knox

your city

Municipal Emergency Management Plan

2019-2022

Knox City Council

Contents

1. Introduction

The Knox Municipal Emergency Management Plan ("Plan") is a legislated document intended for use by all persons and organisations with emergency management roles in Knox and is available to the general public. The aim of this document is to contribute to the development of a more disaster resilient community in Knox that is better able to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergency events.

The Plan is consistent with State and regional emergency management objectives. To achieve this, Knox City Council works collaboratively with emergency services, agencies, all levels of government, local industries and businesses, communities and neighbouring Local Government Areas to prevent and minimise the occurrence and impact of emergency events to people, businesses and the environment.

This Plan has been developed by members of the Knox Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) pursuant to the requirements of Part Four, Section 21 (3) of the *Emergency Management Act 1986*[1] *and 2013* detailed in the Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV).

1.1 Authorisation

This Plan has been produced by and with the authority of Knox City Council pursuant to Section 20(1) of the *Emergency Management Act 1986.*

Knox City Council understands and accepts its roles and responsibilities as described in Part 4 of the *Emergency Management Act 1986.*

This Plan addresses the prevention of, response to and recovery from emergencies within Knox. It is the result of the cooperative efforts of the MEMPC and incorporated audit advice from the Victoria State Emergency Service.

This Plan was endorsed by the MEMPC in December 2018 and has been adopted by Council at their ordinary meeting on 29 January 2019.

Ian Bell
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Knox City Council

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1 Both the *Emergency Management Act 1986* and the *Emergency Management Act 2013* are to be read and construed as one Act, until such time as the 1986 Act is repealed.

1.2   Audit report

Certificate of **Audit**

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE
MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN OF

Knox City Council

Has been audited in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the
Minister and has been assessed as

"Complying with the Guidelines"

Tim Wiebusch
Chief Officer, Operations

1 April 2019

Date

1.3   Acronyms

BoM	Bureau of Meteorology
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CERA	Community Emergency Risk Assessment
CFA	Country Fire Authority
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
EACH	Eastern Access Community Health
EMC EMP	Eastern Metropolitan Councils Emergency Management Partnership
EMLO	Emergency Management Liaison Officer
EMMV	Emergency Management Manual Victoria
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
ERC	Emergency Relief Centre
FFMVic	Forest Fire Management Victoria
HAZMAT	Hazardous Materials
ICC	Incident Control Centre
IEMT	Incident Emergency Management Team
IERC	Incident Emergency Response Coordinator
MECC	Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre
MEM	Municipal Emergency Manager
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
MEMPC	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee

MERC	Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator (Victoria Police)
MERO	Municipal Emergency Resource Officer
MFB	Metropolitan Fire Brigade
MFMP	Municipal Fire Management Plan
MFMPC	Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee
MFPO	Municipal Fire Prevention Officer
MRM	Municipal Recovery Manager
NDRRA	Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements
PIO	Public Information Officer
REMT	Regional Emergency Management Team
RERC	Regional Emergency Response Coordinator
RPSC	Recovery Planning Sub Committee
SEMG	Senior Emergency Management Group
SEMT	State Emergency Management Team
SIA	Secondary Impact Assessment
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
V-BERAP	Victorian Built Environment Risk Assessment Process
VICSES	Victoria State Emergency Service
VicPol	Victoria Police
VFRR	Victorian Fire Risk Register
VPR	Vulnerable Persons Register

1.4   Aim

This Plan aims to ensure an effective and coordinated response to Part 4 of the *Emergency Management Act, 1986* and Part 6 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria in the provision of the agreed arrangements for the prevention of, response to, and recovery from emergencies that may occur in the municipality.

This Plan closely aligns with the State Emergency Management Priorities and the factors that are required to be considered and actioned during response to any emergency. They allow Council to frame how it addresses what is important to individual communities.

The State Emergency Management Priorities are:

- Protection and preservation of life is paramount. This includes:
  - Safety of emergency services personnel
  - Safety of community members including vulnerable community members and visitors/tourists located within the incident area
- Issuing of community information and community warnings detailing incident information that is timely, relevant and tailored to assist community members make informed decisions about their safety
- Protection of critical infrastructure and community assets that support community resilience
- Protection of residential property as a place of primary residence
- Protection of assets supporting individual livelihoods and economic production that supports individual and community financial sustainability
- Protection of environmental and conservation assets that consider the cultural, biodiversity and social values of the environment.

1.5   Objectives

The broad objectives of this Plan are to:

- Implement measures to prevent or reduce the causes or effects of emergencies;
- Manage arrangements for the use and implementation of municipal resources in response to emergencies;
- Manage support that may be provided to or from adjoining municipalities; regional, state and or federal instrumentalities;
- Assist the affected community to recover following an emergency; and
- Complement other local, regional and State planning arrangements.

2. Background

2.1 Context

This Plan, prepared by the Knox Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC), reflects the shared responsibilities of government, emergency management agencies and communities for the actions they will take to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies. It is important for enhancing resilience that community, emergency services and relief and recovery agencies work together.

This Plan is the overarching document for the integrated management of emergencies in the Knox municipal area. It is supported by a range of hazard plans as determined by a risk identification process and a number of response based plans to ensure smooth coordination of service delivery in emergencies.

Emergency management agencies, departments, industries, businesses, schools, groups, families and individuals should have their own plans, procedures and guidelines that support their planning and decision making processes before, during and after emergencies.

This Plan is supported by a variety of information, including:

- Management arrangements that contain general information about emergency planning, response and recovery arrangements; and roles and responsibilities of people and organisations involved in emergency management.

- Sub Plans, including hazard specific Sub Plans and Standard Operating Procedures which are to be used during actual emergency events and are designed to be used as stand-alone operational documents.

- Appendices that contain ancillary information including a contact directory that lists contact details for all persons and organisations that have a role in this plan, administration details and a list of Council resources.

2.2 Area characteristics

The City of Knox is located 25 kilometres east of the Melbourne Central Business District. Knox boasts a green, leafy image extending to the foothills of the picturesque Dandenong Ranges. The City of Knox is one of the most populous and diverse municipalities in Victoria, with more than 160,000 residents living in eleven suburbs.

2.2.1 Topography

The Knox municipal area is located at the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges on the urban rural fringe and includes the geographic area known as the City of Knox. This area is 114 square kilometres and includes predominant land tenures of Parks Victoria, Knox City Council and private land holders.

Surrounded by major parks, with five creeks running through the Knox municipal area, Knox celebrates, and protects its environment. It has a strong and growing business, educational, medical and industrial life, and is located close to growing markets and transport hubs.

The Knox municipal area is a major hub of cultural, commercial, business, medical and innovative activity in the eastern suburbs. It is the gateway to both a major growth area in Melbourne and the urban-rural fringe.

2.2.2   Demography

The population of the Knox municipal area is approximately 160,700 spread over 114 square kilometres and 11 suburbs. Suburbs include Bayswater, Boronia, Ferntree Gully, Knoxfield, Lysterfield, Rowville, Scoresby, The Basin, Upper Ferntree Gully, Wantirna and Wantirna South.

Age structure

The City of Knox population from the 2016 census data shows the age group with the highest number of people living within the city's boundaries in 2016 was the 45 to 49 year age group.

In summary, between 2011 and 2016 census the largest changes in age structure for the City of Knox were:

- An increase in the age group 70 to 74;
- An increase in the age group 65 to 69;
- A decrease in the age group 15 to 19; and
- A decrease in the age group 10 to 14.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities

The Knox municipal area has a diverse population with 46,424 residents born overseas (30% of the total population) and 23% of residents from non-English speaking backgrounds providing the Knox municipal area with a diverse cultural landscape. The top ten listed countries of birth other than Australia includes United Kingdom, China, India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, New Zealand, Philippines, Hong Kong, Vietnam and Germany.

Find further Knox municipality data: http://profile.id.com.au/knox

2.2.3   Vulnerable Persons
Within the Knox municipal area there are several vulnerable groups/facilities:

- **Lower socio-economic groups.** There are 14,000 people living in 8,600 low income households in Knox (those households that fall into the bottom 25% of incomes across Australia).

- **Indigenous community.** Knox has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of 750 people, the second largest population in the Eastern region of Melbourne, which has greater disadvantage in terms of education, economic capacity, employment and housing security compared with the wider population.

