



CAIRNS STUDENT LODGE

TROPICAL CYCLONE AND NATURAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN

1 February 2018



LOCATION

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Tropical Cyclone and Natural Disaster Management Plan

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1. Tropical Cyclones and Natural Disasters in Cairns

Disaster may strike any community at any time. Most people tend to think of the natural disasters most likely occur in their area, such as a cyclone or flood, but other natural hazards (such as flood, earthquake, wild fire, tsunami) or events, such as a disease outbreak or violent threat to a community, are also possible.

Cairns Student Lodge (CSL) has developed a Tropical Cyclone and Natural Disaster Management Plan to provide information to be ready and prepared for a disaster including emergency and evacuation procedures.

2. Official Cyclone Season in Cairns

Cyclones are a part of life for people in northern Australia and have the potential to threaten lives and cause large - scale destruction. The official season lasts from November to April.

In the Cairns region evacuation is advised only if a threat of storm tide surge accompanies a cyclone – not for wind alone. The Bureau of Meteorology advises if a storm tide surge is expected. Public information about this and associated safety advice is issued widely (see Warnings and Alerts section).

3. Storm Tide Zone

CSL is located on higher ground and is in the white storm tide zone which is considered to be outside the predicated threat area for storm tidal surge.

As CSL is not in a storm tide surge zone and historically has been used as a cyclone evacuation centre, the best option is to stay on the CSL premises – CSL shelter is in place. Follow the advice provided from CSL team, the Cairns council website and the local radio.



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4. Responsibilities

The CSL Tropical Cyclone and Natural Disaster Management Plan has been created in understanding of CSL's exposure to disaster risks to reduce adverse impacts, recover more effectively from disasters and continue to provide services to the CSL community.

The CSL Tropical Cyclone and Natural Disaster Management plan also provides practical steps to keep the CSL community safe in a disaster.

The over-arching approach to community disaster response in the Cairns region is self-help. While emergency management agencies have a responsibility to advise and support communities, residents are expected to take the recommended actions to look after themselves, neighbours and follow direction from the CSL team. The CSL team consists of the General Manager, Resident Leaders, staff and any other appointed persons.

5. Communication

CSL is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety and welfare of its residents and workers while they are a threat of a tropical cyclone or natural disaster. The CSL Tropical Cyclone and Natural Disaster Management Plan has been created in understanding of CSL's exposure to disaster risks to reduce adverse impacts, recover more effectively from disasters and continue to provide services to the CSL community.

The CSL Tropical Cyclone and Natural Disaster Management Plan and any other safety information at that time are communicated to staff and residents through:

- The CSL Tropical Cyclone and Natural Disaster Management Plan on the CSL website
- Staff orientation and induction
- Electronic communication
- This document hardcopy of located in all apartments in the bottom kitchenette drawer. Also located in the CSL kitchen
- WHS (work, health and safety) team staff
- Student resident handbooks and publications
- Safety signage



6. First Aid Kits

The provision of first aid kits at CSL are located:

- Each DIY kitchen
- Office Reception
- Motor Vehicle (Van)
- Kitchen

7. Training

CSL provides on-going training and induction to the CSL team in implementing the CSL Tropical Cyclone and Natural Disaster Management Plan for the necessary competencies required in the event of a tropical cyclone or natural disaster.

In practice this means knowing what to do and having the capability to do it in an emergency. Help is obviously available when it is genuinely needed, and specific arrangements are in place for our most vulnerable communities.

8. Disaster Management Arrangements in Cairns

The Disaster Management Act 2003 forms the legislative basis for the Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements (QDMA). The Act provides for establishment of disaster management groups at state, disaster district and local government level and also provides the legislative basis for preparing plans, guidelines, disaster declarations, establishing the SES and community information.

Queensland's disaster management arrangements are based on partnerships between government, government owned corporations, non-government organisations, commerce and industry sectors and local communities. The arrangements provide for each level of the disaster management arrangements working collaboratively to effectively coordinate everything necessary for comprehensive disaster management.



