




Dear DEMC and LEMC Members,

As we draw closer to the cyclone season and with the new Australian Warning System (AWS) in effect this year, I would like to address several queries related to warnings and provide the following information for your awareness.

The State Hazard Plan for Severe Weather outlines guidance for the Hazard Management Agency (HMA), DFES, regarding the response to severe weather events, including public information and warnings.

Key Points:

- Section 4.4.6 of the Plan details the Cyclone Warning System and the usage of the three warning levels by the HMA during an incident.
- A snapshot of the Cyclone Warning Framework table is included below for your reference.

Warning	Description	HMA Usage
<b>Advice</b> 	An incident is active. There is no immediate danger. Stay up to date in case the situation changes.	Escalation phase: Used when a cyclone may produce gales within 48-72 hours or earlier if the cyclone's forecast intensity or predicted path necessitate earlier warnings for the community.  De-escalation phase: Used in the aftermath of a cyclone when there is no longer a threat to the community, whether it be from the cyclone itself or the hazards i.e. debris and damage left behind in its passing.
<b>Watch and Act</b> 	There is a possible threat to lives and homes. Take action to stay safe.	Escalation phase: Used when a cyclone has moved closer and there is a significant risk of destructive winds within the next 24-48 hours.  De-escalation phase: Used in the aftermath of a cyclone where there remains a possible threat to the community, likely from hazards created by the cyclone's passing.
<b>Emergency Warning</b> 	There is a threat to lives and homes. Take immediate action. Shelter indoors now.	Escalation phase only: Considered for use when a cyclone is likely to produce destructive winds and/or the destructive winds are occurring. Only Emergency Services as identified by DFES in consultation with the LEMC should remain functional.

In light of the transition from the previous Blue, Yellow, and Red alert system to the new AWS levels, it's important to note that while terminology has changed, the forecast impact timelines remain the same. These are now aligned with Advice, Watch & Act, and Emergency Warning levels (see below).

What This Means for You:

- Decisions regarding business closures or the relocation of personnel should consider the Watch & Act level, which will be issued when there is a risk of destructive winds (insert speed) within 24-48 hours—similar to the old Yellow Alert.
- During the escalation phase of an incident, the Cyclone Watch & Act will include specific action statements. Post-impact, the same level may be used during the de-escalation phase, with action statements outlining recovery-related actions. Your planning should account for both pre- and post-impact operations.

Planning Considerations:

It's crucial to review your operational, staff management, and business continuity plans in the context of these changes. Determine the triggers for staff relocations, closures, and other critical actions.

Communication During an Incident:

The Incident Controller or Operational Area Manager will engage with the Incident Support Group and Operational Area Support Group to further communicate and clarify the required actions before impacts.

As with all AWS warnings, these will be communicated via Emergency WA. The AWS allows Incident Controllers to define warning areas with tailored action statements to better articulate risks to the community.

Please share this information with your stakeholders, including the Chamber of Commerce, Liquor Accord, tourism operators, accommodation providers, and others in your networks.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact the District Emergency Management Advisor, Matthew Reimer, or me directly.

Thank you in advance. Stay safe and take care this cyclone season.

Kind Regards,

Leon Gardiner

Superintendent

Kimberley Region