



Disaster management activities under the National Indigenous Australians Agency Indigenous Rangers Program

Provider Fact Sheet

Definition of a disaster

For the purposes of the Indigenous Rangers Program (IRP) disaster management activities, the definition of 'disaster' is based on the [Australian Government Crisis Manual](#) definition of 'domestic natural hazard disasters' and includes bushfires, earthquakes, riverine floods, storms, tropical cyclones, storm surges, landslides, tsunamis, meteorite strikes and tornados.

Under the IRP program, disasters are those involving natural hazards and not man-made, such as health or energy supply events.

Disaster management incorporates a range of activities across all phases of a disaster, including prevention, preparation, response and recovery.

Responsibility for disaster management and response primarily rests with state and territory jurisdictions, while coordination at a national level is through the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) does not have funding or coordination responsibility for disaster management.

The NIAA can support Indigenous rangers funded through the IRP to participate in disaster management activities within the parameters of their executed project agreement with the Commonwealth. This should be focussed on disaster planning and preparation and disaster recovery, especially in coordination with the relevant jurisdictional authorities.

You must ensure you have adequate insurance and training to undertake all disaster management activities – further information is below.

IRP provider organisations may choose to participate in a range of voluntary or fee-for-service business activities unrelated to the IRP grant and not using assets, staff or other resources provided by the IRP grant. These activities are the sole responsibility of the provider organisation and where they involve disaster management work, it is NIAA's recommendation that organisations ensure they have the requisite level of interaction with relevant state and territory-based authorities, appropriate insurance, training and equipment.



Domestic biosecurity crises incidents are **not** considered disaster management activities under the IRP. These incidents are defined in the Australian Government Crisis Manual as those where a disease or pest or is posing a severe and immediate threat or causing harm to Australia's animals or plant health, the environment or the economy and requiring a whole-of-government response.

Although rangers can carry out biosecurity activities under their existing funding agreements and these activities are considered eligible under the relevant IRP grant opportunity guidelines, these specific activities are not covered in this Fact Sheet.

What are some of the disaster management activities IRP groups can be involved in?

Activities that could be undertaken by ranger groups funded under the IRP, include:

- **Disaster preparation/mitigation/recovery activities – can be covered within the APP&B:**
 - Revegetation and weed management activities in areas impacted by fire/flood/storm.
 - Repair of fencing and debris removal around important cultural sites, rivers, wetlands, and priority ecosystems.
 - Hazard reduction and cultural burning to reduce fuel loads around community infrastructure, cultural sites, and high priority ecosystems.
 - Preparation of a site prior to an anticipated disaster occurring.
 - Training activities with your local State Emergency Services or local council regarding emergency management.
- **Post-disaster response activities - covered with adjustment to the APP&B and where approved by relevant agencies (if relevant):**
 - Clearing trees or debris, including from public areas (roads etc).
 - Cleaning private properties / land.
 - Distributing food to a community.
 - Providing temporary accommodation.

Are there other activities not covered under the IRP?

Disaster management activities that are the responsibility of state and territory emergency services should be undertaken by those services. IRP rangers may volunteer with these services as individuals.

Some disaster and emergency management response activities **not** covered by the IRP include the following:

- Rescuing people in fire, flood, storm, cyclone situations.
- Responding to wildfires (extinguishing fires, back-burning etc.) *beyond* a ranger groups' own property as land owners or managers.



- Responding to other emergencies – e.g. traffic accidents.

As an IRP Provider, what do you need to do?

If your organisation wishes to play a role in disaster management activities, you must:

- Consider and plan what disaster activities your rangers may wish to undertake before a disaster occurs. This enables a strategic approach to coordination, training, obtaining necessary equipment and ensuring adequate insurance coverage.
- Once you have decided you would like to be involved in specific disaster management activities, the tasks you intend to undertake that year should be included in your Annual Project Plan and Budget (APP&B).
- Please speak with your relevant NIAA contact officer about how activities might be accommodated in your funding agreement if:
 - you are currently working in cooperation with, or under the guidance of jurisdictional emergency services, or wish to do so
 - you are not sure whether your current or planned disaster management activities can be covered under the IRP.
- Once disaster management activities are included in the APP&B, you will then be required to report on any you have undertaken during the year in your annual performance reporting.

Activities during a disaster or recovery after a natural disaster

It is important that you speak with your NIAA contact officer before contemplating assisting during a disaster or embarking on steps to assist with recovery after a disaster. Ideally, you will have already discussed the involvement of your IRP group in this work before a disaster occurs.

If no prior discussion has occurred, the next best option is to still seek approval for the activities you wish to undertake at the time.

For evolving events and unforeseen circumstances and provided you can demonstrate you have undertaken appropriate training and have the necessary insurance coverage and equipment, IRP providers can retrospectively add proposed disaster management activities to their APP&B after discussion and agreement with the NIAA.

Longer term recovery efforts can be detailed in your next APP&B.

Please note IRP grant activities can not include those that *must* be undertaken by state and territory emergency services.

