



**KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE**  
PUBLIC WORKS & INFRASTRUCTURE  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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# **DISASTER MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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**KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC  
WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE  
2025**

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

GIS	Geographic Information System
IMC	Inter-Ministerial Committee on Disaster Management
JOC	Joint Operation Centre
KZNDPWI/Department	KwaZulu Natal Department of Public Works and Infrastructure
MEC	Member of Executive Council of a Province
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PDMAF	Provincial Disaster Management Advisory Forum
PDMC	Provincial Disaster Management Committee

## DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
<b>Disaster</b>	A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses that exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope, using its own resources.
<b>Hazard</b>	A potentially damaging physical event, phenomenon, or human activity, which may cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption, or environmental degradation.
<b>Mitigation</b>	Activities that prevent an emergency, reduce the chance of an emergency happening or lessen the damaging effects of unavoidable emergencies
<b>Preparedness</b>	Activities and measures taken in advance to ensure an effective response to the impact of a hazard, including the issuance of timely and effective early warnings and the temporary evacuation of people and property from threatened locations.
<b>Recovery</b>	Decisions and actions are taken immediately after a disaster with a view to resorting or improving the pre-disaster living conditions of the stricken community while encouraging and facilitating necessary adjustments to reduce disaster risk
<b>Resilience</b>	The capacity of a system, community, or society to resist or to change in order that it may obtain an acceptable level in functioning and structure.
<b>Response</b>	Measures taken during or immediately after a disaster in order to bring relief to people and communities affected by the disaster.
<b>Risk</b>	The probability of harmful consequences, or expected loss (of lives, people injured, property, livelihoods, economic activity disrupted or environment damaged) resulting from interactions between natural or human induced hazards and vulnerable conditions.
<b>Disaster Risk Reduction</b>	The adage "Prevention is better than cure" has never been more applicable than in the case of disaster management. Risk reduction is the science of reducing the risks to which vulnerable communities are being exposed. The Disaster Management Act consequently requires that Municipalities and Provinces should seek to mitigate or reduce the risk of disasters occurring in vulnerable communities as a first prize.
<b>Disaster Preparedness</b>	When the risks have been reduced to the extent that communities are not very vulnerable to risks and/or find it acceptable to live with these risks, the Disaster Preparedness phase kicks in. Disaster Preparedness can be defined as the discipline of being prepared to manage any of the residual risks with the utmost speed and efficiency.
<b>Vulnerability</b>	Vulnerability refers to a set of conditions resulting from physical, social, economic, and environmental factors, which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of a hazard.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The stark reality is that climate change is no longer a distant concern—it is happening now. Global temperatures have risen at unprecedented rates, disrupting seasonal patterns and altering their duration and timing. Rising sea levels are intensifying the frequency and severity of natural disasters such as cyclones, lightning, droughts, floods, and snowfall. As a critical development, investment, economic, and social issue, climate change has become one of the most pressing challenges of this century for policymakers, businesses, and civil society. KwaZulu-Natal Province is not exempt from these impacts.

This Disaster Management Policy presented herein outlines a structured procedure for the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Public Works and Infrastructure as custodian of state immovable assets to effectively respond to and mitigate the impact of disasters within the province, from an infrastructure and asset management perspective. This policy is designed to enhance the department's preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities in the face of natural and man-made disasters that may affect all infrastructure across the province.

The KZNDPWI recognizes the importance of proactive disaster management to safeguard the lives, property, and socioeconomic well-being of beneficiaries. By prioritizing risk reduction, emergency response coordination, and post-disaster recovery efforts, this policy seeks to establish a robust and resilient disaster management framework within the department. The policy serves as a reference guide for all stakeholders involved in the disaster management process. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of each member of the KZNDPWI Disaster Management Committee and presents institutional arrangements and processes to effectively respond to and recover from disasters. This policy is aligned with national and provincial disaster management policies and legislation, including the Disaster Management Act of 2002 and the National Disaster Management Framework.

The successful implementation of this policy requires the commitment, collaboration, and collective effort of all stakeholders. This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure its relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with emerging challenges.

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to enable the Department to:

- a) provide a structured and streamlined process and procedure to effectively respond to disaster events;
- b) ensure coordination and resource sharing in responding to infrastructure-related disaster incidents;
- c) restore normality to the affected stakeholders within a reasonable timescale, dependent on the seriousness of the incident.

## 3. APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

The policy shall apply to the various categories of disasters tabled below:

DISASTER CATEGORIES		
Broad Hazard Category		Specific Disaster Risk Category
Hydrometeorological	Climate-related	Extreme weather (Flooding, hail, hurricanes/heavy winds)

	Hydrological	Riverine flooding Estuarine flooding Coastal flooding/storm surges Urban flooding Hydrological drought Agricultural drought
<b>Geological</b>		Seismic risks and earthquakes Rock falls and landslides
<b>Biological</b>	Fires	Urban fringe fires, Veld fires
	Epidemic	Humans, Livestock
<b>Civil unrest</b>		Social unrest, looting, criminal

#### 4. PERTINENT LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- Constitution of Republic of South Africa Act, 1996
- The National Disaster Management Act, 2002
- Government Immovable Asset Management Act, 2007
- KZN Land Administration and Immovable Asset Management Act, 2014
- National Disaster Management Policy Framework, 2005

#### 5. INTEGRATED CO-ORDINATION

Effective incident management requires a multidisciplinary, multi-sectoral, integrated, and coordinated approach. To achieve this, the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Disaster Management has been established as a subcommittee responsible for coordinating and integrating the Provincial Executive Authority's response. The IMC consists of relevant Members of the Executive Council (MECs) and is chaired by the MEC for Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs (COGTA). It reports directly to the Executive Council on disaster-related incidents and disaster management efforts within the province.

Supporting the IMC is the Technical Committee on Disaster Management, which comprises relevant Heads of Departments and senior representatives from affected line-function departments. This committee is responsible for coordinating the execution of the government's disaster response within the province.

As the custodian of infrastructure, the Head of the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) plays a crucial role in providing support for all affected structures to help mitigate disaster impacts.

Other pertinent provincial state stakeholders are as set out below.

## **5.1 Department Of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta)**

COGTA would play a key role in providing assistance and support during times of disaster:

- a) issuing of notices to KZNDPWI
- b) co-ordinating disaster response efforts across different government stakeholders
- c) working with communities to ensure that they have the resources they need to respond to disasters effectively.
- d) providing funding for emergency services, coordinating the deployment of rescue teams, and assisting with the provision of basic necessities such as food, water, and shelter.
- e) assisting KZNDPWI to develop and implement disaster management plans that can help to mitigate the impact of future disasters.

## **5.2 Sector Departments**

Sector Departments would work in conjunction with KZN DPWI in assessing the state of facilities affected by disasters and providing the requisite funding.

## **5.3 Municipalities**

Municipalities would be responsible for:

- a) Developing and implementing disaster management plans
- b) Co-ordinating emergency response efforts
- c) Ensuring the provision of basic necessities
- d) Conducting post-disaster assessments

# **6. ARRANGEMENTS FOR STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION**

## **6.1 The Provincial Disaster Management Committee (PDMC)**

The PDMC provides the link between national objectives and provincial and municipal disaster management activities and priorities.

In the event of a significant event or disaster occurring or threatening to occur, the PDMC provides support and guidance to the relevant municipal disaster management centres and organs of state, including DPWI. In addition, it mobilises provincial infrastructure and resources to support disaster risk management resources.

## **6.2 Joint Operations Committee (JOC)**

The Joint Operations Committee deals with the implementation of the disaster interventions and looks to provide progress on the ground as well as identify and resolve any bottle necks that may arise, as this committee is chaired by the Provincial Disaster Management Committee (PDMC).

### **6.3 Provincial Disaster Management Advisory Forum (PDMAF)**

The PDMAF provides makes recommendations to the PDMC on disaster management policy and frameworks.

### **6.4 Provincial Disaster Management Practitioners Meeting**

This serves as a forum for municipal disaster management practitioners. It is a strategic institutional structure that allows the province to share best practices, escalate issues, and get guidance and assistance from strategic partners for the integrated direction and execution of disaster management strategy.

### **6.5 District and Disaster Management Advisory Forums**

The DPWI Regions and Districts in the KwaZulu Natal will have a representative on the disaster management advisory forum and committees to drive the implementation and provide reports on disaster management within their respective jurisdictional areas. The PDMC attends the advisory forums and supports the various forums with any requested interventions.

### **6.6 Departmental Disaster Management Committees**

Within provincial departments, a dedicated support structure must be established in line with legislative provisions to promote an integrated and coordinated approach to disaster management in the province. The chair of this committee attends the PDMC.

## **7. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

Within the DPWI, the following units play a key role.

### **7.1 Infrastructure Maintenance and Technical Support (IMTS)**

IMTS will be responsible for the following:

- During the planning stage, assessing the likelihood of weather, flooding, subsidence, and other threats damaging the structure, so that these can be factored into the construction specifications.
- Ensuring that environmentally sustainable measures are considered and included during the planning and design stages of a project.
- Providing technical advisory service on disaster resilient designs and materials when disaster had occurred advise on remedial actions to mitigate or eliminate risks.
- working with sector departments and municipalities to undertake disaster risk assessments within their jurisdiction;
- provide input into the development of Disaster Management Response Plans.

### **7.2 Immovable Asset Management (IAM)**

IAM will be responsible for the following:

- Providing a complete asset register with GIS functionality to identify available land and/or facilities that can be used for disaster relief.
- Ensuring that the condition of state facilities is known to indicate readiness of the asset.



### 7.3 Supply Chain Management

The Supply Chain Management Directorate will be responsible for the following:

- Emergency/urgent procurement of contractors and materials required during disaster events.
- Ensuring that all procurement is undertaken within disaster management protocols.

### 7.4 Communications

The Communications Directorate will be responsible for ensuring that there is clear communication with various role players, media and the public in consultation with Office of The Premier.

## 8. DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT

### 8.1 Establishment

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure Disaster Management Committee (DPWIDMC) must be established by the Accounting Officer and chaired by the Deputy Director-General: Infrastructure Maintenance and Technical Support (IMTS). The Accounting Officer appoints relevant officials to serve on this committee. This committee is accountable and must report to the Accounting Officer on the coordination of disaster management within the Department and make advice and recommendations to the Accounting Officer on the required course of action to meet the departmental mandate and obligations related to disaster.

This structure is responsible for supporting and coordinating sector departments to:

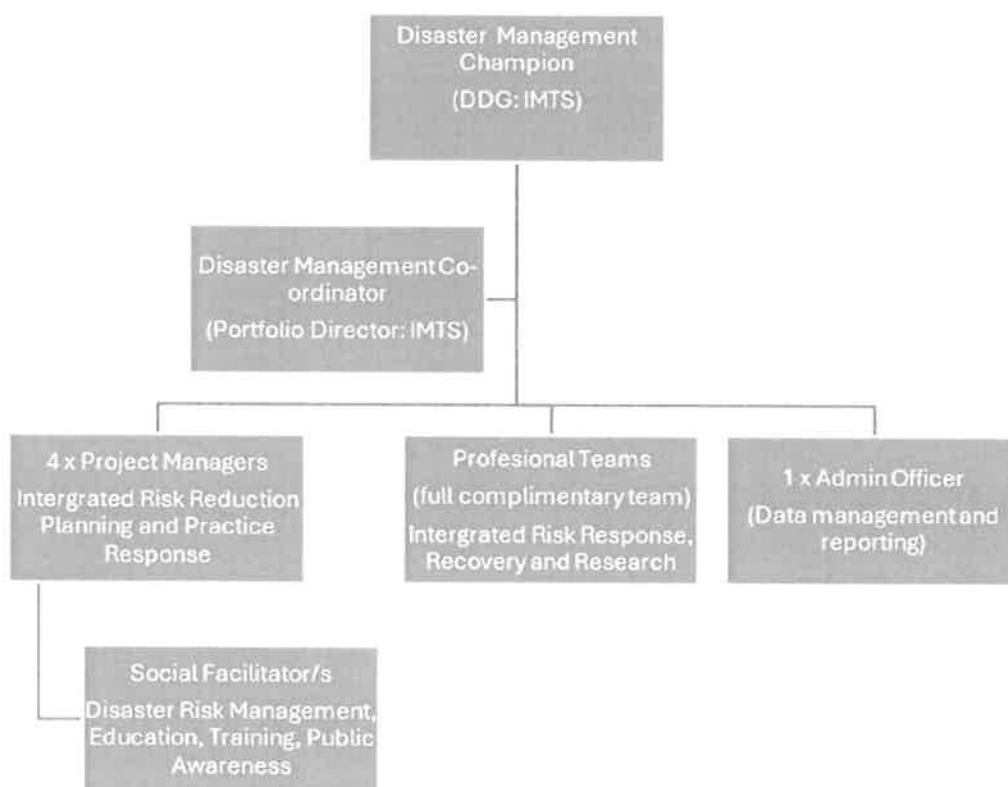
- Enhance emergency preparedness and planning,
- Ensure an effective response and recovery process, and
- Through early warning systems, establish methodologies to mitigate the severity of disaster impacts.
- collaborate with affected sector departments, collect situational reports on reported incidents, and provide the necessary coordination and support for required interventions.

The DPWIDMC will comprise of Senior officials from relevant Business Units and Directorates in the Department responsible for the execution of specific disaster related functions, namely:

Programmes	Units
Programme 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Office of the Head of Department</li><li>• Office of the Chief Financial Officer</li><li>• Office of the Chief Director: Corporate Services</li><li>• Supply Chain Management</li><li>• Enterprise Risk and Integrity Management</li><li>• Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</li><li>• Information Communication</li></ul>

Programmes	Units
	Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications</li> </ul>
Programme 2	Office of the Deputy Director-General: Infrastructure Maintenance and Technical Support (All directorate heads)  Office of the Chief Director: Immovable Asset Management (All directorate heads) Occupational Health and Safety (Infrastructure)
Programme 3	Expanded Public Works Programme

## STRUCTURE OF DPWIDMC



## **8.2 Roles & Responsibilities**

The committee will consist of key personnel from the aforementioned units who will be responsible for specific roles and responsibilities related to disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and post-disaster control which will include the following members:

### **8.2.1 Chairperson**

- Provides overall leadership and guidance to the committee.
- Facilitates meetings and ensures effective communication among committee members.
- Represents the department in external meetings and collaborations related to disaster management.

### **8.2.2 Co-ordinator**

- Serves as the focal point for all disaster management activities within the department.
- Develops and implements the disaster management response plan in collaboration with other committee members.
- Coordinates and monitors the progress of preparedness, response, and recovery initiatives.
- Liaises with external stakeholders and partners involved in disaster management efforts.

### **8.2.3 Risk Assessment and Planning Officer**

- Conducts risk assessments and analyses potential hazards and risks specific to infrastructure.
- Develops strategies, policies, and guidelines for disaster risk reduction and mitigation.
- Collaborates with sector departments to incorporate disaster management considerations into urban planning and development processes.

### **8.2.4 Preparedness and Response Officer**

- Implements preparedness measures, including early warning systems, evacuation plans, and communication protocols.
- Ensures that emergency response procedures are in place and regularly reviewed and updated.
- Coordinates the mobilization of resources, such as land & facilities and relief supplies.

### **8.2.5 Recovery and Rehabilitation Officer**

- Oversees the post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation efforts.
- Develops strategies and initiatives to restore infrastructure and essential services.
- Collaborates with relevant stakeholders, including other government sectors, NGOs, and community representatives, to coordinate and implement recovery programs.
- Facilitates the provision of temporary immovable asset and infrastructure solutions and supports livelihood restoration initiatives.

## **9. PROACTIVE RESPONSE TO DISASTER MANAGEMENT**

### **9.1 Disaster Risk Assessments (DRA)**

KZNDPWI will undertake a Provincial Disaster Risk Assessment (PDRA) in conjunction with sector departments, districts, and local municipalities in the following instances:

- part of the planning process for an infrastructure development, for example, assessing the likelihood of weather, flooding, subsidence, and other threats damaging the structure, so that these can be factored into the construction specifications.
- Provincial Geotechnical Studies & Environmental Impact Assessment to inform the design typologies per area/District to be concluded and be available on Central Supplier Database (CSD).
- Servitudes: electric, Pipeline, railway
- As part of environmental impact assessments for large-scale developments that may increase disaster risk.
- Highly densified areas due to migration.
- Areas in floodplains / Wetland areas / topography that has risk of landslide.

