



STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

A Strategic Framework for
Emergency Management in
Western Australia.

Legislation

Policy

Plan

Procedure

Guidelines

GLOSSARY

Responsible Agency

State Emergency Management Committee Business Unit

APPROVED BY SEMC

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CONTACT DETAILS

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AMENDMENTS TABLE

AMENDMENT		DETAILS	AMENDED BY: (INITIALS)
NO.	DATE		
1	May 2016	Initial issue of amalgamated EM policies with statement of fact amendments	SEMC Secretariat
2	December 2016	Amendments approved by SEMC (Resolution Number 60/2016) as per amendments table v1.1	Office of Emergency Management
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This glossary is available on the State Emergency Management Committee website - www.semc.wa.gov.au

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Western Australia's emergency management framework encompasses multiple agencies, organisations and people; many with their own, unique operational jargon.

Additionally, the emergency management field is ever-evolving; aligning processes to current best practice and adapting to a changing environment.

As such, confusion can arise, within the emergency management community, where a specific term has different meanings, or connotations, to different people.

This Glossary aims to provide agreed definitions, drawn from multiple sources, for emergency management terms likely to be encountered by personnel operating within the emergency management sector.

BACKGROUND

This State Emergency Management (EM) Glossary has been produced by compiling the contents of a range of documents from the emergency management sector across Australia.

Where terminology differs between definitions contained within the *Emergency Management Act 2005* (EM Act) and other documents, the definition contained in the EM Act takes precedence and is contained in this document.

It is recognised that other definitions will exist for some terms shown in this Glossary; however, agencies are encouraged to use this document in the first instance to ensure consistency of terminology across agencies within Western Australia.

PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPING THIS GLOSSARY

The following principles were used in developing this Glossary.

- **Prescriptive versus descriptive** – Some dictionaries are 'prescriptive', in that they only include the so-called 'correct' terms and definitions and exclude others. Other dictionaries, such as the Oxford English Dictionary and Macquarie Dictionary, are 'descriptive' in that they attempt to list and define most terms in common usage. This Glossary combines both approaches; it is descriptive in that it includes the most common terms but it is prescriptive in that it suggests preferred terms and definitions, i.e. the first definition is usually the preferred definition.
- **Selection of definitions** – Definitions were selected using the following documents:
 - *Emergency Management Act 2005*;
 - Australian Emergency Management Glossary;
 - Australasian Fire Authorities Council Glossary of Rural Fire Terminology; and the
 - Western Australia Emergency Risk Management Guide.

accident a sudden event in which harm is caused to people, property or the built or natural environment. *See also* **incident** and **emergency**.

agency operations centre a facility from which a particular agency's resources are commanded, controlled, coordinated and assigned to an incident. *See also* **emergency operations centre**.

agency representative an individual allocated to an incident from an assisting agency who has been delegated full authority to make decisions on all matters affecting that agency's participation at the incident. *Syn.* 'liaison officer'.

aid free material or financial assistance or other support given to an organisation, community or country.

AIIMS *see* **Australasian Interservice Incident Management System**.

AIIMS structure the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures and communications operating within a common organizational structure with responsibility for the management of allocated resources to effectively accomplish stated objectives relating to an incident (AIIMS).

alert that period when it is believed that resources may be required which enables an increased level of preparedness. *See also* **warning**.

alert phase a situation wherein apprehension exists as to the safety of a vessel or aircraft and of the persons on board.

all-agencies coordinated and integrated approach the 'all agencies coordinated and integrated' approach recognises that no one agency can address all of the impacts of a particular hazard. It is necessary for a lead agency to coordinate the activities of the large number of organisations and agencies that are involved. These can be drawn from across all levels of government, non-government, volunteer organisations and the private sector.

all-hazards approach the 'all hazards' approach assumes the functions and activities applicable to one hazard are often applicable to a range of hazards. The all hazards approach increases efficiency by recognising and integrating common emergency management elements across all hazard types. It does not, however, prevent the development of specific plans and arrangements for hazards that require a specialised approach.

assembly area a designated location used for the assembly of emergency-affected persons. The area may also incorporate an emergency relief centre. A prearranged, strategically placed area, where support response personnel, vehicles and other equipment can be held in readiness for use during an emergency.

assessment survey of a real or potential disaster to estimate the actual or expected damages and to make recommendations for prevention, preparedness and response. *See also* **damage classification**.

assets anything valued by people which includes houses, crops, forests and in many cases the environment.

at risk persons anyone who may have difficulty either receiving or responding to emergency public information, e.g. may include people with access or information needs, people with disabilities (intellectual, cognitive, with decision making impairments) or other health related issues, children, the aged, tourists/travellers, those who are homeless, those who are socially isolated and those from remote or culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) the body representing urban and rural fire services and land management agencies in Australia and New Zealand with responsibility for the protection of life and property from fire and other emergencies.

Australasian Interservice Incident Management System (AIIMS) a nationally adopted structure to formalise a coordinated approach to emergency incident management.

Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) a Commonwealth regulatory safety agency having as its charter the efficient delivery of safety and other services to the Australian maritime industry and provision of search and rescue services to the aviation and maritime sectors.

Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) the Commonwealth agency responsible for advising the Australian Government on risks to Australia's security.

authorised officer (a) the State Emergency Coordinator and (b) a person authorised under Section 61 of the *Emergency Management Act 2005*.

authorised person a person authorised by legislation to utilise a range of powers conferred by that legislation.

available resources resources at an incident and available for allocation at short notice. *See also resources.*

biological disaster disaster caused by the exposure of living organisms to germs and toxic substances.

briefing the process of advising personnel of the details of the incident or event with which they will deal. *See also* **debriefing**.

Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) the overall mission of the Bureau is to observe and understand Australian weather and climate and provide meteorological, hydrological and oceanographic services in support of Australia's national needs and international obligations. This overall mission involves four separate basic missions:

- monitoring – observation and data collection to meet the needs of future generations for reliable homogeneous national climatological data;
- research – research directed to the advancement of meteorological science and the development of a comprehensive description and scientific understanding of Australia's weather and climate;
- services – provision of meteorological and related data, information, forecast, warning, investigation and advisory services on a national basis; and
- international – coordination of Australia's involvement in international meteorology.

bushfire a fire involving grass, scrub or forest. Syn. 'wildfire'.

bushfire danger period a period of the year, either established by legislation or declared by the relevant agency, when restrictions are placed on the use of fire due to dry vegetation and the existence of conditions conducive to the spread of fire.

bushfire management all those activities directed to prevention, detection, damage mitigation and suppression of bushfires. Includes bushfire legislation, policy, administration, law enforcement, community education, training of fire fighters, planning, communications systems, equipment research and the multitude of field operations undertaken by land managers and emergency services personnel relating to bushfire control.

call-out the executive command to deploy resources.

