NT EMERGENCY SERVICE

Southern Regional
Emergency Plan

Contents

1. Acknowledgement of Country

The Northern Territory Police Force (NTPF) and the Northern Territory Fire and Emergency Services (NTFES) acknowledges the First Nations people throughout the Northern Territory (NT), from the red sands of Central Australia to the coastal people in the Top End.

We recognise their continuing connection to their lands, waters and culture. We also pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with whom we work and who we serve and protect.

We pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to their leaders' past, present and emerging.

2. Introduction

2.1. Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to describe the emergency management arrangements for the Southern Region.

2.2. Application

This Plan applies to the Southern Region of the NT.

2.3. Key considerations

The *Emergency Management Act 2013* (the Act[1]) is the legislative basis for emergency management across the NT. The Act reflects an all hazards approach to emergency and disaster events, natural or otherwise. It provides for the adoption of measures necessary for the protection of life and property from the effects of such events.

The Act defines the emergency management structures, roles and responsibilities for the NT and, in conjunction with the Territory Emergency Plan[2], form the basis for this Plan.

This Plan:

- confirms appointment of a Regional Emergency Controller

- confirms establishment of the Regional Emergency Committee (REC)

- confirms appointment of a Regional Recovery Coordinator

- confirms establishment of a Regional Recovery Coordination Committee

- specifies control and coordination arrangements for mobilisation of regional, and, if necessary, Territory and national resources

- identifies roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders

- provides for the effective transition to, and management of, regional recovery arrangements in accordance with the Territory Emergency Plan.

This Plan complements the Territory Emergency Plan as it relates to the Southern Region, and is based on contemporary emergency management principles and recognises 4 phases of activities. These activities contribute to the reduction or elimination of hazards and to reducing the susceptibility or increasing the resilience to hazards of a community or environment.

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[1] More information can be found at: https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/Legislation/EMERGENCY-MANAGEMENT-ACT-2013
[2] More information can be found at: https://pfes.nt.gov.au/emergency-service/emergency-management

These phases are referred to as Prevention, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery (PPRR). The activities described will generally be conducted at the local level, with regional support provided as required.

This Plan is also complemented by functional group and hazard plans which are designed to operate on a stand-alone basis or as part of a wider response. They describe that group's capabilities and activities as set out by the Territory Emergency Plan.

2.4. Plan governance

Part 2, Division 2 of the Act outlines the preparation, consideration, approval and review requirements for regional emergency plans.

3. Southern Region context statement

The Southern Region emergency management area extends from Elliott in the north to the Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia borders. It covers approximately 874,994 square kilometres and has a population of approximately 41,000.

The Southern Region of the NT is a unique Australian environment from desert to wide tracks of bushland and open grasslands. It includes world heritage areas and national parks, with views that stretch across the countryside. The environment is vast and diverse - a land of ancient sandstone formations, wetlands, billabongs and unique native flora and fauna.

Tourism is a major economic source for the southern NT, especially during the cooler months of the year. Many people travel from other states to experience the unique NT environment. The NT recognises the importance of minimising vulnerabilities associated with emergency events and aspires to build safe, resilient communities through a range of activities that contribute to the prevention of, preparation for, response to and recovery from, the impact of emergency events.

The Southern Region is characterised by 2 main zones, which experience distinct climatic conditions. They are the grassland zone and the desert zone.

3.1. Grassland zone

Central parts of the NT experience hot temperatures from October - March, while the middle of the year is mild in comparison. Throughout the Wet Season (October - April), when the monsoon trough drifts south, rainfall is more reliable in the Northern part of the region and heavy rain events can occur. At other times of the year, rainfall across the region is unreliable. Fire danger is typically highest from September - December.

3.2. Desert zone

The desert zone is characterised by a hot summer (December - February) and a cold winter (June - August). Most of the lower region experiences low and unreliable rainfall across all seasons of the year. Rainfall is slightly more reliable from December - February as tropical moisture occasionally moves south, bringing an increased risk of heavy rain events and severe thunderstorms. Fire danger also increases during spring and summer (September - February) as heat builds.

