Southern Region Emergency Plan 2021/22

NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT

TERRITORY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Authority

The Southern Region Emergency Plan (the Plan) has been prepared by the Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) in accordance with section 12 of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (the Act).

Territory Controller

Dated this 11th   day of February   2022

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Contents

Photo - Flood 2015, Todd River Alice Springs NT

Version History

The following table lists all previous endorsed versions of this plan:

Plan	Endorsed
Southern Region Emergency Plan 2019/20	Regional Controller
Southern Region Emergency Plan 2020/21	Regional Controller

Amendment List

Proposals for amendment to this plan are to be forward to:
Manager, Planning and Preparedness Command
Northern Territory Emergency Service
PO Box 39764 Winnellie NT 0821

Amendments promulgated are to be certified below when entered:

Revision Date	Description	Updated by
April 2018	Review of document into Southern Region Plan	RMS NTES
Oct 2018	Review of document into Southern Region Plan	EM Planning Officer NTFRES
April 2019	Plan review and update	Deputy Regional Controller
Nov 2019	Plan review and update	Deputy Regional Controller
Oct 2020	Plan review and update	Deputy Regional Controller
Dec 2021	Plan review and document update	Regional Controller

Photo – Road closed due to flooding, Todd River Alice Springs NT

1. Southern Region Context Statement

Southern Region emergency management area extends from Elliott in the north to the Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia borders. It covers approximately 873,700 square kilometres and has a population of approximately 41,000.

The Southern Region of the Northern Territory (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 two main zones, which experience distinct climatic conditions. They are the Grassland zone and the Desert Zone.

1.1. Grasslands Zone

Central parts of the NT experience hot temperatures from May to October, while the middle of the year is mild in comparison. At the peak of the Wet Season (November - 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 to December.

1.2. Desert Zone

The Desert Zone is characterised by a hot summer (December-February) and a cold winter (June-August). The majority of the region experiences low and unreliable rainfall across all seasons of the year. Rainfall is slightly more reliable from December to 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.

1.3. Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to describe the emergency management arrangements for the Southern Region during 2021/22.

1.4. Application

This Plan applies to the Southern Region of the NT.

1.5. Related References

The following references apply:

- *Emergency Management Act 2013*
- Territory Emergency Plan

2. Plan

2.1. Key Considerations

The *Emergency Management Act 2013* (the Act) 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(s), form the basis for this Plan.

This Plan:
- confirms appointment of a Regional Emergency Controller and Regional Recovery Coordinator

- confirms establishment of the Regional Emergency Committee (REC) and Regional Recovery Coordination Committee (RRCC)

- 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 (TEP)

- confirms the reporting structure of the Southern Region Recovery Coordination Committee.

This Plan complements the TEP as it relates to the Southern Region. For further information on the hierarchy of plans, refer **Annex A**.

2.2. Structure of the Plan

The plan is based on a comprehensive approach and recognises four phases of activities that contribute to the reduction or elimination of hazards and to reducing the susceptibility or increasing the resilience to hazards of a community or environment.

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.

The plan is complemented by Functional Group plans which are designed to operate on a stand-alone basis or as part of a wider response and describe that group's capabilities and activities as set out by the TEP.

2.3. Southern Region Composition

The Region incorporates the NT Police Southern Command, inclusive of the Tennant Creek and Barkly Division, the Alice Springs Division and the Southern Desert Division.

The Region is represented by the following four local government authorities (councils):

Local Government Authority	Size of district (km²)	Approx. Population
Alice Springs Town Council	327.5	24,750
Barkly Regional Council	322,514	6,650
Central Desert Regional Council	282,100	3,670
MacDonnell Regional Council	268,800	6,030

2.4. Localities and Communities

The Southern Region is divided into 14 localities and each locality has a Local Controller 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 tables below.

