AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS
AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANUALS SERIES

Part 1

The Fundamentals

Manual 2

AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The information in this booklet has been prepared by Emergency Management Australia (EMA) in conjunction with State and Territory emergency management/counter-disaster organisations.

Published by Emergency Management Australia
www.ema.gov.au
CONTENTS

Introduction
   The need for an Emergency Management System
   National Emergency Management Strategy
   Emergency and Disaster Management Responsibilities
   National Arrangements

Commonwealth Emergency Management Arrangements

   Commonwealth Emergency Management Policy
   Commonwealth Emergency Management Agencies
      Commonwealth Counter-Disaster Task Force
      Emergency Management Australia
   Other Commonwealth Departments and Agencies with Emergency Management Roles
      Department of Finance and Administration
      Department of Family and Community Services/Centrelink
      Department of Health and Aged Care
      Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
      Department of Defence
      Australian Geological Survey Organisation
      Bureau of Meteorology
      Australian Maritime Safety Authority
      AirServices Australia
      AusAID

State and Territory Emergency Management / Counter-Disaster Arrangements

   Queensland
   New South Wales
   Australian Capital Territory
   Victoria
   Tasmania
   South Australia
   Western Australian
   Northern Territory
   Norfolk Island
   Christmas Island
   Cocos Keeling Islands
   Jervis Bay Territory

Annex A  Australian Emergency Management Web Sites
Annex B  Australian Emergency Management Information Contact Points
INTRODUCTION

THE NEED FOR AN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Australia's climate, physical geography, geology and vegetation expose the country to the risk of emergencies and disasters from such natural hazards as severe storms, floods, droughts, cyclones, earthquakes, landslides and bushfires. Because Australia is an industrialised and resource-rich nation, it is also at risk from a variety of other emergencies and disasters resulting from human-caused and technological hazards which include transport and industrial accidents, major urban fires, and accidents involving hazardous materials. Less commonly, other emergencies and disasters might be caused by major escalations of environmental, human and animal health, and crop pest and disease problems that are handled on a daily basis by a wide range of agencies. Ultimately there is also a small risk of emergencies and disasters caused by such human actions as carelessness, sabotage, terrorism or even hostilities.

Australia has a large number of agencies that respond to events that might threaten lives or property. There are occasions however, when the scale or unusual nature of an event is such that resolving the problem requires the participation of a large number of these agencies and the assistance of others with special skills and resources. If the actions of these agencies are to be applied as effectively as possible, the activities of responding organisations need to be coordinated.

This manual outlines the Australian coordination arrangements established to prepare for, respond to and assist recovery from, major emergencies and disasters. It is one of a series of manuals published by Emergency Management Australia relating to different aspects of emergency management.

Future editions of the manual will include more information on disaster prevention and mitigation activities. These activities have been taking place over many years in Australia but in a fragmented manner. Recent studies have shown that, as well as reducing the suffering and damage caused by disasters, prevention and mitigation measures have other benefits for the community. It seems clear that significant savings can be made in the overall cost of disasters if resources are committed to coordinated and effective prevention and mitigation activities. As this edition is being prepared, work is in progress on the development of a national disaster mitigation strategy and increased attention is being paid to identifying effective mitigation and prevention measures that will reduce community vulnerability to disasters in Australia.

Exploration of improved prevention and mitigation activities is one result of the growing adoption of risk management as a basic approach to improving emergency management. By following this approach, managers, communities and organisations can explore the available options then select the most appropriate suite of prevention, mitigation, preparedness and response measures to deal with their particular needs.
NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Commonwealth, States and Territories, through the National Emergency Management Committee, have endorsed the following National Emergency Management Strategy as a guide for development of emergency management in Australia.

**Development** – Reduce risk to the community from natural and technological hazards through the continuing development of emergency management capabilities.

**Partnerships** – Encourage a national approach to emergency management through cooperative partnership arrangements embracing all levels of government and the community.

**Education and Training** – Develop and promote emergency management education and training to meet the needs of the community.

**Community Awareness** - Develop a national approach to fostering and enhancing the community’s awareness of risks, and encourage involvement in prevention or mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery strategies.

**Civil Defence** – Promote and support the development of an Australian civil defence capability that is responsive to threats, in accordance with the national civil defence policy.
EMERGENCY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Australia's emergency management and counter-disaster arrangements are founded on the premise that, when the Australian Constitution was prepared, State and Territory governments retained responsibility for protection and preservation of the lives and property of their citizens. To achieve this, they exercise control over most of the functions essential for effective disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery through:

- legislative and regulatory arrangements within which the community and various agencies operate;
- provision of police, fire, ambulance, emergency services, medical and hospital services; and
- government and statutory agencies that provide services to the community.

Local government plays a major role, as do the many community and voluntary organisations, because of their intimate links with the communities they serve.

Under arrangements agreed with the States and Territories, the Commonwealth Government provides guidance and support to States and Territories in developing their capacity for dealing with emergencies and disasters, and provides physical assistance to requesting States or Territories when they cannot reasonably cope during an emergency.

Under the Constitution, the Commonwealth Government is allocated responsibility for external affairs matters including the provision of humanitarian assistance for emergency and refugee relief overseas.
NATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The basis of the national system for managing major emergencies and combating disasters is a partnership between Commonwealth, State or Territory and local governments, and the community. The goals of this partnership are to:

- minimise vulnerability to hazards;
- protect life, property, and minimise suffering during emergencies and disasters; and
- facilitate rehabilitation and recovery.

There are four elements to this national system:

1. **National Emergency Management Committee (NEMC)** - The NEMC is the peak national consultative forum in emergency management. It is chaired by the Director General, Emergency Management Australia (DGEMA) and comprises chairpersons and executive officers of State and Territory emergency/disaster management organisations. The Committee meets annually to coordinate Commonwealth and State and Territory interests in national emergency management. Five national advisory groups dealing with Emergency Management Principles and Practice, Emergency Management Training, Community Awareness, Communications and Information Systems, and Civil Defence support the NEMC.

   A working party of the NEMC with limited delegated powers, known as the National Emergency Management Executive Group (NEMEG), meets twice yearly to review disaster and emergency management policies and agree the agenda for the NEMC. The NEMEG, which is also chaired by DGEMA, is made up of the executive officers of State and Territory emergency/disaster management organisations and the functional directors of EMA.

2. **State and Territory Emergency/Disaster Management Organisations** - Each State and Territory has established a peak committee of senior members of appropriate departments and agencies to consider emergency management matters. The names and functions of these organisations differ, but they are basically responsible for ensuring that proper plans and arrangements are made at State or Territory and local government level to deal with emergencies and disasters. Details of the organisations are given in the relevant sections of this manual.

3. **Commonwealth Emergency Management Organisation** – The Commonwealth Minister responsible for disaster and emergency management matters is the Minister for Defence. The agency through which the Minister exercises this responsibility is Emergency Management Australia (EMA). The senior interdepartmental body responsible for providing policy advice and for overseeing interdepartmental arrangements for providing recovery assistance to the States and Territories is the Commonwealth Counter Disaster Task Force (CCDTF). Details of these organisations are given in the relevant section of this manual.
4. **Commonwealth Financial Assistance** - Through a Commonwealth - States agreement for financial relief called the Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements (NDRA), the Commonwealth reimburses States and Territories in accordance with a funding formula for expenditure on agreed eligible measures. More information on these arrangements is given in the section on the Department of Finance and Administration.

Commonwealth financial assistance may also be provided directly to individuals affected by emergencies and disasters through the Department of Family and Community Services and Centrelink. These agencies are able to provide eligible people affected by disasters with Income Support payments, Special Benefits payments or Disaster Relief Payments as appropriate. More information on these payments is included in the sections on the Departments of Finance and Administration, Family and Community Services, and Centrelink.
In 1995 the Commonwealth Government released a statement of its policy on emergency management. The text of the statement is as follows:

COMMONWEALTH EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
POLICY STATEMENT

While recognising that the Constitutional responsibility for the protection of lives and property of Australian citizens lies predominantly with the States and Territories, the Commonwealth accepts that it has a broad responsibility to support the States in developing emergency management capabilities. The Minister for Defence will exercise Commonwealth responsibility for emergency management matters through Emergency Management Australia.

Comprehensive and integrated emergency management is based on a partnership between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories. In the development of Commonwealth capabilities the principles of the All Hazards Approach, the Comprehensive Approach, the All Agencies Approach, and the Prepared Community will be followed.

On request, the Commonwealth will provide and coordinate physical assistance to the States in the event of a major natural, technological or civil defence emergency. Such physical assistance will be provided when State and Territory resources are inappropriate, exhausted or unavailable.

The Commonwealth recognises that the effects of emergencies last long after the immediate effects of the physical impact have been relieved. Through the Commonwealth Counter Disaster Task Force and the multiplicity of Commonwealth agencies, it will support State and Territory measures to facilitate the recovery of communities from these effects. It will also provide financial assistance to the States and to individuals to assist in the recovery from disasters under arrangements that will be determined from time to time.

The Commonwealth will continue to provide support to the States and Territories with the development of emergency preparedness and mitigation activities. In particular it will facilitate education, training, research, public awareness, information collection and dissemination activities. It will also provide specialised warning and monitoring services for meteorological and geological hazards as appropriate.

The Commonwealth recognises the necessity of cooperating with the States and Territories to encourage further standardisation of emergency management procedures and equipment. Through Emergency Management Australia and other organisations the Commonwealth will encourage and facilitate such standardisation.

The Commonwealth acknowledges that there is a need for development of policy coordination and support programs to facilitate expansion of existing State and Territory emergency management capabilities to provide an effective civil defence organisation. Planning for the transition to a war footing needs to be undertaken during peacetime. Functions associated with continuity of government and civilian support for the war effort will be the subject of separate Commonwealth and State consideration and consultation.

The Commonwealth will provide physical and financial assistance to other countries in the event of a major emergency. It will also assist in the development of emergency management capabilities, especially to countries in Australia’s region of interest.

The Commonwealth will ensure that appropriate measures are taken to comply with Australia’s emergency management obligations under international law.
COMMONWEALTH EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS

The following agencies have a role to play in implementing the Commonwealth policy:

COMMONWEALTH COUNTER DISASTER TASK FORCE

The Commonwealth Counter Disaster Task Force (CCDTF) is a senior interdepartmental committee, chaired by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, comprised of representatives of Commonwealth government departments and agencies with a significant role to play in the provision of disaster relief or rehabilitation assistance. It is responsible to the Minister for Defence. On the advice of the Director General EMA, the Chair may activate the CCDTF during the response and recovery phase of a disaster in support of EMA activities.

The role of the CCDTF is to:
- Coordinate policy advice and oversight inter-departmental arrangements for the provision of Commonwealth Government assistance;
- Ensure that well-based and integrated advice is provided to responsible ministers; and
- Recommend any special inter-governmental arrangements that might be required.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AUSTRALIA

Emergency Management Australia (EMA) is the Commonwealth agency responsible for reducing the impact of natural and human caused disasters on the Australian community. It is also the lead agency for coordinating Commonwealth disaster response.

FUNCTIONS

EMA’s continuing functional responsibilities are:
- To coordinate Commonwealth physical support to the States and Territories and Australia’s region (as an agent for AusAID) in times of disaster;
- To enhance national emergency management capabilities by:
  - developing Commonwealth Government and national emergency management policies, plans and programs;
  - developing national emergency management education and training curriculum programs;
  - delivering emergency management education and training;
  - developing and delivering emergency management information services;
  - generating and fostering community disaster-awareness in partnership with the States and Territories;
  - providing financial support for the development of capabilities through the Commonwealth Government’s State Support Package program;
  - supporting the development of Australia’s civil defence capability;
  - developing emergency management principles and practice; and
  - fostering emergency management research.
• To support the development of overseas emergency management capabilities, particularly in Australia’s region.

ORGANISATION

To achieve its mission and goals, EMA is organised into two main elements: an office in Canberra, ACT, responsible for policy, planning, coordination (including emergency response coordination), general management and finance; and the Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI) at Mount Macedon in Victoria which is responsible for emergency management training, education, studies and research.

NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATION CENTRE

EMA operations and coordination tasks are conducted from the National Emergency Management Coordination Centre (NEMCC) in Canberra. The small EMA permanent staff in the NEMCC is assisted in its duties by Emergency Management Liaison Officers (EMLOs) nominated by appropriate Commonwealth departments, agencies and statutory authorities to act as points of contact and facilitate departmental response to tasking by EMA.

Requests for Commonwealth Government assistance after disasters are channelled through nominated State and Territory Government contact points and the NEMCC to the Director General, EMA. When a response is approved, the NEMCC is responsible to the Director General for coordinating the arrangements for its effective provision. In the urgent stage of an emergency requests are passed by telephone to reduce response times and the response is arranged on the same basis. Confirmatory written messages follow at a later stage. The request process is shown in diagrammatic form below.

```
Request for Assistance from the State or Territory

DGEMA ascertains the availability of assistance

Approval to respond is obtained from Minister for Defence by DGEMA

The appropriate Commonwealth agency is asked to carry out task.

Relevant Minister or delegate approves agency response as required

DGEMA advises requesting State or Territory
```
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS

To provide a framework for its operations, EMA maintains and uses four Commonwealth emergency response plans. These plans, which guide the response to disasters and emergencies in Australia and overseas, are designed to cover most major natural, human-caused and technological emergencies and disasters. The Plans are:

COMDISPLAN For the provision of Commonwealth assistance following a disaster within Australia including the offshore territories.

AUSASSISTPLAN For the provision of Australian assistance to overseas disasters.

COMRECEPLAN For the reception of persons evacuated to Australia from an overseas disaster

AUSCONPLAN SPRED For the response to the re-entry of radioactive space debris

Four specialised national hazard-related plans are maintained by appropriate Commonwealth agencies, on behalf of the Commonwealth and States and Territories. These plans cover national search and rescue arrangements (Australian Maritime Safety Authority), pollution of the sea by oil (Australian Maritime Safety Authority), management of communicable diseases in Australia (Department of Health and Aged Care) and major outbreaks of exotic animal diseases (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry).

EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

Emergency and immediate post-disaster assistance coordinated by EMA is usually provided at no cost to States and Territories. Commonwealth departments are required to respond to the limit of their operating budgets before approaching the Department of Finance for further allocation of funds if necessary.

NATIONAL REGISTRATION AND INQUIRY SYSTEM

To facilitate a rapid response to inquiries from Australia and overseas about people affected by a disaster in Australia, EMA sponsors a computer-based national disaster victim registration and inquiry system known as the National Registration and Inquiry System (NRIS). NRIS may be activated locally or nationally. When NRIS is activated nationally, victim information registered by the disaster-affected State or Territory is entered on the national computer network of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care and may be accessed from any other terminal linked to that network.

CIVIL DEFENCE

Civil defence is an integral part of national security. The Commonwealth has a civil defence policy coordination and support responsibility, which is exercised through EMA. Support provided includes assistance with civil defence training.
The Commonwealth Government's position is that the Australian civil defence capability is based on existing emergency/disaster management organisations that would be expanded to meet the threat if the need arises. Civil defence planning must be carried out during peacetime in conjunction with the Australian Defence Force.

The functions of civil defence are:
- to protect the civilian population against the dangers of hostilities;
- to help the civilian population to recover from the immediate effects of hostilities; and
- to provide conditions necessary for survival of the civilian population.

Australia has ratified the 1977 Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions which provide an internationally-accepted definition that civil defence is based on the following fifteen humanitarian tasks:

- warning;
- evacuation;
- management of shelters;
- management of blackout measures;
- rescue;
- medical services, including first aid, and religious assistance;
- fire-fighting;
- detection and marking of danger areas;
- decontamination and similar protective measures;
- provision of emergency accommodation and supplies;
- emergency assistance in the restoration and maintenance of order in distressed areas;
- emergency repair of indispensable public utilities;
- emergency disposal of the dead;
- assistance in the preservation of objects essential for survival;
- complementary activities necessary to carry out any of the tasks mentioned above, including, but not limited to, planning and organisation.

AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

The Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI) at Mount Macedon, Victoria, is the training, education, studies and research arm of EMA. The charter of AEMI is to strengthen Australian emergency management capabilities by providing education and training; by conducting activities that foster national cooperation and understanding; by undertaking research into selected aspects of emergency management; and by facilitating the exchange of emergency management information.

Activities conducted by the Institute may include:

- training and education courses delivered residentially or by extension;
- promotional, awareness and problem-solving activities conducted as workshops or seminars;
- post-disaster impact studies and other forms of applied research; and
- consultancies in selected aspects of emergency management.
Each year, the Institute conducts a range of Commonwealth-funded activities designed to improve national capacity for coping with major emergencies and disasters. These activities are directed at either:

- developing particular knowledge, skills and attitudes in individuals and groups who contribute to emergency management and counter-disaster arrangements; or
- stimulating action that will result in an improvement in a specific aspect of the national emergency management capability.

Details of AEMI activities are available from the EMA Web Site and are also given in the Institute Handbook which can be obtained by writing to:

The Assistant Director Training
Australian Emergency Management Institute
MOUNT MACEDON VIC 3441

THE AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT INFORMATION CENTRE

The Australian Emergency Management Information Centre at AEMI is a national resource which, through its collection and various services, promotes and supports all aspects of emergency management. The primary focus of the Centre is to provide national and international emergency management information for EMA staff, participants in AEMI activities, researchers, and the Australian emergency management community. Members of its staff maintain a comprehensive collection of multi-disciplinary emergency management material, which is supported by extensive information networks. Most of the collection is catalogued on a computer database and is fully searchable by subject, keyword, author, title and date.
OTHER COMMONWEALTH DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES WITH EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ROLES

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Under the Natural Disaster Arrangements (NDRA) administered by the Department of Finance and Administration, the Commonwealth provides funding assistance to States and Territories aimed at alleviating the financial burden associated with provision of natural disaster relief and infrastructure restoration. Through these arrangements, the Commonwealth undertakes to reimburse the States and Territories for expenditure in accordance with the NDRA formula, for a range of eligible relief measures.

While Commonwealth financial assistance is not normally provided until after a natural disaster has occurred, the NDRA framework effectively guarantees that a proportion of the expenditure incurred by States and Territories for the provision of disaster relief will be reimbursed by the Commonwealth, subject to the NDRA criteria being met.

Eligible relief measures provided by the States and Territories that qualify for Commonwealth assistance under NDRA are:
• grants for relief of ‘personal hardship and distress’ (PHD), such as the provision of emergency food, clothing and accommodation - conditions for which may vary between States and Territories;
• concessional loans to farmers or operators of small businesses, individuals and voluntary non-profit bodies to replace assets that have been significantly damaged and where the person/s have no reasonable access to commercial finance but, in the case of farmers and small businesses, have reasonable prospects of long-term viability;
• restoration or replacement by a State or Territory of essential public assets damaged as a direct result of an eligible disaster to pre-disaster standard; and
• certain costs incurred by States or Territories for the provision of financial and psychological counselling in the event of an eligible disaster.

Under the NDRA framework, the Commonwealth will meet half of all State or Territory outlays incurred in providing PHD relief where State or Territory disaster expenditure exceeds the small disaster threshold ($200,000). In respect of the other eligible relief measures, Commonwealth assistance is on a $1 for $1 basis for outlays by a State or Territory above a threshold (based on a certain percentage of State or Territory revenue) and increases to 75% or $3 for $1 outlaid by a State or Territory for relief expenditure, when the outlays exceed 1.75 times the threshold.

Disasters covered by this arrangement include bushfires, cyclones, earthquakes, floods and storms.

The objective of the NDRA is to ensure that disaster relief assistance does not supplant or operate as a disincentive for self-help or appropriate strategies of disaster mitigation and that, wherever possible, assistance should seek to achieve an efficient allocation of resources.
DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES AND CENTRELINK

The Commonwealth provides direct financial assistance to individuals affected by emergency situations. The Department of Family and Community Services, through Centrelink, the Commonwealth Services Delivery Agency, maintains existing payments to clients, provides income support payments under the usual conditions of eligibility to persons whose income has been affected by the emergency and also provides information, counselling and referral services. Special Benefit and Disaster Relief Payment are two payments that can be made to those people who ordinarily would not qualify for income support.

**Special Benefit**

Special Benefit is a discretionary payment available under the Social Security Act 1991 which provides a safety net for persons unable to qualify under the conditions of eligibility for any other Social Security income support payments. It is the usual form of payment made to persons affected by disasters.

Eligibility is restricted to persons who are in severe financial hardship and not eligible for any other payments. Payment can be made in emergency situations, but is subject to extremely tight means tests that take account of the claimant's available funds, income and assets.

Special Benefit can only be paid from the date of application; it cannot be backdated for periods prior to the claim. The amount of the payment is based on a person's marital status, the number of dependent children, and whether rent is paid. The taxable payment may be reduced due to income.

**Disaster Relief Payment**

The Disaster Relief Payment is a specific-purpose payment available under the Social Security Act 1991 to assist victims of natural disasters. It is currently payable only after a disaster has been declared a 'major disaster' by the Minister for Family and Community Services. Before such a declaration can be made, the disaster must have caused a significant number of deaths, serious illness or serious injuries, and have caused severe and widespread damage to property. To be eligible for Disaster Relief Payment, a person's principal residence must have been severely damaged or there must have been a significant interruption to a person's source of livelihood.

Disaster Relief Payment is a non-taxable, one-off lump sum payment. It is not means tested. The amount of the payment is based upon a person's marital status and the number of dependent children.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & AGED CARE

The Department of Health and Aged Care is the lead Commonwealth agency with responsibility for communicable disease outbreaks. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (AFFA) is responsible for the operational aspects of human quarantine at points of entry to Australia, based on policy advice from the Department of Health and Aged Care.
The Department collaborates with AFFA and the States and Territories in coordinating national responsibilities on the Commonwealth’s behalf, with the cost borne by the Commonwealth.

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FORESTRY**

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (AFFA) is the lead Commonwealth agency for animal disease emergencies. The Department coordinates the national response to an animal disease emergency with the States/Territories and Commonwealth supporting agencies and manages export trade policy issues. The primary responsibility for the emergency response rests with the government of the affected State or Territory.

The Commonwealth/States Cost Sharing Agreement for certain animal disease provides for assistance to a State/Territory affected by one of 12 specific animal diseases that have major implications for Australia’s trade in livestock and animal products covered by this agreement. The Commonwealth contributes 50 per cent of the cost of the eradication campaign and the States/Territories collectively contribute the remaining 50 per cent on an agreed pro-rata basis.

AFFA may also provide specified physical and specialist skills during the initial response and the recovery phases of a Commonwealth emergency response/recovery operation.

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE**

Although the Department of Defence has no direct responsibility for any aspect of emergency management, it controls a wide range of personnel and resources that are ideally suited to respond to emergencies and disasters. For this reason it is frequently called upon by EMA to deploy these resources when State or Territory authorities seek Commonwealth assistance.

The Department of Defence resources most frequently activated are personnel, equipment, stores, supplies and facilities. The Commonwealth may deploy these resources when action is needed to preserve human life, alleviate suffering, prevent extensive loss of animal life or prevent loss or damage to property, and State or Territory resources cannot meet the need. They may also be made available if assistance is required in a civil emergency or for disaster recovery not directly related to the saving of life and property. In this circumstance, cost recovery is normally sought as State or Territory or commercial resources should be available to perform such tasks.
AUSTRALIAN GEOLOGICAL SURVEY ORGANISATION

The Australian Geological Survey Organisation (AGSO) is part of the Department of Industry, Science and Resources. Its role includes identifying natural geological hazards and advising on mitigating the risk in the Australian region.

AGSO can provide rapid information on the parameters of local and regional earthquakes. Permanent networks of seismographs and accelerographs are maintained throughout the continent to provide information on the ground response to earthquakes. In addition to maintaining the National Earthquake Database, AGSO undertakes special studies on hazard assessment.

Active links are maintained with international facilities to enable information on large significant global earthquakes to be provided when required.

BUREAU OF METEOROLOGY

The Bureau of Meteorology is the national meteorological authority for Australia and is an agency of the Department of the Environment and Heritage. It is responsible for the provision of meteorological and related services in support of the safety, security and general welfare of the community; for maintaining the basic meteorological infrastructure necessary to ensure the continuity and integrity of the national climate record; and for observing and researching the behaviour of Australia’s weather and climate.

A key element of the Bureau’s role is to provide weather, hydrological, climate and consultative services that monitor, warn of and advise on the potential impacts of natural hazards. These include tropical cyclones, weather conducive to extreme fire risk, severe local storms, gales, floods, drought and seismic sea waves.

Services are coordinated by the Head Office in Melbourne and provided by Regional Offices (in each State capital city, Darwin and Canberra) which are responsible for all of the operational and service activities of the Bureau in the State or Territory concerned. The Regional Offices include Regional Forecasting Centres, Tropical Cyclone Warning Centres (Brisbane, Darwin and Perth) and Flood Warning Centres. Many monitoring and warning activities are carried out in partnership with other Commonwealth, State and Local Government agencies and media and community groups.

AUSTRALIAN MARITIME SAFETY AUTHORITY

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) is responsible for aviation and maritime search and rescue operations in the Australian jurisdiction and for the protection of Australia's marine environment. These activities are conducted by Australian Search and Rescue (AusSAR) and the Marine Environmental Protection Service (MEPS).
Australian Search and Rescue

The major functions of Australian Search and Rescue (AusSAR) are to:

- coordinate search and rescue activities for vessels in distress;
- coordinate search and rescue activities in aviation distress incidents;
- manage the acquisition, deployment and maintenance of air-droppable emergency supplies;
- manage the civil SAR unit program under which aircraft operators are engaged on a commercial basis to undertake aerial searches and to deliver air-droppable emergency supplies;
- manage the Australian ground segment of the Cospas-Sarsat satellite system which is used for the detection of distress beacons;
- operate the Australian ship reporting system; and
- manage maritime distress and safety communications including arrangements for the Coast Radio Station network and the Inmarsat maritime communications system.

Marine Environment Protection Services

The Marine Environment Protection Service (MEPS) is responsible for planning and responding to marine pollution including acting as Managing Agency for Australia's Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil.

AUSTRALIAN AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (AusAID)

The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) is the agency responsible for administering Australia’s overseas development assistance program. An integral part of this program is the humanitarian relief program, administered by AusAID’s Humanitarian and Emergency Services (HES) Section, that provides emergency and refugee relief assistance.

The scale and nature of humanitarian crises around the world makes it impossible for Australia to respond to every emergency. In seeking to determine the most effective use of available resources, decisions to provide assistance are influenced by: the scale and nature of the emergency; the likely impact of the emergency on the long-term development efforts; the local capacity to cope with the crises; Australia’s capacity to assist; the response of other donors; and the level of community interest.

The humanitarian relief program not only provides contributions to relieve the impact of overseas disasters and emergencies, but also enhances the preparedness of developing countries in the Pacific and South East Asia to deal with the impact of the disasters to which they may be prone. These programs are instrumental in strengthening the institutional capacity of local authorities in responding to emergencies and disasters.

AusAID uses EMA as its operational agent for the coordination of physical disaster and emergency relief and for the coordination of preparedness programs.
The governments of the States and Territories that make up the Commonwealth of Australia have direct responsibility for the safety of life and property of their populations. They raise and maintain the emergency services tasked with discharging these responsibilities, and can call upon a wide range of other resources to support them in emergencies and disasters. Within each State or Territory there are local government authorities that also have roles to play in emergency management.

Each of the States and Territories has its own emergency management system. Most have laws and regulations relating to emergency management and these are supported by emergency or disaster plans and procedures. Although government administrative arrangements differ between States and Territories and emergency management systems, titles and procedures vary to reflect those differences, the roles of these systems are very similar.

The map below shows the titles of the peak State and Territory emergency management committees and the following pages describe their emergency and disaster management systems.
QUEENSLAND ARRANGEMENTS

LEGISLATION

The State Counter-Disaster Organisation Act 1975-1978 provides for establishment of a counter-disaster organisation at State, Disaster District, and Local levels. Specifically, the Act provides for:

- State Counter-Disaster Organisation (SCDO);
- State Counter-Disaster Organisation Central Control Group; and
- State Emergency Service (SES).

At Disaster District level the Act requires a Disaster District Control Group, and at Local Authority level the Act requires a Local Controller.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT - STATE LEVEL

The Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport has overall responsibility and operates through the State Counter-Disaster Organisation.

**State Counter-Disaster Organisation** - The SCDO comprises the following members:
- Director General, State Development (Chair)
- Executive Director, Emergency Services Division, Department of Emergency Services (Executive Officer)
- Director General, Department of Emergency Services;
- Director General, Department of Environment
- Director General, Department of Families, Youth and Community Care;
- Director General, Department of Health;
- Director General, Department of Justice;
- Director General, Department of Local Government and Planning;
- Director General, Department of Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry;
- Director General, Department of Public Works and Housing;
- Director General, Department of Transport and Main Roads;
- Director General, Treasury Department
- Commissioner of Police, Queensland Police Service
- Manager, Corporate Support Office, Department of Defence, Brisbane

Other persons, as required, are appointed by the Governor-in-Council

The functions of the SCDO are:
- to coordinate resources necessary to ensure that all steps are taken to plan for, and counter the effects of, a disaster; and
- to give advice and assistance to the Minister on all matters with respect to counter-disaster.

**Central Control Group** - The Central Control Group is the operational arm of the State Counter-Disaster Organisation. It is chaired by the Director General, State Development and includes the Director General, Department of Emergency Services, the Executive Director,
Emergency Services Division (ESD) - The functions of the ESD are:

- to develop counter-disaster planning and resources and to advise and assist local authorities, government departments, statutory organisations, voluntary groups and other bodies;
- to educate and train members of the public (including volunteers and members of voluntary groups);
- to coordinate, direct and control members of the public (including volunteers and members of voluntary groups), material and resources; and
- to maintain the base of knowledge and expertise for civil defence.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT - BELOW STATE LEVEL

For emergency management purposes, Queensland is divided geographically into Disaster Districts. Each Disaster District has a Disaster District Coordinator, appointed by the Governor-in-Council, and a Control Group.

The State is further divided into Local Government areas, two or more of which make up a Disaster District. Each Local Government area establishes a Counter-Disaster Committee, a Local State Emergency Service Organisation, and has a Local Controller.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER PLANS

Each Disaster District Control Group is required to prepare counter-disaster plans for the District and keep and maintain standing orders for counter-disaster purposes within the District. Each Local Government is required to prepare counter-disaster plans for its area. Local plans become part of the District Plan.

CONTROL AND COORDINATION OF OPERATIONS

Local level operations are coordinated through Local Government disaster management arrangements and, depending on the scale of the event, at Disaster District and State levels.

When a disaster escalates, or threatens to escalate, to the point where it requires a significant and coordinated response by a number of agencies, a ‘state of disaster’ may be declared for a District. At this point the resources of the State Counter Disaster Organisation are activated. Each Disaster District Coordinator controls operations in that District.

AUTHORITY TO REQUEST COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE

The person authorised as the single point of contact for requesting Commonwealth assistance to emergency/disaster operations in Queensland is the Executive Officer, Central Control Group, State Counter-Disaster Organisation (Executive Director, Emergency Services Division).
NEW SOUTH WALES ARRANGEMENTS

LEGISLATION

The State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 establishes the legislative base for emergency/disaster management in New South Wales. Specifically, the Act provides for:

• The responsibilities of the Minister;
• The State Disasters Council;
• The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC);
• The State Disaster Plan (DISPLAN);
• A State Emergency Operations Controller (SEOCON); and
• A State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC).

At Emergency Management District and Local Government levels the Act also requires Emergency Operations Committees to be appointed. Emergency Management Controllers are also appointed and operate from established Emergency Operations Centres (EOC) during emergencies.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT - STATE LEVEL

The Minister for Emergency Services has overall responsibility for ensuring that arrangements are made at State level to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and assist recovery from emergencies.

State Disasters Council - The Council is responsible for advising the Minister on all aspects of prevention of, preparation for, response to and recovery from emergencies, including coordination. It comprises the Minister as Chairperson, the SEOCON, and any other person determined by the Minister.

State Emergency Management Committee - The principal committee established under the Act for the purposes of emergency management throughout the State. It is responsible for emergency planning at State level, and comprises a Chairperson, SEOCON, and senior members of the emergency services and other agencies as determined by the Minister. The resources of the State (both government and non-government) are grouped into functional areas for emergency management purposes, and the appointed State coordinator for each functional area is a member of the SEMC

The SEMC is serviced by a Secretary and a small permanent staff whose mission is to provide functional and support services to the Minister, the SEOCON, the State Disasters Council, the SEMC and functional areas, and to provide the staff required to maintain and operate the SEOC.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT - BELOW STATE LEVEL

For emergency management purposes, NSW is divided into emergency management districts. Each District has an Emergency Management Committee reflecting, where appropriate and possible, the membership of the SEMC but which is representative of the emergency management resources available in the District. The Committee is chaired by the District Emergency Operations Controller (DEOCON), assisted by a staff officer (emergency
management) – the District Emergency Management Officer (DEMO). The DEMO is also responsible for assisting local committees and communities within the relevant District on management matters.

Each Local Government area has a Local Emergency Management Committee reflecting, where possible and appropriate, the membership of the DEMC. This committee is chaired by a senior representative of the Council for the area, and is supported by a Council appointed Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO). A Local Emergency Operations Controller (LEOCON) is appointed for a Local Government area by the Commissioner of Police.

EMERGENCY PLANS

There is a State Disaster Plan (DISPLAN), which is designed to ensure a coordinated response to emergencies. The Minister may activate DISPLAN at any time. Functional Area plans in support of DISPLAN are endorsed by the SEMC, and approved by the Minister. Disaster Plans are also required at Emergency Management District and Local Government levels. State-level Sub-Plans are also produced for some specific hazards to ensure that special emergency management arrangements additional to those in DISPLAN are pre-planned.

CONTROL AND COORDINATION OF OPERATIONS

DISPLAN details the roles and responsibilities of agencies for emergency operations and identifies the combat agency for designated hazards. When a combat agency operation escalates to the stage where it requires a significant and coordinated response by a number of agencies, it may become an emergency for the purposes of the Act. Emergency Operations Centres are activated to coordinate resource support to the combat agency. Where there is no identified combat agency, the appropriate Emergency Operations Controller will control the operation directly.

LEOCONs operate from a Local EOC. Resource support for emergency operations that involve more than one Local Government area is coordinated at District level. DEOCONs operate from a District EOC.

AUTHORITY TO REQUEST COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE

The person authorised as the single point of contact for requesting Commonwealth assistance to emergency operations in NSW is the SEOCON, who exercises this authority through his operational staff at the SEOC.
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY ARRANGEMENTS

LEGISLATION

The ACT Emergency Services Bureau is responsible to the ACT Government for emergency/disaster management arrangements within the Australian Capital Territory. There is currently an interim ACT Disaster Plan (DISPLAN) which is not supported by legislation but has authority under Administrative Arrangements.

Umbrella emergency management legislation is currently being considered by the ACT House of Assembly. The ACT Disaster Plan, under the proposed legislation will become the ACT Emergency Plan.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT - TERRITORY LEVEL

The Minister for Police and Emergency Services, operating through the ACT Emergency Management Committee has overall responsibility for ensuring that arrangements are made to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and assist recovery from emergencies.

ACT Emergency Management Committee - The Committee comprises the Executive Director, ACT Emergency Services Bureau (Chair) and representatives from the ACT Region - Australian Federal Police, ACT Fire Brigade, ACT Bushfire Service, ACT Ambulance Service, ACT Emergency Service and appropriate government and other agencies. The Director, Bushfire and Emergency Service is the Executive Officer, and provides administrative assistance to the Committee through the Emergency Management Support Officer.

The ACT Emergency Management Committee is responsible for preparing and updating the ACT Disaster Plan, directing the activities of planning sub-committees, preparing and conducting exercises to test the ACT Disaster Plan and sub-plans, and advising the Minister for Police and Emergency Services on emergency management matters.

Unlike other States and the Northern Territory there are no separate Local Government arrangements. The ACT Disaster Plan includes operations normally undertaken by Local Government agencies.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER PLANS

The ACT Disaster Plan formalises and explains management arrangements for handling emergencies in the ACT. The Plan provides the framework for Civil Defence arrangements.

The Plan is supported by sub-plans for People Recovery, Medical and Health, Flood and Warning, Hazardous Material Spillage and Exotic Animal Diseases. Additional sub-plans currently being discussed and considered for future development by the Committee are - Infrastructure Recovery and Earthquake. The existing interim ACT Disaster Plan has been revised, pending the preparation of a new Emergency Plan.
CONTROL AND COORDINATION OF OPERATIONS

The Territory Controller (normally the Chief Police Officer for the ACT, Australian Federal Police) is responsible to the Chief Minister for controlling emergency operations and is assisted by an Emergency Management Executive.

ACT Emergency Management Executive - The Executive comprises the Territory Controller (Chairperson), the Chairperson of the ACT Emergency Management Committee, the Executive Officer, Emergency Management Committee and other advisers as appropriate.

Because of the uniqueness of the ACT (‘City State’ and ‘Seat of Federal Government’), almost all emergencies in the Territory are multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional. The continuum of the emergency/disaster will determine activation of the Disaster Plan and the necessary advice will be given to the Chief Minister. Once the Chief Minister approves activation of the Plan, the Territory Controller, under the Plan, assisted by the ACT Emergency Management Executive, is responsible for taking all action necessary to cope with the emergency/disaster.

Emergency response is coordinated from an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) located in the Winchester Police Centre, with an alternative centre located in the ACT Emergency Services Bureau Headquarters.

Participants in the Plan are grouped into Functional Services, each under the control of a Functional Coordinator, eg. Medical and Health, People Recovery, Public Relations etc.

A Field Controller is appointed by the Territory Controller to take charge of a nominated emergency area and is allocated resources from the various Functional Services to combat the emergency. Field Controllers are normally Australian Federal Police Officers, except in Structure Fire, Bushfire and Hazardous Material Incidents, where they are appointed from the Emergency Services Bureau.

AUTHORITY TO REQUEST COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE

The person authorised as the single point of contact for requesting Commonwealth assistance to emergency/disaster operations in the ACT is the Executive Officer, ACT Emergency Management Committee (Director, Bushfire and Emergency Service).
VICTORIAN ARRANGEMENTS

LEGISLATION

The Emergency Management Act 1986 sets out arrangements to provide for the management and organisation of the prevention of, response to and recovery from emergencies, involving all relevant government and non-government agencies. The Act defines emergency as the actual or imminent occurrence of an event which endangers the safety of health of persons, or which destroys, damages or threatens property or endangers or threatens the environment in Victoria. Victoria’s arrangements are, accordingly, operative for a wide range of incidents.

The Act also:
• Creates the position of Coordinator-in-Chief of Emergency Management - the Minister for Police and Emergency Services;
• Creates the Victoria Emergency Management Council - to advise the Coordinator-in-Chief on all matters;
• Creates planning and management arrangements for response and recovery;
• Specifies certain duties of municipal councils related to emergency management;
• Provides for declaration of a State of Disaster and certain special powers;
• Sets up a compensation scheme for volunteer emergency workers not otherwise covered by such schemes; and
• Provides for the declaration of an Emergency Area – and the power to exclude the public.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT - STATE LEVEL

The Coordinator-in-Chief:
• ensures that adequate emergency management measures are taken by government agencies; and
• coordinates the activities of government agencies carrying out their statutory functions, powers, duties and responsibilities in taking such measures.

The Victoria Emergency Management Council supports the Coordinator-in-Chief in these roles. The Department of Justice provides executive support to the Council and the Coordinator in Chief.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT - BELOW STATE LEVEL

Municipal councils perform vital roles in emergency management:
• In prevention, through such activities as enforcement of land use planning, building control, etc;
• In response by providing resource and information support to emergency services; and
• In recovery by taking a lead role in assisting and enabling their communities.

Above municipal level, Victoria is divided into disaster regions. Within each region there is a Regional Disaster Response Coordinator who is supported by Regional Response Planning and Recovery planning Committees.

Recovery management is devolved to the lowest level possible – the affected community – which may or may not fall within a single municipal district. Management may be carried out
through community recovery committees. These contain representatives of councils, government and voluntary agencies, special interest groups and the affected community.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) coordinates recovery and has Regional Recovery Coordinators who manage and resource local recovery processes.

EMERGENCY PLANS

Four State-level multi-agency committees (Prevention, Response Planning, Recovery Planning and Community Awareness), reporting to the Coordinator in Chief, develop integrated and coordinated plans and strategies involving all responsible agencies.

The State Emergency Response Plan provides the framework for integrated management of the response to emergencies. The Plan identifies lead and support agencies and sets up the coordination system that obtains resources not available from the agencies’ own systems.

Regional Response Planning Committees prepare Regional Response Plans, identify regional resources for emergency response, and exercise and review regional response arrangements.

Recovery activities are managed according to the State Emergency Recovery Plan, which sets out management arrangements and the responsibilities of the various government and non-government agencies involved.

Regional Recovery Planning Committees prepare Regional Recovery Plans, identify regional resources for recovery, and plan for the establishment and support of community recovery committees when required.

The Emergency Planning Act requires councils to appoint committees to plan municipal involvement in emergency management, to prepare plans in accordance with Ministerial guidelines and to appoint officers to manage the provision of council resources in response and recovery.

Regional personnel of the Victoria State Emergency Service assist municipal emergency management planning committees in the planning process.

CONTROL AND COORDINATION OF EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

Victoria Police coordinates response. The State Emergency Response Plan is operative at all times, and does not need to be invoked or specially activated. The Field Response Coordinator, the most senior Police officer attending, coordinates local response operations.

When required by the scale of an event, the State Emergency Response Coordination Centre is activated and operated by Police with liaison officers from functional services. The Centre provides a central coordination, liaison and media briefing facility.

Regional Emergency Response Coordinators coordinate regional response operations that transcend municipal boundaries.
AUTHORITY TO REQUEST COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE

The person authorised to be the single point of contact for requesting Commonwealth assistance with emergency operations in Victoria is the State Coordinator of Response (Chief Commissioner of Police), or his delegated Deputy Commissioner or Duty Commissioner.
TASMANIAN ARRANGEMENTS

LEGISLATION

The Emergency Services Act 1976 provides for establishment of an emergency/disaster management organisation at State, Regional, and Local levels. Specifically the Act provides for a:

- State Disaster Committee;
- State Disaster Executive;
- Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan; and
- State Emergency Service.

At Region level the Act requires a Region Disaster Controller, a Region Disaster Planning Group, and Region emergency management plans. At Local level the Act requires a Local Coordinator of the State Emergency Service and municipal emergency management plans.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT - STATE LEVEL

The Minister responsible is the Minister for Police and Public Safety. The responsibilities are laid down in the Act and the Minister operates through the following:

**State Disaster Committee** - The Committee comprises the Commissioner of Police (Chair), the Head of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, a senior official of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Director of the State Emergency Service (Executive Officer). The function of the Committee is to oversee all emergency management policy.

**State Disaster Executive** - The Executive comprises the same membership as the State Disaster Committee and is activated upon declaration of a 'state of disaster or emergency'. The executive is responsible for the coordination of emergency operations.

**State Emergency Service** - The main functions of the Service are to carry out the directions of the State Disaster Committee/Executive, provide executive support to the State Disaster Committee, administer the Emergency Services Act, coordinate operational support, oversight emergency planning and provide emergency management education and training.

**Special Committees** - A number of special emergency management committees have been established. Executive support is provided by the State Emergency Service. Examples of these are:

- State Personal Services Committee
- State Communications Planning Committee
- State Disaster Medical Committee
- State Disaster Media Committee
- Hazardous Materials Management Committee
- Critical Incident Stress Management Coordinating Committee
- Nuclear-Powered Warships Safety Committee

**Other Committees** – Other committees working in emergency management include:

- Flood Warning Consultative Committee
- Tasmanian Dam Safety Committee
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT - BELOW STATE LEVEL

For emergency/disaster management purposes, Tasmania is divided into three Regions. Their boundaries correspond with those used by all Commonwealth and State authorities. Each Region has a Region Disaster Controller (a Superintendent of Police) and a Region Disaster Planning Committee. This Committee comprises senior representatives of all emergency services, major government organisations and other voluntary organisations and private bodies. The Committee meets every two months and is responsible for emergency/disaster management within its Region. The Chairperson of the Committee is the Superintendent of Police for that Region. The Executive Officer is the Regional Emergency Management Officer of the State Emergency Service.

Below Region level, each Council or group of Councils has an Emergency Planning Committee chaired by the Mayor or senior councillor and comprises senior officers of local organisations. These Committees are responsible for the preparedness of their Council Area including the preparation of the Emergency Plan. Each Council has a person appointed as Local Coordinator who assists the Committee in the planning process and acts as Executive Officer and adviser on emergency management.

EMERGENCY PLANS

The Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan, regional plans and local council plans are prepared by various committees and updated at intervals not exceeding two years.

CONTROL AND COORDINATION OF EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

All emergency services, and those departments involved in emergencies, independently carry out their normal roles on a daily basis, except when a disaster or emergency is declared. Then, overall coordination is carried out by the State Disaster Executive.

AUTHORITY TO REQUEST COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE

The person authorised as the single point of contact for requesting Commonwealth assistance during emergency/disaster operations in Tasmania is the Executive Officer, State Disaster Committee.
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ARRANGEMENTS

LEGISLATION

The State Disaster Act 1980 (amended 1995) provides for establishment of an emergency/disaster management organisation at State level and at Police Divisional level. Specifically, the Act provides for establishment of:

- State Disaster Committee
- State Disaster Plan
- State Coordinator
- State Emergency Operations Centre; and
- State Controllers

The Act provides for a declaration of a “state of disaster” to be made by the Premier (12 hours) or the Governor (96 hours), during which time the State Disaster Organisation is authorised to conduct response and recovery operations under the direction of the State Coordinator. The State Coordinator may also declare a “state of emergency” to implement the State Disaster Plan on the advice of the authority dealing with a major emergency. This declaration is for 48 hours and also authorises the conduct of response and recovery operations.

At Divisional level, the Act requires establishment of Divisional Coordinators (Police Division Coordinators), Divisional Disaster Committees, and Divisional Emergency Operations centres. The Act also distinguishes between counter-disaster and post-disaster arrangements.

Amendments to the Act are under consideration.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT - STATE LEVEL

The Premier is the Minister with overall responsibility for ensuring that arrangements are made at State level to prevent, prepare for, respond to and assist recovery from major emergencies and disasters. The Minister operates through the following bodies, known collectively as the State Disaster Organisation:

Emergency Management Council – The Council is chaired by the Minister for Justice and includes the Ministers and Chief Executive Officers of key Departments as well as the State Coordinator, the Chair of the State Disaster Recovery Committee and an Executive Officer.

State Disaster Committee - This Committee reports to the Emergency Management Council. It has an independently appointed chairperson and the Executive Officer is the Director of the State Emergency Service (SASES). The Committee includes the State Coordinator, senior executives of the emergency services, representatives of the Departments of Premier and Cabinet, and Administrative and Information Services, a representative of the Local Government Association, and the Chair of the State Disaster Recovery Committee. The Committee is responsible for formulating and implementing disaster management policy and for ensuring that adequate arrangements are made to deal with disasters and major emergencies and their after-effects. These arrangements include preparation and maintenance of disaster plans, supervision of training related to those plans, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the State Disaster Plan when it is implemented for a ‘disaster’ or a ‘major emergency’.
**State Disaster Recovery Committee** – The State Disaster Recovery Committee reports to the State Disaster Committee for its day-to-day activities but during an emergency is directly responsible to the Emergency Management Council. The Committee is chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Human Services and includes representatives of government, community, business and other agencies with roles to play in the recovery process. The Recovery Committee is responsible for managing those functions of the State Disaster Plan that deal with recovery from disasters or major emergencies, for overseeing and evaluating recovery operations and programs and for ensuring that recovery planning is carried out in the regions.

**Disaster Mitigation Sub-Committee** – The Disaster Mitigation Sub-Committee is a sub-committee of the State Disaster Committee, chaired by a representative of the Department of Administrative and Information Services and including representatives of government and non-government agencies with roles to play in disaster mitigation. Its roles are to: develop and consolidate partnerships; develop a mitigation strategy and action plans; monitor vulnerability and exposure to risk; and promote public awareness and awareness of disaster mitigation.

**State Coordinator/State Emergency Operations Centre** - Under the Act, the Commissioner of Police is the State Disaster Committee and there is provision for appointment of a Deputy by the Governor. The Coordinator establishes, maintains and operates the State Emergency Operations Centre. Under a declaration of a ‘state of emergency’ or state of disaster’, the Coordinator takes any action necessary to enable counter-disaster operations to be conducted.

**State Controllers** – These persons head each Functional Service and are responsible for coordinating all aspects of that Service in relation to its role under the State Disaster Plan. They are appointed by the State Disaster Committee.

Each Functional Service has prepared a response plan which is implemented from a State Control Centre (SCC) established for each Functional Service. SCCs are either located in Government Departments or in the State Emergency Operations Centre.

**EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT - BELOW STATE LEVEL**

**Divisional Disaster Committees**

For emergency purposes, South Australia is divided into Emergency Management Divisions. These correspond to Police Divisions. Each Division has a Divisional Disaster Committee chaired by the Officer in Charge of the Police Division who is also the Divisional Coordinator. The Executive Officer of the Committee is the SASES Divisional Officer.

**EMERGENCY/DISASTER PLANS**

The Act provides for the preparation of a State Disaster Plan that mobilises the State Disaster Organisation for response and recovery measures to deal with major emergencies and disasters. Functional Plans to support the State Disaster Plan are prepared by each Functional Service. Disaster Plans are also required to be prepared at Divisional level.

**EXERCISE OF SPECIAL POWERS**

DRAFT 23/06/99
The Act allows the State Coordinator or a State Controller to appoint persons individually or by class to be Authorised Officers. In a declared geographical area, these Authorised Officers have the following powers:

- Taking possession of things;
- Evacuation and removal of persons or animals;
- Right of entry;
- Removal, demolition and destruction;
- Shutting off and cutting off supply; and
- Direction of persons whose responsibilities require their involvement.

