Evacuation: Responsibilities, Arrangements and Management

Manual.1.190

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION TO EVACUATION

1.   Evacuation Overview

Evacuation involves scalable approaches to planning and coordination for the movement of persons from an unsafe or potentially unsafe location to a safer location and their eventual return home.

Evacuation is a risk management strategy that can mitigate the adverse effects of a disaster on a community.

1.1.   Local Government

Local government, in close consultation with the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG), are best placed to conduct evacuation planning prior to the onset of an event through their local knowledge, experience, community understanding and existing community relationships.

Assistance from the District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) to effectively conduct evacuation to a safer location or evacuation facility may be identified during local government evacuation planning. It is recommended that communication with all relevant stakeholders and support agencies occurs to increase consistency, ensure resource continuity, enhance community partnerships and minimise the potential for confusion and time delays during an event requiring evacuation.

1.2.   Stages of Evacuation

An evacuation involves:

Community Preparedness	Analysis risk and probabilities (likelihood/worst case scenario) of an event, ensure communities understand risk and evacuation zones (maps) and ensure approaches to evacuation are scalable and documented.
Decision to evacuate	Decision makers analyse event intelligence and make an assessment on the necessity to evacuate persons exposed to a range of hazards.
Warning[1]	Notification of event conditions and appropriate actions required are conveyed to the public.
Withdrawal	The movement of exposed persons from a dangerous or potentially dangerous area to a safer location.
Shelter	The provision of refuge and basic needs for evacuees in safer locations and evacuation facilities.
Return	The assessment of a disaster area and the planned, coordinated and managed safe and timely return of evacuees.

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[1] Within this Manual the term 'warning' is used to describe a stage in the evacuation process and should not be confused with official warnings issued by the Bureau of Meteorology

The following diagram (Figure 1) illustrates the entire spectrum of the evacuation process and is based on the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience National evacuation planning handbook. It highlights the need for planning at every stage and when preparing the community. An evacuation is not considered to be complete until each stage has been implemented.
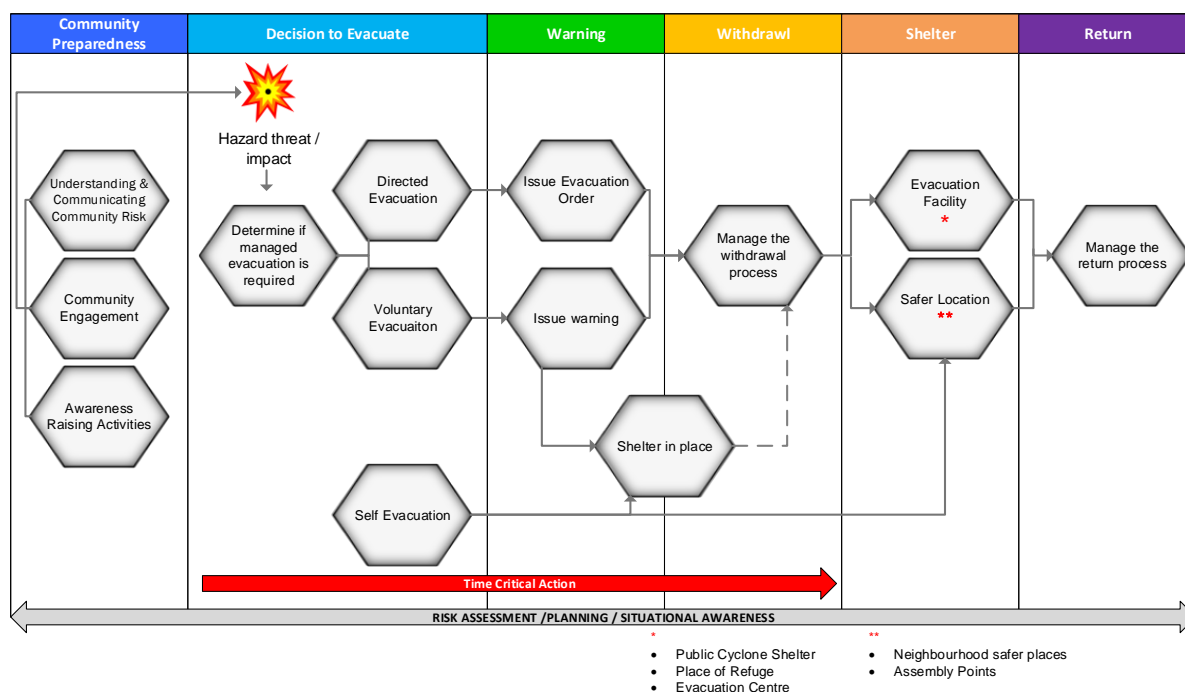
Figure 1. Queensland Evacuation Process

1.3.   Context of Evacuation

It is recommended that evacuation planning addresses the following categories:

Scale	Planning should consider the consequences of the reasonable worst case scenario within the local area considering the scale from small to mass evacuation, with a firm understanding of the potential number of people involved.
Type of evacuation facility	The variety of buildings and sites to accommodate evacuees in response to a disaster event. There is a requirement to be clear on the types of evacuation facilities and/or safer locations.
Stages	Evacuation sub-plans should follow the five stages of evacuation, as discussed previously: decision to evacuate, warning, withdrawal, shelter and return.
Time	Evacuation may be required before a disaster event impacts as a defensive measure, or post-impact as a result of the aftermath of the event, such as loss of services or severe damage to building structures.
Notice	Depending on the nature of the event an evacuation may be immediate with little or no warning and limited preparation time or pre-warned allowing adequate time for preparation.
Compulsion	Some individuals within the community may decide to self-evacuate prior to any direction from authorities. When evacuation is encouraged by authorities it is undertaken as either voluntary evacuation where exposed persons are encouraged to commence evacuation voluntarily, or directed evacuation, where exposed persons are directed under legislative authority to evacuate an area exposed to the impact of a hazard.

CHAPTER 2 – RISK BASED EVACUATION PLANNING

2.   Overview

A community that is prepared for an event is more likely to respond quickly and effectively and become more resilient for the future.

Evacuation planning involves both the deliberate and immediate planning approaches, as described in section 4.3 of the disaster management guideline. Planning and preparing for evacuation is an important process, it allows time to consider possible scenarios and documents an agreed approach to the management and coordination of an evacuation through consultation with a broad range of specialised stakeholders (e.g. an evacuation sub-group).

The process of deliberate and immediate planning is required to ensure adequate planning, management and coordination of evacuation is achieved. The application of this planning approach for evacuation is described below:

Deliberate planning for evacuation:

- Risk Assessment: The risk assessment process may identify evacuation as a mitigation strategy for certain hazard/s.
- Evacuation planning sub-group: In the event evacuation is identified as a mitigation strategy, in order to further assist the evacuation planning process and the development of the evacuation sub-plan, a sub-group may be established by the LDMG involving representatives from all agencies with a role in evacuation and a focus on the development of a comprehensive plan with agreement and ownership by key agencies.
- Disaster Management Plans: To scope and frame the evacuation mitigation strategy, it is recommended that deliberate planning through the disaster management plan be undertaken. This plan documents how the mitigation strategy will be achieved. This level of planning may describe the establishment of procedures, roles and responsibilities to enable effective management and coordination.
- Evacuation Sub-plans: Further deliberate planning in the form of the evacuation sub-plan may also be undertaken. It is recommended that evacuation sub-planning be completed prior to the onset of an event as it is critical to ensure adequate consideration and planning for an evacuation and to ensure roles and responsibilities are clearly identified and understood. Evacuation sub-plans are appendices to the overarching disaster management plan and it is recommended they are: all hazards, scalable, follow the stages of evacuation and involve communication and collaboration with all identified key local, district and state stakeholders.
- Engagement Plans: Engagement planning for evacuation may be included in Disaster Management Plans, Evacuation Sub-plans or as part of existing local engagement plans. They identify and scope approaches to educational and awareness raising activities for engaging the community to create collaboration, cooperation and understanding of local risks and disaster management processes across all hazards.
- Evacuation Facility Business Continuity Plans (BCPs): BCPs may also from part of the evacuation planning process, to ensure the evacuation process and selected facilities can continue to operate during a disaster event and to provide coordination and emergency support to the local community.

Immediate planning for evacuation:

- Operational plans: An evacuation operational plan may be developed to address an event specific situation. This plan outlines the problem/concern/vulnerability (e.g. cyclone approaching/impacting a populated coastline) and identifies the appropriate actions (what? who? how? when?). The operation plan is an appendix to the disaster management plan and operationalises the related sub-plan. It is developed when situational awareness and

risk assessment identify specific community safety needs to preserve or protect life (e.g. directed evacuation).

- Contingency plans: An evacuation contingency plan is developed to assist with managing a gap in capability to ensure services are maintained. Contingency planning can be done as deliberate planning or immediate planning as it seeks to address gaps on an as needs basis (e.g. Cyclone Shelter fly-in arrangements/deployments to identify other places of refuge that may be required at short notice.)

2.1.   Assessing the Risk

The identification of all hazards and the exposed population to each hazard is critical in the development of a planned and coordinated evacuation, to understand all facets of the community profile and to mitigate risk.

Additional information about Queensland's approach to Risk Management is described within the PPRR DM Guideline Chapter 3: Prevention, section 3.2 Disaster risk management.

Additional information about the Queensland Emergency Risk Management Framework (QERMF) is available in the toolkit.

2.2.   Analyse the Population Exposed

Analysis of the population exposed to each hazard can determine any special considerations or actions which may be required to accommodate the demographics of the community.

In conducting this analysis the following categories or factors may be deemed as requiring special consideration:

- critical facilities e.g. hospitals
- aged care facilities (e.g. community service organisations, retirement villages, nursing homes)
- schools and childcare centres
- non-English speaking persons
- persons with a disability or special needs
- existing public transportation systems
- socio-economic capacity of suburbs or areas
- caravan parks
- persons from specific groups such as homeless persons, house bound persons
- offshore islands, isolated resorts or settlements
- previous isolated communities
- temporary/transient populations and tourists
- pet ownership
- communities who are still recovering from a disaster

2.2.1. Vulnerable Population

The LDMG planning process will need to consider special arrangements for members of the community who may be vulnerable during an evacuation. As a guide, persons may be considered vulnerable if it is determined that upon receiving an evacuation message, they will not or cannot comply with evacuation directions. In the planning stage and once a decision to evacuate has been made, LDMGs are encouraged to determine the best approach to engage and liaise with vulnerable people in their community and with service providers who support them. These service providers are in regular contact with their clients and have pre-existing relationships with them and contact lists which will assist in communicating emergency messages and information.

