



# **NORTHERN TERRITORY ALL HAZARDS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

*This document has been produced by the  
NORTHERN TERRITORY EMERGENCY SERVICE  
under the provisions of the  
NORTHERN TERRITORY DISASTERS ACT*

NORTHERN TERRITORY COUNTER DISASTER COUNCIL



## CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The NORTHERN TERRITORY ALL HAZARDS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS has been examined and approved for distribution by the Northern Territory Counter Disaster Council in pursuance of Section 9(b) of the Disasters Act.

Dated this 16<sup>th</sup> day of March 2011.

*Original Signed*  
John McRoberts  
Chairman



## **NORTHERN TERRITORY ALL HAZARDS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

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### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A/APMC	Augmented Australasian Police Ministers' Council
AEMA	Australian Energy Management Agency
AEMC	Australian Emergency Management Committee
AHMAC	Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council
AHMC	Australian Health Ministers Conference
AIIMS	Australian Inter-service Incident Management System
ALGA	Australian Local Government Association
AMSA	Australian Maritime Safety Authority
ANZECC	Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council
APMC	Australasian Police Ministers' Council
AQUAVETPLAN	Australian Aquatic Animal Diseases Veterinary Emergency Plan
ATC	Australian Transport Council
ATSB	Australian Transport Safety Bureau
AUSASSIST	Australian Government Overseas Disaster Assistance Plan
AusSAR	Australian Search and Rescue
AUSCONPLAN SRED	Australian Contingency Plan for Space Re-entry Debris
AUSVETPLAN	Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan
AUSBURNPLAN	Australian Burns Plan
BGAG	Business Government Advisory Group
BOM	Australian Bureau of Meteorology
CASA	Civil Aviation Safety Authority
CAVDISPLAN	Commonwealth Government Aviation Disaster Plan
CBR	Chemical, Biological and Radiological
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
COMDISPLAN	Commonwealth Government Disaster Response Plan
COMARRPLAN	Commonwealth Government Marine Radiological Response Plan
COMRECPLAN	Commonwealth Government Plan for the Reception of Australian Citizens and Other Approved Persons Evacuated from Overseas
DACC	Defence Aid to the Civil Community
DCI	Department of Construction and Infrastructure
DFACA	Defence Force Aid to the Civil Authority
DGEMA	Director General Emergency Management Australia
DLGH	Department of Local Government and Housing
DLP	Department of Lands and Planning
DREVF	Disaster Resilience Emergency Volunteer Fund
DRP	Disaster Resilience Program
DRDP	Disaster Resilience Directed Projects
EA	Emergency Alert
EDD	Explosive Detection Dogs
EMA	Emergency Management Australia
EMPPLAN	Australian Emergency Marine Pest Plan

EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
EPHC	Environment Protection and Heritage Council
HRES	High Risk Engineer Search
JESCC	Joint Emergency Services Call Centre
MCPEM-EM	Ministerial Council Police and Emergency Services – Emergency Services
MCPEM-P	Ministerial Council Police and Emergency Services – Police
MCE	Ministerial Council on Energy
MTSA	Maritime Safety and Offshore Facilities Security Act 2003
NCPS	National Commonwealth Police Services
NDMP	Natural Disaster Mitigation Programme
NDRMSP	Natural Disaster Risk Management Studies Programme
NDRRA	Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements
NEC	National Emergency Committee
NEMCC	National Emergency Management Coordination Centre
NEP	National Emergency Protocol
NEPC	National Environment Protection Council
NEVSF	National Emergency Volunteer Support Fund
NRIS	National Registration and Inquiry System
NRMMC	Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council
NT	Northern Territory
NTES	Northern Territory Emergency Service
OSMASSCASPLAN	National Response Plan for Mass Casualty Incidents Involving Australians Overseas
PFES	Police Fire and Emergency Service
PIMC	Primary Industries Ministerial Council
PLANTPLAN	Australian Emergency Plant Pest Response Plan
RCC	Rescue Coordination Centre
RFMP	Regional Flood Mitigation Program
SCOT	Standing Committee on Transport
SEWS	Standard Emergency Warning System

## **PREFACE**

### **Purpose**

1. The aim of this document is to describe:
  - a. the Territory emergency management framework;
  - b. the roles of organisations within the Territory emergency management framework; and
  - c. the Territory emergency management policies.

### **Scope**

2. This document details Territory wide all hazard emergency prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery arrangements approved by the Northern Territory Counter Disaster Council in accordance with the provisions of the Disasters Act.
3. For the purposes of this document, 'all hazards' refers to both natural, and man made emergencies including counter terrorist emergencies.

### **Format**

4. The format of this plan is as follows:
  - a. Preface;
  - b. Part 1 - Emergency Management in the Northern Territory;
  - c. Part 2 - The Prepared Community (Prevention/Mitigation /Preparedness);
  - d. Part 3 – Emergency Response/Recovery; and
  - e. Part 4 – Public Information
  - f. Part 5 - Emergency Management Support Arrangements.

### **Evolution**

5. The Northern Territory Government is progressively transitioning from a Counter Disaster approach to an all hazards, emergency management framework which emphasises resilience. This document is based on the new framework but constrained by existing Counter Disaster Legislation. Consequently, the terms disaster and emergency are used interchangeably

## **PART 1 - EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY (NT)**

6. The Territory Government recognises the inevitable nature of emergencies and disasters and their social, economic and environmental consequences in all areas of the Territory. Accordingly, it is progressively adopting an emergency management approach which is based upon the following principles:
  - a. **All Hazards.** Given the conformance in organisational arrangements to deal with emergencies, the Territory Government has established emergency management arrangements to deal with all hazards, even though specific counter measures will often vary with different hazards.
  - b. **Comprehensive.** The Territory Government has adopted a comprehensive approach to emergency/disaster management which recognises four elements:
    - (1) **Prevention or Mitigation Activities.** These activities seek to eliminate or reduce the impacts of hazards or reduce the susceptibility of communities at risk by increasing their resilience;
    - (2) **Preparedness within the Community.** Preparedness involves establishing emergency organisations, developing plans and testing arrangements, as well as providing public education and information;
    - (3) **Effective Response.** Effective response involves activating preparedness arrangements and plans immediately after any hazard impact; and
    - (4) **Recovery.** Recovery involves assisting communities affected by emergencies to help themselves recover emotionally, socially, economically and physically.
7. **Integrated.** Constitutionally, the Territory Government has responsibility for emergency management within its jurisdiction. All levels of government have responsibility within their own jurisdiction for emergency planning, preparedness and mitigation in regard to land, property and the environment, assets and infrastructure, agencies and programmes. To achieve an effective emergency management framework, a high degree of collaboration and coordination within, and across, all levels of government and with non-government stakeholders is emphasised.
8. **Prepared and Resilient Northern Territory Communities.** Prepared and resilient communities are ones where:
  - a. Community members have comprehensive local information about hazards and risks, including who is exposed and who is most vulnerable. They take action to prepare for disasters and are adaptive and flexible to respond appropriately during emergencies.
  - b. Community members take steps to anticipate disasters and to protect themselves, their assets and their livelihoods, including their homes and

possessions, cultural heritage and economic capital, therefore minimising physical, economic and social losses. They have committed the necessary resources and are capable of organising themselves before, during and after disasters which helps to restore social, institutional and economic activity.

- c. Community members work together with local leaders using their knowledge and resources to prepare for and deal with disasters. They use personal and community strengths, and existing community networks and structures; a resilient community is enabled by strong social networks that offer support to individuals and families in a time of crisis.
- d. Community members work in partnership with emergency services, their local authorities and other relevant organisations before, during and after emergencies. These relationships ensure community resilience activities are informed by local knowledge, can be undertaken safely, and complement the work of emergency service agencies.
- e. Emergency management plans are resilience-based, to build disaster resilience within communities over time.



**Diagram 1 Interactive Clusters of Emergency Management Activities**

9. As Diagram 1 above shows, emergency management activities are interactive clusters and not stages conducted sequentially.

### **Territory Emergency Management Governance Framework**

10. In the Territory, Emergencies may be managed in a number of different ways:
- a. **Routine Responses.** Routine emergencies such as house fires, vehicle accidents, searches, marine rescues or bushfires are managed in the first instance, by the Controlling Authority with primary responsibility for combating a given type of emergency. This agency is responsible for managing the technical aspects of responding to and addressing the immediate consequences of the emergency. It is likely to be assisted by other agencies in its response but will retain overall responsibility. Counter Disaster Controllers at any level would not normally assume control of an operation from a Controlling Authority unless the situation cannot be contained and Counter Disaster arrangements need to be activated. (see below) A change of control at any level can only occur after consultation between the Territory Controller and the CEO of the Controlling Authority.
  - b. **Hazard Specific Plans and Protocols.** In many instances, the Australian and Territory Governments have produced specific plans or protocols to deal with specific or defined emergencies such as quarantine, civil aviation or security emergencies. These situations may require the activation of Territory Counter Disaster arrangements. See paragraph 16 for further detail.
  - c. **Counter Disaster Arrangements Invoked.** The Northern Territory has developed Counter Disaster arrangements to deal with the effects of major natural disasters such as cyclones, flooding and tsunamis. These arrangements also underpin the other Emergency arrangements discussed above. See paragraph 11 for more detail.
  - d. **Emergency of National Consequence.** In the event of an emergency of national consequence:
    - (1) the Prime Minister and the affected First Minister(s) will consult as necessary to coordinate the response to, and recovery, from the emergency including in relation to policy, strategy and public messaging, in support of an affected State or Territory;
    - (2) the Prime Minister and the affected First Minister(s) will consult on, and deliver the key leadership messages to be conveyed to the public;
    - (3) there will be communication, as appropriate, with all other States and Territories to enable the sharing of key information and public messages across jurisdictions; and
    - (4) all jurisdictions will coordinate the development of public messages through established public information coordination arrangements.

### Counter Disaster Arrangements.

11. The Territory Government's Counter Disaster Arrangements are based upon the concept that control and coordination of emergency operations is conducted at the lowest effective level based upon a three tier system:
  - a. Local Counter Disaster Committee,
  - b. Regional Counter Disaster Committee, and
  - c. Territory Counter Disaster Council.
12. Responsibility for preparedness and response rests initially at local community level and is coordinated through the Local Counter Disaster Committee. If local resources cannot cope they are augmented by support mobilised at the regional level. Finally, the resources of the Territory are mobilised. Throughout this process, resources of the Australian Government and other States may be mobilised if appropriate under the COMDISPLAN.
13. After the immediate response to an emergency is completed, responsibility for recovery rests with the appropriate agencies coordinated as necessary by the Department of the Chief Minister. Local coordination of the recovery may occur through a locally appointed Recovery Committee which would usually be chaired by the relevant Mayor, President or CEO. If a long term whole of Government coordinated recovery is required then the Department of the Chief Minister may appoint a Recovery Coordinator. See Annex G for details.
14. To ensure that Cabinet remains informed of emergency management preparations, response and recovery, a Sub-Committee of Cabinet on Security and Emergency has been formed. The Sub-Committee comprises the Chief Minister and two other Ministers drawn from the Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General, Minister PFES and the Treasurer.
15. **Current Legislation.** The Northern Territory of Australia, Disasters Act, as in force at 27 October 2007 provides for the establishment of an emergency/disaster management organisation at Territory, Regional and Local levels. Whenever an emergency response exceeds the scope of routine procedures or is likely to do so, then the Act provides for the following counter disaster arrangements:
  - a. **Territory Controller.** The Police Commissioner is the Territory Controller. The Controller's functions are to exercise control and direction over counter disaster operations and carry out such other functions as directed by the Counter Disaster Council.
  - b. **Counter Disaster Council.** The Counter Disaster Council is responsible to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services for the administration of the Disasters Act. The Council consists of the Territory Controller (Chairman), Director Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) who is the executive officer of the Council and persons appointed by the Minister. Subject to the direction of the Minister its responsibilities include:

- (1) To advise, assist and where it considers necessary, give directions to the Director Emergency Service in respect of Counter Disaster Planning.
  - (2) To examine and approve local regional and Territory counter disaster plans submitted by the Director.
  - (3) To determine the needs, whether financial or otherwise, of the Territory in the event of a counter disaster operation and advise the Minister accordingly.
  - (4) In respect of the conduct of counter disaster operations, to advise and, where necessary, give directions to the Territory Controller.
16. **Regional Controllers.** The Regional Police Commander is normally appointed as the Controller for their region. Regional Controllers exercise control during counter disaster operations in their region, supervise Local Controllers and are responsible for the care and maintenance of equipment made available by NTES. A diagram showing Police Regional boundaries is at ANNEX J.
  17. **Regional Counter Disaster Committee.** The Regional Counter Disaster Committee consists of the Regional Controller (Chairman), NTES member who is the Executive Officer and persons appointed by the Chief Fire Officer, the Bushfire Council, CEO Health, CEO DCI. and Shires. The functions of the Committee are:
    - a. To assist in the preparation of counter disaster plans for the region and review such plans from time to time; and
    - b. To provide such assistance as may be required for the preparation of local counter disaster plans within its region.
  18. **Local Controller.** The Territory Controller may appoint a Local Controller for a particular town, community or locality. Where there is a police station, he will normally appoint the officer in charge of that station and where there is no police station, appoint a resident of the town, community or locality. Local Controllers exercise control during counter disaster operations in their region, and are responsible for the care and maintenance of equipment made available by NTES.
  19. **Local Counter Disaster Planning Committee.** A Local Counter Disaster Planning Committee may be appointed by the Director NTES which consists of the Local Controller (Chairman), NTES member who is the Executive Officer and persons appointed by the Local Committee as it considers necessary. The function of the Local Committee is to assist in the preparation of local counter disaster plans and review such plans from time to time.

### **Territory Organisational Roles**

20. **Hazard or Risk Ownership.** The Counter Disaster Council has audited the major hazards or risks which might affect the Territory and allocated Hazard



responsibility as shown at Annex A. Responsibilities have been allocated on the following basis:

- a. **Controlling Authority.** The NT organisation which has Territory wide responsibility to direct and/or undertake the response to an emergency. The Controlling Authority is jointly responsible with the Hazard Management Authority for ensuring that preparations to respond to a specified hazard are adequate. If Counter Disaster arrangements are enacted, the Controlling Authority would pass control of the response to the NT Police but would continue to provide appropriate advice and assistance.
  - b. **Hazard Management Authority.** The NT organisation which is responsible for the Territory wide coordination of the preparation of the plans and capabilities to respond to the specified hazard. If Counter Disaster Arrangements are enacted, the Hazard Management Authority will provide subject matter expert advice to the Territory Controller, while working with the NT Police and NTES to organise an appropriate response to the situation.
21. **NT Government Agencies.** The response to an emergency may require additional multi-agency support. This support is provided by Response Groups such as the Shelter Group or the Communication Group. A number of these Groups will continue to operate through the transition into the Recovery Phase (Utilities, Public Health, Transport, for example) to coordinate recovery activities generic to their field. The emergency management roles of key Territory organisations as part of Response Groups are tabulated at Annexes B and C in two ways:
- a. In Annex B, roles and response group membership is shown in tabulated form; and
  - b. In Annex C the roles, tasks and membership of Territory Emergency Services and response groups are shown.

