

Australian Emergency Manual

Disaster Recovery



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NB. Manual will be issued subject to availability and guidelines in the latter paragraph of the Foreword, page v.

Foreword

The purpose of this manual is to provide a comprehensive guide on Disaster Recovery at all levels. It is intended for use in planning, training and operations by all personnel.

This manual has been developed by a steering committee, representative of the range of professions, Government and Non-Government organisations responsible for Disaster Recovery Management and service delivery throughout Australia. The steering committee was initiated and supported by Emergency Management Australia.

A number of workshops and working party meetings were conducted as part of the development of this manual. These activities brought together a broad range of participants with significant experience in the various facets of Recovery Management. The steering committee is grateful to the many individuals and organisations who contributed to the manual through these activities.

The manual will be amended and updated as policy changes are made, new procedures are introduced, or as significant developments in professional practice occur. Proposed changes should be forwarded to the Director-General, Emergency Management Australia at the address shown below.

insertion of individual organisational supplements.

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The manual is also issued in loose-leaf format to facilitate amendment and



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INTRODUCTION

The Australian concept of disaster management calls for a comprehensive approach, embracing prevention, preparedness, response and recovery (PPRR). However these elements are not necessarily sequential or mutually exclusive. Recovery managers and agencies must be involved in the broader processes of disaster management and planning. Recovery and response operations must be simultaneous.

Disaster recovery is the coordinated process of supporting disaster-affected communities in reconstruction of the physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical well-being.

The physical and social aspects are critical to effective recovery. Recovery is more than the replacement of what was destroyed and the rehabilitation of individuals. It is a complex social process and is best achieved when the affected community exercises a high degree of self-determination. Recovery is a developmental, rather than a remedial process, so the manner in which the physical and social aspects of the process are undertaken will have a critical impact. Activities which are conducted without consultation and recognition of needs and priorities will disrupt and hinder the process.

AIM

The aim of this manual is to provide disaster managers and practitioners with a comprehensive guide on recovery at all levels.

FORMAT

The manual is divided into four main sections:

Section One provides concepts and principles which underpin the recovery process.

Section Two gives an insight into the likely impact a disaster may have upon the community.

Section Three describes the structures within which disaster recovery is managed, together with planning and operational guidelines.

Section Four outlines the specific services which may be provided.

**AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANUAL
DISASTER RECOVERY**

SECTION ONE

DISASTER RECOVERY OVERVIEW

SECTION ONE - DISASTER RECOVERY OVERVIEW

CHAPTER ONE

PURPOSE, PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPTS

PURPOSE OF DISASTER RECOVERY

- 1.01** The purpose of providing disaster recovery services is to assist the disaster-affected community towards management of its own recovery. It is a recognition that where a community experiences a significant disaster there is a need to supplement the personal, family and community structures which have been disrupted by the disaster.

PRINCIPLES OF DISASTER RECOVERY MANAGEMENT

- 1.02** In 1979 the Standing Committee of Community Services and Income Security Administrators (then the Standing Committee of Social Welfare Administrators) endorsed principles of disaster recovery management which have provided a successful management context for recovery managers. Those principles are utilised in the training context in the following format:

Disaster recovery is most effective when:

- a. management arrangements recognise that recovery from disaster is a complex, dynamic and protracted process;
- b. agreed plans and management arrangements are well understood by the community and all disaster management agencies;
- c. recovery agencies are properly integrated into disaster management arrangements;
- d. community service and reconstruction agencies have input to key decision making;
- e. conducted with the active participation of the affected community; f. recovery managers are involved from initial briefings onwards;
- g. recovery services are provided in a timely, fair, equitable and flexible manner; and
- h. supported by training programs and exercises.

1.03 The Standing Committee of Community Services and Income Security Administrators endorse the principles of disaster recovery management in the following format:

- a. Recovery from disaster is an enabling and supportive process which allows individuals, families and communities to attain a proper level of functioning through the provision of information, specialist services and resources.
- b. Effective recovery from disaster requires the establishment of planning and management arrangements which are accepted and understood by recovery agencies, combat agencies and the community.
- c. Recovery management arrangements are most effective when they recognise the complex, dynamic and protracted nature of recovery processes and the changing needs of affected individuals, families and groups within the community over time.
- d. The management of disaster recovery is best approached from a community development perspective and is most effective when conducted at the local level with the active participation of the affected community and a maximum reliance on local capacities and expertise.
- e. Recovery management is most effective when human service agencies play a major role in all levels of key decision making which may influence the well being and recovery of the affected community.
- f. Recovery from disaster is best achieved where the recovery process begins from the moment of disaster impact.
- g. Recovery planning and management arrangements are most effective where they are supported by training programs and exercises which ensure that recovery agencies and personnel are properly prepared for their role.
- h. Recovery from disaster is most effective where recovery management arrangements provide a comprehensive and integrated framework for managing all potential emergencies and disasters and where assistance measures are provided in a timely, fair, equitable manner and are sufficiently flexible to respond to a diversity of community needs.

DISASTER RECOVERY CONCEPTS

1.04 Underpinning the recovery management principles outlined in the preceding section are a number of concepts which provide the basis for effective recovery management within Australia. They are:

- a. community involvement;
- b. management at the local level;
- c. affected area/community approach;
- d. differing effects/needs for different communities/individuals;
- e. empowering individuals and communities;
- f. minimum intervention;
- g. recognition of resourcefulness;
- h. planned/timely withdrawal;
- i. accountability, flexibility, adaptability and responsiveness;
- j. integration of services; and
- k. coordination.

1.05 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Experience gained through a range of events from Cyclone Tracy onwards is that the recovery process is most effective when individuals and communities actively participate in the management of their own recovery.

The involvement of the affected community in the recovery management process creates and supports community infrastructures and provides the resources necessary for successful recovery. However, recognising that community capacity to sustain an effective recovery process will vary, government and the wider community should complement and supplement local recovery initiatives where appropriate.

One of the most effective means of involving the community is through community recovery committees. These committees comprise representatives of government, private and voluntary agencies, as well as local councils, ethnic leaders and other representative members of an affected community.

Community recovery committees provide a mechanism through which information, resources and services may be coordinated in support of an affected community, priorities established and information regarding the progress of an affected community made available. These committees also provide a useful source of information and advice for the affected community and recovery agencies. The advantages of community recovery committees include:

- a. reinforcement of local and community orientation of the recovery process;
- b. recognition of the common interests of members of the affected community;
- c. ensuring the equitable application of resources and services;
- d. establishing a mechanism for the identification and prioritisation of community needs;
- e. overall monitoring of the recovery process; and
- f. providing a means for identifying needs which cannot be met from within the community and which require resource support from regional/district or State/Territory level.

Depending upon the scale and geography of a disaster one or more community recovery committees may be activated. Where an event impacts upon a number of communities it may be appropriate to activate local recovery committees for each of the affected areas. Sub-committees may also be required to meet the needs of special needs groups if a large-scale disaster takes place in a large urban area. In instances such as these a central community recovery committee may also be necessary to provide an overall forum for advice, coordination and consultation.

1.06 MANAGEMENT AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Management of disaster recovery services should be devolved as much as possible to the local level. Experience has shown that when recovery programs and assistance measures are imposed upon a community they are less effective than those which are managed at the local level.

Resource support will often be required from regional or State level. However by maintaining participation at a local level, community input and a capacity for disaster-affected persons to participate in the management of their own recovery will be maintained. In this way State and regional recovery strategies, services and resources supplement and complement local initiatives rather than replacing local endeavour. The local authority may require additional management support following a major disaster. This should be provided through the responsible person, agency or committee at State/Territory level.

1.07 AFFECTED AREA/COMMUNITY APPROACH

Recognising that disasters rarely occur within the confines of a single local government area, management of the recovery process is generally undertaken on the basis of an identifiable affected area.

The affected area is the entire geographic area affected in any significant way by the event. It is distinguished by the losses which have resulted and by the common interests of the people involved. It may be contained within a single municipality or administrative region, or may cross municipal, regional/district or State/Territory boundaries.

Affected areas are not always clearly definable and disaster-affected persons may be from a dispersed population. For example, a shooting incident in a shopping centre or other public place may affect people from a range of different localities. In an instance like this, the affected community will need to be defined by other than geographic means.

1.08 DIFFERING EFFECTS/NEEDS FOR DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES/INDIVIDUALS

The capacity of individuals, families and communities to restore losses and re-establish normal living patterns following disasters will vary depending upon their own capacity, the specific circumstances of the disaster and its effect upon them. Consequently, assistance measures must be adapted to meet most appropriately the needs of those affected. This will require sensitivity, together with extensive consultation with affected people and communities.

1.09 EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES

Throughout the recovery process it is essential that disaster-affected persons and communities participate in the management of their own recovery. The capacity of many individuals, families and communities to recover is likely to be diminished by the physical and emotional impact of a disaster. While assistance from outside may be required to overcome these difficulties, it is important that such assistance does not overwhelm those affected and detract from their participation in the management of their own recovery.

Emphasis should be given to supporting and maintaining the identity, dignity and autonomy of those affected by the event. Support services and assistance measures should be well advertised on a repetitive basis, and easily accessible, but allow people to make their own decisions. It should also be ensured that information be made available to people of non-English speaking backgrounds.

Recovery should be seen as a developmental process which should seek to develop the community rather than just return it to the previous level. This is one of the potentially positive aspects of a well-managed recovery process. Community infrastructure and functioning may in fact be improved following a disaster, rather than just reinstated to previous levels.

1.10 MINIMUM INTERVENTION

The recovery management approach should be one of minimum intervention. However, recovery services and information should always be readily available within disaster-affected communities and be responsive to the range of needs evident.

External recovery services and resources are provided as a support to an affected community, to be used if the needs following the event are beyond the capacity of existing services and resources. Wherever possible additional resources should be under local management through the network of existing service providers.

1.11 RECOGNITION OF RESOURCEFULNESS

In successfully managing disaster recovery recognition needs to be given to the level of resourcefulness evident within an affected community. As with other aspects of needs assessment, the capacity of individuals and communities to participate in the management of their own recovery and the level of need for support services will only become clear as the recovery process unfolds.

1.12 PLANNED/TIMELY WITHDRAWAL

One of the most critical aspects of the recovery management process is that of the withdrawal of outside services. If this aspect of the process is not managed successfully the positive effect of all previous efforts may be undone. A planned withdrawal ensures community involvement, ensuring a void will not be left. This is an area in which community recovery committees have a crucial role to play.

1.13 ACCOUNTABILITY, FLEXIBILITY, ADAPTABILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS

These represent four key aspects of recovery management. As with any area of public administration accountability is an important issue. However, the most critical element of recovery management is the speed with which events may unfold and it is in this context that managers and staff working in recovery management will need to be flexible, adaptable and responsive in a potentially ever-changing environment. The need for these skills is further accentuated by the public, media and political scrutiny inherent in large-scale disasters.

1.14 INTEGRATION OF SERVICES

One of the lessons of disaster management over recent years is that, while response and recovery activities may be separate, they are not sequential activities, but should commence and initially occur as parallel activities. Consequently it is essential that there be an integration of all services. This is particularly important when there is an overlap between response and recovery activities, such as when an agency has responsibilities in both areas, or where response and recovery agencies both require access to limited resources. Many of these issues can be resolved through the planning process, while those which are not will be more easily negotiated during the operational process if effective liaison arrangements and networks are in place prior to an event taking place.

There is also a need for an effective integration of recovery services. This is the basis for a coordinated approach to recovery management. Again the establishment of networks and management arrangements during the planning process will ensure that any difficulties which arise throughout the recovery process will be resolved as easily as possible.

1.15 COORDINATION

The provision of recovery services is most effective when coordinated by a single agency. This agency should be represented by an identifiable coordinator who has the responsibility for the full breadth of recovery activities. To ensure community input into all aspects of the recovery process, human service agencies must have a significant role in all decision making processes.

**AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANUAL
DISASTER RECOVERY**

SECTION TWO

**DISASTER EFFECTS ON COMMUNITIES
AND INDIVIDUALS**

SECTION TWO - DISASTER EFFECTS ON COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUALS

CHAPTER TWO

COMMUNITY EFFECTS OF DISASTER

INTRODUCTION

2.01 Events that cause disruption and damage to communities may occur at any time and without warning. It is not difficult to recall instances where people have been seriously injured or killed in accidents or where communities have been destabilised by tragic events.

In all these circumstances, individuals and communities are affected in ways which interfere with their normal functioning and their physical environment. It is important that emergency services personnel, recovery workers and administrators are adequately prepared to deal with such events as they arise, so that all appropriate actions are taken to enable individuals and their communities to return to normal as soon as possible. It is also important to ensure that all people affected are able to access recovery and restoration services.

SECTION AIM

2.02 This Section sets out the physical effects of disaster, together with the likely individual and community responses when these events occur. The aim of these chapters is to provide all workers involved in the recovery process with an understanding of the overall effects of disasters.

SECTION TWO - DISASTER EFFECTS ON COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUALS

CHAPTER THREE

PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF DISASTER

INTRODUCTION

3.01 A natural or technological event does not constitute a disaster unless it impacts upon a community, causing disruption to that community or physical damage to buildings and infrastructure.

All natural disasters and most technological disasters have the potential to cause significant physical damage. Some of these events have short-term effects, such as the temporary loss of electricity supply to a number of suburban blocks, while others will cause long-term effects, such as the loss of a bridge connecting two parts of a city or the sole road transport link to a country town.

Damage caused by disasters may not be immediately apparent. For instance the full extent of damage caused by flooding may not become obvious for a number of months after the event. An example of this is the damage caused to building foundations through subsidence.

The physical effects of disaster impact on government, business and the community. These effects are detailed below to raise the awareness of recovery workers to the possible disruption that can be caused by a disaster.

PHYSICAL EFFECTS

3.02 ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Essential services are likely to be affected following a disaster. The services lost may include:

- a. gas;
- b. electricity;
- c. water;
- d. telephone;
- e. sewerage;
- f. hospitals;
- g. transport systems (including roads and public transport); and
- h. garbage collection.

3.03 RESIDENTIAL

Damage to residential areas will have a major impact upon family and individual lifestyle. It may result in the need for temporary evacuation or longer-term relocation in temporary accommodation. Likely residential losses may include:

- a. houses, home units, flats;
- b. household contents (ie food, furniture, clothing, toys, memorabilia); c. cars;
- d. sporting equipment;
- e. gardens;
- f. tools;
- g. fences; and
- h. pets.

3.04 COMMERCIAL FACILITIES

Disruption to commercial facilities following a disaster may deny consumers access to a range of goods and services, or at least severely restrict their availability. Examples of enterprises which may be affected are:

- a. banks;
- b. service stations;
- c. supermarkets;
- d. clothing stores;
- e. chemists; and
- f. department stores.

In addition, if the impact of the disaster is severe enough, the viability of businesses, including rural properties, may also be threatened.

3.05 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The loss of community facilities following a disaster further disrupts individual and community lifestyle. A range of practical problems will emerge with loss or damage to facilities such as:

- a. community/neighbourhood centres;
- b. schools;
- c. kindergartens;
- d. churches; and
- e. medical centres.

3.06 ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

In addition to damage or disruption within the categories listed above a disaster is also likely to impact upon entertainment and recreational facilities. Facilities which may be disrupted include the following:

- a. sporting clubs;
- b. cultural venues;
- c. entertainment venues; and
- d. restaurants/hotels.

3.07 ENVIRONMENTAL

A disaster may have serious effects upon the environment. Potential effects may include:

- a. pollution;
- b. loss of flora and fauna; and
- c. degradation of national parks.

RECOVERY

3.08 It is unlikely that all of the above effects would be experienced following any single disaster. Recovery plans aim to support the community in dealing with these issues. These plans coordinate the efforts of a range of government and non-government agencies and the community in management of the recovery process.

SECTION TWO - DISASTER EFFECTS ON COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUALS

CHAPTER FOUR

PSYCHOSOCIAL EFFECTS OF DISASTER

INTRODUCTION

- 4.01** Individuals and communities may be affected by traumatic incidents at any time. Regardless of the scale of the event and the number of people affected the nature of the emotional response of the individuals involved is likely to be similar.

As discussed in the introductory section of this manual the type of event for which recovery services are now required has changed somewhat. Where disasters were once thought of exclusively as natural phenomena such as floods, bushfires, cyclones, earthquakes or severe storms, the definition has broadened in recent years to include a wide range of events such as mass shootings, industrial accidents and plane crashes. The common thread is the significant impact upon an identifiable community.

Whatever the type of incident, the normal functioning of the individuals and community affected are likely to be disrupted. A disaster precipitates a sequence of events which affect the function of a community and the individuals which make up the community.

To carry out their duties effectively following a disaster, recovery workers, whether they be responsible for reconstruction of infrastructure or the provision of personal support services, will be dealing with one common element - the people affected by the disaster. Consequently, recovery workers of all types need to be aware of the potential impacts and likely reactions which may be experienced by individuals affected by disasters. In particular, they need to be aware of the ways in which individuals may react to disaster to ensure that services are delivered in the most supportive and effective means possible.

4.02 CHAPTER AIM

This chapter aims to provide an overview of reactions to a disaster to provide recovery workers with a greater understanding of the people they will be dealing with throughout the recovery process.

MYTHS OF DISASTER

4.03 The following table details a number of myths concerning individual and community reactions to disaster. As can be seen from the second column the reality is somewhat different to the myth.

MYTH	REALITY
a. <i>People Panic</i>	People behave quite rationally and responsibly except where there is a threat to life and no escape, no information, or no leadership.
b. <i>People cannot look after themselves</i>	People generally care for each other, helping those in need where possible.
c. <i>Too much information is bad.</i>	People respond appropriately to sound information from a reliable source. They may try to check it with those they consider credible before acting.
d. <i>Children are too young to be affected.</i>	After the immediate responses children may hold back needs until after the crisis. Children often require special attention and counselling.
e. <i>If people don't crack up they are not affected.</i>	Few people 'crack up' but everyone is affected and suffers stress in varying degrees.
f. <i>Communities never recover from disaster.</i>	Communities may undergo trauma and permanent change may result but they can recover. This can be a positive development if improvement desired by the community is recognised and facilitated in the post-disaster period.
g. <i>Emergency workers are not affected.</i>	Emergency workers are also victims of disaster-related stress in varying degrees.

4.04 In addition to the realities outlined above it should also be noted that disaster 'victims' are normal persons, usually capable of functioning effectively, but who have been subjected to severe stress, and some of their reactions to the stress may show as emotional strain. This is usually transitory - it is to be expected and does not imply mental illness. Most often people affected by disasters need concrete help such as information about available services, how to get insurance benefits or loans, assistance with completion of applications to government agencies, health care, baby sitting, transportation, etc. Often the most important help for the emotional distress may be simply listening, providing a ready ear, and indicating interest and concern.

For the most part people perform quite capably considering the amount of stress endured. However, frustration may accumulate, especially as people affected by disaster encounter misinformation, red tape and bureaucratic tangles while seeking governmental help. Feelings of anger and helplessness may result.

People undergoing great stress and pressure often tend to feel isolated and alone. Their ability to cope may be limited. An interest in their concerns helps restore their sense of identity and forestalls much more severe subsequent emotional distress. Where workers expect healthy responses, pathological responses are much less likely to occur.

Many people find it difficult to accept assistance from beyond their normal networks and may reject help because of a sense of pride and altruism, believing that there are people with greater need in the community. Consequently tact and sensitivity are required in bringing assistance into the community.

4.05 The remainder of this chapter details the psychosocial phases of disaster together with the reality of human reactions to disasters.

THE PSYCHOSOCIAL PHASES

4.06 There is a certain predictability about the reactions of communities and individuals to disasters. At the community level Figure 4:1 provides a summary of the psychosocial phases which are likely to be witnessed following a disaster. The table illustrates the process of adjustment and recovery following disaster.

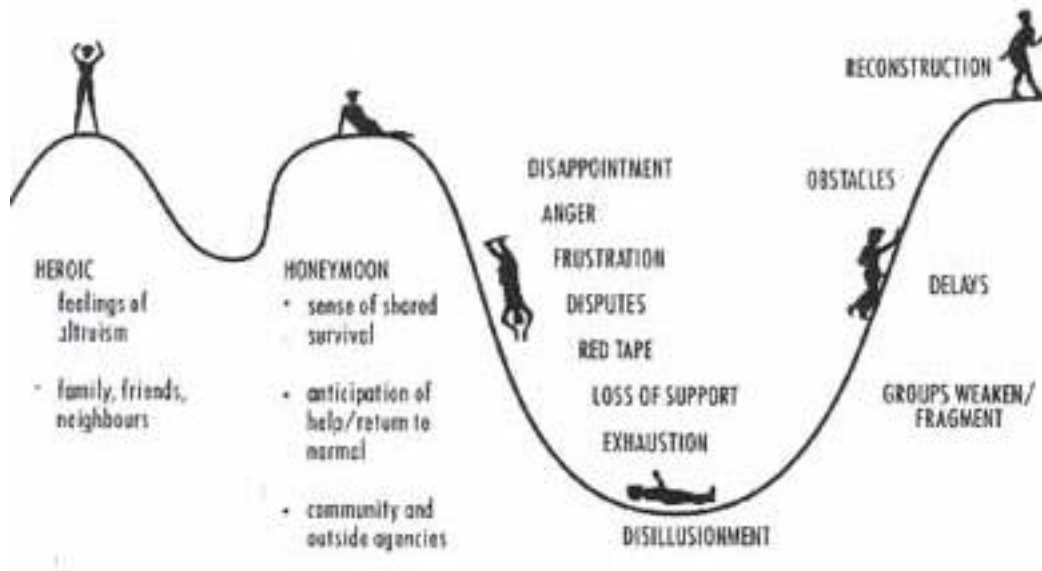


Figure 4:1
Psychosocial Phases of Disaster.

It is important to note that while these reactions are talked about as 'phases' this does not mean that they will occur for all people at the same time or in a sequential manner. In fact, as the figure conveys, the various reactions will be felt at different times by different sections and members within the community. The length of time of each of these 'phases' will also vary and is not predictable.

4.07 HEROIC

The reactions described within the 'heroic' phase will usually occur at impact and in the early stages immediately following the event. A sense of altruism is likely to be experienced as those involved at the disaster site become involved in a range of activities aimed at saving lives and material possessions.

4.08 HONEYMOON

As stated in the section on individual and community responses to disaster, strong bonds are likely to be formed by those members of the community who have experienced a dangerous event together. This sense of shared survival, together with the anticipation of help engendered through the promises and offers of assistance made through political, media and broader community interest in the event, are often referred to as a 'honeymoon' phase.

4.09 DISILLUSIONMENT

As the recovery process progresses much of the initial euphoria at surviving and the anticipation of assistance diminishes. This often leads to a sense of 'disillusionment,' with feelings of anger, frustration and disappointment evident. Diminished support from the broader community, together with a realisation of the enormity of tasks such as rebuilding and refinancing of homes, add to this sense of disillusionment.

4.10 RECONSTRUCTION

The 'reconstruction' phase sees a realisation that the ultimate responsibility for recovery lies with individuals and within the affected community. During this period the range of community restoration, physical reconstruction and community programs reaffirm the belief of those affected by disasters in themselves and in their community.

NORMAL STAGES OF THE RESPONSE/RECOVERY CYCLE

- 4.11** In addition to the psychosocial phases outlined above, Figure 4:2, taken from a Queensland Education Department publication entitled *Traumatic Incidents Affecting Schools*, provides an illustration of the normal stages of the response and recovery cycle as it relates to individuals.

NORMAL STAGES OF THE RESPONSE AND RECOVERY CYCLE FOR A TRAUMATIC INCIDENT

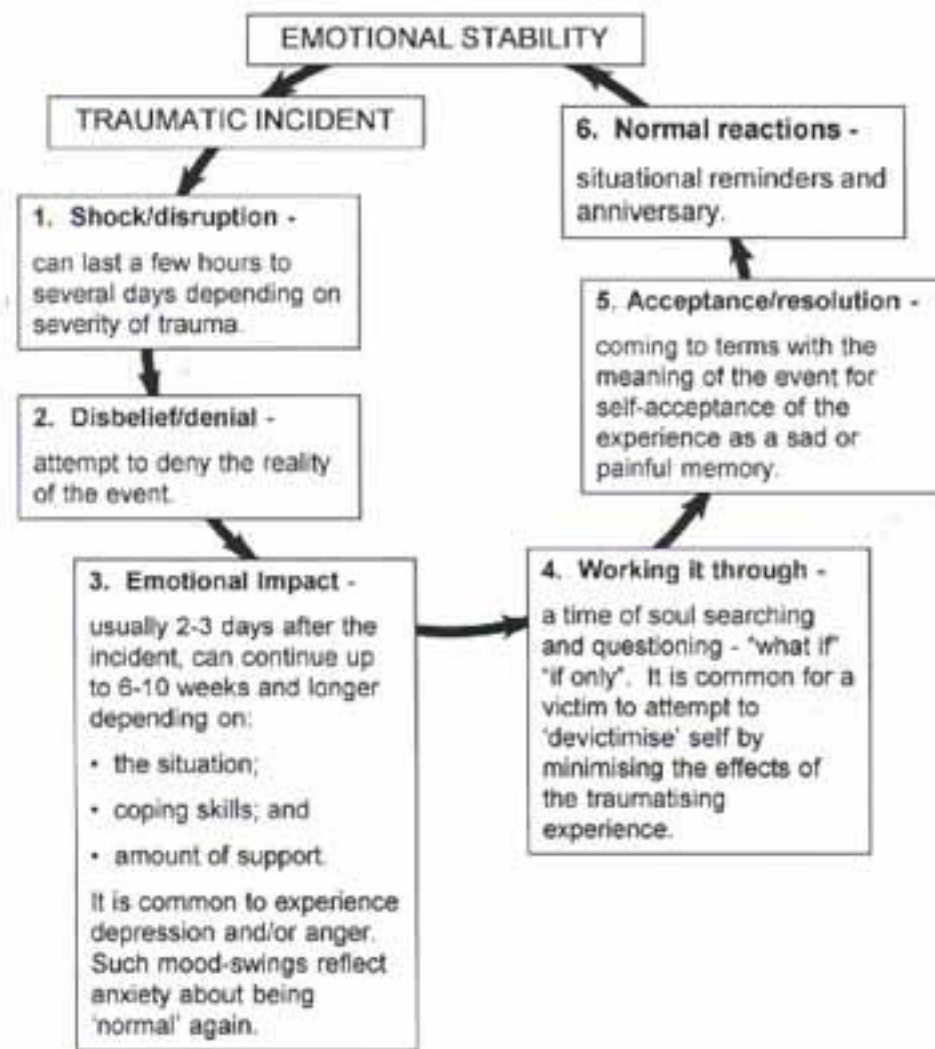


Figure 4:2
Normal Stages of the Response and
Recovery Cycle for a Traumatic Incident

4.12 The information in paragraphs 4.13 to 4.20 has been developed and distributed within affected communities, following a range of different disasters. It provides those people who have been affected by a disaster with an understanding of the effects they are likely to experience.

