Communications Sub Plan

Burdekin Local Disaster Management Group

Prepared By
Local Disaster Coordinator

Authorised By
Local Disaster Management Group

Date Prepared
July 2025

Burdekin
Shire Council

Document Control

Amendment Control

The Communications Sub Plan is a controlled document. The controller of the document is the Burdekin Shire Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC). Any proposed amendments to this plan should be forwarded in writing to:

Local Disaster Coordinator
Burdekin Local Disaster Management Group
PO Box 974
AYR QLD 4807

The LDC may approve minor amendments to this document. The LDC will ensure that any changes to the document's content will be submitted to the Burdekin Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) for approval and be endorsed by the Burdekin Shire Council.

Amendment Register

All versions are archived, and this sub plan only references the last two versions.

Amendment		Plan Updated		
No / Ref	Issue Date	Inserted by	Summary of Changes	Date
11	September 2024	Eileen Devescovi	Yearly Review	September 2024
12	July 2025	Eileen Devescovi	Yearly Review	July 2025

Endorsement

This Communications Sub Plan has been developed for the Burdekin Shire Local Government Area (LGA) and subsequently approved by the Burdekin LDMG. This Plan is a Sub Plan of the *Burdekin Local Disaster Management Plan* (LDMP) and is to be read in conjunction.

The Plan is recommended for distribution by the LDMG and is considered live once approved by the LDMG.

Mayor Pierina Dalle Cort   Eileen Devescovi
Chair Burdekin LDMG   Burdekin Local Disaster Coordinator

The functions of the Local Government were advised in accordance with the *Queensland Disaster Management Act* (DM Act) (s80). This sub plan was formally adopted by the Burdekin Shire Council through resolution at the Council meeting held on 28 October 2025*.

Mayor Pierina Dalle Cort

Abbreviation List

Abbreviation	Full Title
AWS	Australian Warning System
BOM	Bureau of Meteorology
BSC	Burdekin Shire Council
DDC	District Disaster Coordinator
DDCC	District Disaster Coordination Centre
DDMG	District Disaster Management Group
DM Act	Queensland Disaster Management Act 2003
DMO	Disaster Management Officer
EA	Emergency Alert
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre (SES)
LDC	Local Disaster Coordinator
LDCC	Local Disaster Coordination Centre
LDMG	Local Disaster Management Group
LDMP	Local Disaster Management Plan
MRQ	Marine Rescue Queensland
QAS	Queensland Ambulance Service
QFD	Queensland Fire Department
QPS	Queensland Police Service
RFA	Request for Assistance
SES	State Emergency Service

Definitions

Term	Definition
Primary Communications	The Telstra telephone network, including mobile telephones, and/or the internet. Key contact numbers are listed in Attachment A of this Sub Plan.
Secondary Communications	Radio communications in any band, HF, VHF, UHF and satellite telephones and links, may be available for use during disaster situations. Attachment B, C, D and E of this Sub Plan provide a list of radio networks and equipment held by various agencies.
Supplementary Communications	Additional primary or secondary communications facilities may be required from external sources during a disaster, in addition to those usually installed at the LDCC. Secondary communications will be requested from the Townsville District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) by means of a Request for Assistance (RFA).
Emergency Alert (EA)	Emergency Alert is the national telephone warning system used by emergency services to send voice messages to landlines and text messages to mobile phones within a defined area about likely or actual emergencies. EA is just one way of warning communities and will not be used in all emergencies or disasters. Emergency Alert relies on telecommunications networks to send messages, and message delivery cannot be guaranteed.

Table of Contents

1. Overview

1.1 Purpose

This Communications Sub Plan aims to outline arrangements for the effective coordination of communication systems and resources to support the needs of the Burdekin LDMG and other community support groups to perform their emergency response, recovery and assistance tasks effectively.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this sub plan are to:
- Identify types of communication;
- Identify available communication resources;
- Identify communications power supplies and transmission sites;
- Identify methods to communicate information to the public;
- Provide effective liaison between all emergency services and supporting agencies;
- Provide arrangements for efficient coordination of local resources and any required external support; and,
- Prescribe arrangements for testing, evaluation and maintenance of this plan.

1.3 Scope

This sub plan applies to emergency/disaster events occurring within the Burdekin Shire Council area, which are within the capability and resources of the Local Government, Emergency Services and other supporting agencies.

1.4 Authority to Plan

The Burdekin LDMG has prepared this sub plan under the provisions of section 57 of the DM Act. This sub plan will be managed in accordance with the administrative and governance processes outlined within the Burdekin LDMP including approval, document control, distribution, review and renewal.

1.5 Plan Review and Testing Requirements

This sub plan is to be reviewed annually before the severe weather season or post event to include lessons learned. This sub plan is to be exercised to ensure the effectiveness and scalability of the plan and include involvement, communication, and collaboration with identified key local, district and state stakeholders.

2. Governance

2.1 Activation of Sub Plan

This plan will be activated by the LDC of the Burdekin LDMG when an event requires liaison between relevant authorities and coordination of communications networks.

This sub plan is supported by the:
- Burdekin LDMP;
- Burdekin LDMG Airport Emergency Sub Plan;
- Burdekin LDMG Community Information and Warnings Sub Plan;
- Burdekin LDMG Community Recovery & Resilience Plan
- Burdekin LDMG Evacuation Sub Plan;
- Burdekin LDMG Pandemic Influenza Sub Plan;
- Burdekin LDMG Public Health Sub Plan;
- Burdekin LDMG Resupply Sub Plan;
- Burdekin LDMG Transport Sub Plan;
- Burdekin LDMG Tsunami Sub Plan;
- Burdekin LDMG Multi-Purpose Hall Place of Refuge Manual; and,
- Burdekin LDMG Local Disaster Coordination Centre Standard Operating Procedures (LDCC SOP).

The activation of these supporting plans should be considered concurrently with this plan.

2.2 Use of Sub Plan during Operations

This plan will be activated when an event requires liaison between relevant authorities and coordination of communications networks.

Threats to the Burdekin Shire which could cause this sub plan to be activated include:
- Flooding;
- Severe storm;
- Tropical Cyclone (TC);
- Storm surge;
- Earthquake;
- Landslide;
- Bushfire;
- Tsunamis; and,
- Other – any event per *S16 (1 and 2)* of the DM Act.

In the event the primary means of communication is lost, it is necessary to establish and control the secondary communication networks.

2.3 Functional Responsibility

The LDC is to ensure all agencies and members of the LDMG are aware of these procedures.

3. Concept of Operations

3.1 Communications Information

3.1.1 Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC)

- All primary, secondary, and supplementary communications equipment and facilities will be available to the LDCC for preparation, response, and recovery from an event;

- The LDCC uses Council's social media pages, print media, radio, television, pamphlets, message boards, electronic variable message boards (Giru and Home Hill), Council's website and Disaster Dashboard to disseminate information to the community. Council moderates community posts to the social media page to ensure accurate and timely information;

- The management of information in a disaster event will be issued in the first instance by the Burdekin LDMG Chair to the public; and,

- In a disaster event, the LDCC will contact the affected Local Area Wardens daily via mobile telephone (Primary) or radio (Secondary) to obtain any updates they may have about their respective areas.

In summary, each member of the Burdekin LDMG is responsible for notifying their agency or group of any warnings of relevance. The LDMG utilises the Guardian IMS software to control all records, including public information and/or warnings released to the public via the Disaster Dashboard, during a disaster.

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

Warning notification and dissemination is detailed within the Response section of the LDMP (Public Information and Warnings page 35). This section outlines the strategy the LDMG will undertake in relation to community warnings. This is usually in the form of Australian Warning System (AWS) messaging or Emergency Alerts (EA).

The LDMG will decide the appropriate means of delivering warnings to the community, depending upon local conditions (e.g. evacuation to safe housing, etc). The LDMG has access to email details for all electronic and print media in the North Queensland area. The LDMG also utilises the Burdekin Shire Council website, a dedicated Facebook page and the Disaster Dashboard to communicate with the community.

Depending on the event, the LDMG will use other specific methods of communication for the community e.g., community notice boards, electronic message boards, public notices, etc.

Full use is also made of local radio, commercial radio and television broadcasts.

3.1.2 Inter-Agency Communication

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

The broad spread of frequency bands utilised by various response agencies include:

- Burdekin Shire Council – UHF (Channel 34), VHF & UHF SES programmed and owned;
- QPS – UHF/VHF;
- QAS – VHF;
- QFD – VHF;
- SES – UHF/VHF and HF; and,
- MRQ – HF.

The LDCC can communicate with all emergency agencies over the UHF Channel 34.

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

3.1.3 Place of Refuge/Recovery Centres

Council's Place of Refuge is located at the Ayr Showgrounds Multi-Purpose Hall.

Mobile telephone is the primary source of communication at the Place of Refuge.

Fixed telephone communication can be achieved by installing and connecting Council's Telstra IP telephony handsets to Council's infrastructure located within the Multi-Purpose Hall.