Tennant Creek and Barkly District

Locality	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

Alice Springs District

Locality	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

Southern Desert District

| Locality	Major Communities	Local Government Authority
Harts Range	Atitjere (Harts Range) Engawala (Alcoota) Orrtipa-Thurra (Bonya)	Central Desert Regional Council
Kintore	(Walungurra) Kintore	MacDonnell Regional Council
Kulgera	Aputula (Finke) Imanpa	MacDonnell Regional Council
Ntaria (Hermannsburg)	Areyonga Hermannsburg Wallace Rockhole	MacDonnell Regional Council
Papunya	Haasts Bluff Mount Liebig Papunya	MacDonnell Regional Council
Ti Tree	Laramba (Napperby) Pmara Jutunta Ti Tree Tara (Neutral Junction) Willowra Wilora	Central Desert Regional Council
Utopia (Arlparra) and Ampilatwatja	Ampilatwatja Arawerr Arlparra (Utopia) Irrultja	Barkly Regional Council
Yulara (Petermann)	Mutitjulu Watarrka Kaltukatjara (Docker River) Yulara*(Unincorporated)	MacDonnell Regional Council
Yuendumu	Nyrripi Yuelamu	Central Desert Regional Council
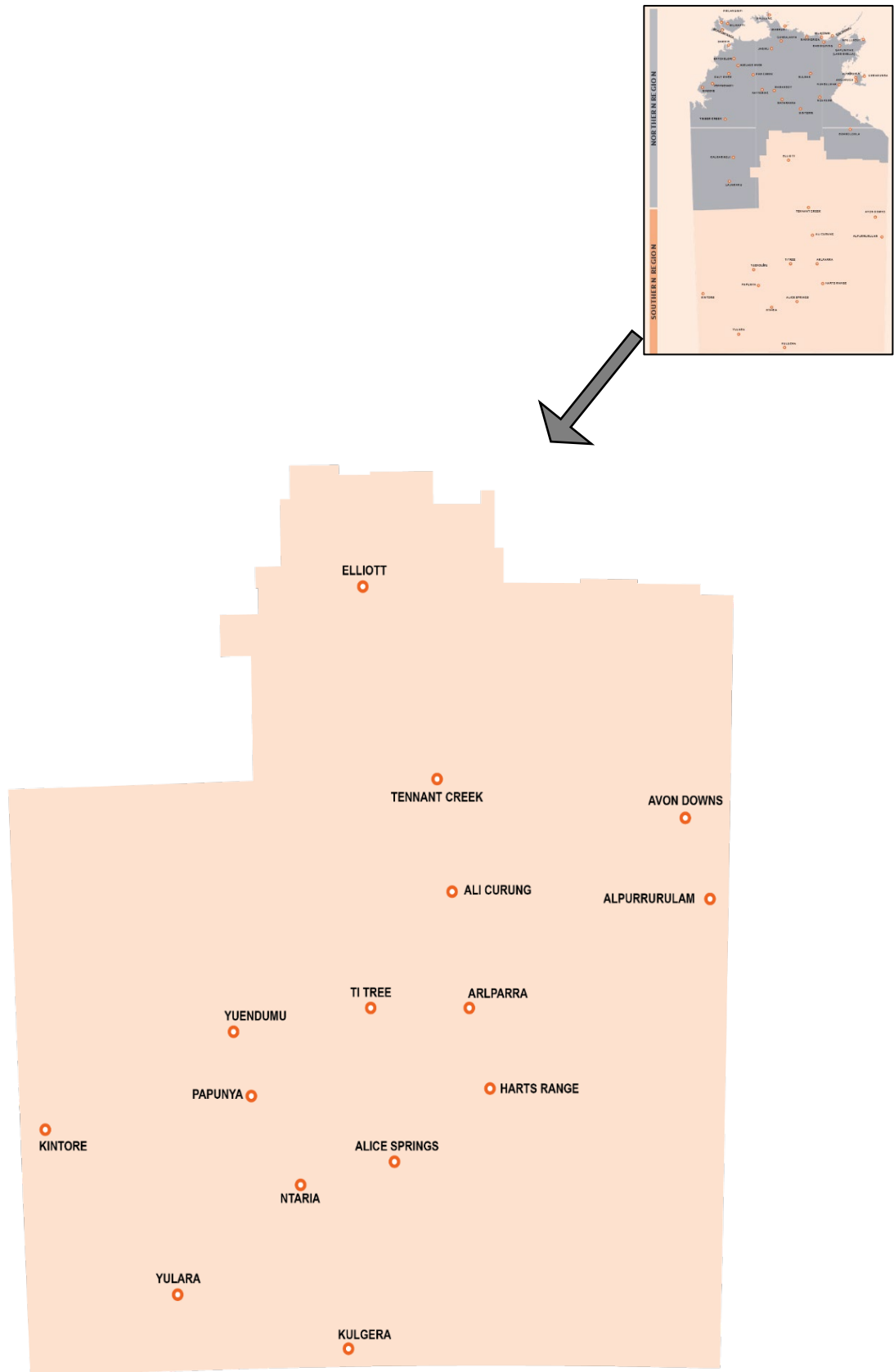
Figure 1 - Southern Region

3. Emergency Management Governance

3.1. Regional Emergency Committee (REC)

Acordance with section 58 of the Act, a REC has been 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 of the Southern REC are listed at **Annex C** (restricted).

3.1.1. Meeting Schedule

The Committee have agreed to meet half yearly throughout the calendar year. During an emergency, the REC will usually meet as determined by the Regional Controller.

3.2. Roles and Responsibilities

3.2.1. Regional Controller

The Territory Controller in accordance with section 54 of the Act appoints a Regional Controller. The Regional Controller for Southern Region is the Assistant Commissioner, Regional & Remote Operations.

The Regional Controller is supported in the Southern Region by a Deputy Regional Controller, being the Commander Southern Command. The Regional Controller will 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:

   a) to supervise and coordinate emergency operations in the region (this may include the appointment of an Incident Controller/s to manage an incident or incidents)
   b) to ensure that the Territory Controller's instructions, policies and procedures are complied with
   c) any other functions conferred on the Regional Controller by the Territory Controller or by the Act
   d) 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 NTES. This will be coordinated through respective Local Controllers at locations where the equipment is held and NTES Southern Command staff.

