1. PURPOSE

The ACT State Emergency Service (ACTSES) is the agency legislatively charged with the responsibility for the control and mitigation of storm and flood damage operations in the ACT. The purpose of this SOP is to detail the response and support requirements for storm and flood damage activities.

2. DESCRIPTION

For the purposes of this procedure, storm or flood damage is described as any event where there has been damage or there is the potential for damage resulting from:

2.1 Local flooding by whatever means;

2.2 Water ingress;

2.3 Fallen trees or branches, or those that are threatening or have the potential to fall;

2.4 High winds or unusual wind patterns;

2.5 Hail or lightning;

2.6 Other weather events.

3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the ACTSES in relation to providing community assistance following storm and flood damage events are to:

3.1 assist the community by providing ACTSES teams and members capable of attending storm and flood damage operations within a given time frame as required by the ACTSES Chief Officer;

3.2 ensure that the teams and members responded to assist with mitigating the effects of the storm or flood damage are appropriately trained and qualified, and physically able to undergo the task;

3.3 ensure that appropriate equipment is readily available for the potential task and that this equipment is in good working order;
3.4 deliver assistance to locations as designated by the ACTSES Duty Officer or to the person assigned by the ACTSES Duty Officer to manage the event.

4. **STORM AND FLOOD DAMAGE FUNCTIONS**

The operational responsibilities ACTSES teams and members are likely to encounter during or after a storm or flood include:

- **4.1** Undertaking roof repairs to dwellings, other domestic buildings, and to commercial premises damaged by wind, hail, rain, water or other weather events;
- **4.2** Preventing the ingress of water through the construction of sandbag walls, or other measures as required;
- **4.3** Performing pumping operations to remove or to relocate water;
- **4.4** Clearing blockages in drains and gutters;
- **4.5** Constructing shoring to repair storm damaged walls;
- **4.6** Removal of trees/branches from dwellings and other buildings, vehicles, roadways/footpaths, and public areas.

5. **PRIORITY SYSTEM**

All storm and flood damage operations will be assigned a priority according to the level of damage sustained or the potential for further damage if left unattended. These priority levels will be determined by either the ACTSES Duty Officer or COMCEN from the information received. Priority levels may then be amended if required by a member of either the ACTSES or the ACT Fire Brigade (ACTFB) once they have arrived on scene.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Immediate threat to life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Risk of significant further damage requiring immediate attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Risk of further damage if left unattended for a period of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Situation stable, does not require immediate attention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. **CALLOUT AND ATTENDANCE**

The ACTSES Duty Officer is charged with the responsibility of coordinating the most appropriate attendance to storm and flood damage incidents. Where a call for assistance is received by COMCEN, the COMCEN operator is to:

- **6.1** Collect as much information about the incident as possible from the initial call. In particular they are to determine if the request for assistance involves rescue of trapped people or animals, and assign a priority in accordance with the priority system described above;
If the call for assistance involves rescue of trapped people or animals then immediately dispatch the closest appropriate resource, but this response must include ACT Fire Brigade resources;

If the call for assistance does not include rescue of trapped people or animals then follow the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTSES NOT STOOD UP</th>
<th>ACTSES STOOD UP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>ACTSES DO/ ACTFB DO</td>
<td>ACTFB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>ACTSES DO/ ACTFB DO</td>
<td>ACTSES/ACTFB**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>ACTSES DO/ ACTFB DO</td>
<td>ACTSES/ACTFB**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>ACTSES DO/ ACTFB DO</td>
<td>ACTSES/ACTFB**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACTFB may be the initial response for storm damage incidents when the ACTSES is not stood up.

The responded ACTFB Station Officer will assign the incident a priority once they have completed their reconnaissance;

The ACTSES Duty Officer and the ACTFB District Officer will then determine any further resource allocation required;

For example a Priority 2, 3 or 4 incident that can be completed relatively quickly by attending ACTFB resources may be left to the ACTFB to secure, whereas an incident that may require a longer term operation will usually be handed on to ACTSES.

Where multiple priority 2, 3 and 4 incidents have been reported and ACTSES is not stood up, the ACTSES Duty Officer is to implement ACTSES stand up arrangements.

Dispatch resources as requested by the ACTSES Duty Officer;

Maintain contact with deployed resources and advise the ACTSES Duty Officer and the ACTFB District Officer of any requests for further assistance;

Advise the ACTSES Duty Officer and the ACTFB District Officer when each task has been completed.

Ensure that the ACTSES Duty Officer is informed of all storm and flood damage events in the ACT.
6.8 Where ACTSES units are stood up, they will be tasked by the ACTSES Duty Officer, through COMCEN, with conducting the initial assessment and commencing repair action or other remedial action. Any requests for further assistance by ACTSES crews attending the incident are to be made to the ACTSES Duty Officer via COMCEN who will determine the most appropriate action.

6.9 If the number of incidents or the severity of the storm damage is such that it is beyond the capabilities of the ACTSES and the ACTFB to provide a timely response, additional assistance may be sought from the NSW SES, through the ACTSES Duty Officer, under the Memorandum Of Understanding.

7. COMMAND

7.1 The ACTSES Unit Commanders are responsible for coordinating the ACTSES response in the field, and for allocating tasks to their teams on receipt of incident information from COMCEN. Team Leaders will command the ACTSES teams at an incident.

7.2 If both the ACTSES and the ACTFB are in attendance at an operation, the controller for that operation will usually be the senior ACTSES member present, however for all Priority 1 incidents the ACT Fire Brigade has the responsibility for incident control.

8. RECONNAISSANCE

ACTSES Unit Commanders may choose to have a dedicated ACTSES member available to conduct reconnaissance. If so appointed, this person is to inform the ACTSES Duty Officer that they are available for this purpose. At the completion of each reconnaissance task the officer is to advise their Commander of the nature of the task, the priority assigned to the task, and a description of the resources required.

9. ACTSES Duty Officer

9.1 Requests by ACTSES personnel for further assistance for all storm or flood damage related incidents because the incident is either beyond the capabilities of the members attending, or are under resourced to complete the task are to be passed on to the ACTSES Duty Officer immediately through COMCEN. The ACTSES Duty Officer will then determine the most appropriate action that needs to be taken.

9.2 The ACTSES Duty Officer can be contacted through COMCEN at any time.