3.3. Map of NT Southern Region
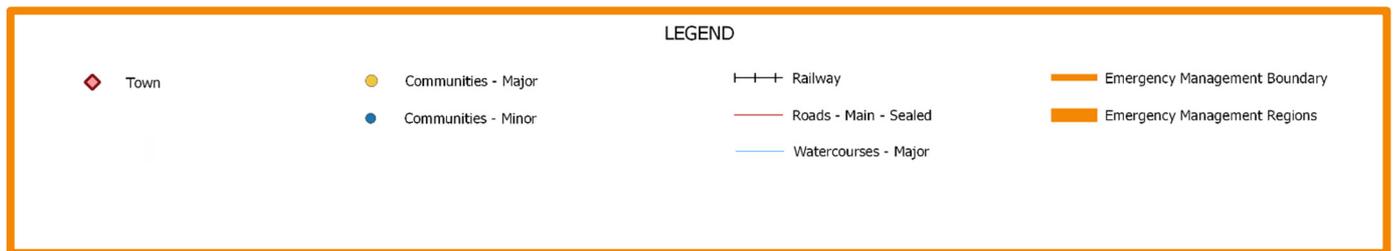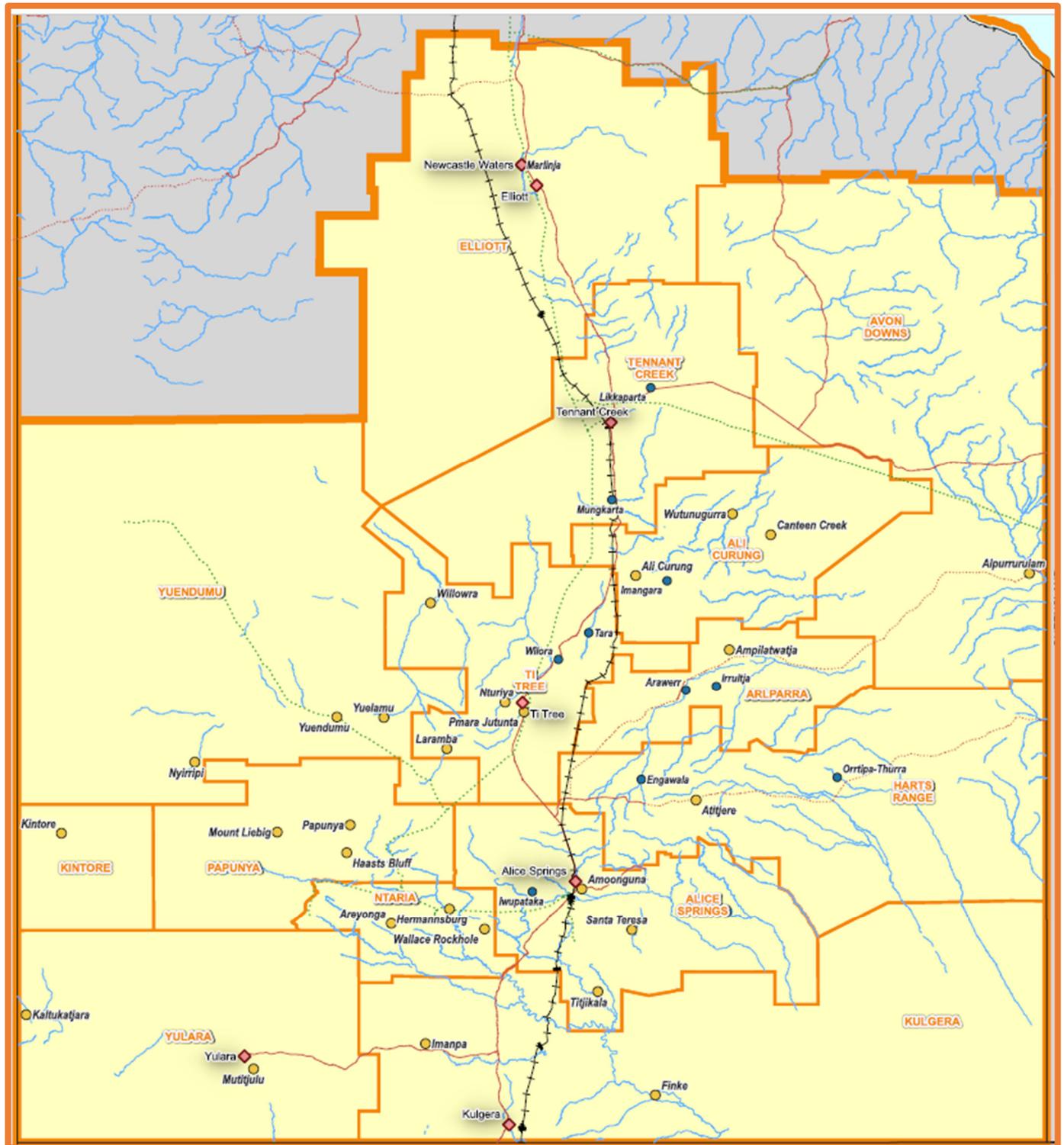
3.4. NT and local government

The NT Government (NTG) service delivery boundaries identified in the Southern Region are:

- Barkly

- Central Australia

The region is represented by the following 4 local government councils, the remaining area is unincorporated and has no local government representation:

Local Government Authority	Size of district (km²)	Approx. population
Alice Springs Town Council	327.5	25,912
Barkly Regional Council	322,514	6,316
Central Desert Regional Council	281,312	3,591
MacDonnell Regional Council	268,910	5,748

3.5. Localities

The Southern Region is divided into 14 localities and operates under a Local Emergency Plan. This provides a basis for coordinated emergency and recovery operations in the locality. Each of the localities, major communities and corresponding local government authorities are listed in the table located on pages 8 and 9 of this Plan.

3.6. Homelands

Homelands are typically located on Aboriginal land, which is held by the Aboriginal Land Trusts established under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976*. There are also some homelands that are located on Community Living Areas or parcels of land within national parks. Assets on homelands are owned by the underlying leaseholder, which for the majority of homelands is the relevant Aboriginal Land Trust. Homelands are not subject to the NTG leasing or part of the NT's remote public housing system.

Homeland service providers contribute to the delivery of housing, municipal and essential services, including fire breaks, where funding allows. Homeland service providers do not deliver emergency services.

Land councils and local ranger groups within the Locality may provide land management activities on Aboriginal land, such as back burning, installing firebreaks and other mitigation works.

3.7. Police commands

By virtue of their legislated role in the Act, the emergency management boundaries of localities are in line with the existing NTPF boundaries. These boundaries are represented by the police areas of Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Barkly and the Southern Desert Divisions.

