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Terms and definitions (1 of 4)

What are an emergency, a disaster, and a crisis?

Your organisation may have an Emergency Plan, a Disaster Plan, or a Crisis Plan. These are all names for the same type of plan.

The dictionary definitions of these words are as follows:

- Emergency - a serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation requiring immediate action
- Disaster - a sudden accident or a natural catastrophe that causes great damage or loss of life
- Crisis - a time of intense difficulty or danger

As you can see, these words tend to indicate an incident that will (or could) have a significant impact, and is unexpected or sudden. These are precisely the types of incident which your plans should be designed to deal with.

The name of your plan is usually just your organisation's preference. However, to keep things simple, the term "Emergency Plan" will be used throughout this module.

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