### **Relationship with Australian Government**

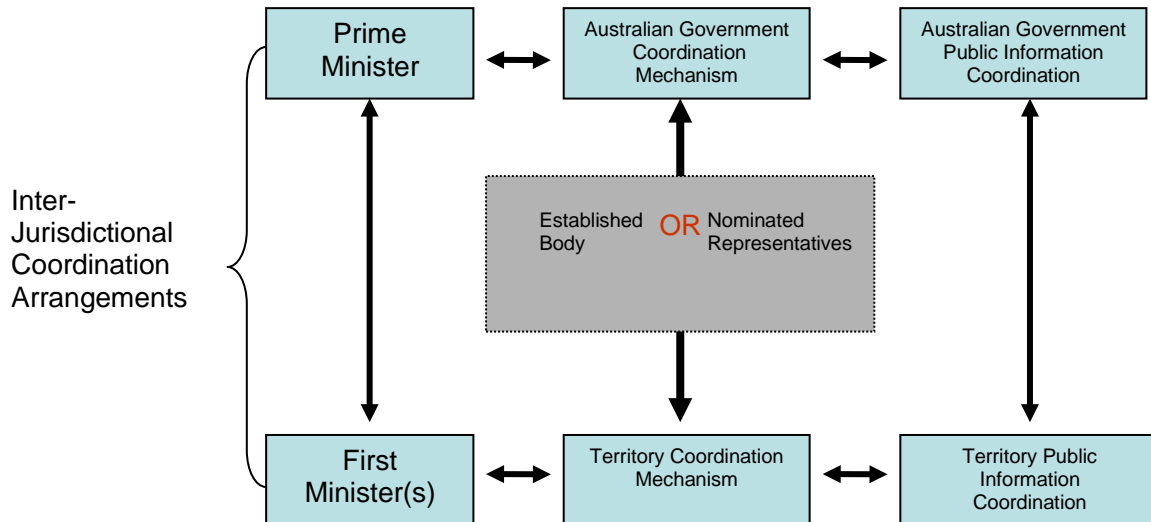
22. The role of the Australian Government in emergency management is:
- a. to provide national leadership in collaborative action across all levels of government in disaster research, information management and mitigation policy and practice;
  - b. to reduce risks and costs of disasters to the nation;
  - c. to provide warnings for weather and ocean related hazards through the Australian Bureau of Meteorology and Geoscience Australia;
  - d. to mobilise resources when State and Territory disaster response resources are insufficient; and
  - e. to provide national support for disaster relief and community recovery. In particular the Australian Government has a major role in:

- f. coordinating national strategic emergency management policy, in collaboration with the State and Territory Governments and Local Government;
  - g. undertaking natural disaster research of national significance;
  - h. identifying national priorities for natural disaster mitigation in collaboration with other levels of government;
  - i. providing support for disaster risk assessment and mitigation measures, in conjunction with the States and Territories and local Government; and
  - j. providing operational support for disaster response to the States and Territories where their individual resources are insufficient; providing a national disaster relief and recovery framework and resources on a cost-sharing basis with the other levels of Government; and providing vital information services such as meteorological, hydrological, geophysical and other geo-data services that support warnings and disaster management.
23. **National Emergency Management Arrangements.** The Ministerial Council for Police and Emergency Management – Emergency Management. (MCPEM-EM) has primary responsibility for emergency management at a National level. This Ministerial Council is supported by the National Emergency Management Committee (NEMC). There are also a number of other Ministerial Councils with supporting policy committee structures that have responsibilities for hazard/functional specific national level plans.
24. **National Emergency Management Coordination Centre.** Requests for assistance from the Australian Government during an emergency are coordinated through EMA unless hazard specific arrangements indicate otherwise. EMA operations and coordination tasks are conducted from the National Emergency Management Coordination Centre (NEMCC) at EMA Headquarters in Canberra. Director NTES is the first point of contact for the Territory with the NEMCC and is the Territory’s designated requesting officer.
25. **Centralised Coordination of Australian Government Resources.** Commonwealth support for emergencies may be provided under specific plans or under the general arrangements specified under the COMDISPLAN which describes the arrangements for the centralised coordination and deployment of Commonwealth resources within Australia.
26. Under COMDISPLAN the senior Territory-based representative of Commonwealth agencies may be authorised by their central offices to commit local resources in support of Territory emergency management organisations. Immediate mobilisation of Defence assistance necessary to save human life, alleviate immediate suffering, or prevent substantial damage to or loss of property may be approved by local Defence commanders if civilian resources cannot cope. These arrangements may not be subject to the provisions of the COMDISPLAN and should be covered in agency supporting plans and in Jurisdictional emergency response plans.

27. **Hazard Specific National Arrangements and Functions.** Hazard specific arrangements and functions can be summarised as follows:
- a. **Quarantine.** Quarantine arrangements including measures involving restrictions on vessels, installations, human beings, animals, plants or other goods may be necessary to prevent, mitigate or reduce the potential impact of the emergency. The Australian Parliament has express legislative power in respect of quarantine and measures for implementing quarantine are contained in the *Quarantine Act (1908)*. The Chief Medical Officer delegates powers for human quarantine to the chief quarantine officers in each state and territory. The states and territories do have powers to declare quarantine within their jurisdictions that are not inconsistent with the Commonwealth Act. However under the *Quarantine Act (1908)* the Governor-General may over-ride these powers in emergency situations.
  - b. **Civil Aviation Emergencies.** Regulation of civil aviation is an Australian Government responsibility. However, emergency management relating to emergencies involving aircraft is a shared arrangement between the Australian Government agencies such as the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA), Air Services Australia, Australian Transport Safety Bureau, and Australian Search and Rescue (AusSAR) and States/Territories departments/agencies as well as airline operators, and airport owners and operators. The Australian Government's Commonwealth Aviation Disaster Response Plan (CAVDISPLAN) provides the national framework for managing aviation disasters.
  - c. **Maritime Emergencies.** The Australian Government's role is to ensure security, regulate trade and protect the sea and marine environment from maritime pollution. Under the *Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Act 2003* (MTSA) the Australian Government regulates the security arrangements of Australian ports, port facilities, ships and security plans for offshore oil and gas facilities. Maritime emergencies could involve agencies such as the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB), Office of Transport Security within the Department of Transport and Regional Services, and States/Territories departments/agencies. In addition Australian Search and Rescue (AusSAR) operates a 24 hour Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) in Canberra and is responsible for the national coordination of both maritime and aviation search and rescue.
  - d. **Civil Defence.** The Australian, State and Territory Governments have civil defence responsibilities. Under the Australian Constitution, the States and Territories remain responsible for the protection of life and property of their citizens through emergency management, including civil defence. The Australian Government, as well as having responsibility for military defence, recognises the need for close cooperation and consultation with the States and Territories during national civil defence emergencies and it accepts that it has a clear and significant role in civil defence policy and support. EMA is the

agency charged with coordinating the Australian Government's civil defence responsibilities.

- e. **Counter Terrorism.** The nature of terrorism means that its implications may cross jurisdictional boundaries. This, and the range of preventive measures and capabilities that may be required, necessitates that Australia maintain a national, cooperative approach to counter terrorism. Where appropriate, in the event of terrorist incident or threat, the Australian Government declares a National Terrorist Situation, with the agreement of the affected States or Territories and in a National Terrorist Situation, determines policy and broad strategies in close consultation with affected States or Territories. Details of the National Counter Terrorism Plan and reference to related matters are contained in the listings of hazard/functional specific national plans at Annex D.
28. **Model Arrangements for Leadership during Emergencies of National Consequence.** The Model Arrangements represent how Australian governments would work together to coordinate the response to, and recovery from, emergencies of national consequence. These are defined as emergencies that require consideration of national level policy, strategy and public messaging or inter-jurisdictional assistance, where such assistance is not covered by existing arrangements.
29. In the event of an emergency of national consequence:
- a. the Prime Minister and the affected First Minister(s) will consult as necessary to coordinate the response to, and recovery, from the emergency including in relation to policy, strategy and public messaging, in support of an affected State or Territory;
  - b. the Prime Minister and the affected First Minister(s) will consult on, and deliver the key leadership messages to be conveyed to the public;
  - c. there will be communication, as appropriate, with all other States and Territories to enable the sharing of key information and public messages across jurisdictions; and
  - d. all jurisdictions will coordinate the development of public messages through established public information coordination arrangements.



*Diagram 2. Model Arrangements for Leadership During Emergencies of National Consequence.*

### Relationship with other Jurisdictions

30. The Territory Government may call for assistance from other jurisdictions in the event of an emergency or provide assistance for an emergency in another jurisdiction. Initial coordination of these arrangements could be either through EMA especially when there is significant Australian Government involvement or through extant bilateral or multilateral arrangements depending upon the nature of the emergency and Agencies involved.

## **PART 2 - THE PREPARED COMMUNITY (PREVENTION/MITIGATION /PREPAREDNESS)**

31. **Background.** In order to prepare properly for possible emergency events, it is necessary to have:
- a. an alert, informed and resilient community.
  - b. an understanding of the hazards that the community faces,
  - c. a program of prevention and mitigation of emergency events,
  - d. development of response and recovery plans to deal with residual risk,
  - e. identification of those responsible for controlling and coordinating emergency management,
  - f. acceptance of support roles and responsibilities,
  - g. cooperation between emergency services and others, and acceptance one another's role in emergency management,
  - h. a coordinated approach to the use of all resources,
  - i. shared responsibility where Territory Government agencies and Local Government contribute actively to achieving integrated and coordinated disaster resilience and in turn, communities, individuals and households take responsibility for their own safety and to act on advice, and
  - j. arrangements to help communities help themselves to recover from emergencies

### **Prevention**

32. Prevention includes the identification of hazards, the assessments of threats to life and property and the taking of measures to reduce potential loss of life and property damage, often called emergency mitigation. Within the Territory, all Councils, Shires and Agencies should engage in risk assessments and prevention activities as part of their normal functions.
33. **Risk Assessments.** Emergency Risk planning should be an important part of all Government and Community planning to ensure that communities are developed in a safe and appropriate manner. Within the Territory, risk management is carried out in accordance with the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS4360:2004. NTES has published a Guide to Disaster Risk Management in Northern Territory Aboriginal Communities.
34. **Mitigation.** Mitigation is one of the foundations for building a resilient community. Emergency mitigation means measures taken in advance of, or after, a disaster aimed at decreasing or eliminating its impact on society and the

environment. Greater investment in disaster mitigation is likely to reduce the economic cost of natural disasters to the nation. Consequently, consideration of restoration of infrastructure to a more resilient standard following a disaster is essential in any cost effective long-term re-building strategy.

35. Mitigation (or prevention) covers a range of activities and strategies at individual, community, business and government levels. Mitigation activities, guided by active and coordinated risk assessments, should be subject to rational benefit/cost and social investment decision-making processes and incorporated into normal government and private practices.
36. Mitigation strategies are determined through a thorough understanding of hazards identified in Emergency Risk planning and their interaction with all aspects of society. The range of measures includes:
  - a. land use planning;
  - b. quarantine and border control;
  - c. engineering (structural works);
  - d. building codes;
  - e. business continuity planning;
  - f. public education;
  - g. increasing infrastructure resilience;
  - h. providing enhanced warning systems; and
  - i. modifying behaviour.

### **Preparedness.**

37. Preparedness includes arrangements or plans to deal with an emergency or the effects of an emergency. Within the Northern Territory, Counter Disaster Plans are developed by Local and Regional Counter Disaster Planning Committees, Local Government and Territory Government Agencies with the assistance of NTES.
38. **Planning Principles.** Planning is an essential requirement of efficient, cost-effective and comprehensive emergency management. It is a process which works best if it is:
  - a. Inclusive – bringing together all relevant personnel and agencies;
  - b. Educational – informing people and agencies of all participants roles and responsibilities; and

- c. Committed – ensuring agencies can and do deliver what they agree to provide.
39. **Hierarchy of Territory Plans.** Emergency Management planning in the Territory is based upon a hierarchal system. It originates with this document which provides the basis for subsequent regional, local and specific emergency management plans relating to specific threats. Despite the linked hierarchical nature of the planning system, all plans are able to stand alone so that in the event of an emergency or disaster only one plan needs to be activated depending upon the scale or type of event:
- a. **Northern Territory All Hazards Emergency Management Arrangements.** Emergency management planning is a Northern Territory Government responsibility. The Counter Disaster Council has the lead role, ensuring that the All Hazards Plan, Regional and Local Counter Disaster Plans, Functional Group Plans and Special Counter Disaster plans are prepared appropriately. Functional authorities are responsible for ensuring that appropriate Agency and specialist plans are prepared.
  - b. **Regional Counter Disaster Plans.** The regional counter disaster organisation is based upon the three Police Regions. Currently, only Greater Darwin Region has a Regional Plan. Katherine and North Region and Alice Springs and South Region plans are under development. A list of Counter Disaster Plans is at Annex D.
  - c. **Local Counter Disaster Plans.** These plans detail specific emergency management arrangements:
    - (1) confirming the establishment of the local counter disaster planning committee;
    - (2) assessing the threats most likely to affect the community;
    - (3) specifying the control and coordination arrangements for mobilisation of local and, if necessary regional, Territory and national resources;
    - (4) identifying the roles and responsibilities of all agencies involved; and
    - (5) detailing specific emergency response procedures for the higher risk situations.
  - d. **Australian Government Plans.** The Australian Government has published a range of national plans to deal with emergencies and disasters. A description of all Australian Government plans is included in the Australian Emergency Operational Handbook.
  - e. **Special Emergency Plans.** These plans outline the arrangements for the control coordination and support response for specific emergencies and disasters such as emergency terrestrial and aquatic pest and disease incursions. A list of extant and proposed Emergency Plans is at Annex D.