**AUTHORITY TO REQUEST COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE**

The person authorised as the single point of contact for requesting Commonwealth assistance to emergency/disaster operations in SA is the State Coordinator (Commissioner of Police).
WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ARRANGEMENTS

LEGISLATION

In Western Australia there is currently no specific emergency/disaster management legislation. Emergency/disaster management arrangements are administered at State, Regional and Local (Municipal) levels, all ultimately responsible to the State Government.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT - STATE LEVEL

The Minister for Emergency Services has overall responsibility for emergency and disaster management and operates through:

**State Emergency Management Advisory Committee (SEMAC)** - The Committee consists of representatives from organisations with a significant role in emergency/disaster operations, and is chaired by the Commissioner of Police. The Committee oversees activity at Regional level and develops State level plans and arrangements. Resource coordination for the Committee is carried out by the Western Australia State Emergency Service.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT - BELOW STATE LEVEL

For emergency management purposes, Western Australia has been divided into Emergency Management Districts. Each District has an Emergency Management Advisory Committee, chaired by the District Police Superintendent. At Municipal level, each community is encouraged to establish a Local Emergency Management Advisory Committee.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS

Specific agencies, because of their legislative responsibilities or specialised knowledge, expertise and resources, have been assigned responsibility, as Hazard Management Agencies, for ensuring that all emergency management activities pertaining to the prevention of, preparedness for, response to and recovery from specific hazards. The Hazard Management Agencies are responsible for preparing emergency management plans, at State, District and Local level, for the hazards within their area of expertise.

General emergency management plans are prepared by District and Local Emergency Management Advisory Committees for the coordination of available services and resources in multi-agency emergencies. Disaster plans prepared at District level cover the coordination of assistance to local communities using the resources available within the Region.

CONTROL AND COORDINATION OF OPERATIONS

**Control** - The designated Lead Combat Authority has operational responsibility for activating and managing the response to a particular hazard through a designated Controller, at the appropriate level.

The Police coordinate all emergency management operations where the task is beyond single service (or combat agency) capacity. At each level, Police operate with the assistance and support of the Emergency Management Advisory Committees. If resources at Municipal level
are insufficient or inappropriate to meet needs, assistance is sought from Regional level. If Regional resources also cannot meet the need, assistance is sought from State level.

**AUTHORITY TO REQUEST COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE**

The person authorised as the single point of contact for requesting Commonwealth Assistance to emergency operations in Western Australia is the Executive Officer of the Emergency Management Advisory Committee (Emergency Services Coordinator).
NORTHERN TERRITORY ARRANGEMENTS

LEGISLATION

The Northern Territory Disaster Act 1982 provides for the establishment of an emergency/disaster management organisation at Territory, Regional, and Local level. Specifically the Act provides for a:

- Northern Territory Counter-Disaster Council;
- Northern Territory Counter-Disaster Controller; and
- Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES).

At Regional and, where necessary, Local level, the Act requires Controllers and Counter-Disaster Planning Committees. The Act also establishes the functions and responsibilities of the Northern Territory Emergency Service and its Director.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT - TERRITORY LEVEL

The Chief Minister, as Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services, has overall responsibility for the Disasters Act and operates through the Territory counter-disaster organisation which comprises the following key elements:

Northern Territory Counter-Disaster Council - The Council comprises the Territory Controller, Director Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) as Executive Officer, and at least three other members appointed by the Minister. The Council advises the Minister on counter-disaster policy and issues, approves all counter-disaster plans and where necessary, advises and directs the Territory Controller and Director NTES with regard to implementation of counter-disaster measures.

Northern Territory Counter-Disaster Controller - Under the Act, the Territory Controller is the Commissioner of Police. The Territory Controller exercises control and direction of counter-disaster operations, and carries out such other functions as directed by the Northern Territory Counter-Disaster Council.

Northern Territory Emergency Service - This organisation, and the position of the Director NTES, are established under the Act and have primary responsibility for counter-disaster planning, training and operational support coordination.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT - BELOW TERRITORY LEVEL

For disaster and emergency management purposes, the Northern Territory is divided into Regions, each with a Regional Controller (the senior Police Officer in the Region) and a Counter-Disaster Planning Committee.

Each Region is further divided into localities with the officer in charge of the local police station appointed to carry out the functions of Local Counter-Disaster Controller and Chairperson of the Local Counter-Disaster Planning Committee.
The NTES is responsible for counter disaster organisation structures and for training, communications and public awareness programs at all levels. NTES provides the Executive Officer for all Regional and Local Counter Disaster Planning Committees.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER PLANS

The Act provides for preparation of Territory, regional and local counter-disaster plans under which the Territory counter-disaster organisation is mobilised for the conduct of counter-disaster operations. Representatives of all primary response and support agencies within each community are encouraged to participate in the development of their local counter-disaster plan.

The actual production and dissemination of plans is carried out by permanent staff of the NTES. They are submitted by the Director NTES to the Northern Territory Counter-Disaster Council for approval on behalf of the Northern Territory Government. Once approved by the Council, plans may be activated at the discretion of the relevant Counter-Disaster Controller and do not require any declaration of a state of emergency or disaster.

CONTROL AND COORDINATION OF OPERATIONS

Whenever the emergency response required by a lead combat authority exceeds the scope of routine procedures, the relevant Controller activates the applicable counter-disaster plan and exercises overall control and coordination of resources mobilised from both within and outside of the community.

ROLE AND INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Northern Territory Local Government Act has established four Municipal Councils to serve the larger population centres. Legislation does not require these councils to undertake counter disaster planning but they play an active part in local community Counter Disaster Planning Committees and the provision of resources during response operations.

AUTHORITY TO REQUEST COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE

The person authorised as the single point of contact for requesting Commonwealth assistance with emergency/disaster operations in the Northern Territory is the Executive Officer, Northern Territory Counter-Disaster Council (Director Northern Territory Emergency Service).
NORFOLK ISLAND ARRANGEMENTS

LEGISLATION

The Norfolk Island Government is responsible for emergency/disaster arrangements within Norfolk Island. The Norfolk Island Emergency/Disaster Plan is not supported by legislation.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT

The Norfolk Island Minister for Health, Immigration and Emergency Services ensures that arrangements are made to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and assist recovery from disasters. The Minister operates through the Norfolk Island Emergency Management Committee.

**Norfolk Island Emergency Management Committee** - The Committee comprises the Chairperson, the Controller, and six functional coordinators responsible for the following:

- Health
- Communications
- Police
- Welfare
- Resources
- Emergency Services

The Committee is responsible for advising the Minister, and for effective coordination of response resources and tasks. The Committee is also responsible for recovery coordination.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER PLAN

The Norfolk Island Emergency/Disaster Plan provides for the provision of effective control, advice and assistance during emergency/disaster response and recovery, and includes provisions to return community life to normal as soon as possible. Functional Service sub-plans are maintained by each Functional Service to support the Disaster Plan.

CONTROL AND COORDINATION OF OPERATIONS

The Norfolk Island Emergency Management Committee is responsible to the Minister, for control and coordination of operations. Functional Coordinators are responsible to the Controller for specific responses within areas of their responsibility.

AUTHORITY TO REQUEST COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE

The person authorised as the single point of contact for requesting Commonwealth assistance with emergency/disaster operations in Norfolk Island is the Chairperson, Norfolk Island Emergency Management Committee.
CHRISTMAS ISLAND ARRANGEMENTS

LEGISLATION

The Christmas Island Administration is responsible for emergency/disaster arrangements within Christmas Island. The Christmas Island Disaster Plan is not supported by legislation.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT

The Administrator of Christmas Island ensures that arrangements are made to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and assist recovery from disasters. The Administrator operates through the Christmas Island Counter Disaster Committee.

Christmas Island Counter Disaster Committee - The Committee comprises the Chairperson (the Administrator), the Controller (Officer in Charge, Christmas Island Police), and functional coordinators responsible for the following:

- Fire and Rescue
- Police
- Marine Services
- Environment
- Coordination of Schools
- Quarantine
- Health
- Resources
- Public Relations
- Meteorology
- Transport

DISASTER PLAN

The Christmas Island Disaster Plan explains the responsibilities for handling incidents and emergencies and details the arrangements for countering disasters in the Territory.

CONTROL AND COORDINATION OF OPERATIONS

The Territory Controller is responsible for the control and overall coordination of counter disaster operations. The Territory Controller is directly responsible to the Administrator for planning, directing, controlling and coordinating all counter disaster measures.

