

Guidelines for Municipal Emergency Management Planning

Part 6: Emergency Management Manual Victoria

Preface

In accordance with Section 21(5) of the *Emergency Management Act 1986*, these guidelines are issued by the Co-ordinator in Chief of Emergency Management, who is the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

These guidelines, representing Part 6 of the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria*, replace the version issued in January 1997.

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Introduction

Purpose of these Guidelines

These guidelines assist local government managers and planners to prepare and maintain a Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMPlan).

They will help councils meet their safety obligations to their communities, outline their roles and responsibilities, under legislation, to prepare emergency management plans and provide advice on the planning process.

They are also a valuable resource to planners in community level agencies and emergency management organisations.

The guidelines represent Part 6 of the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria* and must be read in conjunction with the *State Emergency Response Plan* and the *State Emergency Recovery Plan*.

How to use these guidelines

The guidelines outline a planning process, which individual municipalities can tailor to their needs according to the risks they face and any other community safety planning processes they manage. They stimulate thought about the emergency management planning process and encourage councils to develop their own strategies to deal with local emergency management needs.

As part of the planning process, councils need to undertake Emergency Risk Management based on a sound methodology. These guidelines have used the *Emergency Risk Management - Applications Guide*, produced by Emergency Management Australia. Also available is the Community Emergency Risk Management (CERM) process. Both are based on the Australian/New Zealand AS/NZS 4360: 2004 *Risk Management*. When undertaking a CERM process, councils (or their facilitators) should refer to the Victoria State Emergency Service for information on how to conduct the process.

Some case studies are included to illustrate good practice in municipal emergency management in Victoria and inspire municipalities that face similar challenges.

Executive overview and Introduction

The Executive Overview and Introduction provides a succinct overview of the guidelines for all users, however, it is specifically designed for executive senior management personnel to attain a broad overview of the document.

Section A – Background information

Section A contains background information about emergency management and the planning process. It is essential reading for the emergency planning personnel and managers within the council and outside agencies.

Section A also provides useful information to anyone interested in municipal emergency management, including members of the public, emergency services personnel, council staff members, councillors and CEOs.

Section B – The planning process

Section B is a step-by-step guide to planning and developing a MEMPlan. It provides planning hints, prompts, technical and operational information, checklists and case studies.

Executive Overview and Introduction

Emergencies are destructive. We cannot know exactly when they will occur or what their effects will be however, we can be sure that they *will* happen.

Fires, floods, storms, landslides, transport accidents, chemical incidents or explosions, agricultural epidemics and major infrastructure failures are the sort of events that can endanger lives, damage property and infrastructure and disrupt the social functioning of a community.

Human and economic recovery from emergencies is a long-term process. It can take years before life returns to normal and people come to terms with changes in themselves, their families and communities.

Emergency management planning has traditionally focussed on dealing with emergency events and the recovery process. But in recent years the scope of emergency management planning has broadened to include not only the event and its aftermath but also the risks faced by a community on a daily or seasonal basis.

With the increasing recognition of the social impact of emergencies, the focus for emergency management planners is broadening to consider economic, cultural and environmental implications. In addition, emergency management is being viewed in the broad context of community safety.

The role of local government in emergency management

As documented in the *Emergency Management Act 1986* and the *Local Government Act 1989*, councils play a critical role in Victoria's emergency management systems.

Councils have emergency management responsibilities because they are the closest level of government to their communities and have access to specialised local knowledge about the environmental and demographic features of their districts. People also naturally seek help from their local council and emergency management agencies during emergencies and the recovery process.

Emergency management responsibilities of councils include:

General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ pursuing community safety as a corporate objective; ■ promoting a risk based approach to community safety and emergency management; ■ utilising building and planning processes to promote community safety and emergency management objectives and priorities.
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Risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ identifying; ■ analysing; ■ evaluating; ■ treating risks.
Planning and preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ managing residual risk; ■ preparing Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMPlan); ■ ensuring appropriate council resources (including contracted) are available for use in emergencies and are supported by operational and financial systems; ■ conducting testing of MEMPlan and exercise emergency management arrangements.
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ supporting emergency services.
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ supporting the community's recovery from emergencies.

Thinking about emergency risk management

The guidelines provided here are based on a risk management approach to emergency management.

Emergency Management Australia refined the process of risk management detailed in the *Australian/New Zealand Standard Risk Management AS/NZS 4360:2004* to make it relevant to emergency management. These guidelines refer to Volume 1, Part II of the manual series *Emergency Risk Management – Applications Guide* and endorse the document as a crucial part of Municipal Emergency Management Planning.

The emergency risk management approach assumes that even though major emergencies occur infrequently and unpredictably, the risk of emergency is always present.

To maximise safety, communities must decide which risks they are prepared to tolerate, and which ones are unacceptable and require treatment plans. They should adapt their lifestyles and make their choices accordingly.

Communities can promote their own safety in two ways: by eliminating or reducing the possibility of an incident occurring; and strengthening and preparing themselves to reduce the consequences of an emergency.

Reducing the incidence of emergencies

Prevention and mitigation strategies that reduce the likelihood of emergencies are the traditional approach to reducing risks and removing hazards (e.g. constructing an overpass to replace a dangerous road or rail crossing). See Part 2.

Building and encouraging strong communities

Risk management complements the promotion of safety by addressing the vulnerability of those at risk. It requires a shift in emphasis from the *event* to the *ongoing life of the community* living with the risk of emergencies, recognised or not.

Councils and emergency management agencies need to educate communities about the risks they face, encourage them to take additional responsibility for their own safety and in doing so, work in partnership with specialist agencies.

Community safety is not just about preparing effective response and recovery plans, it aims to build strong, healthy and active communities that are aware of, and can cope with, the risks they live with.

The more resilient communities are, and the more prepared and organised councils become, the better they can cope with an emergency situation.

Aside from the social benefits, contributing to community safety makes good business sense. If councils show that their community can reduce emergency risks, they may attract greater tourist and industry investment, ensuring a sustainable local economy and a more prosperous community.

The Municipal Emergency Management Plan

Large emergencies are disruptive and can affect a council's ability to provide services and support to its community. For this reason, councils need to take special measures to anticipate how to handle an emergency situation.

Each council is required by law to prepare a municipal emergency management plan (MEMPlan). Plans should consider each type of emergency situation and develop generic principles and arrangements that can be activated in any event.

A MEMPlan records a municipality's emergency management arrangements and includes:

- key geographic and demographic information about the municipal district;
- the results of emergency risk analyses performed;
- outlines of risk reduction strategies;
- information about public awareness and education campaigns and other actions taken to increase community resilience;
- arrangements for the management of response and recovery activities;
- contact lists of key council staff and other personnel needed during an emergency; and
- information on access to resources owned or controlled by the council, which are available for prevention, response and recovery activities, including the contact details of suppliers.

A MEMPlan should be an integral part of a council's strategic planning framework and complement its corporate plan.

Executive support for emergency management

Total municipal involvement in emergency management requires executive support. These guidelines refer to a possible senior role of Municipal Community Safety Manager (MCSM). The MCSM coordinates the planning process, keeping emergency management activities at the heart of council strategies. The role of the MCSM is specified on page 26 of this document.

The MCSM may become a member of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee, or a multi-focal broad community safety group that identifies risks within the municipal district, and matches specialist risk treatment groups to develop strategies to treat these risks.

Support, endorsement and involvement from senior level in high priority tasks is essential to implement effective risk treatment strategies.

Emergency management in municipal plans and processes

Working with the community throughout the planning process creates municipal plans that minimise duplication and achieve multiple community safety outcomes.

Community safety programs that could benefit from closer integration with emergency management planning include:

- Safer Cities and Shires;
- Local Safety Committees established under Local Priority Policing;
- Municipal Road Safety strategies;
- Municipal Public Health Plans; and
- other community safety/accident prevention programs or plans.

Emergency management targets can be included in the Council Business Plan and the MEMPlan itself. Specific risk analyses, investigations and treatment programs can be established as corporate council objectives.

An outcome driven planning process will identify projects for different areas or departments of council to undertake. Emergency risk treatments may be conducted with other community safety goals. Land-use planning, building codes, major hazard facilities emergency planning (where applicable), health plans and community safety programs can all help improve community safety and welfare.

Planning that is integrated and conducted within a whole-of-council framework will produce stronger outcomes and reduce staff requirements and resources.

Flexibility in municipal planning for emergencies

Each municipal district in Victoria will face different risks and have different resources, communities and management structures. Councils are free to adapt this planning process to their local circumstances and requirements as long as it delivers the specific outcomes required by the legislation.

Guidelines for municipal emergency management planning

These guidelines which are published as Part 6 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria, are issued by the Co-ordinator in Chief of Emergency Management under section 21(5) of the *Emergency Management Act 1986*. The diagram below charts the underlying municipal emergency management planning structure set up by the Act, demonstrating the pivotal role of this guidelines document.

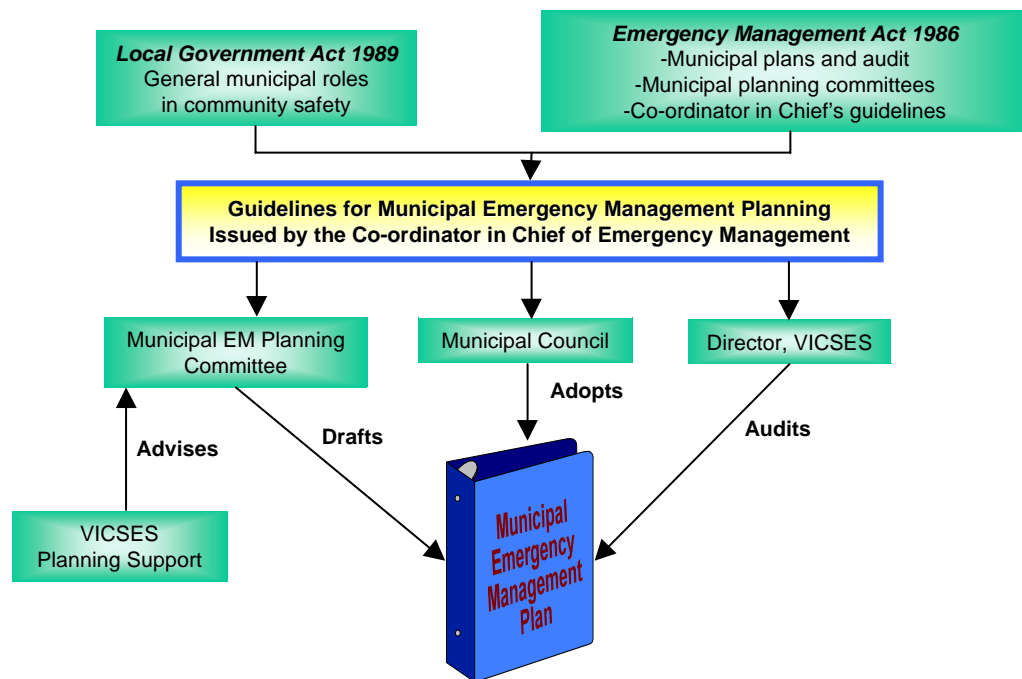


Figure 6.1 Basic Planning Structure

Section A

Background Information

Chapter 1

Emergency Management Planning in the Community Safety Context

This section discusses the following topics:
What is community safety?
What are some contributing factors to community safety?
What is an emergency?
What is emergency management?
What are emergency risks?
Who owns and treats emergency risks?

Community safety is the collaborative effort by community, government and non-government groups to ensure the safety, wellbeing and stability of society.

These efforts are sustained by core values of sustainability, social cohesion, security, cooperation, self-reliance and an improved physical environment.

Under such a regime, safer communities are locally organised and resourced, well informed about local risks, proactive in prevention, risk averse, motivated and able to manage the majority of local issues through effective planning and action.

The community safety spectrum

Activities that contribute to community safety include crime prevention, emergency management, accident prevention and public health programs.

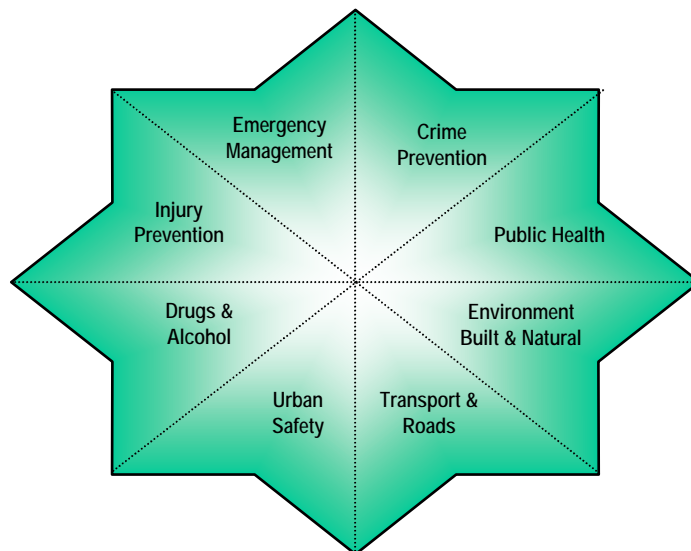


Figure 6.2 The Community Safety Spectrum

Emergency management, as part of community safety, aims to reduce the impact of emergency related events that can cause death, injury, loss of property and community disruption.

Some people and communities are particularly vulnerable to emergencies and must receive special attention when addressing community safety.

What is an emergency?

