

FORWARD

Australians have to endure the stress associated with emergencies that result from a wide range of natural and man-made disasters that recur on an annual basis. It is an inherent human characteristic to instantly offer assistance to any fellow human being in distress. Regrettably, such action will often introduce an element of chaos into an otherwise manageable situation; therefore properly structured preparation is essential. The Lions organization has proved (on a global scale) that it has an unmatched capability to provide direct and immediate humanitarian support at the point of most need. The capacity to provide this emergency service exists in the Australian Lions family. Although its members are not trained as fire fighters, rescuers or paramedics; nor structured for this purpose, each Lions Club is generally well positioned and capable to react immediately to alleviate the anguish and suffering of victims resulting from their loss of sustenance and/or personal effects.

With 28,000 Lions in 1,400 clubs, the Australian capacity is considerable - on the occasion of most incidents there will normally be a Lions Club located nearby. However, due to these Lions elements being dispersed over a vast area and the general lack of coordinated forward planning, it is not surprising that this has resulted in Lions not being "first to mind" with the general public and most emergency organisations. The need to redress this less than satisfactory situation has necessitated the production of this District Emergency Plan.

This plan is issued as an aid to leadership to enable all levels of the Lions family to meet their commitment to the community they serve. It is a living document that should be updated in the light of experience gained or lessons learned, so supplements may be issued. For this purpose Emergency Activity Reports should be forwarded to the National Office.

The purpose of this plan is to enable officers (at all levels) to:

- Adopt the plan for use in their area of responsibility.
- Use it as a matrix for developing a local plan.
- Aid the memory.
- Apply it as a basis of conducting Emergency Management training.
- Introduce Lions capability to Government agencies and other service organisations.
- Measure performance during emergency operations.
- Provide a common language.
- Ease channels of communication.
- Identify an appropriate structure.
- Allow coordination at all levels.

Experience has proven it is essential that appropriate Lions assignments and procedures be in place and well practised before any event occurs.

All members of District 201N1 should familiarise themselves with paragraph 38 onwards.

This plan is commended to your attention.

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INTRODUCTION

General

1. It is an inherent human characteristic to instantly offer assistance to any fellow human being in distress. Regrettably, such action will often introduce an element of chaos into an otherwise manageable situation; therefore strict direction and co-ordination is essential.

Purpose

2. The purpose of this Emergency Plan is threefold:
- 2.1. To provide for the smooth implementation and development of a structured, integrated process for the provision of Lions support in an emergency situation,
 - 2.2. To provide a local adjunct to the LCI “Lions Alert Program”.
 - 2.3. To provide an informative reference document for the guidance of other agencies with which Lions elements may be in close co-operation during an emergency.

The Lions Alert Program

3. Lions Clubs International has established an international emergency response strategy. The N1 Alert Coordinator via the District Governor reports to The Multiple District Lions Alert Coordinator who is the Executive Officer.
4. The Lions Alert strategy underpins this document. This strategy outlines the District response to the Lions Alert Program.
5. Lions' Alert notifications and advice about emergency responses will be issued through the Multiple District Website. <http://lionsclubs.org.au>. and District N1 website at <http://lionsclubs.org.au/201n1/>.

Definition

6. All disasters are emergencies but not all emergencies are disasters.
 - 6.1. Disaster: An unexpected or sudden great misfortune, a calamity, a grievous adversity causing extreme distress.
 - 6.2. Emergency: An actual or immanent occurrence, which endangers or threatens the safety and/or health of persons, damage to property and/or disruption to the environment.
7. Disasters normally have a huge political impact due to the chaos created. Emergencies are sensitive issues but are usually manageable and of moderate political importance; except at the applicable local government level.
8. Lions' involvement in an emergency situation (whatever the need) will be much easier to manage than with a disastrous occurrence.

STRUCTURE

Responsible Agencies

9. The constitutional responsibility for the protection of lives, property and relief of the Australian population lies predominately with the States and Territories, assisted and supported by the Commonwealth. Local Government is a critical component in Emergency Management and is usually the first interface with Non Government Organisations (NGO). These authorities, through their appropriate emergency management agencies, undertake planning for the Prevention – Preparation – Response and Recovery stages of an emergency. As a Non Government Organisation Lions elements do not form part of this planning process; but must be prepared to be responsive to the needs of a distressed community when warranted.

Lions Participation

10. The Lions organization has proved (on a global scale) that it has an unmatched capability to provide direct and immediate humanitarian support at the point of most need. Its primary capacity is financial assistance; but it also has a capacity to provide limited material and physical relief on urgency of need basis.

Lions Capability

11. In Australia, The Lions four-tiered structure of Multiple District, District, Zone and Club is established, in place and operates on well-practiced channels of communication. There are some 28,000 Lions in 1,400(+) Clubs divided into 19 Districts. Each District, while not aligned to specific States boundaries, is State located with a capacity to assist its home State's emergency requirements. Each Lions Club is metropolitan, suburban or rural based, and is normally located in close proximity to the principal Emergency Service Organisations (ESO) – which are the Police, Ambulance, Fire and SES services.

Lions Capacity

12. At any point of incident or occurrence the nearest Lions agency (the local Club) has autonomy over its own assets including human and financial resources. This capacity can be quickly augmented from the co-ordinated resources of the Zone in which it operates – normally from (say) six other clubs. The next and most viable level of Lions emergency management is at District level, where the Alert Officer is a Cabinet member with direct access to the District Governor who will have the resources of some 63 Clubs on which to draw. Should there be need to co-ordinate Lions response on a national basis this would normally devolve to the National Office of Multiple District 201 that has its headquarters in Newcastle, NSW.

PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

Occurrences (Possible Causes)

13. The range of natural and man-made hazards in Australia is extensive. All of the following incidents will normally have disruptive impact on the nearest local community and all too often much wider a field. Agricultural Event – Bush fires
Chemical Explosion – Cyclone – Criminal Act- Drought – Earth Quake – Environmental Disruption – Disease Epidemic – Floods- Industrial Occurrence – Infrastructure Breakdown – Landslides – Maritime Acts- Structural Collapse – Tempest – Transport Accident – Tsunami – Urban Chaos-Volcano – Violent Civil Upheaval – War Causes.

14. Lions Emergency Planning must be structured to produce a single plan that will be responsive to any need arising from each or all of the above occurrences.

Stages of an Emergency

15. There are four stages of an emergency. Lions' involvement is more likely to be in the recovery stage and planning should reflect this probability.

Planning – Prevention – Preparation – Response – Recovery

16. The characteristics of an emergency are Cause – Frequency – Duration – Speed of Onset; plus Destructive Potential. However, Lions will not be able to affect any control over these factors but must make allowance for cause and effect during any planning process. Recovery starts at the point of first applied assistance – as stated, the need for Lions support will most likely occur in this phase.

Planning Considerations

17. **Accurate Information:** It is essential that acquired information clearly determine the full scope of the Lions support that is needed, both for immediate relief and potential development. Duplication of effort with other capable agencies can create confusion that could result in a critical waste of scarce resources.

18. **Assessment of Need:** The very earliest need may be a clubs immediate response in support for its fellow members who may be early victims of occurrence. Early coordination with other agencies to assess the needs of the community is essential; this will help determine what requirement can be met from Lions' existing capabilities.

19. Urgency of Need: Assessment of this factor is extremely difficult for untrained people because most victims will see their need as urgent. Local Government Human Resource / Health Officers will normally be in the best position to advise on urgency of need matters.

20. Ability to Cope: The profile of Lions clubs varies enormously in membership numbers, age levels, financial resources; plus management and trade skills. When a Club first commits its local resources it is to advise the District Alert officer immediately and alert the Zone Chairman to the clubs commitment.

21. Respect of Privacy: Being a victim of any disaster or emergency situation is a most traumatic and sensitive experience. Their loss is compounded by the need to seek aid which for many will be very embarrassing, even humiliating. It is essential that the privacy of these victims be respected. Persons needing distress counselling must be referred to properly qualified personnel.

22. Sources of Assistance: A register of other services (both ESO and NGO) is to be maintained at all levels of the Lions structure. The Title, Name and contact number of responsible officers is to be recorded for immediate reference. Likewise a skills register should be maintained for club members.

23. Funding Sources: Emergency Funds can be sourced from direct lodgement arising from the clubs annual "Allocations" programme, and/or specific fund raising activities; plus application for grants from appropriate government agencies (all levels) applicable to a club's location. In response to an incident, appropriate grants may be requested from LCIF, ALF and other regional Funds e.g. VLF. Application for these fund allocation/grants must be well considered, as most fund sources will prescribe both the use and accountability of such funds. It is important to distinguish between the quick emergency funds needed during the response phase of an occurrence and the larger, more enduring project funding required during the recovery phase.

24. Funds Management: Ready Reaction" funds should be maintained in a discrete "Emergency Fund" account. Each District should maintain an "Emergency Fund", not to be styled for any specific purpose, e.g. "Bush Fire Fund" as this limits expenditure solely for that purpose. For all element of the Lions organisation, the expenditure of funding, at any level, will normally be classified as "Non- Recoverable" Such financial commitment(s) must always be both justifiable and accountable.

25. Human/Material Resources: In addition to the provision of financial support there may be an opportunity for club members to provide practical forms of support. This support will normally consist of physical labour or the provision of material items – or both.

26. Legal Matters: It is a sad reality that litigation is an ever-present resultant of actions taken during any disaster or emergency situation. It is essential that all elements of any Lions organization, participating in such incidents, maintain accurate records that detail all actions undertaken. These records must include names – dates – timings – locations involved and any other data; a copy of which is to be forwarded to the appropriate Legal Officer at either District or Multiple District, as applicable.

27. Information Management: District PR staff have a vital role to perform in the passage of timely and accurate information to the public. The maintenance of morale is of critical importance and inaccurate or misinformation must be avoided at all costs. The District Public Relations Officer must be involved right from the outset and be the single point of contact to external information centres and media outlets for all Lions related aspects. Of particular importance is the over sighting of any Lions contact with any/all elements of the media whose members often have a wont to interview Lions at the local club level – usually with less than satisfactory outcomes.

28. Relationships: Emergency Planning and Emergency Management is multi tiered from National down to Local Government level. A generalized relationship with these agencies and the Lions organization in Australia can be:

- Multiple District - National
- District - State
- Zone/Club - Local Government

29. At the National level the principal agency is the Emergency Management Australia (EMA) – at State the State Emergency Response Authorities (title varies from State to State) and at the local level it is the Municipal Emergency Management Group. The most likely level of Lions involvement will be at the Local Government level: Council – Shire – County; with the main interface being with the following officers:

- Municipal Emergency Manager (MEM).
- Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO)
- Municipal Emergency Recovery Manager (MRM)

30. All members of a Lions Club Board of Directors should be personally acquainted with these municipal officers.

31. Higher Management: The District Governor is to assemble a District Emergency Management Committee to operate under his/her supervision. The Committee should consist of the Vice District Governor (Chairman), the District Alert Officer, the Cabinet Secretary and Treasurer and the PR Officer. The District Constitution and By-Laws Chairman to be on-call for consultation if required.

32. Group Emergency Management Committee: Most Disasters and Emergencies are generally managed within an area that is the geographic liability of a single State to manage. There should be a Group Emergency Management Committee established for the C – N – Q – V – W Districts to co-ordinate mutual support for joint response action when required. The Executive Officer is the Multiple Districts Lions Alert Chairman responsible for coordinating Lions response to National Emergencies.

33. Co-ordination and Control: The onset of any emergency situation will normally be swift but haphazard and its development will often be sporadic. Most agencies will be quick to react, as will be the case with local Lions clubs and members of the public. Lack of coordination at this stage can cause unacceptable delays and inequities that can engender a sense of frustration and a loss of confidence (even animus) in any/all supporting agencies, particularly from victims!

34. It is preferable that appropriate Lions liaison appointments and procedures be in place and practised before any event occurs. Primarily this must be at the applicable local government level, but certainly with those agencies that have prime

responsibility for whatever tasks Lions are asked to perform. These agencies will vary dependent upon the nature of the emergency; e.g., Red Cross, SES, Fire Services, as appropriate for Tempest, Bush Fire, Flood; etc.

35. Co-operation: Tragic situations present an ideal opportunity for close co-operation between Service Organisations (of like interest) to ensure economy of effort and to minimise resource utilisation. A good example is the commonality that exists between Lions and Rotary could well ensure working arrangements operate smoothly. A Joint endeavour of this nature would have the potential to present a formidable force whose needs and deeds must receive serious consideration by all planning and operational groups.

36. When participating in joint ventures care must be taken to clearly identify the contribution each participating component can contribute - particularly expertise, management, finance, material resources and labour. It is also essential to establish at what level each component can either be directly involved or deliver an effective outcome.

37. Emergency Training: It is essential that selected Lions (at all levels) have a good understanding of the general structure and operational procedures of all the Agencies, Organisations and Committees responsible for Emergency Management in their particular Lions area of responsibility. The various State Emergency Services are responsible for the conduct of basic courses styled "Introduction to Emergency Management". Each Lions club should endeavour to have at least one club member attend a course of this nature, as they are basic, but suitable for the integration of Lions emergency functions with that of other agencies.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

38. Activation: At the first awareness of an impending emergency situation or the onset of a real time occurrence; the following action is to be taken:

39. The Club President is to call a Board meeting in preparation for possible Club involvement and to alert both the Zone Chairman and the District Emergency Officer.

39.1. The Club's Emergency Officer is to make contact with the Municipal Emergency Management Committee to be briefed on the situation and to ascertain what assistance, if any, may be required of the Lions Club.

39.2. When any request for assistance is received the Board is to determine the clubs capacity to meet the request from its own resources; Financial, Human and/or Material.

39.3. Requests for support that is beyond the club's capability are to be passed to Zone and District for action or reinforcement.

39.4. Club Members are to be warned – then assembled and tasks allotted as and when required. **All members who will be involved must be recorded as participants.**

40. Participation: As the situation develops and the Lions organisation is committed, it is vital that there is a single point of contact established at each level of

Lions Emergency Management to which all requests are to be made. Participation may be either financial support or the provision of human and/or material resources in a physical support role.

The following Guidelines should be used to assist with the proper allocation of Lions support:

a. Financial Support:

Appropriate:

- *Subsistence – Water and Food.
- *Protection – Shelter and clothing.
- *Medical – Pharmaceutical Products

Inappropriate:

- *Income Losses.
- *Insurance Losses.
- *Utility Services.

b. Manpower/Material Support

Food Preparation Service; Food and Water; Debris clean-up; Eating utensils
Sandbagging – including filling; Bed Linen; Driving tasks; Clothing;
Message call centre operator; Reading Material

41. Cessation of Activities: When advised by proper authority, i.e. Lions, Government, ESO or NGO as appropriate, or when the club wishes to withdraw its support (for whatever reason), the club is to advise all associated elements that it has ceased emergency operations. At this point the club is to carry out the following actions:

- Club members to be debriefed to ascertain any need for medical/mental service.
- All discrete financial commitments are to be finalised.
- All Insurance claims to be submitted.
- Recoverable material is to be collected.
- Borrowed equipment items are to be returned.
- Activity Report to be completed and forwarded to District Alert Officer for processing.
- Publicity submissions to be placed through the District PR Officer.

ALERT OFFICER OR DISTRICT EMERGENCY OFFICER

An emergency qualified officer who has attended an “Introduction to Emergency Management” Course conducted by the SES in each State should fill this appointment. The Alert Officer is the District Governor's representative and is a member of Cabinet. The Alert Officer is the Emergency co-ordinator who provides the link between the District and appropriate Government Authorities; plus Cabinet Officers and Club Administrators on all emergency related matters.

The responsibilities of the District Alert Officer are:

1. Assist and advise the District Governor on the implementation of Emergency Policy matters relative to all levels of the District's emergency responsibility.
2. Develop and produce the District's Emergency Plan within the guidelines incorporated in the Multiple District Emergency Plan(s).

3. Establish proper channels of communication and direct liaison with State and Municipal Emergency authorities; and arrange for these authorities to be fully briefed on the roles, functions, abilities and capabilities of all Lions elements during an emergency situation.
4. Respond to emergency policy and/or co-ordination directives that may, from time to time, be received from Multiple District.
5. Create working arrangements and communication links with the DEO of sister districts in each and every threatened area.
6. Provide guidance to the MERL team on the emergency training requirements for Lions personnel, plus the assistance needed to support the development of Zone Chairmen and Club Emergency Officers.
7. Maintain (through the District Treasurer) an overview of any "Emergency Relief Trust Fund" that may be established at District level.
8. Manage a "Register of Material Assets"; plus a list of "Personal Skills" available in the district and allocate priorities for utilisation these emergency resources.
9. Lead initial investigation into emergency matters of concern to Cabinet and/or clubs within their areas of responsibility.
10. Maintain an "Incident Occurrence Register" and compile "After Action Reports"

LETTER OF INTENT BETWEEN LIONS AND A PARTNER ORGANISATION ENTERING INTO A JOINT EMERGENCY PROJECT

A joint project must be mutually agreed in response to a genuine need that has been identified by an appropriate government agency. Care is to be taken to ensure that the task offered is worthy of each partner's involvement.

The following points are to be agreed:

- A single joint project is preferable over separate projects conducted conjointly.
- Commitment during any extension of a "Response Phase" should be undertaken on a discrete to service basis.
- An activity that can be covered by insurance and/or government financial assistance should not be considered.
- The nature of the joint task should be:
 - A genuine need exists.
 - Clearly identifiable.
 - Recognisable.
 - Is measurable.
 - Is achievable.
 - Is affordable.
 - Is manageable.
- Whichever task(s) is selected, such activity should be relevant to the purpose of each partner.
- Selected task(s) may be in a locality which is either currently serviced by an element of either organization; or in an area that currently does not enjoy such support.