Civil Aviation Safety Authority an independent statutory authority responsible for conducting the safety regulation of civil air operations in Australia and the operation of Australian registered aircraft overseas.

civil disorder a riot, violent protest, demonstration, or illegal assembly, that may affect public safety.

combat to take steps to eliminate or reduce the effects of an incident upon the community.

combat agency a combat agency prescribed under subsection (1) of the *Emergency Management Act 2005* is to be a public authority or other person who or which, because of the agency's functions under any written law or specialized knowledge, expertise and resources, is responsible for performing an emergency management activity prescribed by the regulations in relation to that agency.

combat zone see **hot zone**.

command the direction of members and resources of an organisation in the performance of the organisation's role and tasks. Authority to command is established in legislation or by agreement with an organisation. Command relates to organisations and operates vertically within an organisation. See also **control** and **coordination**.

commander a single-agency term. A commander has authority only within that agency. Responsibilities include the direction and coordination of the activities of that agency. A commander operates vertically within that agency and cannot command members of another agency.

command post (CP) see **forward control centre**.

command post exercise an indoor (within a headquarters, emergency operations centre, or emergency coordination centre) exercise to test and practice various aspects of a plan and the emergency management system. It may include actual tests of critical processes in the emergency management system such as emergency operations centre procedures, communications arrangements and coordination/ liaison methods. Its aim is to realistically simulate an operational situation, using prepared messages and operational reports, without the requirement of using actual resources (people, vehicles, etc.) in the field. See also **exercise**.

communicable disease a disease caused by germs such as bacteria and viruses that can be spread from one person to another. *Syn.* 'infectious disease'.

communications plan details the methods and systems for people to communicate with each other, the incident management structure, including the actual radio channels/mobile phone numbers. (AIIMS)

community a group with a commonality of association and generally defined by location, shared experience, or function. A social group which has a number of things in common, such as shared experience, locality, culture, heritage, language, ethnicity, pastimes, occupation, workplace, etc.

community alert a community alert is issued to warn the community of a period of danger and provide safety advice on what to do relative to the risks.

community warning a community warning provides information to the public so people can take appropriate action to reduce losses during an actual or developing emergency situation.

consequence the outcome of an event or situation expressed qualitatively or quantitatively, being a loss, injury, disadvantage or gain. In the emergency risk management context, consequences are generally described as the effects on people, social setting, public administration, and the environment and the economy.

consequence analysis the estimation of the effect of potential hazardous events.

contamination invasion of a person or animal by pathogenic germs (contaminants). Presence of an infectious agent on inanimate articles such as clothes, surgical instruments, dressings, water, milk or food. Transfer and propagation of a contaminant.

contingency plan see **emergency plan**.

continuity of government the continuation of essential functions of governments.

contributions in kind non-cash assistance in materials or services offered or provided in case of disaster.

control the overall direction of emergency management activities in an emergency situation. Authority for control is established in legislation or in an emergency plan, and carries with it the responsibility for tasking and coordinating other organisations in accordance with the needs of the situation. Control relates to situations and operates horizontally across organisations. See also **command** and **coordination**.

controlling agency an agency nominated to control the response activities to a specified type of emergency.

control centre see **emergency operations centre**.

coordination the bringing together of organisations and elements to ensure an effective response, primarily concerned with the systematic acquisition and application of resources (organisation, manpower and equipment) in accordance with the requirements imposed by the threat or impact of an emergency. Coordination relates primarily to resources, and operates, vertically, within an organisation, as a function of the authority to command, and horizontally, across organisations, as a function of the authority to control. See also **control** and **command**.

Council of Australian Governments (COAG) is the peak intergovernmental forum in Australia, chaired by the Prime Minister. The members of COAG are the Prime Minister, state and territory Premiers and Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) and the role of COAG is to promote policy reforms that are of national significance, or which need co-ordinated action by all Australian governments.

counter disaster a term based on the letters 'CD', for civil defence, invented in Australia to describe the area now known as emergency management.

cyclone a large-scale, closed circulation system in the atmosphere with low barometric pressure and strong winds that rotate counterclockwise in the northern hemisphere and clockwise in the southern hemisphere. The system is referred to as a 'cyclone' in the Indian Ocean and South Pacific, 'hurricane' in the western Atlantic and eastern Pacific and 'typhoon' in the western Pacific.

cyclone severity categories a series of categories with descriptions that provide information concerning effects due to winds typical of cyclones.

cyclone warning a message released by a tropical cyclone warning centre (TCWC) when the existence of a cyclone or a developing disturbance with potential to develop into a cyclone exists and is expected to cause at least gale force winds in coastal areas within 24 hours.

cyclone watch a message released by a tropical cyclone warning centre (TCWC) when a cyclone or a disturbance with potential to develop into a cyclone exists and is likely to cause coastal gales within 48 hours but not within 24 hours. *See also cyclone warning.*

dam an artificial barrier, together with appurtenant works, constructed for storage, control or diversion of water, other liquids, silt, debris or other liquid-borne material.

damage assessment a report on the extent of damage caused by an event.

damage classification evaluation and recording of damage to structures, facilities, or objects according to three (or more) categories:

- 'severe damage' which precludes further use of the structure, facility, or object for its intended purpose;
- 'moderate damage' or the degree of damage to principal members, which precludes effective use of the structure, facility, or object for its intended purpose, unless major repairs are made short of complete reconstruction; and,
- 'light damage' such as broken windows, slight damage to roofing and siding, interior partitions blown down, and cracked walls; the damage is not severe enough to preclude use of the installation for the purpose for which was intended.

dam failure the uncontrolled release of the contents of a dam through collapse of the dam or some part of it, or the inability of a dam to perform functions such as water supply, prevention of excessive seepage or containment of hazardous substances.

debrief (operational debrief) a meeting at the end of an operation with the purpose of assessing the conduct or results of an operation.

debriefing the process of sharing the good and bad points of the response to an incident as a means to improving any future planning and responses.

