



WELFARE SERVICES FUNCTIONAL AREA SUPPORTING PLAN

**A Supporting Plan to the NSW Emergency Management
Plan**

Endorsed by the State Emergency Management Committee
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NSW emergency management plans are updated regularly and accordingly printed plans may be out of date. The current plan is always available at www.emergency.nsw.gov.au.

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Part 1 - Introduction

General

Context

- 101 The role of the Welfare Services Functional Area (WSFA) has two major influences: the New South Wales (NSW) Emergency Management Arrangements and the Personal Hardship and Distress Assistance Scheme. This scheme falls under the NSW Disaster Assistance Arrangements which follow the principles of the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements. Under the NSW Emergency Management Arrangements, the Functional Area supports Combat Agencies, Emergency Operations Controllers, and /or the State Emergency Recovery Controller, by delivering welfare services to people affected by natural and/or non-natural emergencies. The Personal Hardship and Distress Assistance Scheme (PH&D) is a funding arrangement between the Commonwealth and the State of NSW that alleviates personal hardship and distress experienced by individuals and families that have been impacted by a natural disaster.
- 102 Two NSW government agencies are responsible for the coordination and delivery of disaster welfare services in NSW. The role of each agency is outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). In summary:
- a. The Disaster Welfare Services Branch (DWS) of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is responsible for the WSFA and has overall responsibility for disaster welfare in NSW. This includes development of strategic policy, principles and guidelines on planning, preparedness, response and recovery aspects of the WSFA.
 - b. The Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) is responsible for providing Key Welfare Services in support of OEM DWS and coordinates the delivery of these services at a district and local level, including the planning, preparedness, response and recovery aspects of the WSFA.
- 103 Reflecting the emergency management principles outlined in State Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN), the WSFA recognises and respects the collective responsibility of all groups of society (that is, all levels of government, the non-government sector, businesses and individuals) in working together to understand and manage the risks in their community. Through increased understanding and therefore increased preparedness, communities will be better placed to respond to and recover from the disasters that impact them.

- 104 The WSFA acknowledges the capacity and capability of local communities and encourages them to build on the networks and arrangements that already exist in order to assist the community to prepare, respond and recover from emergencies. Encouraging disaster affected people to access and use their local support networks is key to building individual and community resilience. Where possible, WSFA agencies will refer disaster affected people to their local services. Local support services may include migrant resource centres, neighbourhood centres, Aboriginal Health Centres, and community sector organisations such as St Vincent De Paul and Salvation Army.
- 105 Disasters by nature are unpredictable. The WSFA arrangements allow District WSFA Coordinators (WelfACs), in consultation with the State WelfAC, to respond in an agile and effective manner to meet the needs of people that have been impacted by an emergency.

Authority

- 106 This Plan is the WSFA Supporting Plan (Plan) to the EMPLAN developed pursuant to the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* (as amended). This Plan may be implemented during response and recovery emergency operations and details the management arrangements adopted by the OEM to coordinate disaster welfare services in accordance with the *Community Welfare Act 1987*, the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989*, and the welfare services function under EMPLAN.

Scope

- 107 This Plan provides for both government and non-government organisations to work in a coordinated manner to provide key welfare services during an emergency. This Plan outlines the agreed roles and responsibilities.
- 108 This Plan provides for the mobilisation of agencies and resources within the WSFA for the conduct of emergency preparedness, response and recovery operations to assist people affected by emergencies, no matter what the cause of the emergency. Types of emergencies include natural disasters and non-natural disasters that require a significant and coordinated response.

Aim

- 109 The aim of this Plan is to describe and detail preparedness measures and arrangements for the provision of key welfare services during response to and recovery from emergencies in NSW.

Role of Welfare Services Functional Area

- 110 The role of the WSFA is outlined in EMPLAN and detailed in this Plan. The role includes the provision of Key Welfare Services to meet the immediate needs of disaster affected people (children, adults, and/or families) and the provision of Disaster Relief Grants for eligible applicants.
- 111 The WSFA is coordinated at the State level by OEM DWS. Coordination and delivery of disaster welfare services at District and Local level is the responsibility of FACS. The delivery of welfare services occurs with the assistance of non-government organisations.
- 112 The Key Welfare Services that are delivered by the WSFA are:
- a. **Immediate financial assistance** – The provision of immediate financial assistance to disaster affected people who are without, or who cannot access the financial resources to assist themselves to meet their immediate needs of food, clothing and shelter. Immediate financial assistance is provided when in-kind services are not available or appropriate.
Coordinator – Family and Community Services (FACS)
 - b. **Emergency accommodation** - The provision of emergency accommodation services (through commercial accommodation providers) to disaster affected people and to WSFA agency members.
Coordinator – Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)
 - c. **Catering** - The provision of emergency catering to disaster affected people and WSFA agency members.
Coordinator – The Salvation Army
 - d. **Material aid** – The sourcing, assembly and distribution of material aid supplies when requested by the WelfAC. This includes basic clothing, towels, nappies and personal items. FACS will resource the purchase of Material Aid.
Coordinator - ANGLICARE
 - e. **Personal support** - The provision of personal support to disaster affected people.
Coordinator – The Australian Red Cross (NSW)
 - f. **Multi-faith Chaplaincy** – The provision of spiritual support and comfort to disaster affected people by the Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network (DRCN).
Coordinator – The Uniting Church in Australia
 - g. **Disaster Relief Grants** – The provision of financial assistance to eligible people affected by natural disasters, as a contribution towards essential

