Wimmera Emergency Management
Resource Sharing Partnership

Hindmarsh Shire Council | HORSHAM Rural City Council | West Wimmera Shire Council | Yarriambiack Shire Council

Municipal Emergency Management Plan

Wimmera Integrated
Relief and Recovery Sub-plan
2023 – 2026

Version 3.0

Hindmarsh – Horsham – West Wimmera – Yarriambiack

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1. Document information

Acknowledgement of Country

The Wimmera Emergency Management Resource Sharing Partnership (WEMRSP), as the author of this sub-plan, acknowledges the five Traditional Owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagulk, Jaadwa and Jadawadjali people. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community. We pay our respects to the Elders, both past and present, and commit to working together in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect for the benefit of the broader community and future generations.

Authority

In 2020, *the Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018* amended the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (Act) to provide for new integrated arrangements for emergency management planning in Victoria at the State, Regional and Municipal levels. It created an obligation for a Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) to be established in each of the municipal districts of Victoria, including the alpine resorts which, for the purposes of the Act, are taken to be a municipal district. Each MEMPC is a multi-agency collaboration group whose members bring organisation, industry or personal expertise to the task of emergency management planning for the municipal district.

This sub-plan has been prepared in accordance, and complies with, the requirements of the Act including having regard to the guidelines issued under section 77, Guidelines for Preparing State, Regional and Municipal Emergency Management Plans.

Plan assurance and approval

Assurance

A Statement of Assurance (including a checklist and certificate) has been prepared by the Hindmarsh, Horsham, West Wimmera and Yarriambiack MEMPC and submitted to the Grampians Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee (REMPC) pursuant to the Act (section 60AG).

Meets assurance general: Plan has been prepared with regard to the following guidance in ministerial guidelines issued under the Act section 77 (Guidelines for Preparing State, Regional and Municipal Emergency Management Plans).

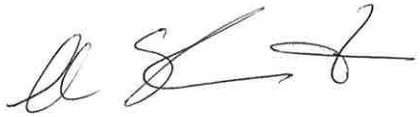
Approval

The Wimmera Integrated Relief and Recovery Sub-plan (WIRRP) has been written and approved by the MEMPC of each Partner Council of the Wimmera Emergency Management Resource Sharing Partnership (WEMRSP).

The sub-plan has been through an assurance process overseen by the Grampians REMPC and is self-assured by the respective MEMPCs.

The WIRRP comes into effect when it is published and remains in effect until superseded by an approved and published update.

<table>
<tr>
<td>Hindmarsh Shire MEMPC

Signature
Jessie Holmes, Chairperson
13 June 2023</td>
<td>Horsham Rural City MEMPC
 
Signature
Mandi Stewart, Acting Chairperson
14 June 2023</td>
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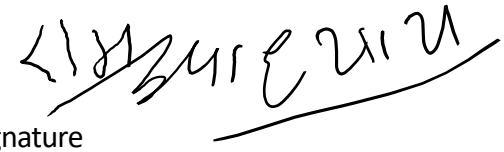
<tr>
<td>West Wimmera Shire MEMPC
 
Signature
Ram Upadhyaya, Chairperson
16 June 2023</td>
<td>Yarriambiack Shire MEMPC

Signature
Michael Evans, Chairperson
15 June 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="2">Grampians REMPC

Signature
Brett Boatman, Chairperson and CFA Deputy Chief Officer
Date: 6 September 2023</td>
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Plan review

This sub-plan will be reviewed and updated as required:

- Annually in full or in part at each MEMPC meeting
- After each major event where the plan has been activated
- Where the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) has been exercised.

To ensure the WIRRP is effective and provides for a current, integrated, coordinated and comprehensive approach to emergency management, it is to be fully reviewed at least every three years. An urgent update of this plan is permitted if there is a significant risk that life or property will be endangered if the plan is not updated (Act section 60AM). Urgent updates come into effect when published on the municipal Council website.

This sub-plan will be reviewed no later than June 2026. This sub-plan is current at the time of publication and remains in effect until modified, superseded or withdrawn.

Amendment Register

Disclaimer

No reader should act based on any matter contained in this publication without appreciating that it may be the subject of amendment or revocation from time to time without notice. The members of the WEMRSP expressly disclaim all and any liability (including liability in negligence) to any person or body in respect of anything and of the consequences of anything done or omitted to be done by any such person or body in reliance, whether total or partial, upon the whole or any part of this publication.

Distribution

A copy of this sub-plan is provided to MEMPC members as per each Partner Council's MEMPC membership list. The current version of this sub-plan is available on the Crisisworks platform maintained by each Partner Council for their emergency management operations.

A copy of this plan may be provided upon written application to one of the Partner Councils via email as follows:

- Hindmarsh Shire Council – info@hindmarsh.vic.gov.au
- Horsham Rural City Council – council@hrcc.vic.gov.au
- West Wimmera Shire Council – council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au
- Yarriambiack Shire Council – info@yarriambiack.vic.gov.au

Amendments

Version number	Date	Details of amendment
1.0		Documentation of relief and recovery arrangements as part of each Partner Council's MEMP
2.0	March 2018	New sub-plan following separation from the MEMP
3.0	June 2023	New sub-plan consistent with the *Emergency Management Act 2013* as amended by the *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018*

To comment on this sub-plan, select the relevant section, note the comment, and forward it to the Chairperson, Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee:

- Hindmarsh Shire Council – info@hindmarsh.vic.gov.au
- Horsham Rural City Council – council@hrcc.vic.gov.au
- West Wimmera Shire Council – council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au
- Yarriambiack Shire Council – info@yarriambiack.vic.gov.au

Plan development

The WIRRP is a sub-plan of the MEMP for each Partner Council. It has been developed in consultation between the Partner Councils, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) and other agencies as required.

Disclaimer

The Partner Council MEMPCs make no representations about the suitability of the information contained in this document or any material related to this document for any purpose.

The document is provided without warranty of any kind to the extent permitted by law. The Partner Council MEMPCs hereby disclaim all warranties and conditions regarding this information, including all implied warranties and conditions of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose, title and non-infringement.

In no event shall the Partner Council MEMPCs be liable for any special, indirect or consequential damages or any damages whatsoever resulting from the loss of use, data or profits, whether in an action of contract, negligence or other tortuous action, arising out of or in connection with the use of information available in this document. The document or material related to this document could include technical inaccuracies or typographical errors.

2. Introduction

The WEMRSP is a partnership between the four Wimmera Councils – Horsham Rural City and Hindmarsh, West Wimmera and Yarriambiack Shire Councils (Partner Councils). The purpose of the WEMRSP is to support the Partner Councils to meet their legislated Emergency Management requirements and to facilitate research and investigate emergency management issues and best practices on behalf of the four participating Councils.

The WIRRP complements each Partner Council's MEMP. This sub-plan records the municipal level emergency relief and recovery management arrangements that may be utilised in supporting a community impacted by an emergency event. As defined in the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP), Local Government (Council) is the lead agency for local emergency relief and recovery.

This plan illustrates how emergency relief and recovery services are coordinated and delivered at the local level by the Partner Councils. The plan also describes how emergency relief and recovery service support is escalated to the Regional and/or State level when local resources are exhausted.

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to detail the local arrangements that deliver emergency relief and recovery services to communities affected by an emergency.

Scope

The scope of this plan is defined by the boundaries of the four Partner Councils that make up the WEMRSP:

- Yarriambiack Shire Council
- Hindmarsh Shire Council
- West Wimmera Shire Council
- Horsham Rural City Council.

The arrangements detailed in this plan guide the local implementation of emergency relief and recovery services to affected communities within the four municipalities, concerning regional and state arrangements that support the initial local effort.

Objectives

The objectives of the WIRRP are to:

1. Detail the capability and capacity of local organisations and resources to deliver relief and recovery services
2. Develop collaborative approaches in delivering relief and recovery services through local organisations and the community
3. Detail how the state, regional and local tiers work together in delivering relief and recovery services.

3. Planning for emergency relief and recovery

Introduction

Emergency relief and recovery is a multi-agency responsibility that needs to be planned for and managed in a structured way. The needs of the community created by an emergency will be met through a range of services provided by government, non-government and community organisations and the commercial sector.

The aim of emergency relief and recovery planning is to coordinate the provision of emergency relief and recovery services.

Response, emergency relief and recovery in parallel

The response to a major emergency involves many agencies from across government. The people and agencies with roles and responsibilities for responding to emergencies work together in emergency management teams at the State, regional and local tiers, to ensure a collaborative and coordinated whole-of-government approach.

