Councils and emergencies position paper

VICTORIA State Government | Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
December 2017

**Department of Environment,
Land, Water and Planning**

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Foreword

Emergencies are a fact of life in Victoria. As climate change gathers pace, we are more likely to see more frequent emergencies. This includes increased frequency of bushfires, floods, heatwaves and storms. The extent to which these events affect communities is determined by how well we all work together. Councils, with their strong relationships with their communities, are well-placed to reduce the effects on Victorians of chronic stresses and acute shocks.

At a local level, we know that councils have an important role in helping their communities build resilience and prepare for the effects of climate change. They also face the challenge of prioritising emergency management responsibilities while continuing to ensure the ongoing viability of their normal business.

This *Councils and emergencies position paper* provides a comprehensive overview of the emergency management responsibilities and activities that councils undertake for the betterment of their local communities. It is important to note that the needs of communities differ and not all councils will or should carry out all of the responsibilities and activities identified in this paper.

Councils and the emergency management sector have contributed formally and informally to the consultative process resulting in this position paper. We thank all the emergency management practitioners from the local government and emergency management sectors who contributed to the consultation process.

The release of the *Councils and emergencies position paper* marks the completion of phase 1 of the project. The paper will help us better understand how to work together to manage emergencies across governments, resulting in better outcomes for Victorian communities. It will also inform future phases of the Councils and Emergencies Project.

In the next phase — phase 2 — of the project, we will work with councils to assess their individual emergency management capability and capacity, through face-to-face and self-assessment approaches. This will help identify gaps in capability and capacity and provide a strong foundation to develop strategies to further enhance councils' abilities, as part of phase 3, to deliver the important emergency management services they provide for their communities.

Thank you for taking the time to read this paper and we look forward to your future contribution.

Dr Graeme Emonson
Executive Director
Local Government
Victoria

Craig Lapsley PSM
Emergency Management
Commissioner

01 Introduction

Victoria's 79 local government areas (LGAs) are led by 637 elected councillors, and the local government sector employs over 40,000 people. Of the 79 LGAs, 31 are Melbourne metropolitan councils and 48 are regional and rural councils. LGAs vary in size from 11 km^2 to 22,000 km^2, and councils' annual budgets range from $11.2 million to $629 million.

Councils have a legislative and electoral mandate to manage local issues and to plan for their communities' needs. Councils provide more than 100 services across many areas including planning, building, roads, parking, health, waste management, animal management, recreation, culture and emergency management. They also enforce various federal, state and local laws for their communities.

Under the *Local Government Act 1989*, councils must have regard to the following objectives:

- promote the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district
- use resources efficiently and effectively
- improve the quality of life of the local community
- promote business and employment opportunities
- ensure the services and facilities provided are accessible and equitable.

Local government plays a central and indispensable role in our federal system of government, and it is recognised in the Victorian Constitution as a distinct and independent tier of government. It is the level of government closest to the people and gives people a say in matters affecting their local area. Councils are governments — they provide a vehicle for the expression of local democracy.

'Meeting local community needs is a council's core business.'

Council officer

Part 1 of this paper provides the context and background to the project. Part 2 describes councils' current emergency management responsibilities and activities as well as their business-as-usual responsibilities and activities with emergency management implications. Part 3 details the next steps of the project and how it can inform emergency management initiatives currently underway.

The Councils and Emergencies Project

About the project

The Councils and Emergencies Project is being led by Local Government Victoria (LGV), which is part of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). DELWP works to ensure the ongoing viability of councils' normal business and emergency management responsibilities and activities through governance and funding support.

The Councils and Emergencies Project is listed in the *Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan* as 'Priority B: Enhance the capability and capacity of local governments to meet their obligations in the management of emergencies', shown in Figure 1.

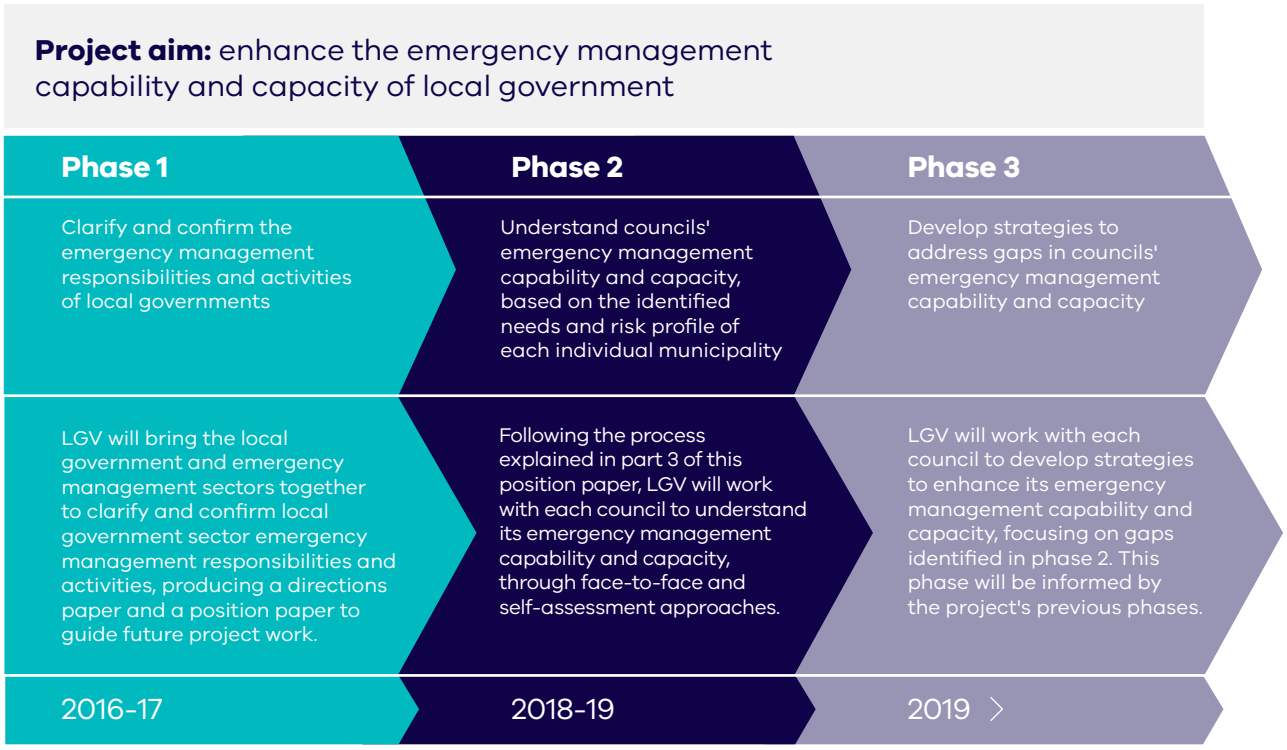
Figure 1:
Priority B, Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan Update 2017-20

Several reviews and enquiries have noted the important role of local government in emergency management and its broader role of ensuring communities prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies. These include the *Victorian Emergency Management Reform White Paper* in 2012 and more recently the *Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry Report 2015/16*.