household items and structural repairs. Eligibility criteria include low income and assets, no insurance, and the affected property being the applicant's primary place of residence.

Coordinator – Office of Emergency Management (Disaster Welfare Services Branch).

113 Key Welfare Services may be delivered through:

- a. Evacuation Centres –The centre has a range of agencies (both government and non-government) present to provide support to people (including stranded travellers) and their companion animals who have evacuated from an area. As part of the planning process, Local Emergency Management Committees, in close consultation with combat agencies, are responsible for the identification and evaluation of potential evacuation centres, and the development of strategies for the activation of these venues. The centre is identified and activated by the Combat Agency / Incident Controller or an Emergency Operations Controller, on behalf of the Combat Agency / Incident Controller, and established and managed by FACS during the response phase of an emergency.
- b. Disaster Welfare Assistance Points (DWAP) - A place where a reduced level of key welfare services may be delivered. A DWAP may be established when there is an identified need for some key welfare services but an evacuation centre is not required. It may be before, during or after the impact of a disaster. DWAPs are established and managed by the WSFA.
- c. Disaster Welfare Assistance Line (DWAL) – a public inquiry line that provides information and advice to disaster affected people and referrals to other avenues for assistance. It is managed by the OEM DWS Branch.
- d. Personal Support Outreach - Outreach programs provide personal support and recovery information to impacted households and assist in identifying people who require additional assistance in their recovery. The need for Outreach is determined for each event and coordinated through the WSFA. It is delivered by the Red Cross with the assistance of ANGLICARE or other agencies as required.
- e. Recovery centres – Recovery centres are one-stop shops that centralise Local, State and Commonwealth government and non-government services to people affected by disasters. They minimise travel and inconvenience for disaster affected people, and provide a point of focus and belonging, especially for those dislocated from their community environment. The State Emergency Recovery Controller (SERCON) is responsible for authorising the establishment of a recovery centre and for the overall interagency coordination and management of recovery centre functions.

NSW SES resupply of flood isolated properties – Personal Hardship and Distress

- 114 The NSW State Emergency Service (NSW SES) coordinates resupply to communities and properties that have been isolated due to flooding. Where isolated households are suffering financial hardship and are unable to meet the cost or unable to access finances to pay for resupply of essential grocery items, NSW SES may refer these households to the WSFA. If financial hardship circumstances are verified, the WSFA will organise supply of essential grocery items to be purchased and packaged for delivery by NSW SES.

NSW SES Resupply Referral Protocol to OEM DWS for Flood Operations - Annex B

Disaster Welfare Assistance for quarantined households

- 115 Other types of emergency operations such as Human Influenza Pandemic may also result in households being quarantined by the Combat Agency or EOCON. The WSFA may assist with the purchase of essential grocery items where the isolated or quarantined household is unable to meet the cost, is unable to access finances or online shopping or cannot access family and friends to assist with resupply of essential grocery items. This request will be via the Combat Agency or EOCON and for the period of quarantine.

NSW Human Influenza Pandemic Plan -

<https://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/Pages/publications/plans/sub-plans/human-influenza-pandemic-plan.aspx>

Airport Reception Centres

- 116 Airport reception centres may be established when an airport or aviation emergency has occurred or when a repatriation operation is occurring. The NSW Police Force will control and coordinate airport reception centres. Welfare services provided at the reception centre may include: personal support, immediate assistance and provision of information.

Salvation Army Emergency Services Catering for Combat Agencies Protocol

- 117 Salvation Army Emergency Services (SAES) has agreed to provide catering services to disaster affected people and WSFA agency members at evacuation centres and disaster welfare assistance points, if required. If sufficient resources are available and the WSFA is operational, SAES will consult with the relevant WelfAC, or their delegate about providing catering services to Combat Agencies or EOCONs at a cost to the requesting agency.

