

Ward 1 Site Visit

18 JUNE 2026

Disaster Management Control Centre, Hermanus

Introduction

Ald Dudley Coetzee, accompanied members of the Ward 1 Committee on a Visit to the Disaster Management Control Centre in Hermanus. The following members attended:

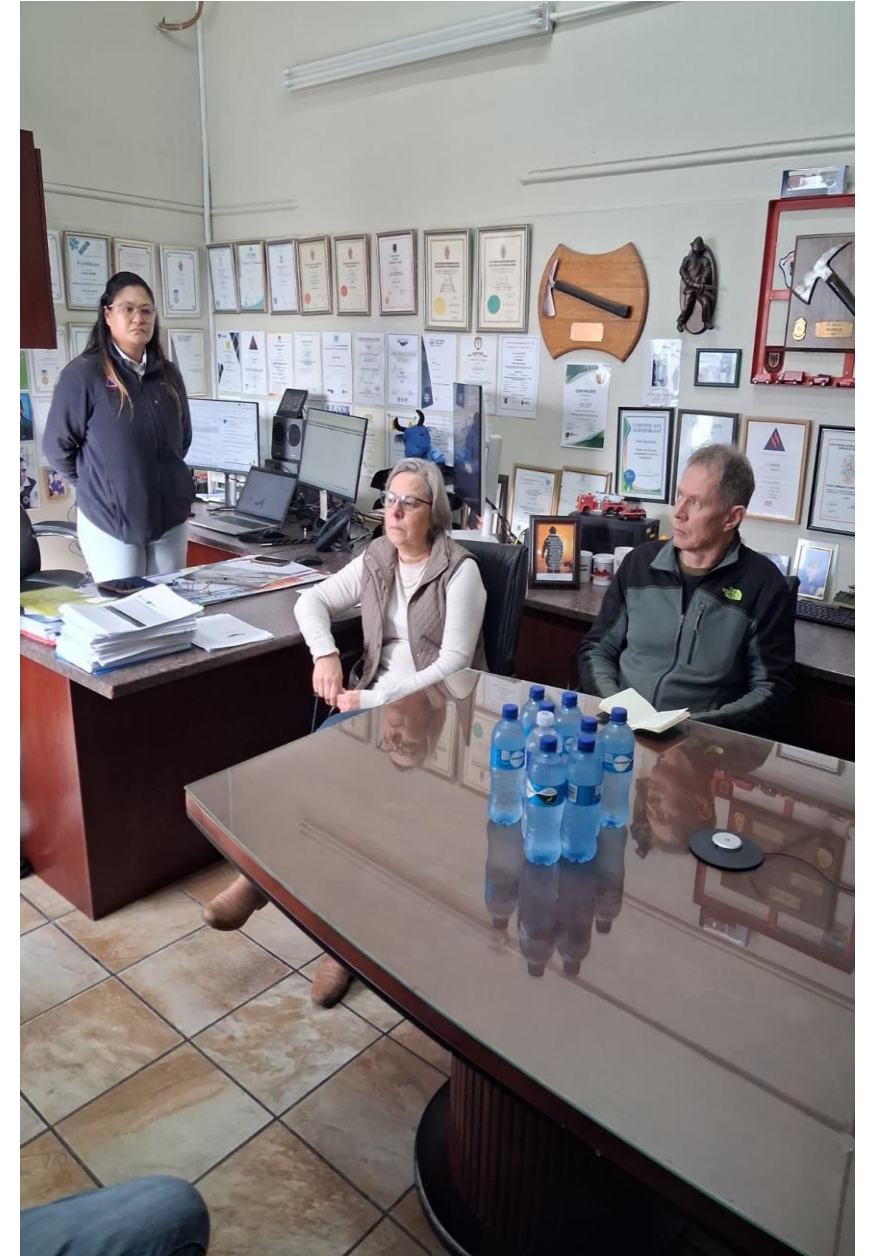
- Mr Wilson Damon
- Mr Dave Hagen
- Mr Kevin Husk
- Mrs. Kathryn Marshall
- Officials:
- Mrs. Marzaan Middleton - Manager: Community Liaison Gansbaai/Stanford
- Official: Mrs. Seulene de Villiers

Date of the tour: Thursday,
18 June 2026 at 11h00

- Overstand officials:
- Mr. Lester Smith (Chief: Fire, Rescue & Disaster Management)
- Mr. Angelo Aplon (Deputy Chief Fire)
- Ms. Meagan Carelse (Assistant Chief: Disaster Management)
- Stanford Residents:
- Mr. Chris James
- Mr. Stuart Dunsmore
- Mrs. Bea Whittaker



Mr. Lester Smith welcomed all present and explained that the meeting had to be held in his office, as the Disaster Management Control Centre is currently under construction.





