

# Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland

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### Information for users

This document and supporting resources are available for download from the Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management website [www.igem.qld.gov.au](http://www.igem.qld.gov.au).

The information contained within this document is designed for use by communities, businesses and entities working within Queensland's disaster management arrangements, and may not be appropriate in other states and territories. This document is not designed to preclude the use of other relevant and industry-specific good practice guidance, standards and legislation.

Additional considerations may be required dependant on the user's specific risks, capability and capacity. For assistance interpreting the use of this document, please contact the Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management.

# Acknowledgements

The Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management acknowledges Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this country. We recognise their connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them, their cultures, and to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

The participation and cooperation of practitioners, operators and experts from across the disaster management sector in the development and continuous improvement of the Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland is highly valued and greatly appreciated.

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# Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland

## Intent

The Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland (the standard) establishes the outcomes to be achieved for all entities involved in disaster management.

Section 16C (d) of the *Disaster Management Act 2003* (the Act) provides the authority for the Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management to make disaster management standards. This standard is made pursuant to section 16N (1) of the Act and is about the way entities responsible for disaster management in the State are to undertake disaster management. The standard is reviewed periodically to ensure it remains contemporary and meets the needs of the disaster management sector (the sector), government and the community.

The standard should be applied in conjunction with disaster management doctrine, good practice guidance and government policy, with reference to the Act and the Queensland Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery Disaster Management Guideline (the guideline).

## A focus on outcomes

The standard focuses on outcomes rather than setting a 'minimum' standard that must be met. It moves away from a traditional compliance tool and towards enhancing performance and achieving shared system-wide goals set by the sector.

To focus on outcomes, the standard provides the parameters within which disaster management should be conducted across Queensland, without being prescriptive about how it should be done. This allows for flexibility across a range of different entities according to their capability, capacity, and needs.

## Who is it for?

The standard is to be used by all entities in Queensland with a responsibility to contribute to disaster management. This includes those with legislated roles, as well as entities acting on behalf of or under an arrangement with those that do.

