

# Councils and emergencies directions paper



Department of Environment,  
Land, Water and Planning  
(Local Government Victoria) with  
Emergency Management Victoria



Environment,  
Land, Water  
and Planning

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# Foreword

Victoria's 79 councils play an essential role in the state's emergency management arrangements by preparing communities to respond to and recover from emergencies. However, current emergency management responsibilities are often not well-understood inside and outside the emergency management sector. Emergency management capability and capacity also differs greatly from council to council.

The emergency management and local government sectors recognise the need for clarity about councils' emergency management responsibilities and actions. Clarity ensures councils know what resources they need and also helps agencies and local communities understand what they can rely on their council to deliver and what they must do themselves.

Identifying and agreeing on councils' current emergency management responsibilities and actions is the essential first step of the Councils and Emergencies Project, which aims to improve the capability and capacity of councils to manage emergencies. The project will help the local government sector align with Victoria's overall emergency management system, in particular the Victorian Preparedness Goal. The Councils and Emergencies Project is being led by Local Government Victoria, which is part of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. The department works to ensure the ongoing viability of councils' normal business and emergency management responsibilities and actions through governance and funding support. The project is also a priority of the *Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan Update 2016–19*. Agencies have worked as one to progress the strategic action plan's priorities and to continue the reform journey, responding to new opportunities and challenges as they arise.

This directions paper describes councils' current emergency management responsibilities and actions, based on their current legislative, policy and planning obligations. The paper acknowledges councils' strengths and their capacity to overcome the challenges they face in undertaking their emergency management role. It reflects extensive consultation with council officers, emergency management agencies and emergency management experts.

As the Emergency Management Commissioner and Executive Director of Local Government Victoria, we ask the local government and emergency management sectors to confirm or suggest amendments to how this paper describes councils' current emergency management responsibilities and actions. Then, Local Government Victoria will work with councils to understand the skills and resources councils need to successfully deliver emergency management services to their community.

Thank you for reading this paper and we look forward to your feedback.



**Dr Graeme Emonson**  
Executive Director  
Local Government Victoria



**Craig Lapsley PSM**  
Emergency Management  
Commissioner



## Enhancing the capacity and capability of councils in emergency management



# Introduction

## Legislative, policy and planning framework

### Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan Update 2016–19

The Emergency Management Acts of 1986 and 2013 as well as the *Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan Update 2016–19* underpin Victoria’s emergency management arrangements. Together, they provide the vision, priorities, investment framework and principles for the statewide emergency management system.

The *Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan Update 2016–19* lists eight statewide strategic priorities and 31 actions to achieve safer and more resilient communities. The priorities seek to strengthen the collective capacity and capability of all those with emergency management responsibilities — the state government, councils, public sector agencies, community organisations, businesses and the public — to learn from experience, meet evolving challenges and build the governance, leadership and systems to support their efforts.

### Victorian Preparedness Goal

The Victorian Preparedness Goal, published in August 2016, provides the foundation for an emergency management preparedness system including:

- state planning systems that support an integrated planning approach across all communities
- a state preparedness framework that identifies risk scenarios and critical tasks to deliver core capabilities
- a state preparedness report that explains progress building and sustaining the core capabilities.

The goal includes the *Victorian Emergency Management Capability Blueprint 2015–2025*, which aligns to Priority G in the strategic action plan. The blueprint’s three objectives are:

- shared understanding: appreciation and understanding of the emergency management sector’s capabilities, capacity and underlying responsibilities
- improved integration for the future: maximise current emergency management capabilities while building and developing future capabilities based on emerging risks
- connected community, business and government partnerships: enhancing capability across community, business and government.



## Victorian Preparedness Goal

Emergency Management Sector Core Capabilities  
July 2016

The blueprint describes **capability** as our collective ability to reduce the likelihood and consequences of an emergency before, during and after it occurs. The core elements of capability are:

- people: people and personnel
- resources: physical equipment and assets
- governance: the enabling factors including legislation, funding, authorising environment, arrangements, doctrine and policy
- systems: learning and development, information technology, financial, infrastructure and assets management, workforce management, workplace health and safety, quality control and incident management systems
- processes: capacity planning, risk management, continuous improvement, information flow and planning.

The blueprint describes **capacity** as the extent to which the core elements of capability can be sustained before, during and after an emergency.

### Core capabilities

The goal identifies 21 core capabilities the emergency management sector needs to manage emergencies, coordinate efforts and improve training. Table 1 lists and describes each core capability, and it shows when organisations exercise the capability: before, during or after an emergency.

Of the 21 core capabilities, councils have some responsibility or take action in sixteen. The 21 core capabilities are described below, those capabilities of which councils are not involved are in italics in the following table.

**Table 1: Victorian preparedness goal core capability descriptions - as they relate to Victorian councils**

<b>Core capability</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Planning</b>	Before, during, after	Conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community as appropriate in the development of executable strategic, operational, and/or tactical level approaches to meet defined objectives.
<b>Community information and warnings</b>	Before, during, after	<p>Deliver public information and warnings that are authoritative, consistently constructed and relevant for all Victorians and visitors in all emergencies.</p> <p>Provide timely and tailored information that supports the community to make informed decisions before, during and after emergencies.</p>
<b>Operational management</b>	Before, during, after	Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities, including operational communications.
<b>Intelligence and information-sharing</b>	Before, during, after	To provide timely, accurate and actionable decision support information, resulting from the planning, collecting, processing, analysis and evaluation from multiple data sources, which is needed to be more proactive in anticipating hazard activity and informing mitigation, response or recovery activities. It also includes the assessment of risks, threats and hazards so that decision makers, responders, and community members can take informed action to reduce their entity's risk and increase their resilience.
<b>Public order and community safety</b>	Before, during, after	Provide a safe, secure and orderly society through the active prosecution of regulations and laws related to the prevention of serious emergencies and to afford a safe environment for those communities affected by an emergency and any responding personnel engaged in emergency operations.
<b>Building community resilience</b>	Before, during, after	Communities strengthen their lifelines by better connecting and working together with appropriate support.
<b>Fire management &amp; suppression</b>	Before, during	Provide firefighting capabilities to manage and suppress fires of all types, kinds, and complexities while protecting lives, property, and the environment in the affected (land and water) area.

