



# Tasmanian Disaster Resilience Strategy

Building our on-island resilience



Photo credit: Department of Premier and Cabinet

## Acknowledgement of Country

In recognition of the deep history and culture of this Island, we acknowledge the traditional owners of this Country and recognise Aboriginal people's continuing connection to Land, Sea, Waterways, Sky and Culture. We acknowledge and pay respect to the knowledge and cultural practices embedded for all time within Tasmanian Aboriginal ownership of Country. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present.

Cover photo credit: Alastair Bett

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# Foreword



Photo credit: Martha Lavinia Beach

**Tasmania embodies the essence of the Australian landscape – a place of World Heritage wilderness, dramatic mountain ranges, ancient forests, and striking coastlines. From windswept alpine peaks to vast button grass moorlands and intricate cave systems carved from ancient rock, our island’s natural environment defines who we are. Our landscape underpins Tasmania’s identity, supporting biodiversity, community wellbeing, and economic opportunity.**

Tasmanians also understand, through experience, the destructive power of disasters. In recent years we have faced bushfires, floods, storms, a global pandemic and emerging security threats. Each disaster leaves lasting impacts on our communities, built and natural environments, economy and health.

As an island state our geographic isolation brings both strengths and unique challenges in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from such events.

Tasmania has a strong track record in preparing for and responding to natural hazards. However, we are now operating in an increasingly complex and unpredictable environment. Natural hazards are becoming more frequent and intense as the climate changes. At the same time, we face a rapidly evolving security landscape marked by greater disruptions, uncertainty and risk.

Our essential services and systems are more interconnected than ever before, creating systemic vulnerabilities where a single disruption can trigger a chain reaction of impacts across communities, infrastructure and the economy.



Photo credit: Moon Cheese Studio

Today's emergencies require proactive, multisectoral coordination as disaster impacts go well beyond what has traditionally been managed by emergency management agencies. We must keep adapting, maintaining flexibility and working together to prepare, respond and recover effectively.

Sincere thanks go to all the people who participated in building this strategy, giving your valuable time to provide insights, ideas and feedback.

Through this strategy we will continue advancing our on-island resilience by identifying key priorities where government, industry, community and non-government sectors

can work alongside each other to build a stronger, more resilient Tasmania.

We encourage you to read the strategy and consider how it can inform your organisational or personal planning. By building a shared understanding of our risks, preparing, adapting and recovering together, and by strengthening our connections, investing in preparedness, we can reduce risks, protect what matters most and ensure a safer future for all Tasmanians.

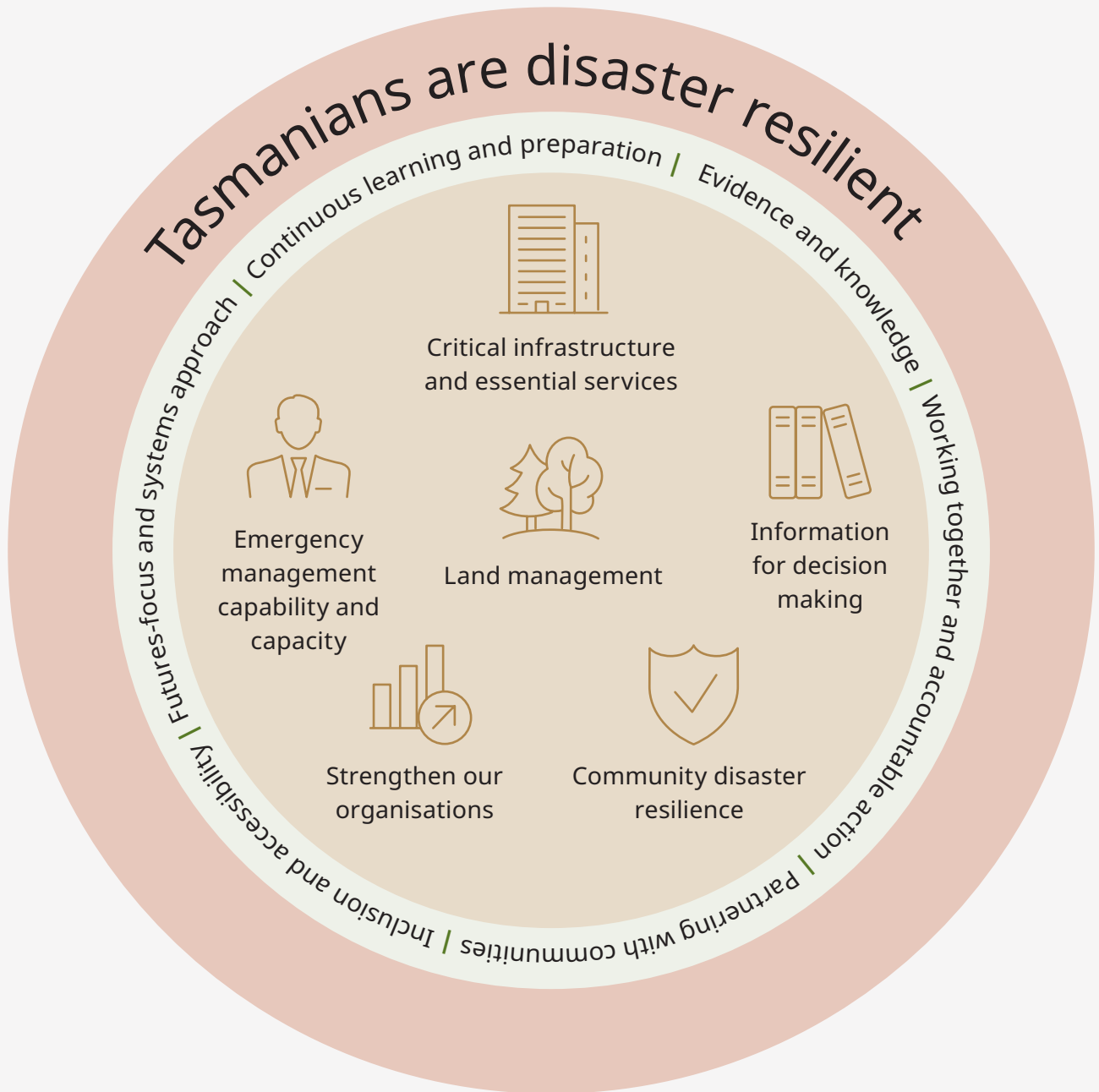


**Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP**  
Premier



**Hon Felix Ellis MP**  
Minister for Police, Fire and  
Emergency Management

# Strategy at a glance



# Introduction



Photo credit: Pete Harmsen

## **What is a disaster?**

An event that significantly disrupts society and results in serious impacts on people, property, the economy or the environment.