3.2.2. Local Controllers

Local Controllers within the Southern Region are the Officers in Charge of the 14 localities identified by the Territory Controller, requiring Local Emergency Plans. Local Controllers will report to the Southern Region Controller, Deputy Regional Controller or a delegated Incident Controller to coordinate effective preparation and response management to an incident.

Local Controllers and their respective Local Emergency Committees will establish Incident Control Points for local management of emergencies and report through the Region Emergency Operations Centre, 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 Local Emergency Committee. If local resources cannot cope, coordination of resources may escalate to a Regional Controller, or if stood up a Regional Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).

3.2.3. WebEOC

WebEOC is a critical information management system used throughout the NT. It is an effective and efficient tool used by stakeholders that have a role and responsibility under the TEP during prevention, preparation, response and recovery phases of any event.

WebEOC is a contemporary platform for the coordination of multi-agency response to any critical incident be it a severe weather event, flood, bush fire, industrial accident, major crime, terrorism or a large scale planned event. It provides the capacity to record (in real time) all information relevant to an incident and to share that information with other persons at the scene, an EOC and Functional Group personnel.

WebEOC allows for information sharing, managing tasks and submitting situational reports. It also assists the Control Authority to manage and disseminate current decisions and objectives. Together these functionalities provide up-to-date situational awareness.

3.2.4. Roles within the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)

Working under the Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS), roles will be assigned to appropriately trained personnel from across the NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services (NTPFES), government agency personnel and non-government personnel.

The EOC can be used as an Incident Control Centre (ICC). For information on roles and responsibilities in an EOC, please refer to the AIIMS manual.

3.2.5. Functional Group Leaders

Functional Groups roles and responsibilities are detailed within the TEP. Functional Group Leaders are appointed by their respective lead agency to provide advice to the REC and provide status reports as requested by the Regional Controller.

Where appropriate, Functional Groups will 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 functional area using WebEOC. Communication from an EOC to Functional Groups will be via regular briefings, phone contact or video conferencing as required, emails and WebEOC.

3.2.6. Regional Recovery Coordination

As per section 65 of the Act, the Territory Recovery Coordinator may appoint a Regional Recovery Coordinator for a region that has been affected by an event. The assigned person will be notified via an instrument of appointment designating them as an authorised officer to direct and coordinate recovery operations. Similarly, the Regional Recovery Coordinator may also appoint a Local Recovery Coordinator as an authorised officers for a locality within a region.

The Executive Director, Central Region, DCMC will likely be appointed Regional Recovery Coordinator Southern Region, unless otherwise directed by the Territory Recovery Coordinator. As per the Act, where a Regional Recovery Coordinator is appointed, a Regional Recovery Coordination Committee will also be established. In most instances, membership of this group will mirror the REC, as well as section 72 of the Act. Regional Recovery Coordination Centre will also be established to coordinate recovery operations, utilising an AIIMS-based incident management system.

3.2.7. Local Recovery Coordinators

Recovery Coordinators are appointed if required by the Regional Recovery Coordinator. In most cases, a Local Recovery Coordinator will be appointed for each community or location impacted by the emergency or disaster event. Where appointed, the Local Recovery Coordinator may establish a Local Recovery Coordination Committee. In most cases, membership of this committee will mirror membership of the Local Emergency Committee.

4. Emergency Management Arrangements

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 may provide operational support coordination to local response or recovery operations. A copy of each approved Local Emergency Plan is located in the WebEOC File Library or on https://pfes.nt.gov.au/emergency-service/publications. Prevention and mitigation relates 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. Strategies are developed based on a

thorough understanding of hazards identified in emergency risk planning and their interaction with all aspects of society.

4.2. Preparedness

The Regional Controller is responsible for ensuring an adequate level of planning, training and equipping has occurred in localities within the region. This includes ensuring local emergency plans have been updated and readiness reports are prepared prior to the Bushfire/Flood Season. 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 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 since the last review or where substantial changes have occurred.

4.3. 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.

4.3.1. Stages of response: Activation of the Plan – Stages of Response/ Recovery

This plan sets out five stages of activation. 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, SERT, DCMC in accordance with Section 5.2 of the TEP.
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 other emergency plans, may lead to activation of the Southern Region Emergency Plan. This plan may be activated by the Territory Controller, Director NTES or Regional Controller.

Recovery may be activated when an incident or event has occurred that did not necessitate the activation of response stages 1 to 4. This may be in relation to a sudden impact event or slow onset event.

4.3.2. Regional level arrangements

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 agency Coordination Centre locations are as follows:

- **Primary EOC** : Damian Clifton Centre, NTES Southern Command Headquarters
- **Medical & Public Health**: Eurilpa House or Alice Springs Hospital
- **Welfare**: Floor 1 Minerals House, 58 Hartley Street
- **Survey/Rescue**: Alice Springs Fire Station
- **Public Utilities**: Power and Water Corporation, Sadadeen Complex
- **Engineering**: Green Well Building, 50 Bath Street
- **Emergency Shelter**: First Floor Alice Plaza, Todd Mall
- **Public Information**: First Floor Alice Plaza & Primary EOC
- **Communication Technology**: First Floor Alice Plaza
- **Transport**: Green Well Building, 50 Bath Street
- **Critical Goods and Services**: Green Well Building, 50 Bath Street
- **Biosecurity and Animal Welfare**: AZRI Complex, South Stuart Highway
- **Industry**: Green Well Building, 50 Bath Street
- **Recovery Coordination**: DCMC to begin with, other location pending incident location
- **Major Defence Installations**: location(s) dependent on location and nature of emergency.