Part 2 – Roles and Responsibilities

Organisations and Key Positions

Coordination and Delivery Agencies

- 201 The OEM DWS Branch and FACS are responsible for the coordination and delivery of disaster welfare services. OEM DWS is responsible for policy development and FACS is responsible for district and local level delivery of disaster welfare services.
- 202 A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between OEM DWS and FACS outlines the roles and responsibilities of the two organisations in the delivery of disaster welfare services in the preparation for, response to and recovery from emergencies. Further information on roles and responsibilities may be found in the MOU.

Office of Emergency Management – Disaster Welfare Services Branch

- 203 OEM DWS is responsible for:
- a. supporting the State WelfAC to carry out their role
 - b. formalising arrangements with FACS and Participating and Supporting Organisations to deliver disaster welfare services to disaster affected people
 - c. administering the personal hardship and distress components of the NSW Disaster Relief Assistance Scheme established to provide financial assistance to disaster affected people
 - d. operating the Disaster Welfare Assistance Line.

Department of Family & Community Services

- 204 FACS is responsible for:
- a. appointing and supporting the WelfACs at district level
 - b. resourcing ANGLICARE to obtain material aid at the District WelfAC's request
 - c. delivering welfare services to individuals and families in times of emergencies at the district and local level, including establishing and managing evacuation centres or disaster welfare assistance points and participating in appropriate recovery activities

- d. providing immediate assistance to eligible evacuees who have been impacted by a disaster and contacted FACS as a result of the emergency
- e. coordinating the provision of accommodation, through its social housing program, for people who have longer term or ongoing needs subject to availability and FACS policy
- f. assisting in sourcing commercial emergency accommodation during large scale events.

State Welfare Services Functional Area Coordinator (State WelfAC)

- 205 The State WelfAC is appointed by the Minister for Emergency Services.
- 206 The State WelfAC is responsible for disaster welfare services in preparation for, response to, and recovery from emergencies in the State. Tasks include:
- a. maintaining, coordinating and implementing the NSW Welfare Services Functional Area Supporting Plan
 - b. representing the WSFA on the State Emergency Management Committee and NSW State Recovery Committee
 - c. establishing, maintaining and chairing the State Welfare Services Committee
 - d. appointing a Deputy who assumes the full responsibilities of the State WelfAC in his/her absence
 - e. ensuring arrangements are in place for the provision of a Welfare Services Liaison Officer to the appropriate emergency operations centres during emergencies as requested
 - f. activating the State Welfare Services Coordination Centre as required
 - g. maintaining partnerships and formalising arrangements with Participating and Supporting Organisations, and other government and non-government organisations.

District Welfare Services Functional Area Coordinators

- 207 The District WelfAC is responsible for disaster welfare services in preparation for, response to, and recovery from emergencies in the district. The tasks of the District WelfAC reflect those of the State WelfAC outlined at paragraph 206 but at a FACS District level.

Participating Organisations

- 208 Participating Organisations are those non-government organisations providing key welfare services who have given formal notice that they are willing to participate, and commit resources in the management of emergencies, once formally requested and as appropriate to the emergency operation.
- 209 A MOU between OEM DWS and the Participating Organisations outlines the roles and responsibilities for the provision of key welfare services in an emergency. The Participating Organisations are:
- a. ANGLICARE
 - b. ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency)
 - c. Australian Red Cross (NSW)
 - d. The Salvation Army
 - e. Uniting Church in Australia (Synod of NSW and ACT)
- 210 The Participating Organisations will develop and maintain, in concert with the OEM DWS, cooperative arrangements for planning, exchange of information, training and continuing liaison regarding preparedness for and response to emergency operations.

Participating Organisation State Coordinators

- 211 Participating Organisations are to appoint a State Coordinator whose tasks include:
- a. coordinating and implementing the arrangements outlined in this Plan for the key services detailed in the OEM DWS – Participating Organisation MOU
 - b. nominating a Deputy State Coordinator who assumes full responsibilities in the absence of the State Coordinator
 - c. developing strategies to ensure an effective response to emergency operations in NSW.

Participating Organisation Roles

ANGLICARE

- 212 ANGLICARE will:
- a. source, procure and deliver basic material aid items when requested by an Evacuation Centre Manager

- b. assist Red Cross in personal support outreach when required
- c. provide general support services to OEM DWS and other Welfare Services Participating Organisations, when other Participating Organisations require increased capacity during an emergency operation.