Mr. Lester Smith introduced his team:
Mr. Angelo Aplon, who is responsible for fire services within the department.
Ms. Meagan Carelse, who is responsible for disaster management within the department.

Mr. David Hagen explained that the Ward 1 Ward Committee members had requested a visit to the Disaster Management Control Centre. Following the floods of 2023, they had several questions regarding how disasters are managed and responded to within the municipality.



Mr. Lester Smith explained the role and functions of the Disaster Management Centre:

The Centre receives weather warnings from various forecasting platforms, including the South African Weather Service (SAWS), Windy, and YR.

Weather warnings classified as **Level 4 and above** trigger the activation of a **Joint Operations Centre (JOC)**.

Through the **Incident Command System (ICS)** and the **Joint Operations Centre (JOC)**, meetings are convened to discuss risk assessments, potential impacts, and the necessary response measures.

Following these discussions, planning and preparedness measures are implemented by the relevant municipal departments to mitigate risks and ensure coordinated responses to potential disasters.



The diagram illustrates the disaster management structure, showing the flow of information and coordination between various entities. Key components include:

- Overberg District Municipality:**
 - Disaster Management Advisory Forum (top center)
 - Disaster Management Centre (top right)
- Overstrand:**
 - Overstrand Disaster Management Advisory Forum (center)
 - Overstrand Disaster Management (center right)
- External Disaster Management Role-players:**
 - SAPS
 - SANDF
 - PGWC EMS
 - PGWC Traffic
 - Eskom DWS
 - GOFPA
 - NGO's
- Overstrand Political Leaders & Top Management** (left)
- Overstrand Municipal Departments** (left)
- Nodal points for disaster management within municipal departments** (left, red box)
- Departmental Planning Groups** (center left)
- Risk Reduction Project Teams** (center left)
- Preparedness Planning Groups** (center left)
- Joint Response & Relief Management Teams** (center right)
- Recovery & Rehabilitation Project Teams** (center right)
- Overstrand Emergency Control Centre/Group** (bottom left):
 - Disaster Management, Fire
 - Municipal Traffic & Law Enforcement
 - Essential Services (Water, Sewerage, Electricity, Solid Waste, Engineering)
- Overstrand Disaster Operations Centre/ Joint Operations Centre** (bottom right):
 - (Activated in case of major incidents or disasters)

Arrows indicate the flow of communication and coordination between these entities.



Discussion on Flood Preparedness and Response

The Ward Committee members expressed their main concern regarding the municipality's preparedness for a flood disaster similar to the one experienced in Stanford in 2023.

Mr. Lester Smith explained that Disaster Management relies heavily on weather warning forecasts and predictive information to prepare for potential disasters. He noted that the Overstrand area is considered a high-risk area for flooding and other weather-related incidents. He further indicated that he would like to convene a meeting with relevant experts, including **Mr. James** and **Mr. Dunsmore**, to discuss flood risks and any available information regarding flood levels. The outcomes and recommendations from these discussions would be incorporated into the Disaster Management Plan to enhance future preparedness and response measures.

Mr. Angelo Aplon also explained the impact of flooding on the natural environment and surrounding infrastructure. He emphasized the importance of strengthening the bridge over the Klein River and ensuring that appropriate measures are implemented to prepare for and mitigate the effects of future flooding events.



Question: Can the Overstrand Municipality fill the gap between the South African Weather Service (SAWS) and Disaster Management?

Answer: It was explained that additional funding is required for Disaster Management to enhance its capacity, resources, and systems. Increased funding would assist in strengthening coordination, preparedness, and response capabilities between weather warning services and municipal disaster management operations.



Control Room Operations

Ms. Meagan Carelse explained to the Ward Committee members how the Disaster Management Control Room operates.

She informed members that residents are encouraged to register on the municipality's SMS notification system. Once registered, residents can receive alerts and important information regarding potential threats, such as fires, flooding, and other emergencies.

She further explained that, whenever there is a threat or warning relating to a fire, flood, or other disaster, information is communicated to residents through various channels, including SMS notifications, WhatsApp groups, and social media platforms.

Mr. Lester Smith encouraged Ward Committee members to maintain regular communication with the Disaster Management Department and to share relevant information with their communities to ensure that residents remain informed and prepared for potential emergencies.





The end
Closing time
12H30
Thank you