

Managing Offers of Assistance

Manual – M.1.202



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CHAPTER 1: OFFERS OF ASSISTANCE PROCESS

The offers of assistance process has five stages, they include: receipt, acceptance, matching, distribution and use. Each stage requires key decisions, considerations and actions which must be undertaken when managing offers of assistance. The below table should be read in conjunction with the process flow chart provided at in the Process Diagram.

Stage	Criteria	Considerations
Receipt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Identify who will be undertake the task of receiving offers within the affected area, agency or group. o Ensure that those receiving offers of assistance are familiar with the approved offers of assistance arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Offers of assistance can be requested from numerous sources and may be received by a number of different agencies or disaster management groups.
Acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Before accepting an offer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o determine if the offer will meet the needs of the affected community o validate that the offer is genuine o ensure the offer meets any necessary legislative or Australian standard requirements to enable its use o if the offer relates to goods such as clothing or appliances assess the quality o record and confirm all relevant details about the offer such as location o of offer, time and date the offer is available o if offer is accepted, communicate that to the source. o Determine which level the offer should be managed at i.e. local or district level or outsourced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The person accepting the offer must understand and confirm any costs associated with the offer (e.g. receiving written confirmation that an invoice will not be issued post event under any circumstances).
Matching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Identify those in the community with the greatest need, in consultation with community groups, leaders and NGOs. o Ensure the offers address the need and any limitations. o Depending on the size and scale of the need, determine which level the offer should be coordinated at i.e. local or district or outsourced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Matching offers with community needs is a complex process. o Needs of individuals and communities may not be understood until they know when or if they are able to return to their homes and communities. This may not be for days or even weeks following an event. o When possible, link broader community recovery activities with the matching process to avoid duplication of effort and stress on those who require support. o Disaster management groups may become aware of community need, through lead and recovery partner organisations, community groups and leaders, multi-agency outreach teams, public hotlines, social media and/or requests for assistance.