COMMON FEELINGS AND EFFECTS OF DISASTER EXPERIENCE

4.13 The effects of disaster are very real. Strong feelings may arise when the disaster experience is talked about. Increased worry may interfere with day-to-day living and the experience may leave people affected by a disaster shaken and worried about the future. 'Getting back to normal' can be difficult after an experience of this kind. Everyone's reactions to disaster will not be the same, however, detailed below are some of the common feelings.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| a. Shock | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Disbelief at what has happened.- Numbness - the disaster may seem unreal, like a dream.- No understanding of what has happened. |
| b. Fears | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Of damage to self, or death.- Of a similar disaster happening again.- Awareness of personal vulnerability.- Panicky feelings.- Other apparently unrelated fears. |
| c. Anger | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- At 'who caused it' or 'allowed it to happen'.- Outrage at what has happened.- At the injustice and senselessness of it all.- Generalised anger and irritability.- 'Why me?' |
| d Helplessness | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Crises show us how powerless we are at times, as well as our strengths. |
| e. Sadness | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- About human destruction and losses of every kind.- For loss of the belief that our world is safe and predictable. |
| f. Shame | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- For having been exposed as helpless, emotional and needing others.- For not having reacted as one would have wished. |
| g. Guilt | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- That some have not lost as much as others. |

4.14 EFFECTS ON BEHAVIOUR

The effects of disaster on behaviour can be expressed in many ways:

- a. **Tension** - More easily startled, general nervousness (physical or mental).
- b. **Sleep Disturbances** - Unable to sleep, thoughts that keep the person awake.
- Reliving the disaster.
- c. **Dreams and Nightmares** - Of the disaster or other frightening events.
- d. **Memories and Feelings** - Interfere with concentration, daily life.
- Flashbacks.
- Attempts to shut them out which lead to deadening of feelings and thoughts.
- e. **Irritability** - Frequent swings in mood.
- f. **Depression** - About the event, past events or loss of personal effects.
- Guilt about how you behaved.
- g. **Social Withdrawal** - A need to be alone.
- h. **Physical Sensations** - Tiredness, palpitations, tremors, breathing difficulties, headaches, tense muscles, aches and pains, loss of appetite, loss of sexual interest, nausea, diarrhoea, or constipation and many other symptoms.
- i. **Delayed Effects** - Any of these may occur after months or years of adjustment.

These physical and emotional symptoms are normal. They develop in people facing stress, threat or loss, and are responses which help the person cope. They can be unpleasant and distressing.

4.15 FAMILY AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

New groups and friendships may be formed following a disaster. However strains in relationships may also appear. As well as the good feelings of giving and receiving there may be conflict, anger and jealousy. Individuals may feel that too little or the wrong things are offered, or that they are unable to give as much of themselves as is expected by others. Changes may occur in the way families, friends and the community relate to and need each other.

4.16 CHILDREN'S REACTIONS

Some of the changes that can be seen in infants and children under stress are:

- a. sleep problems, nightmares;
- b. changes of dressing, eating and toilet habits;
- c. irritability, uncooperative, listless, bored;
- d. clinging to family or familiar things, needing objects for security;
- e. unable to cope with change or ordinary problems;
- f. reverting to habits of behaviour previously grown out of;
- g. changes in relationships with parents, either more demanding, possessive, or becoming withdrawn, uncommunicative, rejecting;
- h. relationships with brothers, sisters and peers become more difficult with conflict, competition, aggression or withdrawal;
- i. pre-occupation with the trauma, wanting to talk about it, playing it out, wanting to see where it happened;
- j. excessive concern for others, holding back their need to protect adults;
- k. reduced school performance, concentration or ability to play constructively;
- l. over-active behaviour, restlessness, dissatisfaction;
- m. small ailments or injuries used to get comfort and security; n. transitions such as from pre-school to school may be more difficult; and
- o. exaggerated reactions to small crises may express their distress over the incident which they don't yet understand.

IMMEDIATE, MEDIUM AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS

4.17 IMMEDIATE EFFECTS

Some reactions may occur immediately after the crisis has passed, and continue for some time, including the following:

- a. Spouses/parents may feel fear about their partner's/child's safety while away from home.
- b. Children may develop nightmares, fears or think a fresh crisis will occur to them or the family member involved.
- c. Family members may be angry because of the fear and distress they were put through - these feelings may be directed at the involved member, at each other, or at people outside the family.
- d. Family members may lose trust and confidence in themselves and other people. The world may no longer feel safe, their own welfare may seem uncertain and everything may seem difficult to manage.
- e. Children express their insecurity by naughtiness, bed-wetting, changes in eating and sleeping habits, grizzling, or in reverting to behaviour they have previously grown out of.
- f. Emotional turbulence, anger, guilt, upset, sadness, unpredictable or unreasonable reactions may occur in any family member.

4.18 MEDIUM-TERM EFFECTS

Some families cope well with the crisis and immediate aftermath. These later changes, including those below, may not obviously be related to the crisis. It may be some weeks or months before these effects are felt:

- a. Routine and work patterns, ambition or motivation in the affected member may change; work efficiency and concentration may be reduced.
- b. Spouses/parents may be short-tempered, irritable or intolerant, leading to friction in relationships.
- c. Young children can be clingy, attention seeking or disobedient.
- d. Teenagers may become more rebellious or demanding.
- e. Child or adult family members may be overly concerned to help, try not to do anything wrong, and postpone their own needs to support the affected member.
- f. Family members' feelings for each other may change by becoming more detached, uninvolved or preoccupied with personal problems.
- g. Spouses may experience changes in their sexual relationship.
- h. Children and teenagers' school performance and concentration may be lowered; they may lose former interests.
- i. Family members may lose interest in leisure, recreation or sport.
- j. Teenagers may turn outside the family for emotional support.
- k. Immediate responses may persist or appear for the first time.

4.19 LONG-TERM EFFECTS

Sometimes effects, for example those below, become evident months or even years after the event:

- a. The event may come back for family members in another crisis, although it was dealt with at the time.
- b. Family members, including children, need to go over the events again when they grow into new stages of maturity and understanding.
- c. People may find future crises harder to handle, particularly when similar feelings are aroused even if for different reasons.
- d. Family members may cover up or cope with difficult feelings until all the fuss is over, and things have returned to normal.
- e. Any of the immediate or medium-term effects may occur as delayed reactions, or become habits.
- f. Problems often appear in the form of everyday frustration, and by retracing the way they developed the connection to the crisis becomes clear. It is wise to assume that a major change or problem in family members in the next few years has some relationship to the crisis.

These problems are all normal reactions to an abnormal event that has touched the lives of the whole family. It is important not to blame others for their behaviour. It is part of a changed pattern of family life arising from the crisis. Try to understand how members affect each other.

ADJUSTING TO THE EXPERIENCE

4.20 The following checklist provides disaster-affected persons with a number of suggestions for coping with the disaster experience:

- a. **Acceptance** Recognise your own reaction and acknowledge that you have been through a highly stressful experience. Excessive denial or lack of acceptance of your feelings may delay the recovery process.
- b. **Support** Seek out other people's physical and emotional support. Talk about your feelings to other people who will understand. Sharing with others who have had a similar experience helps
- c. **Going Over Events** As you allow the memories of the disaster more into your mind, there is a need to think about it, and to talk about it. Facing the reality bit by bit, rather than avoiding reminders of it, will help you come to terms with what has happened
- d. **Expressing Feelings** It is important not to bottle up feelings, but to express them. Talking with others about our experience and feelings are natural healing methods and help us to accept what has happened.
- e. **Taking Care of Yourself** During a period of stress, we are more prone to accidents and physical illness. It is important that people affected by disasters look after themselves by:
 - (1) driving more carefully;
 - (2) having sufficient sleep;
 - (3) maintaining a good diet; and
 - (4) taking opportunities for relaxation.

f. **The Positive Side**

After a disaster people can become wiser and stronger. At a community level, bonds between people can be strengthened by sharing an intense experience together. Your experience of this event may help you cope better with the everyday stresses of life. It can also be a turning point where you re-evaluate the value of life and appreciate the little things often overlooked. Try to identify the positive aspects for yourself or for those who are close to you.

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ANNEXES A AND B

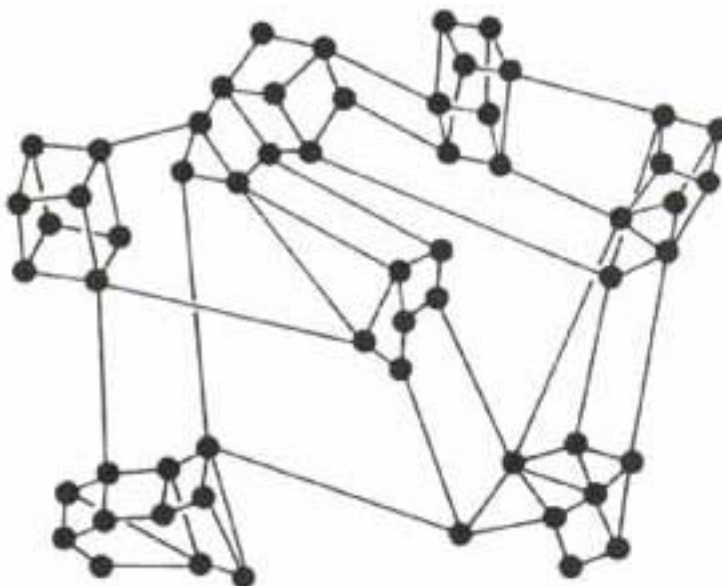
The following two articles, 'Community Responses to Disaster', and 'Individual Responses to Disaster', were developed by Rob Gordon, from a series of 9 articles co-authored by him and Ruth Wraith, which were published in The Macedon Digest, between 1986 and 1988.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO DISASTER

1. PRE-DISASTER STATE

The normal community consists of units (comprising for example individuals, families, interest groups, neighbourhoods) linked in a complex latticework by social bonds. Some sub-groups are more closely linked than others. The particular structure gives the community its character and forms the networks and support systems. A group of families may form a support network by living in close proximity. This cluster may be connected to a regional centre and informal links exist with other families that also use the centre but are geographically more distant. Some families form close bonds with others in different localities with similar interests and participate in their networks.

In Figure 4A:1, the community is represented as a structure of elements linked by bonds which are the basis for communication, influence, community history and tradition. It suggests the intricacy and complexity of a community structure. The position of elements and sub-groups is specific and can be mapped in terms of degree of social proximity and the strength of the attachments. These relationships are the basis for support networks and identity. Each community is differentiated in its own way providing a unique fingerprint of the community.



**Figure 4A:1
Schematic Representation of Community Bonds
Forming a Structure of Sub-Systems**

2. DISASTER WARNING

When a warning is received, the existing bonds form the communication pathways that are activated. Research shows people tend to seek confirmation of the warning and guidance about what to do from those they are familiar with in preference to those with the expertise. Thus they will often find out what neighbours are planning or ring relatives away from the affected community rather than taking action on the official messages alone. At the same time, preparedness procedures are activated and informal plans made to care for old, vulnerable or immobile residents, based on local knowledge. The activation of the existing structure during the warning and preparatory stage confirms it and demonstrates the community capacities.

3. DISASTER IMPACT - DEBONDING

When the impact occurs, there is a moment when the structure is suspended in favour of survival-oriented activity. Since normal community bonds and structures are not formed to meet acute survival needs, they are replaced by others devoted to survival. People relate to those near them, in need or able to help. Previous normal social relationships, such as not talking to those you do not know or who come from the wrong side of the tracks, are temporarily dissolved, as are normal power and influence relations in favour of person-to-person support and assistance. The previous structure is seen as irrelevant or even a liability. In a city shooting disaster, a worker went to the window of his office building when shots were heard. When his supervisor told him to return to his desk he said "You're not the boss of my life!" This indicates the structure of boss/worker was suspended in favour of survival needs. In a bushfire evacuation centre, people relate equally with friends and strangers and provide intimate, unselfconscious support to whoever needs it.

This moment of debonding indicates that the community structure as it existed prior to the disaster has been temporarily abandoned. The bonds formed for non-disaster purposes no longer provide for people's needs and are suspended or replaced by new survival bonds. Although this is described as a moment in time and part of a sequence, it is actually never fully brought into being and certainly not for the whole community at a particular time. However, a debonding stage enables subsequent community processes to be understood. Some people debond more fully than others, and some rebond more rapidly than others. However, the significance of debonding is the disruption of community structure as it existed before the disaster, if on a temporary basis.

Figure 4A:2 illustrates the impact of a disaster on community structure, having a wide ranging effect, like a blunt instrument, wiping away the existing bonds and rupturing the lattice of interrelated sub-groups, debonding the elements and setting them adrift to avoid the disaster as best they can.



Figure 4A:2
Debonding of Community Structures
on Impact of an Area Disaster

This model is appropriate to a natural or area disaster such as bushfire, flood or earthquake. Other types of disaster which are more restricted in their initial impact on the community, such as a transport accident or terrorist attack, can be called 'event disasters'.

Their effect can be likened to a sharp instrument which devastates a more restricted area of the community, but may nevertheless sever important structures and create far-reaching structural changes.



Figure 4A:3
Debonding of Community Structures
on Impact of an Event Disaster

Figure 4A:3 portrays the disaster event slicing into the fabric of the community, forming a wound by severing the bonds in its path and disturbing not only the immediate structures, but also those adjacent and even more distant structures which have bonds to the affected elements.

The pattern of impact differs in these two situations, but the same underlying principle is present. The disaster impacts on the community as a whole, depending on the relation to it. No clear differentiation should be made in this case between "victims" and "non-victims". Everyone is affected, although differently, depending on proximity to disaster events, position in the structure, support structures and other factors. Debonding accounts for the confusion common in the immediate aftermath, since the structures needed to deal with the disaster are themselves affected, and perhaps greatly. This is the social aspect of the disaster. The structure itself has been subjected to trauma, although each person can only see his or her own part of the community, and no-one is in a position to see it as a whole.

4. IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH - REBONDING AND FUSION

People require bonds and relationships that are organised systematically. The loss of these is highly threatening. Therefore debonding is immediately countered by a powerful tendency to establish a new network. This is a process of rebonding. It may last a few minutes, hours, or days. In some situations debonding may last longer than others, and rebonding may occur in one point, while debonding persists elsewhere. However, it is always countered by the need to rebond. A complex process of setting aside, breaking and reforming the several types of bonds occurs.

In rebonding, the resultant structure is not the normal one, since survival issues are still paramount. People bond in an intense, though somewhat indiscriminate manner. In the immediate aftermath, the atmosphere is of intense comradeship and high morale. This is referred to as the 'honeymoon' or 'high' because of the altruism and cooperation, indicating the closeness and uniformity of the bonding. Members of the community form intense relationships that do not acknowledge differences, but are conditioned by the needs of the situation. They are bound together strongly into a survival-oriented, unified group, organised along simple communication lines based on the disaster response system. Since this lacks the intricate system of bonds and communication structures in the pre-disaster community and the distance between clusters and sub-groups is lost, it can be described as a 'state of fusion'. This means the community members form an artificial, intensely-bonded group organised for one purpose. They become an undifferentiated unit.

Figure 4A:4 shows the community in a state of fusion following an area disaster that has had a widespread impact. The bonds are all close and draw the community units closely together to form a cluster rather than the differentiated lattice of the pre-disaster community in Figure 4A:1.

In the case of an event disaster, rebonding and fusion occur on a more restricted basis. Rebonding occurs where debonding was brought about by the event-affected structures fuse along the line of impact or wound. While the surrounding structures maintain their previous relationships, the impacted structures fuse like the formation of scar tissue in an untreated wound in the human body. Like actual scar tissue, it can contract and pull surrounding organs out of position and interfere with their proper functioning. In the community, this is expressed by affected parts forming an intensely-bonded sub-system, whose characteristics relate more to the disaster experience than to pre-disaster functioning. But surrounding structures still maintain normal roles. There is a discrepancy between impacted and non-impacted parts of the system.

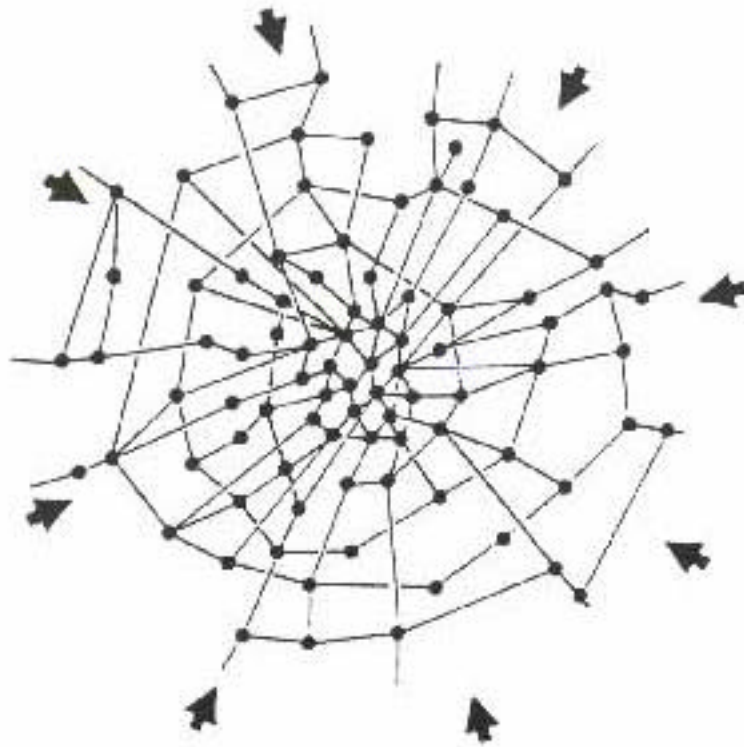


Figure 4A:4
Community Rebonding Following an
Area Disaster Creating a State of Fusion

Figure 4A:5 shows the fusion as a result of rebonding along the line of impact in an event disaster. The elements directly affected form closer, less-differentiated bonds than the surrounding sub-systems, causing tensions and deformations in the structure.

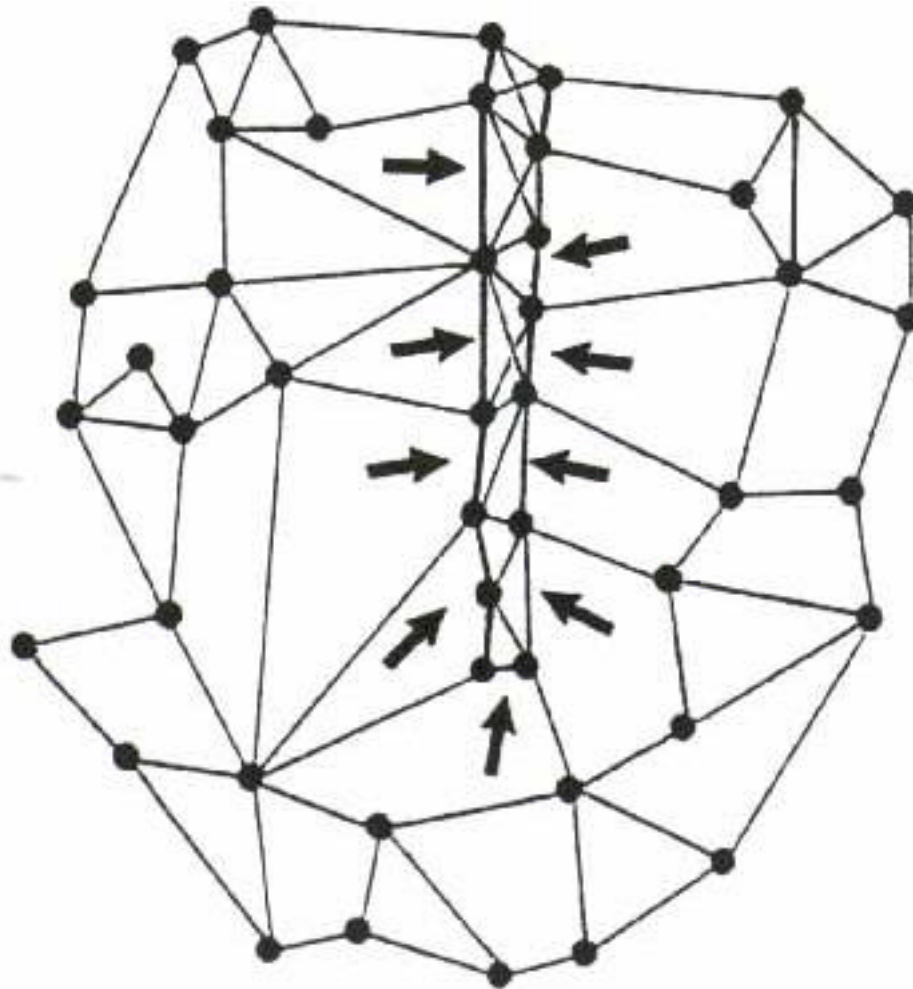


Figure 4A:5
Rebonding and Fusion of Effected
Structures in an Event Disaster

In the state of fusion, differences between the three types of social bonds described above are obscured. Members identify with each other because they share the same experience, they feel strong emotional attachments because of the threats they have undergone together, and rapidly build up a shared disaster culture of stories, incidents, symbols and memories. The fusion has a variety of effects, some beneficial for the recovery process, and some not. The fused community is cohesive and acts with unanimity and altruism-it expresses determination and makes heroic efforts.

It combines the efforts of many people without disputes and disagreements. In the fusion people often concentrate on helping others and ignore their own misfortune. The community seems to predominate at the expense of individual needs.

Some less constructive consequences of the fusion begin to follow as the loss of interpersonal distance becomes more evident. People may feel they lose privacy and respect from the recovery system. They may initially commit themselves deeply to the recovery task without regard to their own needs and then feel obligated and unable to take time or privacy to attend to their own personal and family life. The fusion also sets up personal and community expectations that prove impossible to meet and leads to tensions and conflicts later in the recovery. Closeness also means anyone not present at the point of fusion is felt to be alien and not 'one of us'. It is expected they cannot understand what it has been like, or will lack genuine concern for the community. Incoming recovery workers may have difficulty gaining acceptance if they are not present when the fusion occurs. A similar attitude can develop between sub-groups of directly-affected people and other, less-affected parts of the community. The fused community or those parts in fusion are also likely to overvalue their own capacities and not clearly identify their need for outside help, or they may even reject help at the expense of exhausting their own resources.

5. BREAKDOWN OF THE FUSION - DIFFERENTIATION AND CLEAVAGE PLANES

The fusion is an unstable, expedient measure to cope with external threat. It cannot provide for longer-term needs and the community must re-establish a more complex and intricate structure when the emergency is over. To achieve this the fusion must be disrupted. But it is formed and maintained by intense emotion which is a force for its survival. A tension then exists between the self-protective instincts of the community to band together to survive a threat and the need for a well-organised and structured apparatus to carry out the recovery process, and between community and personal needs.

The fusion is attacked by three distinct forces which are each attempting to develop a differentiated structure, but for different purposes. The first and most obvious is the need to shift from a survival-oriented to a recovery system with a variety of integrated short and longer term services. This system has not existed before, because the disaster is a new event in the history of the community, and it involves agencies and personnel new to it and must relate to organisations outside it. It has to be formed out of the existing fused community and imposes rapid change on it to meet the requirements for its functioning.

The second force is the pre-disaster community structure which is not designed to meet disaster demands. It was a highly-organised system consisting of local government, local services and agencies, and local branches of State services, as well as individual community members. It must undergo rapid change to adapt to the new requirements, but also re-establish itself and take stock of how the disaster has affected its ability to carry out the task.

It must emerge from the cooperative mass of the fusion and establish formal links of communication and procedures. This can be seen as meaningless bureaucratic activity compared to the emotional high of the fusion.

The third force operating against the fusion is the emotional reaction of community members. The unity conferred by everyone having been through the same events is a basis for comradeship, but the differences separating members from each other soon reappear. It becomes evident that the sense of unity no longer applies, and conflict occurs. In a bushfire, those who have lost houses have very different needs from those who did not, yet they also are affected, sometimes severely. It may be difficult for these groups to understand each other when decisions have to be made. The intensity of the emotion initially bound up in the collective sharing of the fusion takes on a more personal meaning as the consequences of the disaster sink in. Anger begins to emerge and there is often a search for someone to blame.

These three forces struggle simultaneously in the same space with the same material - the community members and resources - in order to achieve their objectives. The fusion can break up constructively by establishing a recovery system which integrates the forces.

However the re-emergence of the pre-existing local system may not always be constructive. It carries its own tensions and historical conflicts that may use the uncertainty of the recovery period to gain advantages, and power struggles may occur. But the local system must ensure the recovery programme is appropriate to the community and takes account of historical and other factors, or else it will make mistakes and impede the recovery process.

When tensions develop and differences appear between people, the unity of the fusion is disrupted. But the forces that bring this about are felt as negative emotions placing increased distance between people, such as hostility, hate, envy, rivalry and distrust. These emotions appear soon after the fusion and continue throughout the recovery period as different issues arise.

Disappointment and cynicism are felt as the idealistic, altruistic atmosphere is lost. People have said the fusion represented a high point in their lives; "why couldn't such cooperation always exist" "now you can see how much good there really is in human nature;" its loss for some people can lead to life-long bitterness. If these events are not managed constructively, they can do enormous harm to the community, and members' post-disaster reactions are aggravated.

In the hyper-sensitive state of the fusion anything representing differences between people or groups can create misunderstanding and ill feeling. For instance, in a bushfire affected community those who lost their houses excited envy among some of those who did not, and snide comments were passed about the size of the new houses compared to the old ones. However, the new house was often unwelcome to its owners and they asked friends not to visit until paint was chipped and it began to feel lived in, instead of like a motel. To have an unwanted new house and then hear the comments created intense ill feeling.

