



PAPERS
PAST

Disaster Management

FOR LOCAL COLLECTIONS

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INTERNATIONAL DAY
**FOR DISASTER RISK
REDUCTION**

OCTOBER 13

Promoting a global culture of risk awareness,
disaster preparedness and disaster reduction

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www.history.org.au/local-historybackup

The Four Elements of Disaster Management

Part 1: Prevention and Preparation



Source: [ALIA Disaster Management for Libraries Part 2](#)

The First Steps of Disaster Management – Prevention and Preparation

1. Assess all risks and threats to your collection - *what could go wrong*
2. Reduce or remove those risks - *how can we prevent it*
3. Prioritise the collection - *what do we grab first*
4. Establish Disaster Response Team - *who will we train up from our museum*
5. Establish Support Networks - *who else can help us*
6. Prepare the Disaster Response Plan - *what is our first reaction*
7. Prepare the Disaster Recovery Plan - *how do we cope with the results*
8. Train all staff - *Do we all know what to do?*
9. Review your Plan - *what works, what doesn't*

Source: [Be Prepared – Guidelines for Small Museums for Writing a Disaster Preparedness Plan](#)

Part One: Prevention

Assess all risks and threats

► Aim

The aim of this step is to become quite familiar with any risks — both external and internal posed to your museum and its collection, and to understand what effect they would have on your museum should those risks become real events. A clear understanding should follow regarding those risks that pose the greatest threat to the museum, and those with least likelihood of occurring.

► Tasks

1. Review the history of disasters in your museum / community
2. Identify all risks to your building and collection
3. Rate all risks according to probability and impact on collection.

[See pages 3-4 of the Workbook for working pages]

Type of Disaster	Damage	Cause	Duration
Bushfire	Building burnt, lost several objects from fire and water damage	Cigarette thrown from car	One day of fire, two days of clean-up at museum
Flood in museum	Entire storage area wet, shelves collapsed, most objects damaged	Burst water pipe	Two days dealing with water damage, ongoing work with damaged objects
Human error	Dropped art-works	No training in proper handling	Occasional



RISK (event and consequence)	PROBABILITY High-Low (5-1)	IMPACT High-Low (5-1)	TOTAL (number)	CATEGORY OF RISK (High 10-8, Medium 7-4, Low 3-1)
Examples:				
Earthquake – shelves may collapse	2	4	6	Medium
Bushfire – Buildings and collection burnt	5	5	10	High
Vandalism – display cases smashed, graffiti	4	5	8	High
Flood – low level objects water damaged	1	2	3	Low
Leak (from pipes) – objects in storage area water damaged	3	2	5	Medium
Bomb Threat – museum temporarily closed	1	2	3	Low

Part One: Prevention

Rating Risk

Source: *Be Prepared – Guidelines for Small Museums for Writing a Disaster Preparedness Plan*

Part One: Prevention

Reducing or removing risks

► Aim

The aim of this step is to plan and initiate actions to deal with all of the identified risks to the museum and its collection — dealing with those in the high risk category first. These actions may aim to eliminate the risk (by timely maintenance work, for example) or simply reduce the effect of the risk (by raising objects off the floor in case of flood, for example). Not all these actions will be carried out immediately, but they must be put into some sort of action plan and maintenance schedule.

► Tasks

1. Prepare an Action Plan for activities to reduce or remove these risks.
2. Incorporate preventive actions into the maintenance schedule, IPM and housekeeping schedule

[See p. 5 of your Workbook]

RISK	ACTION	RESOURCES	ASSIGNED TO	DUE BY
Leak in collection store	Repair roof	\$500	Roger (building manager)	End June
Poor security	Install security system	\$1 500	Local Council	End May

Digitisation as a preparedness strategy

- ▶ Why do we digitise?
 - Preservation / surrogacy
 - Access
 - Insurance
 - Succession Planning
- ▶ What to digitise?
 - Priority Items
 - Inherent vice (material type)

Make sure to add your digitisation program to your Preventive Action List

You will need a [Digital Preservation Strategy and Policy](#) as well

Part 2: Preparation

Prioritise the collection

▶ AIM

The aim of this step is to develop an awareness of those objects or collections that are most important to your museum. It is these objects that would be retrieved (if possible) in the face of a disaster or dealt with first when salvaging the collection after the disaster.

▶ Tasks

1. Determine the most significant objects and collections.
2. Write priority list for entire collection that includes location, material type and highest risks.
3. Confirm agreement and responsibilities.