Such service providers may include:

- Australian Red Cross
- Salvation Army
- St Vincent De Paul
- aged care providers (e.g. Spiritus, RSL Care, Bluecare)
- state agencies
- advocacy groups
- other local community centres.

It is recommended that LDMGs seek support from service providers such as Queensland Health, Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors, Australian Government Department of Social Services, local home care service agencies, Energex, Ergon and Telstra when planning for evacuation, prior to the onset of an event to ensure requests and communication channels are agreed upon by all parties. This will minimise any confusion, anxiety, time delays and misinterpretation during an event.

2.2.2. Aged Care Facilities

It is important to note the movement of persons with high care needs may need to be planned and implemented pre-emptively.

It is recommended that aged care facilities have an evacuation plan which outlines procedures for the complete evacuation of the facility, including specialised transportation requirements and the establishment of formal agreements with other aged care facilities or alternative suitable accommodation to provide a safer location and an appropriate level of care for their evacuated residents.

Aged care facilities should also be encouraged to obtain alternative power generation equipment, hold additional stocks of critical stores such as medical oxygen and common medications and develop a high needs client register. This is especially important during high risk times of the year to mitigate the immediate effects of isolation should this occur.

The LDMG may be able to assist local aged care facilities during their evacuation planning process to ensure the facility has a thorough and effective evacuation plan that is underpinned by a rigorous hazard analysis.

Preplanning for evacuation of aged care facilities will reduce the risk to life and LDMG operations during events.

Engagement with private nursing homes is recommended to ensure evacuation plans and business continuity preparations are in place within local government areas. Members of the LDMG may have existing relationships to facilitate conversations with aged care providers such as the Disaster Management Officer, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC), Queensland Health, Queensland Ambulance and the Queensland Police Service (QPS) District Executive Officer. Preplanning will give the LDMG awareness of the barriers to evacuating vulnerable people and identify where LDMG assistance may be required for transport, logistics and alternative accommodation arrangements.

Where the aged care facility identifies a requirement for external agency support which is outside their capacity (such as transport of residents with high care needs to an alternative location), the facility is to engage in detailed consultation with these agencies prior to the onset of an event to ensure a clear understanding of capacity and availability is discussed.

In the instance of a large-scale evacuation, there will likely be more than one facility requiring assistance which is why it is essential for aged care facilities to plan and discuss their needs with transport agencies before an event.

Aged care facilities are encouraged to remain alert to warnings and advice from authorities and enact their plans early if evacuation is required.

2.2.3. Pets

Pets remain the responsibility of their owner during an evacuation and pet owners are encouraged to pre-plan alternative accommodation for their pets prior to the onset of an event. Lessons identified from previous events indicate that some residents will not evacuate without pets, so it is recommended that accommodation requirements for household pets within evacuation centres be considered.

Queensland, as a jurisdiction, endorses embedding the consideration of animals (pets and assistance animals) into disaster planning, in accordance with the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001.

The LDMG is encouraged to consider the management of pets and assistance animals (e.g. guide dogs) during an evacuation and within evacuation facilities.

It is recommended that community education, awareness and engagement programs educate residents on their responsibilities for their pets during an event. These responsibilities may also be articulated to the community during an event to ensure understanding and minimise confusion and anxiety.

As part of the evacuation planning process, it is recommended the following be considered:

- communicate clearly the responsibilities of pet owners within the community
- develop and communicate a policy on the management of pets during an evacuation which outlines pet owner responsibilities
- develop and document transport and shelter plans for pets. LDMGs are encouraged to seek local solutions to this issue before embarking on a large-scale evacuation of pets.

As part of their household evacuation planning process pet owners are encouraged to:

- seek alternative accommodation for their pets by prior planning for the care/fostering of their pets in non-risk areas
- where alternatives are not possible and pet owners require evacuation for themselves and their pets they will need to ensure they have appropriate pet transportation and restraint appliances and any other specific requirements to ensure safety and care of their pets during the evacuation process. Ultimately, pet welfare is the responsibility of the pet owner (refer to Prepare Your Pet Fact Sheet: www.getready.qld.gov.au).

Note that pets, when referenced within the Guideline and Toolkit, refer to household, domestic pets. The LDMG is not responsible for the evacuation of livestock. The primary responsibility for livestock rests with the livestock owner.

2.2.4. School Closures

The authority to approve the temporary closure of a state instructional institution in an emergency situation rests with the relevant principal or person in charge, acting on advice from emergency service officers. In practice, principals would advise the relevant Regional Director of Education, Department of Education, who would authorise the closure of one or more schools. If a school principal cannot contact the Regional Director of Education, then the principal may close the school. Any media releases relating to school closures are issued by the Regional Director of Education.

The Department of Education also has the ability to disseminate warnings and advice to independent and Catholic schools but is unable to enforce the closure of these facilities.

Where evacuation is being considered, it is strongly recommended the community is informed of school closures as early as possible and preferably prior to the start of the school day. This will reduce traffic and the need for carers to collect children if the school is closed during the school day. The early closure of schools will also make school buses and school resources available for the broader evacuation needs of the community.

Note the closure of schools can create a flow-on issue for parents and/or carers and this needs to be planned prior to the school closure.

2.2.5. Tourists

Tourists will generally have minimal local knowledge and potentially no experience or knowledge of Queensland hazard events. Unlike permanent residents, visitors are unlikely to have friends or relatives in nearby safer locations with whom they can seek refuge. Many tourists may also not have access to a vehicle to enable self-evacuation.

Requesting the early movement of tourists away from a potential disaster may be an option considered by the LDMG. The LDMG may also consider mechanisms to manage the inbound movement of tourists into the area. These decisions will provide the LDMG with the ability to reduce the number of exposed persons and the resultant impacts on transport, shelter and welfare of these transient populations during the evacuation process. It is acknowledged this decision will need to be balanced with the consequential economic impact on local businesses and the LDMG are encouraged to engage with local tourism boards, tourism operators and accommodation providers during the evacuation planning process (see chapter 6 Community Education and Awareness).

It is recommended that a community education and engagement strategy be used, where possible, to ensure tourism operators and providers are aware of the need to inform their clients/guests of the potential impacts of an impending disaster event and what action will be required to ensure their safety.

Additional information about Queensland's approach to planning is described within the PPRR DM Guideline Chapter 4: Preparedness, section 4.2.

2.3. Risk Based Evacuation Planning

It is recommended that evacuation planning be proportionate to the risk identified locally. These may range from small-scale local events to risks that may require large-scale evacuations with state and/or national consequences.

It is not necessary to develop a plan for every risk or eventuality. It is recommended that plans based on the credible worst risk that could reasonably be expected to arise in a local area (e.g. the maximum number of population to be moved based on a worst case scenario, historical data and events) are scalable in order to manage the range of risks identified locally. For some risks there may be characteristics that are unique to that event and that may require more specific sub-plans to be developed (e.g. cyclone specific evacuation sub-plan).

More information on planning is available in the Planning and Preparation toolkit.

2.4. Managing the Escalation of Support

During the evacuation planning process, the LDMG may identify the resources available at the local level and/or local capability will be inadequate and may require assistance from the DDMG to effectively conduct evacuation to a safer location or evacuation facility. Similarly, where the requirements exceed the capacity and/or capability of the DDMG, the DDMG would seek assistance from the state

To enhance the sharing of information and resources it is important the LDMG documents local capacity and thresholds in both deliberate and immediate planning processes. It is recommended that any potential requests for support and assistance which have been identified through the evacuation planning process are included and communicated to the DDMG.

The DDMG may use this information to inform its own planning process and where appropriate, inform the state of any potential for the escalation of support.

Additional information about Queensland's approach to residual risk transfer is described within the PPRR DM Guideline Chapter 3: Prevention, section 3.5.

2.5. Evacuation planning requirements

Where evacuation sub-plans are developed, it is recommended they be reviewed annually before the severe weather season or post event to include lessons learned.

It is also recommended that evacuation sub-plans are exercised to ensure the effectiveness and scalability of the plan and include, involvement, communication and collaboration with identified key local, district and state stakeholders.

Once planning has been completed and management plans have been developed for identified risks, there is opportunity to develop comprehensive and tailored community education, awareness and engagement programs.

2.6. Planning Tools

All hazards evacuation planning before the onset of an event is the key to an effective evacuation.

Conducting a PESTLE analysis may be a useful tool to assist with comprehensive planning. This style of analysis includes Political, Environment, Social, Technology, Legislation, Economic considerations. The following list is not exhaustive and can be used as a prompt for your planning process.

2.7. Key messages

Have you considered …

Political	• what are the political implications concerned with your evacuation measures and the movement of people from an unsafe or potentially unsafe location to a safer location?
Environmental	• what are the risks to the evacuation process such as access, road blocks, strong winds, traffic congestion/management, topography?
Social	• what is the community profile? (demographics such as people with special needs, non- English speaking backgrounds, tourists, volunteers) • how to communicate the Evacuation Sub-plan once developed to ensure relevance and consistency amongst community groups and businesses within the community? • identifying all possible media outlets? How will communication with the media occur to ensure consistency and accuracy of information? • the engagement of media to ensure that the most relevant and up to date information is communicated to relevant sections of the community in a timely manner? • the location and signage for evacuation routes, how and when these will be publicised to the community? • the process for the reception and registration of people at evacuation centres and from other jurisdictions? • the process for people returning to the location? • arrangements for people who choose not to evacuate?
Technology	• the accuracy of intelligence data and mapping tools? • the capacity of the public call centre and web based systems to manage a large volume of requests? • how will warning messages be delivered?
Legislation	• who is the responsible decision maker and what is the process to reach the decision to evacuate? • what are the legislative powers given to emergency managers to require evacuation?

	• what are the roles and responsibilities of each agency/person involved in each facet of the evacuation process?
Economic	• what resources are available to the LDMG to conduct and manage an evacuation? • how local offers of assistance should be managed? • how to identify and document the cost associated with the reception of people from other jurisdictions?
Key stakeholders	• LDMG • DDMG • SDMG • Queensland Disaster Management Committee • Australian Government • QPS • QFES • QRA • Evacuation Planning Working Group • State government agencies (e.g. Department of Housing and Public Works, Department of Education) • Non-government organisations (e.g. Australian Red Cross) • The Community
Further information	• *Disaster Management Act, 2003* • *Disaster Management Regulation, 2014* • *Animal Care & Protection Act 2001* • *Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009* • *Queensland PPRR DM Guideline* • QERMF Risk Assessment Handbook Toolkit • State Disaster Management Plan 2018 • Queensland Recovery Plan • Are you bushfire prepared? Prepare.Act.Survive – QFES

CHAPTER 3 – EVACUATION AND SHELTERING ARRANGEMENTS

3.1. Self-Evacuation

This is the self-initiated movement of people to safer places prior to, or in the absence of, official advice or warnings to evacuate.

