Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection

This manual is no longer current. It has been archived. This manual will not be reviewed and should be used for historical reference only.

For further information please refer to knowledge.aidr.org.au

Australian Institute for
Disaster Resilience

Emergency Management Australia

Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department
Emergency Management Australia

MANUAL 18

Community and Personal Support Services

EMA

'safer sustainable communities'

AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY

MANUALS SERIES

PART III
Emergency Management Practice
Volume 3—Guidelines

Guide 2

COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AUSTRALIA

THE AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANUALS SERIES

The first publication in the original AEM Series of mainly skills reference manuals was produced in 1989. In August 1996, on advice from the National Emergency Management Principles and Practice Advisory Group, EMA agreed to expand the AEM Series to include a more comprehensive range of emergency management principles and practice reference publications. The Series is now structured in five parts as set out below.

Parts I to III are issued as bound booklets to State and Territory emergency management organisations and appropriate government departments for further dissemination to approved users including local government. Parts IV and V (skills and training management topics) are issued in loose-leaf (amendable) form to all relevant State agencies through each State and Territory Emergency Service who maintain State distribution/amendment registers. All private and commercial enquiries are referred to EMA as noted at the end of the Foreword on page v.

AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANUALS SERIES STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

			Publishing Status—Aug 98
PART I —THE FUNDAMENTALS			
	Manual 1	Emergency Management Concepts and Principles (3rd edn)	A/R
	Manual 2	Australian Emergency Management Arrangements (6th edn)	R
	Manual 3	Australian Emergency Management Glossary	D
	Manual 4	Australian Emergency Management Terms Thesaurus	D
PART II —APPROACHES TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT			
		Volume 1—Risk Management	
	Manual 1	Emergency Risk Management	D
		Volume 2—Risk Evaluation	
		Titles to be advised	P
		Volume 3—Mitigation Planning	
		Titles to be advised (covering PPRR)	P
		Volume 4—Implementation of Emergency Management Plans	
		Titles to be advised	P
PART III —EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PRACTICE			
		Volume 1—Service Provision	
	Manual 1	Emergency Catering	D
	Manual 2	Disaster Medicine	A/R
	Manual 3	Disaster Recovery	A/R
		Volume 2—Specific Issues	
	Manual 1	Evacuation Planning	D
	Manual	Flood Plain Management	D
	Manual	Flood Preparedness	D
	Manual	Flood Warning	A/R
	Manual	Flood Response Operations	D
	Manual	Civil Defence	D
	Manual	Community Emergency Planning (3rd edn)	A/R
	Manual	Urban Search and Rescue	P
		Volume 3—Guidelines	
	Guide 1	Multi-Agency Incident Management	A
	Guide 2	Community and Personal Support Services	A
	Guide 3	Safe and Healthy Mass-Gatherings	D
	Guide 4	Medical Aspects of NBC Hazards	D
	Guide	Disaster Victim Identification	A/R
PART IV —SKILLS FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES PERSONNEL			

Manual 1	Storm Damage Operations (2nd edn)	A
Manual 2	Operations Centre Management	A
Manual 3	Leadership	A
Manual 4	Land Search Operations (2nd edn—Amdt 1)	A
Manual 5	Road Accident Rescue (2nd edn)	A
Manual 6	General Rescue (4th edn—formerly Disaster Rescue)	A
Manual 7	Map Reading and Navigation (Amdt 1)	A
Manual 8	Four-Wheel-Drive Vehicle Operation (Amdt 1)	A
Manual 9	Communications (2nd edn)	A/R
Manual	Flood Rescue Boat Operation (Amdt 2)	A/R
Manual	Vertical Rescue (Amdt 1)	A/R
Manual	Chain Saw Operation	A/R

PART V —THE MANAGEMENT OF TRAINING

Manual 1	Basics of Training Management (2nd edn)	R
Manual 2	Exercise Management	D

Key to status: A = Available; A/R = original version Available/under Review; D = under Development;
P= Planned; R = under Review/Revision

FOREWORD

The Australian Emergency Guide—Community and Personal Support Services has been developed to assist in the management and delivery of community and personal support services in a disaster context. It comprises principles, strategies and actions, compiled by practitioners with management and service delivery experience in a range of disaster events.

The Guide has been developed by a national consultative committee representing a range of State and Territory agencies involved in the delivery of community and personal support services and sponsored by Emergency Management Australia (EMA).

Proposed changes to this Guide should be forwarded to the Director-General, EMA, through the respective State/Territory emergency management organisation.

This publication is provided free of charge to approved Australian organisations. Copies are issued to appropriate users, upon request, from their State/Territory emergency management organisation.

To support the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, the Australian Government will allow approved overseas organisations to reproduce this publication with acknowledgment but without payment of copyright fees. Manuals and Guides may be supplied to other Australian or overseas requesters upon payment of cost recovery charges.

