



NORTHERN SYNOD

UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

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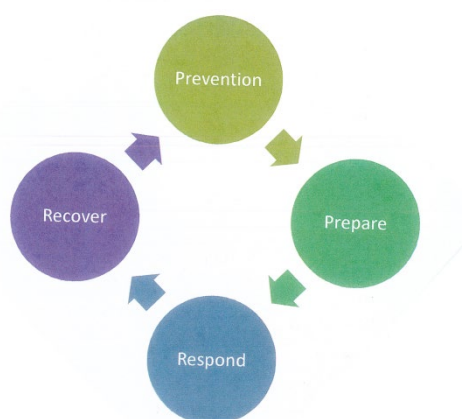
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Northern Synod Disaster Recovery Plan

Emergency Management Process	4
1. Prevention/Mitigation	5
2. Prepare	5
3. Response	6
4. Recovery	7
Appendix 1 – Northern Synod Disaster Response Protocol	8
A. Upon Declaration of an Emergency Situation	8
B. Following a disaster (1-2 days)	8
C. 1-3 Weeks.....	8
D. 1-3 Months	8
E. 4 Months & Beyond	9
F. 1-2 years.....	9
Appendix 2 – Donations after Disaster	10
Appendix 3 – Guidelines for the Release of Disaster Funds in the Northern Synod (as adopted from the Synod of NSW and ACT)	13
A Brief Theological Rationale for Responding to Disaster Relief Requests	13
Special Ministry Placement	14
Recurring Requests.....	15
Grants Group.....	15
Appendix 4 – Northern Synod Congregational Resource Register	16
Appendix 5 – Peer Support Person Role Description	18
Why do we have the Peer Support Team?.....	18
What a Peer Support Person does... ..	18
Follow up care of Peers / debriefing.....	19
Accountability and relationships	19
Activation.....	20
Appendix 6 – Disaster Recovery - Terms of Long Supply (Example only)	21
Appendix 7 - What can congregations do after a crisis in their area?	25
Introduction -What constitutes a crisis?	25
Guidelines on how to respond effectively	25
Before a crisis	25
During and immediately after a crisis	25
In the Short Term	26
In the Longer Term	28
Appendix 8 - Disaster Preparation Steps for Northern Synod Congregations and Faith Groups.....	30
Appendix 9 -Disaster Preparedness Checklist for Congregations and Faith Groups	31

Emergency Management Process

Northern Territory Emergency Management Arrangements provide a framework for a coordinated approach, supporting a whole of nation, all hazards, shared responsibility of planning for, response to and recovery from a disaster.



Prevention¹

Seek to eliminate or reduce the impact of hazards themselves and/or to reduce the susceptibility and increase the resilience of the community subject to the impact of those hazards.

Prepare

Establish arrangements and plans and provide education and information to prepare the community to deal effectively with such emergencies and disasters as may eventuate.

Respond

Activate preparedness arrangements and plans to put in place effective measures to deal with emergencies and disasters if and when they do occur.

Recover

Assist a community affected by an emergency or disaster in reconstruction of the physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical well-being.

The Disaster Management Cycle works on a constant movement through these four segments:

¹ NT Emergency Plan

Prevention, Prepare, Respond, Recover.

This document is framed within those four headings.

The Northern Synod Disaster Recovery Plan is designed to cover all that might reasonably be foreseen in terms of disaster preparation and response by the Synod.

1. Prevention/Mitigation

At regular points beyond the response phase to a disaster, it is important to take time to:

- Connect / meet with all parties involved and gather feedback about process and progress.
- Note and discuss new discoveries and short comings in the church's response.
- Adapt the plan accordingly.
- Communicate changes in process or protocols to all parties.
- Archive wisdom well. These need to be easily found before and during the next crisis.

2. Prepare

The Synod Disaster Recovery Committee consists of the Moderator, General Secretary, Synod Property Officer, NRCC Resource Worker, PPNA Chairperson or nominee. The Synod Disaster Recovery Committee is chaired by the General Secretary.

The Synod Disaster Recovery Coordinator, hereafter called the *Coordinator*, is the Synod Property Officer. In the absence of the Coordinator, the General Secretary or other member of this team will take on the role of Synod Disaster Recovery Coordinator.

Documentation to assist the Synod to prepare for a disaster includes:

- Overarching response protocol/checklist (see Appendix 1).
- Donations (see Appendix 2).
- Distribution of funds (see Appendix 3).
- Peer support.
- Conduct a Disaster Risk Assessment (Appendices 8 & 9 provide helpful information on what is needed to be considered), and
- Regional plans for each of the four areas in the Synod (Darwin, Arnhem Land, The Centre & The Kimberley – see Appendices 10 - 13).²

² Guidelines on these assessments can be found at

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/ub5gnxnh7adcawd/Guiding%20principles%20for%20Risk%20Assessment%20and>

Data-gathering

People

- The Synod will have all congregation contacts (Minister, Church Office & Church Council Chairman, Secretary & Treasurer) up to date.
- Each congregation will establish an emergency contact person and alternate.
- Each congregation will maintain current pastoral lists including vulnerable people.
- Each congregation will devise its own local disaster response plan. This can be aided by Appendices 4, 7 and 8.³

Physical Assets

- The Synod will hold a record of the physical assets that are available in each centre (including space, kitchen / toilet / shower facilities) – (See Appendix 4).
- The Synod office will have a satellite phone or equivalent to ensure communication is possible with any location in that Synod that is affected.
- Generator and fuel, along with other necessary supplies, will be located at Living Water (Humpty Doo) ahead of each cyclone season. This is to allow a temporary Synod Office to operate should the Parap office suffer significant damage due to a cyclone.

3. Response

Connect and support

- Upon receiving an extreme weather or other warning, the Coordinator rings/messages those likely to be affected and completes a check list of where people and assets are.
- Upon declaration of an Emergency Situation, or a State of Emergency or a State of Disaster under the NT Emergency Management Plan, the Synod Disaster Recovery Committee convenes.
- Response to those people outside Northern Synod congregations who are in shelters, evacuation centres and recovery centres would be via the NTCC's Emergency Response Chaplaincy Service.

[%20Disaster%20Risk%20%20%20Reducti.doc?dl=0](#)² but simply working of the Local Government Area disaster plans may be sufficient to identify local area risks and needs.

³ A new resource is being developed by the National Disaster Recovery Officer to assist congregations in developing their own disaster response plan - using an audio visual, booklets and checklists to assist in this planning process. It could be available within the second half of 2017.

- After impact – Coordinator and/or Presbytery Minister/s connect with congregations and leaders affected. The Moderator may also follow up with pastoral contact.
- Coordinator liaises with National Disaster Recovery Officer (currently, Stephen Robinson on 0412 820 848, Stephenr@nswact.uca.org.au)
- Funds are made available for people in need and community projects not yet funded. (**Note:** Regarding the availability of funds from the Assembly – New appeals from the President can always be made.)

Determine need and supplement ministry

- Peer support (see Appendix 5) – aims to provide care, support, education and resources for ministry agents. Specific peer support from UCA people helps with the next step – planning *recovery*. Trained Peer support people may be brought in from other Synods.

4. Recovery

- Coordinator will liaise with National Disaster Recovery Officer (who is often available to visit and advise / assess / support)
- The Synod Disaster Recovery Committee determines special unmet (or unforeseen) needs through meeting with affected congregations/ presbyteries.
- Continue Peer Support under the guidance of the Presbytery.
- Arrange special recovery placement/s (See appendix 6).⁴
- Encourage local congregations to connect with disaster recovery agencies and create cooperative local initiatives (See appendix 7).

⁴ The National Disaster Recovery Officer would seek to be available to assist in negotiating a special placement role and liaising with the locals and Synod in establishing the role description and issues relating to the position.

Appendix 1 – Northern Synod Disaster Response Protocol

A. Upon Declaration of an Emergency Situation

1. Synod Disaster Recovery Committee convenes

B. Following a disaster (1-2 days)

2. Coordinator and General Secretary to connect with the local congregation/s leaders and any ministry workers.
3. Have appropriate contact/communication with:
 - NT Council of Churches Emergency Response Chaplaincy Service.
 - Church Agencies – including Assembly (Stephen Robinson 0412 820 848)
 - Others?
4. Have Peer Supporters be on standby to work alongside ministry agents / congregation – in short term (first 4 – 6 weeks)

C. 1-3 Weeks

5. By around end of first week, peer supporter to travel to the disaster area.
6. Synod Disaster Recovery Committee to determine provision and distribution of initial Emergency Relief funds.
7. Liaison with local church to determine needs/strengths and begin to work out strategies.
8. Systematic oversight of pastoral care. Support of Local Government/ other agencies involved. Liaison with NTCC regarding chaplaincy service if still activated.

D. 1-3 Months

9. Provision of short term supply ministry input if required.
10. Continue to help congregation/ community put together local strategies and response.
 - Continued pastoral care.
 - Ecumenical Worship event?
 - Continued peer support as necessary.
11. Applications for projects apart from placements (if appropriate).

E. 4 Months & Beyond

The Synod Disaster Recovery Committee:

12. Review of any short-term placement (usually 2 months in on 3 month terms).
 - Review of funding
 - Review of any strategies
13. Follow up pastoral contact with congregation/s ministry agents.
14. Peer Supporters to report back to PR & PC, General Secretary.
15. Debriefing of Peer Supporters.

F. 1-2 years

16. Explore longer term implications (which may be positive!!) for local church and ministry.

Appendix 2 – Donations after Disaster

The Australian community has a long history of responding generously after disasters. We define ourselves as a nation which is at its best when facing a crisis and which always helps those in need. Our climate is often harsh and can be hot and in drought for long periods and then faces flood and the destruction it brings. In recent years these disasters have affected country and city dwellers alike. There has even been loss of life. When this happens Australians want to help. We imagine what it would be like to be in that situation ourselves and we want to take action to help others get on their feet as soon as possible. We want to minimise their loss because we all know how hard they have worked to get where they are and we feel for them knowing they have to face that recovery process.

Response is often immediate as we want to let people know we care. We want people to know they are not forgotten in their time of need so we send money and often, clothes and furniture, to the disaster areas. This outpouring of sympathy and a desire to help always comes with the best of intentions but often causes more problems.

This may come as some surprise but one of the main issues of dealing with the 2009 Victorian bushfires was how to cope with and pay for the logistics of processing the goods donated. “The 2009 Victorian bushfires resulted in more than 40,000 pallets of goods from across Australia that took up more than 50,000 square metres of storage space. That is twice the size of the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) arena. The cost for storage, staff and transport amounted to more than \$8 million. Services in the fire affected areas were severely stretched as a result of donations of goods arriving without warning and without resources to sort, store, handle and distribute⁵.”

When we look at these statistics, combined with anecdotal evidence of stories of workers in the area taking a day for 3 people to unload a truck of clothes and goods which were donated but not packaged or labelled or sorted and realise this happened over and over again, we can see how this would become a problem; one which needs to be addressed before the issue has to be faced again.

So that leaves us asking the question- **What would be the best way to**

⁵ Management of Donated Goods Following a Disaster, scoping paper prepared for the Australian Government by the State Recovery Office, Department for Families and Communities, South Australia (A Natural Disaster Resilience Project, February 2010)

harness the good intentions of Australians and best meet the needs of people facing the devastation of flood or fire? There are several easy guidelines for congregations and communities to follow which will maximise the beneficial effects of aid sent to a disaster area. Maximum benefit is, after all, what everyone wants. We want to do the things which will help the most to meet the need and to be cost effective in our aid efforts.

Firstly, we need to truly place ourselves in the shoes of people in these situations. We need to imagine ourselves bundled out of our homes, often with only a short time to decide what to take. We could even be asked to leave all we have in this world at the word of a stranger who tells us fire or flood could threaten us at any moment. We may have to leave our pets and items which cannot be replaced, such as a wedding dress or photos. We may only have the clothes we stand up in and not know when we can get back home. Having got to the evacuation centre, along with other worried neighbours, we have a long wait ahead with not much to do but think about what is happening at home. We need to think about what we would like to happen if it were us who had lost most or all of our possessions.

The report to Synod by the rural chaplain and disaster relief chaplains, who attended both the Victorian bushfires and the recent floods in Yenda, near Griffith, and Hay gives **several key pieces of advice.**

1) Always donate money rather than goods. This makes it easier for workers “on the ground” to meet needs quickly and efficiently. Giving money avoids the problem and cost of sorting and handing out items fairly and appropriately. Traumatized people do not have the added burden of having to accept damaged or worn goods and clothing. With vouchers they can take back some control and buy their own clothes and household items. (It is not trivialising the situation to comment here that there are benefits to retail therapy and it gives people something to do while they wait.) . **Second hand and electrical goods should never be sent unless specifically requested.** Money is **always** the best option. Vouchers can be very useful but local businesses need to be taken into account. Donating money -

- provides choice

- promotes self-directed recovery
- empowers people by promoting personal decision making
- is more flexible
- supports local economies by encouraging local buying
- reduces the complicated, costly and time-consuming process of managing donated goods.

2) Congregations should discuss and organise a disaster donations plan before a situation occurs so they are ready in the event of a disaster nearby or in another area. Planning allows the response to be immediate, considered, objective and organised to provide maximum impact. Congregations can see if other churches in the area want to be involved and they can work together in a co-ordinated effort when the need arises.

3) Congregations can play a role in helping their communities to understand the issues surrounding disaster donations and take a leading role in the community in responding to an emergency situation. As well as working with other churches congregations can involve the wider community through friend and community networks and wider afield. There are many practical ways congregations can raise money to use when needed- A few suggestions are- running a garage sale to help turn donated goods into cash, encouraging the community to come together to raise funds and then responding as a whole community to another whole community.

4) The needs of disaster impacted communities and individuals should always be the first priority. Unhelpful donated goods should never be accepted just because they make the donor feel better.

5) Under the NT Emergency Management Plan, the St Vincent de Paul Society is responsible for supplying Evacuation Centres with clothing. Any donations of clothing should be sent to the local St Vincent de Paul sorting centre so that they can be categorised and distributed according to need.

Appendix 3 – Guidelines for the Release of Disaster Funds in the Northern Synod (as adopted from the Synod of NSW and ACT)

A Brief Theological Rationale for Responding to Disaster Relief Requests

It is our faith that informs how we deal with disaster. Our faith not only strengthens us and gives us hope, it also shapes how we help others rebuild and experience that hope. As disciples of Christ, we respond to his call to love our neighbour, and we act with God to walk alongside and care for the poor, the hurt, and the vulnerable.

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself” (Luke 10:27).

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me’” (Matthew 25:37-40).

“If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,’ and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. But someone will say, ‘You have faith and I have works.’ Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith” (James 2:15-18).

We do not live in isolation, but in community. When one suffers, we all suffer. The Basis of Union states, “The Uniting Church sees in pastoral care exercised personally on behalf of the Church an expression of the fact that God always deals personally with people, would have God's loving care known among people, and would have individual members take upon themselves the form of a servant” (Basis of Union, paragraph 16). Whenever assistance is provided to disaster affected people through personal pastoral care, financial support, or material aid, God's loving care for the world is made known.

Criteria

The following are proposed criteria and levels for payments of grants understanding the need for flexibility in any given situation. The Synod Disaster Recovery Committee is empowered to extend the criteria when deemed necessary.

Requests can come from individuals, congregations or officers of the church.

Disaster and Recovery

For an area impacted by disaster then the following funds are available:

- a) Households
 - Up to \$300 automatically granted
 - Up to \$2000 on consideration of two or more members of the Grants Group
- b) Congregations or Officers of the Church in the area can request up to \$3000 for discretionary payments in the community automatically.
- c) Up to \$5000 to support communities after disaster when approved by two or more members of the Grants Group

Natural Phenomena affecting income

A situation caused by unusual natural phenomena including unseasonal frost or drought, which affects a person or family financially to the point that they require financial assistance.

- a) Households
 - Up to \$300 automatically granted
 - Up to \$2000 on consideration of two or more members of the Grants Group
- b) Congregations or Officers of the Church in the area can request up to \$3000 for discretionary payments in the community automatically.
- c) Up to \$5000 to support communities after disaster when approved by two or more members of the Grants Group

Special Ministry Placement

In the recovery process, a congregation/s, a presbytery or Synod may seek to establish a community recovery role or placement to work in the community. This may be supported by Synod or Assembly disaster relief funds. This proposal should be negotiated with all parties concerned and any Synod funding agreed to by the grants group – to be later endorsed by the Synod Disaster Recovery Committee.

Recurring Requests

All recurring requests need to go to the Grants Committee.

Guiding principles for recurrent individual requests

- Is this request a direct result of the original disaster?
- Does it need to be different from the original request?
- Are there concerns that it will create a climate of dependence or denial?

Grants Group

- Comprises the Synod Disaster Recovery Committee
- Decisions can be made by a minimum of three members
- Decisions can be made in face-to-face meetings or by electronic communications including phone and email.
- Group members should have access to previous grant approvals and all current approvals.

Appendix 4 – Northern Synod Congregational Resource Register



Northern Synod CONGREGATION RESOURCE REGISTER

Please return forms to the Synod Disaster Recovery Coordinator via email to admin@ns.uca.org.au or to PO Box 38221, Winnellie NT 0821.

This will enable us to bring our records up to date in preparation for any emergency. Forms are required to be returned by 1 October each year.

Church facilities that could be used in the event of a disaster within your community.

Name of Uniting Church property:

Location and Address:

Type of Building/s (eg. Church, Hall, House, Child Care Centre etc.):

Number of rooms:

Is there a kitchen on site?

Is it fully equipped?

Are there showers?

Number.

Are there toilets?

Number.

Is there any other facilities that may be of use? i.e.: power generator, animal/pet holding area, mattresses?

Keys for access can be obtained from (please give alternatives to cover absences):

Please include contact details for the Chairperson & Secretary of the Church Council.

	NAME	PHONE	MOBILE
Contact 1			
Contact 2			
Contact 3			

The information contained on this form will only be used for the purpose of assisting the Northern Synod Disaster Recovery Committee prepare for, and respond to, an impending emergency situation.

Appendix 5 – Peer Support Person Role Description

Why do we have the Peer Support Team?

In the situation of trauma/disaster...

- to provide pastoral care, support, resources, knowledge of dynamics of Disaster Recovery and community recovery for agents or leaders on the ground as an outsider.
- to support the work of the local church and minister/ministry agent in supporting the affected community, working in conjunction with the Synod and Presbytery to ensure that the church gives due duty of care to those affected during, and after, the event.

What a Peer Support Person does...

Before an emergency

- Prepare travel pack i.e. Clothing requisites.
- Carry Resources – Educational/liturgical.
- Participate in ongoing awareness-raising and helping the church develop disaster recovery response.
- Educate the church in relation to the role.

During an emergency

- Prepare to be activated. (Let the Coordinator know if out of area – change of phone number or email).
- Contact Coordinator relating to availability.
- Peer Coordinator or Moderator contacts Presbytery (through Disaster Contact Person) advising that there will be a peer person/s activated.
- Peer contacts Presbytery agents (Presbytery Minister/ Chair) for background information, phone numbers and current knowledge of minister/s area affected. This is also to establish role.
- Peer contacts ministry agent/s affected and arranges time to talk.
- Peer to work with disaster contact person and minister/s in planning and responding to the emergency.
- The peers will provide practical help and encouragement, strategies and resources for ministry, and much-needed care during the impact phase and early recovery phase.

After an emergency

- Peer/s will provide follow up contact and resources as appropriate.
- Peer/s will provide a brief report on their activities to the Coordinator. This would be for the purpose of learning from the experience and would respect issues of confidentiality.

Follow up care of Peers / debriefing

- Peers will be followed through by the Coordinator.
- Debriefing will be offered or recommended.
- The Peer Support Team Psychologist will be available for further care if deemed necessary or requested.

Accountability and relationships

The Peer Support Person is accountable to:

- Peer Coordinator
- Moderator
- Synod Disaster Recovery Committee

The Peer Support Person is mindful of:

- Confidentiality
- Boundaries
- Personal limits and mental health

Relationship to/role with the Presbytery:

- The Peer Support Person should keep Presbytery informed at all stages
- The Peer Support Person should be aware of Peer/Presbytery Boundaries
- The Peer Support Person should provide a written general report to the Peer Coordinator on activities within the Presbytery which the Coordinator will then forward to the Presbytery
- The Peer Support Person should advise Presbytery in relation to community recovery, goals or needs, on-going strategies as needed

Relationship to/role with the ministry agent

- The prime role is to be a “carer to the carer”.
- The Peer Support Person is in a pastoral role to the ministry agent and as such is governed by the UCA Code of Ethics
- The Peer Support Person should have an attitude of “servanthood”.

Activation

1. A disaster or trauma has occurred.
2. Synod is aware of this, or Presbytery makes Synod aware of it
3. Moderator contacted by phone by Presbytery Contact Person or Coordinator.
4. Coordinator activates peers in consultation with the Moderator.
5. Peer/s assist/s ministry agent/s involved and his or her carers.

Revised 26 October 2012

Appendix 6 – Disaster Recovery - Terms of Long Supply (*Example only*)

Uniting Church in Australia - Northern Synod

TERMS OF LONG SUPPLY

POSITION, TOWN NAME

The following are the agreed Terms of Supply to which the Minister, the Presbytery and the TOWN NAME Church Council commit themselves together in mutual ministry. It is understood by all parties that it will be possible, with mutual consultation and prayerful consideration, to consult together and so achieve any agreed changes in these Terms of Supply, as endorsed by the SDRC.

This ministry initiative was prompted through the work of the Synod Disaster Recovery Committee in response to the DISASTEREVENT which struck the NAME REGION on DATE. The ministry is informed by research/experience pointing to the critical recovery stage for individuals and communities between 3-12 months after trauma. It is at this 3-12 months' stage that memory of the event (and its impacts) may be receding in the minds of many in the wider community. For many people dealing with post trauma stress, knowing and experiencing ongoing support can be very important in sustaining their pathway to recovery.

The terms set out below have [*will have*] the approval of the PR & PC as it will be a Synod appointment.

1. **Period of supply** – will be 6 months (26 weeks) of generally 2-days per week ministry (52 days of ministry all up) commencing the week beginning Mon 20 July 2015 and effectively concluding the week beginning Mon 14 Dec 15 (refer Appendix 1 likely "Schedule of Ministry Days"). It is understood there will be flexibility in relation to:
 - which actual day(s) of each week are worked (e.g. Mon-Tues or Wed-Thurs) with 2 contiguous days being the norm, and
 - occasionally some weeks may be less than 2 days, such 'missed' days being made up in the following week(s) ensuring 52 days of ministry are provided in the 6 months period of supply.
2. The POSITION will be a part-time role, remunerated on the basis of **0.3 FTE supply ministry**.

3. The **focus of the role** will be:
- i. **Proactive offering of pastoral care** to members of the community and their families (including members of churches) in TOWN NAME and surrounding areas. Pastoral care may involve linking people to other services through referral.
 - ii. **Liaison** (through initiating contact and visits) **with churches, community organisations** (e.g. family and community services, hospitals, SES) **media outlets** and **government** (e.g. Regional/Local Recovery Co-ordinator for the event) so there is community awareness of the POSITION service, including possible referrals to the chaplain for pastoral counselling (see iii below)
 - iii. Offering of counselling from the TOWN NAME Uniting Church, for people needing support with recovering from the storm.
 - iv. **Educating, training and mentoring** of people from the TOWN NAME and other congregations of the Uniting Church, in pastoral visitation of people recovering from trauma (and by extension, equipping people with skills and confidence in general pastoral care). This is in order that suitably gifted church members be equipped to continue "i" above after the POSITION has completed his/her service period.
 - v. Referral of clients in need of assistance with food to the appropriate authority for access to food vouchers.
4. The POSITION will **report regularly** (say, every 4-6 weeks, in writing) on progress of the recovery ministry to:
- PR & PC;
 - TOWN NAME Church Council (Cc. to Synod Disaster Recovery Coordinator).

The reporting format to:

- address the 5 elements of the focus of the role (as per "3 i-v" above) and,
- outline, from time to time, the key issues related to loss and recovery for the people and community of the area, and the ways in which they are being addressed through (and beyond) the ministry of the chaplaincy role.

It is envisaged that occasionally a verbal report may be given to the TOWN NAME Uniting Church Congregation gathered for Sunday worship.

The TOWN NAME Church Council will form a small **Recovery Task Group** to work with the chaplain in support of his/her ministry on a week-by-week basis, including interviewing and general oversight of the disbursement of supermarket vouchers upon referral from the chaplain (see "3 v" above). This task group will ideally include one member who comes from either the Stroud or Stroud Road congregations.

5. The chaplain will receive **regular professional supervision**. If more supervision is required than is currently being undertaken by the chaplain in other part-time ministries, given that many clients may well be traumatised, the costs of extra supervision for the storm recovery work will be met by the Synod as part of its remuneration and allowances paid.
6. The **Synod Disaster Recovery Coordinator**, will be available for the chaplain to consult with, and will undertake to call the chaplain on a reasonably regular basis throughout this supply period.
- 7 **Remuneration** will be paid in accordance with the Synod schedule of Stipend, Allowances & Support Fund Information, as determined by the Synod from time to time, i.e. along similar lines as those currently existing for Presbytery part-time placements.

The chaplain may request that up to 30% of their pre-tax package be treated as a salary package arrangement, paid to a Ministers Benefit Account. This amount would then be held by the Synod and paid to reimburse previously agreed items that conform to those matters allowed under Fringe Benefit arrangements by the Synod.

8. **Overnight accommodation** for the chaplain will be provided/arranged by the TOWN NAME Church Council or privately by the chaplain at the chaplain's discretion. Up to \$??? per week will be available to cover accommodation costs should it be required.

The POSITION, when in TOWN NAME will be based in the TOWN NAME manse **office** at TOWN NAME (including working around the need for church news sheet volunteers to use the office 1 day per week - usually a Fri. or Sat.) .

9. A landline **phone** at the TOWN NAME manse office will be available for use by the chaplain. In addition, the provision of a mobile phone

will be on a similar arrangement currently in existence for the Chaplain.

10. **Travel costs** will be reimbursed to the chaplain for use of his/her private vehicle at the rate of standard ATO rate. The chaplain to keep a log book of kilometres travelled in getting to TOWN NAME and moving around the TOWN NAME area.
11. The Synod will pay contributions to the **nominated Superannuation Fund** at the pro-rata rate required.
12. The Synod will pay contributions to the **Ministerial Support Funds** at the pro-rata rate required.
13. **Annual leave and sick leave** as set out in the Synod by-laws, will be provided commensurate with the duration of supply. Thus, for the 6 months of supply, 48 days will be on duty and 4 days will be annual leave, most likely taken as per Appendix 1. Schedule of Ministry Days.

Appendix 7 - What can congregations do after a crisis in their area?

Introduction -What constitutes a crisis?

At the time of a crisis such as a bush fire or flood, there is often a huge flurry of activity by emergency services and others, but this quickly ceases and people are often left wondering how they might help. While we tend to only think of disasters as crises, there are many other situations that can cause a crisis in a community, such as a road accident that causes a number of deaths, a “prominent” suicide, especially of a young person, the closure of the major employer in the community.

Guidelines on how to respond effectively

The following are some ideas that may or may not be helpful in your situation, but will hopefully stimulate other thoughts. If you need financial assistance, resources or help with any of these activities contact the General Secretary of the Synod.

Before a crisis

- ❖ Build a **network of people** who can be contacted in the event of a crisis. Each Synod should have at least one key person who is dedicated to building networks and systems for disaster response. Regional pastors should have a knowledge of how disaster response operates in their state and, if possible, congregations should also have contact people.

During and immediately after a crisis

- ❖ **Peer Supporters** may be sent by the Synod to assist the congregation. The Peer, who is there to support the congregation in whatever ways are helpful, will not only bring an extra pair of hands, but has expert knowledge of the state’s emergency plan, critical incident stress management, how it all works on the ground, and carries education and liturgical resources. A visit from a Peer Supporter is fully funded by the Synod.
- ❖ Can **your assets and people** be used to help support all the extra people in town? Many churches have good hall facilities and other buildings and have people who can help with food etc. To find out if other help is needed you could talk to local Government employees, the Centre Manager at the Evacuation Centre, if there is one, or any Disaster Recovery Chaplains if they are in town. If an Evacuation

Centre is going to be open on a Sunday, it can be good to have a list of all the church services in town to distribute to people in the centre.

- ❖ Where **accommodation** is stretched by need during an emergency, Disaster Recovery Chaplains can sometimes need accommodation. Congregations may be able to assist by billeting chaplains for a night or two, or use their hall to accommodate them away from an evacuation or recovery centre.
- ❖ Often the children are overlooked. Think about organising **activities for the kids who** are in evacuation centres, or get some treats or gifts to take to them. Before doing this, connect with the evacuation centre manager and ensure that all working in this fashion have child-check clearances.
- ❖ Some days after an emergency, a **Recovery Committee** will be set up, usually by the Local Shire/Council. It is important that a representative from the churches in the community has a seat on this committee. This person needs to be someone committed to keeping all the churches in town informed of the identified needs, and seeing church resources and people help to meet these needs. Congregations should talk to the organiser of the Recovery Committee about having this person attend.

In the Short Term

Financial Support may be available from Synod to provide **Ministry support for congregations**. This can be helpful if those, either ordained or lay, who normally bear the load of organising the ministry of the congregation, are busy helping in the community¹.

Apply to the Synod⁶ for some funds to support local people and families. This may include, among other things:

- **food vouchers or hampers** (preferably bought locally to help the local economy),

⁶ (Or Assembly). People who are displaced into motels or who have damaged kitchens are often unable to cook for themselves/their families. The wider church may be able to fund a freezer kept in a church facility (as happened after the Springwood fires) for storing donated meals – which may be heated there or elsewhere.

- buying food to **make meals** to feed people or give frozen meals to families;
 - **help for local schools** to do things they may not have funds for. One example of this would be if the population has been dispersed and children are being bussed into school from other areas; sometimes a breakfast program is needed during this time. Schools inevitably have extra calls on their welfare funds at this time and it might be appropriate to help top them up.
- ❖ **Help organise community education.** A workshop for community and church members to learn about the process of recovery and what communities can expect to go through, can be very helpful to consider and organise when planning responses. The Synod Disaster Recovery Coordinator or Assembly National Disaster Officer can help arrange this.
- ❖ **Organise some Pastoral visitors** for the area. They may focus solely on visiting people or they may also be involved in some community recovery activities. The visit may be for a number of weeks or a number of months, depending on the need and the availability of the visitors. There can be Synod funding for this and the Synod Disaster Recovery Coordinator is the first place to start.
- ❖ **Organise practical help for those affected.** Following disasters such as floods or fires or cyclones there is always an enormous cleaning up to be done. If more hands are needed than are locally available, talk to the Synod Disaster Recovery Coordinator about getting help to find volunteers from congregations in other parts of the Synod who have not been directly affected by the event. It may involve helping to clean out debris, putting up fences, cleaning up homes or paddocks etc.
- ❖ **Provide Ecumenical services** to mourn for those lost and/or give thanks for those who survived. Liturgical resources are available from the Synod or Assembly if needed.

- ❖ **A pastoral visit from the Moderator** may be helpful to have for both the congregation and/or the community. If so talk to the Moderator to see if this is practical.
- ❖ **The kids in the community** may need something to do while everyone else is focusing on the crisis? Can your congregation help? Other children's ministry coordinators and volunteers from nearby congregations may be brought in to help.
- ❖ **Encourage callers to turn their donated goods into cash** and then send that or give it to appeals that have been established. Often the Synod and/or Assembly will have an appeal set up. If the event has had media coverage then you may receive calls about goods that people want to donate. This causes enormous problems and Synods with policies relating to donations discourage giving used goods and **encourage donating cash or vouchers.**⁷

In the Longer Term

- ❖ Communities will inevitably go through a period of disillusionment. It occurs when the huge emphasis on helping others starts to wear off and the reality of what needs to be done to create a new future sets in. It can start as soon as three weeks after the event and can last as long as a couple of years. As long term members of the community, the congregation (and neighbouring congregations) can play a significant role in helping during this period.
- ❖ Often people are focused on getting their own lives back together and don't have time for others. Organising **community fun events** that can give people a break and an enjoyable time, can remind people that they are not alone and help build personal resilience through being with community.
- ❖ Helping organise a **community project** can be another way of bringing people together. It may be rebuilding a community area, setting up a memorial, restoring a playing field, building a community

⁷ Donation of used goods is a growing problem. Church halls can be filled and rendered useless for months or years if churches accept donated goods and thousands of hours of volunteer time is wasted on near worthless donations.

garden etc. What projects are needed will become obvious over time. Consider including teenagers in these projects. They may be glad to contribute.

- ❖ There are many areas and things not covered by insurance which make quite an impact on people's lives. One of these is gardens. You might like to organise a **plant day** where people are given plants to rebuild their gardens.
- ❖ If the devastation has been enormous it can be helpful to **organise holidays** out of the area so people can get away from the devastation for a short period. Even short times away for groups of people, such as the kids or mothers, can also work wonders. In rural areas farmers can find themselves unable to get away due to the need to watch or feed stock. Retired farmers from nearby congregations may be able to volunteer to do this to allow a much-needed break to an affected farming family.
- ❖ If families have been dispersed then **children's lives will have been significantly impacted**, both for those who have gone and for those who have stayed (eg best friends no longer see each other, sport teams are non-functioning, ballet no longer occurs because the hall no longer exists.) Can your church help in some way?
- ❖ **Ecumenical Services on anniversaries** can be helpful. While acknowledge the losses that occurred these need to have an aspect of looking forward and celebration and not just 're-traumatise' those attending by focusing on the pain of the event.

Each community is different and what works in one place may not work in another but it is hoped that these ideas will give you some ideas of where to start.

Appendix 8 - Disaster Preparation Steps for Northern Synod Congregations and Faith Groups

- Appoint a disaster response coordinator and alternate (not in same household) and small working group to facilitate the following:
- Get pastoral contact lists up to date – identifying people most at risk (e.g. Frail elderly, isolated etc.).
- Connect with local government emergency manager to find out what plans are in place for the local response.
- Undertake a brief risk assessment of local area and discuss most likely hazards and what would be needed. Bring this to the church council for ratification and awareness and lodge a copy with Synod Disaster Recovery Coordinator.
- Complete a “Congregational Resource Register” (Appendix 4) and return a copy of it to Synod by 1 October each year. Make a copy of this available to your Local Government Area disaster response officer too.
- Prior to likely disaster season:
 - ✓ Check church is clear of likely hazards, ensure access and storage areas are clear.
 - ✓ Stock up church with bottled water.
 - ✓ Portable generator, spare fuel, power boards and lead ready to go.
 - ✓ Have pastoral lists and names and numbers of key Synod contact people printed, sealed and accessible.
 - ✓ In key holiday times (especially through December/January) ensure at least one contact person is local and known (name in newssheet), keys to the building, contact lists etc. are available.

Appendix 9 -Disaster Preparedness Checklist for Congregations and Faith Groups

Contacts

- ☐ Who is responsible for contacting your people in the event of a disaster?
Name _____ Contact Number _____
- ☐ Who is responsible for liaising with other local faith groups and organisations including the local council?
Name _____ Contact Number _____
- ☐ Who is the disaster recovery contact person in your denomination/faith group's head office?
Name _____ Contact Number _____
- ☐ Who has the keys to your building?
Name _____ Contact Number _____
Name _____ Contact Number _____
Name _____ Contact Number _____
- ☐ Who is rostered on as a contact when your key people are away (especially holidays).
☐ Name _____ Contact Number _____
Name _____ Contact Number _____
Name _____ Contact Number _____

Policies

- ☐ Do you have a system and policy in place for distributing donations or vouchers in your community?
- ☐ Have you checked the sign-in procedures and insurance cover of your faith group?

Preparation

- ☐ Is your pastoral contact list up to date?

- ☐ Do you have a pastoral care team that can visit people in their homes?
- ☐ Have you checked your local flood or fire plan (from Council) and considered how it might affect your people or response?
- ☐ Are your physical (building) and care resources in place?
- ☐ Do you have access to a portable generator?
- ☐ Can you provide personal protective clothing (e.g. gloves) for recovery volunteers?
- ☐ Do your children's workers/volunteers all have Working with Children Check clearances registered?
- ☐ Is this information kit somewhere people can find it in emergencies?

ⁱ To discuss assistance from Synod contact the Synod Disaster Recovery Coordinator