Priority B in the strategic plan reinforces the importance of local governments having adequate emergency management capability and capacity.

The project's three-phase approach emphasises consultation with councils and the desirability of partnering with them and the emergency management sector in implementing the priority. Figure 2 illustrates this approach.

Figure 2:
Phases of the Councils and Emergencies Project



'The Councils and Emergencies Project process is building a shared understanding of emergency management responsibilities and activities across the 79 councils.'

Council officer

For the first time in many years, the project has brought Victorian councils together with emergency management organisations to identify and discuss their shared responsibilities and activities. As the project has progressed, additional stakeholders have been drawn into the process of clarifying councils' emergency management responsibilities and activities.

Consultations for the project began in 2016. The project has successfully engaged more than 400 council emergency management staff in more than 20 workshops and information sessions held to capture, clarify and confirm councils' current emergency management responsibilities and activities. This work was captured and shared with the sector in *Councils and Emergencies Workshop Feedback Analysis* (June 2016) and *Councils and emergencies directions paper* (January 2017).

Why clarify and confirm councils' responsibilities?

The purpose of this position paper is to provide a comprehensive overview of the emergency management responsibilities and activities that councils undertake for the betterment of their local communities. It is important to note that the needs of communities differ and not all councils will or should carry out all of the responsibilities and activities identified in this paper. The release of the paper marks the completion of phase 1 of the project. The paper will inform future phases of the project, in particular phase 2 which will assess the emergency management capability and capacity of councils.

Clarifying and confirming councils' emergency management responsibilities and activities is the essential first step to determining their capability and capacity to undertake them, which is the intention of phase 2 of the project. It also benefits councils, emergency management agencies and communities by developing a shared understanding of what can and cannot be currently expected of a council before, during and after an emergency.

This position paper demonstrates councils' value and makes their responsibilities and activities clear to the emergency management sector. It standardises the language used to describe councils' emergency management responsibilities and activities and aligns it with the language of the Victorian Preparedness Goal. This will result in better communication between the emergency management and local government sectors, and will provide for improved support to councils during and after emergencies by regional and state incident managers.

Standardising language will also enable councils to more effectively influence emergency management policy in the future and to identify and benefit from funding opportunities and programs in areas of council responsibility and activity.

The project's consultation report, which will be released separately, provides the data about the level of support for the responsibilities listed in the *Councils and emergencies directions paper* and in some cases also summarises feedback received. All the feedback received through consultations will inform phase 3 of the project, which intends to enhance councils' emergency management capability and capacity.

'Rural Councils Victoria supports the need to clarify emergency management responsibilities … clear roles and responsibilities are an important element to mitigating risks posed to our communities.'

Rural Councils Victoria, submission to the Councils and emergencies directions paper

Community satisfaction with councils' emergency management

Each year, LGV coordinates an optional statewide local government community satisfaction survey. The survey assesses the performance of councils across Victoria using a range of measures, and it seeks insight into ways to improve service delivery.

Since 2012, emergency management has consistently rated as one of the areas respondents see as most important for their councils. In the most recent survey, of the 27 service areas surveyed, emergency management had the highest percentage of respondents considering the area 'extremely important'. Respondents also said that emergency management was the fourth-best-performing area for councils of the 27 areas, indicating ratepayers are generally happy with their councils' emergency management performance.

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The annual local government community satisfaction survey continues to show that communities see emergency and disaster management as an important responsibility, and one that councils perform well.

Councils and emergency management

Councils are integral to emergency management

Councils' emergency management responsibilities and activities are a key component of Victoria's emergency management system, and councils are often a conduit between state government agencies, local communities, not-for-profit organisations and service providers. Through their municipal emergency management planning committees, local emergency management practitioners identify risks in their LGAs and develop strategies to mitigate those risks. Emergency management agencies in partnership with councils, educate their local communities about the emergency risks they face and what they can do about the risks.

While councils have an essential role in emergency management planning and community engagement, and in leading relief and recovery efforts at the local level, the risks and consequences of emergencies are ultimately shared across all levels of government and the community.[1]

Equally, councils' strengths are particularly in working with the community during and after emergencies, noting that councils are not a response agency.

'Having a strong connection to local service providers is essential to council's ability to effectively coordinate relief and recovery.'

Council officer

Every council is different

No two councils' approaches to emergency management are the same. Every council knows its community best, and its approach to emergency management responsibilities and activities will differ to that of others according to its community's emergency risk profile, its emergency management capability and capacity and other local factors. Councils' emergency risk profiles vary depending on the type and extent of their infrastructure, their exposure to hazards, their history, the likelihood of an emergency and the effects on their community of an emergency.

As part of the consultation process, it has been made abundantly clear that the project should acknowledge that councils' service delivery varies, as do the relief and recovery needs of each community, and that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach doesn't work. Councils emphasised that while they recognise the responsibilities and activities in this paper represent the full gamut of emergency management responsibilities and activities (described across all tables in part 2), no council will undertake them all, and councils will carry them out in different ways and to different extents. Nuances in how responsibilities and activities are undertaken are often only well understood at the local level.

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The inclusion of an emergency management responsibility or activity in a table in part 2 makes no assessment of a council's capability or capacity to undertake it. Assessment of capability and capacity will be considered in part of phase 2 of the project.

The project aims to increase the capability and capacity of councils to meet their emergency management responsibilities and activities. This doesn't mean all councils should have the same level of capability and capacity: it means the project will work with councils to determine the emergency management capability and capacity they need. It also will help identify gaps in their capability and capacity and to adopt strategies to address those gaps.

1 The final report of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission examined the concept of shared responsibility in some detail.

Although it stands to reason that councils' capabilities and capacities vary, these variances have never been fully understood, reported and assessed against what each council requires, to meet their community's needs.

For this reason, the project aims to identify the extent of the variances, considering the risk profile of each council, to determine where capability and capacity gaps exist and to develop strategies to address those gaps. We expect that some councils don't currently have the capability and capacity to deliver all their emergency management responsibilities, but it is in the best interests of the local government and emergency management sectors that we establish a statewide picture of the current emergency management capability and capacity (using a robust methodology) and develop strategies to address any gaps.

Adequate capability and capacity can be the difference between communities feeling safe, informed and supported through an emergency or feeling devastated by an emergency for which they weren't prepared; and for a council to be left floundering in the face of calls for information and assistance, and disconnected from their community.

Emergency management and business-as-usual responsibilities and activities

The tables in part 2 of this paper group councils' responsibilities and activities into:

- **emergency management responsibilities and activities before, during and after an emergency:** responsibilities and activities that require a council to provide services to meet community needs and which require a specific council emergency management capability and capacity
- **business-as-usual, with emergency management implications:** responsibilities and activities that relate to the delivery of normal, core services but which have secondary or indirect emergency management benefits and which ultimately improve a council's emergency management performance and outcomes as they help build strong and resilient places and people.

