

# Temporary Emergency Accommodation (TEA) Plan

January 2021

Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy



**Queensland**  
Government

## Authorisation

The [Disaster Management Act 2003](#) forms the legislative basis for disaster management arrangements within all levels of government in Queensland. Queensland's whole-of-government disaster management arrangements are based upon partnerships between federal and state government agencies, local governments, government owned corporations, non-government organisations and commercial providers. These partnerships recognise the need for agency collaboration and co-operation to ensure effective coordination of planning, transfer of information and provision of resources to support comprehensive, all-hazards disaster management.

The state disaster management arrangements are described in the [State Disaster Management Plan](#).

The Deputy Director-General, Housing and Homelessness Services, approves this departmental plan as a sub-plan under the [State Disaster Management Plan](#) for the provision of temporary emergency accommodation for displaced people after a disaster event.

## Approved

Chantal Raine

Acting Deputy Director-General

Housing and Homelessness Services

Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy

Date: 08.01.2021

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## Introduction

In line with the [Queensland Disaster Guideline, Evacuation Manual 1.90](#), this Plan contributes to the Local Disaster Management Group's (LDMGs) responsibility to plan for and support the evacuation of a community when appropriate.

As detailed in the *State Disaster Management Plan (SDMP)*, the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (DCHDE) has responsibility for the *provision of temporary accommodation solutions and services for impacted members of a community and/or government response/recovery staff*.

Housing and Homelessness Services are responsible for and not limited to:

- Direct (legal) responsibility for people residing in social housing properties;
- A critical responsibility to directly respond to all residents in the affected areas who are seeking assistance as a result of being displaced from their housing; and
- Leading or participating in a coordinated approach between agencies that have housing related strategies in relation to medium and long-term community recovery.

Depending on the scale and geographical spread of the disaster event, the volume of households impacted by the disaster and the available housing options both within the social housing system and the broader private market, the required response includes:

- Working collaboratively with LDMGs to transition people using evacuation centres;
- Identifying the appropriate emergency/short term housing options for impacted social housing tenancies and for impacted households in the private market (renting or home owners);
- Reviewing short term housing arrangements to transition people from emergency/short term housing into medium/long term housing solutions when necessary;
- Working with key partners such as Q-Build to assess and remedy property damage to social housing properties; and
- Working with community housing organisations to provide a coordinated housing response and to maximise the available housing options for impacted clients.
- Should the disaster event occur in a pandemic environment DCHDE staff will continue to observe and apply all necessary personal protective measures to contain the virus in accordance with Queensland Health advice.
- Should a life-threatening situation occur the Department's response would prevail over pandemic protection measures until that threat subsided.

DCHDE is charged to work with local and state government agencies and non-government partners to provide an effective and coordinated housing assistance response. DCHDE works with retirement villages, residential services, manufactured home parks, community housing providers and specialist homelessness services to check on the welfare of their residents and condition of their properties.

In collaboration with the Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA), Tenants Queensland (TQ) and the Real Estate Institute of Queensland (REIQ) DCHDE works actively to understand the impact of disaster on the private rental market and initiates key actions to ensure housing options and tenure are not adversely impacted.

## Aim and Scope

This Temporary Emergency Accommodation (TEA) Plan (the Plan) describes the arrangements and the roles and responsibilities of key organisations critical to supporting displaced community members through the implementation of this plan.

The Plan details the arrangements required to provide the most appropriate options for those displaced as a result of a disaster event, **after the closure of an evacuation centre**.

In line with the [Evacuation Manual](#), the arrangements detailed in the Plan are designed to be implemented after the initial sheltering phase in an evacuation facility or safer location, to support those who cannot return home.