To undertake the disaster risk assessment in KwaZulu-Natal, the following systematic process applies:

ACTION	DESCRIPTION
1. Establish a project team	KZNDPWI must form a dedicated team comprising of specialists and professionals from relevant fields such as urban planning, environmental management, social sciences, and disaster management. This is to ensure that the team has the necessary skills and knowledge to conduct a comprehensive risk assessment.
2. Define the scope and objectives	<p>The project team will clearly define the scope and objectives of the risk assessment. Determine the specific hazards to be assessed, such as floods, landslides, or storms, and identify the areas within KwaZulu-Natal to be covered. The following must be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) An audit of past significant events and events classified as disasters must be done. A review of previous small and medium-size events as well as declared disasters, where relevant, can identify areas and communities most at risk and help focus more detailed disaster risk assessment efforts.</li> <li>b) Consultation with community members and traditional leaders in areas affected by past events for information on frequency and severity of events classified as disasters, significant events and recurrent small-scale occurrences. Locate these events on a user-friendly map and record them on a graph to show seasonality/change over time.</li> <li>c) Consultation with long-standing members of emergency services and sector departments, the South African Red Cross Society, or other humanitarian assistance organizations who can remember or have recorded ten years or more of past disaster responses.</li> </ul>

ACTION	DESCRIPTION
	d) Consultation with specialist research commissions, universities and the private sector and obtain existing or past research reports.
3. Collect data	The project team together with other sector departments must gather relevant data on the hazards, vulnerabilities, and exposure of the infrastructure in KwaZulu-Natal. This may include historical records of disasters, topographical maps, land use information, population data, infrastructure details, and other relevant socio-economic data.
4. Identify hazards	Identify and map the different hazards present in the province.
5. Assess vulnerabilities and exposure:	The project team must evaluate the vulnerability of state infrastructure to the identified hazards. Consider factors such as the quality of infrastructure, socioeconomic conditions, access to services, and environmental hazards. Determine the degree of exposure to these hazards.
6. Analyze risks	Combine hazard information with vulnerability and exposure data to assess the overall risk faced by the infrastructure. This analysis should identify high-risk areas and prioritize them for intervention.
7. Engage stakeholders	The project team must involve relevant stakeholders, such as local government authorities, community representatives, NGOs, and other relevant organizations. Seek their input, insights, and local knowledge to enhance the accuracy and effectiveness of the risk assessment.
8. Develop risk mitigation strategies	Based on the findings of the risk assessment, the project team must develop appropriate risk mitigation strategies and action plans. This may involve measures such as improving infrastructure, implementing early warning systems, enhancing community preparedness, and incorporating disaster risk reduction into urban planning.
9. Implement and monitor	The Department must implement the identified risk mitigation strategies and monitor their effectiveness. Regularly review and update the risk assessment to account for changing conditions and new hazards.
10. Communicate and raise awareness	The Department must share the findings of the risk assessment with relevant stakeholders, communities, and the public. Raise awareness about the risks, promote preparedness, and encourage a culture of resilience.

## 9.2 Implementation of Early Warning Systems

Early warning systems contribute to building resilient communities and serve as a catalyst for disaster preparedness. The KZN Department of Public Works and Infrastructure must implement an early warning system by using one or more of the following methods:

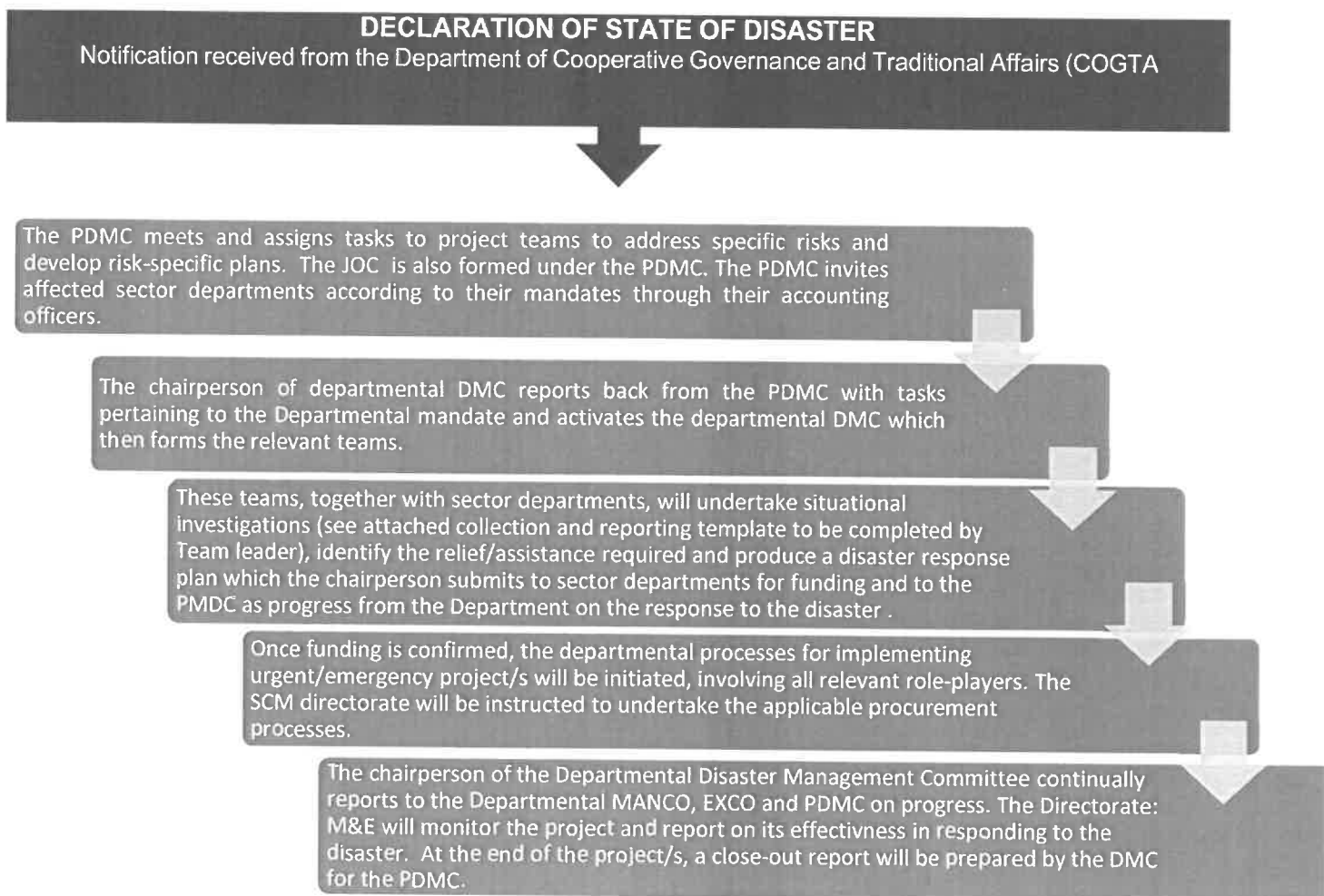
- **Emergency Alert Systems:** The department must adopt an emergency alert system, these systems can provide timely information about approaching disasters, evacuation instructions, and safety guidelines.

- Social Media Platforms: The Department must leverage social media platforms such as X, Facebook, and Instagram to help disseminate disaster warnings, timely updates, safety tips, and emergency contact details to a wide audience.

## 10. DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

### 10.1 Standard Operating Procedure

The following procedure shall be followed once a disaster has been declared and the Department is required to mobilise to provide support at a provincial level:



## 11. MONITORING & EVALUATION

The Directorate: Strategic Management will undertake policy reviews after every two (2) years and/or when the need arises to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and to ensure that the policy is updated with the most recent information necessary for compliance and implementation.

## 12. EFFECTIVE DATE

The effective date of this policy will be the date of signature by the Honorable Head of Department.

## 13. APPROVAL

Prepared by:



Mr. N. B. Zondi

Director: Strategic Management

Supported/Not Supported



Ms. A. Khan

Chief Director: Corporate Services

Date: 20/2/2025

Approved/Not Approved



Dr. V. Govender

Acting Head of Department

Date: 20/2/21

## ANNEXURE

### COLLECTION AND REPORTING TEMPLATE

KZN Department of Public Works and Infrastructure Disaster collection and reporting template								
No.	Facility Name	Facility Type	District Municipality	Cause of damage	Extent damage	Action required	Estimated cost	Progress/Comments
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								
14								
15								