## **PART 3 - POST EVENT (RESPONSE/RECOVERY)**

### **Disaster, Emergency and Emergency Situation**

40. States of Disaster and Emergency may be declared under the Disasters Act as in force at 18 March 2003 in order to allow emergency response and recovery operations to proceed unhindered.
41. **Disaster.** A Disaster means an occurrence due to natural or other causes and includes hostilities, whether or not a state of war has been declared, or an act or threatened act of violence or intimidation whether or not directed against the Territory that:
- a. causes or threatens to cause;
  - b. loss of life or property; or
  - c. injury to persons or distress to persons; or
  - d. in any way endangers the safety of the public in any part of the Territory,
- in respect of which the resources of a normal government service or privately owned services available at the time are inadequate to provide appropriate counter disaster measures.
42. **State of Disaster.** A State of Disaster may be declared when the extent or severity of an event or impending event is, or is likely to be, so great that it is beyond the resources of normal government services or privately owned services available in the Territory at the time; or special powers are required to provide appropriate counter disaster measures.
43. **Emergency.** Emergency means an occurrence that:
- a. causes or threatens to cause:
    - (1) loss of life or property; or
    - (2) injury to persons or distress to persons; or
  - b. in any way endangers the safety of the public in any part of the Territory,
- in respect to which the provision of counter disaster measures is not within the capabilities of a normal government service or privately owned service available at the times but the combined services are adequate to provide appropriate counter disaster measures.
45. **State of Emergency.** A State of Emergency may be declared when the Minister believes the magnitude or threatened magnitude of an emergency is such that he is

satisfied that extraordinary measures are necessary or advisable for the protection of life and property.

46. **Emergency Situation.** Whereas the Territory Controller, in consultation with the CEO of DCM, having regard to the magnitude or threatened magnitude of an emergency and to the facilities that appear to him to be available to deal with the emergency, is satisfied that special assistance may be necessary or advisable for the protection of life and property or to assist the community to recover, he may declare an emergency situation exists in respect of so much of the Territory as, in his opinion, is likely to be affected by the emergency.

#### **Method and Duration of Declarations.**

47. **State of Disaster.** The Administrator, or if the Administrator is unable to perform his duties, two Ministers may declare a State of Disaster for seven days. It may be extended for periods not exceeding 14 days at a time. The format for declaring or revoking a State of Disaster is at Annex E.
48. **State of Emergency.** The Minister may declare a State of Emergency for two days. The format for declaring or revoking a State of Emergency is at Annex E.
49. **Emergency Situation.** The Territory Controller may declare an Emergency Situation for any period necessary.
50. **Duties Under Declarations.**
- a. **States of Emergency or Disaster:**
- (1) the Territory Controller shall institute counter disaster measures to protect life and property and to expedite the termination of the disaster or emergency;
  - (2) the Director NTES shall arrange and coordinate counter disaster support resources; and
  - (3) the Regional Controller, or where appropriate the Local Controller shall take immediate action to use, control and coordinate all available resources and take any other required measures to counter the effects of the disaster/emergency.
- b. **Emergency Situation.**
- (1) Director NTES shall arrange and coordinate any counter disaster support required.
  - (2) The Welfare Group will arrange and coordinate immediate personal hardship and distress assistance as required.
51. **Special Powers under Declarations.** Under States of Disaster or Emergency the relevant Controller, a member of the Police Force or authorised persons may

exercise for the purpose of carrying out counter disaster operations or for the safety of the public generally:

- a. take control of property,
- b. require persons to assist in tasks to save life or property in immediate danger
- c. close premises,
- d. direct evacuation,
- e. enter any place by reasonable force if necessary,
- f. close roads,
- g. remove from or secure anything on a property which is a threat to life, health or continued operation of a road which might be required for use after a cyclone, and
- h. remove vehicles.

52. **Special Powers under Cyclone Watch and Warning.** Under Section 40 of the Disasters Act, once a cyclone watch or warning has been declared by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, the relevant Controller, Director NTES, a member of the Police Force or authorized persons may exercise the special powers to remove from, or secure anything on, a property which is a threat to life, health or continued operation of a road, utility or other facility which might be required for use after a cyclone without States of Emergency or Disaster being declared.

### **Emergency Response**

53. Emergency response includes the actions taken in anticipation of, during, and immediately after an emergency to ensure that its effects are minimised. This requires a timely, coordinated approach to ensure an appropriate response.
54. All major emergencies involve more than one response organisation. Consequently, appropriate processes are required to ensure:
- a. each organisation achieves its goals,
  - b. cooperation between organisations; and
  - c. all aspects of the emergency are efficiently, effectively and appropriately managed.
55. **Initial Response.** In the first instance, an emergency response is managed by the Controlling Authority with primary responsibility for combating a given type of emergency. This agency is responsible for managing the technical aspects of responding to and suppressing the immediate consequences of the emergency and for the command of its own resources. The response may involve the activation of

special plans and require other agencies to assist but the lead authority or agency will retain overall responsibility.

56. Counter Disaster arrangements are activated whenever:
- a. The Controlling Authority for an emergency cannot contain the situation. While not a normal occurrence, a change of control will only be effected after consultation between the Territory Controller and the CEO of the Controlling Authority.
  - b. Special or counter disaster plans indicate they should be activated.
  - c. Government, on advice from the Counter Disaster Council, believes it is appropriate.

### **Emergency Operation Centres**

57. To effect operational control and coordination, a system of Emergency Operation Centres (EOCs) is established at Territory, regional and local levels. EOCs are the locations from which information is received, collated, analysed and disseminated, and the provisions of resources coordinated. These centres are scaled according to local needs. The appropriate Counter Disaster Controller will usually direct the EOC and, where NTES personnel are present, they are generally responsible for the set up and running of the EOC.
58. EOCs may also be established by specific counter disaster organisations and functional groups during counter disaster operations to manage the coordination of their efforts. Specific Northern Territory Counter Terrorism Management Arrangements are detailed in the Northern Territory Counter Terrorism Plan.
59. **Territory EOC.** The Territory EOC has the necessary staff and communications facilities to coordinate Territory resources, seek Australian Government support and provide public information via media outlets and other means. Liaison Officers from functional groups and support agencies attend the Territory EOC as required. The Territory EOC operates using the Northern Territory Incident Management System (NTIMS) which is based upon the Australian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS). The functions of the Territory EOC are:
- a. information collection, collation, analysis and dissemination;
  - b. preparation and issue of official warnings and advice to the public, Regional and Local Counter Disaster Controllers;
  - c. coordination of the provision of resources required by Regional and Local Counter Disaster Controllers;
  - d. requesting Australian Government resources;
  - e. briefing the Territory Counter Disaster Council; and

- f. dissemination of information to the general public via the media and other means.
60. There are insufficient resources to stand up simultaneously a Territory EOC and a Greater Darwin EOC. Consequently, the Territory EOC has potentially dual simultaneous roles:
- a. It provides the facility for the Territory Controller to maintain an overview of an emergency or potentially dangerous situation and to implement the appropriate counter disaster plan.
  - b. It provides the facility for the Greater Darwin Counter Disaster Controller to maintain an overview of an emergency or potentially dangerous situation affecting Greater Darwin and to implement the appropriate counter disaster plan.
61. Should an emergency or potentially dangerous situation occur which requires supervision by the Territory Controller also affect Greater Darwin, the Territory Controller may appoint an Assistant Commissioner to oversee the operations of the Territory EOC and the Greater Darwin Controller will become an incident controller under the Assistant Commissioner's direction.
62. The Territory EOC may be activated by the Territory Controller or the Director NTES. For Greater Darwin matters, the Regional Controller may activate the EOC.
63. **Regional EOCs.** Regional EOCs will be established as required by Regional Controllers. When activated the functions of the Regional EOCs are:
- a. information collection, collation, analysis and dissemination;
  - b. preparation and issue of official warnings and advice to the public and Local Controllers;
  - c. coordination of the provision of resources required in the region and Local Controllers;
  - d. submitting requests for Australian Government resources to the Territory EOC; and
  - e. dissemination of information to the media and general public.
64. **Local EOCs.** Local EOCs will be established as required by Local Controllers to provide the focal point for the overall control and coordination of counter disaster operations in the district. When activated the functions of the Local EOCs are:
- a. information collection and dissemination;
  - b. preparation and issue of official warnings and advice to the public;

- c. coordination of the provision of resources required in the District;
  - d. submitting requests for Australian Government resources to the Territory EOC;  
and
  - e. dissemination of information to the media and general public.
65. **Agency EOCs.** Agencies may establish their own EOCs to provide the focal point for the overall control and coordination of their resources.

### **Closure of Schools and/or Government Offices**

66. In the Greater Darwin Area, the decision to close schools and/or government offices will be made by the Chief Minister on advice from the Territory Controller. In all other areas, the decision to close schools can be made by either the Chief Minister or the relevant DET Regional Director/General Manager in consultation with the relevant Controller.

### **Provision of Emergency Shelters**

67. Designated buildings have been identified as emergency or evacuation shelters. Responsibility for managing these buildings during emergencies is as follows:
- a. Government agencies or Local Councils controlling buildings designated as shelters are responsible for management of the shelter. Responsibility for managing shelters in Non-Government buildings is negotiated on a case by case basis by NTES.
  - b. training for shelter managers is the responsibility of NTES.
  - c. security for shelters is the responsibility of NT Police.

### **National Registration and Inquiry System - NRIS**

68. The National Registration and Inquiry System (NRIS) is a computerised database, designed to record basic details on the whereabouts and safety of disaster affected people and to store the data for easy access in response to inquiries from relatives and friends. It is capable of either manual or computer operation. NRIS relies on registration of the affected persons at or near the scene of the disaster and entry of the registration data in a nationwide computer network. Persons seeking information on disaster affected people can seek information from Inquiry Centres either in the affected location or elsewhere in the country.
69. Within the Territory, NRIS can be initiated by either the Territory or Regional Controller without the whole national system being activated. The Australian Red Cross or, if not available, Police will use manual or local computer procedures to record details of disaster affected persons. When these systems can no longer cope with the registration or inquiry workload (and desirably before that stage is reached) EMA will be requested to activate the national system. More details on NRIS are contained in Annex F of COMDISPLAN.

## Assistance to the Australian Government

70. Assistance to the Australian Government may be provided under a series of separate plans for response to specific events. All National plans are identified in the Australian Emergency Operational Handbook. The Australian Government plans most likely to be used are identified at Annex D.

## Australian Government Assistance Arrangements

71. When the Territory's total resources (Government, community and commercial) cannot reasonably deal with the needs of a situation, it can request Australian Government assistance which is available as both financial assistance and assistance with human and material resources. This assistance may be already deployed within the Territory in the form of an Australian Government Department or it may be necessary for a specific form of assistance to be transported to the Territory. The criteria for enabling the provision of physical Australian Government support are:
- a. assistance required to save life or property or relieve suffering;
  - b. the task is beyond the resources of the Territory or resources cannot be mobilised in time; and
  - c. the task cannot be undertaken by commercial means within the Territory.
72. The Attorney General is the designated Federal Cabinet Minister with responsibility for disaster related matters. EMA is the nominated Australian Government agency responsible for planning and coordinating the Australian Government's physical assistance under Australian Government Emergency Management Policy. Coordination of disaster and emergency response is carried out from the National Emergency Management Coordination Centre at EMA in Canberra under COMDISPLAN.
73. Under COMDISPLAN the senior Territory-based representative of Commonwealth agencies may be authorised by their central offices to commit local resources in support of Territory emergency management organisations. Immediate mobilisation of Defence assistance necessary to save human life, alleviate immediate suffering, or prevent substantial damage to or loss of property may be approved by local Defence commanders if civilian resources cannot cope. These arrangements may not be subject to the provisions of the COMDISPLAN and should be covered in agency supporting plans and in jurisdictional emergency response plans.
74. **Defence Support.** Details on Defence Aid to the Civil Community and Defence Force Aid to the Civil Authority outlined at Annex F.
75. **Request Process.** The COMDISPLAN provides the framework for addressing Territory requests for Australian Government assistance arising from any type of disaster or emergency not covered in a specific plan. COMDISPLAN is normally

activated when Australian Government emergency or disaster response or short term recovery assistance is requested or is likely to be requested.

76. Under current arrangements, all requests for Australian Government assistance should be referred to the Director NTES who is the designated officer for requesting Australian Government support. The request for assistance will be passed to Director General EMA (DGEMA). Following receipt of Australian Government Ministerial approval for the provision of Australian Government assistance for a particular emergency, DGEMA is authorised to task any appropriate Australian Government resource to meet requests.

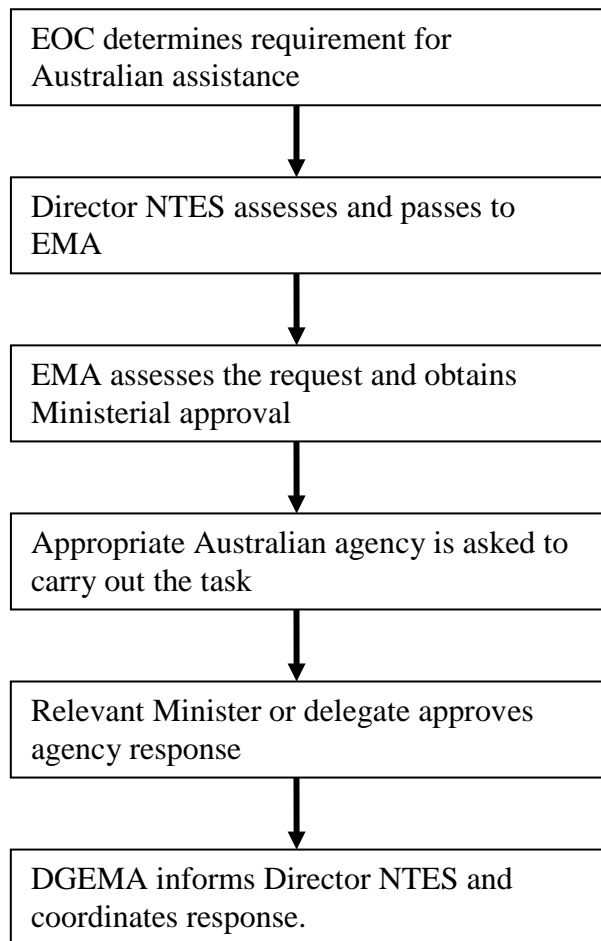


Figure 2. Process for Requesting Australian Assistance

77. **Hazard Specific or Functional Plans.** Hazard specific or functional plans are listed at Annex D.