<b>Core capability</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Fatality management</b>	<i>No council involvement</i>	<i>Provide fatality management services, including search, recovery, victim identification (following Interpol Standards), and repatriation. As well as the sharing of accurate and timely information with other agencies and the community, and the provision of support to the bereaved.</i>
<b>Critical transport</b>	<i>No council involvement</i>	<i>Plan for and provide response and recovery services during emergencies that affect the road network including alternative routes, emergency permits and escorts for responders, clearing, restoration of damaged roads.  Provide response to major public transportation emergencies including infrastructure access and accessible transportation services to ensure community movement including coordination of all private rail, tram and bus services to support response priority objectives.</i>
<b>Logistics and supply chain management</b>	During, after	Deliver essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted communities and survivors, to include emergency power and fuel support, as well as the coordination of access to community staples. Synchronize logistics capabilities and enable the restoration of impacted supply chains, including removal of debris.
<b>Impact assessment</b>	During, after	Provide all decision-makers with relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard and any potential consequences during and after an emergency to ensure efficient, timely and appropriate support for communities.
<b>Search and rescue</b>	<i>No council involvement</i>	<i>Deliver traditional and atypical search and rescue capabilities including people and resources with the goal of saving the greatest number of endangered lives in the shortest time possible.</i>
<b>Health protection</b>	During	The coordination and implementation of legislation, programs and monitoring procedures to minimise public health risk from infectious disease, contaminated food, and contaminated drinking water supplies, radiation and human environmental health hazards. This includes the development and implementation of strategies to promote and protect public health.

<b>Core capability</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Health emergency response</b>	No council involvement	<i>The planning, provisioning, response and coordination of pre hospital and health emergency care, including triage, treatment and distribution of patients, in a timely and structured manner, using all available resources to maximise positive health outcomes.</i>
<b>Relief assistance</b>	During	The provision of well-coordinated, integrated and timely assistance to meet the immediate health, wellbeing and essential needs of affected communities, during and immediately after an emergency event, with the aim to support social cohesion and build resilience.
<b>Environmental response</b>	No council involvement	<i>To assess and manage the consequences to the community, environmental values, domestic animals and livestock of a hazardous materials release, naturally occurring pests or biological hazard.</i>
<b>Economic recovery</b>	After	Return economic and business activities (including food and agriculture) to a healthy state and develop new business and employment opportunities that result in a sustainable and economically viable community.
<b>Natural and cultural heritage rehabilitation</b>	After	Protect natural and cultural heritage resources through appropriate planning, mitigation, response, and recovery actions to preserve, conserve, rehabilitate, and restore them consistent with post-disaster community priorities and best practices and in compliance with applicable environmental and heritage preservation laws.
<b>Built recovery</b>	After	To restore essential infrastructure and establish safe areas during and following an emergency, ensuring the provision of facilities and services to support and benefit communities.
<b>Social recovery</b>	After	The longer term provision of assistance and access to services that allows individuals, families and communities to achieve an effective level of functioning after an emergency event. This includes safety, security, shelter, health and psychosocial wellbeing and re-establishment of those elements of society necessary for well-being.
<b>Assurance and learning</b>	After	Support continuous improvement to improve emergency management practice and community safety by extracting understanding from experience and research, reviewing community consequences, investigating causes and outcomes, providing assurance and translating lessons into behaviour change.

## Councils and Emergencies Project

The Councils and Emergencies Project, led by Local Government Victoria (LGV) and working with councils and the emergency management sector, is a project under 'Priority B: Enhance the capability and capacity of local governments to meet their obligations in the management of emergencies' of the strategic action plan. Figure 1 shows the strategic action plan and Priority B.

Figure 1: Strategic Action Plan Priority B



The Councils and Emergencies Project is using the core capabilities and their descriptions set out in the Victorian Preparedness Goal. These are the core capabilities that all organisations involved in emergency management need to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies. This will ensure there is consistency between the capabilities required by the emergency management sector and the capabilities required by councils for emergency management. It will also ensure councils are smoothly integrated into Victoria's service delivery model before, during and after emergencies.

The Councils and Emergencies Project will run for three years and has three phases:

- **phase 1** is identifying and agreeing council's current emergency management responsibilities and actions
- **phase 2** will assess the capability and capacity of the local government sector, to determine capability and capacity gaps (in terms of skills and expertise) that prevent it from adequately discharging its emergency management responsibilities and taking emergency management action
- **phase 3** will develop strategies and plans to address emergency management capability and capacity gaps.

Phase 1, of which this directions paper is a part, has involved extensive consultation with councils and the emergency management sector.

LGV held eight planning days in early 2016 to define the objectives of municipal emergency management enhancement groups, also considering the *Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group Strategic Plan 2015-2020*.

LGV also held 16 workshops with staff of councils and emergency management agencies to examine councils' current and future emergency management responsibilities and actions. It subsequently made the workshop report — *Councils and Emergencies – Workshop Feedback Analysis Report* — available online (search for 'Councils and Emergencies – Workshop Feedback Analysis Report').

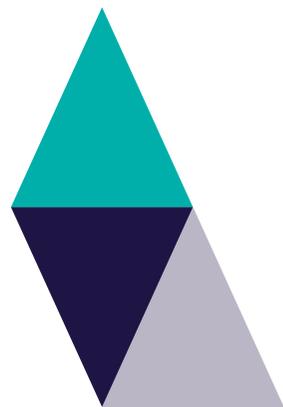
Craig Lapsley, Emergency Management Commissioner and Dr Graeme Emonson, Executive Director, LGV hosted nine forums for council chief executive officers between September and December 2016. They explained emergency management legislative requirements and the objectives of the *Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan Update 2016–19*, the Victorian Preparedness Goal, emergency management collaborations and the Councils and Emergencies Project.