There are many overlaps and links between a council's emergency management responsibilities and activities and its business-as-usual activities, and different councils see the overlaps and links differently.

Land use planning, compliance, environmental health, regulatory services and infrastructure maintenance all involve business-as-usual responsibilities and activities that can also have emergency management benefits and outcomes. For example, when a council assesses a planning application for a new development in a bushfire management overlay area, the assessment addresses bushfire safety: in other words, the council is seeking to mitigate bushfire risk in the 'before' phase of an emergency.

Equally, there might be very few council responsibilities and activities with no emergency management implications whatsoever in the event of a major emergency, but the project is not examining these: it is only examining emergency management responsibilities and activities before, during and after an emergency. Throughout the consultation process responsibilities and activities that are business-as-usual with emergency management implications were also captured.

Under current legislation, a council must appoint a municipal emergency resource officer. It is also common for councils to direct other staff to undertake emergency management duties (such as work at an emergency relief centre or contribute to a municipal emergency management plan) in addition to their business-as-usual duties. Council staff with emergency management duties often benefit from a greater level of job satisfaction as well as exposure to professional development opportunities.

When a council officer has emergency management duties as well as their main duties, they must be allowed adequate time to undertake them. This is particularly important for council officers who are assigned statutory duties that include undertaking legislated emergency management obligations.

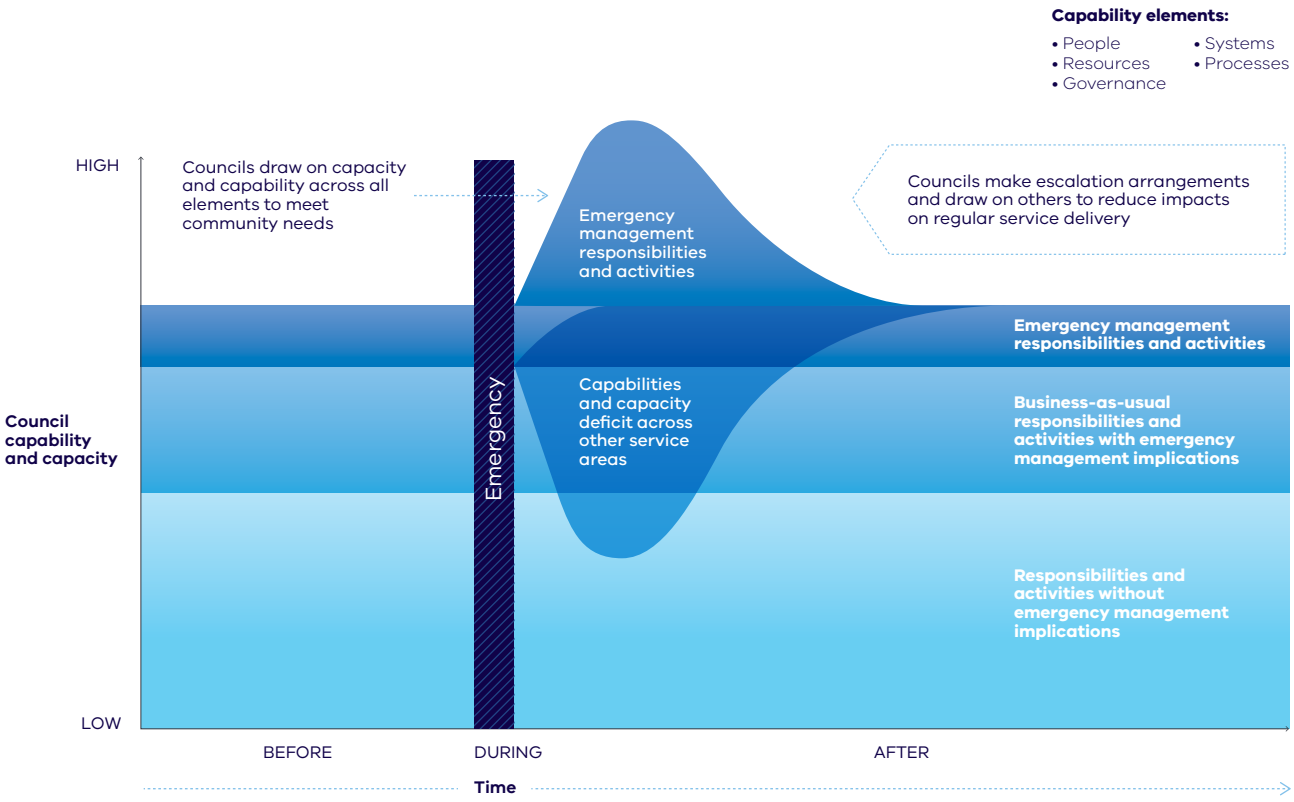
'The emergency management role of rural councils has shifted from response-based resource support to a more complex community resilience, relief and recovery role. This refocusing of emphasis brings greater demands and requires longer-term commitments from rural councils which face various challenges in providing this level of service — whether legislated or otherwise.'

Rural Councils Victoria, submission to the Councils and Emergencies Project

When an emergency occurs, council staff may need to be reallocated from their business-as-usual activities and take on duties specific to emergency management. The extent of these duties depends on the scale of the emergency. History shows that a large emergency demands a significant surge in a council's capacity (and often capability), to meet the needs of an affected community. This reallocation of resources generally reduces a council's capacity to provide its business-as-usual (regular day-to-day) core services. While this reduction can to an extent be addressed by activating business continuity arrangements, it does create a capacity deficit; and councils when making escalation arrangements draw on the support of the State Government and other councils to help with emergency management efforts (particularly relief and recovery activities) for their community, in order to reduce the impact on councils' business-as-usual activities.

Figure 3 shows the above points diagrammatically. It shows that during an emergency there may be impacts requiring capability and capacity from all three types of council responsibilities and activities, and that after an emergency there will be a high but gradually reducing demand from relief and recovery efforts. This may draw significant capability and capacity from business-as-usual activities, and is likely to have some effect on activities considered normally to be without emergency management implications.

Figure 3:
Council capability and capacity curve



02 Councils' emergency management responsibilities and activities

How we developed the list

This part lists the current emergency management responsibilities and activities of councils before, during and after emergencies. The list has been compiled by:

- undertaking a significant consultation process with the local government and emergency management sectors to understand the work councils do in emergency management, a process documented in the *Consultation Report – Councils and Emergencies Project 2017*
- examining requirements of councils in current legislation, regulations, policy and plans to publish an initial list in the *Councils and emergencies directions paper*
- amending the list in the directions paper following feedback from formal submissions to the directions paper and discussions with the project reference group.

Changes to this list will be made over time as councils' responsibilities and activities are ever evolving. Future changes will be guided by the principles outlined in part 3 of this position paper.

How to interpret the tables

The entire list of responsibilities and activities is organised into four tables:

- Table 3: Councils' emergency management responsibilities & activities **before** an emergency
- Table 4: Councils' emergency management responsibilities & activities **during** an emergency
- Table 5: Councils' emergency management responsibilities & activities **after** an emergency
- Table 6: Councils' business-as-usual responsibilities & activities with emergency management implications.