- **Culturally diverse communities.** There is an increasing number of people for whom English is not their first language living in Knox. This increased from 31,500 in 2011 to 38,800 by 2016, with the majority (12,800) speaking a Chinese language. This has implications for communication during a fire event.

- **Senior citizens and residential care facilities.** 15% of the population is aged 65 years and older. There are 25 residential aged care facilities and a further 4 supported residential service facilities within the Knox municipal area, 17 older person independent living complexes and retirement villages. An emerging trend is for older people to remain living in their own homes and have care services delivered in home.

- **Hospitals.** There are four hospitals within the Knox municipal area, two public (the Angliss and Wantirna Health) and two private (Knox Private and Melbourne Eastern Private Hospital).

- **Children and young people.** 18% (27,000) of Knox residents are children under 15 while young people aged 15-24 years account for a further 13% (20,000) of residents. There are 50 schools in the Knox municipal area, both public and private, and one tertiary education institution.

- **Need for assistance**. In 2016 there were approximately 7,400 people with a major disability living in Knox. This is based on need for assistance in regard to self-care, mobility or communication (very young children requiring assistance due to age are filtered out of this figure). This information can assist in continued planning for supporting vulnerable community during an emergency.

Vulnerable Persons Register

The Vulnerable Persons Register is managed by the Department of Health and Human Services and hosted on Council's emergency database Crisisworks[2].

During an emergency Victoria Police have access to the Register. Other relevant service agencies that believe they require this register are requested to contact the Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO) on 9298 8000.

Victoria Police, as the agency responsible for managing evacuations, will be required to assist vulnerable persons in community facilities that house vulnerable people.

Vulnerable Facilities List

The Vulnerable Facilities List is maintained by Knox City Council and identifies buildings where vulnerable people are likely to be situated, including aged care facilities, hospitals, schools, disability group homes and child care centres. The list is reviewed and updated as part of the annual MEMP update.

The Vulnerable Facilities List is held within Crisisworks or can be obtained by contacting Council's Coordinator Emergency Management.

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2   Crisisworks is software for emergency managers that provides enhanced coordination, communication, situational awareness and resilience across all phases including - Planning, Preparedness, Response and Recovery.

Background

2.2.4 Municipal location map

2.2.5 History of emergencies

The Knox municipal area has experienced many emergencies in the past.

2009 Black Saturday

At about 3.40 pm on 7 February, a fire started in the area along the railway line in Upper Ferntree Gully. Local Country Fire Authority (CFA) units in the process of returning from an earlier call observed the column of smoke and immediately responded to the fire. To many, this pre-emptive response was key to the fire being brought under control without any life or significant property loss. In addition, the opportune arrival of a fire bombing helicopter that was able to access water from the lake at the residential development at the old Ferntree Gully Quarry site was a vital success factor in preventing a catastrophe.

A number of emergency alerts were issued to the community during this fire, however there was no requirement for evacuation or relief. The Municipal Emergency Co-ordination Centre (MECC) was not activated. The duty Municipal Emergency Resources Officer (MERO) attended during the fire to provide assistance.

Nixon Road, Upwey Fire

On the afternoon of 23 February 2009, a bushfire occurred in the area of Nixon Road in Upwey. In line with arrangements previously put in place between Knox Council and Yarra Ranges Council, the Relief Centre at the Ferntree Gully Netball Centre was activated to accommodate people evacuating areas within Yarra Ranges. The centre operated for a period of 24 hours and housed over 250 people overnight.

While that fire was entirely within Yarra Ranges, it demonstrates the benefits of co-operative arrangements within emergency management.

2010 Hailstorm

In less than 20 minutes on Saturday 6 March 2010, a severe hailstorm impacted Victoria causing widespread damage to much of metropolitan Melbourne. Many properties sustained significant damage from both the hailstorm and the heavy rain that followed.

Being the Labour Day long weekend, a large number of people were not home at the time and returned to their properties to find them significantly damaged from not just the hail storm but also the significant rain event that followed the hail.

Thousands of residential properties and an unknown number of business properties were damaged – to the extent that some residential properties were required to be demolished.

Countless motor vehicles were damaged and, in some cases, people injured when hit by the hail. The response required the activation of the MECC which was operational for several days.

Many residents suffered trauma. During research conducted three years after the incident in 2013, many people described how their children were still suffering from the storm.

Rapid impact assessments were undertaken to identify displaced residents and to assist with prioritisation of calls to Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) for assistance. In addition to a multi-agency response being activated from within Victoria, more than 300 personnel from interstate State Emergency Services were deployed to support Knox VICSES.

By the end of operations on 12 March, VICSES had managed in excess of 3,000 requests for assistance. As part of the longer term recovery effort, more than 4,000 homes were visited by members of the Victorian Red Cross to ensure residents understood the assistance available from Council and the other recovery agencies.

Knox Transfer Station

Knox has experienced a number of large fires at the Knox Transfer Station.

On Australia Day 2012, there was a multi-agency response to a hazardous fire at the Knox Transfer station involving over 80 CFA and emergency service personnel, with support from the MERO and Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator (MERC). Smoke was visible from surrounding suburbs and raised interest among the community and media agencies.

Agencies involved in this incident were CFA, Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB), Victoria Police, VICSES, Ambulance Victoria, Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Salvation Army and Council. Given there were a number of similar fires at this site in the months following, Knox participated in a joint agency meeting with CFA, Victoria Police and the management of the Transfer Station to develop procedures and strategies to minimise the potential for these fires in the future.

Similar fires occurred at this site on 14 June 2016, 13 April 2018 and 6 October 2018, due to the process of shredding old mattresses. The proprietor and staff along with CFA and Council's Waste Management Department have addressed the risks and introduced a range of mitigation strategies based on the learnings from each of the fires. Due to the nature of the shredding process no guarantees can be given these type of fires will not occur in the future.

Incidents in the built environment

Sometimes single incidents, such as house fires, occur which require multiple Council services to attend to coordinate Council's response. These can include Community Laws, the Municipal Building Surveyor and/or Environmental Health. Incidents which occur in major facilities might also require the attendance of Council's MERO to support the lead agency. This sort of cooperation and collaboration is likely to increase in future.

3. Planning arrangements

This section details the planning arrangements for the management of emergencies which affect the community of the City of Knox.

It identifies specific emergency management roles and responsibilities. All emergency positions and arrangements are put in place to meet the needs of an emergency affected community, with some of these positions required under the *Emergency Management Act 1986.*

3.1 Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)

The Committee, established under Section 21 (3) and (4) of the *Emergency Management Act 1986*, is responsible for formulating, maintaining and testing the Plan.

3.1.1 Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) were endorsed by the MEMPC in December 2018. The purpose of the Committee is outlined under Section 3.1 of this Plan.

3.1.2 Membership of the Committee

The Committee consists of:

Knox City Council members

- Municipal Emergency Manager (Chairperson)
- Coordinator Emergency Management
- Emergency Management Officer
- Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO)
- Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO)
- Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)
- Public Information Officer (PIO)

Response and recovery agency/organisations

- Victoria Police - Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator (MERC)
- Country Fire Authority
- Department of Health & Human Services
- Department of Education and Training
- Ambulance Victoria
- Forest Fire Management Victoria
- EACH
- St John Ambulance
- Victorian Council of Churches Emergencies Ministry
- Red Cross
- Victoria State Emergency Service

Local business/community representatives

- Boronia Centrelink
- Eastern Health
- Westfield Knox

Membership of the Committee can be reviewed at any MEMPC meeting. New members may be invited dependent on changes in legislation, changes of agency contact person, risk identification or interest from a new agency/community group.

3.1.3 Municipal Emergency Management Sub Committees

The MEMPC may form, or contribute to, special sub committees to plan for the management of hazard specific identified risks or functions which require an additional level of planning. Examples of these include: Municipal Fire Management, Municipal Recovery, Pandemic, and Heatwave.

3.1.4 Meeting frequency

The Knox MEMPC holds a minimum of four meetings per year.

Should a significant incident occur within the municipality, the Committee will call an extraordinary meeting to discuss, review and evaluate the response to the event. A risk assessment will be undertaken to review key priorities of emergency management planning.

Legislative or policy changes impacting local governments' response to emergency management operations may also generate the need for an extraordinary meeting.

3.1.5 Maintenance of the Plan

The MEMP and each Sub Plan will be reviewed annually or after a significant emergency. A major review will be undertaken every 3 years by the MEMPC. The Coordinator Emergency Management will ensure that the Plan is updated as required.