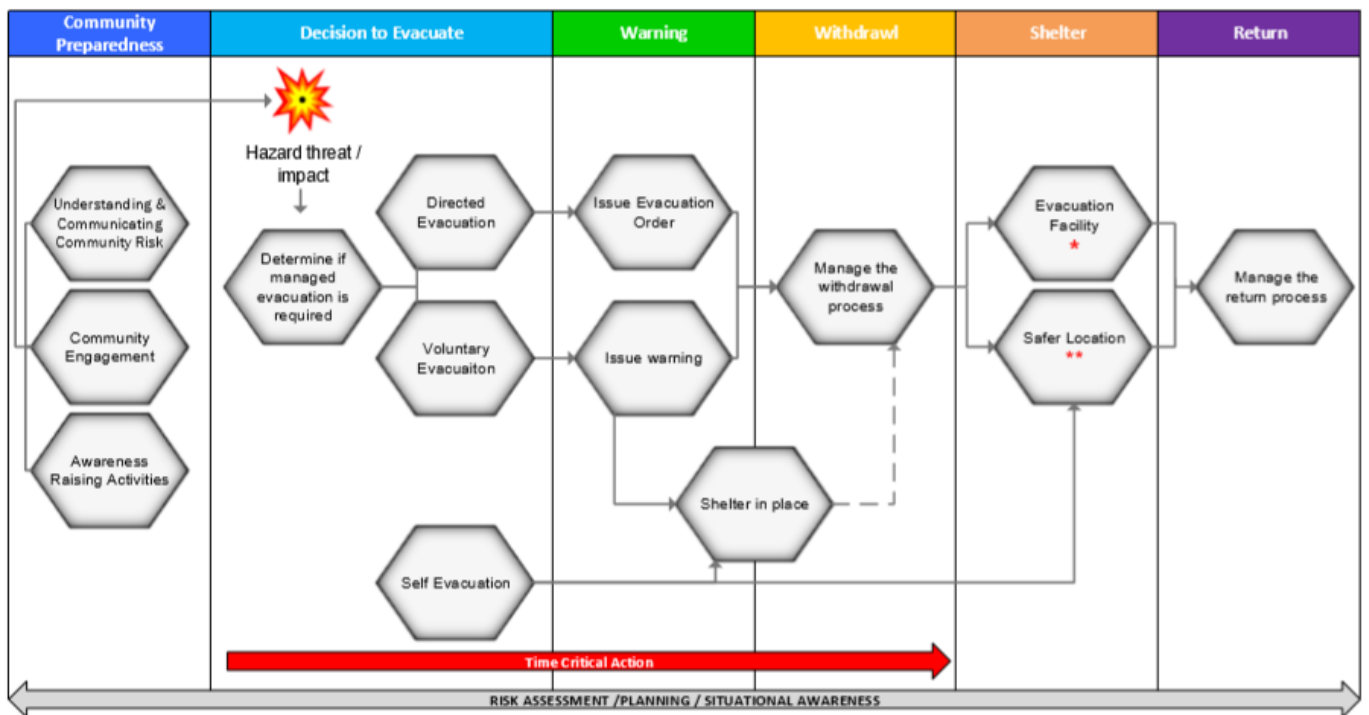


Figure 1. Queensland Evacuation Process, *Evacuation: Responsibilities, Arrangements and Management Manual*

DCHDE work closely with impacted councils to ensure options are available to support those who cannot return home. The provision of accommodation for quarantine purposes during a pandemic is out of scope for this plan. The Department of Health is the lead agency responsible for quarantine during an event.

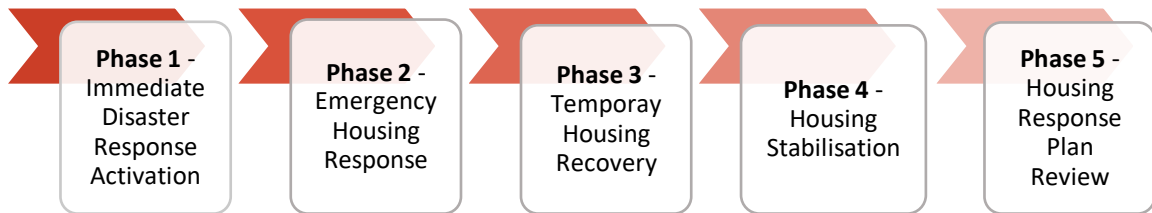
DCHDE provides Emergency Housing Assistance Response (EHAR) services in the event of a pandemic. DCHDE will identify short-term accommodation providers and other housing options to support vulnerable individuals and families who need to self-isolate as part of an immediate accommodation solution.