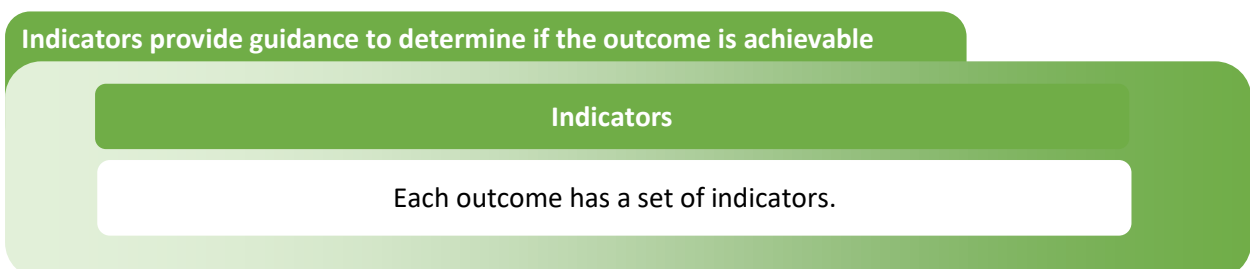
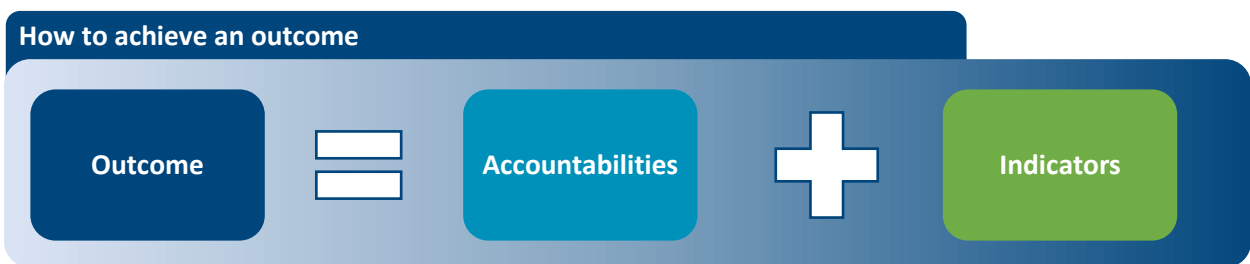
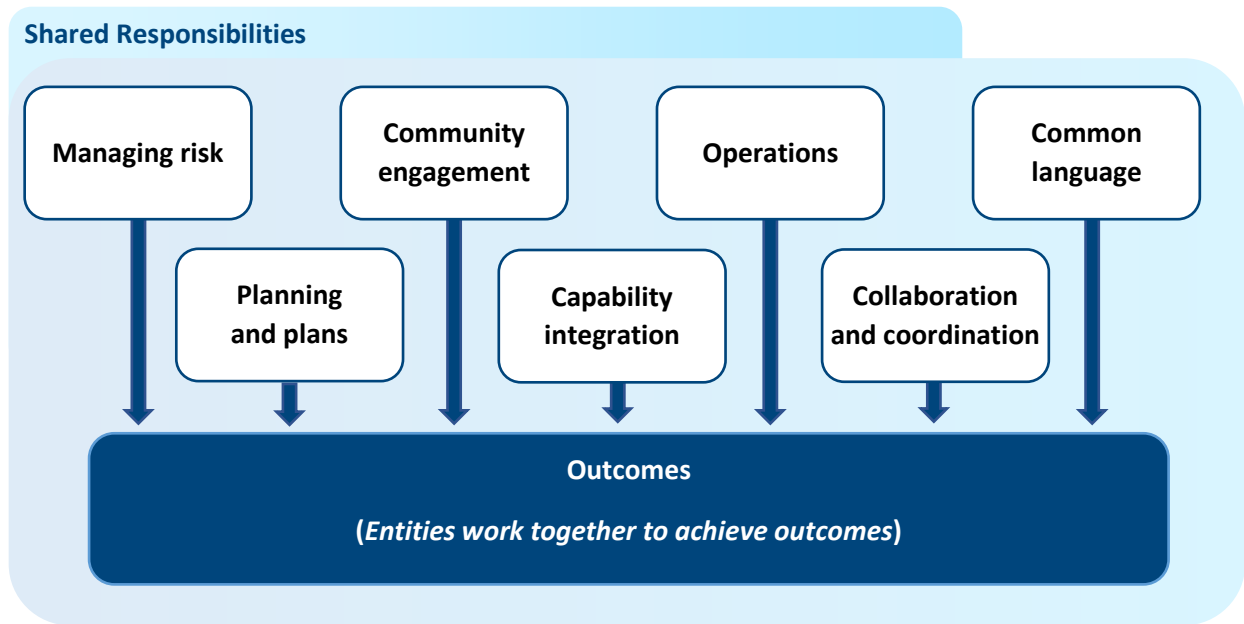
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## Entities

The term 'entities' is defined in the *Acts Interpretation Act 1954*. It determines that an entity includes both a person and an unincorporated body. Consistent with the *Disaster Management Act 2003*, the standard uses the term entity to describe those with roles or responsibilities in disaster management in Queensland. This includes all tiers of government, non-government organisations, not-for-profit organisations, disaster management groups, and others with legislated roles in disaster management.

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# Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland



# Overview

## Shared responsibilities

The shared responsibilities are the elements of disaster management that all entities should deliver against and that everyone within the sector is responsible for contributing to.

Shared responsibilities should not be considered in isolation – they are the interconnected responsibilities that collectively make up the disaster management system in Queensland.

## Outcomes

Outcomes are high-level statements that all entities must work together to achieve. They are the end state that the sector is to achieve.

Outcomes cannot be achieved in isolation. All entities that collectively make up the disaster management system in Queensland need to work together to achieve these outcomes.

## Accountabilities

The accountabilities represent what an entity needs to have in place to achieve an outcome. They provide structure for the delivery of outcomes.

The five accountabilities are:

- Governance
- Doctrine
- People
- Enablers
- Continuous improvement

Each of these accountabilities has specific criteria that must be met to ensure a level of rigour around the delivery of each outcome.

## Indicators

Indicators represent individual items or actions that demonstrate that an entity can achieve an outcome. Each outcome has a set of indicators.

# Shared responsibilities

The shared responsibilities, and the outcomes that align to them are listed below. Details, including the accountabilities and their criteria and indicators for each outcome, can be found on the following pages.

Shared responsibilities	Outcomes
Managing risk	<b>Outcome 1</b> There is a shared understanding of risks for all relevant hazards
	<b>Outcome 2</b> Risk is managed to reduce the impact of disasters on the community
Planning and plans	<b>Outcome 3</b> There is a shared understanding of how the impact of disasters will be managed and coordinated
	<b>Outcome 4</b> Plans outline and detail how the impact of disasters on the community will be reduced
Community engagement	<b>Outcome 5</b> Entities proactively and openly engage with communities
	<b>Outcome 6</b> The community makes informed choices about disaster management, and acts on them
Capability integration	<b>Outcome 7</b> Resources are prioritised and shared with those who need them, when they need them
	<b>Outcome 8</b> Entities develop integrated capabilities and shared capacity to reduce the impact of disasters on the community
Operations	<b>Outcome 9</b> Response operations minimise the negative impacts of an event on the community and provide the support needed for recovery
	<b>Outcome 10</b> Relief operations minimise the negative impacts of an event on the community and provide the support needed for recovery
	<b>Outcome 11</b> Recovery operations minimise the negative impacts of an event on the community and provide the support needed for recovery
Collaboration and coordination	<b>Outcome 12</b> Entities proactively work together in a cooperative environment to achieve better results for the community
	<b>Outcome 13</b> A collaborative culture exists within disaster management
Common language	<b>Outcome 14</b> Common language is used by all entities within Queensland's disaster management arrangements

# Accountabilities

The criteria for the five accountabilities are detailed below. They should be applied in the context of each outcome to ensure consistency.

## Governance

Governance refers to how entities administer their disaster management responsibilities and ensure decision making is appropriate, clear and consistent.

- Roles and responsibilities have been identified, agreed to, and documented
- Entities have been authorised to carry out their delegated responsibilities
- The authorising environment for decisions and approvals has been identified and agreed to, and is being utilised
- Arrangements are in place for reporting on and monitoring the outcomes of decisions and actions
- Decisions are recorded as they are made, and their implementation is monitored

## Doctrine

Doctrine refers to the ideas, strategies and guiding principles contained in the documents that guide disaster management. These align with legislation, reflect good practice, and include guidelines, policies, plans and procedures.

- Roles and responsibilities are based on relevant doctrine
- The action or activity is based on relevant doctrine
- Doctrine is agreed and shared between entities
- Common language being used, and terminology is agreed and consistent with doctrine

## People

People refers to the relationships and networks, training, skills and experience that enable the individuals who undertake disaster management to do so effectively.

- Enabling networks and relationships between individuals and entities, both formal and informal, have been established and maintained
- Training requirements are documented, and the necessary skills and knowledge are being met
- Opportunities are provided for on-the-job training and development
- Upskilling and cross-training provide a reserve of personnel

## Enablers

Enablers refer to the resources that assist entities in undertaking disaster management activities. This includes both the physical equipment and assets, and the systems, data and technologies.

- Enablers are in place, are fit for purpose, and are being used in line with agreed protocols
- Enablers are accessible to the relevant entities, including the community if necessary
- Enablers meet the needs and requirements of all relevant entities
- Benchmarks for the performance of enablers have been established and are being met
- Alternatives or backups are in place

## Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement refers to how entities monitor, evaluate, measure and improve their disaster management activities.

- An established lessons management process is being undertaken
- The capabilities required have been identified, documented, and aligned to recognised and accepted training methodology
- A variety of exercising and testing methods are conducted and evaluated
- Insights are included in a lessons management process
- Lessons identified are shared with other entities, and with the community when relevant
- Improvements are made based on insights gained through testing, exercises and operational activity



# Managing risk

The management of risk is fundamental to making the community safer. Risks need to be identified for both natural and human-caused hazards. Entities have a shared responsibility to work together with their community to develop integrated strategies to manage these risks.

## **Outcome 1: There is a shared understanding of risks for all relevant hazards**

### Indicators

The risk assessment process:

- involves all relevant entities
- follows a recognised methodology
- considers all hazards and potential risks
- is evidence-based
- draws on local knowledge and experience

Risk assessments:

- incorporate community values and priorities
- are fit for purpose and relevant to the local context
- are accessible to all relevant entities
- inform all phases of disaster management
- underpin all disaster management activities
- inform business continuity planning
- identify, refer or accept residual risk

## **Outcome 2: Risk is managed to reduce the impact of disasters on the community**

### Indicators

Mitigation and risk reduction activities:

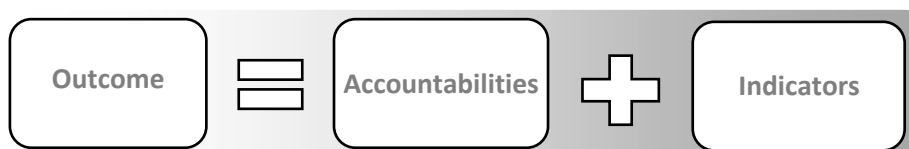
- are informed by risk assessments
- are prioritised based on risk assessments and available resources
- are included in strategic and operational plans
- are considered as business-as-usual
- consider unintended consequences

Entities:

- understand hazards and risks
- embed mitigation and risk reduction activities into normal business
- encourage and enable the community to help manage their own risks
- work together to manage risks

The community:

- knows their hazards and the associated risks
- is invested and acts to reduce the impact of events



# Planning and plans

Planning involves many steps. It should result in entities working with their community to prioritise how their collective and collaborative efforts will reduce the impact of disasters on the community. Plans document these efforts, identify interdependencies, roles and responsibilities, and provide guidance on how to undertake disaster management and operations. The planning process results in a shared understanding of the efforts required to reduce the risk to the community.

**Outcome 3: There is a shared understanding of how the impact of disasters will be managed and coordinated**

**Indicators**

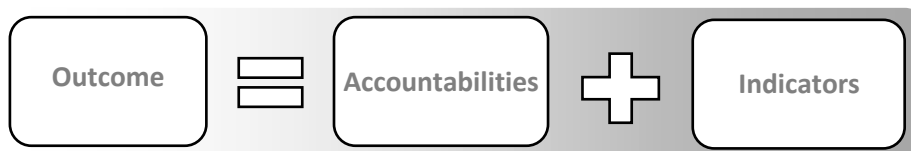
<p>Planning for disaster management is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- embedded into core business</li> <li>- embedded into maintaining service delivery</li> <li>- a collaborative process</li> <li>- coordinated between entities</li> <li>- undertaken and informed by the appropriate entities</li> <li>- based on a recognised methodology</li> </ul>	<p>The planning process provides a shared understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- agreed roles and responsibilities</li> <li>- capability and capacity</li> <li>- limits and escalation points</li> <li>- processes for escalation</li> <li>- the management of resources</li> <li>- internal arrangements that may affect others</li> </ul>
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- Communities:
- are included in the planning process
  - have access to relevant plans and information

**Outcome 4: Plans outline and detail how the impact of disasters on the community will be reduced**

**Indicators**

<p>Disaster management plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- are informed by disaster management guidelines</li> <li>- are informed by evidence</li> <li>- are informed by risks</li> <li>- are informed by people with relevant skills or expertise</li> <li>- are approved by the accountable entity</li> <li>- consider activities initiated by the community</li> <li>- consider funding arrangements, eligibility criteria, and activation mechanisms</li> <li>- identify redundancies for people and resources</li> </ul>	<p>Disaster management planning and plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- are fit for purpose and meet entity needs</li> <li>- meet the needs of the community</li> <li>- identify and acknowledge community capability and capacity</li> <li>- are integrated and consider multi-agency requirements</li> <li>- address the management of offers of assistance</li> <li>- establish the requirements for post-event evaluation</li> </ul>
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# Community engagement

The community is central to disaster management. Community engagement entails actively involving the community in managing their risk. It involves collaboratively planning how the community's collective efforts will contribute to their safety. Community engagement builds local capability, capacity and community self-reliance. This allows entities to focus their efforts where they are needed most.

## **Outcome 5: Entities proactively and openly engage with communities**

### Indicators

Entities distribute communications that:

- are risk-based
- use plain language and common terminology
- are current, timely, fit for purpose and easy to understand
- meet the needs of the community
- are developed and delivered by the appropriate mechanism and entity

Engagement activities:

- are sustainable
- are appropriately resourced
- build on existing relationships and communication forums
- establish two-way information sharing and learning opportunities between entities and the community
- are consistent and coordinated between entities
- are documented and based on a recognised methodology
- gather the knowledge, experience and shared history of the community
- are tested for understanding, effectiveness, and community perception of authority

## **Outcome 6: The community makes informed choices about disaster management, and acts on them**

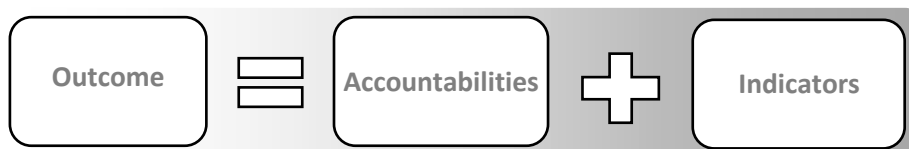
### Indicators

Communities:

- are aware of their level of susceptibility to disasters
- receive relevant, timely, consistent, easy-to-understand warnings
- have access to relevant information about disasters that affect them
- are aware of the support that is available to them, and their eligibility to access it

Entities:

- define communities that are at risk of impact from an event
- identify and engage with those in the community who are or may be more susceptible to the impact of disasters than others
- provide the community with information that enables them to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the impact of disasters
- support the community in developing skills, capability and capacity for disaster management
- seek feedback from the community about disaster management practices



# Capability integration

Capability integration involves entities building their capabilities together in a way that complements existing capability within the community. Capability integration is dependent on a shared understanding of the goals that guide the sector, and the ability to share and manage resources appropriately.

## **Outcome 7: Resources are prioritised and shared with those who need them, when they need them**

### Indicators

In terms of resources, entities:

- are aware of their own and others' resources and their availability
- understand how resources can be accessed and integrated
- know which of their own resources other entities may require
- coordinate and manage resources
- understand the capability limits of available resources
- make relevant plans, procedures, and other documents and resources available to other entities

In terms of information, entities:

- source, verify and share relevant intelligence products with other entities
- understand their own information requirements
- share current, relevant information
- can securely store and share sensitive data

## **Outcome 8: Entities develop integrated capabilities and shared capacity to reduce the impact of disasters on the community**

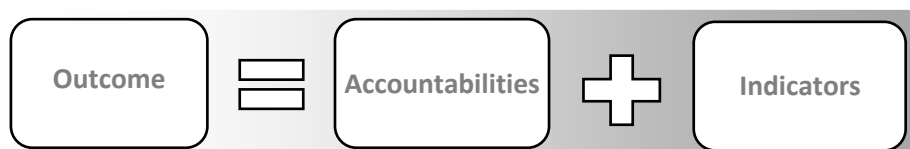
### Indicators

Entities:

- consider the community's capability and capacity to manage their own risks
- work together to build capability and capacity
- have and maintain agreements for the provision and delivery of services and resources
- have agreements with others for access to systems, documents and resources
- develop and implement coordinated strategies

Training and exercising programs are:

- determined by needs, roles and responsibilities
- informed by evidence and risk and doctrine
- developed in collaboration with relevant entities
- coordinated across and involve all relevant entities
- developed and conducted by the appropriate entities
- consistent with recognised methodology



# Operations

Operations are the activities undertaken by entities during response, relief, and recovery for a specific event, including activities to mitigate and prepare for the impacts of that event.

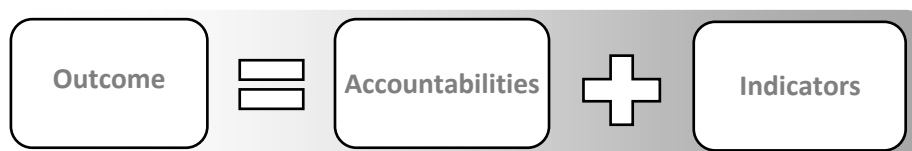
**Outcome 9: Response operations minimise the negative impacts of an event on the community and provide the support needed for recovery**

**Outcome 10: Relief operations minimise the negative impacts of an event on the community and provide the support needed for recovery**

**Outcome 11: Recovery operations minimise the negative impacts of an event on the community and provide the support needed for recovery**

**Indicators** – The following indicators are all common to response, relief and recovery operations outcomes.

<p>Operations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- coordinated</li> <li>- timely and reflect the urgency of the situation</li> <li>- informed by plans</li> <li>- risk-based and evidence-based</li> <li>- based on community needs</li> <li>- conducted, led and coordinated by the appropriate entities</li> </ul>	<p>Entities conduct operations that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- start at the right time</li> <li>- support the transition between response, relief and recovery</li> <li>- incorporate the functions of recovery</li> <li>- support activities initiated by the community</li> <li>- minimise the likelihood of unintended consequences impacting the community</li> <li>- improve the community’s ability to cope with future events</li> </ul>
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# Collaboration and coordination

Collaboration and coordination refer to how entities consider an integrated approach and work together to promote a positive environment in the disaster management sector across all phases of disaster management. It includes how they show leadership and commitment to the principles behind disaster management.

## **Outcome 12: Entities proactively work together in a cooperative environment to achieve better results for the community**

### Indicators

Entities:

- work within internal agency structures
- work together within cross-agency arrangements
- implement disaster management systems and processes that coordinate with their normal business processes
- understand the information requirements of other entities
- have a formally assigned, accessible point of contact
- work in partnership with community groups and leaders

Entities make decisions based on:

- risk
- a recognised and documented process
- the best available intelligence
- the capability and capacity of all relevant entities
- the positive impact they will make to community outcomes

## **Outcome 13: A collaborative culture exists within disaster management**

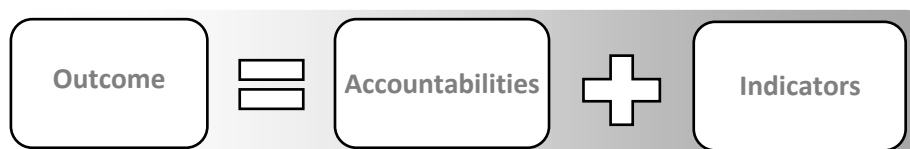
### Indicators

Entities:

- explore and act on opportunities for collaboration with others
- show leadership through a commitment to, and investment in, practices that can be sustained
- integrate disaster management into strategic and operational plans
- identify interdependencies and work with other entities in a collaborative, problem-solving way

Individuals within the sector:

- recognise the importance of and maintain trusted relationships
- use exercises and events as an opportunity to shadow and mentor others
- share their knowledge and experience with others



# Common language

The use of common language across the disaster management sector allows for clear communication within and between entities, and when communicating with the wider community. It minimises the potential for confusion and misunderstanding.

**Outcome 14: Common language is used by all entities within Queensland's disaster management arrangements**

**Indicators**

<p>Entities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- doctrine uses agreed disaster management terms in the agreed way</li> <li>- ensure agreed disaster management terms are used in all disaster management activities</li> <li>- ensure consistent terminology is used in community messaging</li> </ul>	<p>Individuals within the sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recognise the importance of using agreed disaster management terms</li> <li>- identify any terms used within the disaster management sector that are used inconsistently or may cause confusion or misunderstanding</li> </ul> <p>The sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- maintains a list of agreed disaster management terms</li> <li>- has a process for agreeing on the definition of terms</li> </ul>
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