Organisations with responsibilities within this Plan are required to notify the Coordinator Emergency Management of any changes of details (eg. contact information), as they occur. Review of the Plan will specifically focus on the hazards/risks in the municipal area and the Contact Directory of the plan (Appendix B).

Amendments to the Plan are placed on the MEMPC agenda. Following approval, the amendments are included in the updated MEMP and are distributed to members of the MEMPC.

The current version of the Knox Municipal Emergency Management Plan is available on the Council website.

3.2 Operational management arrangements

3.2.1 Sub Plans & Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

A number of Sub Plans have been written to detail specific emergency arrangements. The Sub Plans are hazard based and have been developed based on the risk to the community. Sub Plans are available to the public, via Council's website, where appropriate.

Sub Plans include:

- Knox Municipal Fire Management Plan
- Knox Storm and Flood Emergency Plan
- EMCEMP Eastern Metro Region Local Government Extreme Heat Plan
- EMCEMP Eastern Metro Region Local Government Pandemic Influenza Plan
- Knox Recovery Plan
- Relief Centre Sub Plan (Eastern Metropolitan Councils Emergency Management Partnership)
- Eastern Metropolitan Region Emergency Coordination Sub Plan
  - Part 1 - Arrangements
  - Part 2 - Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
  - Part 3 - Role Statements
  - Part 4 - Appendix

The maintenance of the Sub Plans is the responsibility of the MEMPC and is administered by the Coordinator Emergency Management.

3.2.2 Council's emergency management functions

Knox City Council accepts responsibility for management of municipal resources and the facilitation of community support and involvement to mitigate the consequences of an emergency during both the response to and recovery from emergencies.

This includes:

- The provision of supplementary supply (resources) to incident control and relief agencies during response and recovery;
- Municipal assistance to agencies during the response to and recovery from emergencies;
- The provision of emergency relief to affected persons during the response phase;
- The secondary and post impact assessment of community needs following the emergency; and
- Recovery activities within the municipality, in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services.

3.2.3 Council emergency management positions – roles and responsibilities

The *Emergency Management Act 1986, County Fire Authority Act 1958* and the Emergency Management Manual Victoria legislate and guide Council in the required emergency management roles to fulfil its emergency management responsibilities.

Role descriptions are detailed in Part 3 of the Eastern Metropolitan Region Emergency Coordination Sub Plan.

A brief overview statement, accountability and authority of the positions are as follows:

Municipal Emergency Manager (MEM)

The MEM provides strategic emergency management advice and oversight during an incident, and ensures Council is responding effectively according to their responsibilities. The MEM is responsible for overall management and coordination of the delivery of Council's emergency management activities when activated.

Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator (MERC)

The MERC is a legislated position under the *Emergency Management Act 2013* and is responsible for the effective coordination of emergency response within the municipality. The MERC is a member of Victoria Police and the position is held by the Station Commander, Knox Police. The role is detailed in Part 3 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria.

Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO)

The MERO is responsible for the coordination of municipal resources including personnel and equipment to be used in emergency response, relief and recovery operations. This position operates with a high level of autonomy. Accountable for the efficient and effective management of Council's resources in relation to community emergencies.

The MERO is responsible for authorising relevant expenditure in accordance with Council delegations.

Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)

The MRM is responsible for ensuring the coordinated allocation of resources and delivery of relief and recovery activities undertaken by Council and relief and recovery agencies in support of impacted individuals and communities.

In situations where recovery activities are likely to extend into the medium to longer term, the MRM may undertake strategic recovery planning to meet the needs of impacted communities in partnership with recovery agencies. This may include representing Council on Regional Recovery Teams convened by DHHS.

This position operates with a high level of autonomy and is accountable for the efficient and effective management of Council's resources in relation to community emergencies.

The MRM is responsible for authorising relevant expenditure in accordance with Council delegations.

Public Information Officer (PIO)

The PIO will gather, assemble and disseminate timely, tailored and relevant information to stakeholders. The PIO is accountable for all emergency public information (internal and external) activity.

Emergency Management Liaison Officer (EMLO)

Council's EMLO is a representative of Council that is typically located at the Incident Control Centre (ICC) as part of the Incident Emergency Management Team (IEMT).

They provide a communication link that enables Council (MERO and/or MRM) and the ICC to exchange information. The EMLO must pro-actively seek situational awareness and intelligence to inform relief and recovery requirements, community information, council operations and secondary impact assessment.

Regional Emergency Management Team (REMT) Representative

The REMT Representative acts on behalf of the Eastern Metropolitan Councils and liaises with the Regional Controller as part of the Regional Emergency Management Team. They play a key role in:

- coordination of local government resource supplementation needs from across the region;
- consolidating local government information for regional reporting (including impact assessment information); and
- supporting regional incident planning.

The REMT Representative represents the interests of councils in another agency's facility.

They have the authority to provide advice and guidance on behalf of councils in the region but must communicate all requests and complex matters back to each Council (MEM/MERO/MRM) to make the decision.

The REMT Representative has no financial delegation or authority to deploy resources, but is authorised to arrange the commitment of Council owned or controlled resources on behalf of the Council(s) they represent in support of response, relief and recovery efforts.

Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO)

Knox City Council, under the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*, is required to appoint an MFPO to undertake and regularly review Council's fire prevention program. The role will maintain, update and document Councils Fire Hazard Inspection and Enforcement Program and provide regular reporting to the MEMPC.

The chart at Figure 1 shows the Council Emergency Operations Structure

Planning arrangements
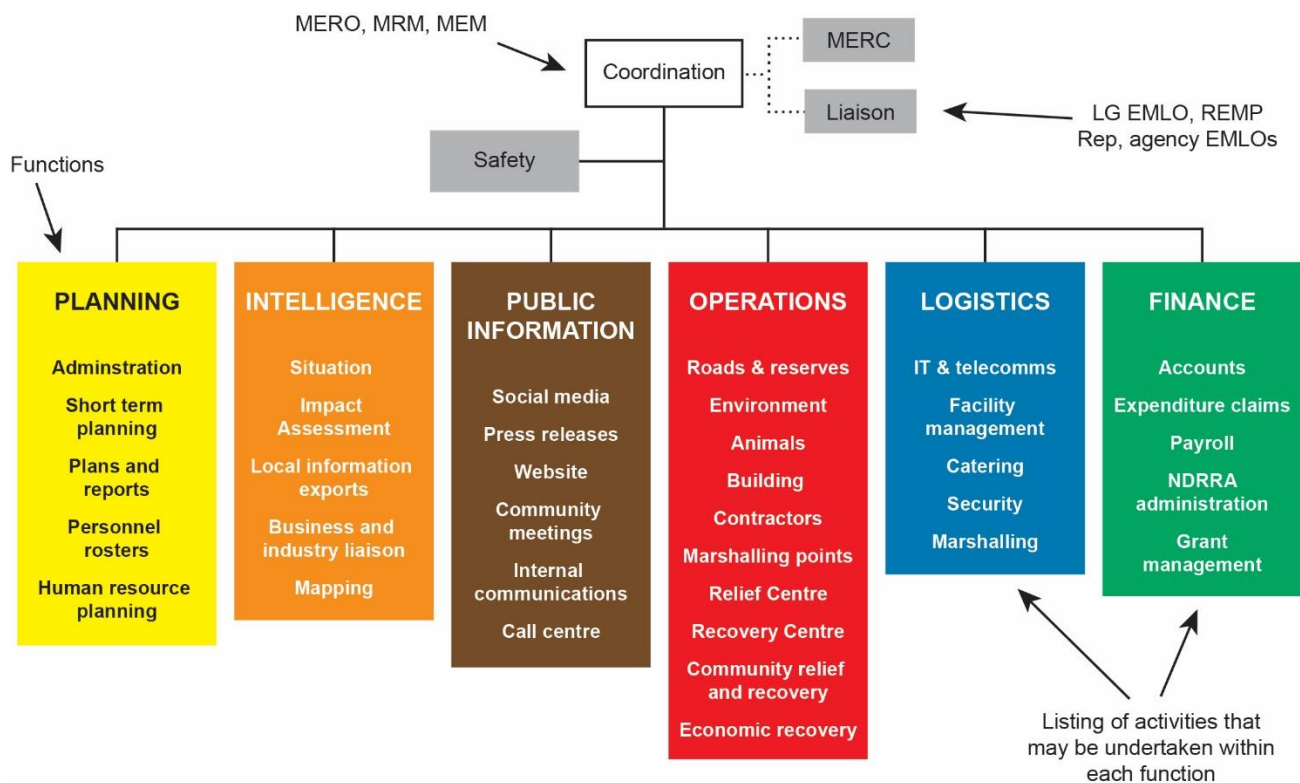
Figure 1. Council Emergency Operations Structure

3.3 Audit requirements and process

The ongoing administration and maintenance of this Plan is the responsibility of the Coordinator Emergency Management. Following MEMPC adoption of any amendments the Coordinator Emergency Management will implement the changes in the master plan managed by the Emergency Management team. Crisisworks and internet copies will also be replaced and the amended version emailed to the MEMPC distribution list.

