



agriculture
& rural development

Department:
agriculture
& rural development
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL



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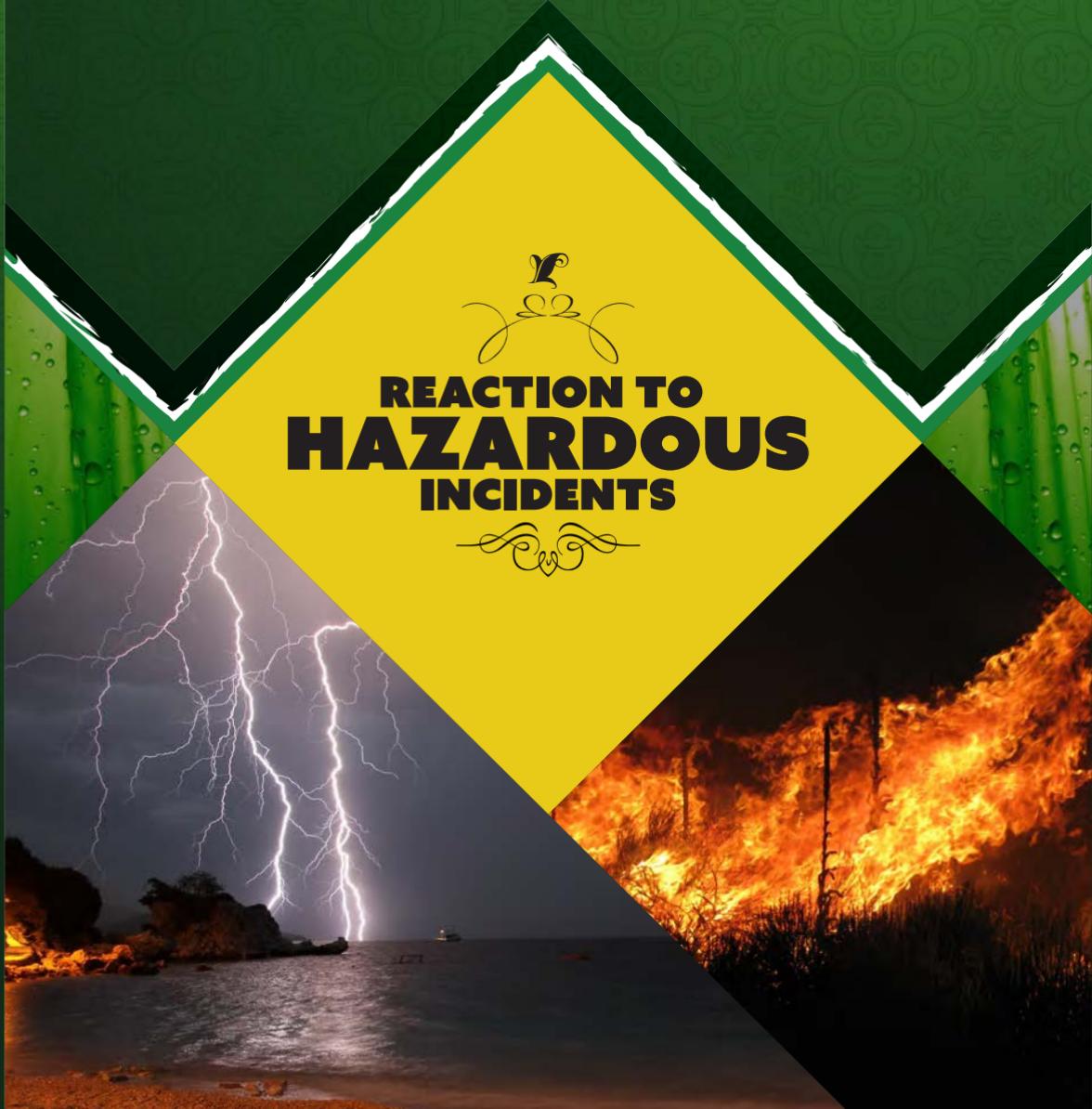
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**REACTION TO
HAZARDOUS
INCIDENTS**


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INTERVENTION

The purpose of a DAEA intervention in a Hazardous incident in Agriculture is to maintain farming activity by the community through protection of critical resources in order to ensure:

- affordable food of good quality
- job and financial security
- prevention of erosion of farmers' collateral

EVALUATION AND PRIORITIZATION

A disaster however is not measured by the event that can cause damage; instead, a disaster is the measure of damage caused by an event.

