

Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland

Overview factsheet

DMS

Why a Standard?

The [Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland](#) (the DM standard) establishes the performance requirements for all entities involved in disaster management. It also forms the basis for assurance activities conducted by the Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management (IGEM) or a disaster management entity.

The DM standard should be applied in conjunction with disaster management doctrine, good practice guidance and government policy, with particular reference to the [Disaster Management Act 2003](#) (the Act) and the [Queensland Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery Disaster Management Guideline](#).

Legislative basis

The legislative basis for Queensland's disaster management arrangements is the Act and the [Disaster Management Regulation 2014](#).

Section 16C of the Act lays out IGEM's functions. They include:

- (d) to make disaster management standards;
- (e) to regularly review and assess disaster management standards;
- (f) to review, assess and report on performance by entities responsible for disaster management in the State against the disaster management standards.

Section 16N of the Act states that 'The inspector-general may make 1 or more standards (each a disaster management standard) about the way in which entities responsible for disaster management in the State are to undertake disaster management.'

A focus on Outcomes

The DM standard is the first example of an outcomes-focussed standard in the disaster management sector in Australia, and one of very few that exist internationally. By focussing on outcomes rather than setting a 'minimum' standard that must be met, the DM standard moves away from a traditional compliance tool, and towards enhancing performance and achieving shared system-wide goals set by the sector.

It's important for the DM standard to focus on outcomes; and be able to be flexibly applied to different circumstances. As an assurance standard, this allows the entities using it to direct their efforts towards continuous improvement of their practices rather than compliance. This helps to cultivate a culture of positive learning and continuous improvement in the disaster management sector in Queensland.

Who is it for?

The DM standard should be used by all entities in Queensland with a responsibility to contribute to disaster management. This includes those with legislated roles, as well as entities acting on behalf of or under an arrangement with those that do.

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Shared responsibilities overview factsheet

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Shared responsibilities

The shared responsibilities are the elements of disaster management that all entities should deliver against and that everyone within the sector is responsible for contributing to. Shared responsibilities should not be considered in isolation – they are the interconnected responsibilities that collectively make up the system of disaster management within Queensland.

The shared responsibilities are used to categorise the outcomes.

Managing risk

The management of risk is fundamental to making the community safer. Risks need to be identified for both natural and human-caused hazards. Entities have a shared responsibility to work together with their community to develop integrated strategies to manage these risks.

Outcome 1: There is a shared understanding of risks for all relevant hazards

Outcome 2: Risk is managed to reduce the impact of disasters on the community

Planning and plans

Planning involves many steps. It should result in entities working with their community to prioritise how their collective and collaborative efforts will reduce the impact of disasters on the community. Plans document these efforts, identify interdependencies, roles and responsibilities, and provide guidance on how to undertake disaster management. The planning process results in a shared understanding of the efforts required to reduce the risk to the community.

Outcome 3: There is a shared understanding of how the impact of disasters will be managed and coordinated

Outcome 4: Plans outline and detail how the impact of disasters on the community will be reduced

Community engagement

The community is central to disaster management. Community engagement entails actively involving the community in managing their risk. It involves collaboratively planning how the community's collective efforts will contribute to their safety. Community engagement builds local capability, capacity and community self-reliance. This allows entities to focus their efforts where they are needed most.

Outcome 5: Entities proactively and openly engage with communities

Outcome 6: The community makes informed choices about disaster management, and acts on them

Capability integration

Capability integration involves entities building their capabilities together in a way that complements existing capability within the community. Capability integration is dependent on a shared understanding of the goals that guide the sector, and the ability to share and manage resources appropriately.

Outcome 7: Resources are prioritised and shared with those who need them, when they need them

Outcome 8: Entities develop integrated capabilities and shared capacity to reduce the impact of disasters on the community

Operations

Operations are the activities undertaken by entities during response, relief, and recovery for a specific event, including activities to mitigate and prepare for the impacts of that event.

Outcome 9: Operations minimise the negative impacts of an event on the community and provide the support needed for recovery

Outcome 10: Relief operations minimise the negative impacts of an event on the community and provide the support needed for recovery

Outcome 11: Recovery operations minimise the negative impacts of an event on the community and provide the support needed for recovery

Collaboration and coordination

Collaboration and coordination refers to how entities consider an integrated approach, and work together to promote a positive environment within the disaster management sector across all phases of disaster management. It includes the ways in which they show leadership and commitment to the principles behind disaster management.

Outcome 12: Entities proactively work together in a cooperative environment to achieve better results for the community

Outcome 13: A collaborative culture exists within disaster management

Common language

The use of common language across the disaster management sector allows for clear communication within and between entities, and when communicating with the wider community. It minimises the potential for confusion and misunderstanding

Outcome 14: Common language is used by all entities within Queensland's disaster management arrangements

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Outcomes overview factsheet



Outcomes

Outcomes are high-level statements that all entities should strive to achieve. They are the end-state that the sector is collectively aiming for. Outcomes are grouped under the correlating shared responsibilities.

Outcome 1: There is a shared understanding of risks for all relevant hazards

This is about risk assessments: the process that should be undertaken to develop them, who should be involved, what they should include and consider, and what they should aim to achieve.

Outcome 2: Risk is managed to reduce the impact of disasters on the community

This is about hazard mitigation and risk reduction activities: how they are informed and prioritised, how entities understand hazards and embed mitigation in normal operations, and how the community understands and acts in relation to their risks.

Shared responsibility: Managing risk

Outcome 3: There is a shared understanding of how the impact of disasters will be managed and coordinated

This is about the planning process: how the planning process is embedded into core business and coordinated between different entities, how it enables a shared understanding of roles, capabilities and capacities, and how the community is included.

Outcome 4: Plans outline and detail how the impact of disasters on the community will be reduced

This is about disaster management plans: the things that they should be informed by, what they should consider, and the needs that they should identify and meet.

Shared responsibility: Planning and plans

Outcome 5: Entities proactively and openly engage with communities

This is about how entities engage with their community: the kind of communications that they distribute and how they distribute them, the type of engagement activities that they undertake, how those activities are supported and coordinated, and what they achieve.

Outcome 6: The community makes informed choices about disaster management, and acts on them

This is about how engagement by disaster management practitioners supports the community to take actions appropriate to them: this includes their awareness of hazards and risk, their access to information and resources, and how entities support that understanding and tailor communications based on risk and susceptibility.

Shared responsibility: Community engagement

Outcome 7: Resources are prioritised and shared with those who need them, when they need them

This is about resource and information management: how entities understand and manage their own and each other's requirements, how these needs are coordinated and made available, and how sensitive data is kept secure.

Outcome 8: Entities develop integrated capabilities and shared capacity to reduce the impact of disasters on the community

This is about entities building complementary capabilities: how entities work together to understand and coordinate capability and capacity, and how training and exercising programs are collaboratively developed and implemented to promote consistent understanding in the sector.

Shared responsibility: Capability integration

Outcome 9: Response operations minimise the negative impacts of an event on the community and provide the support needed for recovery

This is about response operations: the attributes that they should have, the needs they should meet, and the way that entities should conduct them.

Outcome 10: Relief operations minimise the negative impacts of an event on the community and provide the support needed for recovery

This is about relief operations: the attributes that they should have, the needs they should meet, and the way that entities should conduct them.

Outcome 11: Recovery operations minimise the negative impacts of an event on the community and provide the support needed for recovery

This is about recovery operations: the attributes that they should have, the needs they should meet, and the way that entities should conduct them.

Shared responsibility: Operations

Outcome 12: Entities proactively work together in a cooperative environment to achieve better results for the community

This is about the way entities work: how lines of command and control are implemented and adhered to, how entities work with liaison officers and the community, and how decisions are made and documented.

Outcome 13: A collaborative culture exists within disaster management

This is about creating a positive learning culture in the disaster management sector: how entities and individuals work together and invest in opportunities to improve themselves and each other.

Shared responsibility: Collaboration and coordination

Outcome 14: Common language is used by all entities within Queensland's disaster management arrangements

This is about common language being used across the disaster management sector to allow for clear communication within and between entities, and when communicating with the wider community. It minimises the potential for confusion and misunderstanding.

Shared responsibility: Common language

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Accountabilities overview factsheet

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Accountabilities

The accountabilities provide structure for the delivery of outcomes and indicators. They consider what an entity is accountable for under legislation and accepted good disaster management practice. The accountabilities are also a mechanism to frame what the Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management may consider in evidencing the achievement of the outcomes.

The five accountabilities are:

- Governance
- Doctrine
- People
- Enablers
- Continuous improvement.

Each of these accountabilities has specific criteria that must be met to ensure a level of rigour around the delivery of outcomes

Governance

Governance refers to how entities administer their disaster management responsibilities and ensure decision making is appropriate, clear and consistent.

- Roles and responsibilities have been identified, agreed to, and documented.
- Entities have been authorised to carry out their delegated responsibilities.
- The authorising environment for decisions and approvals has been identified and agreed to, and is being utilised.
- Arrangements are in place for reporting on and monitoring the outcomes of decisions and actions.
- Decisions are recorded as they are made, and their implementation is monitored.

Doctrine

Doctrine refers to the ideas, strategies and guiding principles contained in the documents that guide disaster management. These align with legislation, reflect good practice, and include guidelines, policies, plans and procedures.

- Roles and responsibilities are based on relevant doctrine.
- The action or activity is based on relevant doctrine.
- Doctrine is agreed and shared between entities.
- Common language being used, and terminology is agreed and consistent with doctrine.

People

People refers to the relationships and networks, training, skills and experience that enable the individuals who undertake disaster management to do so effectively.

- Enabling networks and relationships between individuals and entities, both formal and informal, have been established and maintained.

- Training requirements are documented, and the necessary skills and knowledge are being met.
- Opportunities are provided for on-the-job training and development.
- Upskilling and cross-training provide a reserve of personnel.

Enablers

Enablers refer to the resources that assist entities in undertaking disaster management activities. This includes both the physical equipment and assets, and the systems, data and technologies.

- Enablers are in place, are fit for purpose, and are being used in line with agreed protocols.
- Enablers are accessible to the relevant entities, including the community if necessary.
- Enablers meet the needs and requirements of all relevant entities.
- Benchmarks for the performance of enablers have been established and are being met
- Alternatives or backups are in place.

Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement refers to how entities monitor, evaluate, measure and improve disaster management activities.

- An established lessons management process is being undertaken.
- The capabilities required have been identified, documented, and aligned to recognised and accepted training methodology.
- A variety of exercising and testing methods are being conducted and evaluated.
- Insights are included in a lessons management process.
- Lessons identified are shared with other entities, and with the community when relevant.
- Improvements are made based on insights gained through testing, exercises and operational activity.