ADRA

213 ADRA will:

- a. provide emergency accommodation services (through commercial venues, including motels and hotels) to disaster affected people and, by arrangement with the State WelfAC, emergency accommodation for WSFA agency members.

Australian Red Cross (NSW)

214 The Red Cross will:

- a. provide personal support services to disaster affected people including the reception of disaster affected people at established evacuation centres and disaster welfare assistance points, care and comfort, information, referral and interpersonal help through measures such as Psychological First Aid and outreach.

The Salvation Army

215 The Salvation Army will:

- a. provide / coordinate emergency catering services to disaster affected people and WSFA agency members. Provision of catering services may be available to Combat Agencies where the relevant WelfAC has determined that capacity and resources are available.

Uniting Church in Australia NSW/ACT Synod

216 The Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network will:

- a. coordinate the delivery of multi faith chaplaincy services to people in evacuation centres, or other places as appropriate, in response to disaster events which result in significant loss of property and/or life or significant distress for the affected community.

Supporting Organisations

217 OEM DWS has arranged and maintains agreements with various supporting organisations who have agreed to provide appropriate resources, technical and

specialist advice, and welfare support during emergencies. Supporting Organisations include, but are not limited to:

Department of Human Services – Australian Government

- 218 The Department of Human Services is responsible for the development, delivery and improvement of social and health-related services for all Australians and development of service delivery policy. The Department’s principal role in a disaster event is maintenance of the Australian Government’s social security safety net for all Australians through:
- a. continuity of Commonwealth payments and services for existing customers
 - b. provision of information and advice about Commonwealth payments and services for affected Australians.
- 219 The Department also delivers additional Australian Government assistance (payments and services) when requested by the Commonwealth.
- 220 All local arrangements involving the Department are subject to the Secretary of the Department of Human Services or a delegated officer authorising staff to be in the field for the particular event.

Save the Children Australia (SCA)

- 221 Children have unique physical and psychological needs during disasters. The WSFA will assess each emergency event, in terms of the type of disaster, duration, impact, and the characteristics of the impacted community itself to determine the need for specific Child Friendly interventions.
- 222 At the request of the State WelFAC, following recommendation from the Evacuation Centre Manager, SCA will provide child friendly spaces and activities for longer-term evacuation centres where there are significant numbers of children and, in general, where there is a SCA team in the area.

Other Stakeholders

- 223 Other stakeholders in the community services sector play a vital role in developing resilience and capacity in local communities and assisting and supporting people after a disaster has impacted. Local Governments, and in particular, their community services and community development role, are crucial in establishing and maintaining community service organisations’ networks that can be accessed following the impact of a disaster. An example of a stakeholder with special community resilience and emergency arrangements, is the NSW Jewish Community Security Group (CSG) who have advised the WSFA of the Jewish

Community's security and emergency and crisis planning arrangements. These arrangements are managed by the CSG as the coordinating agency and operate under the auspices of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and NSW Council for Jewish Community Security and may be accessed during emergencies affecting the NSW Jewish community.

- 224 Liaison with organisations in the community services sector provides opportunities to identify where the functional area can work with the sector to develop a coordinated and planned response that meets the specific needs of impacted individuals and families.

Other Functional Areas

- 225 Other Functional Areas may assist the WSFA when requested. In particular:
- a. Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area (Department of Primary Industries) – provision of welfare and accommodation for companion animals at evacuation centres or in designated care facilities
 - b. Engineering Services (NSW Public Works Advisory)
 - i. provision of expert advice to assist in the assessment of applications for Disaster Relief Grants for essential structural repairs to homes
 - ii. coordination of Clean Up Assistance Programs for eligible disaster affected people
 - c. Health Services (NSW Health) provision of medical, public health and mental health support and advice including linkages to referral pathways, health risk assessments and coordination of first aid services
 - d. Transport Services (Transport for NSW) – provision of transport assistance to evacuees and to transport-dependent people.

Part 3 – Planning and Preparation

Planning Requirements

Welfare Services planning arrangements at district and local level

- 301 The arrangements outlined in this Plan are reflected at a FACS District level. The district arrangements cover the emergency management regions or parts thereof contained in that FACS District and include how welfare services will be delivered at a local level.

Emergency Management Committees

- 302 WSFA representatives attend the State and Regional Emergency Management Committees and contribute to emergency management planning.

Review of State Welfare Services Functional Area Supporting Plan

- 303 The State WelfAC is to ensure this Plan is reviewed every five years or when relevant aspects require review following emergency operations or changes to legislation.