The consultation activities sought to identify council's current emergency management responsibilities and actions before, during and after emergencies. These are described in the next chapter.

Table 2 shows the main steps in the Councils and Emergencies Project.

**Table 2: Councils and Emergencies Project Steps**

Phase	Step	Timeframe
1	• Consultation with councils and the emergency management sector about councils' current responsibilities and actions and the emergency management sectors' expectations of councils	May – December 2016
	• Produce directions paper	December 2016
	• Seek feedback to agree on current responsibilities, actions and expectations	January – May 2017
	• Produce final paper on councils' current emergency management responsibilities and actions	June 2017
2	• Investigate councils' capability and capacity	2017
3	• Develop strategies and plans to address capability and capacity gaps	2018



## Councils' strengths and capabilities

While councils' current emergency management responses are in part a result of legislative, policy and planning obligations, their ability to take action largely derives from their strengths and capabilities and their capacity to overcome the challenges they face undertaking their emergency management role.

The consultation activities identified councils' emergency management strengths in place-based community development and action. Councils:

- are skilled in building and maintaining local networks and relationships across their communities and across many sectors including the emergency management sector
- are knowledgeable about their communities and their unique characteristics, and in particular about local needs and priorities, and can advocate for these at the regional and state levels
- have wide-ranging skill sets which enable them to provide diverse services and implement federal, state and local laws and policies
- are dedicated to and invested in their communities, willing to step up when their communities are in need and are present in their communities beyond particular events
- are skilled in engaging with their communities and able to build community connectedness and social cohesion, build resilience against chronic stressors and acute shocks and work across all communities and all emergencies
- can work together and support each other before, during and after events.

The consultation activities also identified challenges councils face with their emergency management responsibilities and actions.

These include that:

- councils' financial capacity, skills and expertise to provide emergency management services before, during and after emergencies varies
- councils need to balance community priorities across all service areas including emergency management when budgeting and reviewing service provision
- councils need to maintain essential council services during and after an emergency, which needs good business continuity planning
- emergency management is one part of the legal and policy environment within which councils operate, and this environment is constantly changing
- communities have various risk profiles and various needs.

## About this directions paper

This directions paper draws on the consultation activities described above and on research about the current legislative, policy and planning framework. It aims to identify councils' current emergency management responsibilities and actions including how they collaborate with each other and with emergency management agencies. The responsibilities and actions are described in the next chapter.

LGV seeks feedback from the local government and emergency management sectors to confirm or suggest amendments to the list of responsibilities and actions. Note the request is about **current** responsibilities, actions and expectations and not those that are desired, foreshadowed or anticipated in future.

At the close of the consultation period, the Councils and Emergencies Project will review submissions and prepare a final paper about councils' current emergency management responsibilities and actions.

The final paper will inform the next phases of the project. It will also help councils, emergency management agencies and communities share an understanding of what can and cannot be currently expected of councils before, during and after emergencies.

Details about how you can provide feedback are in the final chapter (see page 36).

## Other emergency management reform initiatives

In recent times there has been (and will continue to be) considerable reform of the emergency management legislative, policy and planning framework. Whilst this directions paper deals with (and feedback should address) councils' current emergency management responsibilities and actions, councils should be aware of the key initiatives driving changes.

There are currently two emergency management Acts operating in tandem:

- the *Emergency Management Act 1986*
- the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.

In mid-2016, submissions on the exposure draft of the *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment (Planning) Bill 2016* closed. The exposure draft proposes amendments to the 2013 Act to underpin new emergency management planning arrangements for Victoria. It envisages the *Emergency Management Act 1986* will be gradually repealed and new arrangements prescribed in the *Emergency Management Act 2013*. Councils should be familiar with these proposed legislative changes and should keep their knowledge up-to-date.

The *Emergency Management Manual Victoria* contains policy and planning documents for emergency management in Victoria and details the emergency management responsibilities of relevant organisations. Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) maintains the manual in collaboration with Victoria's emergency management agencies. The Councils and Emergencies Project is working with EMV to ensure future versions of the manual reflect councils' strengths and clearly define their responsibilities and actions.

EMV in partnership with the emergency management sector is developing new emergency management planning guidelines with practical advice about requirements under the proposed *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment (Planning) Act 2016*. The guidelines will cover core concepts, processes, content and standards to develop emergency management plans at the state, regional and municipal levels. EMV is developing the guidelines in consultation with a reference group comprising over 40 emergency management experts from a broad range of agencies, councils, departments and other organisations. The draft guidelines should be available by August 2017. The Councils and Emergencies Project will inform the guidelines, particularly those about emergency management planning arrangements at the municipal level.

**Councils have a long history of supporting their communities during times of emergency**



# Councils' current emergency management responsibilities and actions

## Introduction

This chapter describes the 154 identified current emergency management responsibilities and actions of councils before, during and after emergencies. The descriptions have been compiled by:

- examining requirements of councils in current legislation, regulations, policy and plans
- analysing the feedback from the consultation activities: the planning days, workshops and forums.

The descriptions are preliminary. The purpose of this directions paper is to make them available to councils and the emergency management sector so they can provide feedback about them. There is advice about how to provide feedback in the last chapter.

The descriptions are organised according to the core capabilities explained in the 'Introduction' chapter and according to whether they are responsibilities and actions that arise before, during or after an emergency. Some responsibilities and actions are required across several stages of an emergency or could be placed across a number of core capabilities. To avoid duplication they have been organised into the most relevant capability and stage of an emergency.

### Colouring of descriptions

Some descriptions are coloured **blue**; others are coloured **black**.

**Blue** descriptions are responsibilities deriving from current emergency management legislation (such as the *Emergency Management Act 1986* and the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*), regulations, policy (such as the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria*) and plans (such as the *State Emergency Response Plan* and *State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan*). Each description has an endnote number which refers to the relevant document in the chapter 'Legislation, policy and plan references' showing the source of the requirement (the reference to the particular Act, policy or plan).

**Black** descriptions are actions that are not a responsibility under legislation, regulations, policy or plans, but which some councils consider to be appropriate emergency management actions for them to undertake. They may not be appropriate for every council: there is no suggestion they are suitable or relevant for all councils. This raises the question of whether they are an appropriate responsibility for local government or not.



## Clarifying and agreeing on councils' responsibilities and actions

### A council's role

The choice of active verb that starts each description reflects the role we understand a council takes, and about which we ask for feedback.

**Lead:** signifies a council provides overall direction and coordination of the responsibility or action: it plans, implements, directs, funds and resources most aspects of it. It is usually also the point of contact with government agencies, non-government groups, businesses and the community.

**Support:** signifies a council may contribute to the action, but responsibility is with another agency. It makes sure the other agency takes account of and respects its interests and those of its community. It may provide resources for some aspects of the responsibility or action. Often, involvement and resourcing is at the council's discretion.

**Other active verbs:** (such as 'appoint', 'develop' and 'improve') indicate council will usually directly take the action, often with community or other external participation.

Some descriptions are core business for councils, as well as being emergency management responsibilities and actions. For example, aspects of land use planning, compliance, regulatory services and infrastructure maintenance are core services that councils provide that also have an emergency management outcome, particularly in mitigating, preventing or leading into an emergency.

### Other

Each description is numbered so respondents can refer to its number when providing feedback.

'Community' means the community within the municipality: the local community.

## Current responsibilities and actions

### Planning

Conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community as appropriate in the development of executable strategic, operational, and/or tactical level approaches to meet defined objectives.

#### Before

1. Lead an all-agencies approach to community-based risk assessment and planning including compliance with relevant legislation and policy at the municipal level.<sup>1</sup>
2. Prepare and maintain municipal emergency management plans and subplans.<sup>2</sup>
3. Appoint a municipal emergency management planning committee.<sup>3</sup>
4. Support hazard-specific risk assessment to inform plans and community resilience-building strategies, using local knowledge and information based on community needs.<sup>4</sup>
5. Lead implementation and coordination of specific risk treatments on private and council land in partnership with emergency management agencies, including flood/fire management, maintaining a register of at-risk groups.<sup>5</sup>
6. Lead the maintenance and administration of the Vulnerable Persons Register (VPR).
7. Support the profiling of the community to identify and record what makes people vulnerable in emergencies and work with Red Cross, DHHS and other agencies to establish a plan to support vulnerable people in the community.

8. Develop council business continuity plans detailing procedures and systems to maintain core business and emergency management activities, including:
  - backfilling for staff with emergency management expertise when they are on leave
  - planning to identify and address gaps in council's emergency knowledge and action.
9. Improve recovery plans and procedures by exercising and reviewing them.
10. Develop settlement and issue-based policies and strategies in planning schemes that clearly express and give direction to urban change, including implementing risk-mitigation strategies (such as flood and bushfire management overlays).
11. Apply local planning schemes and building controls including development assessments, inspections and advice.<sup>6</sup>

#### During

12. Prepare local recovery plans after emergencies.<sup>7</sup>
13. Assess capability and capacity needs for undertaking relief and recovery activities, determine councils' ability to meet these needs and plan to obtain additional staff and resources as required.

## Community information and warnings

Deliver public information and warnings that are authoritative, consistently constructed and relevant for all Victorians and visitors in all emergencies.

Provide timely and tailored information that supports the community to make informed decisions before, during and after emergencies.

### Before

14. Support agencies to plan, prepare and deliver consistent, all-hazards customised information and messages to the community, using council communication networks.<sup>8</sup>
15. Plan, together with neighbouring councils and regionally, community information.
16. Identify appropriate and preferred communication channels for the community and particular groups and people (such as those who are vulnerable and those who are culturally and linguistically diverse).<sup>9</sup>
17. Support agencies to develop emergency management communications that are relevant and credible to the community.
18. Support implementation of flood warning systems in at-risk areas of the municipality.
19. Support a whole-of-government approach to emergency preparedness and awareness campaigns.

### During

20. Communicate with elected councillors and the senior/executive management team to keep them informed and up-to-date.
21. Support agencies to develop and disseminate information and warnings that are relevant and credible to the community by:<sup>10</sup>
  - disseminating information through council communication channels and local networks

- developing accurate, timely risk information tailored to community needs.

22. Respond to community calls for local relief and recovery assistance (including assistance with equipment, food, clothing, accommodation and health needs) and be the central point to identify resources and information.

### After

23. Deliver timely, coordinated, accessible and tailored information to the community so it understands relief and recovery assistance mechanisms and processes including through community briefings and meetings.<sup>11</sup>
24. Assess community needs, to inform recovery information.
25. Organise local broadcasts through the mayor and/or chief executive officer (for example, recovery newsletters).
26. Support agencies to provide community-led recovery information (for example using social media or notice boards).
27. Provide and staff a recovery centre.<sup>12</sup>
28. Support agencies to analyse community needs to inform recovery messages and planning from a range of sources (such as public meetings, a call centre, a recovery centre and debriefings).
29. Support evaluators and researchers to better understand community information needs and the effectiveness of local warnings.

## Operational management

Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities, including operational communications.

