Councils and emergencies consultation report

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Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
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PART 01

About this report

This Councils and emergencies consultation report provides details of the consultation process and its outcomes, which was conducted in 2016 and 2017 as a part of phase 1 of the Councils and Emergencies Project. It records the feedback councils, emergency response agencies, state government departments and non-government organisations provided in response to the *Councils and emergencies directions paper* during the consultation period, which was from 10 January to 8 May 2017. It also provides a summary of the process and outcomes of other consultation undertaken as part of the project.

This report should be read in conjunction with the *Councils and emergencies position paper*, which Local Government Victoria (LGV), a part of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), published in December 2017. Feedback from the consultation undertaken during the project has culminated in the release of the position paper.

About the Councils and Emergencies Project

The Councils and Emergencies Project is led by LGV. The project is an action in the *Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan* under 'Priority B: Enhance the capability and capacity of local governments to meet their obligations in the management of emergencies'.

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 action 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 1 illustrates this approach.

Figure 1: Phases of the Councils and Emergencies Project

Project aim: enhance the emergency management capability and capacity of local government

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Clarify and confirm the emergency management responsibilities and activities of local governments.	Understand councils' emergency management capability and capacity, based on the identified needs and risk profile of each individual municipality.	Develop strategies to address gaps in councils' emergency management capability and capacity.
LGV will bring the local government and emergency management sectors together to clarify and confirm local government sector agency management responsibilities and activities, producing a directions paper and a position paper to guide future project work.	Following the process explained in part 3 of the position paper, LGV will work with each council to understand its emergency management capability and capacity, through face-to-face and self-assessment approaches.	LGV will work with each council to develop strategies to enhance its emergency management capability and capacity, focusing on gaps identified in phase 2. This phase will be informed by the project's previous phases.
2016–17	2018–19	2019 >

Project governance

The project is one of six projects in the strategic action plan that address emergency management capability and capacity. The Emergency Management Capability and Capacity Steering Committee oversees these projects. For each project, the steering committee assures strategic alignment with other projects, approves key project decisions, advises on corporate management issues and is responsible for project governance. This project reports directly to the steering committee via the LGV Executive Director.

The State Crisis and Resilience Committee — as the body delegated under the *Emergency Management Act 2013* to develop the strategic action plan — also has an approval and endorsement role.

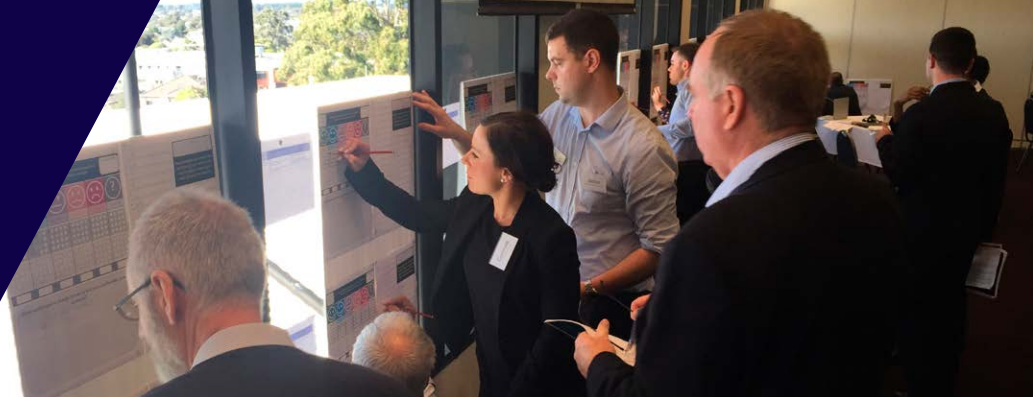
The project team also regularly updates the DELWP Emergency Management Strategy Committee. This committee comprises senior executives of DELWP, and the Deputy Secretary of the Forest, Fire and Regions Group chairs it. The committee oversees DELWP's obligations under the *Emergency Management Act 2013* to implement the work program in the strategic action plan, for which DELWP is accountable. The LGV Executive Director, who is a committee member, provides it with regular updates about the project.

Table 1 shows the relevant state-level approvals by the State Crisis and Resilience Committee and the Emergency Management Capability and Capacity Steering Committee leading up to the *Councils and emergencies position paper.*

Table 1: Engagement with state-level committees

State Crisis Resilience Council	Date
Approved the *Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan*	June 2015
Approved the Victorian Preparedness Goal	19 May 2016
Approved the Victorian Preparedness Framework	16 March 2017
Endorsed the *Councils and emergencies position paper*	16 November 2017
Emergency Management Capability and Capacity Steering Committee	**Date**
Approved the project plan and consultation strategy	30 March 2016
Considered the workshop feedback report	4 July 2016
Approved the *Councils and emergencies directions paper*	13 December 2016
Approved the *Councils and emergencies position paper*	1 November 2017

PART 02



The consultation process

Initial consultation

As Figure 1 shows, in phase 1 of the project LGV brought the local government and emergency management sectors together to clarify and confirm the emergency management responsibilities and activities of local government.

This phase focused on consultation to identify the responsibilities and activities of councils relating to emergency management. The consultation included workshops with councils and emergency management agencies, input by state-level committees, the formation of and input by working groups, information sessions and executive-level stakeholder meetings.

In 2016, LGV engaged Fire Light Consulting to conduct 16 facilitated, independent workshops across the state. Table 2 shows where and when the workshops occurred. The workshops compiled the knowledge and insights of representatives of councils and emergency management agencies.

At the workshops, the facilitators asked participants:

- what are the current responsibilities and actions of councils before, during and after an emergency?
- what stops councils from effectively doing them?
- what enables councils to effectively do them?
- what current responsibilities and actions do councils want not to have and do?

Table 2: Council and emergency management agency workshops

Workshop location	Date
Ballarat (councils)	19 May 2016
Ballarat (emergency management agencies)	20 May 2016
Benalla (councils)	10 May 2016
Benalla (emergency management agencies)	11 May 2016
Bendigo (councils)	13 May 2016
Bendigo/Epsom (emergency management agencies)	25 May 2016
Broadmeadows (councils)	30 May 2016
Horsham (councils)	17 May 2016
Horsham (emergency management agencies)	18 May 2016
Melbourne (emergency management agencies)	16 June 2016
Nunawading (councils)	8 June 2016
Sale (councils)	31 May 2016
Sale (emergency management agencies)	1 June 2016
Swan Hill (councils)	12 May 2016
Warrnambool (councils)	26 May 2016
Warrnambool (emergency management agencies)	27 May 2016

Fire Light Consulting prepared a report for LGV — *Councils and emergencies workshop feedback analysis (June 2016)* — which detailed the methodology, feedback and analysis of the feedback from the workshops.

After the release of the workshop feedback analysis report, LGV in partnership with Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) led a series of engagement forums with chief executive officers of local governments. LGV Executive Director Graeme Emonson and Emergency Management Commissioner Craig Lapsley convened the forums, which were high-level, open discussions between councils, LGV and EMV. They also provided an opportunity to update CEOs about the progress of the Councils and Emergencies Project.

Table 3 shows where and when the engagement forums occurred.

Table 3: Council CEO engagement forums

Forum location	Date
Ararat	4 November 2016
Benalla	11 October 2016
Bendigo	12 September 2016
Camperdown	4 November 2016
Melbourne	19 October 2016
Melbourne	24 October 2016
Sale	28 October 2016

Directions paper consultation

LGV used the feedback from these consultations to develop the *Councils and emergencies directions paper*, which the LGV Executive Director and the Emergency Management Commissioner released in January 2017. The directions paper invited councils, state government and emergency management agencies and other partners to make submissions about the 154 responsibilities and actions it listed during the 17-week consultation period: submissions closed on 8 May 2017.

LGV asked councils for feedback about whether the emergency management responsibilities and actions in the paper were correct and correctly described. It asked state government and emergency management agencies for feedback about whether the descriptions met their current expectations of emergency management work by councils. LGV asked only for feedback about current responsibilities, activities and expectations, not about emergency management responsibilities they wanted in the future or which were anticipated.

The consultation process based on the directions paper was run through the *Councils and Emergencies Consultation* page of the state government's Engage Victoria website. Through the consultation's two web pages, interested parties could:

- get information about the project
- download the directions paper and lodge their submission online
- review a tailored information package and complete a short questionnaire to provide feedback online.

Table 4 shows data about traffic on the two web pages. It shows they were a popular way of disseminating information, with a large amount of traffic.

Table 4: Traffic on the consultation's web pages

Metric	Description	Number
Visitors	The number of people (separate IP addresses) visiting the web pages; they may have visited the web pages more than once	2,143
Page views	The total number of times either web page was visited	2,872
Downloads	The number of times web page visitors downloaded the *Councils and emergencies directions paper*	2,207

Note: The statistics above are for the project web page and the consultation web page for the duration of the consultation period, 10 January 2017 to 8 May 2017.

Directions paper information sessions

Six information sessions were organised during the consultation period. Table 5 shows the dates and locations of the sessions, which were for representatives of councils and emergency management agencies to discuss the directions paper in more detail with LGV staff and to provide any necessary clarification or help with preparing a submission.

The sessions were well-attended and generally seen as beneficial to the consultation process. All feedback that the information sessions attendees provided was recorded, summarised and combined with the written submissions made through the website-based consultation process.

Table 5: Directions paper information sessions

Information session locations	Date
Ararat	24 March 2017
Benalla	21 March 2017
Bendigo	27 March 2017
Camperdown	29 March 2017
Melbourne	5 April 2017
Sale	22 March 2017

Analysis of submissions

LGV analysed and evaluated the submissions to inform the development of the position paper.

LGV aligned all responses to the 154 responsibilities and actions in the directions paper and gave each a rating as follows:

- 'support'
- 'support with clarification'
- 'no defined position'
- 'additional information required'
- 'do not support'
- 'not recorded'.

