



# City of Ipswich

**IPSWICH  
CITY  
COUNCIL**

**AGENDA**

*of the*

**ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE**

**Held in the Council Chambers  
8th floor – 1 Nicholas Street  
IPSWICH QLD 4305**

On Thursday, 7 October 2021  
At 10 minutes after the conclusion of the Economic and Industry Development  
Committee

**MEMBERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE**

Councillor Russell Milligan (**Chairperson**)  
Councillor Andrew Fechner (**Deputy Chairperson**)

Mayor Teresa Harding  
Councillor Jacob Madsen  
Councillor Kate Kunzelmann

**ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE AGENDA**

*10 minutes after the conclusion of the Economic and Industry  
Development Committee on **Thursday, 7 October 2021**  
Council Chambers*

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\*\* Item includes confidential papers

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**ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE NO. 9**

**7 OCTOBER 2021**

AGENDA

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA**

**BUSINESS OUTSTANDING**

**CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

1. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE NO. 2021(08) OF 2 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 September 2021 be confirmed.

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**OFFICERS' REPORTS**

2. **BREMER CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT OFFICER - PROGRESS OF RECRUITMENT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SCENIC RIM COUNCIL AND SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND COUNCIL OF MAYORS**

This is a report concerning the progress of recommendations from the report to the Environment and Sustainability Committee 11 March 2021 (Attachment 1) concerning The Bremer River Catchment Manager Role. Specifically, Ipswich City Council's partnership with Scenic Rim Regional Council and the South East Queensland Council of Mayors (CoMSEQ) through the Resilient Rivers Initiative (RRI) and supporting the establishment of a Bremer River Catchment Management Officer role.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the report be received and the contents noted.

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3. **REVIEW AND UPDATE OF THE LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT SUB PLAN - PUBLIC INFORMATION AND WARNINGS**

This is a report concerning the review and amendments to the Local Disaster Management Sub Plan – Public Information and Warnings.

**RECOMMENDATION**

- A. That the Local Disaster Management Sub Plan – Public Information and Warnings, as detailed in Attachment 3 be approved.
  - B. That the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor, be authorised to make amendments deemed necessary based on further comment received from members of the Local Disaster Management Group, who form part of the governance arrangements for the adoption of this plan.
- 

4. **2021-2022 SEASONAL PREPAREDNESS**

This is a report concerning council's preparedness activities in relation to the 2021-2022 severe weather season, which typically runs from October through April. In addition to an increasing chance of La Niña, which typically brings more rainfall to Queensland, the Bureau of Meteorology forecast for October to December currently indicates that South East Queensland is likely to experience warmer than average nights and above average rainfall.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the report be received and the contents noted.

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**NOTICES OF MOTION**

**MATTERS ARISING**



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**ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE NO. 2021(08)**

**2 SEPTEMBER 2021**

MINUTES

**COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCE:** Councillor Russell Milligan (Chairperson); Councillors Andrew Fechner (Deputy Chairperson), Mayor Teresa Harding, Jacob Madsen, Kate Kunzelmann and Marnie Doyle (Observer)

**COUNCILLOR'S APOLOGIES:** Nil

**OFFICERS' ATTENDANCE:** Acting Chief Executive Officer (Sonia Cooper), Acting General Manager Infrastructure and Environment (Sean Madigan), General Manager Planning and Regulatory Services (Peter Tabulo), Natural Environment and Land Manager (Phil A. Smith), Team Leader (Strategic Catchment and Conservation Planning)(Tim Shields), Acting Manager Environment and Sustainability (Matthew Pinder), Manager Communication and Engagement (Laura Bos), Senior Digital Media and Content Officer (Jodie Richter), Native Title and Cultural Heritage Officer (Tina Longford), Senior Policy and Communications Officer (David Shaw), ProAv Professional Services Technician (Bradley Hebbard) and Theatre Technician (Harrison Cate)

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA**

Councillor Madsen advised that in relation to Item 3 titled Ipswich Rivers Improvement Trust 2021-2022 Annual Precept, both Councillor Fechner and himself are appointed by Council to the Ipswich Rivers Improvement Trust.

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**BUSINESS OUTSTANDING**

Nil

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**CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

1. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE NO. 2021(07) OF 5 AUGUST 2021**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Moved by Councillor Andrew Fechner:

Seconded by Mayor Teresa Harding:

**That the minutes of the Environment and Sustainability Committee  
No. 2021(07) held on 5 August 2021 be confirmed.**

AFFIRMATIVE

Councillors:

Milligan

Fechner

Harding

Madsen

Kunzelmann

NEGATIVE

Councillors:

Nil

The motion was put and carried.

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**OFFICERS' REPORTS**

2. **TRADITIONAL OWNER REFERENCE GROUP**

This is a report concerning the establishment of the Traditional Owner Reference Group and its subsequent role, relationship and responsibilities with Ipswich City Council (Council) and the Native Title Party.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Moved by Councillor Andrew Fechner:

Seconded by Councillor Jacob Madsen:

**\*\*\*A. That Council endorse the formation of the Traditional Owner Reference Group as detailed in the Draft Terms of Reference outlined in Attachment 1.**

**\*\*\*B. That Council endorse the proposed structure of the roles, relationships and responsibilities for the Traditional Owner Reference Group, Council and the Native Title Party as defined in Attachment 3.**

AFFIRMATIVE

Councillors:

Milligan

Fechner

Harding

Madsen

Kunzelmann

NEGATIVE

Councillors:

Nil

The motion was put and carried.



3. IPSWICH RIVERS IMPROVEMENT TRUST 2021-2022 ANNUAL PRECEPT

This is a report is concerning the 2021-2022 annual precept for the Ipswich Rivers Improvement Trust (IRIT), as per Part 6 Division 2 section 14(1) of the *River Improvement Trust Act 1940*.

Council is liable to contribute to the trust each year the sum prescribed in the precept.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved by Councillor Andrew Fechner:

Seconded by Mayor Teresa Harding:

- A. **That Council negotiate with the Ipswich Rivers Improvement Trust to agree on an alternative sum for their 2021-2022 Precept for a reduced works program this year.**
- B. **That Council work in partnership with the Ipswich Rivers Improvement Trust to develop an agreed 3-5 year works program and funding model.**

AFFIRMATIVE

Councillors:

Milligan

Fechner

Harding

Madsen

Kunzelmann

NEGATIVE

Councillors:

Nil

The motion was put and carried.

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4. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT POLICY

This is a report concerning Ipswich City Council's Natural Environment Policy. The policy has been developed to fill a policy gap. Extensive internal and external consultation was undertaken when developing the policy.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved by Councillor Andrew Fechner:

Seconded by Mayor Teresa Harding:

**That the policy titled 'Natural Environment Policy' as detailed in Attachment 1 be adopted.**

AFFIRMATIVE

Councillors:

Milligan

Fechner

Harding

Madsen

Kunzelmann

NEGATIVE

Councillors:

Nil

The motion was put and carried.

5. IPSWICH PLATYPUS E-DNA MONITORING REPORT FOR 2020-2021

This is a report concerning the results of Ipswich City Council's 2020-2021 platypus eDNA (environmental DNA) monitoring program. This sampling represents the fifth and most extensive platypus monitoring event council has undertaken across the city's waterways.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved by Councillor Andrew Fechner:

Seconded by Councillor Jacob Madsen:

- A. That the platypus eDNA monitoring program be continued annually to monitor the city's existing populations, as well as transient individuals moving throughout systems.**
- B. That habitat protection and improvement be conducted around key strongholds such as the Woogaroo, Sandy and Opossum Creek catchments to ensure the long-term sustainability of these populations.**
- C. That detailed habitat assessments be undertaken to identify areas of high-quality habitat and better understand key threats to platypus sustainability.**

AFFIRMATIVE

Councillors:

Milligan

Fechner

Harding

Madsen

Kunzelmann

NEGATIVE

Councillors:

Nil

The motion was put and carried.

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6. STORMWATER QUALITY OFFSET PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT

This is a report concerning the Stormwater Quality Offset's Program status from commencement until June 2021. It consists of an overview of the program's rules, list of water quality improvement projects delivered to date including expenditure, liability, efficiency and most recent implementation plan review.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved by Councillor Andrew Fechner:  
Seconded by Mayor Teresa Harding:

**That the Ipswich City Council Stormwater Quality Offset Program Annual update report be received and the contents noted.**

AFFIRMATIVE

Councillors:

Milligan

Fechner

Harding

Madsen

Kunzelmann

NEGATIVE

Councillors:

Nil

The motion was put and carried.

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7. DISABILITY INCLUSIVE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION PROJECT

This is a report concerning the Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Project undertaken by Council throughout 2020-2021.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved by Mayor Teresa Harding:  
Seconded by Councillor Kate Kunzelmann:

**That the report be received and the contents noted.**

AFFIRMATIVE

Councillors:

Milligan

Fechner

Harding

Madsen

Kunzelmann

NEGATIVE

Councillors:

Nil

The motion was put and carried.

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8. GET READY QUEENSLAND WEEK 2021

This is a report concerning Get Ready Queensland Week in October 2021 and the community education, awareness, and engagement activities that council will carry out in support of the initiative.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved by Mayor Teresa Harding:

Seconded by Councillor Kate Kunzelmann:

**That the report be received and the contents noted.**

AFFIRMATIVE

Councillors:

Milligan

Fechner

Harding

Madsen

Kunzelmann

NEGATIVE

Councillors:

Nil

The motion was put and carried.

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9. DEPUTY CHAIRPERSONS FOR THE LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT GROUP AND THE LOCAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE GROUP

This is a report concerning the appointment of an additional Deputy Chairperson to the City of Ipswich Local Disaster Management Group and a Deputy Chairperson to the City of Ipswich Local Recovery and Resilience Group.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved by Mayor Teresa Harding:

Seconded by Councillor Andrew Fechner:

- A. **That Council appoint Councillor Russell Milligan as the secondary Deputy Chairperson of the City of Ipswich Local Disaster Management Group.**
- B. **That Council appoint Councillor Russell Milligan as the Deputy Chairperson of the City of Ipswich Local Recovery and Resilience Group.**

AFFIRMATIVE  
Councillors:  
Milligan  
Fechner  
Harding  
Madsen  
Kunzelmann

NEGATIVE  
Councillors:  
Nil

The motion was put and carried.

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**NOTICES OF MOTION**

Nil

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**MATTERS ARISING**

Nil

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**PROCEDURAL MOTIONS AND FORMAL MATTERS**

The meeting commenced at 12.42 pm.

The meeting closed at 1.16 pm.

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\*\*\*Refer Council Ordinary Meeting of 16 September 2021 for amendment

Doc ID No: A7500648

ITEM: 2

SUBJECT: BREMER CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT OFFICER - PROGRESS OF RECRUITMENT  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SCENIC RIM COUNCIL AND SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND  
COUNCIL OF MAYORS

AUTHOR: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND LAND MANAGER

DATE: 20 AUGUST 2021

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This is a report concerning the progress of recommendations from the report to the Environment and Sustainability Committee 11 March 2021 (Attachment 1) concerning The Bremer River Catchment Manager Role. Specifically, Ipswich City Council's partnership with Scenic Rim Regional Council and the South East Queensland Council of Mayors (CoMSEQ) through the Resilient Rivers Initiative (RRI) and supporting the establishment of a Bremer River Catchment Management Officer role.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

**That the report be received and the contents noted.**

### **RELATED PARTIES**

Scenic Rim Council

South East Queensland Council of Mayors

### **IFUTURE THEME**

Natural and Sustainable

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT/BACKGROUND**

The Resilient Rivers Initiative (RRI) was developed by CoMSEQ in response to the large scale environmental and water quality impacts of the 2011, 2013 and 2015 flood events. These events saw extensive damage to local rivers and waterways, loss of productive agriculture land, and sediment impacts to the waterways of Brisbane, Ipswich and surrounds.

Under the Resilient Rivers Initiative (RRI), a number of Catchment Action Plans (CAPs) were developed across South East Queensland, including the Bremer River CAP.

The objective of the CAP is to facilitate whole of the catchment planning; collaborative working arrangements; list strategic projects and programs; and ultimately to protect and improve waterway stability and resilience in the Bremer River Catchment. Many of the catchments in South East Queensland, including the Bremer River, cross multiple local

authority boundaries and as such require whole of catchment management collaboration and partnerships.

A priority action within the Bremer River CAP is the establishment of a Bremer River Catchment Management Officer.

As per the recommendation and associated resolution of the report tabled to Committee on 11 March 2021, \$30,000 of Ipswich City Council funds were committed to support this partnership and the role. This money will add to the \$190,000 already committed through the Resilient Rivers Initiative. The payment from ICC has since been made to Scenic Rim who auspice and administer to role. In July a recruitment committee consisting of Scenic Rim Council Officers and the Natural Environment and Land Manager at Ipswich City Council completed interviews and selected a preferred candidate. That Candidate has since accepted the offer and began in their role on 30 August 2021.