Defence Assistance to the Civil Community (DACC) assistance to the community provided by Department of Defence personnel in the event of natural disaster or civil emergency.

demobilisation the orderly release of resources no longer required at an incident.

desk top exercise an umbrella term for some types of indoor discussion exercise. They may feature a model of the area on which a prepared scenario is played out, or simply using a projected map, not in real time. The model or map is used to illustrate the deployment of resources, but no resources are actually deployed. Additionally, responses may be prepared in syndicate, in plenary, or under the guidance of a facilitator who maintains the pace and asks questions. A cost-effective and highly-efficient exercise method that should be conducted as a prelude to a field exercise as part of a graduated series. *See also exercise.*

directing staff personnel appointed to assist the exercise director in the control and coordination of an exercise. They are usually allocated specific functions to oversight, and may include such appointments as umpires, function coordinators, observers, damage control, safety officers, etc.

disaster *see emergency*

disaster area a geographical part of the State or Territory in which a state of emergency or disaster exists.

disaster management the body of policy and administrative decisions and operational activities which pertain to the various stages of a disaster at all levels. *See also* **emergency management**.

disaster victim identification (DVI) procedures used to positively identify deceased victims of a multiple casualty event.

disaster victim identification (DVI) team a police team responsible for identification of deceased disaster victims.

discussion exercise (DISCEX) a discussion exercise is an indoor exercise employing a carefully prepared scenario to test and practise various aspects of emergency management planning, procedures or training. Syn. 'tabletop exercise', 'model exercise' or 'syndicate exercise'. *See also* **exercise**.

disease control all policies, precautions and measures taken to prevent the outbreak or spread of communicable diseases.

disease surveillance health system used to monitor, observe and evaluate on a continuing basis the progress of disease with the view to preventing or curing it.

distress signal a pyrotechnic device intended for signalling, warning, or rescue.

district emergency management committee a district emergency management committee established under section 31(1) of the *Emergency Management Act 2005*.

district emergency coordinator (DEC) the person appointed by the State Emergency Coordinator to provide advice and support to their district emergency management committee in the development and maintenance of emergency management arrangements and carry out other emergency management functions under the direction of the State Emergency Coordinator.

DVI *see* **disaster victim identification**.

DVR disaster victim registration *see* **registration** and **disaster victim identification**.

emergency the occurrence or imminent occurrence of a hazard which is of such a nature or magnitude that it requires a significant and coordinated response.

emergency accommodation the provision of temporary shelter for persons requiring shelter during an emergency, or due to evacuation from an emergency, ranging from short to medium term accommodation, coordinated by Department of Communities.

emergency area the area to which an emergency situation declaration or a state of emergency declaration applies.

emergency centre a facility where the coordination of the response and support to the incident is provided.

emergency coordination centre (ECC) a facility established to coordinate and organize emergency provision of services. *See also emergency operations centre.*

emergency management the management of the adverse effects of an emergency including:

- prevention – the mitigation or prevention of the probability of the occurrence of, and the potential adverse effects of, an emergency;
- preparedness – preparation for response to an emergency;
- response – the combating of the effects of an emergency, provision of emergency assistance for casualties, reduction of further damage, and help to speed recovery; and
- recovery – the support of emergency affected communities in the reconstruction and restoration of physical infrastructure, the environment and community, psychosocial and economic wellbeing.

emergency management agency a Hazard Management Agency (HMA), a Combat Agency or a Support Organisation.

Emergency Management Australia the Emergency Management Australia (EMA) division of the Department of Home Affairs is responsible for preparing for emergencies and disasters through the development and maintenance of national plans, coordination of Australian Government crisis response and recovery efforts, and coordination of protective security arrangements (physical and personal) for Australian high office holders, visiting foreign dignitaries, at-risk foreign missions in Australia, as well as security arrangements for special events in Australia or overseas.

emergency management district an emergency management district established under section 28 *Emergency Management Act 2005*.

emergency management liaison officer *see liaison officer.*

emergency operations centre (EOC) a facility, either static or mobile, from which the total operation or aspects of the operation are managed. A facility established to control and coordinate the response and support to an incident or emergency. Syn. **incident control centre**. *See also agency operations centre and forward control centre.*

emergency plan a documented scheme of assigned responsibilities, actions and procedures, required in the event of an emergency.

emergency public information (EPI) information provided to the community during emergency situations with instructions on how to get assistance or to protect personal health, safety and property.

emergency response plan a plan which sets out the roles and responsibilities of agencies in emergency response and the coordination arrangements which are to be utilised. *See also* **emergency plan**.

emergency risk management a systematic process which contributes to the wellbeing of communities and the environment. The process considers the likely effects of hazardous events and the controls by which they can be minimised¹.

emergency service an agency responsible for the and preservation of life and property from harm resulting from incidents and emergencies. Syn. 'emergency services authority' and 'emergency service organisation'.

emergency situation a declaration made under section 50 of the *Emergency Management Act 2005*, by a Hazard Management Agency or the State Emergency Coordinator, which provides access to additional emergency management powers.

emergency welfare service an organisation to provide all reasonable welfare aid and services to people in need due to an emergency or disaster. Such measures include coordination, control and provision of services to be instituted before, during and after the impact of an emergency or disaster.

essential services network operators the public facilities and systems that provide basic life support services such as water, energy, sanitation, communications and transportation. Systems or networks that provide services on which the well-being of the community depends

evacuation the planned relocation of persons from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas to safer areas and eventual return.

evacuation centre a centre that provides affected people with basic human needs including accommodation, and water. In addition, to enhance the recovery process, other welfare/recovery services should also be provided. *See also* **assembly area**.

evacuation point a predetermined place where patients, visitors and staff are taken or are assembled in the event of an evacuation. Syn. 'evacuation assembly area'.

evacuee a person who has withdrawn or been removed from a place of danger.

evaluation post-disaster appraisal of all aspects of the disaster and its effects. *See also* **assessment**.

event an incident or situation, which occurs in a particular place during a particular interval of time.