Although there were 154 responsibilities and actions listed in the directions paper, some had sub-responsibilities, which were assessed as separate items. This resulted in a total of 180 responsibilities and actions being rated.

LGV received some submissions that were made jointly by a group of councils (for example, for emergency management purposes, some councils group together in a cluster representing a much larger geographical area). For each of the 180 individual items, a response expressed jointly was considered as the response of each individual council in the group. However, on a few occasions, a council in a group also made an individual submission and their response to one of the items was different to the response in the joint submission (for example, they may have added information or perspectives particular to their municipality). In those circumstances, the individual response from the council overrode the group response. The original ranking was then changed on the basis of the joint response to represent the individual council response.

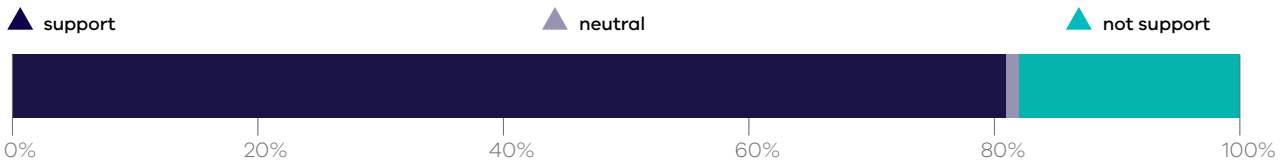
To address submissions and feedback of a qualitative nature, general comments about the project and process were grouped into broad themes, which are reported in the Part 3 - Feedback and responses.

Snapshot of submissions

Seventy-five submissions were recieved in total, representing the views of 78 councils and 13 organisations other than councils: Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV); Rural Councils Victoria; EMV; Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES); Country Fire Authority (CFA); Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB); Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS); Ambulance Victoria; Department of Treasury and Finance; Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources; Victorian Farmers Federation; Red Cross; and Victoria Police. LGV also received about 5,500 individual comments, which were analysed as part of the qualitative analysis of the submissions.

Figure 2 illustrates the overall level of support for the 154 responsibilities and actions in the directions paper. As explained above, LGV analysed and rated a total of 180 responsibilities and actions.

Figure 2: Level of support for the 180 responsibilities and actions in the directions paper



Note: Not all submissions provided responses to all 180 responsibilities and actions. Where there was no response to a responsibility, it was registered as 'not recorded' and not included in this dataset.

The overall level of support for each individual responsibility and action expressed in the submissions is shown in Appendix 1 of this report.

Councils and Emergencies Reference Group input

LGV established a Councils and Emergencies Reference Group to help clarify councils' emergency management responsibilities and to ensure the position paper included practical knowledge, information and advice from the local government and emergency management sectors.

The reference group has 34 members selected to ensure a diversity of:

- experience, authority and expertise
- representation by council size and geographic location
- emergency management agencies
- gender
- extent of current participation in the project.

The reference group provided LGV with advice about:

- the description of emergency management responsibilities and activities, particularly with contentious issues
- the position paper's structure and key components to consider when outlining councils' emergency management responsibilities and activities
- the principles for defining emergency management responsibilities and activities in the future.

Refer to Appendix 2 for reference group participants.

Table 6 shows the dates of the two reference group meetings. As a result of the first reference group meeting, a subgroup met to further refine the content and layout of the position paper, so that it could be presented to and approved by the reference group in the second meeting.

Table 6: Reference group meetings

Reference group meetings	Date
First meeting	10 July 2017
Subgroup meeting	21 July 2017
Second meeting	25 July 2017

The first reference group meeting was conducted over two days. It considered feedback about the style and structure of the directions paper, the top 50 contentious responsibilities identified by respondents, the principles to guide councils' future emergency management role and implementation challenges and opportunities.

After establishing the reference group's role and decision-making rules, it explored three submissions that specifically spoke to the style and structure of the document. There were three presentations, followed by an exploration of the strengths and weaknesses of each. Finally, participants' preference for each model was discussed and two combined models developed. A small working group then refined these models into one that was presented back to the reference group and confirmed as the preferred structure of the position paper.

The reference group also reviewed the 50 most contentious responsibilities — those ranked 'do not support' by more than 20% of participants. The reference group broke into smaller groups to consider if each responsibility should be:

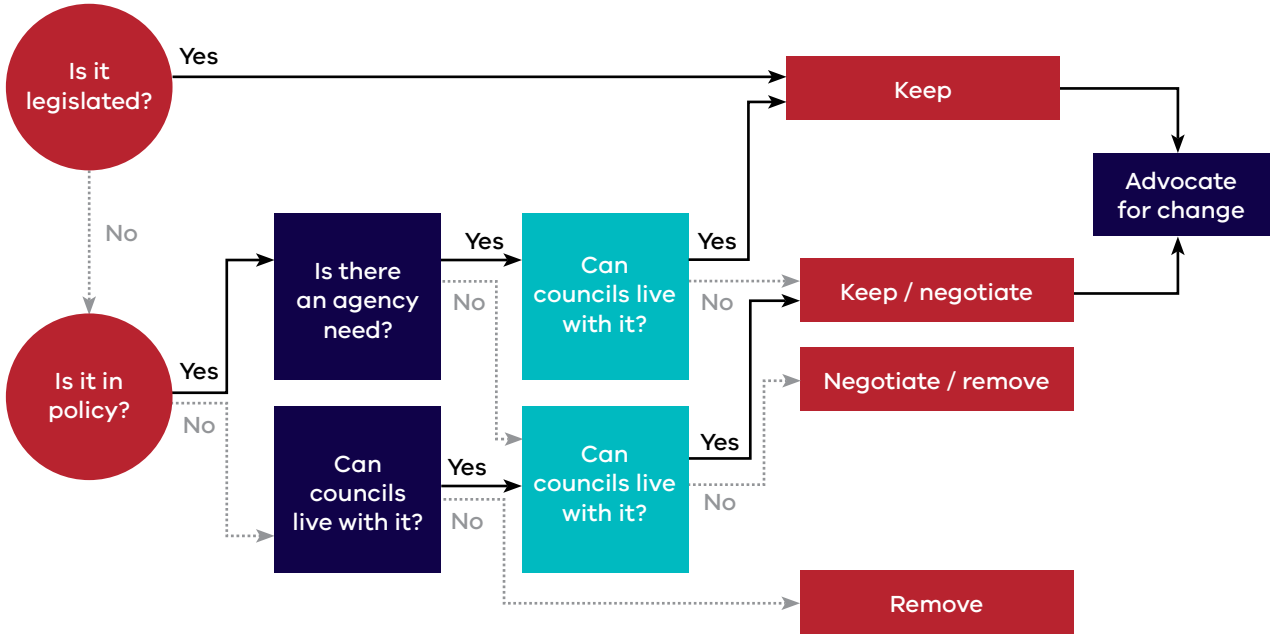
- removed from the list of responsibilities
- retained as written

- reworded to be clearer
- included as business-as-usual rather than as an emergency management responsibility.

Figure 3 shows the methodology and decision-making tool the reference group and project team used to consider the contentious responsibilities. The decision-making tool helped the reference group determine how these responsibilities would be listed (or not) in the position paper.

For example, if a contentious responsibility was legislated, it would be included in the position paper but recorded as a responsibility about which local government had asked for a future change. If it was not legislated but its source was in policy, it would be included but with the wording revised to make it clearer and to increase stakeholders' support for how it is undertaken. If it was not legislated and not in policy, the wording would be revised or it would be removed from the list and not be included in the position paper.

Figure 3: Methodology and decision-making tool for considering contentious responsibilities



The groups decided that six responsibilities should be removed, 31 responsibilities reworded and nine responsibilities shifted to business-as-usual. Three additional responsibilities were subsequently added to the list for rewording. The reference group then split into small teams, which reworded the 34 responsibilities, then reconvened to decide on the final wording for inclusion in the position paper.

The reference group also reviewed the summary of feedback on the principles for future governance of the councils' emergency management responsibilities and suggested several changes.

It also discussed challenges and opportunities implementing the position paper, broader project challenges and opportunities and strategies to capitalise on opportunities and overcome challenges. The project team will use these strategies in the next phases of the project.

The reference group will reconvene in 2018 to provide guidance and support around the emergency management capability and capacity assessment model to be used in phase 2 of the project, the supporting methodology and associated work required to effectively implement phase 2.

Draft position paper consultation

On the advice of the reference group, LGV made a draft version of the position paper available to, and sought feedback from, the local government and emergency management sectors and other stakeholders.

This final consultation process occurred over three weeks, from 28 September to 20 October 2017. Due to the tight timeframe to obtain approval for the position paper, this consultation period was necessarily short, which made it difficult for some organisations to make a submission.

During this period, LGV received 35 submissions. Table 7 summarises the most common feedback received and the changes LGV made to the position paper in response. LGV also made many minor changes to the responsibilities and activities in the position paper, often accepting particular points of feedback in their entirety.

Table 7: Key feedback in position paper draft consultation and amendments made to the final position paper in response

Key feedback	Position paper amendment
Support for a clear distinction between mandatory and non-mandatory responsibilities and activities	The reference group and steering committee had approved the revised style and structure of the position paper, which indicates the source of the responsibility, so the feedback supported their position and no further change was required. LGV reorganised the items in each table to group and list items deriving from legislation first, items deriving from policy second and the identified practices of one or more councils third. LGV improved the narrative to better explain why the paper does not weight responsibilities and activities or describe them as mandatory or non-mandatory.
Concern about the use of the term *core capability* in the tables, and a desire for greater clarity about whose core capabilities they are —the whole emergency management system's, not just councils	LGV changed *Core capability* in the column heading of the tables to *Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability*, to emphasise they do not refer just to the capabilities of local governments. LGV also strengthened the narrative that explains the Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability column of the tables.
Confusion about the icons in the tables that illustrate the link to the Victorian Preparedness Goal core capabilities	LGV removed all but the most important icon from each responsibility and activity, and also named the core capability the icon represents.
Concern that the purpose and intent of the paper was unclear and that the paper would increase expectations that councils undertake all the responsibilities and activities in the paper, leading to scope creep and audits	LGV expanded the narrative in part 1 of the paper to clarify the paper's purpose and its role in the project: that is, to lay the basis for phase 2 by developing a shared understanding of the full gamut of responsibilities and activities councils may undertake in relation to emergency management. LGV also redesigned the project graphic for Figure 2 in the position paper to make clearer the project's purpose, timeframes and work to be undertaken in each phase.
Feedback about specific responsibilities and activities	Where applicable, LGV changed some responsibilities and activities, to improve their readability and clarify any confusion identified by the feedback.