Consideration will be given to requests from developing countries for multiple copies without charge.

Enquiries should be sent to the Director-General, Emergency Management Australia, PO Box 1020, Dickson, ACT 2602 Australia, (facsimile +61 (02) 6257 7665, e-mail: ema@ema.gov.au).

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The principles of Community and Personal Support Services have been endorsed by the Standing Committee of Community Services and Income Security Administrators (SCCSISA) and commended by the National Emergency Management Committee (NEMC). They are congruent, and ought to be read in conjunction with the Principles of Disaster Recovery Management which are reproduced in this Guide.

This Guide has been developed to assist in the management and delivery of community and personal support services in a disaster context. It comprises principles, strategies and actions, compiled by practitioners with management and service delivery experience in a range of disaster events.

In the process of development of these guidelines, a number of common values emerged which are encapsulated in the Principles. These fundamental values require that Community and Personal Support Services should be provided in a

manner which empowers individuals and communities in the management of their own recovery from a disaster. Specific services and resources should be made available but not enforced in a prescriptive manner. In this context, it is important that any additional support from outside a disaster-affected community ought to be provided with a sense of continuity and integrity of existing services and service providers.

Developing services following a disaster means that service providers must be clear in determining the community of interest with whom they are dealing. This will require an early outreach and on-going assessment process to ensure that services are provided to meet the full range of individual and community needs.

Effective delivery of community and personal support services for an entire community requires genuine recognition and understanding of the full range of cultural groups affected by an event. The initial outreach process and subsequent needs assessment following a disaster should endeavor to identify cultural-specific issues and needs. These needs should be monitored throughout the recovery process. The diversity of an affected community should also be represented in relevant forums.

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

(To be read in conjunction with the Principles of Disaster Recovery Management, detailed in the AEM—Disaster Recovery)

Community and personal support services are most effective when they:

- are provided in a coordinated, timely and culturally-appropriate manner throughout the entire recovery process;

- are available for all people affected by the disaster, including:

    - individuals;

    - families;

    - communities;

    - groups/organisations; and

    - emergency service, recovery workers and volunteers;

- include the affected community in their development and management;

- facilitate sharing of information between agencies as an integral part of service delivery;

- recognise that people will require accurate and current information about the situation and the services available;

- are integrated with all other recovery services, particularly with regard to financial assistance;

- provide assistance and resources to create, enhance and support community infrastructures;

- recognises that cultural and spiritual symbols and rituals provide an important dimension to the recovery process; and

- utilise personnel with appropriate capacities, personal skills and an awareness of the full range of services available.

PRINCIPLES OF DISASTER RECOVERY MANAGEMENT

Disaster recovery is most effective:

- when management arrangements recognise that recovery from disaster is a complex, dynamic and protracted process;

- when agreed plans and management arrangements are well understood by the community and all disaster management agencies;

- when recovery agencies are properly integrated into disaster management arrangements;

- when community service and reconstruction agencies have input to key decision making;

- when conducted with the active participation of the affected community;

- when recovery managers are involved from initial briefings onwards;

- when recovery services are provided in a timely, fair, equitable and flexible manner; and

- when supported by training programs and exercises.

PRINCIPLE 1

Commmunity and personal support services are most effective when they are provided in a coordinated, timely and culturally appropriate manner throughout the entire recovery process.

STRATEGY

1.   Establish dialogue with representatives of the community.

Actions:

- Identify 'natural' leaders within the affected community and establish dialogue about the recovery processes and the available resources.

- Involve 'natural' leaders and other community representatives in the identification of needs.

- Establish a reference group which is representative of the total community.

- Provide the community with information about the recovery process and resources available through the reference group and other appropriate mechanisms.

- Identify external experts who can augment the knowledge and skills of local workers.

2.   Coordinate activities within the affected community in order to support the existing structure, including economic, social, physical and political factors.

Actions:

- Ensure the coordinating and reference groups meet regularly.

- Seek out, and work with, personnel who have credibility and acceptance within the affected community.

- Identify existing services, their capacities to deliver services and any likely gaps.

- Determine what additional services will be required and from where these may be obtained.

- Activate existing systems within the community, designed to ensure a coordinated response by external agencies required to assist with the additional services or to enhance existing services.

- Monitor the effectiveness of the response.

3. Develop common goals among recovery agencies and the community, which ensure the use of local expertise.

Actions:

- Assist external service providers to access local expertise.

- Use local structures where possible, including networks, communication channels and key personnel, to disseminate information and provide services as required.

- Monitor and manage the gradual withdrawal of external services in consultation with the key local services and the community.

- Revert to local services as soon as they are able to take up the tasks and provide resources and support for these services as needed.