Emergency relief and recovery activities integrate with emergency response activities and commence as soon as the effect and consequences of the emergency are anticipated. Relief and recovery coordinators/managers should be involved at all tiers and in all teams established to manage the emergency response.

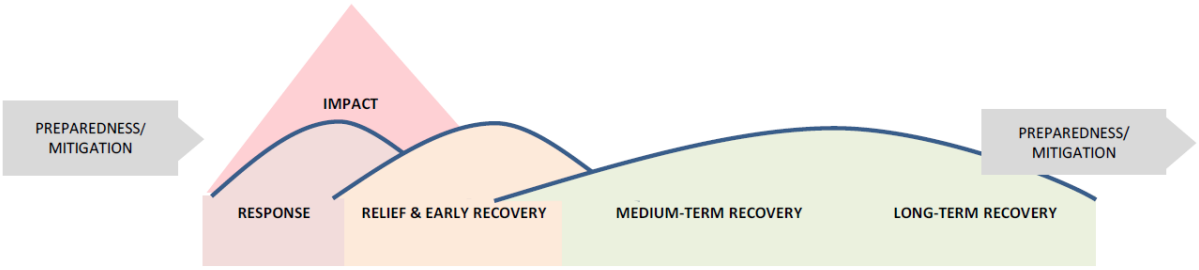

Figure 1. Relief and recovery activities over time

Phases of recovery

The following general timelines are indicative of the phases in response, relief and recovery operations (they depend on the type and extent of the emergency):

- During the incident (response)
- Immediately after the incident (emergency relief: 1 –7 days)
- Short term (recovery inception: 2 –12 weeks)
- Medium term (recovery: 3-6 months)
- Long term (recovery: 6 months and onwards).

State, regional and local relief and recovery planning

State, regional and local emergency relief and recovery arrangements must be aligned. Plans at each level of coordination must specify the agencies responsible for leading and supporting the provision of relief and recovery services.

Developing an understanding of state, regional and local capacity and capability is critical as it enables relief and recovery coordinators to request assistance before being overwhelmed and being unable to deliver the required services.

Agencies with agreed emergency relief and recovery management roles and responsibilities in the SEMP (tables 7 to 13) need to develop their internal operational plans that detail their capacity and strategies for undertaking these roles and responsibilities.

This local plan addresses the key areas of:

- Planning for emergency relief and recovery
- Activation arrangements
- Relief arrangements
- Recovery arrangements
- Operational arrangements
- Impact assessments
- Finance and resource arrangements
- Recovery environments.

Local roles in emergency relief and recovery

The local role of individuals, families, community organisations, businesses, Councils, emergency services and government agencies is based on the premise of "Shared Responsibility" where everyone contributes to emergency management according to their responsibility, capability and capacity.

Individuals and families

It is desirable that individuals and families have a suitable emergency plan they can enact that guides them on what to do and be able to support themselves with resources for 72 hours after the impact of an emergency where they have the capability and capacity to do so.

While emergency services do all they can, individuals and families are responsible for their wellbeing before, during and after emergencies.

The WEMRSP has prepared a range of range of resources to help people plan and prepare for an emergency. For further details, visit the Wimmera 72 website or the emergency page of each Partner Council's website.

The Australian Red Cross RediPlan is a free guide to help individuals prepare for emergencies. For further information, refer to: Australian Red Cross RediPlan.

Community organisations

Local community organisations may provide resources and personal support workers at an emergency site or relief and recovery centre. Organisations are able to use their pre-established connections within communities and with other community sector organisations to provide support to the community.

Community organisations also provide a broad range of services to individuals and communities to assist them as part of longer-term recovery. Local connections within communities ensure that support is targeted, relevant and effective.

For more information about local recovery agencies and support services, refer to:
Appendix B: Supporting resources and links – Organisations/Service Providers

Business

In the event of an emergency, local government cannot act alone in addressing all the needs of the community, particularly those of an economic nature, and will rely on the private sector's resources. The business community needs to be involved in planning for and responding to emergencies.

Involving the business community in the planning processes at an early stage will help to ensure their specific needs are addressed in emergency plans and increase their resilience to the disaster's impact.

Council

The Partner Councils, emergency services and government agencies maintain a number of key roles to meet their emergency management obligations.

- **Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM) –** The MRM plans for and coordinates the provision of municipal emergency relief and recovery services and resources.
- **Emergency Relief Centre Manager (ERCM) –** The ERCM establishes an Emergency Relief Centre (ERC) under the direction of the MRM and coordinates resources and the provision of services within the facility.
- **Emergency Services and Government Agencies –** Emergency services and government agencies have a variety of roles and responsibilities in providing or supporting relief and recovery services to communities.

For a complete list of agency roles in relief and recovery, refer to the SEMP (tables 7 to 13).

4. Operational arrangements

Activation arrangements

The activation process for emergency relief and recovery staff, facilities and services is guided by this document and the following references:

- The Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP)
- State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP)
- Grampians Region Relief and Recovery Sub-plan.

Generally, activation will begin when an emergency event occurs and a control agency responds. Initial awareness will develop of the need for emergency relief services. The MRM will be assessing information to further determine the recovery needs of the affected community.

Activation process

Activation of this plan may occur as a result of the following:

- A request from the Control Agency Incident Controller (IC)
- A request from the MERC
- Due to information received by the MEMO or MRM.

Once an activation request is received, the MRM, in consultation with stakeholders, will determine whether the plan is to be fully or partially activated. This decision will be informed by:

- Information received from the IC
- Information received from the MERC
- Initial impact assessments
- Other sources of information, for example, news, social media.

Based on this information, the MRM will determine community needs and resource availability. This will inform the level of coordination required, and trigger points to escalate from local to regional to state.

Once these factors have been considered, the MRM will activate this plan and coordinate the delivery of emergency relief and recovery services in consultation with relevant stakeholders and partnering agencies.

Phases of activation

The phases of activation are detailed in the MEMP. Activities in each phase may include the following.

Alert

- MRM is alerted to the emergency event
- MRM assesses the need for emergency relief and recovery
- MRM alerts appropriate partner agencies and personnel
- MRM will also notify required facilities, for example, Relief Centres
- Development of a Relief and Recovery Plan for the event
- Partner agencies briefed as required.

Action

- The event Relief and Recovery Plan is implemented to deliver emergency relief and recovery services
- The event Relief and Recovery Plan is monitored throughout the event
- Services are delivered according to the plan and monitored
- Ongoing coordination occurs with partner agencies.

Stand down

- The MRM will determine in consultation with the IC and others when relief and recovery services are no longer required
- A hot debrief is facilitated by partner agencies internally and a summary report may be provided to the MRM
- The MRM will facilitate a formal debrief with partner agencies and compile a report.

Escalation

The provision of emergency relief and recovery services is determined by the emergency event and its impact on communities. Initially, these services are provided as follows:

1. **Local level:** If the event occurs within a single municipality, Council in partnership with agencies in the local area, deliver relief and recovery services according to their capacity and capability. This may be also supported by regional resources as required.
   Triggers for additional regional resources may include when:
   - The local resource capacity is exhausted
   - The resource capability does not meet the need of impacted communities.

2. **Regional level:** If the event occurs across two or more municipalities, or is beyond the capability or capacity of the local Council to manage, DFFH will coordinate relief services and ERV will coordinate recovery services over the region and provide resource support as required to the local level.

3. **State level:** DFFH and ERV will coordinate the delivery of relief and recovery services across Victoria depending on the impact and geographical extent of the emergency. They will coordinate requests for resources from the national, state or other regional levels.

Local operational planning

Council, as the coordinating agency for relief and recovery at the local level, is responsible for developing a relief and recovery plan specific to the event.

This plan should include:

- A description of the emergency situation
- Profile of affected communities
- Impact assessment information
- Potential relief and recovery needs of affected communities
- Arrangements for relief and recovery coordination
- Relief and recovery services required
- Capacity and capability to provide local level service delivery, identifying trigger points for escalation to regional or state level.

For further information, refer to:
EMV Disaster Recovery Toolkit for Local Government – Recovery Tools and Other Resources

5. Relief arrangements

Introduction

Relief is the provision of essential needs to individuals, families and communities in the immediate aftermath of an emergency. Relief is the first stage of recovery and must be seamlessly integrated with response activities and all other early recovery activities. According to the SEMP, Municipal Councils have the responsibility for overseeing emergency relief at the local level.