Position paper publication

Drawing the above processes to a close, the position paper was published on 15 December 2017. The position paper provides a comprehensive overview of the emergency management responsibilities and activities that councils undertake for the betterment of their local communities.

The release of the position paper and this consultation report mark the completion of phase 1 of the project. Phase 2 will involve LGV working with councils to understand their emergency management capability and capacity, based on the position paper and the *Victorian Emergency Management Capability Blueprint 2015-2025*. Phase 2 will consider the identified needs and risk profile of each individual municipality. Phase 3 of the project will involve developing strategies to address any gaps identified during phase 2 of the project.

PART 03

Feedback and responses

Analysis of the submissions to the directions paper identified five broad themes:

- the direction paper's style and structure
- councils' responsibilities and actions
- councils' diverse capabilities and capacities
- the position paper's purpose and future use
- general advocacy issues.

Each theme is not entirely discrete, and there is significant overlap between them.

In preparing the following summary of the feedback, LGV minimised changes to the wording submitters used so as not to misinterpret their intent, although it edited some comments to fix basic grammar and word mistakes.

Theme 1: Direction paper's style and structure

Submissions noted slight inaccuracies, repetitiveness and overly long or complex sentences. Some found the use of blue and black text unhelpful. Some submissions also said the directions paper was not forward-focused or outcomes-focused and questioned the use of the terms *before*, *during* and *after* rather than *prevention, response* and *recovery*.

Key feedback points

- The directions paper was not forward-focused, and it did not provide any direction for local government now and into the future which could help to further inform the emergency management reform agenda.
- The directions paper in part appeared to be very prescriptive, or it could become prescriptive if some statements remained as currently presented.
- The directions paper was at times repetitive, inaccurate or partially inaccurate.
- The directions paper should possibly better align with the language of the Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework.
- The directions paper referred to previous versions of the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria* (EMMV).
- The directions paper emphasised descriptions rather than being outcomes-focused.
- The six principles are a key element to understanding councils' emergency roles and responsibilities. It would be more appropriate to see the principles expressed at the beginning of the document rather than at the end.
- The guiding principles should be moved to a more prominent position in the document, reflecting the role of councils and assisting to categorise the responsibilities and actions.
- The sentence length was at times challenging.
- The use of the blue and black text did not resonate with some councils.
- Some submissions proposed the definition of *lead* be changed in the directions paper or be replaced with the active verbs *facilitate* and *coordinate*. *Lead* implies a level of responsibility and accountability by a council for actions in its municipal emergency management plan or of its municipal emergency management planning committee, although in some cases there is nothing in legislation or policy that says a council is responsible or accountable.
- The responsibilities defined by legislation, policy and plans were not described verbatim. This could have resulted in the description of the responsibilities potentially altering the intent of councils' responsibilities.
- Fire management and suppression is a key element of a council's varied role, particularly in relation to engaging with and advocating for the community in fire management issues. It would be good to see these dot points separated[1], as they are all important statements individually.
- The definitive list should ensure that if the item is currently being performed by other bodies, the description appropriately refers to this, and that tasks derived from legislation, regulations, policies or plans accurately pinpoint their source authority.
- Too much emphasis was given to the descriptions of the core capabilities in the Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework.

1 The comment refers to item 86, which relates to the 'Fire management & suppression' Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability.

LGV's response to the feedback

LGV workshopped the style and structure of the report with the project reference group, and the steering committee approved it. LGV also changed the structure of the position paper to:

- make the primary organising structure of the list *before*, *during*, *after* and *business-as-usual*
- within each of these categories, list legislated items first, policy-related items second and items that were an identified practice of one or more councils third
- include the source of the list item with a hyperlink, so readers can easily examine the source document
- list only the most important Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability for each item and show it graphically and with text.

The position paper includes all 21 Victorian Preparedness Goal core capabilities and does not say councils do not act under five of them.

The position paper makes clear that some of the emergency management responsibilities and activities are carried out through more than one phase of an emergency. If so, they are listed in the phase during which they are most likely to be carried out.

LGV reworded the responsibilities and activities for the position paper so they better reflect current arrangements. A clearly stated, agreed list of councils' emergency management responsibilities and actions — which, until the publication of the position paper, has not existed — is the essential basis for phase 2 of the project (which will gauge councils' current capability and capacity to undertake the responsibilities and activities).

The consultation workshops sought feedback on future responsibilities and actions, asking participants, 'How can councils best contribute to the emergency management sector's vision of safer and more resilient communities?'. However, the feedback was only about current practices and did not identify future responsibilities or actions. Also, the MAV, which was closely involved in developing the directions paper, advised that it should only be about current roles or it could cause confusion.

The position paper more clearly explains (in part 1) the intent of the project, why it only includes current responsibilities and activities and how they will provide the basis for phase 2 of the project.

Text was added to emphasise the purpose of the principles in defining emergency management responsibilities in future and how the principles can inform other emergency management reforms currently underway.

Theme 2: Councils' responsibilities and action

The directions paper organised the list of emergency management responsibilities and actions first by Victorian Preparedness Goal core capability and then by before, during or after an emergency. Submissions favoured the before, during or after categorisation.

The feedback was that it was also important to:

- distinguish items that require a council to proactively provide services related directly to emergency management from items that are part of its 'business-as-usual' activities (such as an infrastructure, asset management or environment function) but have emergency management implications (for example, fuel reduction and fire prevention works)
- indicate the degree of requirement of each item: whether it is a legislative requirement, or in a policy or guidance document, or just the identified practice of one or more councils due to their particular circumstances.

Key feedback points

- A submission by a group of eight councils suggested many of the responsibilities and actions listed, while complementary to emergency management, are undertaken as part of broader service delivery. They are undertaken for example as part of asset management, land use planning and local laws enforcement, and the position paper should separate them.
- Some submissions questioned whether the state should be defining the distinction between a council's role in an emergency and their business-as-usual activities.
- Many items described a council's business continuity actions as emergency management actions, which is not valid because business-as-usual and emergency management are not necessarily interrelated.
- The business-as-usual items will help councils clarify the links between business-as-usual and emergency management responsibilities and actions.
- There was more support for categorising the responsibilities and activities as before, during and after an emergency than there was for categorising them against the Victorian Preparedness Goal core capabilities.
- Although items were listed as before, during and after an emergency, it is important to recognise

that in practice some are also carried out at different times or across phases of an emergency.

- The directions paper conflated legislative requirements with activities (with sources) outside of legislation, such as in manuals. It is misleading to conflate what councils *must* do with what they *should* do.
- It was difficult to distinguish the legislated actions councils perform from those that are a result of increased community and state government expectations.
- The directions paper did nothing to clarify councils' role in relation to the supply of resources during emergencies.
- Some submissions expressed support for relief and recovery and all-hazard planning occurring at the local level.
- The municipal recovery manager role should be further embedded in legislation.
- Councils are well-placed to support lead agencies by providing local intelligence, access to community facilities and council resources, but councils often cannot lead or coordinate activities other than their business-as-usual activities.
- The directions paper failed to take account of the differences between metropolitan / urban and rural councils and the effects of the MFB and CFA Acts on them.
- The directions paper lacked clarity as to the extent of council involvement in non-municipal-wide emergencies (that is, small, localised incidents).
- The position paper said that of the 21 Victorian Preparedness Goal core capabilities, councils have some responsibility or take action in 16. Some submissions said that councils also act under some of the remaining five core capabilities.

LGV's response to the feedback

The reference group proposed the word *activities* rather than *actions* be used, a change made in the position paper.

The directions paper deliberately included all of the identified emergency management responsibilities and actions of councils, as there has been confusion in the past when responsibilities and actions that occur as part of business-as-usual activities (such as land use planning and local law-making) are overlooked, resulting in an incomplete list of emergency management responsibilities and actions.

That said, LGV responded in the position paper by grouping items into:

- emergency management responsibilities and activities: those that require a council to proactively provide services to meet community needs and which require a specific council emergency management capability and capacity
- business-as-usual responsibilities and activities with emergency management implications: those that relate to the delivery of normal, core services (such as land use planning, compliance, environmental health, regulatory services and infrastructure maintenance) but which have secondary or indirect emergency management benefits and which ultimately improve a council's emergency management performance and outcomes.

Business-as-usual responsibilities derive from legislation, regulations and policies not specific to emergency management. In practice, 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 casting the net that wide: it is only dealing with business-as-usual responsibilities and activities with emergency management implications.

Therefore, the position paper:

- lists business-as-usual responsibilities and activities with emergency management implications in a separate table
- explains the interrelationship between business-as-usual and emergency management responsibilities and activities
- explains how an emergency and its immediate aftermath can create a capability and capacity deficit, particularly affecting business-as-usual responsibilities and activities with emergency management implications, which requires councils to make escalation arrangements and draw on other resources to reduce impacts on regular service delivery: this is shown diagrammatically in Figure 3 in the position paper.

Phase 2 of the project has been planned from the outset to assess councils' capability and capacity to manage their emergency management responsibilities and activities.

In November 2016, the State Crisis and Resilience Council decided that phase 2 of the project will also assess councils' capability and capacity to manage their business-as-usual responsibilities with emergency management implications, where those responsibilities derive from legislation.

To address some of the feedback, LGV added an explanation in part 1 of the position paper of the impact emergencies can have on broader services delivery and how integral councils are to the emergency management system.

Theme 3:
Councils' diverse capabilities and capacities

The feedback was that the directions paper did not clearly acknowledge the significant differences in capability and capacity between councils, which affect their ability to undertake the listed responsibilities and activities.

The submissions also explained gaps in the current capability and capacity of councils and the difficulties councils have faced which have led to these gaps developing.

Key feedback points

- The fact that one council does something does not mean that it should be a responsibility of all councils.
- While the directions paper listed all identifiable emergency management responsibilities and activities of councils, they need to be achievable in terms of a council's capacity and capability.
- Councils do not have the resources to employ more dedicated emergency management staff, send existing staff to (costly) training, meet all expectations around mitigation and prevention activities or implement broad recovery programs, without the promise of swift reimbursement or upfront payments.
- Highly trained specialists with appropriate equipment have greater expertise than do council officers who have no or very little emergency response training or appropriate equipment to deal with an emergency.
- The directions paper needed to more strongly identify that councils do not work in isolation: emergency management is a partnership.
- (A council's emergency management response) cannot be one-size-fits-all. Local governments differ in terms of their different drivers and priorities, risk exposures, connections with and geographic spread of communities, available resources and skills.
- Some municipalities will need to operate at a higher level of capacity and capability due to their environment. They face more-frequent events that affect their communities, and many of their vulnerabilities are substantially beyond the ability of a local council to mitigate.
- Any additional requirements put on a council to increase its emergency management responsibilities should be acknowledged and appropriately funded.
- Municipal Emergency Resourcing Program (MERP) funding enables council to meet its statutory obligations and build its capacity and capability in emergency management. Without it, council would not be able to support the community before, during and after emergencies at the current level.
- Council's emergency management responsibilities should reflect its strengths and capabilities. These strengths and capabilities have not been measured, so it is premature to accept the 154 responsibilities and actions, given it is unlikely that councils could or would be able to engage in some of these actions while effectively maintaining the business continuity of essential council services.
- LGV should consider this list of emergency management responsibilities to ensure the responsibilities are consistent with local government's capability and capacity.
- (A council might find it) difficult to maintain essential services during a large or protracted event.
- (There might be an) increased risk to community members as a result of the very limited capacity of small rural councils to prepare for, respond to and recover from an emergency event.
- MERP funding is vital to a municipality with a small rates base to fund the emergency management coordinator position to deliver the council's emergency management responsibilities.
- During emergencies, the provision of support to the response agencies (in the form of physical and human resources) should not be assumed, and it will be contingent on the availability and capability of the council at that time.
- Councils have divested themselves of heavy equipment and plant, outsourcing these to private enterprises due to having leaner structures with little spare capacity. The equipment and resources that the council does own or operate may not be available to be released at the time of an emergency. Council will provide support if it is within its capability at that time, on a fee-for-service basis.
- Current revenue (caps) result in a constrained environment for councils, meaning they are not in a position to put on additional staff to manage the increasing workload.
- The directions paper failed to mention the stress on council in simply responding to the number of reviews and consultation processes in the emergency management space.

- Council staff may consider their emergency management role to be secondary to their substantive job.
- Council is very concerned that the administrative processes, such as the proposed ministerial guidelines process, being employed in the emergency management realm give council very little say in what responsibilities are being assigned to it.
- Councils think there should be a bigger reform in emergency management to establish a new emergency management framework for Victoria. Fundamental to the reform is the need to recognise councils as equal partners in planning, emergency response and funding in Victoria, rather than performing administrative processes on behalf of agencies.
- State funding focuses primarily on project funding, and the state should consider shifting the emphasis to medium-term, recurring funding.
- There should be a clear statement about what level of financial support councils should make to agencies (such as CFA and VICSES) and for what purpose.
- There is an expectation that council officers will be available 24/7 and reprioritise resources to meet new or expanded responsibilities.
- It can be difficult to get executive buy-in for emergency management due to the complex nature of councils' business and the significant number of services they provide to their communities.
- Emergency management is just one of about 110 core business (functions) delivered by council and is not often viewed as a priority function or service.
- While councils are one of the few constants for communities throughout emergency management planning, response and recovery, it is important to note that local government is not a specialist in any particular type of emergency or disaster.
- Councils are not funded, and do not necessarily have the expertise, to supply response services — as emergency response agencies do.
- If council does respond in an emergency, it carries the cost of the response (including its support of emergency management agencies) if it occurs during business hours. When these expenses are incurred, they have a ripple effect on council's ability to perform its normal business. The effect of this will increase the time to recover, as the council will have lost the capacity to provide services to the community.
- Councils don't have the ability to scale up like emergency services do, and/or the budget resources to rely on if they undertake an activity that may not be covered by Natural Disaster Funding Arrangements.
- Emergency management agencies have increasing expectations of the involvement of councils during emergencies (such as attending an incident or regional control centre or opening a municipal emergency coordination centre).
- In large-scale events, staff who are assigned or have volunteered to fill emergency management roles could themselves be affected by the event and consequently their first priority is to their family and home.
- It is important that the discretionary recovery functions undertaken for small, affected populations are not mandated, as council will not have the capacity to deliver those same functions to the larger population. The risk is that critical recovery actions may be overlooked for less-critical but mandated actions, or the delivery of recovery actions will not be equitable across the affected population.
- Less-densely populated rural municipalities often require assistance from neighbouring councils in emergencies and fully support agreements such as the MAV's protocol for inter-council emergency management resource sharing. This protocol allows councils to use the assistance of other municipalities in times of need. The fundamental reliance of small councils on neighbouring municipalities for assistance in emergencies is not recognised in the paper.
- Response agencies are funded to have the expertise to supply response services, whereas councils are not. If an expense is incurred, it will have a ripple effect on council's ability to perform its normal business and will increase time to recover.

LGV's response to the feedback

The position paper makes it clear that 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 phase 2 of the project. The purpose of phase 1 was to 'brainstorm' and quality assure a list of responsibilities and activities that was robust, properly expressed and comprehensive. It was not the project's intention to, and it did not, investigate any extent of the ability of a council to undertake any responsibility or action on the list.

The tables in the position paper include a hyperlink to the source of the responsibility or activity. This might be legislation (such as the *Emergency Management Act 1986*), or policy (such as the *EMMV*), or it might be identified practice of one or more councils. The hyperlink enables the reader to go straight to the source and make their own judgement as to degree of responsibility of a council.

The position paper, particularly in part 1, acknowledges and explores the issue of councils' varied capabilities and capacities. The purpose of phase 2 of the project is to provide an evidence-based picture of the varied capabilities and capacities of each individual Victorian council. This has never been done before, and it will provide valuable insights and understandings which LGV and councils can use to start developing strategies to build local governments' emergency management capability and capacity.

Theme 4: Position paper's purpose and future use

This theme is predominantly about the possible consequences of listing the emergency management responsibilities and activities of councils in the position paper. Councils were concerned about the sheer weight of responsibilities and activities and the possibility of scope creep in future.

Some councils were particularly concerned about the prospect of having increased responsibilities while lacking the funding to address their current capability and capacity gaps, which would make them unable to meet all the requirements. They wanted clearer definitions of the role of a council during an emergency and clear guidelines for funding during an emergency, acknowledging the differences between councils and emergency service agencies.

Key feedback points

- Some councils were concerned and anxious that once these responsibilities are confirmed, they will be used to hold councils accountable, by being included in legislation or policy.
- Councils have experienced significant role creep over the past few years and this extends to emergency management. This sees the sector undertaking functions that are outside what is seen as normal council business and undertaking work entirely on behalf of other agencies and organisations.
- The remit of the project changed from identifying the future role of councils to defining their current role.
- Council has experienced how other state government departments have used guidelines to impose costs or defacto regulation without any regulatory impact process to assess costs or capacity for delivery.
- The emergency management process is being used to transfer obligations, cost and responsibility to local government without consultation or discussion as to whether a council has the resources or capacity to be able to undertake the actions assigned to it in the (directions paper).
- The tone of the directions paper appears to be attempting to place more responsibility on councils without any increase in funding.

- The work a council should be expected to do during an emergency should only be that which it has the capacity to do, over and above its normal business.
- A number of elements, if fully adopted, could impose requirements on councils for which they do not have the capability, capacity or funding.
- The State Government could consider developing a simple council self-assessment tool, to help quantify the level of achievements against the legislative obligations. The results would provide information to enable the State Government to target support and resources to assist councils within a continuous improvement framework.
- Local governments can often be expected to take on responsibilities during emergency periods that are not their core responsibilities.
- There need to be clearer definitions of the role of a council during an emergency and an acknowledgment that:
  - a council should not take on new roles or activities during an emergency
  - a council should not be seen as an emergency response organisation
  - funding needs to flow immediately for any increase in services caused by an emergency
  - a council's role in recovery needs to be recognised in funding and reimbursement programs
  - arrangements for funding are needed at the state and federal levels to give councils clear guidelines about what they can claim, regardless of the emergency
  - the municipal recovery manager role needs to be legislated, in line with the municipal emergency resource officer and municipal emergency response coordinator
  - government funding needs to be provided so smaller councils can function at a higher level for emergency events and planning.
- Any reform must align with and support the intent of the *2014 Victorian State-Local Government Agreement*.

LGV's response to the feedback

A strong message from the consultation process was that many councils were daunted by the sheer size and breadth of responsibilities in the directions paper. For some responsibilities, the directions paper descriptions may appear to suggest that councils are more involved in emergency management than might be expected under Victoria's emergency management arrangements.

It is therefore important that the list of responsibilities and activities express the significance of collaboration and information-sharing, and that they accurately reflect when the state, the emergency management sector or other agencies are expected to lead, coordinate or participate. The position paper provides a clearer narrative about the intended purpose of the list of responsibilities and activities. It also provides a clear narrative about its purpose and how it will be used into the future, and it also acknowledges councils' value in emergency management.