In a city office building shooting incident, those from unaffected floors accused those whose lives had been in danger of creating problems out of nothing by talking about it, when in fact those affected were unable to get the events out of their minds.

Such differences can be thought of as cleavage planes in the community where emotions cause splits and separations in what was a cohesive unit. Cleavage planes in cutting gems denote a plane in the structure where it will break clearly if hit with sufficient force. In the social structure, cleavage planes are the contact boundaries between groups with different interests, attitudes, background or experience. Normally, the bonds holding the community together prevent cleavages from occurring. However, after disaster the community is particularly vulnerable to such splits. Experience indicates any issue differentiating members or sub-groups constitutes a cleavage plane and can split the community if conflict occurs.

Figure 4A:6 illustrates the community in fusion in an area disaster being split up by the issues that form cleavage planes represented by the arrows. As indicated, these issues include loss, experiences, compensation, locality, etc.

In an event disaster, cleavage planes can occur both within the fused part and between it and the surrounding, less-affected structures. Figure~`4A:7 shows this with the consequent destructiveness of both directly affected and other structures.

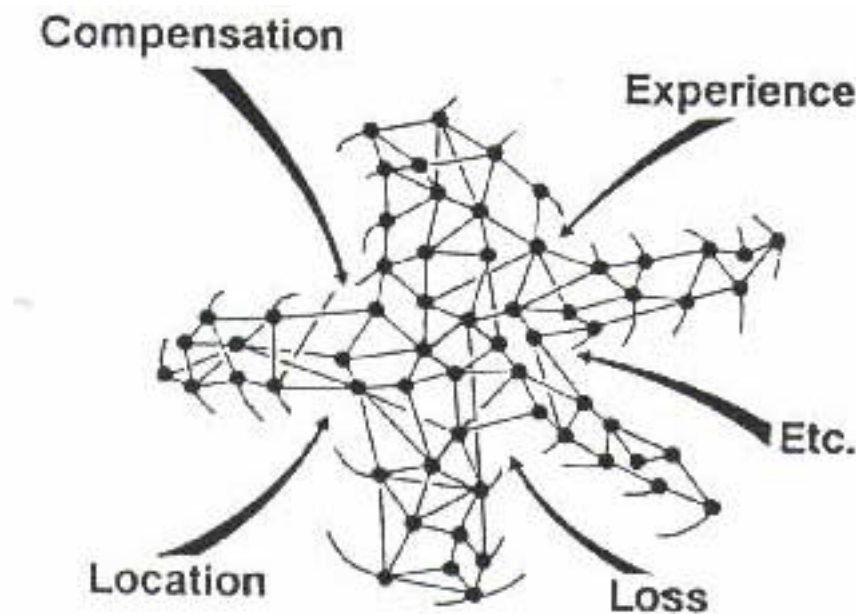


Figure 4A:6
Differentiation of the Community in Fusion
Along Cleavage Planes in an Area Disaster

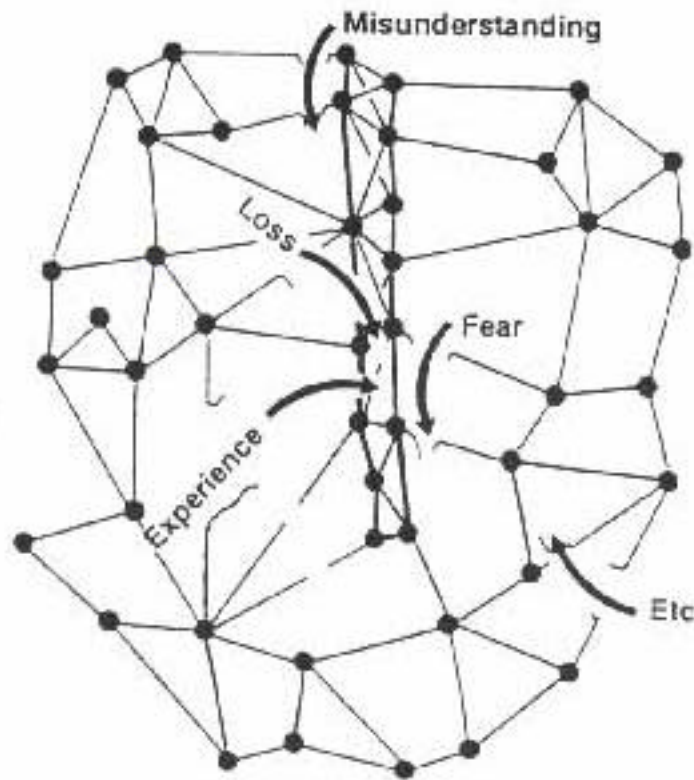


Figure 4A:7
Differentiation of a Community with Fused
Structures Along Cleavage Planes in an Event Disaster

6. STRUCTURAL CONFLICT - SHEAR STRESS

In addition to cleavage planes in the personal experiences of people, a complex interaction also exists at the organisational level. While the pre-disaster community structure re-establishes itself, new structures emerge based on the disaster needs. Recovery cannot return to the pre-disaster state. The community can never be the same again. The effective strategy is to develop a new vision of the future accepting the disaster as a fact of history, review development and integrate the re-establishment of what was lost (insofar as this is possible) and new initiatives into a single enterprise bringing together all members of the community.

But there are several inherent stresses in this situation. The natural tendency to hang on to the past is expressed by those whose circumstances were favourable before the disaster. Others see recovery as an opportunity to achieve long-cherished goals or rectify inequalities. The re-emerging old structure comes in conflict with the developing new structure. These tensions can be described as 'shear stress'.

Where the structures do not harmonise, they can be imagined as grinding over each other in the same way metal is subject to shear stress when two surfaces are twisted in opposite directions. Shear stress occurs at the interface of impacted and non-impacted structures where they do not integrate. This points to the need for care in ensuring the recovery process is carefully integrated.

7. A MODEL OF DISASTER IMPACT - THE DISASTER PROCESS

The broader community processes set in train by a disaster are not confined to the incident itself. It initiates a rolling series of impacts as repercussions are felt in different parts of the system. They continue to occur over time as the community goes through debonding, fusion, and differentiation. Other factors add to the disruption. Physical or climatic changes, such as the first rains after a bushfire creating a quagmire in the ground devoid of vegetation while many are still living in caravans, provide a dramatic increase in stress levels. Political events, like the announcement that a state of disaster will not be declared after a fire, may seem like a callous rejection by government. The death of a local child in a car accident soon after a fire seems the start of a series of tragedies. The re-organisation of a corporation following a massacre disrupts support networks and adds multiple losses, through retirements, to the deaths from the disaster. Other repercussions are evident later. When burnt-out farmers expect the autumn pasture, they realise it will take several years before they can run stock. The closure of businesses ruined by a disaster reduces employment in the area.

The effect of a disaster is initiated by the event itself but the subsequent changes are an integral part of the process and must be anticipated by the recovery process. However, they may not be recognised or may be ignored by the recovery system. Community members may not realise that they are experiencing disaster consequences and, in their despondency, simply submit to them as cruel fate.

A broader conception of a disaster is that it is as a series of impacts, with the physical environment as the first, followed by others with compounding problems. This model of the disaster process is represented in Figure 4A:8, as a graph of community functioning shown falling at impact and as it rises in the subsequent recovery period is met by a series of other disaster-related repercussions, which impede recovery and reduce community functioning in each case.

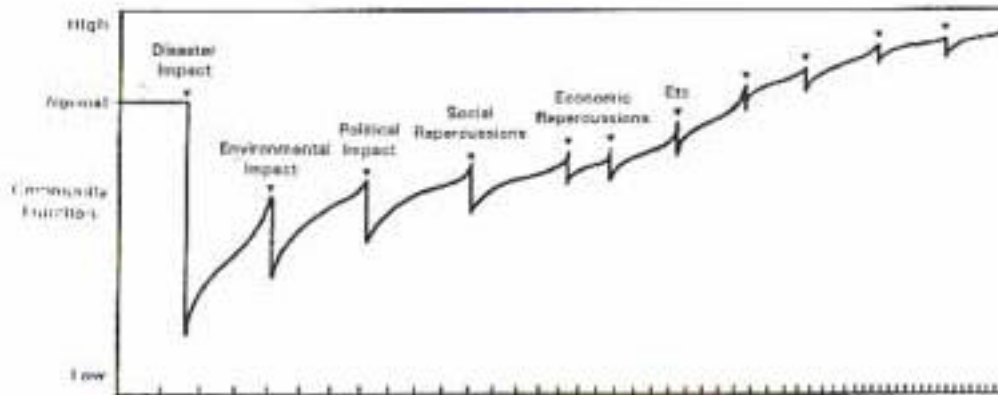


Figure 4A:8
The Disaster Repercussion Process with
Multiple Impacts Reducing Community Functioning

In each disaster the issues that cause such problems are different and may be hard to anticipate. An active recovery management network is necessary to identify and respond to them. If not done, the sense of abandonment and helplessness so destructive to recovery are intensified. The community process also provides a framework for understanding personal reactions of individuals.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES TO DISASTER

Disaster, like all traumatic experiences can have many effects on individuals and families. Some show themselves immediately, others appear months or even years later. Those easiest to recognise are direct and bear the imprint of the trauma. However indirect effects also occur involving the trauma interacting with other issues in the individual's past, present or future life. Short-term effects are likely to be clearly identifiable as stress effects, longer-term responses may appear as personal problems. However, disaster responses are almost always normal responses to abnormal experiences and are misunderstood and mistreated if not recognised as such.

The traumatic experience is so unusual that the individual who undergoes it lacks a basis in previous experience to understand it. An experience of such magnitude disrupts the sense of continuity and predictability of life. Many problems that follow disaster are directly related to this loss of the 'life continuum'. Understanding the life continuum is important to understand disaster responses and their role in community process.

The life continuum can be understood as maintained at each moment by the person understanding the past, anticipating and planning for the future, and making big and small decisions that link past and future together in the present. As illustrated in Figure 4B:1, the past is represented as a line extending into the present, while the future is a second line extending from the present into the future. The two lines are not directly joined, they twine around each other and are linked within the personality by a third line, shown in the centre of the diagram, representing conscious planning, evaluating, deciding and acting and the normal experience of taking responsibility for life as an active agent.

However, living life actively does not happen in a vacuum. If a person finds him or herself outside the structures of family and community relationships, it is harder to think, evaluate or plan. A sense of disorientation and confusion is a common consequence of being outside one's accustomed social environment. Normally however, personal and social support networks are a series of relationships, attitudes and experiences that can be called on as required. But this internal network is maintained by real relationships with other people.

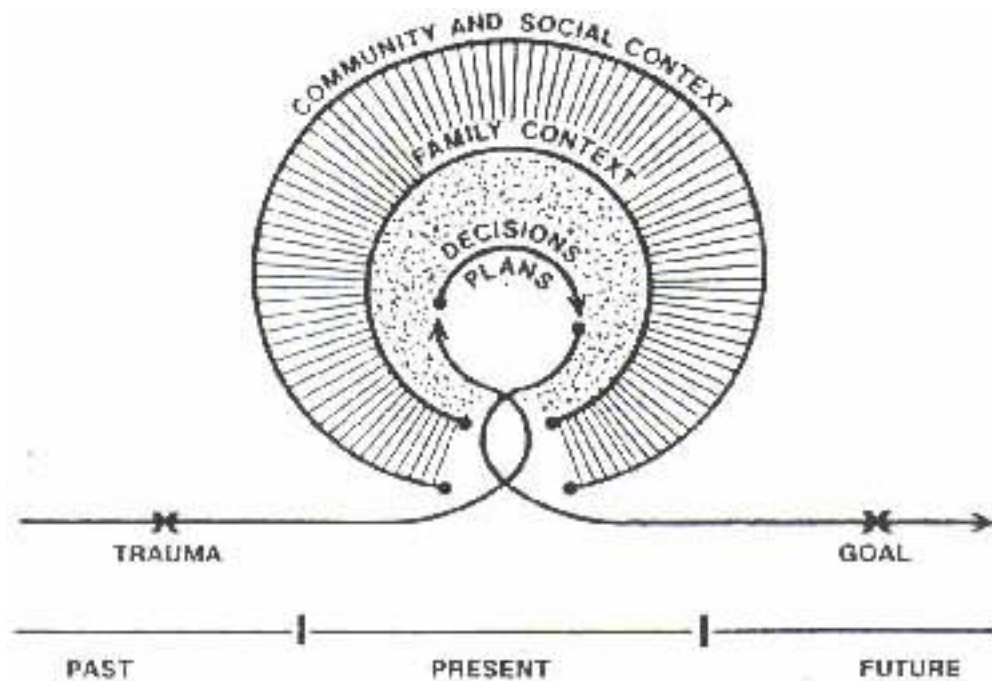


Figure 4B:1
The Life Continuum Integrated with the
Protective Shell of Family and Social Networks

The impact of enforced solitude and deprivation shows that normal people need to be part of an ongoing set of social and family relationships. The social and family context is shown in Figure 4B:1 as a sheath surrounding and protecting the sensitive activity of integrating past and future and being a responsible agent. The social network acts as a protective psychological shell, safeguarding a sensitive and essential process. Past traumas are marked on the line of the past, while short and longer term goals are shown on the line of the future.

When disaster strikes, it attacks the individual's experience and the social networks, disrupting their operation and abolishing the order and routine they provide. Because members of the networks are all simultaneously preoccupied with the same issues, they are effectively unavailable to the individual. Therefore, the effect of the disaster is shown impacting simultaneously on the continuity of life of the individual by disrupting planning and decision making, and on the sheaths that support the process. This is illustrated in Figure 4B:2.

Figure 4B:2 shows that instead of the lines of past and future being brought together within the protective framework of the family and community sheath, they come uncoupled. The affected individual feels unable to relate to the future or leave the past behind. This is shown by the line of the past turning back on itself. People become preoccupied or fixated on their past traumas when the disaster is before them. Sometimes they are unable to focus on the present. The line of the future also turns away into the future creating anxiety about short term goals and despair about the long term as the sense of disruption to life's plan sinks in. This is expressed as despondency and lack of motivation.

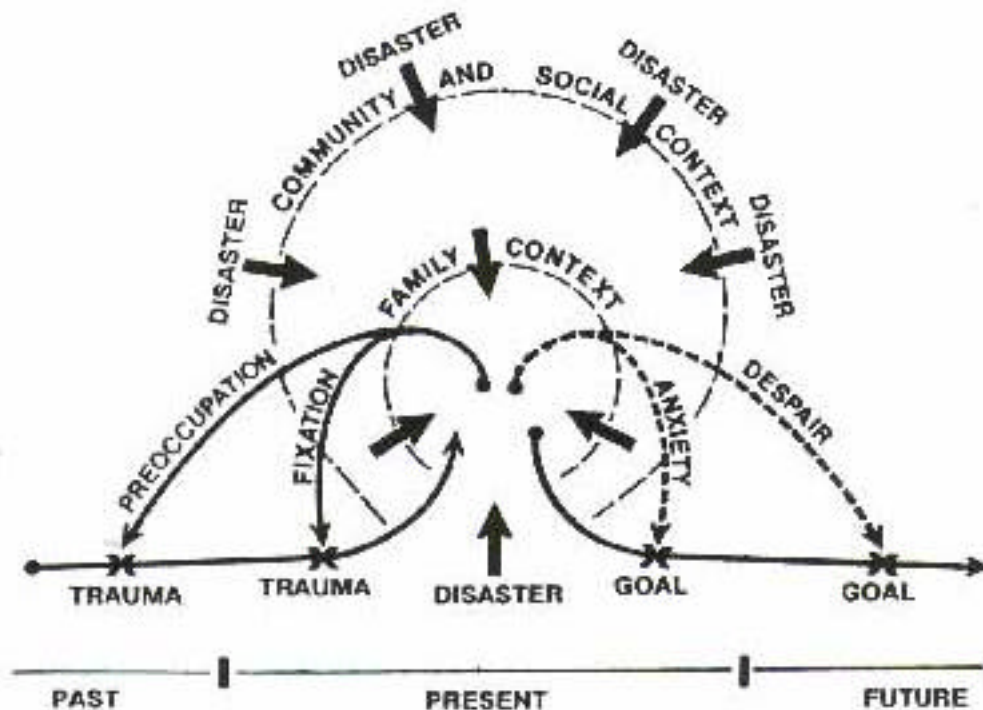


Figure 4B:2
Disruption of the Life Continuum by
Personal and Social Impact of Disaster

The destructive effects of the disaster impact on all levels at the same time. Involvement in a disaster is not the same as a lot of people undergoing a traumatic experience at the same time. The support systems essential for proper recovery are also disrupted, and further disruptions occur as the process unfolds. Many post-disaster problems can be put down to the problems of the recovery period rather than the disaster itself.

A recovery strategy that works to re-establish the sheath of social networks supporting the integrative process that links past and future takes account of this response to trauma and disaster.

Community and family relationships need to embrace the recovery issues and include reviewing the past in the light of the disaster, assisting people to come to terms with a new future, and giving ample opportunities to exercise planning, decision making and initiative in the recovery process.

Figure 4B:3 illustrates how the community's role in the individual's life expands to embrace more than before. It needs to provide for past and future in a way that can be taken for granted under normal circumstances.

The lines of past and future are shown curving back and retracing the path from past and future then returning to the present. The retracing is contained in the expanded sheath of community support. The person is ready once again to reintegrate in the present. This represents the recovery phase and the series is completed by a return to Figure 4B:1.

Coming to terms with trauma and disaster as outlined here is a normal process which everyone goes through to a greater or lesser degree. For some it may be comparatively painless, for others it may be slow and difficult. For some the community input may be limited because they have a well-developed internal network based on their own past experience. Others may need the involvement of others in their family and community in order to feel supported to work through the situation. However, the principles are the same whether someone retraces their past and re-evaluates their future goals in the privacy of their own mind or whether they do it with neighbours, in community forums, or in counselling.

Some people deal with problems by pushing them aside or bottling them up. Experience shows this is often not a successful strategy and sooner or later the issues need to be dealt with or they cause difficulties, although this may only happen after some subsequent event has further stressed the individual. Community interventions can do much to create understanding and opportunities for working through the trauma, encourage those less willing to do so, and provide specific supports. The more the community is assisted to maintain its integrity and avoid destructive splits and conflicts, the more it supports the recovery of its members. Therefore community recovery is at the same time the framework or sheath for personal recovery.

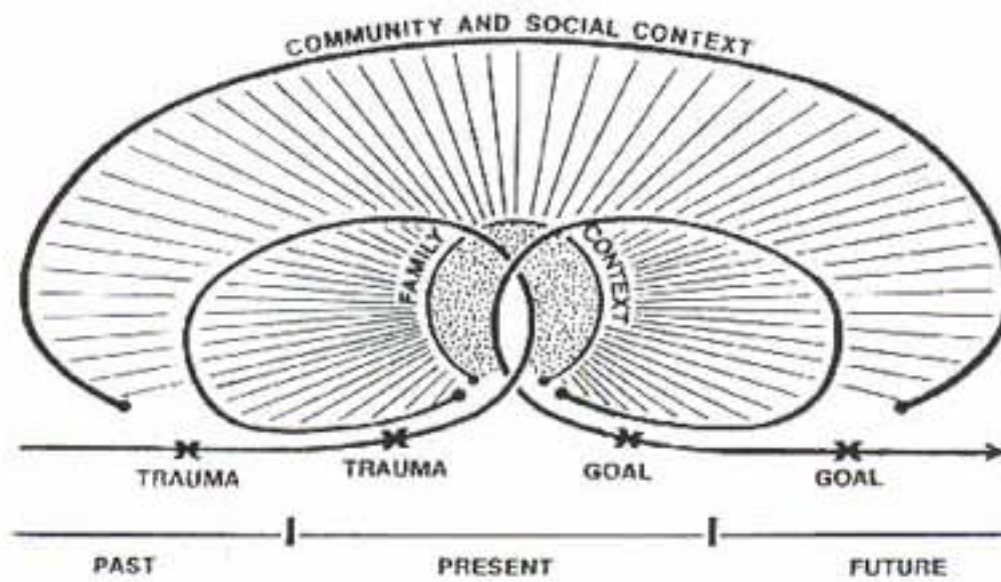


Figure 4B:3
Expansion of Community Recovery Activity
to Support Personal Recovery of the Life Continuum

**AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANUAL
DISASTER RECOVERY**

SECTION THREE

DISASTER RECOVERY MANAGEMENT

SECTION THREE - DISASTER RECOVERY MANAGEMENT

CHAPTER FIVE

PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

- 5.01** This section of the manual outlines the key elements involved in recovery planning. In the following overview, recovery planning, the need for it and inherent benefits are outlined in general terms. The section is then divided into two specific areas; the objectives/principles which underpin successful recovery planning and the interface between the various agencies involved in recovery management. Finally, a short checklist at the end of the section provides a reminder of the key elements which should be considered in the recovery planning process at any level and in any location.

OVERVIEW

- 5.02** Recovery plans will generally set out to develop and formalise arrangements for the effective management of the recovery process. This may include details of inter-agency coordination and specify responsibilities for the overall management of the recovery process, as well as identifying resources and defining responsibility for the range of specific services to be provided.

Recovery planning is required at all levels (ie. State/Territory, regional/district, local). This allows for the management of recovery to be undertaken and resourced at the most appropriate level, depending on the scale of the event and provides for support from the next higher level to be properly coordinated where necessary.

5.03 ALL AGENCIES

All agencies which have a role to play in the recovery process must be involved in the planning process. Through this involvement working relationships and networks are established and developed and representatives of the various agencies gain an understanding of the range of tasks which make up the recovery process.

In addition to contributing to the development of overall recovery plans, individual recovery agencies require their own plans to manage those recovery services which they provide or administer. These plans should take account of the overall recovery plan and the programs, goals and methods of all other relevant agencies.

5.04 REGULAR REVIEW

It is critical that recovery management arrangements be reviewed on a regular basis, particularly after the occurrence of major events. This will ensure the currency of the arrangements as well as enhancing inter-agency arrangements.

To ensure an effective interface between response and recovery, response agencies should have some involvement in the recovery planning process and recovery agencies should be familiar with response plans.

A recovery plan should also undertake an educative function, raising awareness about the importance of the recovery process and providing some insights into how an effective recovery process is managed.

5.05 ALL HAZARDS APPROACH

Recovery plans must be flexible enough to cater for a wide range of disasters. Consequently they should follow the 'all hazards' approach to disaster management.

OBJECTIVES

- 5.06** The broad goal of any recovery plan should be to facilitate the recovery of affected individuals, communities and infrastructure as quickly and practicably as possible. This is best achieved through the activation of management arrangements which ensure that the recovery process, following an event, proceeds as effectively and efficiently as possible.

5.07 SPECIFICS

Specific objectives to be embodied in recovery plans should include:

- a. the activation of mechanisms which ensure community participation in the recovery process;
- b. the identification of responsibilities and tasks of key agencies;
- c. the identification of appropriate recovery measures;
- d. the setting out of appropriate resourcing arrangements; and
- e. the outlining of recovery management structures and management processes.

PLANNING INTERFACE

5.08 It is important that plans for each of the functional areas of emergency management take account of each other and that there is appropriate liaison. The most effective means of achieving this is at the committee level with representatives of the various planning committees attending meetings of the other committees.

5.09 AGENCY PLANS AND SERVICES

In addition to local, regional/district and State/Territory plans, many agencies also have their own disaster plans and manuals. It is in these plans that the detail of the specific services provided by each of the agencies may be found.

PLANNING CHECKLIST

5.10 Recovery plans should:

- a. set out to develop and formalise arrangements for the effective management of the recovery process;
- b. facilitate the recovery of affected individuals, communities and infrastructure as quickly and practicably as possible;
- c. describe the organisational networks and structures appropriate to recovery from a range of different types and scale of events;
- d. involve all agencies with a role to play in the recovery process, including response agencies;
- e. only be detailed for specific functions, such as contact and resource listings;
- f. be developed by all agencies responsible for providing specific recovery services;
- g. be based on normal management strategies (agency recovery roles should preferably require only minor deviations from their normal functions); h. be reviewed on a regular basis;
- i. cater for a wide range and scale of disasters;
- j. ensure community participation in the recovery process;
- k. identify responsibilities and tasks of key agencies;
- l. set out appropriate resourcing arrangements;
- m. outline recovery management structures and management processes; and
- n. be as simple as possible.

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SECTION THREE - DISASTER RECOVERY MANAGEMENT

CHAPTER SIX

OPERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

6.01 This Chapter addresses the key elements of the operational aspect of recovery management. The overview provides a background and general insights into the operational process. A brief outline of the roles and responsibilities of a recovery manager is followed by consideration of a number of specific issues which have been noted by a range of recovery managers to be critical in the overall success of any recovery operation.

OVERVIEW

6.02 The management of the recovery process must be flexible. However, there are some management approaches and practices which are common to most disasters. Typically, management of the recovery process will involve two separate, but interdependent, streams: firstly, management by each agency of its own programs and services; and secondly, coordination between agencies to ensure that services are integrated.

6.03 The following characteristics should be considered when adapting recovery management arrangements to the unique character of each disaster:

- a. Community links and networks are often stronger in rural areas than in urban areas.
- b. The level of public, media and political interest is likely to be higher for disasters close to, or in, urban areas.
- c. Certain types of disaster, especially rapid-onset, destructive events such as bushfires and explosions, can generate greater public and political interest than less dramatic events such as flooding.
- d. Communication and access difficulties will vary, depending on the location and type of disaster.
- e. Recovery measures appropriate in some circumstances may not be suitable for, or effective in, others.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RECOVERY MANAGER

6.04 The recovery manager manages the recovery process on behalf of the nominated lead recovery agency. It is essential that this person be given the necessary authority to effectively carry out this role. Detailed below is material summarising discussions during a number of Disaster Recovery Management Courses held at the Australian Emergency Management Institute. Six distinct categories were identified in regard to the role of the disaster recovery manager. These include:

- a. recovery issues;
- b. manager's role;
- c. management tasks;
- d. management skills;
- e. knowledge base; and
- f. personal qualities.

6.05 RECOVERY ISSUES

The basic issues confronting the disaster recovery manager will include the following:

- a. What is the purpose of the recovery process?
- b. What services are required?
- c. How should those services be provided?
- d. Who is best equipped to provide the necessary services?
- e. How and when should recovery services be withdrawn?