Alice Springs Command	Major Communities	Local Government Authority
Alice Springs	Alice Springs Amoonguna Iwupataka (Jay Creek) Titjikala (Maryvale) Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa)	Alice Springs Town Council MacDonnell Regional Council

Tennant Creek and Barkly Command	Major Communities	Local Government Authority
Ali Curung	Ali Curung Canteen Creek Wutungurra (Epenarra) Imangara (Murray Downs)	Barkly Regional Council
Avon Downs & Alpurrurulam	Alpurrurulam	Barkly Regional Council
Elliott	Elliott Marlinja (Newcastle Waters)	Barkly Regional Council
Tennant Creek	Tennant Creek Likkaparta	Barkly Regional Council
Southern Desert Command	Major Communities	Local Government Authority
Harts Range	Atitjere (Harts Range) Engawala (Alcoota) Orrtipa-Thurra (Bonya)	Central Desert Regional Council
Kintore	Kintore (Walungurru)	MacDonnell Regional Council
Kulgera	Aputula (Finke) Imanpa Kulgera	MacDonnell Regional Council
Ntaria (Hermannsburg)	Areyonga Hermannsburg Wallace Rockhole	MacDonnell Regional Council
Papunya	Haasts Bluff (Ikunji) Mount Liebig (Watiyawanu) Papunya Mbunghara	MacDonnell Regional Council
Ti Tree	Laramba (Napperby) Pmara Jutunta Ti Tree Tara (Neutral Junction) Willowra Wilora (Stirling)	Central Desert Regional Council
Utopia (Arlparra) and Ampilatwatja	Ampilatwatja Arawerr Arlparra (Utopia) Irrultja Mulga Bore	Barkly Regional Council
Yulara (Petermann)	Mutitjulu Watarrka Kaltukatjara (Docker River) Yulara*(Unincorporated)	MacDonnell Regional Council
Yuendumu	Nyrripi Yuelamu (Mt Allan) Yuendumu	Central Desert Regional Council

4. Prevention

4.1. Prevention and mitigation

Southern Region hazards include riverine flooding in the Alice Springs and Alpurrurulam areas; flash flooding which may cause many communities to become isolated; earthquakes in the Tennant Creek area; and a range of local risks that are managed through local emergency plans. The Southern REC will provide operational support coordination to local response or recovery operations. A copy of each approved Local Emergency Plan is in the Web-Based Emergency Operations Centre (WebEOC) File Library and publicly available on the NTPF and NTFES webpage[3].

Prevention and mitigation relate to measures to reduce exposure to hazards, to reduce or eliminate risk. Actions include identifying hazards, assessing threats to life and property, and from these activities, taking measures to reduce potential loss of life and property damage.

The cornerstone of mitigation is guided and coordinated risk assessments, which should involve all potentially affected members of a community. Risk assessments for each locality, which are conducted by the respective local emergency management committee, are available in the corresponding local emergency plan. Strategies are developed based on a thorough understanding of hazards identified in emergency risk planning and their interaction with all aspects of society.

5. Preparedness

The Regional Controller is responsible for ensuring an adequate level of planning and training has occurred in localities within the region. This includes ensuring local emergency plans have been updated and readiness reports are prepared annually. Such reporting will generally occur within a pre-season readiness meeting of the REC.

Emergency plans are a legal requirement as set down by the Act. They become a record of agreements made by contributing parties to accept roles and responsibilities, provide resources and to work cooperatively.

Appropriate training is a legislative requirement for those involved in emergency management activities. Exercises should also be undertaken when the plan has not been enacted within a 12 month period or where substantial changes have occurred.

6. Response

Response actions are those taken in anticipation of, during, and immediately after an emergency to ensure that its effects are minimised and that people affected are given immediate relief and support.

6.1. Regional Committee

In accordance with section 58 of the Act, a REC is established for the Southern Region.

The Southern REC is responsible for the development of effective emergency management preparedness and response arrangements to deal with identified emergency/disaster threats affecting the Southern Region, and the production and amendment of emergency management plans. The functions, powers, membership and procedures of the REC are outlined in Part 4, Division 7 of the Act.

Contact details for members of the Southern REC can be accessed through the office of the Southern Regional Controller and WebEOC[4].

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[3] More information can be found at: https://www.pfes.nt.gov.au/emergency-service/emergency-management
[4] More information can be found at: https://webeoc.NTP and NTFES.triservice/eoc7/

6.2. Regional Controller

The Territory Controller in accordance with section 54 of the Act appoints a Regional Controller. The Regional Controller for the Southern Region is the NTPF Assistant Commissioner, Regional and Remote Operations. The Regional Controller is supported in the Southern Region by a Deputy Regional Controller(s), being the Commander Southern Command. The Regional Controller can nominate an appropriate Deputy Regional Controller to perform the functions as set out below to coordinate emergency operations.

The Regional Controller has the following functions:

- to supervise and coordinate emergency operations in the region

- to ensure that the Territory Controller's instructions, policies and procedures are complied with

- any other functions conferred by the Territory Controller or by the Act

- to conduct such meetings as are required, whether for normal business or to coordinate safe and effective resolution of emergency operations.

The Regional Controller is responsible for the care and maintenance of equipment made available to the region by the NT Emergency Service (NTES). This will be coordinated through respective Local Controllers at locations where the equipment is held and the NTES.

6.3. Local Controller

Local Controllers within the Southern Region are the NTPF Officers in Charge of the police stations with the 14 localities identified by the Territory Controller. Local Controllers report to the Southern Regional Controller, Deputy Regional Controller and can provide advice to an appointed Incident Controller to coordinate effective preparation and response management to an incident.

Local Controllers and their respective Local Emergency Committees (LECs) will establish Incident Control Points for local management of emergencies and report through the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), established by the Regional Controller or Deputy Regional Controller/s for coordination of supporting operations.

