

# Public shelter responsibilities - policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Emergency management plans for school's guidelines and the Emergency management sub plan – all regions emergency shelter group.

## Policy

For those Northern Territory (NT) Government schools designated as public emergency shelters, the principal is the designated shelter manager unless alternative arrangements have been made in accordance with this policy. Schools that are designated public emergency shelters must have appropriate plans in place to manage the shelter in the event of an emergency.

Each emergency shelter requires an identified shelter manager at all times throughout the year, including during school holiday periods. The shelter manager must familiarise themselves with the Territory emergency plan, the Regional counter disaster plan and the relevant Shelter operations plan. The shelter manager is responsible to the shelter group leader for the operation and control of the shelter during an emergency event.

The shelter manager is responsible for having a sound working knowledge of the Emergency management sub plan – all regions emergency shelter group and how this will be operationalised at their school. This includes facilitating access for NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services and St John Ambulance staff to the school premises to fulfil their duties. These duties will vary between regions and are detailed in regional plans.

It is essential that the shelter manager provides regular progress updates to the shelter group leader during an emergency event.

## Business need

In line with the Territory emergency plan, a shelter may be required for emergency events including cyclone and flood. In accordance with the *Emergency Management Act 2013*, the Department of Education (the department) is the lead agency for emergency shelters and coordinates the operational training of shelter managers.

The department maintains a number of public shelters as outlined in regional and local Emergency plans. Part of the department's responsibility is to:

- provide department buildings designated as public emergency shelters
- provide staff to operate the department emergency shelters during activation periods
- liaise with other organisations that have responsibilities relating to emergency shelters.

This policy outlines a consistent approach to ensure that the department meets its public emergency shelter obligations.

## Scope

This policy applies to all NT Government schools, including Independent public school status, which are designated in their Regional counter disaster plans as public emergency shelters.

Some schools have been identified in their respective local emergency plans as locations that may also be called upon to provide additional facilities during an emergency event, and in these circumstances, schools will assume the role of a public emergency shelter and be required to adhere to this policy.

## Roles and responsibilities

### Emergency Management Committee

The Emergency Management Committee will:

- coordinate both advice within the department and the response during an event, in accordance with the departments Emergency management framework.

### Infrastructure, Planning and Investments

The departments Infrastructure, Planning and Investment will:

- identify the department shelter group leader to oversee the activation of emergency shelters during an emergency situation
- ensure that designated department shelter buildings are adequately resourced.

### Senior Director Education

Senior Director Education with the line management of schools will:

- ensure that schools adhere to the requirements of this policy.

### Principals

As the designated shelter manager, principals will:

- assume the role of designated shelter manager in an emergency
- manage the operations of their shelter in line with the Emergency management sub plan - emergency shelter group (all regions)
- liaise with NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services and St John Ambulance volunteers to provide access to appropriate areas of their school for them to carry out their duties in an emergency situation
- manage school assets, including those assets that are emergency shelters
- ensure a shelter manager is identified at all times throughout the year, including during school holiday periods or periods of recreation leave from the school
- manage and adequately maintain all school assets during shelter operations
- coordinate shelter volunteers and assign appropriate roles to staff to assist with:
  - providing information to shelter occupants
  - maintain hygiene of the premises
  - collection of stores
  - monitor and record communications
  - administrative duties such as rostering of volunteers.

Should the principal not be able to perform the duties of a shelter manager, they will arrange for an appropriate manager and ensure that the nominee has working knowledge of their responsibilities during an emergency situation. These appointments must be approved by the relevant Executive Director and forwarded to the departments Emergency Management Committee for noting. This process also applies

where principals wish to engage service providers or volunteers to solely undertake shelter management tasks.

## Shelter group leader

The shelter group leader will:

- have overall responsibility for coordinating the region's emergency shelters and report directly to the territory or region counter disaster controller when a major emergency occurs.