[See page 6 of the Workbook Templates]

Part 2: Preparation

Establish Disaster Response Team

► Aim

The aim of this step is to establish who will be part of your Disaster Response Team and what roles they will play, and to understand the need for each of the different 'jobs'.

► Tasks

1. Define core roles and responsibilities needed
2. Match people with those roles
3. Brief each member of the team

Position

Disaster Coordinator

Volunteer Coordinator

Documenter

Finance Officer

Assessor

Materials/Equip. Coordinator

Media Coordinator

Networker

General Helper

Security Person

OH&S Person



Part 2: Preparation

Establish Support Networks

▶ **Aim:** The aim of this step is to ensure a focus on developing and maintaining outside support and contacts. All necessary expertise should be identified and deliberate efforts made to obtain their support. This support is critical in times of a disaster.

▶ **Tasks**

1. Engage with your regional museum network
2. Contact specific expertise outside the museum and create an External Emergency Contact List based on this
3. Develop a register of volunteers

Part 2: Preparation

Preparing the Disaster Response Plan

- ▶ **Aim:** The aim of this step is to understand the steps involved in effective response to the threat and immediate aftermath of a disaster, and to be able to prepare all the relevant information you will need.
- ▶ These are the things you should have prepared and put in your Disaster Response Plan:
 - Steps in Effective Disaster Response List
 - Emergency Procedures sheets for different disasters (see the *Be Prepared* examples pp. 90-96)
 - Safety Checklist
 - Floor Plans (marking exits, [Disaster Bin](#), extinguishers)
 - Assess and stabilise checklist
 - Telephone Tree (who to call in what order)
 - Incident Report

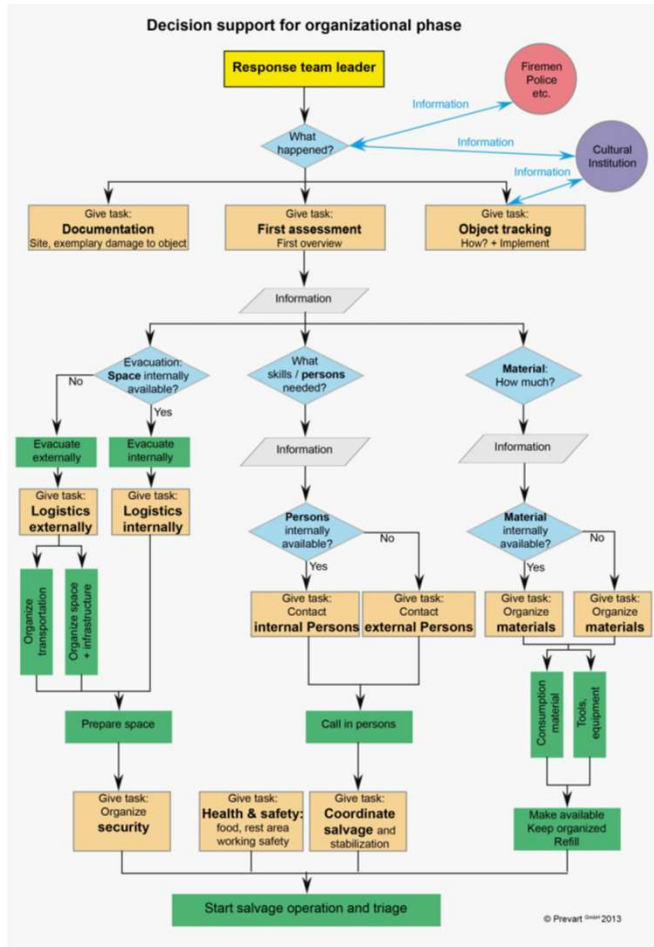
Part 2: Preparation Preparing the Disaster Recovery Plan

The Recovery plan is used once you have responded with the immediate issues of the disaster, secured the site and you have had time to consider next steps.

The following sections cover the areas that need to be included in your Disaster Recovery Plan. As with the Response Plan, use them as headings in your plan and as the tasks that need to be completed now.

1. **Organise the team** (Disaster Team Contact List)
2. **Record and evaluate damage** (Damage Checklist)
3. **Determine recovery needs** (*salvage procedures, materials and equipment/Disaster bin, assistance needed*)
4. **Stabilise the environment** (External contact list / Floor plan showing locations of fans etc.)
5. **Salvage procedures** (Flowchart, Object Documentation list).
6. **Action Sheets** (Actual instructions for volunteers undertaking specific salvage)
7. **Locating supplies** (Where to go for Materials and Equipment / Disaster Bin)
8. **Maintaining morale** (Timetabling breaks and meal requirements)

Flowcharts can be effective tools to include in your Disaster Manual to help guide your team through the Recovery Plan



Part 2: Disaster Recovery

Flowchart 1

Source:

https://restaurierung.swiss/images/verband/publikationen/member_publications/1515_09_4_von_lerber_icom-cc_2014.pdf

Part 2: Preparation Staff Training

Training doesn't have to be complicated or expensive. It is important however, that everyone gets the same information.

It can be as simple as

- ▶ Every year walk through the collection together, note the known problem areas in your museum or storage area
- ▶ Read through the Disaster Plan together
- ▶ Note where the priority items are in your collection spaces
- ▶ Make sure your staff know how to use the objects in the disaster bin
- ▶ Do some mock ups – douse some books from an op shop or duplicate photos – see what happens when disaster strikes
- ▶ Ensure each new volunteer / staff member has an induction that includes disaster management

Part 2: Preparation

Review the Plan

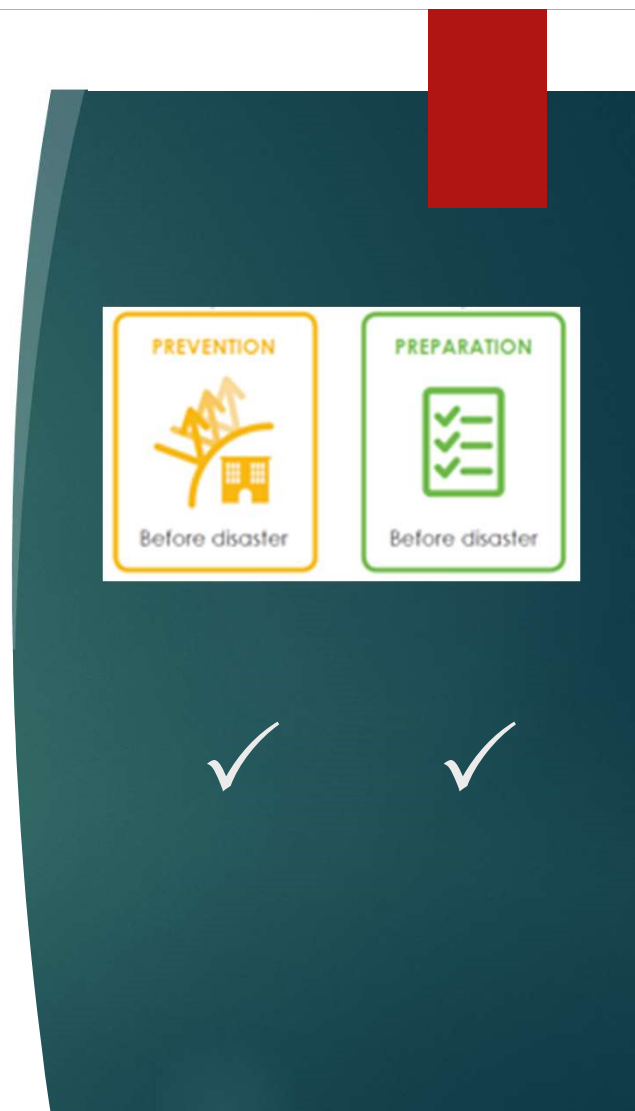
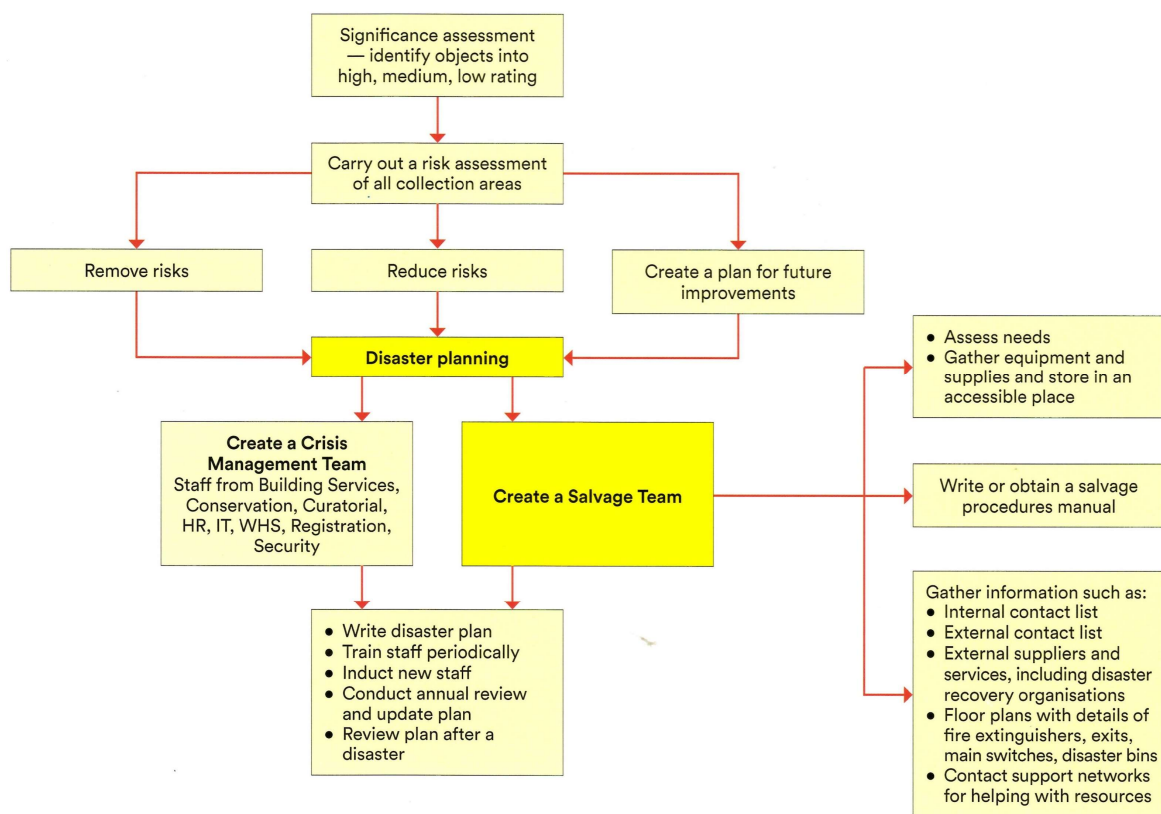
▶ Aim

The aim of this step is to ensure that the Disaster Preparedness Plan is regularly reviewed and updated. This should happen after each disaster (minor or major); after each training session; or whenever anyone learns something new and relevant about Disaster Preparedness.

▶ Strategies

- Develop a de-briefing process
- Review plan and procedures after each training
- Regularly update plan
- Maintain a record book – can be electronic – file your incident reports here

Disaster planning



Source: [All is not Lost: The Collection Recovery Book](#)

Parts 3 & 4: Response and Recovery



- ▶ The Disaster Response and Recovery sections of your manual will be kept in a known location close to museum phone and in the Disaster Bin.
- ▶ Staff and volunteers will have been trained in emergency procedures
- ▶ The Disaster Coordinator will have a copy of the plan at home (plus a copy of the Priority Items list) in a secure location to help when they are contacted.



Emergency Immediate Actions

BIG or SMALL - Smoke or fire, water, oil or chemical leaks, power outage, etc.

Report it!

- 1. Safety first** Remain calm. If there is a life-threatening emergency call <000>. Evacuate as necessary.
- 2. Report it!** Call designated contact e.g. Facilities, Security on <XXX> Tell the contact what is happening. Where it is.
- 3. Protect** Move yourself and others away from affected area to safety. Wait for further instructions as the Disaster Plan is activated.

Part 3: Steps in Effective Emergency Response



1. DON'T
PANIC



2. FOLLOW
THE PLAN

1. Follow the Emergency Response Procedure for the threat or disaster.
2. Evacuate if necessary, retrieve Priority List objects if possible.
3. Call Emergency Services and / or Disaster Coordinator.
4. Work through Safety Checklist to determine site stability.
5. Ensure there is no source of ongoing damage. (e.g. turn off water etc)
6. Stabilise the situation as much as possible - turn off utilities, open windows etc. Use the Assess and Stabilise checklist.
7. Use the contents of the Disaster Bin to deal with any immediate problems.
8. Assess the damage and the situation to determine the extent of the disaster. Use Incident Report and take Photographs if it is a small and immediately manageable event.
9. Go through the Disaster Response Plan to check if you have forgotten anything.

Part 4: Recovery

Disaster Recovery

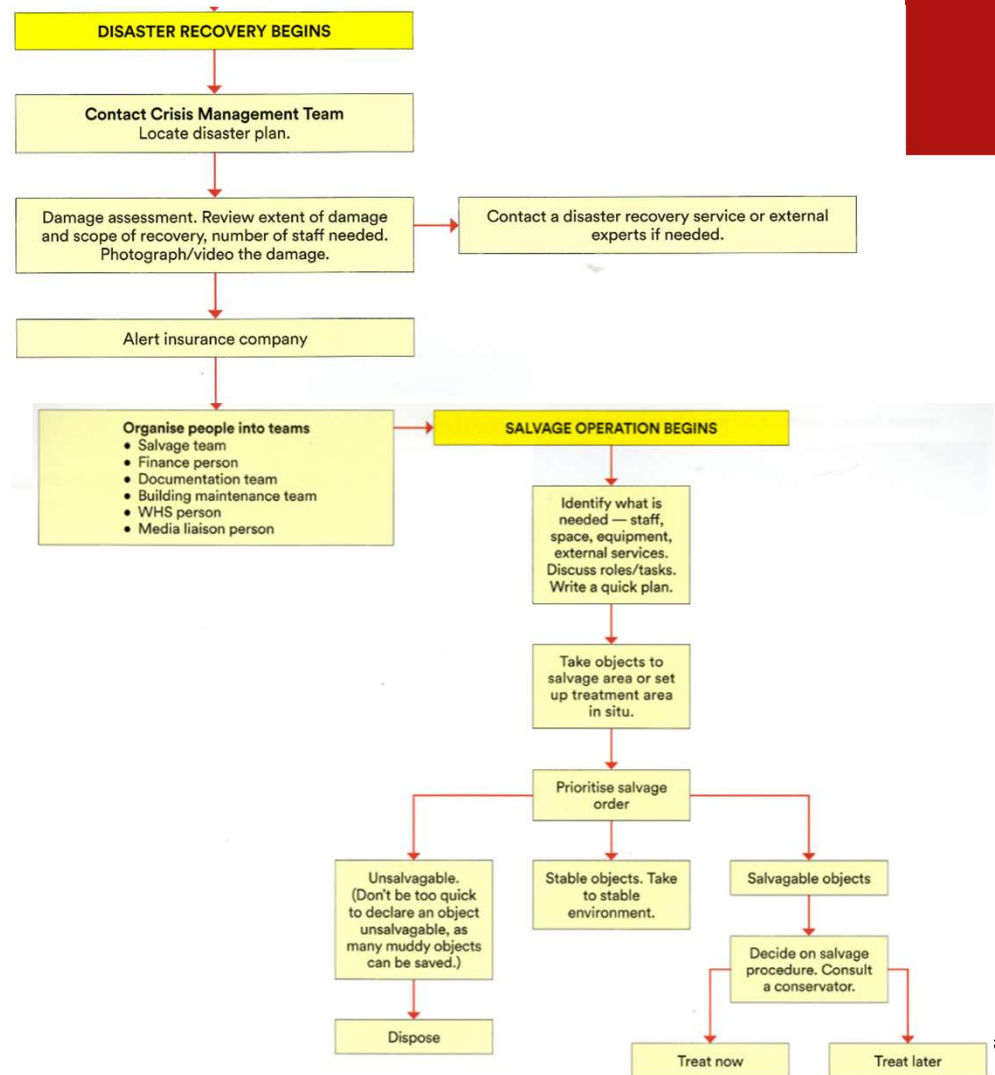
- ▶ Here the Disaster Coordinator will follow the Disaster Recovery Manual to plan your specific recovery steps and procedures for the situation (remember the flowchart!). It is necessary to take time to collect your thoughts, assess the damage and outline your recovery plan. You will need your team to step up to their roles, purchase necessary equipment, support volunteers and get on with the recovery.
- ▶ The main objectives to keep in mind while recovering from a disaster are:
 - safety for all those working at the museum;
 - reducing damage to the collection and the building (and minimising cost);
 - recording damage (for insurance and record-keeping purposes);
 - stabilising the museum environment;
 - saving as much of the collection as possible; and
 - returning to normal museum activities as soon as possible.

Part 4: Recovery



FOLLOW
THE PLAN

Image Source: *All is not Lost*





Post disaster recap

- ▶ No one ever gets it completely right – learning from your experience is one of the most important outcomes of your disaster response and recovery
- ▶ Make notes as soon as possible after the event – this is when people's mind will be fresh with issues and solutions you encountered. Use this experience to inform the next review of your Disaster Plan.



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