Welfare Services Functional Area Committees

State Welfare Services Functional Area Sub Committee

- 304 The State WelfAC establishes the State WSFA Sub Committee to the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC), which is known as the State Welfare Services Committee (SWSC).
- 305 The SWSC comprises the principal government and non-government agencies that form the planning and working elements of the WSFA Supporting Plan to the EMPLAN. The committee meets a minimum of three times a year.
- 306 As per the committee's Terms of Reference, the purpose of the SWSC is to assist the State WelfAC to establish and maintain systems in order to provide welfare services in response to an emergency and to provide advice and strategic direction to the SEMC regarding welfare services related issues.
- 307 The committee's membership includes agencies that provide advice and guidance in their areas of expertise and have access to valuable networks that may assist in disaster welfare work. Member agencies include, but are not limited to Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Department of Education, Office of Fair Trading, Multicultural NSW, Local Government NSW Commonwealth Department of Social

Services, Department of Family and Community Services and Insurance Council of Australia.

- 308 The SWSC may also meet in response to significant operations and contribute to efficient and effective delivery of welfare services.

District Welfare Services Functional Area Committees

- 309 District Welfare Services Committees are formed throughout the state, based on the FACS District boundaries. The committee may be required to meet in addition to the scheduled meeting times to discuss response and / or recovery operation issues.
- 310 The purpose of the District Welfare Services Committee is to establish and maintain systems in order to provide welfare services in response to an emergency. The membership, structure and operating principles of District Committees reflects that of the State Welfare Services Committee.
- 311 District committees are encouraged to identify and invite representatives from appropriate community service organisations which represent the community demographics within the District.

Training

- 312 Participating Organisations are to develop training programs for their volunteers and organisations in order to deliver the key welfare services outlined in this Plan.
- 313 OEM DWS will plan for and conduct training and exercises to rehearse the coordination of the welfare services response and to test the effectiveness of support arrangements between all involved agencies.
- 314 General emergency management training is provided by the Office of Emergency Management, Capability and Planning Branch.

Part 4 – Response & Recovery

Control

- 401 Control of the response phase of an emergency is always vested with an EOCON or a Combat Agency Controller at local, regional or state level. These arrangements are outlined in EMPLAN. An EOCON or a Combat Agency Controller will request the support of the WSFA if required.
- 402 The EOCON or Combat Agency Controller may manage the emergency from an emergency/agency operations centre. The WSFA may be requested to provide a liaison officer to this centre.
- 403 The SERCON and/or Deputy SERCON are responsible for controlling the recovery from an emergency in accordance with section 20B of the *SERM Act 1989*. The SERCON may request the WSFA to support a Recovery operation (see WSFA key services at paragraph 111).
- 404 A Recovery Coordinator may be appointed for a recovery operation that requires an ongoing coordinated approach. Recovery Coordinators are the public face of the recovery operation, providing leadership to the Recovery Committee and coordinating the recovery effort in accordance with agreed recovery plans.

Coordination

Coordination Arrangements

- 405 The WSFA is managed at each emergency management level by:
 - a. State - The State WelfAC is the Office of Emergency Management's officer responsible for the monitoring, support and coordination of disaster welfare services in the State
 - b. District - The District WelfAC is appointed by the FACS Executive District Director and is responsible for coordinating, monitoring and supporting disaster welfare services in the FACS District.
 - c. Local - The District WelfAC is responsible for coordination of services to be delivered in all local government areas within the FACS' District.
- 406 Reflecting the principles of emergency management, emergency response and recovery operations are generally conducted at the lowest level of effective coordination. In some circumstances, the coordination of the WSFA will rest directly with the State WelfAC. These circumstances may include when:

- a. emergency operations are occurring simultaneously in two or more FACS districts
- b. the SEOCON has identified that a state level response is required and has requested the State WelfAC coordinate WSFA operations
- c. the scale and complexity of the emergency operation exceeds the capability of local evacuation centre arrangements, resulting in the need for a Major Evacuation Centre (MEC).

Evacuation Management Guidelines & Major Evacuation Centre Guideline - <https://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/Pages/publications/guidelines-legislation-policies/Guidelines-Legislation-Policies.aspx>

- 407 There may be situations where both State and District WelfACs are coordinating aspects of an emergency operation at the same time, for example when response and recovery operations are occurring concurrently. In this situation, clear communication on the delineation of roles is paramount to an effective response by the WSFA.
- 408 In some circumstances, in collaboration with FACS executive, the State WelfAC will provide additional operational support to a District responding to an emergency operation. This could include:
- a. prolonged events where centres have been running continually for a number of days
 - b. emergency operations where local capacity has been exhausted and resource assistance is required from a higher level
 - c. when the District WelfAC requests the State WelfAC to coordinate the Welfare Services response.