¹ Definition originally sourced from a (now superseded) version of the UNISDR *Terminology on disaster risk reduction*.

exercise simulation of emergency management events, through discussion or actual deployment of personnel, in order: to train personnel; to review/test the planning process or other procedures; to identify needs and/or weaknesses; to demonstrate capabilities; and to practice people in working together. *See also discussion exercise, field exercise, table top exercise and tactical exercise without troops.*

exercise control the group with the responsibility for monitoring the progress of an exercise to ensure objectives are achieved in line with the exercise plan, controlling role players, liaison with external or joint agencies providing support or facilities for the exercise, and all safety measures. In short exercise control is responsible for the total conduct of the exercise and the staff must be separate from the personnel being exercised. *See also directing staff.*

exercise director the exercise director is the person with the overall responsibility to approve, initiate and terminate the exercise. In large scale exercises, s/he may be supported by a deputy and/or assistant exercise directors. *See also directing staff.*

field commander (agency specific) the officer responsible for commanding the activities of an agency in the field.

field control centre *see forward control centre.*

field control point a selected location at or near a fire which provides coordination, control and communication for the sectors at the fire ground.

field exercise an exercise activity in which emergency management organisations and agencies take action in a simulated situation, with deployment of personnel and other resources to achieve maximum realism. It is conducted actually on the ground, in real time but under controlled conditions, as though it were a real emergency. *See also exercise.*

formal debriefing a clinical process conducted by a critical incident stress debriefing trained professionally qualified mental health practitioner. Syn. 'clinical debriefing'. *See also debriefing.*

forward control point an area used as a location for administration and command by operations personnel combating a fire.

forward command post (FCP) *see forward control centre.*

forward control centre a facility, where the controller is located, at or near the scene of an emergency to facilitate better control and management of a particular emergency. In emergencies where the impact is widespread there may be the need to locate more than one forward control centre in which case the title of each forward control centre should be preceded by the place name. The forward control centre may be located in an existing building or be a self-contained mobile unit. Syn. 'field control centre', 'forward command centre', 'forward command post', 'forward control point', and 'incident control point'.

frequency a measure of likelihood expressed as the number of occurrences of an event in a given time. *See also likelihood and probability.*

functional area a category of services involved in preparations for an emergency, including: agriculture and animal services; emergency finance; emergency supply; engineering services; environmental services; health services; media services; welfare services; and Australian Defence Force.

functional plan a document describing roles and responsibilities and arrangements for the performance of a specific support function.

geographic information system (GIS) a computerised database for the capture, storage, analysis and display of locationally defined information. Commonly, a GIS portrays a portion of the earth's surface in the form of a map on which this information is overlaid.

global positioning system (GPS) a highly-accurate navigation system based on a constellation of 24 satellites orbiting the earth at 20,000 kilometres that transmit back a set of signals.

hazard an event, situation or condition that is capable of causing or resulting in loss of life, prejudice to the safety, or harm to the health of persons or animals; or destruction of, or damage to property or any part of the environment and is defined in the *Emergency Management Act 2005* or prescribed in the *Emergency Management Regulations 2006*.

hazard identification the process of recognising that a hazard exists and defining its characteristics.

hazard management see **mitigation**.

hazard management agency (HMA) a public authority, or other person, prescribed by the *Emergency Management Regulations 2006* to be a hazard management agency for emergency management, or an aspect of emergency management, of a hazard.

hazard management officer a hazard management agency may authorize officers or employees of the hazard management agency, or other persons, to act as hazard management officers during an emergency situation declared by that hazard management agency.

hazard mapping the process of establishing geographically where and to what extent particular phenomena are likely to pose a threat to people, property, infrastructure, and economic activities. Hazard mapping represents the result of hazard assessment on a map, showing the frequency/probability of occurrences of various magnitudes or durations.

hazardous material a substance or material which has been determined by an appropriate authority to be capable of posing an unreasonable risk to health, safety and property. See also **hazardous substance**.

hazardous substance

- a chemical, biological or radiological substance; or
 - any other substance that is capable of causing loss of life, injury to a person or damage to the health of a person or to the environment.
- See also **hazardous material**.

hazardous waste management a program for controlling the generation, storage, collection, transportation, treatment, use, conversion or disposal of hazardous wastes; includes administrative, financial, legal and planning activities as well as operational aspects of hazardous waste handling, disposal and resource recovery systems.

HAZCHEM emergency action code a code system indicating the initial emergency actions for incidents involving hazardous materials, as specified in the ADG Code.

HAZMAT see **hazardous material**.

hot zone the area immediately surrounding a dangerous goods incident which extends far enough to prevent adverse effects from dangerous goods releases to personnel outside the zone. Syn. 'exclusion zone', 'combat zone' or 'restricted zone'.

immediate sheltering includes shelter in place, assembly areas and places of last resort.

impact to have a noticeable or marked effect on.

impact area any area which is likely to bear, is bearing, or has borne the full impact of any disaster and in which major lifesaving operations are necessary.

incident the occurrence or imminent occurrence of a hazard. *See also* **accident** and **emergency**.

incident action plan a statement of objectives and strategies to be taken to control or suppress an incident; approved by the incident controller. Describes the actions to be taken to control or suppress an incident.

incident area (IA) the area defined by the Incident Controller for which they have responsibility for the overall management and control of an incident.

incident control *see* **incident management**.

incident control centre (ICC) the location where the incident controller and, where established, members of the incident management team provide overall direction of response activities in an (3) emergency situation. Syn. 'emergency operations centre'.

incident control system (ICS) a command structure to systematically and logically manage suppression of emergency incidents including wildfires, from small, simple incidents to large, difficult or multiple situations. It is designed to develop in a modular fashion from the top (incident controller) downwards. The combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organisational structure with responsibility for the management of allocated resources to effectively accomplish stated objectives relating to an incident. *See also* **Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System**.

incident controller the person designated by the relevant Controlling Agency, to be responsible for the overall management and control of an incident within an incident area and the tasking of agencies in accordance with the needs of the situation. [Note: Agencies may use different terminology, however, the function remains the same].

incident management the process of controlling the incident and coordinating resources.

incident management system (IMS) a system that allows an Incident Controller and their team to control an incident and coordinate resources that is facilitated by information management and intelligence gathering.