The officer will be spending a proportion their time with Ipswich City Council delivering programs identified in the Catchment Action Plan and facilitating a network of organisations and groups working on Natural Resource Management projects or in the Bremer River Catchment.

Ipswich City Council also remains an active member of the Resilient Rivers Western Working group a forum for Councils and organisations to share learnings and practises around catchment and waterway project works.

It is envisaged that as well as delivering outstanding actions the Officer will take a lead in reviewing the original plan with considerations to actions completed and new priorities and data.

#### **LEGAL/POLICY BASIS**

This report and its recommendations are consistent with the following legislative provisions:  
*Local Government Regulation 2012*

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Associated risks in regard to this project lie outside the organisation predominantly with Scenic Rim Council. Ipswich City Council will be privy to annual joint reporting around the progress of work in order to judge the value of the Investment.

#### **HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACTS
<b>RECEIVE AND NOTE REPORT</b>
The recommendation states that the report be received, and the contents noted. The decision to receive and note the report does not limit human rights. Therefore, the decision is compatible with human rights.

## **FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The financial commitment of \$30,000 was made last financial year. Ipswich City Council has made further commitments of in-kind support through the provision of associated office/desk space and access to fleet.

Depending on the success of the officer role in delivering against Council's Corporate objectives this year the financial commitment may be replicated or reviewed in following years.

## **COMMUNITY AND OTHER CONSULTATION**

The development of the Bremer River Catchment Action Plan (CAP), which recommended the establishment of this role and will guide the projects to be delivered, was compiled collaboratively through a series of three workshops where active input was received from Ipswich City Council, Scenic Rim Regional Council, CoMSEQ, and multiple community stakeholders including the Bremer Catchment Association, the Bremer River Network, West Moreton Land Care, Boonah Land Care, and Native Plants Queensland.

State Government through the Department of Environment and Science also provided input through the workshop process and subsequently commenting on drafts of the plan.

The position description for the Catchment Management Officer was drafted jointly between officers from Scenic Rim Regional Council and Ipswich City Council and approved by Officers representing CoMSEQ.

Conversation and consultation with the Resilient Rivers task force and CoMSEQ officers are ongoing.

The Environment and Sustainability Committee and Council were consulted through the previous report process.

## **CONCLUSION**


In line with the Council endorsed recommendation from the Report to this Committee on 11 March 2021 Council has progressed the financial payment to Scenic Rim Regional Council in support of the Bremer River Catchment Manager Officer. Further Council officers have been involved in the recruitment and established and offered the position to a preferred candidate who accepted with a start day of 30 August 2021 for 12 months. The officer will work with both councils within the Bremer Catchment to deliver actions from the Bremer River Catchment Action Plan and build networks with partners and landowners.

This is the first time the Bremer River catchment has had an officer working collaboratively across the whole catchment and marks a step forward for the region in terms of integrated Catchment management.

The officer will also look to begin the process of reviewing the Bremer Catchment Action Plan in line with the recommendations and intention of the original inaugural Plan.



**ATTACHMENTS AND CONFIDENTIAL BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1.	Environment and Sustainability Committee Report of 11 March 2021 - Proposal for Bremer River Catchment Management Officer <a href="#">↓</a> 
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Phil A. Smith

**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND LAND MANAGER**

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Kaye Cavanagh

**MANAGER, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

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ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE  
MEETING AGENDA

11 MARCH  
2021

Doc ID No: A6745996

ITEM: 1

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL FOR RESILIENT RIVERS BREMER RIVER CATCHMENT OFFICER  
HOSTED AS A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN SCENIC RIM AND IPSWICH CITY COUNCIL

AUTHOR: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND LAND MANAGER

DATE: 25 JANUARY 2021

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#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a report concerning a formal partnership with Scenic Rim Regional Council and the South East Queensland Council of Mayors CoMSEQ through the Resilient Rivers Initiative (RRI), to financially support the establishment of a *Bremer River Catchment Management Officer* role.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. That Council provide financial support of \$30,000 for the establishment of the Bremer River Catchment Management Officer role in partnership with Scenic Rim Regional Council.
- B. That Council enter into a partnership agreement with Scenic Rim Regional Council and South East Queensland Council of Mayors (CoMSEQ), outlining the terms and desired outcomes of the funding arrangement.

#### RELATED PARTIES

There are no conflicts of interest or perceived conflicts in relation to this report.

#### ADVANCE IPSWICH THEME

Caring for the environment

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT/BACKGROUND

The *Resilient Rivers Initiative (RRI)* was developed by CoMSEQ in response to the large scale environmental and water quality impacts of the 2011, 2013 and 2015 flood events. These events saw extensive damage to local rivers and waterways, loss of productive agriculture land, and sediment impacts to the main water supply for Brisbane, Ipswich and surrounds.

Under the Resilient Rivers Initiative (RRI), a number of *Catchment Action Plans (CAPs)* were developed across South East Queensland, including the Bremer River CAP (Attachment 1).

The objective of the CAP is to facilitate whole of the catchment planning; collaborative working arrangements; list strategic projects and programs; and ultimately to protect and improve waterway stability and resilience in the Bremer River Catchment. Many of the catchments in South East Queensland, including the Bremer River, cross multiple local authority boundaries and as such require whole of catchment management collaboration and partnerships.

A priority action within the Bremer River CAP is the establishment of a Bremer River Catchment Management Officer.

#### **FUNDING FOR A CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT OFFICER**

Funding for the Bremer River Catchment Management officer is proposed to be funded across the two partner councils and through the Resilient Rivers Initiative. Similar Catchment Management Offices are operating in this way, such as the Logan and Albert catchment officer (Logan City and Scenic Rim Regional Council) with great success.

The proposed contribution for Ipswich City Council is:

- \$30,000 to cover operational costs (approx. 30% of total FTE costs), and
- desk space and computer / ICT access for one to two days per week for an officer

The position will in turn look to deliver a further \$75,000 worth of improvements within the Bremer River Catchment using funding committed under the RRI. There is also opportunity for the officer to seek additional funding through external grants leveraged against the core RRI funding.

The officer will play a part in strategically aligning communications, planning and projects within the catchment to allow for cooperative and effective collaboration and to encourage and facilitate knowledge sharing through a network of government and community organisations and stakeholders.

Should this position and proposal be supported a specific partnership contract or Memorandum of Understanding will be developed between the parties to stipulate the terms and outcomes of the partnership.

The position description is provided in Attachment 2.

#### **LEGAL/POLICY BASIS**

This report and its recommendations are consistent with the following legislative provisions:  
*Local Government Regulation 2012*

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Council endorsed the Bremer River Catchment Action Plan in 2018 and actions within the document include the development of a catchment wide partnership and a project management role to manage project delivery.

Council's recently adopted Waterway Health Strategy looks at ways and means to protect and enhance its major catchments including the Bremer River as a strategic priority. The Ipswich local government area covers approx. one third (1/3) of the catchment area and as such in order to assist and improve the management of the majority of the catchment area strong partnerships and innovative working arrangements are required. In not perusing this partnership Council will potential miss out on the management and implementation of \$75,000 of improvement funds this year as well as the chance to foster and improve relationships across the catchment with land owners, Scenic Rim Regional Council and CoMSEQ.

#### **FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

\$30,000 of budgeted funding (Waterway funding in the Natural Areas and Land Management budget) is proposed to be contributed to the partnership via Scenic Rim Regional Council to be used as a contribution towards the wages and on costs for the Catchment Management Officer role. This funding can be found via savings within the operational budget.

CoMSEQ has committed a total of \$190,000 for the Bremer River Catchment Action Plan to Scenic Rim Regional Council. This funding is to be split between funding the employment of the Catchment Management Officer, support of planning and projects, and a stipulation that \$75,000 to be expended on on-ground improvement works within the Bremer River Catchment.

#### **COMMUNITY AND OTHER CONSULTATION**

The development of the Bremer River Catchment Action Plan, which will guide this process and the projects to be delivered, was compiled collaboratively through a series of 3 workshops where active input was received from Ipswich City Council, Scenic Rim Regional Council, CoMSEQ, and multiple community stakeholders including the Bremer Catchment Association, the Bremer River Network, West Moreton Land Care, Boonah Land Care, and Native Plants Queensland.

State Government through the Department of Environment and Science also provided input through the workshop process and subsequently commenting on drafts of the plan.

The position description for the Catchment Management Officer was drafted jointly between officers from Scenic Rim Regional Council and Ipswich City Council and approved by Officers representing CoMSEQ.

#### **CONCLUSION**

An opportunity has been presented to Council to partner with Scenic Rim Regional Council in the delivery of the Bremer River Catchment Action Plan through the joint recruitment of a Catchment Management Officer.

Council's proposed contribution to this partnership is \$30,000 plus in-kind support through the provision of a desk and office space for up to 2 days a week for 12 months from the recruitment into the position.

The contribution will go to Scenic Rim Regional Council who will administer the wages of Catchment Management Officer. The officer will work across the entire Bremer Catchment to implement, oversee and facilitate catchment and waterway improvement projects in line with the Bremer River Catchment Action Plan and the Council of Mayors Resilient Rivers Initiative.

The Resilient Rivers Initiative through the Council of Mayors has already committed \$190,000 to the Bremer Catchment to support the development and recruitment into this role and the delivery of waterway and catchment improvement projects managed by that officer. **ATTACHMENTS AND CONFIDENTIAL BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1.	Bremer River Catchment Action Management Plan 2018
2.	Position Description - Bremer Catchment Management Officer Position Description

Phil Smith

**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND LAND MANAGER**

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Kaye Cavanagh

**MANAGER, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Sean Madigan

**ACTING GENERAL MANAGER - INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

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Doc ID No: A7504908

ITEM: 3

SUBJECT: REVIEW AND UPDATE OF THE LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT SUB PLAN -  
PUBLIC INFORMATION AND WARNINGS

AUTHOR: EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER

DATE: 23 AUGUST 2021

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This is a report concerning the review and amendments to the Local Disaster Management Sub Plan – Public Information and Warnings.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- A. That the Local Disaster Management Sub Plan – Public Information and Warnings, as detailed in Attachment 3 be approved.**
- B. That the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor, be authorised to make amendments deemed necessary based on further comment received from members of the Local Disaster Management Group, who form part of the governance arrangements for the adoption of this plan.**

### **RELATED PARTIES**

There are no related party matters nor conflicts of interest associated with this report.

### **IFUTURE THEME**

Safe, Inclusive and Creative

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT/BACKGROUND**

In accordance with section 57 of the *Disaster Management Act 2003*, “a local government must prepare a plan (a local disaster management plan) for disaster management in the local government’s area”. This may include the preparation of any disaster management sub plans deemed necessary.

Council identified that a sub plan for public information and warnings was necessary and prepared the same, this was adopted by the Infrastructure and Emergency Management Committee No 2018 (04) of 16 April 2018 and Council Ordinary Meeting of 23 April 2018 (Attachment 1).

The 2018 plan has been reviewed and updated to reflect changes in practice from the release of the Australia’s Warnings System. The updated plan, with amendments identified using track changes are outlined in Attachment 2.

Attachment 3 contains the final draft of the sub plan being submitted for consideration by this committee.

### **LEGAL/POLICY BASIS**

This report and its recommendations are consistent with the following legislative provisions:  
*Disaster Management Act 2003*

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

If the sub plan is not approved, there are potential compliance risks regarding the failure to meet a legislated requirement under the *Disaster Management Act 2003*. There are also potential reputational risks should a disaster occur, and the sub plan is not current.

### **HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

<b>HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACTS</b>
<b>NON-DISCRETIONARY DECISION</b>
Recommendation A states, that Council approve the Local Disaster Management Sub Plan – Public Information and Warnings, (Attachment 3). Council has no ability to act differently/make a different decision because of section 57 (1) of the Disaster Management Act 2003, which requires Council to ‘ <i>prepare a plan (a local disaster management plan) for disaster management in the local government’s area</i> ’ and Section 23(f) and 30(e) both state that one of the functions of the Local Disaster Management Group is to ensure the community is aware of the ways of mitigating the adverse effects of an event, and preparing for, responding to and recovering from a disaster.
Therefore, while the proposed decision may not be compatible with human rights Council’s decision will not be unlawful under the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> .

### **FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no additional financial implications that will result from the adoption of this report.

### **COMMUNITY AND OTHER CONSULTATION**




There has been no community consultation regarding this report. Opportunity for feedback was provided to the City of Ipswich LDMG and feedback where provided, has been incorporated into the draft.

### **CONCLUSION**

The updated sub plan fulfils the requirement of the *Disaster Management Act 2003* and ensures that Council’s approach is aligned with the Queensland State Disaster Management Plan and current practices.