Some people may choose to leave early even in the absence of a hazard but based on a forecast.

Safer places may include sheltering in their own home, or with family or friends who may live in a safer building or location. Self-evacuees manage their own withdrawal, including transportation arrangements. People are encouraged to evacuate early if they intend to evacuate.

It is recommended that self-evacuation be recognised in the planning process, particularly in the shelter and return stage. Depending on whether the disaster event is rapid or slow onset, self-evacuation may be encouraged as the first option for residents. It is advisable that this message is included in community preparedness education, awareness and engagement such as early media releases and public information.

3.2.   Voluntary Evacuation

An individual can choose to self-evacuate prior to an announcement of either a LDMG coordinated voluntary evacuation or District Disaster Coordinator (DDC) directed evacuation. Exposed persons who may be impacted by an impending hazard are encouraged to commence evacuation voluntarily.

Voluntary evacuation of exposed persons may also be coordinated and implemented by the LDMG in close consultation with the DDC. It is recommended that evacuation sub-plans consider documenting the management strategies and operational arrangements for a voluntary evacuation.

3.3.   Directed Evacuation

Exposed persons or animal owners who are directed by the DDC or Declared Disaster Officer under legislation to evacuate an exposed area or part of the area.

A directed evacuation under the Disaster Management Act 2003 (the Act) requires the declaration of a disaster situation. A DDC may declare a disaster situation if satisfied that the requirements of section 64 of the Act have been met. The declaration of a disaster situation requires the approval of the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and must be made in accordance with section 65 of the Act. During a disaster situation, the DDC and Declared Disaster Officers are provided with additional powers under sections 77-78 of the Act. These powers may be required to give effect to a directed evacuation.

A Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC), as part of the LDMG, will make a recommendation to a DDC that a directed evacuation is required, based on their situational awareness in preparation for an imminent disaster. However, as the LDMG/LDC has no legislative power to affect a directed evacuation, the responsibility for authorising a directed evacuation remains with the DDC.

3.3.1. Planning for Directed Evacuation

It is recommended that LDMGs comprehensively and holistically plan for evacuation to perform their role during a directed evacuation, with plans that are scalable to ensure application across various situations and hazards.

The LDMG does not have the statutory power to authorise a directed evacuation, however complete evacuation planning requires local governments to develop an evacuation sub-plan that recognises and includes any scenario where a directed evacuation may be ordered by the DDC.

LDMGs are advised to closely liaise with their DDMG during the development of the evacuation sub-plan to ensure the sub-plan is consistent with, and complements, the DDMG plans and arrangements for a directed evacuation. The directed evacuation section in the LDMG evacuation sub-plan should refer to the QPS directed evacuation policy and any associated operational arrangements.

Similarly, it is recommended that a DDMG ensures the LDMGs within their disaster district are aware of directed evacuation arrangements in place at a district level.

3.3.2. Reception of Evacuees from other Local Government Areas

Even though an evacuation may not be necessary within their local government area, LDMGs may have a requirement to activate elements of their evacuation sub-plan to cater for the agreed reception of evacuees and/or animals, either pets or assistance animals, from other local government areas or districts. It is recommended that this is documented in the evacuation sub-plan, along with possible management strategies, in consultation with the relevant DDMG.

If the LDMG is unable to provide an appropriate safer location for its residents and/or animals within its boundary, the LDMG should brief the DDMG and escalate this issue to district level. Once the DDMG is aware of the issue and escalation has occurred the LDMG, in close consultation with DDMG, will liaise with the neighbouring LDMG area to ensure all the necessary support and

amenities are available for cross jurisdictional issues. The DDMG, if required, will assist with resources and coordination during an event.

If the reception of evacuees from other local government areas exceeds the capacity of the LDMG and the DDMG, the DDMG will escalate the issue and forward a request for assistance through the appropriate channels to the State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC).

Experience has shown the reception of evacuees and/or pets and assistance animals from other local government areas is a likely scenario, especially during large scale events. Therefore it is advantageous for all parties involved to proactively plan for this occurrence and communicate management strategies.

3.4.   Key messages

Have you considered …

Factors	• conducting a community profile or risk analysis of the community to identify types of hazards, exposed areas and population? • specific communication strategies to mitigate these risks? • engaging community champions to identify needs and inform the communication strategy? • contacting local and state community service providers who may hold contact lists for the exposed population? • identifying any specific evacuation needs of local aged care facilities, childcare centres, hospitals etc.? • whether aged care facilities, hospitals etc. are aware of local disaster management arrangements? • the warning message format and dissemination to all population groups? • the potential for increased timeframes during withdrawal, transportation, interpreters and shelter requirements for the exposed population? • a strategy for residents in low risk areas to provide foster care for pets from high risk areas to minimise the number of animals requiring accommodation? • liaising with any local catteries or kennels to identify possible options for pets during events?
Key stakeholders	• LDMG • DDMG • Leading Age Care Services Queensland • Australian Red Cross • Bureau of Meteorology • Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors • Department of Education • Energex/Ergon • RSPCA Qld • Telecommunication providers such as Telstra and Optus • Tourism Queensland • Queensland Ambulance Service • QFES • Queensland Health • QPS • Queensland Tourism Industry Council • other local home care service agencies • Local Government, local catteries and/or kennels
Further information	• State Disaster Management Plan • District Disaster Management Plans • Prepare Your Pet Fact Sheet: www.getready.qld.gov.au

CHAPTER 4: MAPPING THE DATA

4.1. Mapping Overview

Mapping can provide a visual representation of hazards and the potential impact to the community.

4.2. Develop Evacuation Zones

Each local government that uses evacuation zones are encouraged to consider using consistent language and colours where possible, to identify evacuation zones. This will minimise confusion for residents who may need to move between a number of local government areas.

Areas exposed to the impact of a hazard could be categorised into evacuation zones based on severity of impact.

For example, wet events (storm tide, riverine flooding, tsunami) may use inundation levels divided into the four categories:

- minor (Blue zone)
- moderate (Yellow zone)
- major (Orange zone)
- extreme (Red zone)

When inundation levels have been identified through identification of hazard, exposure and vulnerabilities in a risk assessment process, evacuation zones can be defined to create a visual illustration of this information to ensure it is readily accessible to disaster management decision makers and also to efficiently communicate this information to the community.

A Storm Tide Evacuation Framework for Queensland is provided by way of Appendix 2. Application of the framework will ensure a consistent approach to the process for the determination and colour coding of storm tide evacuation zones, considerations for the refinement of storm tide evacuation zones and storm tide specific community education strategies. It is also recommended that evacuation mapping for other hazards relating to the local area based on risk are considered.

An effective means of displaying this information is the use of maps and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

When developing evacuation zones it is recommended the best available datasets are used for example:

- High resolution Digital Elevation Model (DEM) data is available for the majority of coastal communities from the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy This data is in GIS format and the council will likely already have this data available.
- For riverine flooding near the coast it is likely high resolution DEM will be available; however, modelling of the DEM and other key datasets will be required to more accurately identify areas likely to be inundated for the various events.

4.3. Inclusions for Mapping

Consideration may be given to developing evacuation maps for communities vulnerable to storm tide, tsunami and riverine flooding. Where areas exposed can be identified in advance evacuation maps may be developed for where these hazards have the potential to inundate populated areas.

It would be ideal to have one generic evacuation map for a community; however this may not always be feasible as many communities will be vulnerable to a number of hazards and the manner in which those hazards interact may result in different exposed areas.

Evacuation maps are developed in two ways to assist decision making:

- public information (to be used by the community)
- disaster management response (to be used by disaster management groups).

Note, care should be taken using data that may quickly be outdated.

4.3.1. Public Information

It is recommended that evacuation maps or systems developed for public information include a basic level of information to ensure ease of understanding and application by members of the community. It is important to limit confusion and assist members of the community to easily identify their place of residence, level of exposure and an evacuation route to a safer location.

Public information evacuation maps may include the following information and features:

- evacuation zones (clearly identified by colour coding)
- evacuation routes
- public points of reference to aid local orientation and increase awareness such as the local church, library, park, roads, rivers or natural features.

Safer locations such as evacuation centres, neighbourhood safer places, assembly points and public cyclone shelters could be included on public information maps when it has been agreed these safer locations will be used, open and staffed for all hazards.

Language, style and format for community education and engagement are important considerations to maximise understanding, interpretation and adoption of emergency information and instruction. It would be more appropriate to use clear and relevant references to evacuation zones by colour and level of severity rather than using lesser known technical references such as heights above Highest Astronomical Tide (HAT) or Australian Height Datum (AHD).

4.3.2. Disaster Management Response

Evacuation maps developed for disaster management response provide relevant and accurate information to enable prompt decision making. Consideration may be given to the inclusion and clear identification of the following features on disaster management response evacuation maps:

- evacuation zones
- division of sectors or suburbs located within large exposed areas, to enable management of warning and withdrawal activities
- evacuation routes, alternate evacuation routes
- all identified safer locations such as evacuation centres and neighbourhood safer places, including pet friendly facilities
- hospitals, aged care facilities, schools and other similar facilities which may require special attention or response
- emergency services and other key response agencies and locations
- hazardous sites
- critical infrastructure
- local government or other relevant boundaries.

Consideration may also be given to the development of key data to support the disaster management response maps including, but not limited to:

- population and demographic data within each exposed area
- estimated evacuation timeframes for each evacuation zone either independently or concurrently with other zones
- evacuation route capacity and hazard immunity levels
- estimated percentage of exposed population requiring emergency accommodation.

This information is essential to assist decision making and development of warnings which will allow disaster management groups to anticipate safer location requirements and media responses.

Disaster management groups and support agencies are encouraged to share information where possible.