## **Purpose and scope of strategy**

**The Tasmanian Disaster Resilience Strategy is our state's roadmap for building our on-island resilience against natural, human-caused or biological disasters. This strategy builds on the inaugural Tasmanian Disaster Resilience Strategy 2020-2025, and strengthens our coordinated all-hazards approach to resilience. It supports Tasmania's emergency management sector to align and advance investment towards a shared resilience vision and provides strategic leadership on disaster resilience priorities.**

This strategy is not an action plan. It serves to guide and shape actions while integrating disaster resilience into all policy areas and contexts. The strategy is intended to be enduring, providing long-term direction while incorporating scheduled review periods to ensure it remains current and responsive to emerging priorities and learnings. The vision and principles will be reviewed in five-year cycles and the strategic priorities will have a mid-term review. This strategy does not operate in isolation. It is complemented by a range of Tasmanian Government policies and plans that contribute to disaster resilience (Appendix 1). In addition, there are many



Photo credit: Studio Hubert

resources and initiatives that community groups, not-for-profit organisations, tertiary institutions, and industry contribute to disaster resilience.

Some of the key Tasmanian policies and strategies that contribute to disaster resilience include:

- *Emergency Management Act 2006*
- Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements
- State Emergency Management Committee Strategic Directions Framework
- State Emergency Management Plans
- Regional Emergency Management Plans
- Municipal Emergency Management Plans

- Tasmanian Disaster Risk Assessment
- Tasmania’s Risk Assessment for Climate Change 2024
- Tasmania’s Protective Security Policy Framework

This strategy is aligned to national and international policies. The National Strategy for Disaster Resilience highlighted that building resilience is not just the job of emergency agencies – it’s a shared responsibility between governments, communities, businesses, and individuals.<sup>1</sup> In 2015, Australia signed up to the global Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030),<sup>2</sup> which guides efforts to reduce disaster risks and strengthen

resilience both at home and abroad. Australia’s National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework is the way Australia puts the Sendi Framework into action.<sup>3</sup>

The next sections set the context for building Tasmania’s disaster resilience. They explain why a coordinated approach is essential, describe what resilience looks like in practice and outline the factors that shape Tasmania’s risk environment. These insights form the foundation for the strategic priorities highlighted in strategy at a glance and expanded on from page 21.



Photo credit: Studio Hubert

## What is disaster resilience?

**Disaster resilience is the ability to anticipate and withstand the shocks and stresses caused by disruptive events. Put simply, disaster resilience is our ability to not only bounce back but adapt to disasters and emergencies. It includes how we prepare for, live through, and recover from the harmful impacts of hazards on our people, places, businesses, as well as our built and natural environments.**

Building disaster resilience is a continual process, not a final destination. It requires incremental and collective change through continuous learning and adaptation. It means strengthening physical assets and developing more sustainable systems and ways of working. It includes developing better connections between people and the services, systems and structures that enable communities to thrive.

By reducing disaster risks and enhancing the adaptability of our people, places, businesses, built and natural environments and services and systems, we increase our capacity to cope with a wide range of shocks and stresses, enabling faster and more effective recovery.

# Resilience starts before, stays strong during, and grows after emergencies.

Building resilience in our communities is essential for emergency management because strong, connected communities can prepare better, respond faster, and recover more effectively.

## What are shocks and stresses?



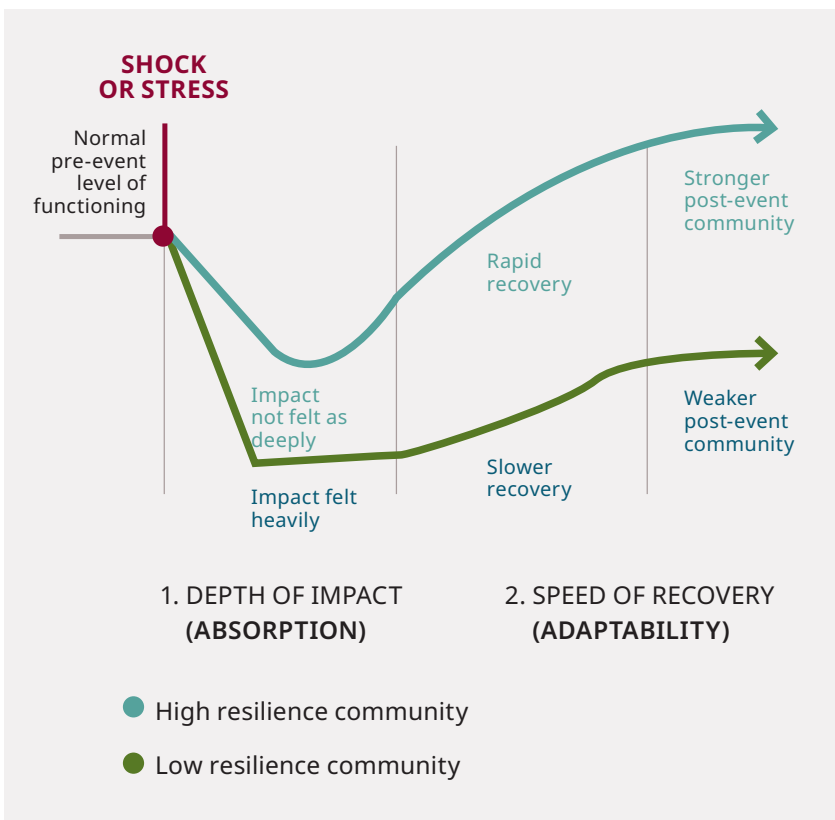
### Shocks

Shocks are sudden, generally short-term events that threaten a community. Examples include bushfires, storms, extreme heat, and infrastructure failure.



