



# **Cherbourg Dam Failure Operations Manual**

**Version 1.0**

**Dated:** March 2020

**This Manual has been developed to provide guidance to the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council and the Cherbourg Local Disaster Management Group on the procedures to be followed when advised of an dam hazard/dam hazard event or emergency at the Bjelke Petersen Dam.**

**The manual details the steps to be taken to warn the Cherbourg Community and to conduct an urgent evacuation.**



**Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council**

22 Barambah Avenue  
Cherbourg, Queensland,  
Australia 4605

[www.cherbourg.a.qld.aov.au](http://www.cherbourg.a.qld.aov.au)

# Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Approval of the Manual.....	3
Amendments and Review.....	4
<b>1. Governance</b>	
Overview.....	5
Purpose.....	5
Aim .....	5
Notification of Events.....	5
<b>2. Response</b>	
Action on Notification of Flood Event.....	6
Action on Notification of Potential Dam Failure.....	6
Provision of Warnings.....	6
Emergency Alert.....	6
Sunwater Emergency Alert.....	6
Community Warnings.....	6
Activation of LDMG/LDCC.....	6
Emergency Actions.....	7
<b>Annexure 1: Dam Failure Check List.....</b>	<b>8</b>

## Authority to Plan

This Dam Failure Operations Manual has been prepared by the Cherbourg Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) under the provisions of Section 57(1) of the Disaster Management Act 2003.

## Approval

The preparation of this Dam Failure Operations Manual has been undertaken in accordance with the Disaster Management Act 2003 to provide for a response to a dam hazard/dam hazard event or emergency at the Bjelke-Petersen Dam.

The Manual is endorsed for distribution by the Cherbourg Local Disaster Management Group.

**Cr Arnold Murray**  
**Chair**  
**Local Disaster Management Group**

**Date:** .....

## Amendments and Review

This manual will be reviewed as required by *Section 59 of the Disaster Management Act 2003*, with relevant amendments made and distributed.

Approved amendments to the manual will be circulated as per the distribution and contacts lists, which are maintained by the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council on behalf of the LDMG.

## Document Control

### Amendment Control and Version Register

The controller of the document is the Cherbourg Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC). Any proposed amendments to this manual should be forwarded in writing to:

*Cherbourg Local Disaster Coordinator, Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council, 22 Barambah Avenue, Cherbourg Qld 4605*

The LDC may approve inconsequential amendments to this document. Any changes to the intent of the document must be approved and endorsed by the Local Disaster Management Group.

### Amendment Register

Amendment		Plan Updated	
Version	Issue Date	Author	Reason for Change
1.0	February, 2013		Original Document
2.0	March, 2020	Warren Bridson Consulting	Redeveloped to provide more relevant information to respond to a dam emergency or dam failure

## Distribution

This manual is not publicly available, and is not for distribution and/or release to persons or agencies other than those identified in the Cherbourg Local Disaster Management Plan.

# 1. GOVERNANCE

## 1.1. Overview

Sunwater, as part of the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy has prepared an Emergency Action Plan for the Bjelke-Petersen Dam. This Emergency Action Plan details Sunwater's response to emergencies in relation to the dam. The procedures also include working with the Cherbourg LDMG in community awareness of the consequences of dam failure and how information and warnings will be provided to the Cherbourg Community and the Cherbourg LDMG.

This Dam Failure Operations Manual builds on those actions by Sunwater and details some actions that the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council and the Cherbourg LDMG can take.

However it must be acknowledged that **the details of Information and Warnings given to the Cherbourg Community are contained in the Information and Warnings Operations Manual and the details of evacuating the Cherbourg Community are in the Evacuation and Evacuation Centre Management Operations Manual** and are not repeated in this manual.

## 1.2. Purpose

The purpose of this Dam Failure Operations Manual is to detail the actions to be taken when advised by Sunwater of an emergency or of a failure of the Bjelke-Petersen Dam.

This manual should be read in conjunction with the Bjelke-Petersen Dam Emergency Action Plan and the operations manuals mentioned in 1.1.

## 1.3. Aim

The aim of this Dam Failure Operations Manual is to ensure timely warnings are provided to the Cherbourg Community in the event of an emergency or failure at the Bjelke-Petersen Dam.

## 1.4. Notification of Events

Sunwater will advise the Council CEO when any issue with the dam may affect the safety of downstream communities. They will do this according to procedures in the EAP. This advice is provided primarily by telephone in the first instance.

The Sunwater Emergency Incident Coordinator will advise the CEO of the nature of the event as either a dam hazard/dam hazard event or emergency event and will advise on actions being undertaken by Sunwater.