A literature review conducted in 2016 on behalf of QFES identified common best practice for public-facing risk communication products relating to storm tide inundation and evacuation mapping and was used to examine current public-facing hazard mapping and evacuation plans in Queensland

Section 5.0 of the literature review (see Appendix 1) describes the criteria developed that reflects best practice for public facing storm tide hazard and evacuation mapping, based on literature and the influence of existing guidance as:

An integrated product that combines hazard/risk areas and evacuation planning by translating risk/hazard zones into evacuation zones and:

- is of a scale appropriate to identifying individual land lots
- contains geographic markers such as roads, shelters, hospitals and major landmarks for reference
- clearly highlights evacuation routes and alternative evacuation routes
- avoids technical terminology in favour of BoM categories of extreme, major, moderate and mild
- highlights evacuation zones through the use of bright colours that not only contrast with the background but also trigger cognitive associations, such as red for extreme risk, orange or yellow for medium risk, and green [or less contrasting colour such as blue[2,3,4,5]] for low risk
- is preferably an interactive product that can be produced in static paper form
- contains a clear legend that is vertically arranged, preferably on the right hand side of the map
- contains historical and contextual data relating to the local community to allow risk assessment
- is accompanied by positively framed language and context about storm tide events
- is supplemented by a streamlined written public-facing evacuation plan.

4.4. Key messages

Have you considered …

Factors	- the identification of all key stakeholders, sources of data and geospatial information? - what type of information and visual illustration is most appropriate for the hazard, impact areas and exposed community? - what type of map is most appropriate to identify the evacuation zones? - what level of detail is the most appropriate and relevant for the exposed community? - how the evacuation zones will be described for ease of understanding (for example above what river height, distance around hazard)?

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[2] Morrow, B.H., Lazo, J.K., Rhome, J., Feyen, J., 2015 "Improving Storm Surge Risk Communication: Stakeholder Perspectives", *Bulletin American Meteorological Society*, 96, 35-48

[3] EXCIMAP (European exchange circle on flood mapping), 2007, *Handbook on good practices for flood mapping in Europe*, EXCIMAP

[4] Wang, X., Khoo, Y.B., Wang, C-H., 2014, "Risk assessment and decision-making for residential housing adapting to increasing storm-tide inundation due to sea-level rise in South East Queensland, Australia", *Civil Engineering and Environmental Systems*, 31:2, 125-139

[5] Wang, F., Wen, S., Zhong, S., 2010, "Key issues in mapping technologies for disaster management", 2nd International Conference on Information Engineering and Computer Science, Dec. 2010, 1-4

	• what strategy will be used for local areas to differentiate between evacuation zones for each hazard (for example storm tide, bushfire, flood, cyclone, chemical hazard)?
Key stakeholders	• LDMG • DDMG • Bureau of Meteorology • Department of Environment and Science Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy • QFES • QPS
Associated Toolkit Items	• National Storm Tide Mapping Model • Neighbourhood Safer Places – QFES • The Tropical Cyclone Storm Tide Warning Response System Handbook

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

5.1. Overview

Thorough and sustained public awareness programs conducted prior to an event are required to build community resilience and ensure community confidence in the LDMG's ability to manage disaster events. Such programs are also required to reinforce the level of responsibility and self-preparedness required by residents in the event of evacuation advice being issued.

5.2. Before an Event

Proactive preparedness planning is important and will promote a more resilient community which is confident, organised and well informed. This will enable a response which is calm, prompt, positive and effective.

The LDMG, in conjunction with local government, are encouraged to develop a community education, awareness and engagement program that is planned and implemented before the onset of an event.

5.2.1. Evacuation Zones

It is recommended that evacuation zones are easy to understand, identified and planned prior to the onset of any event so they are clear to residents, transient populations and anyone newly arrived in a community.

This could be achieved by the following strategies:

- seasonal preparedness campaigns
- colour coded fridge magnets
- colour coded reflective markers on gutters
- emergency action guides included in council rate notices, mail outs and other multimedia platforms
- colour coded stickers on household meter boxes
- roadside wheelie bin zone colouring
- emergency preparedness brochures and maps available and easily accessible in locations where tourists and transient populations access for example foyers of hotels, motels, caravan parks
- public information evacuation maps based on aerial photographs readily available to the community through council offices, websites and community events such as shows and expositions.

5.2.2. Developing community engagement plans

Community engagement is a critical element in fostering community ownership and shared responsibility. LDMGs, where possible, are encouraged to develop a plan for community engagement to ensure a thorough, broad community education, awareness and engagement program is developed and disseminated.

The community engagement plan may include the following elements:

Identify and target specific groups:

- Develop a profile of community sectors in exposed areas, for example:
  o older people living at home alone
  o Anyone who needs assistance with vision, hearing, mobility or making decisions.
  o single parents with young children
  o large families
  o pet owners
  o people with specific medical requirements e.g. oxygen, dialysis.
  o groups with diverse cultures and languages.
- Include information on the range of sectors represented. For example:
  o businesses
  o community groups
  o educational institutions
  o health organisations
  o tourism and accommodation providers
  o animal and wildlife carers and refuges
  o sport and recreation groups.

Develop specific engagement strategies:

- identify current communication pathways already established between local government and target groups
- be clear about the purposes or goals of the engagement effort
- become knowledgeable about evacuation zone history and experiences of previous engagement efforts
- provide the community with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives or solutions
- engage directly with specific sectors to determine their information needs and develop appropriate responses (this may include developing target group specific written evacuation communication strategies in appropriate languages and delivery methods to meet the needs of the identified sectors).

Identify appropriate delivery options and communication strategies:

- delivery options and communication strategies can be identified by targeting specific groups within the community and developing specific engagement strategies appropriate to each exposed population
- evaluating programs and strategies
- regular use of evaluation surveys (pre and post storm and cyclone season) to determine the effectiveness of current arrangements
- outcomes from a regular exercise regime that test existing programs and partnerships
- web-based feedback options could be used to capture community feedback on the value of current communication methodologies and to assist in identifying upcoming community education and engagement opportunities.

5.2.3. Getting the message across

Local governments across Queensland have considerable expertise in communicating council policies and safety messages to their residents. It would be ideal for LDMGs to utilise these existing local community relationships to effectively get the message across to all sections of the local community.

Messages can effectively be conveyed in a variety of ways including:

- council websites
- social media
- newsletters
- notes with rates notices
- brochures at council or local member agency offices
- libraries
- public information displays at shows and mail outs.

Evacuation preparation and procedure messages can also be communicated utilising these methods. Clear, relevant and factual information and recommendations provided before the onset of an event will enable residents to be better prepared and to take responsibility for their own evacuation. Including awareness of emergency alert as a warning method for likely disaster or emergency situations.

Working collaboratively with the community will result in a realistic and credible evacuation plan which the community can trust and are more likely to follow. The community will then be organised and respond swiftly and confidently, ultimately achieving a more resilient community.

Emergency information is processed through two phases.

Awareness raising	people receive emergency information through a variety of media. Current research indicates the preferred media for receiving information is through television, radio, brochures, interactive dashboards, internet and social media.
Action	people seek further information and begin to prepare. The preferred method for seeking information is the internet, brochures and discussion with friends and neighbours.

It is recommended that all publicly produced information provides reference to useful websites and the local government call centre for more information.

5.2.4. Developing Evacuation Warnings

An evacuation warning is a message that informs and enables individuals and communities to take appropriate action in response to an impending hazard.

The key to the success of evacuation warnings is the foundation already in place within the community through an ongoing and effective disaster management community education, awareness and engagement program. This ensures members of the community have an understanding of the likely hazards and potential impacts relative to them and their community, and what actions they will need to take to prepare themselves for evacuation.

The information content and language contained in an evacuation warning needs to be carefully considered as it can be critical in assisting a coordinated and effective evacuation. The dissemination of accurate, clear and timely information is essential to ensure the message is clearly understood with appropriate and prompt actions and responses. The process of releasing information to the community will also assist in reducing apprehension and provide a level of

confidence that the situation is being appropriately managed by disaster management authorities.

As a component of the planning process, Evacuation Order public information release templates may be developed to enable updating with current and relevant information at the time of an event.

In further developing the templates with local data it will be important to consider:

- the types of hazards that threaten the community and their likely consequences
- exposed areas with particular consideration given to special needs groups
- the type of evacuation that will be required
- requests for emergency alerts and the need for pre-drafted or approved messages
- what safer locations to be utilised
- what evacuation routes should be used
- any community specific advice and guidance on actions required
- the appropriate authority to issue warnings and authorisation of the content
- communicating the use of the Standard Early Warning System (SEWS), where appropriate.

Community involvement in the planning process

The development of an efficient evacuation warning system can only be achieved through a comprehensive evaluation of the community and associated capabilities and limitations. Consideration may be given to involving key stakeholders and community groups within the consultation process to further refine warning content and appropriate methods of dissemination. This may include relevant members of the LDMG, private industry, media and special needs community groups such as older people, people with disabilities, ethnic groups and medical, school and/or tourism boards. The participation of all these groups will provide valuable intelligence and ensure the development of effective warning content, format and associated processes.

5.2.5. Warning dissemination methods and processes

It is recommended that a variety of warning dissemination methods be used to ensure broad distribution of warning messages. A range of methods to disseminate warnings ensures coverage of differing demographics, geographic locations and time of day.

The following list provides a sample of the types of warning methods which may be considered. It will be important to choose a range of methods that will provide the broadest coverage of the community. Regular reviews of the warning processes are encouraged to reflect any community changes.

Emergency Alert	Emergency Alert messages disseminated to landlines and mobile phones within an exposed area.
Media releases	Provided to local radio and television networks for frequent broadcast during their programs.
Social networking systems	Facebook, Twitter and other social networking systems. This option allows the public to actively seek information instead of relying on authorities making contact. It is low cost with minimal resources and has the ability to reach a broad range of groups and inform a large number of people.
Telephone, mobile, fax, email	Local public alert systems can be utilised to disseminate a scripted messages.
Internet	The local government website can upload the scripted evacuation message. This option allows the public to actively seek information

	rather than relying on authorities making contact. It is low cost with minimal resources and has the ability to reach a broad range of groups and inform a large number of people.
Door knocking	Undertaken by uniformed emergency responders, usually QPS and/or State Emergency Service. Evacuation message should be scripted and residents may be provided with a paper copy. This option is resource intensive; however, an effective method of warning dissemination.
Public Address system	Fixed or mobile public announcement systems can be utilised to broadcast evacuation message.
Local / community warden system	Local emergency networks can be utilised to disseminate a message across a community or defined area.
Commercial emergency warning providers	Local emergency warning networks for registered users.
Marine radio and distress systems and networks	Where appropriate, evacuation messages can be broadcast across these media.
Signage	These can be existing or established specifically for the purpose of disseminating evacuation messages (liaise with Department of Transport and Main Roads).
Sirens	Local siren to indicate immediate action is necessary.
Notice boards	Community nodes provide excellent coverage in small communities, eg. notices posted at the post office, pub or community notice board are effective, especially in areas with limited mobile reception.

