

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

## WRITTEN QUESTION

### Cyclone Emergency Services

#### Mr Mills to Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

1. *How many cyclone shelters are there in the Greater Darwin Area?*

There are presently eight Emergency Shelters in the Greater Darwin Area and four underground car parks.

2. *List the location, category and capacity of each shelter.*

#### Emergency Shelters:

Supreme Court Basement	-	1800
Nightcliff High School	-	1000
Casuarina Senior College	-	1000
Dripstone High School	-	1500
Palmerston High School	-	1500
Girraween High School	-	200
Taminmin High School	-	1000
Cox Peninsular Council Building		80

TOTAL	-	8080
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#### Overflow

Nightcliff High School	-	500
Casuarina High School	-	500

TOTAL		1000
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#### Underground Car Parks:

Casuarina Shopping Centre	-	1280
Palmerston Shopping Centre	-	1000
Palmerston Hub Complex	-	320
Holiday Inn Esplanade	-	900

TOTAL	-	3500
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*Categories.*

*Emergency Shelters.* The emergency shelters are built to the Building Code of Australia standard for cyclone shelters in Region C or a 1 in 2000 year return event. Emergency shelters have management staff, medical staff and a police presence.

*Overflow Shelters.* Overflow shelters are parts of Casuarina or Nightcliff High Schools which used to be cyclone shelters that can be opened in an emergency.

*Car Parks.* The car parks have been identified as places where people may choose to shelter in their cars with pets. These car parks are built to the appropriate Building Code but are not designed as shelters and management staff may be limited to a police presence.

3. *Are all the shelters considered operational? What are the requirements for the different cyclone shelter categories?*

All listed shelters are operational. See question 2 for further details requested.

4. *Are all cyclone shelters able to cope with a category 5 cyclone and related events? What are the evacuation procedures if shelter occupants need to be relocated?*

In accordance with the Building Code of Australia for Region C, cyclone shelters in the NT are built for 1 in 2000 year risk.

Emergency Shelters are staffed by a Manager, three Police Officers, a First Aider and radio operators. Car parks only possess a police presence. Evacuation procedures for shelters would be determined by the situation at the time.

5. *What upgrades and/or repairs have been made to each shelter since the last wet season? Please provide a list by shelter and detail work required.*

<b>Cyclone Shelter Progress since commencement of the program 2007/08</b>	<b>Works</b>
<b>Completed</b>	
Taminmin	Debris protection roof/walls
Casuarina	Debris protection roof/walls
Nhulunbuy	Construction of new ablutions Health Store Nhulunbuy Contract awarded 1/10/09. Works continuing.

**Current Works**

Marrara Sports Complex	Re-cladding walls/roof and install debris protection and installation of protection to main access points.
Maningrida School	Enclose new multipurpose hall to create a cyclone shelter including screening and debris protection.
Shepherdson College (Elcho )	Enclose new multipurpose hall to create a cyclone shelter including screening and debris protection.
Berry Springs School	Enclose new multipurpose hall to create a cyclone shelter including screening and debris protection.
Rosebery School	Enclose new multipurpose hall to create a cyclone shelter including screening and debris protection.
Yirrkala	New building incorporating a shelter with debris protection and screening.

6. *What upgrades and/or repairs are still required, if any please provide a list by shelter and detail work required.*

Upgrades and repairs are programmed and implemented each year.

7. *In the event of a category 5 cyclone what is the level of damage expected to residences across the greater Darwin area. How many houses are expected to be damaged to a point where they could not be inhabited? Which suburbs would be most affected by a category 5 cyclone and related events.*

The potential damage that could be caused by a Category 5 cyclone is subject to numerous variables including wind strength, direction of cyclone, speed of cyclone's advance, size of the cyclone, storm surge if any and speed of decay. It is therefore difficult to predict the amount of damage that might be caused.

8. *How many people are expected to be temporarily displaced due to storm damage caused by a category 5 cyclone.*

The potential storm damage that could be caused by a Category 5 cyclone is subject to numerous variables including wind strength, direction of cyclone, speed of cyclone's advance, size of the cyclone, storm surge if any and speed of decay. These variables will impact on the number of people displaced.