4.3.3. Warning systems, notifications and dissemination

In the event of an emerging incident occurring, REC members will be notified by any or all of the following means:

- telephone
- email
- SMS messaging
- WebEOC alerts

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 on emerging incidents. As an example; with storm, flood and cyclone, the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) is the primary source of warning information, with NTES providing public action statements that are approved by the Director, NTES or Regional Controller and disseminated by broadcast media, social media and websites.

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

- broadcast media: ABC radio (emergency broadcaster), CAAMA, PAW Radio may be utilised depending on the warning area

- social media: *Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services – Alice Springs and Southern* Facebook pages, Secure NT Facebook and Twitter platforms.

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

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

- Emergency Alert System (EA): a location-targeted voice and text message delivery system. Messages can only be authorised by the Territory Controller, the Director, Northern Territory Emergency Services (NTES), a Regional Controller, the Chief Fire Officer, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer, The Executive Director, Bushfires NT or the Chief Fire Control Officer, Bushfires NT. For more detail refer to the TEP

- 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 the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS). SEWS is an audio signal designed to draw attention to a particular public safety warning. The decision to use SEWS rests with the NTES Director, the Territory Controller or the BOM Manager, Hazard Preparedness and Response.

4.3.4. Emergency shelters

The Regional Controller may request Emergency Shelters are opened, 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.

4.3.5. Welfare Recovery Centres

The Regional Controller, in consultation with the Director, SERT, DCMC, may request the opening of Welfare Recovery Centres (WRC) to support the recovery of an area. The relevant Functional Groups will be briefed and involved in planning to facilitate set up and operation of WRCs. Local Emergency Plans may include suitable locations in communities for use as WRCs.

4.3.6. Evacuation

Evacuation is a risk management strategy that can be used to mitigate the effect of an emergency or disaster on a community[1]. 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 center, 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 Regional Incident Management Team, 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 in regard to the evacuation plan that will have been formulated and seek endorsement of the Territory Controller to proceed with the plan.

Emergency Plans include evacuation and planning considerations. Reference should be made to the NT Evacuation Guide, Impact Assessment Guideline and registration and reception guidelines. Refer **Annex D**: Evacuation Guideline.

In planning for evacuation, consideration must be made for evacuation management, including evacuation centres, registration, reception and repatriation planning.

4.3.7. 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 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 are to have an Emergency Preparedness 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.

4.3.8. 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 three phases:

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[1] Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience. (2017). Handbook 4, Evacuation Planning

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 NTPFES is responsible for impact assessments.

4.3.9. EOC Purpose and Coordination

An Emergency Operations Centre (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 primary EOC is located at the Damian Clifton Centre at the NTES Southern Region Headquarters. When requested by the Regional Controller, the Northern Territory Emergency Service will initiate set up of the EOC.

An EOC will be established by the relevant Emergency 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
- requesting Australian Government resources
- briefing the Regional Controller, Territory Controller and TEMC
- dissemination of information to the general public via the media and other means.

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

Photo –Mt Gillen - 2013

4.4. Recovery

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

Transition from response (led by the applicable Controlling and Hazard Management Authority) to recovery coordination (led by DCMC) will occur as outlined at Part 5 of the TEP, "Recovery arrangements".

4.4.1. Transitional Arrangements

The transition from response to recovery coordination represents a fundamental shift in operational aims and tempo. This shift is from the protection of life and supporting the immediate needs of the community, to establishing longer term, more sustainable support structures.

The transition to recovery coordination occurs at a time agreed to by the:

- Territory Controller,
- Territory Recovery Coordinator,

After consultation with TEMC, the Regional Controller and the Regional Recovery Coordinator.

4.4.2. Handover Arrangements

Formal handover to recovery coordination 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, and

- where there is significant changeover of personnel, the EOC planning operations and logistics sections have briefed incoming recovery planning, operations and logistics staff.

The Regional Recovery Coordinator will ensure all functional group leaders, agencies, support groups and other relevant stakeholders are notified of the transition to recovery well before it occurs. This notification is to include changes to relevant contact details and other pertinent information.

The indicators listed in the TEP provide guidance for emergency managers to identify the most appropriate time for the transition to occur to ensure no loss of operational tempo.

Some of the indicators the transition to recovery is ready to occur include:

- survey and rescue operations are complete
- road 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 a SERT representative and Regional Recovery Coordinator to the affected location/s has been undertaken
- a Recovery Coordination structure has been developed and is ready to be activated
- Welfare Assembly Centres are closed, and evacuation centres (where required) have been established.