To measure the damage caused by the event, its effect on the Agricultural fraternity has to be established, in terms of disruption to community life which threatens or causes

- Death or injury in that community
- And/or damaged property
- Which is beyond the day to day capacity of the prescribed statutory authorities
- And which requires special mobilization
- And organization to resources other than those normally available to those authorities

The criteria used to establish the impact should be considered in terms of agriculture, in totality and not per individual unit. It should be utilized as a guide towards deciding on the disaster status of an event; e.g.:

- The severity or intensity of the event.
- Prevailing threats and critical need for response.
- The frequency of the type of event.
- Magnitude of the area affected.
- To what extent has the agricultural community-life been disrupted?
- Did or is the event threatening or causing health deterioration, injury or death on a large scale.
- Did the event require special mobilization?
- Will the consequence of the event impact negatively on the long term sustainability of agricultural enterprises or fraternity in the area.
- What is the expected institutional (regional council, provincial or national) manageability.
- What is the vulnerability of the agricultural fraternity in the affected area?
- Insurability of losses.

The threat or disaster has to be ranked according to vulnerability, e.g.:

- People
- Health
- Property
- Livelihood
- Developments
- Local Economy
- Infrastructure

THE CLASSIFICATION OF INCIDENTS:

The Disaster Management Act of 2002 prescribes the classification of declared disasters; however, emergency incidents can be classified as follows;

- Minor incidents – The incident can be dealt with by the relevant authorities -
- Major incidents – The incident which is likely to attract national or international interest irrespective of the magnitude
- Local disaster – The disaster affects a single metropolitan, district or local municipality only; and is able to deal with its effects
- Provincial disaster – One or more than one metropolitan or district municipality in the same province unable to deal with the effects and the province concerned is able to deal with
- National disaster – Affects one or more than one province which is unable to effectively deal with the effects of the disaster on its own
- International disasters/incidents – Affects communities across international boundaries (Charles F. Cary; Rural Metro Emergency Management Services)

An incident is only classified as a disaster according to fixed thresholds in terms of human deaths, households directly affected (displaced) and economic damages/losses, viz.:

- threshold for human deaths is 10 > deaths, (1000 to 1 million is catastrophic)
- threshold for household affected is 100 > households,
- threshold for monetary value of property damaged or lost, is 8 million US dollars (2003 base value)
- declaration of a state of emergency
- request for national support. (EM-DAT)

INSTITUTIONAL PREPAREDNESS, LINKAGES & RESPONSIBILITY

Disaster knows no boundaries and requires a concerted coordinated effort by many varied disciplines. Disaster management is not a separate sector or discipline but an approach to solving problems relating to disasters impacting on the sector.

Assessment are being compromised by, perceived urgency, availability and/or restriction on funds, lack of activity or strategic planning, need to stake a claim to "operating niches", limited knowledge, value of feedback, competition which involves propaganda, making it necessary to acquire not only the truth, but perceptions as well.

Thus the organization has to accept the risk of getting initial aid partially wrong when weighed against the benefits of getting it partially right.

The establishment of well-coordinated assessment (network) system which has got a large distribution pattern and which will be available over the long-term rather than a short term disseminate accurate and relevant information, providing guidelines at a central point for conformation ("single gateway"), addressing public needs, diverse languages and cultural differences will build public confidence in the Disaster Management component

IMPLICATIONS

Disaster management must have the active support of decision makers, communities, community structures, commerce and industry.

This would require the establishment of institutional structures e.g.: Implementation of Disaster Management Policy, procedures, a forum: and the filing of post structure.