

Wollondilly Resource Recovery Toolkit

**A plan for the
Wollondilly local community**

**Recovering from an
emergency**

Background and Context

The Wollondilly Local Recovery Plan has been prepared using the NSW Local Recovery Tool Kit, that was developed in accordance with the State Emergency Management Committee under the provisions of the NSW State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 and NSW State Emergency Management Plan.

In NSW, the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 (SERM Act) requires the appointment of a State Emergency Recovery Controller (SERCON) and a Deputy State Emergency Recovery Controller (DSERCON). It details their responsibilities and functions. The SERM Act specifies the requirement for a state emergency plan in NSW.

The NSW State Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN) details emergency preparedness, response and recovery arrangements for NSW. It ensures a coordinated response to emergencies by all agencies having responsibilities and functions in emergencies.

Planning for recovery is integral to preparing for emergencies and as such, in support of the NSW Recovery Plan and NSW Recovery Operations Manual, the Local Recovery Toolkit has been designed to assist local councils and local agencies in their recovery efforts.

The Toolkit and guidelines were designed as a practical 'hands on' document to assist personnel who work in the provision of emergency recovery operations within NSW and the content draws on the Emergency Management Australia Recovery Manual and from recovery plans and documents of other states and territories.

The Toolkit provides detail on the operational aspects of the NSW Recovery Plan and includes a wide range of information, policies and procedural documents, protocols, facts sheets, checklists, forms and templates.

The Wollondilly Local Recovery Toolkit has been modeled upon the NSW Local Recovery Toolkit and has been localized to provide a resource that will assist in the recovery of the Wollondilly Community after an emergency incident.

Note:

Wollondilly Shire Council would like to acknowledge the work of the Office of Emergency Management in the development of the NSW Local Recovery Tool Kit that has been heavily resourced in the development of the Wollondilly Resource Recovery Toolkit

The Guidelines and templates associated with the development of this toolkit can be found at www.emergency.nsw.gov.au

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Introduction to the Plan & Guidelines

Disaster Recovery is the coordinated process of supporting disaster affected communities in the reconstruction of infrastructure and the restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing¹.

Purpose

The Wollondilly Local Recovery Plan and guidelines has been developed to assist Council, community service organisations and individuals involved in the provision of recovery services following an emergency. The aim of this plan and guidelines are to assist in strengthening recovery capability in Wollondilly. The plan has been designed to be flexible and responsive to meet current and changing community needs and is based on a series of guidelines that provide information, tools and guidance that may arise in a recovery process. Each guideline is designed to be read independently.

Flexibility

The needs of the community will vary depending on the nature and intensity of the disaster, the capacity of the community and the stage of recovery the community is in. The guidelines are not prescriptive in terms of providing answers to all the issues which confront disaster recovery workers, but rather aim to establish guidelines for recovery management and raise awareness of the issues. Each guideline provides tools and a planned approach which can be tailored to unique recovery events.

Objectives

Over the past decade, the context of recovery in NSW has evolved with more frequent disasters of larger scale and diverse impacts that require protracted recovery operations. The scope of recovery operations has broadened to encompass extensive works in the built and natural environment, as well as an enhanced focus on social and economic recovery.

The objective of this plan is to:

- Support the Wollondilly community to rapidly adapt to the post-disaster environment;
- Help recovery workers build local capacity within a community;
- Strengthen the focus on building disaster resilient communities; and
- Provide recovery workers with appropriate and easy to read plan to assist in the recovery process.

¹ Australian Emergency Management Handbook 2 Community Recovery

How to use this Plan & Guidelines

The Plan contains a number of strategies and guidelines based on the NSW Government Local Recovery Toolkit¹ with specific information relevant to that subject matter, and are designed to be read independently. Each guideline contains a statement to articulate its purpose, provides a context which expresses the set of circumstances or facts that surround a particular subject and strategies to assist in the communities recovery.

Community

Australian communities are varied in their composition and in their level of exposure to disaster risk. Factors that influence disaster resilience include remoteness, population density and mobility, socio-economic status, age profile and percentage of population for who English is a second language. Community development in the disaster recovery context is the empowerment of individuals and communities to manage their own recovery.

Individuals and agencies involved in community development pre-disaster have a clear role to support and facilitate individual and community recovery post disaster. It is important that they are integrated into the recovery operation.

Engaging our community

Within each guideline there is a specific section dedicated to engaging with the Wollondilly community with tailored advice on how to engage the affected community in recovery efforts.

Media and communications

Similarly, within each guideline there is a specific section dedicated to media and communications with tailored advice on what and how information can be disseminated to the Wollondilly community. Additionally some guidelines contain specific media messaging.

Further information

This plan has been designed to be an easy to read guide to be used when recovery workers are faced with time constraints in the early stages of recovery. Whilst every effort has been made to keep each guideline succinct, it is acknowledged that some subject matter will be supported by further readings.

The material in each guideline draws upon content from the *Australian Emergency Management Handbook* and *Manual Series*, Inter-State Government policies and plans, NSW Government policies and plans and relevant legislation. Each guideline contains a further information section which provides links to these resources.

¹ Local Recovery Toolkit: A resource guide for Local Communities recovering from an Emergency, The Office of Emergency Management, NSW Department of Justice, V1. November 2015

Local Recovery Toolkit

Guideline 1:

Local Recovery Committees





The Local Recovery Committee is the strategic decision making body for local recovery. It provides visible and strong leadership and has a key role in restoring confidence to the community.

Purpose

These guidelines have been designed to assist those involved in the management of Local Recovery Committees following an emergency, perhaps for the first time and under the pressure of time constraints.

Context

The Local Recovery Committee is the strategic decision making body for local recovery. It provides support to the local community and local authorities in managing the recovery process and provides visible and strong leadership. The Local Recovery Committee has a key role in restoring confidence to the community. This is achieved by assessing the consequences of the emergency and coordinating activities to rebuild, restore and rehabilitate the social, built, economic and natural environments of the affected community.

The Local Recovery Committee guides decisions about priorities, resource allocation and management and will provide advice to the State Emergency Recovery Controller (SERCON) as to whether recovery can be managed using local resources, or if external support is required.

Recovery Coordinators may be appointed to be the public face of the recovery operation providing guidance to the Local or Regional Recovery Committee. The Recovery Coordinator, if appointed, chairs the Local Recovery Committee. They also act as the conduit between the Local Recovery Committee, the community and the State Government.

Note: For the purpose of this Toolkit 'Local Recovery Committee' refers to both Local and/or Regional Recovery Committee. We simply use 'Local' in all instances for ease of reading.

Engaging your community

Community development in the disaster recovery context is the empowerment of individuals and communities to manage their own recovery. Individuals and agencies involved in community development pre-disaster have a role to support and facilitate individual and community recovery post disaster. Ensuring that the communities affected are involved in the development and implementation of recovery objectives and strategies can significantly aid in individual and community recovery. It is important that these groups are integrated into the recovery process and are informed of progress made. Examples of community development groups include neighbourhood centres, local not-for-profit and local non-government organisations.

The Local Recovery Committee will:

- Represent local community;
- Conduct and update the Recovery Needs Assessment;
- Assess the need for a Recovery Centre;
- Develop and maintain a Recovery Action Plan;
- Develop and maintain a Communications Plan;
- Guide decisions about local priorities, resource allocation and management;
- Coordinate local recovery activities;
- Liaise with the State Government;
- Ensure that relevant stakeholders, especially the communities affected, are involved in the development and implementation of recovery objectives and strategies and are informed of progress made;
- Ensure the recovery is in line with the National Principles of Disaster Recovery and the NSW tenets (outlined in the NSW Recovery Plan); and
- Provide the SERCON with an end of recovery report.

Local Recovery Committees communicate regularly with the Office of Emergency Management on the local Recovery Action Plan and activities, ensuring alignment with State activities.

Local Recovery Committees are ultimately accountable to the SERCON.

Local Community Consultation Groups

The SERCON or Local Recovery Committee may establish local community consultation groups to enable members of the local community, including people affected by the event and representatives from local organisations, to meet and to provide input and guidance to the recovery process. These groups provide a mechanism for enhancing communication and feedback loops within communities.

The local community consultation group:

- Represents the community in the recovery process;
- Facilitates dialogue between the Local Recovery Committee and the community;
- Regularly advises on issues of concern;
- Works with the Local Recovery Committee and task groups to tackle specific issues; and
- Assists with coordination of recovery initiatives undertaken in the community.

Where communities have already established consultation groups or committees, it may be more appropriate to engage these groups than to establish new ones.

Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference should be developed by the Local Recovery Committee. Terms of Reference describe the purpose and structure of the committee. They should also provide a documented basis for making future decisions and for confirming or developing a common understanding of the scope among stakeholders.

Creating detailed Terms of Reference is critical, as they define the purpose, functions, Chair, membership, secretariat, frequency of meetings, reporting and any sub-committees and working groups.

An example Terms of Reference is provided in the Templates Section at the end of this guideline.

Local Recovery Committee Chair

The Recovery Coordinator, if appointed, chairs the Local Recovery Committee. Where a Recovery Coordinator is not appointed the local council chairs the Local Recovery Committee.

Local Recovery Committee Membership

Membership of the Local Emergency Management Committee should form the basis for the first Local Recovery Committee meeting, including combat agencies. The role of the combat agency on the Local Recovery Committee may include providing information about any continuing response, guidance on mitigation strategies and general advice and assistance to the committee as a subject matter specialist.

The Local Recovery Committee should include additional local representatives of participating agencies (government and non-government) who have the obligations to provide specific services required in the recovery process.

Membership should be reassessed by the Local Recovery Committee as required.

A list of agencies that may make up the Local Recovery Committee is provided in the Templates Section at the end of this guideline.

Administration Support

Secretariat and administrative support for the Local Recovery Committee should be coordinated by local council.

Local council should, where possible, make available council buildings for committee meetings

Schedule of meetings

Local Recovery Committee meetings will be held more frequently in the early stages of recovery and should be held as often as required thereafter in order to best meet the needs of the community.

An agenda template for the first meeting is provided in the Templates Section at the end of this guideline.

Information Management

All Local Recovery Committee meetings should be recorded with minutes documenting all decisions made and assigning responsibility for follow up. Outstanding actions should be reviewed at each meeting. Decisions made by the Local Recovery Committee that affect the Recovery Action Plan need to be recorded and reflected in the Recovery Action Plan.

Recovery Sub-Committees

Local Recovery Committees may form Sub-committees or Working Groups to provide specialised support and advice to the Local Recovery Committee.

Recovery Sub-committees are comprised of professionals with specific knowledge in a particular recovery environment (social, infrastructure, economic and natural).

Sub-committee membership is determined by the Local Recovery Committee in consultation with the SERCON. Membership is flexible and could be made up of government, non-government organisations, businesses and community groups from the affected area.

A representative from the Local Recovery Committee will Chair the Sub-committee to coordinate and implement recovery tasks and disseminate decisions from the Local Recovery Committee as required. The Chair of the sub-committee is also responsible for communicating information and issues up to the Local Recovery Committee.

A Local Recovery Committee structure and Sub-committee Terms of Reference are provided in the Templates Section at the end of this guideline

Concluding activities of the Local Recovery Committee

The Local Recovery Committee will be dissolved once there is no longer a need for regular multi-agency co-ordination and any remaining issues can be dealt with by individual agencies as a part of their business as usual.

The chair of the Local Recovery Committee, in consultation with the recovery committee members and the SERCON, will determine when it is appropriate to dissolve the committee.

