

Response and recovery: Australia's emergency management arrangements

Speed read

- Response is primarily about the protection of human life, property and the environment.
- Recovery includes working with responders to establish relief functions within and for the affected community and extends across built, social, environmental and economic environments.
- It is not possible to prevent all emergencies and therefore response and recovery need to be well planned for before an event.

Key points

- **The protection and preservation of human life is the over-riding goal of response.**
- **Response to an emergency is often managed first at the local level with assistance from other scales of government if deemed necessary.** A key part of a successful response is giving information and warnings so communities, businesses, essential services and critical infrastructure can act to reduce risk.
- **Response arrangements should include** systems for incident management, unity of command, coordination, and the provision of relief.
- **Relief and recovery are linked.** Planning for relief and recovery commences at the same time as the response phase.
- **Recovery can continue from months to years.** Recovery is more than the replacement of what has been destroyed and the rehabilitation of those affected. The aim is to learn from the disaster experience and support communities in being in a place where they are more resilient than before.
- There are six nationally endorsed recovery principles:
 - Understand the context
 - Recognise complexity
 - Use community-led approaches
 - Coordinate all activities
 - Communicate effectively
 - Recognise and build capacity

Take action

- Become familiar with which departments, organisations, and/or agencies are responsible for response in your area. Note these might differ depending on the emergency or hazard.
- Organise a recovery exercise using the [Recovery Exercising Toolkit \(AIDR 2023\)](#)

More information

- [Australian Emergency Management Arrangements \(AIDR 2023\)](#)
- [Incident Management \(AIDR 2022\)](#)
- [Community Recovery \(AIDR 2018\)](#)
- [AIDR Recovery Collection](#) on the Knowledge Hub