This Plan is subject to audit every three years, or earlier, as determined by the Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES). As per the arrangements detailed above, the Plan will be maintained on an ongoing basis and endorsed by the MEMPC, to ensure it remains current and reflective of legislative, operational and planning changes and/or amendments during the time between audits.

The following process is implemented at audit to address all specified requirements:

- The Plan is reviewed in line with the audit requirements outlined in Part 6, Appendix 2 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV)

– or as otherwise determined by VICSES. This review is undertaken in collaboration with the assigned VICSES Regional Emergency Management Officer.

- All new updates and edits made to the pre-existing Plan will be presented to the MEMPC as per the process outlined above.
- Once endorsed by the MEMPC, the Plan will be presented to Council for adoption.
- The Plan will then be lodged with the State Library on the 'public document register'.
- Following MEMPC endorsement and Council adoption of the Plan, VICSES will convene an Audit Committee Meeting, including representatives from Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Victoria Police. The Plan will be audited and scored against specified criteria at this audit committee meeting.
- VICSES will formally notify Council in writing of the outcome of the audit and issue a Statement of Audit Certification for inclusion in the Plan.

4. Prevention/mitigation arrangements

4.1 Background/Introduction

Knox City Council recognises its key role in prevention and mitigation activities. Council's policies relating to land management and building codes ensure that all measures are addressed to reduce the likelihood and impact of emergencies.

The MEMPC plays a key role in prevention via the identification of potential hazards and their associated risks and consequences. These identified risks and consequence are then considered and specifically planned for during the development and implementation of plans, policies and procedures.

The ability of a community to respond to an emergency situation, and in turn recover from the effects of an emergency will depend greatly on the level of resilience the people affected inherently have. Knox, through its MEMPC, and its Sub Committees, will support appropriate prevention and awareness programs to encourage community resilience.

Prevention is defined as the development and implementation of strategies and associated measures to reduce the occurrence of and mitigate the consequences of identified emergency risks on the community and environment.

Preparedness focuses on ensuring the risks and management strategies identified in prevention planning are utilised. This will assist the local community to be aware of their risks and the potential consequences of a resulting emergency event and to inform and equip them with tools to implement resilience strategies for their own homes and families.

4.2 Risk assessment process

This Plan identifies and prioritises emergency risks that may potentially affect the Knox community and environment. The mitigation and awareness of these risks aims to minimise the effects and consequences of an emergency event on the community.

4.2.1 Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA)

The CERA process is designed to systematically identify hazards, determine risks and prioritise actions to reduce the likelihood and effects of an emergency.

Over the past three years the MEMPC has reviewed the risks identified in the CERA and have updated and refined the risks and strategies for Knox.

The MEMPC considered emergency risk within the following context using the International Standard ISO 31000:

- Whole of community perspective;
- Responsibility for the whole municipality;
- Consideration of events which require multi agency responses;
- Consideration and acknowledgement of existing controls;
- Mitigation activities and their effectiveness, and
- Subsequent level of risk.

Risks were assessed and rated according to consequence and likelihood scales and risk matrices in the CERA tool kit. Through the CERA process an overall 'risk rating' ranging from medium to high was determined.

The updated list of risks in the municipality are:

Risk	Rating confidence	Residual risk rating
Storm	**High**	High
Fire – Bushfire	**High**	High
Human Epidemic/ Pandemic	**High**	High
Heatwave	**High**	Medium
Flash flood	**High**	Medium
HAZMAT	**High**	Medium
Road Traffic Incident	**High**	Medium
Fire - Structure	**High**	Medium
Service Disruption - Utilities>2 days	**High**	Medium

To ensure appropriate planning and mitigation strategies are in place for the risks identified, hazard specific plans have been developed and adopted as Sub Plans to this Plan. Additional plans detailing relief and recovery considerations, arrangements and planning have also been developed as Sub Plans.

The CERA was conducted in a manner that did not intend to exclude any form of emergency, with the document adopting a flexible "all hazards approach".

The MEMPC is responsible for reviewing the CERA process at least once every three years prior to audit. The MEMPC continues to review risks as a standing agenda item for its quarterly meetings. This process will be administered by the Coordinator Emergency Management and, if required, an updated draft plan will be presented to the MEMPC for endorsement. Sub Plans will be reviewed for currency annually or as required. When required this work will be with the relevant sub-committee or working group for that hazard.

4.2.2 Victorian Fire Risk Register – Bushfire (VFRR-B)

The VFRR-B is a systematic process that helps to identify assets at risk from bushfire, assesses the level of risk to these assets and highlights the treatments currently in place along with the responsible agencies for implementing these strategies. Outputs from the VFRR-B inform and support this plan. The assets of the VFRR-B are divided into four classes; human settlement, economic, and cultural heritage.

The VFRR-B was used to identify and address bushfire risks within the Knox municipal area. The VFRR-B is reviewed as required. Risk identification is ongoing as the municipality changes.

4.2.3 Victorian Built Environment Risk Assessment Process (V-BERAP)

The V-BERAP provides a sound platform for conducting a structure fire risk assessment which is clearly defined by a robust 10 step process. The V-BERAP Guideline uses the methodology recognised in the National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (NERAG) which is underpinned by ISO 31000, the International Standard for Risk Management.

A risk working group of subject matter experts and key Council staff was formed. During the first workshop risks were identified by their building class via the following statement "There is potential that an accidental ignition will result in a fire in a:

- Class 2 building (flats, apartments)
- Class 8 building (factory)
- Class 1(a) building (house)
- Unregistered/illegal Class 1(b) building (boarding house)
- Class 9(c) building (aged care facility)
- Class 3 building (large boarding house)

that in turn will cause serious injury or loss of life, economic loss and/or displacement."

Using available evidence, the expertise in the room and participant agreement, the group identified the consequence categories for the above building classes to include – 'People' and 'Economy', with 'Social Setting' also identified for Class 2 and Class 1(b) buildings and 'Environment' also identified for Class 8 buildings. A risk assessment was then completed for each consequence category.

4.3   Community awareness and resilience

One increasing challenge facing the emergency management sector is balancing community expectation while promoting and building community resilience when dealing with, or preparing for emergencies. Raising awareness within the community about emergency risks and their potential consequences is the responsibility of all agencies including Council. There are a number of strategies used in education, awareness and resilience building programs to ensure a broad spectrum of the community are engaged.

Strategies currently utilised include:

- Hosting information on public websites
- Social media
- Distribution of brochures/print media
- School based disaster resilience education programs
- Mail outs
- Displays at festivals, shopping centres and within the community.

4.4   Emergency support staff

Knox has a comprehensive list of trained staff who do not have a substantive position in emergency management, but who have offered their skills to support Council during emergencies.

4.5   Emergency exercises

Knox identifies the need to be an active member in emergency management within the municipal emergency management and local community environments. Knox is actively involved in a number of areas to test preparedness and to assist in creating community resilience to emergency situations.

Knox is an active member of the Eastern Metro Councils Emergency Management Partnership EMC EMP and has participated in the annual Regional ERC exercise – Exercise East.

Knox has participated in multi-agency events and exercises including:

- Active Armed Offender Management Exercise – November 2016
- Active Armed Offender Relief and Recovery Exercise – June 2017
- Exercise East 2017 - Knox Council - October 2017
- Exercise Connect – EMLO Exercise – North West Region – November 2017
- Active Armed Offender for Crowded Places Guideline - Whitehorse Council December 2017
- Marshalling Point Exercise – Yarra Ranges – February 2018
- Resilient Recovery Workshop – June 2018
- Exercise East 2018 – Whitehorse and Maroondah Council - October 2018

5. Response arrangements

5.1 Introduction

Emergency response focuses on the control of emergencies and the provision of rescue and immediate relief services for people affected by emergencies. This includes the provision for requests for physical assistance from regional, State and Commonwealth levels of government when municipal resources are exhausted.