### Stresses

Stresses are ongoing problems or slow-moving disasters that make it harder for a community to cope over time. Examples include climate change, drought, poverty, and lack of affordable housing.



Adapted from New Zealand's National Disaster Resilience Strategy.<sup>4</sup>



Photo credit: Samuel Shelley

## Foundations of disaster resilience

**Building disaster resilient communities requires all levels of government, non-government organisations, communities, business and industry to work together and share the responsibility. However, responsibility will not always be shared equally.**

There are some activities where the Tasmanian Government and the organisations that support emergency management must assume greater responsibility than the general community. Similarly, there are activities where communities will take a lead and a greater share of the responsibility.

### Partners in disaster resilience

- All levels of government (local, state, national)
- Individuals and families
- Business, industry and primary producers
- Schools and school communities, childcare and elderly service providers
- Community organisations
- Critical infrastructure and service providers
- Owners and operators of crowded places and major events
- The not-for-profit sector and emergency management volunteers
- The insurance industry
- Design, building and construction industries, and land-use planners
- Scientists and research organisation<sup>5</sup>

There is no one-size-fits-all answer for what makes a community resilient or for how organisations can work together to lessen the impacts of disasters. Every resilient community or organisation will have its own unique mix of risks, people, business, services, built and natural environments and leadership network characteristics, but many will have the same underlying elements. These include working together, planning ahead, looking out for one another, strong local networks, access to reliable information, and the ability to adapt and recover when disaster strikes. Resilient communities learn from past experiences, reduce risks where possible, and build the skills and resources needed to respond quickly and recover stronger.

It is only through a coordinated approach that a sustainable emergency management system that builds resilience to emergencies will be realised in Tasmania.

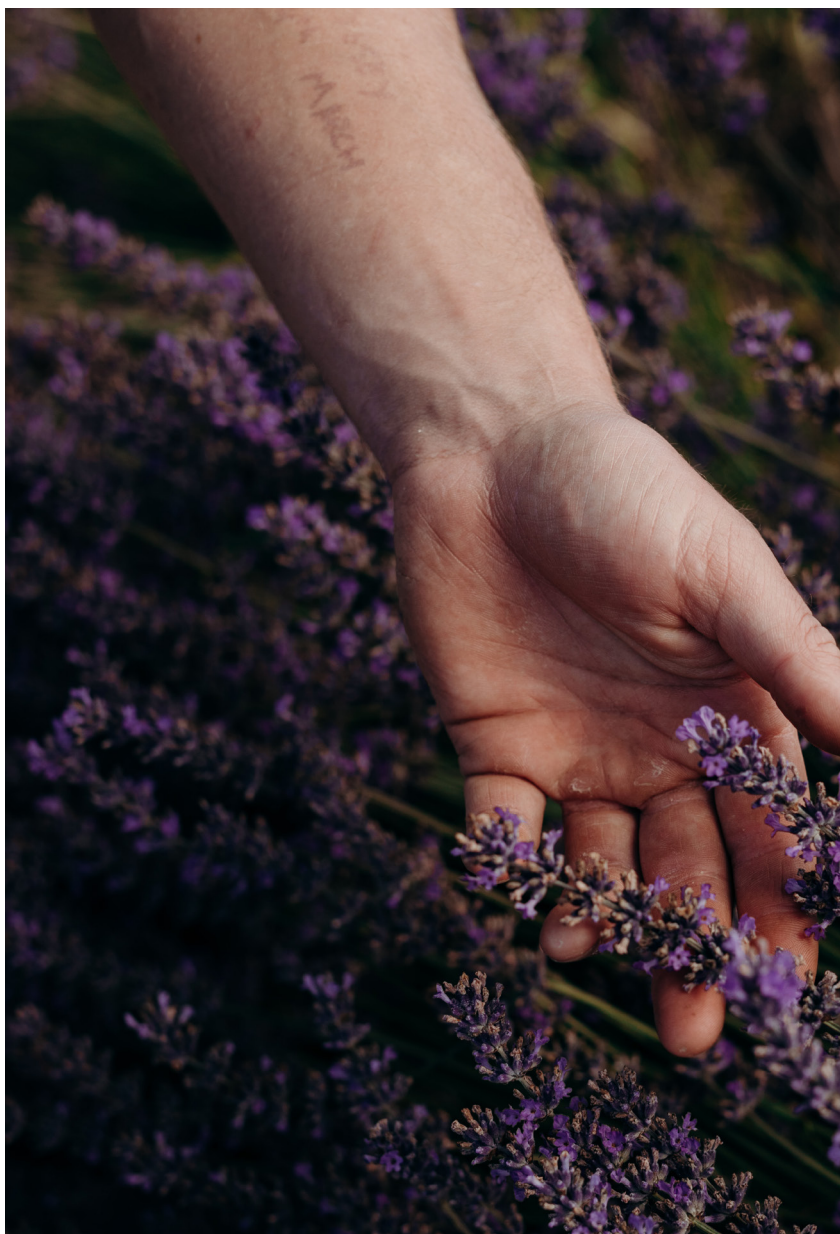


Photo credit: Jess Oakenfull

## Get ready

**Tasmanians can contribute to building a more resilient state by understanding risks that can become a disaster that affect them.**

The Get Ready section on TasALERT.com provides Tasmanians with practical information to prepare for disasters. TasALERT hosts the RiskReady tool that

helps people to identify risks that their individual properties are exposed to, and an Insurance Checkup tool to help individuals understand how to find the right level and type of insurance.