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**ATTACHMENTS AND CONFIDENTIAL BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1.	2018 Public Information and Warnings Sub Plan <a href="#">↓</a> 
2.	2021 Public Information and Warnings Sub Plan - tracked changes <a href="#">↓</a> 
3.	2021 Public Information and Warnings Sub Plan - Final Draft <a href="#">↓</a> 

Matthew Pinder

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER**

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Phil A. Smith

**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND LAND MANAGER**

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Kaye Cavanagh

**MANAGER, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

***“Together, we proudly enhance the quality of life for our community”***





City of Ipswich

Local Disaster Management Sub Plan

# Public Information and Warnings

A3980098: April 2018



## Approval and Endorsement

Approved by resolution at the Infrastructure and Emergency Management Committee No. 2018(04) of 16 April 2018 and Council Ordinary Meeting of 23 April 2018.

Endorsement by the City of Ipswich Local Disaster Management Group Meeting of 15 May 2018.



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## **PART 1: ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE**

### **1.1 Authorising Environment**

This plan is prepared by Ipswich City Council under the auspices of the Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP) for the City of Ipswich and pursuant to the provisions of Section 57(1) of the Disaster Management Act 2003.

### **1.2 Principles**

This sub plan has been prepared as supporting document to the LDMP. Accordingly it must be read in conjunction with the LDMP itself. With the exception of pertinent information, reference to existing statements, definitions and acronyms will be excluded from the sub plan.

Each disaster event is unique and adaptations to this material will required on a case by case basis.

### **1.3 Purpose**

The purpose of this sub plan is to provide a framework in the provision information and warnings to affected members of the public during a disaster situation. It may be utilised by all members, deputies and advisors of the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) and the organisations that they represent and / or any partnering organisations involved to assist in the preparation and dissemination of information and warnings.

This sub plan is not intended to replace or replicate the public information and warnings procedures of individual organisations. It instead strives towards a consistent approach to have an informed and aware community.

### **1.4 Key Objectives**

The key objectives of this sub plan is to:

- Detail the arrangements related to public information
- Detail the arrangements related to the issue of warnings

### **1.5 Continuous Improvement**

This document will be reviewed at least annually<sup>1</sup> with relevant amendments made and distributed as needed. The review process will be in accordance with the State guidelines. Minor amendments that do not materially affect the plan are able to be authorised by the Principal Officer (Emergency Management).

<sup>1</sup> Section 59, Disaster Management Act 2003, Reviewing and Renewing (the) Plan



It is acknowledged that feedback from stakeholders is essential. Proposals for amendments or inclusions can be addressed in writing to:

Post Chief Executive Officer  
Attention: Emergency Management Unit  
Ipswich City Council  
PO Box 191, Ipswich QLD 4305

Email [council@ipswich.qld.gov.au](mailto:council@ipswich.qld.gov.au)

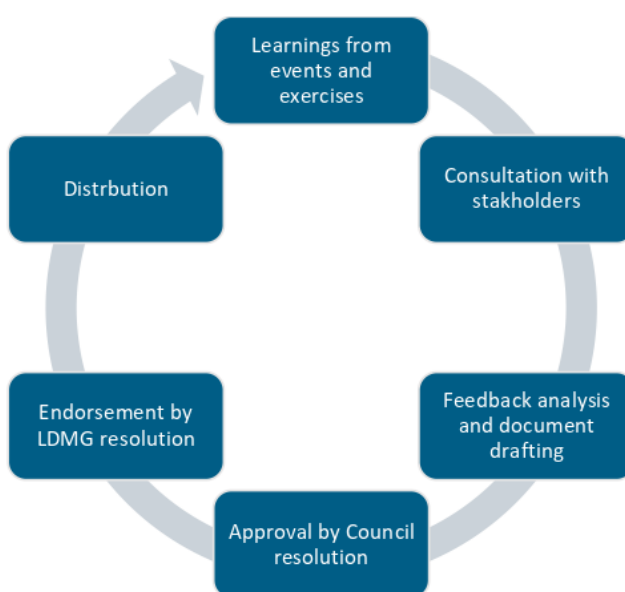


Figure 1 – Continuous Improvement Cycle

### 1.6 Amendment Register

Major document review history is maintained through Council’s internal electronic document management system. Table 1 outlines minor and inconsequential amendments that have occurred between major reviews or amendments.

Vers	Date	Comment
2.00	April 2018	Approved and endorsed version
2.01	Feb 2019	Annual review – minor and inconsequential amendments – update to template
2.02	21 May 2019	Minor and inconsequential amendments including amendments to reflect consolidated warnings principles released by Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience.

Table 1 – Amendment Register



## PART 2: PUBLIC INFORMATION VERSES WARNINGS

### 2.1 Public Information

**Definition:** Public information is the provision of focussed communication with the community for the incident through gathering, assembling and disseminating accurate, relevant, timely information to the public and other stakeholders outside the incident management team.<sup>2</sup>

Public information undertakes three key functions:

1. Disseminating information
2. Managing contact from the media and public
3. Consulting and liaising with affected communities

### 2.2 Warning

**Definition:** An emergency warning is a message signalling an imminent hazard, which may include advice on protective measures.<sup>3</sup>

The Australian Government's Attorney-General's Department, Emergency Warning Arrangements (2013) states:

*The purpose of an emergency warning is to inform the community of an impending or current threat and to prompt an appropriate response or action. The action that is required of the community is usually contained in the warning message, for example, 'seek further information', 'take shelter', or 'activate your emergency plan'.*

*Emergency warnings are a primary tool for disaster management and play a significant role in the protection and resilience of Australian communities. Emergency warnings have the potential to significantly reduce the impact of disasters on communities, properties and the environment when they are combined with the community's understanding of environmental risks and disaster preparedness.*

<sup>2</sup> Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, IMS Directive 06.01.00 (Version 1 29/01/2016)

<sup>3</sup> Emergency Management Australia, Attorney-General's Department, *Australian Emergency Manuals Series: Glossary*, 1998, p 115.



## PART 3: PROVISION OF WARNINGS

A warning is a message that informs and enables individuals and communities to take appropriate action in response to an impending hazard.<sup>4</sup> It is important that a variety of warning dissemination methods are utilised to ensure broad distribution of warning messages. A range of methods of warning dissemination will ensure coverage of differing demographics, geographic locations, and time of day.<sup>5</sup>

The *Disaster Management Act 2003* Section 23(f) and 30(e) both state that one of the functions of the LDMG and the District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) respectively is:

*'... to ensure the community is aware of the ways of mitigating the adverse effects of an event, and preparing for, responding to and recovering from a disaster.'*

When at risk areas and the location of safer areas have been determined, the decision to evacuate at risk members of the community can be made. This information needs to be communicated to the community.

The process for the notification and dissemination of warnings is not a function dependent on the activation of the LDMG; rather it should be the automatic responsibility of LDMG members, regardless of the status of activation of the LDMG.<sup>6</sup> It is each organisation's responsibility to disseminate its own warnings as per internal organisational procedures.

Consideration should be given to the specific needs of the exposed population with particular consideration of special needs groups and how the dissemination of warnings will be best achieved to reach these groups.<sup>7</sup>

### 3.1 The Stages of Warning

The City of Ipswich LDMG (and Ipswich City Council) adopts the national tiered arrangements related to warnings and advice messaging. This is consistent with the intent of the Queensland Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery Disaster Management Guidelines.

Each level has a colour and symbol assigned, these colours are aligned to Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) Bushfire Warnings. In the absence of guidelines in Queensland, the symbols are aligned to those used by Emergency Management Victoria (EMV).

<sup>4</sup> Queensland Government *Queensland Evacuation Guidelines for Disaster Management Groups*

<sup>5</sup> Queensland Government *Queensland Evacuation Guidelines for Disaster Management Groups*

<sup>6</sup> Ipswich City Council Local Disaster Management Plan Version 3.01 February 2016

<sup>7</sup> Queensland Government *Queensland Evacuation Guidelines for Disaster Management Groups*



**Advice**

- Advise messages should be titled **STAY INFORMED**
- An incident is occurring or has occurred in the area
- Access information and monitor conditions
- Impact to the community is estimated at 6 – 24 hours



**Watch and Act**

- Watch and Act messages should be titled **PREPARE TO LEAVE** or **LEAVE NOW**
- An emergency is heading towards you
- Conditions are changing and you need to take action now to protect yourself and your family
- Impact to the community is estimated at 6 – 12 hours



**Emergency Warning**

- Emergency Warnings should be titled **LEAVE IMMEDIATELY** or **SEEK SHELTER**
- You are in imminent danger and need to take action now
- You will be impacted
- Impact to the community is estimated at 0 – 6 hours

Figure 2 – Stages of Warning

### 3.2 National Warning Principles and Processes

The Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience in 2018 released ‘Australia’s Warning Principles.’ These principles consolidated and refreshed existing principles endorsed in 2008.

1. **Life-saving Warnings** can save lives and protect people from harm. They prompt and encourage protective action to minimise the social and economic impacts of an emergency. Warnings are an essential element of effective emergency management.
2. **Empowering:** The provision of warnings enacts a national commitment to building shared responsibility for disaster resilience, by empowering people to make decisions about their own safety.
3. **Trusted, authoritative and verifiable:** For greatest effect, warnings must come from a trusted source and be verifiable through multiple channels. Warnings should therefore be





easily and widely shared to recognise the diversity of potential trusted sources. The official authority issuing a warning should always be clearly stated.

4. **Scaled based on risk:** Scaled warning frameworks should guide the delivery of all warnings and support the consistent risk assessment of a hazard, its impact and its consequence.
5. Timely, targeted and tailored Warnings should be timely, targeted to communities at risk and tailored to provide detail and relevance. Specific consideration should be given to harder to reach and vulnerable members of the community.
6. **Conveying impact:** Warnings should describe the expected impacts and consequences of an approaching or current hazard, to assist people to understand and be motivated to take protective action.
7. **Including a call-to-action:** Warnings should include practical calls-to-action using language tailored to the level of risk, ranging from advice and persuasive recommendations to authoritative direction.
8. **Clearly communicated:** Warnings should be easy to understand and use a consistent structure to provide information. Both written and visual information should be considered to assist with clearly conveying risk and encouraging protective action.
9. **Readily accessible:** Warnings should be disseminated via multiple channels, tailored to suit each channel, and consider accessibility for diverse audiences. Ease of sharing and rapid dissemination should be supported with use of nationally agreed technical standards, and dissemination strategies should be in place to adapt to failure of technology or other systems.
10. **Part of a bigger picture:** Warnings are one component within a systems-based approach to community safety. Community engagement, education and awareness programs better prepare communities to receive, understand and act upon warnings.

### 3.3 Warning Approval

The Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC) should approve the issue of all warnings. When a decision to evacuate has been made, the District Disaster Coordinator (DDC) and the LDC should:

- Ensure stakeholders have the information they need to respond appropriately to the disaster (for example, residents and visitors should be alerted as to which roads and bridges to avoid after a severe weather event, and when infrastructure is expected to be operational again);
- Ensure the ongoing flow of accurate information throughout the initial response period of the crisis; and
- Ensure that messages have been received by all relevant agencies, warning of the evacuation.

### 3.4 Warning – Notification and Dissemination

*This section is replicated from the LDMP*



The LDMG is responsible for ensuring the community is aware of ways to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from a disaster.<sup>8</sup> This involves raising awareness of identified threats and the means by which the public should respond at an individual and/or household level. It may also include warnings and directions, as provided by primary agencies, for warnings relating to the particular hazard.

Under this plan, the Chairperson of the LDMG, or delegate, is the official source of public and media information for the group’s coordination and support activities.

Primary and functional lead agencies will provide media liaison for issues relative to their organisational role/s. Individual organisations maintain responsibility for internal reporting on their business in accordance with their established procedures.

Community members may receive warnings and information from a number of different sources—some official, some not. They may include:

Family	Friends	Neighbours	Media Releases	River 949 Radio
Facebook	Twitter	Emergency Management Dashboard	Websites	612 ABC Radio
Standard Emergency Warning Signal	Emergency Alert	TV Broadcast	Door-Knocking	My Ipswich Alerts

Figure 3 – Sources of warnings and information

### 3.4.1 Family, friends and neighbours

Family, friends and neighbours are an extremely powerful source of warning information. However, this information should always be verified by official sources.

All members of the community are encouraged to check on family, friends and neighbours and to share official warnings with them.

### 3.4.2 Social media, website and notification services

Facebook and Twitter are the two most common social media platforms used by disaster management organisations in Queensland. A search each of these platforms by organisation name will assist in obtaining relevant information. Social media feeds are available from <http://qldalerts.com> and Council’s Emergency Management Dashboard for those currently not subscribed to social media platforms.

Detailed contact information, including websites is provided at the front of the LDMP.

<sup>8</sup> Section 30, *Disaster Management Act 2003*, Functions



*My Ipswich Alerts*, dam release notifications and the Emergency Management Dashboard are explained in Part 5: Preparedness.

### 3.4.3 Emergency Alert

Emergency Alert is the national telephone warning system used by emergency services and Council to send voice messages (to landlines) and text messages (to mobile phones) within a defined area about likely or actual emergencies.

Only in dangerous situations where there is likely impact of human life will the Emergency Alert system be used.