Council hosts its primary disaster recovery infrastructure within the Multi-Purpose Hall, including a standby Starlink Satellite and 4G backup service for Council's Corporate (staff) internet service.

Both Council staff and public Wi-Fi is available at this location.

This facility also has a dedicated NBN STAND satellite service, which will be available for both staff and public use during a disaster event.

To provide communications other than by mobile telephone, NBN or Council Wi-Fi, the Burdekin SES may provide a place of refuge/recovery centre, when activated, with hand-held radios and/or SES Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) radio kit capability on SES frequencies. This will depend on the availability of radios and priority of use not required in the immediate emergency.

3.1.4 Flooding and Cyclones

Council's data capture system, Enviromon, can be accessed by Council staff. The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) have access to Council's river height stations and utilises this system to collect and disseminate flood heights and reports to both response agencies and the general public.

3.1.5 Evacuations

As QPS assist the Burdekin LDMG with directed evacuations, the existing QPS communications network will be utilised with other agency networks, such as but not limited to QFD, SES, MRQ, and Rural Fire Service network.

Communications to the LDCC will be via either communication network.

3.1.6 Large Scale Disasters

In the event of a large-scale disaster impacting the Burdekin Shire, all existing permanent facilities may be damaged or destroyed, causing the total failure of primary communications.

In an emergency, the public should call 000 for life-threatening situations.

- In the event of a large-scale disaster impacting the Burdekin Shire where all existing primary communications facilities are damaged or destroyed, resulting in the total failure of primary communications, it will be necessary to utilise secondary and other communications facilities for the public to access the LDCC with requests.

- It will be necessary to advise the public on how and where they can request urgent assistance. The priority is 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.

- In the event of a large-scale disaster impacting the Burdekin Shire area where all existing primary, secondary and supplementary communication facilities are damaged or destroyed, it will be necessary to utilise rudimentary techniques considered appropriate at the time for the prevailing circumstances, including, but not limited to:

  - Door knocking;
  - Hailer-fitted vehicle patrols;
  - Roadside messaging boards; and,
  - Pamphlet distribution.

3.1.7 Alternate Disaster Coordination Centre

If a mobile/secondary LDCC facility is required, Council's radios are portable and can be taken to an alternate LDCC location if necessary.

The Burdekin SES will provide and staff their EOC caravan. This unit has the following communications network:

- SES UHF (channels "320" Repeater and "350" Talk);
- UHF – CB;
- 27 MHz – Marine;
- VHF Marine; and,
- UHF Fire Command.

The Burdekin SES also has a portable (battery/solar powered) UHF repeater (SES Channels 1 and 2), located at the SES headquarters in Ayr - 4 McCathie Street, Ayr QLD.

3.1.8 Media Releases

All media from the LDCC to the public must be formulated by the Media Liaison Officer and approved by the Chair of the Burdekin LDMG or an authorised person. Regular media briefings must be maintained throughout the disaster event operations as required.

Commercial and government television, radio stations and the Burdekin Shire Council Website, Disaster Dashboard and social media service the Burdekin communities.

A complete list of contact telephone numbers is listed in Attachment A of this sub plan.

3.2 Finance

The recovery of financial expenditure will be carried out in accordance with the procedures detailed in the Burdekin LDMP.

Related Documents

- Queensland Disaster Management Act 2003

Attachment A - LDCC Communications

Type	Contact	Number
Public Access Line		**4783 9800**
Facsimile		**4783 9999**
Silent	Chair	Mobile: 0447 150 582 Work: 4783 9900
	LDC	Mobile: 0429 648 514 Work: 4783 9847
	LDCC	Mobile: 0410 589 208 Work: 4783 9808
Mobile	Chair	0447 150 582
	LDC	0429 648 514
	Manager - Operations	0418 839 965
	Manager – Technical Services	0427 121 878
	Manager – Environment and Health Services	0417 528 750
Radio	SES UHF radio	Channels "320" Repeater & "350" Talk Around Repeater Mt Kelly 323
Mobile	Burdekin SES Local Controller	0405 060 466
Mobile	Burdekin SES Deputy Local Controllers	0484 925 278 0407 333 927

Note: Private/direct phone numbers not for public release.

Attachment B - SES Radio Network

Location	Radio Equipment
Engineering Conference Room	1 x UHF DLC 3 (Emergency Frequency) 1 x VHF Channel 1 (Base 1 – Council Only)
Council – Depot	1 x UHF (Channel 29) 1 x VHF - Base 2 – Foremen's Office - Base 3 – Workshop Office - Base 6 – Store - Base 7 – Water & Wastewater Office
Burdekin SES HQ Incorporating Ayr SES Group	2 x UHF Radio's (Base) – (SES & 80 Channel CB) 1 X UHF Radio (Base) – (DLC "3" Emergency Frequency only)) 1 x HF Radio (Base) 4 x EOC – UHF Radio Packs – (SES & 80 Channel CB) 34 x UHF Handheld Radios 2 x Portable Repeater w/solar panels and telescopic mask – (SES Channels 1 and 2) 1 x VHF Marine Radio (Base) 1 x UHF Mobile Radio (Ayr 401) – Local Controller Utility 1 x HF Mobile Radio (Ayr 401) – Local Controller Utility 1 x UHF Mobile Radio (Ayr 501) - Truck
EOC Caravan	2 x UHF Radio's (Base) 1 x UHF CB Radio (Base) 1 x 27MHz Marine Radio (Base)
Home Hill SES Group	1 x UHF Radio (Base) 1 x UHF CB Radio (Base) 1 x UHF Mobile Radio (Home Hill 501) – Truck
Giru SES Group	1 x UHF Radio (Base) 1 x HF Radio (Base) 1 x UHF Mobile Radio (Giru 501) – Truck - Giru Flood Boat UHF Radio (Giru 201) Giru Flood Boat VHF Marine Radio
Clare SES Group	1 x UHF Mobile Radio (Clare 401) – Utility
Rita Island SES Group	1 x UHF Mobile Radio (Rita Island 401) – Utility - Rita Island Flood Boat UHF Radio (Rita Island 201)

Note: All SES UHF Radios are fitted with channels "20" Repeater and "50" Talk Around. HF radios are fitted with frequencies HF radio band plan.

Attachment C – SES Vehicle and Boat Call Sign & Rego List

Call Sign	Equipment Details
Ayr 501	Ayr Truck Canter – QG-SB43
Ayr 401	Local Controller Ute – QG PC60
Ayr 301	Polaris – 36703C
Ayr 201	Ayr Boat – 463652
Home Hill 501	Truck – 376 QGQ
Home Hill 201	Boat – 461228
Rita Island 401	Rita Island Ute – QGOJ50
Rita Island 201	Rita Island Boat – 30829 QD
Clare 401	Clare 4WD Ute – QG VV77
Clare 201	Clare Boat – 461227
Giru 501	Giru Truck – 377 QGQ
Giru 201	Giru Boat – 4Q386 QD

Attachment D - MRQ Burdekin Radio Network

Facility	Contact Details
Boat Shed - 17 Ayr Dalbeg Road, McDesme 4807	Call sign VMR – 481 Phone 4783 1014
Communications Building - Alva Beach Radio Station (monitoring weekends/public holidays only)	Phone: 4783 5201 1 x HF Radio 2MHz (2182, 2524) and 4MHz (4125) 1 x VHF Radio Ch. 80 1 x VHF Radio Ch. 16
Senior squad officer – Vince Papale If Senior squad officer cannot be raised: David Papale Lionel Tappenden Duty skipper	Phone: 0427 166 378 Mobile: 0459 393 454 Mobile: 0407 169 955 Phone: 0438 137 402
<u>Rescue Vessel</u> "Delta One" "Honeycombs Rescue"	1 x HF Radio 3 x VHF Radios Satellite Phone: 0147184161 1 x VHF Radio Satellite Phone: 0147159687

Attachment E - QPS Radio Network

Police Station	Contact / Equipment Details
Ayr	**UHF Channel 34** • 3 x UHF Mobile (2 x cars, 1 x 4WD) • 1 x UHF Radio (Base) • 7 x UHF Handheld Radios Phone: 4790 3555 Fax: 4790 3521
Home Hill	**UHF Channel 34** • 1 x UHF Radio (Base) • 1 x UHF Mobile • 2 x UHF Handheld Radios Phone: 4782 1300 Fax: 4782 2545
Giru	**UHF Channel 34** • 1 x UHF Radio (Base) • 1 x UHF Mobile • 1 x UHF Handheld Radio Phone: 4759 9303
Clare	**UHF Channel 34** • 1 x UHF Radio (Base) • 1 x UHF Mobile • 1 x UHF Handheld Radio Phone: 4782 7101

Attachment F - Queensland Ambulance Service Radio Network

Queensland Ambulance Station	Contact / Equipment Details
QAS Ayr Station	• VHF Channel 4