# Factors that influence disaster resilience



## ECONOMIC

- Insurance
- Disaster recovery funding arrangements
- Business continuity



## ENVIRONMENTAL

- Caring for, restoring and managing nature
- Traditional environmental knowledge and land management
- Climate change
- Shared responsibility for the stewardship of nature



## CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Cross-sector dependency
- Protective security
- Business continuity planning
- Supply chain resilience
- Essential services
- Investment and maintenance
- Equitable access



## SOCIAL

- Social infrastructure
- Cohesion and trust
- Preparedness and risk mitigation
- Inclusion and equity
- Volunteerism and participation
- Wellbeing and care



## BUILT

- Building codes and standards
- Retrofitting and upgrading
- Land use and zoning
- City development and planning
- Critical facilities
- Reliable and affordable homes
- Nature and water spaces
- Heritage protection



## DISASTER MANAGEMENT

- Hazard risk assessments
- Information systems
- Planning and exercise management
- Continuous improvement and lessons management
- Capability and capacity of emergency management sector
- Volunteer support
- Workforce wellbeing
- Coordination and governance



## COMMUNICATION

- Raising risk awareness
- Sharing knowledge and resources
- Warnings systems
- Supporting continuous feedback
- Building trust and social cohesion

Photo credit: Stu Gibson



## Context | About Tasmania



The Tasmanian brand is admired worldwide and is associated with purity and sustainability.<sup>8</sup> Tasmania supports a diverse range of resilient industries. Primary industries, advanced manufacturing and food processing have been identified as strengths in the state's economy, along with a thriving tourism industry.<sup>9</sup> Small businesses are central to our economy, accounting for over 90 per cent of all businesses in Tasmania. It is important to protect our businesses and industries from the impacts of disasters and maintain Tasmania's clean and green image, which is vital to the state's economic performance.



Tasmania's social and economic wellbeing depends on its critical infrastructure and services; providing our state with safe drinking water, food, transport, health services, energy, communications and supply chains.

Tasmania has a range of resilience strengths and challenges that are unique to our island state. Our airports and seaports are vital to the state's accessibility and economy.<sup>10</sup> The Basslink Interconnector improves energy security and provides economic value for our state alongside significant hydropower and wind assets.<sup>11</sup> Tasmania has nearly 27 per cent of Australia's total freshwater reserve capacity<sup>12</sup>, with large-scale irrigation systems.<sup>13</sup> As critical infrastructure is increasingly interconnected and interdependent, a disruption to one could impact others and result in flow on consequence across our economy.<sup>14</sup> Resilient critical infrastructure provides Tasmanians with ongoing access to secure and stable critical services that can withstand current and future pressures.



Tasmania is known as one of the safest places in the world, for both people and property.<sup>6</sup> We have a highly decentralised population, with many regional, remote and very remote communities. For at least 40,000 years, Tasmanian Aboriginal culture has been carried through story, song, kinship and Country. These connections continue in community life today, carried and shared across generations. Tasmania has a strong arts and culture scene that many people take part in. With a relatively small population of over 575 000,<sup>7</sup> building on our strong community connections by supporting social cohesion, protecting our cultural values and wellbeing is important for our on-island resilience.



At 42 degrees south, our island state has a mild and temperate maritime climate.

Tasmania has spectacular natural attributes including laying claim to some of the cleanest air and drinking water in the world.<sup>15</sup> We are an island state with stringent biosecurity standards and the only Australian state free from many major pests and diseases.<sup>16</sup>

Over 50 per cent of Tasmanian land is managed in our parks and reserves.<sup>17</sup> Protecting our environment helps reduce the impact of severe weather events, keeps ecosystems healthy which can assist with disaster risk reduction.<sup>18</sup>

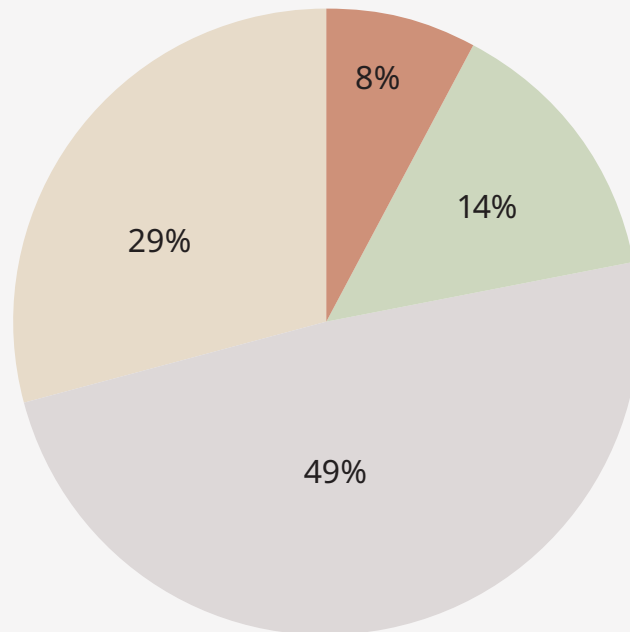
## What Tasmanians value

Through public engagement, with 200 participants across Tasmania, people shared what they value most about living here. They highlighted Tasmania's unique natural environment, the way of life, the strong sense of community and the practical and economic opportunities that support everyday life. These values shape belonging, identity and well being in Tasmania.

Understanding these values is important because they show what matters most when planning for disaster resilience. They clarify that when disaster strikes, interruptions to community life, impacts on livelihoods and damage to the environment are what matters most to Tasmanians.

By including these values in our resilience planning, we make sure community priorities shape how we reduce disaster risks and build resilience.

Values of the Tasmanian community



- Community and lifestyle
- Living environment
- Practicality and accessibility
- Economic and property interest

Understanding the things we value, and the tensions and trade-offs between them, can provide insights about prioritising disaster risk reduction efforts and can assist us to better prepare.<sup>19</sup>



Photo credit: Moon Cheese Studio

## Our disaster risk environment

Tasmania is vulnerable to a range of hazards. Since the release of the state's first disaster resilience strategy in 2019, Tasmanians have experienced a number of small and large-scale emergency events.

Below are Tasmania's emergency management incidents and events from 2020 to 2025.