incident management team a group of incident management personnel comprising the incident controller, and the personnel he or she appoints to be responsible for the functions of operations, planning and logistics. The team headed by the incident controller which is responsible for the overall control of the incident.

incident manager *see* **incident controller**

individual risk the frequency at which an individual may be expected to sustain a given level of harm from the realisation of specified hazards.

incident support group (ISG) a group of agency/organisation liaison officers convened by the Incident Controller to provide agency specific expert advice and support in relation to operational response to the emergency.

informal debriefing a structured meeting of emergency workers, coordinated by a trained 'peer debriefer', conducted in an informal environment, to:

- provide an information briefing on the event, including a status report on the condition of victims, etc;
- offer support;
- provide an opportunity to express feelings and demystify reactions associated with response to the event; and
- enable the team leader to monitor the reactions of his/her teams members; and enable the opportunity to assess the need for formal debriefing.

integrated approach see **all-agencies coordinated and integrated approach**.

involuntary risk a risk imposed on people by a controlling body without their consent.

legislation a set of rules made by a State, Territory or Federal Government, and includes acts and regulations.

level of risk (or risk level) magnitude of a risk or a combination of risks, expressed in terms of the combination of consequences and their likelihood.

liaison officer a representative of an agency/organisation as part of an incident management / operations area management group. Liaison officers should have the capability to communicate with the agency they represent and the authority to commit their agencies' resources. *See also* **agency representative**.

likelihood chance of something happening. It is used as a general description of probability and may be expressed qualitatively or quantitatively.

local emergency coordinator (LEC) the person appointed by the State Emergency Coordinator to provide advice and support to their local emergency management committee in the development and maintenance of emergency management arrangements, assist hazard management agencies in the provision of a coordinated response during an emergency in the district and carry out other emergency management functions under the direction of the State Emergency Coordinator.

local emergency management committee (LEMC) a local emergency management committee established under section 38 of the *Emergency Management Act 2005*.

logistics the range of operational activities concerned with supply, handling, transportation, and distribution of materials. Also applicable to the transportation of people.

major hazard facilities the whole area under the control of an operator: upon or within which an activity takes place involving or likely to involve the processing, production, disposal, handling, use or storage, either temporarily or permanently, of a quantity of materials which exceeds the threshold or aggregate quantity, as determined in accordance with Schedule 1 of the *National Standard for the Control of Major Hazard Facilities*.

major incident an event which requires response by police, emergency services and the community which may affect a wider area over a longer period of time but is not a declared emergency situation or state of emergency.

management by objectives a process of consultative management where the incident management team determine the desired outcomes of the incident. These outcomes or objectives are then communicated to the commander and crews involved in the operation.

marine search and rescue incident an imminent or actual incident when any of the following conditions exist:

- A surface vessel has requested assistance;
- A surface vessel has transmitted a distress signal. iii) It is apparent that a surface vessel is in distress;
- A surface vessel is reported to be sinking or to have sunk;
- The crew is reported to have abandoned ship or is about to do so;
- Reports indicate that the operating efficiency of the craft is so impaired that the craft may sink or the crew may be forced to abandon; and
- The surface vessel is overdue or unreported.

media liaison officer a liaison officer delegated the task of dealing with the media.

medivac/medevac medical evacuation.

Minister references to the Minister means the Minister responsible for the *Emergency Management Act 2005*.

mitigation measures taken in advance of a disaster aimed at decreasing or eliminating its impact on society and environment. *See also prevention.*

multi-agency response an incident of high fire incidence over short periods of time in any administrative unit, usually overtaxing the normal initial attack capability of the unit.

mutual aid emergency agreements agreements established with appropriate agencies in the surrounding community, defining initial notification and response assignments.

National Crisis Coordination Centre (NCCC) the operations centre of Emergency Management Australia headquarters in Canberra. It is the focal point for the coordination of Commonwealth Government assistance during emergencies or disasters.

Natural Disaster Relief & Recovery Arrangements (NDRAA) the arrangements under which the Commonwealth Government assists the State and Territory governments to provide approved financial assistance to eligible persons and organisations following natural disasters.

natural disaster any emergency defined by the Commonwealth for the purposes of the Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements: including bushfire, earthquake, flood, storm, cyclone, storm surge, landslide, tsunami, meteorite strike, tornado.

natural hazard geological, meteorological, or biological hazard.

negligible risks risks that are so small that there is no cause for concern about them, and no reason to take action to reduce them.

non-governmental organisation (NGO) non-profit making organisation operating at the local, national, or international levels. Distinct from a governmental organisation, having no statutory ties with a national government.

objective a goal statement of what is to be achieved.

operating procedures prescribed routine action to be followed by staff during operations.

operational area (OA) the area defined by the Operational Area Manager for which they have overall responsibility for the strategic management of an emergency. This area may include one or more Incident Areas.

operational area manager (OAM) the person designated by the relevant HMA, responsible for the overall management of an Operation within a defined Operational Area and the provision of strategic direction and operational coordination to agencies and Incident Controller(s) in accordance with the needs of the situation.

operational area support group (OASG) a group of agency / organisation liaison officers convened and Operational Area Manager to provide agency specific expert advice and support in relation to strategic management of the emergency.

operations the direction, supervision and implementation of tactics in accordance with the Incident Action Plan.

operations officer the officer delegated by the Incident Controller for the direction, supervision and implementation of tactics in accordance with the Incident Action.

operations point the location from which the overall field operations are commanded by the Operations Officer.

outer cordon a physical area surrounding an incident which has been secured by some means to effectively control the entry or exit of persons and equipment from that area. The area boundary is established at a sufficient distance around the outside of the inner cordon to provide a safety zone around the incident site. Entry to the area between the outer cordon and the inner cordon is strictly controlled and the area usually contains combat and support units. The command post should be established in this area.

outer perimeter that area outside of the inner perimeter which is secured for immediate support operational requirements, free from unauthorised or uncontrolled interference.