Responsibility for response rests initially at the local level and is to be coordinated by the Local Controller through the LEC. Coordination of resources may escalate to the Regional Controller, or if stood up, the Regional EOC.

6.4. Roles within the Emergency Operations Centre

Working under the Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS), roles will be assigned to appropriately trained personnel from across the NTPF and NTFES, government agency personnel and non-government personnel. The EOC can be used as an Incident Control Centre (ICC), and for information on roles and responsibilities of Incident Management Team (IMT), refer to the AIIMS Manual.

6.5. Functional group leaders

Functional groups roles and responsibilities are detailed within the Territory Emergency Plan. Functional group leaders are appointed by the respective lead agency to provide advice to the REC and provide status reports as requested by the Regional Controller.

When activation occurs, functional groups may be requested to provide a Liaison Officer into an EOC to provide advice on their group's status, resource availability and operational issues; contribute as requested to incident action plans, briefings and coordinate deployment of their respective group resources where applicable.

Overall incident planning, logistics and operations tasking will be managed from the EOC/ICC. Functional groups may operate from their own facilities, according to their respective activation plans, and will be tasked through the Operations section using WebEOC.

Communication from an Incident Controller to functional groups will be through many communication streams, including regular in person briefings, phone/video conferencing, emails and WebEOC.

6.6. Stages of Activation – Response/Recovery

These stages are designed to ensure a graduated response to hazardous events, thereby reducing the possibility of under or over reaction by the emergency management agency. The stages are:

Stage 1	Alert	This stage is declared when the Regional Controller receives warning of an event which, in their opinion, may necessitate an emergency management response.
Stage 2	Standby	This stage is declared when the Regional Controller considers an emergency operation is imminent. During this stage passive emergency measures are commenced.
Stage 3	Activation	This stage is declared when active emergency measures are required.
Stage 4	Stand-down, response operations and transition to Recovery	This stage is declared when the Regional Controller considers that no further emergency management is necessary but if the consequences of the emergency require ongoing recovery coordination the Regional Controller will advise the Director, Emergency Management, Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet (CM&C) in accordance with Section 5.15 of the Territory Emergency Plan.
Stage 5	Recovery	This stage is called if ongoing recovery operations and coordination is required.

The stages identified above provide for a sequential response. However, it may be necessary because of the degree of warning and speed of onset of an event for either the Regional or Local Controller to amalgamate the actions required under one stage. Some events, pre-identified in local or hazard-specific emergency plans, may lead to activation of the Southern Region Emergency Plan. This plan may be activated by the Territory Controller, Chief Officer NTES or Regional Controller.

Recovery may be activated when an incident or event has occurred that did not necessitate the activation of response stages one to 4. This may be in relation to a sudden impact event such as a rail crash or an event with a long lead time such as flooding.

6.7. Regional level arrangements

Supporting organisations, agencies and functional groups may establish their own coordination centres to provide the focal point for the overall control and coordination of their agency resources. Nominal coordination centre locations are as follows:

- Animal Welfare Group: AZRI Complex, South Stuart Highway

- Critical Goods and Services Group: Green Well Building, 50 Bath Street

- Digital and Telecommunications Group; Alice Plaza, Todd Mall

- Emergency Shelter Group: First Floor Alice Plaza, Todd Mall

- Engineering Group: Green Well Building, 50 Bath Street

- EOC: Damian Clifton Centre, NTES Southern Command Headquarters

- Industry Group: Green Well Building, 50 Bath Street

- Major Defence Installations: location(s) dependent on location and nature of emergency.

- Medical Group & Public Health Groups: Eurilpa House or Alice Springs Hospital

- Welfare Group, DCF Office Hartley Street Alice Springs

- Public Information Group: First Floor Alice Plaza & Primary EOC

- Public Utilities Group: Power and Water Corporation, Sadadeen Complex

- Recovery Coordination: location(s) dependent on size of recovery and nature of emergency.

- Survey, Rescue & Impact Assessment Group: Alice Springs Fire Station

- Transport Group: First Floor Greenwell Building

6.8. Warning systems, notifications and dissemination

In the event of an emerging incident occurring, the Regional Controller will notify members of the REC by any means necessary specific to the urgency of an emerging or imminent incident.

Response agencies will be activated as per their relevant Standard Operating Procedures.

Sources of warning information and warning systems utilised will depend upon the type of incident. No single warning system will be solely relied upon, and multiple media types will be utilised to get information to the public about emerging incidents. As an example: the Bureau of Meteorology (the Bureau) is the legislated authority to issue weather information.

Examples of warning systems that may be used in the Southern Region include:

- media: ABC radio (emergency broadcaster) and other locally-based radio stations may be utilised depending on the warning area

- social media: Australian Warning System, Secure NT Facebook pages and Twitter platforms, as the primary source and other relevant agency social medial platforms

- electronic media: websites, such as Secure NT and the Bureau which include links to specific information, sites and/or educational materials

- print media: for long term events such as flooding or severe storms

- the Bureau webpage

- Emergency Alert System: a location-targeted voice and text message delivery system

- Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS): Audio signal designed to draw attention to public safety announcement

- loud hailer/door knocks: verbal messaging to specific small areas

- other local arrangements as identified in Local Emergency Plans

Broadcast messages may also include use of a Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS). SEWS is an audio signal designed to draw attention to a particular public safety warning. The decision to utilise SEWS rests with the Chief Officer, NTES, the Territory Controller or the Manager Hazard Preparedness and Response NT, the Bureau.

6.9. Emergency Shelters

The Regional Controller can direct emergency shelters to open, pending an emerging threat. Each Local Emergency Plan has identified shelters and/or strong buildings that are to be referred to as the situation dictates. An emergency shelter can generally only operate for up to 48 hours.

Although staffed by various community service providers, an emergency shelter offers minimal support services. People accessing a shelter are expected to be self-sufficient and provide their own food and emergency supplies.

6.10. Evacuation Centres

Where longer-term emergency accommodation and support is required following a disaster or event, an evacuation centre may be established. An evacuation centre is designed to accommodate people for short to medium periods of approximately 4 weeks, although this time may vary.

An evacuation centre will provide some or all the following services:

- meals

- beds

- linen

- personal support

- medical services (or access to them)

- assistance accessing finances and recreational activities.

An evacuation centre implies the provision of these services in contrast to an emergency shelter, in which people are expected to be self-sufficient.

6.11. Welfare Recovery Centres

Welfare Recovery Centres (WRC) are one-stop-shops that provide a range of support services to an affected community. Accommodation services are not provided.

Types of services that may be provided in a WRC may include:

- financial support and advice

- insurance advice

- psychological support or counselling

- emergency accommodation information

- recovery information

- public health information

Establishment and coordination of WRCs is led by the Welfare Group. Centres may continue to operate throughout response and recovery phases of an emergency event.

The Regional Controller, in consultation with the Director, Emergency Recovery, CM&C, may request the opening of WRCs to support the recovery of an area. The relevant functional groups will be briefed and involved in planning to facilitate the set up and operation of WRCs. The Local Emergency Plans may include suitable locations in communities for use as WRCs.

6.12. Evacuation

Evacuation is a risk management strategy that can be used to mitigate the effect of an emergency or disaster on a community. It involves the movement of people to a safer location and their post impact return. The decision to evacuate a community, including establishing an evacuation centre, is not taken lightly as it can represent significant risk, resource and financial implications. Self-evacuation is a preferred strategy.

Planning for an evacuation will be completed in consultation with the Incident Controller, Functional Groups and relevant Local Emergency Committees.

Where an evacuation is required, the Territory Emergency Management Council (TEMC) will be briefed by the Incident Controller and Regional Controller. A proposed evacuation plan formulated and endorsed by the Territory Controller to proceed.

In planning for evacuation, consideration must be given to evacuation management, including evacuation centres, registration, reception and repatriation planning. A copy of the Evacuation Guideline can be found at **Annex B.**

The NT Evacuation Centre Field Guide has been developed for government and partnering agencies to provide guidance to personnel working in evacuation centres. A copy of the guide is available on WebEOC.

6.13. Closure of schools and/or government offices

The decision to close schools due to an impending threat will be made by the Chief Minister on advice from TEMC. When the nature of an emergency demands an immediate response, local authorities will take the appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the public, which may include the temporary closure of the school to enable communities to begin preparations, pending formal closure of the school by the Chief Minister for the remainder of the emergency.

The decision to re-open schools will be made by the Chief Minister on advice from the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Education and Training based on advice from the controlling authority's Incident Controller.

The decision to close government offices due to an impending threat will be made by the Chief Minister on advice from the TEMC. When the nature of an emergency demands an immediate response, local authorities should take all appropriate steps to ensure public safety and the protection of property. The decision to re-open government offices will be made by the Chief Minister on advice from the TEMC.

All agencies and facilities are to have an emergency management plan which sets out their processes for closing down their offices once approval has been given and should have clearly articulated employee guidelines to ensure employees know when they are authorised to leave and are required to return to work.

6.14. Impact Assessment

Immediately after a hazard has affected a community, assessment of the impact is a vital component of the situational awareness and implementation of response and recovery activities.

Impact Assessment may be carried out in 3 phases:

1. As part of initial post impact Survey and Rescue activities conducted by first responder agencies which will give a less detailed, big picture report on overall impact to a community

2. Rapid Assessment is a more in-depth, "door to door" assessment of building damage and personal needs of affected persons to enable responding agencies to provide specific relief and recovery services

3. Comprehensive Assessment is conducted as an event progresses by specific agencies and experts to determine continuing effect on the community and infrastructure as a whole.

Detailed guidelines to conduct rapid assessments in the NT, including the establishment of a dedicated Rapid Assessment Team/s (RAT) to collect data in the field have been developed. A copy is available in the WebEOC library for emergency management practitioners.

The Survey, Rescue and Impact Assessment Group, led by the NTPF and is responsible for impact assessments.

6.15. EOC purpose and coordination

An EOC is a facility designed to meet the needs of an IMT and supporting personnel throughout the course of an emergency event. It acts as a central facility from which information is received, collated, analysed and disseminated.

The EOC is located at the Damian Clifton Centre at the NTES Southern Region Headquarters. When requested by the Regional Controller, the NTES will initiate set up of the EOC.

An EOC will be established by the Regional Controller in response to a major emergency event. This may occur at the Territory, regional or local level. The function of an EOC is to effect operational control and coordination of all resources required to effectively manage response operations. An EOC is scaled up, or down, in accordance with the key principles of AIIMS depending on the size, scale and complexity of the emergency event.

A large-scale emergency will trigger the activation of an EOC equipped with sufficient staff and communications facilities to coordinate Territory-wide resources, seek Australian Government support and provide streamlined public information via media outlets and other means.

Once the NT emergency management arrangement are activated, liaison officers from each functional group attend the EOC as required by the Controlling Authority. Key functions within an EOC include:

- information collection, collation, analysis and dissemination

- preparation and issue of official warnings and advice to the public

- coordination of the provision of resources required by the Incident Controller and if necessary Australian Government resources

- briefing the Regional Controller, Territory Controller and TEMC

- dissemination of information to the general public via the media and other means.