Principles of relief

The principles for coordination and delivery of relief in Victoria are:

- Emergency-affected communities receive essential support to meet their **basic** and **immediate** needs
- Relief assistance is delivered in a **timely** manner, in response to emergencies
- Relief promotes **community safety** and minimises further physical and psychological harm
- Relief and response agencies **communicate** clear, relevant, timely and tailored information and advice to communities about relief services, through multiple appropriate channels
- Relief services recognise **community diversity**
- Relief is **adaptive**, based on continuing assessment of needs
- Relief supports community responsibility and **resilience**
- Relief is **well-coordinated**, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Relief services are **integrated** into emergency management arrangements.

For further details, refer to: SEMP Part 7 – Roles and Responsibilities: Relief

Activation and de-activation of emergency relief assistance

Incident Controllers determine the need to activate relief services, with advice from the Emergency Management Team (EMT). De-activation of relief services will be based on reduced levels of demand and need for such services.

Once Council is notified of an emergency event within the municipality, the MRM will notify staff and agencies that assistance may be needed. The MRM will request that agencies make arrangements with volunteers and equipment needed to support the community. The MRM may also contact venues that may be required to be used as relief centres to discuss the availability of and access to the facility.

The organisation of relief assistance

Emergency shelter DFFH, Council	**Food and water** Red Cross, Council	**Register.Find.Reunite** Victoria Police, Red Cross	**Disbursement of material goods** Salvation Army, other
Emergency financial assistance DFFH, Council	**Animal welfare** DEECA, Council	**Water and sewerage utilities** DEECA, GWMWater	
Food supply continuity DEECA	**First aid – public health** Ambulance Victoria, DoH, Council	**Community information** Control Agency	**Psychosocial support** DFFH, Council

Figure 2. Local relief coordination

Emergency shelter

In the first instance, impacted individuals and families are encouraged to seek emergency shelter with friends and family. If this is not possible, the following options will be considered:

- Commercial accommodation options
- Local Emergency Relief Centres (ERCs)
- ERCs in neighbouring municipalities.

Emergency Relief Centres (ERCs)

Municipal Councils are responsible for establishing and managing ERCs with support from regional recovery coordinators.

An ERC is a building or place established to provide essential needs to persons affected by an emergency. ERCs are established temporarily to cope with the immediate needs of those affected during the initial response. The establishment of an ERC does not imply a long term presence for the provision of emergency recovery.

ERC locations

ERC locations and a summary description of the facilities are provided in Appendix C: Emergency Relief Centre information. More detailed information and floor plans are maintained by each Partner Council and are available on request.

The location of ERCs is not publicly advertised. ERCs to be opened will be notified to the public through the formal emergency communication channels.

The criteria for selecting an ERC are based on the nature of the emergency and assessment of the facility located in a safe area away from the emergency zone.

The Partner Councils also have a number of secondary ERCs. These are not always assessed annually but may be utilised if the primary facility's capacity is exceeded.

ERC kits

ERC kits contain a collection of items that are immediately required to set up an ERC including consumables etc. The MRM is responsible for establishing and regularly checking the ERC kits. Generally, they are located at each Partner Council's office location and other sites as determined.

Food and water at ERCs

The Australian Red Cross will coordinate food and water for the Partner Council ERCs where agreed. The Partner Councils may engage other agencies or commercial providers to supply food and water where it is expedient to do so. Each Partner Council will maintain a list of accommodation, catering and material goods suppliers.

For further details, refer to:
Appendix B: Supporting resources and links – Accommodation, Catering and Material Goods

Reconnecting families and friends

The reconnection of displaced persons is primarily facilitated through the Register.Find.Reunite service. Victoria Police is responsible for the control and coordination of the service and the Australian Red Cross for its management and operation.

Voluntary registration can be made in a relief centre, by phone at an inquiry centre or online at https://www.register.redcross.org.au/

Crisisworks and registration at ERCs

Generally, the Australian Red Cross completes the registration of people attending an ERC using their documentation. They pass a copy of the completed Personal Information Form to the ERC Manager (or delegate).

Data from this form is then entered into Crisisworks to record who has attended the ERC and the impacts of the emergency on them and/or their property. This allows for the management of relief and recovery services and efficient reporting.

Community information

During an emergency, the Control Agency is responsible for leading the provision of information to affected communities. Councils lead the provision of local public information to affected individuals in relief and recovery.

Emergency animal welfare support

The Partner Councils have adopted an Integrated Emergency Animal Welfare Support Sub-plan that provides guidance on the management of domestic animals, wildlife and livestock in an emergency.

Primary responsibility for the welfare of domestic animals always rests with the owner. Owners are encouraged to have their plans in place on how they will manage the welfare of their pets in an emergency.

The Emergency Animal Welfare Support Sub-plan is available on each Partner Council's website.

A copy may also be provided upon written application to one of the Partner Councils via email as follows:

- Hindmarsh Shire Council – info@hindmarsh.vic.gov.au
- Horsham Rural City Council – council@hrcc.vic.gov.au
- West Wimmera Shire Council – council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au
- Yarriambiack Shire Council – info@yarriambiack.vic.gov.au

6. Recovery arrangements

Purpose of recovery

The purpose of recovery is to provide recovery services to assist the emergency affected community in the management of its recovery. It is the coordinated process of supporting communities in the reconstruction of physical infrastructure, agriculture and natural environment as well as restoring emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing to individuals. It may involve the establishment of a Recovery Centre.

Principles of recovery

The six national disaster recovery principles are fundamental for successful recovery. They are:

1. Understand the context
2. Recognise the complexity
3. Use community-led approaches
4. Coordinate all approaches
5. Communicate effectively
6. Recognise and build capacity.

ERV have added a further two principles:

7. Strengthen communities
8. Ensure an inclusive approach.

The disaster recovery principles are applied to each Partner Council's recovery related activities.

For further details about the national disaster recovery principles, refer to:
Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience website

Transition from response to recovery

Transition is the process of transferring from the response phase to the recovery phase. It may occur in the relief phase (the first few days post-incident) or later on in the recovery phase (from the first week on).

Recovery operations will commence as soon as possible after the onset of the emergency event and will develop alongside the response and relief activities while the incident is still under the management of the Incident Controller from the lead response agency.

A Transition from Response to Recovery document is compiled and signed by Council and relevant agencies.

Disaster Recovery Toolkit

The Disaster Recovery Toolkit for Local Government produced by Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) provides a range of tools, resources and literature to support Local Governments and communities in the recovery phase of an emergency.

The toolkit consists of eight booklets titled:
1. Understanding disaster recovery
2. Recovery readiness: preparation for recovery before a disaster
3. When disaster strikes: the first days and weeks
4. Beyond disaster: the months and years ahead
5. Council business matters: managing the challenges of disaster recovery
6. Regional recovery networks
7. Engaging the community in disaster recovery
8. Recovery tools and other resources.

The Toolkit is updated annually by EMV and can be found at:
www.emv.vic.gov.au/how-we-help/disaster-recovery-toolkit-for-local-government

Community-led recovery

Community-led recovery involves the community leading its recovery and will be varied and relevant to the situation at the time. It is essential that the intent and process of recovery for a community are clear at the outset and may:
- Involve supporting and facilitating a community to lead
- Be inclusive, enabling equitable participation and building the capacity of individuals in the community to contribute and lead
- Revolve around networks and connections
- Resolve and embrace the “hard” issues while being emotionally supportive
- By its very nature need to be flexible
- Connect with both the past and future.

Planning for effective recovery may be achieved through the use of (and by complementing) the resources already available within an affected community and utilising principles of community development. Community development empowers community members and creates stronger and more connected communities.

Communities have a range of trusted community groups or networks, which can be used to implement a range of recovery activities. These groups understand the local community dynamics and are best placed to provide ongoing sustainable community recovery support. Examples include:
- Progress or ratepayer associations
- Community hall committees
- Sporting clubs, service clubs and community service organisations
- Stock and station agents
- Rural financial counselling services
- Newsagents or post offices.

Community Recovery Committees

A local, flexible and scalable decision-making structure for the affected community is essential. A Community Recovery Committee (CRC) ensures community involvement and is a means through which information, resources and services are coordinated. This committee will comprise leaders and other representative members of an affected community, representatives of government, private and voluntary agencies.

A CRC provides a mechanism through which information, resources and services may be coordinated in support of an affected community. The MRM has the responsibility to ensure the establishment of a CRC as soon as possible after the emergency or prolonged event which may impact the community. Where possible, existing local community representative committees should be used.

For further information including a CRC Terms of Reference example, refer to:
EMV Disaster Recovery Toolkit for Local Government – Recovery Tools and Other Resources

Community Recovery Plan

A Community Recovery Plan is based on impact assessments and engagement with the community to identify community recovery issues. It is an important mechanism to identify and express how communities may be supported and can outline a wide range of priorities.