The needs of the community will be key to this decision. Once the Local Recovery Committee has been dissolved and the formal recovery activated withdrawn, it is essential a handover is conducted to relevant local agencies to ensure the ongoing provision of recovery services within the community. These actions should be detailed in the transition strategy section within the Recovery Action Plan and clearly communicated to the community.

Media and communications

Community development in the disaster recovery context is the empowerment of individuals and communities to manage their own recovery. Individuals and agencies involved in community development pre-disaster have a role to support and facilitate individual and community recovery post disaster. Ensuring that the communities affected are involved in the development and implementation of recovery objectives and strategies can significantly aid in individual and community recovery. It is important that these groups are integrated into the recovery process and are informed of progress made. Examples of community development groups include neighbourhood centres, local not-for-profit and local non-government organisations.

Further information

To obtain an electronic copy of this guideline and templates, visit:

www.emergency.nsw.gov.au

To obtain a copy of the NSW Recovery Plan, visit:

www.emergency.nsw.gov.au

To obtain a copy of the Australian Emergency Management Institute's Community Recovery Handbook, visit:

www.ag.gov.au

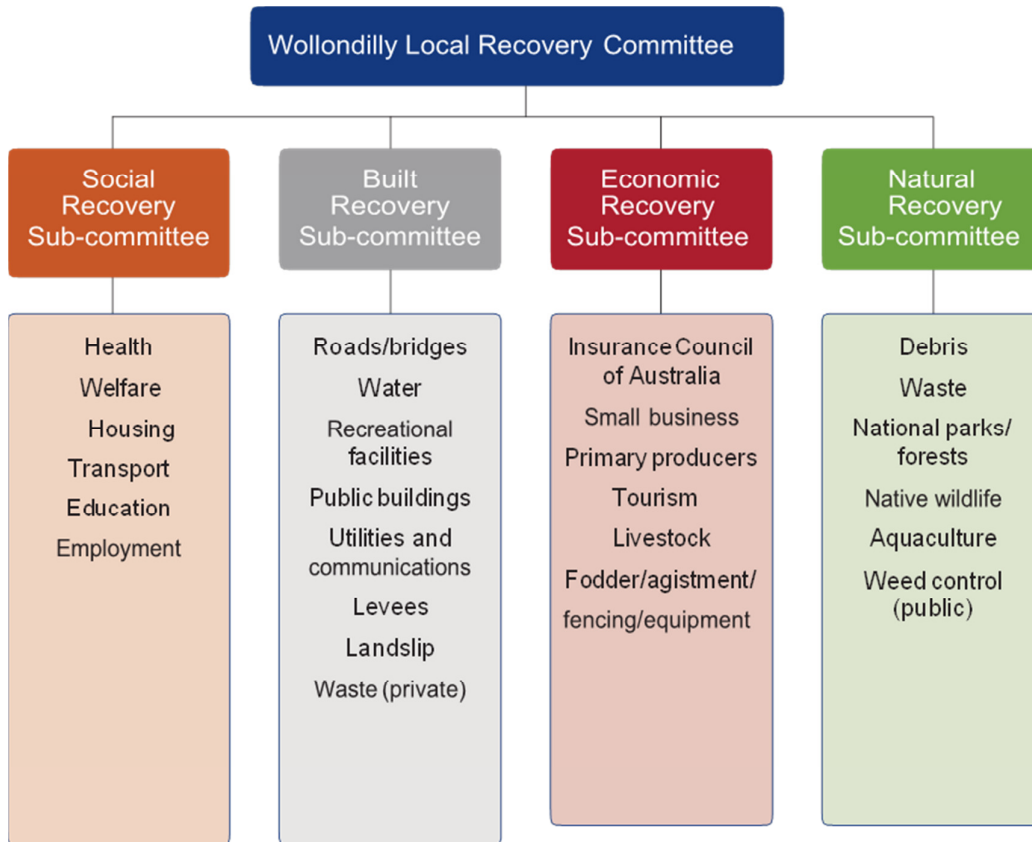
To obtain a copy of the National Principles of Disaster Recovery, visit:

www.ag.gov.au

Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee Template Resources

1. Structure
2. Membership list
3. Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee – Terms of Reference
4. Recovery Sub-committee – Terms of reference
 1. Social
 2. Built Environment
 3. Economic
 4. Natural Environment
5. Wollondilly Recovery Community Consultation Group – Terms of Reference
6. Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee – First meeting agenda
7. Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee – Minutes

1. Structure of the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee



2. Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee – Membership List

Agency	Name	Phone	E mail
Wollondilly Shire Council	Luke Johnson General Manager	02-46779526 0412 303 719	luke.johnson@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au
LEOCON – NSW Police Force	Supt Ward Hansen LEOCON Wollondilly	02 4632 4300 0418 414 863	hans1war@police.nsw.gov.au
Recovery Coordinator (WSC)	Ally Dench	02 46779507 0408 651 923	ally.dench@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au
Fire & Rescue NSW	Supt Philip Lindsay South West	02 9824 6256 0439 846 618	philip.lindsay@fire.nsw.gov.au
Rural Fire Service	Supt Martin Surrey District Manager Southern Highlands	46777000 0418 645 839	martin.surrey@rfs.nsw.gov.au
State Emergency Services	Garry Barnott-Clement Unit Controller	0428 597 109	garry.barnottclement@member.ses.nsw.gov.au
Water NSW	Mary Knowles Catchment Manager	02 4774 4450 0428 489 601	mary.knowles@waternsw.com.au
Regional Emergency Management Officer	Stuart Fisher Regional Emergency Management Officer (REMO)	02 8738 2633 0402 079 413	fish1stu@police.nsw.gov.au
Office Emergency Management	Disaster Welfare Services	02 9212 9200 1800 018 444	MinistryEnquiry@mpes.nsw.gov.au
Dept Family and Community Services	Debra Francis Welfare Functional Area Co-ordinator	02 8713 7800 0401 713 427	debra.francis@facs.nsw.gov.au
Dept Premier & Cabinet	Linda Gorman Senior Coordination Officer	02 9685 2404 0408 688 364	linda.gorman@dpc.nsw.gov.au

2. Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee – Membership List

Agency	Name	Phone	E mail
Dept Primary Industry & Local Land Services	Geoff Mills Senior Biosecurity Officer	02 4655 9165 0418 210 681	geoff.mills@lls.nsw.gov.au
Centrelink		13 24 68	
NSW Public Works	John Zahn General Manager - Sydney Region	02 9852 0285	John.Zahn@finance.nsw.gov.au
NSW Health	Theresa Isedale Disaster Manager	02 9828 6916 0475 941 725	theresa.isedale@sswahs.nsw.gov.au
NSW Housing	Campbelltown Office	02 4629 3222	
NSW Environmental Protection Authority	William Dove	02 4224 4100	william.dove@epa.nsw.gov.au
Safework NSW		13 1050	
Australian Red Cross	Judy Harper Regional Manager Central Disaster welfare hotline	02 4428 4900 0400 993 092 1800 812 028	jaharper@redcross.org.au
The Salvation Army	Disaster welfare hotline	1800 018 444	
Insurance Council Australia	Karl Sullivan General Manager Policy Risk & Disaster	02 9253 5100 1300 728 228	ksullivan@insurancecouncil.com.au
NSW Small Business	Alexandra Geddes Director of Advocacy	02 8222 4800 1300 795 534	we.assist@smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au

*This list is not Exhaustive and other agencies maybe included as necessary

3. Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee

Terms of Reference

The Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee has been established in response to the <event> on <date>.

Purpose

- Assess requirements for recovery activities.
- Develop and maintain the Recovery Action Plan.
- Monitor and coordinate the activities of agencies with responsibility for the delivery of services during recovery.
- Ensure that relevant stakeholders, especially the communities affected, are involved in the development and implementation of recovery objectives and strategies.
- Ensure recovery activities are in line with the NSW Recovery Plan.

Functions

The Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee will:

- liaise closely with the relevant Emergency Operations Controller and combat agency
- liaise closely with the Office of Emergency Management
- determine the overall recovery objective and strategies
- determine the need to establish recovery centres and make recommendations to the State Emergency Recovery Controller
- liaise with the Recovery Coordinator, where appointed
- establish sub-committees as required
- establish task groups and community consultation groups as required
- coordinate the recommendations and actions of sub-committees and monitor progress
- coordinate continuing needs and capacity assessments
- coordinate preparation of public and media communication relevant to the recovery
- agree on transition strategy and timeline
- ensure appropriate governance and record keeping arrangements are established.

Chair

The Chair of the Local Recovery Committee is the Recovery Coordinator, if appointed. Wollondilly Shire Council chairs the Local Recovery Committee, where a Recovery Coordinator is not appointed.

Membership

Refer to Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee Membership List.

Secretariat

Secretariat support will be provided by Wollondilly Shire Council.

Frequency of meetings

The Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee will meet <frequency>.

Reporting

The Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee will oversee and produce:

- A Recovery Action Plan
- Communication plan
- Needs and capacity assessment

Sub-committees and working groups

The Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee will:

- Establish sub-committees as required
- Establish working groups and community consultation groups as required

4. Sub-committees and working groups

4.1 Wollondilly Social Recovery Sub-committee

Terms of reference

The Wollondilly Social Sub-committee has been established by the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee in response to the <event>.

Purpose

To provide specialised support and advice to the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee in relation to social issues such as health, welfare, housing, transport, education and employment

Functions

The Wollondilly Social Recovery Sub-committee will:

- Report regularly to the Local Recovery Committee
- Make recommendations to the Local Recovery Committee in relation to:
 - Health
 - Welfare
 - Housing
 - Transport
 - Education
 - Employment

Chair

The Chair of the Sub-committee is a member of the Local Recovery Committee.

Membership

As determined by the Local Recovery Committee.

Secretariat

Secretariat support will be provided by Wollondilly Shire Council.

Frequency of meetings

The Wollondilly Social Recovery Sub-committee will meet <frequency>.

Reporting

The Wollondilly Social Recovery Sub-committee will report to the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee.

Working groups

Working groups can be formed in relation to but not limited to health, welfare, housing, transport, education and employment

4.2 Wollondilly Built Recovery Sub-committee

Terms of reference

The Wollondilly Built Sub-committee has been established by the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee in response to the <event>.

Purpose

To provide specialised support and advice to the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee in relation to the built environment issues such as roads/bridges, water, recreational facilities, public buildings, utilities and communications and levees, landslip and waste (private).

Functions

The Wollondilly Built Recovery Sub-committee will:

- Report regularly to the Local Recovery Committee
- Make recommendations to the Local Recovery Committee in relation to
 - Roads/bridges
 - Water
 - Recreational facilities
 - Public buildings
 - Utilities and communications
 - Levees Landslip Waste (private)

Chair

The Chair of the Sub-committee is a member of the Local Recovery Committee.

Membership

As determined by the Local Recovery Committee.

Secretariat

Secretariat support will be provided by Wollondilly Shire Council.

Frequency of meetings

The Wollondilly Built Recovery Sub-committee will meet <frequency>.

Reporting

The Wollondilly Built Recovery Sub-committee will report to the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee.

Working groups

Working groups can be formed in relation to but not limited to roads/bridges, water, recreational facilities, public buildings, utilities and communications, levees, landslip and waste (private)

4.3 Wollondilly Economic Recovery Sub-committee

Terms of reference

The Wollondilly Economic Sub-committee has been established by the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee in response to the <event>.

