



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

STATE EMERGENCY WELFARE PLAN

ANNEX A

REGISTRATION AND REUNIFICATION

(May 2016)



**Government of Western Australia
Department for Child Protection
and Family Support**

Prepared by the Department for Child Protection and Family Support

Approved by the State Emergency Management Committee on

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Contact Officer

For copies of this plan, or to provide comment, contact:

Director Emergency Services
Emergency Services Unit
Department for Child Protection and Family Support
PO Box 6334 East Perth 6004
Phone: (08) 9222 2555

Amendment List

AMENDMENT		DETAILS	AMENDED BY
NO.	DATE		INITIALS
	May 2016	Changed from Westplan Registration and Reunification to State Emergency Welfare Plan Annex A Registration and Reunification	AH
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Copies of this State Emergency Welfare Plan are available on

- the Department for Child Protection and Family Support internet site:
www.childprotection.wa.gov.au
- the State Emergency Management Committee internet site:
www.semc.wa.gov.au

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Part 1 Introduction

1.1 Aim and Objectives

To detail the arrangements for the coordination and operation of registration and reunification processes in Western Australia, utilizing the national Register.Find.Reunite. system.

The objectives for this annex are:

- To detail the operational structure to be utilised for the coordination of registration and reunification services, including the use of the Register.Find.Reunite system during emergencies at the State and local levels.
- To detail the agreed roles and responsibilities of emergency management partnering agencies, coordinated by Department for Child Protection and Family Support (CPFS), to provide registration and reunification services during emergencies.
- To provide guidelines for the operating of this annex upon activation.

1.2 Scope

This annex supports the State Emergency Welfare Plan by detailing the State and local level organisational and response arrangements to coordinate the registration and reunification in emergencies.

1.3 Function Definition

One of the possible effects of emergencies on the communities of Western Australia is the likelihood of being rendered homeless, becoming evacuees and/or family members becoming separated. This may generate large numbers of inquiries from friends and relatives either intrastate, interstate or internationally.

The support service of registration and reunification provides for individuals within an emergency affected community to be traced, families reunited and inquiries about individuals coordinated.

The State Welfare Coordinator will activate and implement Registration and Reunification when necessary, and it can be activated at any stage of an emergency to assist with response and recovery operations.

A system that may be used to facilitate this function is the Register.Find.Reunite electronic system, managed by the Australian Red Cross on behalf of CPFS.

It is designed to record the personal details of persons affected by an emergency, and to furnish relatives, close friends or authorised agencies with basic details on the whereabouts and safety of persons affected by an emergency. It is capable of both manual and online operation.

1.4 Related Documents

Other documents related to this plan include:

- *Emergency Management Act 2005*, and associated regulations
- State Emergency Management Policy
- State Emergency Management Plan
- WESTPLAN - Recovery Coordination
- CPFS Local Emergency Welfare Plans
- WANDRRA Determination

1.5 Authority for this Annex

The State Emergency Management Policy and Plan states –

Policy - 5.9.1.1 Certain agencies and local government are assigned roles as a Combat Agency or Support Organisation to undertake support services, as prescribed in the EM Regulations...

Plan – Section 5.5 The EM Regulations prescribe the CPFS as a Support Organisation responsible for the ‘emergency management activity of providing welfare services.

1.6 Annex Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for control and coordination of registration and reunification services rests with CPFS through the State Welfare Coordinator and the appropriate CPFS officers at the local level.

The development and maintenance of this annex will be undertaken by CPFS in consultation with the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC), SEMC Subcommittees, and the State Welfare Emergency Committee (SWEC).

1.7 Exercise and Review Periods

Exercising

CPFS will ensure this annex shall be exercised at least annually in accordance with State emergency management policy [SEMP 4.2].

Reviews

CPFS will ensure the review period shall not be more than five years and may be more frequent if appropriate. Review period can be linked to any activation of the plan [SEMP 4.2].

1.8 Organisational Roles and Responsibilities

The organisation for registration and reunification services is split between the two sub-functions of registration and reunification.

- Registration is the responsibility of CPFS, assisted by the Australian Red Cross if available.
- Reunification of matching inquiries to registered evacuees is delegated by the State Welfare Coordinator to the Executive Director, Australian Red Cross, Western Australia.

Management of the Register.Find.Reunite. system in Western Australia is provided by the Australian Red Cross, Western Australia, in liaison with Emergency Management Australia (EMA), a division of the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department (AGD).

The roles and responsibilities of the participants in this annex are detailed in Appendix 3.

Part 2 Preparedness

2.1 Responsibility for Preparedness

2.1.1 Registration Services

(1) Organisation

The operation of registration services is based on the everyday structure of CPFS. Australian Red Cross assists CPFS with this function. In circumstances where the CPFS or Australian Red Cross is not represented in a community, CPFS shall make arrangements with another local agency to perform this function, which should be recorded in the Local Emergency Welfare Plan.

(2) Control

Control of registration activities is undertaken by the Emergency Services Coordinator, Emergency Services Unit, of CPFS, who shall operate from the State Welfare Emergency Coordination Centre, or elsewhere as required. Local Offices shall nominate officers responsible for registration activities which should be recorded in the Local Emergency Welfare Plan.

2.1.2 Reunification Services

(1) Organisation

The Australian Red Cross provides reunification services on behalf of CPFS. In country areas where the Australian Red Cross is not present or unable to carry out this function, CPFS shall undertake preliminary reunification activities, or make alternative arrangements in consultation with Australian Red Cross.

(2) Control

Undertaken by the Australian Red Cross. In places where Australian Red Cross does not exist, Australian Red Cross will make alternative arrangements.

2.2 Preparedness Arrangements

CPFS and Australian Red Cross officers have access to the Register.Find.Reunite. system for the electronic entering of details from registration and inquiry forms.

Both organisations will maintain a stock of registration and inquiry forms readily available for immediate use at welfare centres.

CPFS will also make the forms available to Hospitals, Police Stations, Local Government Authorities and identified welfare centres as required.

CPFS District Directors within each District are responsible to ensure they have the capacity to conduct local registration and assist with reunification activities.

2.3 Resources

This annex provides for a community centered approach to emergency management, including local coordination of registration and reunification activities. The extent of registration and reunification will, however, depend on the nature and magnitude of the emergency. In some circumstances, it may be necessary for the responsibility for coordinating registration and reunification to be undertaken at a state government level, and this annex outlines the arrangements that apply in those circumstances.

This annex is based on the utilisation of resources existing within a community, and to supplement those resources when required at the state level.

2.4 Training

Training, both internally and inter-agency, will be determined by the member agencies of State Welfare Emergency Committee and at the local level by CPFS staff and Emergency Welfare Coordination Groups, so that staff and volunteers of CPFS and partnering agencies are provided the necessary skills to ensure the provision of registration and reunification services under this annex.

The Australian Red Cross will provide operational training opportunities for staff and volunteers.

2.5 Community Information

Communities' awareness and education strategies to prepare the community for activation of this annex is via –

- SWEC, DEMCs and LEMCs education campaigns; and
- Locally CPFS and partnering agencies testing the Local Emergency Welfare Plans through discussion and field exercises.

Part 3 Operation of Annex

3.1 Annex Activation Procedures

The State Welfare Coordinator will activate and implement this annex when necessary, in direct support of the State and Local Emergency Welfare Plans, having conferred with the controlling agency or HMA. The annex can be activated at any stage of an emergency to assist with Response and Recovery operations.

An automatic code is generated for each activation via the Register.Find.Reunite. system.

3.2 Operations/Coordination Management Structure

Overall control and coordination of registration and reunification response is the responsibility of CPFS through the designated State and Local Welfare Coordinators, with assistance from Australian Red Cross, if available.

CPFS prioritises its response in line with its operational capacity to provide registration and reunification services when requested. See 2.1 above for more information.

3.3 Levels of response

The levels of response are based on the 3.3 Levels of Response in the State and Local Emergency Welfare Plans.

The activation is determined from an assessment of the situation and in consultation with the State Emergency Coordinator and the relevant Controlling Agency or Hazard Management Agency (HMA).

On activation, the State Welfare Coordinator may advise the Executive Director, Australian Red Cross, Western Australia if the Register.Find.Reunite. system needs to be activated.

Registration of the seriously injured and hospitalised will be undertaken by the WA Police and/or Department of Health (DoH), preferably by having details entered directly onto the Register.Find.Reunite. system. However other arrangements may be agreed to by the State Welfare Coordinator.

Under no circumstance are the deceased to be registered, or details released, by any other agency or organisation apart from WA Police.

Where it is agreed by the State Welfare Coordinator, WA Police or DoH, the State Inquiry Centre may release details of the hospital or health facility location of the seriously injured or hospitalised persons. No details of persons registered within Register.Find.Reunite. are to be released to any other party, unless agreed to by the person registering or in circumstances authorised under Law.

At the local level the registration and reunification arrangements are activated and implemented by the CPFS Local Welfare Coordinator in consultation with the Local Emergency Coordinator and responsible Controlling Agency/HMA.

Where additional registration and reunification resources beyond those existing within participating organisations are required, a request is to be forwarded to and processed by the CPFS State Welfare Coordinator.

Registration and Reunification will be carried out at welfare centres or at other designated locations determined by the State or Local Welfare Coordinator.

Completed registration and inquiry forms are to be dispatched to the State Inquiry Centre, by the most expedient means available (i.e. facsimile, scanned and emailed, courier etc.).

See the State and Local Emergency Welfare Plans for arrangements for Emergency Situation Declaration and State of Emergency levels of response.

3.4 Functional Management Centres

Where required the State Inquiry Centre will be established to receive and process registration forms, and deal with inquiries concerning the tracing and reunification of persons.

The State Inquiry Centre is operated by the Australian Red Cross and is located as follows:

Primary Location: Australian Red Cross
110 Goderich Street,
EAST PERTH WA 6004

Alternative Locations: Emergency Services Unit
6-8 Bennett Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004
or
Australian Red Cross – State Inquiry Centres
Any other State or Territory as required.

3.5 Arrangement for Assistance from Other Jurisdictions

To activate interstate and national assistance with the Register.Find.Reunite. system, the following procedures apply, in accordance with State Emergency Management Plan 5.6 Interstate Assistance and 5.6.1 Australian Government Physical Assistance.

- 3.5.1 The State Inquiry Coordinator (Australian Red Cross) shall recommend to the State Welfare Coordinator that interstate and national assistance with the Register.Find.Reunite system be activated.

When making a recommendation the following information should be provided:

- (1) Total registrations to date;
- (2) Approximate number of inquiries received including interstate/overseas figures; and
- (3) The public telephone number of the State Inquiry Centre.

(The recommendation may be submitted by telephone but must be confirmed in writing as soon as possible.)

3.5.2 The State Welfare Coordinator, in consultation with Australian Red Cross, the State Emergency Coordinator and Controlling Agency or HMA, shall request the AGD EMA to activate assistance with the Register.Find.Reunite system.

The request shall include the following details:

- (1) approximate number of registrations anticipated;
- (2) expected extent and duration of any evacuation/relocation;
- (3) any factors likely to contribute to the subsequent involvement of other states/territories as inquiry centres; and
- (4) the public telephone number of the State Inquiry Centre.

(The request may be made initially by telephone but must be confirmed in writing as soon as possible.)

3.6 Resources

Details of resources are provided in the State and Local Emergency Welfare Plans 2.3 Resources and 2.3 Resources above.

3.7 Media and Public Information Management

Certain public information dissemination through the Controlling Agency or HMA or the media is required on implementation of this annex as follows:

3.5.1. The purpose of Register.Find.Reunite., and contact details of the State Inquiry Centre; and

3.5.2. Other registration and reunification related information that may arise periodically.

All such releases are to be made through the State Welfare Coordinator, or the State Emergency Public Information Coordinator (SEPIC) as detailed in the State Emergency Public Information arrangements.

A specimen media release advising the public regarding the Register.Find.Reunite. system is at Appendix 4.

3.8 Activation of Other Plans in Support of This Plan

Other Plans that may be activated in support of this annex include:

- State Emergency Welfare Plan,
- WESTPLAN – Emergency Public Information
- WESTPLAN – Recovery Coordination
- Any other WESTPLAN as determined by the State Welfare Coordinator, in consultation with the State Emergency Coordinator and relevant Controlling Agency or HMA.

Procedures for the activation of these plans are contained within those plans.

3.9 Financial Arrangements for Response

Financial arrangements for activation of this annex will be as outlined in State Emergency Management Policy No. 4.2 Funding for Emergencies (SEMP 4.2), unless other arrangements are negotiated and approved by the State Welfare Coordinator. All expenditure under this annex must be approved by the State Welfare Coordinator or the Emergency Services Coordinator.

3.10 Stand Down and Debriefs

To stand down the Register.Find.Reunite. system the following procedures shall apply:

- 4.3.1 The State Welfare Coordinator will advise the Australian Red Cross and other participating organisations that the Register.Find.Reunite. system is no longer required.
- 4.3.2 Australian Red Cross and other participating organisations will cease the operating of the Register.Find.Reunite. system, and confirm cessation with the State Welfare Coordinator.
- 4.3.3 The State Welfare Coordinator shall advise the Controlling Agency or HMA that the Register.Find.Reunite. system has ceased operating.

Participating organisations are stood down on completion of tasks by the State Welfare Coordinator as per the State Emergency Welfare Plan 3.9 Stand Down and Debriefs.

3.11 Post Operation Reports

As part of the incident analysis / review, agencies involved in any activation in support of this annex may provide a post incident analysis or review to the CPFS' Emergency Services Coordinator and/or Local Welfare Coordinator. These reviews may be used for consultative purposes and may be included in the Post

Operation Report as outlined in State Emergency Management Policy 4.3 Post Operation Reports (SEMP 4.3), and retained by CPFS.

CPFS is responsible for preparing a Post Operation Report for every activation, at both state and local levels, regardless of whether SEMP 4.3 applies. These Post Operation Reports are for internal CPFS use only, and information contained within them may be provided to other agencies as part of the formal Post Operation Reports, as outlined by SEMP 4.3, but only where approved by the Emergency Services Coordinator.

Appendix 3 – Roles and Responsibilities

The provision of registration and reunification in emergencies requires several agencies to operate cooperatively and in a coordinated manner to facilitate the accounting of affected persons. The roles and responsibilities have been negotiated and determined by agreement between the respective agencies.

At the local level these responsibilities may vary due to the capabilities and availability of organisations and are reflected in the Local Emergency Welfare Plan.

Any Memorandums of Understanding or Service Level Agreements entered into with agencies in support of this plan are to form part of this document and are retained by the Emergency Services Coordinator CPFS.

DEPARTMENT FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND FAMILY SUPPORT (CPFS)

a. Role:

Manage Annex A of the State Emergency Welfare Plan – Registration and Reunification.

b. Responsibility:

- (1) Prepare, exercise, test and maintain SEWP Annex - Registration and Reunification.
- (2) Ensure all participants in this plan are adequately trained to carry out their role and responsibilities.
- (3) Provide appropriate officers as Registration and Reunification Coordinators at the State and local level.
- (4) Provide Registration and Reunification services at the State and local level. In circumstances where CPFS is not represented in a community, CPFS shall make arrangements with a local agency to perform this function through the Local Emergency Management Committee.
- (5) Provide quantities of both registration and inquiry forms for use by CPFS, Australian Red Cross, hospitals and police stations at the State and local levels, and Local Government Authorities as required.
- (6) Activate this annex when required.
- (7) Arrange for public information broadcasts in conjunction with the State Emergency Public Information Coordinator (SEPIC) and Australian Red Cross.
- (8) Carry out Registration and Reunification activities (with the support of Australian Red Cross, Western Australia) at the State, and local level.
- (9) Forward registration and inquiry information, within the bounds of confidentiality, to the State Inquiry Centre.

- (10) Conduct debriefs following an activation and submit Post Operations Reports and recommendations to the State Welfare Coordinator and the State Welfare Emergency Committee.

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

a. Role:

On behalf of CPFS, manage the Reunification function of Annex A of the State Emergency Welfare Plan - Registration and Reunification.

On behalf of CPFS, assist with the Registration function of Annex A of the State Emergency Welfare Plan - Registration and Reunification.

b. Responsibility:

- (1) Provide a State Inquiry Coordinator and appropriate officers as Registration and Reunification Coordinators of the inquiry function at the Local level if available.
- (2) Provide and staff the State Inquiry Centre to receive, answer and process public inquiries relating to registration of persons.
- (3) Provide local staff to carry out inquiry activities.
- (4) Assist CPFS by providing staff to carry out registration at welfare centres or other designated locations.
- (5) When requested by the CPFS State Welfare Coordinator to activate and operate the Register.Find.Reunite. system.
- (6) Ensure that Australian Red Cross local offices maintain stocks of registration and inquiry forms.
- (7) Provide a Liaison Officer to the State Welfare Emergency Coordination Centre where requested.

CONTROLLING AGENCY OR HAZARD MANAGEMENT AGENCY

a. Role:

To determine when the registration and reunification function is required, and advise the State Welfare Coordinator CPFS.

b. Responsibility:

- (1) Decide when, and request for, Annex A of the State Emergency Welfare Plan – Registration and Reunification to be activated by CPFS.
- (2) Determine, in consultation with the State Welfare Coordinator, and advise the area within which the registration and reunification services are to be provided.
- (3) Determine, in consultation with the State Welfare Coordinator, and advise when the registration and reunification services are no longer required.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE

- a. Role:
To manage the registration and reunification function for fatalities and the seriously injured resulting from emergencies.
- b. Responsibility:
 - (1) As a Hazard Management Agency advise as per the section above Controlling Agency or Hazard Management Agency.
 - (2) Carry out registration and inquiries for fatalities and the seriously injured; and ensure relevant information is entered into the Register.Find.Reunite. system, or passed to the State Inquiry Centre as agreed by the State Welfare Coordinator.
 - (3) Assist with public information broadcasts as part of WESTPLAN – Emergency Public Information, in consultation with the State Welfare Coordinator.
 - (4) Provide a Liaison Officer to the State Inquiry Centre if requested.
 - (5) Provide the Emergency Coordinator role at state, district and local levels.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH)

- a. Role.
To manage the registration of victims admitted to hospitals resulting from emergencies where Annex A of the State Emergency Welfare Plan – Registration and Reunification has been activated.
- b. Responsibility:
 - (1) As a Hazard Management Agency (HMA) for Westplans – HAZMAT, Heatwave, Human Epidemic, fulfil the role and function of the HMA as outlined in the Controlling Agency or HMA section above.
 - (2) Notify hospitals when Annex A of the State Emergency Welfare Plan - Registration and Reunification is activated.
 - (3) Provide the ability to print off registration forms at any hospital within the State.
 - (4) Obtain relevant information on patients admitted to hospitals and ensure this information is passed to the State Inquiry Centre as agreed by the State Welfare Coordinator.
 - (5) Provide a Liaison Officer to the State Inquiry Centre where requested.

Appendix 4 – Sample Media Release



An Australian Government Initiative



Government of **Western Australia**
Department for **Child Protection**
and **Family Support**



Register. Find. Reunite.



Australian Red Cross
THE POWER OF HUMANITY

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release – (day), (date)

Register.Find.Reunite. launched to help reunite friends and family separated by the (event) in WA

In response to the (event) in the (location) (Western Australia), Red Cross has opened Register.Find.Reunite., a registration and enquiry service that helps reconnect family, friends and loved ones separated during disasters.

People in the area who've been affected by the (event) are encouraged to register [online](#) or in person at the evacuation centre. Register.Find.Reunite. can also be used by anyone wanting to enquire about the location of friends or family caught up in the disaster.

Registrations and enquiries can be made:

Online at register.redcross.org.au

Or at the evacuation centre set up at the (address)

“Being separated from family and friends is one of the most stressful things a person can experience during an emergency,” says Red Cross State Manager Emergency Services, (name). “Not knowing where your loved ones are, not being able to get a hold of them by phone or email adds to that anxiety.

“The simplest way to let your family and friends know you're OK or to find out that your loved ones are safe is to register with the Register.Find.Reunite. service. The service helps find and reunite family, friends and loved ones during a disaster.”

For media enquiries please contact (name) on (number) or at (email address).

Appendix 5 – Participating Agencies and Contact Details

(Restricted Information - Not included in Public Release Document.)