### Before

30. Appoint a municipal emergency resource officer.<sup>13</sup>
31. Appoint a municipal recovery manager.<sup>14</sup>
32. Identify council-owned and/or operated resources, assets and services available for emergency prevention, response or recovery; specify their preparedness; and plan to deploy them.
33. Support agencies to develop procedures to use council resources.<sup>15</sup>
34. Lead risk-mitigation measures through business-as-usual works by:
  - where council is a road authority, managing vegetation on roadsides to ensure a safe, efficient road network<sup>16</sup>
  - mitigating risks to council-owned assets and infrastructure.
35. Manage and maintain a council emergency coordination system and/or council operations and facilities that can be used during emergencies.
36. Ensure council staff are trained to safely undertake emergency management roles and responsibilities (such as traffic management, emergency management liaison officer and municipal recovery manager).
37. Develop response, relief and recovery activities and participate in those led by agencies and other councils.
38. Engage relevant stakeholders in gathering, analysing and sharing recovery information.

### During

39. Implement council's business continuity plan.
40. Implement collaborative plans and arrangements to maintain council's capacity, including by using neighbouring (partner) councils' resources.
41. Support response agencies to effectively deliver emergency response services locally by:<sup>17</sup>
  - after consultation, making council resources, facilities and services available to agencies during response, relief and recovery phases
  - providing council resources as requested by agencies to secure affected areas
  - providing a council liaison officer (emergency management liaison officer) to an emergency management team to:
    - share knowledge, data and information about community needs and consequences
    - ensure council is consulted and involved in emergency decisions that will affect the council and community.
42. Support response agencies to access affected areas.
43. Provide agencies with resources and information to partially or fully close roads and determine alternative transport routes.<sup>18</sup>

## After

44. Conduct local recovery activities.<sup>19</sup>
45. Support the transition from relief to recovery with relevant emergency management teams.
46. When safe, deploy council staff to affected communities to deliver recovery services.
47. Work with the community and recovery agencies to adapt recovery plans to reflect newly identified or changing community needs and priorities.
48. Scope requirements for planning to establish a municipal / community recovery committee and if necessary form, lead and support the committee.<sup>20</sup>
49. Support agencies to analyse community needs for the planning of service provision.
50. Establish processes to gather information from a range of sources (such as public meetings, a call centre, a recovery centre and debriefings) to inform recovery planning.
51. Continually assess recovery needs, redeploy staff to recovery roles and implement surge arrangements to fill gaps.
52. Establish a recovery centre, coordinating across agencies to ensure sufficient staff, resources and equipment.
53. Support recovery case management and gather data from relevant agencies locally.
54. Conduct post-emergency needs assessments, coordinating with response and recovery agencies locally.
55. Coordinate local outreach with relief and recovery agencies to undertake the initial assessment of relief needs.
56. Work with local services including psychosocial services to utilise existing services and programs to support recovery efforts and reassure the community.
57. Support agencies to take a coordinated approach to recovery at the regional level.
58. Conduct the transition of local recovery arrangements back to the previous management arrangements.
59. Clear blocked drains and local roads including by removing trees on council land and on roads.<sup>21</sup>
60. Lead the management of environmental health issues (such as food and sanitation safety, vector control and animal disposal) with relevant agencies.
61. Support agencies to coordinate volunteer efforts after emergencies.<sup>22</sup>
62. Coordinate animal welfare within council resources.<sup>23</sup>
63. Support agencies to coordinate and manage services to meet the immediate needs of affected livestock locally.<sup>24</sup>
64. Support agencies to monitor emerging needs and adapt services to minimise the long-term consequences on health and wellbeing.



## Intelligence and information-sharing

To provide timely, accurate and actionable decision support information, resulting from the planning, collecting, processing, analysis and evaluation from multiple data sources, which is needed to be more proactive in anticipating hazard activity and informing mitigation, response or recovery activities. It also includes the assessment of risks, threats and hazards so that decision makers, responders, and community members can take informed action to reduce their entity's risk and increase their resilience.

### Before

65. Implement standardised systems and processes to facilitate surge arrangements and exchange staff between neighbouring (partner) councils to maintain capability and capacity during and after emergencies by:
  - identifying data needs for relief provision and planning for data management
  - establishing data-sharing agreements and procedures with agencies.
66. Collect, analyse and share information about current and emerging local risks, hazards and consequences with agencies, businesses, service providers, the community and other emergency management partners.
67. Clarify and communicate council's emergency management role locally, to develop a shared understanding of emergency management activities with agencies and the community.
68. Work with other organisations to integrate information systems, tools and networks of trained personnel to deliver intelligence requirements (such as by using Crisisworks and Emergency Management Common Operating Picture ([EM-COP])).
69. Support regional and state information-sharing forums, committees and meetings.

### During

70. Support agencies by providing council-owned data and intelligence about properties, residents, assets, facilities, community demographics, needs and consequences.
71. Capture, process and manage large volumes of data from multiple sources to share with the community and stakeholders.

### After

72. Capture and analyse lessons, share the findings with other councils and agencies, and work cooperatively to identify and implement solutions.
73. Conduct ongoing intelligence-gathering and information-sharing activities about local mitigation and recovery activities.

## Public order and community safety

Provide a safe, secure and orderly society through the active prosecution of regulations and laws related to the prevention of serious emergencies and to afford a safe environment for those communities affected by an emergency and any responding personnel engaged in emergency operations.

Before, during & after

74. Undertake municipal functions as required by local government, building, electricity, water and land use planning legislation and regulations.<sup>25</sup>
75. Proactively enforce relevant regulations and laws that relate to emergency management.<sup>26</sup>

## Being prepared for future emergencies

## Building community resilience

Communities strengthen their lifelines by better connecting and working together with appropriate support.

### Before

76. Build local partnerships with businesses and not-for-profit organisations.
77. With other partners, support agencies to empower individuals and the community to exercise choice about and take responsibility for risks.
78. Encourage and assist the community to participate in emergency management education and training programs provided by council and agencies.
79. Advocate for community needs at the regional and state level including for:
  - community preparedness and local leadership
  - adequate emergency management funding and resources
  - compatible and consistent emergency management information systems
  - consistent and streamlined legislation that supports council's role in emergency management at all stages of an emergency.
80. Gather knowledge about local assets, values and support systems including about the community's history and what people value as important, now and for the future.
81. Develop and deliver emergency management and community resilience training for council staff.
82. Monitor and evaluate the community's engagement with emergency management and its capacity to prepare for, act during and recover from emergencies.

### During

83. Support emergency management teams by ensuring local information and contacts are provided as part of community decision-making during emergencies.

### After

84. Conduct community engagement activities to implement lessons learned about community resilience.
85. Engage the community in developing and delivering recovery activities including by appointing community development and/or community recovery officers.<sup>27</sup>

## Fire management & suppression

Provide firefighting capabilities to manage and suppress fires of all types, kinds, and complexities while protecting lives, property, and the environment in the affected (land and water) area.

### Before & during

86. Support agencies in line with relevant fire legislation and regulations by:
  - appointing a municipal fire prevention officer<sup>28</sup>
  - developing and maintaining a municipal fire prevention plan<sup>29</sup>
  - identifying, designating, signing, maintaining and annually reviewing bushfire safer places and their plans, and (for councils in Country Fire Authority [CFA] areas) reporting back annually to the CFA<sup>30</sup>
  - issuing permits to burn<sup>31</sup>
  - taking all practicable steps (including with planned burning) to prevent the occurrence and spread of fires and minimise their danger on land that council manages or is responsible for<sup>32</sup>
  - providing pillar fire hydrants in reticulated areas when the CFA issues written notice to do so<sup>33</sup>
  - meeting the costs of providing, installing, marking and maintaining all fire plugs in the municipality.<sup>34</sup>

## Logistics and supply chain management

Deliver essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted communities and survivors, to include emergency power and fuel support, as well as the coordination of access to community staples. Synchronize logistics capabilities and enable the restoration of impacted supply chains, including removal of debris.

### Before

87. Develop emergency management resource-sharing protocols between councils.
88. Maintain and store essential equipment and materials to support emergency management activities and meet the needs of affected communities (such as sandbags).

### During

89. Support agencies to source and supply personnel, equipment, materials, services and facilities to support emergency management activities and meet the needs of affected communities.
90. Manage, coordinate, supply and deliver resources promptly and efficiently using best-practice methods locally.



## Impact assessment

Provide all decision-makers with relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard and any potential consequences during and after an emergency to ensure efficient, timely and appropriate support for communities.

### Before

91. Develop impact-assessment processes and data-collection systems.
92. Lead council's impact-assessment processes, systems and tools for core council services.

### During

93. Collect secondary impact-assessment data about the scale and characteristics of the impact on the social, economic, built and natural environments.<sup>35</sup>
94. Initially assess impacts on essential infrastructure and services.<sup>36</sup>
95. Support agencies to gather information about how the emergency is affecting animals.
96. Support agencies to use council's spatial data to verify property losses.

### After

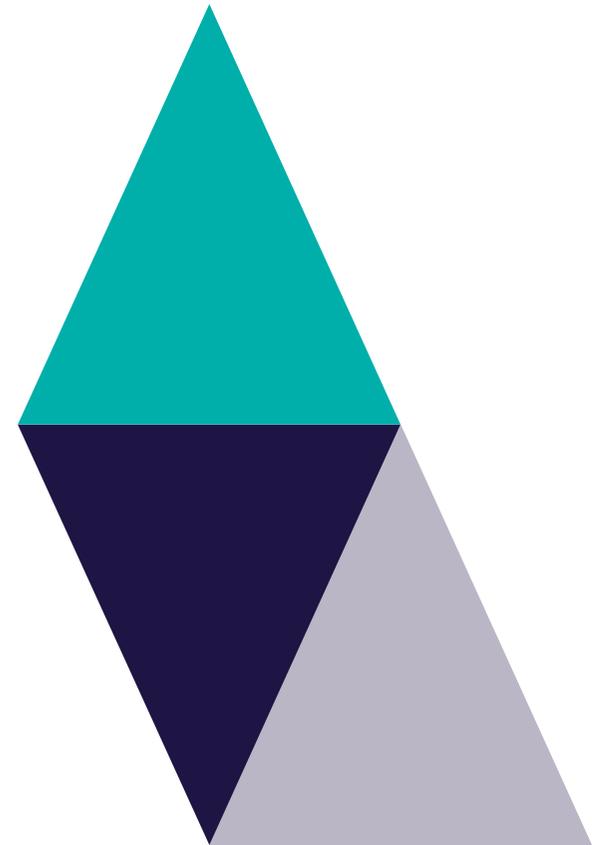
97. Conduct a process to gather incident and impact intelligence from initial and secondary impact assessments to inform relief and recovery planning.
98. Conduct longitudinal mapping of the impact focusing on wellbeing, liveability, sustainability and viability.

## Health protection

The coordination and implementation of legislation, programs and monitoring procedures to minimise public health risk from infectious disease, contaminated food, and contaminated drinking water supplies, radiation and human environmental health hazards. This includes the development and implementation of strategies to promote and protect public health.

### Before, during & after

99. Undertake municipal functions as required by public health and wellbeing legislation and regulations.<sup>37</sup>
100. Include emergency management in council plans including in the municipal public health and wellbeing plan and the council plan.
101. Establish programs to detect and identify risks to public health locally (such as through heatwave planning).
102. Conduct epidemiological and other investigations.
103. Communicate information about public health locally.



## Relief assistance

The provision of well-coordinated, integrated and timely assistance to meet the immediate health, wellbeing and essential needs of affected communities, during and immediately after an emergency event, with the aim to support social cohesion and build resilience.