The *Emergency Management Act 1986* defines “emergency” as:

“...the actual or imminent occurrence of an event which in any way endangers or threatens to endanger the safety or health of any person in Victoria or which destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage, any property in Victoria or in any way endangers or threatens to endanger the environment or an element of the environment in Victoria, including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing –

- *an earthquake, flood, wind storm or other natural event; and*
- *a fire; and*
- *an explosion,*
- *a road accident or any other accident,*
- *a plague or an epidemic,*
- *a warlike act, and*
- *a hi-jack, siege or riot,*
- *a disruption to an essential service (“essential service” means any of the following services: transport, fuel (including gas), light, power, water, sewerage, or a service (whether or not of a type similar to the foregoing) declared to be an essential service by the Governor in Council).”*

The strength of this definition is its generality and breadth. It does not restrict the types of events that can be considered emergencies and suggests that if a community is considering whether or not an event classifies as an emergency, the answer is that it most likely is one.

Emergencies have some or all of the following characteristics. They:

- are disruptive to individuals and communities;
- are not part of day-to-day experience and are outside normal life expectations;
- are unpredictable in occurrence and effects;
- require a response for which normal local resources may be inadequate;
- have a wide range of effects and impacts on the human and physical environment;
- generate complex needs in dealing with them;
- can be of sudden onset;
- are destructive of human, animal and/or plant life, health, property and/or the environment; and
- overwhelm normal prudent protective measures.

Components of emergency management

Prevention:

This means eliminating or reducing the incidence or severity of emergencies and mitigating their effects. This is achieved using a wide range of strategies and actions.

The risk management process outlined in these guidelines addresses the issue of prevention.

Response:

This means responding to emergencies and their effects by using resources effectively and providing immediate rescue and relief services. This can be accomplished if the various control and support agencies coordinate their planning, preparation and response actions.

Recovery:

This means helping people and communities affected by emergencies to achieve a proper and effective level of functioning. This can be achieved when councils and others, using specialist services and resources, support the community as it manages its own recovery.

What is risk?

In recent years, emergency risk management has been widely adopted as a tool in emergency management. It deals specifically with sources of risk (or hazards) that can cause emergencies.

The concept of risk management was developed to address uncertainty in business, finance, industry and human resource management. In this context, risk was understood as the exposure to the possibility of financial loss, physical damage, injury or delay, as a consequence of pursuing, or failing to pursue a course of action.

The concept of risk has two elements:

- the **likelihood** of something happening; and
- its **consequences**.

Emergency risk (i.e. the risk related to the impact of an emergency) is a function of the interaction of hazards, both natural and technological, and the elements at risk: people, their structures and the environment.

Emergency risk management

Emergency risk management is a “systematic process that produces a range of measures that contribute to the wellbeing of communities and the environment”. The philosophy and methods of emergency risk management are a blend of traditional emergency management and the risk management approach, as set out in the *Emergency Risk Management - Applications Guide*.

Risk can be owned, shared, and transferred in a variety of ways. Risk management focuses attention on both the sources of risk (the hazards)

and the elements at risk (the community). In treating risk, some strategies can address the sources of risk, and some the elements at risk.

The advantage of adopting risk management tools and processes in emergency management is that they offer a more rational process for identifying, analysing and treating risks than previously available. They offer options and directions that may not have been evident if a more simplistic prevention approach were used.

Objectives in relation to risk

Once risks are identified and analysed during risk assessment, the council and community must determine how to treat them.

It is generally not possible to eliminate a risk completely. As long as populations or structures are exposed to hazards such as wildfire, flood, storm, and major industrial and chemical facilities, risk will be present. If a risk is extreme, high or even moderate, the objective (where practical) is to reduce that risk to a *tolerable* or *acceptable* level. This level will vary according to the risk tolerance of the particular community.

The flow chart below demonstrates the ways emergency risk management and emergency planning and preparedness can contribute to a safer community.

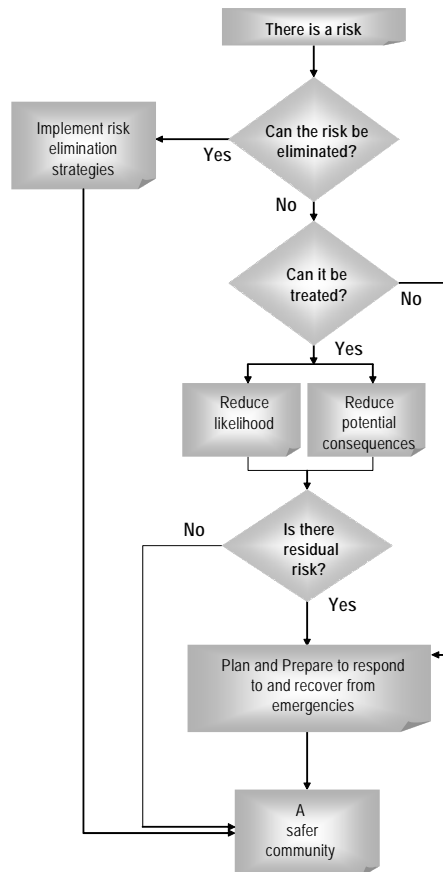


Figure 6.3 Risk Management incorporated into Emergency Management

The Emergency Risk Management Process focuses on the causes of risk, rather than on emergencies that may arise from it. For risks that can be eliminated or neutralised by risk treatments and a residual risk remain, municipal emergency planning must develop generic and specialised arrangements for response and recovery. (At this point these guidelines depart from the *Emergency Risk Management - Applications Guide*.)

Municipal councils and emergency risk management

As the level of government closest to the community, councils can best analyse and assess risk for the areas and communities within their boundaries.

In some types of emergency activity, councils will take the lead role in looking after community needs, and specialist emergency agencies will assume the support role.

This may occur in a situation where dealing with the initial hazard is beyond the control of the Council. The Gas Crisis of September/October 1998 was such an example. The actual event occurred in one municipality but the effects of the disruption of the State's gas supply were felt in municipalities all around Victoria.

In the two weeks after the explosion at Esso's Longford gas storage facility, councils provided significant support in a number of ways to their communities. They provided information directly to community members and passed on information, sourced from DHS, on how to manage domestic life under gas restrictions. Councils also provided some direct services such as communal shower and cooking facilities and interpreter services for ethnic groups. In addition, councils played a co-ordinating role for local support agencies providing service, and assistance to people in need.

With responsibility for many other social programs and community development activities, councils can implement strategies to reduce individual and community vulnerability to emergencies and increase resilience. In general, the vulnerability of people to emergencies is related to their vulnerability to other social problems, such as crime.

As representatives of local communities, councils do not necessarily own all the emergency risk faced by householders, businesses and industry, but they do have safety responsibilities on behalf of their communities. As the managers of relevant resources and information about their communities, they are also the focal point of local emergency planning.

During emergencies, councils support their communities directly and indirectly by providing resources and information to emergency agencies, and providing these services directly to the community.

Addressing all forms of risk during the planning process

Municipal emergency management planning that addresses emergency risks should always be carried out in consideration of other types of risks relevant to community safety.

Many of the strategies taken to reduce the impact of emergencies on the population may also reduce the likelihood of other harmful events on the community. For example, a community resilient to fire hazards, might be better able to deal with the risks of crime, accidents, public health problems or other emergencies.

Programs that increase the resilience of the community in one area will be beneficial other areas. Councils may structure their planning groups to identify such links, ensure synergies in program design and achieve multiple goals.

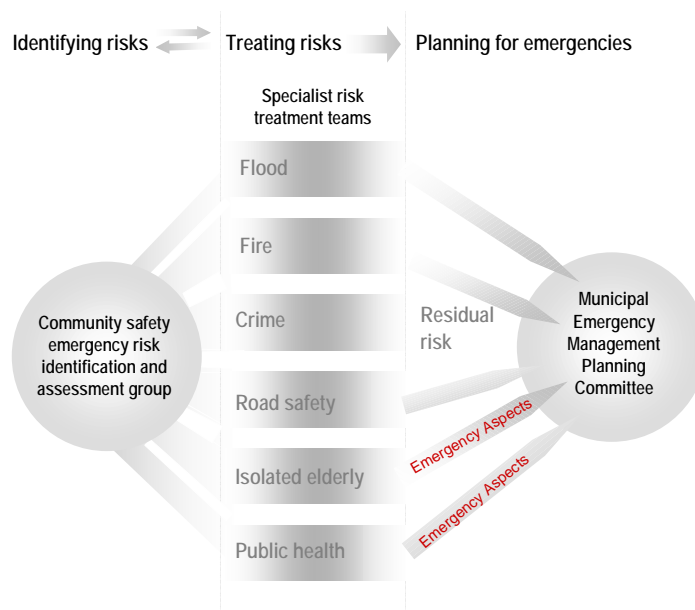


Figure 6.4 A model for integrated municipal community safety planning

This municipal risk management model (Fig. 6.4) identifies the relationship between municipal emergency planning and other elements of community safety planning in an integrated approach to risk management.

Many identified risks have their own appropriate plan or formalised output according to particular legislation or policy framework. For example, strategies developed to deal with identified public health risks would be documented in the *Municipal Public Health Plan* and *Municipal Public Health Emergency Management Plan*. Likewise, strategies to deal with road safety and transport accident risks would be documented in the *Municipal Road Safety Strategy*.

Case study - Murrindindi Shire Council: Safer Murrindindi Safety Plan

The main aim of the Safer Murrindindi approach is to encourage agencies such as the Council, and the Police or Fire Services to share responsibility for community safety with the community itself. The process involves a *whole of council, whole of government, whole of community* approach.

The Steering Group is the engine of the project and draws on representation from government and non government agencies for emergency services, health and community services, parks and environment and local schools. The specialist expertise of this group mean that direction and practical operational strategies are developed and implemented with the assistance of a project officer.

The Senior Management Team is the link between council operations and the regional departments of state government. It has senior regional department staff as members. The SMT provides leadership and authority to the project overall.

Project Coordination is provided by the council's Department of Community Services. Safety is incorporated into all functional areas of the council's corporate plan.

Partnerships have developed between agencies, authorities and organisations in the shire to enable joint planning and sharing of resources.

Consultation occurs in recognition of the fact that each community is unique. The project attempts to address safety issues on a community by community basis as opposed to a blanket approach that does not recognise specific needs. The issues and the solutions identified in the safer Murrindindi Safety Plan have come from the community through targeted focus groups, submissions and surveys.

Chapter 2

Roles of Commonwealth and State Governments in Emergency Management

This chapter discusses the following topics:

What are the Commonwealth government's emergency management responsibilities?

What are the Victorian government's emergency management responsibilities?

What financial assistance and other assistance is provided to councils for emergency management?

Effective emergency management requires a partnership between all levels of government and the community.

Each level of government in Australia is responsible for discharging emergency management roles. Various government departments, emergency service agencies, and statutory authorities have a role in pursuing the objective of creating safer communities.

Commonwealth and state responsibilities

The Commonwealth has no constitutional responsibility for local safety and emergency services, but is responsible for the military defence of Australia and the civil defence of the Australian community during hostilities.

The Commonwealth supports emergency management in the states and territories in a variety of aspects. The type of assistance and the state agencies through which this is channelled are outlined below:

Type of support	Details	State agency
Finance	Emergency Management Australia (EMA) provides funds for Emergency Management development to the States/territories.	Department of Justice
	Emergency Management Australia (EMA) assists States and Territories under Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements after emergencies and disaster according to a funding formula, and provides funding for risk management studies.	Treasury and Finance
	Centrelink assists affected persons with special benefits as appropriate.	Centrelink (direct delivery)
	Department of Finance and Administration provides project funds to eligible bodies under the <i>National Disaster Risk Management Studies Program</i>	Department of Justice (lead)
Operational Resources	Commonwealth assets provided to supplement state resources under specified conditions (see Annex 3 of this document).	Victoria Police

Type of Support	Details	State Agency
Meteorological Advice	Bureau of Meteorology	(direct delivery)
Training	EMA provides training, and national oversight of emergency management competency standards.	VICSES; and Department of Justice
Policy development and publications	EMA publishes the <i>Australian Emergency Manuals</i> , some of which are listed in Appendix 3. It also conducts workshops on current topics.	VICSES; and Department of Justice

State departments and agencies are responsible for providing emergency related services such as policing, social welfare and recovery services, agriculture, education, health and ambulance provision, land use planning policy, building control policy, and emergency management policy.

These services are delivered through regional offices/local branches, brigades/units and councils.

Emergency agencies and State government

Emergency agencies such as police, fire and ambulance services, VICSES, the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) are deeply involved in and committed to emergency management.

They provide specialist resources to help communities assess and treat risk, and when risk treatment strategies prove inadequate, are directly involved in response and recovery activities. However they neither own nor bear responsibility for the risks faced by communities.

Their personnel provide a facilitative, expert resource to communities to help them grapple with their risk exposure, and help them gain a broader perspective through their knowledge, contacts and resources.

State post-emergency financial assistance

The Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) provides financial assistance to councils for specified types of emergency management expenditure, within the policy guidelines of the Commonwealth-State *Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements*. Eligible events are: bushfires, cyclones, earthquakes, floods, storms (including hail) and land slippage caused by any of the above defined natural events.

Emergency protection works

Assistance is available for the full costs of approved emergency protection works undertaken to protect community assets or restore essential public services under municipal control.

The Government accepts as *emergency protection works* those ordered or authorised by the relevant control agency for the emergency.

It accepts as *restoration of essential public services* works that are authorised by the Municipal Engineer or CEO in line with the council's responsibility to:

- reinstate council buildings and equipment (includes temporary bridges);
- clear roadways or public places (includes removing timber which has fallen or is in danger of falling); and
- remove hazards to public health or safety (including work on private land where necessary).

Restoration of Municipal Assets

The Department of Treasury and Finance will meet 75% of approved restoration costs between \$10,000 and \$110, 000 and 100% of costs above \$110,000. Costs will only be recognised for restoration of assets to prior standard, and will not include costs of betterment, even if these are incurred in the replacement of destroyed or damaged assets.