PPRR an abbreviation for prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. *See Emergency Management Principles.*

pandemic prevalent throughout an entire country or continent, or the whole world, as in a disease.

perceived risk the level of risk that is thought to exist by an individual or group of individuals.

personal support services the process of assisting the diverse, immediate as well as longer-term personal needs of people affected by a disaster. Such needs may encompass provision of information, practical advice on a range of issues and emotional support. *See also recovery.*

place of last resort a place where members of a community can go or be taken to at the last minute to seek shelter from an imminent threat when it is too late to evacuate. It should only be used when all other plans have failed and no other option exists. This may be a shed, areas of the home, dam, swimming pool or other place appropriate to the hazard.

plan a formal record of agreed emergency management roles, responsibilities, strategies, systems, and arrangements. *See also emergency plan.*

planning meeting a meeting to prepare the incident action plan, attended by the incident management team and others and held as required.

planning process the collective and collaborative efforts by which agreements are reached and documented between people and organisations to meet their communities' emergency management needs. It is a sequence of steps which allows emergency management planning to take place.

plume the column of non-combustible products emitted from a fire (smoke). A vapour cloud formation having shape and buoyancy. The airborne radioactive material released from a nuclear power plant and carried by the prevailing winds which may affect radiologically those downwind areas over which it passes.

population at risk a well-defined population whose lives, property, and livelihoods are threatened by given hazards. Used as a denominator. All those persons who would be directly exposed to floods within the dambreak – affected zone if they took no action to evacuate.

preliminary flood warning a warning issued by the Bureau of Meteorology when flood-producing rains are occurring or are expected over particular river catchments. The warning is normally of a general nature and is issued to the public. It includes advice on the current meteorological situation and expected developments, together with an assessment of the class of flooding that can be expected in a particular river basin.

prepared community a community which has developed effective emergency management arrangements at the local level, resulting in:

- an alert, informed and active community which supports its voluntary organisations;
- an active and involved local government; and,

- agreed and coordinated arrangements for prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.

preparedness preparation for response to an emergency.

prescription a written statement defining the objectives to be attained during prescribed burning. This statement considers the condition of temperature, humidity, wind direction and speed, fuel moisture, and soil moisture under which the fire will be allowed to burn. This is generally described within acceptable ranges of the various indices, and the limit of the geographic area to be covered.

prevention the mitigation or prevention of the probability of the occurrence of, and the potential adverse effects of, an emergency.

probability the likelihood of a specific outcome, measured by the ratio of specific outcomes to the total number of possible outcomes. Probability is expressed as a number between 0 and 1, with 0 indicating an impossible outcome and 1 indicating an outcome is certain.

probability analysis the derivation of both the likelihood of incidents occurring and the likelihood of particular outcomes (or effects) should those events occur.

procedures pre-planned detailed directions for dealing with specific occurrences. *See also standard operating procedures.*

public authority

- an agency as defined in the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*;
- a body, corporate or unincorporated that is established or continued for a public purpose by the State, regardless of the way it is established;
- a local government or regional local government;
- the Police Force of Western Australia;
- a member or officer of a body referred to in one of the above; or
- a person or body prescribed (or of a class prescribed) by the regulations as a public authority for the purposes of this definition.

public awareness the process of informing the community as to the nature of the hazard and actions needed to save lives and property prior to and in the event of disaster.

public health the discipline in health sciences that, at the level of the community or the public, aims at promoting prevention of disease, sanitary living, laws, practices and healthier environment.

quantified risk assessment (QRA) a risk assessment that is based essentially on quantified inputs.

quarantine legal restrictions imposed on a place or tract of land by the serving of a notice and limiting access or egress of specified animals, persons or things.

recommended evacuation an evacuation whereby a Controlling Agency provides advice to members of a community that they evacuate, when the Incident Controller believes this represents the best option to mitigate the effects of an emergency on a community, based on the agency's risk assessment at that time, but where the risk is not perceived as extreme/imminent.

reception centre the evacuee processing centre set up at or nearby the reception point, providing services such as customs, immigration, health assistance, health screening, consular advice and assistance for approved foreign nationals, temporary accommodation and transport as required.

reception point the first point or port within Australia at which evacuees arrive.

reconnaissance inspection of a fire area for the purpose of obtaining information about current and probable fire behaviour and fire suppression information.

reconstruction actions taken to reestablish a community after a period of rehabilitation subsequent to a disaster. Actions would include construction of permanent housing, full restoration of all services, and complete resumption of the pre-disaster state. *See also recovery.*

recovery the support of emergency affected communities in the reconstruction and restoration of physical infrastructure, the environment and community, and the psychological and economic wellbeing.

recovery information management recovery information management develops timely, effective communication channels to gather, process and disseminate information relevant to the recovery of the affect community.

recovery management (principles of)

Successful recovery relies on:

- understanding the **context**;
- recognising **complexity**;
- using **community**-led approaches;
- ensuring **coordination** of all activities;
- employing effective **communication**; and
- acknowledging and building **capacity**.

refuge site a place where the community may take shelter within the community that is suitable to the hazard that presents. This may be an open space, building or other suitable place of shelter. It may be determined at the time of the emergency.

register a listing of all hazardous substances which are used or produced in the workplace and the available material safety data sheets.

Register.Find.Reunite an Australian Red Cross service that registers, finds and reunites, friends and loved ones after an emergency.

registration the process of accurately recording onto disaster registration cards details of all persons affected by disaster whether they are evacuated or remain in the disaster area. *See also Register.Find.Reunite.*

rehabilitation the operations and decisions taken after a disaster with a view to restoring a stricken community to its former living conditions, whilst encouraging and facilitating the necessary adjustments to the changes caused by the disaster. Alternatively, the process of adjustment to circumstances prevailing in the aftermath of an exotic animal disease outbreak. *See also reconstruction.*

relief the provision of immediate shelter, life support and human needs to persons affected by, or responding to, an emergency. It includes the establishment, management and provision of services to emergency relief centres. *See also recovery.*

relocation a term sometimes used in place of self-evacuation. It can also be used to refer to an individual's choice to move to a location of reduced risk of an emergency occurring under certain conditions even before an emergency has occurred (e.g. on a day where a catastrophic fire weather danger rating has been issued).

remote area an area where, because of distance or circumstance, the medical resources required to adequately manage the event are delayed to the potential detriment of the casualties.

rescue the safe removal of persons or animals from actual or threatened danger of physical harm.

residual risk risk remaining after risk treatment. Following implementation of risk treatment, residual risk can also be referred to as retained risk.

resettlement actions necessary for the permanent settlement of persons dislocated or otherwise affected by a disaster to an area other than their last place of habitation. *See also recovery.*

resilience the ability of a system, community or society, exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structure and functions. This is determined by the degree to which the community has the necessary resources and is capable of organising itself both prior to and during times of need.

resources all personnel and equipment available, or potentially available, for incident tasks.

response the combatting of the effects of an emergency, provision of emergency assistance for casualties, reduction of further damage, and help to speed recovery.

response time the time taken between the report of an incident and arrival of responders at the scene. It includes both reaction time and travel time.

restricted area a declared area in which defined rigorous conditions apply to the movement into, out of, and within, of specified animals, persons or things.