Theme 5:
General advocacy issues

Key feedback points

Various issues were raised and views expressed that group under the heading of general advocacy issues. These matters are relevant but do not necessarily directly relate to the broader work of the project or the position paper.

- The Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework are inappropriate (they do not suit the key aims and objectives of this project).
- Councils have not been engaged early enough in the development of many (other) state-led projects.
- Councils are currently overwhelmed by the number of policies and documents being released for comment or implementation by the state. There is a general feeling that councils have not been engaged early enough in the development of these projects, and in the current revenue-constrained environment they are not in a position to put on additional staff to manage the increasing workload. An example of the potential increased demands on council are the proposals in the recently released EMV *Resilient Recovery Discussion Paper*. This paper has an explicit connection with the *Councils and emergencies directions paper* and should be viewed contemporaneously.
- The links between the suite of emergency management documents currently being distributed are unclear. There is no apparent agreement between LGV and EMV about these documents.
- There has been inadequate engagement with councils in the drafting of the Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework and there is a lack of understanding about how the two pieces of work fit together.
- The Fair Go Rates System (rate capping) is making it more difficult for local government to discharge its emergency management obligations.
- The current freeze on indexation of federal financial assistance grants is a concern for councils.
- There was also support for the exposure draft of the *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment (Planning) Bill 2016*.
- The tightening of Department of Treasury and Finance funding arrangements in recent times and the requirements for evidence and supporting documentation is making it difficult for councils to undertake some of the responsibilities in the directions paper. It is important to note that things that may have been claimable in the past cannot now be claimed.
- The process for allocating funds to councils after an emergency needs to be streamlined.
- The municipal emergency resource officer role should be reviewed. It is a historic position that needs to better reflect a council's current emergency management responsibilities.
- CFA and/or DELWP should be responsible for maintaining, operating and staffing fire towers, depending on the beneficiary.
- Councils are concerned about the requirement for them to continue to fund VICSES. As it is a statutory authority, funding should come from the state.
- There are two independent systems to record emergency management data: EM-COP and Crisisworks. To ensure consistent reporting throughout an emergency, the systems should be linked or combined into one system.
- Councils do not need to be involved in the replacement of essential water after a fire. Continuing to administer requests for water replacement puts council between CFA and the water authority.
- The directions paper implies the EMMV has the legal standing of regulations. This is clearly not the case. The EMMV is a set of guiding principles and ideals that help differing agencies to develop plans and actions for managing and mitigating emergencies and risks. Also, the EMMV helps inform agencies about the roles of other agencies, to avoid duplication, not to shift responsibility from one agency to another.
- Similar to the point above, one council was unsure which section of the Emergency Management Act specifically allocates local government to relief and recovery: it was not convinced part 4 of the EMMV sets out a mandatory requirement. Another council was unsure from where the EMMV derives its power to allocate roles to agencies and local government, or whether actions are legislated.
- Councils expressed concern about the lack of consultation around changes in responsibility areas in the EMMV, specifically with changes to part 4 and part 7 of the EMMV from November 2015 to November 2016 (such as with 'part 7 Agency roles' and in particular with emergency accommodation moving from DHHS to local government). Changes that create an impost on council resources require consultation with all stakeholders and should not be made in an update that does not clearly indicate the changes made.

- Monitoring of and response to blue-green algae should be a responsibility of a water authority or catchment management authority.
- VICSES, EMV, Bureau of Meteorology and the relevant catchment management authority should be responsible for installing, monitoring and maintaining flood gauges and flood warning systems. Also, the bureau has not committed to monitor flood gauges other than to collect data.
- DHHS should be the lead agency to maintain and administer the vulnerable persons register, with council as a user of the system.
- The state is developing policies that affect local governments, without consultation. An example is the policy response to people who are sleeping rough in extreme weather policy and the *State Shark Hazard Plan*.
- It would be good to have more information about how EMV could better support councils.
- EMV should have resources (including fact sheets and templates) available online to guide councils in an emergency. The current system is inefficient and requires each municipality to handle events in isolation.
- Ministerial guidelines should clarify single-incident support. Support for collaboration with other emergency agencies and municipalities is essential, to add value to activities and to provide local, mutual relief and recovery assistance.
- Emergencies are not confined to local government boundaries. The safety of communities is paramount and emergency management responsibilities should be held, planned and delivered at a regional level. This could involve the establishment of a regional team of experienced emergency management practitioners that council officers could support as appropriate. This would ensure an adequate number of experienced emergency management personnel would be available and able to respond when an emergency occurs, reducing the risk to communities in small rural shires. The team could:
  - lead an all-agencies approach to community-based risk assessment and planning including compliance with relevant legislation and policy locally
  - prepare and maintain local emergency management plans
  - manage local emergency management planning committees
  - establish relief centres
  - prepare local recovery plans
  - establish local recovery centres and conduct local recovery activities
  - support agencies to coordinate volunteer efforts after emergencies
  - coordinate animal welfare
  - assess effects on essential infrastructure and services
  - collect secondary impact-assessment data about the scale and characteristics of the effects of an emergency on the social, economic, built and natural environments
  - survey and determine the occupancy of damaged buildings.
- A central recovery officer could also be employed full-time at a regional level for general community resilience work. In an emergency, this officer would then be deployed to the affected shire to support recovery activity until grant funding enables the employment of a fixed-term recovery officer.
- Further clarity about the role of recovery coordinators in supporting councils and prompt funding of community recovery committees will also determine some of the responsibilities in the paper.
- The process for adopting municipal emergency management plans needs review.
- Emergency planning at the municipal level is too small-scale and inefficient. Grouping councils together would enable planning at a subregional or regional level. The larger footprint would provide a better overview of risks. It would also not be as resource-heavy, as agencies would not have to attend multiple meetings for small footprints.
- Continuation of MERP funding is essential, to ensure a council has resources to perform emergency management functions. However, a council cannot discharge many responsibilities even within the current funding model. Also, MERP funding enables councils to perform only basic functions and does not cover the increasing emergency management requests made to councils.

LGV's response to the feedback

As most comments did not relate directly to the directions paper or the project, LGV did not incorporate them into the position paper. However, some of this feedback may prove useful in phase 3 of the project, which will involve developing strategies to address gaps in councils' emergency management capability and capacity.

Some general advocacy also addresses many of the related emergency management reforms currently underway. The project intends to use the agreed sectorwide principles, which are listed in part 3 of the position paper, to improve the outcomes for local government as a result of various emergency management reforms currently underway.

Appendix 1: Level of support for responsibilities and actions

Appendix 1 shows the level of support for each of the individual 154 responsibilities and actions (and their sub points where applicable) in the directions paper.

Current responsibilities and actions

Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Planning

1 Lead an all-agencies approach to community-based risk assessment and planning including compliance with relevant legislation and policy at the municipal level.

2 Prepare and maintain municipal emergency management plans and subplans.

3 Appoint a municipal emergency management planning committee.

4 Support hazard-specific risk assessment to inform plans and community resilience-building strategies, using local knowledge and information based on community needs.

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.

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:

8 a) backfilling for staff with emergency management expertise when they are on leave

8 b) 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 strategices in planning schemes that clearly express and give direction to urban change, including implementing risk-mitigation strategies (such as flood and bushfire management overlays).

Current responsibilities and actions

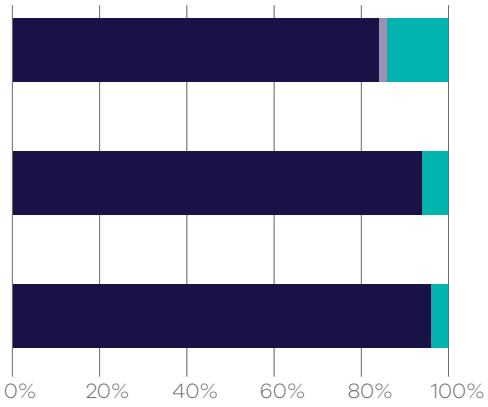
Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Planning

11 Apply local planning schemes and building controls including development assessments, inspections and advice.

12 Prepare local recovery plans after emergencies.

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

14 Support agencies to plan, prepare and deliver consistent, all-hazards customised information and messages to the community, using council communication networks.

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).

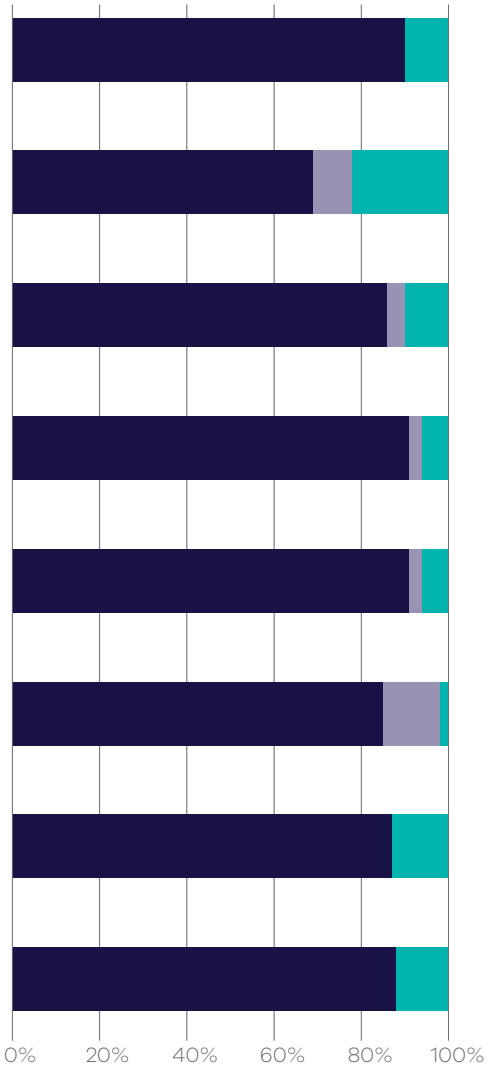
17 Support agencies to develop emergency management communications that are relevant and credible to the community.