It should be recognised that Emergency Alert is one way of warning communities. It relies on telecommunications networks to send messages, and message delivery cannot be guaranteed.<sup>9</sup>

### 3.4.4 Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS)

When disasters loom or a major emergency happens, residents will be alerted by the sound of the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS).

SEWS is a wailing siren sound used throughout Australia for various emergency events of major significance, such as cyclones, flooding and severe storms. When community members hear the signal on radio or television, they should pay careful attention to the message that follows and act immediately on the advice given. There are strict rules on the use of this warning signal in Queensland.<sup>10</sup>

### 3.4.5 Mainstream media (radio, television and newspapers)

The use of mainstream media is essential for the provision of emergency warnings. Mainstream media channels are generally very proactive in the monitoring of official sources.

<sup>9</sup> Australian Government, Emergency Alert, <http://emergencyalert.gov.au/>

<sup>10</sup> Queensland Government, [http://disaster.qld.gov.au/Warnings\\_and\\_Alerts/Pages/about\\_sews.aspx](http://disaster.qld.gov.au/Warnings_and_Alerts/Pages/about_sews.aspx)



## PART 4: PROVISION OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

Public information, for the purpose of this document, is considered to be any information other than warnings that is provided to the community in the wake of a disaster event. This may include information such as:

- Reports on the current status of the event,
- Information regarding recovery efforts,
- When it will be safe to return,
- Which agencies are providing assistance, and where to go to access it.

### 4.1 Prepare

Where Council is the lead or primary agency, it is Council's responsibility to disseminate public information in an effective and timely manner. It is important, as with the development of warnings, that the information prepared is accurate and consistent across all agencies engaged in actions in response to the event or threat.

### 4.2 Approval

As with the provision of warnings, all information being released by Council in the event of a disaster situation should be approved by the LDC prior to distribution.

### 4.3 Release

After being approved by the LDC, the information should be released through the most appropriate channels available at the time.

### 4.4 Preparedness - Notification and Dissemination

*This section is replicated from the LDMP.*

#### 4.4.1 Bureau of Meteorology

Warning products issued by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) include severe weather warning, tropical cyclone advice and tsunami warnings. The LDMG can subscribe to these.

Member organisations and community members can also monitor weather situations through <http://www.bom.gov.au/> or download the BoM App from Google Play Store or Apple Store.

#### 4.4.2 Emergency Management Dashboard

Ipswich City Council's Emergency Management Dashboard provides the Ipswich Community with a comprehensive and user-friendly platform for accessing information on the current status of events in Ipswich. It includes emergency news, road conditions, weather warnings, power outages and more. The Emergency Management Dashboard is the community's link to emergency management information. To view the dashboard visit: <http://emd.ipswich.qld.gov.au>.



#### 4.4.3 My Ipswich Alerts

As part of Ipswich City Council's commitment to community safety and wellbeing, it has teamed up the Early Warning Network (EWN) to provide residents with early warning alerts for potentially dangerous weather and bushfires within the City of Ipswich. Council encourages residents to become familiar with potential hazards and risks and take early action where needed.

The EWN alerts are provided through Council's innovative *My Ipswich Alerts* platform, a free service enabling the community to be instantly updated via email, SMS or smartphone app with warnings and information about disaster and emergency events in the greater Ipswich region.

To opt in for this service or find out information visit: <http://ipswich.qld.gov.au/myipswichalerts> or download the My Ipswich Alerts App from Google Play Store or Apple Store.

#### 4.4.4 Dam release notification service

Seqwater manages three gated dams (Wivenhoe, Somerset and North Pine dams) in South East Queensland. These dams provide water to 3.1 million people in the region.

For more information visit <http://seqwater.com.au/dam-release-information-service>.

#### 4.4.5 LDMG and member organisation responsibilities

The LDMG has established notification and dissemination process to allow communication between member organisations. This process takes into account the time restrictions of rapid onset events such as dam failures.

Council as the Secretariat does not use the LDMG notification system to send out any publically available warnings or notifications to member organisations. Member organisations are required to subscribe and manage their subscription to these services themselves.



## PART 5: MONITORING

During all stages of a disaster event, Council acting in its capacity within the LDMG will conduct monitoring activities across several different mediums, to ensure that the most accurate and up-to-date information is able to be accessed.

### 5.1 Social Media

Social Media can be an invaluable tool during disaster events; providing a convenient, easily accessed platform for the quick and effective dissemination of information to a mass audience. However, the accessibility of social media can also mean that incorrect information is easily spread. It is therefore imperative that social media channels be monitored and corrections offered wherever possible.

**The aspiration for social media is that the public is *well* informed, not *over* informed.**

In engaging with a social media audience, Council should act in the best interests of the wider community, providing feedback that mitigates any undue concern caused by inaccuracies. Warnings and emergency messages should be reinforced by formal language and strong calls to action where required, to ensure that the urgency of the situation is appropriately promoted.



Social media will work best with an audience that is already well engaged in the online presence. It is worth considering that social media in the emergency management space should be utilised on a regular basis outside of disaster situations, to ensure that the audience will be there when it really counts.

#### 5.1.1 Mythbusting

Social media platforms are extremely responsive, with channels of information able to spread exponentially across different demographics within very short timeframes. It is extremely important that rumours and incorrect information be corrected as quickly as possible, and in a polite and friendly manner suitable to the platform.

### 5.2 Official Channels

Information coming through official channels should be monitored by Council during an event to ensure that any unfolding events or sudden changes are accurately and appropriately communicated.

Disaster events can unfold swiftly, and primary agencies may not have time to update the LDCC while they are in the midst of coordinating their response. As such it is important that Council conducts its own monitoring to ensure the best chance of gaining all possible information

**Item 3 / Attachment 1.**



regarding an unfolding event in as timely a manner as possible, regardless of whether individual agencies are able to provide direct updates through the LDCC.

There are several different agencies, service providers, and other associated entities that Council may need to contact during a disaster event.



## PART 6: ANNEXURES

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## 6.2 Annexure 2 – Generalised Advice Messages

It is important that information disseminated to the public prior to, during, and after a disaster event is consistent and easily understood. The preparation of clear messages is of utmost importance. Appropriate measures should be taken when planning for possible events, to ensure that key messages are suitably formulated for distribution to the LDCC, disaster response teams, and the general public.

Several key messages that should be reinforced to members of the public are:

- Keep listening to local radio or television stations.
- If authorities tell you to evacuate do so immediately, taking your emergency kit.
- If you have more time, prepare your home and/or business.
- Prepare to be self-sufficient for three days.
- Do not return to your home until authorities deem it safe to do so.
- Follow your home emergency plan.
- Be vigilant to all hazards.
- Do not use candles at home due to the associated fire risk.
- Generators should not be used indoors due to the risk of illness and/or death due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

### Warning templates need to be populated with the following information:

- What is happening
- When will it happen
- What people have to do in order to maximise their safety
- The evacuation route/s showing where they should go
- Transportation assistance services available to people without means to travel
- When the evacuation will be happening
- Which assembly areas and evacuation centres will be used
- How long they are likely to be away from their residence
- What to pack
- Which agencies will be assisting with the evacuation
- Where to access more information
- Potential hazards that they may face during the evacuation

City of Ipswich  
Local Disaster Management Sub Plan

# Public Information and Warnings

A3980098: August 2021



## Approval and Endorsement

Approved by Ipswich City Council by resolution at the Environment and Sustainability Committee No. 2018(04) of 16 April 2018-XXXX and Council Ordinary Meeting of 23 April 2018-XXXX.

Endorsed by the City of Ipswich Local Disaster Management Group on the 15 May 2018-XXXX.

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## PART 1: ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

### 1.1 Authorising environment

This plan is prepared by Ipswich City Council under the auspices of the Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP) for the City of Ipswich and pursuant to the provisions of Section 57(1) of the Disaster Management Act 2003.

The plan aligns to Council's [Disaster Management Policy](#)<sup>1</sup> which outlines a commitment *to promote a resilient community that can prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from the impacts of disaster which includes a focus on the needs of the community's most vulnerable persons.*"

### 1.2 Amendment register

A history of reviews and amendments is outlined in Table 1.

Vers	Date	Comment
<a href="#">2.00</a>	<a href="#">April 2018</a>	<a href="#">Approved and endorsed version</a>
<a href="#">2.01</a>	<a href="#">Feb 2019</a>	<a href="#">Annual review – minor and inconsequential amendments – update to template</a>
<a href="#">2.02</a>	<a href="#">21 May 2019</a>	<a href="#">Minor and inconsequential amendments including amendments to reflect consolidated warnings principles released by Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience.</a>
<a href="#">3.00</a>	<a href="#">26 July 2021</a>	<a href="#">Plan review and update to align with the Australian Warning System which was updated following the Royal Commission into the National Disaster Management Arrangements.</a>

Vers	Date	Comment

Table 1 - Amendment register

### 1.3 Document classification and approval

~~[Disaster & Emergency Operations Administrative Directive \(A6331905\)](#) establishes disaster and emergency doctrine types. This document is classified as a disaster and emergency management manual and the approvals are outlined on the front cover.~~

<sup>1</sup> Ipswich City Council (2020), Disaster Management Policy [online] Available at: [https://www.ipswich.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0016/131740/Disaster-Management-Policy.pdf](https://www.ipswich.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/131740/Disaster-Management-Policy.pdf)

### 1.41.3-Principles

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This sub plan has been prepared as supporting document to the LDMP. ~~Accordingly~~Accordingly, it must be read in conjunction with the LDMP itself. With the exception of pertinent information, reference to existing statements, definitions and acronyms will be excluded from the sub plan.

Disaster operations occur in volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environments (VUCA). Policy, procedures and doctrine provides guidance to achieve community safety outcomes. Overly prescriptive doctrine that focuses on process compliance at the expense situational awareness; context and outcome based decision making is likely to achieve adverse outcomes.

***Justifiable deviations and adaptations to disaster doctrine are permissible and should be assessed on a case by case basis.***

### 1.51.4Purpose

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The purpose of this sub plan is to provide a framework in the provision of information and warnings to affected members of the public during a disaster situation.

It may be utilised by all members, deputies, and advisors of the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) and the organisations that they represent and / or any partnering organisations involved to assist in the preparation and dissemination of information and warnings.

**1.6**—This sub plan is not intended to replace or replicate the public information and warnings procedures of individual organisations. It instead strives towards a consistent approach to have an informed and aware community.~~The purpose of this document is to~~ ~~[[Insert Purpose]]~~

### 1.71.5Key objectives

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The key objectives of this sub plan is to outline the:

- arrangements related to public information
- arrangements related to the issue of warnings related to the Australian Warning System

The key objectives of this sub plan is to:

- ~~[[insert]]~~

### 1.81.6Planning assumptions

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In the preparation of this document, the following ~~assumptions are~~assumptions were made.

- ~~[[Optional (remove section)—Insert planning assumptions]]~~Individual agencies, including primary agencies have governance arrangements for warnings and public information.



- [That the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements are locally led, which is contrasted with the top down approach required in some circumstances such as pandemic.](#)

### 1.91.7 Continuous improvement

This document will be reviewed at least annually<sup>2</sup> with relevant amendments made and distributed as needed. The review process will be in accordance with the State guidelines.

Minor amendments that do not materially affect the plan are able to be authorised by the Emergency Management and Sustainability Manager.

It is acknowledged that feedback from stakeholders is essential. Proposals for amendments or inclusions can be sent to [emergency@ipswich.qld.gov.au](mailto:emergency@ipswich.qld.gov.au).

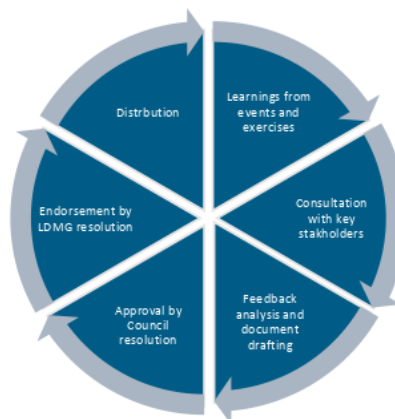


Figure 1 - Continuous improvement cycle

<sup>2</sup> Section 59, Disaster Management Act 2003, Reviewing and Renewing (the) Plan

## PART 2: NATIONALLY CONSISTENT

The Australian Government, through the Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience has developed common features to guide best practice in warnings and public information. These are adopted by each State, including Queensland.

### 2.1 Australia's warning principles<sup>3</sup>

The 10 principles guide the development and use of warnings in Australia. They outline why warnings are important and how warnings are provided most effectively. The design and use of warnings should be guided by a total warning system, underpinned by clear governance arrangements, operate within an integrated incident management system, and be supported by delivery systems.

