

Evaluating public information and warnings

Speed read

- Post-incident evaluation and research helps better design, deliver and understand the impact of warnings during emergencies.
- A lessons management approach should be taken when reviewing and evaluating the impact of public information and warnings.
- The impact of a warning cannot truly be evaluated without gathering insight into community understanding, sentiment and response to that warning.

Key points

- Post-incident analysis and evaluation of warnings typically focuses on review of operational systems, strategy and effectiveness e.g. what worked well and what requires change and the reach of warnings to targeted audiences.
- National, jurisdictional and independent reviews are regularly commissioned post-incident to evaluate, understand or improve particular areas of public information and warnings practice.
- Consideration for and consultation with the community is required whether evaluation is planned or occurring in response to an event. Working with communities who may have been impacted by an emergency requires care, respect and expertise and needs to be conducted ethically and appropriately.
- Factors to consider when working with communities include: methods of data collection, understanding of issues such as trauma, accuracy of recall or bias, careful phrasing of questions, sample sizes.
- Make the distinction between lessons that have been identified versus lessons learned and embedded within the practice of providing public information and warnings.
- Consideration of policies and processes; capability to deliver warnings, suitability of systems; training and resourcing; and availability of data and intelligence to make decisions and inform warnings can all provide insight and improve practice.

Take action

- [Review Lessons Management Models and Examples](#) (AIDR 2019) from different states and organisations.

More information

- [Lessons Management](#) (AIDR 2019) provides a framework, general principles and factors to be considered when implementing a lessons management system within an organisation.
- [Community Engagement for Disaster Resilience](#) (AIDR 2020) presents strengths-based, inclusive community engagement approaches that improve the quality and effectiveness of community engagement practices and maximise inclusion and participation to achieve effective disaster resilience outcomes.
- The Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC Video Series [Driving change: the evolution of communications and warnings in emergency preparedness, response and recovery](#) to learn about recent research and learnings in the field of warnings and how it can be applied by practitioners.
- [Public Information and Warnings](#) (AIDR 2021)
- [AIDR's Warnings Collection](#) brings together key guidance material, research, information and professional development resources to support provision of effective warnings in Australia.