The plan is used to guide how local, state and federal governments, local agencies and philanthropic organisations can best support affected communities.

The Community Recovery Plan must be flexible and allow for regular review, as the timelines of the implementation of these priorities will be different for each community.

For further information, refer to:
EMV Disaster Recovery Toolkit for Local Government – Recovery Tools and Other Resources

Emergency Recovery Centres

An Emergency Recovery Centre is a “one-stop-shop” managed by the Council, where people can access a wide range of information and services as they work towards recovery and reconstruction. The Emergency Recovery Centre may transition from the Emergency Relief Centre or it may be located separately.

The Emergency Recovery Centre should be located in as close proximity to the affected area as possible. The provision of a meeting space where community members can catch up and work together on local recovery activities should be considered.

The Emergency Recovery Centre should provide access to information on Council-related matters, rebuilding information, grants, temporary accommodation and case management. It can be used as a base for community development and recovery project workers.

Recovery communication

Recovery is built on effective communication to ensure a coordinated approach to informing the community and delivering services. A well informed and connected community will recover sooner and become stronger than one without effective communications and guiding information.

Information sharing between agencies is important to ensure the community is informed of relevant information and services. This includes the sharing of contact details of members of impacted communities where their safety and welfare are of primary consideration.

Recovery communication is managed at the local level by the MRM and the Recovery Sub-committee in collaboration with the control agency for the emergency and ERV at the regional level and state level.

Key activities may include:

- Supporting communities to develop their communication strategy through regular newsletters, emails, social media, SMS updates and radio segments
- Developing and distributing a Community Recovery Bulletin
- Sharing between agencies of basic contact details of those affected by the emergency to ensure they are provided with information and communication over time.

For further information on recovery communication, refer to:

- Australian Red Cross Communicating in Recovery
- EMV Disaster Recovery Toolkit for Local Government – Recovery Tools and Other Resources

The **Control Agency** for an emergency at the local, regional and state tiers is responsible for coordinating community information **during** an emergency.

Relief and early recovery messaging at the local level will be coordinated by the Partner Councils and disseminated in accordance with Control Agency requirements while they are operational. The development and distribution of messages may be supported by DFFH and ERV.

In situations where regional or state coordination of relief and/or recovery has been activated, Council will support DFFH and ERV respectively, as a way of continuing the principle of “one source, one message”.

7. Impact assessments

Introduction

Impact assessments are conducted in the aftermath of an emergency to assess the impact on the community and inform the government of immediate and longer-term recovery needs. Under the *Emergency Management Act 2013,* EMV, through the Commissioner, is responsible for ensuring the coordination, collection, collation and reporting of impacts.

Impact assessments commence in the response phase of the emergency and are conducted in three stages:

1. Initial Impact Assessment (IIA)
2. Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA)
3. Post Emergency Needs Assessment (PENA).

For further information, refer to:
EMV Disaster Recovery Toolkit for Local Government – Recovery Tools and Other Resources

The impact assessment process

The first two phases of the impact assessment process provide the foundation for a more in-depth assessment during the transition from initial to post-impact assessment. Generally, the assessment timeline commences once access is gained to an affected area.

In general terms:

- **Initial Impact Assessment (IIA):** First responders conduct an IIA to provide an initial appraisal of the extent of the impact of the emergency on a community and infrastructure.
- **Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA):** Entails a higher level of data collection that can be generated from a number of sources, for example, state agencies, local governments and other agencies.
- **Post Impact Assessment (PIA):** Is a far more detailed assessment process involving input and analysis from experts.

The Incident Controller (IC) is responsible for initiating the impact assessment process. The IC will request the appointment of a coordinator to manage the IIA. A Recovery Coordinator will be appointed to manage the SIA and PIA as they transition through from the IIA.

The MRM will determine the staffing requirements of the team required to carry out any Council impact assessment and will depend on the type and scale of the emergency and impact.

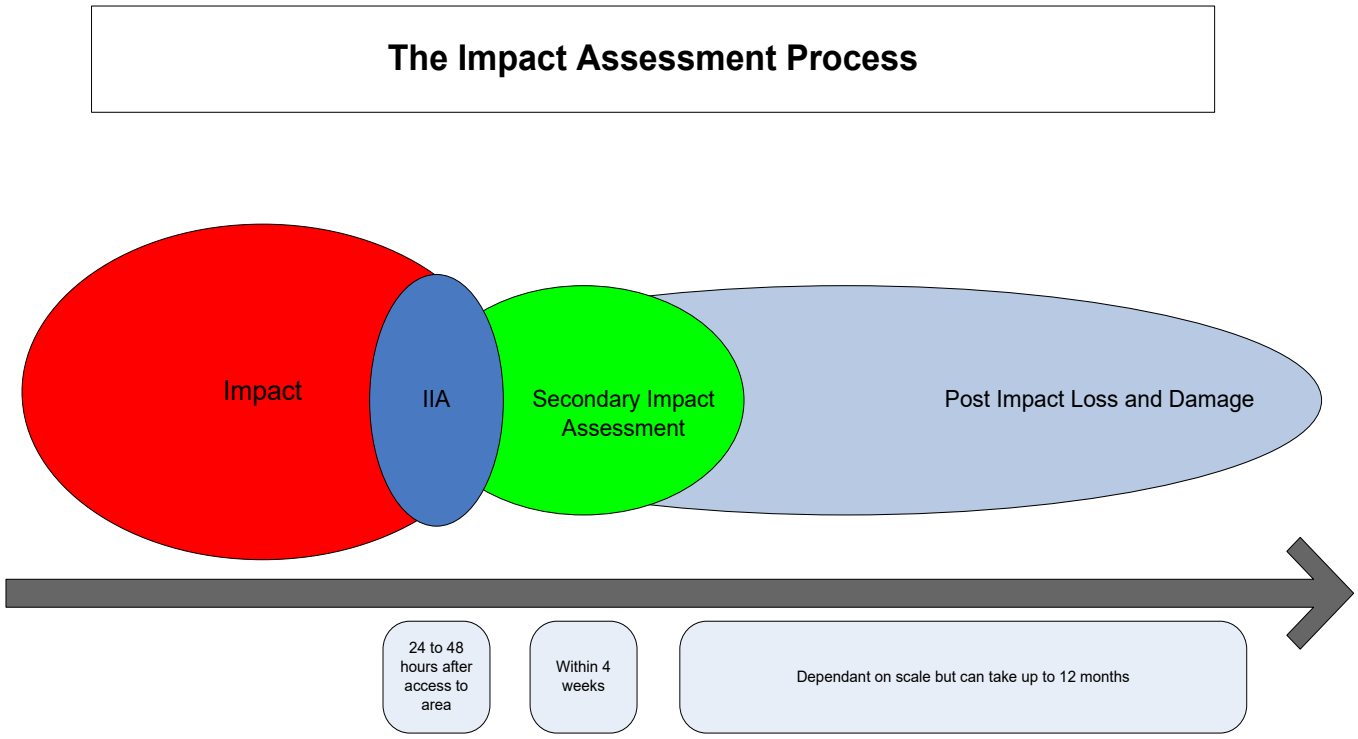

Figure 3. Impact assessment process

Initial Impact Assessment (IIA)

An IIA is an initial appraisal of the extent of damage, disruption and breakdown to the community and its infrastructure resulting from the emergency or disaster. IIA is initiated and coordinated by the control agency.

The purpose of IIA is to provide an immediate assessment of an impacted area during the initial stages of an emergency by:

- Determining the impact and scale of the emergency
- Gathering information to assist response, relief and recovery activities
- Providing information to the government and the community on the impact of the emergency to promote confidence in the management of the incident
- Establishing a standard process for gathering, recording and reporting on impact-related information.

During the first 48 hours of an emergency, the IIA gathers and verifies data about the impact of an emergency. Information from an IIA is provided by the ICC to the MEMO and MRM to enable planning for current and future response and recovery activities.

IIA data is used to assist recovery agencies to plan for potential relief and recovery requirements of communities by identifying the following impacts:

- Community/township built environment (sewage, water, electricity access)
- Injured/ deceased persons
- Damage to local businesses vital to the community (suppliers of food)
- Damage to government facilities of community significance (schools, hospitals)
- Residential damage indicating displaced people

- Damage to essential road and rail transport connections results in isolation of communities, homes, and businesses.

In addition, the data will assist in informing local, regional and state budget holders regarding potential financial assistance requirements.

The MRM, in conjunction with the MEMO and MERC, is to assess the impact of the incident and determine any requirement for recovery support in accordance with local resources.

The magnitude of the event and the subsequent recovery activities will be determined by the data collected during the post-impact assessment.

Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA)

SIA builds on the observational information gathered through the IIA phase to provide an additional layer of analysis and evaluation. A SIA is more detailed and the information supports understanding the type and level of assistance needed by affected communities. The Incident Controller will initiate the transition from IIA to SIA in consultation with the IIA Coordinator and Recovery Coordinator.

The SIA phase considers resources available within an affected community and identifies those needs and priorities that can only be met with outside assistance. The management of this phase will change from the incident, regional and state-level IIA Coordinator to the Recovery Coordinator.

The following should be considered when transitioning from IIA to either the SIA or PIA phase:

- Review incident risk assessments so that necessary measures are put in place for the safety and wellbeing of personnel that will be operating in the secondary and post-impact assessment phases.
- Determine the need to conduct SIA, or transition directly to local government where local resources are activated for the conduct of PIA.
- Confirm the process of IIA data exchange from the Incident Controller to ERV, recovery agencies and local government (an agreed process should be developed and documented which ensures that any further impact assessment information collected by the relevant controller is clearly identifiable and flows seamlessly to those agencies and organisations involved in recovery operations).
- Determine what resources are required during the secondary and post impact phases and for what period of time.
- Confirm which resources will be stood down and which resources will be activated such as local government, Australian Red Cross and the Victorian Council of Churches – Emergencies Ministry (VCC EM).
- Map and understand key geographical areas within the area of impact where SIA and PIA operations should be concentrated and prioritised, for example, key infrastructure, isolated communities and community icons.
- Development of key messages to the community, which can be included within the broad suite of warning methods.

- Understand the complications associated with the return of the community to the impacted area and develop a suitable plan where the community members are informed and supported.

- Teams undertaking SIAs should consider the provision of psychological first aid by either including an appropriately trained person in the team or by ensuring team members have undertaken appropriate training in psychological first aid.

This SIA process will have the recovery teams engaging with community members and obtaining impact information in detail. Returning residents may have had contact with IIA teams already, so subsequent assessors will need to keep this in mind and try to minimise "assessment fatigue" by avoiding repeating the same questions that IIA responders may have previously asked.

Ideally, secondary assessment teams will be deployed as soon as the Incident or Regional Controller declares the impact area safe.

Post Impact Assessment (PIA)

A PIA estimates the cost of destroyed assets of an emergency across the recovery environments. The assessment should inform the medium to longer-term recovery process, and guide planning that focuses on building structures and designing environments that enhances community resilience and assist in mitigating the impact of future emergencies.

A PIA draws upon information gathered from the IIA and SIA and is an appraisal of the extent of damage, disruption and breakdown to the community and its infrastructure resulting from the emergency or disaster. Estimates are made for both physical and financial losses, such as the loss of business output.

A PIA will:

- Survey the extent of damage and evaluate financial and material needs
- Provide a priority listing to assist agencies in the performance of their functions to address community needs
- Monitor the acquisition and application of financial and material aid provided or required during the recovery period
- Develop an appropriate Recovery Plan applicable to the assessed impacts.

A PIA is conducted primarily after the emergency when it is safe enough for trained personnel to enter the affected area.

Council will coordinate the PIA for Council owned or managed property and assets. Other agencies may also be involved in PIA, for example, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) when rural and farming enterprises or state-owned land is impacted.

8. Finance and resources

Introduction

Recovery from an emergency is a shared responsibility between the community, government and non-government agencies. It is expected that the community will have adequate resources to sustain them for at least the first 72 hours, to allow for the mobilisation of support services.

It is expected, where available, that appropriate and adequate insurance is held to manage the impacts of an emergency upon people and property.

The WEMT has developed a range of resources to help people plan and prepare for an emergency including the Wimmera 72 website and Three Steps to Emergency Preparedness brochure.

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)

Municipal Councils are responsible for the cost of emergency relief and recovery measures provided to an impacted community and can claim expenditure through the DRFA.

The DRFA is a cost sharing arrangement between the commonwealth and state governments to support certain relief and recovery efforts following an eligible disaster. Under these arrangements, the state government determines which areas receive assistance and what assistance is available to individuals and communities. The DRFA does not cover all costs resulting from a disaster. The DRFA is coordinated through Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) and Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV).

For further details about the DRFA, visit the EMV website.

Donations and appeals

The Partner Councils support the principle of monetary donations over donated goods in the first instance as per the National Guidelines for Managing Donated Goods. Financial donations can provide a greater level of choice and can more accurately target any identified needs and help circulate money in affected communities.

The Partner Councils have limited capacity to coordinate donated goods and services and will liaise with appropriate non-government agencies, service groups and organisations such as GIVIT to assist in this area.

For further details about GIVIT, visit the GIVIT website.

Municipal resources

Recovery following emergencies can often take a long time and significant resources are required to manage recovery processes for the community. Council, agencies and the affected community will work together to review expenditure requirements and advocate for further external funding to ensure that consideration is given to emerging needs and issues.

Municipalities have a responsibility to plan for and provide resources from within the municipal area in the event of an emergency, and contingencies exist under the SEMP to manage resource requests if the Council is unable to provide them.

Resource requests are sourced locally first and then, if unable to be provided, the request is passed through to the MEMO, to the MERC, to the Regional Emergency Response Coordinator (RERC).

Municipal resource sharing

Emergencies sometimes require Councils to source additional resources to ensure that the affected community is restored to normal function as efficiently as possible.

The Partner Councils have mutual aid agreements in place with other Councils and is a member of the Municipal Association of Victoria's (MAV) Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing protocol. For more information and specific details on resource sharing, refer to the MEMP.

Volunteer management

Volunteers work across all four areas of recovery (built, natural, social and economic) to support people affected by an emergency. The Partner Councils will manage the volunteers they are responsible for in accordance with their policy and plans. Other volunteers will be managed depending on the circumstance and in consultation with key volunteer organisations.

Key considerations in volunteer management include:

- Ensuring that volunteer activity is managed and coordinated
- Ensuring volunteers are inducted and suitably trained for the work undertaken
- Ensuring that where possible, activities such as fencing and environmental work are carried out by appropriate groups with trained and insured volunteers
- Community development resources and administrative support are provided to support the local volunteer committees and groups to sustain their involvement in the recovery process
- Spontaneous volunteers and their management.

9. Recovery environments

Recovery is undertaken across four environments: Social, Economic, Built and Natural. They provide a framework within which recovery can be planned, reported, monitored and evaluated. The recovery environments and their functional areas can be adapted to meet the needs of people and communities affected, such as consideration for aboriginal culture and healing. In the event of a major emergency, a Recovery Committee will be established to ensure these areas are addressed appropriately.

Recovery environment	Functional area	Recovery coordinating agency
Social The social environment considers the impact an event may have on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. This environment is primarily concerned with safety, security and shelter, health and psychosocial wellbeing.	Housing and accommodation	DFFH
	Individual and household financial assistance	DFFH
	Psychosocial support	DFFH
	Health and medical assistance	DH
Economic The economic environment considers the direct and indirect impacts that an event may have on business primary producers and the broader economy.	Local economies	DJSIR
	Businesses	DJSIR
	Agriculture	DEECA
Built The built environment considers the impacts that an event may have on essential services, commercial and industrial facilities public buildings and assets and housing.	Energy services	DEECA
	Public telecommunications	DJSIR
	Reticulated water and wastewater services	DEECA
	Transport	DoT
	Building and Assets	Activity Leads
Natural The natural environment considers the impact that an event may have on a healthy and functioning environment, which underpins the economy and society. Components of the natural environment include: air and water quality, land degradation and contamination, plant and wildlife damage/loss and national parks, cultural and heritage sites.	Natural environment, public land and waterways	DEECA
	Threatened ecosystems and species	DEECA

Figure 4. Recovery coordination for services across all environments

10. Social environment

Introduction

The social recovery environment addresses the impact of an emergency on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. Recovery programs in the social environment have an emphasis on the psychosocial support that a variety of service providers deliver. These services need to be accessible early in a recovery program so the services providers can deliver the support required.

Responsibility

Responsibility for coordination activities in the social recovery environment at the local, regional and state levels are as follows:

Local level – Municipal Councils

Councils are responsible for coordinating the delivery of recovery services for affected people and communities. Consideration of appropriate support strategies may include:

- Accessing information
- Financial assistance
- Coordinating support services
- Coordinating of accommodation arrangements.

Regional level – Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) and Department of Health (DH)

- DFFH is responsible for coordinating relief/social recovery coordination (emergency accommodation, financial assistance and psychosocial support) regionally and in support of the local level
- DH is responsible for coordinating the provision of health services.

State level – Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) and DFFH

- ERV has a state-wide coordination role in recovery where an emergency is of significant scale
- DFFH supports ERV in this role.

People diversity in an emergency

Communities have a diversity of people who may be affected by an emergency. Where a community has been affected, Recovery Managers require an appreciation of the community profile so they can plan and coordinate the delivery of appropriate resources and services. Diversity considerations include but are not limited by:

Gender – male, female, LGBTIQA+

- Gender groups respond differently in an emergency. An appreciation of this is needed to plan for appropriate service delivery.
- Gender and Disaster Australia (GADAus) has undertaken significant research in relation to the harmful impacts of gendered expectations in disaster. Further details are available on the GADAus website.

Children and young people

- Children and young people respond to disasters in a different way to adults and have unique needs that must be addressed when planning for emergencies. The Emergency Management Planning for Children and Young People Guide for Local Goverment provides practical advice on key things that should be included in local area emergency management plans.

Elderly people

- The elderly have particular needs and recovery planning will need to take these into account and facilitate collaboration with aged care service providers.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) groups

- The culture, language and religious beliefs of individuals and groups within a community need to be considered when planning recovery services. The Partner Councils will consult with relevant organisations and community leaders.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

- For Aboriginal people, relationships to country, culture and community are not only interconnected, they are intrinsically linked and enmeshed with one's identity. This means that when one of these foundations is impacted by a disaster, Aboriginal people experience unique pain and loss.
- Engaging with Traditional Owners and their communities to self-determine appropriate recovery responses will assist in providing appropriate relief and recovery services and protect their cultural heritage when recovery work is undertaken.

Vulnerable groups

In recovery planning, Council and other recovery service providers need to consider how their recovery arrangements best engage and deliver services to vulnerable groups. The recovery arrangements must be sufficiently flexible, adaptable and inclusive when an emergency impacts a community. These groups include but are not limited to:

- CALD groups
- Bereaved people
- Isolated households
- People with physical disabilities, for example, deafness, blindness, etc
- People with mental health issues
- Parents with young children
- People from low socio-economic backgrounds
- People with poor literacy and numeracy skills.

Displaced and dispersed people in an emergency

An emergency may displace, disperse and isolate people or communities from where they live and work. Recovery arrangements and agencies need to consider their needs when providing services and support. It is important that displaced or dispersed people are returned to their residences as quickly as possible.

History has demonstrated that, where it has taken too long to rehabilitate an impacted area and return people as quickly as possible, they often never return. If circumstances are such that it is not possible for them to return quickly, it is important that they are informed of the reasons and kept up to date regularly.

Family violence in an emergency

Gendered disaster research in Australia has highlighted the increased risk of violence against women occurring in the aftermath of an emergency and the issues associated with this risk. Some of these issues include inadequate responses to women by legal, community and health professionals, violence again women linked to the level of suffering men face during and following emergencies, and that domestic violence can increase with alcohol and/or substance abuse.

It is recognised that experience of family violence and access to support services may be further impacted by additional vulnerabilities including age (children, seniors), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people within culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, lesbian, gay, bisequal, transgender, intersex, queer and asexual people (LGBTIQA+), people living in rural, regional and remote communites and people with a disability.

The Family Violence Framework for Emergency Management supports planning and response to family violence during emergencies. It outlines existing family violence strategy and policy, and opportunities for partnership between the family violence and emergency management sectors. Further information is available on the DFFH website.

GADAus has also undertaken significant research in relation to family violence and the harmful impacts of gendered expectations in disaster. Further details are available on the GADAus website.

Community programs

Depending on the level of impact, affected communities who have been adversely affected by an emergency may not be able to return to their previous way of life. The affected individuals and communities need support to adapt and change.

Community programs may be developed to support the individuals and communities to adapt and change. Any program development must be done with the involvement of the affected communities. These planning sessions are a part of the overall recovery process and are coordinated by Council at the local level initially. It should be the community that identifies a sustainable program to support their ongoing recovery initiatives.

Community engagement

Through community engagement, recovery planning and service providers can identify existing community networks to deliver recovery programs. Engagement with these networks will identify recovery service requirements and deliver information, recovery services and support to those affected.

The community networks may include but are not limited by:

- Community houses
- Community resource centres
- Welfare agencies
- Sporting clubs
- Service clubs
- Volunteer resource centres
- Chamber of commerce groups
- Development associations
- Farmer groups, for example, Victorian Farmers Federation.

11. Built environment

Responsibility

The Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) is responsible at the state level for coordinating the participation of all agencies to ensure that the recovery of the built environment is facilitated. The responsibilities of agencies at the regional level are specified in regional relief and recovery plans.

Agencies retain their responsibilities in respect of infrastructure that sits within their portfolio. DJSIR maintains a coordination function only and agencies are responsible for any reporting obligations in respect of the infrastructure they are responsible for.

At the local level, the partner Councils are responsible for the infrastructure that is within their mandate to manage, for example, roads, drainage, etc.

Housing

Assessment and repair of homes is critical for expediting the return of people to an acceptable level of functional life. Households and property owners are responsible for having adequate insurance protection or other means to enable the clean-up, repair and reconstruction of damaged property. Where insurance applies, it is used in the first instance to begin the recovery process.

Information on insurance policies and coverage can be sourced from the individual insurance company or the Insurance Council of Australia.

Other activities that can assist and help in the transition from displacement to repatriation include:

- Information for individuals and industry about temporary homes, buildings and new building standards
- Facilitating access to public housing or the private rental market
- Advice on obtaining building permits and engaging building practitioners.

DFFH may support households to arrange interim accommodation and assist with planning future housing arrangements.

Should the state need to assist with clean-up and demolition DEECA will coordinate activities through the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

The Victorian Building Authority provides building advice and information and in some cases expedites the building cycle after an emergency event.

Public infrastructure

The state government, local Councils, community and private sector all have responsibilities when community facilities are damaged or destroyed. Damaged or destroyed facilities may include:

- Community/neighbourhood centres and places for congregation
- Schools and learning institutions
- Kindergartens and child care facilities
- Places of spiritual worship
- Graveyards and memorials

- Sporting and recreational facilities and clubs
- Cultural centres
- Entertainment venues
- Restaurants and cafes.

Each of these facilities has the potential to assist the community in its recovery process, but if damaged would be unable to perform their community functions. The damage may be structural damage to buildings or damage to furnishings and contents or both.

Critical public buildings, infrastructure and facilities need to be pre-identified as priorities in the recovery planning process and adequate arrangements developed for their restoration or replacement.

Local governments are similarly responsible for Council-owned and managed assets and infrastructure, working with local businesses where appropriate.

Recovery activities should also recognise key elements of the built environment that have social value, for example, landmarks and significant community sites which are symbolically and functionally important in community recovery.

Critical infrastructure

Respective government departments are responsible for the restoration of critical infrastructure that sits within their portfolio in conjunction with the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority and relevant private operators.

Commercial (private) infrastructure

The property manager is responsible for ensuring adequate insurance is in place to enable the restoration of their facilities.

12. Economic environment

Responsibility

The economic environment considers the direct and indirect impacts that an emergency event may have on:

- Individuals and families
- Business
- Primary producers
- Tourism
- Industries
- Broader community.

The impacts range from the immediate and intense, for example, loss of income or capacity to generate income, to long term and chronic, for example, loss of workforce due to displacement of people, loss of productive land or disruption to tourism in an area.

Municipal Councils are responsible for the local coordination and delivery of economic recovery activities for businesses including:

- Assisting businesses in accessing information, grants or assistance programs through DFFH
- Prioritising recovery works that have positive impacts on business recovery.

Councils may also involve local businesses in:

- Recovery activities
- Development and promotion of local employment opportunities
- Supporting local tourism and other affected businesses.

DJSIR assists municipal Councils with this role at the regional and state level. During relief activities, the referral of any identified urgent need will be coordinated by DJSIR and the appropriate agency for service provision.

The Business Victoria website provides guidance on business preparedness, risk mitigation and business continuity. For further information, refer to: www.business.vic.gov.au

Business Victoria provides specific advice for tourism businesses, including resources to assist local and regional businesses and tourism operators plan for, respond to and recover from emergencies. For further information, refer to: Crisis Essentials - Crisis Management Guide for Tourism Businesses

Agriculture

Following significant incidents, DEECA may establish a longer-term recovery program. They are a key support agency that takes a lead role in the provision of recovery services to commercial primary producers and rural land managers.

The operational objective of a recovery program is to support primary producers in improving productivity after an emergency event through the design and implementation of appropriate assistance programs. The focus of a DEECA rural recovery program is on:

- Supporting the well-being of rural communities
- Revitalising the economy of rural communities
- Re-establishment of agricultural enterprises
- Rehabilitation of productive land and the surrounding environment.

Where primary producers are impacted, DEECA and the MRM will liaise and determine the appropriate level of case management deployment DEECA will activate to ensure coordination and minimise duplication.

Emergency fodder

DEECA and the VFF may provide emergency fodder for a maximum of four weeks following an emergency, where a significant amount of pasture and/or fodder has been lost. The need will be jointly considered on a case-by-case basis.

Fencing

It is the responsibility of the owner of private land to fence their property and secure stock within their boundary. Landholders are expected to manage risks to their assets and have appropriate levels of insurance to cover boundary and internal fencing.

Assistance may be provided by volunteer groups to rural landholders to assist in dismantling damaged fences and reconstructing fences. Local government may take the lead role in coordinating local volunteer efforts after emergencies.

The Victorian Government will pay 100% of the restoration costs of fences damaged on private land as a result of machinery used by fire agencies to control bushfires. This includes damage to fences by machinery such as bulldozers entering properties and or constructing fire control lines and other fire emergency vehicles obtaining access.

The Victorian Government will meet half the cost of materials to replace or repair fencing between private land and all national parks, state parks and state forests destroyed or damaged by bushfire.

For further information, refer to: DEECA website

Animal welfare

DEECA coordinates all animal welfare and works in collaboration with agencies involved in assisting the recovery of animals after emergencies:

- Councils (companion animals)
- DEECA (wildlife)
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)
- Australian Veterinary Association (AVA)
- Other volunteer groups.

The services that may be required include but are not limited by:

- Adequate food and water
- Provision of shelter
- Adequate shelter and space
- Freedom from pain, suffering, disease and obvious discomfort
- Freedom from unnecessary fear and distress.

Key animal welfare considerations include:

- Maintaining acceptable animal welfare standards for all animal species
- Destruction of the minimum number of animals during an emergency
- Best use of available resources.

For further information, refer to:

- Wimmera Integrated Emergency Animal Welfare Support Plan (available on each Partner Council's website)
- Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Support Plan

DEECA will also assess and assist with urgent animal welfare needs of rural land managers with an emphasis in the first instance on the relief of animal suffering.

DEECA and the EPA can provide direction to local government and their Environmental Health Officers regarding the location of stock disposal sites.

13. Natural environment

Responsibility

One third of Victoria is public land comprised of parks, forests and reserves. Emergencies that occur on this land have multiple consequences for ecosystems, biodiversity, economic and social values. Actions to recover from these emergencies may start while the emergency is still underway and can continue for many months or years.

DEECA is responsible for coordinating natural environment recovery activities at the local, regional and state levels by working closely with partner agencies such as:

- Parks Victoria
- EPA
- Catchment Management Authorities
- Local governments
- Communities.

Emergencies on public land or the marine environment can lead to impacts on the economies of communities and regions through direct or indirect impacts on industries such as:

- Forestry
- Fishing
- Apiary
- Farming
- Nature-based tourism
- Cultural based tourism
- Recreational tourism.

Activities that can be undertaken to assist to restore the economic viability of impacted industries include:

- Restoring access to impacted public land
- Reopening the road network
- Restoring visitor facilities
- Monitoring and surveying impacted habitats
- Regenerating forests for future timber use
- Assisting farmers to restore boundary fences between farms and public land.

These activities are undertaken by DEECA, Parks Victoria, Forest Fire Management and local government as appropriate.

Council will provide information and advice on community priorities to DEECA and keep the community informed about recovery management undertaken in the natural environment.

14. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Cultural heritage management in Victoria

The *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (the Act) and *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007* (the Regulations) provide protection and management for Victoria's Aboriginal heritage with processes linked to the Victorian planning system. The legislation provides protection for all Aboriginal places, objects and ancestral remains regardless of their inclusion on the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register or if they are located on public or private land.

The Act also provides clear guidance to planners and developers about when, and how, Aboriginal cultural heritage needs to be considered, and in some situations, work cannot proceed until compliance is met. In some situations, a Cultural Heritage Management Plan or the need to obtain a Cultural Heritage Permit may be required.

For further information, refer to: www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au

Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register

The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (the Register) is a tool for the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage. The Register holds the records of all known Aboriginal cultural heritage places and objects within Victoria. Aboriginal heritage places and objects are irreplaceable, non-renewable resources and can also include traditional and spiritual sites of significance.

Registered Aboriginal parties play a key role in the protection and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage. The Register holds information on each registered Aboriginal party, their area of responsibility and contact details. Approximately, 36,000 Aboriginal places and objects have been recorded. Many of these places and objects are located on private property.

Access to the Register is limited and not publicly accessible due to it containing culturally sensitive information.

For access to the Register, refer to: https://achris.vic.gov.au/#/dashboard

Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

A Welcome to Country is provided at all significant events and can only be provided by an appropriate Aboriginal Traditional Owner or Elder. A Welcome to Country gives Traditional Owners an opportunity to formally welcome people to their land. It shows respect for Aboriginal people as the Traditional Owners of the land.

Acknowledging ownership of the land at the commencement of meetings and forums pays respect to the Traditional Owners, ancestors and continuing cultural and spiritual practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It is a way that non-Aboriginal people can show respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and the ongoing relationship of Traditional Owners with the land. It provides an increasing awareness and recognition of Australia's Aboriginal people and cultures.

The Barengi Gadjin Land Council represents the Traditional Owners from the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk peoples. For further information, refer to Barengi Gadjin Land Council website: www.bglc.com.au

Gathering places

For further information about local networks and gathering places located across Wimmera contact:
Larry Kanoa, Grampians Local Aboriginal Network (LAM) Broker:
Phone – 0400 668 168
Email - **larry.kanoa@dpc.vic.gov.au**

Aboriginal health organisations

For a list of health care services that support Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, refer to: Appendix B: Supporting resources and links – organisations/service providers

Appendix A: Acronyms

Acronym	Description
CRC	Community Recovery Committee
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
DFFH	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
DH	Department of Health
DoT	Department of Transport
DJSIR	Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
EM-COP	Emergency Management Common Operating Picture
EMT	Emergency Management Team
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
ERC	Emergency Relief Centre
ERV	Emergency Recovery Victoria
MEMO	Municipal Emergency Management Officer (Council)
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
MEMPC	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
MERC	Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator ((Victoria Police)
MRM	Municipal Recovery Manager (Council)
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
REMPC	Grampians Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee
RERC	Regional Emergency Response Coordinator (Victoria Police)
SEMP	Victorian State Emergency Management Plan
VCC EM	Victorian Council of Churches – Emergencies Ministry
WEMRSP	Wimmera Emergency Management Resource Sharing Partnership
WEMT	Wimmera Emergency Management Team
WIRRP	Wimmera Integrated Relief and Recovery Sub-plan

Appendix B: Supporting resources and links

Municipal Emergency Management Plans

Document	Location
Hindmarsh Shire MEMP 2022-2025	Hindmarsh Shire MEMP 2022-2025
Horsham Rural City MEMP 2022-2025	Horsham Rural City MEMP 2022-2025
West Wimmera Shire MEMP 2022-2025	West Wimmera Shire MEMP 2021-2024
Yarriambiack Shire MEMP 2022-2025	Yarriambiack Shire MEMP 2022-2025

Other plans and documents

Document	Location
Emergency Relief Centre Standard Operating Guidelines	WEMRSP SharePoint site or available on request from the WEMT on 0353 82 9777
Grampians Region Relief and Recovery Sub-plan	Available on request from the Grampians REMPC rocgrampians@cfa.vic.gov.au
State Emergency Management Plan	www.emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/semp
Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan	www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/emergency-management/emergency-animal-welfare/victorian-emergency-animal-welfare-plan
Victorian Preparedness Framework	www.emv.vic.gov.au/how-we-help/emergency-management-capability-in-victoria/victorian-preparedness-framework
Wimmera 72	www.wimmera72.com.au
Wimmera Emergency Animal Welfare Sub-plan 2022-2025	Partner Council websites

Organisations/service providers

Organisation	Link
Partner Councils	
Hindmarsh Shire Council	www.hindmarsh.vic.gov.au
Horsham Rural City Council	www.hrcc.vic.gov.au
West Wimmera Shire Council	www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au
Yarriambiack Shire Council	www.yarriambiack.vic.gov.au
Agencies and government departments	
Ambulance Victoria	www.ambulance.vic.gov.au
Australian Red Cross	www.redcross.org.au
Barengi Gadjin Land Council	www.bglc.com.au
Country Fire Authority	www.cfa.vic.gov.au
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	www.deeca.vic.gov.au
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	www.djsir.vic.gov.au
Emergency Management Common Operating Picture (EM-COP)	https://cop.em.vic.gov.au/sadisplay/nicslogin.seam
Emergency Management Victoria	www.emv.vic.gov.au
Emergency Recovery Victoria	www.vic.gov.au/emergency-recovery-victoria
First Peoples – State Relations	www.goolumgoolum.org.au
National Emergency Management Agency	www.nema.gov.au
Victorian Council of Churches – Emergencies Ministry	www.vccem.org.au
Victoria Police	www.police.vic.gov.au
Victoria State Emergency Service	www.ses.vic.gov.au

Organisation	Link
Health care services	
Dunmunkle Health Services	www.vahi.vic.gov.au/hospital-and-health-services/dunmunkle-health-services
Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative	www.goolumgoolum.org.au
Grampians Community Health	www.gch.org.au
Grampians Health Edenhope	www.edmh.org.au
Grampians Health Horsham and Dimboola	www.whcg.org.au
Headspace Horsham	www.headspace.org.au/headspace-centres/horsham/
Mental Health Services – Grampians Health	www.bhs.org.au/services-and-clinics/mental-health-services/
Orange Door – Wimmera	www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au/now-open-orange-door-wimmera
Rural North West Health	www.rnh.net.au
Uniting – Wimmera Grampians Outreach and Community Services	www.unitingvictas.org.au/locations/horsham-185-baillie-st/
West Wimmera Health Service	www.wwhs.net.au
Service providers	
Hindmarsh Shire Council service providers	www.mycommunitydirectory.com.au/Victoria/Hindmarsh
Horsham Rural City Council service providers	www.mycommunitydirectory.com.au/Victoria/Horsham
West Wimmera Shire Council service providers	www.mycommunitydirectory.com.au/Victoria/West_Wimmera
Yarriambiack Shire Council service providers	www.mycommunitydirectory.com.au/Victoria/Yarriambiack
Wimmera Development Association (commercial service providers)	www.thewimmeraonline.com.au

Accommodation, catering and material goods

Document	Location
Hindmarsh Shire Council relief and recovery suppliers list	WEMRSP SharePoint site or available on request by contacting the MRM on 03 5391 4444 or 0400 681 382
Horsham Rural City Council relief and recovery suppliers list	WEMRSP SharePoint site or available on request by contacting the MRM on 03 5382 9777 or 0427 514 176
West Wimmera Shire Council relief and recovery suppliers list	WEMRSP SharePoint site or available on request by contacting the MRM on 139 972 or 0429 707 407
Yarriambiack Shire Council relief and recovery suppliers list	WEMRSP SharePoint site or available on request by contacting the MRM on 03 5398 0100 or 0427 680 253

Appendix C: Emergency Relief Centre information

Hindmarsh Shire Council – Emergency Relief Centres

Facility	Location	Contact details	Capacity
Dimboola Senior Citizens Centre	41 Victoria Street, Dimboola	HSC: 03 5391 4444 MRM: 0400 681 382	50 people 10 only for sleeping
Jeparit Hall	10 Roy Street, Jeparit	HSC Jeparit: 03 5391 4450 MRM: 0400 681 382	100 people 25 only for sleeping
Nhill Memorial Community Centre	70 Nelson Street, Nhill	HSC: 03 5391 4444 MRM: 0400 681 382	250 people 50 only for sleeping
Rainbow MECCA	Federal Street, Rainbow	HSC Rainbow: 03 5391 4451 MRM: 0400 681 382	100 people 30 only for sleeping

Horsham Rural City Council – Emergency Relief Centres

Facility	Location	Contact details	Capacity
Horsham Senior Citizens Centre	17 Roberts Avenue, Horsham	HRCC: 03 5382 9777 MRM: 0427 514 176	100 people Limited sleeping
Uniting Church Complex	Cnr Pynsent and Urquhart Street, Horsham	Office: 03 5382 4380 A/H: 03 5382 6373 0427 778 068 Pastoral Care: 0429 881 238	300 people Limited sleeping
Haven Hall	4378 Henty Highway, Haven	Sue Exell: 03 5382 6313 0409 257 256	20 people Limited sleeping
Natimuk Showgrounds	48 Jory Street, Natimuk	Cheryl Sudholz: 03 5387 1036 0428 871 036	200 people Limited sleeping
Natimuk Soldiers Memorial Hall	101 Main Street, Natimuk	Natimuk Post Office: 03 5387 1210 0428 871 210	200 people 60 only for sleeping
Hamilton Lamb Memorial Hall	13 Kalkee Road, Horsham	HRCC: 03 5382 9777 Susan Hogan: 03 5381 0222 0407 547 388 Hall Mobile: 0419 538 206	50 people No sleeping
Kalkee Recreation Reserve	1674 Blue Ribbon Road, Kalkee	Greg Lawson: 03 5383 2206 0428 832 206	200 people Limited (<50) for sleeping
Laharum Hall	1586 Northern Grampians Road, Laharum	Judy Berendsen: 03 5383 6265 0417 056 219	150 people Limited (<50) for sleeping
Wimmera Machinery Field Days Facility	37 Field Days Road, Longerenong	Vanessa Lenehan: 03 5384 7210 0437 588 306	300+ people Sleeping limited only by the supply of appropriate equipment
Kanagulk Hall	4859 Natimuk-Hamilton Road, Kanagulk	Anne Russell: 03 5570 1403 0437 124 003	40 people Limited sleeping

West Wimmera Shire Council – Emergency Relief Centres

Facility	Location	Contact details	Capacity
Apsley Recreation Reserve	37 Splatt Street, Apsley	Apsley Police OIC: 0408 220 616	50 people No sleeping
Apsley Hall	62 Wallace Street, Apsley	WWSC Edenhope: 139 972 Key Safe: 193	70 people No sleeping
Edenhope Senior Citizens Centre	54 Langford Street, Edenhope	WWSC Edenhope: 139 972 Key Safe: 195	50 people No sleeping
Goroke Senior Citizens Centre	7-11 Station Street, Goroke	WWSC Edenhope: 139 972 Key Safe: 195	50 people 50 only for sleeping
Kaniva Senior Citizens Centre	25 Baker Street, Kaniva	WWSC Kaniva: 139 972 Key Safe: 193	50 people 50 only for sleeping

Yarriambiack Shire Council – Emergency Relief Centres

Facility	Location	Contact details	Capacity
Beulah Community Centre	24 Deakin Street, Beulah	Karen Williams: 0429 902 343	150 people 100 only for sleeping
Hopetoun Football Club	29 Strachan Street, Hopetoun	Ross Brown: 0409 946 648	150 people 60 only for sleeping
Hopetoun Memorial Hall	13 Austin Street, Hopetoun	Wal Ferguson: 0417 342 899	250 people 100 only for sleeping
Hopetoun Senior Citizens Centre	86 Toole Street, Hopetoun	Coral Cox: 5083 3463	100 people No sleeping
Minyip Memorial Hall	36-58 Donald-Murtoa Road (Main Street), Minyip	Russ Connelly: 0403170169	300 people 100 only for sleeping
Minyip Senior Citizens Centre	72-74 Main Street, Minyip	Evelyn Wright: 53857590	100 people No sleeping
Murtoa Mechanics Institute	37 Duncan Street, Murtoa	Carolyn West: 03 5385 2373	500 people 175 only for sleeping
Patchewollock Memorial Hall	Cnr Federation and Poulton Streets, Patchewollock	Alison Frankel: 0409617669	200 people 100 only for sleeping
Rupanyup Community Centre	27 Gibson Street, Rupanyup	Vicki South: 03 5385 5079	200 people 75 only for sleeping
Rupanyup Memorial Hall	41 Cromie Street, Rupanyup	Sandra Loats: 0427 855 136	300 people 100 only for sleeping
Warracknabeal Community Centre	Scott Street, Warracknabeal	Alan Mclean: 0418 553 259	300 people 100 only for sleeping
Warracknabeal Stadium	Anderson Street, Warracknabeal	YSC: 03 5398 1000	500 people 150 only for sleeping
Woomelang Memorial Hall	45-47 Brook Street, Woomelang	Rex Barbary: 03 5081 2122	300 people 100 only for sleeping
Woomelang Recreation Reserve	Brock Street, Woomelang	Colin Barber: 03 5081 2137 0427 345 242	150 people 100 only for sleeping