Part 3 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV) outlines the State level arrangements for response in Victoria.

The State has endorsed a set of emergency management priorities to underpin and guide all decisions made during emergencies in Victoria. The priorities focus on the primacy of life and the issuing of community warnings and information in order to assist people to make informed decisions about their safety. The priorities are detailed on page 10 of this plan.

Emergency response operations are managed via three operational tiers which include State, regional and incident levels.

The following section outlines the arrangements in place for the activation and implementation of response activities for emergency events impacting the Knox municipality; including regional collaborative arrangements to facilitate effective response to emergency events that impact on an area larger than the municipality.

5.1.1 Definitions of Emergencies

Emergencies are classified into three classes according to the EMMV:

"Class 1 emergency" means a major fire; or any other major emergency for which the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board, the Country Fire Authority or the Victoria State Emergency Service Authority is the control agency under the State Emergency Response Plan.

"Class 2 emergency" means a major emergency which is not a Class 1 emergency; or a warlike act or act of terrorism, whether directed at Victoria or a part of Victoria or any other state or territory of the Commonwealth; or a hi-jack, siege or riot.

"Class 3 emergency" (also known as security emergencies) are classified as a warlike act or act of terrorism, where directed at Victoria or at any other state or Territory of the Commonwealth or a hi-jack, siege or riot.

5.2 Command, Control, Coordination, Consequence, Communication and Community Connection

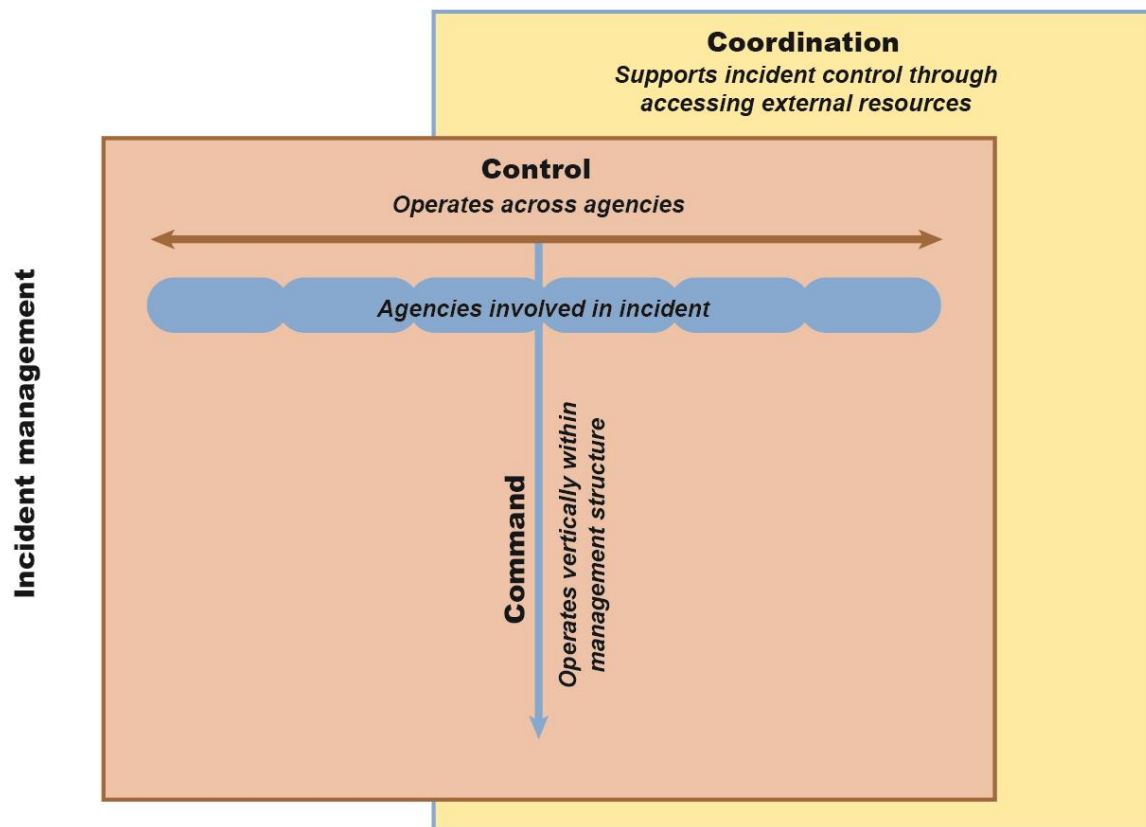**Figure 2**: Victoria's Emergency Management Arrangements, demonstrating Command, Control, Coordination and the Emergency Management Team.

5.2.1 Command

Command is the internal direction of personnel and resources, operating vertically within an agency. Each agency has a 'chain of command', which is the agency's organisational hierarchy that identifies the link between each individual and their supervisor.

5.2.2 Control

Control is the overall direction of response activities in an emergency, operating horizontally across agencies. In Victoria, authority for control is established in Part 3 of the EMMV (State Emergency Response Plan) with the agency responsible for control of emergency response (known as the 'Control Agency') being specified in Part 7 of the EMMV – Emergency Agency Roles.

5.2.3 Coordination

Coordination is the bringing together of agencies and resources to ensure effective response to and recovery from emergencies.

Emergency response coordinators bring together agencies and resources to support the response to emergencies.

Emergency recovery coordinators/managers bring together agencies and resources to support the provision of relief and recovery from emergencies.

5.2.4 Consequence

Consequence management involves the coordination of the activities of agencies with a role in delivering of services to the community, with the aim of minimising the adverse consequences of emergencies on the community. During a major emergency all agencies may need to activate their business continuity arrangements in order to manage the adverse consequences of the emergency on their area of responsibility.

Consequence management informs and is a precursor to relief and recovery activities. The Emergency Management Commissioner is responsible for consequence management for major emergencies but will be supported by agencies implementing their business continuity arrangements.

5.2.5 Communication

Communications relates to communicating to the public, reporting to government and communicating with stakeholder agencies during emergencies. The Emergency Management Commissioner is responsible for the communication function for major emergencies, but will be supported by the relevant Control Agency.

5.2.6 Community Connection

Safer and more resilient communities is always the aim of any emergency management planning. Community connection is around the understanding of and connecting with trusted networks, trusted leaders and all communities to support resilience and decision making.

5.3   Emergency Management Teams

The three tiers of control, scalable as required from incident through regional and on to state, support the six C's of Coordination, Control, Command, Consequence, Communication and Community Connection functions.

Incident Emergency Management Team (IEMT)

The IEMT supports the Incident Controller. Their focus is on managing the effect and consequences of the emergency.

Regional Emergency Management Team (REMT)

The REMT supports the RERC and those exercising control at a regional level (Regional Controllers). Their focus is to raise awareness of the emergency across the whole of government, identify and manage strategic risks and consequences and develop a regional strategic plan outlining high level actions of all agencies.

State Emergency Management Team (SEMT)

The State EMT (SEMT), is usually located at the State Control Centre or other location determined by the control agency.

If an emergency requires activation of a state tier response the SEMT is formed comprising senior representatives from response, recovery, support agencies and relevant departments. The role of the SEMT is to develop consistent situational awareness, identify strategic state risks and consequences and to develop a strategic plan with high level all agency actions.

5.4   Phases of activation

Response arrangements should be implemented at the earliest possible opportunity if the effects of emergencies are to be minimised, for this reason several phases of activation have been accepted by Knox City Council for internal activation. These are:

ALERT

Upon receipt of warning or information that an emergency may occur or affect the relevant area of responsibility, the Council's Emergency Management Team must be alerted to ensure its readiness to act if called upon. Some of the activities that should be considered in this phase are:

- Warning for key Council officers
- Testing of communication arrangements
- Establish flow of information between Council and Control/Support

STAND BY

As the threat, or the effect of the emergency, becomes imminent, Council officers are placed on standby, thus being ready to move immediately if they are required. Some of the activities that should be considered in this phase are:

- Ensure MECC is made ready
- Prepare equipment and personnel for immediate action

ACTION

This is the operational phase of the emergency when control and support agencies are committed to contain or control the emergency. Some operations may necessitate moving to the "ACTION phase" immediately without the "ALERT" and "STANDBY" phases being implemented. For this reason, Council maintains a state of preparedness at all times.