## RECOVERY MANAGEMENT

78. Recovery Management in the Territory includes all activities to support the return to normalities of areas affected by emergencies or disasters. It is a coordinated process of supporting affected communities in the reconstruction of their physical infrastructure and restoration of their emotional, social, economic and physical fabric. Recovery is most effective when:
- a. management arrangements recognise that recovery from an emergency is a complex, dynamic and protracted process;
  - b. agreed plans and management arrangements are well understood by the community and all appropriate agencies;
  - c. public expectations regarding the timing and level of support are realistic and supported by a focussed public information plan;
  - d. arrangements are properly integrated into emergency management arrangements;
  - e. community service and reconstruction agencies have input into key decisions-making;
  - f. it is conducted with the active participation of the affected community;
  - g. recovery managers are involved from the outset of the emergency;
  - h. recovery services are provided in a timely, equitable and flexible manner; and
  - i. recovery is supported by training programmes and exercises.
79. **Principles of Recovery.** Recovery is organised according to the following principles in the Territory:
- a. community recovery should be managed and coordinated with maximum local community level input,
  - b. recovery activities should be coordinated by the appropriate level of government,
  - c. while the response to the event is the primary activity, recovery activities will be commenced and undertaken at the same time, and
  - d. recovery planning should be separate from, but synchronised with, emergency management plans

### Recovery Concept

80. Within the Territory, coordination of recovery is organised as follows:

- a. **Immediate Relief.** Overall responsibility for coordinating immediate relief rests with the appropriate Controller and Counter Disaster Committee. Immediate relief is coordinated through the appropriate Emergency Operation Centre and the Recovery Coordination Centre when it is established.
- b. **Restoration and Reconstruction.** When the immediate threat has passed, responsibility for coordination transfers at a time to be determined by the relevant authority (generally the Territory Controller or Regional Controller) in consultation with the authority who will be assuming control. In a major event it will be assumed by the Department of the Chief Minister and it is likely that:
- (1) Recovery Management Group (RMG) will be constituted to provide oversight of recovery coordination at a Territory level. Membership will be tailored according to the event but is likely to be drawn from the following stakeholders:
    - (a) Department of the Chief Minister (Chair)
    - (b) NT Police, Fire & Emergency Service
    - (c) Department of Health & Families
    - (d) Power and Water Corporation
    - (e) Department of Education and Training
    - (f) Department of Lands and Planning
    - (g) Department of Business and Employment
    - (h) Department of Construction and Infrastructure
    - (i) Department of Regional Development, Primary Industry, Fisheries and Resources
    - (j) Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services.
    - (k) Treasury
    - (l) Australian Local Government Association NT Chapter
  - (2) A Recovery Coordinator may be appointed by the Territory Government to oversee recovery operations.
  - (3) A local Recovery Committee may be constituted to assist in coordinating the recovery and provide local input to the Recovery Coordinator. This Committee will be chaired by the Recovery Coordinator and have relevant community leaders as its members, including appropriate Territory Government officers.

- (4) A Recovery Coordination Centre may be designated by the Recovery Coordinator and publicised as soon as possible after it is established. This centre will provide a “one stop shop” for the provision of local recovery planning, coordination and welfare advice.

## PART 4 – PUBLIC INFORMATION

81. To assist in overall coordination and control of operations, it is essential that the communication of public information is coordinated to ensure that the public is properly informed. In an emergency it will be critical that these communications:
- a. provide appropriate and consistent advice for public information and safety;
  - b. ensure accurate and timely advice is provided; and
  - c. build and maintain public confidence in the ability of authorities to cooperate to prevent and/or manage an emergency.
82. Communications with the public will adhere to the following core principles:
- a. public safety is the highest priority;
  - b. communications should be regular and immediate;
  - c. information must be accurate, with statements supported by established facts; and
  - d. information should not compromise any operations or subsequent investigations.

### Territory Emergency Public Information Arrangements

83. **Normal Response Arrangements.** The Controlling Authority in conjunction with the Hazard Management Agency is responsible for managing Public Information concerning an event. This includes the provision of all emergency warnings.
84. **Counter Disaster Arrangements Activated.** When Counter Disaster arrangements are activated, NTPFES will assume lead responsibility for coordinating Public Information unless otherwise indicated in Special Counter Disaster Plans. Emergency Warnings will be promulgated in discussion with the controlling and Hazard Management Authority
85. When NTPFES assumes responsibility for Public Information, the Media Director PFES will assume the role of Territory Media Liaison Officer and has responsibility for coordinating and disseminating all public information. A copy of the Territory Emergency Public Information Handbook is at Annex G.
86. **Recovery Arrangements.** When the response to a Disaster or Emergency has transitioned to the recovery stage coordinated by the Department of the Chief Minister, they will assume lead responsibility for coordinating Public Information.
87. **Call Centres.** Territory arrangements for establishing Call Centres are at Annex G.

## Broadcast of Emergency Warnings

88. In situations where persons, property or the environment are under emerging or immediate threat, assistance will be requested from media outlets to broadcast emergency warnings to the public in accordance with AEMC Guidelines for the Request and Broadcast of Emergency Warnings. These guidelines do not encompass news or disaster recovery coverage, editorial comment or dissemination of general emergency preparedness advice. The AEMC Guidelines are superseded by Territory arrangements when an event becomes an ongoing response or recovery operation.
89. **Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS).** SEWS is a wailing siren sound which may be broadcast on radio or television anywhere in Australia to draw attention to the fact that an urgent safety message is about to be made. SEWS may be broadcast immediately before an urgent safety message for an event such as:
- a. cyclones and their associated storm surges;
  - b. earthquakes and their associated Tsunamis;
  - c. major floods;
  - d. major fires;
  - e. chemical hazards and any associated major pollution; and
  - f. civil defence emergencies.
90. The signal will also be occasionally broadcast as a test message. Any test of the signal will be announced prior to and after the signal.
91. Generally, authority to broadcast SEWS is vested with the Territory Controller and Director NTES. Controlling Authorities and Hazard Management Authorities may have the pre-planned use of SEWS approved by including the arrangements or protocols in the appropriate annex of Local Counter Disaster Plans, Regional Plans or Special plans.
92. Unplanned use of SEWS can be authorised by the Territory Controller, Director NTES or more likely, the appropriate Regional Controllers. Generally, SEWS is only played before announcements concerning significant emergencies and counter disaster arrangements should be activated in these situations.
93. Requests to broadcast SEWS will be confirmed by facsimile. The format of Request to the Media to use SEWS is at Annex H.
94. **Emergency Alert.** Emergency Alert (EA) is a National Telephone Warning System which was introduced into the NT in March 2010. EA currently allows emergency warnings voice messages to be sent to fixed line telephones and SMS warnings to mobile phones.

95. Day to day operational control of EA is managed by Superintendent Emergency Operations PFES. Policy development is coordinated by Director NTES.
96. Approval to use EA is given by two methods:
  - a. EA use is authorised through an approved emergency plan. Activation would be through the JESSC.
  - b. EA's use is authorised by the Territory Controller, Director NTES or one of the three Police Regional Commanders.

### **Call Centre Arrangements**

97. Controlling Authorities and Hazard Management Authorities are responsible for ensuring that they have appropriate call centre arrangements in place.
98. Overflow call centre arrangements have been negotiated with Centre Link. Superintendent Emergency Operations PFES is responsible to manage these arrangements on behalf of the NT Government. Activation of the overflow arrangements can be authorised by:
  - a. The Territory Controller;
  - b. CEO DCM
  - c. Director NTES; and
  - d. Regional Controllers.

### **National Emergency Public Information Arrangements**

99. In the event of an emergency of national consequence the Prime Minister and the affected First Minister(s) will consult as necessary to coordinate the response to, and recovery, from the emergency including in relation to public messages and the key leadership messages to be conveyed to the public.

## **PART 5 – EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Resupply Operations**

100. When communities become isolated, resupply operations are based upon the following principles:
- a. Where-ever possible, the normal resupply/wholesale supply system should be used.
  - b. Ideally, only one resupply operation should be undertaken for each affected area, so bulk orders, sufficient to last the affected community until normal services can be restored are encouraged.
  - c. The receiver of resupply goods repays the “normal” costs for delivery with the appropriate response organisation meeting the difference between normal costs and the costs of transport arranged. As no extra transportation costs will be incurred by the retailers, consumers should not be subject to any extra cost.
  - d. Resupplied operations are generally limited to only essential supplies and supplies deemed necessary to maintain physical and/or psychological welfare.
  - e. Communities that are frequently cut off during the wet season should put in arrangements to mitigate this problem and not rely on emergency resupply.

### **Financial Assistance Framework**

101. Disaster relief measures are designed to help those within the community who do not have the resources to provide for their own recovery. The various schemes address specific needs, which exist within a stricken community as well as providing a safety net for disaster victims. Assistance is NOT provided as compensation for damage/losses sustained or as a disincentive to self-help by way of commercial insurance and/or other appropriate disaster mitigation strategies.
102. While the relief schemes provide a measure of financial support, the primary responsibility for the safeguarding and restoration of private and public assets remains with the owner who should plan for the vagaries of nature.
103. Following severe disaster events, Local, Territory and Australian Governments respond through a coordinated range of counter disaster financial arrangements to address both the physical and financial needs of affected communities. This framework consists of:
- a. Immediate response funding arrangements;
  - b. Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA); and
  - c. Disaster Mitigation Programmes.

104. **Immediate Response Funding Arrangements.** Territory Government agencies fund their immediate disaster recovery activities from within budget, but are able to seek budget supplementation at regular junctures throughout the year from the Treasurer's Advance as required. There is also a standing approval for government asset restoration as part of the Infrastructure Program. Some assistance is also available for local government councils from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services.
105. Agency requests for budget supplementation from Treasurer's Advance for disaster-related expenditure (whether it involves payments/grants to other organisations or direct expenditure by an agency) can be made to Treasury as soon as is practical after the disaster event, or can be undertaken every quarter, whichever is necessary depending on the timing in the financial year. Requests need to be supported with documentation that directly relates expenditure to the disaster event. Supporting documentation includes:
- a. compliant tax invoices;
  - b. details of the GST exclusive amounts;
  - c. annotation that the expenditure is tied to the particular disaster event; and
  - d. any overtime approval forms annotated that the overtime is tied to the disaster event.
106. **NDRRA.** The objective of NDRRA is to assist states and territories with the recovery of communities whose social, financial and economic well-being has been affected by a natural disaster event. It involves a cost sharing formula for a range of pre-agreed relief measures which the Territory may activate immediately following a disaster event, once a need has been established. Financial assistance from the Commonwealth is available to the Territory Government beyond a certain threshold amount, and increases proportionately up to a maximum of 75 cents in the dollar as disaster expenditure increases. However, the Territory usually funds the majority of disaster relief and recovery in any particular year as assistance thresholds are usually only reached in years when major or multiple disasters occur.
107. Eligible natural disasters under NDRRA include any one, or a combination of natural, rapid onset phenomena which includes cyclone, flood, storm, bushfire, storm surge, tsunami, tornado and earthquake.
108. Assistance from the Commonwealth under the NDRRA is only available where Territory expenditure (on all assistance measures) exceeds \$240 000.
109. Drought and non-natural disasters where poor environmental planning practices or commercial development have been contributing factors are not eligible for Territory Government disaster assistance or NDRRA funding. Should expenditure following some other type of emergency event or disaster (i.e. chemical, toxic gas/smoke cloud, aircraft impact, essential service, infrastructure failure or terrorist



attack) be beyond the financial capacity of the Territory, an approach could be made for extraordinary circumstances funding.

110. NDRRA assistance from the Commonwealth relies on full documentation of recovery expenditure, and is audited. Where expenditure cannot be substantiated, the Territory Government cannot claim assistance.

### **Relief Measures**

111. Relief measures may be invoked by the Territory Government immediately following a disaster event. The following is a summary of relief measures that may be activated to assist individuals and communities affected by disaster events.
112. **Assistance to Individuals and Households.** Assistance to individuals and households is intended to alleviate genuine hardship and can typically include the provision of emergency food, clothing and temporary accommodation. Emergency payments are not available to individual or families if assistance in kind has been provided. Assistance to individuals includes:
- a. emergency food, clothing or temporary accommodation;
  - b. repair or replacement of essential items of furniture and personal effects;
  - c. essential repairs to housing, including temporary repairs and repairs necessary to restore housing to a habitable condition;
  - d. demolition or rebuilding to restore housing to a habitable condition;
  - e. removal of debris from residential properties to make them safe and habitable;
  - f. extraordinary counter disaster operations of direct assistance to an individual (for example, operations to protect a threatened house or render a damaged house safe and habitable);
  - g. personal and financial counselling aimed at alleviating personal hardship and distress arising as a direct result of the natural disaster; and
  - h. extraordinary costs associated with the delivery of any of the above forms of assistance (for example, costs of evacuation or establishment and operation of evacuation centres and recovery centres, being costs which exceed the costs that a state could reasonably have expected to incur for these purposes).
113. **Restoration of Public Assets.** To attract Commonwealth assistance as part of NDRRA, essential Territory Government assets are restored or replaced to their pre-disaster standard in accordance with current building and engineering standards. In some circumstances, the Territory Government may elect to replace an asset to a more disaster-resilient standard than the pre-disaster standard. Although this is a Territory Government decision, and takes into account potential to improve resilience to future disasters as well as considering other competing priorities, Commonwealth assistance will not necessarily be available. This

requires the Territory advising the Commonwealth of its decision to restore an asset to a more disaster-resilient standard; the reasons for doing so; the cost effectiveness of the proposal; and how the increased disaster-resilience of the asset will mitigate the impact of future natural disasters.

114. Assistance to restore or replace essential public assets damaged as a direct result of a natural disaster includes assets that are:
  - a. an integral and necessary part of the Territory's infrastructure; and
  - b. if lost or damaged, would severely disrupt the normal functioning of a community; and
  - c. if lost or damaged, would be restored or replaced as a matter of urgency.
  
115. **Assistance to Local Government Bodies** Assistance is available to small local government bodies with insufficient financial capacity to recover following a natural disaster. Such assistance would usually be for the purpose of restoring local government roads.
  
116. **Loans (subject to the Territory Treasurer's approval)** Assistance may be available to small businesses and primary producers at concessional interest rates, as a lender of last resort and with the approval of the Treasurer. The following lending criteria must be met to be eligible for assistance, should it be provided:
  - a. The Territory must be satisfied that the borrower's assets have been significantly damaged by the natural disaster.
  - b. The Territory must be satisfied that the borrower has no reasonable prospect of obtaining commercial finance but has a reasonable prospect of long-term viability for the business.
  