Australia's warning principles	
1.	<b>Life-saving:</b> Warnings can save lives and protect people from harm. They prompt and encourage protective action to minimise the social and economic impacts of an emergency. Warnings are an essential element of effective emergency management.
2.	<b>Empowering:</b> The provision of warnings enacts a national commitment to building shared responsibility for disaster resilience, by empowering people to make decisions about their own safety
3.	<b>Trusted, authoritative and verifiable:</b> For greatest effect, warnings must come from a trusted source and be verifiable through multiple channels. Warnings should therefore be easily and widely shared to recognise the diversity of potential trusted sources. The official authority issuing a warning should always be clearly stated.
4.	<b>Scaled based on risk:</b> Scaled warning frameworks should guide the delivery of all warnings and support the consistent risk assessment of a hazard, its impact and its consequence.
5.	<b>Timely, targeted and tailored:</b> Warnings should be timely, targeted to communities at risk and tailored to provide detail and relevance. Specific consideration should be given to harder to reach and vulnerable members of the community.
6.	<b>Conveying impact:</b> Warnings should describe the expected impacts and consequences of an approaching or current hazard, to assist people to understand and be motivated to take protective action.
7.	<b>Including a call-to-action:</b> Warnings should include practical calls-to-action using language tailored to the level of risk, ranging from advice and persuasive recommendations to authoritative direction.
8.	<b>Clearly communicated:</b> Warnings should be easy to understand and use a consistent structure to provide information. Both written and visual information should be considered to assist with clearly conveying risk and encouraging protective action.
9.	<b>Readily accessible:</b> Warnings should be disseminated via multiple channels, tailored to suit each channel, and consider accessibility for diverse audiences. Ease of sharing and rapid dissemination should be supported with use of nationally agreed technical standards, and dissemination strategies should be in place to adapt to failure of technology or other systems.
10.	<b>Part of a bigger picture:</b> Warnings are one component within a systems-based approach to community safety. Community engagement, education and awareness programs better prepare communities to receive, understand and act upon warnings.

Table 2 - Australia's warning principles

<sup>3</sup> Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience, (2018). Public Information and Warnings Handbook, p8.

## 2.2 A total warning system



Figure 2 - Australia's Total Warning System

A total warning system describes a means of collecting information about an impending emergency, understanding the nature of the threat, communicating that information to those likely to be affected by it, and facilitating protective action and timely response (Mileti & Sorensen 1990; Sorensen 2000).

Australia's Total Warning System defines the essential elements of delivering warnings effectively, with a lifecycle of action before, during and after emergency. It is made possible with commitment to a partnership approach across agencies and with communities<sup>4</sup>.

## 2.3 Further reading

For detailed insights into public information and warnings visit the Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience by visiting <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/public-information-and-warnings-handbook/>

<sup>4</sup> Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience, (2018). Public Information and Warnings Handbook, p10.

## PART 2: PART 3: PUBLIC INFORMATION VERSES WARNINGS

### 2.13.1 Public Information<sup>5</sup>

**Definition:** is information provided to the public immediately before, during and after an emergency to reduce the potential impact of an emergency or hazard Public information is the provision of focussed communication with the community for the incident through gathering, assembling and disseminating accurate, relevant, timely information to the public and other stakeholders outside the incident management team.<sup>6</sup>

Public information undertakes three key functions:

1. Disseminating information Creation and dissemination of information
2. Managing contact from the media and public
3. Consulting and liaising with affected communities

3- In an approaching or current emergency, communities require a wide range of information including, but not limited to, official warnings. This might include, for example, general information about the nature of an approaching hazard, information on looking after your health during an emergency, forthcoming community meetings, local resources, relief and recovery services. **Warning messages are often presented separately to more detailed public information about an emergency to ensure they remain easily identifiable and understood.**

### 2.23.2 Warning<sup>7</sup>

**Definition:** point-in-time information about a hazard that is impacting or is expected to impact communities. Warnings describe the impact and expected consequences for communities and include advice on what people should do An emergency warning is a message signalling an imminent hazard, which may include advice on protective measures.<sup>8</sup>

The Australian Government's Attorney General's Department, Emergency Warning Arrangements (2013) states:

*The purpose of an emergency warning is to inform the community of an impending or*



<sup>5</sup> Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience, (2018). Public Information and Warnings Handbook, p2, p7.

<sup>6</sup> Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience, (2018). Public Information and Warnings Handbook, p2. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, IMS Directive 06.01.00 (Version 1-29/01/2016)

<sup>7</sup> Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience, (2018). Public Information and Warnings Handbook, p2.

<sup>8</sup> Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience, (2018). Public Information and Warnings Handbook, p2. Emergency Management Australia, Attorney General's Department, Australian Emergency Manuals Series: Glossary, 1998, p 115.



*current threat and to prompt an appropriate response or action. The action that is required of the community is usually contained in the warning message, for example, 'seek further information', 'take shelter', or 'activate your emergency plan'.*

*Emergency warnings are a primary tool for disaster management and play a significant role in the protection and resilience of Australian communities. Emergency warnings have the potential to significantly reduce the impact of disasters on communities, properties and the environment when they are combined with the community's understanding of environmental risks and disaster preparedness. The decision to warn should be based on risk, which requires an assessment of hazard, vulnerability, and exposure. Practically this indicates that warnings need to consider the community that is likely to be impacted by the disaster and that arbitrary triggers based on hazard alone may not be as effective compared to consideration of the tri-risk approach.*

Figure 3 - Tri-risk approach diagrammatically



**PART 3:PART 4: PROVISION OF WARNINGS**

**4.1 The role of the LDMG**

The *Disaster Management Act 2003* Section 23(f) and 30(e) both state that one of the functions of the LDMG and the District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) respectively is:

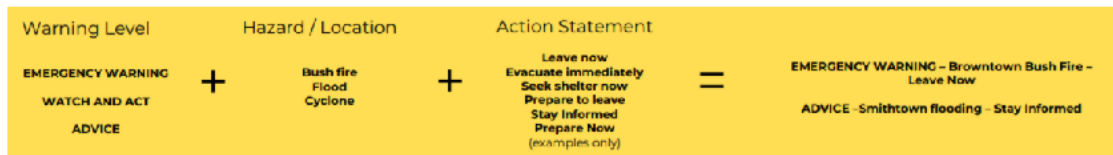
*‘... to ensure the community is aware of the ways of mitigating the adverse effects of an event, and preparing for, responding to and recovering from a disaster.’*

**4.2 Australia’s Warning System<sup>9</sup>**

A warning provides point-in-time information about a hazard that is impacting or is expected to impact communities. It describes the impact and expected consequences for communities and includes advice on what people should do.

The Australian Warning System has been designed based on feedback and research across the country and aims to deliver a more consistent approach to emergency warnings, no matter where you are. It uses a nationally consistent set of icons to show incidents on websites and apps, supported by calls to action.

Th AWS uses a nested model to optimise the effectiveness of warnings. This model contains a warning level, hazard/location, and an action statement.



A warning is a message that informs and enables individuals and communities to take appropriate action in response to an impending hazard.<sup>10</sup> It is important that a variety of warning dissemination methods are utilised to ensure broad distribution of warning messages. A range of methods of warning dissemination will ensure coverage of differing demographics, geographic locations, and time of day.<sup>11</sup>

~~The *Disaster Management Act 2003* Section 23(f) and 30(e) both state that one of the functions of the LDMG and the District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) respectively is:~~

~~*‘... to ensure the community is aware of the ways of mitigating the adverse effects of an event, and preparing for, responding to and recovering from a disaster.’*~~

<sup>9</sup> Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience, (2020). Australian Warning System. Online at: <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/australian-warning-system/> [Accessed 26/07/2021]  
<sup>10</sup> Queensland Government *Queensland Evacuation Guidelines for Disaster Management Groups*  
<sup>11</sup> Queensland Government *Queensland Evacuation Guidelines for Disaster Management Groups*

When at risk areas and the location of safer areas have been determined, the decision to evacuate at risk members of the community can be made. This information needs to be communicated to the community.

The process for the notification and dissemination of warnings is not a function dependent on the activation of the LDMG; rather it should be the automatic responsibility of LDMG members, regardless of the status of activation of the LDMG.<sup>12</sup> It is each organisation's responsibility to disseminate its own warnings as per internal organisational procedures.

Consideration should be given to the specific needs of the exposed population with particular consideration of special needs groups and how the dissemination of warnings will be best achieved to reach these groups.<sup>13</sup>

### 3.14.3 The Stages of Warning Levels of warning

The City of Ipswich LDMG (and Ipswich City Council) adopts the national tiered arrangements related to warnings and advice messaging. This is consistent with the intent of the Queensland Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery Disaster Management Guidelines.

#### There are three warning levels:

Advice: An incident has started. There is no immediate danger. Stay up to date in case the situation changes.

Watch and Act: There is a heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing and you need to start taking action now to protect you and your family.

Emergency Warning: is the highest level of warning. You may be in danger and need to take action immediately. Any delay now puts your life at risk.

#### 4.3.1 'Advice' warning level

Each level has a colour and symbol assigned, these colours are aligned to Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) Bushfire Warnings. In the absence of guidelines in Queensland, the symbols are aligned to those used by Emergency Management Victoria (EMV).

<sup>12</sup> Ipswich City Council Local Disaster Management Plan Version 3.01 February 2016

<sup>13</sup> Queensland Government Queensland Evacuation Guidelines for Disaster Management Groups

**Advice**

Calls to action

- [Prepare now](#)
- [Stay informed](#)
- [Monitor conditions](#)
- [Stay informed/threat is reduced](#)
- [Avoid the area](#)

Indicative Timeframe

- [Impact to the community is estimated at 6 – 24 hours](#)

Advice icons



Colour palette

C 3 M 7 Y 91 K 0 | R 251 G 224 B 50 | HEX # fbe032



Advice

**4.3.2 'Watch and Act' warning level**

**Advice Watch and Act**

Calls to action

- [Prepare to leave/evacuate](#)
- [Leave/evacuate now \(if you are not prepared\)](#)
- [Prepare to take shelter](#)
- [Move/stay indoors](#)
- [Stay near shelter](#)
- [Walk two or more streets back](#)
- [Monitor conditions as they are changing](#)
- [Be aware of ember attack](#)
- [Move to higher ground \(away from creeks/rivers/coast\)](#)
- [Limit time outside \(cyclone, heat, asthma\)](#)
- [Avoid the area/avoid the flooded area](#)
- [Stay away from damaged buildings and other hazards](#)
- [Prepare for isolation](#)
- [Protect yourself against the impacts of extreme heat](#)
- [Do not enter flood water](#)

Indicative Timeframe

- [Impact to the community is estimated at 6 – 12 hours](#)

Watch and Act icons





**Colour palette**

C O M 65 Y 100 K 0 | R 255 G 121 B 0 | HEX # ff7900

- Advise messages should be titled **STAY INFORMED**
- An incident is occurring or has occurred in the area
- Access information and monitor conditions
- Impact to the community is estimated at 6 – 24 hours



**Watch and Act**

- Watch and Act messages should be titled **PREPARE TO LEAVE** or **LEAVE NOW**
- An emergency is heading towards you
- Conditions are changing and you need to take action now to protect yourself and your family
- Impact to the community is estimated at 6 – 12 hours

**4.3.3 'Emergency Warning' warning level**

**Advice Emergency Warning**

**Calls to action**

- Leave/evacuate (immediately, by am/pm/hazard timing)
- Seek/take shelter now
- Shelter indoors now
- Too late/dangerous to leave

**Indicative Timeframe**

- Impact to the community is estimated at 0 – 6 hours

**Emergency Warning icons**



**Colour palette**

C 9 M 100 Y 91 K 2 | R 214 G 0 B 28 | HEX # d6001c



**Emergency Warning**

- ~~Emergency Warnings should be titled LEAVE IMMEDIATELY or SEEK SHELTER~~
- ~~You are in imminent danger and need to take action now~~
- ~~You will be impacted~~
- ~~Impact to the community is estimated at 0 – 6 hours~~

Figure 2—Stages of Warning

### 3.2 National Warning Principles and Processes

The Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience in 2018 released ‘Australia’s Warning Principles.’ These principles consolidated and refreshed existing principles endorsed in 2008.

1. **Life-saving Warnings** can save lives and protect people from harm. They prompt and encourage protective action to minimise the social and economic impacts of an emergency. Warnings are an essential element of effective emergency management.
2. **Empowering:** The provision of warnings enacts a national commitment to building shared responsibility for disaster resilience, by empowering people to make decisions about their own safety.
3. **Trusted, authoritative and verifiable:** For greatest effect, warnings must come from a trusted source and be verifiable through multiple channels. Warnings should therefore be easily and widely shared to recognise the diversity of potential trusted sources. The official authority issuing a warning should always be clearly stated.
4. **Scaled based on risk:** Scaled warning frameworks should guide the delivery of all warnings and support the consistent risk assessment of a hazard, its impact and its consequence.
5. Timely, targeted and tailored Warnings should be timely, targeted to communities at risk and tailored to provide detail and relevance. Specific consideration should be given to harder to reach and vulnerable members of the community.
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7. **Including a call to action:** Warnings should include practical calls to action using language tailored to the level of risk, ranging from advice and persuasive recommendations to authoritative direction.
8. **Clearly communicated:** Warnings should be easy to understand and use a consistent structure to provide information. Both written and visual information should be considered to assist with clearly conveying risk and encouraging protective action.
9. **Readily accessible:** Warnings should be disseminated via multiple channels, tailored to suit each channel, and consider accessibility for diverse audiences. Ease of sharing and rapid dissemination should be supported with use of nationally agreed technical standards, and

~~dissemination strategies should be in place to adapt to failure of technology or other systems.~~

- ~~10. **Part of a bigger picture:** Warnings are one component within a systems-based approach to community safety. Community engagement, education and awareness programs better prepare communities to receive, understand and act upon warnings.~~

### 3.34.4 Warning Approval and communication

The Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC), deputy LDC or Incident Controller should approve the issue of all warnings. ~~In doing so where, possible the LDCC will~~When a decision to evacuate has been made, the District Disaster Coordinator (DDC) and the LDC should:

- Ensure stakeholders have the information they need to respond appropriately to the disaster warning be issued (for example, residents and visitors should be alerted as to which roads and bridges to avoid after a severe weather event, and when infrastructure is expected to be operational again);
- Ensure the ongoing flow of accurate information throughout the initial response period of the crisis; and
- Ensure that messages have been received by all relevant agencies, warning of the evacuation.