## Definitions

Term	Definition
Counter disaster sub plan – all regions emergency shelter group	The procedures detailing the methods of staffing and operation of public emergency shelters in the event of a threat to people by cyclone, flood, fire or other emergency event.
Emergency	A range of events which could otherwise be described as incidents, accidents, catastrophes, disasters or crises. An emergency embraces the range of terms frequently used to describe an event, actual or imminent, which endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment, and which requires a significant and coordinated response.
Emergency Management Committee	Comprised of key department business areas responsible for reviewing risk and improving and promoting preparedness and recovery from a major emergency or disaster and is chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive Agency Services.
Emergency management plans	Detail assigned responsibilities and procedures required in the event of an emergency or critical incident.
Senior Director Education	When referred to in this policy, are those with the line management of schools.
Independent public schools	Schools that remain part of the public education system while operating with increased autonomy in relation to staff selection, financial management, governance, and their teaching and learning programs.
Local emergency plans	Developed to ensure coordinated emergency and recovery operations for a specific locality.
Public emergency shelters	Designated NT Government buildings identified for use as a shelter during an emergency and as a temporary place of refuge for people during a disaster or emergency event such as a flood, cyclone or fire.
Regional emergency plans	The regional emergency management structure is based on the 3 police regions. The plans provide a basis for coordinated emergency and recovery operations in each region.
School	Includes preschool and the land area up to the school boundaries.
School staff	Any person responsible for the operations or education services at a school. This can include contractors and volunteers.

Territory Emergency Management Council	Established under the <i>Emergency Management Act 2013</i> and is comprised of chief executives from a number of key departments. The primary functions of the Council include directing resources during emergency and recovery operations and provide advice in relation to emergency planning.
Territory emergency plan	The Territory's approach to emergency and recovery operations, the governance and coordination arrangement, and roles and responsibilities of agencies. It is supported by regional, local and hazard-specific plans and functional group sub plans.

## Related legislation, policy and documents

Additional resources can be found on the department's Work Health and Safety site – staff access only.

### Legislation

*Emergency Management Act 2013* - <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/Legislation/EMERGENCY-MANAGEMENT-ACT-2013>

*Education Act 2015* - <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/Legislation/EDUCATION-ACT-2015>

### Policy

Emergency management framework – <http://ed.ntschoools.net/documentcentre/Pages/home.aspx?category=School%20operations&subcategory=Emergency%20management>

Emergency management plans for schools' guidelines - [https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/school-operations#emergency\\_management](https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/school-operations#emergency_management)

Temporary school closures policy - [https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/school-operations#emergency\\_management](https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/school-operations#emergency_management)

Emergency management school preparedness policy - [https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/school-operations#emergency\\_management](https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/school-operations#emergency_management)

Emergency management sub plan all regions emergency shelter group - <http://ed.ntschoools.net/documentcentre/Pages/home.aspx?category=School%20operations&subcategory=Emergency%20management>

### Documents

Australian Standard 3745-2010, Emergency control organisation and procedures for buildings, structures and workplaces - [https://infostore.saiglobal.com/en-au/Standards/Product-Details-122637\\_SAIG\\_AS\\_AS\\_268393/?ProductID=122637\\_SAIG\\_AS\\_AS\\_268393](https://infostore.saiglobal.com/en-au/Standards/Product-Details-122637_SAIG_AS_AS_268393/?ProductID=122637_SAIG_AS_AS_268393)

Australian Standard AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009, Risk management fact sheet - <https://www.iso.org/standard/65694.html>

Australian Emergency Management Institute, Disaster Resilience Education for Schools - <https://ajem.infoservices.com.au/>

Northern Territory Emergency service publications and forms - <https://pfes.nt.gov.au/emergency-service/publications>

Territory emergency plan - <https://www.pfes.nt.gov.au/emergency-service/emergency-management>

Acronyms	Full form
NT	Northern Territory

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2.0	March 2023	Emergency Management and Security	Administrative amendments made to align roles and responsibilities to the structural alignment in effect from 1 July 2022 including NTG template and minor formatting