### Before

104. Coordinate relief agencies and the community to develop local relief plans.<sup>38</sup>
105. Develop protocols and procedures that are agreed with relief agencies.
106. Design a scalable organisational structure to deliver relief services.
107. Work with other councils to develop a collaborative approach to relief.
108. Contribute to regional relief planning.
109. Identify, plan and document relief centres or other locations to provide emergency relief services that meet health and other community needs.
110. Develop plans and procedures for emergency shelter.
111. Plan for the needs of domestic animals as part of relief activities.
112. Support service providers and local groups to educate the community about donated goods and volunteering and develop messages and procedures about donated goods and volunteers.
113. Work with health practitioners to understand the health and psychosocial implications of emergencies and the implications for relief.
114. Develop surge arrangements for relief, recovery and business-as-usual activities in the short, medium and long-terms.

### During

115. Coordinate relief services locally.<sup>39</sup>
116. Establish and manage relief centres where appropriate, including:<sup>40</sup>
  - register relief centre attendees
  - coordinate the provision of food, water and materials to affected communities<sup>41</sup>
  - provide temporary shelter options for displaced local people
  - coordinate and manage services to meet the physical and psychosocial needs of affected local people.<sup>42</sup>
117. Start recovery case management by gathering data from relevant agencies.
118. Inform the community about financial hardship assistance payments.
119. Manage enquiries about donations of goods and offers to volunteer.
120. Support efforts to reunify family and others separated during an emergency.
121. Support a coordinated approach to relief at the regional level.

## Economic recovery

Return economic and business activities (including food and agriculture) to a healthy state and develop new business and employment opportunities that result in a sustainable and economically viable community.

### After

122. Help affected businesses to access information and advice locally.
123. Support the community to work with insurers.
124. Support organisations to offer technical advice about re-establishing local businesses.
125. Assess business and economic needs.



## Natural and cultural heritage rehabilitation

Protect natural and cultural heritage resources through appropriate planning, mitigation, response, and recovery actions to preserve, conserve, rehabilitate, and restore them consistent with post-disaster community priorities and best practices and in compliance with applicable environmental and heritage preservation laws.

### Before

126. As part of emergency planning, identify at-risk cultural heritage sites.

### After

- 127. Coordinate natural environment rehabilitation works locally.
- 128. Restore local cultural heritage sites.
- 129. Assess impacts to natural and cultural heritage sites.
- 130. Coordinate remediation and stabilisation works on private and public land.
- 131. Monitor natural and cultural heritage sites.
- 132. With the support of Heritage Victoria, develop ways to mitigate or avoid adverse impacts to cultural heritage sites during recovery, reconstruction or rehabilitation works.

## Built recovery

To restore essential infrastructure and establish safe areas during and following an emergency, ensuring the provision of facilities and services to support and benefit communities.

### Before

133. Identify community needs and priorities for restoring the built environment including essential services, commercial and industrial facilities, public buildings and assets and housing.
134. Identify standards for clean-up and recovery.
135. Identify likely resource and equipment requirements for council recovery activities in the short, medium and long terms and determine supply chains in consultation with other agencies to ensure adequate resourcing.

### After

136. Survey and determine the occupancy of damaged buildings.<sup>43</sup>
137. Conduct stabilisation and remediation works on council or community infrastructure and land to prevent further damage to the built environment.
138. Support safety assessments for essential and critical assets and infrastructure.
139. Working with the community, prioritise the restoration of local assets and infrastructure, ensuring the restored assets and infrastructure are sustainable and more resilient to future emergencies.

140. Coordinate the rebuilding and redevelopment of council and private assets.<sup>44</sup>
141. Restore council-owned assets, prioritising business operations and commercial or community facilities essential for community wellbeing or recovery activities.<sup>45</sup>
142. Coordinate clean-up activities including the disposal of dead animals.<sup>46</sup>
143. Support the restoration of private and non-council assets within the scope of existing council services.
144. Review physical infrastructure needs and establish long-term recovery infrastructure where necessary.
145. Support agencies to restore essential assets and infrastructure.
146. Establish planning scheme exemptions for emergency accommodation and clean-up works, and streamline planning and building construction approvals.

## Social recovery

The longer term provision of assistance and access to services that allows individuals, families and communities to achieve an effective level of functioning after an emergency event. This includes safety, security, shelter, health and psychosocial wellbeing and re-establishment of those elements of society necessary for well-being.

### After

147. Coordinate health programs to ensure the continuity and availability of advice and activities.
148. Assess and deliver services for the medium- to long-term psychosocial needs of the community.
149. Provide access to short-, medium- and long-term housing options for displaced people.
150. Assess and deliver financial re-establishment assistance.
151. Support community services to provide shelter, food, counselling and other assistance to people at socioeconomic disadvantage.

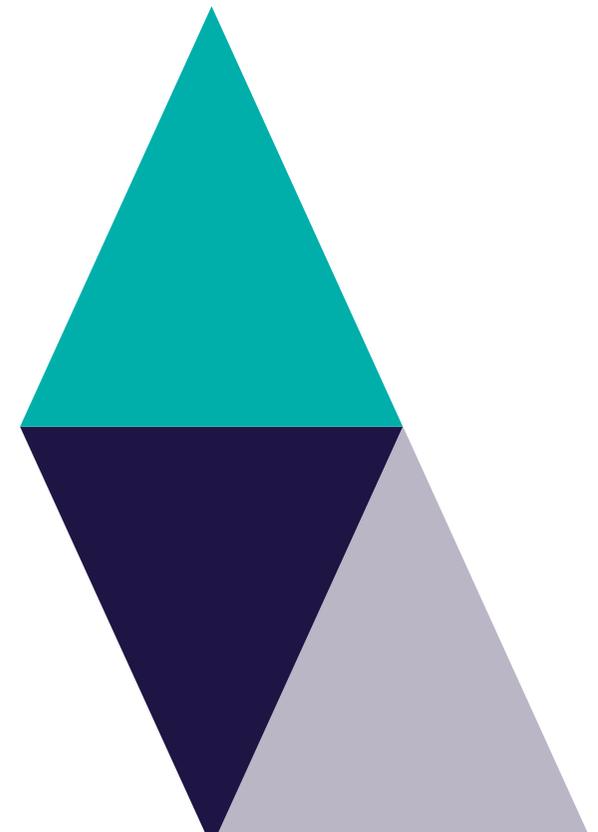


## Assurance and learning

Support continuous improvement to improve emergency management practice and community safety by extracting understanding from experience and research, reviewing community consequences, investigating causes and outcomes, providing assurance and translating lessons into behaviour change.

### After

152. Conduct after-action reviews of council operations during emergencies, to inform future planning.
153. Conduct incident management reviews and modify council plans and procedures to draw on lessons learned.
154. Assess and review outcomes for the community after an emergency, looking for opportunities to improve outcomes in future.



## Principles for defining responsibilities and actions

The consultation activities also brought forward ideas for principles to use when assessing whether councils' emergency management responsibilities are appropriate. These principles might have application when considering any future changes to council's current emergency management responsibilities and actions.

These principles are that a council's emergency management responsibilities and actions should:

- reflect the council's strengths and capabilities and align to its normal business functions
- complement those of other agencies, businesses and the public
- be engaged only where the council is the best-placed organisation to do so (meaning it should not be used as an intermediary on behalf of other agencies, particularly for processes over which it has no control or ownership)
- be applicable to emergencies of different scales and complexity
- be consistent with its capability and capacity, along with its other legislative responsibilities and core business
- provide a platform to collaborate and build partnerships with other councils to enhance the delivery of services.

## Building partnerships to enhance delivery of services

- Provide specialist and de
- capability to the recovery
- who do not have operatio
- Develop and implement i
- Gather and analyse relev
- Engage with managemer
- recovery workgroups
- Gather relevant informati
- s...lders – including
- indicators to mo
- every plans
- refine recov
- the implemen

# How to provide feedback

LGV invites submissions from councils about whether the current emergency management responsibilities and actions described in this directions paper are correct and correctly described. We also invite submissions from state government and emergency management agencies about whether the descriptions meet their current expectations of councils. In particular, we are interested in hearing about whether the choice of action verb — reflecting as it does a council's degree of responsibility, initiative and involvement — is accurate.

Note that the requested feedback is about **current** responsibilities, actions and expectations and not those that are desired, anticipated or expected in future. The requested feedback is also about whether the descriptions are **appropriate**, not whether councils currently engage in them or not, or a council's capability and capacity to discharge their responsibilities or engage in the actions. LGV recognises that emergency management capability and capacity varies between councils due to a range of factors including resourcing, size, location and risk profile. Phase 2 of the project includes assessing capability and capacity, but there first needs to be agreement about appropriate responsibilities and actions.

When providing feedback, please:

- refer to the relevant description number for feedback about that description
- include feedback about the principles for defining responsibilities and actions under a separate heading, 'Principles'
- include any other feedback under a heading, 'Other'.

The deadline for making a submission is **8 May 2017**. A number of information sessions will be held throughout Victoria for those wishing to discuss the directions paper in more detail. Information session dates and locations are available by visiting:

**<http://delwp.vic.gov.au/councils-and-emergencies>**.

LGV has also produced an explanatory video which can also be viewed at: **<http://delwp.vic.gov.au/councils-and-emergencies>**.

Feedback can be made:

- online, at **<https://engage.vic.gov.au/councils-and-emergencies-consultation>**
- by email, to **[LGV.emergencies@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:LGV.emergencies@delwp.vic.gov.au)**
- by post, to 'Councils and emergencies directions paper consultation', Local Government Victoria, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, PO Box 500, Melbourne Victoria 8002.

# Legislation, policy and plan references

- 1 s59B Amendment Bill to the *Emergency Management Act 2013* will change this to support, but until then as per s21 of the *Emergency Management Act 1986* councils lead this function by developing and maintaining the municipal emergency management plan
- 2 s20(1) *Emergency Management Act 1986*
- 3 s21(3) *Emergency Management Act 1986*
- 4 MEMPC guidelines, EMMV Part 6, p.6–5
- 5 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 6 s212 *Building Act 1993*, BMO, clause 52.47 Bushfire protection: planning requirements (BF5) & clause 44.06 Planning provisions
- 7 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 8 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, p.32
- 9 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, Appendix 2, p. 4–23
- 10 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 11 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, pp.32
- 12 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 13 s59G Amendment Bill to the *2013 Emergency Management Act*, this section replaces s21 (1) of the *Emergency Management Act 1985*
- 14 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4 p.4–8
- 15 s20(2) *Emergency Management Act 1986*
- 16 s20, s34, s40 *Road Management Act 2004*
- 17 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 18 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 19 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4
- 20 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 21 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 22 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, Appendix 6, p.4–39
- 23 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 24 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 25 *Emergency Management Act 1986, Emergency Management Act 2013, Local Government Act 1989, Country Fire Authority Act 1958, Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958, Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, Water Act 1989, Water Industry Act 1994, Electricity Safety Act 1998, Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the *Building Act 1993*
- 26 *Emergency Management Act 1986, Emergency Management Act 2013* and the EMMV
- 27 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, Appendix 2, p. 4–23
- 28 s96A *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* and s5A *Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958*; MEMPC guidelines, EMMV Part 6, p.6–28
- 29 s55A, *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*
- 30 ss50G, H, I & J *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*
- 31 s38 *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*
- 32 s5 *Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958*, s43 *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*
- 33 s36 *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*
- 34 s81 *Water Industry Act 1994*
- 35 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, p.4–8
- 36 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, p.4–26
- 37 s24 *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- 38 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 39 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, pp.4–11, 4–20 & 4–32
- 40 State Emergency Response Plan, EMMV Part 3, pp.3–15 & 3–36
- 41 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 42 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 43 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 44 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 45 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77
- 46 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

**Safer and more resilient  
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respond to change**