6.06 MANAGER'S ROLE

- a. Ensure that appropriate strategies are put in place.
- b. Facilitate the acquisition and appropriate application of material, staff and financial resources necessary to ensure an effective response.
- c. Contribute to the resolution of community and political problems which emerge during the recovery process.
- d. Ensure the maximum community involvement in the recovery process.
- e. Ensure that both immediate and long-term individual and community needs are met in the recovery process.
- f. During non-disaster periods increase disaster recovery awareness and promote as much planning as is feasible.

6.07 MANAGEMENT TASKS

- a. Organise and manage the resources, staff and systems necessary for the immediate and longer-term recovery.
- b. Advocate on behalf of the affected community with government departments, voluntary agencies, local government, the wider community, businesses and other organisations involved in the recovery process.
- c. Liaise, consult and, where necessary, coordinate or direct voluntary agencies, community groups, local government and government departments in order to achieve the most effective and appropriate recovery.
- d. Provide information to the government, bureaucracy, community and media.
- e. Mediate where conflicts occur during the relief and recovery process.
- f. Develop a close and positive working relationship with the key individuals and groups in the affected community.
- g. Be partially distanced from the immediacy of the event and consider the overall recovery process in establishing priorities and anticipating future requirements.

6.08 MANAGEMENT SKILLS

A disaster recovery manager requires a high level of skill in:

- a. planning;
- b. problem solving;
- c. time management;
- d. public, group and individual communication;
- e. decision making;
- f. monitoring;
- g. evaluation;
- h. negotiation/bargaining;
- i. consultation;
- j. personnel management; and
- k. information management.

6.09 KNOWLEDGE BASE

The disaster recovery manager will have to understand and fully appreciate the importance of:

- a. the local disaster management arrangements;
- b. involving the affected community in all aspects of the recovery process;
- c. getting reliable information out to affected persons, politicians and government departments as a matter of priority and maintaining an information flow once established;
- d. meeting the physical as well as the personal support needs of affected individuals and communities;
- e. debriefing and supporting recovery workers;
- f. the limits of their decision making powers and any other constraints under which they may be operating;
- g. who the decision makers are within other organisations; and
- h. having recovery plans and systems in place before a disaster.

6.10 PERSONAL QUALITIES

The personal qualities of a disaster recovery manager are critical to their capacity to facilitate an effective recovery process. Paramount among the desirable qualities are:

- a. a firm but participatory management style;
- b. an ability to work in a confused and rapidly-changing environment and still deal with complex problems;
- c. a high degree of energy and resilience to stress;
- d. the capacity to engender confidence among staff and the disaster-affected community;
- e. a quick and agile mind which can determine the most effective use of frequently-limited resources;
- f. a strong belief in the rights and integrity of individuals;
- g. a sensitive and honest approach to people and work demands;
- h. political insight and intuitiveness; and
- i. an entrepreneurial approach to work demands and problem solving (ie the person should be self-activating, flexible and result-oriented).

While it is unlikely that any one manager will have all the skills and abilities described above, it is worth noting the observation of a number of recovery managers in recent disasters that, in reality, recovery management is no different from any other form of public sector management, it's just that decisions are made within a shortened time frame.

KEY OBJECTIVE AND MANAGEMENT TASKS

- 6.11** The key objective for recovery operations is to provide necessary recovery measures and programs to affected individuals, families and communities at appropriate times, so that recovery takes place as quickly and effectively as possible.

An early response is essential to successful recovery management. Close liaison with the relevant combating agencies and the affected local government is essential. Effective and regular liaison between the range of disaster management agencies at the planning stage will increase the likelihood of early notification at the time of a disaster. The aim should be for the recovery manager to be included in initial briefings. In some instances self-activation may be appropriate. However, advice of such action needs to be conveyed to the appropriate disaster management agencies.

- 6.12** There are a number of key management tasks which may need to be undertaken in meeting the key objective. These are as follows:

- a. Impact Assessment.
- b. Resource Management.
- c. Information Management.
- d. Withdrawal of Services.

Where possible these activities should be undertaken in accordance with local arrangements and plans. Other issues to be addressed from a recovery management perspective include the allocation of tasks, setting of priorities and ongoing monitoring of the recovery process. These actions may be undertaken in the context of a rapidly-changing event which requires that management strategies be flexible and adaptable while still meeting the usual accountability requirements.

6.13 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

One of the critical factors in the management of an effective recovery program following a disaster is to gain early, accurate information about the impact of the event upon individuals, the community and physical infrastructure.

To determine service, staffing, resource and general recovery requirements it is necessary to obtain an early but full assessment of the disaster and the needs of the community, eg the number, location and circumstances, including ethnicity, of affected people, identify the number of dwellings destroyed or made uninhabitable, establish the extent to which essential services have been disrupted, etc. To do this it is important that key recovery agencies liaise as early as possible with police, State/Territory emergency services, local government and any other relevant combating and coordinating authorities. Experience has shown that the most reliable figures on losses are usually available through local government.

Following the disaster, a 'visitation' or 'outreach' program can also provide valuable information. To avoid over-servicing it may be useful for such programs to be run on a team basis, bringing together representatives from agencies with expertise in a range of areas, such as personal counselling and financial assistance. In this way details can be gathered regarding losses and needs, while at the same time providing support and services to affected persons. Sharing of information between agencies is another means of facilitating this process.

6.14 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

State/Territory, regional/district and local recovery plans should provide details of agency responsibilities in regard to the provision of resources for recovery management purposes. However, there are also a number of areas which may require specific attention from the recovery manager's point of view. These include staffing and the use of volunteers:

a. Staffing

As a consequence of a disaster additional staff may be required to enable agencies to meet their responsibilities. In determining additional staffing requirements the demands of recovery operations as well as the ongoing operational needs of the organisation should be considered. Staffing needs should be assessed at the earliest possible time so that adequate resources can be obtained and made available.

The most common mistake in determining staffing requirements is to underestimate the duration of recovery operations. As discussed in the introduction to this manual the recovery process following a disaster may be lengthy and some services may be required for a period of months or even years after the event has taken place.

Overloading of staff will occur if adequate arrangements have not been made to perform their normal duties. This will exert enormous pressure on recovery workers to finish their tasks prematurely and return to day-to-day agency tasks.

Decisions will need to be made as to whether additional staff should be used in recovery operations, leaving normal staff to carry out their existing duties, or whether the additional staff should be used in normal agency duties to free up existing staff to carry out recovery operations. Experience has shown that tensions may occur within agencies as the high public and media profile of disasters may 'glamorise' recovery activities, leaving those staff undertaking ongoing agency tasks to feel somewhat left out. Similarly there may be problems as workers who are taken 'off-line' from their normal jobs to work on recovery activities may be perceived by their colleagues to be on some sort of holiday. Often this means that their normal work is left to mount up, awaiting their return at the end of the recovery process. The effects of this are twofold, impacting on both staff morale and agency output.

Recovery operations can be periods of high stress for workers, particularly in their early stages. It is therefore essential that managers be aware of the strains that may be placed upon themselves and their staff and that suitable arrangements are made. Managers should consider the capacity of their staff to work under pressure in a rapidly-changing environment, before appointing them to a disaster recovery role. Arrangements should also be made for adequate rostering and rest periods.

b. **Volunteers**

Volunteers are likely to play a significant part in any recovery operation, particularly after large-scale, highly-publicised disasters. There are likely to be two types of volunteer: those who are affiliated with a specific organisation such as service clubs, community agencies and other non-government organisations; and those members of the public who offer their services after the disaster has occurred.

Those volunteers who are affiliated with an organisation will be directed by that organisation and are likely to have specific skills to undertake previously assigned roles. Examples of this are the many volunteers with agencies such as the Red Cross and Salvation Army, involved in such activities as catering and registration, who are trained for their allotted task.

Those volunteers from the general public who offer assistance on an ad hoc basis immediately after a disaster has occurred can also be of great benefit to the recovery process, but require more careful management. Issues to be considered include individual skills, community and individual needs, supervision, identification, and provision of support in the form of accommodation, transport, catering, debriefing and insurance. The most effective method of managing volunteers is often through the appointment of a volunteer coordinator.

If well-managed, volunteer labour can be a great asset to the recovery process, undertaking activities from personal support and catering through to the clearing of properties and rebuilding activities. However, their efforts need to be well-coordinated to ensure that their time is used as productively as possible for the greatest benefit of the affected community.

Regular briefing and debriefing of both paid staff and volunteer workers is another important factor. This process should provide for both structured and informal briefings, depending upon the circumstances and the environment in which workers are operating.

6.15 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (see also Chapter Nine)

One of the key elements of disaster recovery is effective information management. The media profile given to most disasters, particularly those on a large scale, means that public and political interest in the recovery process will generally be high. Added to this is the need for adequate information to be provided to affected communities and individuals regarding the effects of the event and the availability of recovery services. While issues of information management are covered in more detail in Chapter Nine of this manual it is worth noting a few key points from a management perspective.

With one of the underlying principles of recovery management being the empowerment of individuals and communities to participate in the management of their own recovery, it is critical that regular and accurate information be provided regarding such things as the cause and effects of the disaster, the type and availability of recovery services, and any other relevant information. This information should be made available in as many languages as necessary to meet the needs of people affected by the event from non-English speaking backgrounds. This will enhance the capacity of the community to participate in the management of their own recovery.

There are a range of mechanisms for providing information to the public. These may include local newsletters, press releases, use of the various electronic media and public meetings or forums.

Given the media, political and public profile of disasters there will also be a need for the provision of up-to-date, accurate information regarding recovery services and advice on the state of the affected community to a range of sources. This need will be particularly prevalent in the early stages of the recovery process, as this is the time at which recovery managers will be under most pressure. Consequently, it is important that effective information management systems be established as soon as possible following a disaster. Ideally, systems and protocols for the dissemination of information should have been developed as part of the recovery planning process and should only require minor adjustments to facilitate the flow of information after a disaster has occurred:

a. **Media**

During disasters the press, radio and television have a legitimate interest in obtaining prompt and accurate information. If media access to accurate information is unduly restricted, rumour and speculation may be substituted for fact. Consequently, there is nothing to be gained by attempting to restrict media access. The media is also a vital link between recovery agencies and the public and provides an effective means of disseminating information. Always cooperate as best you can with the media during an emergency or disaster, by transmitting facts clearly and promptly and offering them facilities to do their job. It is recommended that regular and scheduled media briefings be negotiated to suit the publishing and broadcasting timetables of the media.

Due to the fact that the recovery process will generally involve a range of different organisations there is a need for coordination of information to the media to avoid confusion or conflict. The most effective means of dealing with this issue is through the nomination of a media liaison officer to represent the overall recovery process.

b. **Visits to the Affected Area**

In addition to the level of media interest in disasters there is also likely to be a number of visits to the affected area and a high level of interest in the recovery process from politicians and executive management from a range of agencies. There are a number of issues which need to be considered by the recovery manager involved with, or responsible for hosting, such visits:

- (1) Effective briefings should be provided. These should include accurate and up-to-date information about estimated losses, assistance programs and financial assistance packages. This will ensure that any information relayed to the affected community or the media is accurate, reducing the risk of falsely raising expectations regarding such things as assistance measures, and reducing the risk of embarrassment. Some pre-visit briefing is also desirable to ensure that visitors are well-informed of the necessary information before their arrival.
- (2) Briefing of any visitors should also include details about the current state of the community, including the various emotions they may be experiencing as a result of the disaster, as well as identification of any existing sensitivities.
- (3) Visitors should have a clear understanding of emergency management arrangements and protocols.

- (4) Visitors should also be clearly briefed on the potential impact of their visit and their subsequent role in the recovery process. In particular it should be emphasised that any information provided must be accurate, as the effects of inaccurate or ill-founded information on a disaster-affected community may reinforce the impact of the event.
- (5) In the case of a disaster affecting more than one geographic area, care should be taken to ensure that communities are treated equitably and visits are arranged accordingly.

6.16 WITHDRAWAL

One of the last significant tasks to be undertaken in any recovery management process is that of the withdrawal of services. While the emphasis of any recovery program should be on community involvement and self-management the cessation of formalised support services from outside agencies will nevertheless be a critical time in the affected community's recovery. Experience has shown that a gradual handover of responsibilities to local agencies and support services is most effective. It may also be timely for some sort of commemorative event to symbolise the end of the recovery program and the renewal of the community. In the past this has been achieved through such events as tree planting ceremonies, street theatre, church services and a range of other activities which involve the entire community and give a positive focus to the end of the recovery program.

OPERATIONAL CHECKLIST

6.17 Detailed below is a checklist of the key issues which will need to be addressed throughout the recovery process. The list is by no means exhaustive and depending upon the nature and location of the disaster and the affected community a range of other issues may also emerge:

- a. Liaise with relevant response agencies regarding location, size, type and potential impact of event.
- b. Contact and alert key staff.
- c. Determine likely human effects.
- d. Contact other relevant response and recovery agencies.
- e. Activate and brief relevant agency staff.
- f. Activate appropriate inter-agency liaison mechanisms.
- g. Locate liaison officer at emergency operations centre (if appropriate).

- h. Determine immediate short-term needs (ie. accommodation, financial assistance and personal support).
- i. Manage offers of assistance, including volunteers, material aid and donated money.
- j. Assess impact of the disaster through information/data from local government, geographic data and relevant response agencies.
- k. Meet with other recovery agencies to determine strategies.
- l. Report to organisational hierarchy on likely costs/impact of involvement in recovery activities.
- m. Organise briefing and debriefing process for staff.
- n. Activate outreach program to meet immediate needs and determine ongoing needs. Issues to be considered should include the need for specialist counselling, material aid, accommodation, financial assistance and social, recreational and domestic facilities.
- o. Establish 'One Stop Shop' recovery centre to provide affected community with access to all recovery services.
- p. Manage restoration of essential infrastructure/utilities.
- q. Manage public appeal process.
- r. Brief media on recovery program.
- s. Assess reports gathered through outreach program to assess community needs.
- t. Identify special needs groups or individuals.
- u. Meet with other recovery agencies to consider full assessment of impact of the disaster, determining the best means of involving the affected community and determine action required from specific agencies.
- v. Activate community recovery committees, ensuring active participation of members of the affected community.
- w. Develop community information process, including consideration of public meetings and newsletters.
- x. Monitor staffing arrangements.
- y. Review resources and services on an ongoing basis.

- z. Determine longer-term recovery measures.
- aa. Provide newsletters to the affected community and information to the media as required.
- ab. Provide interpreters, multilingual information and bilingual staff, as necessary.
- ac. Continue to monitor agency activities and reduce/withdraw services when appropriate.
- ad. Debrief recovery agencies.
- ae. Recognise agency/staff input.

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SECTION THREE - DISASTER RECOVERY MANAGEMENT

CHAPTER SEVEN

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

7.01 Disaster recovery should be managed and planned for in a structured manner. The broad needs created by the impact of a disaster on a community will only be met through a range of services, provided by a range of both government and non-government organisations.

At the local level the focus of recovery planning and management is on community input. Within their emergency planning responsibilities local arrangements must incorporate recovery planning and, from an operational point of view, a range of services, including both infrastructure and human services, is provided. These arrangements should provide for the coordination of the activities of local agencies.

7.02 STATE/TERRITORY ARRANGEMENTS

Individual States and Territories have specific regional/district level arrangements which provide for recovery planning and operations.

At regional or district level, a committee should have responsibility for recovery planning. The committee itself or a designated agency will be responsible for the coordination of recovery management under the direction of the recovery manager. Within this context specific services will be provided by a range of agencies in a coordinated approach to the recovery process.

Overseeing the process of recovery management at State/Territory level there is a disaster management organisation. This organisation is generally responsible for policy issues covering all aspects of disaster management including recovery.

7.03 STATE/TERRITORY DISASTER RECOVERY COORDINATORS

The program operated by each State and Territory community services department to assist the recovery of disaster-affected communities is managed by officers generally referred to as 'Disaster Recovery Coordinators'.

Collectively these officers form the Disaster Recovery Sub-Committee of the Standing Committee of Community Services and Income Security Administrators. The objectives of the Sub-Committee, which meets annually, are:

'To review disaster recovery policies, practices and procedures. To examine other related matters arising from disaster recovery experiences and report to the Standing Committee of Community Services and Income Security Administrators and Community Services Ministers' Conference.'

The Disaster Recovery Coordinators are responsible for preparedness to provide recovery services to disaster-affected communities in their State or Territory. This is addressed through the development of policy and procedures as well as support and training for disaster recovery workers from government departments and community agencies. During operations the Disaster Recovery Coordinators provide direction and logistical support to the disaster recovery manager, as well as keeping executive management and the Minister briefed.

The Disaster Recovery Coordinators have membership of the State/Territory - level disaster management committee through which they contribute to disaster management policy and procedures and coordinate with the other disaster management agencies during operations.

7.04 NATIONAL DISASTER RECOVERY TRAINING

The Standing Committee of Community Services and Income Security Administrators, through its member States and Territories, funds a position entitled 'National Training Consultant, Disaster Recovery'. This position provides disaster recovery training at the Australian Emergency Management Institute, Emergency Management Australia as well as a training and consultancy service to each of the States and Territories.

7.05 What is described in this chapter are structures used in managing recovery, not the functions or services performed. For detailed information regarding disaster management arrangements in each of the States and Territories throughout Australia refer to the booklet entitled 'Australian Counter-Disaster Handbook - Volume 2' (Australian Emergency Management Arrangements), published by Emergency Management Australia.

RECOVERY COMMITTEES

7.06 LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government has responsibilities to provide and maintain physical services relevant to disaster recovery. Most local government authorities also provide a range of human and community services to individuals and the community. Recovery planning is undertaken by committees to address the needs of their community. Disasters may also affect more than one local government area or, in some cases, relate to geographically diverse populations.

a. Composition

Recovery committees should include representatives of State, Commonwealth and local government, together with representatives of non-government organisations and community groups. Both infrastructure and human service agencies should be represented.

b. Recovery Committee Roles

The roles of local recovery committees are to:

- (1) prepare and maintain a recovery plan;
- (2) meet regularly to maintain liaison between agencies, enhance understanding of agency roles, update contact arrangements and ensure the currency of local arrangements;
- (3) review local plans;
- (4) conduct regular exercises and training programs;
- (5) establish arrangements for the conduct of post-disaster impact assessment, and for the collation, evaluation and use of the information gathered;
- (6) manage the provision of recovery services at the local/district level;
- (7) supplement local government resources which may be exhausted by an emergency, eg building inspectors, environmental health officers, human services staff, etc, to ensure that an adequate recovery program is provided;
- (8) formalise links with regional/district plans and recovery agencies;

- (9) consider all aspects of a local community's recovery, including both the restoration of physical infrastructure and the provision of human services;
- (10) activate and co-ordinate service delivery;
- (11) identify responsibility for the establishment and maintenance of contact and resource listings.

c. **Operations**

A local committee would oversee:

- (1) management of the recovery process at the local level, ensuring that community needs are met, either through local resources or by the acquisition of appropriate resources from the regional/district level; and
- (2) provision by member agencies of a range of specific recovery services, ranging from reconstruction and physical infrastructure issues to personal support services.

In addition a local committee would also report on the progress and ongoing needs of the community to the next highest level of management.

d. **Local Advisory Committees**

Local advisory committees should be established to enable members of the local community, including persons affected by the event and representatives from local organisations, to meet and to provide input and guidance to local/district committees on such issues as needs assessment and service delivery.

7.07 REGIONAL/DISTRICT

Regional/district committees are necessary because many of the services required in recovery management are administered and delivered on a regional or district basis.

a. **Composition**

The composition of regional or district level committees will be similar to that of local committees. There may be specific recovery-based committees or recovery aspects may be included as part of the overall emergency management structure.

b. **Recovery Committee Roles**

The roles of regional or district recovery committees are to:

- (1) prepare and regularly update recovery management arrangements, detailing inter-agency arrangements, resourcing arrangements and responsibilities;
- (2) monitor local arrangements;
- (3) ensure adequate levels of agency preparedness (including regular committee meetings);
- (4) provide regular exercises and training programs.

c. **Operations**

A regional/district committee would oversee:

- (1) management of the recovery process at the regional/district level, ensuring that community needs are met, either through regional/district resources or by the acquisition of appropriate resources from the State/Territory level;
- (2) provision by member agencies of a range of specific recovery services, ranging from reconstruction and physical infrastructure issues to personal support services; and
- (3) the interface with local management, as conducted through the local committee.

In addition it also reports on the progress and on-going needs of the community to the next higher level of management.

7.08 STATE/TERRITORY

a. **Composition**

Committees at State/Territory level comprise representatives from Commonwealth, State/Territory and local government agencies and non-government organisations.

b. **Recovery Committee Roles**

The roles of a State/Territory recovery committee are to:

- (1) develop policy on recovery management planning and operations;
- (2) oversee the implementation of recovery policy throughout the State/Territory;
- (3) provide advice to government;
- (4) prepare State/Territory plans; and
- (5) monitor agency preparedness.

c. **Operations**

A State/Territory committee would oversee:

- (1) management of the recovery process at the State/Territory level, ensuring that community needs are met, either through State/Territory resources or by the acquisition of appropriate resources from the Commonwealth; and
- (2) provision by member agencies of a range of specific recovery services, ranging from reconstruction and physical infrastructure issues to personal support services.

In addition it also reports on the progress and ongoing needs of the community to the next higher level of management.

7.09 COMMONWEALTH

At the Commonwealth level there are two key committees involved in disaster management. Details of these committees are outlined below.

a. **Commonwealth Counter-Disaster Task Force**

The peak Commonwealth body with emergency management responsibilities is the Commonwealth Counter Disaster Task Force (CCDTF). The Task Force, chaired by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, is an inter-departmental committee responsible to the Minister for Defence for providing policy guidance on emergency response matters and for coordination of Commonwealth emergency recovery activities. The main focus of the CCDTF is coordinating Commonwealth action for response or recovery in relation to an emergency.

b. **National Emergency Management Committee**

The National Emergency Management Committee is Australia's peak consultative emergency management forum. It is chaired by the Director General of Emergency Management Australia (EMA) and comprises chairpersons and executive officers of State/Territory emergency management committees. The Committee meets annually to provide advice and direction on the coordination and advancement of Commonwealth and State/Territory interests in emergency management issues. As required, it establishes working parties to examine particular issues.

REFERENCES

- (1996) **Australian Emergency Management Arrangements (Australian Counter-Disaster Handbook - Volume 2),**
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ACT
- (1992) **Australian Emergency Manual - Community Emergency Planning Guide (2nd. edition),**
Emergency Management Australia, Canberra
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**AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANUAL
DISASTER RECOVERY**

SECTION FOUR

DISASTER RECOVERY SERVICES

SECTION FOUR - DISASTER RECOVERY SERVICES

CHAPTER EIGHT

RECOVERY SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

8.01 This section provides details of some of the key services which may be required as a part of the recovery process. These services have been broken into three main categories: community; physical; and economic recovery.

While most of these services (ie personal support or environmental health) are undertaken on a day-to-day basis by professionals involved in these specific fields, it is the aim of this section to provide a recovery management context in which the services may be required. To this end the section begins with a number of guidelines for the delivery of disaster recovery services, applicable to the delivery of the full range of services described. Following these are a discussion of the key roles, characteristics and issues relating to recovery personnel.

GUIDELINES FOR DELIVERY OF DISASTER RECOVERY SERVICES

8.02 The following guidelines should be followed in the delivery of all disaster recovery services:

- a. Maximise the flow of information throughout the affected community.
- b. Make provision for programs that enable those affected by disaster to actively participate in their own, and their community's recovery.
- c. Maximise the use of local resources, groups and individuals. Local suppliers should be used wherever possible in the provision of material and physical resources.
- d. Ensure effective liaison between recovery teams, volunteer resources and existing community organisations.
- e. Encourage practices that allow for self-determination and maximise community involvement in restoration planning.
- f. Make use of the existing structures, resources and local formal and informal networks of care and support wherever possible.

- g. Ensure all recovery workers are given ongoing support, debriefing, relief and rest.
- h. Aim at keeping families together in any evacuation, temporary accommodation or resettlement processes.
- i. Plan withdrawal of external recovery resources whilst ensuring continuity of the recovery process.

RECOVERY WORKERS: ROLES/CHARACTERISTICS/ISSUES

8.03 KEY STRESSORS

The requirements of workers involved in the provision of disaster recovery services are closely related to the nature of the work likely to be encountered. Key stressors in disaster work include the following:

- a. its unpredictable, emergency character;
- b. the need to provide services in an uncertain and rapidly-changing environment;
- c. application of skills in an abnormal environment;
- d. high levels of both acute and ongoing stress;
- e. exposure to direct and vicarious trauma;
- f. highly-charged personal work environment and sometimes brittle inter-agency relationships;
- g. exposure to intense emotions; and
- h. intense scrutiny of work performance (often by politicians and the media).

8.04 PREFERRED CHARACTERISTICS

In addition to the skills required to provide specific services under normal circumstances, workers involved in service provision following a disaster need to be capable of dealing with these stressors. In choosing appropriate staff for recovery work it may be useful to consider the following characteristics:

- a. Staff should have consolidated their core professional skills. A disaster is not a training ground for inexperienced workers.
- b. Staff should be secure in their professional identity. The uncertainty of the disaster situation and its consequent stresses may otherwise seriously undermine their confidence and capacity to deliver the relevant service.

- c. Staff should be secure in their role in their agency or organisation. The nature of disaster recovery work necessitates time spent out in the field, away from the normal working environment. Workers cannot function effectively or provide the time required if they are anxious about their position or feel that their agency is ambivalent towards their being away. Work roles should permit a degree of flexibility.
- d. Staff need to adopt flexible working styles. Improvised strategies may be required for the delivery of services.
- e. Preparedness to travel and work out of hours in less than optimal conditions. This is also likely to be required.

SECTION FOUR - DISASTER RECOVERY SERVICES

CHAPTER NINE

COMMUNITY RECOVERY

RECOVERY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

9.01 INTRODUCTION

Information management is a key function of the disaster recovery manager. Much of the success of the recovery process is dependent upon how well information is managed.