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.

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:



Current responsibilities and actions

Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Community information and warnings

21 a) disseminating information through council communication channels and local networks

21 b) 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.

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.

24 Assess community needs, to inform recovery information.

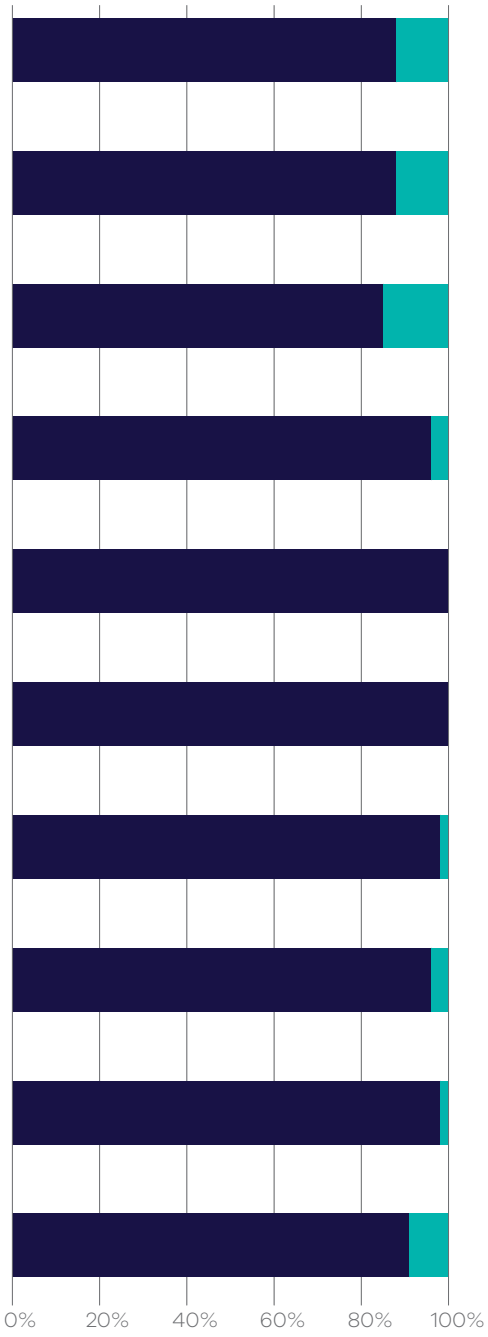
25 Organise local broadcasts through the mayor and/or chief executive officer (for example, recovery newsletters).

26 Support agencies to provide community-led recovery information (for example using social media or notice boards).

27 Provide and staff a recovery centre.

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.



Current responsibilities and actions

Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Operational management

30 Appoint a municipal emergency resource officer.

31 Appoint a municipal recovery manager.

32 Identify council-owned and 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.

34 Lead risk-mitigation measures through business-as-usual works by:

34 a) where council is a road authority, managing vegetation on roadsides to ensure a safe, efficient road network

34 b) 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.

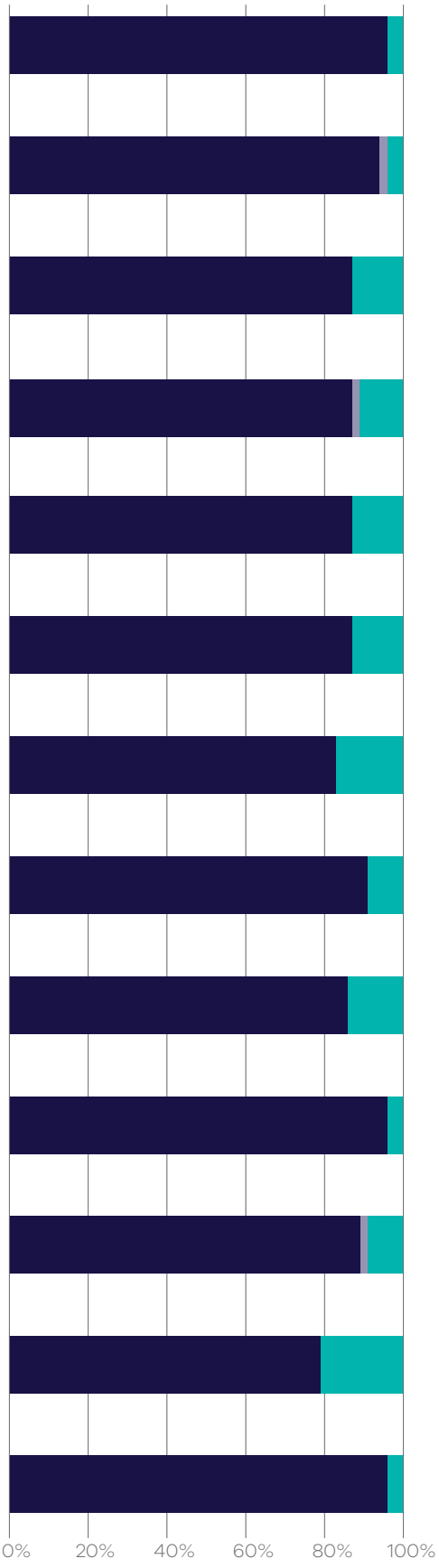
36 Ensure council staff are trained to safely undertake emergency management roles and resposibilities (such as traffic management, emergency management liaison officer and municipal recovery manager).

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.

39 Implement council's business continuity plan.

40 Implement collaborative plans and arrangements to maintain council's capacity, including using neighbouring (partner) councils' resources.



Current responsibilities and actions

Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Operational management

41 Support response agencies to effectively deliver emergency response services locally by:

41 a) after consultation, making council resources, facilities and services available to agencies during response, relief and recovery phases

41 b) providing council resources as requested by agencies to secure affected areas

41 c) 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 every 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 .

44 Conduct local recovery activities.

45 Support the transition from relief to recovery with relevant emergency management teams.

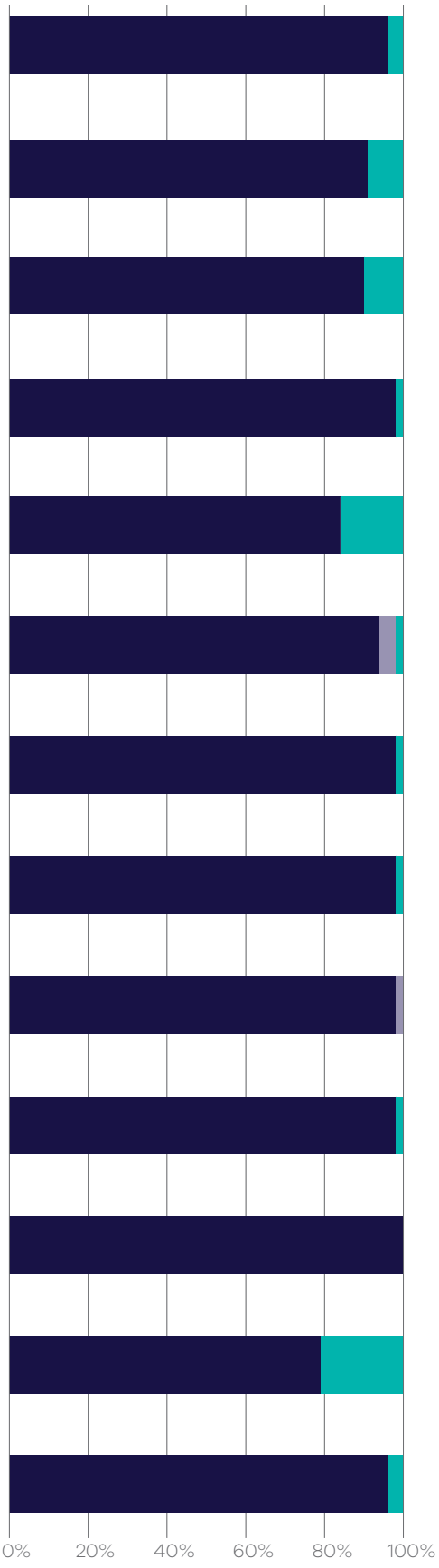
46 When safe, deploy council staff to affected communities to deliver recovery services .

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 .

49 Support agencies to analyse community needs for 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.



Current responsibilities and actions

Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Operational management

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.

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.

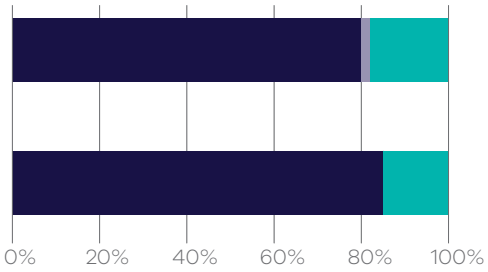
62 Coordinate animal welfare within council resources.

Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Operational management

63 Support agencies to coordinate and manage services to meet the immediate needs of affected livestock locally.

64 Support agencies to monitor emerging needs and adapt services to minimise the long-term consequences on health and wellbeing.



Intelligence and information-sharing

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:

65 a) identifying data needs for relief provision and planning for data management

65 b) 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.

70 Support agencies by providing council-owned data and intelligence about properties, residents, assets, facilities, community demographics, needs and consequences.

Current responsibilities and actions

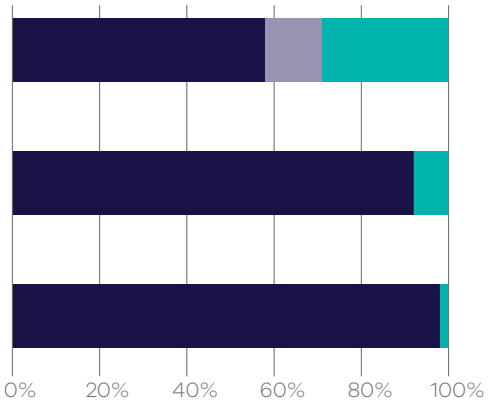
Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Intelligence and information-sharing

71 Capture, process and manage large volumes of data from multiple sources to share with the community and stakeholders.

72 Capture and analyse lessons, share the findings with other councils and agencies, and work cooperatively to identify and implement solutions.