Some of the activities that should be considered in this phase are:

- Mobilise personnel/equipment as requested
- Produce situation reports on regular bases for higher authorities

STAND DOWN

After consultation with Control Agencies and any other relevant agency, and the MERO is satisfied that the response to the emergency has been completed, the MERC will advise all participating agencies of "STAND DOWN".

Figure 3: Phases of activation

5.5 Local response arrangements and responsible agencies

Part 7 of the EMMV details a 'control agency' and 'support agencies' for a range of emergencies. It is the control agency's responsibility to plan for the relevant emergency and ensure that adequate resources are in place. Knox City Council is not a control agency but is a support agency for a range of emergencies.

Where there is any doubt as to who is the control agency, the Emergency Management Commissioner, RERC, MERC or Incident Emergency Response Coordinator (IERC) will determine who will exercise control.

Local incident response is coordinated at a municipal level by the MERO. The request usually comes from the coordinator of the response agency who is at the incident. The MERO attends to the requests received. The MERC/MERO may direct and authorise the use of physical resources in response to the local incident. Following the direction of the Incident Controller, the MERC, in consultation with the MERO, may direct the establishment of a MECC or a municipal relief centre to be placed on standby. The escalation of Council's response is to advise the MRM.

The objective of the response phase of this plan is to minimise the effects of an emergency on affected persons and property within the Knox municipality.

This is achieved by coordinating municipal resources to assist responding agencies, and in providing community support, as requested, or as the situation requires.

The basic functions at a local level can include all or any of the following:

- Provision of resources as available and needed by the community and response agencies
- Establishment of Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre – facilities and staffing
- Under the direction of the control agency facilitate the delivery of warnings to the community
- Guided by the control agency, provision of information to public and media
- Coordination of the provision and operation of emergency relief centres and emergency shelters
- Clearance of blocked drains and reinstatement of local roads, including tree removal and other physical works as deemed appropriate and where possible
- Support to Victoria Police for partial/full road closures and determination of alternative routes
- Repairing or replacing damaged public utilities, services and assets.

5.6 Process for sourcing additional resources

Where additional resources are required beyond the original control agency, the Incident Controller should:

- Seek response agency resources directly through the response agency commanders.
- Seek supplementary resources, other than those of the responding agencies, through the IERC or MERC/MERO.
- Seek relief or recovery resources through the MRM/through the IERC or MERC/MERO.

Following a request:

- The IERC or MERC will seek resources within the local area (through the MERO) and the MERC will escalate unfulfilled resource requests to the RERC.

- RERCs will seek resources within their region and escalate unfulfilled resource requests to the Emergency Management Commissioner.

- The Emergency Management Commissioner will seek resources from across the State, interstate or internationally where necessary.

Depending on the scale of the incident a MECC may be established by the IERC or MERC in consultation with the MERO.

Knox City Council is a signatory to the MAV Protocol for Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing.

5.7 Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre

Knox City Council, through the MERO, is responsible for planning the establishment and operation of primary and alternative MECCs.

The purpose of the MECC is to provide a location for the coordination of Council and community resources in support of the response to emergencies. It is not the control centre for an emergency. An Incident Control Centre may be established by the control agency if the emergency is significant enough to warrant it.

The MECC will be activated only to the level of activity necessary in providing support to the emergency. In minor events this might involve only a few staff, through to a major emergency requiring significant resources over a long period.

The function of emergency coordination for Council can be undertaken easily from a variety of locations which provide flexible options including operating on site or at ICC if required.

5.8 Council resources list

A list of resources owned by Council is located in Appendix D – Council resources list. This list also includes a range of contractors where non-Council owned resources can be obtained.

A copy of this list is also included in Crisisworks.

5.9 Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre activation procedure

In the first instance, the control agency will notify the MERC that there is a requirement for additional resources. The MERC will then contact the MERO. At the municipal level, resources owned or under the control of Council may be used to supplement those of the control and support agencies.

Knox City Council's 24 hour number 9298 8000 also provides access to the Council MERO to initiate MEMP response arrangements as required. The activation level is dependent upon the scale of the emergency and is determined by the MERC in consultation with the MERO.

5.9.1 Level 1 – Small scale incidents (less than 24hr impact)

A small scale emergency that can be resolved through the use of local or initial response resources. The MECC might not necessarily be activated with the MERC and MERO in close communication at all times. Consequently, the MERC and MERO will undertake the planning and logistics functions concurrently and will activate the MRM as required to provide relief and recovery support if required (virtual MECC). They will also monitor the emergency and its impact on the area, the community, the weather, and other elements/variables that might lead to a higher level of activation.

5.9.2   Level 2 – Medium scale incidents

A medium scale emergency is more complex in size, resources or risk. The MECC may be activated. If activated the function will be the deployment of resources beyond initial response, and multi-agency representation in the MECC. The emergency may potentially require forward planning to address response issues, and for recovery during the response phase.

5.9.3   Level 3 – Large scale incidents

A large scale emergency is characterised by levels of complexity that require the activation and establishment of all MECC functions. This level of emergency will require forward planning as the emergency continues and will specifically require recovery planning during the early stages of the response phase of the emergency.

These descriptions are in line with the Australasian Inter Service Incident Management System (AIIMs) Classification of incidents. Further information on accessing supplementary supplies can found in Practice Note - Sourcing Supplementary Emergency Response Resources from Municipal Councils.

5.10   Financial considerations

Financial accounting for municipal resources utilised in emergencies must be authorised by the MEM, MERO or the MRM and shall be in accordance with the normal financial arrangements of Knox City Council.

Control agencies are responsible for all costs involved in that agency responding to an emergency. Depending on the magnitude of the emergency some government financial assistance may be available for prevention, response and recovery activities. Knox City Council is accountable for any monies donated to it as a result of any emergency event and will implement systems to receive and account for all such donations.

5.11   Evacuation

Evacuation is the planned relocation of persons from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas to safer areas and their eventual return. The decision to evacuate rests with the control agency in conjunction with Police and available expert advice, unless time constraints prevent this consultation.

Evacuation may be undertaken by individuals, families and households on their own volition and independent of any advice, or it may be after an assessment of information provided by a control agency.

Examples of events that may require immediate evacuation include fire, floods, hazardous materials accidents/incidents, air crash or earthquake. In some life-threatening circumstances, and in an effort to preserve life, this decision to evacuate may be made by any agency representative and in these circumstances, the Incident Controller must be notified of this decision as soon as possible.

Once the decision to evacuate has been made, the MERC and Council representatives (MEM, MERO and MRM) should be contacted.

The MERO/MRM will assist the MERC by:

- Arranging a suitable assembly area if the pre-determined locations are not appropriate

- Providing transport resources and the determination of the location to which evacuees will be asked to attend

- Establishing and activating emergency relief centres - including consideration of which location is the most appropriate in the circumstances

- Providing advice on local area information to assist with the traffic flow of evacuated persons out of the area and emergency services into the area

- Providing vulnerable person/facility information and advice for relocation and other relief services.

In Victoria, evacuation is largely voluntary. The Incident Controller makes a recommendation to evacuate and it is the choice of individuals as to how they respond to this recommendation.

However, in particular circumstances legislation provides some emergency service personnel with authority to remove people from areas or prohibit their entry.

The *Emergency Management Act 1986 Section 36A* makes provision for the declaration by Police of an emergency area if normal community activities and freedom of movement must be restricted because of the size, nature or location of an emergency, and when the extreme powers available under a declared state of disaster are not needed or would take too long to implement. People and vehicles may be prevented from remaining in or entering the emergency area. However, this power is limited when a person claims pecuniary interest in a property or goods or valuables in a property within the emergency area. If the person claiming pecuniary interest is not on that property, they can be directed to leave or prevented from entering the emergency area. However, if they are located on the property then they cannot be required to leave.

By exception, the *Terrorism (Community Protection) Act 2003* (Sections 16, 18 & 21) provides that a senior officer of Police, if suspecting that an area has, or people in that area may have, been exposed to such contamination by a terrorist act, may authorise a member of the force to direct a person or groups of persons to enter, not to enter, or to leave, any particular premises or area. Police may use reasonable and necessary force to ensure compliance with any authorised direction.

