

Flood emergency planning process

Speed read

- Flood emergency plans are developed at different levels, including at the community, local government area, region, zone and state level.
- Flood emergency plans are created using project management approaches.
- Flood emergency plans result in a documented plan and a clear understanding by all stakeholders of their roles and responsibilities in managing a flood emergency.

Key points

1. Establish a project plan and team

Develop a project plan and conduct stakeholder analysis.

- Use project management methodologies to scope the project plan.
- Involve key stakeholders in the planning process by including them on the flood emergency planning team or through consultation.
- Include stakeholders such as the flood control agency, local government, flood hazard leaders, floodplain managers, dam operators, emergency services, and community and business representatives. Stakeholders will vary for different levels of flood emergency planning (i.e. local, zone/region, or state)

2. Understand the flood emergency management risk

Understand flood behaviour, its consequences, likelihood and the associated risk to inform the development of emergency management strategies.

- Use existing information and working closely with flood risk management, dam management agencies and professionals.
- Develop a summary of flood information and a flood emergency management risk analysis that can be easily understood by incident management teams. This may include the use of tables, maps and flood intelligence records.

3. Develop strategies and arrangements

Identify strategies and arrangements to achieve operational objectives and priorities, including roles and responsibilities for implementation.

- Figure out the resources that are available to undertake required tasks, potential constraints and trigger points for when additional resources are needed.
- Extreme flood events will stretch resources and overwhelm strategies that routinely work in smaller events.
- Plan for extreme events requires consideration of how national and international capabilities could be used. Exercise the plan to assess the viability of different strategies.

4. Document the plan

Develop a flood emergency plan that is concise and clear to its audience.

- Templates can be used to assist documenting the flood emergency plan and for consistency in format and arrangements across plans.
- It is important that templates are flexible in content so that users can adapt them to the circumstances of individual areas covered by the plans.

5. Endorsement of the plan

Endorse the flood emergency plan through an appropriate authority.

- For example, emergency management, disaster management or counter disaster committees.
- Legislation or emergency management policy in each jurisdiction may outline the endorsement process.

6. Implementation and review

Make flood emergency plans available to the public to inform them of strategies, arrangements and risk information.

- Flood emergency plans should be used to inform the development of incident action planning.
- Keep the plan alive and fit for purpose through exercising, review, training and community engagement.
- All stakeholders need to be involved in exercises, practising their designated roles and responsibilities as specified in the plan.
- Reviewing flood emergency plans is critical to remain relevant and accurate.

7. Consultation and communication

Consider communication and consultation at each step of the flood emergency planning process.

- Participation by stakeholders including the community builds ownership.
- Include effective strategies for communication and consultation between agencies and stakeholder groups in the community.
- Involve communities in the planning process.

Take action

- Use the template provided in Appendix A in [Flood Emergency Planning for Disaster Resilience](#) (AIDR 2020)
- Chapter 3 in [Managing the Floodplain](#) (AIDR 2017) provides further details on the flood study process.
- Consider running an exercise, refer to the [Managing Exercises](#) (AIDR 2023) and supporting materials to help you with this.

More information

- [Flood Emergency Planning for Disaster Resilience](#) (AIDR 2020)
- [Emergency Planning](#) (AIDR 2020)
- [Community Engagement for Disaster Resilience](#) (AIDR 2020)
- [Land Use Planning for Disaster Resilience Communities](#) (AIDR 2020)