Some of the emergency management responsibilities and activities are carried out through more than one phase of an emergency. If so, they are in the table for the phase of the emergency during which they are most likely to be carried out.

Emergency management responsibilities and activities

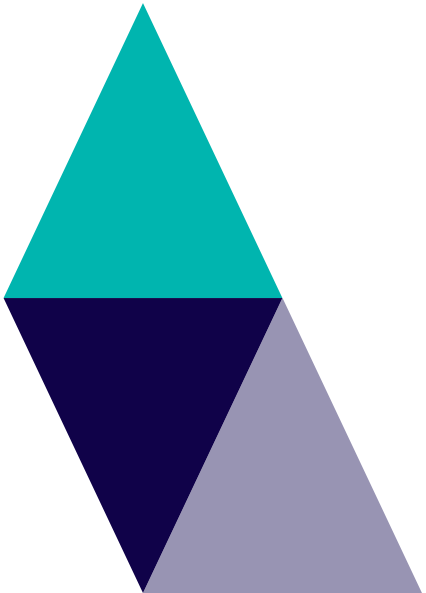
Emergency management responsibilities and activities require a council to proactively provide services to meet community needs and will generally require an increased council capability and capacity. They relate directly to emergency management and are undertaken before, during and after emergencies.

Business-as-usual responsibilities and activities with emergency management implications

Business-as-usual responsibilities and activities with emergency management implications are other activities that indirectly improve councils' emergency management performance and outcomes. They relate to councils' normal core service delivery but also have secondary or indirect emergency management benefits. These are activities that form part of a council's everyday service delivery, such as:

- developing and implementing public health policies and programs (delivered by the health, welfare and community services functions)
- undertaking fuel reduction and fire prevention works (delivered by the infrastructure, asset management and environment functions)
- providing strategic and land use planning (delivered by the strategic and statutory planning functions).

Business-as-usual responsibilities derive from legislation, regulations and policy not specific to emergency management (such as planning, building, fire management, health and wellbeing legislation) and are part of a broader, whole-of-government approach to improving community outcomes and may include responsibilities shared with other governments, the private sector and communities.



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Councils' responsibilities and activities are not organised into 'mandatory' and 'non-mandatory'. Phase 2 of the project involves working with councils to understand their capability and capacity to undertake emergency management responsibilities and activities that are relevant to their community. The text below explains this in more detail.

What the table columns mean (tables 3-6)

Number column

There are 94 responsibilities and activities in tables 3-6. The number provides a reference for consultation and discussion purposes, and has no other significance.

Council responsibility / activity column

The list of responsibilities and activities was compiled through extensive consultation with the local government and emergency management sectors that sought to identify all the emergency management responsibilities and activities currently undertaken across the local government sector. In compiling the list, the project sought to identify all responsibilities and activities undertaken by one or more councils, without judgement as to whether they were legislative requirements or simply the custom of a few councils.

Accordingly, inclusion of an item in the list makes no inference about the relevance, prominence or intent of existing legislation, regulations or policy to convey any obligation in relation to the item. Insofar as any such inference can be made, the reader can identify the source of the listing and where relevant click on the link for further information. As part of phase 1 of the project it is not within the scope of the project to make judgements about the degree of requirement of a council to undertake any of the activities or responsibilities.

That said, some of the items are statutory requirements. Every council needs to understand its legislated responsibilities and plan to carry them out as efficiently and effectively as possible, having regard to available resources and community expectations. Councils are complex organisations, and how they prioritise responsibilities and activities to meet local community needs differs considerably from council to council.

For these reasons, the list of responsibilities and activities is not organised into 'mandatory' and 'non-mandatory'. Phase 2 of the project will work with councils to understand how each council considers the responsibilities and activities, and it will use a robust methodology to consider local risks, community needs and emergency management capability and capacity. Part 3 of this paper has more information about phase 2 of the project.

Source column

This column provides further information about the origin of the responsibility or activity. In many cases, the source is legislation (such as the *Emergency Management Act 1986*) or emergency management arrangements (such as the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria*).

Table 1 gives the full title of each source, with a URL link to the document. Links in the tables link where possible to the specific item within the document.

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'Identified practice of one or more councils' items were identified in the project's consultation workshops as a current practice of one or more councils, usually driven by the priorities of the councils and their local communities.

Table 1:
Sources and references, with hyperlinks

Source	Full title
BIR r 810 (7)	*Building Interim Regulations 2017 (regulation 810)*
CASA AC139-7(0)	*Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Advisory Circular September 2012, AC 139-7(0)*
CFAA	*Country Fire Authority Act 1958*
EM Act	*Emergency Management Act 1986*
EMMV	*Emergency Management Manual Victoria*
EPA	*Environment Protection Act 1970*
FA	*Food Act 1984*
MRA	*Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990*
MFBA	*Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958*
PEA	*Planning and Environment Act 1987*
PHWA	*Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
Practice note	*Sourcing supplementary emergency response resources from municipal councils*
PMA	*Port Management Act 1995*
RMA	*Road Management Act 2004*
VFMS	*Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy*
VPP	*Victoria Planning Provisions*
WA	*Water Act 1989*

Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability column

The *Victorian Preparedness Goal* provides the foundation for Victoria's emergency management preparedness system. The goal identifies 21 core capabilities the sector requires to deal with the challenges and risks of an emergency. The *Victorian Preparedness Framework* is a planning tool to achieve the goal to develop targets and identify the tasks required to achieve them. The goal and framework use common language to describe the core capabilities — people, resources, governance, systems and processes — required to manage a potential major emergency.

This project is aligned with the goal and framework to ensure consistency between the capabilities required by the emergency management sector and by councils to undertake their emergency management responsibilities and activities. This will ensure councils can work as one with the emergency management sector before, during and after an emergency.

Table 2 shows the 21 core capabilities in the Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework, and the icons used in tables 3 to 6 to show the core capability each responsibility and activity addresses. The core capabilities in the table apply across the entire emergency management sector, and some may not be relevant for local government.

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The core capabilities in the table apply across the entire emergency management sector, and some are not relevant for local government. Some responsibilities and activities align with multiple core capabilities: if so, the table shows the main core capability.

Table 2: Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework core capabilities

Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability	When	Description	Icon
Planning	▲ Before ▲ During ▲ After	Conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community as appropriate in developing executable strategic, operational and/or tactical level approaches to meet defined objectives.	
Community information and warnings	▲ Before ▲ During ▲ After	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.	
Operational management	▲ 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.	

Table continues on next page ►

Table 2:
Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework core capabilities (continued)

Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability	When	Description	Icon
Intelligence and information-sharing	Before During After	Provide timely, accurate and actionable decision-support information resulting from 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 actions. 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.	
Public order and community safety	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, to afford a safe environment for communities affected by an emergency and for any responding personnel engaged in emergency operations.	
Building community resilience	Before During After	Building community safety and resilience includes working together at the local level. Communities can strengthen their lifelines by better connecting and working together with appropriate support from organisations.	
Fire management and suppression	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.	
Fatality management	Before After	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.	
Critical transport	During After	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 and 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 priority response objectives.	

