

## Evacuation planning: Stage 1 – Decision to evacuate

### Speed read

- The decision to evacuate (or not) is the first of the five stages of the evacuation process.
- Effective evacuations have clear decision-making processes in place.
- Document the decision-making process and communicate the decision to stakeholders.

### Key points

**Identify authority and responsibility to make decision to evacuate.** It may be the decision of several organisations, so work out how the functions work together during an emergency.

**Identify relevant stakeholders involved.** Typically includes police, other relevant emergency management organisations, local government, community representatives from a diverse cross section of the community.

**Assess risk to support the decision to evacuate or not.** Due to time constraints, this assessment will often be brief. Establish the context, identify, analyse and evaluate the risks, and identify risk treatment options (the most appropriate type of evacuation).

**Communicate the decision.** The evacuation plan includes a process for the timely and effective communication of evacuation decisions to key organisations and stakeholders, potential evacuees and other community affected by the decision.

**Document the decision.** Documentation helps lessons management and continuous improvement processes and may be needed for independent or judicial inquiries or legal processes.

### Take action

Understand underlying principles of effective evacuation management – see the Quick Guide – principles and the regulations, and Chapter 2 of the Evacuation Planning Handbook.

### More information

- [Evacuation Planning](#), Chapter Chapter 3 (AIDR 2023)
- [Emergency Planning Handbook](#) (AIDR 2020)
- [Community Engagement for Disaster Resilience](#) (AIDR 2020)
- [Gender and Emergency Management Guidelines](#) (Gender and Disaster Australia, 2023)
- [Public Information and Warnings](#) (AIDR 2021)