Richter scale an open-ended logarithmic scale used to express the magnitude or total energy of a seismic disturbance (or earthquake). In this scale an increase of 1 indicates a thirty-fold increase in energy.

risk a concept used to describe the likelihood of harmful consequences arising from the interaction of hazards, communities and the environment.

- The chance of something happening that will have an impact upon objectives. It is measured in terms of consequences and likelihood;
- A measure of harm, taking into account the consequences of an event and its likelihood. For example, it may be expressed as the likelihood of death to an exposed individual over a given period; and
- Expected losses (of lives, persons injured, property damaged, and economic activity disrupted) due to a particular hazard for a given area and reference period. Based on mathematical calculations, risk is the product of hazard and vulnerability.

risk acceptance an informed decision to accept the likelihood and the consequences of a particular risk.

risk analysis process to comprehend the nature of risk and to determine the level of risk.

risk assessment the overall process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation.

risk criteria the State's endorsed risk criteria and associated tools and guidelines which form the minimum required level of analysis/reporting.

risk evaluation process of comparing the results of risk analysis with risk criteria to determine whether the risk and/or its magnitude are/is acceptable or tolerable

risk identification the process of finding, recognising and describing risks

risk management coordinated activities of an organisation or a government to direct and control risk.

risk management process the systematic application of management of policies, procedures and practices to the tasks of communicating, consulting, establishing the context, and identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating, monitoring and reviewing risk.

risk reduction actions taken to lessen the likelihood, negative consequences, or both, associated with a risk.

risk tolerance an organisation's or stakeholder's readiness to bear the risk after risk treatment to achieve its objectives.

risk treatment process of selection and implementation of measures to modify risk. The term "risk treatment" is sometimes used for the controls themselves.

risk treatment options measures which modify the characteristics of hazards, communities, or environments.

road block road check point or barricade to maintain compliance with movement control restrictions.

safest corridor the route that evacuees take that presents the safest egress from the threat to the place of safety.

safer place a nearby location where members of the community can relocate or evacuate to quickly that is safer than the location being threatened by the hazard.

self evacuation the voluntary evacuation of community members who have assessed their risk and have decided to move to a safer place; either a place established for the hazard or a place of their choosing.

shelter in place the advice to community to remain in their location, this may be an open space, building, indoors or other suitable place of shelter, usually with additional advice from emergency services as to how to take actions to reduce their exposure to the hazard.

search and rescue (SAR) the process of locating and recovering disaster victims and the application of first aid and basic medical assistance as may be required.

search and rescue incident the specific situation that causes the search and rescue system to be activated.

search and rescue operation in whole or in part the action taken during the currency of a search and rescue incident.

secondary hazard a hazard that occurs as a result of another hazard or disaster, i.e. fires or landslides following earthquakes, epidemics following famines, food shortages following drought or floods.

section that organisation level having functional responsibility for primary segments of incident operations such as: operations, planning, logistics, .

simulation exercise decision making exercise and disaster drills within threatened communities in order to represent disaster situations to promote more effective coordination of response from relevant authorities and the population.

situational analysis a deliberate process where the current incident situation, the factors that are relevant to the incident, the courses open and their consequences are reviewed and alternative strategies are assessed and an incident action plan is recommended.

situation report (SITREP) a brief report that is published and updated periodically during an emergency which outlines the details of the emergency, the needs generated, and the responses undertaken as they become known.

span of control a concept which relates to the number of groups or individuals controlled by one person – a factor of 1:5 is recommended.

specialist facilities may be required when evacuees are unable to care for themselves or require additional care (e.g. hospitals, aged care or similar facilities, and disability care).

St John Ambulance Australia a national charitable organisation dedicated to the relief of persons in sickness, distress, suffering or danger. In all States it provides first aid training and volunteer first aid and community care services, and in Western Australia and the Northern Territory it also runs the public ambulance service.

staging area a prearranged, strategically placed area where support response personnel, vehicles and other equipment can be held in readiness for use during an emergency.

stand-by the period normally following an alert when deployment of resources is imminent. Personnel are placed on stand-by being ready to respond immediately

stand-down that phase where an agency's response is no longer required, and services are wound back. Site teams are returned to base, and additional staff called in are released from duty.

Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) a distinct sound approved by the State Emergency Management Committee to indicate an emergency announcement follows.

standard operating procedures (SOP) a set of directions detailing what actions could be taken, as well as how, when, by whom and why, for specific events or tasks.

State Disaster Council a group established, under section 63 of the *Emergency Management Act 2005*, during a state of emergency to liaise with, advise and support the State Government and the State Emergency Coordination Group, and liaise with the Australian Government as required, in relation to the state of emergency.

State Emergency Coordination Group (SECG) a group that is established, under section 26 of the *Emergency Management Act 2005* during a state of emergency, or may be established where an emergency occurs or is imminent, to ensure the provision of a strategic, coordinated multi-agency response to and recovery from the emergency and report to the Minister.

State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) committee established under section 13 of the *Emergency Management Act 2005*.

state emergency management plan a plan prepared under section 18 of the *Emergency Management Act 2005* to outline the State arrangements for the emergency management of hazards and support functions.

State emergency management policies a set of policies prepared under Section 17 of the *Emergency Management Act 2005* that provides for:

- a strategic framework for emergency management in the State;
- the roles and responsibilities of emergency management organisations; and
- other matters that are prescribed by the regulations.

State Emergency Public Information Coordinator (SEPIC) the SEPIC, appointed by the State Emergency Coordinator, is the Director Media and Corporate Communications, Western Australia Police Force.

state of emergency a declaration made under section 56 of the *Emergency Management Act 2005*, by the Minister, which provides access to further emergency management powers.