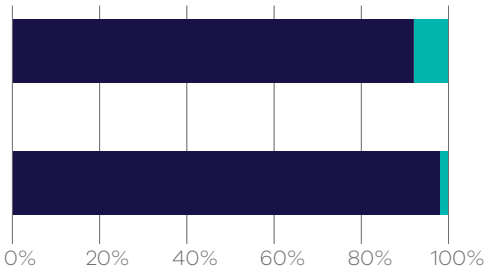
73 Conduct ongoing intelligence-gathering and information-sharing activities about local mitigation and recovery activities.



Public order and community safety

74 Undertake municipal functions as required by local government, building, electricity, water and land use planning legislation and regulations.

75 Proactively enforce relevant regulations and laws that relate to emergency management.



Building community resilience

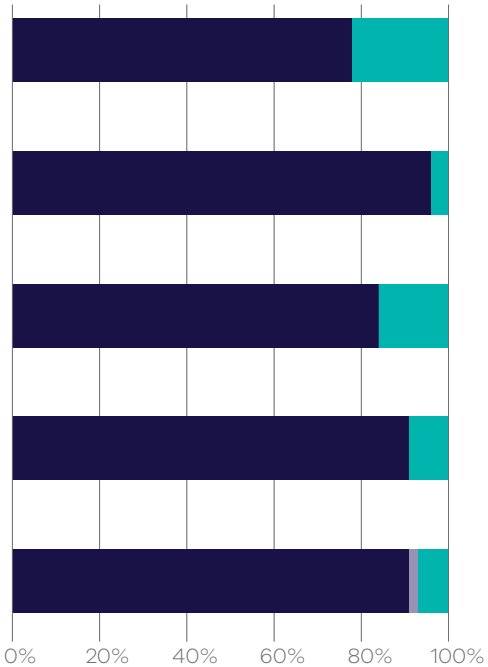
76 Build local partnerships with businesses and not-for-profit organisations.

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:

79 a) community preparedness and local leadership



Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Building community resilience

79 b) adequate emergency management funding and resources

79 c) compatible and consistent emergency management information systems

79 d) 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.

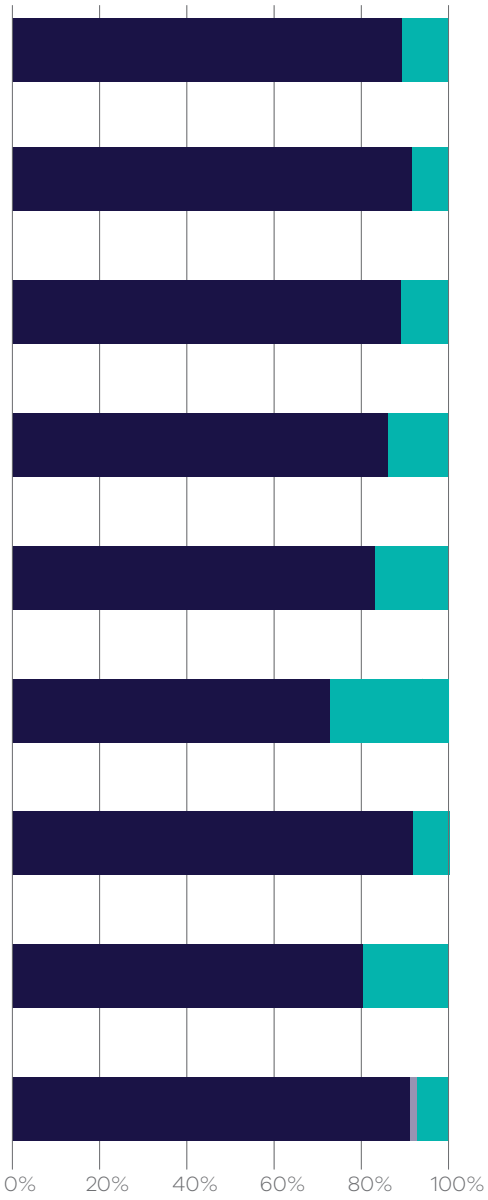
81 Develop and deliver emergency management and community resilience training for council staff.

82 Monitor and evaluate the community's engagement with emergency management and its capacity to prepare for, act during and recover from emergencies.

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

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.



Current responsibilities and actions

Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Fire management & suppression

86 Support agencies in line with relevant fire legislation and regulations by:

86 a) appointing a municipal fire prevention officer

86 b) developing and maintaining a municipal fire prevention plan

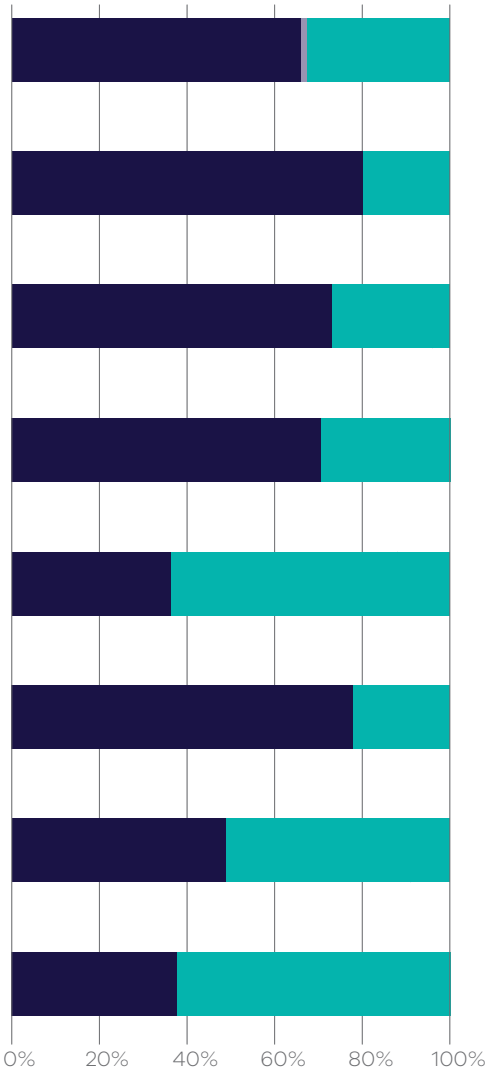
86 c) identifying, designating, signing, maintaining and annually reviewing bushfire safer places and their plans, and (for councils in Country Fire Authority [CFA] areas) reporting back annually to the CFA

86 d) issuing permits to burn

86 e) 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

86 f) providing pillar fire hydrants in reticulated areas when the CFA issues written notice to do so

86 g) meeting the cost of providing, installing, marking and maintaining all fire plugs in the municipality.



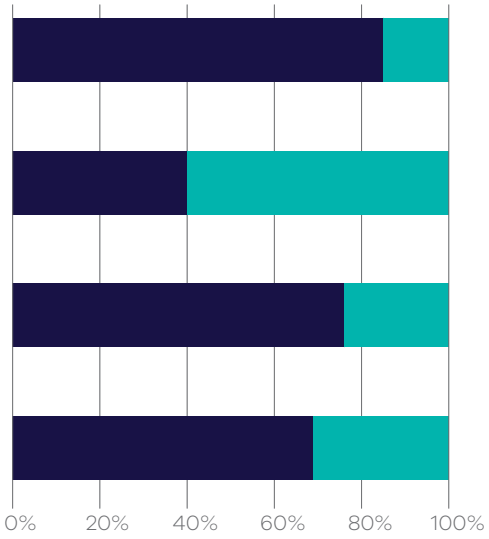
Logistics and supply chain management

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).

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.



Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Impact assessment

91 Develop impact-assessment processes and data-collection systems.

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

93 Collect secondary impact-assessment data about the scale and characteristics of the impact on the social, economic, built and natural environments.

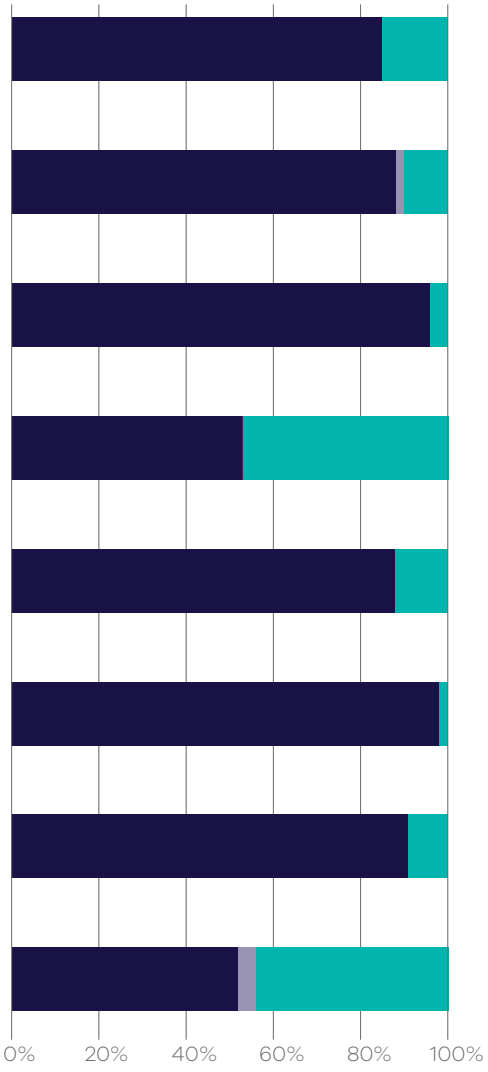
94 Initially assess impacts on essential infrastructure and services.

95 Support agencies to gather information about how the event is affecting animals.

96 Support agencies to use council's spatial data to verify property losses.

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.