Information management is not only concerned with disseminating information, but also with gathering information from authorities and disaster management agencies as well as from the affected community. Provision of information in disaster recovery not only provides the affected community with information about the availability of recovery services and plans, but also is the basis for important social processes such as bonding between individuals, groups and communities. It engenders a sense of belonging and caring and provides a sense of control and predictability of events. The effective management of information following a disaster can be used to promote and hasten community recovery.

9.02 RECOVERY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT - DEFINITION

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

9.03 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

The principles of effective recovery information management rely heavily on the premise that an affected community has a right to all information relevant to its recovery. The capacity of the community to participate in its own recovery is directly dependent upon communication of information. In this regard it is essential that information be provided in an appropriate range of languages to ensure accessibility by people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

- a. Information is the right of an affected community.

- b. Information enhances the capacity of an affected community to manage its own recovery.
- c. Information should be timely, factual and disseminated through a range of communication channels. In the case of disasters affecting people from non-English speaking backgrounds, this includes provision of information through a range of ethnic media.
- d. Information should be repeated frequently in the early stages following a disaster.
- e. Information needs change during the course of the recovery.
- f. Information should aid recovery as well as inform.
- g. Information credibility is enhanced through delivery by a known, credible person or organisation.
- h. Information is the basis for effective decision making.
- i. Information management involves gathering, processing and disseminating information.
- j. Information is needed by disaster workers, managers and authorities, as well as by the affected community.

9.04 COMMUNICATION

- a. Management - The management task is to identify what needs to be communicated, to whom and when, and to develop information gathering, processing and dissemination channels. The information which needs to be communicated in the recovery process is dependent upon the characteristics of the disaster in terms of type, location, severity and effects on the community. To be specific about all possible items of information to be communicated is impractical and much of the information communicated is reactive to expressed needs. However, a list of representative information needs is included under the heading 'Practical Issues' at the end of this chapter.
- b. Categories - It is, however, possible to detail the broad categories of information which need to be communicated in the recovery process, namely:
 - (1) what has happened in the community;
 - (2) what recovery is likely to involve;

- (3) what plans are in place for the well-being of the community;
- (4) what services and resources are available for recovery of the community; and
- (5) information which will assist the community to effect recovery.

9.05 INFORMATION NEEDS

In considering information gathering, processing and dissemination channels it is necessary to take account of who needs information and whose role it is to provide information. It is relatively easy to identify two broad groups who need information: the affected community; and those working towards recovery of the community. The individuals, groups and organisations included in those groups are innumerable; however, special mention needs to be made of the information needs of elected representatives and the media.

The means of communicating information to the affected community, recovery workers, elected representatives and the media differ vastly. It also should be kept clearly in mind that all four groups are disseminators of information as well as receivers. A listing of individuals, groups and organisations within the affected community whose information needs require consideration is included under the heading 'Practical Issues' at the end of this chapter.

9.06 THE COMMUNITY

The affected community following disaster comprises various individuals, groups and organisations with differing needs. There are those directly affected by the disaster in terms of injury, death, loss of possessions and accommodation, those evacuated, those emotionally affected, or those financially affected through loss of employment or livelihood. There will be groups with other special needs such as physical or intellectual disability, language, age or lack of personal or family support. Groups which may be directly affected by the disaster may comprise particular suburbs or areas, particular communities such as caravan parks or retirement villages, and employees of a particular business closed by the disaster. Organisations which may be directly affected by disaster include community, service, sporting, recreation, ethnic, cultural and religious organisations.

There are also those individuals, groups and organisations which suffer the secondary effects of disaster whose information needs may be as great as those directly affected. In particular, there are friends, relatives and neighbours of those directly affected whether they be affected as individuals or as part of a group or organisation.

Information which is gathered and disseminated, which does not take account of these many factors, is likely to miss the needs, or be interpreted as uncaring or overlooking the needs of those affected. It is unlikely to be seen as helpful or credible.

- 9.07** Those working towards recovery of the community also have the need for current, accurate information about the environment in which they are working. These information needs exist across the range of recovery workers whether they be involved in clean-up, rehabilitation, medicine, environmental health, physical restoration or community recovery.

An important principle to be considered is that people will not tolerate being without the information they need. In the absence of accurate, trustworthy information they will actively seek it out through their own resources, and if they cannot obtain information will fill the gap with rumour and speculation. The informal community information systems should be recognised and catered for so that they do not confuse the situation and distort what is made available. These channels are a vital means of communicating with the community and often people who do not trust or have access to official channels will rely on them for what they need. Rumours and speculation should be actively managed and understood as an important indicator of the community's need for information.

9.08 ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Elected representatives can play an important part in assisting the recovery of the community. In fact it is their duty as community representatives to do so. However, their success is directly related to the quality of information and advice with which they are provided to enable good decision making and credible dissemination. The information needs of elected representatives cover all aspects of recovery. Well-informed elected representatives can assure the success of public meetings and media briefings. They can also engender confidence in the recovery processes and in the ability of the community to overcome the effects of the disaster.

9.09 MEDIA

News and spectacular events are the business of the media, so it must be expected that there will be considerable media interest in any disaster. It is important that the media is provided with full, accurate information in time to meet their deadlines. Reporters will meet those deadlines with whatever information they have at the time. If they have not been provided with full information, the gaps may give a distorted view of recovery efforts. The media outlets, television, radio and print are an excellent means of disseminating information to the affected community and the wider public. Consideration is given later in this chapter to the role of media liaison officers and the needs of the different types of media.

9.10 COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

There are five major communication channels to be considered. They are: gathering of information; processing, evaluating and integrating information; disseminating the information; feedback to the source so its relevance can be evaluated leading to further gathering. Finally, this takes place in an established and developed communication context. The information process is a circular one and can be represented in Figure 9:1. Each aspect of the process is then discussed below:

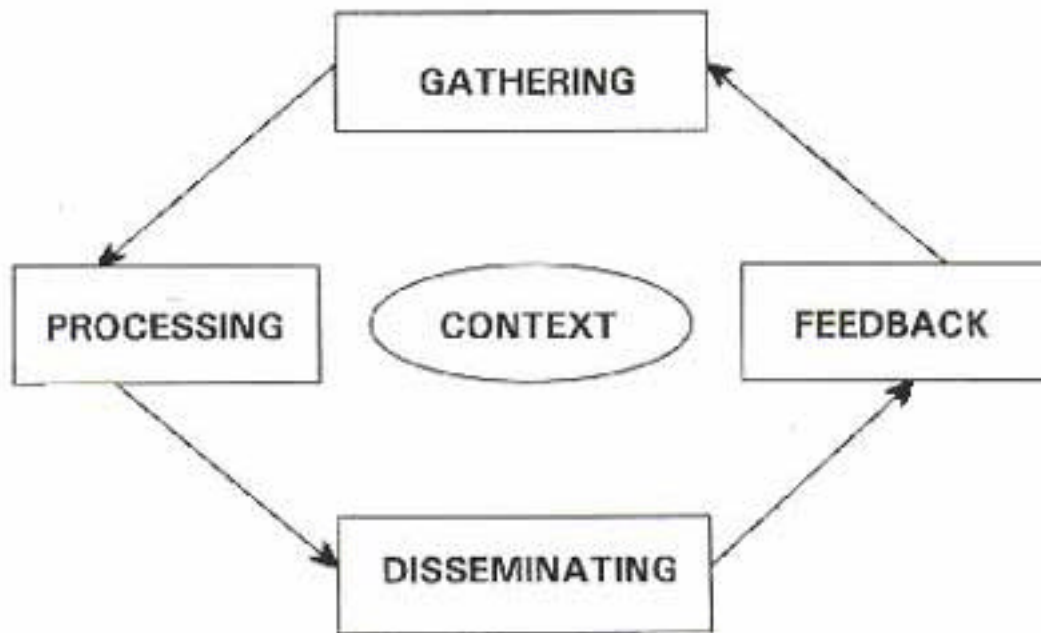


Figure 9:1
The Information Communication Process

- a. **Gathering** - The information required depends on the nature of the disaster and varies as time passes and the repercussions become manifest in the different areas of community life. It should be gathered from outside and within the community. Information which provides resources to people in terms of the availability of services and knowledge about how to cope with problems engendered by the disaster is probably gathered from outside the community. Information identifying community needs, day-to-day problems and the community's own services and resources has to be gathered from within it.

A network needs to be created which provides access to information from without and for official and informal information from within. Since the information needs arising from the disaster are different from those which may have existed before, the community's current information systems need to be augmented and changed to serve the new purposes. One early task of recovery management is to establish a communication system which provides for input to and feedback from the community. This may mean convening existing networks and developing new ones to regularly report on their observations of the community needs.

- b. **Processing** - Timeliness of information, the amount that can be absorbed, and the meaning it has within the existing recovery process need to be considered. Once information is obtained, it needs to be integrated with community culture, education level, ethnic or other value systems, language, social traditions and local customs, to ensure that the message delivered is the one intended to be received. Incoming information from the community needs to be analysed and interpreted for the requirements which may not be expressed clearly or accurately. This processing occurs within the recovery management system and the network of local providers for planning, delivering services and obtaining resources from outside the community. However, community members may also need to process and integrate the information they receive before it can be of any use to them. They need to discuss and evaluate it, ask questions and make their own individual response to it. This happens within family and informal social support networks, but these may not be able to fully perform these tasks and always risk distorting it with rumours and uninformed or emotive opinions. It is then important to establish opportunities for people to process important or disturbing information through other means. These may include community meetings, discussions with existing networks such as school, childcare, elderly citizens, rural and ethnic groups, talkback radio, newsletters, etc. People can then integrate their needs and understanding with what has been provided to them.
- c. **Dissemination** - Once information has been processed, it needs to be conveyed along relevant and trustworthy communication systems so that it is received by those who need it and can be accepted by them. To be accepted, it needs to be couched in the appropriate language and presented in an acceptable form. Consideration needs to be given about whether it should be written, verbal, mass media, pictorial, anecdotal, factual. Official recovery information should be seen to be given by trustworthy spokespersons. Risk information may need to be given by those with independent expertise in the area. The systems which can be used are varied and may need to validate and support each other to ensure dissemination is successful. Media releases, interviews, public announcements, newsletters, meetings, information and drop-in centres, notice boards, visits and telephone contacts all have a role to play.

- d. **Feedback** - Information is best conveyed as part of a two-way communication process. People receive and integrate information best if they can interact with it and provide feedback about it to the source. Feedback needs to be built in as part of any communication system and information release. A wide range of systems may be employed to do this. They include information flows from community to recovery manager, from recovery manager to community, and between the disaster-affected community and the wider community. Official or informal communication, such as news coverage of the progress of the recovery process, can all be harnessed in the service of the communication process.
- e. **Context** - What is communicated is always more than the intended message. The timing, format, style and content all convey additional messages about attitudes, recognition of needs and other factors. The lack of a message or information, or the failure to inform that there is no information at a particular time, can be a message that itself carries an unintended meaning. Communication always occurs within a pre-existing context and this provides the framework for the interpretation of any information which is conveyed, or lack of information.

9.11 RELEASE AUTHORITY AND CREDIBILITY

The question of authority to release information is paramount, as is the credibility of the release. For instance, a release on meteorological matters not verified and attributed to experts in that field will not be credible, and if not authorised may result in restriction of the disaster recovery manager's ability to disseminate information.

It is important that the disaster recovery manager has a clear understanding of whose role it is to release what information and the timing of that release. Often, media releases are the preserve of elected representatives and ministers, although, once released, information can be disseminated in newsletters and the like. Also, disaster managers, whether they be police or disaster management organisation officers, may have an embargo on the release of information until its publication or broadcast.

In any case, it is imperative for disaster recovery managers to be aware of information they are able to disseminate, the authority required and the expiration of any embargo.

9.12 MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

As has been stated, information must be timely, accurate, targeted and credible. Consideration must also be given to the fact that information carries implicit characteristics of emotional tone, attitude, values and priorities in each of the means of communication described below. Where people from non-English speaking backgrounds are affected by a disaster, the full range of communications should also be provided in necessary languages and styles to meet the needs of those affected. This may require use of translations, interpreters, ethnic media and representatives of ethnic communities.

- a. **Newsletters** - These are an excellent means of providing a wide range of information to disaster-affected communities. Topics often range from eligibility conditions for disaster relief assistance, to how to restore flood-damaged furniture or photographs, to messages of encouragement from civic and community leaders. Newsletters are often used in the early days following disaster when affected persons often do not have access to other information media.

They are seen as an informal, friendly and caring means of communication. Leaflets or brochures serve much the same purpose but are usually specific to the one issue. Another advantage of newsletters, leaflets and brochures is that they can be retained by disaster-affected persons for future reference.

- b. **Radio - Newscasts**, community service announcements and talk-back programs are particularly useful means of disseminating information in disaster-affected communities. Radio is very effective, as announcements can usually be broadcast at short notice and talk-back radio is inter-active. As well, radio broadcasts can be listened to while people are engaged in other activities.
- c. **Newspapers** - These provide a hard-copy, retainable information means as well as the potential for feature articles and paid advertising. By purchasing advertising space, the advertiser controls the text of the message.
- c. **Television** - This graphically brings the pictures of the disaster to the people. Television time is short, so short that precise statements are needed to convey messages. Stations also carry community service announcements and may feature disaster issues in current affairs programs.

- e. **Public Meetings** - These are an excellent means of communicating recovery information to and from a disaster-affected community. They can serve varying purposes at different stages of the recovery process. When well-planned and actively managed, they can be most useful in providing information, gathering concerns, dispelling rumour and correcting misconceptions. It is emphasised however, that there is a need for planning and clarity regarding the purpose of the meeting. Public meetings that are not well planned and with vague objectives, have a high potential to go awry and degenerate into a forum of scapegoating, blame-laying and complaint. The objectives of public meetings will be dependent upon the stage of recovery which the community has reached at the time the meeting is to be held. These objectives however, should always include raising or maintaining the profile of the recovery effort and assisting the community towards recovery. In planning public meetings, account must be taken of:
- (1) the patronage under which the meeting is to be held (eg local authority, emergency management organisation, disaster recovery agency);
 - (2) the objectives of the meeting, the agenda to be addressed, the process of conducting the meeting, the speakers (including local identities) and their subject matter;
 - (3) the process for expressions of concern or complaint by attendees;
 - (4) advertisement of the venue, time, purpose, patronage, speakers and complaint process;
 - (5) strategies to deal with and follow-up expressions of concern or complaint and further meetings/arrangements; and
 - (6) management issues such as:
 - (a) a strong, independent but fair and non-defensive chair;
 - (b) representatives from a range of disaster disciplines to correct misinformation;
 - (c) a pre-determined finishing time;
 - (d) a neutral venue;
 - (e) addressing the psycho-social issues as well as physical aspects of recovery;
 - (f) availability of personnel to address issues after the meeting; and

Regardless of the success or otherwise of the meeting, every effort should be made to conclude the meeting on a note of optimism for the early and successful recovery of the community.

9.13 INFORMATION CENTRES

Information centres provide an easily accessible one-stop centre for disaster-affected persons to gather information about the whole range of services established to assist recovery.

Information centres are often operated by local authorities, citizens advice bureaux or community agencies. The range of information available may cover the whole spectrum of services available to the community. It is, however, impossible for an information centre to be able to satisfy every possible inquiry and, therefore, it is important for centres to have the capacity to obtain information which is not normally immediately available. It is also essential for information centres to be accessible by telephone. Information centres are often established at or near evacuation centres, disaster relief centres or in council chambers or conveniently located one-stop shops.

The integrity of information centres is dependent upon the accuracy and usefulness of the information they provide. Centre management must therefore be vigilant in ensuring the currency of the information provided.

9.14 LOCAL PARTICIPATION

As with all recovery services, local participation in information management is essential. Local knowledge not only affects how information is provided but also adds credibility to the message. Local residents have a wealth of knowledge about the physical and cultural aspects of their community which cannot be gained by any other means.

9.15 PRACTICAL ISSUES

Efficient management of information following a disaster can contribute significantly to the success of the recovery process. However, management of information in the disaster setting can be a difficult task. Detailed below are a range of helpful hints gleaned through the experience of disaster recovery managers:

- a. Keep the information management principles to the forefront of the mind of all information workers.
- b. Information must be factual and accurate - verify material wherever possible.

- c. Delivery by a known or easily-identifiable person or organisation enhances credibility of information.
- d. Information disseminated must aim to enhance recovery.
- e. In the early stages following a disaster, information needs to be repeated to be comprehended and retained.
- f. Information needs to be disseminated through a number of different channels or media to reach the target population. This may include the use of a variety of different forms and media to meet the needs of people from non-English speaking backgrounds.
- g. To reduce the likelihood of confusion, it is essential that information from the range of organisations involved in the recovery process is coordinated.
- h. Information leaflets are best suited for significant, single-issue messages.
- i. Newsletters are best suited for multiple-issue information dissemination.
- j. Leaflets, newsletters and newspapers have the advantage of providing retainable hard copy.
- k. Newspapers provide the opportunity for information dissemination by way of news, features and paid advertisement.
- l. Paid advertisements provide the advertisers with full control over the text.
- m. Radio is often the quickest and most easily-accessible means of mass dissemination of information. Talk-back programs offer an excellent means of communicating and processing information.
- n. As well as news, television offers current affairs programs and community service announcements as means of disseminating information.
- o. Information centres gather as well as disseminate information.
- p. Information needs to be packaged to the needs of the receiver.
- q. Information changes constantly - include updated information for staff in briefings.
- r. Information centres must have the capacity to ascertain the information sought. Staff at information centres must also be aware of the availability of interpreter services and how to access them.
- s. Enquirers must be able to access information centres by telephone.

- t. Only disseminate information within the competency level of the staff communicating the information.
- u. Know the referral process for other services and what they offer to whom.

PERSONAL SUPPORT, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

9.16 INTRODUCTION

This part of the Chapter addresses the areas of personal support, community services and psychological services and their importance in meeting human needs following a disaster. The need for both personal support and psychological services for recovery workers is also discussed.

- a. Personal Support Services refer to 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. These services may be required in the short term as part of an evacuation process or longer term through home visits and at recovery centres.

All agencies in the recovery system contribute to these services which are coordinated by each State/Territory government community services department as detailed in emergency management arrangements.

- b. Community Recovery Services, in this context, refer to a broad range of tasks to be undertaken within an affected community to ensure that it is given the support to recover effectively from the disaster. Activities may include a range of practical assistance, organisation of public forums on current topics and development of a range of community activities. These activities will generally be undertaken by disaster recovery officers and/or community development officers appointed to work with the affected community.
- c. Psychological Services refers to the specific forms of assistance, ranging from initial support through to long-term clinical treatment provided by trained personnel within this framework.

9.17 PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Disaster-affected individuals and communities have particular needs which require the provision of specialised services. Individually, people will require information about both the cause and effects of the disaster, the availability and accessibility of services, and a capacity to regain control.

Service delivery may range from availability of personnel at evacuation centres, to coordinated visitation programs and organisation of community activities. It is critical that personal support services be provided for individuals and communities throughout the recovery process, and be developed and managed in consultation with the affected community.

a. **Service Provision**

Personal support services are most often provided on a one-to-one basis and comprise the full range of immediate needs following the provision of shelter, food and clothing. The range of services which may be provided at evacuation, welfare and recovery centres include:

- (1) information - what's happened, services available, what plans are in place;
- (2) practical advice;
- (3) comfort and reception;
- (4) referral to other agencies;
- (5) reassurance and security;
- (6) material aid;
- (7) time away for families;
- (8) child minding;
- (9) child/aged care;
- (10) transport;
- (11) advocacy, legal aid, insurance;
- (12) pet care;
- (13) clean-up;
- (14) meetings/forums;
- (15) interpreters and translated information;
- (16) organising funerals;
- (17) medication and medical care;
- (18) practical assistance; and

b. **Outreach/Visitation Programs**

An effective means of delivering many personal support services is outreach or visitation programs. These programs usually comprise home visits by representatives of the recovery program to offer support and information and concurrently make an assessment of people's current circumstances.

Home visits also provide an opportunity for people to talk about the disaster and be reassured that their experience is likely to have been shared by other members of the affected community. Although the majority of these visits will be undertaken within or close to the disaster-affected area it is essential that people affected by the disaster who have left the area also be included in this process. These may include evacuees who have lodged with relatives or injured people transferred to hospital.

Management staff must ensure that close liaison and coordination is maintained with all staff from all the various agencies undertaking home visits. Their contact is important for support, assessment of claims and specific needs or for other forms of material/financial assistance.

Intrusion into people's lives must be minimised or additional stresses will be caused. This is done by coordinated and planned visits that limit the number of times people have to tell their story.

Conjoint visits by small groups of community services department staff and mental health workers, teamed with staff from other agencies (ie agricultural, commercial association, insurance or other financial visitors) should be considered. Cross-referral and sharing of information creates efficiency provided it is with the concurrence of the people concerned and meets usual professional practice standards.

In managing an outreach or visitation program account should be taken of the following:

- (1) a clear understanding of the objectives of the program;
- (2) adequate briefing;
- (3) home visits should be undertaken by workers in teams of at least two;
- (4) interpreters should be provided where necessary;

- (5) visits should only be undertaken during daylight hours;

- (6) liaison should be undertaken with Police to determine residences that should not be visited;
- (7) workers should be debriefed at the end of each shift; and
- (8) training and supervision should be provided by workers experienced in disaster recovery activities.

Visits generally occur immediately after the disaster and may be repeated as a part of the ongoing recovery process as required. They may also be conducted towards the end of the recovery process as a means of advising the community that external services are being withdrawn and to provide information regarding the availability of ongoing services within the community.

c. **Personnel**

The personnel required to deliver personal support services are provided by a wide range of government and non-government agencies. They comprise both employed and trained volunteer personnel who have the capacity and personal skills to support and listen to people in distress. These personnel do not provide counselling or psychological services but should be able to recognise people with these needs and refer them to the appropriate service providers.

9.18 COMMUNITY SERVICES

Assistance and resources must be provided to create and support community infrastructures and to enable successful recovery. This process of support is often referred to as 'community re-development.' Depending on capacity to recover, local community initiatives may also need to be supported by government and the wider community.

Community re-development programs are generally funded and managed by the relevant State/Territory community service department. This is undertaken by disaster recovery officers and/or community development officers whose task it is to work directly with an affected community in identifying and addressing specific needs following a disaster. In addressing community needs certain tasks may be undertaken as part of the management of a community redevelopment process. These tasks are: identification of community needs; initiating and servicing key committees and working groups; assisting in accessing information and resources; and assessing and monitoring the overall recovery process.

There are a number of specific activities which may be part of a community re-development process. These are addressed under the following headings: Community Information, Public Forums, Community Activities and Cultural and Spiritual Factors.

a. **Community Information**

In addition to the individual information regarding services available after a disaster there is a need for a broader range of information regarding community activities. The dissemination of such information is an important part of the re-development of any community.

Further detailed advice is available in paragraphs 9.01 to 9.15 on Recovery Information Management. However, at least it is important to note that there are a range of different means for distributing information within a disaster-affected community. These include regular newsletters, convening of public forums and through recovery centres.

b. **Public Forums**

Various forms of public forum provide an important part of the recovery process. Public meetings may be held soon after a disaster has taken place, as a means of communicating information to an affected community regarding such things as the extent of the damage caused by the disaster and the services available through the range of recovery agencies.

Representation of the various recovery agencies at a public meeting also gives the affected community an opportunity to identify those agencies providing services and to clarify important issues. Further public meetings may be held throughout the recovery process as the need arises.

Public meetings also provide the opportunity for members of an affected community to meet together and for rumours, which are inevitable in the early part of the recovery process, to be dispelled. However, given the volatility which may be evident immediately following a disaster it is critical that public meetings be carefully timed and managed by a facilitator skilful in dealing with any problems which may arise.

Public forums may also be organised to provide practical advice and discussion on a range of issues, from personal needs to housing and rebuilding issues. The need for these forums is best identified by workers who have a direct understanding of emerging needs within a community. Community recovery committees also provide a disaster-affected community with a mechanism to contribute to the management of the recovery process. These committees provide an important forum, ensuring local participation in the management of the recovery process.

c. **Community Activities**

The amount of time spent on recovery activities such as re-building and repair to houses and properties may undermine the equally important recovery issues of family and community interaction. To overcome this problem the organisation of activities such as community, cultural and sporting events has proven very effective.

d. **Cultural and Spiritual Factors**

Cultural and spiritual symbols provide an essential dimension to the recovery process. They provide a framework for meaning and evaluation of the disaster experience. These need to be managed as an integral part of recovery activities. The community will present its own symbols and rituals, probably beginning in the immediate aftermath. If these are recognised, supported and coordinated as part of the recovery process which is owned by the community they will provide the focus for cultural and spiritual activities.

These activities will assist in the long-term integration of the disaster into the history of the community. Often these activities can be conducted on anniversaries or other significant community occasions.

9.19 PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Following a disaster, there are a variety of reactions which exceed people's capacity to adapt, and which result in various degrees of psychological difficulties. These problems are potentially serious and for some people may sometimes lead to very long-term destructive consequences. For a greater number, they result in the degradation of the quality of life and relationships. In this paragraph, the types of psychological difficulties which can be expected are discussed, together with the services which may assist in their minimisation.

a. **Common Psychological Responses**

While most people are likely to suffer only passing responses there are a number of reactions which require varying degrees of professional assistance. In each case some form of professional assistance is likely to be required, however this may vary in its intensity:

- (1) **Stress Responses** - The demands of reconstruction or adaptations to a grossly changed environment create continuing stress. Where an event has led to the destruction of assumptions about personal safety or trust, the need to constantly maintain watch for personal protection of self or loved ones creates a new set of demands which are not easily met for some time. These situations lead to a state of stress which reduces the capacity to cope with other ongoing demands. Stress can be acute and severe, temporarily overwhelming the person's capacity to manage their responsibilities, or leading to a state of emotional distress. Stress can also be cumulative or chronic and cause the gradual loss of enjoyment and distancing of close relationships. If persistent, it usually leads to health problems which may become serious if not treated.

- (2) Crises - A disaster itself is a crisis which is outside the normal experience and coping skills of people, and it may lead to a temporary loss of the ability to solve the on-going problems of daily life. During the recovery period, there are also many different situations which may present people with problems which they are unable to manage whether for emotional reasons or reasons of their own personal circumstances. Such a crisis usually means that the person is not able to adequately re-establish a normal state without some assistance.
- (3) Critical Incident Stress - 'Critical incident stress,' is a term used to describe the difficulties encountered by emergency workers exposed to highly stressful or unusual events. It is now often used to describe the various reactions which denote that a worker or other person has been presented with an internal experience which is likely to lead to symptoms of stress or may take some time to resolve.