### 2019–2020

Black Summer Bushfires

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### 2020–2023

COVID-19 Pandemic

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### 2022

January – Mersey River Marine Incident (oil spill)

March – Widespread Internet Outage (damaged telecommunication cables)

June – North-West Windstorm

August – Huon and Derwent Valley Flash Flooding

October – Severe Weather Event (flooding in Northern Tasmania)

December – Rosebery Bushfire



Photo credit: Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management

### 2023

March – Small Hive Beetle Incursion

April – Cyber Incident (GoAnywhere)

September – Coles Bay Bushfire

November – Dolphin Sands Bushfire

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### 2024

February – East Coast Flash Flooding and Storm

February – Central Highlands Bushfires

March – Port Latta Bushfire

September – Statewide Severe Weather Event

### 2025

January – Lake Rosebery Oil Spill Incident

January – Snug Tiers Bushfire

February – West Coast Complex Bushfires

October – Severe Weather Event

December – Dolphin Sands Bushfire

December – St Helens Bushfire

## What increases disaster risk?

Climate change projections indicate that many natural hazards will intensify as the climate warms. As our climate continues to change, Tasmania is likely to experience increased hot days and heatwaves, longer and more severe fire seasons, significant changes in seasonal and regional rainfall patterns, increased windspeed, rising sea levels, and increased frequency of storm events and related flooding, coastal erosion and inundation.<sup>20</sup>

The impact of extreme weather on the Australian economy has more than tripled over the past three decades.<sup>21</sup> The total cost of natural disasters in Tasmania over the next 40 years is expected to be between \$19 billion (low emissions scenario) to \$21 billion (high emissions scenario).<sup>22</sup>

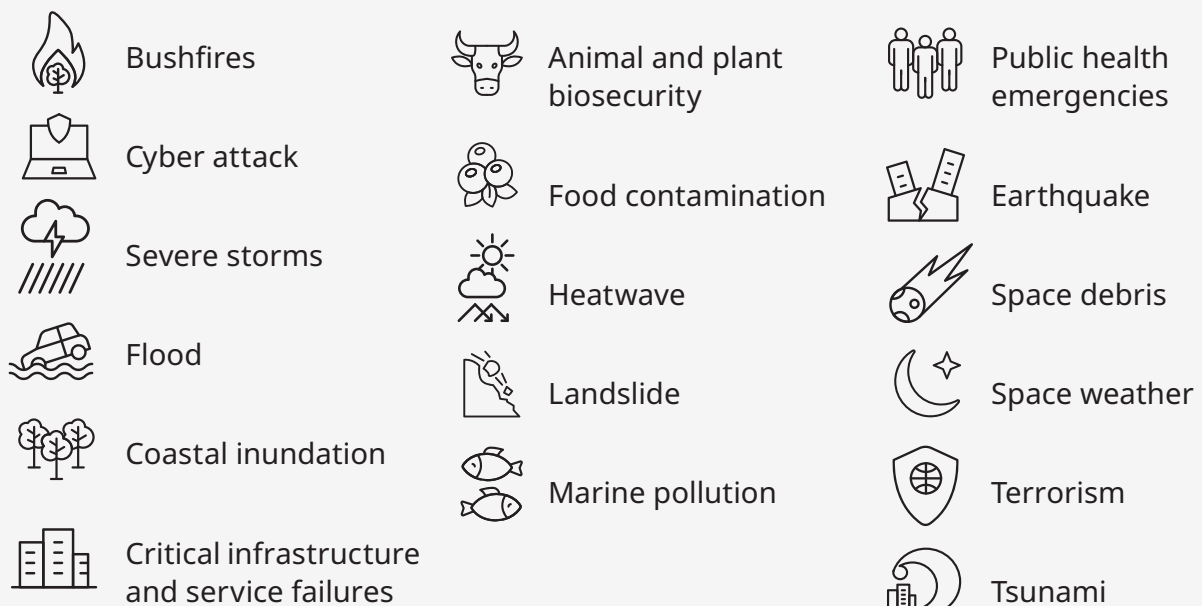
In addition to natural hazards, Tasmania is not immune to threats in the security environment including cyber attacks, espionage, foreign interference and violent extremism.

An increasing population, demographic change, regional and remote communities, widening socio-economic disparity, and expensive infrastructure also contribute to the potential for increasing losses from disasters.<sup>23</sup>

Our vulnerability is influenced by more than just exposure to hazards or threats. Our systems and resources also determine how affected we are by impacts and influence how quickly we can bounce back.

Today's disasters demand more than emergency response, they require a whole-of-society effort to prevent, withstand and recover.

### Types of disasters that are likely to impact Tasmania:



Refer to the *Tasmanian Disaster Risk Assessment* for further information on hazards in Tasmania.

## Emerging Tasmanian disaster resilience challenges

The following emerging challenges show how Tasmania's resilience will continue to be tested, and where new thinking and shared action can make the greatest difference.

- Growing climate risks and geopolitical instability are increasing the risk of disruption to critical supply chains.<sup>24</sup>
- Rising insurance premiums and exclusions are forcing more households into no insurance or underinsurance, which in turn widens inequality and puts greater pressure on public systems during recovery.<sup>25</sup>
- Older buildings not built to modern standards and infrastructure in high-risk areas (such as flood plains) are at increased risk of both acute and chronic climate events.<sup>26</sup>
- Reliance on digital systems exposes communities and services to cyber attacks and data breaches. Stronger protections are needed to maintain trust, privacy and the continuity of essential services.<sup>27</sup>
- Misinformation and disinformation are spreading faster and more widely. This pattern makes it harder for government agencies to build and maintain the trust needed for people to act on official advice and warnings.<sup>28</sup>
- Volunteer numbers are declining and the existing volunteer base is ageing. This weakens the capacity of the system to respond to disasters. We need ways to value, recruit and sustain volunteers.<sup>29</sup>
- Tasmania's ageing population, decreasing affordable home ownership, rising rates of chronic health and disability are increasing the number of people at increased risk in disasters, which create new demands on emergency systems.<sup>30</sup>
- Tasmania's climate is changing. Tasmania has experienced a number of natural hazard events in recent years and under the changing climate these are projected to increase in intensity and frequency.<sup>31</sup>

Tasmania has strong foundations for disaster resilience. These have been built through collaboration, learning and shared responsibility across communities, organisations and government. As the risk environment evolves, the systems and capabilities that support recovery are also tested in new ways. Recognising these emerging challenges will help focus future investment, coordination and innovation to continue to build Tasmania's resilience for the years ahead.

Photo credit: Moon Cheese Studio



# Strategy

## Development of the strategy

The development of the Tasmanian Disaster Resilience Strategy was funded by the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Government's National Disaster Risk Reduction Grants Program.

Cooperation is a vital component to achieving disaster resilience. The development of the strategy involved a range of consultation approaches to hear from the emergency management sector and the community.