It is recommended that an agreement is reached on the responsibilities for the dissemination of warnings and a table is developed within the Evacuation Sub-plan which documents all sections of the exposed population, the most appropriate warning methods and an agency responsible for the actual warning dissemination.

Exposed population	Warning method	Agency primarily responsible for dissemination of warning

When the warning dissemination methods are determined it will be vital to engage with the agencies and organisations involved in the delivery process, in particular the media, to develop a working relationship to ensure agreement and commitment to the warning dissemination process.

It will also be critical to test the warning systems to improve community recognition and ensure their effectiveness. It is recommended that any exercise or test of the warning processes involve relevant agencies and organisations to ensure clear understanding and conduct of their role.

5.3.   Key messages

Have you considered …

Before an event	• identifying the information needs for each sector of the exposed community?
	• identifying community leaders who can assist with communication to specific groups?

	• liaising with existing local government community service providers to communicate evacuation planning and messaging? • the elements of an effective communication strategy, for example: • credible (being issued by a recognised authority) • consistent (key messages do not vary over time and campaigns are conducted regularly) • descriptive (describes a series of actions to be undertaken) • reinforced (consistent key awareness and preparedness messages are supported across seasonal media and marketing campaigns) • dynamic (opportunities exist for individuals to seek further information)
Factors	• what type of hazard is threatening the community and what are the impacts to the community? • who will be affected and what type of evacuation is required? • what warning resources are available and what are their limitations? • who has the authority to issue warnings and who authorises the content? • should the Standard Emergency Warning System (SEWS) be used? • how to provide calm, factual, timely warnings to ensure the community is not alarmed and stressed? • how to include diverse cultures, people with visual or hearing impairment in warnings and communications to ensure that warnings are not misinterpreted? • pre-drafted or approved messages and the use of emergency alerts?
Key stakeholders	• LDMG • DDMG • Bureau of Meteorology • Local government representatives • Media such as Australian Broadcasting Corporation • QFES • QPS • State agencies e.g. Queensland Health, Maritime Safety Queensland • Australian Red Cross • commercial and community radio personnel • community representatives and leaders • key local business • key local community groups • Salvation Army • St Vincent De Paul • CALD Community leaders
Associated Toolkit Items	• PPRR DM Guideline • Emergency Warnings – Choosing Your Words: www.ag.gov.au • SEWS • www.getready.qld.gov.au • www.disaster.qld.gov.au • Your local government website which can be found at: www.dlgp.qld.gov.au/local-government-directory/index.php

CHAPTER 6 - THE FIVE STAGES OF EVACUATION

6.1. Decision to evacuate

The evacuation process starts with planning for an evacuation. During this stage, decision makers analyse event specific information and intelligence and make an assessment on the necessity to evacuate exposed persons. There are many factors which will influence the decision to evacuate and it is recommended that the LDMG undertake pre-planning and consideration of these factors.

6.1.1. Determining evacuation timelines

One of the important factors to be considered when planning for evacuation is the time required to safely and effectively undertake an evacuation. A timeline to map the steps in an evacuation process has the advantage of showing the critical links between the predicted impact time, the decision to evacuate and the many factors that will determine the time taken to complete the withdrawal.

The timeline may be developed graphically to clearly indicate the time requirements for each phase of the evacuation process. The timeline may display the phases of evacuation, decision points and other considerations that will inform the evacuation process. The resultant timeline can then be used to illustrate the actions necessary, when actions are to be commenced and timeframes for their completion.

An example evacuation timeline is used for storm tide in the Tropical Cyclone Storm Tide Warning Response System Handbook Decision points

Decision points

Decision points are to be planned and documented for predictable hazards in the evacuation timeline. During this section it is important to plan for the unexpected and predict possible scenarios that will require contingency planning or alternative solutions. Liaison with all key stakeholders will be needed to develop an all hazards approach and to ensure all perspectives and possible scenarios are taken into consideration.

6.1.2. Decision making considerations

In undertaking the decision making process, it is recommended that an all hazards risk assessment is conducted based on event specific risks, timeframes available to safely effect an evacuation and the availability of alternative public protection measures.

6.1.3. Authority to evacuate

An individual can choose to self-evacuate prior to an announcement of either a LDMG coordinated voluntary evacuation (defined in section 3.2) or DDC directed evacuation (defined in section 3.3).
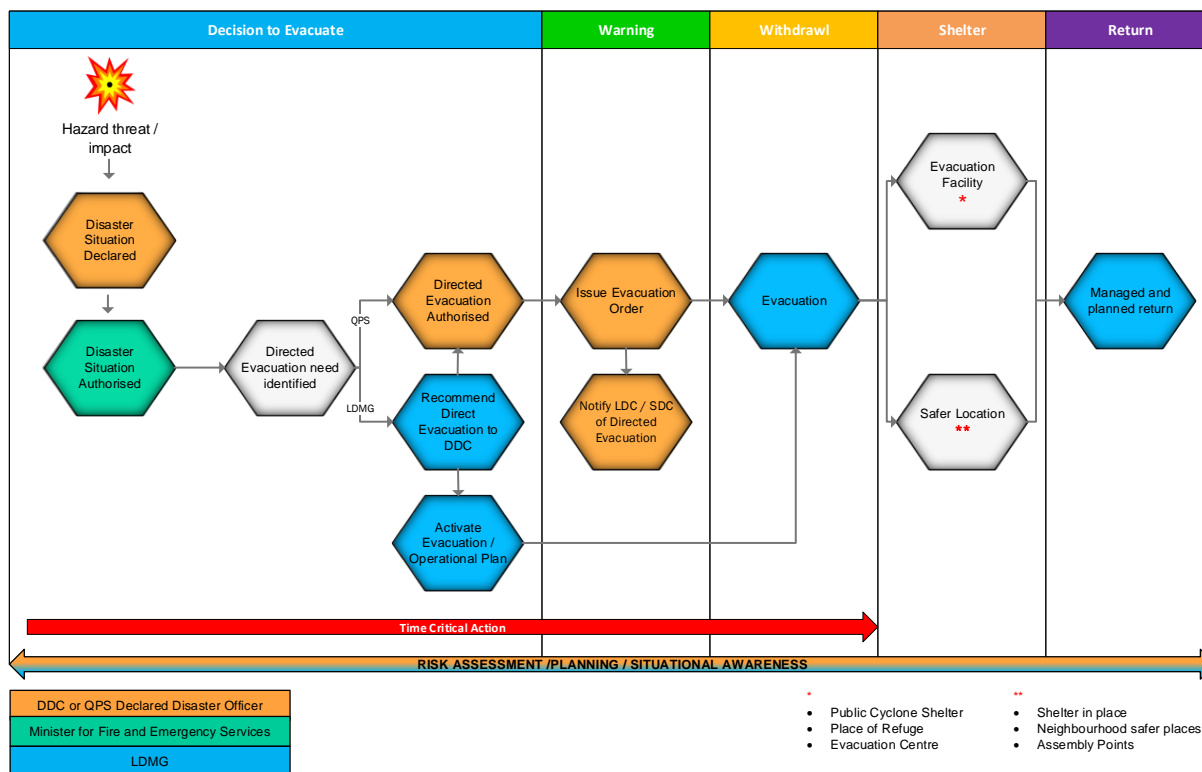
Directed Evacuation Roles and responsibilities

Below is the process for Directed Evacuation, it aligns to the stages of evacuation which is based on the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience National evacuation planning handbook.

LDMG

As indicated in 3.3.1, "the LDMG does not have the statutory power to authorise a directed evacuation". However, the LDMG can recommend to a DDC the requirement for a directed evacuation. The LDMG will be responsible for the management of all facets of the evacuation process (section 30(c) of the Act) which are not the direct responsibility of the DDC under the Guideline and this Manual or pursuant to the Act.

DDC

The DDC is responsible for authorising the directed evacuation and exercising any statutory powers under sections 77-78 of the Act which are required to give effect to that directed evacuation.

6.1.4. Key messages

Have you considered …

Data and information gathering	• all advice from relevant authorities on severity, arrival of hazard and impact area?
Evacuation	• has the DDC been consulted with? • the number of persons requiring evacuation and the type of evacuation necessary? • the time required to complete the evacuation and the lead time available? • is the evacuation achievable, safe and the most suitable option? • what is the critical point for the decision to evacuate and the point at which the evacuation is to be completed? • is this achievable? • the availability of appropriate resources available to effectively manage the evacuation?

	• if the required resources available are sufficient and if not how more will be obtained?
Warnings	• how the current and predicted conditions, weather and the time of day will affect • the proposed methods of warning dissemination, safety of movement and overall timeframe?
Exposed population	• how will the process of evacuation affect the exposed population especially people with special needs and what special facilities are required for their safety?
Transport	• the specific transportation requirements for all residents including people with special needs and pets? • the capacity of proposed evacuation routes to support rapid egress by pedestrian and / or vehicular traffic given the specific event related conditions?
Safer locations	• the suitability of proposed safer locations and / or assembly points, including the ability to establish them quickly and sustain them for the duration of the event? • the most suitable safer location for the impending hazard, for example shelter in place or evacuation centre?
Business	• the implications on commercial operations and community criticism of unnecessary evacuation versus primary responsibility and duty of care for safety of exposed population?
Key stakeholders	• LDMG • DDMG • Department of Transport and Main Roads • RSPCA Qld • QPS – District Disaster Coordinator • SDCG • Bureau of Meteorology • QFES
Associated Toolkit Items	• *Disaster Management Act 2003* • *Disaster Management Regulation 2014* • PPRR DM Guideline • The Tropical Cyclone Storm Tide Warning Response System Handbook

6.2.   Warning

The most advanced warning process will not be fully effective unless the community is educated and aware of what the warning means to them and are well informed on the actions they need to take for evacuation, refer section 5 of this Manual.

The primary message to be conveyed to the community is that individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for their own, their family and their pets safety. This includes having an emergency plan, an emergency kit and an evacuation kit easily accessible and ready.

Activation of the community education, awareness and engagement section of the evacuation sub-plan is required during an event to encourage individuals to be aware of the possible need to evacuate, to understand the warning system, and to take proactive steps to maintain safety and mitigate the effects of the identified threat.

It is recommended that the relevant location of and routes to an evacuation centre are disseminated to the exposed population as soon as possible.

All information materials should provide consistent, up to date and factual detail which is easily understood and relevant to the community.

6.2.1. After an event

It is important to maintain communication with impacted residents to ensure they are fully informed of the process required for a safe return to their homes or businesses, such as structural and electrical assessment of dwellings, safe water, public health risks and viable access routes. All media outlets and community leaders also need to be fully informed to enable them to support the community to minimise anxiety and increase resilience and community wellbeing. All websites and call centres are recommended to be maintained with relevant information until safe return has been completed.

6.2.2. Dissemination of return advice

As with the evacuation warnings, information regarding the return process is required to be widely disseminated to evacuees. This may be achieved by notices and announcements at evacuation centres and assembly points, Emergency Alerts, broadcasts on radio and television, social media and notices in local papers.

Where the return advice relates specifically to schools, hospitals, aged care facilities and other institutions, the return advice may be provided directly to the affected agency or overarching body such as the Department of Education or Queensland Health.

Information to be detailed in the return advice may include the following, where appropriate:

- issuing authority, date and time
- details of event and data to signify threat has abated
- specific areas deemed safe for return, include maps where appropriate
- suitable routes including any load limits and specific traffic control arrangements
- public transport arrangements, where provided
- requirement for evacuees to provide advice of proposed return to evacuation centre or other evacuee registration service, as appropriate
- appropriate health and safety messages, if required such as requirement to boil water before consumption, any potential public health risks
- recovery services available
- contact number for further information or clarification.

It is recommended that return advices are advertised widely to ensure evacuees staying with friends or family outside of the local area are informed.

6.2.3. Post event review

A review of all communication resources and channels including the community education, awareness and engagement section of the evacuation sub-plan is encouraged to identify lessons learned and ensure it contains relevant and updated evacuation information, processes and procedures.

In preparation for the next disaster event, it is recommended that preparedness information continue to be uploaded to websites.

6.2.4. Key messages

Have you considered …

During an event	• how and when to activate the community education, awareness and engagement section of the evacuation sub-plan? how you will coordinate external information received by the community via media outlets?

	• how you will ensure consistent, up to date and factual information is publicised? • planning for contingency plans and alternatives in case technology and web based systems reach capacity and fail (due to higher than normal public usage) and become ineffective tools for disseminating information?
After an event	• how you will manage the expectations of the public, media, politicians and other disaster management groups and requests for information? • what relevant return information is provided to residents and how and when it will be disseminated? • the process and assessments required for the community to return safely to specific locations? • providing counselling for affected residents to enable positive recovery?
Key stakeholders	• LDMG • DDMG • Australian Red Cross • commercial and community radio personnel • community representatives and leaders • key local business • key local community groups • Salvation Army • St Vincent De Paul • CALD Community leaders
Associated Toolkit Items	• www.disaster.qld.gov.au • www.getready.qld.gov.au • Your local government website which can be found at: www.dlgp.qld.gov.au/local-government-directory/index.php

6.3. Withdrawal

The process of withdrawal involves the physical and coordinated movement of exposed persons and animals (pets or assistance animals) to safer locations. Withdrawal requires careful, comprehensive and coordinated planning to support the movement of all exposed persons and animals in a timely manner and reduce public anxiety and traffic congestion wherever possible.

6.3.1. Managing the withdrawal process

There may be some community groups who will require assisted withdrawal. It is recommended that these groups are identified during the analysis of the exposed population so that the process and actions for their withdrawal have already been pre-planned and documented in the evacuation sub-plan.

A systematic grid system is utilised to ensure all properties are visited and regular reports on progress are conveyed back to the Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC).

6.3.2. Evacuation routes

It is recommended that evacuation routes are identified during the planning stage. This may involve consultation with local government engineers, QPS and Department of Transport and Main Roads representatives, as applicable.

In determining evacuation routes, consideration of the following will be necessary, but is not limited to:

- potential number of evacuees utilising the routes
- ensuring evacuation routes to safer locations such as an evacuation centre leads away from the potential hazard
- route capacity and hazard immunity.

The evacuation routes to be utilised for each event will be determined and based on the hazard and information received from specialised organisations such as the Bureau of Meteorology, QPS, Transport and Main Roads and local government. However, some are likely to be common to all situations. Local evacuation routes may extend as far as a main highway or arterial road and it is recommend they are signed using common signage and pre-planned colours.

6.3.3. Assembly points

An assembly point is a temporary designated location specifically selected as a point which is not anticipated to be adversely affected by the hazard. Assembly points are often used as a means of gathering evacuees prior to their coordinated movement to evacuation centres or cyclone shelters.

6.3.4. Signage

Local government may consider the application of standard evacuation rout signage as appropriate to local conditions.

6.3.5. Maintenance

Where roads are designated as evacuation routes, it is advisable that maintenance or upgrading works on these routes is conducted outside seasonal threat periods. This will eliminate delays created by a reduced capacity of the routes during an evacuation. It is also important to acknowledge that where a road is designated as an evacuation route, it is recommended to be prioritised for maintenance or mitigation works within the capital works program.

6.3.6. Transport

The analysis of the exposed population undertaken during the initial stages of evacuation planning will provide valuable data to assist in the planning of transport requirements during the withdrawal stage. Demographic data on the exposed population may provide a basis for calculating those within the community who will require transportation assistance.

Where it is deemed necessary, a transport strategy is recommended to be developed and documented within the evacuation sub-plan.

It is recommended that the level of detail included in the strategy is adequate enough to enable prompt decision making and implementation at the time of an event. The strategy may identify transportation methods, transport resources and may consider addressing the issues outlined within this table.

Exposed area / suburb/location	Transport mode	Transport provider	Number of services	Pick-up point	Destination

6.3.7. Security

The level of security to be provided to evacuated areas will require careful consideration and planning. The availability of resources to provide security is an issue to be considered in light of other priorities during the evacuation process.

It is recommended that the security strategy to be implemented for evacuated areas is detailed within the evacuation sub-plan.

Options that may be considered include, but are not limited to:

- regular patrols by privately contracted security and / or QPS
- the erection of barriers and manned road closures to restrict unauthorised entry to evacuated areas
- safety of emergency and / or security personnel.

6.3.8. Key messages

Have you considered …

Factors	• how to communicate evacuation routes in a timely manner to all sectors of the exposed population? • how to ensure the major arterial routes are accessible? • alternatives if the evacuation route becomes inaccessible? • how to communicate evacuation routes to transient groups? • transport for vulnerable groups such as high need medical, people with disabilities, children? • transport and care for assistance dogs and pets during the withdrawal phase? • how to manage security? • how to identify residences which have been evacuated to ensure disaster management resources are not used unnecessarily?
Key stakeholders	• LDMG • DDMG • Department of Transport and Main Roads • QPS • Local government engineers
Associated Toolkit Items	• *Disaster Management Act 2003* • *Disaster Management Regulation 2014* • *Animal Care & Protection Act 2001* • PPRR DM Guidelines • Manual of Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) • National Standards as advices by Austroads.

6.4. Shelter

The shelter stage of the evacuation process includes the provision of refuge to evacuees within nominated safer locations away from the potential hazard or area of impact. This stage of evacuation relates to the receiving, registration and temporary respite or accommodation of evacuees.

It is recommended that suitable facilities and/or safer locations for the provision of refuge to evacuees are pre-identified and documented in the planning stage within the evacuation sub-plan. During the shelter stage the identification of the most appropriate facility or safer location in which to shelter, relative to the type of event, will be decided by the LDMG and conveyed within warning messages.

It is important to note if the public is directed to evacuate from an unsafe area, through the dissemination of an evacuation order, there will be an expectation that some form of safer location option is provided.

6.4.1. Community responsibility

Although the identification of safer location options is the responsibility of the LDMG and reflected in their evacuation plans, the community should be encouraged to also understand their personal risk and initiate activities to ensure they are able to evacuate. It is recommended that members of the community are encouraged to understand the probability of their need to evacuate against the various hazards and undertake the appropriate steps to prepare.

During a time where a hazard may be threatening to impact on a community, it is the responsibility of individuals to remain informed about the current situation (e.g. tuning into warnings, logging onto council website and listen out). When communities are informed and understand the potential risks of an impact to them, they are better able to determine the most appropriate sheltering solution and decide whether shelter in place or finding alternative accommodation away from the exposed area (motel, hotel, other family and friends) is a valid and safer option. Persons who are capable of moving away without assistance are encouraged to relocate outside the exposed area.

6.4.2. Types of Safer Locations

A safer location is a designated location which is not anticipated to be adversely affected by the hazard. Some safer location options do not require significant coordination or investment by LDMGs. these include; sheltering in place or staying with friends and family, neighbourhood safer places, assembly points.

Evacuation facilities may require staff deployment, coordination of resources, just in time structural works or pre-activation checks, these include: evacuation centres, public cyclone shelters, place of refuge, and, in some cases, neighbourhood safer places.

Shelter in place

Shelter in place would be considered where the structure or location of the available buildings provides a safer environment during a disaster event or where the time prior to a disaster event is not adequate to conduct a safe withdrawal.

Residents should be encouraged to shelter in a structure that meets current building standards, has been well maintained and is considered a safer location for the impending hazard. If their current residence does not satisfy these criteria, it is recommended they are advised to move to a suitable location which may be with family and friends in the first instance.

Persons who can move away without assistance are encouraged to relocate outside the area of the impending hazard.

Considerations:

- assistance cannot be provided during the event
- typically buildings that have been built since 1982, have been well maintained and are outside the impact of the hazard are safer than those that aren't
- there may be a need to be self-sufficient for some time after the event.

Neighbourhood safer places

Neighbourhood safer places are buildings or open spaces where people may gather, as a last resort, to seek shelter from bushfire. Neighbourhood safer place can be used as a possible safer location and would usually only be utilised during events where specific shelter is not required and the duration of the evacuation is not predicted to be lengthy. Neighbourhood safer place may not necessarily be staffed and evacuees may be requested to cater for their own basic requirements for a short stay and pets are not permitted.

Assembly points

Assembly points are also considered a safer location. An assembly point is a temporarily designated location specifically selected as a point which is not anticipated to be adversely affected by the hazard. Assembly points are often utilised as a means of gathering evacuees prior to their coordinated movement other evacuation facilities.

Considerations:

- amenities and meals may not be available
- pets may not be permitted however consideration is recommended.

6.4.3. Types of Facilities

Evacuation centre

An evacuation centre is a designated building specifically selected as a location not anticipated to be adversely affected by the hazard. It is recommended that evacuation centres are pre-determined and clearly categorised for event suitability by the LDMG.

Establishment and management of evacuation centres is a responsibility of the LDMG, in conjunction with DDMGs as necessary. LDMGs may enlist the services of the Australian Red Cross and other community or support agencies to assist them in the management and operation of evacuation centres. This assistance is usually agreed to before the onset of an event (State Disaster Management Plan).

