual, Canada, 2000</i>).
Disaster	A serious disruption in a community, caused by the impact of an event, that requires a significant coordinated response by the State and other entities to help the community recover from the disruption (<i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i>).
Disaster management	Arrangements about managing the potential adverse effects of an event, including, for example, arrangements for mitigating, preventing, preparing for, responding to and recovering from a disaster (<i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i>).
Disaster mitigation	The taking of preventative measures to reduce the likelihood of an event occurring or, if an event occurs, to reduce the severity of the event (<i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i>).
Disaster operations	Activities undertaken before, during or after an event happens to help reduce loss of human life, illness or injury to humans, property loss or damage, or damage to the environment, including, for example, activities to mitigate the adverse effects of the event (<i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i>).
Disaster preparedness	The taking of preparatory measures to ensure that, if an event occurs, communities, resources and services are able to cope with the effects of the event (<i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i>).
Disaster research	May be broadly understood as a systematic inquiry, before and after a disaster, into a relevant disaster management problem. (<i>COAG, Natural Disasters in Australia: Reforming mitigation, relief and recovery arrangements: 2002</i>).
Disaster response	The taking of appropriate measures to respond to an event, including action taken and measures planned in anticipation of, during, and immediately after an event to ensure that its effects are minimised and that persons affected by the event are given immediate relief and support (<i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i>).
Disaster response capability	The ability to provide equipment and a suitable number of persons, using the resources available to the local government, to effectively deal with, or help another entity to deal with, an emergency situation or a disaster in the local government's area (<i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i>).
Disaster response operations	The phase of disaster operations that relates to responding to a disaster (<i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i>).
Disaster recovery	The taking of appropriate measures to recover from an event, including action taken to support disaster-affected communities in the reconstruction of infrastructure, the restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing, and the restoration of the environment (<i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i>).
Disaster recovery operations	The phase of disaster operations that relates to recovering from a disaster (<i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i>).
Disaster relief	Disaster relief is the provision of immediate shelter, life support and human needs of persons affected by, or responding to, an emergency. (<i>COAG, Natural Disasters in Australia: Reforming mitigation, relief and recovery arrangements: 2002</i>).
Disaster risk assessment	The process used to determine risk management priorities by evaluating and comparing the level of risk against predetermined standards, target risk levels or other criteria. (<i>COAG, Natural Disasters in Australia: Reforming mitigation, relief and recovery arrangements: 2002</i>).

Event	<p>An event means any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a cyclone, earthquake, flood, storm, storm tide, tornado, tsunami, volcanic eruption or other natural happening; - an explosion or fire, a chemical, fuel or oil spill, or a gas leak; - an infestation, plague, or epidemic; - a failure of, or disruption to, an essential service or infrastructure; - an attack against the State; or - another event similar to the above events. <p>An event may be natural or caused by human acts or omissions. (<i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i>).</p>
Hazard	<p>A source of potential harm, or a situation with a potential to cause loss (<i>Emergency Management Australia, 2004</i>).</p>
Post-disaster assessment	<p>Addresses performance during and the risks revealed by a disaster event in order to improve future development of mitigation measures. Post disaster assessment forms part of continuous improvement of the whole system. (<i>Adapted from COAG, Natural Disasters in Australia: Reforming mitigation, relief and recovery arrangements: 2002</i>).</p>
Residual risk	<p>The risk remaining after risk treatment. Residual risk can contain unidentified risk. Residual risk can also be known as 'retained risk'. (<i>ISO Guide 73:2009 Risk management – Vocabulary</i>)</p>
Risk	<p>The effect of uncertainty on objectives. (<i>ISO Guide 73:2009 Risk management – Vocabulary</i>). For emergency risk assessments the effect is usually a negative deviation from the expected and is characterised by hazardous events and the likelihoods of particular consequences. (<i>National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines: 2010</i>).</p>
Risk identification	<p>The process of finding, recognising and describing risks. (<i>ISO Guide 73:2009 Risk management – Vocabulary</i>).</p>
Risk management	<p>Coordinated activities to direct and control a community or organisation with regard to risk. (<i>Adapted from ISO Guide 73:2009 Risk management – Vocabulary</i>).</p>
Risk management process	<p>The systematic application of management of policies, procedures and practices to the tasks of communicating, consulting, establishing the context, and identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating, monitoring and reviewing risk. (<i>National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines: 2010</i>).</p>
Risk reduction	<p>Actions taken to lessen the likelihood, negative consequences, or both, associated with a risk. (<i>National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines: 2010</i>).</p>
Risk treatment	<p>Process of selection and implementation of measures to modify risk. (<i>National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines: 2010</i>).</p>
Serious disruption	<p>Serious disruption means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) loss of human life, or illness or injury to humans; or (b) widespread or severe property loss or damage; (c) widespread or severe damage to the environment (<i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i>).
Vulnerability	<p>The conditions determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes, which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards. (<i>National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines: 2010</i>).</p>