117. **Community Recovery Package (subject to agreement and announcement by the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister)** In the event of a severe natural disaster, which has a significant or exceptional impact on a community, additional assistance may be available in the form of a community recovery package where a holistic approach to a region's or community's recovery is required. Packages are subject to the- Chief Minister and Prime Minister's joint approval and include:
  - a. a community recovery fund in circumstances where a community is severely affected and needs to restore social networks, community functioning and community facilities over the long term, beyond the immediate relief response. Expenditure from the fund is aimed at community recovery, community development and community capacity building, and is administered in close collaboration with local government bodies or other community bodies;
  - b. recovery grants for small businesses where an industry sector is severely affected and the community risks losing essential businesses. Grants to small businesses are aimed at covering the cost of clean-up and reinstatement, but not at providing compensation for losses; and

- c. recovery grants for primary producers where the farming sector is severely affected, with threats to viability and disruption of production likely to extend beyond the current season. Grants to primary producers are aimed at covering the cost of clean-up and reinstatement, but not at providing compensation for losses.

*Further Details on NDRRA arrangements are at Annex I and at Northern Territory Treasury's website: <http://uluru.nt.gov.au/ntt/NDRRA/>.*

### **Natural Disaster Resilience Program (NDRP)**

- 118. A National Partnership Agreement for Natural Disaster Resilience was implemented commencing 1 Jul 2010. Increasing involvement and awareness of local communities in emergency management and disaster resilience is a critical step in improving the ability of the community to prepare for, recover from and build resilience to emergencies and disasters of all types.
- 119. The three funding programs the Northern Territory conducts under the Natural Disaster Resilience Program are the Disaster Resilience Emergency Volunteer Fund (DREVF), the Disaster Resilience Program. (DRP) and the Disaster Resilience Directed Projects (DRDP). These programs are NT Government programs that are cooperatively funded by the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department:
  - a. **Disaster Resilience Emergency Volunteer Fund** The DREVF is designed to replace the National Emergency Volunteer Support Fund (NEVSF) and will provide funding to support volunteer organisations at the frontline of emergency management for recruitment, retention, training and equipping volunteers to develop or improve community resilience to natural disasters.
  - b. **Disaster Resilience Program.** The DRP is designed to replace the Natural Disaster Mitigation Programme (NDMP) and will make funds available for other disaster resilience projects that will contribute to developing or improving community resilience. DRP will also provide funds for development of disaster recovery management plans by Local Councils and Shires.
  - c. **Disaster Resilience Directed Projects.** The DRDP is design to fund high priority projects identified by the Counter Disaster Council within the Council's strategic plan.

### **Donations Management**

- 120. Donations management can be a major issue in disaster response and recovery which requires good coordination and transparency. Territory Agencies need to be sure that they do not encourage public behaviour that compromises, inhibits or distracts important response and relief work and resources from attending to affected communities actual needs. The public and aid agencies should be advised that donations of inappropriate goods can pose logistics problems and inhibit the

recovery. The preferred form of assistance from the public, unaffected businesses and organisations is monetary donations.

## **ANNEXES**

- A. Hazard Responsibilities
- B. Territory Emergency Response Groups and Participating Organisations
- C. Response and Recovery Groups - Roles and Tasks
- D. Regional, Local and Special and Commonwealth Counter Disaster Plans
- E. Format for Declaring or Revoking States of Disaster or Emergency
- F. Requests for Defence Assistance
- G. Public Information Handbook
- H. Request for SEWS
- I. NDRRA Funding Arrangements
- J. Police Regional Boundaries

**ANNEX A TO NT ALL  
HAZARDS EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT  
ARRANGEMENTS**

**HAZARD RESPONSIBILITIES**

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Controlling Authority</b>	<b>Hazard Management Authority</b>
Air Crash	Police	Fire and Rescue Service
Bush Fires	Bushfire NT	Bushfire NT
Chemical Biological Radiological	Police	Fire and Rescue Service
Coastal Marine Search and Rescue	Police	Police
Confined Space	Police	Fire and Rescue Service
Cyclone	Police	NTES
Dam Safety	Police	Power and Water
Earthquake	Police	NTES
Emergency Animal Disease	Department of Resources	Department of Resources
Emergency Plant Pest or Disease	Department of Resources	Department of Resources
Emergency Marine Pest	Department of Resources	Department of Resources
Emergency Aquatic Animal Disease	Department of Resources	Department of Resources
Fire (within Gazetted Area)	Fire and Rescue Service	Fire and Rescue Service
Flooding	Police	NTES
Flood Boat Rescue	Police	NTES
Hazardous Materiel	Police	Fire and Rescue Service
Human Disease	Department of Health	Department of Health
Invertebrate Pests (Land)	NRETAS	NRETAS
Invertebrate Pest (Aquatic)	Department of Resources	Department of Resources
Land Search and Rescue	Police	NTES
Marine Oil Spill	Department of Lands and Planning	Department of Lands and Planning
Rail Crash	Police	Fire and Rescue Service
Road Crash Rescue	Police	Fire and Rescue Service
Storm Surge	Police	NTES
Structural Collapse	Police	Fire and Rescue Service
Terrorism	Police	Police
Tsunami	Police	NTES
Urban Search and Rescue	Police	Fire and Rescue Service
Vertical Rescue	Police	NTES
Water Contamination	Power and Water	Power and Water

<b>Commonwealth Plan</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>NT Hazard Management Authority</b>
Australian Aquatic Animal Diseases Veterinary Emergency Plan (AQUAVETPLAN)	Outline arrangements for managing the response to an aquatic animal disease emergency	Department of Resources
Australian Contingency Plan for Space Re-entry Debris (AUSCONPLAN SPRED)	Coordination of Commonwealth Agencies supporting jurisdictions regarding space debris	NTFRS
Australian Emergency Marine Pest Plan (EMPPLAN)	Details arrangements to respond to incursions by introduced pests and diseases	Department of Resources
Commonwealth Aviation Disaster Response Plan (CAVDISPLAN)	Details the national framework for managing aviation disasters	Police
Australian Government Action Plan for Human Influenza (CGAP)	A planning resource for all Australian Government agencies	Department of Health
Australian Government Overseas Disaster Assist Plan (AUSASSISTPLAN)	Details the coordination arrangements for Australian emergency assistance to disasters overseas (primarily to developing countries)	NTES
Australian Plant Emergency Response Plan (PLANTPLAN)	Outlines the arrangements for managing the response to plant pest and disease emergencies	Department of Resources
Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan (AUSVETPLAN)	Outlines the arrangements for managing the response to emergency animal arrangements	Department of Resources
Commonwealth Government Disaster Response Plan (COMDISPLAN)	Outlines the arrangements for the provision of physical assistance in response to requests from a state or territory arising from any type of disaster or emergency	NTES
Commonwealth Government Maritime Radiological Response Plan (COMMARRPLAN)	Outlines the arrangements for managing the response to a maritime radiation incident in Australia's coastal waters	
Commonwealth Government Plan for the Reception of Australian Citizens and other Approved Persons Evacuated from Overseas (COMRECEPLAN)	Details the arrangements for Australian Government and state and territory reception operation for Australians and other Approved Persons evacuated from overseas.	NTES
Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement	Provides guidelines for the establishment of national consultative committees, decision making and cost sharing in the event of a response to an animal disease.	Department of Resources
Emergency Plant Pest Response Agreement	Provides guidelines for the establishment of national consultative committees, decision making and cost	Department of Resources

<b>Commonwealth Plan</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>NT Hazard Management Authority</b>
	sharing in the event of a response to an animal disease.	
Framework for the Protection of the National Information Infrastructure (FPNII)	Provides a framework for national consistency in the mechanisms to help prevent and manage an attack, degradation and/or interference of the National Information Infrastructure	
France, Australia and New Zealand Trilateral cooperation agreement (FRANZ)	Outlines arrangements for disaster response, primarily focussed upon natural disasters.	NTES
Liquid Fuel Emergency Guidelines (LFEG)	Outlines arrangements for the management of a liquid fuel emergency.	Department of Resources
National Action plan for Human Influenza Pandemic	Outlines how the Australian, State, Territory and Local Governments will cooperate in prevention preparedness, response and recovery from a human influenza.	Department of Health
National Food Safety Incident Response Protocol	Provides the framework for cross-jurisdictional consideration of food safety incidents that pose a public health risk and require a national response.	
National Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Security Strategy	The COAG Strategy identifies areas of responsibility for governments, business, industry and the community in relation to CBRN incidents.	NTFRS
National Counter Terrorism Plan (NCTP)	Outlines responsibilities, authorities and mechanisms to manager acts of terrorism.	NT Police
National Electricity Market Emergency Protocol (NEMEP)	Details arrangements in the event of a national electricity grid emergency	Power and Water
National Gas Emergency Response Protocol (NGERP)	Details arrangements in the event of a national gas grid emergency	Power and Water
National Liquid Fuel Emergency Response Plan (NLFERP)	Details arrangements for managing a liquid fuel emergency under the LFE Act	Department of Resources
National Pandemic Influenza Airport Border Operations Plan (FLUBORDERPLAN)	Outlines processes to deploy and operate border control measures at designated Australian International airports in response to the threat or actual transmission of pandemic influenza.	Department of Health
National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil and other Noxious and Hazardous Substances (NATOILPLAN)	Outlines arrangements for response to pollution incidents in the marine environment	Department of Lands and Planning
National Response Plan for Mass Burn Casualty Incidents. (AUSBURNPLAN)	Arrangements for the distribution of burns casualties and the facilitation of specialist burns care for onshore and off shore incidents.	Department of Health
National Action Plan for Human Pandemic		Department of Health
National Response Plan	Details arrangements for the assessment,	NTES

<b>Commonwealth Plan</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>NT Hazard Management Authority</b>
for Mass Casualty Incidents Involving Australians Overseas (OSMASSCASPLAN)	repatriation and provision of care for Australians and other Approved Persons injured or killed overseas in a mass casualty incident.	
Nuclear Warship visits	Details arrangements for the visits of nuclear powered warships	NTES



**ANNEX B TO  
NT ALL HAZARDS  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
ARRANGEMENTS**

**TERRITORY EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND RECOVERY GROUPS AND PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

The matrix below lists the Functional and Response Groups and participating organisations. Annex B, provides details of key leaders, tasks and roles.

<b>PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS</b>	<b>B I O S E C &amp; P R O D I N T E G</b>	<b>B R O A D C A S T I N G</b>	<b>C O M M U N I C A T I O N S</b>	<b>E M E R G E N C Y S H E L T E R S</b>	<b>E N G I N E E R I N G</b>	<b>F O O D</b>	<b>M E D I C A L</b>	<b>P U B L I C H E A L T H</b>	<b>I N F O R M A T I O N</b>	<b>P U B L I C U T I L I T I E S</b>	<b>T R A N S P O R T</b>	<b>W E L F A R E</b>
NT Police, Fire & Emergency Service	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X	X
Dept of the Chief Minister	X					X			X			
Dept of Business and Employment			X	X		X						
Dept of Education and Training				X								
Dept of Children and Families				X				X	X			X
Dept of Health	X			X		X	X	X	X			X

PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS	B I O S E C & P R O D I N T E G	B R O A D C A S T I N G	C O M M U N I C A T I O N S	E M E R G E N C Y S H E L T E R S	E N G I N E E R I N G	F O O D	M E D I C A L	P U B L I C H E A L T H	I N F O R M A T I O N	P U B L I C U T I L I T I E S	T R A N S P O R T	W E L F A R E
Dept of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services				X								X
Dept of Construction & Infrastructure	X				X			X	X		X	
Dept of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sport	X							X				
Department of Justice				X								
Department of Lands and Planning	X			X	X				X		X	
Department of Resources						X						
Treasury	X											
Local Councils	X				X			X				
WICEN			X	X								
Power and Water Corporation								X	X	X		
NT WorkSafe								X				
Commercial Operations (Aviation)											X	
NT Fleet											X	
Red Cross Society												X
St John Ambulance Australia (NT)				X			X					
Salvation Army/Anglicare/St Vincent de Paul				X								X
Telstra/NDC/OPTUS			X									

PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS	B I O S E C & P R O D I N T E G	B R O A D C A S T I N G	C O M M U N I C A T I O N S	E M E R G E N C Y S H E L T E R S	E N G I N E E R I N G	F O O D	M E D I C A L	P U B L I C H E A L T H	I N F O R M A T I O N	P U B L I C U T I L I T I E S	T R A N S P O R T	W E L F A R E
ABC (Radio)		X										
Australian Defence Force			X						X			
Air Services Australia											X	
Australia Wide Media Outlets			X						X			
Centrelink												X
Employee Assistance Service												X
Private Enterprise			X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X

**ANNEX C TO  
NT ALL HAZARDS  
EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT  
ARRANGEMENTS**

**RESPONSE AND RECOVERY GROUPS - ROLES AND TASKS**

This Annex provides details of key Groups, and their roles across the Northern Territory. A matrix listing the Response and Recovery Groups and participating organisations is at Annex B.

## **BIOSECURITY & PRODUCT INTEGRITY GROUP**

**GROUP LEADER:** Director Biosecurity & Product Integrity  
Department of Regional Development, Primary  
Industry, Fisheries and Resources

### **ROLE:**

The role of the Biosecurity and Product Integrity Group is to ensure the biosecurity of the Northern Territory, through developing policies and plans and coordinating arrangements during the response to, and recovery from, an emergency.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The prime responsibilities of the Biosecurity & Product Integrity Group are to:

- a. ensure early detection of any emergency terrestrial or aquatic pest or disease emergency incursion through effective surveillance;
- b. effectively and efficiently respond to these emergency incursions;
- c. have an effective legislative framework to respond to such incursions if/when they occur;
- d. prevent such emergency incursions through effective quarantine measures;
- e. enable the declaration of freedom from pests and/or diseases through surveillance;
- f. provide advice to the Territory Controller and Counter Disaster Council on measures to improve robustness of biosecurity arrangements and responses; and
- g. provide advice to the Territory Controller (through the Regional Controllers) and the Recovery Coordination Group on issues that may be impacting on response and recovery measures.