When an evacuation is ordered and it is no longer safe to shelter in place, residents are advised to relocate to a designated evacuation centre that is open and staffed.

It is important to identify and prioritise possible evacuation centres suitable for a range of hazards within a community prior to the onset of an event, noting an evacuation centre for one hazard may not be appropriate for another. Once all possible evacuation centres have been identified, prioritised and documented in the evacuation sub-plan, timely decision making during an event is more likely. If the planned primary evacuation centres reach capacity, or residents are unable to reach them, identifying other options will allow planning for a flow on effect from one centre to another.

During emergencies, it is not uncommon for 'organic evacuation centres' to be opened spontaneously by well-meaning community members or organisations. LDMG's are encouraged to work together with communities as part of their year round planning and preparedness activities to identify where the community is most likely to go during an emergency and if appropriate incorporate these facilities into the formalised evacuation planning arrangements. Working collaboratively with community and having local community representation on evacuation planning sub-committees will ensure more positive evacuation outcomes.

During the passage of a cyclone it is important to note that an evacuation centre will not provide the same level of protection as a purpose designed cyclone shelter. However, on agreement between the LDMG and cyclone shelter owner, a cyclone shelter may be used as an evacuation centre after the cyclone has passed.

Considerations:

- availability of volunteer support organisations
- evacuation centres are planned to be operational for at least two weeks to allow assessment of ongoing accommodation needs to be considered
- large numbers of people may be present, if it is a large facility
- registration
- communications

- food and amenities
- other supplies such as power and water
- pets may not be permitted
- availability of QPS, emergency service or coordinating personnel.

Public cyclone shelter

A public cyclone shelter is a building specifically located and designed to provide protection to occupants from the effects of the most severe tropical cyclones until the cyclone threat has passed. For a structure to be designated as a public cyclone shelter, it must be designed and constructed in accordance with the *Design Guidelines for Queensland Public Cyclone Shelters*.

The primary purpose of a public cyclone shelter is to protect people evacuated from their homes, due to the threat from potential storm tide inundation or those without shelter who have been unable to find alternate accommodation outside the potential impact area during the passage of the cyclone.

Although, public cyclone shelters are not designed for the long term temporary accommodation of evacuees, or for the provision of services to evacuees after a cyclone has passed, a public cyclone shelter may be converted for use as an evacuation centre after a cyclone on agreement between the LDMG and cyclone shelter owner. Evacuation centres are established for this purpose in more suitable buildings.

The LDMG are encouraged to consider a policy for animals in the cyclone shelter in partnership with the asset owner. Where pets, except for assistance animals, are not permitted in the facility it is essential that contingencies are developed to address unsolicited presentation of pets at a shelter.

Public Cyclone Shelter considerations:

- Significant planning required to open, operate and return buildings to owners
- room for seating only
- attendees are expected to bring their own food, with no cooking facilities available
- limited capacity for occupancy usually 500-800 people
- conditions inside are unfavourable – crowded, noisy, basic amenities only
- QPS and emergency services may be in attendance
- volunteer support organisations may or may not be in attendance.

Place of refuge

Where the capacity of identified other safer locations may be exceeded a place of refuge may be an option. A place of refuge is usually a building that will provide a level of protection from the effects of the cyclone as it passes, but has not been built or designed in accordance with the Cyclone Shelter Design Guidelines.

A place of refuge may be solidly built, outside storm tide areas and evacuation zones and could be one of the following but not limited to:

- concrete commercial or government car parks
- shopping centres
- solid industrial buildings
- school buildings.

The location and opening of a place of refuge will be announced by a member of the LDMG, most likely the Mayor or a senior QPS officer.

Considerations:

- volunteer support organisations may not be in attendance
- large numbers of people may be present if it is a large facility

- emergency food or other supplies, power and water may /may not be available
- pets may not to be permitted
- QPS, emergency service or coordinating personnel may not be in attendance.

6.4.4. Identification of suitable safer locations and evacuation facilities

It is recommended that safer locations and evacuation facilities are established at well known, accessible and easily recognisable sites within the community. In planning for evacuation, the LDMG are encouraged to ascertain suitability based on the following considerations:

Event suitability

It is critical the nominated safer locations are suitable and are not anticipated to be adversely affected by the hazard. For this reason it is recommended that a list of locations is not released prior to an event to ensure the public does not arrive at a wrong location.

A location which is suitable for one hazard may not necessarily be suitable for refuge from all hazards and its immunity may be investigated and documented within the Evacuation Sub-plan.

Capacity

It is important to quantify the capacity of the safer location to ensure public health and evacuee welfare and safety are maintained. While an assembly point in an open location may not have a maximum capacity, there may be a maximum capacity for evacuees to park their cars or for other transport solutions (buses or ferries) to pull up and unload evacuees. In determining the capacity of a facility, it is also important to consider the function it is going to provide. Some facilities, such as cyclone shelters, will have different design capacities during the passage of the cyclone compared to if it is used as an evacuation shelter after the event. At all times the safety and wellbeing of the evacuees is the highest importance.

The Australian Red Cross 'Preferred Sheltering Practices for Emergency Sheltering in Australia' provide guidance around minimum and preferred standards for: Space Management, Waste Management, Water Supply, Sanitation and Food in evacuation centres.

Although the Design Guidelines for Queensland Public Cyclone Shelters: September 2006 contains criteria for designing cyclone shelters, particularly matters relating to wind load, debris load and debris screening, it also provides useful criteria that can be used in considering the suitability of buildings for occupancy as safer locations.

Negotiation for use

In planning for evacuation it is recommended the use of a safer location or evacuation facility be negotiated with the owner or managing body of the location or facility. In addition, it will be important to seek clear instructions and advice on contact details or arrangements for after hour's access.

Limit disruption to recovery

When considering locations which may be suitable as safer locations or evacuation facilities it is imperative to consider the impact this may pose to the usual business of the location. For example, most schools could be deemed suitable for use as an evacuation centre however by doing so will delay the return of children back to a normal routine and may also compromise a child's sense of safety and wellbeing in their own school. Other facility selections might impact negatively on the local economy.

Facility Considerations

When assessing and determining suitability of a facility for use as an evacuation centre the following may be considered:

Communication	To ensure communication to the LDCC, consider availability of access to a phone, facsimile and a redundancy communication mechanism such as a battery operated radio. Evacuees will require communication mechanisms to stay informed of current situations with the event; this may be achieved via television, radio broadcast and an information board for updated advice and messages from the LDCC.
Amenities	Toilets and shower facilities should be adequate to cater for the proposed capacity of the location. This may need to be achieved through the provision of temporary amenities.
Disabled access and amenities	The facility should have suitable access and amenities for evacuees with disabilities.
Kitchen facilities	Basic facilities should include access to a supply of clean drinking water. Kitchen facilities should be able to cater for the capacity of the location or planning should include the provision of meals prepared externally to the location such as Salvation Army, commercial catering, pre-packaged airline food.
Ventilation	Ventilation should be sufficient to cater for the proposed capacity of the location.
Vehicular access	Suitable vehicular access should be available at the location including parking within close proximity. Consider all weather access and hard stand/clear areas for parking heavy vehicles.
Pet and animal facilities	Consider the availability of suitable housing of pets within the facility or within close proximity to the facility. Also consider how aid animals (e.g. guide dogs) and companion animals will be accommodated.
Alternative power supply	Consider the availability of an alternative power supply or a connection for emergency supply.
Alternative water supply	Consider the availability of alternative water supply. This may include planning for the provision of alternative bottled supply.
Associated Toolkit Items	*Disaster Management Act 2003* *Disaster Management Regulation 2014* *Animal Care & Protection Act 2001* - PPRR DM Guideline - Queensland Evacuation Centre Planning Toolkit - Queensland Evacuation Centre Management Handbook - Red Cross Preferred Sheltering Practices for emergency sheltering in Queensland

An important consideration regarding buildings or areas within larger buildings that are being considered for use as a safer location, is the presence of external glass windows. In areas likely to be impacted by cyclonic winds it is critical that occupants are not placed in buildings or areas within buildings that will be adversely impacted by the shattering of overhead/ceiling or wall window glass as a result of debris impact or window failure.

6.4.5. Document safer locations

Once safer locations suitable for hazards captured in the risk assessment have been identified and an agreement reached with the owner/manager of the facility, it is advisable to include detailed information on each safer location within an appendix of the evacuation sub-plan, including contact details for 24/7 access to the facility.

It is recommended that maps used for disaster management response identify the location of each safer location or evacuation facility and appropriate evacuation route/s to each location and that these maps are included in an appendix of the evacuation sub-plan and reviewed annually as part of each LDMG's pre-season planning and forecasting.

6.4.6. Evacuation centre management

Where evacuation centres are being used as safer locations during an evacuation, it is recommended that they are opened and operational prior to their details being released to the public in the Evacuation Order.

It is advisable that specific details on the coordination, management and ongoing operation of evacuation centres is addressed and clearly outlined within the evacuation centre management sub-plan. Local governments may also consider entering into a memorandum of understanding for evacuation centres with the Australian Red Cross, or other supporting agencies, which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of each party in planning and responding to evacuation requirements during an event.

It is recommended that the evacuation centre management sub-plan clearly outline the coordination and management of the following services and issues:

- allocation of roles and responsibilities
- opening and staffing of centre
- registration of evacuees (Register.Find.Reunite and centre 'intake form')
- preparation and provision of catering and bedding
- centre security and privacy
- meeting basic human needs of evacuees while in the centre
- requirements for the care and welfare of special needs evacuees
- cultural considerations
- first aid personnel, hygiene and laundering
- child safe spaces and practice
- facilities for pets and animals if applicable (including assistance animals)
- an area to recharge personal technology such as mobile phones
- identification of roles and responsibilities of supporting agencies which may be present in the community.
- Communication, information sharing and reporting
- Health, Safety and compliance
- Closure of evacuation centre and return of evacuees

In addition, communication protocols between the evacuation centre and the LDCC to ensure regular advice on numbers of evacuees, requirements for catering and any health and safety issues are encouraged to be outlined in the evacuation centre management sub-plan.

Children and people with special needs may be particularly vulnerable in an evacuation centre as their normal safeguards, routines and support structures have been interrupted or altered. Consideration on how their needs could be met is encouraged, including:

- access to health and wellbeing support, including for people who need psychosocial support
- additional measures to ensure the safety and protection of children, including the establishment of 'child-safe spaces'
- provision of age-appropriate activities and recovery support programs.

6.4.7. Registration

It is recommended that all evacuees are registered and the registration documented. Where evacuees decide to relocate to a nominated evacuation centre, their registration should be undertaken as a standard function of evacuation centre management. Consideration is required for registration when evacuees decide to evacuate to family and friends or another alternative safer location. Methods of registration will vary depending on the nature of the emergency and the volume of evacuees and may include online registration, the completion of registration forms at designated locations or through the dissemination of a telephone number for phone registrations

Registration is normally undertaken utilising the National Registration and Enquiry Service 'Register.Find.Reunite.' which is administered by Red Cross on behalf of QPS. Register.Find.Reunite. is an online database filing and retrieval system designed to register people displaced as a result of an emergency event and to reunite them with concerned family and friends.

During an event the QPS and Red Cross have the capacity to launch the Register.Find.Reunite. service which allows the community to register themselves as being safe and well or to place an enquiry about a loved one in the emergency affected area. It is important to liaise with the QPS and Red Cross to determine if registration is required and what functions of the Register.Find.Reunite. service is required to be enabled.

6.4.8. Pets and animal welfare

During an evacuation that may require the evacuation of a resident and their pet, the LDMG are encouraged to consider developing a strategy for the welfare of the pets and animals of evacuees.

Pets, when referenced within the Guideline and Toolkit, refer to household, domestic pets only. The LDMG should not be responsible for the evacuation of livestock, the primary responsibility for livestock will rest with the livestock owner.

Some evacuees may require accommodation for their pets and consideration of the following is recommended:

- domestic pets to be separately accommodated for hygiene and safety reasons
- assistance animals accommodation with the evacuation centre.

Consideration and planning is also encouraged for situations where pet owners have been required to quickly evacuate (possibly under *Public Safety Preservation Act 1986*), leaving pets behind that will require welfare checks and/or feeding and watering.

6.4.9. Recovery Hubs

Recovery hubs are not considered evacuation facilities. These centres provide a range of welfare, support, financial and emotional recovery services. The evacuation process, however, does not end when the hazard has passed and it is critical that people return home in a safe manner with as much support and assistance as possible.

Where return is not immediately possible, recovery services to facilitate short term and longer term temporary accommodation solutions for displaced community members need to be implemented. Recovery Hubs, commonly referred to as 'One Stop Shops' which provide a range of welfare, support, financial and emotional recovery services for disaster affected persons are a separate facility with differing management and facility requirements and therefore will normally be housed separately to the evacuation centre. Where there is a possibility that returning will not occur in the short term, it is recommended that the recovery sub-plan include strategies for managing displaced people and enabling their return as soon as practicable.

Considerations include:

- availability of volunteer support organisations
- large numbers of people may be present, if it is a large facility
- registration
- communications
- food and amenities
- amenities
- other supplies such as power and water
- pets may not be permitted
- availability of QPS, emergency service or coordinating personnel

Determining the need for, and establishment of, relief and recovery centres is managed by the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors. These decisions are informed by the needs identified by the LDMG.

6.4.10. Key messages

Have you considered …

Factors	• the identification of approximate number of evacuees to be accommodated?
	• a process for background checks and police checks of potential evacuees?
	• evacuation centre signage that is able to be understood by all community members
	• especially the special needs community?
	• the collection of information for Register-Find-Reunite?
	• identifying community groups who may take responsibility for establishing and operating centres in the future?
	• establishing cooperative arrangements with these community groups which outline how the centres should operate, and to ensure the centres have appropriate facilities?
	• suitable evacuation centres (event specific) away from the hazard to accommodate the identified number of evacuees (with power generators)?
	• how the establishment and maintenance of communication with spontaneous evacuation centres will occur?
	• the management strategy of resupply for these spontaneous evacuation centres?
	• developing a floor plan that describes the lay out and allows calculation of occupancy and resource requirement?
	• how the resources for your evacuation centre will be provided?
	• how costs will be documented for host council and neighbouring council?
	• car parking spaces, buses for private transport to the evacuation centres?
	• access for emergency vehicles e.g. ambulance, fire, police?
	• security for evacuees, staff and resources?
Key stakeholders	• LDMG
	• DDMG
	• Australian Red Cross
	• Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors
	• Department of Housing and Public Works
	• Local security businesses, supermarkets
	• QFES
	• QPS
	• QRA
	• RSPCA
	• Salvation Army
Associate Toolkit Items	• PPRR DM Guideline
	• Neighbourhood Safer Places – A Place of Last Resort In a Bushfire: 2010

6.5.   Return

The return of evacuees to their homes requires careful planning to ensure the process is undertaken in a managed and coordinated manner. It is recommended that it be undertaken prior to the onset of an event and complements recovery plans. The evacuation process is not complete when the hazard has passed. It is critical that people return to their homes and community in a safe manner with as much support and assistance as required.

The return process may include:

- return to the area by emergency services and work teams only
- partial return to only some areas of the evacuated area
- temporary return during daylight hours only.

Planning and consideration will be required to manage those persons who voluntarily evacuated without the visibility and knowledge of the LDMG as these people will not be registered and may not be receiving direct public information regarding the return to their homes.

The timely return of evacuees is considered a critical step in human and social recovery; however safety should not be compromised and their return is not to be undertaken until all issues have been considered and the disaster area is deemed safe for return. Advice on the integrity of structures may be sought from local building certifiers or the Queensland Building and Construction Commission. Recovery planning can assist in enabling the prioritisation of efforts and resources by the local government, state government agencies and the Commonwealth during the return stage.

It is also important to note that during the pre-planning of the return of residents to their home it is essential appropriate support and counselling is considered and where possible, offered through local, State agencies and/or non-government organisations. This proactive measure will promote a calm, connected environment enhancing the recovery process.

6.5.1. Decision to return

The decision to begin the return process is to be made by the LDMG in consultation with all other agencies involved in the evacuation process including:

- DDC
- local government sections, as relevant to local area, may include:
  - o environmental health
  - o building services
  - o water and sewerage
  - o roads and drainage
  - o animal management
- electricity providers
- telecommunication providers such as:
  - o Telstra and Optus.

The LDMG may be represented by a recovery subcommittee, if the response phase has been completed before evacuees can be returned.

To determine if an impacted area is safe for return it will be necessary to conduct a detailed assessment of the area addressing the following issues:

- the threat has passed and there is no likelihood of further impact
- suitable management of public health issues and secondary threats such as electrical risks, sewerage contamination, mosquito infestations, contaminated water supply
- building structures are safe to reoccupy
- utilities such as power, water, sewerage and communication networks are operational

- QPS related investigations to meet Coroner's needs
- roads and transport infrastructure is open and safe for use
- commercial food supplies are available
- adequate security remains for damaged or unsafe areas
- availability of support services including financial and welfare services.

The majority of the information required to assess the suitability of an area for return will be available from impact assessments conducted during the response phase.

6.5.2. Return strategy

The LDMG are encouraged to consider the development of a return strategy to outline the arrangements necessary to plan and execute a safe and organised return before the onset of an event. It is recommended this strategy is reviewed annually to include lessons learned from the previous year's event.

It is advised that the return strategy addresses how to identify the specific areas deemed safe for return, any staging requirements for the return to larger areas, ongoing security arrangements for damaged, unsafe structures or infrastructure, and traffic management plan and transportation requirements.

Once it is determined that areas are safe for return, the LDMG are encourage to activate the return strategy and disseminate return advice to the community. Special consideration will be required for people with special needs and these arrangements documented in the return strategy.

Dissemination of return advice

As with the evacuation warnings, information regarding the return process is required to be widely disseminated to evacuees. This may be achieved by notices and announcements at evacuation centres, neighbourhood safe places and assembly points, Emergency Alerts, broadcasts on radio and television, and notices in local papers.

Where the return advice relates specifically to schools, hospitals, aged care facilities and other institutions, the return advice may be provided directly to the affected agency or overarching body such as Department of Education or Queensland Health. Information to be detailed in the return advice may include the following, where appropriate:

- issuing authority, date and time
- details of event and data to signify threat has abated
- specific areas deemed safe for return, including maps where appropriate
- suitable routes including any load limits and specific traffic control arrangements
- public transport arrangements, where provided
- requirement for evacuees to provide advice of proposed return to evacuation centre or other evacuee registration service, as appropriate
- appropriate health and safety messages, if required, such as requirement to boil water before consumption, any potential public health risks
- recovery services available
- contact number for further information or clarification.

It is recommended that return advices are advertised widely to ensure that evacuees staying with friends or family outside of the local area are informed.

6.5.3. Recovery

The longer term accommodation requirements of those unable to return to their homes are managed through the recovery process. Appropriate longer term temporary accommodation will be required for these evacuees once the evacuation centres are closed.

The transition from response to recovery is a very important step in the process and it is recommended that it be detailed and planned for in the evacuation sub-plan. Recovery agencies should be identified and strategies listed as to how these agencies will be communicated with and whose role it will be to liaise will these groups. Recovery planning should be sufficiently flexible to deal with the needs of the impacted community, regardless of the nature of the disaster. For further guidance refer section 6 of the Disaster Management Guideline and the M.1.136 Guide to Local Recovery Planning Manual.

While the evacuation process is completed with the return of evacuees to their homes or their transfer into medium to longer term temporary accommodation, the disaster management process continues from response and recovery into managed recovery. It is important that the recovery planning is undertaken as early as possible in the evacuation process.

6.5.4. Key messages

Have you considered …

Factors	• whether the threat has passed? • what process will be used to return to the area: temporary return, partial return, complete return? • who will assess the buildings and roads for safety? • who will coordinate the return and community recovery? • whether all services are available to residents and buildings safe for habitation? • whether there are any possible health and safety risks to the residents? How will these be managed and solved? • whether the recovery services are ready and able to enter the area to assist residents? • whether there are any load limits on roads/access and how will this impact the return and recovery process? • whether there is adequate food and clean water for the community? • how will information on the community return be communicated with residents? • how will the special needs population be managed to return to their homes? • whether each home has been inspected by electricians if flood affected?
Key stakeholders	• LDMG • DDMG • QDMC • Australian Red Cross • Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors • Local building certifiers or the Building Services Authority of Queensland • Queensland Health • QPS • SRPPC • QRA
Associated Toolkit Items	• PPRR DM Guideline • Queensland Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements Guide • Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub Handbook 4 – Evacuation Planning • www.getready.qld.gov.au

Appendix 1 – Storm Tide and Evacuation Mapping Literature Review 2016

Click here to access Literature Review

Appendix 2 – Developing Evacuation Zones

Click here to access Developing Evacuation Zones Reference Guide