Purpose

To provide specialised support and advice to the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee in relation to Economic issues such as insurance, small business, primary producers, tourism and livestock (fodder/agistment/fencing/equipment etc)

Functions

The Wollondilly Economic Recovery Sub-committee will:

- Report regularly to the Local Recovery Committee
- Make recommendations to the Local Recovery Committee in relation to
 - Insurance Council of Australia
 - Small business
 - Primary producers
 - Tourism
 - Livestock - Fodder/agistment/fencing/equipment

Chair

The Chair of the Sub-committee is a member of the Local Recovery Committee.

Membership

As determined by the Local Recovery Committee.

Secretariat

Secretariat support will be provided by Wollondilly Shire Council.

Frequency of meetings

The Wollondilly Economic Recovery Sub-committee will meet <frequency>.

Reporting

The Wollondilly Economic Recovery Sub-committee will report to the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee.

Working groups

Working groups can be formed in relation to but not limited to insurance, small business, primary producers, tourism and livestock (e.g fodder, agistment, fencing, and equipment)

4.4 Wollondilly Natural Recovery Sub-committee

Terms of reference

The Wollondilly Natural Sub-committee has been established by the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee in response to the <event>.

Purpose

To provide specialised support and advice to the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee in relation to Natural environment issues such as debris, waste, national parks/forests, native wildlife, aquaculture and weed control (public)

Functions

The Wollondilly Natural Recovery Sub-committee will:

- Report regularly to the Local Recovery Committee
- Make recommendations to the Local Recovery Committee in relation to:
 - Debris
 - Waste
 - National parks/forests
 - Native wildlife
 - Aquaculture
 - Weed control (public)

Chair

The Chair of the Sub-committee is a member of the Local Recovery Committee.

Membership

As determined by the Local Recovery Committee.

Secretariat

Secretariat support will be provided by Wollondilly Shire Council.

Frequency of meetings

The Wollondilly Natural Recovery Sub-committee will meet <frequency>.

Reporting

The Wollondilly Natural Recovery Sub-committee will report to the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee.

Working groups

Working groups can be formed in relation to but not limited to debris, waste, national parks/forests, native wildlife, aquaculture and weed control (public)

5. Wollondilly Recovery Community Consultation Group Terms of Reference

The Wollondilly Recovery Community Consultation Group has been established by the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee in response to the <event>.

Purpose

The purpose of the Wollondilly Recovery Community Consultation Group is to reflect community concerns, feelings and initiatives and assist in informing the wider community.

Functions

The group is non-executive and shall, as far as possible, work on the basis of consensus to:

- Assist with the needs and capacity assessment of the affected community
- Reflect community concerns and initiatives and bring these to the attention of the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee
- Assist in informing the wider community of discussions and progress of the recovery operations
- Liaise with the business community and refer their concerns to the recovery committee
- Engage the community in the recovery process.

Membership

<list members here>

Representatives will be drawn from the wider community such as:

- Local elected members
- Residents associations
- Tenants associations
- Local schools
- Local businesses
- Community groups (including religious faith groups)

Chair and Secretariat

The Wollondilly Recovery Community Consultation Group will be chaired by <name>. Secretariat support will be provided by Wollondilly Shire Council

Frequency of meetings

The Wollondilly Recovery Community Consultation Group will meet <frequency>.

Reporting

The Wollondilly Recovery Community Consultation Group will report to the Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee.

6. Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee First meeting agenda

Chair	
Date	
Time	
Venue	

- Welcome and introductions
- Terms of Reference for the committee
- Membership
- Responsibilities and authority
- Event briefing / progress report. Including the latest impact assessment data.
- Recovery Action Plan
- Immediate actions / or urgent issues related to the emergency
- Need for Recovery Sub-committees, community consultation groups, Recovery Centre, community meetings
- Schedule of meetings & next meeting

7. Wollondilly Local Recovery Committee – Minutes

Chair	
Date	
Time	
Venu	

Attendance	
Agency	Representative

Actions arising from this meeting	
Agency	Action

Discussion	
Agency	Discussion

Next meeting	
Date	
Time	
Venue	



Local Recovery Toolkit

Guideline 2:

Managing RecoveryCentres





Recovery Centres provide support to the affected community by bringing together government and non-government services in one location to aid in the restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing.

Purpose

These guidelines have been designed to assist those involved in the management of a Recovery Centre following an emergency, perhaps for the first time and under the pressure of time constraints. These guidelines are flexible and can be tailored to individual circumstances.

Context

The guidelines identify the key stakeholders and outline their roles and responsibilities in the delivery of services through a Recovery Centre. The guidelines do not dictate the terms of operations for the separate agencies within a Recovery Centre. It is the responsibility of each agency to develop internal operating procedures.

Rationale for a Recovery Centre

Recovery Centres are one-stop-shops for the provision of Local, State and Commonwealth Government and non-government services to people affected by emergencies. Recovery Centres support the recovery process of disaster affected communities by:

- Providing a safe place for those affected by the disaster to meet and discuss their experience;
- Providing direct provision of government and non-government information and services in one easy to access location;
- Expediting the administration of government processes and services; and
- Engaging recovery workers who understand the context of the emergency and the effects on individuals and communities.

Depending on the emergency, services may include:

- Financial support for individuals, primary producers and small businesses;

- Mental health and counselling support services;
- Local government services;
- Legal and advocacy services;
- Disaster-specific advice, for example safe clean up, managing health concerns; and
- Insurance advice

Recovery Centres are not established following every emergency. Communities that are geographically dispersed or remote may not be best served by a centrally located Recovery Centre. Under these circumstances it may be more appropriate to implement a mobile recovery service model.

A mobile recovery service model involves the delivery of Recovery Centre functions and services directly to geographically dispersed communities for a set period of time.

Planning for a Recovery Centre

As part of the emergency management planning process, the Local Emergency Management Committee should consult with Engineering Services Functional Area and the Office of Emergency Management to identify suitable locations for Recovery Centres. A Recovery Centre located near the central business and shopping district of a community will be visible and easily identifiable to the affected community.

The site of the Recovery Centre will ideally have the following characteristics:

- Security from the effects of hazards;
- Adequate space for reception and for agencies to undertake their required functions;
- Accessible to those requiring wheelchair access;
- Toilet facilities for both staff and public;

- Parking available for fleet vehicles, staff and public;
- Separate areas for private consultations and staff breaks;
- Adequate heating and cooling;
- Close to public transport;
- Child minding areas;
- Kitchenette to provide light refreshments to the public;
- Meeting space (for example, for staff meetings); and
- Resource table/stand for flyers, brochures etc.

It is essential that all appropriate worker health and safety (WHS) standards be maintained within the facility.

Following an event, it may be necessary to prioritise the importance of these characteristics in order to procure the most appropriate site available at the time.

Establishing a Recovery Centre

Following an event the Local Recovery Committee, will assess the need for a Recovery Centre and make recommendations regarding its establishment to the State Emergency Recovery Controller (SERCON). The establishment of a Recovery Centre must have authorisation from the SERCON. Once authorisation is given by the SERCON, the Recovery Centre will be established by Engineering Services Functional Area and the Office of Emergency Management.

The local knowledge of the Local Recovery Committee is central to determining the need for a Recovery Centre and its appropriate location.

The following factors should be considered in the decision making process:

- Who has been affected by the emergency?
- How has the community been affected? For example, impacts to small business, the environment, etc.
- What has been affected? Clarify

the catchment and intensity of the emergency.

- What recovery services does the affected community need?
- What are the specific needs that the Recovery Centre will address?
- What is the community able to provide for itself, without assistance from the Recovery Centre?

Equipment in the Recovery Centre

The Recovery Centre will be furnished with tables, chairs, land line phones (when possible), internet (when possible), printers, copiers and faxes.

Individual agencies are responsible for providing their own stationery and IT equipment (for example, laptops), establishing their own systems and procedures to support service delivery. Resources owned or produced by each individual agency are managed separately by the agency

All agency representatives are required to wear clearly visible identification at all times within the Recovery Centre.

Each agency in the Recovery Centre should provide the following information to the Recovery Centre Manager:

- Number of representatives attending;
- Name and contact details; and
- Agency specific requirements, such as private space for sensitive conversations

Managing physical assets

Resources owned or procured by each individual agency are managed by the agency. Resources owned or procured centrally for the Recovery Centre are coordinated by the Recovery Centre Manager. Assets are to be stored securely until the decommissioning of the Recovery Centre. This includes banners and signage, printers, laptops, vehicles, GPS and office equipment.

Funding Arrangements

The *NSW Disaster Assistance Guidelines, A.13 Recovery Centres*, sets out the conditions under which eligible local council expenditure related to Recovery Centres may be recouped. This expenditure may be partly recovered by the State under the Commonwealth's Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) subject to eligibility, threshold and audit requirements.

The policy for Reimbursement of Claims for Recovery Activities can be obtained from the Office of Emergency Management.

Reporting Arrangements

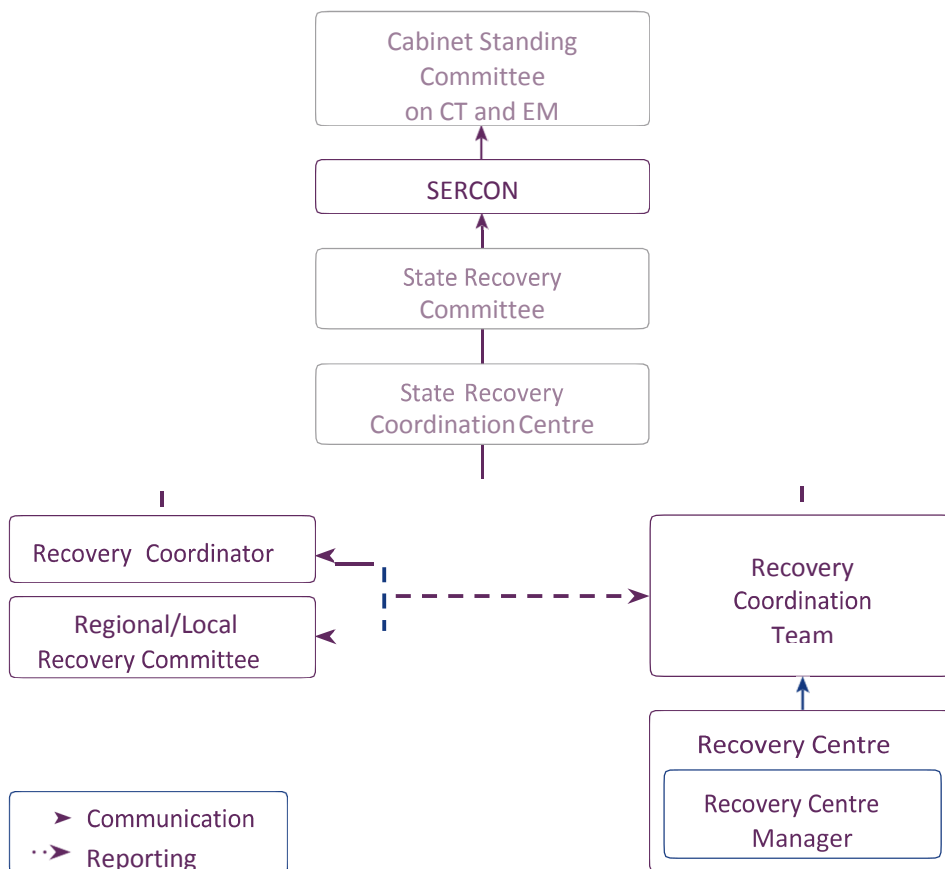
The coordination arrangements for recovery are built on the principle that recovery should be locally-led and supported by the State Government, where necessary. However, following major emergencies, the capacity of local agencies and the Local Recovery Committee to manage disaster recovery may be overwhelmed.

