

# Tasmanian Disaster Resilience Strategy

2020-2025





# 1 Disasters will happen

Tasmania has experienced:

- natural disasters such as major fires and floods; and
- human-caused events, such as the Tasman Bridge collapse and the Port Arthur massacre.

Tasmanians have always responded with tenacity and generosity. We support one another in times of need. Our emergency services, volunteers, community organisations, governments and businesses work tirelessly to respond and to help communities to recover.

The reality of climate change is that extreme weather events are becoming more common. There are more hot days and intense rainfall. Bushfires, floods and storms continue to put people at risk, destroy property and impact communities, businesses, and the economy. Tasmanians also need to think about:

- other natural hazards, such as earthquake, landslides and tsunamis;
- pandemics and bio-security hazards; and
- intentional violence, cyber threats, major industrial accidents and other human-caused events.

Tasmanians are resilient, but also vulnerable and at risk. We can always do more to make sure we cope with and bounce back from disasters. We learn from past events to reduce risks and to prepare.

Disaster resilience is about everyone working together, using the best available evidence, to understand and reduce risks and prepare for disasters. It is about acting beforehand to reduce the impacts of disasters on communities and the environment.

*Disaster resilience is the ability of communities and individuals to survive, adapt and thrive in the face of turbulent change or acute stresses*

# 2 Why focus on disaster resilience?

We need to focus on disaster resilience because:

## 1 It helps ensure people's safety and well-being

Disaster resilience helps reduce the impacts of disasters such as

- deaths;
- injury and illness;
- the number of people affected;
- economic loss; and
- damage to property, or important services and assets.

## 2 Catastrophic disasters need a whole of society approach

Severe disasters can include compounding events and have widespread or prolonged impacts. Climate change means there is increasing risk of disasters. Responses to such disasters rely on a cross-sector and whole-of-society approach.



### 3 It is most governments' largest contingent liability

In 2017 Australia's disaster costs were \$13.2 billion. Experts predict this will increase by 3.4 per cent a year. This means disaster costs could triple by 2050. These estimates do not include intangible social, health, employment and economic impacts.

### 4 Disaster resilience cost-benefits add up

Investing in reducing disaster risk can be more cost-effective than spending on response and recovery. Disaster risk management can reduce response and recovery costs by 50 per cent. Resilient communities can recover better and often have fewer event-related health issues.

### 5 There are risks in relying on post-disaster funding

A focus on post-disaster funding may:

- create a disincentive for people to reduce their disaster risks and result in higher risk behaviours;
- divert funds from other public programs, such as other health and wellbeing programs that support resilience; and
- impact on investment and economic growth.

### 6 There are social and economic benefits even if a disaster does not happen

Reducing risks has benefits even if a disaster does not occur. It can:

- instil investor confidence, innovation, investment and economic growth;
- help reduce poverty and inequality; and
- contribute to the stability of Tasmania's economy.

## 7 There are disaster resilience co-benefits

Reducing disaster risks can leverage other everyday benefits. For example:

- building for disaster resilience can mean lower maintenance costs;
- tree planting to stabilise slopes can help the environment in other ways;
- flood mitigation measures, such as levees or dams, can provide stable and cleaner water supplies; and
- disaster resilient communities can better cope with other stresses, such as industry closures and household level crises.

### Example: Risk reduction measures pay off in an emergency

*'Fire fighters and TasNetwork crews have been praised for a remarkable job minimising the impact on the state's power network during the bushfire crisis.'*

*As few as 100 power poles have been damaged so far, despite several large blazes burning through almost 3 per cent of the state.*

*Tas Networks spokesman Josh Bradshaw said only a small number of customers had suffered outages due to downed poles and wires...*

*"Our electricity network is very resilient," Mr Bradshaw said. "Contingencies were in place to provide enough reserve should any large transmission assets have been impacted..."*

*TFS Station Officer Darren Gye said TasNetworks, the National Broadband Network and telecommunications companies put in a lot of effort before a bushfire event to prepare their sites.*

*"When we come along it's just a matter of attacking the fire at front or flank," he said. "If you do the work before it gets bad, it makes our life easier." He said the same rule applied for preparing a house prior to a major fire.*

*- Jack Paynter, Praise for keeping the lights on during bushfire drama, The Mercury, 10 February 2019*



### 3 How can we be more disaster resilient?

We've learned from our own experiences, plus the latest thinking from others nationally and internationally that everyone needs to play their part by:

- understanding their natural disaster risks;
- reducing disaster risks where possible;
- being prepared for disasters; and
- knowing what to do and what support is available.

**For individuals and families,** being resilient means:

- reducing risks in and around your home;
- planning what you would do in an emergency;
- joining with others in the community to put your plans into action; and
- supporting community organisations. People will rely on them after a disaster and they can help you understand and prepare for events.