Coordination Centres

- 409 The WSFA will coordinate its operations via:
- a. **State WSFA Coordination Centre (SWSCC)** - This may be established by the State WelfAC for the coordination of welfare services at the state level
 - b. **District WSFA Coordination Centre (DWSCC)** - This may be established by a District WelfAC to coordinate the provision of welfare services within a FACS District.

Liaison

- 410 Liaison and cooperation between emergency service organisations and the WSFA is essential. This is achieved through the provision of Welfare Services Liaison

Officers to emergency operations centres or agency operations centres and through the timely dissemination of situation reports as required.

Emergency Response & Recovery Operations

Concept of Operations

- 411 A WelfAC may be requested to provide welfare services in support of an emergency operation controlled by an EOCON, a Combat Agency or the SERCON.
- 412 During an emergency response and/or recovery operation, requests for welfare services support are made through the relevant State or District WelfAC or delegate who will activate the appropriate agencies to fulfil the request.

Activation

- 413 The arrangements in this plan can only be activated by State or District WelfACs. The State or District WelfAC can implement the arrangements contained in this plan when requested by an EOCON, by the controller of a Combat Agency or by the SERCON.
- 414 Recognised stages of activation for the WSFA in the response phase are:
 - a. ALERT - On receipt of information about a possible event, a briefing is given to relevant welfare services agency representatives
 - b. STANDBY - On receipt of information about the significant risk of or the imminence of an event occurring, welfare services resources are confirmed and ready to respond if required
 - c. ACTIVATION - On receipt of information that an event has occurred or there is an increased level of risk of an event, welfare services resources are deployed
 - d. STAND DOWN – on receipt of information that an event has finished or the risk has diminished, and that welfare services resources are no longer required, welfare services resources are stood down.

Recovery

- 415 Recovery is the process of returning an affected community to its proper level of functioning after an emergency. A successful recovery operation is characterised by the affected community managing its own recovery with external technical, physical and financial assistance if needed. A successful recovery operation recognises the importance of local community knowledge and capacity, and empowers that local community to direct their own recovery, informed by their community's needs.

NSW Recovery Plan –

<https://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/Pages/publications/plans/supporting-plans/recovery-plan.aspx>

National Disaster Recovery Principles –

<https://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/Pages/emergency-management/Recovery/resources.aspx>

- 416 The WSFA has three roles in Recovery:
- a. coordinating the conduct of Outreach to ensure that disaster affected residents are aware of assistance measures available and to collect and provide information on community needs to inform the recovery process
 - b. administration of the Personal Hardship and Distress Assistance Scheme to eligible individuals, following a natural disaster, to ensure they have a safe and habitable home to live in
 - c. providing advice and referral to affected community members to link them back into the local community services networks.
- 417 The WSFA and its agency members will generally assist a recovering community by:
- a. acknowledging and respecting an impacted community's existing capacity and resilience and referring individuals to these community networks
 - b. valuing the contribution of non-government community service organisations to disaster welfare services delivery
 - c. facilitating linkages between local programs and networks and any community service resources established for the initial phase of recovery.
- 418 Where a disaster impacts on the welfare of individuals and households, the WSFA will be represented on the Recovery Committee as appropriate.
- 419 Services delivered through the WSFA are available to disaster affected people regardless of whether a Recovery Committee is established.

Communications

- 420 The Disaster Welfare Assistance Line (DWAL) is a central support and contact point for disaster affected people inquiring about welfare services advice and assistance. The Disaster Welfare Assistance Line has two levels of operation:
- a. **General hours of operation** - 0830 hrs to 1630 hrs weekdays excluding public holidays
 - b. **Emergency hours of operation** – extended hours of operation during an emergency as required.

421 The Public Information and Inquiry Centre (PIIC) may be activated by the State EOCON to assist with general public inquiries. If the PIIC is activated in the initial stage of the emergency operation, the State WelfAC, in consultation with the State EOCON, may arrange for the Disaster Welfare Assistance Line to be diverted to the PIIC. A liaison officer from the WSFA may be requested at the PIIC if such a diversion is arranged.

Part 5 - Administration

Administration of Finance

- 501 Funding for the provision of welfare services will be conducted in accordance with guidelines and include:
- a. OEM will collate costs associated with operational expenditure and seek reimbursement from the Disaster Relief Account (DRA)
 - b. each Participating Organisation or Supporting Organisation by arrangement is to meet operational costs for an emergency and then seek reimbursement from OEM as costs are known
 - c. FACS will meet operational costs for an emergency and seek reimbursement of Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery (NDRRA) expenditure from DRA as costs are known.