### **PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

Department of the Chief Minister  
Department of Health  
Department of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sport  
Department of Construction and Infrastructure  
Local Councils  
Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services  
Northern Territory Treasury

### **SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS**

Department of Lands and Planning

## **BROADCASTING GROUP**

### **GROUP LEADER:**

Manager  
Australian Broadcasting Corporation

### **ROLE:**

The role of the Broadcasting Group is to ensure that official public information can be broadcast to the public during the response to an emergency.

### **Responsibilities:**

The prime responsibilities of the Broadcasting Group are:

- a. Provision of a fail-safe radio and television broadcast capability to disseminate cyclone and other counter disaster information to the public as required in the event of a major disruption of communications.
- b. Provision of advice to the Territory Controller and Counter Disaster Council on any issues that may impact on the **broadcasting** of information to the public in the event of a disaster.
- c. Provision of advice to the Public Information Group Leader on broadcast message content issues as raised by the audience group which may impact of the effectiveness of response and recovery measures.

## **PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

Australian Broadcasting Corporation  
NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services

## **COMMUNICATIONS GROUP**

**GROUP LEADER:**

Director Communications and  
Electronic Services  
Peter McAulay Centre

**ROLE:**

The role of the Communications Group is to coordinate policies and plans to ensure effective Territory wide essential communications during the preparation, response, and recovery phases of an emergency

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The prime responsibilities of the Communications Group are:

- a. the maintenance and restoration of essential emergency communication networks;
- b. the establishment and maintenance of effective liaison with specialist communication organisations to facilitate speedy restoration of public / commercial communications networks;
- c. provision of advice to the Territory Controller and the Counter Disaster Council on measures to improve the robustness of communication networks in the event of a disaster; and
- d. provision of advice to the Territory Controller (through Regional Controllers) and the Recovery Coordination Group on communication issues impacting on response and recovery measures.

### **PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services  
Department of Business and Employment  
WICEN  
Network Design and Construction (NDC)  
OPTUS  
Telstra  
ADF  
Australia Wide Media Outlets  
Private Enterprise

## **EMERGENCY SHELTER GROUP**

### **GROUP LEADER:**

Assistant Director Infrastructure  
Operations  
Planning & Infrastructure  
Department of Education & Training

### **ROLE:**

The role of the Emergency Shelter Group is the overall coordination of the provision of emergency shelters and development of NT shelter policies and plans in the preparation, response, and recovery phases of an emergency.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The responsibilities of the Emergency Shelter Group are:

- a. the provision of those buildings designated as Emergency Shelters;
- b. the provision of personnel to staff and operate Emergency Shelters when they are activated;
- c. the maintenance of effective liaison with other organisations with responsibilities relating to Emergency Shelters, in particular the Welfare Support Group;
- d. assisting with the staffing, operation and control of such Shelters as may be designated emergency accommodation centres in a post-event phase;
- e. provision of advice to the Territory Controller and Counter Disaster Council on measures to improve shelter arrangements in the event of a disaster; and
- f. provision of advice to the Territory Controller (through Regional Controllers) and the Recovery Coordination Group on shelter and emergency accommodation issues impacting on response and recovery measures.

### **PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

Department of Education and Training  
Department of Lands and Planning - Darwin Bus Service  
Northern Territory Police  
Northern Territory Emergency Service  
Department of Children and Families  
Department of Health  
Department of Justice  
Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services  
St John Ambulance Australia (NT)  
Wireless Institute Civil Emergency Network (WICEN)

### **SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS**

Salvation Army  
Anglicare  
Private Enterprise



## **ENGINEERING GROUP**

**GROUP LEADER:** General Manager, Construction Division,  
Department of Construction and Infrastructure

### **ROLE:**

The role of the Engineering Group is to coordinate the provision of appropriate NT wide emergency engineering plans and policies in the preparation, response and recovery phases of an emergency.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The prime responsibilities of the Engineering Group are:

- a. the clearing of essential traffic routes;
- b. the co-ordination, inspection and advice in relation to damaged buildings;
- c. the opening and maintaining of rubbish/debris tips;
- d. facilitating and co-ordinating the sourcing and provision of additional and/or external equipment;
- e. the clearing of storm water drains.
- f. facilitating the restoration of public buildings to a serviceable state;
- g. provision of advice to the Territory Controller and Counter Disaster Council on measures to improve the capacity of the Engineering Group to undertake its responsibilities in the event of an emergency; and
- h. provision of advice to the Territory Controller (through Regional Controllers) and the Recovery Coordination Group on Engineering Group issues impacting on response and recovery measures.
- i. managing the temporary closure of roads and traffic management issues

### **PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

Department of Construction and Infrastructure – Construction Division  
Local Councils

### **SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS**

Private Enterprise  
Department of Lands and Planning

## **FOOD GROUP**

**GROUP LEADER:** Department of Business and Employment

### **ROLE**

The role of the Food Group is to work with industry to develop Territory wide policies and plans which ensure the availability of food during the response to, and recovery from, an emergency.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The prime responsibilities of the Food Group are:

- a. to advise on the availability and durability of food and ice from Food Group Members (wholesalers and major retail outlets)
- b. to liaise with industry in order to facilitate arrangements that assist with the restoration and/or provision of food supplies;
- c. to provide assistance with the sourcing of food for Emergency Accommodation or Evacuation shelters and support to the Welfare Group Leader during counter disaster activities;
- d. provision of advice to the Territory Controller and Counter Disaster Council on measures to improve the robustness of food supplies in the event of a disaster; and
- e. provision of advice to the Territory Controller (through Regional Controllers) and the Recovery Coordination Group on any Food Group issues impacting on response and recovery measures.

### **PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

Department of the Chief Minister  
Department of Children and Families  
Department of Health  
Department of Resources  
Northern Territory Emergency Service

### **SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS**

Private Enterprise

## **MEDICAL GROUP**

**GROUP LEADER:**

Department of Health and Families

**ROLE:**

The role of the Medical Group is to coordinate NT wide policies and plans to ensure the preparation for and provision of appropriate medical services during the response to, and recovery from, an emergency.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The prime responsibilities of the Medical Group are to co-ordinate and control the mobilisation of all health responses to emergencies. This includes medical, nursing, first aid, pharmaceutical supplies, and public and mental health services, laboratory services, and involves:

- a. hospital and medical services for the management of large numbers of casualties resulting from an emergency or disaster;
- b. provision of field medical teams to manage casualties in the field. This may be prior to, or as an alternative to later transport to hospital;
- c. medical and mental health services to welfare emergency units;
- d. Laboratory Services. Diagnostic, monitoring and therapeutic services including the Red Cross Blood Bank.
- e. liaising with other jurisdictions for the provision of additional support;
- f. provision of advice to the Territory Controller and Counter Disaster Council on measures to improve the robustness of the medical response in the event of a disaster; and
- g. provision of advice to the Territory Controller (through Regional Controllers) and the Recovery Coordination Group on medical issues impacting on response and recovery measures.

### **PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

Department of Health  
Dept of Children and Families  
St John Ambulance Australia (NT)  
Northern Territory Emergency Service

### **SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS**

Private Practitioners (Top End Division of General Practice)  
NT Aerial Medical Service

## **PUBLIC HEALTH GROUP**

### **GROUP LEADER:**

Department of Health

### **ROLE:**

The role of the Public Health Group is coordinate NT wide policies and plans to ensure the provision of appropriate public health services during the preparation, response and recovery phases of an emergency.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The prime responsibilities of the Public Health Group are to develop NT wide policies to facilitate the mobilisation of all environmental health, disease control, and public health information. This involves:

- a. **Environmental Health.** Coordinate and control mobilisation of environmental health responses including: food safety, drinking water quality monitoring, sewage disposal, vermin and vector control, radiation hazards, disposal of hazardous wastes, inspection of evacuation centres, emergency shelter and housing, solid waste management, disposal of deceased animals, personal hygiene, disinfection, and occupational health and safety.
- b. **Centre for Disease Control.** Communicable disease risk assessment, determining immunisation policy, coordinating and assisting in the provision of immunisation, monitor the incidence of communicable and other infectious diseases, provide expert medical advice on communicable diseases, monitoring diseases trends in the recovery phase and beyond.
- c. **Public Health Information.** Coordinate and control mobilisation of DHF public health information responses for transmission through the Joint Services Emergency Operations Centre public communications process. The public health information section can assist operational units in the preparation of material, particularly where the message requires consideration of complex public health issues.
- d. provision of advice to the Territory Controller and Counter Disaster Council on measures to improve public health measures in the event of a disaster; and
- e. provision of advice to the Territory Controller (through Regional Controllers) and the Recovery Coordination Group on public health issues impacting on response and recovery measures.

### **PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

Department of Health  
Department of Children and Families  
Top End Division of General Practice  
Power and Water Corporation

### **SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS**

Dept of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sport  
Department of Business and Employment NT WorkSafe  
Local Councils

## **INFORMATION GROUP**

### **ROLE:**

The role of the Information Group is to coordinate Territory wide policies and plans to ensure the provision and distribution of public information during the preparation, response and recovery phases of an emergency.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The prime responsibilities of the Information Group are:

- a. ensure all Government agencies and media outlets are prepared to provide a co-ordinated flow of information to the public during all phases of an emergency;
- b. Coordinate Government agency dissemination of timely and accurate information to the public during all phases of an emergency;
- j. provision of advice to the Territory Controller and Counter Disaster Council on measures to improve media arrangements and information dissemination generally in the event of a disaster; and
- k. provision of advice to the Territory Controller (through Regional Controllers) and the Recovery Coordination Group on any information flow issues impacting on response and recovery measures.

**NOTE:** The Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Service is responsible for co-ordinating the release of operational information. The Department of the Chief Minister, Strategic Communications is responsible for providing and coordinating back-up support for the release of operational information.

### **SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS**

All Government departments including the Department of Defence and the International Airports media and communication personnel may be called upon to assist in the event of an emergency. Assistance from specifically identified agency personnel may be requested where specific key agencies are more involved in the emergency than others.

## **PUBLIC UTILITIES GROUP**

**GROUP LEADER:**

General Manager Remote Operations  
Power and Water Corporation

**ROLE:**

The role of the Public Utilities Group is to ensure the maximum availability of public utilities through the development of Territory wide policies and plans during the preparation, response and recovery phases of an emergency.

**Responsibilities**

The prime responsibilities of the Public Utilities Group are:

- a. the protection, maintenance and restoration of power, water and sewerage services;
- c. the taking of temporary measures to ensure that services required during the restoration period are available;
- d. provision of advice to the Territory Controller and Counter Disaster Council on measures to improve the availability and robustness of public utilities in the event of a disaster; and
- e. provision of advice to the Territory Controller (through Regional Controllers) and the Recovery Coordination Group on public utilities issues impacting on response and recovery measures.

**PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

Power and Water Corporation

**SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS**

Private Enterprise

## **TRANSPORT GROUP**

**GROUP LEADER:**

Senior Director Transport Services  
Department of Lands and Planning

**ROLE:**

The Role of the Transport Group is to coordinate Territory wide policies and plans to ensure the provision of transport support during the preparation, response and recovery phases of an emergency.

**Responsibilities:**

The prime responsibilities of the Transport Group are to:

- a. coordinate the provision of transport support as required by a Hazard Management Authority and other functional areas;
- b. maintaining as far as practical, the normal operations and activities of public and commercial transport services;
- c. provision of advice to the Territory Controller and Counter Disaster Council on measures to improve transport arrangements in the event of a disaster; and
- d. provision of advice to the Territory Controller (through Regional Controllers) and the Recovery Coordination Group on transport issues impacting on response and recovery measures.

### **PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

Commercial Operations (Air Transport)  
Department of Corporate Information Services  
Northern Territory Emergency Service  
Department of Lands and Planning

### **SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS**

Private Enterprise

## **WELFARE GROUP**

### **GROUP LEADER:**

Department of Children and Families

### **ROLE:**

The role of the Welfare Group is to coordinate Territory wide policies and plans to ensure the provision of welfare services during the preparation, response and recovery phases of an emergency.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The prime responsibilities of the Welfare Group are:

- a. undertake general assessment of the needs of individuals and families affected by disaster;
- b. provide advice to the Territory Controller (through Regional Controllers); Recovery Coordination Group and Recovery Planning Committees in relation to welfare response and recovery strategies;
- c. the provision of welfare support to individuals, families and the community during the 'Response Phase';
- d. provide information and help to ensure access to, personal support to those persons engaged in counter disaster activities; (provision or access to)
- e. work with individuals, families and the community to assess and respond to the long term welfare requirements of the community;
- f. contribute to the coordination of recovery services;
- g. co-ordination of Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Assistance for individuals to alleviate personal hardship when relevant; and
- h. provision of advice to the Territory Controller and Counter Disaster Council on measures to improve the ability to provide welfare support in the event of a disaster.

### **PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

Department of Children and Families, Department of Health, Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services- Territory Housing, Salvation Army, Australian Red Cross, Northern Territory Police (PFES College), Department of Planning and Infrastructure, Road Transport Division Centrelink, Employee Assistance Services Australia (EASA)

### **SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS**

Private Enterprise  
Chaplaincy Services  
Multicultural Council Northern Territory



**ANNEX D TO NT  
ALL HAZARDS  
EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT  
ARRANGEMENTS**

**REGIONAL, LOCAL, SPECIAL AND COMMONWEALTH COUNTER  
DISASTER PLANS**

**Regional Plans**

Greater Darwin – Counter Disaster Plan

**Local Counter Disaster Plans**

<b>Greater Darwin</b>	<b>Katherine and Northern</b>	<b>Alice Springs and Southern</b>
Adelaide River Township	Borroloola	Alice Springs
Batchelor	Daly River	Ali Curung
Darwin	Groote Eylandt	Avon Downs
Prlangimpi	Gunbalanya	Ayers Rock
	Jabiru	Elliott
	Kalkaringi	Harts Range
	Katherine	Kintore*
	Maningrida	Kulgera
	Maranboy	Lajamanu
	Palumpa	Ngukurr
	Pine Creek	Ntaria
	Timber Creek	Papunya
	Wadeye	Ti Tree
		Watarrka*
		Tennant Creek
		Yuendumu

**Special Counter Disaster Plans**

Dam Safety Emergency  
Darwin LNG Emergency Response  
Darwin International Airport Emergency Plan  
Emergency Animal, Fish, Plant Disease or Pests  
Fuel Emergency  
NT Marine Oil Pollution Plan  
Human Pandemic Influenza  
Northern Territory Counter Terrorism Plan  
Mass Casualty Evacuation  
Northern Territory Chemical, Biological and Radiological Response Plan  
Nuclear Powered Warships

Footnote \* In draft at present.