State Public Information Line (SPIL) a telephone call centre facility that may be established by the State Emergency Public Information Coordinator to receive and respond to general inquiries from the public regarding an emergency.

storm surge the difference between the actual water level under influence of a meteorological disturbance (storm tide) and the level which would have been attained in the absence of the meteorological disturbance (i.e. astronomical tide).

storm tide the combination of a storm surge, tidal peaks, a shallow coastal gradient, and on – shore winds. A storm tide effect may be increased by funnelling due to coastal terrain.

strategy a statement detailing how an objective will be achieved.

strike teams a set number of resources of the same type that have an established minimum number of personnel. Strike teams always have a leader (usually in a separate vehicle), and have a common communications system. Strike teams are usually made up of five resources of the same type such as: vehicles, crews, earth moving machinery, etc.

support organisation a public authority or other person who or which, because of the agency's functions under any written law or specialized knowledge, expertise and resources is responsible for providing support functions in relation to that agency.

sustainable development development in the present that does not destroy the resources needed for future development.

table top exercise an umbrella term for some types of indoor discussion exercise. They may feature a model of the area on which a prepared scenario is played out, or simply using a projected map, not in real time. The model or map is used to illustrate the deployment of resources, but, no resources are actually deployed. Additionally, responses may be prepared in syndicate, in plenary, or under the guidance of a facilitator who maintains the pace and asks probing questions. A cost effective, and highly efficient, exercise method that should be conducted as a prelude to a field exercise as part of a graduated series. *See also* **exercise**.

tactical exercise without troops (TEWT) TEWTs are used to relate theory and/or emergency management arrangements to a simulated operational situation on the ground. This allows controllers, operations officers, etc. to be practiced and tested in problem solving and decision making techniques as well as applying operational procedures without actually deploying their resources to a field situation. *See also* **exercise**.

tactics these are the tasking of personnel and resources to implement the incident strategies. Incident control tactics are accomplished in accordance with appropriate agency procedures and safety directives. Tactics are normally determined at division/ sector level with a corresponding allocation of resources and personnel.

task a job given to any firefighting force or unit.

temporary accommodation accommodation provided over an extended period of days, weeks or months, for individuals or families affected by an emergency. It is different from emergency shelter.

temporary sheltering includes family, friends or commercial accommodation outside the impact zone, refuge sites, evacuation centres and specialist facilities.

terrorist act is defined in section 100.1 of the Commonwealth *Criminal Code Act 1995* and is adopted by the Western Australian *Emergency Management Act 2005* and *Emergency Management Regulations 2006* to prescribe the hazard of Terrorist Act.

tolerable risk a risk which the exposed people are expected to bear without undue concern, once all reasonable practicable reduction measures have been adopted. 'Tolerable' is sometimes used interchangeably with 'acceptable', but its more negative connotations make it more appropriate for risks which are reluctantly accepted.

tolerated risk a risk which is borne without people actively campaigning to reduce it. This may be because it's tolerable, but it may also be because its true levels are unknown. It is possible that a risk which is at present tolerated would, given better information, be judged intolerable.

traffic management point a point established to control and limit access to a fire area. It provides a means of managing the entry of residents of the fire affected area so that they can secure their property and extinguish fires caused by the ember attack after the passage of the fire front.

trauma injury of any nature.

triage the process by which casualties are sorted, prioritised and distributed according to their need for first aid, resuscitation, emergency transportation and definitive care.

triage area an area which may be set aside at the entrance to the patient treatment post specifically for triage of casualties as they are brought to the area.

tropical cyclone (TC) generic term for a non – frontal synoptic scale cyclone originating over tropical or sub-tropical waters with organised convection and definite cyclonic surface wind circulation:

tsunami a Japanese word for 'harbour wave'. It is used to define a water wave generated by a sudden change in the sea bed resulting from an earthquake, volcanic eruption or landslide.

unified command a method for all agencies or individuals who have jurisdictional responsibility, or in some cases who have functional responsibilities at the incident, to contribute to: determination of overall objectives for the incident, and selection of strategies to achieve the objectives.

unlisted hazard any occurrence or imminent occurrence of a hazard which is of such a nature or magnitude that it requires a significant and coordinated response but is not readily identified as a hazard within the *Emergency Management Act 2005*.

urban area in which residences and other human developments form an essentially contiguous covering of the landscape, includes most area within cities and towns, subdivisions, commercial and industrial parks and similar development whether inside city limits or not.

urban/rural interface the line, area or zone where structures and other human development adjoin or overlaps with undeveloped bushland.

volunteer emergency worker a volunteer worker who engages in emergency activity at the request (whether directly or indirectly) or with the express or implied consent of the chief executive (however designated), or of a person acting with the authority of the chief executive, of an agency to which either the State emergency response or recovery plan applies.

vulnerability² the characteristics and circumstances of a community, system or asset that make it susceptible to the damaging effects of a hazard. There are many aspects of vulnerability, arising from various physical, social, economic, and environmental factors that vary within a community and over time.

2 UNISDR – Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction

warm zone the area where personnel and equipment decontamination and hot zone support takes place. It includes control points for the access corridor and thus assists in reducing the spread of contamination. Syn. 'decontamination zone', 'contamination reduction zone', or 'limited access zone'.

warning information provided to people at risk before or during an incident/emergencies advising them to take appropriate action to reduce losses.

warning system a suite of procedures and protocols established to inform individuals and communities about emerging or current threats and how to respond to reduce risk of death, injury, property loss and damage.

weather alert a warning broadcast on radio or television of an approaching storm or gale, or of an impending cold change.

welfare the provision of immediate and continuing care of emergency affected persons who may be threatened, distressed, disadvantaged, homeless or evacuated; and, the maintenance of health, well-being and prosperity of such persons with all available community resources until their rehabilitation is achieved.

welfare assembly centre the initial point, within or just outside the disaster area, to which and from which emergency affected persons shall be directed as appropriate.

welfare centre location where temporary accommodation is available for emergency affected persons containing the usual amenities necessary for living and other welfare services as appropriate.

welfare information centre any centre established within or near the disaster area to meet the immediate needs of emergency affected persons which will be the focal point for the delivery of welfare services to the community but does not provide accommodation.