When the possibility of an evacuation is being considered, Victoria Police will identify a member to take the role of Evacuation Manager (EMMV: Appendix 9 Evacuation Guidelines). The Evacuation Manager should be co-located with the Incident Controller at the ICC, or if no ICC exists, at the location where control is exercised

5.12 Public information and warnings

Emergency warning systems have been established to warn individuals and communities in the event of a major emergency. Although these systems aim to improve the ability to warn communities about emergencies, individuals and communities still need to prepare themselves in case of an emergency.

It is important to ensure that public information and warnings are maintained at an optimum level for specific circumstances where community action is necessary, primarily to protect lives, and also for the protection of property and environment.

The localised arrangements for warnings and information come from the State Emergency Response Plan.

The Incident Controller is responsible for issuing warnings and community information.

Where an extreme and imminent threat to life exists and authorisation from the Incident Controller is not practicable in the circumstances, warnings may be issued by any response agency personnel with notification to the Incident Controller as soon as possible.

The Emergency Coordination Sub Plan outlines the roles and accountability in the municipal context.

5.13 Neighbourhood Safer Places (places of last resort) and fire refuges

Neighbourhood safer places and community fire refuges can be provided for community as last resort survival options. They do not replace having a well thought out and practiced survival plan.

Knox does not have any designated Neighbourhood Safer Places or fire refuges, given there are a number of accessible areas such as shopping centres, libraries and other community facilities available.

5.14 Emergency Relief Centres

Knox Council will utilise the most appropriate facility at the time, in consultation with the control agency.

All relief centre information can be found in the Emergency Relief Centre Sub Plan.

5.15 Planning for cross municipality events

Planning for both response and recovery at the regional level is always necessary as emergencies respect no boundaries and will often traverse multiple municipal boundaries.

Further, planning for cross boundary events is necessary as often services provided by State government agencies are administered and delivered at a regional level.

Knox has participated in a number of cross Council, multi-agency training exercises to better prepare for emergencies which have the potential to affect numerous Council boundaries.

Knox is a member of the Eastern Metropolitan Councils Emergency Management Partnership (EMC EMP) and is represented on a number of regional working groups helping to build regional relationships and support to strengthen Councils' ability to support each other in emergencies.

New and emerging risks are communicated both at regional planning committees and through regional partnerships.

5.16 Inter-council resource sharing

Knox City Council is a signatory to the 'Protocol for Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing' coordinated by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV). The Protocol provides an agreed position between councils for the provision of inter-council assistance for response and recovery activities during an emergency.

This Protocol is most commonly enacted for emergency support staff requests to fulfil MECC and ERC shifts. Requests for resources from another Council should be made through the MERO.

5.17 Debriefing arrangements

For local level emergencies, the MERC is responsible for ensuring the control agency for the emergency organises an operational debrief with participating agencies as soon as practicable after the cessation of response activities.

The aim of a debrief is to assess the adequacy of the response activities and recommend any changes to relevant agency plan(s) and future operational response activities.

The Regional Emergency Response Coordinator (RERC) holds these responsibilities for regional level events, which must include local response agency participation.

Where a MECC has been activated during an emergency, all emergency support staff that undertook their allocated MECC roles will be debriefed by the Coordinator Emergency Management and/or the MERO as soon as practicable following the cessation of MECC operations.

This debrief will be delivered with an aim to assess the adequacy of the MECC operations and to identify and make recommendations for future planning and operations related to the MECC. Psychological debriefing will also be made available as required.

5.18 Response to Recovery – transition

Transition requirements to effectively transfer control and coordination responsibilities from response agencies to relief/recovery agencies is required for all major incidents and may also be required for local level incidents that have resulted in significant impacts on the local community requiring continued provision of relief and/or recovery services.

The MERO, MRM and MERC will start planning for the transition from response to relief/recovery, as soon as possible following the initial impact of an emergency.

Relief typically commences at the same time as response activities, and therefore formalised transition from the response (during) phase to relief and recovery (after) is deemed to be at the point when the control activities associated with the emergency have ceased, and the provision for relief and/or early recovery services continue to be required by the affected community.

Issues to be considered for the timing of transition from response and recovery include:

- The nature of the emergency and what ongoing specialist resources are required;

- Whether a recurring threat is likely to occur compounding the impact on the community;

- The extent of the impact on communities, as this may determine the length of the transition period;

- The level of loss/damage and the extent to which this has been validated (the stage of impact assessment reached eg. if phasing into secondary/post impact stages may indicate transition requirements);

- The extent to which the community requires emergency relief services;

- The resources required for the activation of recovery arrangements, and

- The transition agreement will be developed at the appropriate level between the response agency Incident Controller, MERC, MERO, MRM and the recovery agency coordinator (typically DHHS).

The Knox Relief and Recovery Sub Plan provides details on how the coordination of activities, resources and information is managed effectively between the response agencies to the recovery organisations to support this changeover or responsibility.

6. Relief and recovery arrangements

6.1 Introduction

Emergency relief is the provision of essential needs to individuals, families and communities in the immediate aftermath of an emergency. Relief services could be provided at the site of an emergency, a dedicated relief centre, places of community gathering, isolated communities, transit sites or other safe locations as appropriate. Relief is the first stage of recovery and must be seamlessly integrated with all other early recovery activities.

Recovery is assisting individuals and communities affected by emergencies to achieve an effective level of functioning. Recovery planning must ensure that there is a clear understanding of the community context (prior to the emergency) and is based on continuing assessment of impacts and needs.

Both relief and recovery begin when an emergency occurs and many response, relief and recovery activities are undertaken concurrently. Typically, relief is provided during and in the immediate aftermath of an emergency. Recovery is generally a longer term process for affected individuals and communities.

6.2 Municipal relief arrangements

Emergency relief is the provision of immediate shelter, life support, and personal needs of people affected by, or responding to an emergency. It includes the establishment, management and provision of services to emergency relief/recovery centres.

Council is responsible for the local relief arrangements such as the establishment and management of Emergency Relief Centres (ERC).

6.2.1 Management structure

A request may come from an ICC to open an ERC to support an emergency. In consultation with the Incident Controller the selection of an ERC will be determined by the MERO, in consultation with the MERC and the MRM.

6.2.2 Summary of relief arrangements, roles and responsibilities

Council is responsible for the coordination and provision of relief services for affected community during times of emergency. Knox is an active member of the Eastern Metro Councils Emergency Management Partnership (EMC EMP) and has adopted the Emergency Relief Centre Sub Plan. The Sub Plan details the arrangements that are in place for the activation, management and deactivation of ERCs for municipal and regional scale events.

An ERC is a building or place established to provide (temporary) support and essential needs to persons affected by or involved in the management of an emergency. The Centre will provide for basic needs only including shelter, food and water. Emergency relief agencies may also set up at the centre to provide emergency affected people with grants, material aid, Register Find Reunite, first aid, accommodation, and psychosocial support.

Further details on the roles and responsibilities of government and community organisations involved in the provision of relief services are detailed in the Emergency Relief Centre Sub Plan.

The ERC is managed by a range of trained ERC staff and supported by Council's emergency support staff as required. Knox City Council is a member of the Eastern Metropolitan Councils Emergency Management Partnership (EMC EMP) and has arrangements in place for trained staff to support the operation of ERC services when local resources are overwhelmed. There may be occasions when Knox will set up a relief centre, locally in support of an emergency in another municipality, for example Yarra Ranges Council.

Knox City Council has three regional ERCs. Details of these Centres including roles and responsibilities, standby arrangements, activation, set up and deactivation, copies of Facility Plans including traffic management plans are available in the Emergency Relief Centre Sub Plan.

6.2.3 Role of Department of Health and Human Services in relief/recovery

Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) is responsible for state-level relief and recovery coordination.

Relief and recovery coordination arrangements at the regional levels are the responsibility of DHHS and municipal councils have the responsibility at the local level.

6.3 Recovery arrangements

Section 46 of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* appoints the Emergency Management Commissioner with the responsibility for the coordination of agencies in line with the State Emergency Recovery Plan. Municipal councils take the lead in delivering on the ground relief and recovery services, because they are closest to an affected community. The Victorian government supports municipalities to fulfil these local responsibilities.

Figure 4 shows the relationship between State, regional and local level for relief and recovery coordination.