In many cases of disaster, workers are exposed to extended periods of stressful work and large amounts of human suffering. This is likely to cause critical incident stress. Affected people may suffer from the exposure to the sufferings of others and to risks which they may be familiar with, but which nevertheless cause them considerable distress. In this case, they too can be seen as suffering from critical incident stress.

- (4) Traumatic Stress - Trauma occurs when a person suffers an extreme event which threatens their life or welfare, or those of their loved ones, and has the effect of damaging their ability to come to terms with it. Usually it leads to severe symptoms of traumatic stress which are not resolved without professional interventions. Often there are severe consequences for the whole of a person's life. Although comparatively few people are likely to suffer from trauma in a natural disaster, in other emergencies, such as sieges or large-scale transport accidents, the rate may be much higher.

b. **Psychological Support Services**

- (1) Psychological Support - Listening to a distressed person, offering empathy and understanding, enables them not to feel alone and helps to place their personal experience in a context which helps them come to terms with it. However, the support person is required to make a sensitive and appropriate contact, to retain an objective and non-judgemental approach and to refrain from giving advice or commenting on their emotions. Support is gained from acceptance and the opportunity to express oneself in as full a way as necessary.

Often this is not in accordance with normal conversations where people tend to pass judgement on what they hear, compare it with their own experience or evaluate it. In particular, it is inappropriate to expect an untrained person to listen to painful or distressing experiences while still retaining an objective and supportive attitude. Psychological support is provided by trained human services workers.

- (2) Crisis Counselling - Counselling provides a relationship in which the affected person's disaster experience is able to be examined in detail together with other issues in their life in order to assist them to understand the effects it has had and the meaning they have given them. It can then provide them with an alternative set of understandings. This may also extend to other aspects of the recovery process, such as the impact of change, and stress on relationships, personal identity and values.

Counselling is a structured relationship which is provided by someone trained to understand the nature of the difficulties the person is presenting and who can anticipate the needs and the methods necessary to assist them. Most crisis counselling is focussed on some specific aspects of the crisis situation and seeks to provide immediate remedies.

- (3) Longer-Term Counselling - Complex personal and family problems tend to emerge during the difficult recovery period. Emotional problems which may have been adequately managed in normal circumstances may become major difficulties in the context of the disaster stresses. These often require more extensive counselling or other forms of psychological treatment provided by experienced clinicians.
- (4) Defusing, Debriefing and Worker Support - These are specific techniques developed to assist recovery workers who have been affected by their experiences and have developed critical incident stress. Debriefing is a structured method of ensuring the details of the experience are reviewed, together with the reactions and thoughts they have caused. It is conducted by people with counselling or other clinical skills who have had specific training in the technique. Most emergency services and other agencies involved in response and/or recovery work are likely to have already developed debriefing services. However, some agencies may not and may require assistance to deliver these services.

It is important to offer debriefing to groups of workers in services and workplaces who have performed their responsibilities during the disaster. Examples include hospitals, nursing homes and community service agencies. Existing and organised community groups such as neighbourhood centres and support groups are also likely to benefit from structured group sessions to review their experience and gain

information. In general, workers need to feel supported by their managers and to have ready access to supervision and consultation and to have their personal needs arising from the work sensitively managed.

People affected by a disaster, caused by known and expected hazards, are likely to benefit from debriefing. Experience suggests that debriefing is not necessarily the best response to people who have not had any expectation of the trauma they have suffered and are in a traumatised, distressed or disorganised state, although it can often be of assistance in a modified form as part of a network of other services.

- (5) **Traumatic Stress Treatment** - Post-traumatic stress is a complex and potentially severe and disabling condition. It needs to be carefully assessed and treated by a clinician trained in the field. Usually traumatic stress becomes compounded with pre-existing problems and forms a complex set of difficulties.
- (6) **Assessment and Evaluation** - Many reactions to aspects of the disaster are similar in the initial stages, whether they include symptoms of traumatic stress, critical incident stress or crisis response. However, the differences which define these conditions need to be assessed so that affected people are able to be identified and referred to the relevant services to have their needs met at the appropriate time. The assessment function needs to be made with the assistance of experienced mental health or similarly trained staff, although this may be based on the observations and information provided by other human service workers or trained volunteers. However, the assessment may need to be done at different stages since problems may develop or manifest at all stages of the recovery process.

c. **Personnel**

The personnel required to provide these psychological services cover a range of backgrounds, training and experience. Those providing immediate psychological support, with the aim of reducing psychological problems, may be human service workers specifically trained to provide this (psychological first aid) function. These workers need to be selected for their capacity and personal skills to support and listen to people in distress and by their experience in disasters. They need to be supervised by an experienced clinician, preferably with previous disaster management experience.

- (1) **Human Services Workers** - Welfare and youth workers, nurses, clergy, social workers, are trained in interpersonal helping and counselling. Human services workers are commonly employed in the state child protection services, intellectual disability services, community health centres or other health settings, as caseworkers or case managers. They could also be employed in non-government agencies as caseworkers or community development workers. They are qualified to provide crisis counselling for individuals, families or groups in order to facilitate the recovery process. They may need briefing to adapt their skills to the disaster context and access to supervision by a clinically-trained counsellor. The distinction between this and the above category is the possession of a human services/social science qualification or equivalent, or commensurate experience in the human services field.
- (2) **Clinically-Trained Counsellors** - Clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, or other professionals with specialist clinical training such as social workers, psychiatric nurses or psychotherapists, are needed to provide longer-term counselling and clinical treatment. Intervention of this nature can only safely be provided by such qualified individuals. They may also need briefing to adapt skills to the specifics of the disaster context and access to clinical supervision. Additionally, clinicians can provide a valuable consultancy service to other personnel providing personal support and psychological services.
- (3) **Debriefers** - They may be drawn from human services workers or clinicians provided they have had appropriate training in the technique. Whenever possible, personnel providing psychological services should work as small, multidisciplinary teams, under the direction of a suitably-qualified and experienced team leader. The team leader is responsible for allocation of work/duties across the team in recognition of team members knowledge and skills. The team leader can provide clinical supervision for team members, or could arrange for this to be provided by another practitioner. Ideally local workers should be used wherever possible, so that pre-existing working relationships, credibility, and knowledge of the affected community can be maximised, but care needs to be taken not to overload them or detract from their normal responsibilities. As with the delivery of all recovery services interpreters will be required to support work undertaken with people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

d. **Psychological Time-Frame**

(1) Immediate Post-Impact

At this stage, the critical issue is to provide assistance to people affected by the incident as immediately as is humanly possible. For this to occur, there needs to be effective planning and consultation with emergency service authorities, so that understanding and acceptance of the need for psychological intervention is ensured. From what is currently understood of the recovery process, immediate intervention is likely to ameliorate the psychological difficulties that some people experience, especially traumatic stress reactions, or mitigate the debilitating effects of these.

The aim of this immediate intervention is to minimise the disruption to the experience of trust, predictability, continuity, and safety which are caused by the emergency. This is not achieved by 'counselling' as such but by specialised psychological support, comfort, empathic listening and information as discussed above.

This is needed as soon as people have been received at the assembly point/evacuation centre/recovery centre. Human services workers need to be available for assessment of people who are in apparent need of more intensive psychological assistance. Formal training and experience are necessary in order to make this initial assessment.

Firm arrangements for follow-up support or counselling, as needed, must be made at this point to ensure continuity of care and information. Such follow-up can be on a group, individual or family basis. It is essential that practical issues relating to follow-up are addressed (eg transport, child care, interpreters). Clinical counsellors at this stage are most effectively utilised as consultants to human services workers in the area of assessment, or in devising strategies/activities to most helpfully and supportively use the time that evacuated people must remain in the centre before they can go home or elsewhere. Clinical treatment is not likely to be of great demand at this stage unless the event has been highly traumatic.

Flexibility and creativity in service provision are important to ensure that the response is tailored to the needs of the particular situation. Hence venue or locale could be quite different from what is anticipated, although the principles of providing psychological services remain the same. It is also likely that many or most people affected may have made their own arrangements to leave the affected area and may not have contacted the evacuation/recovery centre.

It is important to begin the process of making contact with them at the earliest possible time to shorten the period between the impact of the disaster and their incorporation into a recovery program.

(2) Ensuing Few Days/First Two Weeks

At this stage there are two aspects of the services to be established. Services need to be pro-active, reaching out to the people affected by the incident who have not come forward. It also needs to respond to those (few) who initiate/ask for help, or take up the offer of referral from a disaster worker, volunteer or professional.

As previously discussed under the heading of 'Personal Support', the most effective outreach services usually comprise home visits (wherever home currently is) by representatives of the recovery program to offer support, information, counselling and concurrently make an assessment of peoples' current circumstances.

It is important to maintain close liaison with recovery program coordinators who may also be coordinating home visits for support, assessment for claims, or for other forms of material/financial assistance in order to minimise intrusion into peoples lives.

The concept of outreach to people at this point is important, as people rarely seek out assistance in managing distressing feelings, thoughts or concerns in the early stages. However, resolution of psychological difficulties is much easier with early intervention. Additionally, people do not undergo significant mental or emotional pain unnecessarily. The development of a group identity among affected people via the outreach and recovery system greatly reduces the sense of isolation which exaggerates the impact of the difficulties.

Psychological services also need to be provided at the identified disaster recovery centre(s), or any other convenient venues identified as appropriate for the particular incident. There also may be groups of people for whom separate venues may be needed because of cultural, health, age or other factors. For example, it may be appropriate for culturally sensitive services to be made available in an Aboriginal community, at a community centre for people of non-English speaking backgrounds, youth, itinerant or homeless people, etc. Information about where psychological services are available needs to be well disseminated. It may be necessary to relocate services at a future point in the recovery process because of changing needs.

The only effective recovery facilities are those which are well-used, and this is likely to be determined by subjective, emotional and cultural factors which need to be respected and incorporated into planning.

Services that need to be provided include assessment, crisis intervention, individual, couple and family counselling/ therapy, group therapy, services for and advice on children, defusing and debriefing. Clinical therapy can only be provided by clinically trained counsellors. Supportive counselling, problem solving and educational input can be provided by human services trained workers.

Psychological services also contribute to coordination of existing community services. Psychological services established to respond to the disaster or incident need to be integrated with the existing community support and health services. Effective working relationships need to be encouraged, duplication minimised, and clear and timely cross-referrals facilitated.

Ethical principles such as confidentiality continue to apply, with the added consideration of the need to be proactive in providing information to the affected community, so that people are in a position to make decisions about what services they wish to use. Workers need to adapt normal ethical practices to the disaster context with consideration for the social, cultural and political characteristics of the people they are serving. It may be necessary to change some practices, but this should only be done as part of a consideration of the special characteristics of disaster situations which can raise difficult decisions in the area of interpersonal helping. This emphasises the necessity for professional supervision for human services workers/counsellors in making these decisions.

Workers involved in any facet of psychological services need continuing support and debriefing in their task to enable them to be effective and ensure they do not suffer from the experience. Continual reiteration of tragic stories can cumulatively become an emotional burden if helpers are not able to process what they are hearing, make sense of other's disaster experiences and how it is different for the workers themselves. Even experienced clinicians may feel the impact of this material more deeply in a disaster context since they are outside their accustomed professional context.

This can also be intensified for helpers working in their own affected community and for workers who have sustained losses themselves. The issues for workers need to be carefully and sensitively addressed, in ensuring their continued mental health. The psychological needs of rescue and response workers are also important and are dealt with by their own organisations.

Support workers/counsellors who subsequently develop difficulties as a result of their work, or because of their own issues/losses, must be relieved of disaster recovery responsibility and provided with the appropriate assistance. It may be more appropriate for them to return to their usual duties when they are ready to do so. Disaster clients should also be transferred into worker's normal caseloads as soon as possible.

Stresses for counsellors can result from close encounter with death, sharing the anguish of victims and families, and role ambiguity or conflict (Raphael, B. 1986). Hence the importance of ongoing supervision and clear statements of duties/expectations. Additional stress results from workers being expected to carry responsibility for some or all of their regular workload, which is not feasible under any circumstances.

As with any other facet of recovery operations an effective management structure is required. Issues to be considered include rosters, relief, workload allocation, resources, industrial/working conditions, etc. As much of this as possible needs to be negotiated during the planning process, so that valuable time is not lost in getting teams operational and adequately resourced.

(3) Medium-Term (1 - 6 months)

In the medium term the services discussed above need to continue, but be adapted to the changing circumstances. It is likely that outreach will be replaced by programs of support and information which will ensure that the psychological issues which become prominent from time-to-time in the changing circumstances of the recovery process are commented upon and understood. For example, growing exhaustion, loneliness and emotional and relationship stress need to be seen as community-wide problems to reduce the personalisation which occurs to people who lack a knowledge of what others are experiencing. Trained mental health or other human service workers can assist recovery workers to analyse and interpret their observations in the community and use these for planning group or community interventions which can address them within a community mental health context.

Assessment needs to continue since the issues which are likely to cause difficulty change with time. Often people who have been severely affected by the emergency are able to use their coping skills to buffer themselves from the stress effects. However, they can only do this for a limited period and as other demands come into play during the medium term, these adjustments may break down. Many delayed stress effects are likely to emerge in the medium term. Additional stresses and crises emerge throughout the medium term to aggravate the difficulties. As people's circumstances change, people take stock of their situation, and stresses of adjustment increase, coping and adaptations fail, and the need for counselling and psychological treatment increases. Experience indicates that the greatest clinical demands are usually during the medium term. The success of the services at this stage depends to a great degree on the adequacy of early outreach and information services which need to prepare affected people to understand these responses and know what services to use.

Team leaders and workers will continue to be challenged to respond flexibly and sensitively to the unique needs of a particular disaster and the community involved. Matching services to contexts to meet people's needs calls for a creative approach to service delivery. Examples have included group sessions in aged persons hostels, schools, mobile services and debriefings for key executives. Worker support and debriefing continues throughout this period.

(4) Long-Term (6 - 18 months+)

Disaster specific counselling and clinical services continue and gradually reduce as people's concerns focus more around long-standing issues that have been aroused or reactivated by the disaster experience or subsequent crises (eg previous unresolved losses or trauma). At this stage, it is more appropriate for them to be referred to existing (generic, mainstream) psychological and support services which have been augmented, than for disaster-specific services to be perpetuated. The process of gradual withdrawal needs to be carefully planned and provide for an adequate post-anniversary period. Worker support and debriefing continues as required during this period.

e. **Research and Evaluation**

A final issue that involves psychological service personnel, though is not direct service provision, is research and evaluation. Research projects could be formulated and commence in the early stages following a disaster and continue throughout the recovery period. It is important to add to the body of knowledge in the area of disaster recovery, and ethically-sound research needs to be supported. Improved practice should follow from what is learned in each situation. Personnel may be directly or tangentially involved in projects, or may be constructively consulted on proposals and the likely effects of implementing such proposals. A part of this research can be evaluation of the services offered, both in terms of the effect on clients and their subsequent adjustment and the overall planning and delivery.

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ACCOMMODATION/RECOVERY CENTRES

9.20 When a disaster necessitates evacuation of people from their normal place of living every effort should be made to provide the most suitable form of alternative accommodation available. In the immediate aftermath of the disaster this is likely to be through evacuation centres. People whose principal residence is badly damaged or destroyed by the event may also require longer-term temporary accommodation.

9.21 EVACUATION CENTRES

Although further details of the evacuation process and the establishment of evacuation centres may be found in the AEM - Evacuation Management, there are a number of issues which are of particular relevance to the recovery manager. Evacuation centres provide affected people with basic human needs including accommodation, food and water. In addition, to enhance the recovery process, other welfare/recovery services should also be provided.

a. **Services**

The nature of the disaster will dictate the services to be provided at centres. They may include:

- (1) registration point for victims;
- (2) financial and immediate assistance;
- (3) counselling;
- (4) temporary accommodation;
- (5) first aid;
- (6) food;
- (7) clothing, blankets, linen and bedding;
- (8) information and referral services;
- (9) assistance in completing applications for:
 - (a) Commonwealth pensions and benefits;
 - (b) disaster relief; and
 - (c) other related schemes;
- (10) point of application for insurance and advice;
- (11) employment advice and referral interpreter services;
- (12) housekeeper services, referral staff/volunteer help, including child-minding services;
- (13) physical assistance, such as cleaning and debris removal, transport, etc;
- (14) arrangements for pets;
- (15) arranging for rubbish removal; and
- (16) legal services.

These additional services may be provided at the evacuation centre, or alternatively at a suitable venue nearby, easily accessible to both people staying at the evacuation centre and others affected by the disaster.

9.22 'ONE-STOP SHOPS'

Evacuation centres provide a solution to short-term accommodation problems while longer-term alternatives are determined. Following the closure of evacuation centres there will still be a need for the continuation of many of the support services provided. Consequently, consideration should be given to converting suitable facilities into relief services centres, commonly referred to as 'one-stop shops', which are established to provide a range of short and intermediate-term services.

When establishing this facility the preferred option is to collocate services within the one location. If this is not possible a single centre should provide a referral point for all services thus enabling people to access a multiplicity of services with a minimum of inconvenience.

Responsibility for the establishment and management of one-stop shops varies from State-to-State but should rest with the lead recovery agency. The establishment of a one-stop shop should be undertaken in consultation with the agency responsible for the establishment and management of evacuation centres. This will ensure that the most appropriate site, venue and facilities are utilised.

9.23 When selecting a site for a one-stop shop, the following should be considered:

- a. capacity;
- b. power, sewerage and water;
- c. communications;
- d. long-term availability;
- e. catering;
- f. access/egress;
- g. proximity to transport; and
- h. car parking.

A one-stop shop performs a comprehensive range of recovery services. Such a centre is usually, but not necessarily, set up in cooperation with local government. By providing services in this manner it is possible to minimise travel and inconvenience to people affected by the disaster and maximise coordination and liaison between relief and recovery services.

It is essential that they be easily accessible, well advertised and properly staffed. In establishing a one-stop shop, early identification and liaison with other participating agencies is essential.

Adequate communication, catering, toilet and other services and facilities are essential. This will minimise confusion, congestion and practices which promote an atmosphere of 'people processing.'

9.24 ACCOMMODATION

Following disasters many people will make their own accommodation arrangements. However, others may need assistance and some may require extensive support and help over an extended period. When considering the allocation of accommodation consideration should be given to issues of privacy, security, dignity, autonomy, and cultural differences.

- a. **Temporary Accommodation** - In a major event the provision of alternative accommodation for an extended period may involve:
 - (1) liaison with a wide range of government and private agencies;
 - (2) provision of caravans, showers, toilets, generators, pumps and/or water tanks;
 - (3) provision of financial assistance measures to assist with temporary living expenses;
 - (4) establishment of an information service;
 - (5) making individualised accommodation arrangements by considering a number of important points such as the fact that:
 - (a) many displaced persons prefer to remain at their home site, or at least in their neighbourhood;
 - (b) where temporary relocation is necessary, individual and family needs should be considered;
 - (c) any disruption to family, work, school, or other social, or domestic routines should be minimised;
 - (d) temporary arrangements should be of a sufficient standard to be suitable until re-establishment is possible (eg caravans may be suitable only in certain weather conditions).

- (e) the length of time people may be required to live in temporary accommodation;
 - (f) when temporary accommodation arrangements are made, they should allow for a smooth transition to permanent accommodation at the earliest possible time; and
 - (g) where items such as caravans, generators, and water pumps need to be purchased or hired, local businesses should be used whenever possible as this will assist recovery of the overall community.
- b. **Permanent Accommodation** - Permanent accommodation may include repair and/or rebuilding of damaged residences or relocation to an alternative property. People may require assistance through:
 - (1) provision of financial assistance measures for re-establishment of both house and contents;
 - (2) provision of rebuilding and relocation consultation services; and
 - (3) advocacy with organisations such as insurance companies, banks, etc.

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SECTION FOUR - DISASTER RECOVERY SERVICES

CHAPTER TEN

PHYSICAL RECOVERY

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

10.01 INTRODUCTION

Physical Infrastructure comprise the buildings and permanent installations that provide the facilities required for community living. They include:

- a. energy supply;
- b. water supply;
- c. food supply;
- d. waste disposal;
- e. accommodation;
- f. transport;
- g. communications;
- h. manufacturing and commerce;
- i. primary production;
- j. health;
- k. law and order;
- l. government;
- m. recreation and culture; and
- n. education.

In managing the recovery of physical infrastructure regard must be taken of issues such as current codes, legal liabilities, government regulation, economic and social implications and the desirability of close community consultation.

For emergency recovery operations priorities need to be determined where adequate resources are not immediately available to return an affected community to near a normal level of operation in the shortest possible time. In general terms, priority will be given to restoration of essential services and to regaining access to living accommodation. In the short term highest priority must be to provide temporary services and shelter to those in need, possibly through evacuation/shelter/accommodation arrangements.

10.02 SCHEDULE OF TASKS

Physical recovery will occur at different speeds for different types of infrastructure and forward planning of the steps in recovery is essential. As with all other aspects of the overall recovery process it is essential that there is appropriate and ongoing involvement of the community in the decision-making process. The following issues are listed as a guide to the tasks to be undertaken and are included in the matrix provided at the end of this chapter for planning purposes:

- a. Assessment and collation of damaged items - nature, extent, severity, hazards, ownership.
- b. Implementation of a cost management system.
- c. Determination of priority for attention.
- d. Determination of nature and extent of repair or replacement.
- e. Determination of resourcing, estimated duration and responsibility.
- f. Integration, scheduling and implementation of relevant recovery activities.
- g. Evaluation of the outcomes of the recovery process.
- h. Updating of the local recovery plan.

10.03 INFRASTRUCTURE COMPONENTS

- a. **Services** - The majority of essential services are provided by government (local, State/Territory and national,) departments or agencies. (Note: This emphasis may be changing in some States/Territories with the current trend towards privatisation of a range of services). They will be aware of the codes and regulations concerning their areas of responsibility during reconstruction of these facilities. They will usually be the best avenues for providing temporary arrangements for such services. However, it is the responsibility of the emergency management organisation, through the recovery manager, to advise special priorities for different sections of the community based on information provided by other recovery agencies (welfare, health, etc.) to these responsible authorities. The essential services, together with special features that may need to be considered, are as follows:

Infrastructure Type	Components	Special Features
SEWERAGE	Collection (reticulation), transport (pump stations and rising mains). Treatment works and effluent disposal areas.	Environmental matters - overflows and discharges. Temporary power and temporary collection.
WATER	Storage (headworks, reservoirs). Distribution (rising and reticulation mains).	Tankers for transport of potable and non-potable water. Temporary storage for local distribution. Portable treatment units.
ELECTRICITY	Generation. Distribution.	Need to reconnect disrupted areas. Temporary supplies - portable generation to key institutions (eg hospitals, evacuation centres, repair gangs, etc.)

WASTE DISPOSAL

Collection and transport.
Disposal points.

Emergency landfills.
Debris removal and disposal.
Hazardous material.

GAS

Source.
Distribution.

Ownership.
Leak detection.

COMMUNICATIONS

Telephone exchanges.
Distribution. Co-axial cables.
Radio.
Newspaper.
Television.

Alternative arrangements.

TRANSPORT

Roads.
Rail.
Airports.
Port facilities, harbours and seaways.

Structures associated with the facilities.
Basic access/supply to every property as soon as possible.
Community consultation re on-going need.
Assess useability of pavements, formations and foundations.
Develop program for rehabilitation of network.

b. Damage Assessment

Damage to buildings as a consequence of a disaster is likely to impact on various sections of the community. Problems likely to occur include:

- (1) displacement of residents from their homes;
- (2) temporary or permanent closure of businesses;
- (3) disruption of normal community operations; and
- (4) destruction of physical infrastructure.

The extent of damage will affect the effectiveness of the recovery process if there are no clear-cut objectives and priorities for their restoration/rehabilitation.

Damage assessment should be undertaken by trained and suitably qualified structural engineers and building surveyors following previously determined procedures. The role of assessment personnel is to provide reports to the responsible authority NOT to make decisions in regard to demolition (the responsible authority must consider many factors in determining any actions in regard to specific buildings).

There are a number of phases to post-disaster damage assessment. A preliminary overview is required as soon as possible to provide initial logistical information for emergency services, financial, and recovery operatives. It is important as part of the preliminary assessment to ensure that post-disaster facilities such as emergency operation centres, evacuation centres, hospitals, and other such facilities are safe for occupation and use.

In order to ensure public safety, rapid visual assessment of individual buildings should be made and individual buildings designated with an agreed 'poster system', (ie red for dangerous, yellow for limited entry, and green for safe). Applied Technology Council's ATC 20 'Procedures for Post-earthquake Safety Evaluation of Buildings' could be adapted for Australian use for various types of disaster. The purpose of ATC 20 is to promote uniformity in rating building damage. Guidelines include detailed criteria for building evaluation of different structural types, assessment of geotechnical hazards, non-structural hazards and secondary hazards such as fires, gas explosions, spills and release of toxic materials.

Further assessment will be required in a more comprehensive form by individual owners. This is likely to require controlled access to any building for assessment purposes and for the removal of company records. Access to any building considered dangerous should be limited due to the possibility of other events, eg. earthquake aftershocks, secondary hazards and exposure to asbestos.

c. **Codes and Policies**

In revising codes and policies local government should consult with the community as part of the disaster recovery process:

- (1) Access - A variety of groups have need for legitimate access (eg owner, tenants, emergency workers, assessment personnel and building contractors). A clear policy established before the event will minimise confusion. Such a policy must be applied uniformly and consistently.
- (2) Demolition - Demolition policy should include procedures for assessment and determination as well as highlighting potential for asbestos and other hazardous materials contamination. Demolition must only be carried out following the issue of a demolition order and, wherever possible, with the knowledge of the owners or occupiers.
- (3) Heritage Buildings - Heritage buildings should be designated on disaster planning documents and assessed for access and public safety issues in the event of a disaster. The policy should cover the evaluation process and establish a system of consultation in the event of a disaster. Further detail regarding preservation of heritage buildings may be found in relevant State/Territory legislation. Provision should be made for materials from demolition of heritage buildings to be retained in order to be recycled in the reconstruction or repair of other heritage buildings.
- (3) Repair/Reconstruction - Policies should be developed in consideration of local government standards required for repair and reconstruction. Each individual building will require consideration in accordance with adopted policies and specific design requirements as well as economic and social implications of any requirements.