**For businesses and other organisations,** disaster resilience means planning to cope with disruption and continue key operations while under stress. Business continuity planning has benefits, even if a disaster does not occur, such as improving processes and identifying efficiencies.

**For local community organisations and councils,** better disaster resilience means:

- understanding local businesses and forging partnerships;
- thinking about how we use land and where we build; and
- building relationships with emergency services.

**For Tasmanian Government agencies,** better disaster resilience means:

- providing early information and guidance; and
- greater coordination, collaboration and integrated service delivery.

More information on how to know your risks, connect with others, get ready and act is in Section 7 of this Strategy.

### 4 Strategy context and aims

Emergency management covers:

- Prevention;
- Preparation;
- Response; and
- Recovery.

Disaster resilience promotes preventing or reducing disaster risks and preparing for response and recovery.

This Tasmanian Disaster Resilience Strategy complements the Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements (TEMA). The TEMA describes the formal arrangements under the *Emergency Management Act 2006*. A separate State Emergency Management Committee Strategic Directions Framework enables related Tasmanian Government actions.

This Strategy aligns with:

- the international Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; and
- related national frameworks such as *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience* and the *National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework*.

All reflect the following common principles of disaster resilience:

- shared and defined responsibilities;
- reducing risk is everybody's business;
- integrated action;
- inclusive engagement;
- continual improvement;
- evidence-based decision-making; and
- leadership commitment at all levels.

People's health, literacy, social connections and financial security can impact on their disaster resilience. These are outside the scope of this Strategy but do impact on it. The Strategy complements other programs supporting:

- community development, social engagement, educational outcomes and preventive health;
- environmental and cultural values protection; and
- economic growth, sustainability and diversity.

This is Tasmania's first Disaster Resilience Strategy and it focuses on strategically linking existing initiatives. It encourages all Tasmanians to consider disaster resilience in their everyday decision-making. This includes:

- government;
- the private sector;
- non-government organisations; and
- community members.

This Strategy aims to bring together sectors and communities to:

- build on current actions that support disaster resilience;
- help everyone to work together for the safety and wellbeing of all Tasmanians; and
- make the best use of people's efforts and available resources.

The *Tasmanian Disaster Resilience Strategy 2020-2025* outlines:

1. a vision for a disaster resilient Tasmania;
2. the goals that underpin that vision;
3. strategies to achieve the goals;
4. how the Tasmanian Government will work with others to achieve the goals;

5. examples of current actions;
6. what success looks like; and
7. how Tasmanians can reduce disaster risks and prepare.

There is a '*Background and supporting information*' paper. It includes more details on:

- the scope of the strategy and the reasons for each goal;
- current actions;
- challenges and opportunities identified while preparing the Strategy; and
- references.

Access this paper at:

[www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/osem](http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/osem)

## 5 A disaster resilient Tasmania - vision and goals

### The Vision

Using the best available evidence, everyone works together to reduce their disaster risk, and to prepare to withstand and adapt to the impacts of disasters.

### The Goals

Four goals underpin this vision.

- 1 Understanding disaster risk** - everyone understands the disaster risks affecting them.
- 2 Working together** - everyone collaborates to reduce risks and prepare for disasters.
- 3 Reducing disaster risk** - Everyone reduces disaster risks in ways that have everyday benefits.
- 4 Being prepared for disasters** - when a disaster occurs, everyone knows what to do and can do it.

The next section outlines the strategies to achieve the goals, how the Tasmanian Government is working with others to achieve the goals, gives examples of related current actions and describes what success looks like.

# 6 Towards a disaster resilient Tasmania

## 1. Understanding disaster risk

Strategies	The Tasmanian Government will work with others to...	Example current initiatives*	What success looks like
1.1 Improve the quality, scope, usefulness and accessibility of risk and hazard information and analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to fill priority data and knowledge gaps.</li> <li>Improve prioritisation measures for risks and vulnerabilities across all hazards.</li> <li>Continue to improve integrated access to natural disaster information.</li> </ul>	<p>Tasmanian State Natural Disaster Risk Assessment .</p> <p>Ongoing specific hazard assessments.</p> <p><i>Climate Futures for Tasmania</i> report.</p> <p>The LIST/COP mapping data.</p> <p>Research support.</p>	There is relevant, accessible and useful data and research outputs.
1.2 Enable and encourage Tasmanians to access and use risk and hazard information and support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the accessibility of risk data and analysis for non-specialists and their diverse needs.</li> <li>Link local risk information to practical guidance on how to manage risk and prepare.</li> <li>Promote risk awareness in ways that suit individual, community and group diverse needs.</li> </ul>	<p>Iplan.tas.gov.au interactive maps.</p> <p>Disaster resilience curriculum resources.</p> <p>Tasmanian Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines.</p>	Everyone is aware of the risks affecting them.
1.3 Enable inclusive community capacity building programs across all hazards to suit local and individual needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate inclusive policies and programs based on community engagement, awareness and local or individual needs to ensure broad understanding of disaster risks and risk management across all hazards.</li> </ul>	<p>Hazard-related support for household risk reduction.</p> <p>Business Tasmania advice and workshops.</p> <p>SES Flood Policy Unit.</p> <p>People at Increased Risk in an Emergency: Guide (for community service providers).</p>	Tasmanians are supported and empowered to manage disaster risk.
1.4 Encourage all parties to reduce their risks and vulnerabilities based on sound evidence and clear priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure decision-makers have access to relevant risk information to inform decision making.</li> <li>Support councils to manage local risks through local plans, operations and policies.</li> </ul>	<p>Regional and municipal risk treatment plans.</p> <p><i>Climate Action 21: Tasmania's Climate Change Action Plan 2017-2021</i>.</p> <p>Councils' risk assessment guidelines.</p> <p>ANZCTC Crowded Places Strategy.</p>	Everyone prioritises and manages risks affecting them based on evidence.

## 2. Working together

Strategies	The Tasmanian Government will work with others to...	Example current initiatives*	What success looks like
2.1 Ensure there are agreed shared roles and responsibilities across all sectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify and communicate responsibilities for individuals, landowners, businesses and other organisations to reduce risks and be prepared for disasters.</li> <li>Clarify responsibilities for slow onset disasters.</li> </ul>	<p>Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements.</p> <p>Regional and Municipal Emergency Management (EM) plans.</p>	Everyone plays their part in reducing and preparing for disaster risks.
2.2 Facilitate and support collaborative cross-sector networks and governance structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renew and maintain effective committees and other collaborative networks across sectors and levels of government to facilitate continual improvement.</li> <li>Encourage private/public partnerships for community disaster resilience benefits.</li> </ul>	<p>State Emergency Management Committee and linked collaborative structures.</p> <p>Regional and Municipal EM Committees.</p> <p>State Fire Management Council, related committees.</p>	All parties collaborate to ensure cohesive action.
2.3 Tasmanian, Australian and local Governments collaborate to facilitate national, state and local disaster resilience continual improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to local, national and international strategic directions and initiatives.</li> <li>Support local councils in managing risks, disaster preparation and recovery.</li> <li>Enable continuous improvement mechanisms and reporting on disaster resilience actions and outcomes.</li> </ul>	<p>National Partnership Agreement and related programs.</p> <p>Recovery Partners Network.</p> <p>State involvement in national initiatives.</p> <p><i>Review of Fire Services Act</i>.</p>	All levels of government work together and with others for continual improvement.
12.4 Encourage risk reduction investment, insurance uptake and other means to reduce risk exposure and maximise broad benefits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure project governance and oversight across funding pools enables clear outcome realisation and the best use of resources.</li> <li>Continue to encourage uptake of insurance.</li> <li>Continue to consider disaster risks in major investment decisions.</li> </ul>	<p>National Partnership Agreement and linked grants programs.</p> <p>Tasmanian Risk Management Fund.</p> <p>Insurance schemes and awareness programs.</p>	Available resources are strategically allocated in line with risk-based priorities.

### 3. Reducing disaster risk

Strategies	The Tasmanian Government will work with others to...	Example current initiatives*	What success looks like
3.1 Address vulnerabilities through land use planning schemes, building and other regulations and natural resource management plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop strategic policy on managing vulnerabilities through EM experts, planners and others collaboration.</li> <li>Include risk considerations in land use and natural resource management plans, policies, strategies, and use and development controls when developed or reviewed.</li> </ul>	Draft State Planning Provisions and Building Act/ Regulations incorporate restrictions/ requirements for hazardous areas.	Land use and development of the built environment manage long-term vulnerabilities.
3.2 Enhance collaboration to manage vulnerabilities relating to critical infrastructure and services (CI&S).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further define Tasmania's vital services and assets.</li> <li>Collaborate to address vulnerabilities and local participation in national initiatives.</li> <li>Support Government Business Enterprise CI&amp;S providers to enhance their physical and organisational resilience.</li> <li>Continue to develop Tasmania's health services resilience.</li> </ul>	Government Business Enterprise service provider risk management plans. State Special EM Plans . National networks and support mechanisms. Health sector EM plans and procedures.	Critical infrastructure/ services are reliable and operational during/after disasters.
3.3 Encourage all parties to manage disaster risk within normal operations and leverage other benefits where possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and encourage all organisations and individuals to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- include disaster risk management in their normal activities;</li> <li>- develop and maintain contingency and continuity plans; and</li> <li>-leverage everyday benefits where possible.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Local council, Tasmanian Government and other organisations' internal disaster risk management.	Everyone includes disaster risk reduction in everyday operations and plans.
3.4 Prioritise risk prevention, preparedness, and recovery for assets of significant community value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritise risk reduction and preparedness for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- key state or community economic and social assets;</li> <li>- crowded places;</li> <li>- educational institutions; and</li> <li>- irreplaceable State natural and cultural heritage assets.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Rural and other business support. Crowded places supporting guidelines. Bushfire Ready Schools. EM plans for key natural and cultural assets.	Prioritised key industry, economic, social, natural and cultural asset protection.

### 4. Being prepared for disasters

Strategies	The Tasmanian Government will work with others to...	Example current initiatives*	What success looks like
4.1 Tasmanians have access to practical guidance. All levels of government and others support and encourage them to prepare for disasters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure consistency and clarity of preparedness information and support.</li> <li>Facilitate the uptake of preparedness information and support.</li> <li>Recognise, encourage and promote excellent risk management/ preparedness actions.</li> </ul>	Tools for household and community preparedness eg Red Cross RediPlan, Bushfire Ready Programs. Business Tasmania guides for businesses.	Tasmanian individuals, businesses, organisations, communities are prepared for disasters.
4.2 Regularly update and improve emergency management (EM) plans and other arrangements based on lessons learned and other evidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to review and improve Tasmania's EM plans, information mechanisms and other arrangements.</li> <li>Use lessons learned from events and exercises, ongoing risk assessments and other evidence and evaluation to inform improvements.</li> </ul>	TEMA, State Special, Regional and Municipal EM Plans. Community Protection Plans. TasALERT hazard specific information mechanisms.	There are practiced plans and arrangements covering all hazards.
4.3 Pursue measures to ensure emergency management personnel (paid and volunteer) are valued, supported and developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop emergency management sector capabilities in line with the Australian Disaster Preparedness Framework.</li> <li>Develop lessons management capabilities.</li> <li>Enhance inter-operability arrangements.</li> <li>Further enable and recognise volunteer contributions.</li> </ul>	DPFEM staff and volunteer training and development initiatives. Interoperability arrangements.	Tasmania's EM sector can capably respond to disasters and enable relief and recovery.
4.4 Continually improve relief and recovery arrangements to enable quick escalation, community leadership and long-term resilience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continually improve Tasmania's recovery arrangements to learn from experiences and enhance community outcomes.</li> <li>Improve collaboration and coordination across sectors.</li> <li>Collaborate to strengthen community capacity for locally-led recovery.</li> </ul>	Tasmanian Relief and Recovery Arrangements and associated support programs. Tasmanian Recovery Partners Network.	Relief and recovery support facilitates long-term disaster resilience.

\* See the background and supporting information paper for further details.

# 7 Know your risk, connect with others, get ready, act

## Individuals and families

- Understand your risks.
- Reduce your risks.
- Consider disaster risks when buying or developing property.
- Prepare yourself and your household.
- Plan for disruption (for example, no power/ water/ communications).
- Know where to find key information and how to use that information.
- Know your neighbours - you are each other's front line.
- Be involved. Volunteering helps you and your community.

More information: [www.tasalert.com](http://www.tasalert.com)

## Businesses and organisations

- Understand and manage your risks.
- Make resilience a strategic objective. Include it in plans and strategies.
- Invest in organisational resilience. Plan for disruptions and business continuity when a disaster occurs.
- Practice plans and arrangements to be ready and make improvements.
- Try to find solutions with everyday benefits.
- Consider how you can contribute to your local community's resilience.
- Keep the long-term in mind.
- Collaborate with others locally or in your sector for mutual benefits.
- Learn about what to do when a disaster happens.

More information: [www.business.tas.gov.au](http://www.business.tas.gov.au)

## Local governments and community organisations

- Understand your local risks.
- Make resilience a strategic objective.
- Lead, promote and champion community disaster resilience.
- Plan for disruption – business continuity planning can help ensure the community can rely on you during these times.
- Aim for resilient urban development and safeguard natural buffers.
- Champion investment in resilience.
- Understand your collective capabilities and capacity.
- Plan using expert advice from Tasmania's emergency services.
- Try to find solutions with everyday benefits.
- Help build skills and capacity for response and recovery.

## Tasmanian Government agencies

- Check, assess and publicly report on disaster resilience actions.
- Champion resilience.
- Make resilience easier through supporting guidance and information.
- Invest in organisational resilience.
- Have flexible structures and processes.
- Involve all relevant people.
- Aim for multi-purpose investments.
- Embed disaster resilience across services.
- Work together.
- Tackle complex risks.
- Build skills and capacity for response and recovery.

Adapted from New Zealand's Strategy for Disaster Resilience and the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience.

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