



LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN

**Evacuation Planning
Sub Plan**

Document control

This Sub Plan will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary. The Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC) will ensure contact details are kept and up to date.

Minor amendments to this plan can be made by the LDC. Amendments which affect the intent of the plan must be endorsed by the LDMG.

All approved amendments are to be listed below. The LDC will ensure that all copies of the plan are replaced with the most up to date version.

Version	Date	Comments	Approved by
1.1	June 2021	Supersedes Evacuation Sub Plan 2016 (Version 1); Sub plan reviewed.	LDC

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full title
DDC	District Disaster Coordinator
DDMG	District Disaster Management Group
DNRME	Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy
DMA	Disaster Management Act (2003)
LDC	Local Disaster Coordinator
LDCC	Local Disaster Coordination Centre
LDMG	Local Disaster Management Group
LDMP	Local Disaster Management Plan
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
PSPA	Public Safety Preservation Act (1986)
QAS	Queensland Ambulance Service
QFES	Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
QPS	Queensland Police Service
RRC	Rockhampton Regional Council
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
SES	State Emergency Service
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TMR	Department of Transport and Main Roads

Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this is to detail the agreed arrangements, at the local level, for planning the evacuation of residents at risk, during an emergency or disaster event, to ensure that they can be moved to a safer location and be provided with relevant support services.

This Sub Plan is to be used in conjunction with the Local Disaster Management Plan and its Sub Plans. It sets out the agreed evacuation planning responsibilities and actions for the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) and applies to emergency/disaster events and associated hazards within the Rockhampton Regional Council (RRC) Local Government Area.

Objectives

The objectives of the Evacuation Planning Sub Plan are to:

- Define the structure, membership, roles and responsibilities of the Evacuation Planning Sub Committee;
- Provide an understanding of evacuation planning in a disaster management context;
- Facilitate an effective withdrawal of “at risk” persons to managed temporary emergency shelters and evacuation centres;
- Define authority to evacuate; and
- Coordinate a safe and ordered return of displaced persons.

Key contacts

An Evacuation Planning Sub Committee is established by the LDMG to oversee the evacuation processes of the RRC Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP) and associated Evacuation Planning Sub Plan.

The contact list for members of the Evacuation Planning Sub Committee is held by RRC’s Disaster Management Unit. The Chairperson of the Evacuation Planning Sub Committee is responsible for ensuring the contact list is maintained and up to date.

The Evacuation Planning Sub Committee comprises of the following members:

Chairperson: Officer in Charge Rockhampton - Queensland Police Service

Members:

- Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
- State Emergency Services Local Controller
- Department of Transport and Main Roads
- Evacuation Facilities Manager Rockhampton Regional Council
- Coordinator Disaster Management Rockhampton Regional Council
- Australian Red Cross
- Salvation Army
- Supporting Advisors: Representatives from other agencies, industries or community organisations deemed necessary to act as advisors for both planning and operational arrangements.

Responsibilities

The role of the Evacuation Planning Sub Committee is to assist in achieving the objectives of the Evacuation Planning Sub Plan by:

- Assisting the LDMG in coordinating support to the lead agency responsible for the evacuation (and return) of directly affected persons during an emergency or disaster event;
- Providing reports and recommendations to the LDMG in relation to evacuation issues; and
- Developing an effective Evacuation Planning Sub Plan and to regularly review and assess the plan.

The Evacuation Planning Sub Committee should meet on a regular basis (minimum of once per year) as determined by the Chair.

Evacuation

Evacuation is a risk management strategy that may be used as a means of mitigating the effects of an emergency or disaster on a community. It involves the movement of people to a safer location. However, to be effective it must be correctly planned and executed. The process of evacuation is usually considered to include the return of the affected community to their homes.

Evacuation is – *“1. The temporary relocation of persons from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas to safe areas. 2. The planned relocation of persons from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas to safer areas and eventual return.”*

Evacuation from one’s property is the **last resort option** in an emergency/ disaster event to keep one safe and reduce the risk of injuries. This Sub Plan is developed to enable a safe and coordinated transfer of the *“at risk”* population, away from high risk areas, as the key focus. The safety of the emergency responders and support agency representatives is of equal importance.

Residents deemed *“at risk”* will be encouraged to move from the emergency/ disaster area **and seek accommodation with family or friends or alternative commercial accommodation**. If necessary, evacuees may be relocated to an evacuation centre with access to welfare support facilities.

Residents deemed *“at risk”* who may have activated their evacuation plans will be directed away from the danger area to a sheltering location or facility as determined by the Chairperson Evacuation Planning Sub Committee, until the danger has passed. Only minimum support facilities may be required. Some evacuations will need to be phased to ensure that vulnerable groups can be evacuated in time and to avoid congestion. Phasing may be by area or by the needs of the groups.

The most likely events that will instigate an evacuation scenario due to impact and risk are: cyclone, severe storm, major flooding, bushfire, loss of facilities (long-term).

In the event of a disaster/ emergency requiring evacuation, careful planning and consideration must be given to the needs and safety of the following groups:

- Persons with disabilities;
- Residents and patients of hospitals, nursing homes, retirement villages and aged care facilities;
- Persons with non-English speaking background;
- Children and youth at child care centres and schools;
- Tourists to the region (particularly those residing in caravans or on boats or vessels); and
- Homeless people.

Evacuation process

There are five (5) stages to the Evacuation Process.

1. Decision

There are often many complex issues to be taken into account in making this decision and it may need to be made in the absence of all the desired information. The decision making process needs to be as simplified as possible and clear and informed.

The LDMG (including the Evacuation Planning Sub Committee) has no legislative authority to invoke an evacuation and can therefore only offer advice to the community of the need or potential need to evacuate an area.

Should the LDMG require a mandatory evacuation of an “*at risk*” area or community, they are to make a request through the District Disaster Coordinator (DDC) who is a commissioned officer within the Queensland Police Service.

Key organisations and functions

Organisation	Responsibility	Key Functions	Support Agency/s
District Disaster Coordinator	Mandatory evacuation	Seek approval for disaster declaration Issue media release on mandatory evacuation Authorise declared disaster officers as necessary	DDMG QPS LDMG QFES
Chairperson Local Disaster Management Group	Manage decision process for evacuation	Request authority from DDC for mandatory evacuation	LDMG Evacuation Planning Sub Plan Committee DDMG
QFES QPS	Manage evacuations under Public Safety Preservation Act	Manage evacuations under Public Safety Preservation Act in response to incidents affecting a community.	QFES QPS LDMG DDMG

2. Warning

Warning comprises of the dissemination of public information in the form of advice or direction.

An evacuation warning must be structured to provide timely and effective information to the public. The effectiveness of the evacuation will largely depend on the quality of the warning.

Factors which may influence the effectiveness of the warning include time, distance, visual evidence, threat characteristics and sense of urgency demonstrated by the emergency services. For example, the more immediate the threat, the greater the readiness of people to accept and appropriately react to the warning.

Key organisations and functions

Organisation	Responsibility	Key Functions	Support Agency/s
Chairperson Local Disaster Management Group	Manage dissemination of information for evacuation	Advise public of situation as outlined in Communications Sub Plan	LDMG Relevant control authority

3. Withdrawal

Withdrawal involves the orderly removal of people from a dangerous or potentially dangerous area to a safer area. This stage focuses on the actual evacuation.

In practice, there are three degrees of evacuation:

Self Evacuation –the self-initiated movement of people to safer places prior to, or in the absence of, official advice or warnings to evacuate. Some people may choose to leave early even when in the absence of a hazard but based on a forecast. Safer places may include sheltering with family or friends who may live in a safer building or location. Self-evacuees manage their own withdrawal, including transportation arrangements. People are encouraged to evacuate early if they intend to evacuate;

Voluntary Evacuation –an evacuation advice has been issued, people are strongly encouraged to consider enacting their evacuation plans. Voluntary evacuees also manage their own withdrawal;

Directed Evacuation –a relevant government agency has exercised a legislated power that requires people to evacuate. A directed evacuation under the *Disaster Management Act 2003* requires the declaration of a disaster situation. A DDC may declare a disaster situation which requires the approval of the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and must be made in accordance with Section 65 of the Act. During a disaster situation, the DDC and Declared Disaster Officers are provided with additional powers under sections 77-78 of the Act. These powers may be required to give effect to a directed evacuation.

During a disaster it may be necessary to relocate some community members to a place of relative safety away from the “*at risk*” area. If unable to relocate to family and friends or established accommodation, the “*at risk*” community will be directed to an evacuation centre. This is a place established to cater for the immediate basic needs of evacuees, and is the best last resort option.

In some situations, the “*at risk*” community will be directed to an assembly point to determine if proceeding to an evacuation centre is the best suited option.

Evacuation Centres are a temporary sheltering solution only, and will normally close as soon as evacuees are either returned to their primary residence or are settled in appropriate alternative short-long term accommodation.

Transportation of persons requiring assistance to evacuate will be undertaken in consultation with the LDMG.

There will be occasions when it may be assessed that people would be safer to stay and shelter in place. Depending on the nature of the hazard, measures such as closing windows, isolation of air conditioning systems and listening to the radio and/or TV to receive information can be taken to reduce vulnerability.

Key organisations and functions

Organisation	Responsibility	Key Functions	Support Agency/s
Queensland Police Service	Lead Agency/Control Authority	Implementation of evacuation process Crowd & traffic control of evacuation routes Crowd & traffic control at emergency accommodation centres/assembly points Security of evacuated area Security of assembly points	SES QFES Australian Red Cross RRC
Evacuation Planning Sub Plan Chairperson & Committee	Evacuation planning & coordination	Coordinating the evacuation of “ <i>at risk</i> ” persons during an emergency or disaster event Provide reports and make recommendations to the LDMG in relation to disaster management evacuation issues Determine/identify need for assembly points Determine/identify evacuation centres to be utilised Coordinate communication needs for evacuation centres/assembly points	LDMG SES QFES DDMG TMR
		Assess and determine appropriate transportation routes from area to be evacuated to nominated evacuation shelter/location Provision of appropriate transportation resources where necessary to assist in evacuation of persons Provision of appropriate transportation resources where necessary to assist with return of persons to their residence	LDMG SES QPS QFES QAS DDMG RRC TMR
	Evacuation Centre – see Evacuation Centre Management Sub Plan	Suitable sheltering locations or facilities, such as evacuation centres for evacuees, will be identified, inspected and recorded Ensure appropriate facilities available to respond and provide accommodation and services, as required, in an emergency/ disaster event	LDMG QPS QAS DDMG RRC Australian Red Cross
QAS	Medical	Casualty and medical transport	St John Ambulance

4. Shelter

Shelter involves provision of the basic needs for affected people away from the immediate or potential effects of the hazard.

Shelter provides for the temporary respite of evacuees. It may be limited in facilities, but must provide protection from the elements as well as accommodate the basic personal needs which arise at an individual level in an emergency.

Shelter, in the context of evacuation, may include:

- Assembly Point;
- Evacuation Centre;
- Neighbourhood Safer Place;
- Place of Refuge; or
- Public Cyclone Shelter.

An Assembly Point is – *“a temporarily designated location specifically selected as a point which is not anticipated to be adversely affected by the hazard.”*

Evacuation Centre is – *“located beyond a hazard to provide temporary accommodation, food and water until it is safe for evacuees to return to their home or alternative accommodation.”*

Neighbourhood Safer Place is – *“a building or open space where people may gather as a last resort to seek shelter from bushfire.”*

Place of Refuge is – *“a building assessed as suitable to provide protection to evacuees during a cyclone, but is not a public cyclone shelter. These are typically opened when the capacities of other evacuation facilities have been exceeded.”*

Public Cyclone Shelter is – *“a building designed, constructed and maintained in accordance with government requirements and provides protection to evacuees during a cyclone.”* NB There is not a Public Cyclone Shelter within Rockhampton Region. The closest shelter is located in Yeppoon, Livingstone Shire Council.

During an evacuation affected populations may be directed to an Assembly Point, Neighbourhood Safer Place, or Place of Refuge in the first instance. At the designated sheltering location or facility, affected people will be redirected to family and friends or commercial accommodation where possible, and as a last resort to the closest evacuation centre. All affected persons will be required to register. COVID safe considerations will be applied. If affected people are showing any COVID symptoms, they will be redirected for testing and to a separate isolation centre to await results, prior to entering an evacuation centre.

Further information on potential temporary sheltering locations or facilities, such as evacuation centres, are listed in the Evacuation Centre Management Sub plan. This list is to be kept current by the Chairperson of the Evacuation Planning Sub Committee in consultation with relevant RRC officers and a copy held within the LDCC when activated.

A database of potential temporary sheltering locations or facilities are also stored/identified in RRC’s Disaster Management software and RRC’s Geographic Information System.

Key organisations and functions

Organisation	Responsibility	Key Functions	Support Agency/s
Queensland Police Service	Lead Agency/Control Authority	Security of designated sheltering location or facility Registration of evacuees (may be assisted by Australian Red Cross via the Register.Find.Reunite system)	SES QFES Australian Red Cross RRC
Evacuation Planning Sub Plan Chairperson & Committee	Evacuation Centre – see Evacuation Centre Management Sub Plan	Suitable sheltering locations or facilities for evacuees will be identified, inspected and recorded Ensure appropriate facilities available to respond and provide accommodation and services, as required, in an emergency/ disaster event	LDMG QPS QAS DDG RRC Australian Red Cross
Australian Red Cross	Evacuation Centre	Management of evacuation centres once activated Registration of evacuees and displaced persons Provision of information, advice and updates to LDMG as required	LDMG RRC QPS
QAS	Medical	Casualty and medical transport	St John Ambulance

5. Return

Return is the final stage and requires assessment of the disaster area to determine if return is possible and to identify any special conditions which may need to be imposed. The return may be conducted in a phased manner.

Key organisations and functions

Organisation	Responsibility	Key Functions	Support Agency/s
District Disaster Coordinator	Return following mandatory evacuation	Approve and plan the safe return of evacuees and displaced persons	DDMG QPS LDMG QFES
Chairperson Local Disaster Management Group	Manage decision and planning process for return following evacuation	Request authority from DDC for commencing return planning	LDMG Evacuation Planning Sub Plan Committee DDMG
QFES QPS	Manage return following activation of Public Safety Preservation Act	Manage safe return following the impacts of an incidents affecting a community.	QFES QPS LDMG DDMG
Recovery Sub Committee & Chairperson	Recovery	Recovery arrangements as per Recovery Sub Plan	Department of Communities
Evacuation Planning Sub Plan Chairperson & Committee	Return	Coordinate a safe and ordered return of displaced persons	LDMG QPS QAS DDG RRC Australian Red Cross