Part 6 - Annexes

Annex A – Definitions and Acronyms

The definitions below relate to this plan. Other definitions should be referred to in EMPLAN.

Combat Agency

the agency identified in EMPLAN as the agency primarily responsible for controlling the response to a particular emergency (Source: SERM Act).

Family and Community Services (FACS)

NSW Department of Family and Community Services.

Coordination

the bringing together of agencies and individuals to ensure effective emergency or rescue management, but does not include the control of agencies and individuals by direction (Source: SERM Act).

Disaster affected person

a person who is in need or distress, or whose property is lost or damaged as a result of a disaster (Source: *Community Welfare Act 1987*). People affected by disaster include individuals, families and children.

Disaster

In this plan means the same as Emergency.

Disaster Welfare Assistance Line (DWAL)

the Office of Emergency Management operated public inquiry line for people seeking information and advice on disaster welfare assistance.

Disaster Welfare Assistance Point (DWAP)

a nominated place where a reduced level of Key Welfare Services may be delivered when a fully functioning evacuation centre is not required, but where some immediate assistance measures are required; before, during or after an event. Disaster Welfare Assistance Points are managed by the WSFA.

District

an area of the state established by Department of Family and Community Services for administrative and management purposes.

District Welfare Services Functional Area Coordinator (District WelFAC)

the officer appointed by FACS as the Welfare Services Functional Area Coordinator for all Emergency Management Regions or parts thereof contained within a FACS District boundary.

EMPLAN

the New South Wales State Emergency Management Plan. The object of EMPLAN is to ensure the coordinated response to emergencies by all agencies having responsibilities and functions in emergencies (Source: SERM Act).

Emergency

an emergency due to an actual or imminent occurrence (such as fire, flood, storm, earthquake, explosion, terrorist act, accident, epidemic or warlike action) which:

- (a) endangers or threatens to endanger, the safety or health of persons or animals in the State, or
- (b) destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage, any property in the State,

being an emergency which requires a significant and co-ordinated response.

For the purposes of the definition of emergency, property in the State includes any part of the environment of the State. Accordingly, a reference in the Act to:

- (a) threats or danger to property includes a reference to threats or danger to the environment, and
- (b) the protection of property includes a reference to the protection of the environment

(Source: SERM Act).

Emergency Accommodation

is a type of immediate assistance that may be offered to disaster affected people who cannot return home for the foreseeable future and who are, for whatever reason, unable to be accommodated through family and friends.

Emergency Management Region (Region)

the State is divided into such regions as the Minister may determine by order published in the Gazette. Any such order may describe the boundaries of a region by reference to local government areas, maps or otherwise (Source: SERM Act).

Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)

a centre established at State, Region or Local level as a centre of communication and as a centre for the coordination of operations and support during an emergency (Source: SERM Act).

Evacuation Centre

is a centre set up at the request of a Combat Agency or EOCON to meet the immediate needs of disaster affected people following evacuation from an emergency situation. This may include travellers (commuters and tourists), who are unable to complete their journey.

Emergency Operations Controller (EOCON)

a generic term used to refer to the relevant level of Local, Regional or State Emergency Operations Controller with reference to a particular operation.

Immediate Assistance

including food, clothing, personal items and emergency accommodation, may be provided to meet the essential emergency needs of people who are directly affected by a disaster. The assistance may be provided during and in the first days after a disaster (NSW Disaster Assistance Guidelines).

Liaison Officer (LO)

a person, nominated or appointed by an organisation or functional area, to represent that organisation or functional area at a control centre, emergency operations centre, coordination centre or site control point. A liaison officer maintains communications with and conveys directions/requests to their organisation or functional area, and provides advice on the status, capabilities, actions and requirements of their organisation or functional area (Source: EMPLAN).

Key Welfare Services

are the services necessary to meet the immediate needs of disaster affected people. The Key Welfare services are Emergency Accommodation, Immediate Financial Assistance, Emergency Catering, Material Aid, Personal Support and Multi-faith Chaplaincy.

Local Government Area

an area within the meaning of the *Local Government Act 1993* and includes a combined local government area as referred to in section 27 of the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act, 1989* (as amended) (Source: SERM Act).

Major Evacuation Centres (MEC)

large scale evacuation centres that require multi agency co-ordination and response to deliver basic services to individuals and their companion animals affected by an emergency.

MECs are established to provide emergency accommodation when the scale and duration of the emergency are beyond the capability and capacity of the established local/regional emergency management arrangements for evacuation centres (Source: NSW Evacuation Management Guidelines).

Participating Organisation – Welfare Services

those organisations providing key welfare services who have given formal notice to the Disaster Welfare Services Branch of the Office of Emergency Management that they are willing to participate and to commit resources in the management of emergencies, once formally requested and as appropriate to the emergency operation.

Preparation

in relation to an emergency includes arrangements or plans to deal with an emergency or the effects of an emergency (Source: SERM Act).

Prevention

in relation to an emergency includes the identification of hazards, the assessment of threats to life and property and the taking of measures to reduce potential loss to life or property (Source: SERM Act).

Recovery

in relation to an emergency includes the process of returning an affected community to its proper level of functioning after an emergency (Source: SERM Act).

Recovery Centre

a one-stop-shop that centralises Local, State and Commonwealth Government and non-government services to people affected by disaster (Source: NSW Recovery Plan).

Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC)

the committee established under the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act, 1989* (as amended), which at Regional level is responsible for preparing and reviewing plans in relation to the prevention of, preparation for, response to and recovery from emergencies in the region for which it is constituted. In the exercise of its functions, any such Committee is responsible to the State Emergency Management Committee (Source: SERM Act).

Response

in relation to [the stages of] an emergency includes the process of combating an emergency and of providing immediate relief for persons affected by an emergency (Source: SERM Act).

State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC)

the committee established under the *State Emergency Management Act, 1989* (as amended). It is the peak committee which develops emergency management policy and oversees emergency management in New South Wales (Source: EMPLAN).

State Emergency Operations Controller (SECON)

the person appointed by the Governor, on the recommendation of the Minister, responsible, in the event of an emergency which affects more than one region, for controlling the allocation of resources in response to the emergency. The State Emergency Operations Controller is to establish and control a State Emergency Operations Centre (See SERM Act for a full definition).

State Emergency Recovery Controller (SERCON)

the person acting in the position of the Executive Director, Office of Emergency Management and is responsible for controlling the recovery from an emergency that affects more than one region or for which the State Emergency Recovery Controller assumes responsibility (See SERM Act for a full definition).

State Welfare Services Coordination Centre (SWSCC)

the operations centre for the coordination of the WSFA at the state level.

State Welfare Services Functional Area Coordinator (State WelfAC)

the officer appointed by the Minister for Emergency Services as the WSFA Coordinator for New South Wales.

State Welfare Services Committee (SWSC)

is the State WSFA Sub Committee, which is a subcommittee to the State Emergency Management Committee.

Supporting Organisation - Welfare Services

those organisations (government or otherwise), who have indicated a willingness to participate and provide specialist support resources to the Disaster Welfare Services Branch of the OEM and the Department of Family and Community Services during emergency operations.

Welfare Services

means the key services provided to assist in the relief of personal hardship and distress to individuals and families who have been affected by disaster.

Acronyms or Abbreviations relevant to this plan

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AGDRP	Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment
District WelFAC	District Welfare Services Functional Area Coordinator
DRCN	NSW Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network
DSERCON	Deputy State Emergency Recovery Controller
DWAL	Disaster Welfare Assistance Line
DWAP	Disaster Welfare Assistance Point
DWO	Disaster Welfare Officer
DWS	Disaster Welfare Services
DWSCC	District Welfare Services Coordination Centre
EMPLAN	NSW State Emergency Management Plan
EOCON	Emergency Operations Controller
FACS	NSW Department of Family & Community Services
OEM	Office of Emergency Management
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
SAES	Salvation Army Emergency Services
SCA	Save the Children Australia
SEMC	State Emergency Management Committee
SEOCON	State Emergency Operations Controller
SERCON	State Emergency Recovery Controller
SERM Act	State Emergency and Rescue Management Act, as amended 1989
SWSC	State Welfare Services Committee
SWSCC	State Welfare Services Coordination Centre
WelFAC	Welfare Services Functional Area Coordinator
WSFA	Welfare Services Functional Area

Annex B - NSW SES Resupply Referral Protocol to Welfare Services Functional Area for Flood Operations

Overview of Resupply

Resupply is the transport of supplies to isolated properties and/or communities during prolonged flood events. Resupply is a function of the NSW State Emergency Service (NSW SES).

When isolation of a whole community occurs NSW SES assists in the transport of supplies from the designated loading points to local storekeepers, where households and businesses can purchase essential items.

Some households will not have the ability to purchase essential grocery items due to financial hardship. NSW SES may refer these households to the WSFA. Where financial eligibility criteria are met, the WSFA will assist with the purchase of essential grocery items. Welfare Services or their partner agency the Salvation Army will deliver the essential grocery items to the NSW SES nominated point for transport.

Protocol

Whilst each flood event is different, the agreed referral process for those requiring WSFA assistance for resupply is:

