



Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department



The role of Emergency Management Australia with Natural Hazards

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Emergency Management Australia

In short what we do is:

Monitor

Inform

Coordinate

Emergency Management Australia Role

- Australian Government's central crisis coordination resource through provision of the Australian Government Crisis Coordination Centre (CCC).
- Single channel for coordination of activities with states and territories
- Single avenue for request for assistance from states
- Primary source of information and situational awareness in domestic emergencies.
- Administers financial assistance programs

EMA's role - Domestic Disasters

- Coordinates whole-of-government approaches to crisis management.
- Provides situational awareness to ministers, agencies and jurisdictions.
- Manages financial assistance and support:
 - Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA),
 - the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment,
 - ex-gratia payments where necessary, and
 - the Australian Government Disaster Arrangements.

EMA's role – Domestic Disasters

When requested:

- Coordination of Australian Government physical assistance - COMDISPLAN
- Deployment of Liaison Officers
- Coordination of inter-jurisdictional assistance
- Management of domestic and international offers of assistance

EMA's role - International Disasters

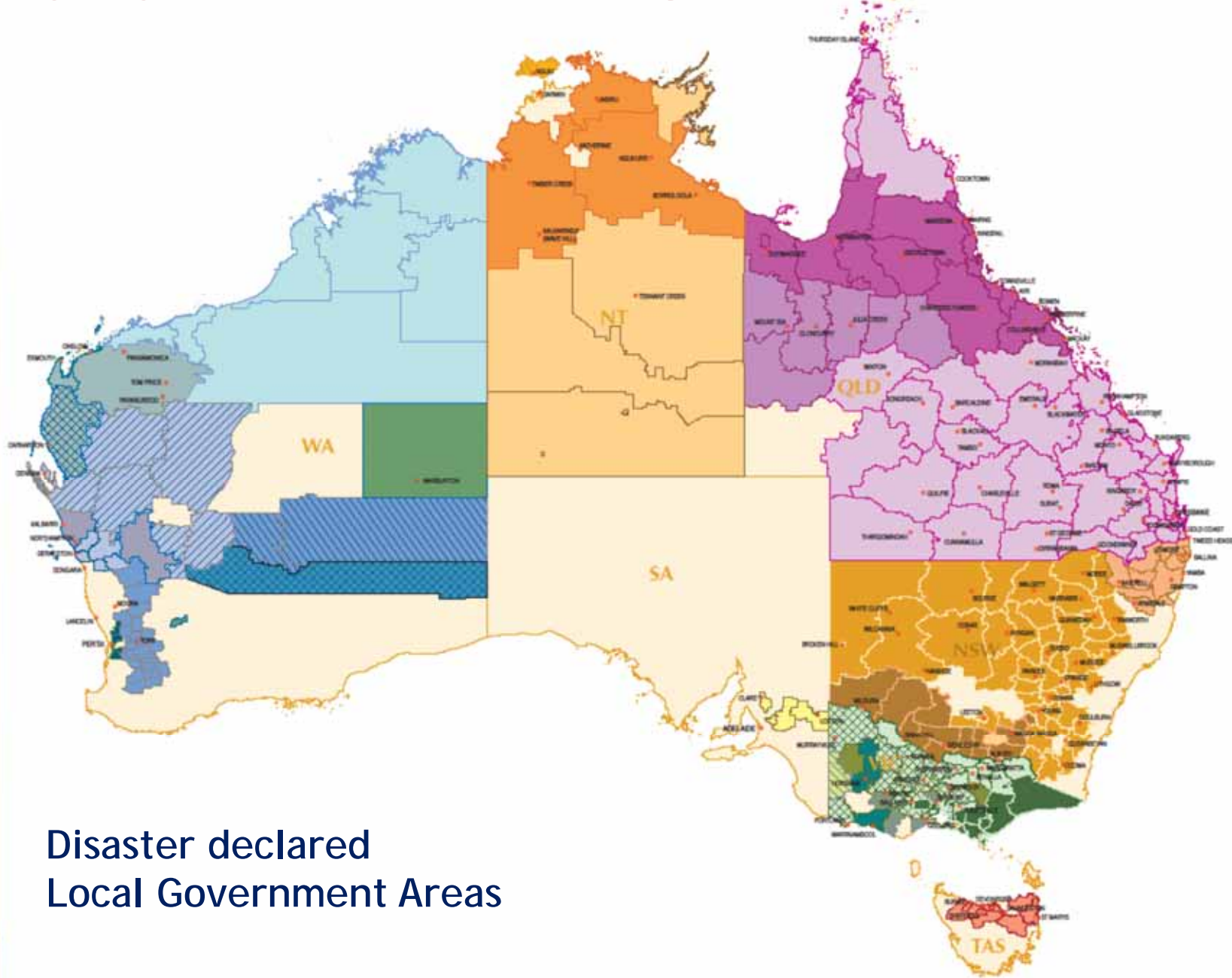
Supports Australian Government response:

- Planning response options
- Coordination of domestic resources – USAR or AUSMAT
- Deployment of Liaison Officers
- Situational awareness to agencies and jurisdictions

2010-11 Disaster Season

- All States and Territories affected
- 320 (of 559) Local Government Areas disaster declared - some more than once
- 36 lives lost
- Economic lost - estimated \$9 billion
- Scale of impact requires additional Australian Government support
- Australian Government pledge of \$6.6 billion toward recovery and reconstruction effort

2010-11 Disaster Season



Disaster declared
Local Government Areas

October 2010- February 2011

- September-November 2010: Queensland and NSW experiences heavier than normal rain periods. Twenty-five Local Government Areas (LGA's) receive NDRRA funding in NSW.
- December 2010: Severe weather causes widespread damage across Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and South Australia.
- December 6: NSW floods. Disaster events declared in 17 NSW LGA's. The total number of affected LGA's will rise to 54 by 20 January.
- December 8: Widespread flooding across Victoria
- December 16-18: Widespread flooding in the Gascoyne areas of WA.
- December 23: Preparations in SA for threat of flood waters travelling from Qld and NSW.



And the Rain continued



- December 25: Tropical Cyclone Tasha makes landfall near Cairns in the early hours of Christmas Day, bringing heavy rainfalls to Queensland.
- December 28: Disaster declared in several Queensland towns. Flooding prompts evacuations.
- December 28: Australian Defence Force requested to assist. ADF Joint task force established to streamline defence assistance.
- January 2: Floods affect 22 Queensland towns.
- January 10: Further heavy SE Qld rains causes flash flooding in Toowoomba and surrounding areas resulting in severe damage and 22 deaths.
- January 14: Severe weather and deluges in Victoria trigger significant flooding event.
- January 25-27: Tropical Cyclone Bianca (Qld) and Tropical Cyclone Anthony (WA) impact coasts
- February 2: Tropical Cyclone Yasi impacts Qld
- February 5-6: Remnants of TC Yasi causes severe flooding across Victoria



CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKE

SEPTEMBER 2010

Incident

- Magnitude 7 earthquake on branch fault line
- Minimal structural damage, no loss of life

Response

- EMA was the central point of contact for all communications into and out of the Australian Government, including initial incident notification and updates from GeoScience Australia
- Briefed Ministers and Senior Officials per the new Australian Government Crisis Management Framework



EAST COAST FLOODING

January 2011

Incident

- Flooding caused by an extended La Nina event and Tropical Cyclone Tasha
- Significant loss of life, more than 200,000 people evacuated from 70 towns

Response

- Managed communications flows between all stakeholders, including the Bureau of Meteorology and Queensland State Disaster Coordination Centre
- Actioned 30 requests for assistance from Queensland and Victoria
- Managed offers of assistance on behalf of Queensland
- Provided Liaison Officers to facilitate on ground coordination and ensure appropriate Australian Government assistance was provided





TROPICAL CYCLONE YASI

February 2011

Incident

- Category 5 Tropical Cyclone, originating over Fiji and crossing the Australian coast south of Innisfail
- No lives lost

Response

- EMA managed communications flows, including initial incident notification and updates from the Bureau of Meteorology
- Received and actioned more than 25 requests for assistance from the Governments of Queensland
- Managed offers of assistance (domestic and international) on behalf of the Queensland Government



CHRISTCHURCH AFTERSHOCK

February 2011

Incident

- Magnitude 6.3 aftershock at 5km depth south of Christchurch CBD
- 166 lives lost, widespread building collapse and structural damage

Response

- EMA managed communications flows to all stakeholders, including the DFAT, ADF and Australian Customs and Immigration Service
- Supported the transport, equipment and tasking of three Australian Urban Search and Rescue Taskforces, Australian Medical Assistance Team and a field hospital
- EMA Liaison Officers deployed to facilitate on ground coordination and ensure appropriate Australian Government assistance was provided
- Provided on ground rapid impact assessment



JAPANESE EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMI

March 2011

Incident

- Magnitude 9 earthquake off the Japanese coast and ensuing Tsunami,
- More than 10,000 lives lost and 17,500 missing persons

Response

- EMA maintained situational awareness and managed communications flows between key stakeholders, including the DFAT, ADF and Australian Customs and Immigration Service
- Supported the transport, equipment and tasking of an Australian Urban Search and Rescue Taskforces, Provided a Liaison Officers to facilitate on ground coordination and ensure appropriate Australian Government assistance was provided as needed

Lessons and observations

- Natural disasters in Australia are inevitable and the 2010-11 disaster season marks a trend towards increasingly severe and costly disasters.
- We need to change our approach:
 - Obtaining / collating / providing information that is more accessible and more accurate
 - Relationships are critical
 - Shared responsibility - Resilience
 - Increasing costs of recovery
 - Greater emphasis on mitigation and preparedness is needed
 - Centralised whole-of-government coordination
- Australian taxpayer has become the default underwriter for disasters

Shift to Resilience based approach

- The incidence and severity of disasters in Australia is on the increase.
- Increasing exposure to disaster risks:
 - demographic trends
 - growing complexity and interdependence of our economy, and
 - predicted impacts of climate change
- Recovery and reconstruction costs unsustainable
- Need to minimise exposure to disaster risks - greater focus on prevention and mitigation

To become more disaster resilient!

Resilience

National Strategy for Disaster Resilience endorsed by COAG - February 2011

- **Shared responsibility:**

“...building the resilience of communities requires a national, coordinated and cooperative effort and is the collective responsibility of all sectors of society.”

- **Self-reliance:**

“Fundamental to the concept of disaster resilience, is that individuals and communities be more self reliant and prepared to take responsibility for the risks they live with.”

- **Be prepared for the unexpected**

“...we (now) need to focus more on action-based resilience planning to strengthen local capacity and capability, with greater emphasis on community engagement.”

Information sharing

- Fundamental to developing resilience and for effective coordination
- Reliant on:
 - stakeholder relationships
 - agreed principles
- To minimise the impact of natural disasters we need to be better informed of:
 - Local hazards and risks
 - Risk/impact assessments
- Assists development of timely, accurate and consistent
 - Crisis picture
 - Reports
 - Public communications

Mitigation

- Aim - to develop individual and community resilience
- Ensure minimal long-term damage to communities, businesses and societies after disasters and emergencies.
- Provides a positive cost benefit for the community
- Information sharing, education and accessibility are crucial to improving mitigation practices
- Australian Government providing \$110 million over 4 years under National Disaster Resilience Program
- Funding has always been minimal compared to response and recovery expenditure.

Work For the Future

- Making sure that risk is borne at the most appropriate level.
- Building resilience.
- Making people less exposed to natural disasters.
- Basing response, relief and recovery decisions on objective evidence.





EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FOR SCHOOLS

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A comprehensive resource on emergency management for Australian students and teachers, from late primary school to late secondary school.



Dingo Creek - The Disaster

Go back in time to save
Dingo Creek



Dingo Creek - The Recovery

Help the community rebuild
and recover



Living With Disaster

Digital stories



People Get Ready

Community teaching
resources



An on-line game where you travel back in time
to save the Dingo Creek community from disaster

DINGO CREEK II

The recovery



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THE RECOVERY

An on-line game where students help rebuild the Dingo Creek community after disaster hits.

Living With Disaster

Digital stories



A series of “Digital Stories”
from the Black Saturday bushfires

Young people tell their own stories of disaster experiences



Schools' Kit for teachers available - free – www.ema.gov.au/schools



QUESTIONS