AUTHORITY TO REQUEST COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE

The Administrator, Christmas Island is the single point of contact for requesting Commonwealth assistance in emergency/disaster operations.
COCOS (KEELING) ISLANDS ARRANGEMENTS

LEGISLATION

The Cocos (Keeling) Islands Administration is responsible for emergency/disaster arrangements within the Cocos Islands. The Cocos (Keeling) Islands Disaster Plan is not supported by legislation.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT

The Administrator of Cocos (Keeling) Islands ensures that arrangements are made to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and assist recovery from disasters. The Administrator operates through the Cocos (Keeling) Islands Counter Disaster Committee.

Cocos (Keeling) Islands Counter Disaster Committee - The Committee comprises the Chairperson (the Administrator), the Controller (Officer in Charge, Cocos (Keeling) Islands Police), and functional coordinators responsible for the following:

- Fire and Rescue
- Police
- Marine Services
- Environment
- Coordination of Schools
- Quarantine
- Health
- Resources
- Public Relations
- Meteorology
- Transport

DISASTER PLAN

The Cocos (Keeling) Islands Disaster Plan explains the responsibilities for handling incidents and emergencies and details the arrangements for countering disasters in the Territory.

CONTROL AND COORDINATION OF OPERATIONS

The Territory Controller is responsible for the control and overall coordination of counter disaster operations. The Territory Controller is directly responsible to the Administrator for planning, directing, controlling and coordinating all counter disaster measures.

AUTHORITY TO REQUEST COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE

The Administrator, Cocos (Keeling) Islands is the single point of contact for requesting Commonwealth assistance in emergency/disaster operations.
JERVIS BAY TERRITORY ARRANGEMENTS

LEGISLATION

There is currently no specific emergency management legislation in the Jervis Bay Territory (JBT). The Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government is responsible for emergency/disaster arrangements within JBT.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Jervis Bay Territory Emergency Management Committee - The Committee comprises the Chairperson, the Controller, The Fire Control Officer and one representative from each of:
- Royal Australian Navy
- Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council
- Booderee National Park
- Private lease holders
- Shoalhaven Local Emergency Management Committee

The Committee ensures that arrangements are made to prevent, prepare for, respond to and assist recovery from disasters.

If the magnitude or nature of an operation warrants, assistance may be sought from the Shoalhaven Local Emergency Management Committee.

Mutual Aid Agreement – A draft agreement details arrangements for mobilisation and coordination of resources between the JBT and the Shoalhaven district in response to disasters or emergency incidents where resources from either jurisdiction are required to respond across the border.

EMERGENCY PLAN

The draft Jervis Bay Territory Disaster Plan details the agreed emergency arrangements. It also provides for the recovery phase and includes provision for returning community life to normal as quickly as possible.

CONTROL AND COORDINATION OF OPERATIONS

Whenever the emergency response required by a lead combat authority exceeds the scope of routine procedures, the Officer in Charge at the Jervis Bay Police Station, as JBT Counter Disaster Controller, activates the Territory Counter Disaster Plan and exercises overall control and coordination of resources.

AUTHORITY TO REQUEST COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE

The person authorised as the single point of contact for requesting Commonwealth assistance with emergency/disaster operations in the Jervis Bay Territory is the Chairperson Jervis Bay Territory Emergency Management Committee.
AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WEB SITES

The following Worldwide Web sites provide access to more information on emergency management in Australia. There are also a large number of sites established by individual emergency services and other agencies. Many of these can be accessed through the sites listed. Spaces are provided for entry of sites that are not yet available or for other sites that may be found by the reader.

**COMMONWEALTH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commonwealth Website</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AusAID</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ausaid.gov.au">www.ausaid.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.amsa.gov.au">www.amsa.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bureau of Meteorology</td>
<td><a href="http://www.bom.gov.au">www.bom.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrelink</td>
<td><a href="http://www.centrelink.gov.au">www.centrelink.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry</td>
<td><a href="http://www.affa.gov.au">www.affa.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Defence</td>
<td><a href="http://www.defence.gov.au">www.defence.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Family and Community Services</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dfcs.gov.au">www.dfcs.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Finance and Administration</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dofa.gov.au">www.dofa.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Health and Aged Care</td>
<td><a href="http://www.health.gov.au">www.health.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Management Australia</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ema.gov.au">www.ema.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STATES AND TERRITORIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Region</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nsw.gov.au">www.nsw.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nt.gov.au">www.nt.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td><a href="http://www.emergency.qld.gov.au">www.emergency.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td><a href="http://www.emsa.asn.au">www.emsa.asn.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td><a href="http://www.police.tas.gov.au">www.police.tas.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td><a href="http://www.justice.vic.gov.au">www.justice.vic.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>tba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT INFORMATION CONTACT POINTS

COMMONWEALTH

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AUSTRALIA

The Director General
Emergency Management Australia
PO Box 1020
DICKSON ACT 2602

Administration
Phone: +61 (0)2 6266 5402 (Administration)
Fax: +61 (0)2 6257 7665 (Administration)
Email: ema@ema.gov.au (Administration)

Operations/NEMCC
Phone: +61 (0)2 6257 6031
Fax: +61 (0)2 6257 1490
Email: emaops@ema.gov.au

Australian Emergency Management Institute

Training matters
The Director
Australian Emergency Management Institute
Mount Macedon Road
Mount Macedon VIC 3441
Phone: +61 (0)3 5421 5100
Fax: +61 (0)3 5421 5272
Email: aemi@ema.gov.au

Information matters
The Information Centre
Australian Emergency Management Institute
Mount Macedon Road
Mount Macedon VIC 3441
Phone: +61 (0)3 5421 5100
Fax: +61 (0)3 5421 5273
Email: icmail@ema.gov.au

STATES AND TERRITORIES

QUEENSLAND

The Executive Director
Counter-Disaster Services
GPO Box 1425
BRISBANE QLD 4001
Phone: +61 (0)7 3247 4172
Fax: +61 (0)7 3236 4042
Email: jnoye@emergency.qld.gov.au
NEW SOUTH WALES
The Secretary
NSW State Emergency Management Committee
PO Box K1056
SYDNEY  NSW  2000

Phone: +61 (0)2 9289 1871
Fax:  +61 (0)2 9289 1870
Email: semc@oes.nsw.gov.au

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
Executive Officer
ACT Emergency Services Bureau
PO Box 104
CURTIN  ACT  2605

Phone +61 (0)2 6207 8606/8450
Fax:  +61 (0)2 6207 8367
Email: peter-smith@dpa.act.gov.au

VICTORIA
Executive Officer
Victoria Emergency Management Council
C/- Department of Justice
GPO Box 4356QQ
MELBOURNE  VIC  3001

Phone: +61 (0)3 9651 5244
Fax:  +61 (0)3 9651 0356
Email: fesd@vdoj.vic.gov.au

TASMANIA
The Director
Tasmania State Emergency Service
GPO Box 1290N
HOBART  TAS  7000

Phone: +61 (0)3 6230 2700
Fax:  +61 (0)3 6234 9767
Email: joe.paul@ses.tats.gov.au

SOUTH AUSTRALIA
The Director
State Emergency Service South Australia,
GPO Box 1539
ADELAIDE  SA  5001

Phone: +61 (0)8 8204 2988
Fax:  +61 (0)8 8410 3115
Email: state-hq@sessa.asn.au

WESTERN AUSTRALIA
Emergency Director Services
Fire and Emergency Services Authority
480 Hay Street
PERTH  WA  6000

Phone: +61 (0)8 9323 9300
Fax:  tba
Email: barry.hamilton@ses.wa.gov.au
NORTHERN TERRITORY

The Director
Northern Territory Emergency Service
 Territory Headquarters
Berrimah Police Centre
PO Box 39764
WINNELIE NT 0821

Phone: +61 (0)8 8922 3344
Fax: +61 (0)8 8922 3390
Email: Iain.Rae@pfes.nt.gov.au

NORFOLK ISLAND

The Chairperson
Norfolk Island Emergency Management Committee
The Administration of Norfolk Island
Administration Offices
KINGSTON NORFOLK ISLAND 2899

Phone: +672 3 22001
Fax: +672 3 23177

CHRISTMAS ISLAND

The Territory Controller
Christmas Island
Indian Ocean WA 6798

Phone: +61 (0)8 9164 8444
Fax: +61 (0)8 9164 8440
Email: Bmills@email.dat.gov.au

COCOS (KEELING) ISLANDS

The Territory Controller
Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Indian Ocean WA 6799

Phone: +61 (0)8 9162 6600
Fax: +61-(0)8 9162 6601
Email: Bmills@email.dat.gov.au

JERVIS BAY TERRITORY

The Chairperson
Jervis Bay Territory Emergency Management Committee
The Jervis Bay Territory Administration
Village Road
Jervis Bay 2540

Phone: +61 (0)2 4442 1006
Fax: +61 (0)2 4442 1063