This funding is available for the following restoration works:

Roads and bridges	Replacement of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ bituminous seals; ■ guide posts and other road furniture; and ■ bridges.
Reserves	Replacement of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ boundary and internal fencing; ■ sporting facilities such as tennis courts, football ground fences; and ■ pavilions, toilets, picnic facilities.
Plant and buildings	Replacement of: (or repair of) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ earthmoving plant, vehicles or other equipment. ■ Public buildings destroyed will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Other grants

The *Victorian Grants Commission* can provide special payments if there is a shortfall between the approved restoration costs and the DTF contribution (i.e. the municipal share).

DHS assists councils with funding to employ community development officers to assist with community recovery.

Other emergency grants and sources of financial assistance are available to businesses, primary producers, non-profit organisations, households

and individuals from various agencies. For more information on these arrangements, see Appendix 1 (Part 8).

Conditions for repeated assistance

The State provides financial assistance to councils and catchment management authorities for emergency protection or restoration activities for emergencies reasonably likely to recur, on the condition that: *risk management has been applied to the source of risk which gave rise to the emergency for which a claim has been made.*

Under this condition, the risk management process is assumed to be a structured, iterative and staged process that cycles on a three-year rolling basis (not necessarily integrated with the 3 year MEMPlan audit cycle). As each stage of the cycle is completed, the next begins within a reasonable time – no longer than twelve months.

When a claim is lodged, the council's risk management activities are examined against the process outlined below, on the basis that failure to proceed to any ensuing stage within twelve months may lead to denial of the claim.

Councils are required to consider and pursue a range of risk treatment options. Financial assistance will not necessarily be granted to the most expensive option if it is not financially feasible. Alternative options may need to be investigated.

Process

- Undertake a systematic process of risk identification, analysis and assessment, evaluation and prioritisation (to AS/NZS 4360:2004 standard or equivalent).
- Ensure risk treatment strategies for the particular risks have been, or are being, considered and prioritised, and recommendations made to council.
- Decide which risk treatment strategies is to be implemented in relation to the type of emergency for which a claim has been made.
- Implement risk treatment strategies in relation to the type of emergency for which a claim has been made.

Once a council commits itself to a recommended risk treatment strategy it must implement it within a reasonable time, depending on the nature of the strategy. Failure to do so will make an application for further assistance ineligible if the same type of emergency re-occurs in the area.

Chapter 3

The role of Local Government

This section discusses the following topics:

What are the responsibilities of councils?

What are the legislated requirements?

What positions are required?

Who should be on the MEMPC?

What are the response and recovery requirements?

How are MEMPlans audited?

The roles allocated to local government in the *Emergency Management Act*, and in these Guidelines, were arrived at with close regard to the real concerns and normal functions of local government. Experience indicates that these constitute what the community expect of council during an emergency.

Response and recovery agencies are actively involved during and after an emergency, but councils have a lasting responsibility for the wellbeing of their communities. People see their councils as their link to sources of assistance beyond their locality, and for information and support in managing emergencies.

A community's ability to handle emergencies can be strongly influenced by its council's attitudes, preparedness and involvement in emergency management. Because of their proximity to local needs, councils can deliver on-ground services that other levels of government, due to their size and remoteness, may not be able to deliver.

Responsibilities of local government

Local government is responsible for:

- local implementation of state-wide preventive strategies – planning and building codes, flood planning (in conjunction with Catchment Management Authorities); health planning; and fire prevention planning in conjunction with CFA/MFESB/DSE;
- local risk management and emergency planning;
- management of community participation in planning and service delivery before and after emergencies;
- provision of community education and awareness programs;
- incorporation into local safety programs of risk reduction strategies;
- service delivery to support persons in particular need;
- equipment support to emergency agencies; and
- management/support of community recovery programs, policies and strategies.

Diversity of municipalities

The physical and social diversity of the 78 municipalities in Victoria means each municipality has a unique risk profile. Individual councils develop their own planning structures and strategic solutions to answer their emergency management requirements.

These guidelines promote consistency and standards in the approach Victorian municipalities take to emergency management planning and the way they structure their plans. Councils should prepare unique plans in response to the different risk environments that they face, the different communities for which they are responsible, and their own resource base.

Provision for joint planning – One integrated MEMPlan

The Act provides for two or more councils to carry out their emergency management activities jointly. No external approval is needed for such arrangements as long as each council retains individual responsibility for meeting its legal requirements.

Within totally integrated arrangements, one of the councils must be nominated as the principal municipal council and approval must be obtained from the Coordinator in Chief of Emergency Management. A planning committee will prepare one plan for all of the participant councils that have appointed the principal municipal council.

Joint planning for a shared risk

Where two or more councils face a shared risk, such as location on a floodplain, they may develop a joint plan in order to:

- harness more effectively the resources and expertise of government and private sector participants whose jurisdictions extend across several adjoining municipalities.
- deal more efficiently, and strategically with complex community safety issues that affect two or more municipalities in a region.
- share resources when they are confronted by a similar risk profiles, or by a common hazard such as flooding from the same river system.

The use of contractors

Where activities are contracted out, councils are still responsible for ensuring a continuous year-round emergency capacity is maintained. This involvement should be built in to every relevant contract.

Case study - Melbourne City Council - Enhancing Synergy Workshop

One of the aims of the City of Melbourne's MEMPC is to continually improve the relationship between Council, local emergency response agencies, and service providers (contractors providing resources identified in the MEMPlan). To strengthen the synergy between these players, the City of Melbourne, staged a 2-day Enhancing Synergy workshop facilitated by the Victoria State Emergency Service.

The workshop comprised:

- a tour through the MFESB fire house and smoke tunnels to raise awareness of council officers and service provider's of actual emergency situations;
- a session on the role of municipalities and their service providers in emergency situations;
- an exercise on the operation of a Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre; and
- an opportunity for participants to network and discuss issues in a less formal setting.

Feedback from participants and the emergency services was enthusiastic, so much so that service providers in particular reported a huge leap in their level of understanding of emergency management processes and context. They indicated that the workshop enabled them to respond more effectively to requests for their resources and to develop more meaningful working relationships with municipal counterparts and emergency services personnel.

At the suggestion of workshop participants, the City of Melbourne undertook follow on exercises such as on-ground testing of the response of many service provider resources. This proved a successful means for improving call-out processes and response times.

So that contractors can meet these responsibilities, councils should:

- include response and recovery aspects of emergency management, as appropriate, in tender specifications and contracts;
- ensure contractors and their staff understand their emergency management obligations and operational requirements in emergency situations;
- establish communications links with contractors and their vehicles for use during emergencies;
- take remedial action to assist if contractors lack local knowledge.

Duty of care

In 1998 the High Court of Australia ordered a Victorian council to pay damages to two residents for a fire that occurred in a rented dwelling in that municipal district. The claimants were awarded damages because it was proved that the council had known about the risk of fire and had failed to exercise sufficient responsibility in ensuring the safety of the building and occupants.

Implications of statutory powers

The High Court's decision is significant to all councils. It means that a statutory authority (the council in this instance) owes a duty of care to members of the public in areas for which it is responsible, particularly if

it is aware of the existence of danger, has the means of preventing or averting it, or bringing it to the knowledge of individuals at risk.

If councils fail to identify, analyse, assess and address risks over which they have statutory authority they can be liable for any harm or damage resulting from the risk.

What constitutes duty of care

Factors to be considered when deciding if a statutory authority has a duty of care include:

Where there is significant risk, an authority cannot lawfully refuse to exercise its statutory powers to protect persons or property, unless there is a good reason for doing so.

- whether a statutory authority had knowledge of circumstances that created a risk so that if it were to exercise its statutory power, it could prevent harm from occurring.
- the degree of risk, with the greater degree of risk imposing a greater obligation on the authority to utilise its statutory powers;
- whether the individuals concerned are aware of the danger or are likely to become aware of it. ♣

Legislated requirements of councils

Part 4 of the *Emergency Management Act 1986* requires each municipal council to:

- appoint a Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) to prepare a Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMPlan), in accordance with these guidelines, for the council's consideration;
- prepare and maintain an MEMPlan which must be audited by the Director, Victoria State Emergency Service every 3 years;
- appoint one or more Municipal Emergency Resource Officers (MERO) to coordinate the use of municipal resources for emergency response and recovery; and
- respond to an audit report within three months.

Sections 6, 7 and 8 of the *Local Government Act 1989* empower and require councils to use their resources for emergency management.

The *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* requires councils to appoint a Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO) and any number of assistant MFPOs. It also requires councils to maintain a Municipal Fire Prevention Plan, which must be audited by the CFA every three years.

Emergency management roles are consistent with the purposes, objectives and powers of councils as set out in Part 2 of the Act and fall within the normal business of councils.

♣ Henry, Mark (1999) "The Risks of Caring for a Vulnerable Community Post Pyrenees." Conference Paper, Australian Fire Authorities Council Conference, Melbourne, October 1999, Ref: Pyrenees Shire Council v Day (1998) 151 ALR 147.

Key roles

Many council personnel may be involved in planning and implementing council's emergency management responsibilities. These responsibilities are shared between several key council roles. These key roles do not necessarily reflect council's organisational structure and may not necessarily be designated positions. They may already exist and/or may be known by other names. It is expected that the key roles may be shared with other tasks and are not necessarily full time roles. It is also possible that one person may be responsible for more than one role. What is important is that the *responsibilities* of these positions are allocated and relationships established.

In these Guidelines, two levels of emergency management responsibilities within councils have been proposed; the management aspect and the functional aspect. While councils are required to appoint certain functional positions, such as the MERO and MRM, to ensure an adequate level of emergency management operations, two additional managerial roles are suggested as a way to assist councils in the managing and coordination of emergency management in the broader context of community safety.

The *Municipal Community Safety Manager* (MCSM) and the *Municipal Emergency Manager* (MEM) are the two new roles. The MCSM is a senior role whose responsibilities span a broad range of community safety issues, including emergency management. The MEM is also a senior role that is concerned with council's emergency management responsibilities covering emergency risk management and operational emergency response and recovery.

These roles and positions are illustrated in *Figure 6.5* below.

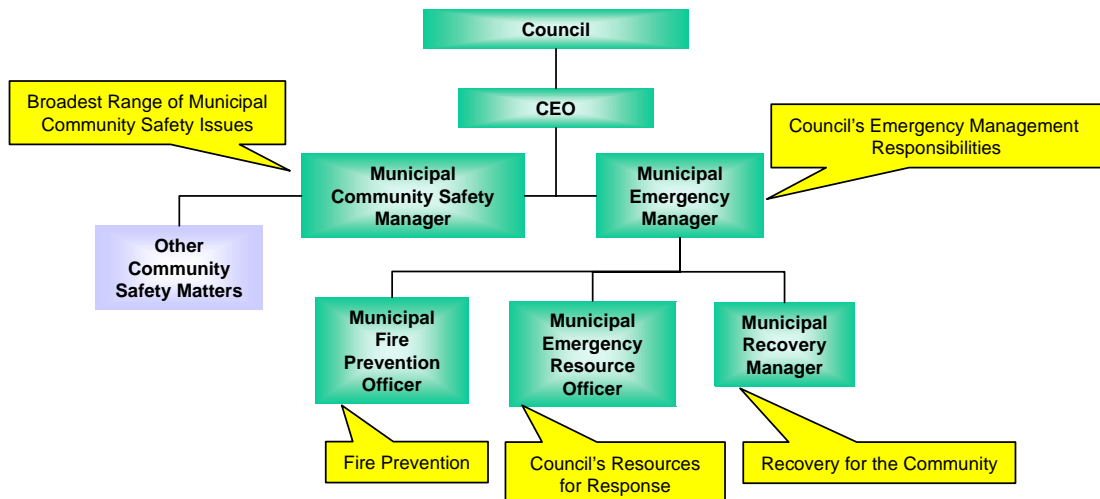


Figure 6.5 Organisational structure of key roles.

Responsibilities of key council roles

The suggested responsibilities for each of these key roles is provided below:

Municipal Community Safety Manager

This is a senior position whose interests span the broader range of community safety issues.

The functions of the position would include:

- chair the Broad Risk Identification Group;
- coordinate a range of risk reduction activities to ensure maximum efficiency and synergy is obtained;
- liaise with the community on all safety matters and support staff and groups designated to deal with specific risks;
- track the progress of risk treatment programs.

Municipal Emergency Manager

The *Municipal Emergency Manager* is a senior officer, responsible to the Chief Executive or MCSM for the effective management of the council's emergency management activities.

The suggested role of the *Municipal Emergency Manager* is to:

- chair the MEMPC;
- ensure the MEMPlan is effective and current;
- ensure that municipal resources are utilised effectively in a community emergency, for response and recovery activities;
- coordinate the emergency management activities of, and liaise closely with the MERO, MRM and MFPO;
- ensure that an MECC can be activated at short notice in event of an emergency;
- arrange meetings of the MEMPC or the Emergency Management Group as appropriate during an emergency;
- maintain effective liaison with all regional, state or Commonwealth emergency related agencies servicing the municipality;
- ensure that an effective contact base is maintained so that municipal resources can be accessed on a 24-hour basis;
- ensure that contractual arrangements with contractors to provide response or recovery support during an emergency are agreed to and documented in advance of such events;
- ensure that appropriate operating procedures and processes are developed, documented and tested by those required to use them during an emergency, and that suitable training takes place;
- ensure that appropriate procedures, processes and systems are in place to record and monitor any council expenditure specifically applicable to an emergency;

- ensure that applications for expenditures eligible for assistance from State sources are submitted to appropriate agencies;
- ensure that debriefing sessions are held for any response and recovery operation after an emergency to examine effectiveness of the MEMPlan, and upgrade it as necessary;
- keep the council and Chief Executive informed on emergency management activities, including the presentation of an annual report on activities that includes expenditure incurred by the council during the previous 12 months.