9. *What emergency mid to long term accommodation contingencies are in place to cope with a large number of displaced persons.*

Emergency accommodation arrangements will depend upon a broad range of factors including the nature of the emergency event, the damage it causes, the area of the NT affected, the number of people affected, the lead time available and seasonal factors.

10. *What are the mid to long term logistics in place to cope with a large number of displaced residents after a category 5 cyclone. Please detail plans for Food stores, potable water storage, medical treatment etc.*

In the event of a category 5 cyclone displacing a large number of people, the NT Government would link into National support arrangements designed to mobilise Commonwealth assistance. The extent of Commonwealth assistance provided would depend upon the situation at the time, but as Cyclone Larry demonstrated it would be substantial if necessary.

11. *How often do police, fire, and emergency services and other essential agencies conduct drills to prepare for a category 5 cyclone.*

The Emergency Services adopt an all hazards approach, practicing the skills required for a broad range of emergencies such as floods, storm damage, air crash, urban search and rescue, general rescue etc.

Annually, individual skills are practised in a series of training courses and minor exercises across these disciplines by all agencies involved in response.

12. *When was the last drill undertaken. What was the assessment of the effectiveness of the emergency services and what recommendations following this drill have been taken up by Government; and what remain unaddressed.*

The last training activity involving a cyclone scenario was a Greater Darwin Region Emergency Operations Centre discussion exercise on 5 October 2009 concerning a severe cyclone strike on Darwin. Recommended outcomes taken up: -

Serial	Action
1	Develop Palmerston road clearance plan
2	Confirm Palmerston rubbish disposal plan
3	Confirm assets to implement Darwin City Council Road clearing plan
4	Develop SecureNT to host plans
5	Negotiate Agreements with other jurisdictions to provide support
6	Develop Call Centre scripts
7	Increase to physical mortuary capacity
8	Confirm Defence role setting up and administering a Logistic Hub at Darwin Airport.
9	Develop coordinated plans for utilisation of contracts by Department of Lands and Planning, Councils, Power and Water
10	A need to improve the information technology support within the Emergency Operations Centre.

13. *What measures are in place to provide emergency communications in the event of a cyclone. Are the communications run by NT Government agencies ie police or by another agency ie ADF. If not the NT Government who provides the communications and why.*

The NT Government provides the majority of emergency communications in the event of a cyclone. The nature of the communications varies according to circumstance and location. Within Darwin, communication arrangements, should normal telephonic communications breakdown are as follows:

- (1) Satellite phones;

- (2) Counter Disaster Ultra High Frequency (UHF) and Very High Frequency (VHF) radio networks which includes:

<b>Net</b>	<b>Net Control Station</b>
Survey and Rescue Net (UHF)	Survey and Rescue Operations Centre
Welfare Net (UHF)	Joint Emergency Services Communication Centre
Emergency Shelter Net (UHF)	Joint Emergency Services Communication Centre
Defence Net (VHF)	Joint Emergency Services Communication Centre

- (3) Digitally Encrypted UHF Radios provide contact between the Joint Services Emergency Operations Centre and the following locations:
- (i) Bureau of Meteorology (also supported with UHF radio to JESCC);
  - (ii) Department of the Chief Minister, (Territory Crisis Centre);
  - (iii) ABC Darwin;
- (4) VHF radio between HQ NORCOM and Robertson Barracks;
- (5) **Defence Communications Network (DEFCOMMNET)**. Should interstate telecommunications fail **urgent** messages may be transmitted to Emergency Management Australia, Canberra via HQNORCOM using DEFCOMMNET;
- (6) NTPFES car radios; and
- (7) High Frequency Radios.

Non-NT Government supplied emergency communications providers include:

- (1) Defence provides back up HF communications from the Emergency Operations Centre at Berrimah and Parliament House to Headquarters Northern Command. It also provides access to DEFCOMMNET. Defence provides its backup communications to ensure that the Commonwealth Government can communicate with the NT Government in an emergency.
  - (2) Amateur Ham Radio operators man the cyclone shelter UHF radio communications. They volunteered to provide this service.
  - (3) Commercial providers give access to mobile and fixed line phones, facsimiles etc. They provide this on a commercial basis.
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