Current responsibilities and actions

Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Health protection

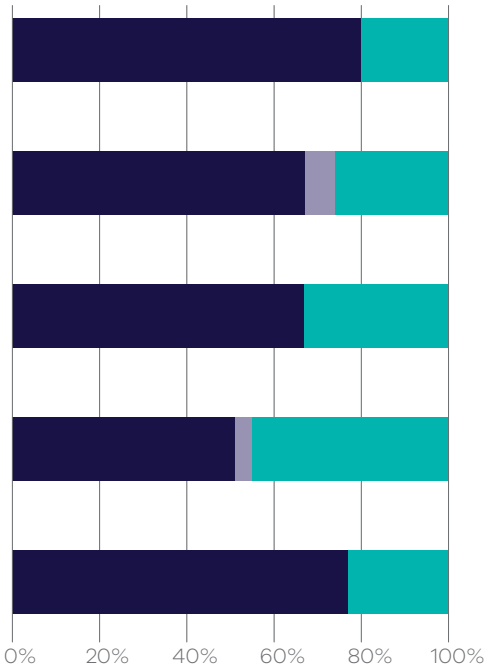
99 Undertake municipal functions as required by public health and wellbeing legislation and regulations.

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

104 Coordinate relief agencies and the community to develop local relief plans.

105 Develop protocols and procedures that are agreed with relief agencies.

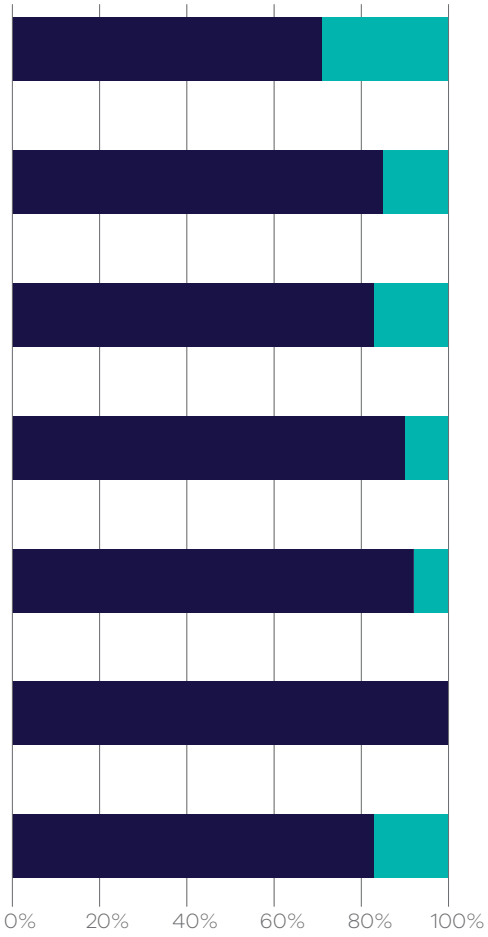
106 Design a scalable organisational structure to deliver relief services.

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



Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Relief assistance

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.

115 Coordinate relief services locally.

116 Establish and manage relief centres where appropriate, including:

116 a) register relief centre attendees

116 b) coordinate the provision of food, water and materials to affected communities

116 c) provide temporary shelter options for displaced local people

116 d) coordinate and manage services to meet the physical and psychosocial needs of affected local people.

117 Start recovery case management by gathering data from relevant agencies.

118 Inform the community about financial hardship assistance payments.

Current responsibilities and actions

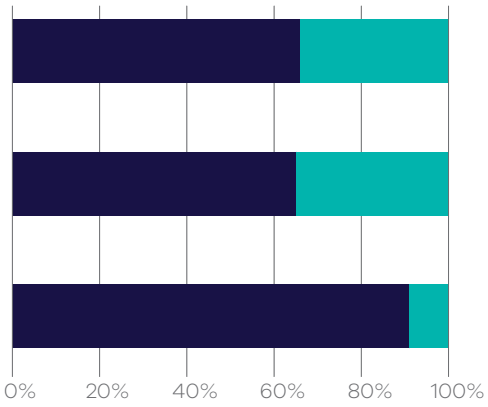
Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Relief assistance

119 Manage enquires 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

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.

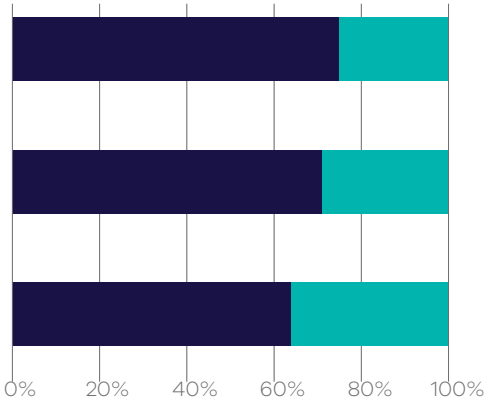
125 Assess business and economic needs.

Natural and cultural heritage rehabilitation

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

127 Coordinate natural environment rehabilitation works locally.

128 Restore local cultural heritage sites.



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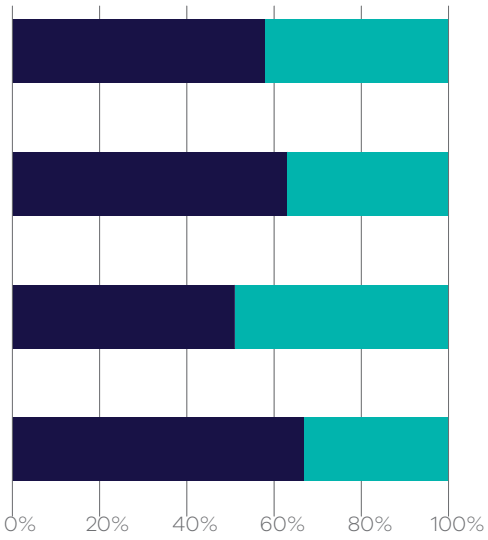
Natural and cultural heritage rehabilitation

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

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 resources 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.

136 Survey and determine the occupancy of damaged buildings.

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.

Current responsibilities and actions

Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Built recovery

141 Restore council-owned assets, prioritising business operations and commercial or community facilities essential for community wellbeing or recovery activities.

142 Coordinate clean-up activities including the disposal of dead animals.

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

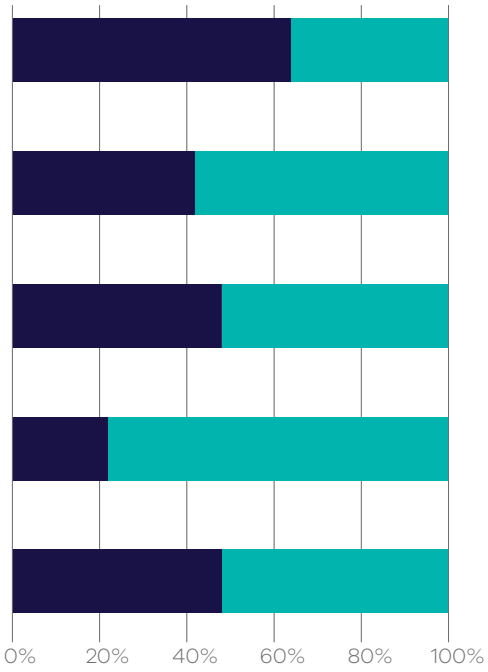
147 Coordinate health programs to ensure the continuity and availability of advice and activities.

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.



Current responsibilities and actions

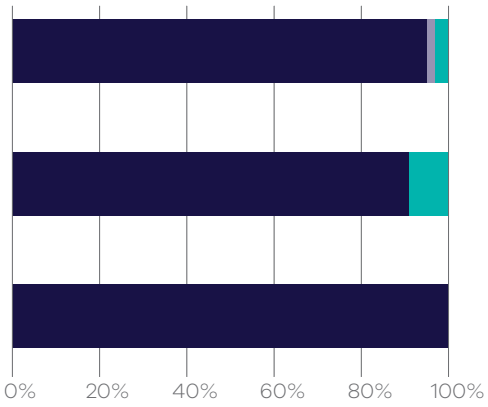
Feedback ▲ support ▲ neutral ▲ not support

Assurance and learning

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.



Appendix 2: Councils and Emergencies Reference Group membership

Phil Kuhne	Horsham Rural City Council, West Wimmera Shire Council, Hindmarsh Shire Council and Yarriambiack Shire Councils
Michael Tudball	Southern Grampians Shire Council
Andrew Hamilton	Loddon Shire Council and Central Goldfields Shire
Ben Trevena	Campaspe Shire Council
Lyall Bond	Corangamite Shire
Liz Coles	City of Greater Geelong
Helen Napier	Manningham City Council
Peter Gunn	Greater Shepparton City and Moira Shire Councils
Bryan McCarthy	Mitchell Shire Council
Naomi McNamara	Murrindindi Shire Council
Justin Murray	Nillumbik Shire Council
Jason Amos	Mount Alexander Shire Council
Corinne Bowen	Yarra Ranges Council
Christine Drummond	Melbourne City Council
Steve Crawcour	Strathbogie Shire Council
Swathi Kartik	East Gippsland Shire
Rachelle Quattrocchi	Kingston City Council
David Draffin	Pyrenees Shire Council
Cr Kim McAliney	Wyndham City Council
Ben Lester	Wyndham City Council
Alice Daly	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Peter Bracken	Victoria Police
John Mennen	Victoria Police
Ben Townsend	Department of Treasury and Finance
Jacinta Rossi	Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources
Richard Plant	Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources
Kate Siebert	Emergency Management Victoria
Melanie Mills	Emergency Management Victoria
Shane Robertson	Department of Health and Human Services
Rene Jones	Department of Premier and Cabinet
Jamie Devenish	Victoria State Emergency Service
Gwynne Brennan	Country Fire Authority
Deb Shaddock	Australian Red Cross
Emma Lake (Proxy: Kevin Peachey)	Municipal Association of Victoria

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State
Government
Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning