

SOUTHLAND

Community Emergency Hub Guide



OVERVIEW

In an emergency, it's vital communities come together to support and help each other. This guide is a starting point for your community to help you set up and run a Community Emergency Hub – a place where the community can meet and make collective decisions about how to best look after themselves.

The first thing to do in an emergency is to make sure you and your household are safe. Then check to see if your neighbours are alright. After this, you can check on others in your street, then your wider neighbourhood. Sometimes all people need to stay safe during an emergency is to make sure those close to them are safe. Sometimes though, a Community Emergency Hub can offer additional support, even if it is just an opportunity to share stories and experiences.

During an emergency response, councils and emergency services won't be the only ones who are able to respond. Communities are filled with people who have different skills and can work together to solve local problems. By coming together in Community Emergency Hubs, people can make collective decisions to ensure the safety and comfort of everyone in their community.

Depending on the scale of event, more than one Hub may open in your area. Some will be listed in your local Community Response Plan, others may spontaneously develop depending on need. If you know of any other Hubs, you can coordinate your efforts and work together to provide even more support to your community. It's important though to make sure community members working in a Hub understand they have no legal powers to requisition resources. Laws still apply during an emergency, but people are often generous and willing to help if they're asked.

Your Hub also has another vital role to play in an emergency. You will be able to use your local information and knowledge to feed information back to the Emergency Coordination Centre, where trained staff will be coordinating the response to the emergency. Your information will help ensure an effective and coordinated emergency response.

Emergency services and councils may be overwhelmed during the initial stages of a disaster. However, if there is a situation which is life threatening, you should still call 111 in the first instance.

This Hub Guide has six sections to help you get started:

1 ACCESSING THE HUB

2 WORKING AS A TEAM

3 SETTING UP

4 BEFORE YOU OPEN

5 THE COMMUNITY'S RESPONSE

6 THINKING ABOUT RECOVERY

1

**ACCESSING
THE HUB**



ACCESSING THE HUB

First, make sure you check the area around the Hub is safe. If it is not safe, find another location. If you know someone who is a builder, electrician, plumber or has other trades experience, they can help you check for external and then internal structural damage.



1

Check for:

- ▶ flooding or slips
- ▶ the smell of gas or sewage
- ▶ exposed electrical wires
- ▶ external damage to the building

2

Locate the key from either the building key holder, lock box or place specified in the Community Response Plan, which is included at the back of this guide.

3

Once inside, make sure you **check the building for any damage** not visible from outside the building.

4

Inside there will be a **Community Emergency Hub folder** which contains:

- ▶ a copy of this guide
- ▶ a copy of the local Community Response Plan with full contact details
- ▶ maps of your area
- ▶ lanyards
- ▶ paper and pens

5

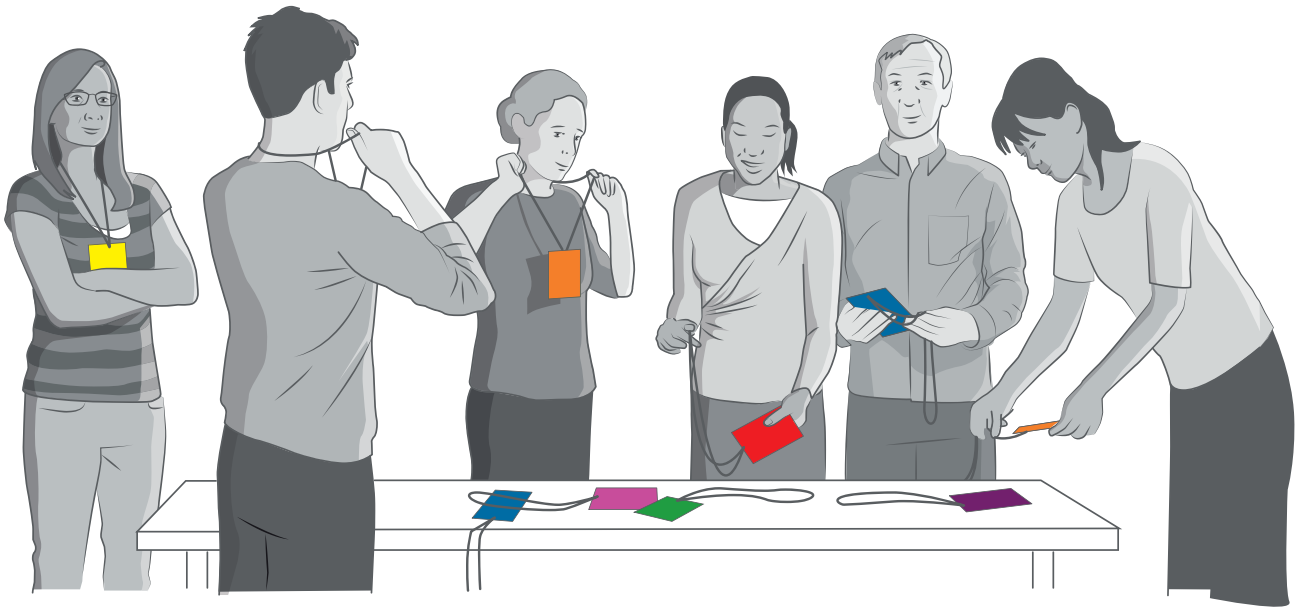
Clean up and set up:

- ▶ clear away any debris or glass
- ▶ secure anything that may be a hazard in aftershocks
- ▶ move furniture to make clear spaces
- ▶ set up working areas
- ▶ make sure the building is accessible for those with mobility or visual difficulties

2

**WORKING
AS A TEAM**





TEAM TALK

Once everything is safe, tidy and secure, come together and talk about why you're there, what you want to achieve and how you can best support your community.

You are here to:

- ▶ provide information, so everyone knows what needs to be done to help each other and stay safe
- ▶ gather information, to build a picture about what is happening in your community and communicate this information with the Emergency Coordination Centre
- ▶ solve problems using local resources and skills
- ▶ provide a safe place for people to gather and support each other

You will then need to assign people to cover different roles within the Hub.

HUB ROLES

1. Hub supervisor

It's important someone has an overview of what is going on. Decisions should be made by agreement, but it's helpful if someone can bring everything together. Remember you're a team, and as a group you'll be able to consider the immediate needs of those in the community, and what community assets and resources are available. The supervisor can change depending on the situation, and as people with more experience join the Hub team they may be willing to step into the role.



HUB SUPERVISOR KEY TASKS

- ✓ make sure other roles are allocated
- ✓ make sure everyone has what they need to do their job
- ✓ make sure new people joining the hub are invited to join the team
- ✓ make sure each area of the Hub works with the other areas as a team
- ✓ record major decisions for future reference, including what happened and any actions taken
- ✓ develop a roster to ensure people have adequate breaks and don't work too long
- ✓ close the Hub overnight when appropriate
- ✓ secure the property and provide information about open times to the community
- ✓ let the Emergency Coordination Centre know when the Hub has closed and when it is open again
- ✓ close the Hub when the community no longer needs it
- ✓ supervise the Hub clean-up when permanently closing
- ✓ work with media that show up:
 - 1 **do** provide any public or general information such as weather details, open hours, and copies of public information such as media releases
 - 2 **do not** give out private information such as details on injuries or deaths, addresses of evacuated homes or personal information you've received
- ✓ Ensure the Hub team understands the following legal information:
 - 1 if you don't have special legal powers in your normal life, you don't have any in a state of emergency either
 - 2 if a situation is life threatening, saving life is the priority, but remember usual laws apply

2. Information coordination

This person or team organises all the information coming into the Hub. They collect, display and try to confirm information to develop a clear picture of what is happening in the community. This can help prioritise help for where it is needed most.

Some information collected will be displayed to the public by the public information team, and some will need to be communicated back to the Emergency Coordination Centre, make sure unconfirmed information is clearly marked as such.