Table continues overleaf ►

Table 2:
Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework core capabilities (continued)

Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability	When	Description	Icon
Logistics and supply chain management	▲ During ▲ After	Deliver essential commodities, equipment and services in support of impacted communities and survivors including emergency power and fuel support and the coordination of access to community staples. Synchronise logistics capabilities and enable the restoration of impacted supply chains including removal of debris.	
Impact assessment	▲ During ▲ After	Provide all decision-makers with relevant information about 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.	
Search and rescue	▲ During	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.	
Health protection	▲ During	Promotes and protects the public health of Victorians by monitoring notifiable diseases and responding to any disease outbreaks in order to control and minimise the risk of infection. This includes regulating the safety of food, drinking water and human environmental health hazards such as radiation, Legionella and pesticides. Includes informing the community and health providers about public health risks and promoting behaviours and strategies to mitigate and avoid risk. It also includes the development of national policies, standards and strategies to promote improvements in public health generally and supports the health system to respond to national public health risks.	
Health emergency response	▲ During	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.	
Relief assistance	▲ 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.	

Table continues on next page ►

Table 2:
Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework core capabilities (continued)

Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability	When	Description	Icon
Environmental response	▲ During	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.	
Economic recovery	▲ 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.	
Natural and cultural heritage rehabilitation	▲ 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.	
Built recovery	▲ After	Restore essential infrastructure and establish safe areas during and following an emergency, ensuring the provision of facilities and services to support and benefit communities.	
Social recovery	▲ 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 wellbeing.	
Assurance and learning	▲ 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.	

Emergency management responsibilities & activities – before an emergency

Table 3:
Councils' emergency management responsibilities & activities **before** an emergency

Before
During
After

This table shows 'before an emergency' responsibilities & activities.

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
1	Prepare and maintain a municipal emergency management plan.	EM Act s 20 (1)	Planning
2	Appoint a municipal emergency planning committee constituted by persons appointed by the municipal council being members and employees of the municipal council, response and recovery agencies and local community groups involved in emergency management issues. ***Note:*** *the function of a municipal emergency planning committee is to prepare a draft municipal emergency management plan for consideration by the municipal council.*	EM Act s 21 (3) EM Act s 21 (4) *for the note*	Planning
3	Appoint a person or persons to be the municipal emergency resource officer or municipal emergency resource officers. ***Note:*** *a municipal emergency resource officer is responsible for ensuring the coordination of municipal resources to be used in emergency response and recovery.*	EM Act s 21 (1) EM Act s 21 (2) *for the note*	Operational managment
4	Identify the municipal resources (being resources owned by or under the direct control of the municipal council) and other resources available for use in the municipal district for emergency prevention, response and recovery.	EM Act s 20 (2)(a)	Planning
5	Specify access and use arrangements of identified municipal resources for supporting the delivery of emergency mitigation, response and recovery activities.	EM Act s 20 (2)(b) EMMV pt 6.6 Practice note	Planning

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Emergency management responsibilities & activities – before an emergency
(continued)

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
6	Participate in an all-agencies approach to risk management planning.	EMMV pt 6 s6.5	Planning
7	Appoint a municipal recovery manager.	EMMV pt 4 s 4.4.1	Operational Management
8	Develop and maintain internal operational plans that detail their capacity and strategies for undertaking roles and responsibilities.	EMMV pt 4 s 5.2	Planning
9	Work with local and regional partners to determine arrangements and processes to manage relief and recovery activities.	EMMV pt 4 s 4.4 & s 5	Planning
10	Identify, plan and document emergency relief centres or other locations to provide emergency relief services and to ensure they meet health and other community needs.	EMMV pt 4 s 6.4 EMMV pt 3 s 5.2.6	Planning
11	Plan for the emergency housing of displaced and lost / stray companion animals.	EMMV pt 4 s 6.3.11	Planning
12	Develop secondary impact assessment processes and data-collection systems.	EMMV pt 4 ss 2.2 & 7.4.1.3	Impact assessment
13	Collect, analyse and share information about local risks, hazards and consequences with emergency management partners, businesses, service providers and the community.	EMMV pt 6	Planning
14	Identify the resources and equipment needed for council's recovery activities in the short, medium and long terms and determine supply chains in consultation with other agencies, to ensure resources and equipment are available as needed.	EMMV pt 6.6 ss 6.2, 6.3 & 6.6	Built recovery

Table continues overleaf ►

Emergency management responsibilities & activities – before an emergency
(continued)

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
15	In conjunction with the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee, test, exercise and evaluate relief and recovery plans.	EMMV pt 4 s 5.1	Planning
16	Develop and manage an emergency coordination system and/or council operational facilities that can be activated during an emergency.	EMMV pt 4 s 5.1	Operational management
17	(For a council, wholly or partly within the country area of Victoria) support the operation of the vulnerable people in emergencies policy by: • developing and maintaining a list of facilities where vulnerable people are situated • appointing a vulnerable persons register (VPR) coordinator to administer the municipality's VPR • undertaking emergency planning and VPR screening and data verification for council's home and community care program for younger people (HACC PYP) clients • when referred, undertaking emergency planning, VPR screening and data verification for people not receiving services in their municipality.	CFAA s 3 *for the definition of 'country area of Victoria'* Vulnerable people in emergencies policy *(Department of Health and Human Services [DHHS])*	Planning
18	Contribute to local flood warning services in partnership with other agencies in line with flood risk severity and community support.	VFMS ch 16	Community information and warnings
19	Advocate for its community's emergency management needs and priorities.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Building community resilience

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Emergency management responsibilities & activities – before an emergency
(continued)

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
20	Gather knowledge about local assets, values and support systems (including its community's history and values), to inform risk management planning.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Building community resilience
21	Support the development and delivery of emergency management training for council staff involved in activities before, during and after emergencies.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Planning
22	Establish agreements, partnerships and systems with other councils to support surge requirements during emergencies including to: • share intelligence and information • exchange staff and other resources to maintain capacity • align activities with business continuity plans.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Planning
23	Work with sector partners to integrate intelligence- and information-sharing systems, tools and networks of trained personnel (such as by using Emergency Management Common Operating Picture [EM-COP]) to deliver intelligence requirements and contribute to information-sharing forums, portals and committees.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Intelligence and information-sharing
24	Identify standards for the clean-up and recovery of council-managed assets.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Planning
25	Encourage and support the community to engage with emergency management agencies to participate in emergency management awareness programs, so people understand their responsibilities and can better prepare for, respond to and recover from an emergency.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Building community resilience

Emergency management responsibilities & activities – during an emergency

Table 4:
Councils' emergency management responsibilities & activities **during** an emergency

Before
During
After

This table shows 'during an emergency' responsibilities & activities.

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
26	Coordinate local relief and recovery, working with local partners to determine arrangements to manage local relief and recovery activities.	EMMV pt 4 s 4.4	Operational management
27	Coordinate and lead relief services locally by: • establishing and managing relief centres where appropriate • coordinating the provision of food, water and materials to affected communities, supported by the Red Cross and other agencies including Foodbank Victoria • working with DHHS to provide temporary shelter / short-term housing / accommodation options for displaced people • coordinating and managing services with DHHS to meet the psychosocial needs of affected local people.	EMMV pt 4 ss 3.1, 6.3.1 – 6.3.9 & 7.4.1	Relief assistance
28	Support as needed the efforts of Victoria Police and Red Cross to reunify families and others separated during an emergency.	EMMV pt 4 s 6.3.8	Relief assistance
29	Promote a single point of contact for residents to obtain information about available support, services and assistance.	EMMV pt 4 s 7.4.5.1	Community information and warnings
30	Support response agencies to effectively deliver emergency response services locally by: • making council resources and facilities available as needed by the community and response agencies, after consultation • 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 • support response agencies to access affected areas.	EMMV pt 6.6, EMMV pt 7-76 Practice note	Operational management

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Emergency management responsibilities & activities – during an emergency
(continued)

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
31	Provide support to VicRoads for partial/full road closures and determination of alternative routes.	EMMV pt 7-76	Critical transport
32	Clear blocked drains and local roads including by removing trees on council land and roads.	EMMV p 7-76	Critical transport
33	Coordinate secondary impact assessment, including the collection of information about the scale and characteristics of the impact on the social, economic, built and natural environments.	EMMV pt 4 s 2.2	Impact assessment
34	Coordinate community requests for local relief and recovery assistance including assistance with equipment, food, clothing, accommodation and health needs.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Operational management
35	Support DHHS with the dissemination of information about emergency financial assistance.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Relief assistance
36	Support agencies, where requested, with the dissemination of warnings to the community through council's communication channels and local networks.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Community information and warnings
37	Where the council is the land manager, determine in consultation with relevant agencies whether to close areas (such as beaches) that could or have been impacted by an emergency, and erect signage and fences as required.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Operational management
38	Support agencies to use relevant council data and intelligence to inform relief and recovery requirements including verifying the loss of assets.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Impact assessment
39	Support emergency management teams by making information about local community assets, values, support systems and history available for decision-making during emergencies.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Intelligence and information-sharing

Emergency management responsibilities & activities – after an emergency

Table 5:
Councils' emergency management responsibilities & activities **after** an emergency

Before
During
After

This table shows 'after an emergency' responsibilities & activities.

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
40	Lead the management of environmental health issues at the local level (including food safety, waste and waste water management, infection control, air quality, drinking water quality, vermin and vector control), coordinating with relevant agencies.	PHWA, FA, EPA	Operational management
41	Participate in the transition from response to recovery. Where council is determined to be the appropriate recovery coordinator, ensure readiness to assume responsibilities and have the appropriate resources assembled before the transition.	EMMV pt 3 s 4.6	Planning
42	Lead and coordinate relief and recovery at the local level and escalate to regional or state level as required.	EMMV pt 4 s 5.3.1	Operational management
43	Establish and lead a municipal / community recovery committee.	EMMV pt 4 s 7.4.5.2	Operational management
44	Provide and staff a recovery centre. Councils could request various recovery support agencies to attend the recovery centre to provide advice and guidance.	EMMV pt 4 s 7.4.5.4	Operational management
45	As part of social recovery, consider appropriate support strategies including how individuals will access information, the coordination of services and case support.	EMMV pt 4 s 7.4	Social recovery
46	Support DHHS in the assessment and delivery of services for the medium- to long-term psychosocial needs of the affected community.	EMMV pt 4 s 7.4.2	Social recovery

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Emergency management responsibilities & activities – after an emergency
(continued)

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
47	Support DHHS in the coordination of medium- to long-term housing / accommodation options for displaced people.	EMMV pt 4 s 7.4.1	Social recovery
48	Work in partnership with DHHS and other service providers to consider how best to engage with vulnerable groups	EMMV pt 4 s 7.4.2.2	Planning
49	Support agencies to coordinate spontaneous volunteer efforts after emergencies.	EMMV pt 4 s 7.4.5.7	Operational management
50	Lead (in partnership with neighbouring councils and regional stakeholders) the provision of community information through appropriate channels (including community briefings and meetings, social media and notice boards) and promote a single point of contact for residents to obtain information about the support services and assistance that could be available to affected individuals in relief and recovery.	EMMV pt 4 ss 6.1 & 7.4.5.1	Community information and warnings
51	Survey and determine the occupancy of damaged buildings.	EMMV pt 4 s 7.4.1.3	Built recovery
52	Coordinate post-emergency needs assessments to inform longer-term recovery planning.	EMMV pt 4 s 2.2	Impact assessment
53	Conduct safety assessments of council-owned essential and critical assets and infrastructure.	EMMV pt 4 s 7.6.5	Built recovery
54	Support the Victorian Building Authority to provide building maintenance and safety information to affected persons.	EMMV pt 4 s 7.4.1.4	Built recovery

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Emergency management responsibilities & activities – after an emergency
(continued)

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
55	Working with the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR), coordinate the housing of displaced, lost and stray companion animals (other than wildlife).	EMMV pt 4 s 6.3.11	Relief assistance
56	Coordinate clean-up activities including the disposal of dead domestic, native and feral animals.	EMMV pt 4 s 7.6.5.1	Relief assistance
57	Support DEDJTR in the coordination and management of services to meet the immediate needs of affected livestock at the local level.	EMMV pt 4 s 6.3.11	Operational management
58	Engage the community in the development and delivery of recovery activities including by appointing community development officers (when funded).	EMMV pt 4 s 7.4.5.5	Building community resilience
59	Work with DEDJTR to implement appropriate actions and initiatives that encourage and bring forward the resumption of local economic activity, including: • tourism visitation when safe to do so • the use of local business in recovery activities • buy-local initiatives • events that attract visitation • other relevant activities.	EMMV pt 4 ss 7.5.1.3 & 7.5.2.4	Economic recovery
60	Assist businesses to recover by providing advice and referrals.	EMMV pt 4 s 7.5.1	Economic recovery

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Emergency management responsibilities & activities – after an emergency
(continued)

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
61	Transition local recovery activities back to business-as-usual activities and services.	EMMV pt 4 s 7.2	Operational management
62	Conduct reviews of municipal operations and community consequences after an emergency to capture lessons and improve future outcomes, considering opportunities to: • inform future municipal plans and procedures • conduct community engagement activities to implement lessons learned • share findings with other councils and agencies to cooperatively identify and implement solutions.	EMMV pt 3 s 2.6	Assurance and learning
63	Coordinate local outreach in partnership with other agencies (such as Red Cross and the Victorian Council of Churches) to inform recovery planning.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Social recovery
64	Collect information from community meetings, call centres, emergency relief centres, debriefs and community recovery committees after an emergency. Analyse community needs to inform recovery messaging, planning and recovery services.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Community information and warnings
65	Support consistent messaging and advice about available community health programs.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Social recovery

Table continues overleaf ►

Emergency management responsibilities & activities – after an emergency
(continued)

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
66	Conduct a process to gather incident and impact intelligence from initial and secondary impact assessments to inform relief and recovery planning, including longitudinal mapping of the consequences across the four recovery environments — built, social, economic and natural.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Impact assessment
67	Coordinate, assess, rehabilitate and monitor council-managed natural and cultural heritage assets after an emergency.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Impact assessment
68	Coordinate the rebuilding and redevelopment of council assets and infrastructure having regard for community needs and priorities.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Built recovery
69	Support agencies to restore essential assets and infrastructure, ensuring the restored assets and infrastructure are sustainable and more resilient to future emergencies.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Built recovery
70	Oversee rebuilding and redevelopment works by: • advocating for planning scheme exemptions for emergency accommodation and clean-up works • streamlining planning and building construction approvals.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Built recovery
71	Work with community and recovery agencies to adapt recovery services to reflect newly identified or changing community needs and priorities.	Identified practice of one or more councils	Social recovery

Business-as-usual responsibilities and activities with emergency management implications

Table 6:
Councils' business-as-usual responsibilities & activities with emergency management implications

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	When	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
72	Where council is a planning authority, prepare a municipal strategic statement with strategic planning, land use and development objectives for the municipality and related strategies and actions.	PEA s 12A	▲ Before	Planning
73	Where council is a planning authority, provide sound, strategic and coordinated planning of the use and development of land in its area.	PEA s 12 (1)(b)	▲ Before	Planning
74	Where council is a road authority, ensure a safe, efficient network of roads is maintained, taking into account obligations under the Victoria Planning Provisions for managing roadside vegetation.	RMA ss 20, 34 & 40, VPP 52.17	▲ Before	Planning
75	Where a council manages an airport: • establish and maintain an aerodrome emergency committee • conduct an emergency exercise at least every two years, assessing the response to any actual emergency response.	*CASA AC139-7(0)*	▲ Before	Planning
76	Where a council manages a local port, prepare and implement a safety management plan and an environmental management plan for the port or part of the port the council manages.	PMA s 91(c)	▲ Before	Planning

Table continues overleaf ►

Business-as-usual responsibilities & activities (continued)

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	When	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
77	Where a council operates a mine or quarry, ensure the site remains safe and stable.	MRA ss 77J, 77Q & 81	▲ Before	Planning
78	Seek to protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing within the municipal district including by preparing a municipal public health and wellbeing plan.	PHWA ss 24, PHWA s 26	▲ Before ▲ During ▲ After	Planning
79	Develop and implement public health policies and programs.	PHWA ss 24	▲ Before ▲ During ▲ After	Planning
80	Appoint a person to be the municipal fire prevention officer.	CFA s 96A, MFBA s 5A	▲ Before	Fire management & suppression
81	(For a council wholly or partly within the country area of Victoria) at the direction of the municipal emergency management planning committee and on advice from the fire services, establish a multi-agency municipal fire management planning committee to develop and maintain a municipal fire management plan.	CFAA s 3 *for the definition of 'country area of Victoria'* CFAA s 55A *for the municipal fire prevention plan* EMMV pt 6 ss 6.2 & 6.4 *for the committee and plan*	▲ Before ▲ During	Fire management & suppression

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Business-as-usual responsibilities & activities
(continued)

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	When	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
82	(For a council wholly or partly within the country area of Victoria) identify, designate, ensuring signage, maintain and undertake an annual review of bushfire safer places and their plans, as well as report back annually to Country Fire Authority (CFA).	CFAA s 3 *for the definition of 'country area of Victoria'* CFAA pt IIIA div 3 *for neighbour-hood safer places*	▲ Before	Fire management & suppression
83	(For a council wholly or partly within the country area of Victoria) work in partnership with CFA by issuing permits to burn during the fire danger period where appropriate.	CFAA s 3 *for the definition of 'country area of Victoria'* CFAA s 38 *for issuing of permits*	▲ Before ▲ During	Fire management & suppression
84	Take all practicable steps (including burning) to prevent the occurrence of fires on, and minimise the danger of the spread of fires on and from, any land vested in it or under its control or management and any road under its care and management.	MFBA s 5, CFAA ss 43	▲ Before ▲ During	Fire management & suppression
85	If requested in writing by CFA, provide pillar (vertical, above-ground) hydrants at specified locations in reticulated areas.	CFAA s 36	▲ Before ▲ During	Fire management & suppression
86	Require the relevant water authority to install, mark and maintain fire plugs in suitable locations to supply water for firefighting purposes (at council's cost).	WA s 165	▲ Before	Fire management & suppression
87	Serve a fire prevention notice on an owner or occupier (other than a public authority) in respect of anything that is or may be a danger to life or property from the threat of fire.	MFBA s 87, CFAA s 41	▲ Before	Fire management & suppression

Table continues overleaf ►

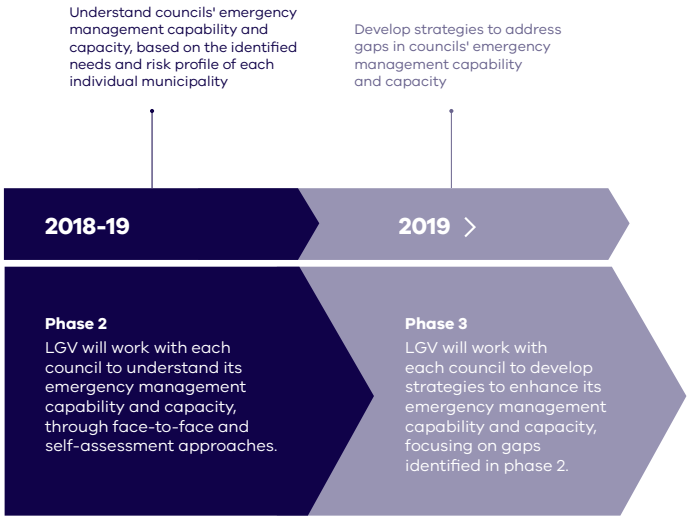
Business-as-usual responsibilities & activities (continued)

No.	Council responsibility / activity	Source	When	Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability
88	Serve an infringement notice on a person who the municipal fire prevention officer has reason to believe has not lawfully complied with a fire prevention notice.	MFBA s 92, CFAA s 41E	▲ Before	Fire management & suppression
89	Make a copy of the most recent designated bushfire-prone-areas map available for inspection by the public without charge during business hours.	BIR r 810 (7)	▲ Before	Planning
90	Develop community profiles to identify areas and types of vulnerabilities and ensure local arrangements support vulnerable people and assets.	Identified practice of one or more councils	▲ Before	Planning
91	Develop council business continuity plans detailing procedures and systems to maintain critical functions during disruptions.	Identified practice of one or more councils	▲ Before	Planning
92	Conduct risk-mitigation activities for council-owned and managed assets and infrastructure.	Identified practice of one or more councils	▲ Before	Operational management
93	Build community resilience by strengthening local partnerships with businesses and not-for-profit organisations	Identified practice of one or more councils	▲ Before	Building community resilience
94	Consider emergency management as part of broader council planning (such as when preparing the council plan and strategic resource plan).	Identified practice of one or more councils	▲ Before ▲ During ▲ After	Planning

03 Next steps

During phase 2 of the project, Local Government Victoria will work with each Victorian council to fully understand the approach each council takes to their emergency management responsibilities and activities, using face-to-face and self-assessment approaches.

Phase 2 will draw on the *Victorian Emergency Management Capability Blueprint 2015-2025* published by Emergency Management Victoria (EMV). We will use the blueprint and the responsibilities and activities in part 2 of this paper to assess each council's capabilities against the blueprint's core capability elements — people, resources, governance, systems and processes.



During phase 3 of the project, LGV will develop strategies and action plans in partnership with the local government sector to address gaps in capability and capacity. This phase will be informed by previous phases of the project, including the consultation undertaken thus far which has provided insight into councils' strengths and opportunities to address the challenges they face in supporting their communities before, during and after emergencies.

Figure 4:
The Victorian Emergency Management Capability Blueprint 2015-2025

Principles to guide councils' future emergency management role

The *Councils and emergencies directions paper* set out principles for defining councils' emergency management responsibilities. A statement of principles will help guide any proposed changes to councils' responsibilities arising from future changes to legislation or policy, which include:

- Emergency Management Legislation Amendment (Planning) Bill
- Emergency management planning guidelines
- Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework
- Resilient Recovery
- Strategic review of incident control centres and regional control centres
- Reform of the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements
- Auditor-General's audit of councils' natural disaster preparedness

Councils' emergency management responsibilities and activities should:

01 Reflect local governments' strengths, capability and capacity, and be consistent with existing legislative responsibilities and core business.

02 Be led by local government only when it is the best-placed organisation to do so.

03 Be applicable to emergencies of different scales and complexity, with a focus on community priorities and outcomes.

04 Provide opportunities to collaborate and build partnerships with other councils and stakeholders to enhance the delivery of services.

05 Acknowledge local decision-making, governance, structures and relationships that already exist between councils and their local communities.

Figure 5:
Statement of emergency management principles

These principles have been derived from feedback to the project so far, including submissions in response to the *Councils and emergencies directions paper*. The principles have also been workshopped by the project reference group.

Councils' responsibilities in emergency management should:

01 Reflect strengths

Reflect local governments' strengths, capability and capacity, and be consistent with existing legislative responsibilities and core business.

02 Lead when best-placed

Be led by local government only when it is the best-placed organisation to do so.

03 Applicable and relevant

Be applicable to emergencies of different scales and complexity, with a focus on community priorities and outcomes.

04 Provide opportunities

Provide opportunities to collaborate and build partnerships with other councils and stakeholders to enhance the delivery of services.

05 Acknowledge local arrangements

Acknowledge local decision-making, governance, structures and relationships that already exist between councils and their local communities.

These principles will help guide any proposed changes to councils' responsibilities into the future.

Emergency management initiatives relevant to local government

The emergency management sector is in an exciting period of reform, and many initiatives are occurring concurrently. Each initiative has consequences for the local government sector, and the sector's participation is therefore very important. While it is a challenge for smaller or less-resourced councils to provide feedback for all the reform projects, the participation of councils and the emergency management sector in this project has been considerable.

Brief details of the main reform initiatives currently underway in the emergency management sector, and relevant to local government, follow:

1. Emergency Management Legislation Amendment (Planning) Bill

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 *Emergency Management Act 2013* 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*. It proposes that emergency management planning guidelines would be issued to provide practical guidance about planning.

2. Emergency management planning guidelines

To support proposed legislative changes, the emergency management sector is developing new emergency management planning guidelines that will cover core concepts, processes, content and standards to develop emergency management plans at the state, regional and municipal levels. The planning process helps clarify and build understanding of the roles and responsibilities, standards and capabilities required before, during and after emergencies. This is an opportunity to fundamentally change the approach to emergency management, to focus more on the planning process.

3. Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework

As described in part 2 of this paper, the *Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework* provide the foundation for Victoria's emergency management preparedness system.

Table 2 in part 2 of this paper explains the core capabilities set out in the goal and framework, and the four tables in part 2 show which of the core capabilities each council responsibility and activity addresses.

Phases 2 and 3 of the project will continue to align with and inform the Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework, as LGV and EMV continue to work in partnership to build councils' capability and capacity.

4. Resilient Recovery

EMV's *Resilient Recovery Discussion Paper* released in early 2017 proposed the Resilient Recovery Model, a model that looks at how the many, diverse components of a relief and recovery effort —individuals, communities, public and private sector organisations and governments — can be brought together, organised and empowered to deliver community recovery outcomes. It seeks to understand relationships between the components, how the actions of one affect others and how strong networks can be formed between them. It supports individuals, families and communities to be healthy and safe; to engage in and lead their recovery; to live, work and connect within their community; and to identify opportunities for growth, renewal and innovation.

The project's work will inform the development and implementation of Resilient Recovery, which will strengthen councils' role as local relief and recovery coordinators.

5. Strategic review of incident control centres and regional control centres

EMV is currently conducting a strategic review of the management of the state's network of incident control (ICCs) and regional control centres (RCCs). The review aims to ensure Victoria's emergency management system is efficient and effective and that it puts the community at the centre of everything it does in line with EMV's 'all communities, all emergencies' approach. This review is important for councils as they are increasingly involved in the operations of ICCs and RCCs.

6. Reform of the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements

The Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) administers the Natural Disaster Financial Assistance (NDFA) scheme, which essentially mirrors the Australian Government – State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA). Acknowledging the significant cost of natural disasters, the Commonwealth Government established the NDRRA to provide a fiscal safety net to states and territories to facilitate the early provision of assistance to disaster-affected communities. Under the NDFA, councils and catchment management authorities can seek reimbursement from DTF for eligible relief and recovery expenditure on counter-disaster operations and to restore essential public assets after a natural disaster. The NDRRA allows the state to claim costs from the Commonwealth subject to meeting financial thresholds and conditions.

In May 2015, the Commonwealth Government released the Productivity Commission's *Inquiry report on Natural Disaster Funding* and the Australian National Audit Office's report on the *Administration of the NDRRA by Emergency Management Australia*. Since then, the Commonwealth Government has consulted with state and territory governments about reforming the NDRRA, with an emphasis on the processes of funding the restoration of essential public assets and increasing accountability and assurance arrangements. The Commonwealth is currently proposing to implement a new version of the arrangements on 1 July 2018.

7. Auditor-General's audit of councils' natural disaster preparedness

In 2018–19, the Victorian Auditor-General plans to conduct a performance audit to determine if local councils are sufficiently prepared to respond to and recover from natural disasters. Its annual plan notes the importance of building resilience and shared responsibility between communities, governments and others.

VICTORIA
State
Government
Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning