



Emergency Relief and Support

LEMC REPORT FOR DISTRIBUTION 4th Quarter 2025 - 2026

Regional Emergency Relief and Support contact

Activation of Emergency Relief and Support (ERS) services is via
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Region specific update

Emergency Relief and Support update

The Department of Communities (Communities) Emergency Relief and Support (ERS) continued to support impacted people and communities over the high threat season by assisting with evacuation centres, providing immediate accommodation, and coordinating early recovery planning in alignment with local government.

- **A range of new initiatives** have been introduced across the season, including updated Go Bags - packs for accommodation including air mattress, pillow and sleeping bags, and hygiene packs. Throughout the season, feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The hygiene packs are proving particularly popular, and the air bed, pillow, and sleeping bag bundle has been widely appreciated as a practical take home pack.
- A pilot project has been undertaken in response to the Boddington Newmont bushfire in December 2025. The purpose of the pilot was to test the feasibility and scalability of post evacuation centre engagement, with the aim of supporting social and emotional wellbeing during the early recovery period. The project also sought to capture structured feedback on evacuation centre operations to inform service improvements and strengthen continuity between response and early recovery. Findings are being reviewed to assess feasibility and scalability across future emergencies.

Identification of Evacuation Centres

Under the State's Emergency Management Arrangements, Local Governments are required to identify evacuation centres suitable for relevant hazards and/or communities.

- When identifying potential evacuation centre locations, it is the responsibility of the local government, in collaboration with the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMCs) and relevant emergency management agencies, including the Department of Communities, to determine that the facilities are appropriate for hazards that are high risk to the area.
- Section 2.3 of the Location Planning of the Western Australia Evacuation Community in Emergencies Guidelines states:
LEMCs should consult with relevant emergency management agencies (including local governments, HMAs, Controlling Agencies, support organisations, and the Department of Communities) to determine the evacuation centres suitable for relevant hazards and/or communities. LEMCs should also identify possible options for refuge sites depending on the nature of the emergency.
- Communities maintains a record of all evacuation centres in the State and provides this to Controlling Agencies and/or HMAs as required.

Communities encourage local governments and LEMCs to ensure that only approved and assessed evacuation centres, as documented in the Local Emergency Relief and Support Plan, are included in the LEMA.

To support this process, Communities will be tabling an agenda item at LEMCs to seek confirmation of the centres on the State register.

Emergency Relief and Support Training

As we move into the preparedness and capability development season, Communities will be rolling out updated training across local government, partner organisations, and our internal staff group. This 2.5-hour session (which can be adapted to suit local needs) is designed to support local government staff who may be allocated to open and facilitate the operation of an evacuation centre prior to Communities' arrival.

This practical based training builds knowledge of key processes, common challenges, and the adaptations required for different cohorts and scenarios. Multiple scenarios and exercises targeting local government preparedness are included.

ERS staff in your region will be in contact to arrange dates for this training.

Exercising

Local governments are encouraged to include ERS early in all hazard emergency exercise planning to strengthen coordination across response and recovery.

Response ERS activations - January to March 2026

Significant events during the reporting period included Tropical Cyclone Mitchell, Severe Tropical Cyclone Narelle, flooding in the Kimberley, and multiple bushfire incidents across metropolitan, regional, and remote locations.

Across the previous quarter January to March 2026 Communities were activated:

- 13 times for Bushfires: January (7 evacuation centres) February (4) and March (2).
- 3 times for Cyclones: January TC Luana (2 evacuation centres)
February TC Mitchell (5 evacuation centres)
March TC Narelle (5 evacuation centres)

The State Support Plan – Emergency Relief and Support was activated on 26 March, as a result of Severe Tropical Cyclone Narelle with 5 evacuation centres opened and more than 180 people supported. Exmouth experienced widespread damage to homes and critical infrastructure, prolonged power and water disruptions, telecommunications outages and flooding, while Carnarvon experienced major flooding affecting homes and plantations.

Communities have been leading the State Social Recovery Domain, coordinating welfare and early recovery activities in partnership with relevant government and non-government organisations. Key community needs identified include housing damage, increased costs and limited availability of essentials, requests for financial and wellbeing support, limited face-to-face services, and heightened environmental health concerns.

The AUSRECPLAN — the Commonwealth plan that supports the repatriation of Australian citizens and approved foreign nationals following a critical incident overseas — was placed into ALERT phase in March as a result of the Middle East conflict.

Other updates

Disaster Ready Fund - Opportunity to upgrade applicable facilities

The National Emergency Management Agency has confirmed that the next round (Round Four) of the Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) is expected to be open by mid-2026. [Disaster Ready Fund | NEMA](#)

Local governments could consider opportunities to:

- Identify facilities that may require alternative or backup power generation to remain functional during emergencies.
- Assess facilities that could support incident coordination agencies, emergency services, and key stakeholders during a crisis.
- Develop or refine plans, scoping documents, or proposals for renovations and upgrades to community facilities so they can better support evacuation operations, including improvements to accessibility, capacity, safety features, and emergency functionality.

The Communities team is happy to talk through your ideas and can also prepare a letter of support to strengthen your application.

Monitoring Fuel supply and availability

Communities continues to oversee statewide fuel supply availability in response to District Emergency Coordinator requests. A structured weekly reporting process is now in place to support consistent monitoring and information sharing.