



DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND MANAGEMENT

OPERATIONAL INSTRUCTION

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Introduction

The Department of Health (DOH) has an obligation within Westplan Health to ensure that an efficient health response can be activated to meet health disaster and emergency management requirements.

Aim

Intense media and public interest can be anticipated following the impact of an emergency. The following actions will assist with the handling of the media and public inquiries.

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for the preparation of DOH media statements and coordination of media inquiries during an emergency event lies with the Manager, Public Affairs or nominated delegate. This role will specifically coordinate activities at a state wide level, including:

- Providing up-to-date information to media outlets and service their inquiries;
- Providing media management and communication assistance to senior staff involved in an emergency event;
- Coordinating community announcements to be disseminated via the West Australian media outlets;
- Liaising with public relations staff across the health system;
- Liaising with Government Media Office; and
- Liaising with media and public relations staff from other government and non-government agencies involved in any emergency event (eg Police, FESA, St John Ambulance etc).

Participating Agencies

Other Government agencies and non-government organisations participating with the DOH response should develop, as a part of their own emergency plan, procedures to cater for inquiries by the public and media organisations. The procedures should specify who would manage the overall media liaison during an emergency event. Media releases and public information should be restricted to that information which specifically relates to the functions of that organisation.

Health Disaster Coordinators

All Health Disaster Coordinators must advise Public Affairs (9222 4333 all hours) of the DOH's involvement with regard to a significant disaster ASAP.

State Public Information Emergency Management Support Plan

The State Public Information Emergency Management Support Plan can provide additional media relations support for the health emergency management functions if required. The State Health Coordinator, with advice from the Manager Public Affairs, is responsible for determining if such assistance is needed. The State Public Information Plan is available electronically through the Disaster Preparedness and Management intranet site;

<http://intranet.health.wa.gov.au/disaster/otherstateplans.cfm>

Monitoring and Review

The Executive Officer, Disaster Preparedness and Management is responsible for the monitoring and review of this document on an annual basis.