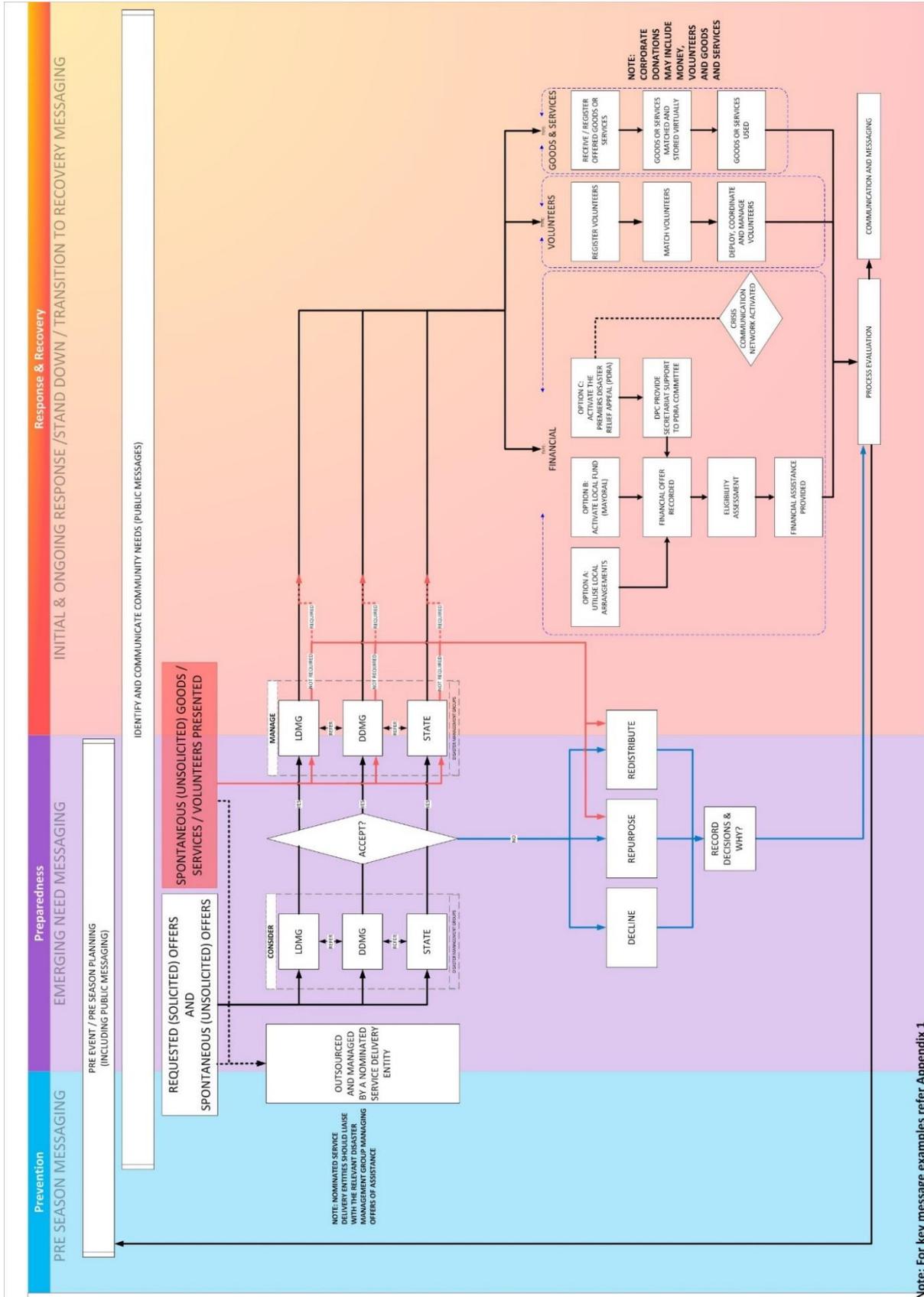




Stage	Criteria	Considerations
Distribution	<p><u>Financial donations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o May be distributed through: vouchers issued for local businesses, Incentive grants, or Electronic Funds Transfer. o Should be managed through a pre-established and auditable financial management system. <p><u>Volunteers:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Require local planning, understanding of community needs and triaging those in most need, supervision and coordination to induct, deploy and debrief volunteers to the disaster affected areas. o Require effective volunteer management and engagement prior to being deployed to the community or individuals in need, to support cost effective and safe work practices. It is advisable this responsibility is outsourced to a nominated service delivery entity or NGO to manage the offers from volunteers. o May use virtual volunteer management to register and track offers of to help through volunteering and corporate volunteering offers. o Spontaneous volunteers should be partnered with experienced volunteers where possible. <p><u>Goods:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o May require storage in virtual warehouses prior to distribution to the community or individuals in need, to support cost effective and safe work practices. o Should be set up for distribution at appropriate distribution points. o May use virtual warehousing to register and track offers of goods and corporate offers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Offers need to be distributed to the community or individual in need, in a coordinated and inclusive manner. o It is crucial that offers of assistance are integrated in such a way that those receiving the support have a say in how it will assist them. o Virtual warehousing is increasingly being used and provides an online matching service connecting those who have registered offers, with the charities that accept their offers. o Volunteering management experts support service to organisations and volunteers including training. Advice is also offered on national standards and community involvement, consultancy and advice.
Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Once the offer has been received, assess the use to ensure that the need has been met. o In some circumstances, particularly when spontaneous (unsolicited) offers are presented they may not be matched or utilised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Ongoing monitoring of offers to ensure need is met. o Assess the potential need for more offers. o If offers are not utilised they may be re-purposed, redirected or declined the offer and must be recorded appropriately.



1. Process Diagram



Note: For key message examples refer Appendix 1



CHAPTER 2: PUBLIC MESSAGING

Public messaging for disaster management and offers of assistance needs to be reliable and consistent to meet the needs of the affected community, keep the general public informed and engaged and to support disaster management activities and operations.

Messaging should ideally be delivered throughout all phases of the event:

- Prior to the event, to ensure the community is as prepared as possible and aware of arrangements for offers of assistance that may be put in place.
- During the event, to reassure the community and reinforce requirements as the event progresses.
- Following the event, to ensure the community feels their efforts have been noted and valued and potentially to cease the flow of assistance if it is no longer required.

2.1. Scripts for Public Announcements¹

The following scripts can be used as the basis for media releases and/or talking points for interviews and public announcements. As each incident is unique in nature, these scripts may not be appropriate in some cases. Before using the below messaging please make contact with the relevant agencies to determine incident specific requirements.

2.1.1. Pre-event

Disasters generate public sympathy and offers of assistance to those affected.

The public may try to help by making donations, however the items donated may not be suitable and can create extra work for authorities, distract from recovery efforts and undermine community resilience.

Dealing with unsolicited donated goods takes time and focus away from the very important work that needs to be done with disaster affected people.

Large quantities of donated goods in a disaster affected location can depress sales by local businesses and delay recovery of the local economy.

In addition, donated goods can impose a sense of obligation on survivors who may be struggling to deal with what has happened. This sense of obligation is difficult to reconcile when the goods are unneeded or of poor quality.

However, public care and support is very important to disaster affected people. It helps them feel more positive and confident about the task that lies ahead.

The most effective way we can all help is by contributing money. Donating money is always the best option as it is more flexible, provides choice, promotes self-directed recovery and more accurately targets need. It also stimulates local economies, leading to a quicker recovery for the community.

During a disaster, authorities quickly assess what is needed and targeted appeals may be launched for particular items. We can all help significantly by waiting for those appeals and only offering good quality items that are requested.

2.1.2. During the event

If you want to help [affected community], donating money is the best option.

This allows the people affected by this disaster to make choices about what is best for them to help their recovery. This also puts money back into the local economy which assists early recovery for the whole community.

¹ National Guidelines for Managing Donated Goods

http://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1894/national-guidelines-for-managing-donated-goods.pdf





Donations can be made at [details].

We really appreciate your support—but at this stage we do not require donations of second-hand clothing and other goods.

Authorities are assessing the needs of those affected. If specific items are required, a targeted appeal will be announced.

If you have goods you wish to donate, please consider turning your goods into cash instead. For example, have a garage sale, boot sale, a fun auction among friends or sell items online. Then you can donate the money raised to the recovery effort.

Your support and encouragement are very important to the people who have been affected by this disaster.

2.1.3. After the event

Thank you for your support to help [affected community]. The response has been overwhelming and we received many items which have helped to meet the needs of those affected. Appeals for specific items worked well and much of what was donated has been of great value to the affected community.

We still have a large quantity of items left over, which will be recycled wherever possible. Some items may be sold and the proceeds donated to the recovery program.

2.2. Scripts for recovery personnel responding to public enquiries²

These scripts can be used as the basis for responding to phone calls and other public enquiries about how people can help. They may also form the basis of media releases and/or talking points for interviews and public announcements.

This is important to recognise people's concern and acknowledge the importance of their help, while directing their assistance so it can be most useful.

2.2.1. Response to people wanting to help

Thank you for thinking of the people who have been devastated by the [disaster].

Your interest and kindness are very much appreciated by [affected community] and really makes a difference to the recovery of those who have been affected.

The best way you can help is by donating money. This will allow us to more precisely meet the needs of the people who have been affected.

Or you may be interested in approaching one of the charitable organisations to offer your time as a volunteer or get involved in fundraising.

If you have goods that you wanted to donate, consider selling these and donating the money instead.

2.2.2. Response to people wanting to donate goods

Thank you for thinking of the people who have been devastated by the [disaster].

Your interest and kindness are very much appreciated and public support makes a big difference to community recovery.

However, there is no need for donated goods at the moment, and unfortunately we have no storage space to keep items in case they might be needed down the track.

² National Guidelines for Managing Donated Goods

http://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1894/national-guidelines-for-managing-donated-goods.pdf





If we identify any particular needs we may launch a targeted appeal for specific items, so please watch out for that.

If you have goods that you wanted to donate, consider selling these and donating the money instead.

2.2.3. Response to people delivering their own donations or donations they have collected

Thank you for thinking of the people who have been devastated by the [disaster].

Unfortunately, there is no need for these items at present and we do not have the storage space to hold them in case of future need.

If we identify any particular needs we may launch a targeted appeal for specific items, so please watch out for that.

Your interest and kindness are very much appreciated and public support makes a big difference to community recovery. You may still be able to help. Have you thought about trying to sell these items and then donate the money to the disaster appeal?