4.4.3. Recovery Action Plan

A Recovery Action Plan will be developed for each impacted community or location. The plan will articulate the overarching recovery aim and objectives, as well as strategies needed to achieve the recovery objectives.

4.5. Debrief

To embed continuous improvement into the delivery of emergency management activities, debrief processes should be part of the operational methodology. The three 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.

Section 6 of the TEP provides further information on the debrief processes, and debrief documentation, as per the Whole of Government Debrief Process, is available under **Annex G** of this plan, and templates are available in the WebEOC library.

4.6. Plan Governance

Part 2, Division 2 of the Act outlines the preparation, consideration, approval and review requirements for Regional Emergency Plans.

Mt Gillen – NTES Rescue 2013

Annexures

Annex A: Hierarchy of Plans

Emergency management planning in the Territory is based upon a hierarchal system. It originates with the Territory Emergency Plan which provides the basis for subsequent regional, local and specific emergency management plans relating to specific threats.

- *Territory Emergency Plan.* A plan to describe the Northern Territory's approach to emergency and recovery operations, the governance and coordination arrangements and roles and responsibilities of agencies. The plan is supported by regional, local and hazard specific plans and functional group sub plans.

- *Regional Emergency Plans*. The regional emergency management structure is based upon two Police Regions. The plans provide a basis for coordinated emergency and recovery operations in the region.

- *Local Emergency Plans.* Plans developed for coordinated emergency and recovery operations in the identified locality.

- *Territory Wide Plans.* Plans are not associated with functional group operational plans but cover an all hazard/all agency/all regions approach.

- *Agency/functional group plans.* Plans developed for agencies or functional groups to deliver the functions and operations of their agency during an emergency or disaster.

- *Australian Government Plans and Arrangements.* The Australian Government publish a range of national plans to deal with emergencies and disasters.

- *Special Emergency Plans.* Plans outlining the arrangements for the control, coordination and support response, for hazard specific emergencies and disasters such as emergency terrestrial and aquatic pest and disease incursions.

Figure 1 – Plan Hierarchy

Annex B: Functional Groups - Roles and Responsibilities

Functional Group	Position and Agency
Biosecurity and Animal Welfare	Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade
Communication Technology	Department of Corporate and Digital Development
Critical Goods and Services	Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade
Emergency Shelter	Department of Education
Engineering	Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics
Industry	Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade
Medical	Department of Health
Public Health	Department of Health
Public Information	Department of the Chief Minister & Cabinet
Public Utilities	Power and Water Corporation
Transport	Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics
Survey, Rescue and Impact Assessment	NT Police (TRG) with the assistance of NT Fire and Rescue Service NT Emergency Service
Welfare	Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities

Full details on agency roles and responsibilities are detailed in the Territory Emergency Plan.

Annex D: 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 Territory Emergency Management Council.

Evacuation is a complex process that has five distinct steps:

1. decision
2. warning
3. withdrawal
4. shelter
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 five-step process.
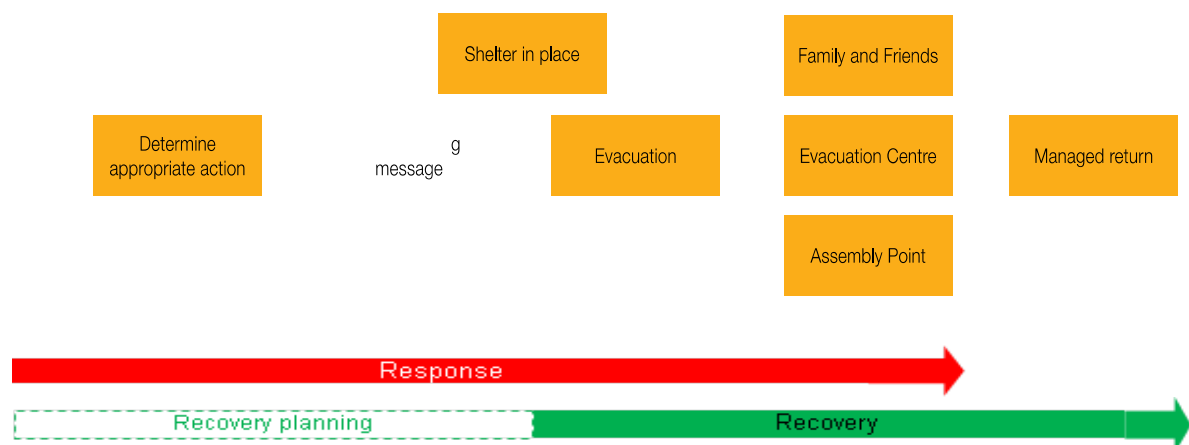
Source: Five stages of Evacuation, Qld Government, 2011.

Emergency Shelters

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.

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

An evacuation centre will provide some or all of 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.

Identified Evacuation Centres

For further information on evacuation centres / shelters management, refer to the NT Evacuation Centre Guide available on WebEOC.