- (5) Formal Inspection Requirements - The local authority should adopt a post-disaster policy in relation to requirements for building approvals and inspection requirements. This policy should recognise the urgency or otherwise of immediate rebuilding requirements and conditions.
- (6) Insurance Considerations - The Insurance Industry should be involved in the immediate aftermath of a disaster and should be party to the approval and inspection requirements. Policies and procedures should be developed in consultation with the Insurance Industry as part of the planning process.
- (7) Planning and Land Use - The local authority should adopt a philosophy in regard to the options of land usage opportunities in the event of a major disaster. Such philosophy should recognise the existence of community expectations and any implications to such opportunities.
- (8) Public Information - A comprehensive public information campaign is required in the aftermath of a disaster to outline and emphasise policies, procedures and other building issues. This is essential to avoid confusion and minimise recovery problems.

10.04 MATRIX

The following matrix has been prepared as an aid for the preparation of individual plans at any level. It is suggested that this be photocopied to a large size and used as a checklist to ensure that all aspects of Physical Infrastructure are considered.

INFRASTRUCTURE RECOVERY TASK SCHEDULING CHECKLIST

Sewerage

Water Supply

Electricity Supply

Waste Disposal

Gas Supply

Communications

Roads

Rail

Airports

Ports, Waterways

Residential Buildings

Commercial Buildings

Industrial Buildings

Public Buildings

Essential Facilities

Drainage

Dry Storage

Other Structures

Fuel Facilities

* For explanation, refer to paragraph 10.02 of this Chapter entitled 'Schedule of Tasks.'

10.05 HINTS

Following is a list of hints or suggestions that have been used successfully in physical recovery following previous disasters:

- a. Use a matrix to ensure that recovery activities are 'on track' and not being overlooked.
- b. Use the experience of others and what worked successfully for them in disaster recovery situations.
- c. Be careful of damage which is not immediately evident, (eg underground displacement or damage of services after earthquake or flood, crystallised steel in bushfire, bridge timbers burnt, underwater obstructions in waterways).
- d. Consider whether replacement of destroyed infrastructure is necessarily the best option, (eg old bridge destroyed may be better located elsewhere, temporarily closed road may not be needed at all, rebuilding on flood plain, inappropriate design or location of building). Community consultation is an important part of this process.
- e. Ensure that finances are reasonably assured before committing to extensive repair, renewal or replacement.
- f. Check regularly to ensure that responsible organisations listed in the local recovery plan are currently up-to-date.
- g. Consider security of property or infrastructure under repair.
- h. Establish authority for access to damaged property or infrastructure under repair, preferably in writing.
- i. Use an approved poster system to designate level of building damage. j. Use trained and qualified assessment personnel.
- k. Make sure that maps, equipment and communications equipment are available.
- l. Remember that assessment may be impeded by secondary hazards, (eg fires).

PUBLIC/ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

10.06 INTRODUCTION

The issues of public and environmental health following disasters are an important part of the emergency management process. In addition to being an important part of response activities following a disaster they are also an integral part of the recovery process. Together with the re-establishment of basic physical infrastructure they can be seen to provide the practical basis upon which a community's recovery from disaster is based. They also highlight the importance of the interface between response and recovery and the various agencies involved in the provision of services following a disaster.

10.07 CONTEXT

As with any other element of the recovery process, management of public health services following a disaster is not particularly different to the day-to-day management of the service, it merely occurs in a different context. 'Management experience in public health provides a useful background for managing industrial disasters. Not simply because of its focus on physical safety and well-being but because, as a public health manager one is accustomed to:

- a. responding to on-going issues and to unpredictable events;
- b. dealing with probabilities, acceptable and unacceptable levels of risk, inconclusive data and less than perfect solutions using medical interventions as only one of a larger range of interventions;
- c. working with multi-disciplinary teams; and
- d. working with a variety of stakeholders as well as the wider public.

The technical knowledge required in any given situation varies and is often highly specialised but the knowledge required for management and skills are remarkably consistent. Lessons learned from one ongoing issue or single event may be transferred to another.ö (Raysmith, 1994).

While these comments were made specifically in relation to industrial disasters they provide a useful insight into the management of public health services following any form of disaster.

10.08 ISSUES

Throughout Australia the management of public and environmental health problems are generally delegated to local environmental health officers. In the absence of an environmental health officer, contact must be made with the relevant State/Territory health department to oversee public and environmental health issues where these are of concern. Key issues to be addressed in terms of public and environmental health include: water, shelter, food, sanitation and infectious diseases. While each of these issues is dealt with in depth in the Australian Emergency Manual - Disaster Medicine, the following excerpts from that Manual are of particular relevance to the recovery process:

- a. **Nature of Disaster** - Collection, collation, interpretation and dissemination of accurate, objective and timely data are mandatory to efficiently and effectively manage the public health response to the disaster and to mitigate the effect of future disasters. The first priority is to determine the nature of the disaster which will then indicate likely public health problems. This will require immediate access to previously collected baseline data for the affected area, such as demographic and health characteristics.

- b. **Immediate Assessment** - The next priority is immediate assessment, which must include:
- (1) the geographical extent of the disaster;
 - (2) current and projected climatic conditions;
 - (3) major public health problems;
 - (4) an estimate of the number of people affected;
 - (5) what further information is needed immediately; and
 - (6) the presence of continuing hazards.
- c. **Detailed Assessment** - This should then be followed by detailed assessment as the disaster unfolds, including the:
- (1) number of persons dead and injured;
 - (2) estimated number of homes destroyed/damaged;
 - (3) condition and viability of essential services;
 - (4) availability of shelter;
 - (5) anticipated number of persons requiring evacuation/temporary shelter; and
 - (6) presence of continuing hazards.
- d. **Relief Priorities** - The information from this assessment will then dictate relief priorities. Public health issues which may need to be addressed are:
- (1) provision of safe and adequate water;
 - (2) shelter;
 - (3) food and food related concerns;
 - (4) provision of emergency ablution facilities;
 - (5) sanitation;
 - (6) refuse disposal collection;
 - (7) vermin and vector control;
 - (8) infectious disease control;

- (9) disinfection;
- (10) personal hygiene;
- (11) disposal of dead stock and animals;
- (12) disinfection;
- (13) hazardous materials; and
- (14) siting and layout of emergency campsites.

The advice and direction of the local government environmental health officer must be sought in regard to all of the above.

10.09 ACCOMMODATION

Every effort must be made to provide disaster-affected persons with the most suitable accommodation available.

- a. **Homes** - In most instances, people affected by disasters will want to return to their own homes. This should be encouraged as soon as possible but only if basic needs are available, and the site is cleared of any potential hazard. (Where a house or another building has been affected by flood waters special health issues will need to be addressed.)
- b. **Emergency Accommodation**

When the disaster has made houses uninhabitable and there has been no evacuation of the area, temporary accommodation must be arranged for those affected, who will generally prefer to remain near their property. It may happen that the population settles widely, sheltering in anything immediately available. If the sanitary situation may then rapidly deteriorate and it becomes very difficult to assess requirements.

As part of the provision of emergency accommodation it may be necessary to provide items of material aid such as bedding, blankets and clothing. From a health perspective it is essential that such articles are clean and free of any potential health risk. Further details regarding the establishment and management of emergency recovery centres are provided in Chapter Six, paragraphs 6.04 - 6.10 of this Manual.

10.10 FOOD

A key public health issue in the immediate aftermath of a disaster is food and related concerns. In disaster-prone areas the population should be encouraged to maintain a supply of 'long-life' basic food rations sufficient for a family for 4 to 7 days.

a. **Food Management**

Unless proper sanitary measures are applied to the storage, preparation and distribution of food under disaster conditions, mass feeding will be a constant danger to health. Food is easily contaminated, especially when being prepared and distributed in conditions which may prevail during and after a disaster.

- (1) Protection Aspects - Special attention must be paid to the services associated with the protection of food, namely:
 - (a) water supply;
 - (b) waste disposal; and
 - (c) vector control.
- (2) Sanitation Requirements - These services may have to be carried out in an improvised manner. Failure to maintain proper sanitary conditions in areas of food preparation and distribution could lead to a secondary disaster with personnel and disaster-affected people contracting food poisoning.
- (3) Disease Risk - Post-disaster conditions favour the outbreak of food and food-borne diseases, and the consequences of such an outbreak could be overwhelming. The medical and health services, which might already be short staffed and fully focussed on urgent situations, might not be able to cope. These considerations show clearly the necessity for the proper planning and operation of food sanitation programs in disasters including:
 - (a) quantities and types of food;
 - (b) lines of supply;
 - (c) premises and preparation; and
 - (d) means of distribution.

b. **Emergency Food Production/Preparation** - Measures that can be applied to ensure safe emergency food production include the following:

- (1) Quality control of incoming food in order to detect spoilage and contamination including a knowledge of the source and type of food.
- (2) Knowledge of the water supply to ensure its safety or if necessary its treatment.
- (3) Control of insects and rodents in stores, kitchens and feeding centres.
- (4) Provision for the proper storage and location of food (eg freezers, refrigerators and dry store).

- (5) Provision for the proper disposal of solid and liquid food wastes (eg grease traps, burial, cartage and incineration).
 - (6) Provision of the proper washing and sanitation of utensils (eg cutting boards).
 - (7) Supervision of food preparation areas.
 - (8) Supervision of food servicing (eg appropriate cooking methods).
 - (9) Supervision of food-handling personnel including:
 - (a) health;
 - (b) training;
 - (c) adequate numbers; and
 - (d) provision of separate toilet and hand-washing facilities for food-handlers, where possible, to prevent cross infection.
 - (10) When possible, food should come from a reliable source (eg supermarket).
- c. **Special Food Surveillance** - Areas that need special attention and supervision include:
- (1) the method for transporting food (eg trucks, cars, aircraft);
 - (2) examination of donated food;
 - (3) examination of disaster-affected food;
 - (4) conditions under which food has been stored and transported (eg temperature);
 - (5) regular supervision of feeding areas, particularly during the early stage of a disaster when personnel are operating 24~` hours a day, usually in shifts of six hours; and
 - (6) examination of food suppliers (eg food warehouses and supermarkets).

10.11 REFUSE DISPOSAL

The primary aim of disposing of waste material is to prevent the transmission of disease and to make areas safe and accessible. Disaster conditions will overwhelm normal refuse disposal (tip) facilities and planning for emergency methods of disposal may be necessary. In a disaster the control of public health problems such as vector/vermin control depends a lot on the efficiency with which all refuse is collected and removed. The separation of hazardous materials (ie asbestos, refrigerators and freezers, gas cylinders, etc.) is essential to prevent environmental and life-threatening issues. It is also important to separate rubble, machinery and cars to prolong tip life.

10.12 DISPOSAL OF DEAD ANIMALS

The basic objectives to be achieved in disposing of dead animal carcasses, products and waste materials are to ensure that no spread of disease occurs to either humans or to other animals, and that the carcasses are effectively removed from public view. If an animal is suspected to be diseased or has died from a disease the advice of State/Territory agriculture department officials must be sought. In their absence the advice of a local veterinarian may suffice.

10.13 INFECTIOUS DISEASES

- a. **Introduction** - Emergency health workers must be aware of the need for vigilance in a disaster to prevent or control an infectious disease epidemic. Epidemics are rare following disasters in Australia, but can be common in less developed countries.
- b. **Public Perception** - During the immediate aftermath of a disaster, unconfirmed stories of epidemics may be reported by the media. These may prompt the wasteful deployment of resources on emotive rather than scientific grounds. Consequently, it is essential that effective information strategies are developed and implemented to reduce the risk of such stories occurring.
- c. **Risk Factors** - Certain diseases such as malaria and cholera pose a threat after a disaster in areas where they are endemic. However, even if conditions are ideal for transmission, a disease cannot occur as a result of a disaster unless the causative organism is present before the disaster or introduced to the area during the disaster. The chance of a disaster-related infectious disease occurring in an area depends on the variables of:
 - (1) the existing pattern of disease; and
 - (2) the nature of the disaster.
- d. **Mitigating Transmission** - Epidemic control measures should include:
 - (1) reduction of population density to reduce person-to-person contact;
 - (2) provision of appropriate sanitation and water;
 - (3) awareness of existing disease prevalence in the disaster area and evacuation/relocation areas; and
 - (4) adequate control of disease vectors.
- e. **Control Principles** - One person should assume overall responsibility for the management of disaster-related infectious disease (ie regional health officer, council's medical officer of health, council's environmental health officer, or a medical practitioner with training in public health medicine). The following principles apply:
 - (1) Effective disaster surveillance, through an awareness of probable and possible infectious disease in the area.

- (2) Prompt reporting and investigation of rumoured outbreaks.
- (3) Timely feedback to appropriate authorities to facilitate the appropriation of resources and dissemination of information.
- (4) Institution of appropriate control measures for the defined infectious diseases risk.
- (4) On-going surveillance beyond the declared disaster period.

10.14 VECTOR AND VERMIN CONTROL

Depending on the type of disaster, vector may become a major issue. Most floods give rise to mosquito-related complaints which are more likely to be a nuisance than a potential health risk. However, their control is essential to minimise panic and enhance community well-being. Areas which require constant baiting and surveillance include tips, flooded premises, food outlets and accommodation and feeding areas.

10.15 HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL

Hazardous waste has physical, chemical or biological characteristics which require special handling and disposal procedures to avoid risk to health or other adverse environmental effects. When attempting to define 'hazardous waste', concern is essentially with wastes that present either of the following:

- a. Short-Term Acute Hazard - These include acute toxicity by ingestion, inhalation, skin absorption, corrosion or other skin or eye contact hazards, or a risk of fire or explosion.
- b. Long-Term Environmental Hazards - These include chronic toxicity upon repeated exposure, carcinogenicity, resistance to detoxification processes such as biodegradation, the potential to pollute underground or surface waters, or aesthetically objectionable properties, such as offensive odours. Wastes with these properties may arise as by-products, side-products, process residues, radioactive residues, contaminated plant or equipment from manufacturing operations and the discarding of manufactured products.

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REDEVELOPMENT/PLANNING

10.16 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this part of the Chapter is to provide an overview of the key issues to be considered in the planning and redevelopment of the physical environment of a community following a disaster. Topics to be addressed include: post-disaster needs; sense of place and preservation of visual and historical links with the past; the capacity for disaster-affected communities to cope with change and redevelopment; involvement of the community in the redevelopment process; and the opportunity for disaster-affected areas to be improved rather than just restored through the redevelopment process. While a number of the decisions concerning rebuilding of elements of a disaster-affected area will be made on an ad hoc basis, it is essential that long-term planning is undertaken and the recovery process be used as an opportunity to redevelop the built and natural environment in a positive manner.

10.17 SENSE OF PLACE AND IDENTITY

Human beings require and develop a sense of place and being which is, in part, engendered by the physical landscape, including the natural environment of rural areas or the built environment of the urban landscape. Redevelopment of this sense of place is an important aspect of both the physical and psychological recovery of individuals and an affected community.

10.18 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND SYMBOLISM

Following a disaster the preservation and restoration of historic buildings and significant features or landmarks within a community may be important as symbols of the past and the 'pre-disaster' landscape and community. In so doing, not only are physical objects preserved and restored, but so too are aspects of community history at a time when many other links with the past, both on an individual and community basis, have been damaged or destroyed.

The maintenance of historical features can be achieved in many ways, while still using the recovery process as an opportunity to upgrade infrastructure and other elements of the built environment. In particular, creative re-use of buildings may preserve their historic significance while meeting the repair/reconstruction requirements brought about by the disaster and future community needs and function. The maintenance or re-use of significant features may also provide the disaster-affected community with a sense of continuity at a time of significant instability.

10.19 CHANGE/REDEVELOPMENT IN A DISASTER-AFFECTED COMMUNITY

In the article 'Community Response to Disaster,' (featured in Annex A to Chapter Four of this Manual) Gordon argues that the bonds or networks evident between various groups within a community (ie family, neighbourhood) may be disrupted by the impact of a disaster. New bonds will then be formed between different members of the community based on their disaster experience (ie those who have survived a life threatening experience, those who have had their houses destroyed). Gordon observes that these groups and the disaster-affected community as a whole will then go through several stages in the recovery process as the repercussions of the event are evidenced. A range of emotions will be experienced at different times by individuals who have experienced or been affected by the disaster.

These emotions may range from the initial euphoria of survival of the event through disillusionment, anger and disappointment if relief and recovery services are not forthcoming, or are perceived to be inadequate.

During the period following a disaster, affected individuals, groups and communities are also likely to reassess their priorities and lifestyles. This may influence the size and stability of the community as some of those affected choose to leave and resettle elsewhere. Over a period of time there is also likely to be entry of a range of new members to the community, replacing those who have left. This may add further to the tensions within a community and may significantly affect the demographics and overall composition of the community for which planning and redevelopment is to be undertaken.

The challenge for recovery agencies in redevelopment of the physical environment is to accommodate the various changes in the community and to redesign it in a context which is sensitive to the community's instability and fragility. This difficulty is expressed succinctly by Haas, Kates and Bowden who note that:

'The physical destruction of a part of the city is seen by some persons, especially planners, as a unique opportunity to improve the livability of the city. Still others may see it as a chance for instant urban renewal an opportunity to replace a deteriorating area with new modern land and building packages. But for many persons the new is unfamiliar, and that unfamiliarity creates personal discomfort; there will almost always be resistance to proposed changes in land use.' (1977, p.49)

10.20 DISASTERS ACCENTUATE PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS

Disasters will typically accentuate many of the positive and negative factors evident within a community prior to the event taking place. This is also true of reconstruction/redevelopment issues, with disasters often accentuating issues such as homelessness and public and private housing availability, as well as a range of other economic, political and social issues. The resolution of these issues following a disaster is likely to be a highly-politicised process involving not only the range of agencies existing before the event but also specific interest groups which may evolve as a result of the disaster.

10.21 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community involvement in the decision-making process following a disaster is essential. One of the key principles of disaster recovery is that individuals and communities be resourced and supported in the management of their own recovery. While community consultation may be an integral part of any planning process, the need for community involvement in redevelopment following disasters is an important means of contributing to the overall empowerment of individuals and communities to manage their own recovery.

One of the inherent difficulties in ensuring community participation following a disaster is the need for rapid redevelopment. Conflict is likely to arise as a result of this tension between the competing need for a rapid rebuilding process and adequate community consultation in its development and implementation. Imposing a highly-centralised approach to redevelopment and reconstruction, at the expense of community involvement, is inappropriate and would accentuate further the dependence already engendered by the impact of the disaster.

Processes of community involvement will vary and depend on the nature of the task, the type and impact of the disaster and the affected community. Some of the most effective means of consultation in disaster recovery situations include public meetings, community representation on committees, and the inclusion of representatives from community organisations in decision-making processes. In each case it is essential that information mechanisms be developed to report to the broader community and that delegates are representative of the community at large. It is also essential that the affected community is provided adequate opportunities to debate and review major issues.

The report published by the Newcastle City Council's Renewal Coordination Unit following the earthquake of December 1989 provides a particularly useful insight into the importance of community involvement in the redevelopment process:

'Process itself was seen as healing and restorative, as it involved discussions and on-going consultations, information sharing, developing models, joining organisations together to seek new resources, or to confront divisive issues and facilitating and participating in social action.' (1991; 14)

10.22 IMPROVEMENT NOT RESTORATION

One of the positive aspects of the disaster recovery process is the potential for individuals and communities to improve on their situation before the event, rather than merely restoring things to the way they had been previously. In fact, the impact of the disaster will usually mean that a return to the status quo prior to the disaster is not possible; the quality of the recovery process will determine whether affected individuals progress or regress. Nevertheless, in the redevelopment process there is likely to be a strong tension between elements of the community which see the disaster as an opportunity for renewal and those which want to see an affected area restored exactly as it was before the disaster occurred.

It is in this context that the devastation wrought by disasters provides a unique opportunity for a community to examine a range of issues such as housing inequities, traffic problems and inadequate infrastructure. In addition, there may be opportunities for modernisation of public facilities, beautification of the landscape and built environment, and even stimulation of the local economy.

Following an earthquake in Whittier in California in 1987, the redevelopment process was used as a means to stimulate economic growth in the area. This provides a useful case study of the potential for the redevelopment process following a disaster to embrace a positive focus in broad terms. In his study of the Whittier recovery and reconstruction, Bolin notes that:

'Disasters disrupt ongoing trends and social patterns, providing conditions for social, political, and economic change in the midst of tragedy and loss. The intent of the reconstruction in Whittier was not to return the central business district to its prior state, but to create the basis for economic growth by increasing population densities in the surrounding neighbourhoods and expanding retail activities.' (1994; p.45)

While this is obviously an ambitious redevelopment program, aimed at a specific outcome of economic growth, Whittier's redevelopment efforts can be seen as an example of comprehensive planning, using the disaster as a point of departure for long-term economic revitalisation and expansion of a central business district which, before the disaster, had been in decline.

10.23 PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Following a disaster the affected community will have needs ranging from housing and reconstruction of public facilities through to restoration of business and community activities. A critical issue is the speed which will be required for the restoration of the community. While the opportunities for improvement and community involvement discussed previously will be significant, these will be tempered with the requirement for early restoration and redevelopment.

The likely scenario is aptly conveyed by the following excerpt from a symposium on rebuilding after earthquakes held in the US in 1990:

'You will be thrust into a world of instant life and death decisions, mounds of building permit applications, daily dealings with a new bureaucracy with incredible paper work requirements, and unremitting pressure to get things back to normal. Everyone will want a plan, but few will want to take the time to plan. You will be expected to have answers to problems you have not even thought about before....Present in this high pressure situation are opportunities to improve the urban pattern, but these opportunities will soon pass if they are not acted on quickly.' (1991; p.1)

A further complication is that in some instances legislative requirements will need to be amended to reflect the needs imposed by the type of disaster. For example changes to safety standards and building and planning requirements may be necessary in response to events such as cyclones and earthquakes.

Disasters which impact heavily upon houses, buildings and the various infrastructure elements are likely to create a significant demand on both resources (ie building materials) and workers (ie building contractors). Examples of this were the Ash Wednesday bushfires and Newcastle earthquake.

With a shortage of adequate labour and materials likely, it may be necessary to implement strategies which monitor prices and quality of work to ensure that people affected by disasters are receiving fair and equitable treatment and are not being exploited or inconvenienced by unnecessary delays.

10.24 SUMMARY

A symposium for urban planners held in the US in 1990 provides a range of lessons for those involved in the redevelopment of communities following disaster. Findings are discussed under the headings 'Urban Form and Design, Housing, Business, and Public Facilities' (William Spangle and Associates Inc., 1991). While the full details of the lessons derived from the symposium are available in their report, the lessons derived under the heading Urban Form and Design provide a useful summary of the key issues in redevelopment and rebuilding following a disaster.

The six key findings in terms of urban form and design were;

- a. cities and towns are almost never relocated;
- b. the rebuilt city is a safer city;
- c. earthquakes offer opportunities for specific urban redesign projects;
- d. neighbourhood preservation can aid personal and community recovery;
- e. preserving historic and symbolic buildings helps retain community identity; and
- f. design is everybody's business.

Although this symposium specifically addressed earthquake, the findings are equally applicable to any disaster which has a significant impact upon the built environment.

The impact of the rebuilding process on a disaster-affected community is significant and far reaching. The notion that cities and towns are almost never relocated recognises the importance to a community of rebuilding in the same location after a disaster. This is further reinforced by the fourth point which identifies the need for individuals and communities to retain their sense of place during the upheaval which follows a disaster. Similarly, the fifth point recognises that the preservation of historical and symbolically significant buildings and landmarks is also vital to individual and community identity.

The second and third points recognise the potential for both individual and community issues prevalent prior to a disaster occurring to be considered in the rebuilding process. This is consistent with best practice in recovery management in that the aim of the recovery process is to improve upon the situation evident before to a disaster occurring, rather than merely attempting to return to that same situation after the event.

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SECTION FOUR - DISASTER RECOVERY SERVICES

CHAPTER ELEVEN

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

INSURANCE

11.01 BACKGROUND

One of the most significant players in the recovery process following any disaster, particularly one which involves damage or loss of property, is the insurance industry. Since the occurrence of Cyclone Tracy in Darwin in December 1974 there has been a marked change in insurance coverage for people affected by disasters. With an ever-increasing competitiveness in the insurance industry, policy costs and extent of coverage in response to specific events or damage vary significantly.

After Cyclone Tracy the insurance industry was able to agree upon a blanket coverage for all those affected who held insurance policies. This is no longer the case. The diversity of different policies means that levels of coverage and payment following specific events vary greatly. In response to this need the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) has developed the Insurance Emergency Service (IES) to ensure a coordinated approach to disasters by the insurance industry as a whole. Through its streamlining of insurance processes following disasters, the IES aims to alleviate and counteract some of the emotional effects of disaster along with restoring the financial security of policy owners.

For any service provided as part of the recovery process, people affected by a disaster require accurate information regarding what is available and how to access it. In the case of insurance this will require information about such things as the level of coverage for the event and claims procedures. This information will generally be required on a case-by-case basis, sensitive to the emotional state of individuals as a result of the disaster experience.

In a number of recent events the siting of insurance personnel at recovery centres to work in conjunction with other recovery service providers has proven a very effective means of dealing with individual concerns and queries. The following information is drawn from an information pamphlet published by the ICA. The pamphlet is readily available from ICA offices throughout Australia.

11.02 THE INSURANCE EMERGENCY SERVICE.

The Insurance Emergency Service (IES) is a scheme which provides for rapid processing of insurance claims in the event of a major disaster. The IES was formed by three organisations concerned with disaster mitigation: the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA), representing the general insurance industry; the Chartered Institute of Loss Adjusters; and the Council of Loss Adjusters of Australia, representing professional loss adjusters whose task is to assess the nature and extent of damage to insured property.

