



## Emergency Services information sheet

### Communication Plan

All public communication during an emergency is the responsibility of the Hazard Management Agency (HMA).

The Department of Communities (Communities) and the other support services involved should only provide information to the public and the media on issues that are directly their responsibility.

### Communication procedure

When an emergency arises, a HMA will alert the Emergency Services Unit (ESU) of Communities. The HMA will update the ESU on any developments.

When the ESU has been alerted they will advise SWEC and coordinate the service requirements for each relevant SWEC agency, assisted by the Department.

ESU will update SWEC agencies on the latest developments and media interest.

Relevant SWEC agencies are to include the ESU Director and Corporate Communications officers, as well as all the SWEC agencies into any media releases, emergency activities and situation reports.

### Communication in recovery

The HMA officially hands the responsibility of managing communications to the relevant local government/s leading the recovery.

Local government are best placed to coordinate recovery as they are the

closest level of government to the community, who is the focus of their work at all times. To support effective recovery, local government should provide regular, up to date information about the recovery effort and engage in constant ongoing dialogue using a community-led approach.

The delivery of information to communities in recovery should be available as soon as possible and repeated through various mediums.

The approach aims to lower the anxiety levels of the community affected and to restore a sense of predictability through accurate, credible information.

### Community input

Ascertaining the needs of a community in recovery is vital to ensure effective communication.

An effective way of achieving this is by meeting with existing community networks and the relevant emergency services representatives. This process allows the community and emergency services to identify and address core issues and they emerge.

### Access to information

For the recovering community it is extremely important to access information and should be available to:

- the whole of the affected area
- non-English speaking people
- isolated people and communities
- secondary victims



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Regular updates via a newsletter in the mail or at the welfare centre is a preferred method of accessing information.

### Communication before, during and after

Information before, during and after an emergency should be:

- available and accessible
- timely
- easy to understand

A recurring theme in the feedback from victims is the lack of simple, clear and well advertised information.

It is important to remember that communities in recovery want information about their circumstances not politics.

### Further information

To find out more about communication plans please visit our website.

[www.communities.wa.gov.au](http://www.communities.wa.gov.au)

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