Annex E: SITREP Template

Situation Report (SITREP)

SITREP NO:
Date:
Period Covered: From: To:
AGENCY:
Created by:
Current Situation:
Objectives:
Present Key Issues:
Future Key Issues:
Recommendation(s):

Annex F: Summary of Response and Recovery Activities

The following tables list a summary of possible response and recovery activities to be considered following an event. 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 produces many challenges, both foreseen and unpredicted. Response and Recovery Coordination must be flexible and able to adapt to the situation as it evolves.

This table is presented as a guide to assist emergency managers with operational decision making, planning and resource allocation. It also highlights the importance of Response and Recovery Coordination working collaboratively. 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.

Response PFES / EOC → Transitional Arrangements → Recovery DCMC / TCCC

Activity	Response activities	Recovery activities
Situational awareness	Survey and rescue teams Road clearance teams Impact assessment teams General public Media reports	☐ Continues in recovery through the use of impact assessments and Outreach
Public Information	Public Information Group stood up Spokes persons identified SecureNT activated	☐ Continues in recovery ☐ Handover to long term recovery coordination
Survey and Rescue	Survey teams deploy to designated areas Critical sites surveyed Deploy rescue teams – NTFRS and TRS provide primary USAR capability	Nil
Road clearance	Road patrol teams deploy and check assigned routes Road clearance to priority sites	Monitoring and completing road clearance activities
Emergency accommodation	Emergency accommodation and shelter - welfare assembly centres (WAC) - evacuation centres	Evacuation centres may continue into recovery. Temporary accommodation options

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	Provision of resources that will enable people to remain in their homes Emergency clothing	
Medical	Hospital - road clearance to the hospital - damage assessment - increase morgue capacity - divert patients from remote and regional areas - power (fuel) and water supplies Medical clinics and field hospitals - Determine the need for clinics to be opened - Assess damage to clinics - Deploy field hospital/s ☐ Medical presence in WAC - Supplied by the Medical Group ☐ Ambulance pick up points on key, cleared roads GP clinics and pharmacies - Identify GP clinics able to open - Identify pharmacies able to open Medically vulnerable people - Support agencies to follow-up and advise the Medical Group - Vulnerable people in shelters or WAC - Support for vulnerable people at shelters Care Flight	Hospital - Business continuity arrangements - Repair work Department of Health- Health Centres - Repair work - Reopen other clinics Support vulnerable people to return home. GP clinics and pharmacies - Ongoing liaison by the Medical Group CareFlight –resume normal operations St John Ambulance – resumption of core business
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	Encourage private business to reopen Monitor levels and availability of critical resources Manage logistics arrangements supplying resources to outlying communities Public Health inspections (food outlets)

		Banking sector business continuity arrangements
	Fuel Fuel suppliers and point of sale Manage fuel supplies to emergency power generation	Liaise with fuel suppliers, distributors and wholesalers. Monitor fuel levels Infrastructure repairs
	Cash Assess damage to banks and ATMs Implement temporary arrangements	Implement long term arrangements
Evacuation	Evacuations within community Evacuation out of community Registration	Support services for evacuees Recovery information for evacuees
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	Ongoing in recovery
Utilities	Power supply Power generation Water supply Sewerage Emergency sanitation	Recovery of the power network Recovery of water and sewerage infrastructure
Impact Assessments	Training assessment teams Initial Impact Assessments	Secondary Impact Assessments Continued assessments through outreach
Transport infra-structure (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) ☐ Repairing infrastructure

		□ Establish alternate arrangements for the supply of remote communities
	Rail Ask rail operator to assess damage to the railway	□ Liaising with GWA/One Rail Australia to monitor repair work □ Repairing infrastructure □ Establish alternate arrangements for the supply of remote communities
	& associated infrastructure and report outage estimation	
Waste management	Waste management requirements and develop waste management plan if required	Continues in recovery
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
Transport Services	Staged re-establishment of public transport services	Continues in recovery
Communications	Telstra and Optus will assess the damage to their infrastructure Put in place temporary measures to enable landline and mobile services	Repair damage networks and infrastructure
Public safety	Police will maintain normal policing services to the community	Gradual return to core business
Pets	Temporary emergency arrangements for pets. Arrange emergency feed/veterinary care for livestock	Reunite pets with their owners and cease emergency support arrangements Coordinate disposal of animal carcasses in conjunction with Engineering Group
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

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Annex G: Debrief

1. The purpose of this Annex is to provide a framework for a debrief process which complements the Whole of Government Debrief Process. The process should not be confused with training or exercise evaluations but rather considered as a lessons learned opportunity. Lessons learned leads to improved operational effectiveness, increased cost efficiency and reduced operational risk.

2. The Debrief Process embeds continuous improvement into the delivery of activities pursuant to the Territory Emergency Plan (TEP). Consistent approaches to lessons learned will encourage adaptability, and flexibility across all functional areas; sharing of knowledge and experiences will assist with ongoing continuous improvement of people and organisations.

3. Implemented judiciously, a lessons learned approach can have a positive impact on organisational culture commensurate with increasing opportunities to achieve goals. Whilst lessons learned often begins in one organisation through an internal debrief processes, those lessons learned are often transferable across multi-agencies; this Whole of Government Debrief Process and Lessons Management aims to ensure learnings are translatable across multiple organisations.

4. One of the most critical steps in the lessons management is the collection of information and observations of persons involved in the operation. The collection of this information is not limited to persons involved in the operation itself or the actions of those who provided a response, but includes those who had involvement prior to including the promulgation and implementation of plans (as lessons to be learned is not limited to how an emergency was managed but also includes the planning processes).

5. Debriefing is more than simply producing a report at the end of an operation. It forms part of the broader process of learning and has significant influential impact on an agency and sensitises people into doing the right thing. It prevents confusion and misinterpretation for future operations and drives home the main reasons the agency implores a lessons management system – to ensure that the agency learns from their mistakes and what they do well and drives continuous improvement.

6. Debriefs are not about distributing blame, but rather shifting focus towards improving capacity and capability to respond to incidents in a way that reflects improved planning, process, technology, support, training and development. The inevitability that exists with decisions made on a risk based approach carries a certain level of accepted risk and this needs to be taken into account when debriefing.

7. During any operation, anyone involved in the operation should be recording activities where there are lessons to be learned; activities can include decision making and consequential responses.

8. Where decisions are made by an Incident Management Team member or a Functional Group Leader, those decisions should be recorded in the Decision Log in the WebEOC event. Decision Logs can be referred to as part of the debrief process.

9. A Hot Debrief is held immediately after the incident response is complete or when a person concludes their shift in response to the incident. It allows rapid capture of real-time feedback aimed at addressing pressing or immediate concerns. This is a key time to address any health or safety issues and provides an opportunity for instant feedback.

10. The Hot Debrief will be fed into the Whole of Government Debrief Process and Lessons Management. For the purpose, the following template is to be used and uploaded to WebEOC.

Record of Debrief

Operation / event:

Date	
Time	
Location debrief held	
Operation background (provide succinct detail of sequence of events)	
What went well	
What could have been done better	
What opportunities are there for improvement	
Did the agency have sufficient capacity / capability	
Other related issues that contributed to the execution of the operation	
Open discussion points	
Action items arising and whom will monitor	
Are there any staff welfare concerns	
Are there staff that deserve recognition - **detail of whom and why**	

Annex H: Glossary

Term	In the context of this plan, this means:
All Hazards Approach	The application of one set of control, coordination and communication policies and procedures in a universal manner to emergency situations of varying type thereby promoting consistency of emergency management at all levels.
Affected area	A particular area where either an emergency situation, state of emergency or state of disaster exists.
Approved emergency plan	Means a plan approved under section 10930, 13(2), 16(2) of the Act. Source: *Emergency Management Act 2013*
Authorised Officer	Person or persons authorised under section 98 of the Act. Source: *Emergency Management Act 2013*
Chief Executive	The appointed position that leads the governance and management of a service responsible for the effective exercise of the relevant statutory powers, authorities, duties and functions consistent with the NT government policy.
Command	The authority to command is established in legislation or by agreement with agency/organisations. Command relates to agencies/organisations, functions and individuals. Situations are controlled.
Comprehensive approach	The development of emergency and disaster arrangements to embrace the aspects of prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery (PPRR). PPRR are aspects of emergency management, not sequential phases. Source: ADR Glossary.
Control	The overall direction of Emergency Management activities in an emergency situation. Authority for control is established in legislation or in an emergency plan and carries with it the responsibility for tasking other organisations in accordance with the needs of the situation. Control relates to situations and operates horizontally across organisations. Source: ADR Glossary.
Controlling Authority	The authorised agency which has the overall direction of activities, agencies or individuals concerned.
Coordination	The bringing together of organisations and elements to ensure an effective response, primarily concerned with the systematic acquisition and application of resources (organisation, manpower and equipment) in accordance with the requirements imposed by the threat or impact of an emergency. Source: ADR Glossary.
Debrief	A meeting at the end of an operation with the purpose of assessing the conduct or results of an operation. Source: ADR Glossary.
Delegate	A person nominated to act as the representative of an officially appointed position holder, having the same powers and authority to commit the resources of the official employee.
Emergency	An event, actual or imminent, which endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment, and which requires a significant and coordinated response. Source: ADR Glossary.

Emergency Management Act	The Act which provides for matters relating to emergency management in the NT. References in this plan to the Act relate to this.
Emergency Situation	Exists in an area once a declaration to that effect is declared by the minister under section 3 of the Act. Source: *Emergency Management Act 2013*
Functional Group	These responsibilities are laid out in functional plans and the Territory Emergency Plan.
Group Leader	The individual allocated responsibility to prepare for, respond to and command and control a functional group in response to a specific hazard based on their legislated and or technical capability and authority.
Lead agency	An agency allocated responsibility to prepare for and respond to a specific hazard based on their legislated and/or technical capability and authority.
Hazard Management Authority	The agency allocated responsibility to prepare for and respond to a specific hazard based on their legislated and/or technical capability and authority.
Participating organisations	Agencies which provide a supporting role in preparing and responding to a specific hazard based on their legislative and/or technical capability and authority.
Preparedness	The knowledge and capacities developed by governments, response and recovery organisations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent or current disasters. Preparedness action is carried out within the context of disaster risk management and aims to build the capacities needed to efficiently manage all types of emergencies and achieve orderly transitions from response to sustained recovery. Preparedness is based on a sound analysis of disaster risks and good linkages with early warning systems, and includes such activities as contingency planning, the stockpiling of equipment and supplies, the development of arrangements for coordination, evacuation and public information, and associated training and field exercises. These must be supported by formal institutional, legal and budgetary capacities. The related term "readiness" describes the ability to quickly and appropriately respond when required. Source: ADR Glossary.
Prevention	Activities and measures to avoid existing and new disaster risks. Prevention (i.e., disaster prevention) expresses the concept and intention to completely avoid potential adverse impacts of hazardous events. While certain disaster risks cannot be eliminated, prevention aims at reducing vulnerability and exposure in such contexts where, as a result, the risk of disaster is removed. Prevention measures can also be taken during or after a hazardous event or disaster to prevent secondary hazards or their consequences. Source: ADR Glossary.
Recovery	The coordinated process of supporting emergency-affected communities in reconstruction of the physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical well-being. Measures which support emergency-affected individuals and

	communities in the reconstruction of the physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, economic and physical well-being. The restoring or improving of livelihoods and health, as well as economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets, systems and activities, of a disaster affected community or society, aligning with the principles of sustainable development and "build back better", to avoid or reduce future disaster risk. Source: ADR Glossary.
Region	Means a region specified in a Gazette notice under section 27 of the Act.
Regional Controller	For a region, means the Regional Emergency Controller for the region as mentioned in section 54 of the Act.
Response	Actions taken directly before, during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs of the people affected. Disaster response is predominantly focused on immediate and short term needs and is sometimes called disaster relief. Effective, efficient and timely response relies on disaster risk-informed preparedness measures, including the development of the response capacities of individuals, communities, organisations, countries and the international community. The institutional elements of response often include the provision of emergency services and public assistance by public and private sectors and community sectors, as well as community and volunteer participation. Source: ADR Glossary.
Responsibilities	The state or fact of being responsible, answerable, or accountable for something within one's power, control, or management. Source: Dictionary.com
Risk	The effect of uncertainty or objectives. Source: ISO Guide 73:2009 Risk management – Vocabulary
Risk Identification	The process of finding, recognising and describing risks. Source: ISO Guide 73:2009 Risk management – Vocabulary
Stand down	Transition from responding to an event back to normal core business and/or recovery operations. There is no longer a requirement to respond to the event and the threat is no longer present.
Stand up	The operational state following "lean forward:" whereby resources are mobilised, personnel are activated and operational activities commenced. Disaster coordination centers are activated.
State of Disaster	Means a state of disaster declared under section 21 of the Act. Source: *Emergency Management Act 2013*
State of Emergency	Means a state of emergency declared under section 19 of the Act. Source: *Emergency Management Act 2013*
Volunteer member	Means a member of the NTES appointed under section 52 of the Act. Source: *Emergency Management Act 2013*
Vulnerability	The conditions determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes which increase the susceptibility of an individual, a community, assets or systems to the impacts of hazards. Source: ADR Glossary.
Territory Controller	Means the Territory Emergency Controller mentioned in section 28 of the Act.

	Source: *Emergency Management Act 2013*
Territory Emergency Management Council	The management council is established under the terms laid out in Division 4 of the Act. Source: *Emergency Management Act 2013*
Territory Recovery Coordinator	Means the Territory Recovery Coordinator mentioned in section 32 of the Act. Source: *Emergency Management Act 2013*
WebEOC	WebEOC is a critical information management system used throughout the Northern Territory. It is used by agencies that have roles and responsibilities under the NT Emergency Management Act during prevention, preparation, response and recovery phases of any emergency.

Source:
Australian Disaster Resilience (ADR) Glossary: https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/glossary

Annex I: Acronyms

Acronyms	
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ADR	Australian Disaster Resilience
AIDR	Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience
AIIMS	Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System
ATM	Automatic Teller Machine
BOM	Bureau of Meteorology
CAAMA	CAAMA Radio
DCMC	Department of Chief Minister and Cabinet
EA	Emergency Alert
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
ICC	Incident Control Centre
GWA	Genesee & Wyoming Australia / One Rail Australia
NT	Northern Territory
NTES	Northern Territory Emergency Service
NTFRS	Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service
NTPFES	Northern Territory Police Fire and Emergency Services
PFES	Police, Fire and Emergency Services
PPRR	Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery
RAT	Rapid Assessment Team
REC	Regional Emergency Committee
RRCC	Regional Recovery Coordination Centre
SERT	Security & Emergency Recovery Team
SEWS	Standard Emergency Warning Signal
SITREP	Situation Report
TEMC	Territory Emergency Management Council
TEP	Territory Emergency Plan
TRG	Territory Response Group
WAC	Welfare Assembly Centres
WRC	Welfare Recovery Centre