

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WA

EM Information Sheet

2/2009

Local Emergency Management Arrangements & Community Evacuation

Background

In recent times there have been questions raised with regards to community evacuation during emergencies. This information sheet aims to detail the requirements for planning evacuation in the local emergency management arrangements framework.

What are the Requirements for local government?

The Emergency Management Act 2005 requires that a local government is to ensure that local emergency management arrangements in the local government's district are prepared. Section 41 of the Act highlights the minimum requirements for the arrangements. Emergency Management planning at all levels are to consider the principles of evacuation outlined in the Emergency Management Procedures Manual [OP 7 – Community Evacuation].

It is not the intent for Local Government to be responsible for developing an evacuation plan for each hazard, however it is local government responsibility (in partnership with Hazard Management Agencies (HMA) to ensure adequate arrangements are in place to support evacuation. This includes the provision of evacuation centres and applicable support functions. Consideration should be given to special needs groups within the community and any applicable requirements should be documented in the Local Emergency Management Arrangements.

Specific evacuation plans such as those for aged care facilities and/or child care centres are the responsibility of the business owner, however it is advisable for a copy of these plans to be held as an annexure or sub plan to the local emergency management arrangements.

All emergency management agencies preparing Hazard plans at all levels are to include evacuation plans specific to that hazard. They should include details such as triggers for evacuation, opening of welfare centres and transport requirements. The Department for Child Protection (DCP) should be involved early in the decision and planning phase.

Local Emergency Management Committees should work with Hazard Management Agencies to plan evacuation in specific locations. The following should be considered:

- Community Warnings;
- Information requirements for those evacuated such as websites, telephone numbers, notice boards, public meetings;
- Traffic management – identification of major routes in/out possible congestion points;
- Special needs groups – age care, hospital, schools;
- Resource needs such as busses, and the availability of these around town.

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The State Emergency Management Committee Policy – State Emergency Management Policy (SEMP) 4.7 – ‘Community Evacuation’ will assist in evacuation planning. Sections 13, 14 & 15 of the Policy relate to planning:

- Consider the principles under State Emergency Management Procedures Manual – OP 7 “Emergency Evacuation” (s13)
- Local Arrangements must include a section on evacuation arrangements for the community (s14)
- HMA plans at all levels should include details such as triggers for evacuation, opening welfare centre’s, and transport requirements.

How does evacuation work in practice?

During an incident the Hazard Management Agency’s Incident Controller (IC) is responsible for making decisions regarding evacuation. The Incident Controller should be fully cognisant of:

- Local emergency management arrangements relevant to the area;
- the hazard; and
- any legislative provisions.

The WA Police through its Local Emergency Co-ordinator (LEC) will be requested by the HMA Incident Controller to effect and control evacuation of persons to a location to be determined by the Incident Controller. The LEC will seek the advice of the HMA Incident Controller prior to effecting an evacuation. However, when loss of life or injury is imminent, and a decision from the IC is not readily available, the LEC may make a decision to evacuate.

Once the evacuee’s are moved to an evacuation centre, the Department for Child Protection (DCP) coordinates welfare functions and services for evacuated persons.

Where can I get more information?

- *Emergency Management Act 2005*
- State Emergency Management Committee Policy No 4.7: *Community Evacuation*
- State Emergency Management Committee Procedure OP-7: *Emergency Evacuation*
- Emergency Management Australia Manual No 11: *Evacuation Planning Guide*
- State Emergency Management Support Plan: *WESTPLAN - Welfare*
- *Local Emergency Management Arrangements Development Guide for WA* developed by the Fire & Emergency Services Authority of WA
- *FESA Website: www.fesa.wa.gov.au*

Community Emergency Management Services
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For more information please contact your local Community
Emergency Management Officer

- Metropolitan : Quinta La Rosa 9479 9375
- South West : Paul Carr 9780 1900
- Great Southern: Adam Smith 9845 5000
- Goldfields Midlands: Yvette Grigg 9690 2313