In collaboration with the National Security College at the Australian National University, and drawing on their expertise in futures thinking and workshop design, the following engagement activities were delivered.



**90+** community members were engaged at the Burnie and Hobart shows in 2024.



**100+** participants from local and state government, critical infrastructure operators and non-government organisations attended regional workshops in 2025.



**60+** meetings with a range of individuals and groups/committees from local and state government, non-government organisations or representatives from the community.



**110+** surveys were completed during public consultation. The Premier's Youth Advisory Council was engaged through a focus group and an online workshop.

### What we heard:

"I hope that Tasmanians have an appreciation for our environment and our place in it."

"We need a plan for infrastructure and land use that acknowledges the risk of our unique island environment."

"We need to strengthen contingency planning and future-proof critical infrastructure and processes with significant consideration for interdependencies."

"Increasing individual resilience through education, communication and community engagement is a priority."

## Vision

The Tasmanian Disaster Resilience Strategy aims to support our state to achieve the following shared vision:

**Tasmanians are disaster resilient and work together to proactively manage risks and build resilience in a way that supports people to stay safe and recover.**

## Principles

These principles aim to provide a values-based framework to guide Tasmania's approach to building disaster resilience and working together to implement the strategic priorities. Applying these principles in planning and delivery helps ensure that projects follow a consistent approach, promoting collaboration and alignment across disaster resilience efforts in Tasmania.

### Decisions guided by evidence and local knowledge

Scientific research and local experience guide decisions to strengthen Tasmania's disaster resilience, with a focus on integrating climate risk and sustainable development principles.



### Clear roles, working together and accountable action

Governments, communities and organisations work together with clear responsibilities, coordinated action and transparent communication to build Tasmania's disaster resilience.



### Partnership with communities and local leadership

Communities, volunteers and local leaders help shape priorities and strengthen disaster resilience through place-based knowledge and shared decision-making.



### Inclusion, accessibility and participation

Everyone has access to the information and support they need. Services and communication reflect diverse needs and strengthen connections across communities.



### Futures-focus and systems approach

Disaster resilience in Tasmania is proactive and considers a range of future scenarios and interconnected risks.



### Continuous learning and preparedness

Tasmania builds resilience by learning from experience, improving capability and supporting innovative and adaptive approaches to preparedness.



## Strategic priorities

Tasmania's strategic priorities for building our on-island resilience have been developed through consultation with the emergency management sector. The priorities describe what we are working towards and give the Tasmanian emergency management sector a common framework for ongoing improvement. They provide strategic

leadership to guide collective action, decision-making and investment supporting a coordinated approach to strengthening Tasmania's disaster resilience.

The priorities aim to support Tasmania to build strong, coordinated systems that identify risks early, reduce impacts, and sustain Tasmania's resilience over time. The priorities will be reviewed to ensure they remain contemporary and reflect emerging research, learnings and the evolving

disaster risk environment. This strategy has identified 12 priorities across six themes of community disaster resilience, land management, critical infrastructure and essential services, strengthen our organisations, emergency management capability and capacity and information for decision-making.

## Community disaster resilience

**Empower Tasmanian communities to support one another to manage shocks, adapt, recover and grow stronger by:**

**Priority 1: Strengthening public understanding of disaster risks and preparedness, embedding community voices and preparing the next generation.**

Strengthening community awareness and understanding of disaster risks helps communities (whether it be individuals, businesses or service providers) to make informed decisions and take practical steps and work together in being better prepared for future disasters. People are more likely to engage in preparedness when they know what the risks are and how to respond.<sup>32</sup> This includes preparing the next generation by helping children and young people develop confidence and ability to be actively involved in preparing their local communities.

**Priority 2: Increasing targeted preparedness, response and relief initiatives for people at increased risk during emergencies and the services that support them.**

Everyone is at risk in an emergency, but some people face greater risk when their safety, health, access to information, or social networks are compromised. Barriers such as limited transport, telecommunications, language services, or culturally appropriate support can further increase these risks.<sup>33</sup> Supporting people at increased risk during emergencies includes measures such as (but not limited to) person-centred preparedness programs, organisational emergency preparedness for service providers and ensuring information is accessible to diverse audiences.



Photo credit: Studio Hubert

## Land management

**Govern future land use and reduce exposure of at-risk settlements through adaptation and land management by:**

**Priority 3: Building capacity and understanding around the role of land use management decisions in long-term disaster resilience.**

Strategic land-use planning reduces disaster risk by guiding development in hazard-prone areas and recognising land constraints. It supports long-term resilience by shaping critical systems and strengthening coordination between local and state government. Regional and settlement planning can limit community exposure to risk, identify shared protections, support household measures, and enable adjustments to settlement patterns where needed.<sup>34</sup>

**Priority 4: Embedding adaptive land use and environmental management practices in risk reduction decision-making across built and natural environments.**

Degraded environments increase disaster risk. Conservation, restoration and sustainable management of land, wetlands, oceans and other natural resources strengthen disaster and climate risk management. Adaptive land management builds resilience by creating natural buffers and reducing impacts on people, infrastructure and services.<sup>35</sup>

## Critical infrastructure and essential services

Support the protection, adaptive capacity and continuity of critical infrastructure and essential services by:

### **Priority 5: Managing interdependencies and vulnerabilities across critical systems such as energy, water, health, transport and communications.**

Critical infrastructure operates within a complex web of interdependencies. A failure in one sector can trigger cascading impacts.<sup>36</sup> Critical infrastructure interdependencies are fundamental considerations when assessing the resilience of infrastructure assets, systems, and the communities they serve. Understanding how critical infrastructure systems operate, anticipation of potential cascading and escalating failures, and identification of possible adaptation measures can help in preventing widespread failures.<sup>37</sup>

### **Priority 6: Strengthening resilience of priority assets and essential service networks required for safety and continuity.**

Many infrastructure assets were not designed for today's climate conditions or demand levels. Loss of essential infrastructure due to a disaster is costly for the economy and has a big impact on communities.<sup>38</sup> Strengthening priority assets through improved asset management and risk-informed design can help ensure infrastructure remains resilient now and into the future.