Municipal Emergency Resource Officer

The *Emergency Management Act 1986* requires each council to appoint a *Municipal Emergency Resource Officer/s* (MERO).

The MERO's response roles are to:

- coordinate municipal resources in emergency response;
- provide council resources when requested by emergency services or police during response activities;
- maintain effective liaison with emergency agencies within or servicing the municipal district;
- maintain an effective contact base so municipal resources can be accessed on a twenty-four hour basis;
- keep the municipal emergency coordination centre(s) prepared to ensure prompt activation if needed;
- liaise with the MEM and the *Municipal Recovery Manager* on the best use of municipal resources;
- organise a response debrief if requested by the Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator (MERC), an appointee of Victoria Police;
- ensure procedures and systems are in place to monitor and record expenditure by the council in relation to emergencies; and
- perform other duties as determined.

Case study - Liaise with the other MEROs in your area.

The MERO Issues and references group was established as a sub-committee of the Region One Emergency Response Planning Committee from 1997-2000. The group was initiated as a pilot study and operated under a Charter and included personnel of Melbourne, Yarra, Port Phillip, Stonnington, Glen Eira, Bayside, Kingston and Docklands councils.

The chairperson was one of the MEROs and reported to the Police Emergency Response Coordinator.

The group provided an opportunity:

- For MEROs within a Police region to share emergency management ideas.
- For networks to be established.
- To have a formal and informal direct linkage to the Police Emergency Response Coordinator through the chairperson.
- To utilise the group for the efficient and effective transfer of emergency management training.
- To establish formal and informal mutual aid.
- To share resources.
- To bring together people with similar objectives in emergency management thereby reinforcing the benefits of communication, co-operation and co-ordination.
- Create a forum where from time to time MEROs from other areas can be invited to address common issues.

The group was very well received by its members and was considered a successful initiative.

Municipal Recovery Manager

The second role under the general title of municipal emergency resource officer/s is that of the *Municipal Recovery Manager* (MRM).

The MRM should be a senior responsibility, as the recovery process can involve many aspects of council's activities over a considerable period. If the MERO is also appointed as the MRM, special planning is needed to minimise a clash of priorities in the early stages of dealing with major emergencies, as response and recovery activities will be operating in parallel.

The role of the *Municipal Recovery Manager* is to:

- coordinate municipal and community resources for recovery;
- assist with collating and evaluate information gathered in the post-impact assessment;
- establish priorities for the restoration of community services and needs;
- liaise with the MEM and MERO on the best use of municipal resources;
- establish an information and coordination centre at the municipal offices or a location more appropriate to the affected area;
- liaise, consult and negotiate with recovery agencies and council on behalf of the affected area and community recovery committees;
- liaise with the regional recovery committee and Department of Human Services;
- undertake other specific recovery activities as determined.

Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO)

The *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* and the *Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958* require each municipal council to appoint a fire prevention officer (generally known as a Municipal Fire Prevention Officer) and any number of assistant fire prevention officers.

The role of the MFPO is to:

- manage the Municipal Fire Prevention Committee (MFPC) (if formed under the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*) as chairperson and executive officer;
- undertake and regularly review council's fire prevention planning and plans (together with the MFPC, if one exists);
- liaise with fire services, brigades, other authorities and councils regarding fire prevention planning and implementation;
- advise and assist the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee on fire prevention and related matters;
- ensure the MEMPlan contains reference to the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan;
- report to council on fire prevention and related matters;
- carry out statutory tasks related to fire prevention notices and infringement notices;
- investigate and act on complaints regarding potential fire hazards;
- advise, assist and make recommendations to the general public on fire prevention and related matters;
- issue permits to burn (under s.38 of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*); and
- facilitate community fire safety education programs and support Community Fireguard groups in fire-prone areas.

Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)

Under Sections 21(3) and (4) of the *Emergency Management Act* each council is required to appoint a Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) to formulate a draft plan for the council's consideration.

Role of the MEMPC

It is *not* the MEMPC's role to manage emergencies. This is the responsibility of the agencies and personnel identified under the response and recovery arrangements.

The MEMPC is required to prepare the MEMPlan, which documents response and recovery operational arrangements, and to ensure all the subjects listed in the plan outline are investigated and adequately provided for.

The ongoing role of the committee is to review and amend the operational components of the plan

Composition of the MEMPC

Section 21(3) recommends that council appoint to the MEMPC representatives of:

- the municipal council (members and employees);
- response agencies;
- recovery agencies; and
- local community groups involved in emergency management issues.

The suggested members of the committee are:

- Municipal Community Safety Manager/Municipal Emergency Manager or Councillor as chairperson;
- Municipal Emergency Resource Officer;
- Municipal Recovery Manager;
- Municipal Fire Prevention Officer;
- Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator (Victoria Police);
- local emergency service representatives;
- local recovery agency representatives;
- local representatives of other relevant agencies (eg. Catchment Management Authority, Department of Natural Resources and Environment)
- local medical representatives;
- interested community groups;
- executive officer to committee (council officer);
- local media representatives and others as required.

Specialist sub-committees

Planning hint:

Social service agencies and volunteer organisations that could be included in specialist recovery subcommittees are:

- Service clubs
- Red Cross
- St John Ambulance
- Community Volunteer groups

It may be appropriate to form one or more specialist sub-committees of the MEMPC on subjects of major significance to the municipal district, such as specific risks and related issues.

This does not mean excluding other individuals or relevant groups from membership. The complexity and resources of the municipal district should influence its size.

Frequency of meetings

Once a plan is prepared, the planning committee should meet at least twice a year, and each time an organisational change or emergency occurs. Most councils find, however, that the process of maintaining the plan is improved if the committee meets quarterly.

Emergency Management Group

To manage the council's planned roles during emergencies, it is common practice to utilise a core group of municipal emergency management staff (as a sub-group of the MEMPC).

The role of this group, known as the *Emergency Management Group*, is more *operational* than planning in nature. It convenes when the scale of an emergency calls for a significant effort in organising and managing municipal functions or resources detailed in the plan.

Membership will vary according to need but it could consist of:

- Municipal Community Safety Manager (if applicable);
- Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO);
- Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM);
- liaison officers of response and recovery agencies and contractors;
- specific functional representatives; and
- others co-opted as required.

Plans should be made for alerting members of the group. Members should designate and train deputies who can attend in their absence and provide relief when necessary.

Operational role statement for municipal councils

The operational role statement identifies the resources or services councils should provide within Victoria's emergency management arrangements, and sets out key operational management requirements.

The council is responsible for managing and coordinating municipal resources for responding to, and recovering from emergencies. *Municipal resources* include those owned by the council and those under its control if sourced from other agencies. Local and regional planning ensures that agencies' expectations of council services are based on a realistic assessment of council capability.

Councils may obtain part or all of these services or resources from outside contractors. In such cases, the council is responsible for providing the agreed resources on time, and paying the costs incurred.

Response

Preparing for response activities

Councils can prepare for their response activities by:

- organising local resource provision through MEROs;
- identifying specialist personnel (e.g. building surveyor, environmental health officer);
- maintaining and providing specialist information and maps, including:
 - drainage
 - underground services

- flood/inundation
- wildfire-prone areas;
- coordinating community support and catering functions;
- providing information about individuals or groups with special needs (location, targeted protection/evacuation strategies);
- providing community awareness, information services and warning systems;
- developing Standard Operating Procedures for the most probable activities; and
- developing plans for probable events.

Response activities

A council's response activities include:

- **Establishing and operating centres and facilities** such as:
 - a municipal emergency coordination centre (MECC) (see Annex 1);
 - emergency relief centres; and
 - emergency services staging areas.
- **Providing and coordinating emergency catering:**
 - in conjunction with Red Cross and other providers;
 - for response agency personnel; and
 - for affected members of the community.
- **Facilitating the provision of information:**
 - as warnings to the community in consultation with other agencies; and
 - as information to public and media in consultation with control agencies.
- **Coordinating and ensuring effective transport** in the area by:
 - providing transport for those at risk;
 - clearing impassable roads, including removing trees;
 - unblocking drains; and
 - assisting with resources to partially or completely close roads and determining alternative routes.
- **Providing and coordinating equipment** for response support such as:
 - equipment for traffic or crowd diversion (e.g. barricades, traffic signs);
 - material to absorb spilt fluids;
 - levee or damming materials; and
 - heavy equipment for tasks such as: earth moving; clearing large material or debris; transporting large or heavy materials, water or personnel; lifting materials or personnel; and pumping water.

Recovery

Recovery management

Case study

South Western Victorian recovery - Memorandum of understanding

An unwritten understanding has existed since the late 1990s between the recovery managers of the South West Municipalities including Corangamite, Glenelg, Moyne, Southern Grampians, and Warrnambool City.

Formalised as a Memorandum of Understanding and signed by the Chief Executive Officers of each Municipality, the document provides for mutual assistance during any protracted recovery operation following a major emergency. The councils agreed to provide personnel to an affected council with recovery managers, environment health officers, engineers or any other specialist staff.

Though not a legally binding document, the MOU contains information on the deployment of personnel, general terms governing the provision of loaned employees, expenses and wages, workers compensation, occupational health and safety and negligence of loaned employees.

The MOU has fostered a better working relationship in the region. In particular, it has encouraged a level of networking between Recovery Managers that may not otherwise exist given that they do not work in the same professional areas.

The content of the document is not as important as the links it creates.

Recovery activities should begin as soon as possible after an emergency begins.

Waiting for response activities to scale down or stop before starting recovery activities can make problems worse.

For a significant emergency, representatives of recovery agencies should be included in the municipal emergency management group. The group will probably have an ongoing management role if the recovery process is protracted or a wide range of recovery activities is involved.

Councils can prepare for recovery roles by:

- planning, resourcing, testing and exercising for recovery; and
- ensuring recovery arrangements are in place as set out in Part 4 The State Emergency Recovery Plan of the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria*.

Councils can also:

- use post-impact reviews to set priorities for reconstruction and restoration strategies.
- increase staff numbers through short-term employment of community development officers and other essential personnel; and
- implement pre-planning enhanced prevention strategies as part of a recovery process, such as changes in land usage.

Recovery activities

Activities required at a local level may include, and should be documented in the MEMP:

Coordinating and managing:

- municipal resources through the Municipal Recovery Manager;
- the provision of material needs to affected persons;
- environmental health such as food, water, sanitation, and vector control;
- volunteer helpers; and
- public appeals.

Providing:

- community development services;
- personal support services (e.g. counselling, advocacy); and
- emergency and/or temporary accommodation.

Gathering and processing information:

- for post-impact assessments; through survey and determination of occupancy of damaged buildings; and by monitoring the progress of recovery.

Providing information and advice:

- through provision and staffing of recovery/information centre(s); information services to the affected community such as public meetings, newsletters, and advertising; and to recovery agencies and the State Government.

Organising clean-up and repair activities:

- removing debris, clearing blocks (hazard removal); removing public health hazards such as dead animals from waterways;
- disposing of dead, maimed or diseased animals (domestic [including livestock], native and feral);
- repairing/restoring infrastructure such as roads, bridges, sporting facilities, and public amenities;
- supervising and inspecting rebuilding and redevelopment; and
- providing heavy equipment for earth moving; clearing large material or debris; transporting large and/or heavy materials, water or personnel; and lifting materials or personnel.

Sponsorship and advocacy:

- of community recovery committees;
- of the interests of the affected community.

Councils will need to identify and negotiate with local agencies that are able to provide these services. Some services may be internally provided, others may be local agencies, State or Australian government agencies. Agencies are responsible for funding the provision of these services themselves, as these services are existing services that they already provide to the community.

Community Recovery Committee

If the effects of an emergency are widespread or serious, community input into the recovery process should be organised by setting up *Community Recovery Committees* for the affected areas.

The membership of Community Recovery Committees will depend on the needs of the affected areas.

Members should include:

- the Municipal Recovery Manager;
- community development personnel;
- councillors;
- community groups;
- affected persons;

- government agencies; and
- non-government agencies.

Functions of the Community Recovery Committee

Community recovery committees help individuals and communities achieve an effective level of functioning.

They can coordinate information, resources and services in support of an affected community, establish priorities and provide information and advice to the affected community and recovery agencies.

The role of the community recovery committee is to:

- *monitor* the progress of the recovery process in the community;
- *identify* community needs and resource requirements and make recommendations to recovery agencies, council and the recovery managers;
- *liaise, consult and negotiate* on behalf of the community with recovery agencies, government departments and the council;
- *liaise* with the Department of Human Services as the recovery coordination agency through the designated regional director or delegate; and
- *undertake* specific recovery activities as required.

Audit requirements

When completing the writing and compiling your MEMPlan, use the checklists provided in Annex 2.

Under the *Emergency Management Acts, 21* each council must prepare its MEMPlan in compliance with these guidelines and submit the plan for audit. The municipal emergency management planning committee is responsible for ensuring the plan complies with the guidelines.

The Act requires that municipal emergency management plans are audited every three years (s. 21A) by the Director of the Victoria State Emergency Service. The Director may delegate the audit responsibility to another person and councils may schedule audits at convenient dates.

The Act also requires that the auditor obtain comments on each municipal plan from the Divisional Emergency Response Planning Committee and the Regional Recovery Committee.

Councils that use the planning support services of the Victoria State Emergency Service will have access to a facilitation process designed to produce a plan that fulfils the requirements of these guidelines.

Purpose of the audit

The audit process is designed to stimulate quality municipal emergency management planning in a positive, non-punitive way. It advises and supports councils in their efforts to serve their communities.

Audit report

Each audit report will indicate whether the plan:

- complies fully or more than adequately with the guidelines;

- complies adequately with the guidelines, but the plan or planning process needs improvement; or
- the plan falls short of the guidelines standards, and outlines areas that should be addressed in order for council to meet its statutory obligations.

To help you prepare your MEMPlan, a checklist is included in Annex 2 which lists the audit requirements.

Response to audit

Under section 21A(3), each municipal council must respond in writing to an audit report within three months of receiving it. If the audit is qualified, councils should indicate in their response how they intend to remedy any deficiencies.

Section B

The Planning Process

Introduction

Section B outlines the emergency risk management planning process and explains how to compile the Municipal Emergency Management Plan.

It provides:

- the context for incorporating municipal emergency risk management planning into a wider community safety framework in order to more efficiently address a wide range of risks faced by the community; and
- guidance for recording operational arrangements to deal with emergencies arising from the residual risks.

The Municipal Emergency Management Plan

The purpose of preparing an MEMPlan is not to produce an impressive looking document but to record the outcomes of a productive and comprehensive planning process.

Activities such as workshopping the types of risk your municipal district faces, developing and implementing strategies to treat risks, and creating contingency plans are the essential elements of the process.

One of the first tasks in preparing a key document is to understand the requirements of the users of the document. There are three main groups of users of the plan:

- those who have an involvement in the planning process;
- those who will have to apply the plan or some part of it; and
- the community for, and with whom, the plan has been developed.

Users need a plan that:

- provides a general overview;
- explains the relationships between parts of the plan; and
- permits comprehensive and informative reference.

The format and structure of the MEMPlan is reasonably flexible and diverse. As long as the plan meets the identified needs of the users, fulfils its legal and operational requirements, there is no prescribed format. However, a suggested plan of contents has been included in Step 3b to assist councils.

Stages involved in developing a MEMPlan

This section outlines the stages to undertake emergency risk management and to produce an MEMPlan.

The elements of the planning process are:

Step 1	Establish the planning framework and objectives.
Step 2	Identify tasks and match groups.
Step 3a	Undertake research: Identify, analyse, evaluate and prioritise risks. Develop strategies to treat high priority risks.
Step 3b	Acknowledge residual risks. Plan and prepare for response and recovery operations.
Step 4	Evaluate the plan: Exhibit it for comment, testing and implementation.

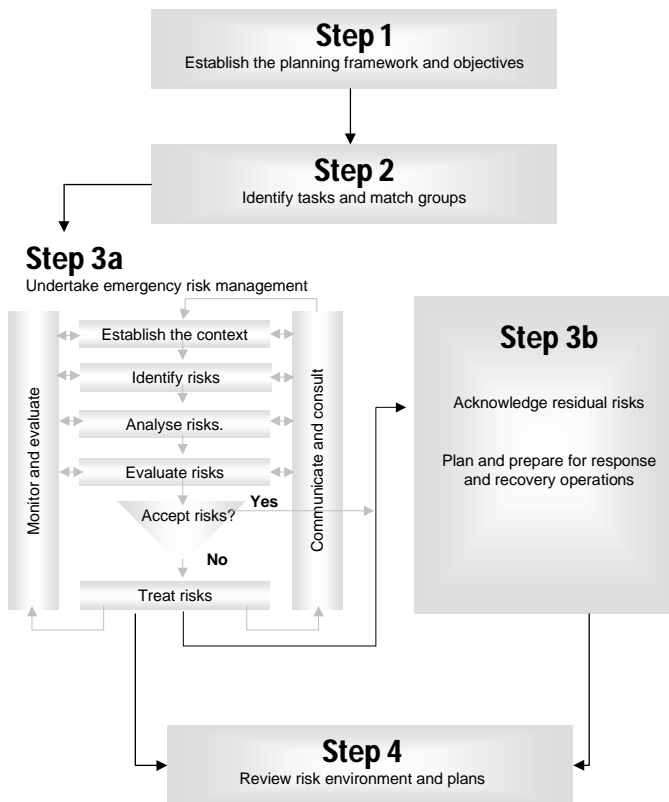


Figure 6.6 A Suggested Municipal Emergency Management Planning Process

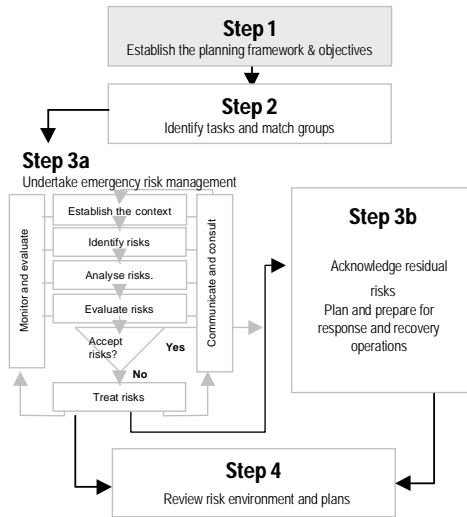
Figure 6.6 outlines a model for municipal emergency management planning. It describes a process which can be followed to undertake Emergency Risk Management (ERM) and the preparation of a MEMPlan.

The major research phase, Step 3a, is that set out in the *Emergency Risk Management - Applications Guide* published by Emergency Management Australia.

Figure 6.6 puts the ERM process into the context of Victorian municipal emergency management planning. It encourages councils to link a range of community safety and related programs or planning processes with emergency management. The model is also suitable as a generic community safety planning process.

Because Victorian councils have been planning for emergency management in an organised fashion for many years they may not need to begin this process from the very beginning. However, they should review existing MEMPlans and council planning structures against the process outlined here and rework them as necessary.

Step 1 –Establish Planning Framework and Objectives



Step 1 involves the following tasks:

- conduct initial overview;
- identify key stakeholders; and
- establish goals and objectives.

Conduct initial overview

The first task is for a senior management team in council to clarify the context in which your specific emergency management planning will be carried out. At the same time you should identify other appropriate programs, policies and personnel within the council associated with community safety objectives.

Consider the following factors when describing the context:

- applicable legislation and policy;
- applicable management arrangements and programs;
- stakeholders;
- political and economic circumstances; and
- social and cultural issues.

Link emergency with other community safety objectives

It is important that the Municipal Emergency Management Plan not conflict with council's other objectives but complement and support them.

Opportunities exist for synergy between different programs, especially where risk reduction strategies can achieve multiple community safety goals.

Before beginning the planning process, make sure you identify other council programs and planning processes with similar community safety objectives, whether primary or secondary.

List the plans that will provide opportunities for linked programs and joint outcomes with municipal emergency management, and the people within council responsible for the plans.

Ensure these people are aware of activity of the emergency management planners and make sure they keep in touch, share information, share objectives and discuss possible mutual outcomes of a more integrated approach.

Analyse the range of municipal functions

In order to assess their relevance to emergency management issues, you should analyse a range of normal municipal functions such as:

- general public services;
- health, education and welfare services;
- planning and land use (including issuing of permits e.g. planning, building, occupancy);
- property services such as water, drainage, gas, electricity;
- municipal road safety strategies; and
- environmental control, protection and conservation.

Councils should take into consideration the emergency risk implications of new projects such as major industrial or commercial facilities, airports, major roads, or dams that may (or will inevitably) introduce hazards into the area.

Planning hint

The Occupational Health and Safety (Major Hazards Facilities) Regulations 2000 require major hazards facilities to prepare an emergency plan in conjunction with the emergency services who have responsibility for the area in which the major hazard facility is located and; in relation to the off-site consequences of a major incident occurring, the municipal council or councils within the area occupied by the local community.

A major hazard facility is a site that stores, handles or processes large quantities of dangerous chemicals or products. Typically, they include refineries, chemical and gas processing plants, LPG storage and distribution sites, and even certain types of large warehouses.

Consider legislative responsibilities

At this stage councils should review local laws, other plans, mutual aid agreements and other guidance documents that may affect or contribute to emergency management obligations.

The council should identify the existing systems it has in place to discharge its legislative responsibilities for prevention activities such as building regulations, health regulations, and fire prevention regulations.

The applicable legislation in this field covers:

- municipal fire prevention planning;
- building codes and planning requirements;
- major hazard facilities;
- municipal public health planning;
- environmental; and

- other appropriate subjects.

These guidelines encourage councils to:

- integrate emergency management with other core municipal functions;
- avoid duplicating risk management planning tasks; and
- utilise the same processes to achieve outcomes with related purposes, i.e., to improve the safety and wellbeing of the community.

Identify key stakeholders

The consultative planning process enables councils to draw on the expertise of, and develop partnerships with, adjoining municipalities, key stakeholders, local emergency services, relevant government agencies, and appropriate business representatives.

Identify the stakeholders, namely:

- those who have an involvement in the planning process;
- those who will have to apply the plan or some part of it; and
- the community for whose benefit the plan is developed.

Organisational stakeholders could be:

- councillors;
- municipal staff;
- local representatives of emergency management agencies;[↔] and
- contractors for municipal resources.

Public stakeholders could be:

- residents of the municipality;
- representatives of home owners or neighbourhood organisations;
- business owners and managers;
- managers of major industrial and/or critical facilities such as airports, power stations, public utilities, hospitals, and schools;
- farmers and land owners;
- land developers, real estate agents and others who affect the future development of the community;
- major and smaller industries and government bodies; and
- media representatives.

This planning process utilises a number of different groups to undertake specific tasks. The groups range from senior level management and coordinators, and broad-based risk brainstorming and research groups, to technically specialised risk treatment teams.

[↔] Refer to Part 7 of the Manual for a listing of potential agencies.

The functions of such groups are to:

- identify and state the desired outputs, outcomes and performance measures;
- identify and analyse the safety needs of the community through ongoing assessment and community consultation; and
- develop policies and strategies that will include local partnerships and community involvement to address these needs.

Step 2 of the planning process outlines the roles and membership of these groups in detail.

Establish goals and objectives

In strategic planning, a number of tools are used to provide a framework for focussing the direction of an organisation and putting in place a strategy to set and achieve goals.

Councils plan strategically at many levels, including the corporate, policy and service delivery level. They will already have in place processes to articulate their business goals and objectives.

Goals, objectives and strategies can be discussed or determined by a senior management team within the council with broader involvement. The Municipal Community Safety Manager could coordinate the team.

The following example may assist councils in their community safety and emergency management strategic planning.

A planning process can include the development of the various elements described below.

Vision statement

A vision statement describes the desired long term goal. A suitable vision statement for this context could be:

- “A Safer Community”

Mission statement

A mission statement describes the reason for the existence of a group, or its prime purpose. An appropriate mission statement for municipal emergency management, could be:

- “The promotion of community safety policies and strategies”; or
- “Ensuring that emergency management makes a significant contribution to community safety in our shire/city”.

Goals

Goals describe the outcome that the group seeks to achieve, for either itself or for others, for example:

- better understanding of the community and the environment;
- reduction of risks in the municipal district;
- improved community resilience and self-reliance;
- more productive partnerships between community safety stakeholders;

- better integration of various community safety and well-being programs;
- alleviation of the consequences of emergency events on the community.

Objectives

Objectives identify actions that directly contribute to the achievement of the identified goals, such as:

- identify and treat potential risks to the community and the environment;
- develop and administer programs that reduce the community's vulnerability and increase its capacity for resilience and self-reliance;
- link more closely emergency management and other community safety programs and promote synergies;
- contribute to the management of emergency events;
- prepare a Municipal Emergency Management Plan.

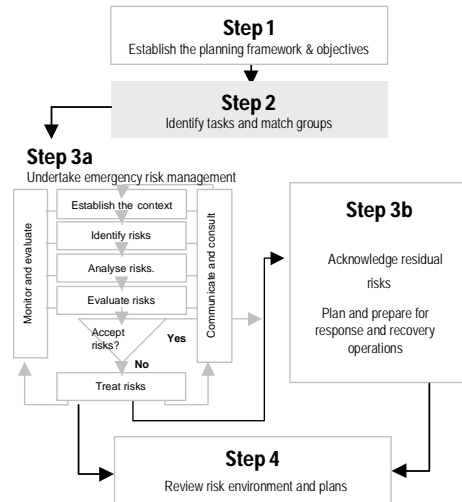
Strategies

Strategies are the means for achieving objectives.

For instance, by:

- undertaking the risk analysis and treatment processes;
- developing a resilience and vulnerability profile;
- conducting the Municipal Emergency Management Planning process;
- developing ideas for involving the community in this process;
- identifying municipal resources to be used in emergency response and recovery.

Step 2 – Identify Tasks and Match Groups



Step 2 involves the following tasks:

- identify tasks;
- select the participants;
- involve other groups, bodies and organisations;
- facilitate the process; and
- include the community.

Identify tasks and select participants

Step 1 enabled the senior management team to gain a comprehensive overview of the context in which they will undertake the planning process (where they are). They also prepared a statement of what they wish to achieve in their planning (where they want to go).

It is useful to refine these strategies still further into set tasks and to select appropriate people for each job.

The table below identifies the tasks involved in undertaking emergency risk management and preparing the MEMPlan. It also suggests groups that would be suitable to manage the tasks.

Task	Participants
Identify and Assess risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ initiate communication, consultation and participation; ■ develop risk evaluation criteria; ■ identify and describe hazards, community and environment; ■ scope vulnerability; ■ describe risks; ■ analyse risks – determine likelihood and consequence; ■ evaluate risks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Council senior management team; and/or ■ Municipal Community Safety Manager; and ■ Broad Risk Identification Group; /or ■ Local Safety Committee

Task	Participants
<p>Treat risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ obtain specialist advice; ■ identify options; ■ evaluate options; ■ seek key stakeholder input; ■ select options; ■ plan and implement risk treatments. 	<p>Specialist Risk Treatment Teams (indicative only):</p> <p>Fire Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Municipal Fire Prevention Committee <p>Flood Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Catchment Management Authority ■ VICSES ■ Water Authority ■ Private dam operators ■ VicPol <p>Public Health Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Council’s Social Development or Community Health Department ■ Environmental health officer ■ Local/regional DHS personnel ■ Local health providers <p>Road Safety Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Community Road Safety Council ■ Other appropriate or interested parties
<p>Prepare MEMPlan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Record outcomes of the above processes and identify location of detailed risk treatment plans and reference documents. ■ Plan for emergencies arising from residual risks. ■ Identify tasks of key stakeholders in emergencies and formalise relationships with auxiliary and volunteer groups. ■ Document management arrangements for response and recovery. ■ Prepare and update resource and contact directories. 	<p>Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee</p>

Refer to role statements

Outlined below are the role statements of the major groups in the suggested model for integrated municipal emergency management planning.

Broad Risk Identification Group

A new group, possibly chaired by the proposed MCSM, can be formed specifically for the role of identifying a broad range of risks. An existing committee (e.g. the Local Safety Committee, chaired by Police) may undertake all or some of the tasks.

Suggested members include council personnel, relevant agencies, and representatives from the general public.

The group serves to:

- systematically identify all safety risks facing the municipal district;
- perform analysis and evaluation tasks in conjunction with specialist risk treatment groups;
- prioritise risks according to council/community objectives;
- allocate tasks to specialised risk treatment groups; and
- review and coordinate risk treatment groups and strategies.

Specialist Risk Treatment Groups

Suggested members include technical and operational experts from the appropriate fields.

The functions of the groups are to:

- provide specialist advice to the Broad Risk Identification Group;
- devise mitigation, prevention and risk treatment plans.

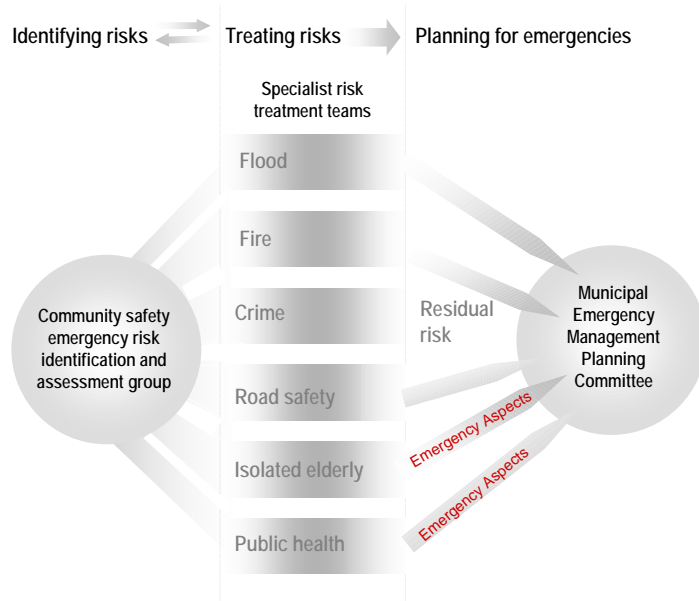


Figure 6.4(repeated) A model for integrated municipal community safety planning

Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee

The committee serves to:

- assist in analysing and evaluating emergency related risks;
- help produce risk treatment strategies; and
- prepare response and recovery plans for the municipality.

Involve other groups, bodies and organisations

The next step is to choose suitable members for each group. It is worth considering people with expertise and knowledge of specific emergency risks and emergency management processes such as representatives from the emergency services and State departments.

Councils will also receive full cooperation and support, as needed, from other government agencies and emergency services. The expertise and knowledge from these agencies and departments can help councils undertake risk assessments and vulnerability studies.

Membership of a particular planning group will encourage and formalise links with emergency services and other agencies. While such expertise and advice is invaluable, it is even more important that close working relationships are established between emergency services and council staff. If an emergency occurs a long history of working together will ensure smooth response and recovery.

Specialist areas of the MEMPlan

While the operational aspects of the MEMPlan are being developed, support will be required from people within the community, or from specialist agencies in order to develop specific functional or ancillary areas.

Specialist areas might include:

- emergency relief;
- medical services;
- health services;
- communications;
- community resources;
- transport;
- engineering and technical resources; and
- public education and information.

Facilitate the process

Councils should take advantage of the expert support and guidance in the planning process provided, at no charge, by the Victoria State Emergency Service.

VICSES personnel can facilitate the Emergency Risk Management process and can help councils hold information seminars for staff relating to emergency management arrangements and the MEMPlan.

Include the community

Planning hint:

Try involving key stakeholders in sub-committees. Making sure that the media is properly informed, and sympathetic to the council's roles is a bonus in emergencies and helps avoid misinformation and sensationalism. Include representatives from major industries such as fishing, timber and forestry sectors. As key stakeholders, they have to deal with emergencies like algal blooms, droughts, floods, oil spills and bushfires and can bring this experience to the group.

Educating, sharing information, training and encouraging preparedness can assist the community as well as the council.

Some councils have found that during and after emergencies, the demand for information is better handled if council administrative staff, and other staff are aware of basic emergency management arrangements and processes. The City of Moreland has prepared for this by holding a series of staff information sessions to

publicise the municipal emergency management arrangements and the broad features of the MEMPlan.

The community should be consulted because it can:

- bear the risk of loss from emergencies and therefore has the right to be informed about them in order to participate in the relevant decisions;
- provide local knowledge of risks and emergencies;
- raise concerns not recognised by experts;
- help design programs and plans that best suit local needs;
- share the workload; and
- develop a sense of ownership of the plan and be more inclined to participate in implementing it.

Implement a process for community consultation

By recognising that it is communities that own emergency risk, the practice of councils and emergency services “planning for” or “doing to” communities is no longer identified as best practice.

To help the community reduce risks and take some responsibility for its own safety, the planning process needs to incorporate community consultation. The process should be open, accountable and allow individuals and groups to exchange views, and influence policies and decisions.

Ideally, the Broad Risk Identification Group or another strategic risk analysis committee, such as the Local Safety Committee, will analyse the

community's safety needs and the municipality's priorities in consultation with members of the community.

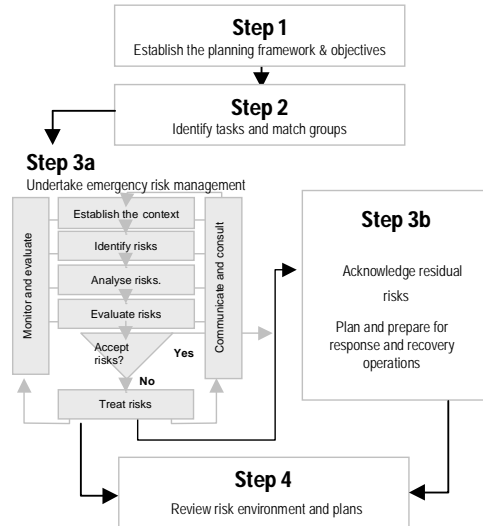
Planning hint:

Consider capturing community interest from groups such as Neighbourhood Watch, Police Community Consultative Committees, and local Landcare groups, and directing their interest towards other community safety issues. Enrolling such groups could encourage other sectors of the community with similar and compatible concerns to take more interest in municipal emergency planning.

Members of the community can become involved by:

- responding to a survey that helps define the problem and identify issues and acceptable solutions;
- attending meetings on specific issues;
- learning about recent developments through a newsletter or presentations at emergency service meetings;
- reviewing and commenting on the draft plan; and
- serving on the MEMPC.

Step 3a – Undertake Emergency Risk Management



This step involves the following tasks:

- collect information;
- identify and describe risks, the community and the environment;
- evaluate risks;
- set risk priorities;
- explore treatment options;
- select options;
- plan and implement risk treatments; and
- consider financial implications of risk treatments.

Read the Emergency Risk Management – Applications Guide



Essential reading

Emergency Management Australia developed the *Emergency Risk Management – Applications Guide* to provide an approved national adaptation of AS/NZS 4360: 2004 *Risk Management* for the emergency management context.

The document owes much of its content to the *Community Emergency Risk Management Facilitator's Resource Kit* produced by the Victoria State Emergency Service in 1998.

The State Government has adopted the national approach to emergency risk management for municipal use in Victoria. The *Applications Guide* is accessible, easy to follow and is supported by documents such as *Implementing Emergency Risk Management – a facilitator's guide to working with committees and communities* (in draft as at August 2000). The *Applications Guide* clearly outlines the emergency risk management process and gives councils the information they need to manage the process.

Councils are advised that VICSES personnel are available to facilitate the emergency risk management and emergency management planning processes at no cost.

The detailed process for this step is described in the *Emergency Risk Management - Applications Guide (EMA, 2000)*. The following information will show how this approach applies to Victorian councils.

The *Applications Guide* and your facilitator can provide you with detailed information on how to identify, analyse and evaluate risk environments. Another document, *Assessing Resilience and Vulnerability in the Context of Emergencies: Guidelines (DHS, 2000)* provides information on how to conduct a vulnerability profile of your community.

Collect information

The information gathering stage provides the planning group with a comprehensive picture of the municipality; the people who live there, its geographic features, infrastructure, past history of emergencies and current risks.

Councils can collect information from a wide range of sources including:

- municipal databases e.g. the planning scheme;
- emergency service organisations;
- government departments such as the departments of Sustainability and Environment, Infrastructure, Human Services and Education, and agencies such as Catchment Management Authorities or Parks Victoria;
- essential service distribution agencies such as electricity, water, gas public transport;
- major industrial facilities in the area, or adjoining municipalities; and
- the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Identify and describe the risks, community and environment. Evaluate risks and set priorities



Key questions:

What risks exist in your community and how significant are they?

Which risks does your community not tolerate and which risks is it prepared to live with?

How is the community or council going to deal with the risks that it cannot live with?

What process and controls exist, or are needed to minimise the level of risk?

Who has the responsibility for implementing plans for treating risks?

What resources are needed (people, money, technical?)

What performance indicators are desirable to monitor the performance of the control measures and the risk treatments?

What consultative processes will you use in determining answers to the above?

The relevant sections in the *Emergency Risk Management - Applications Guide* are “Identify Risks”, “Analyse Risks” and “Evaluate Risks”. The process of risk analysis covers a broader community safety scope than that of emergency management. It covers risks in crime, health and other personal and public safety arenas. This task identifies and prioritises the major community safety risks that face the community and the

environment. Participants can be drawn from a wide range of interest groups both in and outside the council.

A senior management team or Broad Risk Identification Group identified in Step 2 is ideal for such a task. Specialist risk treatments teams/personnel should be utilised to provide detailed analysis of their specific subjects. A Municipal Community Safety Manager could co-ordinate and lead the process.



Recommended reading

The Department of Human Services has produced a document designed to assist planners, managers and other interested personnel undertaking a vulnerability profile. Produced in 2000, the *Assessing Resilience and Vulnerability in the Context of Emergencies: Guidelines* are expected to be progressively reviewed and refined over subsequent editions.

Consult with the community to assist in determining which risks are tolerated and which are not.

Explore treatment options; Select options; Plan and implement risk treatments

The following components of this step are best handled by the Specialist Risk Treatment Teams identified in the model. The relevant section in the *Emergency Risk Management - Applications Guide* is entitled “Treat Risks”. VICSES facilitators can provide more detailed information on the process.

When treating risks, remember that there are strategies that address the sources of risk (i.e. hazards) and others that address the elements at risk (i.e. population and environment).

The Broad Risk Identification Group has a key role in identifying treatment options. As well as identifying priorities and allocating tasks to the Specialist Risk Treatment Teams, the Broad Risk Identification Group should identify the linkages between treatments to ensure maximum synergy and to minimise duplication of activities between groups, especially in relation to community based programs.

Prepare a schedule to implement the strategies, documenting who is responsible for programs and strategies, and by which date they must be completed. A monitoring system ensures these projects stay on track, while regular progress reports help trace the outcomes and progress of treatment strategies.

A systematic record of treatment strategies is also helpful when securing State government funding (which is under the National Disaster Relief).

Risk treatment strategies may be referred to in the MEMPlan, however, actual strategy documents do not need to be included. The plan should identify the name of the documents containing detailed descriptions of the strategies, where they are kept, and the officer in council (or other agency) responsible for each document.

Consider financial implications of risk treatments

The planning process needs to consider financing of programs for risk treatments, response and recovery.

Financial assistance

Commonwealth and State sources can provide some assistance with risk assessment and treatment.

The sources are:

- **Natural Disaster Mitigation Programme**

This program funds natural disaster mitigation works, measures and related activities that contribute to safer, sustainable communities. These include natural disaster risk management studies, disaster mitigation strategies, disaster warning systems, community awareness and readiness measures, land and building purchase in high risk areas, investment in disaster resilient public infrastructure and other mitigation measures.

Applications are invited annually from all councils.

Contact:

Manager, Emergency Management Policy
c/ Department of Justice
GPO Box 4356
Melbourne VIC 3001

or

<http://www.ema.gov.au>

- **Regional Flood Mitigation Programme**

This program assists in the implementation of priority, cost-effective flood mitigation works and measures in rural and regional Australia.

Applications are invited annually from all councils.

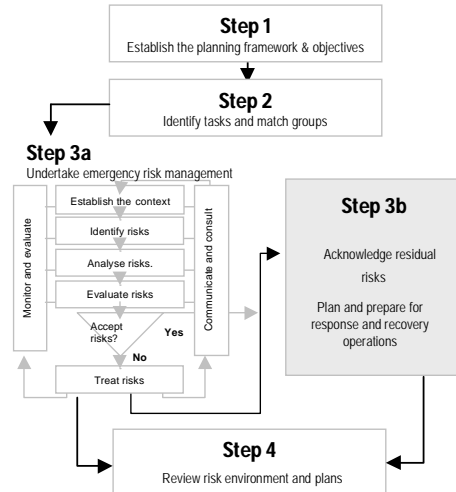
Contact:

Manager Floodplain Management Unit.
Department of Natural Resources and Environment
PO Box 500
East Melbourne VIC 3002

or

<http://www.ema.gov.au>

Step 3b – Deal with Residual Risk, Plan for Emergencies



This step involves the following tasks:

- acknowledge residual risk;
- develop response and recovery arrangements;
- prepare the plan; and
- refer to checklists.

Acknowledge residual risk

Some risks cannot be treated, or even if they can, many still present what is known as residual risk. Response and recovery plans must therefore be developed whenever a risk has the potential to become an emergency event.

Develop response and recovery arrangements

Councils' roles are detailed in Chapter 3 (Section A of this document).

In relation to response and recovery activities councils must:

- address all identified tasks by referencing the *State Emergency Response Plan* and the *State Recovery Plan* to determine which agencies have nominated responsibilities; (see Part 7 of the Manual)
- obtain briefings from responsible agencies and key council personnel on their approach to their activities, with particular reference to the support roles and tasks expected from council;
- identify the municipal resources available to help perform the support roles and tasks; and
- design coordinating systems and arrangements to provide the agreed support.

Include the outcomes of the tasks listed above into the relevant section of the municipal emergency management plan.

Consider financial implications of operations

Councils are responsible for the costs of providing municipal resources (owned or under the direct control of council) including:

- equipment such as heavy machinery (even where sourced from external suppliers)
- personnel for response and recovery activities
- resources for recovery activities

Government agencies involved in emergency response and recovery activities are generally responsible for their own financial arrangements. The provision of some council resources for response activities may be subject to limits and/or constraints, e.g. the use of some equipment may be limited to a timeframe due to the expense of its operation. Such limits and/or constraints should be reasonable, commensurate with each council's capacity to provide such resources, and details included in municipal emergency management plans. (See Appendix 1, Part 8 for complete details about the responsibility for costs).

Depending on the magnitude and type of an emergency, people communities and councils affected by it may be eligible to receive government financial assistance.

Case study - City of Greater Geelong

Recording of costs for emergency response and recovery

To determine the true cost of undertaking emergency management response and recovery operations, Council has been recording costs as they are incurred.

To facilitate recording of costs, a cost centre was established for specific emergency management expenditures. Significant events are to be identified when they occur and allocated a separate task number. Significant events should be regarded as ones that result in a call for assistance by one of the emergency response/recovery agencies (Police, CFA, DSE, etc) or the Council's MERO or Operations Manager.

Minor routine events are those which do not need to be channelled by the emergency agency through the Municipal Emergency Coordinator and MERO and are to be costed under categories such as *clean-up after traffic accidents* or *storm damage debris removal*. Each category must have a task number and while the number of incidents under a category will not be identifiable, other than from incident records, the annual expenditures under the categories will be. Response and recovery activities will be listed separately.

There should be a minimum value placed on the work undertaken on each call before it qualifies for recording. This may be a nominal amount of say \$1,000. The supervisor responsible for the work being undertaken would need to nominate whether or not the task was recorded as an emergency management task, and experience would assist in determining the amount of work to achieve the nominal value. Achieving this value is not critical, it is simply a guide.

Not all events require compensation as some are routine tasks that are traditionally funded or contracted out. The objective is to record these costs as emergency response so that overall costs expended on emergency management are maintained. A mechanism needs to be developed to record routine costs against the contract. One way to do this may be to separate costing of routine assistance to a particular job number which can identify that it is for emergency work yet at the same time be recorded against the contract.

Prepare the plan

Format and structure of the plan

The plan should be structured in the following way:

- presented in loose-leaf form, preferably single sided;
- divided into sections, with each page numbered and dated;
- contain a complete table of contents; and
- include a record of distribution.

Suggested plan contents

The suggested contents of a municipal emergency management plan are outlined below. The sequence and content may be varied to suit local requirements.

The suggested contents of an MEMPlan include:

- introductory information;
- risk management information;
- operational management arrangements;
- response arrangements;
- recovery arrangements;
- ancillary arrangements;
- contact directory; and
- appendices.

Introductory information

- title page;
- table of contents;
- municipal emergency planning committee contact list;
- municipal statement of endorsement - council to adopt and seal the plan;
- audit report;
- emergency management mission, vision, goals, objectives and strategies;
- purpose of the plan;
- municipal emergency management functions; and
- maintenance strategies of the plan:
Detail review meeting dates and testing arrangements.

Risk management information

This should include:

- a summary of the municipal emergency risk assessment process covering hazards, community and environment,
- a summary of demography, vulnerability profiles, topography and history of emergencies; and

- a summary list of risk treatment strategy documents and references.

Planning and management arrangements

Detail the names, (of individuals), membership (of groups) appointment and roles of the following:

- Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
- Municipal Emergency Management Group
- Municipal Community Safety Manager
- Municipal Emergency Manager
- Municipal Emergency Resource Officer
- Municipal Recovery Manager
- Municipal Fire Prevention Officer
- Municipal Emergency coordination centre(s)
Identify the location of primary and alternate MECCs

Response arrangements

This should include:

- response management principles and definitions of command, control and coordination drawn from the State Emergency Response Plan
- control and support agencies
Detail the local arrangements for response to identified emergencies
- response/recovery interface
Refer to relevant parts of the State Emergency Response Plan and State Emergency Recovery Plan.



Suggested reading: Where flood is a high priority risk refer to Department of Natural Resources and Environment, *Victorian Flood Management Strategy, (1998)*

Recovery arrangements

This should include:

Context of recovery

Summarise and adapt to local conditions from the State Emergency Recovery Arrangements

Activation and notification

Detail the arrangements for activating recovery arrangements and should cover notification of key personnel, key agencies and customer service staff.

Municipal coordination and management arrangements

Detail the arrangements in place for:

- assessment of impact and needs
- communicating with the affected community engaging with the affected community
- providing a single point of contact for the affected community (establishment of a community recovery committee)
- arrangements for the coordination of offers of voluntary assistance and material assistance

- identifying members of the community that may more vulnerable to the impact of the emergency require additional assistance to manage.

Functional Areas:

Each of the functional areas is made up of a number of more detailed tasks and functions. It is likely that different agencies are responsible for the provision of these services. It is the responsibility of the agency nominated as a lead agency to ensure that these service providers are documented in the municipal plan, or a sub-plan. List the local agencies responsible for coordinating the following functional areas:

- Personal support
 - Provision of personal support
 - Provision of general and family counselling
 - Provision of financial counselling
 - Provision of practical assistance eg occasional child care, carer respite services
 - Provision of written and verbal information
- Financial Assistance
 - Provision of personal hardship grants
 - Provision of income support
 - Provision insurance advice
 - Provision of financial advice
 - Provision of consumer affairs advice
- Material Assistance
 - Provision of immediate needs
 - Provision of whitegoods and other larger items
 - Temporary Accommodation
 - Provision alternate short term accommodation
 - Provision of long term accommodation
 - Provision of advice to tenants
- Public Health
 - Provision of environmental health assessment and advice
 - Provision of health assessment and advice
 - Provision of health promotion advice and activities
- Clean up
 - Arrangements for general clean up and rubbish disposal
 - Arrangements for the disposal of dead animals posing a threat to human health

- Provision of assistance to people within the community without the capacity to manage their own clean up, eg frail aged, people with disabilities

- Reconstruction
 - Provision of building assessments and advice
 - Architectural advisory services
 - Planning advisory services

- Community development
 - Detail arrangements for agencies with the capacity, capability and expertise to auspice a community development program

- Economic development
 - Detail arrangements for engaging with local business, identifying impacts upon businesses, and linkages with Regional Development Victoria, Small Business Victoria, Tourism Victoria

- Environmental management
 - Detail arrangements for restoration of public lands under council control
 - Detail arrangements for managing air and water quality issues
 - Detail arrangements for managing contaminated land

Escalation criteria

Detail the criteria for escalation of the incident to a regional level

Reporting arrangements

This will cover operational and non-operational reporting to elected official, council executive and the regional recovery coordinator.

For further information, the following publications are available from
Emergency Management Australia

Recovery Manual (2004)

Economic and financial aspects of disaster recovery

Community Development

Disaster Psychological Services Guidelines: Guidelines for Managers

Department of Human Services: Recovery from Emergencies:
Management Guidelines

Ancillary arrangements

The following subjects may need to be addressed in emergency management plans. Parts 7 and 8 of the manual identify agencies with particular responsibilities in the following areas:

- **Financial considerations**
Identify the sources of finance and the control system.
- **communications with emergency agencies**
Detail the local agreed arrangements for providing and supplementing communications resources.
- **Supply of goods/services**
State the agreed arrangements for response and recovery.
- **Provision of volunteer assistance**
Identify the organisations that can assist in human resources at local level, and management arrangements.
- **Compensation for volunteer emergency workers**
Detail a procedure for recording involvement of 'casual' volunteer emergency workers, in keeping with section 4 of the Act.
- **Catering**
List agencies at a local level that will provide this function.
- **Communities at risk**
Detail agreed arrangements for communities and sub-groups at particular risk, including targeted protection or evacuation strategies, and agencies to be involved.
- **Community information and warnings**
Identify purposes, methods, systems and responsibilities.
- **Emergency relief centres**
Identify resources at local level (see also Appendices below).
- **Registration of evacuees and affected persons**
Identify agencies at a local level that will provide this function.
- **Recovery information and coordination centre (one-stop-shop)**
Detail the location and staffing of one or more centres.
- **Public and media briefings**
Identify systems and contact arrangements and responsibilities.
- **Material needs**
List agencies at local level that provide this function.
- **Post-impact assessment**
Detail the agreed arrangements for conducting a survey, and reviewing the information gathered.
- **Environmental health**
Detail the local agreed arrangements for emergency provision and coordination.
- **Medical**
Detail the local agreed arrangements for emergency provision and coordination.
- **Transport and engineering**
Detail the local agreed arrangements for emergency provision and coordination.
- **Mutual aid arrangements**
Detail any agreed arrangements between the council and other councils or organisations.



Suggested reading: Australian Institute of Environmental Health – Victorian Branch, *Municipal Public Health Emergency Management Planning* phone (03) 9438 5960 or vic@aieh.org.au

- Other support tasks and functional service agencies
Task examples are listed in the State Emergency Response Plan and the State Emergency Recovery Plan.

Contact Directory

- List the contact phone (business, mobile and after hours) and fax numbers of all agencies that have a role in the plan.

Appendixes

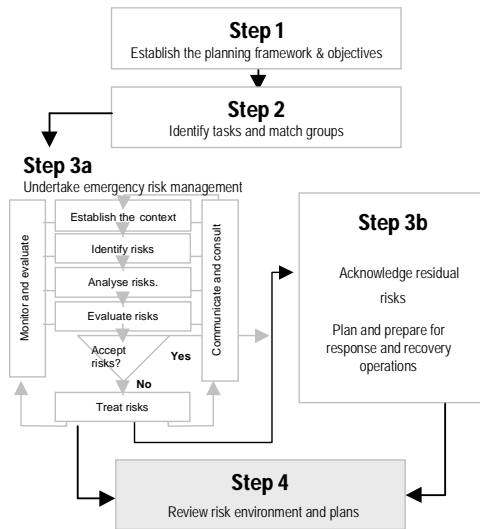
This should include:

- Maps
Attach maps showing the municipal district and its surrounding areas. Maps should be A4 in size scaled to show necessary detail.
- Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre standard operating procedures
Detail an agreed set of procedures for establishing and operating an MECC. These should include the location of primary MECC and alternate(s), staff rostering, activation procedure, information management processes.
- Special plans and arrangements
- Functional annexes
List special plans (e.g. hospitals, dams, industrial sites, mutual aid) which exist within the municipal district. Include contact details of plan holders. Do not include the plans themselves.
- Emergency relief centres
Detail the location and arrangement for gaining access and facilities available (including numbers for accommodation). Centres should have facilities for sheltering, feeding and personal hygiene for emergency-affected people and their pets
- Glossary of terms/abbreviations
List alphabetically all special terms used within the plan and their meanings. Refer to the Glossary in Part 8 of the manual for standard meanings.
- Distribution list
List all holders of the plan. Distribute the list to any person or organisation requiring a copy of the plan and any amendments.
- Bibliography
List other documents used or referred to in the development of the plan.

Refer to audit checklists

After you prepare the MEMPlan, check the contents with the two audit checklists in Annex 2.

Step 4 - Evaluate, Implement and Test the Plan



This step involves the following tasks:

- receive comments;
- publish and distribute;
- conduct exercises; and
- monitor and review.

Receive comments

?

Key questions:

What do key stakeholder groups think of your plan?

Can the users follow the format and find what they need easily?

Are they comfortable with it and can they understand it?

After completing a draft of the plan, circulate it for comment. Seek users' views on the content, organisation, presentation, consistency, and ease of use of the document.

Make the draft plan available to various groups; key stakeholders, members of the community facing particular risks, interested organisations and local businesses. If there is enough interest, post the plan in the council offices or hold a meeting to discuss it.

After making the necessary amendments according to the comments received, seek formal council approval or endorsement of the plan.

Publish and distribute

Planning hint:

Accountability lies at the heart of genuine participation and community involvement.

One way municipal emergency planning processes can remain transparent and accountable is to undertake an annual emergency management report to the community.

Such a report could appear in a bulletin, newsletter or as part of the Council's corporate annual report.

The report could discuss the status of the MEMPlan and any key emergency issues that affected the community in the previous year.

When publishing and distributing your MEMPlan, consider the following:

- who will receive the MEMPlan; Make sure appropriate stakeholders and organisations mentioned in the plan are on the distribution list.
- how to make the plan available/accessible to stakeholders;
- releasing the plan internally and educating council staff about its contents;
- the number of copies required; and
- publicising the MEMPlan and referring to it in key council documents and reports.

Publishing options

When a document has a large distribution list, there may be some confusion as to which copies are current. Delatite Shire Council overcame this problem by publishing its MEMPlan in a bound soft cover and stating the publication date on the title page. Each recipient on the distribution list could check whether they had received the most up to date copy and that the information was relevant.

The City of Greater Geelong published its MEMPlan on the Council intranet, making it available to all employees who have access to the computer network. Updates can be made available immediately using this system and a daily update bulletin can be published during an emergency so that employees and councillors are informed of developments.

Conduct exercises

It is important to test a plan to ensure it is understood and effective. Table-top exercises are effective in determining how well the operational elements of the MEMPlan can be implemented.

Exercises should be carried out at the end of the development of the plan and on a regular basis afterwards to ensure it stays effective.

Exercises provide the following benefits:

- personnel have an opportunity to train and practice;
- members of the emergency management community at the local level come together and gain confidence in each others roles and abilities;
- the community is educated about the local plan and programs;
- organisations can test their procedures and skills in simulated emergency situations.



Suggested reading

Manual 2. *Exercise Management* from the Australian Emergency Manuals Series

Planning and conducting effective exercises takes time and expertise. Victoria State Emergency Service is available at no cost to assist with them.

It is also helpful to prepare a document detailing the outcomes and lessons learnt from the exercises, and take minutes of the debriefing meeting as a record for future reference and to help improve the exercises. Do not place these documents in the MEMPlan; but include a reference to them within the plan.

Monitor and review



The most important part of updating the plan is calling the numbers on the contact list to check that they are still current. This should be done at least quarterly.

One of the roles of the Municipal Community Safety Manager is to keep track of the risk treatment strategies that emerge as part of Emergency Risk Management. The original Specialist Risk Treatment Teams will remain closely affiliated with their projects, however, the Municipal Community Safety Manager or an equivalent position is appropriate to coordinate a range of different risks.

Monitoring and reviewing the status of identified risks and treatment projects are formal stages in Emergency Risk

Management and should also be noted in the MEMPlan.

Key recommendations and projects also need to be implemented and tracked. It is important to make sure the people responsible for the recommendations understand what is expected of them and are willing to work to implement them. It helps if the plan clearly identifies responsibility for each recommendation.

Section C

Annexes

Annex 1

Providing a Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre

The municipal emergency management planning committee is responsible for planning the establishment and operation of a primary Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC) and alternative(s).

The MECC is not the control centre for emergency response, but the focus for organising any support that may be needed. It is from the MECC that relevant personnel coordinate and organise emergency provision of council and community resources within the municipal district, or by agreement, to a neighbouring district.

The MECC also:

- monitors all operational activities for recording, debriefing and planning purposes;
- operates during larger response operations; and
- operates for the relief and early recovery activities in which council's roles require coordination.

Equipping a MECC

The MECC should be staffed with municipal personnel and appropriate agency Liaison Officers and equipped with the following:

- communications equipment such as telephones, radios, facsimile machines, and computer links;
- maps of the area showing access and egress routes, power, drainage, pipelines, flood levels etc;
- stationery;
- administrative facilities;
- a 24 hour clock; and
- trained personnel to act as technical/specialist advisers, scribes, etc.

Location of a MECC

Principal and alternative sites should be selected with the following considerations in mind:

- available on a 24 hour, 365 day basis;
- premises can be secured from unauthorised personnel;
- amenities exist close by; and
- adequate parking is available.

If possible, radios should be located in an adjacent area to reduce noise levels in the MECC itself.

The municipal offices may be the most appropriate location for the primary MECC, as they are the normal working location of key municipal staff, and provide access to essential information and facilities. An area which can be readily controlled, or to which access can only be gained from a staffed reception desk, will help secure the area from unauthorised personnel.

MECC functions may, in the first instance, be conducted from an appropriate police station. However, early activation of the primary MECC is encouraged. A mobile facility could be considered as an alternative MECC.

Operations of a MECC

In planning the MECC, arrangements need to be made for:

- preparation of documented standard operating procedures; and
- training all personnel to perform their respective designated roles.

Arrangements for activating, staffing and conducting the MECC should be kept simple, and include:

- opening and activating the centre;
(especially after hours)
- calling in key personnel or their deputies;
- setting up the centre;
(including the safe storage of material normally located in the office spaces)
- installing additional communications and computer equipment to establish pre-arranged links;
- nominating a designated person to release information to the media in accordance with existing arrangements;
(see page 3–12 of Part 3)
- supplying emergency power;
- keeping the area clean; and
- catering.

Ensure that all information and records collected during the MECC operation (including maps, etc.) are passed on to the section or agency with continuing responsibility.

Activation of a MECC

The authority to open the MECC rests with the MERC, but this may be on the advice of:

- the DERC; and/or
- municipal staff; and/or
- a representative from the control agency.

Consideration to opening a MECC should be given if one or more of the following criteria are satisfied:

- the emergency continues for an extended duration;
- members of the community are displaced by the emergency;

- the volume of requests for resource support from the Council cannot be easily managed by the on call personnel;
- there is a need to register volunteer emergency workers in case they ever need to claim under the Emergency Management Act;
- there is a need to coordinate the provision of emergency relief to either responders or the affected community;
- there is a need to coordinate the dissemination of community information and warnings.

It must be remembered that the MECC is not a control centre for emergency response, but the focus for organising any support that may be needed.

Staffing a MECC

See the Emergency Management Group on page 6-31.

Annex 2

Audit Checklists

Legislative checklist



- Does the plan cover the entire geographical area of the municipal district?
- If the plan covers the geographical area of more than one municipal district, does it identify separate planning committees for each municipal district?
- If adjoining municipal districts do not have separate planning committees has the Coordinator in Chief approved the appointment of one of the municipal councils to be the principal municipal council in relation to emergency management? (s.19).
- Has the municipal council prepared and maintained an emergency management plan identifying municipal resources (i.e. council owned/controlled and other resources available for use in the district for emergency prevention, response and recovery)? (s.20).
- Does the plan specify how those resources are to be coordinated and used for emergency prevention, response and recovery? (s.20(2)).
- Has the council appointed a person or persons responsible to the council for the coordination of municipal resources to be used in emergency response and recovery? (ss.21(1) and (2)).
- Has the council appointed a municipal emergency planning committee? (s.21(3)).
- Does the committee consist of members and employees of the council, response and recovery agencies and local community groups involved in emergency management issues? (s.21(3)).

Planning checklist



- Are response and recovery arrangements consistent with State and regional response and recovery plans?
- Are the linkages with other community safety plans articulated?
- Has the plan been reviewed annually by the planning committee?
- Have the contact numbers on the list been checked to gauge whether they are up to date?
 - Amendment procedures
 - Minutes of MEMPC meetings
- Does the planning committee meet twice per year as a minimum?
 - Minutes of MEMPC meetings
- Does the plan identify individuals with responsibility for plan development and maintenance?
 - Committee structure
 - Plan caretaker/MEMPC executive officer
- Does the plan include provision for distribution of amendments to all holders?
 - Distribution list
- Has the plan been distributed?
 - Check with copy holders through divisional emergency response committees
- Does the plan include a summary/report of the risk assessment process?
 - Risk assessments
- Does the process include an exploration of the particular risks and needs of vulnerable community groups?
 - Community analyses
 - Data sources
 - Action plans
- Does the plan identify the risks tolerated/not tolerated by the community?
- Does the plan identify measures/programs/activities to treat risks?
 - Action Plans
- Does the plan identify the frequency of exercises for testing the agreed arrangements?
 - Management arrangements
 - Policy statement

Annex 3

Useful References

General emergency management and community safety

Emergency Risk Management – Applications Guide Emergency Management Australia (2004) Australian Emergency Manuals Series

Implementing Emergency Risk Management - A Facilitator's Guide to Working with Committees and Communities - Emergency Management Australia (2000) Australian Emergency Manuals Series

Introduction to Emergency Risk Management – Workbook Australian Institute of Emergency Management, Emergency Management Australia (1999)

AS/NZS 4360:2004 Risk Management Standards Australia (2004)

Assessing Vulnerability and Resilience in the Context of Emergencies: Guidelines Department of Human Services (2000)

Municipal Fire Prevention Planning Guidelines Country Fire Authority (1997)

Victorian Flood Management Strategy Department of Natural Resources and Environment (1998)

Safer Cities and Shires – A Guide to Developing Strategic Partnerships Department of Justice, Victoria (1997)

Local Priority Policing – An Overview of local Priority Policing and an Introduction to Local Safety Committees Victoria Police (2000)

Public Health Emergency Management Plan Australian Institute of Environmental Health – Victorian Branch, Emergency Management Committee. (August 2000)– Contact the Institute for a copy: phone (03) 9438 5960 or vic@aieh.org.au

Disaster Risk Management, Zamecka, Alice & Buchanan, Graham (2000)– Produced by the Queensland Department of Emergency Services

Disaster Risk Management Guide: A How-to Manual for Local Government Counter Disaster and Rescue Services, Queensland Department of Emergency Services (2000)

Australian Emergency Manuals

The **Australian Emergency Manuals Series** produced by Emergency Management Australia (EMA) is available free of charge. Copies may be obtained through Victoria State Emergency Service. The list of titles available in the manuals series can be viewed on the EMA website www.ema.gov.au

Of particular interest to Councils may be:

Part I – The Fundamentals

- Manual 1. Emergency Management Concepts and Principles (3rd edition)
- Manual 2. Australian Emergency Management Arrangements (6th edition)
- Manual 3. Australian Emergency Management Glossary

Part III – Emergency Management Practice

Volume 2 – Specific Issues

- Disaster Assessment and Survey (not published as of August 2000)

Volume 3. Guidelines

- Guide 2 Community and Personal Support Services
- Guide 3. Managing the Floodplain
- Guide 4. Flood Preparedness
- Guide 5. Flood Warning
- Guide 6. Flood Response
- Guide 7. Gathering Community Information

Part V – The Management of Training

- Manual 2. Exercise Management (not published as of August 2000)

Victoria State Emergency Service Training

In addition to advice on how to carry out the CERM process, VICSES also offers a variety of related training. The *Introduction to Emergency Risk Management (IERM)* is a one day activity designed to give a basic understanding of the concept and process. Alternatively the *Introduction to Emergency Management (IEM)* is a two day course which provides a more detailed awareness of Victoria's emergency management arrangements and processes. This course includes the learning outcomes from the IERM course. Both courses serve as a prerequisite to attend further emergency and risk management training at the Emergency Management Australia Institute.

Department of Human Services information

The documents listed below are available from the **Department of Human Services State Emergency Recovery** unit website:
<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency>

Planning

- Criteria for Assessing Emergency Recovery Plans
- Municipal Checklist

Management

- Coordination of Recovery Management
- Issues In Managing Large Scale Events
- Damage and Needs Assessment
- Temporary Accommodation
- Material Aid
- Personal Hardship Grants
- Personal Support
- Supply Management
- Resource Management
- Community Development
- Information Management
- Volunteer Management
- Public Appeal Coordination

Forms

- Client Contact Record
- Contents Loss
- Log Sheet
- Outreach Support
- Emergency Grant Application (available only during emergencies)
- Re-establishment Grant Application (available only during emergencies)
- Temporary Living Expenses Grant Application (available only during emergencies)

Pamphlets

The following series of pamphlets deals with the effects of emergencies upon individuals and families

- Family and crisis
- Children and crisis
- Teenagers and crisis
- Understanding stress in emergencies

Management Guidelines

The State Emergency Recovery Unit has published a series of Recovery Management Guidelines.

These include:

- Recovery from Emergencies: Planning Guidelines
- Recovery from Emergencies: Management Guidelines
- Recovery from Emergencies: Management Checklists
- Recovery from Emergencies: Personal and Psychological Support Guidelines
- Assessing Resilience and Vulnerability in the Context of Emergencies: Guidelines

Fact Sheets:

Community

1. Living without gas or electricity - An overview of public health issues
2. Parenting without gas or electricity - Advice for parents of infants and young children
6. Washing safely without hot water
7. Cooking safely without gas or electricity
10. Safe use of alternative cooking appliances
12. Coping with stress in emergencies
16. Food storage and preparation without gas or electricity
17. Children and crisis
18. Family and crisis
19. Stress after emergencies
20. Teenagers and crisis
21. Boil drinking water - Flood areas
23. Control of mould and fungal growth in and under flooded houses
24. Flood action guide
26. Repainting after flood damage
27. Repairing flood damaged buildings
29. Financial assistance available from Department of Human Services
30. Keeping cool safely and preventing problems from hot weather
32. How to recognise heat stress
33. First aid for heat stress

Industry

- A. Cleaning and sanitising without gas or electricity
- B. Working without gas or electricity - Advice for children's services
- C. Managing stressed clients - During re-establishment of a public utility supply
- D. Giving psychological support to clients
- E. Cooling towers and water systems
- F. Maintaining food safety in a commercial kitchen
- G. Re-opening a food premises
- H. The human face of disaster recovery - Information for human service workers in disasters

Human Recovery from Disasters - Information for Workers in Disasters

Documents available from the **Department of Human Services
Public Health** website <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/phd>

- LINK - Public health bulletin for local government
- Municipal Public Health Plans - Guidelines for development
- Municipal Public Health Practice - Quality Improvement
- All for Health - Strategic directions for promoting health in Victoria through coordinated action at Local Government level.
- Public Health Planning in Local Government Information Pack
- Public Health Emergency Management Plan - February 1998