Date Time	Location	What's Happening	Our Response	Priority / Completed
15/7 11:39am	Kowhai Rd	Report that Kowhai Rd bridge looks damaged	Note down for status report to EOC. Advise community to avoid use (Public Info board)	Urgent ✓
11:51pm		First volunteer teams sent out for door knocking northern suburbs	Refer to map for locations. First report due from team 2pm	On going
11:33pm	15 Rangeview Ave	House on fire	Send Community Patrol to check everyone is out. 11:50am Ad out	Urgent
12:57pm	Pine Medical Centre	Report: Pine Medical Centre CLOSED, use Mill Medical Centre	Advise community to go to Mill Medical Centre if need help (Public Info board) Advise Reception	Not Urgent
2:34pm	Palm St	Palm Villa Rest Home needs help clearing debris	Send volunteers to help clear debris	Not Urgent
2:46pm	Cat Cres	Vet is open for people needing first aid	Display on Public Info Board Advise Reception	✓
15/7 8:10am		Blocked roads - Tan St, Marine Dr, Poned Ln, Dart St, Tin St	Note down for status report to EOC. Advise Public Info board.	On going



INFORMATION COORDINATOR KEY TASKS

- ✓ maintain an information board or wall and display the maps of the area from the hub kit
- ✓ highlight hazards such as slips or areas of liquefaction
- ✓ list the condition of water supply, wastewater, power, telecommunications and roads
- ✓ list other information that may be useful, such as river levels or road conditions
- ✓ list communities known to be safe, and those unconfirmed or not heard from
- ✓ talk with new arrivals to the Hub about what they may have seen on their way
- ✓ operate a status report to collate information for reporting back to the Emergency Coordination Centre

INFORMATION COORDINATION

I am responsible for:

- Collecting, confirming and sharing information.
- Providing everyone with a clear picture of what is happening in the community and the wider area, so the right help can be provided.
- Using the information gathered to prioritise the hub activities.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY HUB

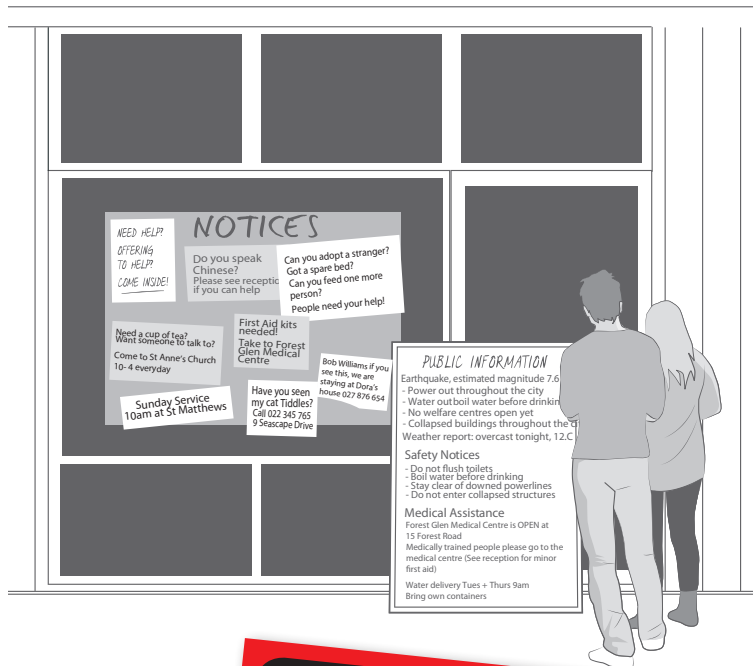
INFORMATION COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Create and maintain the Situation Board and display maps with gathered information.
- Determine information needs. What do you need to know?
- Organise the collection of information within the Hub.
- Organise groups to go out to find further information in the community.
- Keep the Hub team up to date with what is happening, especially the Hub Supervisor and Public Information person.
- Create Situation Reports (SitReps) that can be relayed to the official response at the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) by the person using the radio.

3. Public information

The public information board provides information useful to the community. Some people come to the Hub just for this information, so it may be useful to have this on display at the front, and even a copy outside if suitable.

It's important to keep this board up to date so people know the latest information. The type of things people will want to know include public meeting times and locations, evacuation zones, liquefaction areas, public health information, the latest weather forecast, safety messages and water status including tap water, waste water and storm water.



PUBLIC INFORMATION KEY TASKS

- ✓ ensure the information board is accessible and visible
- ✓ ensure the information board doesn't obstruct entrance ways
- ✓ make sure the information is up to date by working with the information coordination team
- ✓ make the information time-specific by adding a time and date
- ✓ note clearly if the information is unconfirmed, or wait until it has been confirmed before it's displayed
- ✓ make sure information is neatly written and uses plain language
- ✓ any information that could be useful for the Emergency Coordination Centre should be passed onto the information coordination team



4. Needs and offers

This role fulfils one of the Hub's main objectives – to solve problems using the resources and skills the community has available.

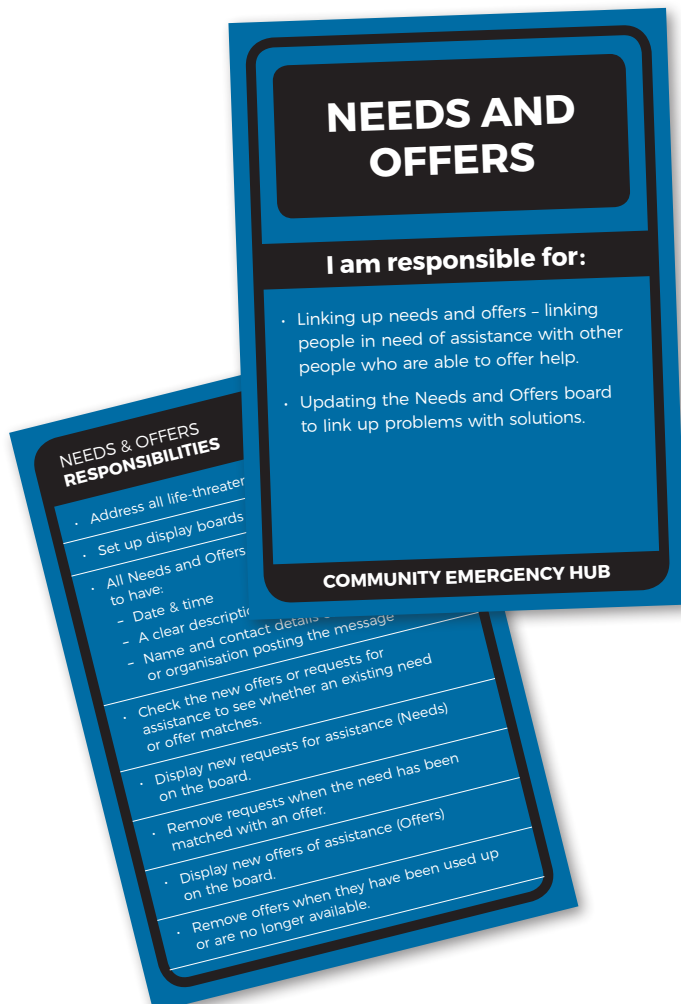
While preservation of life is the highest priority in an emergency response, it is important to meet other basic needs to keep people safe. Shelter, water, food and sanitation quickly become priorities in an emergency.

Needs and offers boards are a tool for managing and tracking what the community needs, and what offers of assistance have been made by individuals or organisations. People who need assistance go to the needs board, and people who can help go to the offers board. The team looking after the boards match the needs with offers of assistance. An example may be someone needing shelter, being matched with someone offering accommodation.



NEEDS AND OFFERS KEY TASKS

- ✓ prioritise needs, ensure life threatening needs are met by contacting 111, alerting the Hub supervisor or contacting the Emergency Coordination Centre
- ✓ establish display boards or wall areas for needs and offers
- ✓ ensure requests and offers are dated and timed, include contact details, clearly describe the need or offer
- ✓ check frequently to see if there are matches for needs and offers
- ✓ develop groupings of needs and offers in categories such as catering, shelter, trade type or equipment
- ✓ keep boards up to date by removing met requests, or expired offers
- ✓ information about significant offers or needs, such offers from supermarkets may need to be managed by the Emergency Coordination Centre
- ✓ identify when the need is greater than can be supported by the community and forward the information through to the Emergency Coordination Centre.



5. Community space

Some people will come to the Hub for specific reasons, such as a need, or to offer help. Others may just want general support, comfort or company at a time of stress. The community space is a dedicated area where people can get support, wait for resources or just hang out for a while.



COMMUNITY SPACE KEY TASKS

- ✓ set up a community space near the rest of the Hub, but preferably away from the information boards
- ✓ make sure the space is accessible, and has adequate seating
- ✓ if someone is visibly distressed, comfort them as you would a friend
- ✓ if refreshments are available, set it up so people can help themselves and keep the area tidy
- ✓ keep a record if the team makes key decisions or takes key actions
- ✓ consider those with physical or visual impairments, differing cultural backgrounds and mental health conditions
- ✓ think about how you may be able to help parents keep children calm

PROVIDING COMFORT

- ✓ only counsel if you are qualified in your normal life to do so
- ✓ sometimes, all people need is someone to listen to them, provide information or give practical advice about their immediate needs



- ✓ help people feel in control by enabling them to make their own decisions
- ✓ if someone is emotional, sometimes sitting quietly is enough
- ✓ listen respectfully and show what they are saying is important to you
- ✓ encourage them to consider who else may be able support them
- ✓ ensure you maintain their privacy and independence
- ✗ don't take anything they say personally, remember it's a stressful situation for everyone
- ✗ don't order people to do things
- ✗ don't tell them not to worry or compare their situation to others
- ✗ don't patronise or try to talk them out of their feelings
- ✗ don't separate them from people they know

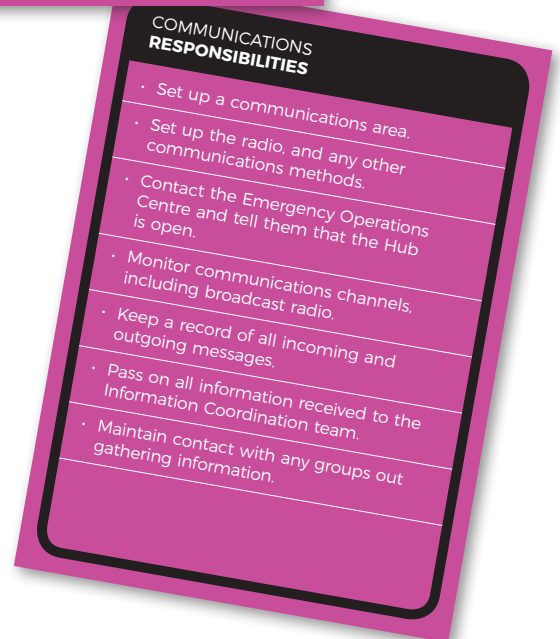
6. Communications

This role deals with the important task of keeping the Emergency Coordination Centre informed of what is going on in your community, so the official response can provide support where possible.



COMMUNICATIONS KEY TASKS

- ✓ establish a quiet space to set up the communications area
- ✓ establish contact with the Emergency Coordination Centre
- ✓ the Emergency Coordination Centre may want to know:
 - the impacts of the emergency to your community
 - are people injured or in need to help?
 - do you have phone, power, internet or road access?
 - are houses damaged?
 - are there any critical resources required?
- ✓ pass on and gather information from other relevant areas such as the information coordination team



7. Reception

People coming into the Hub will be made to feel more at ease if greeted by a friendly face to direct them to where they may need to go.

The team at reception need to be able to explain exactly what the Hub can help with and what it can't help with, don't make promises you can't keep.



RECEPTION KEY TASKS

- ✓ greet people at the door
- ✓ stay calm and remember people react to stress in different ways
- ✓ be honest, if you don't know the answer to something say so and then try and find out who may be able to help



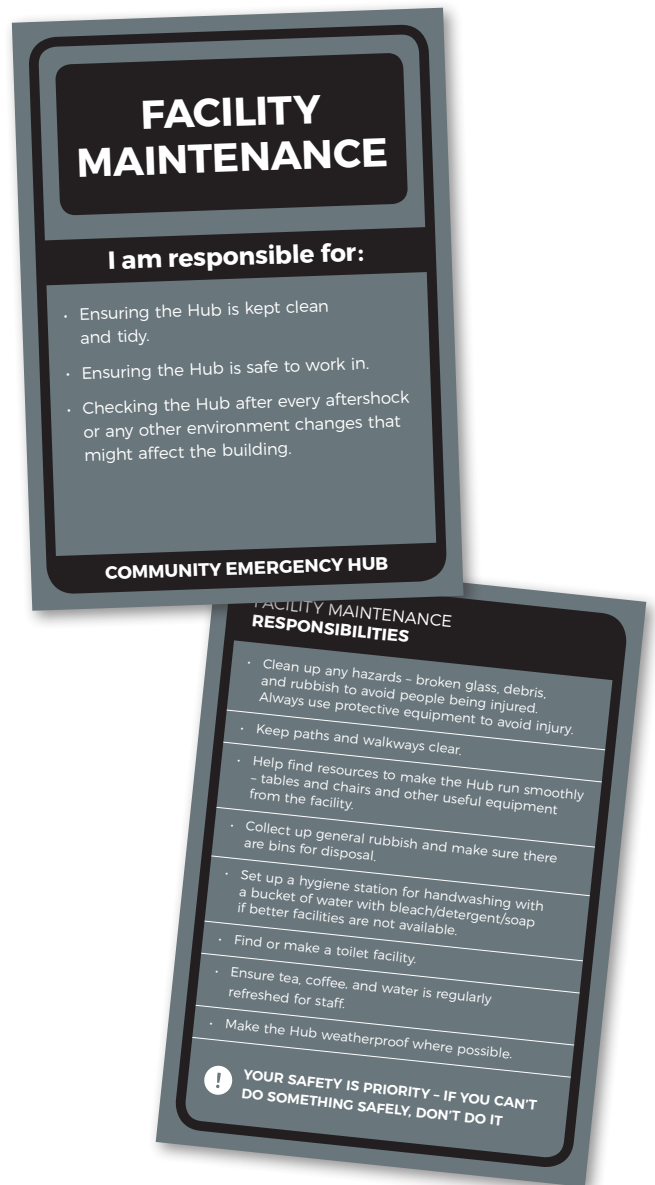
8. Facility maintenance

It will help make people feel more at ease if they come into an orderly, tidy space. The safety of the building and outside environment is essential and will need to be checked again after an aftershock or other environmental impact.



FACILITY MAINTENANCE KEY TASKS

- ✓ keep entrance ways clear to maintain accessibility
- ✓ ensure there are enough resources such as chairs, tables and rubbish bins
- ✓ set up a hygiene station for handwashing
- ✓ locate or make a toilet facility
- ✓ keep up refreshment supplies
- ✓ check the building and ensure it is water proof where possible
- ✓ maintain personal safety, don't take risks



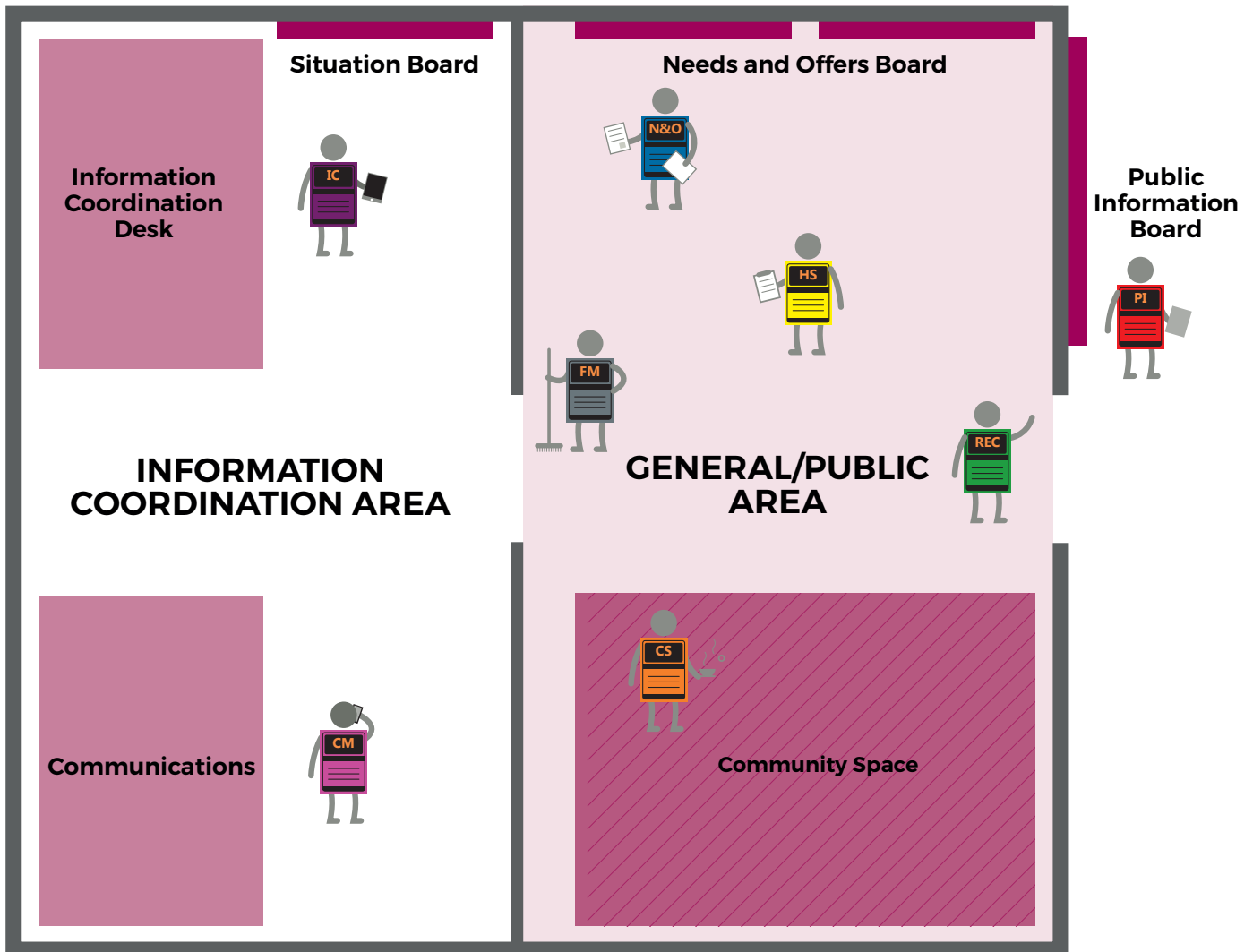
3

SETTING UP



Priority areas to set up are the public information board and information coordination area.

- ✓ make sure the public information board is easy to see, accessible and near the front of the Hub
- ✓ set up a situation board to give an overall picture of what is happening.
- ✓ record actions taken and tasks assigned or yet to be assigned; some of this information could be sensitive so find a quiet space away from the public, maybe even in another room
- ✓ set up a needs and offers collection area – near the front of the facility
- ✓ set up an area for communications – in a quiet area
- ✓ set up a community space – away from busy areas like information boards
- ✓ set up toilet and hygiene station – neighbouring houses or businesses may be able to help with cleaning materials and too



Hub roles



HUB SUPERVISOR

I oversee that the Hub runs smoothly by helping everyone work together.



INFORMATION COORDINATION

I keep track of important information coming in and out of the Hub.



PUBLIC INFORMATION

I keep the Public Information board up to date and tidy.



RECEPTION

I meet and greet people coming to the Hub and direct them where to go.



NEEDS AND OFFERS

I match people's needs and offers of assistance by using notes on a board.



COMMUNITY SPACE

I create a welcoming, comfortable space where people can connect and wait.



COMMUNICATIONS

I use whatever communications are available to stay in contact with the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).



FACILITY MAINTENANCE

I ensure the Hub is safe, clean and has the resources it needs to run.

4

**BEFORE
YOU OPEN**



5

**YOUR
COMMUNITY'S
RESPONSE**



IDEAS AND SOLUTIONS

Ideas and solutions for challenges you may face.

Life threatening situations

- ▶ try to call 111
- ▶ inform people if there is a hazard
- ▶ evacuate the area if necessary
- ▶ report details back to the Community Emergency Hub
- ▶ report details back to the Emergency Coordination Centre

Local resources and vulnerabilities

- ▶ many of these are listed in your Community Response Plan
- ▶ for additional options, brain storm amongst the team; resources may include service groups, business owners, infrastructure and other facilities

Checking on people and damage

- ▶ contact everyone in the community as soon as possible
- ▶ record and report information as soon as possible
- ▶ recheck in the following days as circumstances may change



In life threatening situations, attempt to call 111 first.

How can you make sure everywhere has been checked?

- ▶ start with the worst affected areas
- ▶ draw upon local knowledge and contact lists
- ▶ coordinate a street by street, house by house check using Hub maps



Help if you can, but do not put yourself in unnecessary danger to save someone else. You don't want to become a casualty as well.

Medical assistance

- ▶ identify and coordinate community resources that can be used to assist and treat the injured
- ▶ identify and check on people with day-to-day medical needs
- ▶ direct the community to medical providers that are known to be open
- ▶ identify and coordinate people in the community with medical skills who can help
- ▶ take injured or sick people to the nearest medical centre if one is open
- ▶ anyone with first aid skills should go to the nearest open medical centre or Hub
- ▶ coordinate transport for those who are in need and cannot get to the medical centre

Water

- ▶ people need access to clean water for drinking, cooking and hygiene
- ▶ inform the public in as many ways as possible about how to treat drinking water
- ▶ arrange a place where water can be distributed if needed
- ▶ try to locate large water tanks which may have excess water
- ▶ if in doubt – boil; filter through a clean cloth if you need to, then boil water for one minute
- ▶ if you cannot boil water, use bleach to treat it; filter through a clean cloth if you need to, then add two drops of unscented bleach per litre of water



Small repairs may make homes safe enough.

Shelter

- ▶ ensure the community has somewhere safe and comfortable to stay
- ▶ find places people can shelter from the weather, rest and sleep
- ▶ if people do need to leave their homes, encourage them to take as much bedding as possible
- ▶ encourage people to stay with friends, family and neighbours
- ▶ consider the needs of visitors to your community – they may require accommodation
- ▶ encourage the community to make spare rooms available
- ▶ don't wait for a perfect solution, shelter from the weather is a priority over comfort
- ▶ inform the Emergency Coordination Centre how many people require shelter



To ensure public health, everyone needs access to an appropriate place to go to the toilet.

Food

- ▶ encourage people to share food with others
- ▶ organise a way to feed large groups of people who are displaced or do not have food of their own coordinate food supplies in the community
- ▶ tell people to use foods in the refrigerator first, then the freezer and finally goods from the pantry
- ▶ encourage street BBQ's or communal gatherings

Sanitation

- ▶ organise long drop toilets throughout the community, and near groups who may not be able to organise themselves
- ▶ identify resources and supplies to build emergency toilets
- ▶ identify people who can dig or build toilet facilities
- ▶ identify a location for a long drop toilet at the Hub
- ▶ encourage regular handwashing and the use of gloves
- ▶ long drop toilets should be one metre deep and 30-40 centimetres wide; after each use, cover waste with soil or other mulch
- ▶ alternatively use a two-bucket system, one for liquid and one for solid waste; mix with sawdust

6

**THINKING
ABOUT
RECOVERY**



RECOVERY – LONG-TERM PLANNING PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES

When you're working in a Hub, you're exposed to situations you would not normally even think about. Some difficult situations which occur in emergencies may seem impossible to fix, but when you have no choice, you often manage to find the answer.

One reason for this is because you live in this community, you know it and you understand what's important to the people who live here.

As soon as an emergency happens, councils and government departments will have people considering what the community may need to recover in the long-term. Plans will be forming on how to support the cultural and physical well-being of individuals and communities. This involves thinking about opportunities to regenerate and enhance communities in ways that will meet future needs, while protecting what's important to that community if possible.

During recovery it is vital that communities have their say and let decision makers know what is really important. To do this, communities need to stay connected, keep communicating, provide input, take all opportunities to be heard and support each other to achieve the community's goals.

When thinking about recovery:

- ▶ make sure you and your family have what you need to recover and maintain what's important to you following an emergency
- ▶ then consider what is really important to your community
- ▶ then make sure you have your say about these things during the recovery process