If transition to recovery has occurred (if deemed necessary), an EOC may transition into a Recovery Coordination Centre.

7. Recovery

Recovery is the coordinated process and measures for supporting emergency-affected communities in reconstruction of the physical infrastructure and restoration of social, economic and physical well-being.

7.1. Transitional Arrangements

Transition from response to recovery operations represents a fundamental shift away from protection of human life and supporting the immediate needs of the community, to establish long-term, more sustainable support structures.

Transition from response to recovery operations is outlined in Section 5 of the Territory Emergency Plan. Recovery activities may commence with response operations through the development of a transition to recovery checklist. The Territory Controller and the Territory Recovery Coordinator will agree to the transition of control on advice from the Regional Controller and Regional Recovery Coordinator, in consultation with the TEMC.

Formal handover to recovery will not occur until the Territory Recovery Coordinator is satisfied the following briefings have been completed:

- the Territory Controller has briefed the TEMC and the Territory Recovery Coordinator

- the Regional Controller has briefed the Regional Recovery Coordinator

- the IMT has conducted a handover briefing with the new team.

The indicators listed in the Territory Emergency Plan provide guidance for emergency managers to identify the most appropriate time for the transition to occur without loss of operational tempo.

Some of the indicators when the transition to recovery is ready to occur includes:

- survey and rescue operations are complete

- clearance of main arterial roads is complete

- first round impact assessments have been completed and an initial assessment of the impact of the event has been developed

- evacuations have been completed to the shelter phase

- a visit by the Regional Recovery Coordinator or representative to the affected location/s has been undertaken

- a Recovery Coordination structure has been developed and is ready to be activated

- evacuation centres (where required) have been established

7.2. Recovery Action Plan

A Recovery Action Plan will be developed for each impacted community or location, articulating the overarching recovery objectives and strategies for execution. Where there is no longer a requirement for a multi-agency recovery effort, the Territory Recovery Coordinator will seek endorsement from the TEMC to transition to agency arrangements.

8. Debrief

An operational debrief should be undertaken after all responses and is the responsibility of the control and/or recovery agency, typically the Incident Controller and Recovery Coordinator.

Debrief processes embed continuous improvement into the delivery of emergency management activities. Consistent approaches to lessons learned encourage adaptability, and flexibility across all levels of government. Sharing of knowledge and experiences throughout emergency events assists with ongoing continuous improvement of people and organisations involved.

The NTG implements a lessons learned approach recognising the positive impact on organisational culture commensurate with increasing opportunities to achieve emergency management goals. Whilst lessons learned often begins in one agency through an internal debrief process, those lessons learned are transferable across multi-agencies.

During any operational response, personnel involved are encouraged to record activities where there are lessons to be learned. Activities can include decision making and consequential responses. Where decisions are made by an Incident Controller, IMT member or a functional group member, those decisions should be recorded in a Decision Log (WebEOC). Decision logs can be referred to as part of the debrief process.

The 3 debrief methods are:

- Hot debrief – usually held immediately after response operations, providing an opportunity for instant feedback especially in relation to addressing pressing or immediate concerns

- Internal organisational debrief – to be held within 14 days of the event, where organisational issues are addressed, looking at both strengths and weaknesses to guide future training and development

- Multi-agency whole of government debrief – to be held within 28 days of the event where the activity resulted in a multi-agency response. A formal debrief report should be formulated to ensure consistency in the approach to the collation of information.

More information and templates on debrief can be found in Section 6 of the Territory Emergency Plan and are available in the WebEOC file library.

9. Related references

The following references apply:

- *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) 1976*[5]
- *Emergency Management Act 2013*[6]
- Territory Emergency Plan[7]
- National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework[8].

10. Annexures

Annex A - Functional groups

Annex B - Evacuation guideline

Annex C - Summary of response and recovery activities

Annex D - Definitions and acronyms

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[5] More information can be found at: https://www8.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdb/au/legis/cth/consol_act/alrta1976444/
[6] More information can be found at: https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/Legislation/EMERGENCY-MANAGEMENT-ACT-2013
[7] More information can be found at: https://pfes.nt.gov.au/emergency-service/emergency-management
[8] More information can be found at: https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/emergency/files/national-disaster-risk-reduction-framework.pdf

10.1. Annex A: Functional groups

Functional group	Agency
Animal Welfare	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF)
Critical Goods and Services	Depart of Trade, Business and Asian Relations (DTBAR)
Digital and Telecommunication	Department of Corporate and Digital Development (DCDD)
Emergency Shelter	Department of Education and Training (DET)
Engineering	Department of Logistics and Infrastructure (DLI)
Industry	DTBAR
Medical	Department of Health (DOH)
Public Health	DOH
Public Information	Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet (CM&C)
Public Utilities	Power and Water Corporation (PAWC)
Transport	DLI
Survey, Rescue and Impact Assessment	NTPF and NT Fire and Rescue Service (NTFRS)
Welfare	Department of Children and Families (DCF)

Full details on functional group roles and responsibilities are outlined in the Territory Emergency Plan.

10.2. Annex B: Evacuation guideline

Evacuation is a risk management strategy that can be used to mitigate the effects of an emergency or disaster on a community. Evacuation involves moving people to a safer location, and is usually considered to include the return of the affected community. It is recommended that when advance warning is available to notify the TEMC.