The agreement provides for the pooling of administrative and technical resources by IES members to enable insurance claims to be assessed and paid promptly. An insured person wishing to make a claim is able to go to the central claims bureau no matter with which company they are insured and receive assistance in filing their claim. At the same time, insurance companies and loss adjusters can maintain internal administrative standards in investigation of claims.

a. **IES Membership** - IES comprises not only the signatories to the scheme, namely members of the Insurance Council of Australia, the Institute of Loss Adjusters of Australia Limited and the Chartered Institute of Loss Adjusters, but also coordinates with other bodies concerned with disaster management. Insurers who are not members of the ICA are also able to join. Government and semi-government bodies cooperate with the Service to ensure that a coordinated and efficient operation is created between the different groups working in the area.

b. **How Does the IES Work?**

ICA is responsible for the administration of the scheme and for coordination of operations in the event of a disaster. Once the Chief Executive of ICA has decided that the disaster is serious enough to warrant activating the IES, a central claims bureau, with outlying offices if necessary, is established by the IES in the emergency area.

The central claims bureau provides the framework for IES members to streamline their normal claims procedures by pooling administrative resources, particularly loss assessment services, within the disaster area. The IES appoints claims adjusters from a central pool thus ensuring the most effective and efficient use of the available technical skills. This means that the average time and cost required to process a claim is substantially reduced.

A person affected by a disaster, no matter with which company he or she is insured, is able to go to the bureau and receive information about insurance and assistance in making the claim. In the event of the IES being activated, location of the central claims bureau is advertised on radio and other media.

c. **Who Benefits from the IES?**

One of the major benefits of the IES is that people, disoriented by their disaster experience and worried about restoring their property, will have their insurance claims processed quickly through the central claims bureau. In this way they can begin repairs sooner and suffer less disruption to their lives because claims will be settled more quickly.

The IES provides the most efficient use of adjusters by ensuring that there is no oversupply of services in one area or a shortage in another. Clearly defined areas of responsibility and established channels of communication also reduce confusion and aid efficiency.

The scheme also provides a reliable system for the collection of statistical data relating to property damage, the number of claims recorded and their value. This information is extremely helpful in assessing probable degrees of risk from various natural hazards in the future.

d. **IES Operations**

The ICA has established an Insurance Emergency Service Operations Room at Head Office in Melbourne. The Operations Room is equipped with maps, personnel lists and other materials which help coordinate the insurance industry's responses to a major disaster in any part of Australia.

In the Operations Room, situations such as cyclonic depression, bushfires and floods are monitored and recorded. On advice received from Regional Managers, or State Regional Coordinators, ICA's Chief Executive is able to decide if and when to activate the IES. When this is necessary experienced industry personnel, including selected ICA staff in all Regions, may be despatched to the disaster area for on-the-spot assessment of the situation. Staff then establish one or more claims bureaux to assist people who have suffered losses.

ICA has a close working relationship with disaster organisations in all states and sits on committees which investigate disaster mitigation and post-disaster activities, including recovery management. This exchange of information helps to ensure that the Operations Room is kept up to date with any situations that may occur and that people affected by disaster receive the best possible service available.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

11.03 NATURAL DISASTER RELIEF ARRANGEMENTS

The mechanism used to provide Commonwealth Government financial assistance to communities affected by natural disaster is the Commonwealth/State Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements (NDRA). These arrangements provide a cost-sharing formula as well as the following range of pre-agreed relief/assistance measures:

- . Personal hardship and distress:
 - . counter-disaster operations;
 - . disaster relief assistance scheme; and
 - . home rebuilding or substitute purchase.
- . Restoration of public assets.
- . Concessional loans to primary producers.
- . Concessional loans to small businesses.
- . Freight subsidies.
- . Loans/grants to non-profit organisations.

The objective of NDRA is to assist the recovery of communities whose social, financial and economic well-being has been severely affected by a natural disaster event. Natural disaster relief measures are designed to help those within the community who do not have the resources to provide for their own recovery.

Each of these assistance measures is subject to eligibility conditions. These arrangements apply only to natural disasters. Disasters as a result of accident are not included. Eligible disasters are bushfires, cyclones, earthquakes, floods and storms, including hail damage. Drought is excluded from these arrangements.

- a. **Personal Hardship and Distress** - This relief measure provides assistance to persons in necessitous circumstances towards the cost of food, clothing, accommodation, the repair or replacement of essential household contents and repairs to owner-occupied dwellings.
- b. **Restoration of Public Assets** - This relief measure provides for the restoration of essential public assets damaged by natural disasters through the provision of funding towards the restoration of essential constructed public assets to the equivalent of their pre-disaster standard.
- c. **Concessional Loans to Primary Producers** - This relief measure provides concessional loans to assist in meeting the needs of primary producers to recover following natural disasters of substantial magnitude.
- d. **Concessional Loans to Small Businesses** - This relief measure provides concessional loans to small business to re-establish operations on a viable basis following the effects of natural disasters.
- e. **Freight Subsidy** - This relief measure subsidises charges for the movement of freight following a natural disaster event.
- f. **Loans/Grants to Non-profit Organisations** - This relief measure provides concessional rate loans and accompanying grants to non-profit organisations to repair or replace facilities damaged or lost as a result of natural disaster.
- g. **Administration** - Each of these relief measures is administered by State/Territory government agencies. The availability of these sources of funding is well-advertised following disasters. The personal hardship and distress scheme will be administered by the relevant State/Territory community service department.

11.04 DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY PAYMENTS

The Department of Social Security (DSS) provides income support where people's normal livelihoods are disrupted by disaster. Social Security payments for people affected by disaster include: Disaster Relief Payment (DRP); Special Benefit; and Continuing Payments.

- a. **Disaster Relief Payment (DRP)**

This is an immediate payment available to people whose residence or place of employment has been damaged or who have had their normal source of livelihood disrupted by the disaster. DRP can be paid only when the Minister for Social Security declares a disaster, whether natural or otherwise, to be a widespread disaster by notification in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette.

Disasters which would have met the criteria for payment of DRP include the Newcastle Earthquake, the Ash Wednesday Bushfires and Cyclone Tracy.

DRP is also available to Social Security clients receiving a pension or other payment such as Job Search, Newstart or Sickness Allowance. Payment is made immediately by cheque or in cash, and is twice the weekly rate of benefit that would be payable to an individual or family in similar circumstances. DRP is not subject to an income or assets test. People who need continued income support after the initial payment of DRP will be able to have their claims for pension, allowance or benefit backdated to when the disaster originally affected them. Any insurance proceeds will be disregarded for income and assets test purposes for 12 months.

- b. **Special Benefit** - This is paid to people in severe financial hardship who are not getting, or able to get, a pension or other Social Security payment. Special Benefit covers a range of individual needs other than disaster, (strict guidelines apply).
- c. **Continuing Payments** - The Department of Social Security may be able to provide continuing financial help to people affected in the short, to long-term by a disaster. While emergency payments are designed to provide immediate cash, clients are able to transfer to ongoing, mainstream payments (if entitlement exists) to support them financially with regular income assistance. Departmental staff will be available to answer enquiries and process claims for assistance at either 'One Stop Shops' with other service providers, or at any of the Department's service outlets.

APPEAL FUNDS

11.05 INTRODUCTION

a. Historical

The Australian community has historically come to the aid of people affected by disaster through monetary donations to disaster appeal funds.

The magnitude of disaster events, in terms of such things as the impact on individuals, geographical area and costs have primarily determined the source(s) from which a disaster appeal may be initiated. Generally, local authorities, non-government organisations or the media have initiated disaster appeals when the disaster affects the people, businesses, etc. within that local authority's boundaries.

However, the various state governments and/or the lord mayors of the principal cities have initiated disaster appeals which have national or special interest or widespread impact and are considered to be beyond the capacity of one local authority to manage.

Experience shows that there is a need to have procedures for handling public appeal funds available for use in the event of significant disasters occurring within Australia.

b. **Purpose of this Chapter Part (Appeal Funds)**

This part of Chapter 11 has been designed to assist those involved in the management of an appeal fund, perhaps for the first time and under the pressure of time constraints. It covers a wide range of matters in the establishment and administration of the fund, the determination of those who should benefit from the fund, and the criteria for making grants.

The significance of public appeals as a recovery symbol for a community should be recognised by all involved in the management of appeal funds. Further details of the importance of symbols to individuals and communities affected by disaster may be found in Section Two of this Manual, 'Effects on Communities and Individuals'.

- c. **Equity** - The aim is to establish principles which will provide equity for recipients. Because of the wide diversity of need by individuals, it will not be possible to satisfy all individual needs. While accepting this, attention should be given to equity between individuals and groups, mindful of the importance of the appeal in providing a positive recovery symbol to the affected community.
- d. **Flexibility** - The needs of recipients will vary depending on the nature and intensity of the disaster, the nature of the community and the stage of recovery reached. An appeal management needs to continually reassess the assistance it makes available in the light of the current situation.
- e. **Non-prescriptive** - This information is not prescriptive in terms of providing answers to all the issues which confront disaster appeal managers, but rather aims to establish principles of appeal management and raise awareness of the issues about which appeal managers need to make determinations.
- f. **Unintended Consequences** - Consideration must be given to the overall outcomes of distribution decisions to ensure that serious unintended consequences are minimised. Unintended consequences are likely to occur when decisions are made on the basis of a narrow view which does not take into account the overall situation and the situation of that particular moment in the whole recovery process. An example of this is the donation of a specific item, such as refrigerators, to all people affected by a disaster. Whilst this assistance may be significant to householders the impact of such an offer on local businesses may be devastating. A more holistic solution would be to provide funds to householders to enable them to purchase appliances, etc in the local area.

11.06 MANAGEMENT

The management of disaster appeals may be undertaken by trustees operating within the terms of a trust deed. There may also be a need for management and distribution committees to support the trustees in the administration of the fund.

- a. **Trust Deed** - A trust deed is the document which establishes the trust fund, into which donated funds are deposited and from which distributions are made. The deed also determines the conditions of appointment of trustees as well as the fund's purpose, administration and the broad arrangements for distribution of money collected. Trust deeds may be of a continuing nature or created specific to a particular disaster.
- b. **Trustees** - Trustees are appointed as per the terms of the trust deed and hold donated money in trust for distribution within the eligibility arrangements. The trustees are the peak policy making body for the management of the appeal and the distribution of donated money. Final accountability and responsibility for the collection and distribution of money lies with the trustees.
- c. **Management Committee** - The management committee is responsible for the operational management of the disaster appeal. This involves the actual operation of the appeal, within the policies determined by the trustees. Distribution of funds may be undertaken by administrative support staff or the establishment of a separate distribution committee.
- d. **Distribution Committees** - Distribution committees are responsible for acceptance of applications for appeal funds and distribution of money within the policies determined by the trustees and the eligibility conditions determined by the management committee. Distribution committees usually comprise a high proportion of locally-based representatives.
- e. **Types of Organisations which Establish Funds** - A variety of organisations establish funds designed to assist victims of disasters. These include:
 - (1) state governments;
 - (2) local governments;
 - (3) charitable organisations;
 - (4) service clubs;
 - (5) churches; and
 - (6) media.

These organisations either establish special appeal trust deeds or use existing deeds with like objectives to administer the moneys. Australian taxation deduction benefits accrue to donors only if the objects of the trust deed clearly states that the assistance will only be provided to persons in Australia who are 'in necessitous circumstances'.

- f. **Combining or Coordinating Appeals** - The use of existing services and structures are recommended, if they have the capacity, to undertake the administrative procedures relating to the appeal funds. There are also advantages in other appeals being combined with the Government-operated one or, where this is not possible or desirable, being coordinated especially with respect to eligibility conditions and the purposes for which grants are made. The aims of combining or coordinating appeals are to:

- (1) achieve greater equity;
- (2) limit double-dipping;
- (3) prevent gaps in eligibility and benefits; and
- (4) reduce administrative costs.

To achieve combination or coordination with a Government appeal, the announcement of the appeal should publicly invite other appeal managements to participate in a combined fund. Subsequently the management committee should approach other appeal managements to enter into discussions about combination or coordination.

Where other appeals agree to combination the managers of those appeals should be added to the membership of the management committee. Where combination is not possible the management committee should make arrangements with the other appeal managements for exchange of information to achieve the aims detailed above.

- g. **Accountability** - There is a moral and legal obligation for the trustees of appeal funds to account for the donated money. Thus it is recommended that public acknowledgment and advice as to the application of the funds be provided in the media. The audit of the books of account should also be undertaken at regular intervals during the life of the appeal fund and particularly at the closing of the fund. Various legislative requirements are usually applied to the trustees to require these actions.
- h. **Administration Costs** - Consideration should be given to how the administration costs of the appeal are to be financed. In major appeals these can be very considerable with the employment of administration staff over many months. Consideration should be given as to whether the appeal or a sponsoring body, such as a government agency, pays for these costs.

11.07 PRINCIPLES

The following principles are recommended for adoption when establishing and managing disaster appeal funds and the distribution of appeal moneys:

- a. **Policy:**
 - (1) The management committee must involve input from persons from the disaster-affected area.
 - (2) Appeal funds should be distributed in a manner which is accessible, equitable and timely.
 - (3) Eligibility guidelines should be well-publicised and accessible. This should include the use of ethnic media for the benefit of people from non-English speaking backgrounds.
 - (4) The management committee should ensure that distributions from the appeal fund support the recovery of both individuals and the local community.

- (5) Every effort should be made to disburse all moneys collected.
- (6) Where there are a number of organisations conducting disaster appeals, they should be coordinated and, where possible, combined.
- (7) Disbursements from appeal funds should take account of other assistance available to victims.
- (8) Appeal funds must not be used to make loans but should be given as grants for assistance. Loans carry an expectation of repayment, and this is contrary to the desire of donors for their assistance to be made directly available to those affected by the disaster.
- (9) Eligibility conditions for grants should not act as a disincentive to people taking out normal insurance.
- (10) Accounting for all sources of assistance, applicants should not gain financial advantage from their disaster experience.

b. **Administration:**

- (1) The management committee should represent the interests of both the donors and recipients.
- (2) Distribution of funds should only be made available to persons lodging a written application form.
- (3) Subject to a trust deed or legislation, the management committee has the responsibility to determine the criteria and priority for the allocation of grants.
- (4) A report of the operations of the appeal fund, incorporating the financial accounts, should be published.

11.08 GUIDELINES

a. **Trust Fund and Legislation** - Before the creation of the trust deed, consideration should be given to, at least:

- (1) whether the trust will be permanent or disaster-specific;
- (2) the objectives of the trust;
- (3) what will activate the trust (applicable if a permanent trust);
- (4) what will close the trust (applicable if an event-specific trust);
- (5) the body or type of body to which residual assets of the trust are distributed when the trust is closed;
- (6) membership - trustee(s) and management committee;

- (7) whether applicants' eligibility criteria will be specifically included in the trust deed, or whether this aspect will be the responsibility of the committee;
- (8) investment of the funds;
- (9) receipt of moneys; and
- (10) disbursement of moneys.

Should the trust be a statutory fund, care will need to be taken to ensure the relevant legislative provisions are observed.

b. **Tax Deductibility**

The availability of taxation deductibility is a great incentive for people to donate. For this purpose, early contact should be made with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) to advise what is proposed. When the deed is available, it should be forwarded to the ATO for consideration and grant of the tax-deductible status.

Legal assistance is necessary in the development of a trust deed. The following comments are intended as helpful advice and do not substitute for obtaining qualified legal assistance at the time.

Tax deductible status would usually be sought pursuant to Item~`4.1.3 of table 4 of subsection 78(4) of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1936. This allows tax deductible status to a public fund established and maintained for the relief of persons who are in necessitous circumstances. (This may exclude the possibility of payments being made to assist small businesses.)

ATO has indicated that for a fund to be accepted as a 'public' fund, it must be demonstrated that:

- (1) the fund is open to subscription by the public;
- (2) the public, or a significant part of it, must in fact contribute to the fund;
- (3) the public must participate in the administration of the fund; and
- (4) the fund must be applied exclusively for public purposes.

In addition, the winding up provisions in the deed should provide that any body to which the residual assets of the trust are distributed must fall within the provisions of subsection 78(4) of the Act (ie it must also have tax-deductible status under the same section).

- c. Sources of Donations - Often an appeal is launched by the state or a local government body making an inaugural donation. Donations can come from people in all walks of life, and from interstate and overseas if the disaster has a major impact on a large part of the community. Businesses and their workers are also a significant source of donations.

d. Collection of Donations - Immediate consideration will need to be given to ways of making it as easy as possible for the public to donate to the appeal, including through:

- (1) branches of banks;
- (2) local authority offices;
- (3) church offices; and
- (5) newspaper cut-outs to send with the donation.

e. **Material Donations**

Disasters often attract donations of material goods, typically clothing and furniture. This may be in the response to an appeal by the authorities or be motivated by a community wishing to assist those in need.

Material donations tend to have a negative effect on the recovery of a disaster-affected community. The personnel resources devoted to accepting, storing, transporting and distributing material aid may be best directed to other recovery needs. The time taken to manage material aid may preclude usefulness to disaster-affected persons and the donations received may be of little use if of the wrong size, colour or style. The provision of material assistance also reduces the capacity of individuals to manage their own recovery and reinforces their dependence on charity, undermining their self-esteem and dignity.

For these reasons all donations should be monetary. To achieve this it is necessary in the early stages of the disaster for a prominent, credible member of the committee to publicly announce that only monetary donations are required.

Even then, material donations will still be received. It is suggested in these circumstances that such goods be directed to the charitable organisation with expertise in the management of the material of that kind. Where there is a need for material goods to be provided, because of the special circumstances of the disaster, the preferred position is for charitable organisations with expertise in the area to provide material goods in exchange for the proceeds of a material aid appeal.

f. **Acknowledging Gifts**

People and businesses take great pride in seeing their names associated with a publicly-acceptable and worthwhile cause. It is therefore essential to publicly acknowledge donations received in the media. This practice can encourage more donations and is a form of accountability (see also above the sub-paragraph of this Chapter entitled 'Accountability').

Such acknowledgments can be either in the form of an advertisement in daily newspapers, over the radio, on television or in public addresses. Local community newspapers can be used for the same purpose.

g. **Media Involvement**

The media is a powerful tool for all forms of appeals and every effort must be made to enlist the aid of all branches of the media to achieve a successful appeal. Firstly, the media can be employed in various ways to provide publicity for the appeal, including:

- (1) television stations' coverage of the disaster event and showing visual images of the event, accompanied by an advertisement for donations to the appeal. (most television stations will do this as a community service);
- (2) live radio coverage of the disaster event coupled with regular on-air appearances (eg talk back programs by a senior member of the committee); and
- (3) extended newspaper coverage of the disaster event and the recovery efforts alongside advertisements seeking donations to the appeal.

In addition to the 'straight forward' publicity referred to above, the media should also be used as a means of regular reporting on the progress of the Appeal in terms of the level of funds raised and the level of funds disbursed.

It might be appropriate for these reports to be accompanied by before-and-after television footage or photographs. However, this should be treated sensitively, with consideration given to the stage and status of the overall recovery process in the preparation of such a report. In particular, individuals and communities may be particularly vulnerable at certain stages of the recovery process and the possibility of further anger and disappointment may be accentuated.

h. **Disbursements**

Achieving equity in the distribution of disaster appeal moneys is difficult. The needs created by each disaster are unique to that disaster event. Adopting the principles of disaster appeal management referred to earlier will address equitable distribution according to need. Listed below are the major issues for determination by the committee, together with advisory notes to assist in that determination:

- (1) **Eligible Losses** - Examples of likely losses are shown in Annex A to this Chapter, to assist determination of which losses are to be eligible for disbursement from the appeal fund.
- (2) **Priority** - Determination of the priority of eligible losses is important to achieve timely disbursement. Disbursement with respect to emergent circumstances and personal hardship have typically received first priority.
- (3) **Means Tests** - Consideration should be given as to whether eligibility for disbursement is to be means tested, and if so whether the test will apply to assets as well as income.
- (4) **Insurance** - Eligibility conditions should address insured losses and under-insurance.

- (5) Government Disaster Relief Schemes - Assistance provided through State and Commonwealth disaster relief schemes should be addressed in the eligibility conditions. Assistance from Government disaster relief schemes, which are means tested, should not affect eligibility for grants from appeals, as they are targeted towards those in most need who should also benefit from public donations.
- (6) Other Disaster Appeal Funds or Assistance Measures Consideration should be given to the effect on eligibility conditions of disbursement from other appeals, charities and other available funds.
- (7) Specific Purpose Donations - Some donors may wish to donate for a specific purpose, such as residents of a particular area, or to equip a particular service, such as animal welfare. In determining whether it can receive such a donation, the committee will need to determine whether it can make such a disbursement under the terms of its governing trust.
- (8) Range of Applicants - The eligibility considerations should address assessment of applications with respect to individuals, families, dependent children, households, business¹ and non-profit organisations.
- (9) Grievances/Appeals - Consideration should be given as to whether it is intended to establish grievance mechanisms for concerns about eligibility assessments.

i. **Identification of Needs**

The application form should identify losses which will require subsequent assessment. The needs will include emergency food and shelter, personal belongings, household contents, residences, vehicles, income, medical and many others. Not all applicants will be able to identify their needs and losses in the first few days after a disaster. Opportunity should be given to allow subsequent statements of needs and losses as the victims begin to recover and re-evaluate their losses.

j. **Assessment of Needs**

Every effort should be made to ensure that disbursements from public appeal funds are applied equitably and consistently to all persons affected by a disaster. The distribution committee may require external advice to assess claims from applicants in specialist areas such as agriculture, equipment, machinery, or for the determination of family formation. As well as material losses, consideration must be given to the priority for making grants for grief, disfigurement, funeral, medical and rehabilitation expenses.

Staged payments provide the opportunity for assessors to adjust grants in cases where applicants' financial situations change. It can be expected that an applicant's loss may significantly increase or decrease due to the discovery of further losses, because of a late insurance settlement or the receipt of a grant from other sources. It could be six months before estimates stabilise.

¹ Subject to tax deductibility considerations for the appeal fund. Refer to paragraph 44.04b

Personal contact with claimants is the preferred means of obtaining information. The management committee must expect some people who have made applications to be 'dobbled in' by others for alleged over-claiming. The management committee must decide how to handle the advice. It is recommended that discreet follow-up be undertaken on all such allegations.

k. **Insurance**

The quantum of assistance from appeal funds to applicants who have either insured, not insured or are underinsured presents an eligibility dilemma to funds managers. The difficulty is to achieve equity between the three groups.

The distribution of appeal funds should not act as a disincentive to people taking out normal insurance. Yet it is incumbent upon those managing appeal distributions not to leave sections of the community in sub-standard circumstances.

The reasons for non-insurance or under-insurance are many and varied and range from a positive decision not to insure through to unavailability, unaffordability or oversight. It is not possible for, nor indeed the prerogative of, the appeal Committee to make moral judgements about the reasons people do not insure or underinsure.

Appeal eligibility conditions should aim to include insured, non-insured and under-insured applicants. Except in circumstances where all needs are able to be met, the most likely and acceptable aim is for those fully-insured to suffer a lesser overall loss than the other two classes of applicants.

l. **Application Form Design**

The application form should include sufficient information to identify the applicant and to advise where the applicant may be contacted. They should also give advice about the nature of the damage, information for means testing, and insurance coverage. In addition to these details, the information listed in Annex B may also be required.

It is also recommended that a statutory declaration be made to confirm information provided and to acknowledge that grant funds can be reclaimed if compensation is subsequently paid by another authority.

As with any aspect of information provision during the recovery process application forms should adequately meet the needs and diversity of the affected community. Consequently, they may be required in a range of different languages, assistance may need to be provided in their completion, and suitable arrangements should be made for their distribution and collection. This may include the provision of interpreters to assist people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

m. **Boundary of the Disaster Area**

This requirement is often difficult to determine (eg the undamaged areas within the disaster area or incidents occurring on the same day as the disaster). The management committee should determine a policy early to limit ineligible claims and unfulfilled expectations.

LOSSES ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE

Alphabetical list of likely losses for which assistance may be provided

Accommodation

- Emergency accommodation
- Rental assistance
- Tariffs

Business (including primary production)

- Business premises
- Crops
- Equipment
- Fixtures and fittings
- Land rehabilitation
- Loss of profits
- Machinery
- Sheds
- Stock
- Tools
- Vehicles

Community Facilities

- Public
 - Gardens
 - Libraries
 - Neighbourhood centres
 - Parks
 - Playgrounds
- Private
 - Churches
 - Clubs
 - Sporting facilities

Death

- Funeral expenses
- Cost of transportation of body
- Costs relating to recovery of personal effects
- Trust accounts

Disability/Personal Injury

- Cosmetic injury
- Loss of limbs
- Loss of mobility

Household Contents

- Books
- Computers
- Electrical appliances
- Electronic equipment
- Furniture
- Household/garden tools
- Kitchen equipment and wares Linen/blankets/mattresses
- Videos/CDs
- White goods

Loss of Income (non-business)

- Commissions
- Salary
- Wages

Medical Expenses

- Consultation fees
- Hospital expenses
- Medical equipment
- Medication/pharmaceutical

Personal Belongings

- Clothing
- Glasses
- Hobby equipment
- Pets
- School books/equipment
- Toys
- Watches

Residences

- Caravans (permanent living)
- Clean up
- Driveway restoration
- Fences
- Garages
- Garden sheds
- Home units
- Landscaping
- Paths
- Pergolas
- Townhouses

Vehicles (private usage)

- Bicycles
- Cars
- Motor cycles
- Recreational (caravans/boats)
- Trailers
- Trucks
- Vans

APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE

Information required in the application process

In developing application forms for assistance
the following information may be required.

Personal/Identification details

- Name (all residents)
- Date of birth/age
- Occupation
- Address
 - Disaster-affected
 - Temporary/contact

Assistance measures

- type of assistance being applied for
- details of type and amount of assistance received from other sources

Financial details

- Income
- Assets
- Insurance
- Dependants

Residence type

- Principal
- Holiday
- Owner/occupier
- Tenant

Loss/Damage

- Type
 - Property
 - Household
 - Personal effects
 - Fencing
 - Motor vehicle
 - Tools of trade
 - Income
- Extent of damage

Declaration

- Statutory declaration verifying losses
- Commitment to repay funds if compensation for damage/loss is received from another source (ie insurance)

**AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANUAL
DISASTER RECOVERY**

SECTION FIVE

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

SECTION FOUR - DISASTER RECOVERY SERVICES

FURTHER READING

Effects on the Community of Disaster

Ackehurst, C. et al (1990)

The Local Government Engineer in Disaster Recovery,

Australian Emergency Management Institute,
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