Under these circumstances, the Office of Emergency Management will deploy to the affected area to coordinate State recovery operations and to support the Local Recovery Committee, including the establishment and coordination of Recovery Centres.

In this case the Recovery Centre Manager reports to the Office of Emergency Management, Recovery Coordination Team.

Figure 1 shows the reporting structure between the Recovery Centre, Recovery Coordination Team and the Local Recovery Committee

Figure 1: Recovery Centre reporting arrangement



Office of Emergency Management

The Office of Emergency Management is deployed when the recovery from an event requires the engagement of a range of State agencies in relief, clean-up and short to medium term recovery activities. The Office of Emergency Management assists the Local Recovery Committee to execute these responsibilities through providing guidance and support, facilitating access to additional resources and coordinating State recovery operations in the affected area.

In relation to the Recovery Centre, the Office of Emergency Management is responsible for:

- Coordinating the establishment of the Recovery Centre with Engineering Services Functional Area;;
- Determining the timeline for establishment and commencement;
- Determining the layout of the centre and equipment required;
- Assisting the local council to nominate a suitable officer/s to perform the role of the Recovery Centre Manager;
- Briefing local council(s) and Recovery Centre Manager(s) on their respective roles and responsibilities;
- Providing orientation and induction to the Recovery Centre Manager;
- Providing regular updates to the Recovery Centre Manager on operations;
- Coordinating personnel to meet and greet clients;
- Contacting key stakeholders and agencies who will be present in the Centre; and
- Planning and supporting the closure of the Recovery Centre in conjunction with Engineering Services Functional Area.

The Office of Emergency Management is also responsible for:

- Providing support and advice to the Local Recovery Committee;
- Acting as a conduit between agencies, the local community, the SERCON and local council(s);

- Coordinating the State Government's recovery operation in the field;
- Reporting to the State Recovery Committee on recovery operations; and
- Providing advice on natural disaster relief and recovery arrangements. .

State Emergency Recovery Controller

The responsibility for the overall coordination of recovery operations at the State level rests with the State Emergency Recovery Controller

(SERCON) who may delegate to the Deputy State Emergency Recovery Controller (DSERCON), or as otherwise prescribed in hazard specific plans.

The SERCON/DSERCON support, guide and may direct Recovery Coordinators and Recovery Committees in the exercise of their responsibilities.

The SERCON is responsible for authorising the establishment of Recovery Centres. The SERCON, in conjunction with the local council, ensures that participating agencies are appropriately notified that a Recovery Centre may be required in an affected area.

NSW Government

A range of NSW Government agencies provide services within Recovery Centres. It is the responsibility of each agency to source and train their own staff and establish their own procedures to support service delivery in a Recovery Centre.

Staff within the Recovery Centre should be appropriately supported by their agency supervisors and managers. This may include regular checks on staff, debriefs, adequate breaks and access to counselling services.

The roles and responsibilities of NSW Government agencies in recovery are outlined in the Department of Premier and Cabinet Circular C2011-35, available at www.dpc.nsw.gov.au.

Agency representation in the Recovery Centre

The following agencies administer disaster assistance on behalf of the NSW Government and the Commonwealth Government, and are able to provide support within a Recovery Centre. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, and is only an indication of possible agency involvement:

- Department of Human Services – Centrelink;
- Department of Family and Community Services;
- Department of Finance and Services – Office of Fair Trading;
- NSW Health;
- Department of Planning;
- Department of Primary Industries;
- Rural Assistance Authority;
- NSW Small Business;
- Insurance companies;
- Insurance Council of Australia;
- Legal Aid NSW;
- NSW WorkCover;
- Local government;
- Disaster Welfare Services;
- NSW Police Force;
- Utilities service providers; and
- Support agencies such as Red Cross, Save the Children, Salvation Army and others.

Local Recovery Committee

The Local Recovery Committee, in consultation with the SERCON, will determine the parameters of operations for the Recovery Centre(s). It will determine the resources required to operate a centre, operating location, opening hours, options for mobile recovery services and planned closure.

Local council

The primary responsibilities of local council(s) in relation to the Recovery Centre are:

- Working with Engineering Services Functional Area and the Office of Emergency Management to identify an appropriate location for the Recovery Centre;
- Appointing and remunerating a Recovery Centre Manager;
- Supporting the operations of the Recovery Centre with administrative and financial assistance as required; and
- Providing site maintenance and IT support, as appropriate. This includes stationery, kitchen and bathroom provisions (once initial provisions are depleted).

Engineering Services Functional Area

Engineering Services Functional Area is responsible for procuring the internal physical assets and resources for the Recovery Centre. The Office of Emergency Management will plan the layout and the flow within the Recovery Centre with Engineering Services Functional Area.

The Engineering Services Functional Area will appoint a Recovery Centre Facilities Manager, who is responsible for;

- Establishing the physical Recovery Centre, including property procurement and lease management;
- Procuring office equipment, fleet vehicles, electricity and telecommunication appliances, signage and initial stationery, kitchen and bathroom provisions;
- Fitting out the Recovery Centre;
- Engaging security and cleaning contractors;
- Handing over operation of the Recovery Centre to the local council;
- Supporting the local council to operate the Recovery Centre as required; and
- Decommissioning the Recovery Centre.

Once the Recovery Centre has been established, responsibility for its ongoing operation will be handed over to the local council.

Recovery Centre Manager

The Recovery Centre Manager is responsible for day-to-day management of the Recovery Centre and facilitating an appropriate environment for agencies to provide recovery services. This includes:

- Opening and closing the Recovery Centre daily;
- Facilitating daily briefs and debriefs;
- Coordinating information sharing among agencies;
- Collating Recovery Centre reports for the Local Recovery Committee and the Office of Emergency Management;
- Attending Local Recovery Committee meetings as required;
- Developing systems and procedures to assist functioning of the Recovery Centre, for example most efficient referral systems;
- Managing shared resources (procurement, documentation and allocation);
- Managing the Administration Officer; and
- Managing WHS in the Centre.

The Recovery Centre Manager Duty Statement is provided in the Templates Section at the end of this guideline.

Administration Officer

The Administration Officer is responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of the Recovery Centre, including general reception duties, compiling Recovery Centre statistics and maintenance of shared supplies and property. The Administration Officer may be appointed by the local council or the Office of Emergency Management External Surge Program and reports to the Recovery Centre Manager.

The Administration Officer Duty Statement is provided in the Templates Section at the end of this guideline.

Intake Officer

Intake Personnel are responsible for assisting clients to complete the Recovery Centre Intake Form and identifying which agencies in the centre they wish to see. Intake Personnel may be appointed by the local council or the Office of Emergency Management External Surge Program and report to the Recovery Centre Manager.

The number of Intake Personnel required is determined by the Recovery Centre Manager and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Employment conditions

Employment conditions of agency staff working in the Recovery Centre are determined by their existing agency arrangements. Employment conditions for contract staff are determined by their contract.

Each agency will have their own system for how staff are required to document and claim additional payments and benefits.

Non-government organisations

Non-government organisations may provide services and assistance in the Recovery Centre such as meet and greet, childcare, refreshments and chaperoning the public around the

Centre. Non-government organisations offering assistance should be referred to the Local Recovery Committee who will determine their appropriate role in recovery and the Recovery Centre.

Business and insurance organisations

Business organisations and insurance companies may also wish to offer their services at the Recovery Centre. The SERCON and Local Recovery Committee determine if this involvement is appropriate. In any instance, the Recovery Centre is not to be used as a platform for profit-making and advertisement.

Inducting Recovery Centre staff

All staff, volunteers and agency representatives should be briefed on Recovery Centre arrangements. This briefing should be led by the Recovery Centre Manager. The induction should include the following:

- Introduction of the Recovery Centre Manager and Administration Officer;
- Introduction to all agency personnel;
- Overview of the support services provided by each agency;
- Information on the Intake Process;
- Overview of WHS considerations;
- Internal coordination procedures (meetings etc.);
- Locations of facilities (kitchen, bathroom etc.)
- Procurement procedures;
- Reporting and administration procedures, including sign-in requirements;
- Security and lock up;
- Resource allocation and access; and
- Procedures for engaging with emotional, distressed or potentially violent members of the public.

Daily sign-in and sign-out

All staff, volunteers and agency representatives are required to sign in and out of the building on a daily basis.

A sign-in/sign-out template is provided in the Templates Section at the end of this guideline.

Customer service

The Recovery Centre exists to provide centralised and coordinated customer service to those affected by the emergency. Customer service includes consideration of the psychological needs of disaster affected people. Providing good customer services requires:

- A safe environment where people can be provided with care and comfort;
- Minimal waiting times;
- Open communication with the public;
- Comfortable waiting areas;
- A physical lay-out that is easily navigated,

with directions available if necessary; and

- Comprehensive written information freely available.

Clients with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

The services available at the Recovery Centre should be accessible to all community members seeking support, including those with special needs, accessibility limitations and those who speak English as a second language.

The Recovery Centre Manager and Local Recovery Committee should consider the need for interpreters. Interpreting and Translation services are available to all NSW Government departments and agencies through Multicultural NSW.

Intake process

The complexity of recovery needs means that community members may need to see a number of agencies. All agencies have somewhat different information needs. However, it is frustrating for people to fill in numerous in-take forms for different agencies.

Recovery Centre Intake personnel will fill in one form per family when they are initially received at the Recovery Centre. Families will then be chaperoned, together with the intake form, to agencies as needed.

Agencies may then transcribe this information into their own forms as necessary. The intake form will then be returned to Intake Personnel.

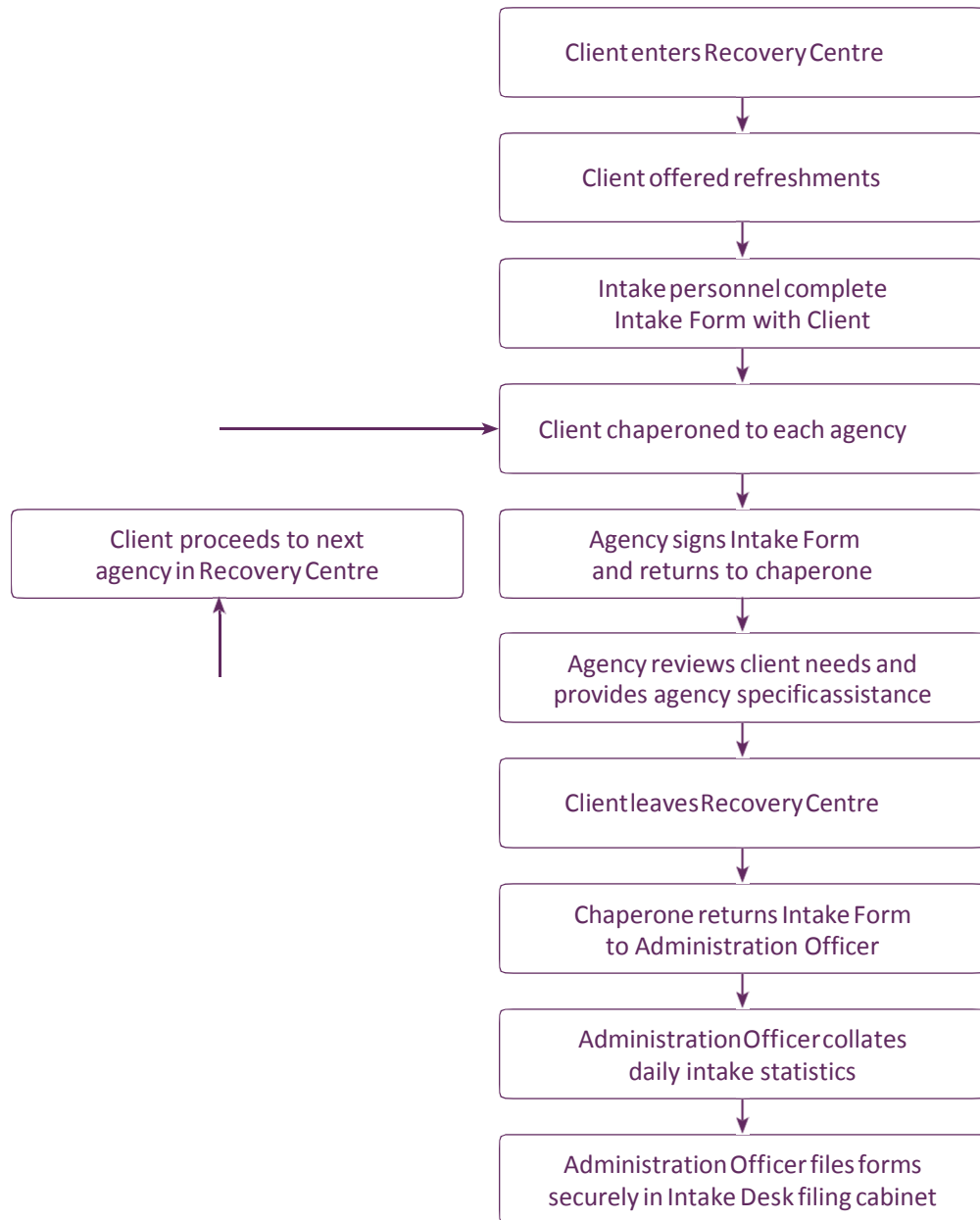
It is important that systems are established that enable people to be assessed and referred

to relevant agencies. A sample flow chart for processing people that come to the recovery centre is located below.

A Recovery Centre Intake form is provided in the Templates Section at the end of this guideline.

The Intake Process is depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Recovery Centre Intake Flowchart



Daily briefing

The Recovery Centre Manager is responsible for coordinating the daily operation of the Recovery Centre. The daily briefing is a useful tool for coordinating activities. The Recovery Centre Manager will determine when to conduct the briefing.

The daily briefing may include:

- Situation updates;
- Summary of agency activities;
- Review of changing demand for services;
- New staff induction;
- Gathering daily statistics from agencies; and
- Review and resolution of issues arising.

A daily briefing template is provided in the Templates Section at the end of this guideline.

Reporting on Recovery Centre operations

The Recovery Centre is a vital source of information on the scale of the emergency, and the needs of the community. Information from the Recovery Centre must be collected and reported to the Local Recovery Committee and the Office of Emergency Management. Monitoring and reporting of internal activity and issues is also essential for maintaining accountability for expenditure.

The Recovery Centre Manager is to compile Recovery Centre daily statistics. These reports are to be emailed to the Office of Emergency Management at recops@mpes.nsw.gov.au and collated into a summary report for the Local Recovery Committee on request.

A Recovery Centre daily statistics template will be provided electronically by the Office of Emergency Management.

Information and records management

All documentation produced by the Recovery Centre is to be securely stored. At the closure of the Recovery Centre each agency will retrieve its physical records and ensure the appropriate storage of all physical and electronic records of the event in accordance with internal procedures.

Any other records not specifically held by individual agencies will be retrieved by the Office of Emergency Management and stored in accordance with internal procedures.

Local councils are to ensure all records relating to the management of the facility are appropriately stored.

Media and the Recovery Centre

Given the disruptive nature of emergencies, people may present to the Recovery Centre feeling highly anxious or distressed. Due to the need to respect the privacy of community members and the safety of staff, media are not permitted to conduct interviews, take photographs or video footage from inside the Recovery Centre.

Media and information requests to State Government agencies relating to their disaster assistance activities should be handled in accordance with their internal procedures.

Work health and safety considerations

When the Recovery Centre is established by Engineering Services Functional Area, it will be equipped with:

- An evacuation plan (if none exists already);
- Fire Extinguishers
- Exit signs; and
- First aid kits.

The ongoing maintenance of WHS arrangements at the Recovery Centre are the responsibility of the Recovery Centre Manager. The Recovery Centre Manager is to ensure all staff and volunteers working in the Recovery Centre are provided with a WHS induction before commencing work.

The following list WHS considerations that should be included in the initial briefing to recovery centre staff provided by the Recovery Centre Manager.

- General Safety:
 - Hazard reporting;
 - Incident/accident reporting;
 - Site specific induction training; and
 - Assigned smoking locations in accordance with regulations.
- Other specific procedures and requirements
 - Waste disposal;
 - Use of pool vehicles;
 - Operating office equipment; and
 - After-hours operations.
- Emergency procedures
 - First aid action plan (refer to Templates Section at the end of this guideline);
 - Bomb threat (refer to Templates Section at the end of this guideline); and
 - Evacuations.

Evacuation

If evacuation from the Recovery Centre is required follow the directions on the Emergency Evacuation Plan.

Bomb threat

All bomb threats are assumed to be serious, unless proven otherwise. These procedures aim to safeguard Recovery Centre staff and clients, and limit any unnecessary action that may place people in danger.

Written bomb threat

Once a message has been identified as a bomb threat, the document should be appropriately stored to prevent any further unnecessary handling that may damage the evidence that is fingerprints, handwriting, postmarks. The document should be stored in a container or plastic envelope where possible. Immediately

inform your supervisor and the Recovery Centre Manager who will inform the police. An emergency alarm or evacuation system should not be activated unless advised by police.

Telephone bomb threat

- Once a call has been identified as a bomb threat, listen, keep calm and do not interrupt the person speaking. Do not hang up the phone when the caller does. Keep the line open.
- The Recovery Centre Manager will call the police from another phone if possible so that an attempt can be made to trace the call.
- Complete the Bomb Threat Checklist as soon as possible, to collect as much information available to assist the police with their investigation.

A bomb threat check list is provided in the Templates Section at the end of this guideline.

Progressive service reduction and closure

As demand reduces for a particular service, it is common for agencies to progressively cease work at the Recovery Centre prior to the official closure. Appropriate plans should be made to ensure these agencies can still be contacted by clients looking for assistance.

Closure is usually recommended by the Local Recovery Committee based on an assessment of community needs. The SERCON and the Local Recovery Committee should be given appropriate notice that resources will be withdrawn from the Recovery Centre. Final approval is required by the SERCON. The Office of Emergency Management will advise Engineering Services Functional Area of the closure and the arrangements for decommissioning the Recovery Centre.

The Recovery Centre Facilities Manager is responsible for facilitating the decommissioning of the centre in consultation with the Office of Emergency Management.

The following includes actions that need to be completed to facilitate the closure of the Recovery Centre.

Action	Details	Responsible agency
Community notifications	Community notified of closure date (that is, signage, media release, radio announcement) and provision of alternative contacts.	Local Recovery Committee The Office of Emergency Management
Service notifications	Cancelling cleaning and security services. Cancelling utilities services. Finalising lease arrangements.	Engineering Services Functional Area
Equipment	All equipment to be returned to Engineering Services Functional Area, including furnishings, office equipment, cabling, signage, fleet cars, keys.	Local council The Office of Emergency Management
Phone/email notification	Notification attached to phone and email that the centre has closed, provision of alternative contacts.	The Office of Emergency Management

Communicating the closure of the Recovery Centre

It is important that the community is adequately notified of the intention to close the Recovery Centre. This information may be distributed at the outset, or disseminated when it is apparent to the Local Recovery Committee that the service is no longer required.

The closure of the Recovery Centre does not mean that disaster assistance measures are no longer available for the affected community.

It is important that the community is made aware of the assistance measures that continue to be available through mainstream services, information on the process for submitting a claim and contact information for the relevant agencies.

Infrastructure and resources

The Recovery Centre Manager ensures all resources purchased centrally are returned to Engineering Services Functional Area and documented on the inventory list. Engineering Services Functional Area retains responsibility for the resources once the Recovery Centre is closed.

All agency specific infrastructure and resources are the responsibility of the agency to document and close according to their systems and protocols.

An Inventory List is provided in the Templates Section at the end of this guideline.

Transition to business as usual

When the Recovery Centre closes, staff and agencies may be required to hand over a number of roles and responsibilities to local agencies. This process should be planned and coordinated by the relevant parties.

As agencies cease activity in the Recovery Centre, information should be made available about the process for accessing disaster assistance after the Recovery Centre has closed. This will be provided by the Local Recovery Committee as part of ongoing recovery communication activities.

Recovery Centre summary report

The Recovery Centre Manager is responsible for collating the Recovery Centre summary report. This report should provide a compilation of the daily statistics and issues log. This should be sent to the Office of Emergency Management at recops@mpes.nsw.gov.au.

A sample Recovery Centre summary report is provided in the Templates Section at the end of this guideline.

Media and communications

Mainstream media outlets are a vital part of Recovery Centre communications. However, it is important that media involvement at the Recovery Centre does not undermine the privacy or safety of people seeking disaster assistance.

In order to effectively manage public expectations in relation to the Recovery Centre, the following information should be made available:

- Which agencies are present in the Recovery Centre and how they can assist;
- Disaster assistance measures available under the NSW Disaster Assistance Guidelines;
- Location of the Recovery Centre;
- Opening hours of the Recovery Centre;
- Intended date of closure of the Recovery Centre (when known); and
- Contact information.

The methods for disseminating information about the Recovery Centre will vary according to the nature of the emergency, any service interruptions, and the community's preferences for receiving information. Channels include:

- Media releases through council/government websites;
- Advertisements via local newspapers, television and radio;
- Flyers, either hand-delivered or via the post;
- Social media, including Facebook and Twitter;
- Radio and community service announcements;
- External signage;
- Local Small BizConnect provider;
- Face to face communication; and
- Community newsletters, including school newsletters, neighbourhood centres, churches etc.

It may be necessary to use a number of these channels to ensure that the information is accessible. The communication strategy must consider the requirements of the local press, radio and television to ensure information is received within appropriate timeframes.

Effective media releases are a vital part of the overall communication strategy. All media releases should be structured commencing with an informative headline, followed by the body of information which clearly and concisely details the message.

A number of media releases are provided in the Templates at the end of this guideline.

Managing RecoveryCentres

Templates

Recovery Centre Manager Duty Statement

Administration Officer Duty Statement

Bomb Threat Checklist

Media Release - Establishment of Recovery Centre

Media release – Recovery Centre progress update

Media release – Opening of Recovery Centre

Media release – Change to hours of operations

Media release – Notification of Recovery Centre closure: Pre-closure advice

Media release – Notification of Recovery Centre closure: Post-closure advice

Recovery Centre Intake Form

Recovery Centre daily briefing

Recovery Centre call log

Recovery Centre inventory list

Recovery Centre summary report

Recovery Centre sign in/sign out sheet

Contact list – Confidential

First aid action plan



Templates and guidelines are available at www.emergency.nsw.gov.au

Recovery Centre Manager Duty Statement

Recovery Centre Manager – Duty Statement	
Location	Recovery Centre
Purpose	To coordinate the operation of the Recovery Centre
Reports to	Recovery Operations Director
Positions reporting to this position	Administration Officer
Skills required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managerial experience and organisational ability. • Excellent customer service skills. • Ability to be both professional and empathetic in a complex and high pressure environment. • Capacity to respond quickly to emerging and complex issues.
Pre-deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek briefing on recovery operation and requirements from Recovery Coordination Team. • Identify and brief Recovery Centre Administration Assistant. • Confirm the coordination and reporting arrangements required by the Recovery Operations Director and Local Recovery Committee (if established).
During deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide orientation and induction to agencies participating in the Recovery Centre (based on initial briefing received from Recovery Coordination Team). • Ensure all WHS Standards are maintained within the Recovery Centre, including evacuation plans. • Open and Close the Recovery Centre daily. • Conduct daily briefings with Recovery Centre personnel. • Monitor operations, including reception and registration, to ensure service provision meets community needs. • Liaise with agencies in the Recovery Centre to ensure continuity of service provision. • Coordinate and conduct reporting of daily activities.

Administration Officer Duty Statement

Administration Officer – Duty Statement	
Location	Recovery Centre
Purpose	To provide services that facilitate effective recovery centre operations.
Reports to	Recovery Centre Manager
Pre-deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On initial advice from Recovery Centre Manager of the need to establish a Recovery Centre: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake preparation to work in the Recovery Centre; and Confirm the coordination and reporting arrangements required by the Recovery Centre Manager.
During deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer all incoming telephone enquiries and record information on logsheet. Maintain voicemail for Recovery Centre telephones. Compile daily statistics including incoming calls and walk in enquiries. Provide summary of daily statistics to the Recovery Centre Manager. Maintain shared supplies and equipment and order stationary as required. Ensure all agencies' desks are clearly identified with signage. Maintain an area within the centre which provides general information for the public including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> brochures and information packages from relevant agencies; hotline contact numbers; and rental accommodation available. Maintain registry of local contacts for support services and agencies. Maintain a centre noticeboard that is updated regularly with current information. Ensure consumables are stocked and easily accessible for staff including tea/coffee requirements, stationery, and general housekeeping products. Confirm that general maintenance, security and cleaning is provided regularly.
After deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with the audit of all stock and centrally procured infrastructure and resources.

Bomb threat checklist

(Keep calm and do not hang up)

Wording of call	

Questions to ask	
When is the bomb going to explode?	
Where exactly is the bomb?	
When did you put it there?	
What does the bomb look like?	
What kind of bomb is it?	
What will make the bomb explode?	
Why did you place the bomb?	
What is your name?	
Where are you?	
What is your address?	

Listen for	
Voice	accent / impediment / tone / speech / diction / manner
Language	polite / incoherent / irrational / taped / read out / abusive
Noises	traffic / voices / machinery / music / noises on the line / local call, STD
Other	gender of caller / estimated age

After the call	
Note the time of the end of the call	am/pm
Name of recipient	
Signature	Date

(Report the call to the Recovery Centre Manager who will contact the police)



Media release – Establishment of Recovery Centre

[Insert location] Recovery Centre established.

A disaster recovery centre is being established to help residents in [location] Local Government Area who have been affected by the recent [flood/bush fire] event.

The centre, to be located at [address] close to [reference landmark], is expected to be operational from [date].

The [name] Recovery Centre, to be managed by [Name], will be open [number] days a week. While the need exists its hours of operation will be:

Monday to Friday – [opening time] until [closing time]

Saturday and Sunday – [opening time] until [closing time]

The phone number for the Centre will be [number].

For those requiring assistance, representatives of key welfare, business and insurance agencies will be on hand, or via referral from the site, to give help, advice and information to affected residents and business people.

The agencies that will be represented will include: [list agencies].

After the Emergency Operations Centre was stood down at [time] on [date], the [name] recovery committee, chaired by [name] met at [time] the same day to commence the recovery process and to set up the [name] Recovery Centre. This committee will meet regularly to ensure a coordinated approach is adapted to the recovery.

Anyone requiring information on road closures should visit the [local government] website at [name] or phone Council on [number].

Media release – Recovery Centre progress update

Over [number] enquiries received by the Recovery Centre.

The [name] Recovery Centre has taken over [number] enquiries from people affected by recent [event] since it opened last [Thursday]. [name], [name] Recovery Centre Manager said it has been excellent to see so many people coming in to seek advice and help from the centre.

“Since the weekend we have seen enquiries increasing as people realise the range of services available to assist them through the Recovery Centre,” said [name].

If you have been affected this is a good opportunity to come in and access the various Government Departments all under one roof, including: [agencies].”

“These agencies have come from all over the state to help our community.” We have volunteers from [locations]. There are staff members from Government Departments and agencies here from [locations]. The wealth of information available is tremendous.”

For more assistance or information please contact the [name] Recovery Centre at address, close to the [land mark], on [number].

Media release – Opening of Recovery Centre

Centre opening information

[name] Recovery Centre

[address]

Residents and businesses affected by the recent [event] in [location] can seek assistance and advice through the [name] Recovery Centre which is now open close to the [landmark] in [address].

Open [number] days a week

Monday to Friday [opening time to closing time]

Saturday and Sunday [opening time to closing time] (Hours will be reviewed according to need)

Recovery Centre Phone number [number]

Representatives or contacts for various welfare, business and other agencies will be available to give help, advice and information including: [list agencies].

Media release – Change to hours of operations

Change of hours

[name] Recovery Centre

[address]

Close to [landmark]

Change of hours

- [date] [opening time to closing time]
- [date] [opening time to closing time]
- [date] Closed
- [series of dates] [opening time to closing time]

The centre has representatives from various government agencies on site to assist you or they can refer you to the right people to get the help you need.

Recovery Centre Phone number [number]

Media release – Notification of Recovery Centre closure Pre-closure advice

Pre-closure advice

[name] Recovery Centre

[address]

Close to [landmark]

Advice and assistance for [event] affected residents and businesses.

Hotline [number]

Weekdays [opening time to closing time]

Centre will be closing on [date]

Media release – Notification of Recovery Centre closure Post closure advice

Post closure advice

[name] Recovery Centre has now closed

Advice and assistance for [event] affected residents and businesses are still available from;

Department of Primary Industries

[address] [number]

NSW Rural Assistance Authority

Natural Disaster Relief & Recovery Grant (up to \$XXXX)

Natural Disaster Relief Assistance Loans (up to \$XXXX)

*for both primary producers and small business

[number] 8.30am to 4.30pm weekdays

www.raa.nsw.gov.au

Disaster Welfare Services

Registration and assessment for Disaster Relief Grants

1800 018 444

8.30am to 4.30pm weekdays

[Add more as required]

Recovery Centre Intake Form

This form is designed to help you share your personal information with different agencies in the Recovery Centre.	<<name>> Recovery Centre			
	Initial registration date	(dd/mm/yyyy)		
	Repeat visit date	(dd/mm/yyyy)		
	Phone enquiry	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		
Contact person				
Surname	Given name	Present	Date of birth	Gender
		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	/ /	<input type="checkbox"/> m <input type="checkbox"/> f
Other household members				
		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	/ /	<input type="checkbox"/> m <input type="checkbox"/> f
		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	/ /	<input type="checkbox"/> m <input type="checkbox"/> f
		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	/ /	<input type="checkbox"/> m <input type="checkbox"/> f
		<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	/ /	<input type="checkbox"/> m <input type="checkbox"/> f

Home address			
Suburb		Postcode	
Home phone		Mobile phone	
Email address			
Would you like to receive recovery information by email?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		

Was your home affected? (damaged or destroyed)?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
Was your home insured?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
Do you own a small business?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
Do you operate your small business from home?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no

Temporary location	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a <input type="checkbox"/> family <input type="checkbox"/> friends <input type="checkbox"/> hotel/motel <input type="checkbox"/> other, please specify:
Temporary address	
Suburb	
Temporary phone	

I consent to the information in this form to be shared with other agencies for the purpose of disaster recovery assistance.	Signature	Date
---	-----------	------

Agency	Agency signoff	Notes
Australian Tax Office		
Centrelink		
Disaster Welfare Services		
Fair Trading		
Family & Community Services - Housing		
Legal Aid		
NSW Health		
Rural Assistance Authority		
WorkCover		

If you have any queries relating to the collection or use of your information, or if you wish to access or update your information, please contact the [Office of Emergency Management](#) on (02) 9212 9200.

Recovery Centre daily briefing

Date	
Time	
Venue	

Agencies present		

1. Welcome and apologies
2. Reports from the respective agencies
3. Activity of the recovery centre (for example, number of people visiting the centre)
4. What is working well?
5. What is not working well?
6. Suggested changes to the operation of the recovery centre
 - The need for additional resources
 - Changes to demand in services
7. Additional information
 - Recovery committee decisions, external recovery activities
8. Planning for the next day

Summary of actions arising		
Responsible party	Action	Due date

Recovery Centre call log

Intake form completed													
Action													
Enquiry													
Contact number													
Name													
Time													
Date													

RecoveryCentreinventorylist

Item	Item number	Description	Date	Time out	Time in	Signed out to	Signature



Recovery Centre summary report

The following is a template for the final summary report for the recovery centre.

Recovery Centre details	
Event	
Name of Recovery Centre	
Location	
Dates of operation	
Hours of operation	
Recovery Centre Manager	
Agencies present	

Total statistics

Insert total statistics over the dates of operation

Daily statistics

Insert daily statistics

Considerations for future recovery centres

Include any considerations for the establishment, management and closing of recovery centres such as:

- additional resources in the recovery centre that would assist to meet client and agency needs
- suggestions to assist future Recovery Centre Managers

Completed by	
Recovery Centre Manager	Date

Contact list – Confidential

The following provides an indication of the contact information that will be useful to a Recovery Centre Manager. These numbers are confidential and are for use by the Recovery Centre Manager and Administration Staff only. They are not for public dissemination.

This list is a guide only, and may be adjusted as required.

Agency	Name	Ph. No.	Email
Recovery Centre Manager			
Office of Emergency Management			
Disaster Welfare Services			
NSW Public Works			
Australian Tax Office			
Dept of Primary Industries			
Rural Assistance Authority			
Centrelink			
NSW Health			
Family and Community Services			
Housing NSW			
Security Service			
Cleaner			
IT Support			

DRSABCD action plan

In an emergency call triple zero (000) for an ambulance



D DANGER

Ensure the area is safe for yourself, others and the patient.

R RESPONSE

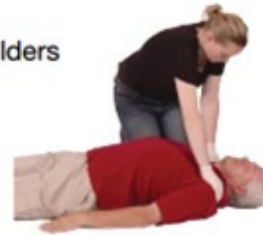
Check for response—ask name—squeeze shoulders

No response

- Send for help.

Response

- make comfortable
- check for injuries
- monitor response.



S SEND for help

Call Triple Zero (000) for an ambulance or ask another person to make the call.

A AIRWAY

Open mouth—if foreign material is present:

- place in the recovery position
- clear airway with fingers.

Open airway by tilting head with chin lift.



B BREATHING

Check for breathing—look, listen and feel.

Not normal breathing

- Start CPR.

Normal breathing

- place in recovery position
- monitor breathing
- manage injuries
- treat for shock.



C CPR

Start CPR—30 chest compressions : 2 breaths

Continue CPR until help arrives or patient recovers.



D DEFIBRILLATION

Apply defibrillator if available and follow voice prompts.

© St John Ambulance Australia. St John encourages first aid training as this information is not a substitute for first aid training.

Local Recovery Toolkit

Guideline 3:

Recovery Action Plans





Recovery Action Plans are unique to each event, are guided by the needs of the community and the community's capacity to respond to these needs.

Purpose

The purpose of this guideline is to assist Local Recovery Committees and Sub-committees with the development of a Recovery Action Plan that forms the foundation for recovery activities based on the needs and capacity of the community.

Context

A Recovery Action Plan provides direction and operational actions required to facilitate a successful recovery, it is unique to each event and guided by the needs of the community.

One of the first actions for Local Recovery Committees is to develop a Recovery Action Plan. A Recovery Action Plan is a living document and an ongoing process that needs to be revised and updated as the recovery continues.

Local Recovery Plan

A Recovery Action Plan differs from a Local Recovery Plan. The preparation phase in relation to the Prevention, Preparation, Response

and Recovery (PPRR) phases of emergency management includes the preparation of arrangements or plans to deal with an emergency or the effects of an emergency.

Local Recovery Plans should be prepared as part of the standard emergency planning process by the Local Emergency Management Committee, building on the emergency risk management study for the local area. The Local Recovery

Plan should identify local recovery management structures, actions, roles and responsibilities and be consistent with relevant State level plans. Local Recovery Plans and the outcomes of impact assessments form the basis for detailed Recovery Action Plans developed following an emergency.

Impact Assessments

Impact Assessments are commenced as soon as possible following an emergency. The data collection process is undertaken with the assistance of Emergency Operations Centres, Combat Agencies, Functional Areas and Local Councils.

The aim of Impact Assessments are to identify economic, social, built and natural impacts on communities. They provide the data to inform analysis and identification of physical and financial resources needed for recovery operations.

The Impact Assessments provide valuable information to form the Recovery Action Plan including potential risks and recovery requirements.

Recovery Needs and Capacity Assessments

Recovery Needs and Capacity Assessments deal with the type, amount and priorities of assistance needed by an affected community after an emergency and the community's capacity to fulfil these needs.

A Recovery Needs and Capacity Assessment builds on the information provided in the Impact Assessment and provides valuable information for forming the Recovery Action Plan including areas of the community that require immediate attention and what resources are available.

Guideline 5 of this Toolkit provides further information on Recovery Needs and Capacity Assessments.

Engaging your Community

Following an emergency individuals are highly motivated to contribute to the recovery of their own community. The community can contribute to planning recovery activities in a variety of ways, including attendance at local council meetings and recovery community meetings, on-line surveys and feedback forums, facilitating two way exchange of information and communication. Community members then become active participants in informing and making decisions, assisting them to implement decision regarding their recovery

Recovery Action Plans

Recovery Action Plans are informed by Impact Assessments and the Needs and Capacity Assessment and lead to the development of specific recovery activities that have measureable outcomes and associated timeframes.

Recovery Action Plans are generally operational plans developed by the Local Recovery Committee and tailored specifically for each event which define strategies and interventions specific to the affected communities. The Plan considers the impact of the event, the location, community demographics and the vulnerabilities of the community and pre-existing community social networks. The Plan is typically an internal working document rather than a public document. There is a need for transparency and accountability, however given the evolving needs in the recovery context the Plan may be fluid and dynamic and not suited for public release. Communicating with the community, to outline the recovery priorities can still occur and be successful without publishing the Plan. Please refer to Guideline 4: Communicating in Recovery for methods and channels that may be utilised.

The Recovery Action Plan details; Priorities, Objectives, Actions Needed, Resources Needed,

Actioned by, Timeframe and Status. The Plan will span across economic, social, built and natural domains and the Actions needed will be prioritised based on the immediate and long term needs of the community. Recovery Action Plans need to have agreed timeframes and outcomes to enable monitoring and evaluation. The Recovery Action Plan allows for the objectives of the recovery to be assessed and monitored over time, and if necessary amended or adjusted.

The Plan should provide a balance between fostering community resilience and maintaining the provision of community-based services that support recovery to meet community needs.

A Recovery Action Plan template is attached at the end of this Guideline. The template steps you through the process of creating a well-structured Recovery Action Plan tailored for the affected community.

Transition to mainstream service provision

A Transition Strategy is a systematic plan for the withdrawal of formal recovery structures once there is no longer a need for formal recovery co-ordination. It is essential to plan from the beginning, for the transition of recovery services back to mainstream service provision in the community.

If existing community services and networks have been used in the recovery to provide services and activities, the transition for recovery activities may be simpler and more direct. However, if additional recovery service systems have been established in the community, more careful planning for the transition back to the existing services is required.

Working with affected communities to determine appropriate timing and processes for transition from recovery to mainstream services is essential. As is the communication to affected communities and stakeholder organisations.

Ensuring services are in place to support ongoing needs of affected persons

Transitioning from formal recovery services to ongoing community activities and services requires a strategy that integrates recovery services into mainstream service provision while maintaining the sense of community health and wellbeing.

This means that any remaining recovery objectives can be met by individual agencies as a part of business as usual. In addition to the Objective, Actions Needed, Actioned by and Timeframe, the Transition Strategy should detail the:

- Ongoing recovery agreements;
- Outstanding or ongoing tasks and associated activities;
- Handover of responsibilities to the agency or service that usually has responsibility for those activities as part of their business as usual;
- Contingency planning for responding to emerging community needs; and
- A Communications plan for informing the community

Ideally, many of the activities and services that are facilitated will be integrated into structures that may have existed prior to the emergency or may have emerged since, and this will require minimal transition.

A Transition Strategy template forms part of the Recovery Action Plan template, attached at the end of this Guideline.

Further information

To obtain an electronic copy of this Guideline, visit www.emergency.nsw.gov.au

Recovery Action Plan Template

How to use this template

Before you complete the Recovery Action Plan template and start using it, consider the following:

1. Use the italicised text.
 - The italicised text is there to guide you by providing some detailed questions you may like to answer when preparing the Plan. If a question does not apply to the circumstances it should be ignored.
2. Use the **red text**.
 - The red text is there to guide you by providing some examples when preparing the Plan. If an example does not apply to the circumstances it should be ignored.
3. Review.
 - Review the Recovery Action Plan as a standing agenda item at each Local Recovery Committee meeting.

Supporting Assessments

Impact Assessments

Impact Assessments will help you to describe the damage caused and the impact the damage has on the four recovery domains: economic, social, built and natural.

Recovery Needs and Capacity Assessment

The Recovery Needs and Capacity Assessment will help you to list the needs of the community and their capacities to aid recovery.

Transition Strategy

List the transition strategies for completing outstanding recovery objectives and transitioning tasks to local agencies.



Wollondilly LGA

Recovery Action Plan

Name of event:

Date of event:

Action Plan prepared on: [Day/Month/Year]

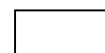
Document control: [Version 1.0]

Distribution list:

Name	Position	Organisation	Date



Wollondilly Local Government Area Recovery Action Plan – Social Issues						
Objective	Actions Needed	Resources Needed	Actioned by	Timeframe	Status	
1	[What recovery objective do you want to achieve]	[List the steps needed to achieve the recovery objective.]	[List the resources needed e.g. staff, service providers, assets, materials]	[Assign an agency to each task]	[Day/Month/ Year]	[Describe the status of the recovery steps and objective]
2	Design and implement media and communication arrangements	<p>Identify channels to use.</p> <p>Coordinate with NSW Government to design and disseminate messages.</p> <p>Monitor community feedback and make changes as recovery evolves.</p>	<p>Local Council. 1 x staff.</p> <p>Office facilities.</p> <p>Office equipment</p>	Local Council/s.	01 June 2016.	Under development.
3	Design and implement arrangements for long-term housing.	<p>Establish how many houses have been impacted.</p> <p>Establish how many people need accommodation.</p> <p>Source accommodation. Allocate accommodation.</p> <p>Maintain an accommodation database.</p>	<p>Department Family and Community Services.</p> <p>1 x staff.</p> <p>Office facilities.</p>	Department Family and Community Services – Housing NSW	01 June 2016.	Under development.



Wollondilly Local Government Area Recovery Action Plan – Built Environment Issues

Objective	Actions Needed	Resources Needed	Actioned by	Timeframe	Status	
1	[What recovery objective do you want to achieve]	[List the steps needed to achieve the recovery objective.]	[List the resources needed e.g. staff, service providers, assets, materials]	[Assign an agency to each task]	[Day/Month/ Year]	[Describe the status of the recovery steps and objective]
2	Establish planning and approval process for restoring damaged and destroyed housing.	Outline existing planning and approval process. Draft new arrangements for fast track planning and approval process. Establish systems for processing. Implement arrangements.	Department of Housing. 2 x staff. Office facilities.	Department of Housing.	01 June 2016.	Under development.
3	Plan and implement arrangements for permanent construction/ restoration of damaged and destroyed infrastructure.	Identify damaged infrastructure. Prioritise construction/ restoration. Plan arrangements. Develop arrangements. Implement arrangements.	Engineering Functional Area Coordinator. 1 1/2 x staff. Office facilities. Vehicle access.	Engineering Functional Area Coordinator.	01 June 2016.	Under development.

Wollondilly Local Government Area Recovery Action Plan – Economic Issues

Objective	Actions Needed	Resources Needed	Actioned by	Timeframe	Status	
1	[What recovery objective do you want to achieve]	[List the steps needed to achieve the recovery objective.]	[List the resources needed e.g. staff, service providers, assets, materials]	[Assign an agency to each task]	[Day/Month/ Year]	[Describe the status of the recovery steps and objective]
2	Assist tourism operators to address possible downturn as result of event.	Requests funding & other support to be made to relevant Ministers & Destination NSW. Boost promotional packages for tourism industry.	Local Council/s. 0.5 x staff. Office facilities.	Local Council/s.	01 April 2016.	In progress.
3	Raise awareness of potential tradesman related scams in response to the event.	Media release. Radio interviews.	Local Council/s. 0.5 x staff. Office facilities.	Local Council/s.	01 April 2016.	In progress.



Wollondilly Local Government Area Recovery Action Plan – Natural Environment Issues

Objective	Actions Needed	Resources Needed	Actioned by	Timeframe	Status	
1	[What recovery objective do you want to achieve]	[List the steps needed to achieve the recovery objective.]	[List the resources needed e.g. staff, service providers, assets, materials]	[Assign an agency to each task]	[Day/Month/ Year]	[Describe the status of the recovery steps and objective]
2	Create plans for remediation of priority areas for agriculture.	Identify areas. Create and approve plans. Implement plans. Monitor remediation.	Environment Functional Area Coordinator. 14 x staff. Office facilities. 5 x Vehicle access.	Environment Functional Area Coordinator.	01 Dec 2016.	Not started.
3	Develop long term plans for air, water, land and soil, plants and animal's evaluation and restoration.	Identify areas for restoration. Develop plans. Implement plans.	Environment Functional Area Coordinator. 14 x staff. Office facilities. 5 x Vehicle access.	Environment Functional Area Coordinator.	01 Jan 2017.	Not started.

Wollondilly Recovery Action Plan - Recovery Transition Strategy				
	Objective	Actions Needed	Actioned by	Timeframe
1	[What recovery objective do you want to achieve]	[List the steps needed to achieve the recovery objective.]	[Assign an agency to each task]	[Day/Month/Year]
2	Handover recovery coordinator responsibilities.	List responsibilities. Write status report. Assign tasks. Handover.	Recovery Coordinator Local Council/s.	01 Dec 2016.
3	Complete remediation of priority areas for agriculture.	Implement remediation plan.	Local Council/s.	01 Dec 2016.

Additional Considerations for Transition

- Outstanding or ongoing tasks and associated activities
- Handover of responsibilities to the agency or service that usually has responsibility for those activities as part of their business as usual
- Ongoing recovery agreements (if required)
- Contingency planning for responding to emerging community needs
- A Communications plan for informing the community

Guideline 4: Communicating in Recovery

This section to be developed when resource has been released by The Office of Emergency Management, NSW Department of Justice

Guideline 5: Recovery Needs & Capacity Assessment

This section to be developed when resource has been released by
The Office of Emergency Management,
NSW Department of Justice

Local Recovery Toolkit

Guideline 6: Disaster Appeals





Many individuals are moved to do something for those in need following a disaster. The Australian community has, historically, come to the aid of people affected by disasters through monetary donations to public appeals.

Purpose

These guidelines have been designed to assist local councils and charity groups involved in the establishment and management of disaster appeals following an emergency, perhaps for the first time and under the pressure of time constraints.

The content draws on the Australian Emergency Manual Series, Economic and Financial Aspects of Disaster Recovery.

Context

Following a disaster, public appeals have typically been launched by local council, state governments, non-government organisations (NGOs), religious, philanthropic or humanitarian agencies and media groups.

The generosity of donations through public appeals though cannot be assured in the future and should not be part of a contingency plan. The purpose of financial assistance measures is to support those in need, while encouraging appropriate personal responsibility. Resilience and preparedness (such as appropriate and adequate levels of insurance) should always be encouraged.

Amongst the most important and urgent decisions which must be made by your organisation will be whether or not a disaster appeal should be established.

Are other disaster appeals already operating?

The extent to which funds may be available in the community for public appeals is limited. It is usually less effective to have several organisations trying to carry out the same work in the same area.

Many organisations assume that they must set up a new appeal fund if they want to carry out specific or particular charitable purposes.

However, this is not always the case. It may be better to offer your services to, or combine with, an existing appeal fund.

There are many charities working throughout New South Wales that undertake an extremely wide range of work. Examples include Australian Red Cross, The Salvation Army and Anglicare Australia. It is likely that a charity already exists which is doing the kind of work which you would like to carry out.

For large charitable organisations such as the Australian Red Cross, the management of disaster appeals is core business and their experience in this area attracts a high level of public trust.

Partnership with an existing appeal fund

Partnership with an agency that has expertise and public trust in conducting public appeals has been shown to be an effective model for disaster appeals. Recent State Government public appeals have involved partnership arrangements with the Australian Red Cross that are negotiated and agreed at the time of the disaster.

Under these arrangements, donations were collected through an Australian Red Cross public appeal. All funds raised were then transferred from the Red Cross Appeal trust account to the Government's Appeal trust account for division of roles for fund collection and distribution is an arrangement favoured by the Australian Red Cross management of distribution to beneficiaries.

In the past, disaster appeals have involved certain banks as collection agents. This is an efficient and effective way of collecting funds. Receipts for any donations need to be given and the funds need to be paid into a special account established for the appeal.

Establishment of a disaster appeal

The decision to establish a new appeal should recognise that management of a public appeal represents a significant undertaking for your organisation that will require redirection of substantial resources over an extended timeframe. Any decision to establish a disaster appeal must take into account the complexities surrounding donor intent, the potential disconnect between level of funds raised compared with the level of disaster related needs (either too much or too little) and the capacity of the appeal to address unmet disaster needs within the affected community.

Legal framework

The request or acceptance of any money, property or other benefit from the public is considered a fundraising appeal if a representation is made (or implied) that the appeal is for a charitable purpose. A charitable purpose includes the relief of financial hardship and other purposes for the benefit of the community. These purposes include disaster relief appeals.

There is a licensing scheme for charitable fundraising appeals. The licence is called an authority to fundraise, and is issued under the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991. This is concerned with regulating the fundraising activity, not the structural basis of the organisation. To conduct a public appeal, approval must be obtained. If a surplus remains for which no use has been specified, you should seek legal advice before distributing the surplus. Charitable trust law may apply to the surplus.

Engaging your Community

If communities wish to provide assistance, they should be strongly encouraged to express their sympathy and empathy for those affected by the disaster through monetary donations to public appeals.

It is more empowering for people to receive cash grants so that they can choose what they most need to support their own recovery, which can also assist in stimulating the local economy.

The key message is that cash is always preferred because it can be targeted to meet immediate needs.

Officers from NSW Fair Trading, as far as possible, are available to attend special meetings formed for the purpose of establishing a disaster appeal and to give advice about the impact of the charitable fundraising law and other prudent practices and procedures.

Do we need an authority to fundraise?

If your organisation intends to collect funds for a charitable purpose it must hold an authority to fundraise. Exemptions apply in the following cases:

- If your organisation is established under an Act and subject to the control and direction of a Minister, fundraising appeals may be conducted without the need for an authority to fundraise; or
- In certain instances religious organisations are exempt.

Organisations wishing to establish a public appeal should take care to observe the requirements stipulated in the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991.

How do we apply for an authority to fundraise?

A Charitable Fundraising application form can be obtained by contacting NSW Fair Trading.

After your organisation has been registered as a fundraiser with the NSW Fair Trading you must meet certain on-going banking, reporting, auditing and record keeping obligations. These can also be obtained by contacting NSW Fair Trading.

Taxation concessions

The appeal fund may be eligible to receive exemptions and assistance from federal, state and local government. For example, the appeal fund may be entitled to deductible gift recipient status in respect of donations (income tax deductibility).

Organisations that are entitled to receive income tax-deductible gifts and tax-deductible contributions are called deductible gift recipients (DGRs).

To qualify as a DGR, an organisation must be either endorsed by the Australian Tax Office or listed by name in the income tax law. Your organisation must have DGR status in order for donors to claim income tax deductions for their gifts.

How do we apply for Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status?

An application for Endorsement as a Deductible Gift Recipient form can be obtained by contacting the Australian Tax Office.

Management of disaster appeals

The management of disaster appeals may be undertaken by trustees operating within the terms of a trust deed.

A trust deed is the document which establishes the trust fund, into which donated funds are

deposited and from which distributions are made. The trust deed also determines the conditions of appointment of trustees as well as the fund's purpose, administration and the broad arrangements for distribution of funds. Trust deeds may be of a continuing nature or created specifically for a particular disaster.

Trustees are appointed as per the terms of the trust deed and hold donated monies in trust for distribution within the eligibility arrangements. The trustees are the policy making body for the management of the appeal and the distribution of donated monies. Final accountability and responsibility for the collection and distribution of monies lies with the trustees.

The trustees or management committee, if appointed, have a responsibility to ensure that the funds are allocated fairly and according to need in accordance with the guiding principles, and appropriate assessment procedures are applied in all cases.

Management committee

In large scale disasters, where it is expected a significant amount of funds may be donated, there may be a need to establish a management committee to support the trustees in the administration of the fund. The management committee is an independent group appointed to govern the appeal fund and it is responsible for:

- Calling for applications for relief funds ensuring wide publicity and ease of lodgement;
- Allocating funds on behalf of all donors;
- Determining the criteria for the distribution of funds including means testing requirements and types of recipients;
- Determining the means of assessing applications;
- Ensuring timely distribution of funds, including rapid disbursement of early, interim payments to address emergency needs; and
- Overseeing legal and audit accountabilities.

The independence of the group is crucial and there needs to be transparency on how the members are chosen.

Public expectations

Public appeals attract intense public attention and media scrutiny which can potentially result in criticism of fund administrators. It is paramount that the management systems and processes put in place ensure that the fund is administered in accordance with its stated intent, that donated monies are distributed efficiently and that the public is informed every step of the way.

Lessons identified from previous appeals have indicated the areas of appeal management most likely to result in public controversy are: how trustees and management committee members are chosen; accountability (in relation to decision making and distribution); categories of beneficiaries; means testing of potential beneficiaries; percentage of appeal funds paid directly to disaster affected persons or bereaved; perceived delays in payment of assistance; inconsistencies between projects funded and the stated intent of an appeal and the life of the Fund.

Collection and distribution of funds

An agreed set of guiding principles and auditing requirements need to be established that will inform the collection and distribution of funds. The guiding principles of the appeal must be prepared with particular care to ensure:

- That there is no doubt as to who is to benefit from the donations; and
- To identify whether or not the benefit to be given is to be at the discretion of trustees or a management committee formed for that purpose.

Guiding principles

The following principles will guide the operation of a public appeal:

Policy:

- All appeal funds will be distributed in accordance with the trust deed and the expectations of donors;
- All appeal funds will be provided to the individuals and communities affected, with priority to those who are most impacted and who have limited capacity to financially recover;
- Funds distribution will be timely, equitable and reflective of the wide diversity of individual and community needs;
- Affected communities will be able to participate in determining types of assistance provided and eligibility criteria;
- Funds will be distributed to respond to both immediate and emerging needs of individuals and communities, recognising that needs change over time;
- Public expectations is that any management and administration costs associated with the appeal will not deducted from donated funds;
- All appeal processes will be transparent, well publicised and accessible; and
- Confidentiality will need to be maintained by all participants, particularly in regards to sharing and disclosing personal information in accordance with relevant privacy legislation.

Administration:

- The management committee should represent the interests of both the donors and recipients;
- Distribution of funds should only be made available to persons lodging a written application form;
- Subject to a trust deed or legislation, the management committee has the responsibility to determine the criteria and priority for the allocation of grants; and
- A report of the operations of the appeal fund, incorporating the audited financial accounts, should be published.

Media and communications

The media is a powerful tool for all forms of appeals and every effort must be made to enlist the aid of all branches of the media to achieve a successful appeal.

Firstly, the media can be employed in various ways to provide publicity for the appeal, including:

- television stations coverage of the disaster event and showing visual images of the event, accompanied by an advertisement for donations to the appeal;
- live radio coverage of the disaster event coupled with regular on-air appearances, e.g. talk back programs by a senior member of the appeal management committee; and
- extended newspaper coverage of the disaster event and the recovery efforts alongside advertisements seeking donations to the appeal.

In addition to the publicity referred to above, the media should also be used as a means of regular reporting on how to apply for appeal funds, the progress of the appeal in terms of the level of funds raised and the level of funds distributed.

Acknowledging Donations

People and businesses take great pride in seeing their names associated with worthwhile causes. It is therefore beneficial to publicly acknowledge donations received in the media. This practice can encourage more donations and is a form of accountability. Such acknowledgments can be either in the form of an advertisement in newspapers, over the radio, on television, Recovery Newsletters or in public addresses. It is important to obtain consent from the donor prior to public acknowledgement.

Further information

To obtain an electronic copy of this Guideline, visit www.emergency.nsw.gov.au For information about

- Fundraising regulations and NSW authority to fundraise; or
- An outline of the main features of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 visit www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

For information about applying for Deductible Gift Recipient endorsement, visit www.ato.gov.au

Guideline 7: Donated Goods

This section to be developed when resource has been released by The Office of Emergency Management, NSW Department of Justice