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The principal structures that make up Queensland's disaster management arrangements are:

- Disaster management groups operating at local, district and state levels, responsible for planning, organisation, coordination and implementation of all measures to mitigate/prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters.
- Coordinate centres at local, district and state level to support disaster management groups to coordinate the information, resources and services necessary for disaster operations
- State government functional agencies that manage and coordinate the responsibilities of the state government and state government threat-specific agencies.

Local Government and local disaster management groups

The functions of a local government under the Disaster Management Act include:

- Ensuring it has a disaster response capability
- Approving its local disaster management plan (the Cairns Local Disaster Management Plan)
- Ensuring information about an event or a disaster in its area is promptly given to the District Disaster Co-ordinator.

Local government is best situated to provide first-hand knowledge and understanding of social, economic, infrastructure and environmental issues within communication and ideally placed to support communities from a disaster management perspective. This is achieved through local disaster management groups (LDMGs) that coordinate the local government disaster response.

Cairns Regional Council Disaster Management Unit

The Cairns Regional Council's disaster management team works year-round on preparedness, awareness and management.



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Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements

If the disaster event impact is significant, it may trigger activation of the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA). The NDRRA provides for jointly funded state/Australian government financial assistance to communities affected by eligible disaster events. In the days following a disaster, people who are unable to meet immediate essential needs for temporary accommodation, food, clothing and medication may be eligible for financial assistance. Immediate hardship assistance is available as a contribution to support people impacted by the disaster to meet their immediate essential needs for food, clothing, medical supplies or temporary accommodation. Other support and assistance such as psychological first aid counselling may also be provided.

9. Disasters and Procedures at CSL in Cairns

The following pages describe the types of disasters and the specific response procedures for CSL residents and staff in the Cairns region.

Note that the CSL Tropical Cyclone and Natural Disaster Management Plan is the preparation for disasters and the immediate response to help protect life and property. Included are separate plans for actions and recovery after the immediate threat has passed.

10. Tropical Cyclones

Cairns may experience one or more cyclones during the wet season (November to April).

In the Cairns region evacuation is advised only if a threat of storm tide surge accompanies a cyclone – not for wind alone. The Bureau of Meteorology advises if a storm tide surge is expected. Public information about this and associated safety advice is issued widely (see Warnings and Alerts section).

What should you do if a cyclone disaster threatens

CSL has developed a Tropical Cyclone and Natural Disaster Management Plan to provide information to be ready and prepared for a disaster including emergency and evacuation procedures.



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Upon a cyclone warning, the CSL team will issue each resident a copy of the following 4 plans of actions.

There are 3 plans of actions in the event of a tropical cyclone warning:

- Before a cyclone
- During a cyclone
- After a cyclone

11. Plan 1 – Before a Cyclone

Residents personal effects are their responsibility

Residents should consider writing down contact phone numbers should mobile phones go flat and the power is out

Residents need to have a household emergency plan based on the following

Household Emergency Plan

CSL is not in a low-lying area and is in the white storm tide zone which is considered to be outside the predicated threat area for storm tidal surge.

As CSL is not in a storm tide surge zone and historically has been used as a cyclone evacuation centre, the best option is to stay on the CSL premises – shelter in place. Follow the advice provided from CSL team, the Cairns council website and the local radio.

Establish the safest place in the resident's unit or on the CSL premises to shelter

Remove and secure anything in the yard that could become a missile in strong winds

Residents need to make sure their entire household and neighbours know what to do

Residents need to familiarise themselves with the CSL emergency evacuation plan and procedures that are located in the units



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Residents need to stay informed and listen to

- Instruction and direction from General Manager and Resident Leaders
- CSL Contact Phone number 4057 1111
- ABC Far North – 106.7 FM
- Cairns Community Radio – 89.1 FM
- Watch the ABC cyclone emergency plan videos at www.abc.net.au/news/emergency/plan-for-an-emergency/cyclone/

Contacts for more information during a cyclone

- Ring the Disaster Coordination Centre on 4044 3377
- Life Threatening and Emergency Services Ring 000 – Ambulance, Fire or Police
- Bureau of Meteorology
www.bom.gov.au
- Councils disaster web page
www.cairns.qld.gov.au/disaster
- Facebook
www.facebook.com/CairnsDCC
- Twitter
www.twitter.com/CairnsDCC
- QLD Tropical Cyclone Warnings
1300 659 212
- QLD Land, Weather and Flood Warnings
1300 659 219
- Transport and Main Roads
131 940
Tmr.qld.gov.au/travel-and-transport.aspx
- SES (national number)
132 500



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Residents are responsible and must create their own Cyclone Emergency Survival Kit per person

Cyclone Emergency Survival Kit

- Battery operated radio and spare batteries
- Torch and spare batteries – do not use candles or matches
- Combination pocket knife
- Water in sealed containers (10L a person)
- Medication
- Toiletry sanitary supplies
- Change of clothes and strong shoes
- Non-perishable food, enough for 3 days – CSL will provide non-perishable food for each resident to be held in their room should the fridge should stop working
- Cash money
- Personal documents
- Strong plastic bags (for clothing and valuables)
- Emergency phone numbers

If you hear either an emergency disaster watch or a warning, residents need to:

- Stay tuned to the local ABC radio station on a battery-powered radio and check the ABC Emergency Twitter and Facebook pages regularly for instructions and updates on the cyclone
- Familiarise themselves with some of the facts behind tropical cyclones through the Bureau of Meteorology
- Check the cyclone emergency survival kit is complete and at hand
- Let neighbours and other lodge residents in your apartment know a cyclone watch/warning has been issued



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- Clear the property of all loose items and bring outdoor furniture, etc inside or under cover including washing securing the property
- Move vehicle and bicycles undercover if possible
- Fill buckets and or bottles or buy water (in case the water supply gets cut off) enough for 3 days
- Remain inside until informed otherwise
- Let friends and family know where you are

12. Plan 2 – During a Cyclone

While sheltering:

- Unplug all appliances
- Keep the cyclone emergency survival kit close at hand
- Stay inside the apartment or building you are in
- Keep listening to the radio and updates for cyclone updates and from the CSL team if possible
- Beware the calm eye of the cyclone; stay inside until advised it is safe to go outside
- Comfort one another
- Follow instructions from the CSL team and emergency services

When an official evacuation order is issued:

- Act immediately. You and your room neighbours should follow directions; seek directions from CSL team for another shelter on the premises or student centre or a public shelter or stay with friends/family further inland or on higher ground
- Check with your lodge neighbours that they have received the updated information
- Unplug all appliances
- Make sure everyone in your apartment is wearing strong shoes and suitable clothing
- Take your cyclone emergency survival kit and follow instructions from the CSL team



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- Comfort each other
- If you are driving when a cyclone hits, immediately park in an area that is clear of trees, powerlines and water course. Stay inside your car
- Stay calm. Keep listening to the local ABC radio station online or via your radio, ABC emergency Cairns Council, twitter and Facebook for updates and instructions

13. Plan 3 – After a Cyclone

- The time immediately after a cyclone is often just as dangerous as the initial event itself
- Deaths and injuries often happen when people go exploring and sightseeing
- Only leave your apartment or shelter when directions and instructions have been given by the CSL team

Once the cyclone has passed:

- Follow the instructions and directions from the CSL team
- Listen to the radio and remain indoors until an official all clear has been given by the CSL team or authorities
- If you are advised to return to your apartment, do so using the recommended routes only
- Do not go sightseeing
- Check on your neighbours, family and friends
- Get electrical appliances that have been wet checked before using them
- Boil and purify water until water supplies are declared safe
- Stay away from damaged powerlines, fallen trees and flood water

In case you become separated from your apartment neighbours during an emergency, the Red Cross manages a register. Find, reunite, a national registration and enquiry service.



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When the service is activated, people can register at www.redcross.org.au or in person at an evacuation or relief centre

You can also use the website if you are unable to contact a loved one who may have been affected

Stay tuned to the local ABC radio station and listen online or via the ABC Radio app and/or check ABC Emergency's Twitter and Facebook for updates and instructions

14. Loss of Power

Should there be a loss of power, the CSL team will keep residents informed and updated.

A generator is located in the dining hall for refrigeration to keep food supplies chilled. Gas supplies can be used for cooking purposes

15. Cyclone Categories – What to Expect

Category 1:

- Negligible building damage
- Damage to some trees, gardens and vehicles
- Typical wind gusts over flat land 90 – 125 kph

Category 2:

- Minor building damage
- Significant damage to signs, trees and vehicles
- Risk of power failure
- Typical wind gusts over flat land 125 – 164 kph

Category 3:

- Roof and structure damage to buildings
- Significant damage to signs and trees
- Some vehicles destroyed
- Power failure likely
- Typical wind gusts over flat land 164 – 224 kph

Category 4:

- Significant roofing and structural damage
- Some vehicles destroyed and blown away
- Dangerous airborne debris
- Widespread power failures
- Expect very destructive winds of 225 - 279 kph

Category 5:

- Extremely dangerous with widespread destruction
- Very destructive winds of more than 280 kph
- Significant roofing and structural damage
- Many vehicles destroyed and blown away
- Dangerous airborne debris
- Widespread power failures

16. Flooding

Cairns may experience flooding at any time of the year, although it is more likely during times of higher rainfall – typically the wet season (November to April). In the Cairns region there are flash floods, where water levels rise very rapidly and usually recede rapidly.

Floods may happen in association with cyclones (un-related to storm tide surge although they may occur in combination), because of ‘tropical depressions’ or as a result of heavy rain in higher catchments, such as the tablelands.



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Heavy rains may occur in some parts of the region and not others, so specific early warnings are not always possible. Rivers may also rise extremely quickly with little notice. The power of floodwaters should not be under-estimated, and all warnings must be taken seriously.

What should you do if flooding threatens

CSL is located on higher ground and is in the white storm tide zone which is considered to be outside the predicated threat area for storm tidal surge.

It is highly unlikely severity of flooding will occur, though should such an event occur, the following action plan is

- Follow the instructions and directions from the CSL team
- Follow Seek refuge on higher floors or student centre
- If required, follow evacuation procedures
- Personal items can be carried by residents themselves in a backpack or small bag
- Emergency supplies will be provided for by CSL
- Prepare items as listed in the cyclone emergency survival kit for self-sufficiency for up to 3 days as isolation by flooding and or infrastructure could be affected, such as loss of power or water contamination

17. Tsunami

The Cairns region can be affected by a tsunami. Although the Great Barrier Reef is likely to mitigate the effects, it will not stop a tsunami. A tsunami could also be generated inside the reef and reach the region with little warning. While it is less likely to affect Cairns let alone CSL than some other natural hazards, a tsunami that does not sound particularly threatening can produce extremely powerful dangerous waves

What should you do if a tsunami threatens

- Follow the instructions and directions from the CSL team
- Seek refuge on higher floors or student centre when instructed
- When instructed, follow evacuation procedures
- The following tsunami map attached (Map 2-301 / Area 2) details *Cairns Council Evacuation Routes Overview* when instructed by CSL team or authorities to action
- Personal items can be carried by residents themselves in a backpack or small bag
- Emergency supplies will be provided for by CSL
- Prepare items as listed in the cyclone emergency survival kit for self-sufficiency for up to 3 days as isolation by flooding and or infrastructure could be affected, such as loss of power or water contamination

18. Earthquake

Although Cairns does not have records of being severely affected by earthquakes, they are still a significant potential hazard for the Cairns region with many occurring around the area since records began. The impact of an earthquake depends on its depth as well as rating or magnitude from 1-10 (1 may not be noticeable to 10 causing significant damage) and proximity to inhabited areas

Cairns area and CSL may receive little if any warning of an impending earthquake – its possible residents and staff may feel it before emergency services know its going to happen. Earthquakes can occur at any time of the day and any time of the year

There are sometimes preceded by stillness and sounds such as rolling or rumbling. People could feel a jolt or series of jolts or varying intensities or a rolling sensation. Items may fall from the ceiling, walls or out of cupboards, the water in toilets may slosh around and walls may crack if the shock is severe. The electricity may go out and sprinkler or fire alarm systems may turn on



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What should you do if an earthquake threatens

Indoors

- Immediately take cover
- Hold onto a solid piece of furniture or construction or door, or if unable to curl into a tight ball and protect your face and head, until the shaking stops
- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls and anything that could fall
- Stay inside until the shaking stops, there may be aftershocks
- Follow the instructions and directions from the CSL team or authorities
- When instructed, follow evacuation procedures

Outdoors

- Outside residents and staff are advised to stay outside and move away from buildings, streetlights and utility wires
- Stay in the open until the shaking stops
- Follow the instructions and directions from the CSL team or authorities
- When instructed, follow evacuation procedures

If people become trapped

- Not to light a match or use a lighter
- Keep still
- Cover their mouth with a handkerchief or clothing
- Tap on a pipe or wall or call out
- Call 000 if a mobile phone is available or try 112 if 000 does not work
- Follow the instructions and directions from the CSL team or authorities

19. Wild Fire

Though CSL is not considered to be in a wild fire zone, there are many wild fire hazard zones around the Cairns region. Alternatively, seasonal burning may occur near CSL as a way of mitigating fire risk. Fires can start and spread rapidly and are often unpredictable. If there is a long spell of hot, dry weather and its windy, the fire risk increases

Generally, the fire season in Far North Queensland is through the winter (“dry” season) and spring months. It is important to take fire a warning seriously even if you believe or have been told they don’t happen in Cairns

Should there be a wild fire threat residents and staff need follow the instructions and directions from the CSL team or authorities

And when instructed to follow evacuation procedures

20. Warnings and Alerts

In a major emergency, information will be issued through all available media channels and from the CSL team. This includes television, newspapers, email lists, radio and social media as well as loud- hailer announcements and door knocking. Emergency alerts will also come by landline and mobile phones

Residents receiving contact from the CSL team or emergency services unless stated, the signal is a way of alerting people to stop what they are doing and immediately seek information. It does not automatically mean a cyclone or natural disaster or the immediate need for evacuation is needed

Residents should only follow advice and information from the CLS team, the Cairns Local Disaster Coordination Centre, or other based emergency authorities. Council webpages and the disaster management Facebook and twitter sites will provide updates in emergency situations

Radio and the CSL team is the primary source of public information in a disaster. Broadcasts will continue around the clock on ABC. It is therefore critical that residents Cyclone Emergency Survival Kit includes a battery-operated radio in the case of hazards occurring on a more minor scale or at a localised level, information will also be available from the Cairns Disaster Management Unit



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21. Review

The Cairns Student Lodge (CSL) has developed a Tropical Cyclone and Natural Disaster Management Plan which is available on the CSL website where hardcopies can be downloaded. Any hardcopies will be uncontrolled copies.

The policy is reviewed regularly in the light of organisational and legislative changes, emergency and contacts information changes, Cairns Council Local Disaster Management Plan and any other new or current related policies and information and in any case, at least every year to ensure it remains effective, relevant and appropriate to the CSL, and reflects current legislative requirements.



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Annexure A

Resident 'Cyclone Emergency Survival Kit' Check Sheet

Be prepared for emergencies

Residents should be aware of the potential for natural disasters such as tropical cyclone, storm surge, floods, earthquakes, tsunamis and wild fires to affect the Cairns regions

Residents must immediately follow the advice from the CSL team and local government emergency information, and Cairns emergency services

Residents may hear a warning sign or receive a mobile phone message

Ask the CSL team what to do. Do not rely on public information from anyone except Cairns emergency services

Residents are to always have ready to prepare a Cyclone Emergency Survival Kit, using a small pack or other bag that is easy to carry these items:

- Battery operated radio and spare batteries
- Torch and spare batteries – do not use candles or matches
- Combination pocket knife
- Water in sealed containers (10L a person)
- Medication
- Toiletry sanitary supplies
- Change of clothes and strong shoes
- Non-perishable food, enough for 3 days – CSL will provide non-perishable food for each resident to be held in their room should the fridge should stop working
- Cash money
- Personal documents
- Strong plastic bags (for clothing and valuables)
- Emergency phone numbers