In the event that the Sunwater Emergency Incident Coordinator cannot reach the Cherbourg CEO, they will contact any Council member of the LDMG. If the event is urgent, the Police representative on the LMDG shall be contacted first.

Sunwater will support the LDMG by undertaking the following actions to ensure the Cherbourg Community is informed as soon as possible:

- Maintain an up to date list of immediately Down Stream residents of Bjelke-Petersen Dam.
- notify the immediate Down Stream residents via SMS unless otherwise agreed with LDMG
- provide timely advice to the LDMG

The Manager, Corporate Services is to ensure that Sunwater is provided the current LDMG Contact List.

## 2. RESPONSE

### 2.1. Action on Notification of Flood Event

The actions to be taken in relation to a flood event are dependent on the nature of the expected flood impact e.g. minor, moderate or major flooding. The LDC will decide if it is necessary to activate the LDMG and LDCC to ensure a coordinated response to the situation.

### 2.2. Action on Notification of Potential Dam Failure

In the worst case scenario, a dam failure is likely to cause major flooding at Cherbourg. Water levels and flows in Barambah Creek are likely to exceed those experienced in the 2010/11 flood event. The speed of water level rises are unclear however it could be expected that river flows would increase quickly given the distance from the Dam to the community. An indicative assessment is that water level rises will start to occur within 15 minutes of major dam failure.

In such cases the response is to immediately evacuate all people in Cherbourg to the highest point (vicinity of the school). The priorities for evacuation are people living in the lower lying areas of Cherbourg.

A flowchart depicting key actions to be taken on notification from Sunwater is at page 7.

### 2.3. Provision of Warnings

Provision of flood related warnings will depend on the situation and will be managed by the Cherbourg CEO or if the Local Disaster Management Group is activated, through the Local Disaster Coordination Centre.

Provision of Warnings regarding potential dam failure may be time critical requiring immediate action.

### 2.4. Emergency Alert

On receipt of any warning that requires IMMEDIATE evacuation of low lying areas of Cherbourg, the CEO is to request an Emergency Alert campaign using the pre-prepared polygon and dam failure messages **provided in the Information and Warnings Operations Manual**. These are registered with the State Disaster Coordination Centre and can be activated within a very short timeframe (likely within 15 minutes).

A draft Emergency Alert Request Form is also lodged with the SDCC and is to be modified as required and submitted to the SDCC as soon as possible.

### 2.5. Sunwater Emergency Alert

In the event of a Dam failure, or when required, Sunwater also has use of the National Emergency Alert System to send a voice message and SMS.