PRINCIPLE 2

Community and personal support services are most effective when they are available for all people affected by the disaster, including:

- *individuals;*

- *families;*

- *communities;*

- *groups/organisations; and*

- *emergency service, recovery workers and volunteers.*

STRATEGY

1. **Adopt an inclusive approach.**

   Actions:

   - Identify all segments of the community which may be affected.

   - Disseminate information about responses to disasters and help available.

   - Take a proactive multi-faceted approach to information provision with regular and timely communications through appropriate personnel and networks, for example doorknocks, leaflets, electronic and print media and public meetings.

STRATEGY

2. **Respond to needs and the changing nature of these needs through service delivery process.**

   Actions:

   - Identify what impacts on the community and what particular effects this has on groups within the community.

   - Identify the location of those affected (ie still on site, at home, evacuated to another site or out of the area, in hospital, etc).

   - Monitor changes from immediate needs to delayed reactions within the community.

   - Arrange feedback sessions with targeted individuals and groups (fact-finding).

   - Identify responses appropriate to the changing needs and the best resources at each stage of the response (for example supportive

listening, advocacy, family meetings, school activities, street meetings, information sessions at workplaces, or drop-in centres).

- Establish the ability of organisations working in the community recovery process to care for their own paid workers and volunteers.

- Ensure that policy decisions are discussed with community groups before finalisation and implementation.

- Arrange regular review meetings to monitor changing needs and issues.

STRATEGY

3.   Provide services relevant to individual needs.

Actions:

- Have personal support staff on the ground liaising with and talking to individuals in the community to identify personal and changing needs.

- Ensure that persoanl support staff report back to trhe Recovery Committee.

- Ensure that the Recovery Committee coordinates all actions.

- Provide Recognition of practical needs.

PRINCIPLE 3

Community and personal support services are most effective when they include the affected community in their development and management.

STRATEGY

1. **Engage the community.**

Actions:

- Establish a committee representative of the community.

- Encourage early involvement of representatives of the affected community.

- Utilise the initial needs assessment/outreach process as a means of engaging those people affected.

- Work with the community in organising community/interest group meetings.

- Use the full range of media to disseminate information.

- Publish a newsletter/bulletin to provide information on human interest and encourage community involvement.

- Implement outreach programs.

- Locate recovery centres to provide easy access.

STRATEGY

2. **Maximise community participation and self-determination.**

Actions:

- Provide appropriate resources in support of community activities (ie administrative, financial, human and physical resources).

- Utilise local resources wherever possible.

- Encourage support of local trade and commerce.

- Advocate support of local trade and commerce.

- Ensure community participation in the Community Recovery Committee.

- Encourage/support the community in on-going community/interest group meetings.

- Ensure community involvement in the development and publication of newsletters and other information dissemination processes.

STRATEGY

3.   Identify key community members.

Actions:

- Identify formal and informal leaders and networks and encourage their participation in the recovery process through consultation, support, training and supervision.

- Utilise existing groups and maintain their profile and capacity.

- Encourage and support groups which emerge as a result of the disaster.

- Encourage community leaders to acknowledge people's experiences.

PRINCIPLE 4

Community and personal support services are most effective when they facilitate sharing of information between agencies as an integral part of service delivery.

STRATEGY

1. Ensure information flow.

Actions:

- Identify existing formal and informal communications networks between agencies.

- Encourage cooperation between agencies to ensure provision of current, accurate, consistent information to the community, through the media and other sources of information dissemination (ie newsletters, outreach programs).

- Provide regular briefings for the dissemination of information to government and authorities.

- Establish effective databases and inter-agency networks.

- Develop/revise protocols to ensure information exchange between agencies.

- Maintain confidentiality and privacy principles.

- Communicate good news and achievements by agencies.

STRATEGY

2. Ensure cooperative and collaborative provision of services.

Actions:

- Develop appropriate complementary networks that capture deficiencies/gaps.

- Conduct inter-agency briefings and feedback sessions on effectiveness and efficiency.

- Conduct service coordination briefings.

- Pool/share resources between agencies where practicable.

- Respect the integrity of local agencies.

- Avoid duplication of services and identify gaps.

PRINCIPLE 5

Community and personal support services are most effective when they recognise that people will require accurate and current information about their situation and the services available.

STRATEGY

1.   Ensure open and effective communication.

Actions:

- Identify a formal contact officer in the Emergency Operations/ Co-ordination Centre.

- Appoint a person based in the Recovery Centre to liaise with:

    – local or statewide media;

    – local government; and

    – human service agencies.

- Implement a range of local information strategies to:

    – distribute information to the affected community by way of:

        * local/regional newspapers;

        * information packs;

        * information newsletters and updates;

        * local/national radio/TV; and

        * noticeboards;

    – identify 'experts' who could talk to the media about aspects of disaster recovery such as effects on families, individuals or property; and

    – use existing networks, community groups and leaders.

Note: Accessibility of information should be ensured for all people affected by the event, including community members who may be housebound, socially isolated or have special needs.

- Facilitate lines of communication from within the community.

- Plan and control release of information to meet different stages of recovery, and react to emerging local needs.

- Coordinate factual, attributable information.

- Repeat information frequently in the early stages of recovery.

Provide information in a range of languages to ensure accessibility for people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

PRINCIPLE 6

Community and personal support services are most effective when they are integrated with all other recovery services, particularly financial assistance.

STRATEGY

1. Facilitate interagency understanding of overall service provision and responsibilities.

Actions:

- Establish open formal communication channels with other key agencies involved in recovery.

- Respect confidentiality between clients and agencies and establish ways to release and maintain information between agencies.

- Hold regular meetings to discuss implementation of recovery services.

STRATEGY

2. Ensure maximum integration of all service delivery.

Actions:

- Ensure that people distributing financial assistance have a high level of interpersonal skills.

- Determine guidelines for, and coordinate distribution of government and non-government funds.

- Establish principles which will provide equity for all recipients.

- Reassess available assistance continually.

- Ensure locally-based support structures are resourced and strengthened as external service providers withdraw.

- Offer services in a sensitive manner which involves minimum disruption and preserve the independence and integrity of the recipient.

STRATEGY

3. Provide the affected community with the criteria governing grants, loans and gifts.

Actions:

- Involve the community in the process of criteria determination whenever possible.

- Make arrangements which will ensure that disaster affected persons are informed of and receive their entitlements with a minimum of delay.

- Make special arrangements for disadvantaged groups and those with special needs to be informed of and to receive their entitlements.

- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained.

PRINCIPLE 7

Community and personal support services are most effective when they provide assistance and resources to create, enhance and support community infrastructures.

STRATEGY

1.   Ensure an integrated and cooperative approach.

   Actions:

   • Utilise local agency personnel to provide orientation to incoming agency workers.

   • Ensure incoming agencies network with local services and agencies.

   • Encourage interaction between local agencies and services.

   • Provide progressive briefings to elected members, authorities, agencies and residents about actions and plans and seek their participation.

STRATEGY

2.   Support and promote the economic base of the affected community.

   Actions:

   • Employ local residents to deliver services whenever possible.

   • Purchase resources and services locally if available.

   • Encourage agencies to employ local residents and to purchase resources and services locally.

   • Provide government grants, appeal distributions and charitable payments as financial rather than material assistance in support of economic and local business recovery.

   • Ensure all affected persons and agencies are aware of the financial assistance and income security measures available.

   • Assist local agencies to seek funding from available sources.

   • Advocate with financial institutions on behalf of disaster-affected residents.

   • Provide financial counselling services aimed at maintaining the population locally.

PRINCIPLE 8

Community and personal support services are most effective when they recognise that cultural and spiritual symbols and rituals provide an important dimension to the recovery process.

STRATEGY

1. **Encourage and facilitate the development of community-based cultural and spiritual symbols and rituals.**

   Actions:

   - Enable participation of members of all affected cultural groups in recovery activities.

   - Access demographic information from appropriate sources, such as local government, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, chambers of commerce, local libraries and other government/non-government organisations, in order to compile a community profile.

   - Enable and support cultural groups to determine the nature of their own recovery, particularly the development of culturally appropriate symbols and rituals.

   - Establish links with cultural groups through outreach and invitations to taskforce meetings.

   - Ensure representation of cultural groups on decision-making.

   - Resource and support appropriate recovery activities including rituals, memorials, church services etc.

PRINCIPLE 9

Community and personal support services are most effective when they utilise personnel with appropriate capacities, personal skills and an awareness of the full range of services available.

STRATEGY

1.   Ensure that personnel involved have the capacity and skills commensurate with the services required of them.

Actions:

- Be aware of the capacity and skills of personnel and assign functions accordingly.

- Ensure personnel, including yourself, are aware of the process for referral of functions outside personal capacity or skill range.

- Ensure that all personnel accept only those functions that are within personal capacity and skill range.

- Review the current capacity, personal well being and reaction to stressors of personnel with a view to relief.

STRATEGY

2.   Ensure service delivery personnel have an awareness of the range of services available and appropriate referral processes.

Actions:

- Gather, collate and distribute to service delivery personnel information on all agencies providing recovery services:

  – name of service;

  – contact details;

  – access details;

  – range of services;

  – referral processes; and

  – location.

- Update and review information distributed on recovery services regularly to ensure accuracy and currency.

- Monitor the capacity of agencies to accept referrals.

STRATEGY

3.   Ensure personnel are able to identify individual and community needs.

Actions:

- Utilise personnel with training and experience in identifying individual and community needs.

- Ensure personnel have the capacity to recognise their level of expertise and provide them with access to those skilled in identifying individual and community needs.