## Commonwealth Plans

Commonwealth Plan	Purpose	NT Hazard Management Authority
Australian Aquatic Animal Diseases Veterinary Emergency Plan (AQUAVETPLAN)	Outline arrangements for managing the response to an aquatic animal disease emergency	DOR
Australian Contingency Plan for Space Re-entry Debris (AUSCONPLAN SPRED)	Coordination of Commonwealth Agencies supporting jurisdictions regarding space debris	NTFRS
Australian Emergency Marine Pest Plan (EMPPLAN)	Details arrangements to respond to incursions by introduced pests and diseases	DOR
Commonwealth Aviation Disaster Response Plan (CAVDISPLAN)	Details the national framework for managing aviation disasters	NT Police
Australian Government Action Plan for Human Influenza (CGAP)	A planning resource for all Australian Government agencies	Department of Health
Australian Government Overseas Disaster Assist Plan (AUSASSISTPLAN)	Details the coordination arrangements for Australian emergency assistance to disasters overseas (primarily to developing countries)	NTES
Australian Plant Emergency Response Plan (PLANTPLAN)	Outlines the arrangements for managing the response to plant pest and disease emergencies	DOR
Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan (AUSVETPLAN)	Outlines the arrangements for managing the response to emergency animal arrangements	DOR
Commonwealth Government Disaster Response Plan (COMDISPLAN)	Outlines the arrangements for the provision of physical assistance in response to requests from a state or territory arising from any type of disaster or emergency	NTES
Commonwealth Government Maritime Radiological Response Plan (COMMARRPLAN)	Outlines the arrangements for managing the response to a maritime radiation incident in Australia's coastal waters	
Commonwealth Government Plan for the Reception of Australian Citizens and other Approved Persons Evacuated from Overseas (COMRECEPLAN)	Details the arrangements for Australian Government and state and territory reception operation for Australians and other Approved Persons evacuated from overseas.	NTES
Emergency Animal Disease Response	Provides guidelines for the establishment of national consultative committees, decision making and cost	DOR

<b>Commonwealth Plan</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>NT Hazard Management Authority</b>
Agreement	sharing in the event of a response to an animal disease.	
Emergency Plant Pest Response Agreement	Provides guidelines for the establishment of national consultative committees, decision making and cost sharing in the event of a response to an animal disease.	DOR
Framework for the Protection of the National Information Infrastructure (FPNII)	Provides a framework for national consistency in the mechanisms to help prevent and manage an attack, degradation and/or interference of the National Information Infrastructure	
France, Australia and New Zealand Trilateral cooperation agreement (FRANZ)	Outlines arrangements for disaster response, primarily focussed upon natural disasters.	NTES
Liquid Fuel Emergency Guidelines (LFEG)	Outlines arrangements for the management of a liquid fuel emergency.	DOR
National Action plan for Human Influenza Pandemic	Outlines how the Australian, State, Territory and Local Governments will cooperate in prevention preparedness, response and recovery from a human influenza.	Department of Health
National Food Safety Incident Response Protocol	Provides the framework for cross-jurisdictional consideration of food safety incidents that pose a public health risk and require a national response.	
National Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Security Strategy	The COAG Strategy identifies areas of responsibility for governments, business, industry and the community in relation to CBRN incidents.	NTFRS
National Counter Terrorism Plan (NCTP)	Outlines responsibilities, authorities and mechanisms to manager acts of terrorism.	NT Police
National Electricity Market Emergency Protocol (NEMEP)	Details arrangements in the event of a national electricity grid emergency	Power and Water
National Gas Emergency Response Protocol (NGERP)	Details arrangements in the event of a national gas grid emergency	Power and Water
National Liquid Fuel Emergency Response Plan (NLFERP)	Details arrangements for managing a liquid fuel emergency under the LFE Act	DOR
National Pandemic Influenza Airport Border Operations Plan (FLUBORDERPLAN)	Outlines processes to deploy and operate border control measures at designated Australian International airports in response to the threat or actual transmission of pandemic influenza.	Department of Health
National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil and other Noxious and Hazardous Substances (NATOILPLAN)	Outlines arrangements for response to pollution incidents in the marine environment	DLP
National Response Plan for Mass Burn Casualty Incidents.	Arrangements for the distribution of burns casualties and the facilitation of specialist burns care for onshore and off shore incidents.	Department of Health

<b>Commonwealth Plan</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>NT Hazard Management Authority</b>
(AUSBURNPLAN)		
National Action Plan for Human Pandemic		Department of Health
National Response Plan for Mass Casualty Incidents Involving Australians Overseas (OSMASSCASPLAN)	Details arrangements for the assessment, repatriation and provision of care for Australians and other Approved Persons injured or killed overseas in a mass casualty incident.	NTES
Nuclear Warship visits	Details arrangements for the visits of nuclear powered warships	NTES
Plan CELADON	NORCOM Plan for Assistance to the local community	NTES

**ANNEX E TO NT ALL  
HAZARDS  
EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT  
ARRANGEMENTS**

**Format for Declaring a State of Disaster or Emergency**

NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

*Disasters Act*

DECLARATION OF STATE OF DISASTER

I, (NAME IN FULL), the Administrator of the Northern Territory of Australia, acting with the advice of the Executive Council, under section 35(1) of the *Disasters Act*, declare a state of disaster exists in respect of the part of the Territory specified in the Schedule.

Dated

Administrator

By His Honour's Command

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

**DRAFT DECLARATION OF A STATE OF DISASTER**

NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

*Disasters Act*

DECLARATION OF STATE OF DISASTER

We, \_\_\_\_\_, the Minister for \_\_\_\_\_ ;  
and \_\_\_\_\_, the Minister for \_\_\_\_\_ ;  
under section 35(1) of the *Disasters Act* and with reference to section 35(2) of the  
Act, declare a state of disaster exists in respect of the part of the Territory specified  
in the Schedule.

Dated

Minister for

Minister for

**DRAFT DECLARATION OF A STATE OF DISASTER**

NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

*Disasters Act*

DECLARATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY

I, (NAME IN FULL), the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services, under section 39(1) of the *Disasters Act*, declare a state of emergency exists in respect of the part of the Territory specified in the Schedule.

Dated

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

**ANNEX F TO NT ALL  
HAZARDS  
EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT  
ARRANGEMENTS**

**REQUESTS FOR DEFENCE ASSISTANCE**

1. **Defence Assistance to the Civil Community.** (DACC) As a general principle, the provision of DACC should be regarded as the exception rather than the rule. Defence resources are intended to be used for Defence purposes only. Requests for DACC may receive favourable consideration if there is no suitable alternative source of assistance particularly in instances of emergency and for other requests where worthwhile training or public affairs benefits will accrue to Defence as a result of the provision of assistance.
2. Two types of assistance may be made available to the civil community by the Department of Defence – counter disaster and emergency assistance, and non-emergency assistance. The categories of counter disaster and emergency assistance made available under DACC are:
  - a. **Category 1.** DACC Category 1 is emergency assistance for a specific task(s) provided by local military commanders/administrators, from within their own resources, in localised emergency situations when immediate action is necessary to save human life, alleviate suffering, prevent loss of animal life, or prevent widespread loss/damage to property. Provision of DACC Category 1 assistance should not normally exceed 24 hours. Defence does not seek cost recovery under this Category.
  - b. **Category 2.** DACC Category 2 is emergency assistance, beyond that normally provided under Category 1, in more extensive or continuing disaster where action is necessary to save human life or prevent loss/damage to property, and when State/Territory resources are inadequate. Defence does not seek cost recovery under this Category.
  - c. **Category 3.** DACC Category 3 is assistance associated with recovery from a civil disaster or emergency, which is not related to the saving of life or property. Generally full cost recovery is sought unless a waiver or exemption is granted.
  - d. **Category 4.** DACC Category 4 is non-emergency assistance provided to other government departments or authorities, to State/Territory/local government or other authorities or organisations, commercial enterprises, non-profit organisations or individual or bodies in the general community. (Ad hoc requests from Emergency Services for training assistance, public events of significance and participation for public relations/ceremonial purposes fall under this category.) Generally full cost recovery is sought unless a waiver or exemption is granted.



- e. **Category 5.** DACC Category 5 is non-emergency assistance of a minor nature which can be provided to a local organisation from within the resources and authority of the local military commander/administrator and which does not compromise unit effectiveness or readiness. (Support to media or advertising organisations, and the use of aircraft for DACC Category 5 tasks, in certain circumstances, are prohibited activities under this category) Generally Defence does not seek cost recovery under this Category.
  - f. **Category 6.** DACC Category 6 is support to civil authorities in the performance of non-emergency law enforcement related tasks where there is no likelihood that Defence personnel will be required to use force. Generally full cost recovery is sought unless a waiver or exemption is granted.
3. Procedures for requesting Defence Assistance follow those outlined at paragraph 71 in the main body of this plan. In exceptional cases, if Defence support is required where immediate assistance is critical, the relevant Counter Disaster Controller can approach a local military commander for immediate assistance under DACC Category 1. In these circumstances, Director NTES should be advised of the circumstances as soon as possible.
  4. **Defence Force Aid to the Civil Authority.** (DFACA) Responsibility for responding to, and countering, a terrorist threat rests with civil governments and their law enforcement agencies. The nature of terrorism could however, lead to a situation where responsible civil authorities lack the capability to deal with the threat. When these conditions exist, the civil authority may seek the assistance of the Defence Force. Defence Force assistance in any circumstances potentially involving Defence Force members being required to use force (including any conduct intended simply to restrain a person, prevent free movement or restrain their liberties) is categorised as DFACA. Procedures for requesting DFACA follow those outlined at paragraph 71.

**ANNEX G TO  
NT ALL HAZARDS  
EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT  
ARRANGEMENTS**

**Police, Fire and Emergency Services  
Information Group Handbook**

**Acronyms used in this document**

EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
DCM	Department of Chief Minister
NTPFES	Northern Territory Police Fire and Emergency Services
JESCC	Joint Emergency Services Call Centre
NTES	Northern Territory Emergency Services

**Introduction**

During a crisis or emergency, providing timely and accurate information to the general public is critical. The Information Group is responsible for ensuring the public are informed before and during these events for which the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) has been established.

The Information Group operates along side the Emergency Operations Centre and is directed by the EOC Incident Controller (aka the Territory Controller).

A whole-of-government approach has replaced the previous Counter Disaster Media Liaison Committee.

This whole-of-government support model is coordinated by the Department of the Chief Minister's Strategic Communications Unit. It will ensure a coordinated communication effort, and ensure access to resources (particularly skilled media and communication officers) during emergency situations.

This document has been developed to define the process, roles and responsibilities for distributing public information in the event of a threat or response to an actual emergency situation. It does not outline the processes, roles and responsibilities during the recovery phase of an emergency.

**Who's in the lead?**

The NT All Hazards Emergency Management Arrangements identify potential emergency/critical events the Northern Territory could face, and nominates a controlling authority (or lead agency) for each. Lead agencies vary dependent on

the nature of the emergency or disaster. It is acknowledged that in most instances the controlling authority will be the NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services (NTPFES). As such, in this document it is assumed the NTPFES is the controlling authority. However please note at times a different agency may be in the lead role depending on the nature of the crisis/emergency.

In the event the lead agency is not NTPFES, that lead agency may decide to adopt and refer to this handbook (or parts of) as determined appropriate by that lead agency.

It should be noted that some events have specific plans outlining responsibilities and requirements, such as the National Counter Terrorism Plan, NT Pandemic Influenza Plan and Ausvet Plan (for animal disease outbreak/s).

Also, some events require involvement from and coordination with Australian Government agencies. In these instances guidelines and protocols are outlined in the National Emergency Protocol (a link is available from [www.securent.nt.gov.au](http://www.securent.nt.gov.au)), or in event-specific plans.

### **What is an Emergency Operations Centre?**

In the event of a risk, threat or actual emergency situation in which NTPFES is the lead agency, an EOC will be established.

An EOC can be established anywhere in the Territory. It is most often located in the Peter McAulay Centre, Berrimah, and is adjacent to the Media Unit and the Joint Emergency Services Call Centre (JESCC). There is a capacity to activate the hotline if required.

An EOC includes all response group leaders from across Government. All the nominated representatives from across Government will be called in as per the Counter Disaster Plan group contact details. These details are maintained and updated regularly by the Northern Territory Emergency Services (NTES).

When an EOC is activated, whether well in advance or with little or no warning, the Information Group Leader (Director, NTPFES Media and Corporate Communications) and DCM representative are both notified and their attendance requested in the EOC.

#### **Media/communication staff in the EOC**

In the EOC, two seats are allocated for the Public Information Group.

One seat will be taken by the Information Group leader. The second seat will be taken by the deputy group leader (usually NTPFES Media Manager), or the Director/Media Liaison Officer for another agency playing a key role in the operational response.

DCM also has two seats in the EOC, one of which is dedicated to a DCM Strategic Communications representative.

Communications Directors can request a seat in the EOC if they believe their agency's role in the response warrants it. These requests should be made through DCM Strategic Communications in the first instance. However it should be noted that there are limited seats in the EOC. While there is no specific timeframe on such decisions being made, every effort will be made to ensure decisions are made as quickly as possible. It may be a request has gone to an agency Communications Director already for example, a request may go out to the Communications Director at the Department of Health if a situation has resulted in mass casualties.

### **Information Group responsibilities**

The NT All Hazards Emergency Management Arrangements states the Public Information Group's prime responsibilities are:

- a. *ensure all Government agencies and media outlets are prepared to provide a coordinated flow of information to the public during all phases of an emergency*
- b. *ensure Government agencies provide timely, accurate and coordinated dissemination of information to the public during all phases of an emergency*
- c. *provision of advice to the Territory Controller and Counter Disaster Council on measures to improve media arrangements and information dissemination generally in the event of a disaster, and*
- d. *provision of advice to the Territory Controller (through Regional Controllers) and the Recovery Coordination Group on any information flow issues impacting on response and recovery measures.*

### **Objectives**

- To ensure timely, accurate, consistent and coordinated release of information in the event of a threat or emergency.
- To ensure appropriate physical and human resources are allocated to achieve the objectives.

### **Public Information Group leadership and membership – emergency response**

The NTPFES Media Director will lead the Information Group, closely supported by the DCM Director of Strategic Communications (or their delegated officer).

The Information Group will be staffed primarily by the NTPFES media and communication team, with support from DCM and Department of Defence Public Affairs Branch (where appropriate). Communication staff from other agencies directly involved in the response will be also involved in the group.