DCHDE’s approach to providing EHAR during a pandemic includes support for people rough sleeping, couch surfing and living in inappropriate congregate accommodation to relocate to both suitable hotel accommodation and long-term housing solutions, where possible. Such a response also provides the opportunity for those experiencing housing vulnerability, with self-contained accommodation to appropriately observe public health directives during a pandemic and reduce the chances of infection and community transmission.

DCHDE, through QBuild, manages the commercial arrangements established with transportable accommodation providers which can also be activated where accommodation is required for Queensland Government response/recovery workforces. If other eligible entities wish to access the commercial transportable arrangements they can contact QBuild through the District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) Liaison Officers.

## Phases of accommodation support

There are five phases in the provision of accommodation support which recognise the changing needs and information available for the impacted community. It provides a framework for delivering housing outcomes across the key phases of the disaster response and recovery cycle. Accordingly, the Temporary Emergency Accommodation Plan is organised into five phases which may run consecutively or may need to overlap or be extended, depending on the level of community resilience across the economic, infrastructure and human social domains.



### Phase One – Immediate Disaster Response Activation

The Plan is automatically activated when the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (DCHDE) is advised a disaster is occurring, is likely to occur or has occurred.

Housing and Homelessness Services immediately undertake an analysis of available accommodation options through their usual providers and in vacant hotels, motels and caravan parks across the identified Disaster District to understand potential available capacity to accommodate displaced community members.

In the lead up to a known or suspected disaster, the department undertakes the following:

- Housing and Homelessness Services contact vulnerable tenants and Community Housing Providers in the disaster area to ensure tenants and providers are aware of any possible impacts.
- Establish contact with Residential Services Providers to confirm awareness and impact
- Staff deployment lists are confirmed and scripts for Smart Service Queensland (SSQ) are activated.

As soon as the impact of the disaster becomes apparent DCHDE will work with all key stakeholders, particularly the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) nominated officers, to identify short term, medium and longer-term needs as the housing response moves through Phases 2, 3 and 4 outlined in this plan. This includes consideration of potential future needs such as the delivery of insurance claims the arrival of external trades to support reconstruction and the possible change in the rental landscape as a result of the event.

Housing and Homelessness Services will work with the LDMG to develop a council specific Temporary Emergency Accommodation Plan to articulate the local arrangements supporting displaced community members. The development this plan will be triggered when the scale of the housing recovery responses is determined to require a dedicated plan to effectively respond to the housing needs of the community. At this time a dedicated DCHDE Liaison Officer will be provided to work with the LDMG and Local Council.

### Phase Two – Emergency Housing Response

Although this Plan is focused on the support of displaced residents it is critical to ensure that all actions associated with the support of one area do not disadvantage another. Critical to wholistic recovery of

impacted communities is the support of local economic recovery across all other support considerations. To ensure the appropriate accommodation options are provided a clear identification of need and an understanding of local solutions is developed in conjunction with the LDMG.

## Identification of Need - Emergency Housing Assistance Request (EHAR)

The EHAR process is activated in response to disaster events to enable identification of displaced persons who require accommodation support as a result of the disaster and the closure of the LDMG's evacuation centre.

EHAR data provides accurate information on the number of displaced members of the community who have registered as requiring temporary emergency accommodation with DCHDE. The EHAR data assists in identifying the requirement for the provision of accommodation infrastructure to supplement any shortfall in locally available accommodation.

The effectiveness of the EHAR process is dependent on displaced residents registering their requirements with DCHDE. Local governments, the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (DCDSS), and non-government organisations play a critical role in supporting this process by actively referring displaced residents from the impacted community to the website, the smart phone app, the 13 QGOV (13 74 68) call centre, or DCHDE staff at Recovery Hubs or Housing Service Centres to register on EHAR.

## Local Accommodation Support Options – preferred option

Housing Service Centres have several options available which support the temporary accommodation requirements of displaced members of the community and the economic recovery of the impacted regions.

In the first instance, individuals are encouraged to pursue arrangements through their own networks, including family and friends, non-government organisations and insurance company provisions, if available. This allows those with the most need to rapidly access available services.

Where personal network options are unavailable, DCHDE will access a variety of local solutions including temporary accommodation in hotels, motels, caravan parks or serviced apartments.

Throughout the delivery of accommodation options all efforts are made to source local suppliers of services to mitigate the impacts of the disaster on the economy and community. Work to build housing supply options will occur concurrently with engagement locally, to determine the quantum and characteristics of housing need.

Many building contractors will support the economic recovery of the area and will provide long term tenancies as they complete the work on the ground. The impact of government workers and contractors on the availability of temporary hotel accommodation will be monitored, particularly in Phases 1 and 2 to ensure impacted residents are not disadvantaged.

DCHDE will maintain close contact with both the local government and DCDSS to ensure clarity around which locations and facilities are available and can be used.

This collaboration and sharing of situational awareness will ensure consistent information is provided to decision makers across all stakeholders.



## Phase Three – Temporary Housing Recovery

The transition period between the immediate needs of displaced residents and the medium to longer term accommodation requires a multifaceted approach led by DCHDE in close consultation with the LDMG, the Human Social Recovery Groups, industry groups and local agents, to help source an appropriate supply of sustainable accommodation solutions.

The DCHDE Communication Plan and Schedule will detail the communication channels that will be used to ensure that messaging to the community begins. This may include radio, print and social media posts as well as information available at Recovery Hubs.

All impacted residents are reminded that they can apply for emergency housing if they are affected by the floods. Access to support products is not time limited and recognises that some people will be able to source their own solutions initially but the longer term impacts of the event may evidence at a later date.

DCHDE staff proactively follow up with EHAR applicants who are staying with family and friends, to confirm the length of this support arrangement and to plan for alternative housing for these people, if required.

DCHDE pauses all social housing allocations state wide and tenants with pre-existing transfer applications may be able to be prioritised to open up additional capacity within the disaster area.

DCHDE relaxes the eligibility criteria so Housing Service Centres can provide a variety of solutions to assist impacted residents to return to the local private housing market. These include:

- RentConnect support
- Bond loans and rental grants
- Home Assist Secure
- Mortgage relief loans
- Access to Homelessness Services
- Serviced apartments
- Head leasing in the private market
- Retirement villages
- Public housing vacancies
- Community Housing Provider vacancies

The relaxed eligibility criteria also allow affected residents to access commercial solutions through real estate agents with approved bond loans and rental grants provided by DCHDE.

DCHDE staff will work directly with local real estate agents to help source an appropriate supply of rental accommodation to meet the diverse needs of the community impacted by the event. DCHDE will provide 6 months' rent in advance, as an incentive to agents so that we can secure head-leasing arrangements on properties.

Real Estate agents are asked to do all they can to offer and support flexible leasing arrangements for those people during the disaster recovery period. In particular, they are encouraged to support short-term leases, as some households may only need a short-term lease while their homes are being repaired.

Landlords and property managers are asked to take a compassionate and flexible approach when dealing with impacted community members.

Social housing tenants who have significant damage to their properties are matched to vacant social housing dwellings, to provide long term accommodation while repairs are undertaken.

As the community transitions through the phases of the disaster response and recovery phases housing needs will change i.e. housing demand may increase and/or decrease. To manage these cycles DCHDE will use the Housing and Social Sub-Committee to identify any known or perceived demand to inform future housing/accommodation strategies. This will include but will not be limited to, understanding future major events in the disaster area, increase in trades (as known by key bodies), rental availability from organisations like the REIQ, Caravan Parks etc.

It is understood that accommodation data is point in time and in some circumstances difficult to obtain however the Sub-Committee will endeavour to use every available means to identify vacancy and demand and scenario plan accordingly.

## Transportable accommodation support options

If the EHAR process identifies the accommodation need is likely to significantly exceed the Disaster District available solutions, the local government, in consultation with DCHDE, would forward a formal request for assistance (RFA) to the DDMG for the provision of transportable accommodation.

The provision of temporary emergency accommodation infrastructure is only considered when all other practical options to accommodate displaced persons within the Disaster District have been exhausted.

If transportable accommodation is required DCHDE will provide a liaison officer to work with the requesting council to ensure the delivery and siting of the accommodation units is managed efficiently and transparently.

The activation of transportable accommodation solutions carries additional risks including financial impacts if the accommodation need is not accurately understood prior to procurement, social risks if the management of the facility is not correctly undertaken, and the risk of long term unsustainable future community expectation.

Additionally, transporting accommodation into a community adds the further complexity of identifying appropriate sites to locate the new infrastructure. Requirements such as the size of land required, the availability of utilities and services, access and egress availability, and the land ownership all need to be considered.

For these reasons it is imperative that councils identify locations where transportable accommodation may be placed. DCHDE liaison officers at the DDMGs are available to assist in this assessment.

### Transition

Decommissioning of the transportable accommodation facilities may be undertaken as a staged process or as a single activity. As residents transition out of the facility to longer term accommodation solutions, parts of the facility such as accommodation units may become redundant.

DCHDE, in conjunction with key partners, will advise on the need to maintain the facility infrastructure in full or whether parts of the facility can be decommissioned and removed.

DCHDE is responsible for coordinating the decommissioning of the transportable accommodation facility in conjunction with the supplier.

As required, restoration of the site will occur to pre-disaster standard and be carried out in conjunction with the asset owner.

## Phase Four – Housing Stabilisation

DCHDE will continue to assist impacted residents to return to economic and social independence by assisting them to maintain stable housing.

DCHDE will support impacted residents with an individualised case management approach and pathway planning to determine longer term housing solutions. This will involve establishing place-based housing case coordination, ensuring people are connected to appropriate local support services. Social housing tenants will be supported to reconnect with the community through Tenant Connect.

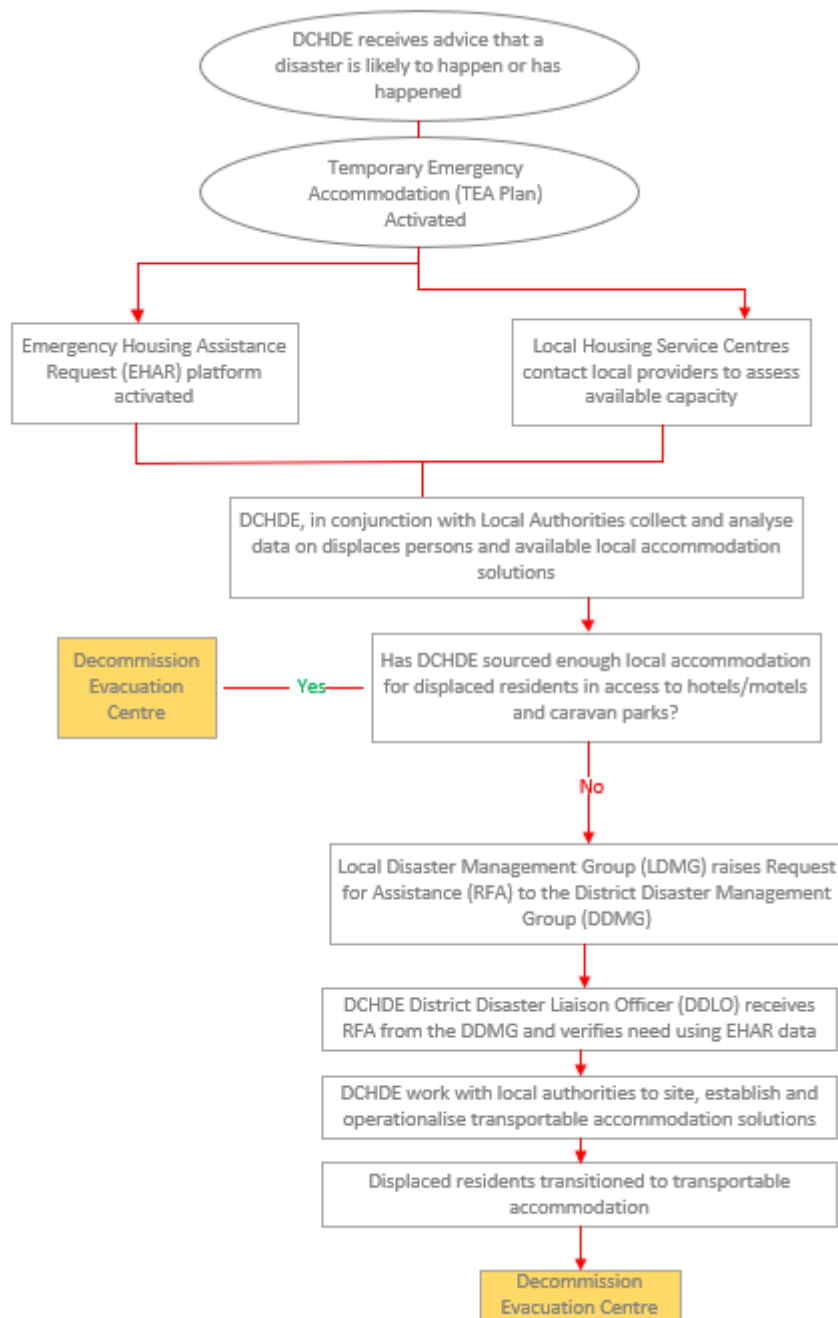
Some of DCHDE's key objectives during this phase are to resolve individual cases, complete social housing repairs, and assist to address any remaining systemic local housing issues.

## **Phase Five – Housing Response Plan review**

In line with the State Disaster Management Plan and the recommendations from the Inspector-General Emergency Management's review of Tropical Cyclone Debbie operations, DCHDE will undertake a review of the decisions, processes and protocols of any emergency planning arrangements after an event.

Through a series of workshops and online surveys, stakeholders will be asked to contribute any identified successes and areas for improvement. This continuous improvement cycle ensures the effectiveness of outcomes for displaced residents are increased and lessons learned for future events.

**Attachment 1 - TEA process flowchart** (below Box for Local HSC contacts Local providers to assess avail capacity should be changed to “Contact Government Travel Office to source accommodation”)



## Attachment 2 - Roles and Responsibilities

Organisation	Roles and responsibilities
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and refer impacted community members to register with EHAR</li> <li>• Maintain operations within evacuation centre until the assessment of further accommodation need has been assessed</li> <li>• Coordinate the transition of displaced residents of evacuation centres into the alternate accommodation, in conjunction with DCHDE and DCDSS</li> <li>• Provide a liaison officer to work with DCHDE if transportable accommodation is required.</li> </ul>
DCHDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the EHAR process, assess the potential continued support requirement for displaced people when the evacuation centre closes.</li> <li>• Identify and source support services for displaced residents in alternate accommodation</li> <li>• Maintain close liaison with local government and DCDSS to implement alternate accommodation solutions</li> <li>• Provide status updates to DDMGs and LDMGs regarding EHAR applicant requirements, assessments and the potential requirement for transportable accommodation</li> </ul>
DCDSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and refer impacted community members to register with EHAR</li> <li>• Promote EHAR process through District Human Social Recovery Group partners</li> </ul>

## Attachment 3 – Five Phases Accommodation Options

The suggested short, medium and long term accommodation options to be considered over the five phases of accommodation support are listed in the table below. The accommodation options identified in the table represent the starting point when demand needs are identified.

Short Term (Phases 1 - 2)	Medium Term (Phase 3)	Long Term (Phase 4 onwards)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motels and hotels</li> <li>• Serviced apartments</li> <li>• Head leasing private market</li> <li>• Caravan parks</li> <li>• Retirement villages</li> <li>• Other regional locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serviced apartments</li> <li>• Head leasing private market</li> <li>• Retirement villages</li> <li>• Public housing vacancies</li> <li>• Community Housing Provider vacancies</li> <li>• Other regional locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public housing vacancies</li> <li>• Community Housing Provider vacancies</li> <li>• Potential DCHDE redevelopments, some in partnership with Community Housing Providers</li> <li>• Other regional locations</li> </ul>

## Attachment 4 - Contacts

Office of the General Manager  
Service Delivery  
Housing and Homelessness Services  
Telephone: (07) 3007 4901  
Email: [HHS-SD-OGM-Executive-Requests@hpw.qld.gov.au](mailto:HHS-SD-OGM-Executive-Requests@hpw.qld.gov.au)

## Attachment 5 - References

The requirements set out in this document are based on, and are consistent with, relevant Government legislation, regulations, directives, information standards and/or policies at the time of publication.

### Legislation and regulations

[Disaster Management Act \(2003\)](#)

### Queensland Government documents

[Queensland State Disaster Management Plan](#)

[Evacuation: Responsibilities, Arrangements and Management Manual](#)

### Former Department of Housing and Public Works documents

[HPW Disaster Management Plan](#)