



HINCHINBROOK
LOCAL DISASTER
MANAGEMENT GROUP

COMMUNICATIONS SUB PLAN VERSION 3

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Authority To Plan

This Communications Sub Plan has been prepared by the Hinchinbrook Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) under the provisions of section 57 of the *Disaster Management Act 2003* (the Act). This Sub Plan is a part of, and is to be read in conjunction with, the Hinchinbrook Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP).

Approval

The Communications Sub Plan has been developed in accordance with the Act to detail the role of the LDMG to provide an effective communications network across a multiagency response to a disaster event.

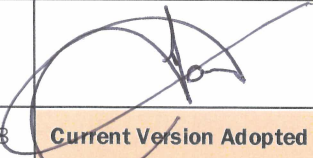
It is recommended this Sub Plan is distributed to LDMG members via email and to the public via the Hinchinbrook Disaster Dashboard.

Amendment Control

The controller of the document is the Hinchinbrook Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC). Any proposed amendments to this sub plan should be forwarded in writing to:

Local Disaster Coordinator
Hinchinbrook Shire Council
25 Lannercost Street
INGHAM QLD 4850

The LDC may approve minor amendments to this document. Any changes to the intent of the document must be endorsed by the LDMG.

DOCUMENT HISTORY AND STATUS					
Action	Name		Position	Signed	Date
Approved	Ramon Jayo		Chair		20/01/2025
Plan Version	3	Initial Adopted	Version	24/10/2018	Current Version Adopted
Maintained By	Local Disaster Management Group			Next Review Date	01/2026
File Location	631_OMC_Communications Sub Plan V3				

1. Objectives

Specific objectives of this Sub Plan are to identify:

- Types of communication;
- Available communication resources;
- Communications power supplies;
- Transmission sites; and
- Methods to communicate information to the public.

The Communications Sub Plan must be read in conjunction with the Local Disaster Management Plan (LDMP).

2. Activation

The activation of this Sub Plan will be initiated by the Chair of the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) or their designated officer when an event requires liaison between relevant authorities and coordination of communications networks.

Threats to the Hinchinbrook Shire which could activate the Communications Sub Plan include:

- Flooding;
- Severe storm;
- Tropical Cyclone (TC);
- Storm surge;
- Earthquake;
- Landslide;
- Bushfire;
- Tsunamis;
- Climate change; and
- Other – any event as per S16 (1 and 2) of *Disaster Management Act 2003*.

If primary means of communication are lost, secondary and supplementary communication networks will be established.

3. Communications Glossary

3.1 Primary Communications

Telstra, nbnTM, Optus and Vodafone are the primary mobile, broadband and internet service providers within Hinchinbrook Shire.

In addition to the terrestrial networks noted above, the use of satellite communication technology such as Starlink is increasing across the shire.

Television and radio broadcast services are provided from transmitters located in Townsville.

Key contact numbers are listed in Attachment A of this Sub Plan.

3.2 Secondary Communications

Council provides UHF radios to Local Area Wardens at the beginning of the disaster season to provide a secondary means of communication to the Hinchinbrook Shire. Channels 9 (Mt Mercer) and Channel 16 (Wallaman) are assigned for Local Area Warden radios and are government regulated channels. Rural Fire Service Queensland (RFSQ) personnel can utilise Local Area Warden channels from their RFSQ vehicles. Halifax RFSQ operate under a normal CB Channel 3 VHF UHF and satellite telephones are also available for Local Area Warben use during disaster events.

During a disaster event additional primary or secondary communications capabilities to support the Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC) and the public may be sought from external sources, such as Satellite NBN provided by nbn™.

3.3 Supplementary Communications

Other forms of supplementary communications may include:

- Door knocking;
- Loud Hailer fitted vehicle;
- Roadside messaging boards;
- Electronic Community Noticeboards; and
- Pamphlet distribution.

4. Communications Information

4.1 Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC)

- All primary communications, equipment and facilities and secondary and supplementary communications, equipment and facilities, will be available to the LDCC for the purpose of preparation, response and recovery from an event;
- The LDCC uses Council's social media pages, print media, radio, television, pamphlets and the web-based Disaster Dashboard to disseminate information to the community. Community posts to the social media page are moderated by Council to ensure information is accurate and timely;
- The management of information in a disaster event will be, in the first instance, issued by the Hinchinbrook LDMG Chair to the public; and
- During a disaster event the LDCC will make, at a minimum, daily contact with the Local Area Wardens via primary, secondary or supplementary means to obtain/disseminate updates in relation to their respective areas. Further information is detailed in the Local Area Warden Information Booklet.

Each member of the Hinchinbrook LDMG is responsible for notifying their agency or group of any warnings of relevance. During a disaster, the LDMG utilises the Guardian system to control all records, including public information and/or warnings released to the public via the Disaster Dashboard.

Information is managed in accordance with Council's Records Management Framework Policy. This ensures that document protection, confidentiality and waste disposal of information in the LDCC is adequately managed as per the Records Management Policy.

4.2 Interagency Communications

Due to the broad spread of frequency bands utilised by various response agencies, i.e.

- Queensland Police Service (QPS) – UHF/VHF;
- Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) – UHF/VHF;
- Queensland Fire Department (QFD) – UHF/VHF;
- State Emergency Service (SES) – UHF/VHF; and
- Council – UHF, an “all agency” command radio network is currently unattainable. (See note).

Therefore, all responding agencies will provide to the LDCC, where practicable, a liaison officer with a radio for communication within their agency's established network.

Note: Co-location of radio communications equipment may generate interference across the radio network.

4.3 Evacuation Centre and the Public Cyclone Shelter

To supplement landline telephone and mobile telephone at the Evacuation Centre, Council will provide suitable staff with a handheld radio. Satellite nbn™ Broadband Service including Public Wi-fi is available within the Evacuation Centre.

The Public Cyclone Shelter, when activated, has a fixed permanent radio and a landline telephone, 4776 6342. These are for communications with the LDMG by the Cyclone Shelter Management team.

4.4 Flood and Cyclones

Council's data capture system, Enviromon, can be accessed by Council staff. BOM have access to Council's river height stations and utilise this system to collect and disseminate flood heights and reports to both response agencies and the public.

4.5 Evacuations

QPS, as the lead agency in a directed evacuation and working in conjunction with the LDMG liaise via the Police communications network

The Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI) through Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) are responsible for the evacuation of campers/tourists in National Parks in the district. Various notices are issued from a DES/QPWS regional level notifying of the pending cyclone/flood, where the directive is given to evacuate and close the parks. No further bookings are taken whilst this directive is in place.

4.6 Large Scale Disasters

During a large-scale disaster where all existing primary communications facilities are damaged or destroyed resulting in total failure, secondary and supplementary communication facilities for the public to lodge requests to the LDCC will be utilised. This will be by UHF – CB Channel 3 and 5 or contact through Local Area Warden's on channels 9 and 16.

- It will be necessary to advise the public how and where they can make requests for urgent assistance. It must be stressed that these facilities are for use only in the most urgent circumstances i.e. medical emergencies. The LDMG will ensure adequate notification is made available to the public regarding the appropriate use of secondary and supplementary communications.
- Consideration will be given to utilisation of the Wireless Institute Civil Emergency Network (WICEN) organisation. This division of the Wireless Institute are amateur radio operators who have a large range of portable equipment and frequencies at their disposal. There are several members of this organisation within the Hinchinbrook Shire with both portable and base station equipment.

Note: *WICEN radio operators can assist as communications operators within the LDCC during disasters and emergencies over a prolonged period.*

- During a large-scale disaster where all existing primary, secondary and supplementary communication facilities are damaged or destroyed, rudimentary techniques considered appropriate at the time for the prevailing circumstances will be utilised.

4.7 Mobile or Secondary Disaster Coordination Centre

If a mobile/secondary LDCC facility is required, Council's radios are transportable and can be relocated.

The transportable unit has the following communications network supporting the LDMG:

- SES UHF (channels 9 and 16);
- UHF – CB; and
- 27 MHz – CB.

4.8 Media Releases

All media releases from the LDCC to the public and other media must be formulated by the Media and Communications Officer or a delegate and authorised by the Chair or LDC of the LDMG. Regular media briefings must be maintained throughout the disaster response and recovery.

The Hinchinbrook community is serviced by all commercial and government television and radio stations and these services may be utilised to distribute information.

A list of LDCC contact telephone numbers are listed in Attachment A of this Sub Plan.

5. Finance

The recovery of financial expenditure will be carried out in accordance with the procedures stipulated in the LDMP section 8.8 Financial Arrangements.

Attachment A

LDCC Communication / Contacts	
Type	Phone Number
Council Public Access Line	4776 4600
Council Fax	4776 3233
Chair LDMG	4776 4600
LDC	4776 4600
LDCC	4776 4600
SES Ingham Headquarters	4776 2899
SES Ingham Duty Phone	0476 765 548
SES Halifax Unit	0400 751 622
SES Halifax Duty Phone	0476 781 340
Disaster Management Officer	0436 813 568
Ingham Cyclone Shelter	4776 6342 only active when cyclone shelter is activated for use by Cyclone Shelter Management Team
Ingham Cyclone Shelter Manager (CSM)	0408 455 726

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE (SES) RADIO NETWORK	
Location	Contact/Radio Equipment Details
Ingham SES Headquarters Building	36 x handheld radios
	1 x base station in building
	2 x portable base station
	1 x portable repeater
	1 x backpack radio
	1 x Codan HF radio
	2 x boat mounted radios
	2 x vehicle mounted radios
	1 x maritime radio
	1 x ground to air radio
Halifax SES Unit Building (Blue Light)	7 x handheld radios
	1 x boat mounted radio
	1 x vehicle mounted radio
	1 x portable repeater
	1 x base station in building

QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE (QPS) RADIO NETWORK		
Police Station	Contact	Equipment Details
Ingham	4776 9777	
Halifax	4061 5995 / 0427 139 936	QPS Inter Emergency Services channel UHF CB Channel 3 and 5 Marine Radio Base HF CB 27Mhz

QUEENSLAND AMBULANCE SERVICE (QAS) RADIO NETWORK		
Ambulance Station	Contact	Equipment Details
Ingham	4776 5133 / 0428 985 777	UHF Channel 5 QAS Inter Emergency Services Channels
Halifax	4777 7233	