### 2.6. Community Warnings

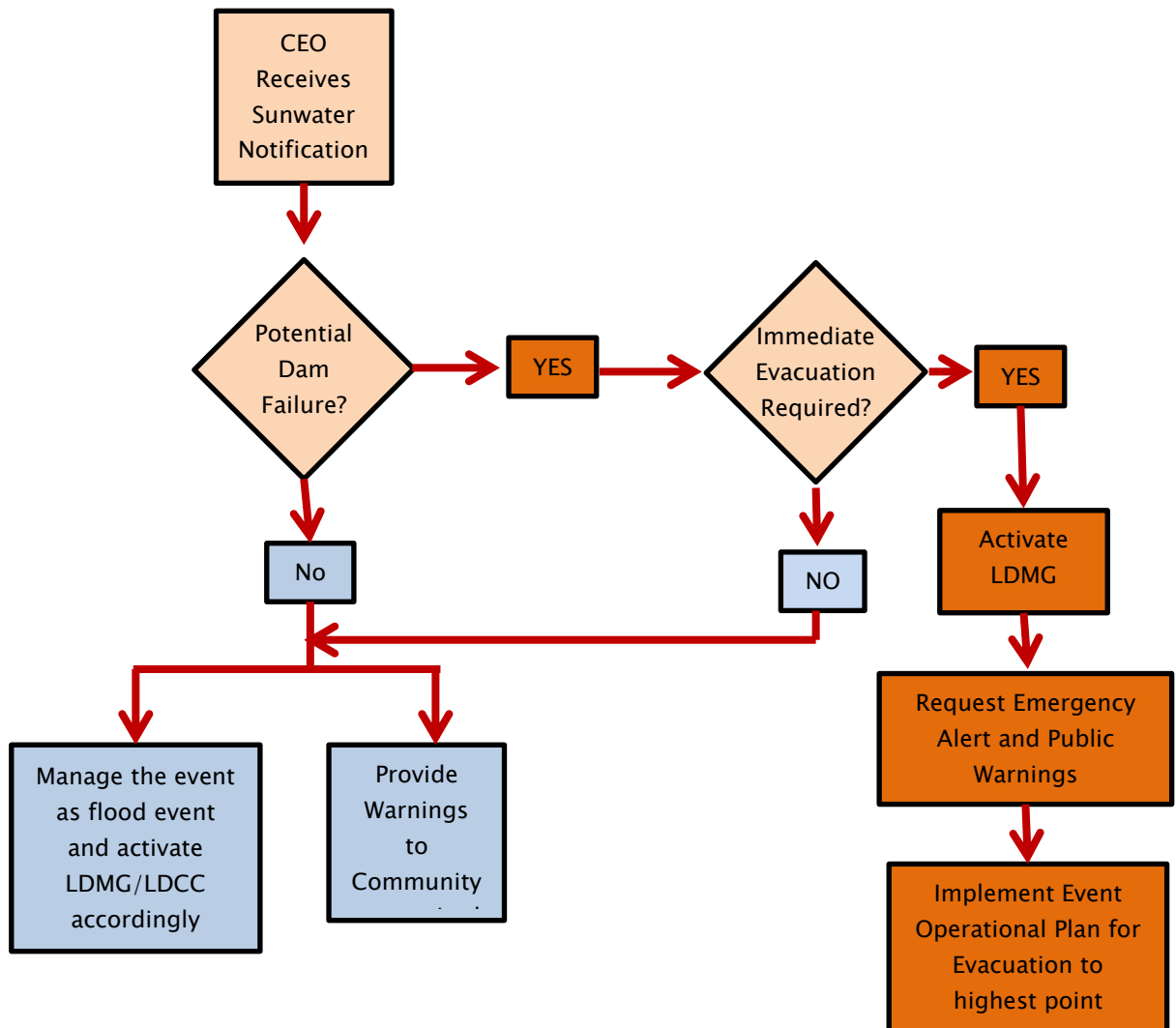
Warnings will also be delivered by other means, if possible, such as the Local Radio Station and Council Facebook Page.

It is deemed safe to do so, doorknocking operations should be conducted in low lying areas of Cherbourg to ensure warnings are received and to ensure evacuation is occurring.

### 2.7. Activation of LDMG / LDCC

Upon warning of a potential dam failure, the LDC should immediately activate the LDMG and LDCC. Activation will be to STAND UP using all available staff. The focus of the LDMG will be to ensure the community is warned and to coordinate the immediate evacuation of all low lying areas of Cherbourg to the highest point in the vicinity of the school.

## 2.8. Emergency Actions on Notification from Sunwater



## ANNEXURE 1: DAM FAILURE CHECK LIST

Action	Responsible Officer	Completed v
Take note of time and details of advice received by the CEO from Sunwater regarding dam emergency	Local Disaster Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that Sunwater has current list of all downstream residents in Cherbourg LGA	Local Disaster Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Issue information bulletins as received from Sunwater to the Community	Local Disaster Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confirm with QPS that advices from Sunwater are being received by them	Local Disaster Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Issue formal "Alert" notifications, if time permits, to the Community	Local Disaster Coordinator Communications Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>
For rapid onset dam failure, issue urgent orders to evacuate to higher ground on all available media platforms	Local Disaster Coordinator Communications Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Issue Information and Warnings (Templates in Manual) to the local radio station for immediate broadcast	Communications Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Request SDCC to issue Emergency Alert to all residents in Cherbourg using pre-programmed polygon and Emergency Alert messages	Local Disaster Coordinator	
Place information regarding dam emergency on Council website, Facebook and other social media	Local Disaster Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commence procedures for door knocking to issue urgent evacuation orders to higher ground	Local Disaster Coordinator SES Controller QPS OIC	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide assistance to any reasonable requests to assist persons to evacuate.	Local Disaster Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open evacuation centres and advise community of location using all media platforms	Local Disaster Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Execute business continuity plan actions for the preservation of Council equipment, stock and materials in low lying areas.	Council Works Supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use existing Council Flood Procedures to move any items identified as needing to be saved from flooding.	Council Works Supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>



Discuss with QPS the projected road closures and isolation of Cherbourg.	Local Disaster Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep community informed on the progress of the evacuation and where to go	Local Disaster Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continually monitor the situation and obtain crucial feedback from Sunwater	Local Disaster Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask SES and QPS to check houses to ensure all persons in flood threat zones have been evacuated	Local Disaster Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assist QPS with road closures	Council Works Supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>