### **Priority 7: Diversifying and securing Tasmania's supply chains and essential resources to ensure continuity.**

Disasters can disrupt essential supply chains in many ways. Demand for goods and services increases during emergency response and recovery, while transport routes, infrastructure and production can be damaged or delayed.<sup>39</sup> At the same time, competition for limited resources often increases.

Climate change, both globally and within Australia, along with ongoing geopolitical tensions, are increasing the likelihood of disruptions to critical supply chains.<sup>40</sup> Supply chain resilience can be strengthened by understanding where the main risks and weak points are, working closely across government and industry, using a wider range of suppliers, and maintaining strategic stockpiles to reduce the impact of disruptions.<sup>41</sup>



Photo credit: Studio Hubert



Photo credit: Studio Hubert

## Strengthen our organisations

Strengthen Tasmania's organisations to ensure the continued delivery of services and safeguard Tasmania's people, information and assets by:

**Priority 8: Advancing protective security practices within organisations to safeguard their most critical resources – their people, information and organisational assets.**

The effective implementation of protective security measures and the creation of a strong security culture helps to safeguard our people, information and assets by preventing or mitigating potential disruptions from security threats, and responding promptly and effectively to any incident.<sup>42,43</sup>

## Emergency management capability and capacity

Build and develop the capability and capacity of our emergency management sector to prepare for, sustainably respond to and recover from emergencies by:

**Priority 9: Advancing interoperability and coordination across the emergency management sector through common systems and approaches.**

Disaster management relies on coordinated action across all levels of government, organisations and volunteers. Interoperability across systems, personnel and equipment enables effective information sharing and joint operations during emergencies. As extreme weather events increase in frequency and intensity, pressure on Tasmania's emergency response systems will grow.<sup>44</sup> Continuous improvement in interoperability will strengthen sector capability and reinforces the need to invest in compatible systems as technology evolves.<sup>45</sup>

## Information for decision-making

**Better coordinate the development, use, sharing and accessible delivery of disaster risk and emergency management information for decision-making by:**

**Priority 10: Centralising and maintaining risk information on external and internal systems to ensure a trusted source of truth.**

Emergency services depend on operational management systems which provide access to data and information to assist preparing, planning and responding to large scale emergencies. Decision support tools are important for short-term operational and tactical decisions to promote safe operational decisions for emergency services and clearer communication with the public, and also provide the data needed for long-term strategic planning and investment in resilience.<sup>46</sup> It is critical that intelligence capabilities are current, robust, maintained, fully utilised, integrated and shared across multiple sectors.<sup>47</sup>

**Priority 11: Improving awareness, availability and sharing of disaster risk information across government, business and communities.**

Our communities can only take steps to prepare and recover quickly from disasters if they feel empowered in their decision-making. That begins with information presented in the right way, at the right time, and through trusted channels.<sup>48</sup> Developing a shared understanding of risk across society enables all stakeholders to take informed action and make meaningful commitments to planning, investment and disaster preparedness.<sup>49</sup>

**Priority 12: Enabling greater data sharing across government and the emergency management sector through common systems and approaches.**

A coordinated approach to disaster and climate data reduces administrative costs, minimises duplication of data collection and analysis, and enhances decision-making. Improved data governance alongside harmonised standards and technologies will support collaboration in the production, analysis, access, and exchange of information, data and knowledge.<sup>50</sup> It will also provide the opportunity to improve the coordination of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.<sup>51</sup>

Consultation identified additional priorities, including local leadership and community-led initiatives, enhanced emergency management capability within local government, and social connection. Important work is already underway in these areas and will continue. These priorities will be reconsidered through the strategy's formal review process.



Photo credit: Moon Cheese Studio

## Measuring success

**Building disaster resilience is a long-term commitment that takes time, persistence and collaboration. It means learning from past events, working together and making continual improvements so communities are safer and stronger for the future.**

Disaster resilience cannot be measured by a single indicator because it involves many interdependent systems, relationships and capabilities that evolve over time. Progress becomes visible as partnerships mature, systems strengthen and capability grows.

This strategy responds to that challenge by introducing a process to track progress and guide future investment. Each year, the Tasmanian Government will review projects, investments and outcomes that contribute to disaster resilience across the state. This is designed to build a shared evidence base that supports better decision-making, drives continuous improvement and strengthens capability for the future.

# Spotlight on resilience in action

## Young people shaping resilient futures

Young people live with uncertainty of climate change, pandemics and disasters shaping their present and future. Their experiences of school, community, technology and social life offer distinctive perspectives on what resilience may look like and requires. Listening to these perspectives is critical for building strategies that reflect intergenerational realities and foster long term and inclusive resilience.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 identifies children and youth as “agents of change” and calls for their active participation in decision-making.<sup>52</sup> The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child reinforces governments’ duty to protect children from environmental risks and ensure their participation in shaping the future.<sup>53</sup> In Australia, the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience emphasises shared responsibility, while the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework advances this through an all-of-society approach that includes structured youth involvement in risk

information, planning and investment.<sup>54,55</sup>

In Tasmania, the Premier’s Youth Advisory Council was engaged to ensure the inclusion of young people in the development of this strategy. A resilient futures workshop and a focus group captured young people’s perspectives on the challenges and the priorities they see for strengthening resilience. Activities encouraged participants to imagine what a resilient Tasmania could look like, reflect on challenges, and identify the building blocks of resilience they considered most important. Their insights reinforce and extend international and national policy directions.

**Education as the foundation:** Embedding disaster education in schools and communities equips young people with the knowledge and confidence to prepare. Ongoing engagement from emergency services through high school builds pathways for volunteering and strengthens connections with young people.

**Connection and wellbeing:** Building strong social ties and ensuring accessible mental health supports enables resilience, particularly during recovery.

### **Trustworthy**

**communication:** Clear, consistent and transparent government messaging builds confidence, especially during pandemics and misinformation events.

### **Digital and physical**

**security:** Investing in both cyber protections and infrastructure ensure communities and services can withstand disasters.

## Youth vision for a resilient Tasmania

We imagine a Tasmania where our schools and communities teach us how to get ready before disasters happen. We want security systems that work, but just as important, we want to know what to do ourselves. When we’re prepared, the impacts feel smaller and we can bounce back faster. Everyone, including young people, should have a real say in how communities get ready, because resilience belongs to all of us.