Insurance and Training

- IRP groups must have the appropriate level of insurance and training to undertake disaster management activities, whether those activities are conducted under the IRP or outside of the IRP. It is the responsibility of each IRP provider to ensure that their staff have the relevant training, equipment, and appropriate type and level of insurance to undertake disaster management activities.



- The NIAA cannot support any activity where the provider is not adequately insured and staff are not appropriately trained nor equipped to undertake the activity.
- Providers must supply certificates of insurance and confirm coverage for all specified activities to ensure compliance.

Fee-for-Service work

IRP rangers can undertake disaster management activities as part of IRP fee-for-service work but this work should be captured under the APP&B and all terms and conditions relating to insurance, training and equipment are still to apply. IRP fee-for-service work is covered by this policy as it uses IRP assets, resources and/or staff.

This is not the same as activities undertaken as voluntary or fee-for-service work *unrelated* to the IRP grant and not using assets, staff or other resources provided by the IRP grant.

Additional Support

Ranger groups can inquire with other relevant agencies for additional funding opportunities for disaster management activities that are not within the scope of the IRP. Please see the attached ***Resources and Disaster Management Related Contacts***.

Further Information

For further information on this factsheet please contact your local NIAA regional office. You can find the contact details here: [Regional offices around Australia | NIAA](#).

If you are unsure of who your NIAA contacts are, please call **1800 079 098**. This toll-free number will automatically connect you to the nearest NIAA regional office.



Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Attachment – Resources and Disaster Management Contacts

National Emergency Management Agency

[Homepage | NEMA](#)

[Contact us | NEMA](#)

States and Territory Emergency Services

[Respond | NEMA](#)

Volunteer Emergency Services

Australian Capital Territory - [| ACT Emergency Services Agency](#)

Northern Territory Emergency Services - [Emergency Service | NT Police, Fire & Emergency Services](#),

South Australia Emergency Services - [SA.GOV.AU - About emergency services](#)

Western Australia Emergency Services - [Emergency services volunteer recruitment in WA | DFES](#)

Tasmania Emergency Services - [Volunteer - Tasmania State Emergency Service](#)

Victoria - [Become a volunteer - Victoria State Emergency Service – VICSES](#)

New South Wales - [Emergency Volunteering | NSW Government](#)

Queensland - [Volunteering with SES | Emergency services and safety | Queensland Government](#), [Home Page | Queensland Fire Department](#)

Other Resources

There are other relevant organisations in your state and territory including for volunteer fire combat services, disaster relief, and marine/ sea rescue services.

KEY MESSAGE – Regional Offices are best placed to know which disaster management organisations operate in their region and the services offered. Regional offices are encouraged to be aware of and engage with relevant services as required.

[Australian Government Crisis Management Framework](#)

[Australian Disaster Preparedness Framework](#)



Australian Climate Service and Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

[NCRA Climate risks](#) | [Australian Climate Service Website](#)

[National Climate Risk Assessment and National Adaptation Plan](#)

[Future climate and hazards](#)

[Extreme events and security](#)

[Natural environment and primary industries](#)

[People and communities](#)

[Economic impacts](#)

[Climate risks to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples](#)

Jurisdiction	Organisation	Key Functions	Contact
National	Australia Red Cross	Food and essentials Housing Evacuation Medical response	1800 733 276
	St Vincent de Paul	Food and essentials Housing Service relief	13 18 12
	Salvation Army	Food and essentials Service relief	13 72 58
	Australian Volunteer Coast Guard	Search and rescue	Home - Australian Volunteer Coast Guard
NSW	Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA)	Search and rescue	1300 872 777
NSW	Rural Fire Service (RFS)	Fire response	02 8741 5555
SA	Country Fire Service (CFS)	Fire response	08 8115 3300
SA	Sea Rescue Squadron	Search and rescue	08 8295 5072
ACT	Emergency Services Agency (ESA)	Search and rescue Storm response Fire response Flood response	02 6207 8444
QLD	Fire and Emergency Services (QFES)	Fire response	Home Page Queensland Fire Department



Jurisdiction	Organisation	Key Functions	Contact
TAS	Tasmania Fire Service (TFS)	Fire response	1800 000 699
WA	Bush Fire Service	Fire response	08 9395 9300
WA	Volunteer Fire and Emergency Services	Fire response Flood response	08 9395 9300
WA	Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services	Fire response	08 9395 9300
NT	Emergency Service (NTES)	Flood response Storm response Earthquake response Search and rescue Cyclone response	NT Emergency Service NT.GOV.AU
NT	Fire and Rescue Service (NTFRS)	Fire response	08 8932 1335
NT, NSW, QLD, TAS, WA, VIC	Marine Safety, Search and Rescue	Search and rescue	Marine safety NT.GOV.AU Home - Marine Rescue NSW Home Marine Rescue Queensland Marine Rescue Services - Surf Life Saving Tasmania Volunteer Marine Rescue Western Australia Marine Search and Rescue Western Australia, Australia Marine Search and Rescue vic.gov.au

NOTE: these services vary by jurisdiction. Each state government has different arrangements with different providers for delivery of services.

