

Getting to know the Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland Info Sheet: Accountabilities of Outcome 6

A16

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 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 the community's 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.

Examples of applying the Accountabilities to Outcome 6

Please note: the following are examples only and should be used to inform understanding of how the Accountabilities might be applied to individual circumstances rather than as a checklist

Governance

Roles and responsibilities have been identified, agreed to, and documented

- Entities work with stakeholders to define clear roles and responsibilities when creating formal partnerships with community groups
- Entities understand the role and responsibilities of the community in maintaining effective disaster management

Entities have been authorised to carry out their delegated responsibilities

- Entities provide the community with information about how to deal with the impact of disaster events in line with their responsibilities as authorised in the [Queensland State Disaster Management Plan](#)
- Entities authorise personnel to conduct engagement activities in partnership with community leaders

The authorising environment for decisions and approvals has been identified and agreed to, and is being utilised

- Entities give personnel approval to provide support to the community to develop disaster management capabilities
- Entities enable the community to act on their own behalf, through understanding the role and authority of community leaders and members as outlined in the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience's [Community Engagement for Disaster Resilience Handbook](#)

Arrangements are in place for reporting on and monitoring the outcomes of decisions and actions

- Entities monitor their community engagement strategies to ensure they meet community information needs
- Entities include community feedback as an evaluation tool when monitoring engagement activity outcomes

Decisions are recorded as they are made, and their implementation is monitored

- Entities record the decisions made around how they use information gained from the community to ensure that Queensland right to information and privacy legislation is adhered to
- Entities monitor the decisions made around the ways that information is provided to the community about the support available to them, to see whether that impacts on the amount of support being accessed

Doctrine

Roles and responsibilities are based on relevant doctrine

- The roles community members can play in disaster management and how entities work with them is based on doctrine, for example ways of working with spontaneous volunteers are based on the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience's [Communities Responding to Disasters: Planning for Spontaneous Volunteers Handbook](#)
- The disaster management plan provides information to the community on disaster management roles and responsibilities and acknowledges the role of the community

The action or activity is based on relevant doctrine

- Entities base their community engagement activities on doctrine such as the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience's [National Community Engagement for Disaster Resilience Handbook](#)
- Entities use doctrine such as the [People with vulnerabilities in disasters framework](#) to help to identify communities who may be more susceptible to impacts from an event than others
- The way that entities use information gained through community engagement activities conforms to right to information and privacy legislative requirements

Doctrine is agreed and shared between entities

- The doctrine used by entities to determine ways of engaging with the community is available to the community
- Entities share their community engagement plan with other relevant entities, to ensure they are coordinated and that the community's needs are being met

Common language is being used, and terminology is agreed and consistent with doctrine

- Entities tailor community messaging and education to the community that they are connecting with
- Entities consult with specialists and use the appropriate guiding doctrine to ensure that the language used is suitable for the engagement activity, for example school-based programs are linked to the national curriculum and contain age-appropriate content

People

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

- Entities engage local organisations to co-design community messaging, to establish and strengthen partnerships
- Entities use established local networks and industry contacts to establish and maintain new relationships with community organisations

Training requirements are documented, and the necessary skills and knowledge are being met

- Entities document and provide the training required to provide communities the information they need to make informed choices about disaster management
- Individuals have the necessary skills and knowledge to enable understanding of cultural nuances, norms and complexities when communicating with the community

Opportunities are provided for on-the-job training and development

- Entities provide opportunities for personnel to learn more about the community's information and engagement needs
- Individuals are given the opportunity to develop new skills while performing activities related to community engagement

Upskilling and cross-training provide a reserve of personnel

- Entities train multiple personnel to perform each community engagement role, so that if the primary person responsible is not available there is someone else who can step in
- When individuals go on leave, their community engagement role is backfilled, upskilling others in the entity to perform it if needed

Enablers

Enablers are in place, are fit for purpose, and are being used in line with agreed protocols

- Entities provide information on local hazards to the community through various mediums, such as videos, written material and artwork, to overcome potential communication barriers
- Entities are aware of the most appropriate communication channels to reach their community, such as social media or radio
- Entities actively seek to identify and address technological barriers to engagement

Enablers are accessible to the relevant entities, including the community if necessary

- Entities have a disaster dashboard on their website that contains information about how to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the impact of disasters
- The community knows where to source localised information to prepare for future events
- Individuals know where to locate their entity's stakeholder engagement framework

Enablers meet the needs and requirements of all relevant entities

- Entities have the tools needed to effectively communicate with community members from diverse backgrounds, including those who are culturally and linguistically diverse
- Entities have the tools to define communities at risk of impact from an event, such as flood modelling showing which physical areas of the community may be impacted

Benchmarks for the performance of enablers have been established and are being met

- Entities use evidence-based research to measure the impact of the information that they distribute, and the engagement processes that they use, on community preparedness levels
- Entities use metrics on web traffic to test community reach for social media sites and to establish the performance requirements for warnings distributed through these channels

Alternatives or backups are in place

- Entities source suitable redundancies for communicating important information to their area which the community will also be familiar with, such as the potential use of satellite phones or available alternative technologies in remote communities
- Entities have different methods in place to warn the community if technology fails during an event, such as door knocking or an alert siren
- Entities have access to communication tools that they do not normally use, such as UHF and satellite phones, to manage technological redundancies during disasters

Continuous Improvement

An established lessons management process is being undertaken

- Entities incorporate observations made through community engagement into their lesson management process to enrich insights and lessons identified

- Entities have an internal lessons management process which includes lessons about the community's actions

The capabilities required have been identified, documented, and aligned to recognised and accepted training methodology

- Entities understand, or have arranged to acquire, training in the principles of adult learning and information retention
- Entities conduct regular needs assessments of employee training requirements in stakeholder engagement capabilities

A variety of exercising and testing methods are being conducted and evaluated

- Entities include community members in relevant disaster management exercises to test community preparedness campaign penetration and comprehension
- Entities are aware of a variety of ways to measure community preparedness to ensure engagement activities meet outcomes and community needs
- Entities include the testing of community warning systems in inter-agency exercises
- Entities incorporate adult learning principles in their community engagement activities and test their effectiveness

Insights are included in a lessons management process

- Entities develop insights from observations and feedback received through community engagement activities
- Entities have processes to measure community awareness and develop observations and insights into lessons identified to improve future community preparedness campaigns

Lessons identified are shared with other entities, and with the community when relevant

- Entities share lessons identified regarding community engagement activities and community preparedness with other entities on their disaster management group
- Entities incorporate lessons identified when co-designing community engagement activities

Improvements are made based on insights gained through testing, exercises and operational activity

- Entities take an adaptive and flexible approach to community engagement, so that they can incorporate lessons identified during engagement activities and improve processes as needed
- Entities make improvements to the processes used to seek feedback from the community about disaster management practices, based on the insights gained while seeking that feedback

Contact

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