These insights invite the emergency management sector to take responsibility for prioritising preparedness education as part of young people’s growing up, as natural as playing sport or caring for country.

## Caring for Country, building resilience

**Aboriginal knowledge of Country, often referred to as traditional ecological knowledge, is increasingly recognised as essential for disaster resilience. Aboriginal knowledge of Country takes form in practices including cultural burning, seasonal land management and caring for waterways and biodiversity.**

National and international policy frameworks reinforce this recognition. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction highlights the role of indigenous peoples globally,<sup>56</sup> while the National Agreement on Closing the Gap emphasises the importance of embedding

Aboriginal voices in disaster planning, response and recovery.<sup>57</sup> Public interest in these practices is also growing, which provides further momentum for their integration into disaster resilience.

In Tasmania, Aboriginal ranger programs led by Aboriginal organisations and the Tasmanian Government's Caring for Country program, including the Aboriginal Burns Unit, provide meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal people to work on Country, and foster cross-cultural knowledge sharing.

Aboriginal rangers apply cultural knowledge in activities such as weed and feral animal control, revegetation with native

plants, habitat restoration and cultural burning. Their work extends to the protection of cultural heritage sites, marine and coastal management, and the care of Aboriginal-managed lands.

Aboriginal land and sea stewardship sustains living connections between people and Country, renews the health of soils and waterways, protects cultural places after bushfires, and the continuation of cultural practices. As collaboration expands, ongoing support and the continuation of Aboriginal knowledge of Country will be crucial for strengthening long-term resilience in Tasmania.



Photo credit: Moon Cheese Studio



Photo credit: Studio Hubert

## People at the centre of disaster preparedness

**When emergencies happen, like a fire or a flood, it's important that everyone knows what to do to stay safe. People with disability may have extra things to think about or might need extra help. It can be harder for some people to hear warnings, move quickly, or bring what they need for everyday life.**

People who plan for emergencies in Australia and around the world want to make sure nobody is left out. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030<sup>58</sup> asks countries to include people with disability in emergency

planning and make sure information is accessible to all. Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 supports this vision at a national level.<sup>59</sup>

In Tasmania, a State Emergency Service (SES) project is helping people with disability get ready for emergencies. The project builds on the Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) approach created by the University of Sydney with emergency services and people with disability.<sup>60</sup> P-CEP works with people to make a plan that fits their life, so they know what to do in an emergency. The Tasmanian project holds workshops for people

with disability and their support networks. The project team also goes to community events to talk about ways to get ready for emergencies. SES is making sure all emergency preparedness guidance reflects the P-CEP model and is accessible, recognising that one in five Tasmanians live with disability. By helping people to make a plan for emergencies that fits their life, everyone in the community can be safer and more resilient. The project contributes to a more inclusive culture of preparedness in Tasmania.

## Resilience is a shared responsibility

**Ultimately, household insurability is not just about the cost of a policy — it's the confidence that we, as a community, can manage our shared risks. It happens when government policies, planning, individual actions and community resilience come together.**

The collaboration between local, state and federal governments to deliver the upgrades to the Launceston flood levee is a great example of working together to achieve resilience. The Launceston Flood Authority was established in 2008 to design, construct and maintain the new and existing flood levees. \$58 million of major upgrades was completed in 2014, the upgrades were put to the test by the June 2016 floods. The federally funded Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative

Research Centre studied the performance of the levee system after the event and found it saved \$215 million during the event.

However, the broader community benefits provided through insurance were not widely understood when assessing the advantages of reduced vulnerability to both the hazard and the exposure to the hazard. At the 2022 Floodplain Management Australia National Conference, global reinsurance broker Aon noted that existing flood mitigation measures, like levees and nature-based solutions, reduce the flood insurance premium by approximately 34 per cent compared to unprotected areas.

Aon highlighted that Launceston was leading nationally with approximately a 93 per cent insurance benefit due to the Launceston City Council's

proactive sharing of high-quality flood mitigation information with the Insurance Council of Australia's National Flood Information Database. Insurers have been able to use this detailed data to lower premiums for well-protected areas such as Launceston. RACT has estimated this proactive investment saves homeowners in the protected areas \$10-\$15 million each year in reduced insurance premiums alone.

If Tasmanians continue to build their understanding of disaster risk, share the risk fairly, reduce the risk through coordinated planning and investment, insurance once again becomes what it was always meant to be: a bridge to recovery, not a barrier to protection and our island can be one of the most resilient places to live.

# Appendix

Tasmanian Government policies and strategies that contribute to disaster resilience include (but are not limited to):

*Climate Change (State Action) Act 2008*

Tasmanian Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines

Tasmania's Emissions Reduction and Resilience Roadmap

Rural Water Use Strategy

The Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Natural Values Climate Change Adaptation Strategy

Tasmania's Climate Change Action Plan

Natural Heritage Strategy for Tasmania (2013-2030): Securing our Natural Advantage

Tasmanian Urban Passenger Transport Framework

Tasmanian State Coastal Policy

Managing Tasmania's Climate Risks and Opportunities

*Biosecurity Act 2019*

*Building Act 2016*

*Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994*

*Fire Service Act 1979*

*Food Act 2003*

*Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*

*Launceston Flood Risk Management Act 2015*

*Local Government Act 1993*

*Natural Resource Management Act 2002*

*Petroleum Products Emergency Act 1994*

*Public Health Act 1997*

*Terrorism (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2002*

*Water Management Act 1999*

Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy

Tasmanian Relief and Recovery Arrangements

Regional Drought Resilience Plans

Regional Land Use strategies

Tasmania's Population Policy – Planning for our future

Tasmanian Housing Strategy

Tasmanian Food Security Strategy

Lifting Literacy Implementation Plan

Tasmanian Government strategy for digital transformation - Our Digital Future

Tasmanian Renewable Energy Action Plan

Our Healthcare Future

Tasmania's Disability Strategy

Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy – It Takes a Tasmanian Village

Embracing Diversity, Fostering Belonging: Tasmania's Multicultural Action Plan

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This project was made possible with a grant from the Australian Government's National Disaster Risk Reduction Grants Program.

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Published: March 2026  
ISBN: 978-1-925906-59-2

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