In a prolonged event or where enough staff are not available, communication staff from other government agencies and the International Airport communications personnel (where appropriate) will be called on. This means departments that

generally may not have a significant role in the event of an emergency, may still be called upon for general support on a rotating roster.

### **Public Information Group leadership and membership – recovery phase**

Recovery efforts are managed by the Department of the Chief Minister and, in most instances, will require continued whole-of-government coordination.

When response transitions into recovery, leadership of the Public Information Group is handed over to the DCM Director of Strategic Communications.

### **Transitioning from response to recovery**

This handbook extends throughout the period of transition from RESPONSE to RECOVERY. There is no fixed timeframe on the transition phase to ensure thoroughness and meeting the requirements of the situation. The transition phase begins once the Incident Controller has officially stood down the RESPONSE phase.

During the transition phase, the Director, PFES Media and Corporate Communications and the Director, DCM Strategic Communications are joint group leaders.

DCM will inform all Communication Directors once the transition period is drawing to a close and confirm the information coordination arrangements that will be put in place for the recovery period.

### **Audiences**

The primary external audiences for the Information Group are:

1. **members of the public identified as threatened, at risk or directly affected by the emergency situation.** In all such matters, the priorities are the preservation of life followed by property.
2. **family/friends of people identified as threatened, at risk or directly affected by the emergency situation.**
3. the general public.

The group is also responsible for whole-of-government internal communications and ensuring all NTG Communication Directors are provided with appropriate information/updates about the incident/emergency.

### **Key Messages**

Information approved for distribution will prioritise, but not be limited to:

- details of the emergency situation (including a reference to the Bureau of Meteorology where appropriate)
- potential or real threat expected/projected (situational awareness)
- preparations that individuals need to make (self-responsibility/limit of personal risk)

- responses being prepared or in place by those with operational responsibility (confidence in response being generated)
- any time frames that may be predicted or what members of the public directly effected by the incident would need to know.

### **Key tasks/activities**

The key responsibilities for the Public Information Group are:

- Coordinating the information flow to the public for all response groups including official broadcasts and ensuring the media have received this information through follow up phone calls. However, official broadcasts do not include initial bushfire (in a Fire and Rescue Emergency response Area) as these are managed by Fire and Rescue. Further, cyclone broadcasts are now disseminated by the Bureau of Meteorology;
- Distributing timely, accurate, coordinated and consistent information;
- Ensuring official information is broadcast on ABC radio prior to the 'Emergency Alert' (SMS and telephone warning system – see further on for more info) being activated (the Alert informs people to tune into the ABC for updates);
- Providing timely responses to media enquiries as approved by the Incident Controller or an approved delegate of the Incident Controller (for example the Incident Controller may delegate public information approval authority to the Chief Fire Officer in a bushfire);
- Providing advice on media and communication issues to the Incident Controller and EOC members (group leaders);
- Providing at-scene media management and liaison where appropriate;
- Liaising with Hotline Supervisor and Joint Emergency Services Call Centre supervisor to identify common questions and where appropriate include these answers in media information/statements;
- Ensuring information updates/key speaking points are sent to the hotline supervisor;
- Ensuring desktop duties are met including filing, monitoring and provision of all information to the web manager. Basic administration desktop duties are in place to ensure correct recording and processes are followed in the event of high pressure situations. These duties are clearly listed and displayed on all desktops;
- Updating the website with all pre-approved information;
- Place a 'tweet' on 'ntpolice' twitter referring people to the ABC for information relating to the emergency (only NTPFES Media and Corporate Communications have password access to do this);
- If all other forms of electronic and web based communication have failed, reading approved media releases to the ABC via Higher Frequency radio in the media unit;
- Through DCM Strategic Communications, ensuring all internal information and talking points are consistent with approved information; and
- Recording interviews and loading to the website where appropriate. (Remote, Interstate and International media can be directed to this to reduce demands on the spokesperson.)

### **Information flow and approval process**

Information may be proactive or reactive.

Proactive information is usually generated from the EOC. As issues or updates arise from the individual response groups in the EOC, the Information Group leader is advised so public information can be prepared and distributed.

Reactive information/responses may be the result of requests from media, the hotline supervisor, the JESCC or DCM on behalf of NTG or agency directors. There may be also the need to correct misreported information and respond to eyewitness accounts reported through the media on the scene.

All information/responses must be approved by the Incident Controller (or their delegate) before distribution.

It should be noted that due to urgency, the usual process of going through individual agency Communication Directors for approval may be bypassed (unless the agency's EOC representative is liaising directly with their Communication Director).

Approved information is distributed through the NTPFES Media and Corporate Communications (physically located in the Peter McAulay Centre or Alice Springs Police Station), or through the media liaison officers sent to an EOC established at another location within the Territory.

### **Information updates**

During an emergency, information updates will be prepared at regular intervals. All information updates are approved by the Incident Controller before they are distributed.

The updates may be distributed through a combination of the following:

- verbally on radio by a nominated spokesperson;
- electronically (eg email) to all media;
- direct to a reporter following a specific request;
- via the NTPFES website;
- call taker/information hotline scripts;
- internally across NTG agencies;
- through Web EOC; and
- disseminated internally/across NTG by DCM.

### **Frequency of information updates**

Generally, if there is deemed to be a threat or risk to the community within:

- **24 hours**, information updates should be provided four-hourly, even if the messages are repeats of previous information
- **12 hours**, information updates should be provided every two hours, even if the messages are repeats of previous information.

If the emergency situation is within six hours of occurring, or in fact does occur, updates should be provided at least every hour and/or as new information comes to hand and is approved for distribution.

Official updates have been as frequent as every 15 minutes. Flexibility is required in these guidelines, as capability and information availability may vary in each emergency situation.

### **Media spokespeople**

The Incident Controller is the media spokesperson. At times, they may nominate an appropriate delegate for example:

- Chief Fire Officer in the event of a major fire
- Trauma Centre representative if the information relates to injuries sustained as a result of the Emergency situation
- Power and Water representative if the update relates to specific power outages.

Media responses, scripts and key speaking points must be approved by the Incident Controller or delegate to ensure accuracy, consistency and public interest.

### **Working with the Broadcast Group**

The role of the Broadcast Group is to ensure that official public information can be broadcast to the public during the response to an emergency.

The leader of the Broadcast Group is the Director of the ABC Northern Territory. It is unlikely a member from this group will be required in the EOC.

The broadcast group:

- provides a fail-safe radio and television broadcasting capability,
- provides advice to the Public Information Group about message content and issues/questions raised by the callers/listeners which require urgent attention.

### **Established Communication/Media Channels**

#### **ABC radio updates**



The ABC radio remains the most reliable medium for public information in the event of an emergency due to the contingency 'higher frequency' radio plan.

A Memorandum of Understanding between NTPFES and the local ABC radio ensures, that during a crisis or emergency, official information is broadcast word for word, in an agreed timeframe. For example, a written statement may be read out every 15 minutes.

The NTPFES has also supplied a receiver at the ABC headquarters in Darwin City which allows updates to be sent directly from the Peter McAulay Centre. This system is tested regularly and will enable messages to be broadcast when all other mediums have failed.

All public information should direct the public to ABC radio for regular updates during an emergency by including: *'Tune into local ABC radio for regular updates in the event of an emergency. Always keep a battery powered radio and spare batteries in your emergency kit at home and in the workplace'*.

### **NT Police Twitter**

It is unlikely NT Police Twitter will be used during an emergency. A 'tweet' will be posted on 'ntpolice' Twitter informing people to tune into ABC radio for updates. Where appropriate, Twitter may be used as an additional medium to refer people to relevant websites where appropriate.

### **Emergency Alert:**

Information on the nationally-introduced 'Emergency Alert' can be found at [www.emergencyalert.gov.au](http://www.emergencyalert.gov.au).

Emergency Alerts are SMS messages sent to mobile phones and recorded voice messages to a landline. Once the geographical area affected by the emergency is identified and approved, the Incident Controller can approve a message to be distributed.

The message will generally inform people there is an emergency situation in the area and to tune into local ABC for updates. The Information Group leader must confirm that official information is being broadcast on local ABC radio before the Incident Controller approves the message.

The alert is activated through the JESCC in Berrimah and sent to all phones registered within that area.

National amendments are underway to enable all handsets and mobile phones physically located in the selected area to receive the information.

## **Hotline, Peter McAulay Centre**

The PFES Hotline 1800 888 901 is on permanent standby. This number is activated when the Officer In Charge of the Joint Emergency Services Call Centre advises that JESCC'S capacity is being exceeded by an unmanageable volume of calls to 131 444 or 000.

Dedicated call takers, focussed on the emergency situation, will provide a scripted and managed response to the calls.

Scripts/key messages are consistent with approved information being distributed and further encourage people to tune into local radio for updates.

The Hotline Supervisor receives all media release updates. They also advise the Information Group Leader (or their nominee) about common questions being received that require responses.

Responses to these questions will be provided to the Hotline Supervisor, and also incorporated into media releases and other public information.

## **Internet**

During an emergency situation, a dedicated page will be established on the NTPFES website which will be clearly navigated from the home page .

All information updates will be loaded onto this page.

Links to the page will be added to the Secure NT and NT Government homepages, and may be included as a Twitter messages.

## **Non-NTPFES personnel working within the Information Group**

Personnel from across NTG marketing and communications teams, the Department of Defence and the International Airport Public Relations personnel may be rostered on an eight hour roster. The roster should be a mixture of agencies and skills to include media, marketing and web management and will include NTPFES personnel at all times.

The NTPFES Director, Media and Corporate Communications can also request assistance from media and corporate communications staff from interstate where the emergency situation enables travel. This will become a priority in incidents such as mass fatalities, traumatic circumstances and a major crime investigation such as a Terrorist incident.

Those due to start their shift in what is likely to be the peak of the emergency/crisis, are required to ensure they are at the designated media unit safely in advance with:

- spare clothing
- toiletries and towel

- comfortable shoes
- mobile phone and charger
- remote laptop where available
- sleeping attire
- and any other items required by the individual to sustain a 24 hour shift if circumstances prevent the individual from leaving the premises for example, amidst a cyclone.

Building access passes, computer access and a brief induction will be provided to all non-NTPFES staff and there will be full supervision and advice from NTPFES staff at all times. Instruction sheets and contact numbers will be available on every physical desktop and tasking will be coordinated to suit skills and levels.

Physical resources are limited to available desktops, landlines and computers.

This document was last updated 17 December 2010 in consultation with all Northern Territory Government Communication Directors. Any required changes should be sent to [media.pfes@nt.gov.au](mailto:media.pfes@nt.gov.au)

**ANNEX H TO  
INTERIM  
NT COUNTER  
DISASTER PLAN**

**REQUEST FOR SEWS**

All requests to the media to broadcast SEWS are to use the format below. Authority to broadcast SEWS is vested with the Territory Controller, Director NTES and Regional Authorities. Controlling Authorities and Hazard Management Authorities may authorise its broadcast when called for under Special, Regional or Local Counter Disaster Plans.

**REQUEST TO BROADCAST AN EMERGENCY ANONUNCEMENT USING THE STANDARD EMERGENCY WARNING SIGNAL**

This is a formal request to broadcast the following emergency announcement preceded by the Standard Emergency Warning Signal.

Please broadcast the message below verbatim every \_\_\_\_\_minutes for the next \_\_\_\_\_hours

This use of SEWS is authorised by:

\_\_\_\_\_(Name)

\_\_\_\_\_(Appointment)

This message can be confirmed by ringing \_\_\_\_\_(telephone number)

**EMERGENCY ANNOUCEMENT**

This is an official announcement for \_\_\_\_\_(Area)

Issued by \_\_\_\_\_(Appointment/Agency)

Concerning the \_\_\_\_\_(Emergency Description)

Message Text

\_\_\_\_\_(What has happened, where, when)

\_\_\_\_\_(What has been done to date)

\_\_\_\_\_(What actions are proposed)

\_\_\_\_\_(Actions the public should take to protect life and property)

This emergency announcement was issued by \_\_\_\_\_ (Appointment/Agency). Stay tuned to this station for further information.

**ANNEX I TO  
NT COUNTER DISASTER  
PLAN**

**ACTIVATION OF RELIEF MEASURES**

1. Following a natural disaster event and an initial evaluation of damage, loss and personal hardship, the Territory Government will respond by providing relief/assistance measures to individuals and the restoration of restoring Territory Government assets, particularly assets necessary essential to restoring community functionality as quickly as possible. Standing arrangements exist for assistance to small local government bodies with insufficient financial capacity, particularly in relation to local government roads.
2. The Department of Health and Families (supported by Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services) is responsible for activating and coordinating the delivery of assistance measures to individuals and households.
3. Additional assistance programs such as concessional loans to small business and primary producers are subject to the Territory Treasurer's approval.
4. In the event of a severe natural disaster, the Territory (in consultation with the Prime Minister may consider activation of special recovery modules aimed at longer term recovery of the affected community, beyond the immediate relief provided. These modules provide for the establishment of a community recovery fund and recovery grants for small business and primary producers (aimed at covering the cost of clean-up and reinstatement but not compensation for losses).

**Categories of Relief Measures**

**Counter Disaster Operations (to alleviate personal hardship)**

- Expenditure by Emergency Services and other Territory agencies on counter disaster operations to assist community response/recovery and ensure the safety of life, health and property.

*Administering Authority:* Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services

**Disaster Relief Assistance Scheme (to alleviate personal hardship)**

- Emergency financial assistance for individuals or families/households, provided on the basis of need to assist with food, clothing, accommodation and medical supplies in the immediate aftermath of a natural disaster.
- Means tested grants to eligible applicants for essential household contents (food, bedding, clothing etc) and repairs to dwellings.

*Administering Authority:* Department of Families and Children

**Restoration of Public Assets**

- Financial assistance is available to small local government bodies (mainly roads) and budget supplementation is available for Territory Government agencies for the restoration of essential public assets to the equivalent of their pre-disaster standard.

*Administering Authority:* Department of Construction and Infrastructure and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services

**Concessional Loans to Small Business, Primary Producers and Not-For-Profit Organisations**

- Concessional loans (to primary producers and small business unable to provide for their own recovery) for carry-on needs, stock replacement and restoration of fixed/landed assets.

*Administering Authority:* Department of Business and Employment

**Community Recovery Modules**

- Administering Authority: Community Recovery Fund: Determined by nature and severity of the disaster.

*Administering Authority:* Department of the Chief Minister

ANNEX J TO  
NT COUNTER DISASTER  
PLAN

POLICE REGIONAL BOUNDARIES