Evacuation is a complex process that has 5 distinct steps:

1. decision
2. warning
3. withdrawal
4. shelter; and
5. return.

Each step is linked and must be carefully planned and carried out in order for the entire process to be successful. Given an evacuation centre will only be opened as a part an evacuation, it is vital to have an understanding of the 5-step process.
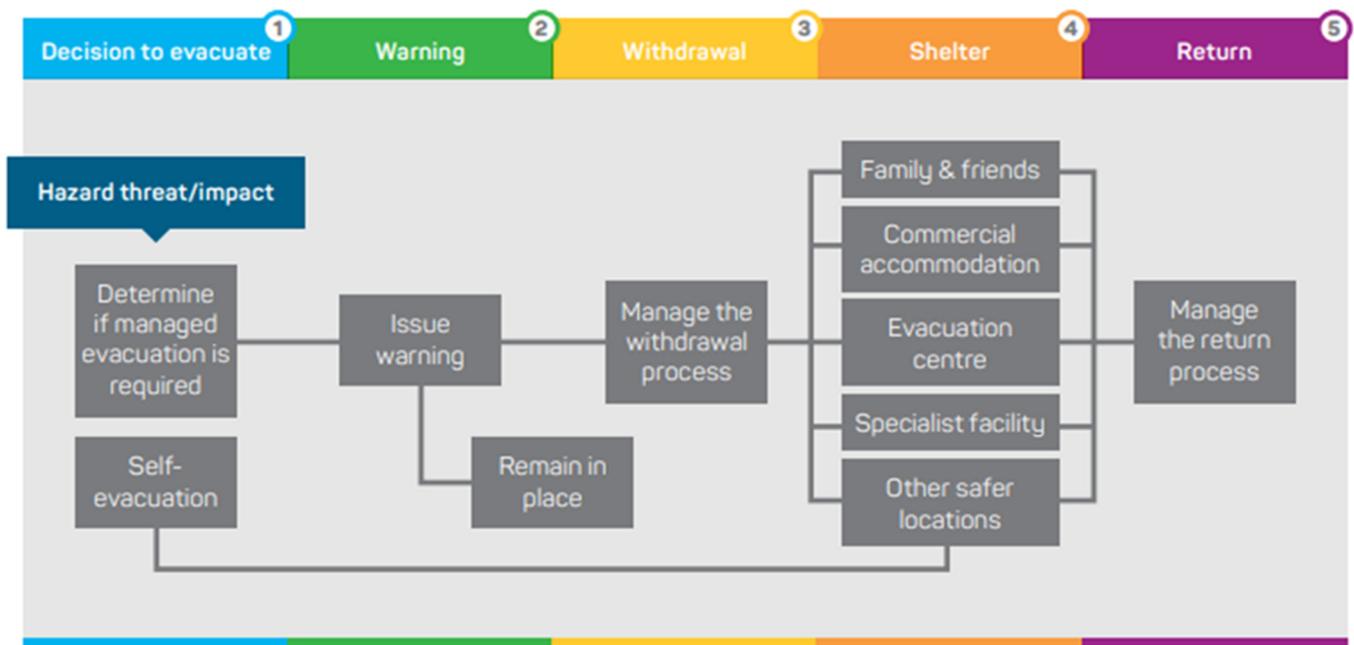
Source: *Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience Evacuation Planning Handbook, 2017*

10.3. Annex C: Summary of Reponses and Recovery Activities

The following table outlines a summary of possible response and recovery activities to be considered following an event.

This table is presented as a _guide only_, assisting emergency managers with operational decision making, planning and resource allocation. It also highlights the importance of response and recovery coordination working collaboratively.

Activities have been broken down and are listed under either response or recovery for simplicity and ease of use. In practice not all response activities will be completed during the response phase. Likewise not all recovery activities will commence after the transition to recovery.

The post event period of any event is highly dynamic and produces many challenges, both foreseen and unpredicted. Response and recovery coordination must be flexible and able to adapt to the situation as it evolves.

In most cases the points noted in this table and in the ensuing document are outlined in greater detail in functional group or agency plans.

Activity	Response activities	Recovery activities
1. **Situational awareness**	- Road clearance teams - General public - Media reports - Survey and rescue teams - Impact assessment teams	- Contributes to recovery planning through impact assessment data - Comprehensive Impact Assessments - Needs Assessment
2. **Public Information**	- Public Information Group activation - Spokes persons identified - SecureNT activated	Continues in recovery
3. **Survey and Rescue**	- Survey teams deploy to designated areas - Critical sites surveyed - Deploy rescue teams – NTFRS and NTPF Specialist Response Division provide primary Urban Search and Rescue capability	Survey and Impact Assessment data used to develop the Recovery Action Plan
4. **Road clearance**	- Road patrol teams deploy and check assigned routes - Road clearance to priority sites	- Restoration of road networks and bridges - Return to business as usual

Activity	Response activities	Recovery activities
	• Assess major highways through to the Australian border (supply route)	
5. Emergency accommodation	• Emergency accommodation and shelter - evacuation centres • Provision of resources that will enable people to remain in their homes	• Evacuation centres may continue into recovery • Temporary accommodation options • Repatriation planning

6. Medical	• Hospital
	  - Identify any issues with accessing facilities
	  - Initial Impact assessment
	  - Access to critical supplies e.g. medicines, consumables, power or fuel and water
	  - ongoing acute clinical care and critical services requirements
	  - increase morgue capacity
	Health Centres
	  - identify any issues with accessing facilities
	  - Access to critical supplies e.g. medicines, consumables, power or fuel and water
	• GP clinics and pharmacies
	  - identify operational GP services
	  - identify operational pharmacies
	• Support Medically vulnerable people
	• Medical retrieval services (air and road)
		• Ongoing provision of health services
		  - which may include business continuity plans
		  - engagement with stakeholders
		• Repatriation of medically vulnerable people in community
		• GP clinics and pharmacies
		  - ongoing liaison by the Medical Group
		• Medical retrieval services – resume business as usual