### 3.44.5 Warning – Notification and Dissemination channels

*This section is replicated from the LDMP*

The LDMG is responsible for ensuring the community is aware of ways to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from a disaster.<sup>14</sup> This involves raising awareness of identified threats and the means by which the public should respond at an individual and/or household level. It may also include warnings and directions, as provided by primary agencies relating to the specific hazard.

The Chairperson of the LDMG (or delegate) is the official source of public and media information for the group's coordination and support activities. Primary and functional lead agencies provide media liaison for issues relating to their organisational roles. Individual organisations maintain responsibility for internal reporting on their business in accordance with their established procedures.

Community members may receive warnings and information from several different channels and sources – some official, some not. A summary of the most common sources and channels are detailed below.

<sup>14</sup> Section 30, Disaster Management Act 2003, Functions

Family	Friends	Neighbours	Media Releases	River 949 Radio
Facebook	Twitter	Emergency Management Dashboard	Websites	612-ABC Radio
Standard Emergency Warning Signal	Emergency Alert	TV Broadcast	Door-Knocking	My Ipswich Alerts

3.4.1 Figure 3 – Sources of warnings and information

#### 4.5.1 Family, friends, and neighbours

Family, friends and neighbours are an extremely powerful source of warning information. However, this information should always be verified through official sources. All members of the community are encouraged to check on family, friends and neighbours and to share official warnings with them.

#### 4.5.2 Social media, websites, and notification services

Facebook and Twitter are the two most common social media platforms used by disaster management organisations in Queensland. A search of each of these platforms by organisation name will assist in obtaining relevant information. Social media feeds are available from [Qld.gov.au/alerts](http://Qld.gov.au/alerts) and Council’s Disaster Dashboard for those who do not subscribe to social media platforms.

#### 4.5.3 Emergency Alert

Emergency Alert (EA) is the national telephone warning system used by emergency services and Council to send voice messages (to landlines) and text messages (to mobile phones) within a defined area about likely or actual emergencies. The Emergency Alert system will only be used in dangerous situations where there is likely to be an impact on human life. It relies on telecommunications networks to send messages, and message delivery cannot be guaranteed.<sup>15</sup>

#### 4.5.4 Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS)

When disasters loom or a major emergency happens, residents will be alerted by the sound of the SEWS before critical television or radio broadcasts. The SEWS is a wailing siren sound used throughout Australia for various emergency events of major significance, such as cyclones, flooding and severe storms. When community members hear the signal, they should pay careful attention to the message that follows and act immediately on the advice given. There are strict rules on the use of this warning signal in Queensland.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Australian Government, Emergency Alert, [emergencyalert.gov.au/](http://emergencyalert.gov.au/)

<sup>16</sup> Queensland Government, Disaster.[qld.gov.au](http://qld.gov.au)



#### [4.5.5 Mainstream media \(radio, television and newspapers\)](#)

[The use of mainstream media is essential for the provision of emergency warnings. Mainstream media channels are generally very proactive in the monitoring of official sources.](#)

### 3.4.2 Family, friends and neighbours

Family, friends and neighbours are an extremely powerful source of warning information. However, this information should always be verified by official sources.

All members of the community are encouraged to check on family, friends and neighbours and to share official warnings with them.

### 3.4.3 Social media, website and notification services

Facebook and Twitter are the two most common social media platforms used by disaster management organisations in Queensland. A search each of these platforms by organisation name will assist in obtaining relevant information. Social media feeds are available from <http://qldalerts.com> and Council's Emergency Management Dashboard for those currently not subscribed to social media platforms.

Detailed contact information, including websites is provided at the front of the LDMP.

*My Ipswich Alerts*, dam release notifications and the Emergency Management Dashboard are explained in Part 5: Preparedness.

### 3.4.4 Emergency Alert

Emergency Alert is the national telephone warning system used by emergency services and Council to send voice messages (to landlines)



~~and text messages (to mobile phones) within a defined area about likely or actual emergencies.~~

~~Only in dangerous situations where there is likely impact of human life will the Emergency Alert system be used.~~

~~It should be recognised that Emergency Alert is one way of warning communities. It relies on telecommunications networks to send messages, and message delivery cannot be guaranteed.<sup>47</sup>~~

#### ~~3.4.5 Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS)~~

~~When disasters loom or a major emergency happens, residents will be alerted by the sound of the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS).~~

~~SEWS is a wailing siren sound used throughout Australia for various emergency events of major significance, such as cyclones, flooding and severe storms. When community members hear the signal on radio or television, they should pay careful attention to the message~~

<sup>47</sup> Australian Government, Emergency Alert, <http://emergencyalert.gov.au/>



~~that follows and act immediately on the advice given. There are strict rules on the use of this warning signal in Queensland.<sup>18</sup>~~

#### ~~3.4.6 Mainstream media (radio, television and newspapers)~~

~~The use of mainstream media is essential for the provision of emergency warnings. Mainstream media channels are generally very proactive in the monitoring of official sources.~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~



<sup>18</sup> Queensland Government, [http://disaster.qld.gov.au/Warnings\\_and\\_Alerts/Pages/about\\_sews.aspx](http://disaster.qld.gov.au/Warnings_and_Alerts/Pages/about_sews.aspx)



## **PART 4: PART 5: PROVISION OF PUBLIC INFORMATION**

Public information, ~~is information provided to the public immediately before, during and after an emergency to reduce the potential impact of an emergency or hazard. for the purpose of this document, is considered to be any information other than warnings that is provided to the community in the wake of a disaster event.~~ This may include information such as:

- ~~Reports on the current status~~ status of the event
- Broader community impact,
- Information regarding recovery efforts,
- ~~When it will be safe to return,~~
- How to provide assistance to self, family and friends
- Which agencies are providing assistance, and where to go to access ~~it.~~ it.

### **4.15.1 Prepare**

Where Council is the lead or primary agency, it is Council's responsibility to disseminate public information in an effective and timely manner. It is important, as with the development of warnings, that the information prepared is accurate and consistent across all agencies engaged in actions in response to the event or threat.

### **4.25.2 Approval**

As with the provision of warnings, all information being released by Council in the event of a disaster situation should be approved by the LDC, deputy LDC or Incident Controller prior to distribution.

### **4.35.3 Release**

After being approved by the LDC, the information should be released through the most appropriate channels available at the time. This includes the disaster dashboard.

### **4.45.4 Preparedness - ~~N~~otification and ~~D~~issemination sources and channels**

*This section is replicated from the LDMP.*

#### **5.4.1 Bureau of Meteorology**

Warning products issued by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) include severe weather warnings, heatwave warnings, tropical cyclone advice and tsunami warnings. The community is encouraged to subscribe to these. Monitoring may also occur through Bom.gov.au/ or through the BoM App available from the Google Play Store or Apple Store.

#### **5.4.2 Disaster Dashboard**

Ipswich City Council's Disaster Dashboard provides the Ipswich community with a comprehensive and user-friendly platform for accessing information on the status of events in Ipswich. It includes emergency news, road conditions, weather warnings, power outages and other information. To view the dashboard, visit [Disaster.ipswich.qld.gov.au](https://disaster.ipswich.qld.gov.au).

#### **5.4.3 My Ipswich Alerts**

As part of Ipswich City Council's commitment to community safety and wellbeing, it has teamed up with the Early Warning Network (EWN) to provide residents with early warning alerts for potentially dangerous weather and bushfires within the City of Ipswich. Council encourages residents to become familiar with potential hazards and risks and take early action where needed. The EWN alerts are provided through Council's innovative *My Ipswich Alerts* platform, a free service enabling the community to be instantly updated via email or smartphone app with warnings and information about emergency and disaster events in the greater Ipswich region. To opt in for this service or find out information, visit [ipswich.qld.gov.au/myipswichalerts](https://ipswich.qld.gov.au/myipswichalerts) or search the Google Play Store or Apple Store for *My Ipswich Alerts*.

#### **5.4.4 Seqwater notification service**

Seqwater manages three gated dams (Wivenhoe, Somerset and North Pine dams) in South East Queensland, these dams provide water to 3.1 million people in the region. Seqwater provides information on planned releases of water from the dams in addition to other notices. For more information visit [Seqwater.com.au/dam-release-information-service](https://seqwater.com.au/dam-release-information-service).

#### 4.4.1 Bureau of Meteorology

Warning products issued by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) include severe weather warning, tropical cyclone advice and tsunami warnings. The LDMG can subscribe to these.

Member organisations and community members can also monitor weather situations through <http://www.bom.gov.au/> or download the BoM App from Google Play Store or Apple Store.

#### 4.4.2 Emergency Management Dashboard

Ipswich City Council's Emergency Management Dashboard provides the Ipswich Community with a comprehensive and user friendly platform for accessing information on the current status of events in Ipswich. It includes emergency news, road conditions, weather warnings, power outages and more. The Emergency Management Dashboard is the community's link to emergency management information. To view the dashboard visit: <http://emd.ipswich.qld.gov.au>.

#### 4.4.3 My Ipswich Alerts

As part of Ipswich City Council's commitment to community safety and wellbeing, it has teamed up the Early Warning Network (EWN) to provide residents with early warning alerts for potentially dangerous weather and bushfires within the City of Ipswich. Council

~~encourages residents to become familiar with potential hazards and risks and take early action where needed.~~

~~The EWN alerts are provided through Council's innovative *My Ipswich Alerts* platform, a free service enabling the community to be instantly updated via email, SMS or smartphone app with warnings and information about disaster and emergency events in the greater Ipswich region.~~

~~To opt in for this service or find out information visit:  
<http://ipswich.qld.gov.au/myipswichalerts> or download the *My Ipswich Alerts* App from Google Play Store or Apple Store.~~

#### ~~4.4.4 Dam release notification service~~

~~Seqwater manages three gated dams (Wivenhoe, Somerset and North Pine dams) in South East Queensland. These dams provide water to 3.1 million people in the region.~~

~~For more information visit <http://seqwater.com.au/dam-release-information-service>.~~

#### ~~4.4.5 LDMG and member organisation responsibilities~~

~~The LDMG has established notification and dissemination process to allow communication between member organisations. This process~~



~~takes into account the time restrictions of rapid onset events such as dam failures.~~

~~Council as the Secretariat does not use the LDMG notification system to send out any publically available warnings or notifications to member organisations. Member organisations are required to subscribe and manage their subscription to these services themselves.~~

## PART 5: PART 6: MONITORING

During all stages of a disaster event, Council acting in its capacity within the LDMG will conduct monitoring activities across several different mediums, to ensure that the most accurate and up-to-date information is able to be accessed.

### 5.16.1 Social Media

Social Media can be an invaluable tool during disaster events; providing a convenient, easily accessed platform for the quick and effective dissemination of information to a mass audience. However, the accessibility of social media can also mean that incorrect information is easily spread. It is therefore imperative that social media channels be ~~monitored~~ monitored, and corrections offered wherever possible.

~~The aspiration for social media is that the public is well informed, not over informed.~~

In engaging with a social media audience, Council should act in the best interests of the wider community, providing feedback that mitigates any undue concern caused by inaccuracies. Warnings and emergency messages should be reinforced by formal language and strong calls to action where required, to ensure that the urgency of the situation is appropriately promoted.



Social media will work best with an audience that is already well engaged in the online presence. It is worth considering that social media in the emergency management space should be utilised on a regular basis outside of disaster situations, to ensure that the audience will be there when it really counts.

#### 5.1.16.1.1 Mythbusting

Social media platforms are extremely responsive, with channels of information able to spread exponentially across different demographics within very short timeframes. It is extremely important that rumours and incorrect information be corrected as quickly as possible, and in a polite and friendly manner suitable to the platform.

### 5.26.2 Official Channels

Information coming through official channels should be monitored by Council during an event to ensure that any unfolding events or sudden changes are accurately and appropriately communicated.

Disaster events can unfold swiftly, and primary agencies may not have time to update the LDCC while they are [in the midst of](#) coordinating their response. As such it is important that Council conducts its own monitoring to ensure the best chance of gaining all possible information regarding an unfolding event in as timely a manner as possible, regardless of whether individual agencies are able to provide direct updates through the LDCC.

There are several different agencies, service providers, and other associated entities that Council may need to contact during a disaster event.

Item 3 / Attachment 2.





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## 6.2 — Annexure 2 — Generalised Advice Messages

It is important that information disseminated to the public prior to, during, and after a disaster event is consistent and easily understood. The preparation of clear messages is of utmost importance. Appropriate measures should be taken when planning for possible events, to ensure that key messages are suitably formulated for distribution to the LDCC, disaster response teams, and the general public.

Several key messages that should be reinforced to members of the public are:

- Keep listening to local radio or television stations.
- If authorities tell you to evacuate do so immediately, taking your emergency kit.
- If you have more time, prepare your home and/or business.
- Prepare to be self-sufficient for three days.
- Do not return to your home until authorities deem it safe to do so.
- Follow your home emergency plan.
- Be vigilant to all hazards.
- Do not use candles at home due to the associated fire risk.
- Generators should not be used indoors due to the risk of illness and/or death due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

### Warning templates need to be populated with the following information:

- What is happening
- When will it happen
- What people have to do in order to maximise their safety
- The evacuation route/s showing where they should go
- Transportation assistance services available to people without means to travel
- When the evacuation will be happening
- Which assembly areas and evacuation centres will be used
- How long they are likely to be away from their residence
- What to pack
- Which agencies will be assisting with the evacuation
- Where to access more information
- Potential hazards that they may face during the evacuation

City of Ipswich  
Local Disaster Management Sub Plan

# Public Information and Warnings

A3980098: August 2021



## Approval and Endorsement

Approved by Ipswich City Council by resolution at the Environment and Sustainability Committee No. XXXX and Council Ordinary Meeting of XXXX.

Endorsed by the City of Ipswich Local Disaster Management Group on the XXXXX.

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## PART 1: ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

### 1.1 Authorising environment

This plan is prepared by Ipswich City Council under the auspices of the Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP) for the City of Ipswich and pursuant to the provisions of Section 57(1) of the Disaster Management Act 2003.

The plan aligns to Council’s [Disaster Management Policy](#)<sup>1</sup> which outlines a commitment *to promote a resilient community that can prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from the impacts of disaster which includes a focus on the needs of the community’s most vulnerable persons.*”

### 1.2 Amendment register

A history of reviews and amendments is outlined in Table 1.

Vers	Date	Comment
2.00	April 2018	Approved and endorsed version
2.01	Feb 2019	Annual review – minor and inconsequential amendments – update to template
2.02	21 May 2019	Minor and inconsequential amendments including amendments to reflect consolidated warnings principles released by Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience.
3.00	26 July 2021	Plan review and update to align with the Australian Warning System which was updated following the Royal Commission into the National Disaster Management Arrangements.

Table 1 - Amendment register

### 1.3 Principles

This sub plan has been prepared as supporting document to the LDMP. Accordingly, it must be read in conjunction with the LDMP itself. With the exception of pertinent information, reference to existing statements, definitions and acronyms will be excluded from the sub plan.

Disaster operations occur in volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environments (VUCA). Policy, procedures and doctrine provides guidance to achieve community safety outcomes. Overly prescriptive doctrine that focuses on process compliance at the expense situational awareness; context and outcome based decision making is likely to achieve adverse outcomes.

***Justifiable deviations and adaptations to disaster doctrine are permissible and should be assessed on a case by case basis.***

<sup>1</sup> Ipswich City Council (2020), Disaster Management Policy [online] Available at: [https://www.ipswich.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0016/131740/Disaster-Management-Policy.pdf](https://www.ipswich.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/131740/Disaster-Management-Policy.pdf)

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## 1.4 Purpose

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The purpose of this sub plan is to provide a framework in the provision of information and warnings to affected members of the public during a disaster situation.

It may be utilised by all members, deputies, and advisors of the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) and the organisations that they represent and / or any partnering organisations involved to assist in the preparation and dissemination of information and warnings.

This sub plan is not intended to replace or replicate the public information and warnings procedures of individual organisations. It instead strives towards a consistent approach to have an informed and aware community.

## 1.5 Key objectives

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The key objectives of this sub plan are to outline the:

- arrangements related to public information
- arrangements related to the issue of warnings related to the Australian Warning System

## 1.6 Planning assumptions

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In the preparation of this document, the following assumptions were made.

- Individual agencies, including primary agencies have governance arrangements for warnings and public information.
- That the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements are locally led, which is contrasted with the top-down approach required in some circumstances such as pandemic.

### 1.7 Continuous improvement

This document will be reviewed at least annually<sup>2</sup> with relevant amendments made and distributed as needed. The review process will be in accordance with the State guidelines.

Minor amendments that do not materially affect the plan are able to be authorised by the Emergency Management and Sustainability Manager.

It is acknowledged that feedback from stakeholders is essential. Proposals for amendments or inclusions can be sent to [emergency@ipswich.qld.gov.au](mailto:emergency@ipswich.qld.gov.au).

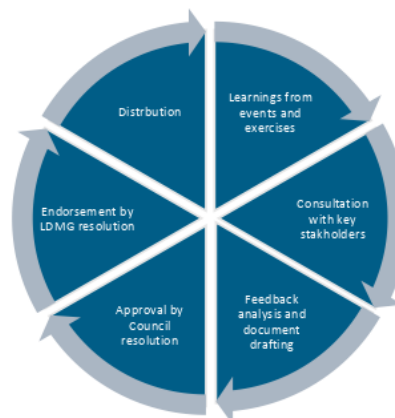


Figure 1 - Continuous improvement cycle

<sup>2</sup> Section 59, Disaster Management Act 2003, Reviewing and Renewing (the) Plan



## PART 2: NATIONALLY CONSISTENT

The Australian Government, through the Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience has developed common features to guide best practice in warnings and public information. These are adopted by each State, including Queensland.

### 2.1 Australia's warning principles<sup>3</sup>

The 10 principles guide the development and use of warnings in Australia. They outline why warnings are important and how warnings are provided most effectively. The design and use of warnings should be guided by a total warning system, underpinned by clear governance arrangements, operate within an integrated incident management system, and be supported by delivery systems.

Australia's warning principles	
1.	<b>Lifesaving:</b> Warnings can save lives and protect people from harm. They prompt and encourage protective action to minimise the social and economic impacts of an emergency. Warnings are an essential element of effective emergency management.
2.	<b>Empowering:</b> The provision of warnings enacts a national commitment to building shared responsibility for disaster resilience, by empowering people to make decisions about their own safety
3.	<b>Trusted, authoritative and verifiable:</b> For greatest effect, warnings must come from a trusted source and be verifiable through multiple channels. Warnings should therefore be easily and widely shared to recognise the diversity of potential trusted sources. The official authority issuing a warning should always be clearly stated.
4.	<b>Scaled based on risk:</b> Scaled warning frameworks should guide the delivery of all warnings and support the consistent risk assessment of a hazard, its impact and its consequence.
5.	<b>Timely, targeted and tailored:</b> Warnings should be timely, targeted to communities at risk and tailored to provide detail and relevance. Specific consideration should be given to harder to reach and vulnerable members of the community.
6.	<b>Conveying impact:</b> Warnings should describe the expected impacts and consequences of an approaching or current hazard, to assist people to understand and be motivated to take protective action.
7.	<b>Including a call-to-action:</b> Warnings should include practical calls-to-action using language tailored to the level of risk, ranging from advice and persuasive recommendations to authoritative direction.
8.	<b>Clearly communicated:</b> Warnings should be easy to understand and use a consistent structure to provide information. Both written and visual information should be considered to assist with clearly conveying risk and encouraging protective action.
9.	<b>Readily accessible:</b> Warnings should be disseminated via multiple channels, tailored to suit each channel, and consider accessibility for diverse audiences. Ease of sharing and rapid dissemination should be supported with use of nationally agreed technical standards, and dissemination strategies should be in place to adapt to failure of technology or other systems.
10.	<b>Part of a bigger picture:</b> Warnings are one component within a systems-based approach to community safety. Community engagement, education and awareness programs better prepare communities to receive, understand and act upon warnings.

Table 2 - Australia's warning principles

<sup>3</sup> Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience, (2018). Public Information and Warnings Handbook, p8.

## 2.2 A total warning system



Figure 2 - Australia's Total Warning System

A total warning system describes a means of collecting information about an impending emergency, understanding the nature of the threat, communicating that information to those likely to be affected by it, and facilitating protective action and timely response (Mileti & Sorensen 1990; Sorensen 2000).

Australia's Total Warning System defines the essential elements of delivering warnings effectively, with a lifecycle of action before, during and after emergency. It is made possible with commitment to a partnership approach across agencies and with communities<sup>4</sup>.

## 2.3 Further reading

For detailed insights into public information and warnings visit the Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience by visiting <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/public-information-and-warnings-handbook/>

<sup>4</sup> Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience, (2018). Public Information and Warnings Handbook, p10.

## PART 3: PUBLIC INFORMATION VERSES WARNINGS

### 3.1 Public Information<sup>5</sup>

**Definition:** is information provided to the public immediately before, during and after an emergency to reduce the potential impact of an emergency or hazard.

Public information undertakes three key functions:

1. Creation and dissemination of information
2. Managing contact from the media and public
3. Consulting and liaising with affected communities

In an approaching or current emergency, communities require a wide range of information including, but not limited to, official warnings. This might include, for example, general information about the nature of an approaching hazard, information on looking after your health during an emergency, forthcoming community meetings, local resources, relief and recovery services. **Warning messages are often presented separately to more detailed public information about an emergency to ensure they remain easily identifiable and understood.**

### 3.2 Warning<sup>6</sup>

**Definition:** point-in-time information about a hazard that is impacting or is expected to impact communities. Warnings describe the impact and expected consequences for communities and include advice on what people should do.

The decision to warn should be based on risk, which requires an assessment of hazard, vulnerability, and exposure. Practically this indicates that warnings need to consider the community that is likely to be impacted by the disaster and that arbitrary triggers based on hazard alone may not be as effective compared to consideration of the tri-risk approach.



Figure 3 - Tri-risk approach diagrammatically

<sup>5</sup> Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience, (2018). Public Information and Warnings Handbook, p2, p7.

<sup>6</sup> Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience, (2018). Public Information and Warnings Handbook, p2.

## PART 4: PROVISION OF WARNINGS

### 4.1 The role of the LDMG

The *Disaster Management Act 2003* Section 23(f) and 30(e) both state that one of the functions of the LDMG and the District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) respectively is:

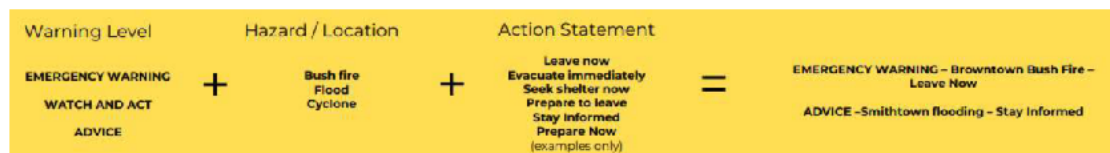
*‘... to ensure the community is aware of the ways of mitigating the adverse effects of an event, and preparing for, responding to and recovering from a disaster.’*

### 4.2 Australia’s Warning System<sup>7</sup>

A warning provides point-in-time information about a hazard that is impacting or is expected to impact communities. It describes the impact and expected consequences for communities and includes advice on what people should do.

The Australian Warning System has been designed based on feedback and research across the country and aims to deliver a more consistent approach to emergency warnings, no matter where you are. It uses a nationally consistent set of icons to show incidents on websites and apps, supported by calls to action.

The AWS uses a nested model to optimise the effectiveness of warnings. This model contains a warning level, hazard/location, and an action statement.



### 4.3 Levels of warning

The City of Ipswich LDMG (and Ipswich City Council) adopts the national tiered arrangements related to warnings. This is consistent with the intent of the Queensland Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery Disaster Management Guidelines.

**There are three warning levels:**

- 1. Advice:** An incident has started. There is no immediate danger. Stay up to date in case the situation changes.

<sup>7</sup> Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience, (2020). Australian Warning System. Online at: <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/australian-warning-system/> [Accessed 26/07/2021]



- 2. **Watch and Act:** There is a heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing and you need to start taking action now to protect you and your family.
- 3. **Emergency Warning:** is the highest level of warning. You may be in danger and need to take action immediately. Any delay now puts your life at risk.

**4.3.1 ‘Advice’ warning level**

**Advice**

**Calls to action**

- Prepare now
- Stay informed
- Monitor conditions
- Stay informed/threat is reduced
- Avoid the area

**Indicative Timeframe**

- Impact to the community is estimated at 6 – 24 hours

**Advice icons**



Storm



Cyclone



Fire



Heatwave



Flooding



Other

**Colour palette**

C 3 M 7 Y 91 K 0 | R 251 G 224 B 50 | HEX # fbe032

**4.3.2 ‘Watch and Act’ warning level**

**Watch and Act**

**Calls to action**

- Prepare to leave/evacuate
- Leave/evacuate now (if you are not prepared)
- Prepare to take shelter
- Move/stay indoors
- Stay near shelter
- Walk two or more streets back
- Monitor conditions as they are changing
- Be aware of ember attack
- Move to higher ground (away from creeks/rivers/coast)

- Limit time outside (cyclone, heat, asthma)
- Avoid the area/avoid the flooded area
- Stay away from damaged buildings and other hazards
- Prepare for isolation
- Protect yourself against the impacts of extreme heat
- Do not enter flood water

**Indicative Timeframe**

- Impact to the community is estimated at 6 – 12 hours



**Watch and Act icons**



Storm



Cyclone



Fire



Heatwave



Flooding



Other

**Colour palette**

C O M 65 Y 100 K 0 | R 255 G 121 B 0 | HEX # ff7900

**4.3.3 'Emergency Warning' warning level**



**Calls to action**

- Leave/evacuate (immediately, by am/pm/hazard timing)
- Seek/take shelter now
- Shelter indoors now
- Too late/dangerous to leave

**Indicative Timeframe**

- Impact to the community is estimated at 0 – 6 hours

**Emergency Warning icons**



Storm



Cyclone



Fire



Heatwave



Flooding



Other

**Colour palette**

C 9 M 100 Y 91 K 2 | R 214 G 0 B 28 | HEX # d6001c

**4.4 Warning approval and communication**

The Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC), deputy LDC or Incident Controller should approve the issue of all warnings. In doing so where, possible the LDCC will:

- Ensure stakeholders have the information they need to respond appropriately to the warning be issued (for example, residents and visitors should be alerted as to which roads and bridges to avoid after a severe weather event, and when infrastructure is expected to be operational again);
- Ensure the ongoing flow of accurate information throughout the initial response period of the crisis; and
- Ensure that messages have been received by all relevant agencies, warning of the evacuation.

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## 4.5 Warning – Notification and dissemination channels

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*This section is replicated from the LDMP*

The LDMG is responsible for ensuring the community is aware of ways to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from a disaster.<sup>8</sup> This involves raising awareness of identified threats and the means by which the public should respond at an individual and/or household level. It may also include warnings and directions, as provided by primary agencies relating to the specific hazard.

The Chairperson of the LDMG (or delegate) is the official source of public and media information for the group's coordination and support activities. Primary and functional lead agencies provide media liaison for issues relating to their organisational roles. Individual organisations maintain responsibility for internal reporting on their business in accordance with their established procedures.

Community members may receive warnings and information from several different channels and sources – some official, some not. A summary of the most common sources and channels are detailed below.

### 4.5.1 Family, friends, and neighbours

Family, friends and neighbours are an extremely powerful source of warning information. However, this information should always be verified through official sources. All members of the community are encouraged to check on family, friends and neighbours and to share official warnings with them.

### 4.5.2 Social media, websites, and notification services

Facebook and Twitter are the two most common social media platforms used by disaster management organisations in Queensland. A search of each of these platforms by organisation name will assist in obtaining relevant information. Social media feeds are available from [Qld.gov.au/alerts](http://Qld.gov.au/alerts) and Council's [Disaster Dashboard](#) for those who do not subscribe to social media platforms.

### 4.5.3 Emergency Alert

Emergency Alert (EA) is the national telephone warning system used by emergency services and Council to send voice messages (to landlines) and text messages (to mobile phones) within a defined area about likely or actual emergencies. The Emergency Alert system will only be used in dangerous situations where there is likely to be an impact on human life. It relies on telecommunications networks to send messages, and message delivery cannot be guaranteed.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Section 30, Disaster Management Act 2003, Functions

<sup>9</sup> Australian Government, Emergency Alert, [emergencyalert.gov.au/](http://emergencyalert.gov.au/)

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#### 4.5.4 Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS)

When disasters loom or a major emergency happens, residents will be alerted by the sound of the SEWS before critical television or radio broadcasts. The SEWS is a wailing siren sound used throughout Australia for various emergency events of major significance, such as cyclones, flooding and severe storms. When community members hear the signal, they should pay careful attention to the message that follows and act immediately on the advice given. There are strict rules on the use of this warning signal in Queensland.<sup>10</sup>

#### 4.5.5 Mainstream media (radio, television and newspapers)

The use of mainstream media is essential for the provision of emergency warnings. Mainstream media channels are generally very proactive in the monitoring of official sources.

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<sup>10</sup> Queensland Government, [Disaster.qld.gov.au](https://www.disaster.qld.gov.au)



## PART 5: PROVISION OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

Public information, is information provided to the public immediately before, during and after an emergency to reduce the potential impact of an emergency or hazard. This may include information such as:

- Reports on the status of the event
- Broader community impact
- Information regarding recovery efforts
- How to provide assistance to self, family and friends
- Which agencies are providing assistance, and where to go to access it.

### 5.1 Prepare

Where Council is the lead or primary agency, it is Council's responsibility to disseminate public information in an effective and timely manner. It is important, as with the development of warnings, that the information prepared is accurate and consistent across all agencies engaged in actions in response to the event or threat.

### 5.2 Approval

As with the provision of warnings, all information being released by Council in the event of a disaster situation should be approved by the LDC, deputy LDC or Incident Controller prior to distribution.

### 5.3 Release

After being approved by the LDC, the information should be released through the most appropriate channels available at the time. This includes the disaster dashboard.

### 5.4 Preparedness - notification and dissemination sources and channels

*This section is replicated from the LDMP.*

#### 5.4.1 Bureau of Meteorology

Warning products issued by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) include severe weather warnings, heatwave warnings, tropical cyclone advice and tsunami warnings. The community is encouraged to subscribe to these. Monitoring may also occur through [Bom.gov.au/](http://Bom.gov.au/) or through the BoM App available from the Google Play Store or Apple Store.

#### 5.4.2 Disaster Dashboard

Ipswich City Council's Disaster Dashboard provides the Ipswich community with a comprehensive and user-friendly platform for accessing information on the status of events in Ipswich. It includes

emergency news, road conditions, weather warnings, power outages and other information. To view the dashboard, visit [Disaster.ipswich.qld.gov.au](https://disaster.ipswich.qld.gov.au).

### 5.4.3 My Ipswich Alerts

As part of Ipswich City Council's commitment to community safety and wellbeing, it has teamed up with the Early Warning Network (EWN) to provide residents with early warning alerts for potentially dangerous weather and bushfires within the City of Ipswich. Council encourages residents to become familiar with potential hazards and risks and take early action where needed. The EWN alerts are provided through Council's innovative *My Ipswich Alerts* platform, a free service enabling the community to be instantly updated via email or smartphone app with warnings and information about emergency and disaster events in the greater Ipswich region. To opt in for this service or find out information, visit [ipswich.qld.gov.au/myipswichalerts](https://ipswich.qld.gov.au/myipswichalerts) or search the Google Play Store or Apple Store for *My Ipswich Alerts*.

### 5.4.4 Seqwater notification service

Seqwater manages three gated dams (Wivenhoe, Somerset and North Pine dams) in South East Queensland, these dams provide water to 3.1 million people in the region. Seqwater provides information on planned releases of water from the dams in addition to other notices. For more information visit [Seqwater.com.au/dam-release-information-service](https://seqwater.com.au/dam-release-information-service).

## PART 6: MONITORING

During all stages of a disaster event, Council acting in its capacity within the LDMG will conduct monitoring activities across several different mediums, to ensure that the most accurate and up-to-date information is able to be accessed.

### 6.1 Social Media

Social Media can be an invaluable tool during disaster events; providing a convenient, easily accessed platform for the quick and effective dissemination of information to a mass audience. However, the accessibility of social media can also mean that incorrect information is easily spread. It is therefore imperative that social media channels be monitored, and corrections offered wherever possible.

In engaging with a social media audience, Council should act in the best interests of the wider community, providing feedback that mitigates any undue concern caused by inaccuracies. Warnings and emergency messages should be reinforced by formal language and strong calls to action where required, to ensure that the urgency of the situation is appropriately promoted.



Social media will work best with an audience that is already well engaged in the online presence. It is worth considering that social media in the emergency management space should be utilised on a regular basis outside of disaster situations, to ensure that the audience will be there when it really counts.

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Social media platforms are extremely responsive, with channels of information able to spread exponentially across different demographics within very short timeframes. It is extremely important that rumours and incorrect information be corrected as quickly as possible, and in a polite and friendly manner suitable to the platform.

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Information coming through official channels should be monitored by Council during an event to ensure that any unfolding events or sudden changes are accurately and appropriately communicated.

Disaster events can unfold swiftly, and primary agencies may not have time to update the LDCC while they are amid coordinating their response. As such it is important that Council conducts its own monitoring to ensure the best chance of gaining all possible information regarding an

unfolding event in as timely a manner as possible, regardless of whether individual agencies are able to provide direct updates through the LDCC.

There are several different agencies, service providers, and other associated entities that Council may need to contact during a disaster event.

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## PART 7: ANNEXURES

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ITEM: 4

SUBJECT: 2021-2022 SEASONAL PREPAREDNESS

AUTHOR: SENIOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICER

DATE: 14 SEPTEMBER 2021

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This is a report concerning council's preparedness activities in relation to the 2021-2022 severe weather season, which typically runs from October through April. In addition to an increasing chance of La Niña, which typically brings more rainfall to Queensland, the Bureau of Meteorology forecast for October to December currently indicates that South East Queensland is likely to experience warmer than average nights and above average rainfall.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the report be received and the contents noted.**

### **RELATED PARTIES**

There are no conflicts of interest.

### **IFUTURE THEME**

Safe, Inclusive and Creative

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT/BACKGROUND**

Disaster and emergency management is a whole of Council responsibility, supported and undertaken by all departments and service delivery units. Accordingly, all council staff will have the opportunity in October to attend Seasonal Briefings contextualised for Ipswich which will include a bushfire outlook provided by the Rural Fire Service and a weather outlook provided by a Meteorologist from the Early Warning Network.

To bolster council's capability to respond to disasters in Ipswich by establishing the Local Disaster Coordination Centre, approximately 30 staff from various sections across council undertook disaster coordination centre training in May 2021. This has since been supplemented with regular learning opportunities and will be supported with further incident management training in November.

Arrangements are being finalised to facilitate training, exercises, and workshops in November for key internal stakeholder groups with very different disaster management responsibilities including Councillors, the Executive Leadership Team and the Local Recovery and Resilience Group (LRG) and Recovery Taskforces.

To ensure council is well placed to ensure redundancy of key roles and support fatigue management during protracted disaster events, council recently resolved to appoint a Deputy Chair to the LRG and an additional deputy to the role of Chair, Local Disaster Management Group (refer Report no. 13387 *Deputy Chairpersons for the Local Disaster Management Group and the Local Recovery and Resilience Group*).

Council has also been and will continue throughout the season, to review its standard annual seasonal preparedness logistics including, but not limited to reviewing evacuation centre arrangements; testing facilities and equipment; participating in multi-agency exercises; undertaking internal seasonal preparedness training and exercise regimes; and monitoring and reporting on potential threats to the Ipswich community.

### **LEGAL/POLICY BASIS**

This report and its recommendations are consistent with the following legislative provisions:  
*Disaster Management Act 2003*  
*Ipswich City Council Disaster Management Policy*

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The *Disaster Management Act 2003* asserts that Local Governments are primarily responsible for managing disaster events within their area, thus severe weather season always carries a level of risk for council. The seasonal preparedness activities outlined above place council in a good position to mitigate that risk through appropriate planning, response and recovery arrangements.

### **HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACTS
<b>RECEIVE AND NOTE REPORT</b>
The recommendation states that the report be received, and the contents noted. The decision to receive and note the report does not limit human rights. Therefore, the decision is compatible with human rights.

### **FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Seasonal preparedness activities are developed and delivered within organisational budgets.

### **COMMUNITY AND OTHER CONSULTATION**

Community education and awareness are important elements of council's seasonal preparedness program and include a general seasonal awareness campaign and event-related notifications delivered through social media and other channels.

In addition, council is undertaking several community engagement activities during Get Ready Queensland Week (10-17 October) which have been detailed in the following reports recently approved by Council in September 2021: Report no. 13388 *Get Ready Queensland Week 2021* and Report no. 13362 *Get Ready Community Safety and Crime Prevention Expo*.

## **CONCLUSION**

While severe weather season will always carry a level of risk for council, the seasonal preparedness activities outlined in this report place council in a good position to mitigate that risk both internally, in relationship to the broader disaster management arrangements, and in partnership with the community.

Kristie Mckenna  
**SENIOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICER**

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Matthew Pinder  
**ACTING MANAGER, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Phil A. Smith  
**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND LAND MANAGER**

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Kaye Cavanagh  
**MANAGER, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

***“Together, we proudly enhance the quality of life for our community”***