

# A CONSEQUENCE MANAGEMENT APPROACH TO DISASTER MANAGEMENT: WHY? PART 1

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In this series of articles a consequence management approach to the reactive elements of disaster management will be discussed. The basic departure point of the authors is that consequences and the responsibilities for dealing with those consequences forms a logical and useful point of departure and organising framework for dealing with disaster preparedness and response. While the articles following on this one will unpack the details of a consequence management approach to disaster management, this first article will state the case for a consequence management approach.

Why consequence management? Consequence management planning enables the combination of disaster preparedness, response and relief in a single, all-hazard, operational, tactical and strategic plan. Consequence-based planning ensures the involvement of multiple stakeholders (hazard owners) in preparing for and responding to multiple types of incidents through the execution of predetermined standardised

*If you plan for the worst, you can handle everything else*

- Prof Barney de Villiers

activities. Consequence-based planning enables coordination and management of disparate entities, entities both experienced and inexperienced, educated and uninformed of incident command and control into a unified command and multi-agency coordination structure.

In developing this series of articles, the authors considered the Western Cape Disaster Preparedness, Response and Relief Procedure established in 2007, the City of Cape Town Multidisciplinary Incident Management Plan (MIMP) established in 1999, various manifestations of the Incident Command System ICS (ICS) and Major Incident Medical Management and Support (MIMMS) system, other multi-agency multi-hazard response management plans as well as the African Centre for Disaster Studies/USAID Knowledge Product 38: All-Hazard Preparedness and Response Planning developed in 2015.

The suggested consequence management approach is the logical outflow of developments in the concept and practice of disaster management in South Africa. From 2000 to 2001, the Western Cape Disaster Management Centre initiated the development of a multi-purpose emergency management centre. In the years 2001 to 2005 the concept of the centre developed but with a difference to the standard layout of a joint operations centre (JOC) at the time. The centre, already separated from the call-taking and dispatch function, incorporated a clear distinction between tactical coordination and strategic decision-making components.

From 2004 to 2010, the concept of a coordinated but cluster-based tactical centre forced a transition from the hard copy Civil Protection individual hazard plans to a computer-based multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary approach ▶

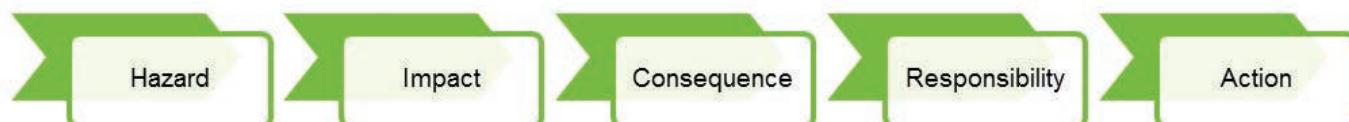


Figure 1: Disaster response workflow (Carstens and Minnie, 2014)

- ▶ along with the development of a unified multi-agency coordination system and all-hazard plan. By 2010 this approach was used in the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup planning, in a provincial Social Conflict Plan, a provincial Agriculture Plan and in the City of Cape Town for all contingency plans. In 2014 the concept was developed into a USAID Knowledge Product called All-Hazard Preparedness and Response Planning.

Prior to 2002, individual Civil Protection-based plans existed in the Western Cape for individual hazards, for example individual plans for fire, epidemics, floods and drought. These were hard copy, stand-alone plans. After 2002 a new approach was applied that was more focused on the consequences of hazards which were identified in disaster risk and vulnerability assessments, with significant funds invested in the development of a provincial risk profile (software and research). The outcome of this research identified 32 specific hazards, then went through process of who, what and how, where, when and why, which in turn resulted in the identification of at least 122 role-players and that again led to development of 72 all-hazard activities to deal with the consequences of risk in the province.

The planning process for hazards will need to factor in the lifecycle of disaster response, starting with hazard identification and moving to action when the hazard impacts. The lifecycle can be termed a disaster response workflow as illustrated in Figure 1.

The disaster response workflow serves to illustrate that when a risk or potential hazard translates from risk to reality, a logical flow of reaction is initiated. In short, the hazard realises and has a specific impact which in turn has a set of consequences. The consequences presents a challenge that is allocated

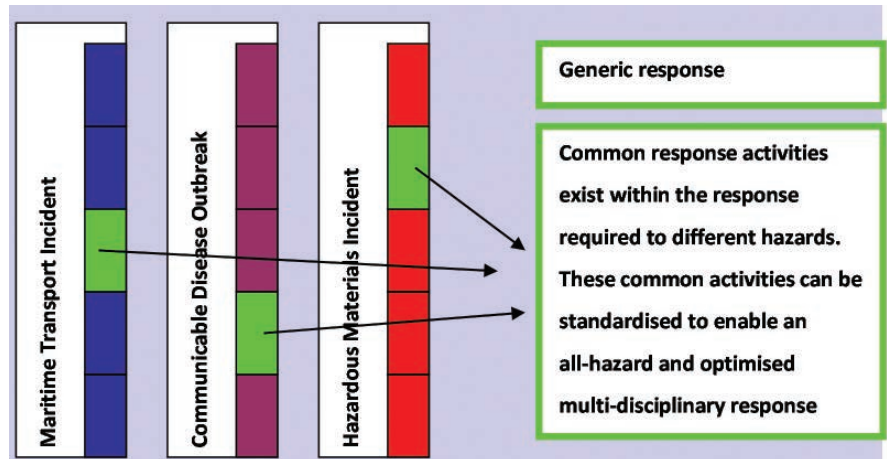


Figure 2: Common response activities can be standardised to increase efficiency (PGWC, 2009)

to those responsible for dealing with the consequences, after which those responsible then take action in accordance with their responsibility.

The disaster response workflow is a simple tool that allows planners to analyse the life cycle of disaster response to any specific hazard and identify stakeholders and actions required to deal with the hazard.

By iteratively developing hazard-specific disaster response workflows for a number of hazards, a pattern of common elements that remain essentially the same irrespective of hazard, will emerge to form the basis of an all-hazard response plan. In one example of such a process, the common elements of disaster response and incident management were listed as around 72 generic response actions. This process involved identifying the possible disaster response activities that would be required to deal with the possible impacts of hazards. The focus was specifically impacts and not risks, and developing activities that could be used in response to more than one hazard, since different

hazards may have similar impacts which require the same response activities.

Due to the fact that certain response activities are common in various hazard-specific responses, it is possible to standardise certain generic response activities and actions to enable and support more integrated multi-disciplinary response and support all-hazard preparedness and response planning.

In the example in Figure 2, The Western Cape Disaster Response and Relief Plan, the developers set out to identify common response and relief activities and then describe them in order to encourage standardisation and mutual understanding between responding parties.

The disaster response workflow already described above provides an implementation process for the development of consequence-based all-hazard preparedness, response, relief and rehabilitation plan.

In the next article the authors will discuss response management. 🌐

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