Activity	Response activities	Recovery activities
7. **Essential goods and services**	• Establish emergency feeding and food distribution points • Assessing the damage to suppliers and retailers of critical resources • Implement interim banking arrangements	• Support the re-opening of the private business sector • Monitor levels and availability of essential goods • Manage logistics arrangements supplying resources to outlying communities • Public Health inspections (food outlets) • Banking sector business continuity arrangements
	<u>Fuel</u> • Fuel suppliers and point of sale • Manage fuel supplies to emergency power generation	• Monitor fuel levels • Infrastructure repairs • Emergency fuel supplies for recovery • Liaise with fuel suppliers, distributors and wholesalers to re-establish long term supply
	<u>Banking</u> • Assess damage to banks and ATMs • Implement temporary arrangements	• Emergency cash outlets • Implement long term arrangements
8. **Evacuation**	• Evacuations within community • Evacuation out of community • Registration	• Support services for evacuees • Recovery information for evacuees • Repatriation of evacuation residents
9. **Public Health**	• Communicable disease control response • Drinking water safety standards • Sewage and waste disposal • Safe food distribution and advice • Vector and vermin control • Food and commercial premises • Assessment of evacuation centres	• Ongoing in recovery
10. **Utilities**	• Power supply	• Restore power network

Activity	Response activities	Recovery activities
	• Power generation • Water supply • Sewerage • Emergency sanitation	• Restore water and sewerage infrastructure • Issue alerts until safe to use
11. **Impact Assessments**	• Training assessment teams • Initial Impact Assessments	• Comprehensive impact assessments • Ongoing needs assessments
12. **Transport infrastructure (supply lines)**	Air (Airport/Airstrip) • Clear the runway to allow air movements • Establish a logistics hub at the airport • Terminal damage and operational capability assessment	• Monitor repairs and business continuity activities
	Road • Highway and critical access roads damage assessment • Repair work to commence immediately	• Planning and prioritising repair work of all affected key Territory Highways (Stuart, Barkly, Victoria and Arnhem)
	Rail • Rail damage assessment • Outage estimation	• Ongoing liaison with operator to support restoration to business as usual
13. **Waste management**	• Waste management requirements and develop waste management plan if required	• Continues in recovery

14. **Repairs and reconstruction**	• Private housing
	  - Impact Assessments
	  - Temporary repairs
	• Government buildings
	  - Damage assessment
	• Public housing
	  - Impact Assessments
	• Private industry
	  - Damage assessments
		• Private housing
		  - Information and support to facilitate repairs.
		• Government buildings
		  - Repairs and reconstruction
		• Public housing
		  - Long term repair plans
		• Private industry
		  - Repair and reconstruction
		• Temporary accommodation for a visiting construction workforce

Activity	Response activities	Recovery activities
15. Transport Services	• Staged re-establishment of public transport services	• Continues in recovery
16. Telecommunications	• Telecommunications providers will assess the damage to their infrastructure • Put in place temporary measures to enable landline and mobile services	• Repair damage networks and infrastructure (for private entities there is support for operators only)
17. Public safety	• Police will maintain normal policing services to the community	• Gradual return to business as usual
18. Animal welfare	• Temporary emergency arrangements for pets and wildlife	• Reunite pets with their owners and cease emergency support arrangements
19. Community consultation	• Information provision regarding the overall situation, response efforts, what services are available and how to access them	• Community consultation process regarding long term recovery and community development

10.4. Annex D: Definitions and acronyms

Acronyms	Definitions
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
AIIMS	Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System
CM&C	Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet
DAF	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
DCDD	Department of Corporate and Digital Development
DCF	Department of Children and Families
DET	Department of Education and Training
DLI	Department of Logistics and Infrastructure
DOH	Department of Health
DTBAR	Department of Trade, Business, and Asian Relations
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
ICC	Incident Control Centre
IMT	Incident Management Team
LEC	Local Emergency Committee
NT	Northern Territory
NTES	Northern Territory Emergency Service
NTFES	Northern Territory Fire and Emergency Services
NTFRS	Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service
NTG	Northern Territory Government
NTPF	Northern Territory Police Force
PAWC	Power and Water Corporation
PPRR	Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery
RAT	Rapid Assessment Team
REC	Regional Emergency Committee

Acronyms	Definitions
SEWS	Standard Emergency Warning Signal
TEMC	Territory Emergency Management Council
WebEOC	Web-Based Emergency Operations Centre
WRC	Welfare Recovery Centre

11. Document control

11.1. Governance

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11.2. Version history

Date	Version	Author	Summary of changes
29/12/2014	1	John McRoberts	First Version
18/11/2016	2	Reece Kershaw	Reviewed and Updated
23/01/2019	3	Reece Kershaw	Reviewed and Updated
07/01/2020	4	Michael White	Reviewed and Updated
16/02/2021	5	Jamie Chalker	Reviewed and Updated
24/02/2022	6	Jamie Chalker	Reviewed and Updated
28/12/2023	7	Michael Murphy	Reviewed and Updated
26/03/2025	8	Martin Dole	Reviewed and Updated
18/02/2026	9	Martin Dole	Reviewed and Updated

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