Section 4.6 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV) outlines municipal responsibilities for relief and recovery. The requirements include:

- Development and implementation of the MEMP
- Forming and convening of the MEMPC
- Appointment of an MRM
- The aligned responsibilities of the MERO for notification to the MRM for relief and recovery needs during emergencies
- Leading the provision of local public information to affected individuals in relief and recovery;
- Participation in local relief and recovery impact assessments – sharing any information gathered with Victorian Government agencies, as requested
- Development and maintenance of a Relief and Recovery Plan that is aligned with the requirements specified in Appendix 7, Part 4 of the EMMV.

In the City of Knox, planning and preparedness for recovery is undertaken by the Recovery Planning Sub Committee (RPSC). This Committee reports to the MEMPC.

Relief and recovery are responsibilities that require collaboration and coordination shared between individuals and communities, non-government organisations, businesses and government agencies.

A range of Council service units, external agencies and organisations form the RPSC, which is chaired by the Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM). The Deputy Chairs of this committee are the Deputy MRMs. Operational recovery at the municipal level is driven by the four environments of social, economic, built, and natural.

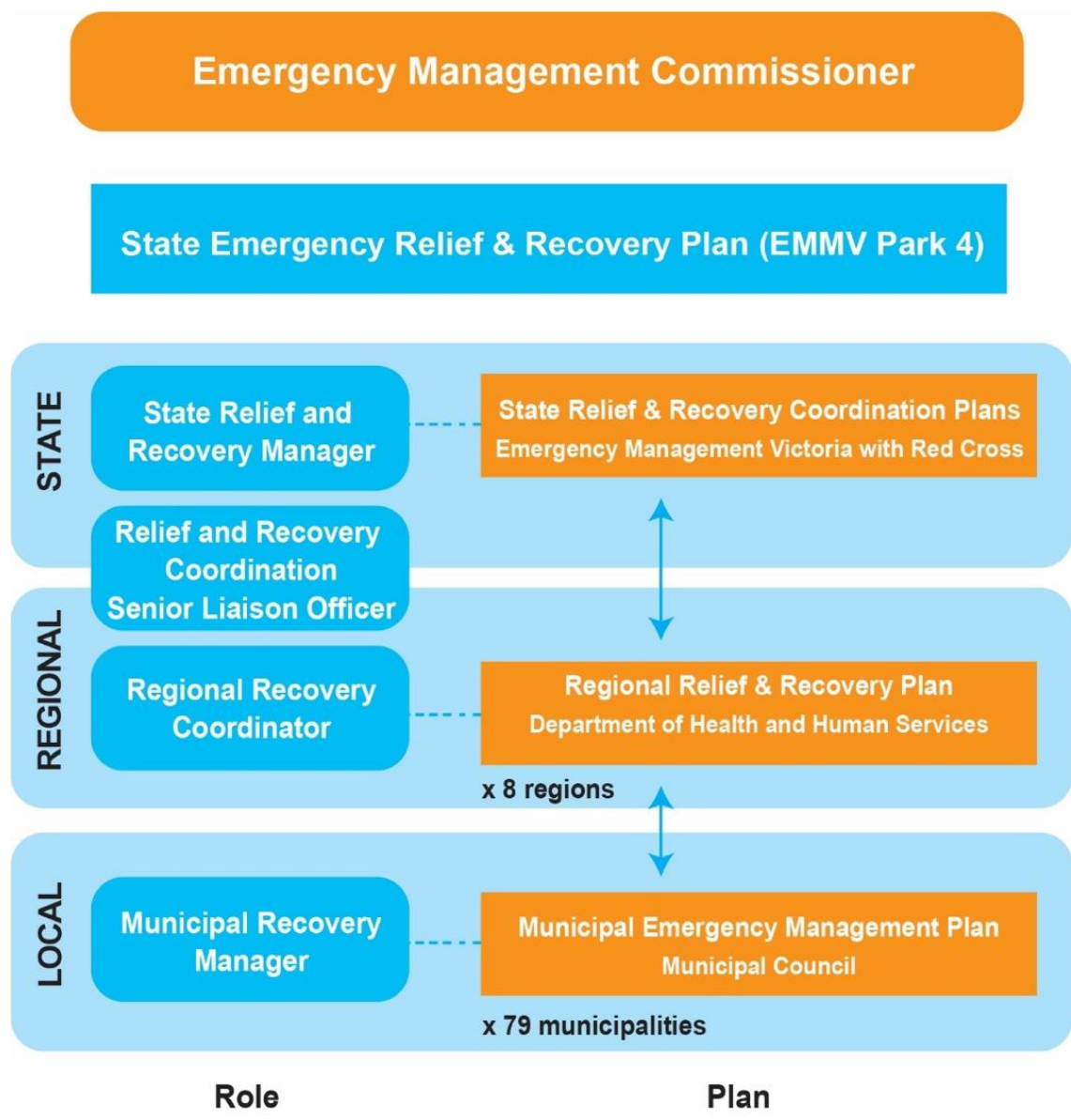**Figure 4**: The three levels of relief and recovery coordination in Victoria

6.3.1   Objectives of recovery

Recovery at all levels of government is implemented in alignment with the nationally recognised disaster recovery principles, to ensure successful recovery is delivered to affected communities. These principles are:

- Understanding the context
- Recognising complexity
- Using community-led approaches
- Coordinating all activities
- Communicating effectively
- Recognising and building capacity

Recovery requires collaboration between individuals, communities, all levels of government, non-government organisations and businesses across four inter-related recovery environments:

1. Social environment – the emotional, social, spiritual, financial and physical wellbeing of affected individuals and communities;

2. Built environment – the restoration of essential and community infrastructure;

3. Economic environment - the revitalisation of the affected economy; and

4. Natural environment – the rehabilitation of the affected environment.

Recovery initiatives may address specific elements of one or multiple aspects of the above recovery environments.

The functional areas of recovery; social, built, economic and natural environments; will lead the recovery planning process at the municipal level. The implementation of recovery requirements in each of the functional environments will be coordinated by the MRM.

The primary responsibility for each of the relevant functional environments will be assigned to the relevant area(s) within Council.

6.3.2   Recovery Centre activation

A Recovery Centre should be a one-stop-shop offering services appropriate to assist the community in recovery. The MRM together with the MERO will identify an appropriate venue for a Recovery Centre. Details of these arrangements are contained in the Recovery Sub Plan.

6.3.3   Government Funding

The Victorian Government provides funding through the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) Fund to assist the Victorian community through Natural disaster relief and recovery payments and infrastructure restoration. Details of these arrangements are contained in the Eastern Metropolitan Region Emergency Coordination Sub Plan,

Appendix A Administration

Amendment history

No.	Amendment date	Amendment details
1	14 November 2018	Major revision and formatting changes in readiness for 8 March 2019 audit by VICSES
2	28 November 2018	Draft Plan presented to the MEMPC
3	1-17 December 2018	Further amendments and comments incorporated from MEMPC consultation. Rewrite of sections in prevention, response, relief and recovery arrangements

Distribution list

This Plan is made available at **www.knox.vic.gov.au**

Members of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning
Committee (MEMPC) may also access this Plan via the Library Tab in Crisisworks.

As required by the EMMV, a hard copy has been sent to:
State Library of Victoria, 328 Swanston St, Melbourne VIC 3000

Appendix B Contact directory

(NOT FOR PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION)

ACTIVATION OF THE PLAN

In the event of an emergency within the Knox municipal area, contact the Knox Police Station on 9881 7000 and ask for the Senior Sergeant/MERC who will activate the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP).

The Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO) can also activate the MEMP 24 hours a day on 9298 8000.

Appendix C
Special plans and arrangements

Hazard Sub Plans

Knox Municipal Fire Management Plan

Knox Storm and Flood Emergency Plan

Eastern Metro Region Local Government Extreme Heat Plan

Eastern Metro Local Government Pandemic Influenza Plan

Sub Plans

Knox Municipal Recovery Plan

Emergency Relief Centre Sub Plan - Eastern Metropolitan Councils Emergency Management Partnership

Eastern Metropolitan Region Emergency Coordination Sub Plan

Functional Plans

Eastern Metropolitan Councils Emergency Animal Welfare Plan

Knox Public Health Plan

Arrangements and other documents

Knox Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee Terms of Reference

Disaster Recovery Tool Kit

Emergency Relief Centre Facility Management Plans

Practice Note - Sourcing Supplementary Emergency

Response Resources from Municipal Councils

Appendix D Council Resources List

(NOT FOR PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION)