Warrnambool Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2023-26

The Warrnambool Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee acknowledges the Gunditjmara and the Kirrae Whurrong people as the traditional custodians of the lands of the Warrnambool area.

We acknowledge the descendants and ancestors of the Aboriginal nations within the lands forming the Great South Coast, and particularly the elders of the indigenous communities in both Warrnambool and this Region.

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DOCUMENT CONTROL AND DETAILS

Distribution of the MEMP

The Warrnambool City Council Municipal Emergency Management Plan (the MEMP or *the plan*) is for the use of members of the Warrnambool City Council Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC). The Warrnambool City Council MEMP and amended versions will be distributed to the Warrnambool City Council MEMPC electronically.

Public Access

Public versions are available from:

- Warrnambool City Council website
- State Library of Victoria

The public facing version has information and contact details removed to comply with confidentiality and privacy requirements. The unrestricted version has full details and is made available to the MEMPC membership and approved agencies with a role, or responsibility, detailed in *the plan*. However, it should be noted that these details are only valid at the time of writing and should not be relied on in an emergency. A current list of Barwon South West EM contacts is produced regularly by Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, and is recognised as the best directory for use.

This plan is maintained by the Warrnambool City Council MEMPC for committee member access.

Names and details in *the plan* are only to be used for emergency management purposes and must be managed in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.

Maintenance of the MEMP and MEMPC Contact details

The plan has been prepared by the Warrnambool City Council MEMPC in accordance and compliance with the requirements of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (EM Act 2013) having regard to the guidelines issued under S.77, Guidelines for preparing State, Regional and Municipal Emergency Management Plans.

The Warrnambool City Council MEMPC will review *the plan* every three years, or more frequently as required, to keep it current. Version updates and amendments are produced and distributed by Warrnambool City Council MEMPC using the distribution list in Appendix 2 (Redacted in Public facing versions).

MEMP Contact Details

All enquiries regarding the MEMP should be addressed to:

Municipal Emergency Management Officer
Warrnambool City Council
P.O. Box 198,
WARRNAMBOOL 3280

Telephone: 03 5559 4800

Glossary and Acronyms

Definitions of words and phrases used in the MEMP have the same meaning as those prescribed in the relevant legislation and should be referred to, they include

- *Emergency Management Acts 1986 & 2013*
- Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018
- State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP)

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Authority

In December 2020, the Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018 (EMLA 2018) amended the Emergency Management Act 2013 (EM Act 2013), "*the Act*", to provide for new integrated arrangements for emergency management planning in Victoria at the State, Regional and Municipal levels. It also created an obligation for a Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) to be established in each of the municipal districts of Victoria, including the alpine resorts which, for the purposes of *the Act*, are taken to be a municipal district.

Each MEMPC is a multi-agency collaboration group whose members bring organisational, industry and personal experience to the task of emergency management planning for the municipal district.

The development of the Warrnambool City Council Municipal Emergency Management Plan is pursuant to Section 20(1) of the Emergency Management Act 1986 (EM Act 1986). This plan addresses the prevention of, response to and recovery from emergencies within Warrnambool City Council and is the result of the co-operative efforts of the Emergency Management Planning Committee and the Victoria State Emergency Service, and recognises the previous planning activities in the Municipal area.
This plan has been prepared in accordance with, and complies with, the requirements of *the Act,* having regard to the guidelines for Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees and Emergency Management Plans.

1.2 Plan Assurance and Approval

1.2.1 Assurance

A Statement of Assurance (including a checklist and certificate) has been prepared and submitted to the Barwon South West Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee (BSW-REMPC) pursuant to Section 60AG of *the Act*.

1.2.2 Approval

This plan is approved by the BSW-REMPC. This plan comes into effect once published and remains in effect until superseded by an approved and published update.

1.2.3 Plan Review

To ensure *the plan* provides for a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach to emergency management and is effective, it is reviewed every three years. This complies with Section 60AN of *the Act*.
Any urgent updates (under Section 60AM *the Act*) to *the plan* are permitted if there is a significant risk to life and property should *the plan* not be updated. Urgent updates come into effect when published on Council website and remain in force for a maximum period of three months, unless revoked sooner by the approver. All affected agencies must be made aware of any urgent updates as soon as possible.

Version Control details are listed in Appendix 1.

1.3 Planning Context

The Act requires *the plan* to contain provisions providing for the mitigation, response and relief and recovery from emergencies (before, during and after), and to specify the roles and responsibilities of agencies in relation to emergency management.

It is recommended that *the plan* be read in conjunction with the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP), its Sub-Plans and the Barwon South West Regional Emergency Management Plan (BSW-REMP). For regional level context please view the BSW Environmental Scan Report. A list of agency roles and responsibilities as defined in the SEMP, is available online.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 Aims

The aim of *the plan* is to document agreed emergency management arrangements for emergencies that could potentially occur in the municipality and impact on its communities.
This plan is consistent with the principles underlying the preparation of emergency management plans. These principles require that this plan is:

- Prepared in a collaborative manner
- Prepared in a manner that acknowledges and reflects the importance of community emergency management planning
- Prepared efficiently and effectively

1.4.2 Objectives

The broad objective of *the plan* is to establish the municipal emergency management arrangements that:

- Identify hazards and determine the risk of impact upon the municipality
- Implement measures to prevent or reduce the causes and/or effects of emergencies
- Manage arrangements for the utilisation and implementation of municipal resources in response to emergencies

- Manage support that may be provided to or from adjoining municipalities
- Assist affected communities to recover following an emergency, and
- Complement other local, regional and state planning emergency arrangements.

Both the SEMP and the Barwon South West Regional Emergency Management Plan (BSW-REMP) are available online.

1.5 Testing, Exercising and Evaluation of the MEMP

The SEMP requires *the plan* to be exercised at least once a year. However, this is not required if the MEMP has been enacted due to an emergency in the previous 18 months, unless there is a requirement to exercise for a specific purpose (eg. exercising changes made to *the plan* due to recent emergencies). Exercises are intended to test the arrangements set out in *the plan* to see if they are practical and appropriate in emergency situations.
The Warrnambool City Council MEMPC plans and implements all testing exercises. Exercises are structured to provide the following benefits:

- Provide opportunity for organisations
- Provide an opportunity for the local emergency management community to work together
- Provide education about *the plan* and other programs to the community.

Exercises may be conducted in a variety of formats and may test only parts of the arrangements at various levels of response, relief or recovery management.

Recent exercises are listed in Appendix 4

1.6 History of Major Emergencies

The table below provides details of the major emergencies that have occurred within Warrnambool City as of January 2024

Date	Incident	Outcome
Apr/Jul 1903	Earthquakes	Property Damage, social effects
11 January 1921	Nestor sinks in Hopkins River	10 drown
March 1946	Flood	Evacuations, Drownings in district
February 1983	Ash Wednesday Bushfires (Cudgee / Ballengeich)	50,000 Ha, 9 Deaths, 872 buildings lost or damaged
1995	High Seas Warrnambool	Flooding South Warrnambool
25 January 2005	Mass Drowning at Stingray Bay	5 Deaths
January 2011	Flooding of Merri River & Russells Creek	Flooding in Allansford
22 November 2012	Telstra Exchange Fire	Economic & Social effects due to loss of communications
July 2014	Storm Surge	Merri River mouth flooding and damage to Viaduct Rd
September 2016	Flooding Merri & Hopkins River & Russells Creek	Roads closed
November 2017	Nurdle Spill – from treatment plant into Ocean	Class 2 Emergency Response, EPA investigation and Volunteer Beach Clean up
March 2018	St. Patrick's Day Bushfires	Large Bushfires in Moyne & Corangamite Shires. Warrnambool Relief Centre Open, Warrnambool ICC above capacity.
March 2020	COVID-19 Pandemic	Significant impacts to communities' social, economic and physical health.
October 2020	Storm Event (AGRN 939)	Hopkins River high through Allansford and local roads
October 2022	Storm Event (AGRN 1037)	Hopkins River high through Allansford and local roads
September 2023	Storm Event (AGRN 1069)	Local road closures
December 2023	Storm Event (AGRN 1096)	Tree and Building Damage, local flooding of 3 properties

2 CONTEXT

2.1 The Land

Warrnambool City Council is located on the south-west coast of Victoria, about 260 kilometers west of Melbourne. The Local Government Area (LGA) comprises the urban spans of Warrnambool, and parts of Dennington, Illowa, Yangery, Woodford, Bushfield and Allansford. Warrnambool City is bounded by Moyne Shire Council to the north, east and west, and the Southern Ocean to the south.

The municipality covers approximately 121 square km, predominantly of dairy farming and agriculture with a relatively narrow strip of coastal dunes. Two river systems enter the sea in Warrnambool, the Hopkins River, and the Merri River and its tributaries of Russell's Creek and Yangery Creek.

According to the Bureau of Meteorology the climate is moderate with a mean maximum summer temperature of 24.7°C in January and a mean minimum winter temperature of 5.5°C in July. The average annual rainfall is 739.8mm.

2.2 The Community

The Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Census lists the Warrnambool LGA with a population of 35,406, 51.9% of which are female and with an above state median overall age of 42. They live in 15,963 private dwellings at an average of 2.3 per household.

This census shows that the LGA has lower than average state and national populations below the age of 10, and between 20 and 50, and higher between 10 and 20 and over the age of 50.

2.2.1 Cultural Diversity

Analysis of the country of birth of the population in Warrnambool City in 2021 compared to the rest of Victoria and Australia, shows significant difference. 84.8% reported being born in Australia compared to 65% for Victoria and 66.9% in Australia. Only 19.5% had one or more parents born overseas, whereas Victoria has 52.2% and Australia 48.2%. England and New Zealand are the most popular places of birth in both instances. Not surprisingly the top three religions in the census return were Christian.

2.2.2 Health

The population is serviced by South West Health Care's Base Hospital, St John of God's Private Hospital and the Epworth Healthcare managed South West Regional Cancer Centre, along with the Barwon South West Local Public Health Unit. There are numerous general and specialist clinics, counselling support and self-help services aimed at particular illnesses and needs.
The Council provides an extensive range of health services such as food hygiene, immunisation, hygiene standards, education and promotion.

Across all "Long Term Health Conditions" listed in the census, the LGA had higher percentages of the population afflicted. Only 55.2% listed no conditions, compared to 61% for Victoria and 60.2% for Australia as a whole.

2.2.3 Education

As would be expected with the employment opportunities available, Warrnambool has significantly less bachelor degrees per population but higher levels of Certificate III and IVs.
Warrnambool City has:

- Many childcare centres and occasional care services,
- 12 kindergartens and pre-schools,
- 6 Government and 4 Independent primary schools,
- 2 Government and 3 Independent secondary schools
- 1 special school
- 1 TAFE Campus
- 1 University Campus

2.2.4 Employment

Warrnambool has approximately 2,800 businesses and a workforce of almost 18,000 people. Health Care and Social Assistance is the primary employment industry in Warrnambool, followed by Retail Trade, Education and Training, Accommodation and Food Services and Construction. Between them they account for over two thirds of employees within Warrnambool:

2.3 Livability

Roads: - The main road network through Warrnambool consists of the Princes Highway (A1), running east and west from the City Centre, Hopkins Highway (Mortlake Road) running to the north east and Caramut Road north west. Public Transport Victoria (PTV), via Warrnambool Bus Lines, provide a local bus service with 9 routes throughout Warrnambool.
Rail: - PTV provides passenger rail services from its terminus in Warrnambool to Geelong and Melbourne and coaches to Mount Gambier and Ballarat. Freight trains also depart from the rail freight terminal and are managed by WestVic Freight.
Air: - The Warrnambool Airport is a licensed aerodrome located within Moyne Shire Council approximately 14 kilometers by road from the City Centre and is controlled by Warrnambool City Council. The airport is home to Ambulance Victoria's Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS 4) and other leaseholders.
Sea: - Council manages the Port of Warrnambool on behalf of the Department of Transport. The Port of Warrnambool has 18 moorings, 2 jetties, breakwater, a boat ramp and cafe. The Australian Volunteer Coastguard moor their vessel in the Port of Warrnambool.
Services: - The majority of Warrnambool and Allansford residents are connected to electricity, gas, water, sewerage and wired phone / broadband. However outer areas of the city and townships are more reliant on rain water, bottled gas, septic systems and wireless internet connections. Warrnambool LGA has generally good 4G mobile phone coverage with limited 5G services in the CBD. However this reception can rapidly become patchy on leaving the city.

2.4 Recreation

Warrnambool City offers a large and well-used network of parks and reserves. There are over 200 open spaces totaling more than 1,000 hectares, or over 8.0% of the municipality. More than 450 hectares are available for recreation without restriction. The remainder of sites include restricted access sports reserves, and reserves primarily for conservation or drainage. The beaches and rivers facilitate a wide variety of water based activities and contribute to making the city a popular summer destination.

The city is home to multiple sports clubs involving Netball, AFLW and AFL, soccer, rugby union, hockey, bowls, racket sports, water sports and many more.

Between May and October Logan's Beach is popular with locals and tourists due to its visiting population of Southern Right Whales. These whales return most years to give birth and nurse their calves in the shallow, sheltered waters. The raised coast line provides Victoria with the main site for land-based whale watching.

The Warrnambool - Port Fairy Rail Trail links Warrnambool to the historic townships of Koroit and Port Fairy. The trail covers 32 kilometers, generally following the old decommissioned rail line.

3 PLANNING AND MITIGATION ARRANGEMENTS

This section identifies specific emergency management roles and responsibilities, as determined by the Emergency Management Act 2013 and the State Emergency Management Plan. It details the prevention and preparedness activities and arrangements for the management of emergencies in Warrnambool City.

3.1 Planning Structures

3.1.1 Principles of Emergency Management

These principles underpin all the activities taken by response agencies and supporting entities to address a range of hazards. They are critical to the effective management of emergencies.

The principles are:

- **Primacy of Life -** The protection and preservation of human life takes priority over all other considerations
- **Community Centric -** Community are at the core of everything we do. The intent is to minimise impacts of emergencies, provide relief and enable affected communities to focus on their recovery as early as practicable
- **Unified -** Working together to achieve common objectives as one team, before during and after emergencies.
- **Progressive –** Anticipation, foresight and continual improvement to predict, prepare, plan and respond to likely, unexpected and worst- case scenarios.
- **Risk Driven –** Our actions are prioritised by risk. Risk management involving assessment, treatment and monitoring is applied to the assigning of priorities and resources.
- **Integrated and Collaborative –** Unity in achieving shared outcomes based on a willingness to work together, share responsibilities and act with respect, integrity and trust that has been developed through teamwork and strong relationships.
- **Flexible –** Being able to adapt and apply creative and innovative approaches in responding to and solving challenges of emergencies. Understanding the dynamic nature of emergencies can sometimes mean plans will change and adapt with new circumstances.
- **Communicating Information –**Providing clear, accessible and tailored information to those that need it and those at risk.

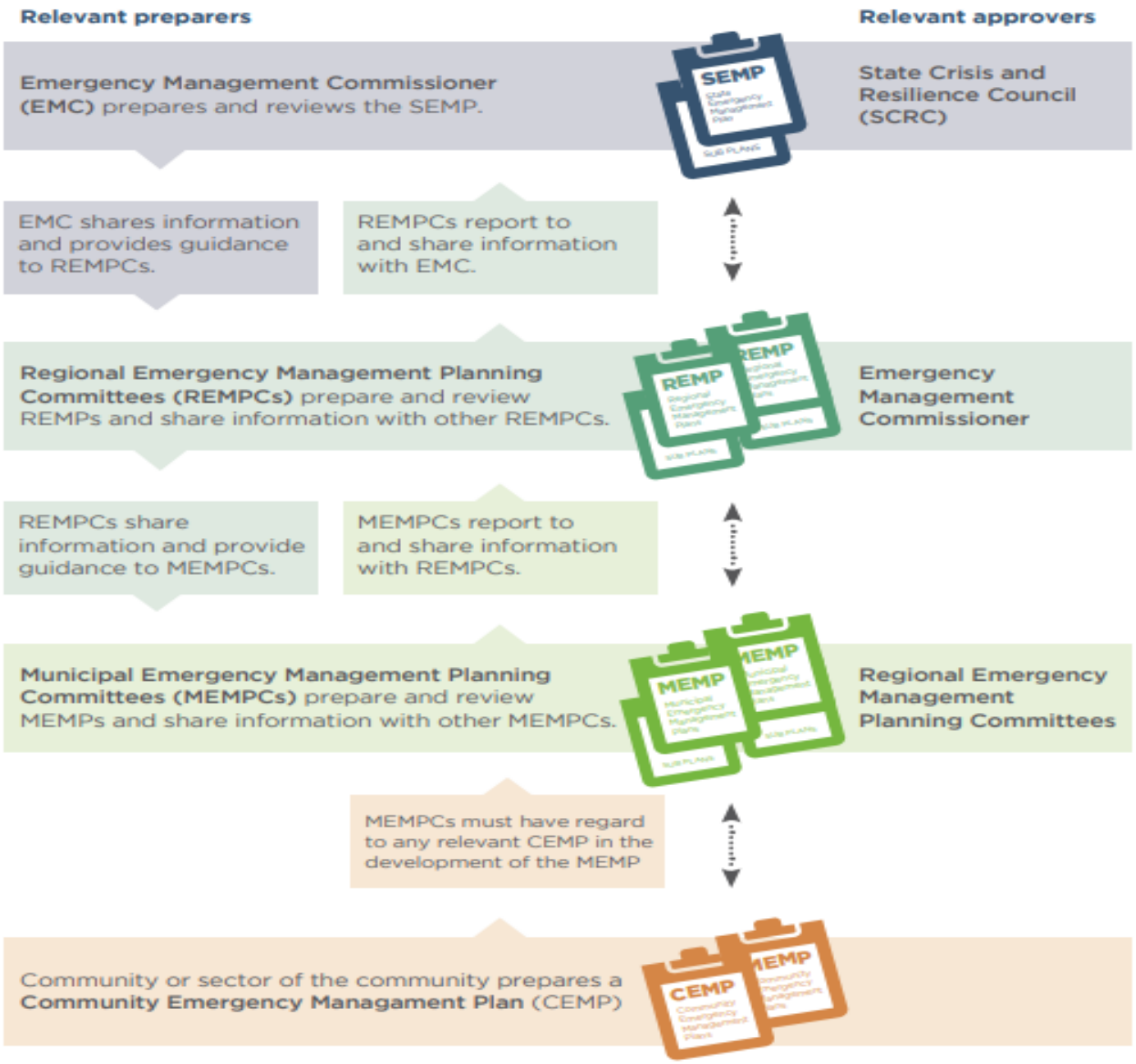
3.1.2 Emergency Management Arrangements

The *Emergency Management Act 1986* (EM Act 1986) and the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (EM Act 2013) along with the *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018* (EMLA Act 2018) provide the legislative basis for emergency management in Victoria.

3.1.3 Victoria's Emergency Management Planning Framework

This plan is consistent with the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) and Barwon South West Regional Emergency Management Plan (BSW-REMP). The SEMP establishes integrated arrangements for emergency management planning in Victoria at a state level, this informs all levels of planning – State, Regional & Municipal. The BSW-REMP is a secondary plan to the SEMP with this plan, the MEMP, a subordinate plan to the BSW-REMP. If inconsistencies occur, the information provided within the SEMP will prevail.

This plan, where possible, does not duplicate or conflict with other existing emergency management plans. This plan should be read in conjunction with both the BSW-REMP and SEMP.


Relevant preparers
Relevant approvers
Emergency Management Commissioner (EMC) prepares and reviews the SEMP.
SEMP
State Crisis and Resilience Council (SCRC)
EMC shares information and provides guidance to REMPCs.
REMPCs report to and share information with EMC.
Regional Emergency Management Planning Committees (REMPCs) prepare and review REMPs and share information with other REMPCs.
REMP
Emergency Management Commissioner
REMPCs share information and provide guidance to MEMPCs.
MEMPCs report to and share information with REMPCs.
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees (MEMPCs) prepare and review MEMPs and share information with other MEMPCs.
MEMP
Regional Emergency Management Planning Committees
MEMPCs must have regard to any relevant CEMP in the development of the MEMP
Community or sector of the community prepares a Community Emergency Managament Plan (CEMP)
CEMP

3.2 Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)

Warrnambool City Council and Moyne Shire have combined to establish a Joint MEMPC under the *Emergency Management Legislation 2018* (EMLA Act), the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (EM Act 2013) and the *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018* (EMLA Act 2018)

The Joint MEMPC operates strategically to ensure comprehensive, collaborative and integrated planning occurs at all levels.

The Joint MEMPC maintains an awareness of existing capability and capacity across both municipalities to support the effective conduct of mitigation, response and recovery activities.

See Appendix 2 for the Joint MEMPC Membership Agencies. Please note that this is redacted in public facing versions. For the MEMPC terms of Reference please contact the Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO).

3.3 Sub-Plans and Complimentary Plans

3.3.2 Sub-Plans

All sub-plans are multi-agency plans and may be hazard specific where the consequences are likely to be significant, for example a municipal fire management sub-plan.

Any sub-plans are subject to the same preparation, consultation, assurance, approval and publication requirements as the MEMP. Agencies with roles and or responsibilities in a sub-plan must act in accordance with that plan (*the Act*s.60AK)

3.3.3 Complimentary Plans

Any plans prepared outside Part 6A of *the Act* are known as complementary plans. Complementary plans are generally written by a relevant agency, for a specific purpose and are often prepared under specific statutory requirements, governance arrangements, and/or authorising environments. As these plans fall outside *the Act* they are not subject to the same approval process.

3.3.4 Key Plans

Key agencies operating within the city develop and implement plans and initiatives based on identified risks to ensure mitigation activities are conducted. These plans are reviewed and exercised as required under *the plan*.

Other complimentary plans, such as operational plans, procedures and guidelines, exist within agencies to assist with their capacity and capability to undertake their legislative functions or complete projects to mitigate risk. It is not the purpose of this plan to list these.

3.4 Mitigation

3.4.1 Risk Management

Emergency risk management is the part of general risk management practice that deals with the sources that can cause an emergency. It takes a structured approach and involves a range of activities that contribute to community and environmental wellbeing. The municipality's geography, history of natural disasters and the socio-demographic trends within its communities provide important context for these activities.

Most public safety risks can be managed by routine operations and practices such as clearing roadways, immunisation programs, attending road accidents and extinguishing house fires. However many risks require multiple organisations to work together to ensure the best outcomes for the community. Typically these low-probability high consequence events are associated with natural, biological, technological and industrial sources of risk.

3.4.2 Community Objectives

For emergency risk management, the relevant objectives are those of the community of interest. These may be very general and may be applicable across many levels of government.

Objectives can be set around wellbeing, covering areas such as health, property, economic performance, environmental qualities and those that support these social and economic goals. Emergencies destroy, damage or interfere with these objectives.

3.4.3 Context of Risk

Consideration of the context or current environment is important during the risk assessment process.

It is possible that the population has changed, new industries are emerging, building codes are altering and the types of vegetation has changed over time. These or other changes may result in different impacts and likelihoods of future events. These risks are reviewed periodically to reassess the dangers.

3.4.4 Community Emergency Risk Assessment Process

The MEMPC is responsible for conducting reviews of existing and potential risks. It uses the Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA) process which provides a framework for considering these risks, and improving the safety and resilience of their communities by mitigation strategies.

This process is facilitated by VicSES and includes risk assessment and risk treatment along with likelihood and consequence matrices. This process is subject to reviews annually and a major review at least once every three years between MEMP audits.

MEMPC stakeholders recognise that they have a key role in prevention and mitigation activities to reduce the likelihood or minimise the consequences of emergencies. The MEMPC may call in subject matter experts if risks fall outside their knowledge base.

Hazard Category	Emergency Hazard	Rating Confidence	Residual Risk Rating
Natural Disasters	Bushfire - Grassfire	**Medium**	**High**
Natural Disasters	Flood	**Medium**	**Medium**
Natural Disasters	Extreme Temperatures	**Medium**	**Medium**
Natural Disasters	Storm	**Medium**	**High**
Natural Disasters	Earthquake	**Medium**	**Medium**
Transport	Transport accident	**Medium**	**Medium**
Transport	Transport Incident- Marine	**Medium**	**Medium**
Infrastructure	Essential Services Disruption	**Medium**	**Medium**
Technical	Hazardous Materials Land	**Medium**	**High**
Technical	Fire- Urban	**Medium**	**Medium**
Biological	Human disease (pandemic)	**Medium**	**Medium**
Biological	Emergency Animal Disease	**Medium**	**Medium**
Biological	Food & water contamination	**Medium**	**Low**
Human-caused	A “warlike” act	**Medium**	**Medium**

Warrnambool CERA risks as at January 2023

3.4.5 Cross Boundary Arrangements

Warrnambool City Council and its MEMPC stakeholder’s have pre-existing relationships across the Barwon South West Region and beyond. This area includes the councils of:

- Moyne Shire
- Glenelg Shire
- Southern Grampians Shire
- Corangamite Shire
- Golden Plains Shire
- City of Greater Geelong
- Borough of Queenscliff
- Surf Coast Shire
- Colac Otway Shire

Warrnambool City Council is a participant in the Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing Protocol. (See also 4.15 of this document).

4 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Response is the action taken immediately before, during and in the first period after an emergency to reduce the effects and consequences of the emergency on people, their livelihoods, wellbeing and property; on the environment; and to meet basic human needs.

Emergency response management is based upon the functions of:

Coordination The bringing together of agencies and resources to ensure effective preparation for, response to and recovery from emergencies.

Control The overall direction of response activities in an emergency, operating horizontally across agencies.

Command The internal direction of personnel and resources of an agency, operating vertically within the agency.

In order to meet objectives, those performing the above functions need to ensure the following are also managed and occur:

Consequences The management of the effect of emergencies on individuals, the community, infrastructure and the environment.

Communication The engagement and provision of information across agencies and proactively with the community to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.

Community Connection The understanding of and connecting with trusted networks, trusted leaders and all communities to support resilience and decision making.

Together, these are often referred to as the 'Six Cs'.

4.1 State Emergency Management Priorities

The State Emergency Management Priorities underpin and guide all decisions during a response to any emergency. They are:

- Protection and preservation of life and relief of suffering is paramount. This includes:
  - Safety of emergency services personnel
  - Safety of community members including vulnerable community members and visitors / tourists
- 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 considers the cultural, biodiversity and social values of the environment.

4.2 Response Management Arrangements

4.2.1 Tiers of Emergency Management

Victoria uses a three tier system to scale emergencies. This ensures the adequate provision of resources as an emergency grows or requirements build. It also provides a pathway to reduce the scale as response gives way to recovery.

- **Incident Tier**
  This is usually a single LGA but may cross into neighbouring Council areas. For the purpose of this plan the incident tier is **- Warrnambool City Council**

- **Regional Tier**
  An area that is declared by the Governor in Council under the EM Act 2013, section 77A for which there are specific arrangements. For the purpose of this plan the regional tier is - **Barwon South West**

- **State Tier**
  The state tier is activated when resource requirements, coordination, consequences and communications extend beyond the region or area of operation tiers and need the highest level of management.
  For the purpose of this plan the state tier is - **The State of Victoria**

4.2.2 Classification of Emergencies

There are three classifications of emergency response:

Level One - Small scale emergency (less than 24hr impact). Level one incident normally requires the use of local or initial response resources.

Level Two – Medium scale emergency (more than 24hrs). A level two emergency is more complex in size, resources and risk than level one. It is characterised by the need for:

- Deployment of resources beyond initial response.
- Sectorisation of the emergency; or
- The establishment of functional sections due to the levels of complexity; or
- A combination of the above.

The Incident Controller Centre (ICC) may be activated to coordinate the multi-agency response to the event. The Incident Controller (IC) may establish an Emergency Management Team (EMT) as required.

Level Three – Large scale emergency (multiple day's impact). Level three incidents are largescale emergencies, characterised by the levels of complexity that will require the activation and establishment of an ICC. 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.

4.2.3 Classes of Emergencies

A Major Emergency is:

- A large or complex emergency (however caused) which:
  - has the potential to cause, or is causing, loss of life and extensive damage to property, infrastructure or the environment; or
  - has the potential to have, or is having, significant adverse consequences for the Victorian community or a part of the Victorian community; or
  - requires the involvement of two or more agencies (fire service agencies if a major fire) to respond to the emergency; or
- a Class 1 emergency; or
- a Class 2 emergency.

Section 3 of *the act* contains specific definitions for emergencies:-

Class 1 Emergency is:

- a major fire; or
- any other major emergency for which FRV, the CFA or VicSES is the control agency under the SEMP.

Class 2 Emergency is 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 at any other state or territory of the Commonwealth; or
- a hi-jack, siege or riot.

The definition of a **Class 3 Emergency** has been included in the SEMP for the sole purpose of simplifying the way it can identify or refer to the emergencies specified under this definition

Class 3 Emergency is defined as:

- a warlike act or act of terrorism, whether directed at Victoria or a part of Victoria or at any other state or territory of the Commonwealth; or
- a hi-jack, siege or riot.

. . . . . .

4.3 Command

Command is the direction of response activities vertically (internally) within an agency to use its people, resources, governance, systems and processes to discharge its responsibilities in line with relevant legislation.

An agency responding to an emergency identifies the commanders responsible for supervising their personnel and the agency chain of command. Commanders escalate agency issues and provide direction on agency issues through the agency chain of command.

. . . . . .

4.4 Control

Control relates to multi agency situations and operates horizontally across those agencies. Controllers are accountable for the overall control of the incident managed within their span of control, and provide direction to all other agencies responding to that emergency.

The control agency is dependent of the type of emergency and is set out in the SEMP.

4.4.1 Incident Controller (IC)

The Control Agency appoints the IC: they are usually the most senior agency person at the incident, and they resolve the emergency using local resources. The IC leads and manages the incident tier response to an emergency.

The name of the IC should be included in incident reports and shared with the other agencies responding to the incident. As the control function operates horizontally across agencies, IC's need to communicate with all other agency commanders responding to the incident, including the agency commanders of their own agencies' resources.

For an incident that is, or that may become, a **Class 1** emergency the Regional Controller (RC) will appoint an IC, regardless of their agency, from a list of Level 3 IC's endorsed by the EMC.

This IC will be based in an Incident Control Centre (ICC) and supported by an Incident Management Team with specialist skills and equipment, rather than by a field-based IC.

For a **Class 2** emergency, the State Controller may appoint IC's as required.

4.4.2 Incident Management Team (IMT)

The IMT is formed to support an incident controller to manage their control function.

As an incident escalates in size or complexity, the IC may need to delegate some or all their management functions. These can include, but are not limited to, planning, intelligence, public information, operations, investigations, logistics and finance. These may be staffed by the control agency or other supporting agencies.

The IC and IMT have several tasks to address if they are to be successful in resolving the incident being

managed. These include –

- Build a picture of what has happened, what is happening and what is likely to happen
- Decide what needs to be done and how it will be done
- Prepare a plan that captures those decisions
- Gather the resources necessary
- Implement the plan and monitor its progress
- Keep people and agencies informed of all these actions
- Maintain records of their deliberations and decisions
- Manage environmental impacts and consequences of the response effort
- Initiate and support the relief and recovery efforts for affected communities.

4.4.3 Incident Management Systems

To enable agencies to 'work as one,' the Victorian EM sector operates under the Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS).

The AIIMS principles of flexibility, management by objectives, unity of effort, functional management and span of control ensure that each individual contributing to an EM effort understands their role.

During the response phase, the EM sector commonly applies AIIMS, which can be modified to suit the incident, operations or consequence area. Primary functional areas within AIIMS include control, planning, intelligence, public information, operations and logistics.

4.5 Coordination

Is the bringing together of people, resources, governance, systems and processes, to ensure effective preparation for, response to, and relief and recovery from, an emergency.

Coordination operates:

- Vertically within an agency as a function of command
- Horizontally across agencies as a function of the authority to control.

Emergency response coordination ensures:

- Effective control arrangements are established and maintained
- Information is shared effectively

- The resources required to support the response are accessed.

In a Class 1 or Class 2 emergency, the Emergency Management Commissioner is responsible for the coordination of the activities of agencies having roles or responsibilities in relation to the response to the emergency.

The Chief Commissioner of Police is responsible for response coordination of Class 3 emergencies.

4.6 Communication

In order to make informed choices about their safety and to take responsibility for their own recovery the community needs timely, relevant information.

The controller at the relevant tier must authorise the release of public information and warnings on behalf of the IC and agencies. However, if there is an imminent threat to life and property and warnings must be issued urgently, any Control Agency personnel can issue them to a community under threat, but they must notify the relevant controller as soon as possible after they do so.

Relief and recovery messaging should be integrated with response messaging. It should inform the community about relief centres, impacts on critical infrastructure and how to get assistance among other things.

For some major emergencies:
- Municipal councils, working with coordination agencies, may hold community engagement meetings
- The State tier may prepare a communications plan (such as a state relief and early recovery communications plan).

Two web based platforms are mainly used within the EM Sector of Victoria.

For real-time situational awareness and sharing of intelligence the Emergency Management Common Operating Picture (EM-COP) is used. To sign in, or to register, go to:
https://cop.em.vic.gov.au (operations) or https://training.cop.em.vic.gov.au (training)

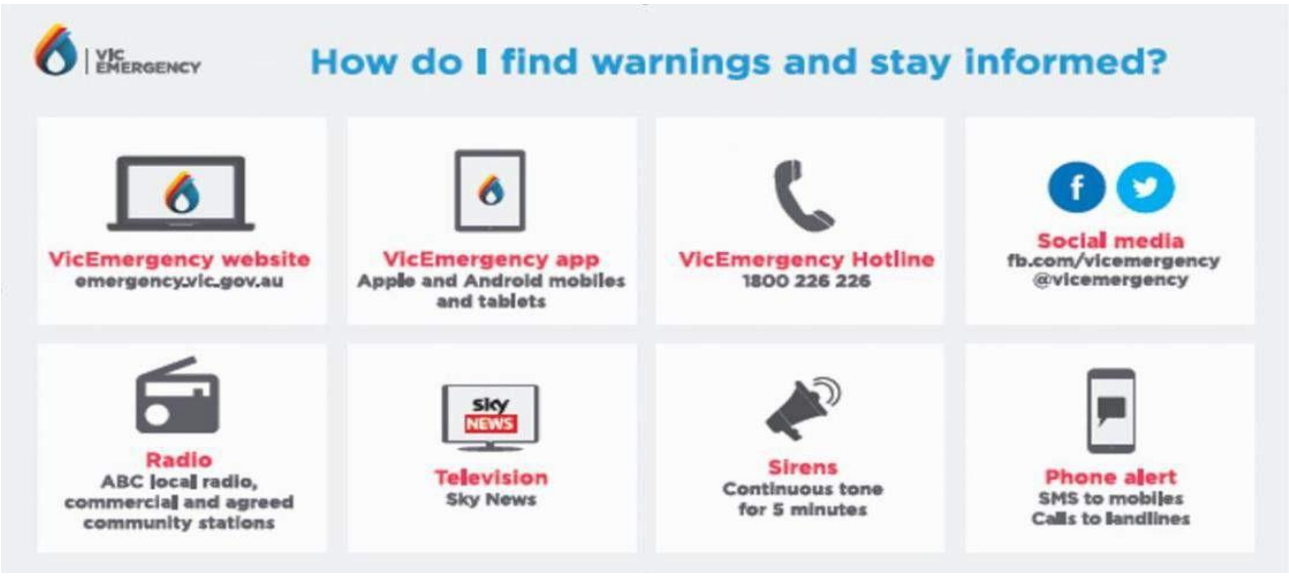
The second platform is Crisisworks, which is a records, request and information sharing system. This allows information to be stored and transferred between allocated positions, and other platforms to facilitate timely work flows. It is an agency specific log in and access needs to be requested from that agency.

4.6.1 Warning Systems

The Victorian Warning Arrangements aim to warn individuals and communities in the event of a major emergency.
However, individuals and communities need to be mindful that they should still prepare themselves in case of an emergency.

Once the decision has been made to issue a warning, the IC or Control Agency will determine which method to use (see below) and determine if a telephone alert needs to be issued.

Victoria has an integrated warning system which provides information and warnings to community through a range of channels. These include websites, social media, phone and broadcasts.



4.6.2 Warning Levels

Warnings

Victoria has adopted the Australian Warning System where warning icons show the hazard image represented within a triangle shape.

Under the Australian Warning System, Watch and Act is the second level of warning for Bushfire, Flood, Storm, Cyclone and Heat. Other emergencies may have Warning as the second level.

Emergency Warning
You are in imminent danger and need to take action now. You will be impacted.

Watch and Act (Warning)
An emergency is developing nearby. You need to take action now to protect yourself and others.

Advice
An incident is occurring or has occurred in the area. Access information and monitor conditions.

Can also be used as a notification that activity in the area has subsided and is no longer a danger to you.

Evacuation

Under the Australian Warning System, any evacuation orders are now aligned within these 3 levels of warning as action statements – Prepare to Evacuate and Evacuate Immediately.

When an evacuation is in place, it will be represented on the map and list with the below icon.

Evacuation
An evacuation is recommended or procedures are in place to evacuate.

4.6.3 Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS)

The Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) is a distinctive tone played on radio and television in the event of an emergency. The Standard Emergency Warning Signal will be played immediately before an urgent public safety message.

The purpose of SEWS is designed to:

- Alert the public via a media announcement that an official emergency announcement is about to be made concerning an actual or potential emergency which has the potential to affect them; and
- Alert the community at large, via a public address system, that an important official emergency announcement is about to be broadcast.

The decision to use SEWS rests with the Incident Controller. This is reflected in and supports the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) and is also governed by the Victorian Warnings Arrangements.

For further information refer to the Victorian Warning Arrangements V4 - 2021

4.6.4 Emergency Broadcasters

Locations	Radio Frequency
Mortlake	**ABC Local** - 100.7 FM - 594 AM - 1602 AM
Port Fairy	**ABC Local** - 594 AM - 774 AM - 1602 AM
Warrnambool	**ABC Local** - 594 AM - 774 AM - 1602 AM **Coast FM** - 95.3 FM **3YB** - 94.5 FM
Hamilton Western Victoria	**ABC Local** - 94.1 FM - 107.9 FM - 594 AM - 774 AM **3HA** - 92.9 FM **Mixx FM** - 88.9 FM **ABC Local** - 594 AM - 94.1 FM

The Victorian Government has formal arrangements with a number of media outlets to broadcast emergency warnings and information to the community.

During emergencies, emergency broadcasters will relay information which will help you make decisions based on the advice of emergency services. If necessary, emergency broadcasters will interrupt normal programming on the radio or television station.

It is important to understand that this is a guide only, as radio reception varies and may also depend on local weather and geographical conditions. In addition, you should always use more than one source of information to make sure you have the most accurate and up-to-date information possible.

Official Emergency Broadcasters in Victoria

4.6.5 Community Information and Warnings

It is important to deliver public information and warnings that are authoritative, consistently constructed and relevant for all Victorians and visitors in all emergencies. Warnings should provide timely and tailored information that supports the community to make informed decisions before, during and after emergencies

It should 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 for the protection of property and the environment.

4.7 Consequence Management

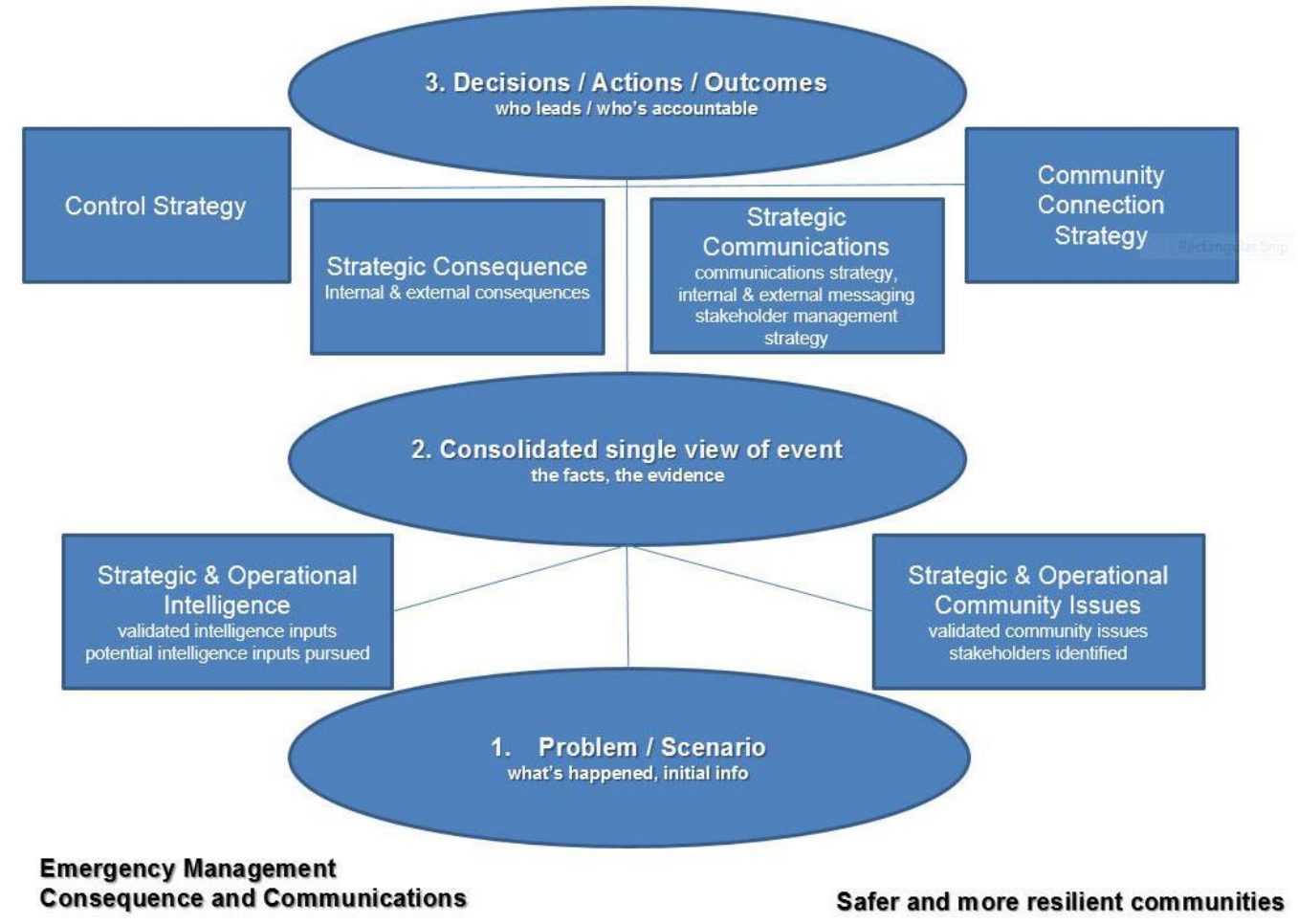
Consequence in the emergency management context, is the change in circumstances, planned or otherwise, experienced by a community or its members as a result of an event and its subsequent management. Consequence Management is the management of these effects on individuals, the community, infrastructure and the environment.

The safety of community members is the primary consideration in consequence management. Although it is a key consideration for all emergencies, it should not interfere with the control of an emergency.

The Emergency Management Commissioner is responsible for consequence management in major emergencies.

4.8 Community Connections

These is the connection to, and understanding of, trusted networks, leaders and communities to support resilience and decision making.



Understanding the impact and its consequences, and how we reach in and acknowledge the community connections before, during and after an emergency is vital to building a sustainable emergency management system. One that recognises the central tenets of wellbeing, livability, sustainability and viability for communities.

This approach is supported by the State Emergency Management Priorities which include "primacy of life" and the issuing of information and warnings to communities as non-negotiables, and a focus on protection of property, infrastructure, economic and environmental assets and values.

4.9 Emergency Shelter Options

The availability of shelter options may assist people in considering how they respond to an emergency.

Victoria's Bushfire Safety Policy provides direction and guidance to agencies and government on the improvement of community bushfire safety for all Victorians. However the policy can also be applied to other emergencies.

The Framework recognises there are different ways people may respond to emergencies, in particular bushfires. It is important that advice to the public about bushfire safety options communicates that:

- Not all options will afford the same degree of protection from a bushfire
- Personal circumstances and local conditions in a fire area will affect the extent to which any of these options provide relative safety
- Some options should only be considered as a backup or last resort, rather than a primary safety option
- Movement through a fire affected landscape on foot or in a vehicle is dangerous.

However, there will be situations where it is appropriate for emergency services to recommend and manage evacuations of those under direct threat.

4.9.1 Safety and Shelter Options

The Policy puts forward an options hierarchy from lowest to highest risk options:

"There is only one low risk option"

Risk Level	Safety & Options
LOW RISK	• Leaving Early
MEDIUM RISK	• Private Shelter/Bunker • Defending a well prepared property • Community Fire Refuge
HIGH RISK	• Neighbourhood Safer Place Bushfire Place of Last Resort (NSP-BPLR) • Informal place of shelter • Sheltering in an ill prepared property • Fleeing in the face of threat

4.9.2 Leaving Early

In its simplest form, 'leaving early' means leaving a bushfire-prone area before a fire has started and is the safest response. This is the only option that can guarantee safety in a bushfire.

People leaving an area prior to a fire starting will have a range of options available to them that are outside the fire threatened area. These may include privately arranged places (e.g. friends and family), or public locations such as suburban areas, regional urban areas or larger towns that are safer from bushfire and provide access to amenities.

4.9.3 Well Prepared Property

Remaining at a well-prepared house surrounded by adequate defendable space and actively defending it against the fire threat may be a valid strategy in some circumstances. Due to the range of potential threats that the property may face a definitive assessment of the survivability is difficult, but the addition of a "bunker" as a refuge should not be overlooked.

Residents need to make their own assessment of their abilities, the extent of preparation required and the most appropriate plan for their situation.

In Victoria there are permit, design, siting and construction regulations for private bushfire shelters:

- Compliance with the Victorian Building Regulations 2006 (Regulations) and the National Construction Code (NCC)) performance requirements.

For more general information go to the CFA Information page

4.9.4 Community Fire Refuge

Community Fire Refuges are modified or purpose-built structures that provide protection from radiant heat and ember attack. Community Fire Refuges (CFRs) are only activated and opened once there is significant fire in the local area. Community Fire Refuges offer a last resort shelter option if you cannot leave the area.

The presence of emergency services is not guaranteed at a community fire refuge. Safe travel to and from the site cannot be guaranteed. For more Information visit EMV's Webpage

Note – There are no Community Fire Refuges within Warrnambool City

4.9.5 Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort (NSP-BPLR)

A NSP-BPLR is a place of last resort when all other bushfire plans have failed. They are locations that **may** provide some protection from direct flame and heat from a fire, but they do not guarantee safety. They are generally existing locations and not purpose built, fire-proof structures.

Many NSP-BPLR's are simply a clearing, or an oval, that provides separation distance from the bushfire hazard and not a place of shelter from other types of emergencies. e.g. escaping rising flood waters or severe weather events

Locations of NSP-BPLR's within Warrnambool are:

Davidson Oval	Corner Caramut Rd and Fairfax Ave.	-
EJ King Reserve	Simpson St, between Bostock St and Otway Rd. Adventure	WCC 153
Lake Pertobe	Playground Carpark, Pertobe Rd.	WCC 148-149
Mack Oval	Grafton Rd.	WCC 164
Merrivale Oval	Corner Merrivale Drive and Landman St.	-
Reid Oval 1	Cramer St, between McConnell St and Nelson St.	WCC 162
Reid Oval 2	Coulstock St, between Japan St and Foster St.	-
Walter Oval	Coulstock St, opposite Foster St.	WCC 163

Further information and state wide locations can be found here on the CFA's web site

4.9.6 Informal Place of Shelter

In rural locations people may make private arrangements to use a neighbour's property that is more easily defended or has a bunker. This option should be planned and prepared for well in advance and have trigger points that are adhered to.

Advice should highlight that such places may not be safe in all circumstances and that individuals who decide to use private places of shelter are responsible for assessing their suitability. It should also be noted that communications and help may not be accessible during events.

4.9.7 Sheltering in an Ill Prepared Property and Fleeing in the Face of Threat

This is the most risky option and should only be considered when other, safer options, are no longer possible.

Leaving or sheltering in an ill prepared property once a fire has started may be an option in some circumstances. Safety will be affected by many factors, including the proximity of the fire, access to safe evacuation routes and timely information about the incident.

4.10 Evacuations

"Evacuation is the planned relocation of people from a dangerous or potentially dangerous area to a safer area. This is a safety strategy that uses distance to separate you from the danger"

A definition from "Community Evacuation Information sheet" by Victoria Police

Evacuation is a risk management strategy that may be used to reduce the loss of life or lessen the effects of an emergency on a community, prior to the onset of, or during, an emergency. For an evacuation to be effective, it should be appropriately planned and implemented.

The main priority when deciding to undertake an evacuation is the protection and preservation of life.

Evacuation information sheets are available in a number of languages on Victoria Police's Emergency response page under Community Emergency Evacuation

4.10.1 Recommendation to Evacuate

The Incident Controller (IC) is responsible for authorising and issuing evacuation messages to the community. If time permits this decision should be made in consultation with Victoria Police and the IEMT, and consider other expert advice where available.

A recommendation to evacuate should only be made when it is expected to offer a higher level of protection for the community than other options and can be achieved without endangering response agency personnel.

Where the IC decides to recommend that people should evacuate, the IC is required to immediately communicate this decision to the Police Forward Commander for implementation, and through the line of control and agency chain of command, the IMT and to incident personnel / responders.

4.10.2 The Evacuation Process

The evacuation process is conducted in 5 stages:

1 - Decision to evacuate
2 - Warning or recommendation to persons likely to be effected by an emergency
3 - Withdrawal of an effected community.
4 - Sheltering of persons evacuated
5 - Return of affected persons.

A formal evacuation process does not prevent people in the community from making the decision to self-evacuate in the appropriate circumstances.

4.10.3 Roles and Responsibilities in Evacuation

EMV's JSOP 03.12 – Evacuation for Major Emergencies outlines the responsibilities, activities and forms that are required to be undertaken by the IC and Evacuation Managers in the event of a required evacuation.

4.11 Traffic Management

In consultation with Victoria Police the IC may choose to set up Traffic Management Points (TMPs) to regulate the flow of traffic into an area where an emergency has occurred, is occurring or has the potential to impact. Their purpose is to maintain the safety of emergency personnel and the public.

Due to the fluid nature of emergencies the positioning and conditions at TMPs may be subject to change at short notice.

EMV's JSOP J03.10 outlines the process for the activation, ongoing monitoring and deactivation of traffic management points, including the appointment of a Traffic Management Manager, development of a Traffic Management Plan and associated forms.

To facilitate entry into an area, a TMP will be assigned an access level (see table).The circumstances and groups of people who may be permitted access at each access level will be determined by the IC.

4.11.1 Public TMP Access

Depending on the location of the TMP, and the current status of the emergency, there may be differing restrictions on access. Resident access may be regulated through the issue of wristbands, provided upon presentation of documents proving ID. All entries and exits through TMPs should be logged.

There is detailed information on TMPs and access on the CFA's website.

No entry	Restricted	Authorised	Authorised	Road Open
Emergency Services Only.	**Level B** ■ Emergency Services ■ Safety assessment teams ■ Residents and business owners (at the discretion of the Incident Controller)	**Level C** ■ Level B plus: ■ Residents ■ Recovery and relief services ■ Council/VIC ROADS ■ Accredited media	**Level D** ■ Level B &C plus: ■ Road owners ■ Employees ■ Persons bringing supplies for people and animals	

4.12 Vulnerable People and Facilities

In the threat of, or during an emergency, special consideration needs to be given to the safety of the more vulnerable members of the community. They may not have, or be able to activate their emergency plans or may need assistance to enact them.

Where records are available Victoria Police as Evacuation Manager will be required to identify vulnerable persons within the community and also the facilities that may house vulnerable people.

Factors to consider when assessing an individual's vulnerability include:

- Lives alone and has additional needs and/or lives with an individual with similar or greater level of additional needs.
- Physical dependence.
- Inability to make an independent decision due to cognitive or other impairment, and/or geographic isolation.

A Vulnerable People in Emergencies Policy is available on the Victorian Government Website.

4.12.1 Vulnerable Persons Register (VPR)

The VPR is a list of consenting people who live within the community and have been assessed as vulnerable to an emergency because they are:

- Frail and/or physically or cognitively impaired
- Unable to comprehend warnings and directions and/or respond in an emergency situation
- Unable to identify personal or community support networks to help them in an emergency.

During an evacuation, the Victoria Police Evacuation Manager will be required to access the web-based VPR. The VPR is accessible in preparation for emergencies, and during emergencies when an evacuation has been deemed necessary. It provides information on the location of the vulnerable person as well as their support agency and any special requirements.

Warrnambool City Council coordinates the Vulnerable Persons Register for the Warrnambool municipality. This register can be accessed by Victoria Police, Department Families, Fairness and Housing and authorised persons with access within Council.

4.12.2 Vulnerable Facilities

Vulnerable Facilities refers to buildings where vulnerable persons are likely to be situated.

These include

- Aged care facilities, hospitals, schools, disability group homes and child care centres.
- Facilities funded or regulated by the Department of Health and Department of Education
- Commonwealth funded residential aged care facilities; and
- Other locally identified facilities likely to have vulnerable people situated in them.

A list of facilities where vulnerable people are likely to be situated is developed by Warrnambool City Council to ensure they are effectively planned for at the local level. This is a requirement in line with recommendation 3.2 of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission Final Report.

A list of facilities can be accessed by authorised Victoria Police representatives for the purposes of planning, exercising and in the event of an emergency. For details see Appendix 3

In addition, data sets for state defined vulnerable facilities are located on EM-COP.

4.13 Staging Areas

A Staging Area is a pre-determined location established to support the incident, division or sector. It is where equipment, crews and vehicles can muster prior to deployment to the incident.

The area is managed by a Staging Area Manager and may include the provision of immediate welfare for personnel and equipment maintenance facilities.

Warrnambool will use the FRV Station on Mortlake Road for single strike team staging and the Friendly Societies Park off Hyland Street for multiple teams.

4.14 Financial Considerations

The general principal is that costs that are within the "reasonable means" of an agency or organisation are met by that agency or organisation.

Any requests by the control agency, or originating from the ICC, should be costed to that agency. Consequently any requests should be accompanied by a purchase order or other acceptance of financial liability. Municipal councils are responsible for the cost of emergency relief measures provided to an impacted community and can reclaim expenditure through a variety of both state and federal government agency funding streams.

4.14.1 Municipal Council Managed Supplementary Resources

Supplementary supply at the Municipal level occurs when control agencies exhaust their own avenues of supply. Control Agencies are able to request the use of council-managed resources to supplement emergency response within the municipal district, if such resources cannot be reasonably sourced by other means. Any request should be authorised by the incident controller through the MERC or the RERC

In line with capacity and capability constraints, councils will endeavour to provide council-managed resources in line with the request. The use of resources may be charged to the requesting agency, or time limited, due to the expense or nature of the operation, or safety concerns.

As above, requests made from any agency must be accompanied by a purchase order or supporting information confirming financial responsibility.

4.15 Resource Sharing Protocols

Warrnambool City Council is a signatory of the Protocol for inter-council resource sharing, which sets out an agreed position between councils regarding the provision of resources to assist other municipalities with response and recovery tasks. The protocol is intended to clarify operational, insurance and reimbursement issues that may arise.

The protocol is consistent with the concepts and policy guidelines articulated in the Emergency Management Act 2013 and the State Emergency Management Plan. Version 3 of the protocol came into effect in February 2021 and contains the relevant forms for both requesting and receiving councils.

The Municipal Association of Victoria, MAV, also established a Human Resource Sharing Database following the 2019/20 North Eastern Victoria and East Gippsland fires to log offers of assistance from the local government sector. It is intended to only activate the use of the database in major emergencies to facilitate resource sharing. Further information on the MAV Human Resource Sharing Database is provided in the MAV Human Resource Sharing Database FAQ.

5 EMERGENCY RELIEF

Emergency relief is the provision of assistance to meet the essential needs of individuals, families and communities during, and in the immediate aftermath, of an emergency.

Agencies with relief responsibilities incorporate the principles of relief as outlined in the SEMP and National Strategy for Disaster Resilience. Relief is focused on consequence management and should consider the principles of relief. Relief encompasses a range of services such as, but not limited to community information, emergency shelter and provision of immediate needs, psychosocial support, material aid, first aid, financial assistance, animal welfare and legal support. It is important that assessment of needs is undertaken for each incident to determine needs.

Relief is considered part of response and must be integrated into the response arrangements; however, it is important to note that relief is interconnected with recovery and must be seamlessly integrated with all other early recovery activities and considered in the response phase.

5.1 Relief Management and Governance

The Municipal emergency recovery arrangements have been developed in accordance with the Emergency Management Act 1986, Emergency Management Act 2103 and align to the SEMP, Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP) and the Regional Relief and Recovery Sub-plan. These arrangements apply to all emergencies that have an impact on the community.

Warrnambool City Council is responsible for relief coordination at the municipal level. Council has the lead role in ensuring coordination of relief activities during an emergency such as:

- community information (public meetings, newsletters, information sheets, advertising and media requests)
- temporary or emergency shelter and Emergency Relief Centres (ERC)
- food, water and immediate material-aid
- psychosocial support and health and medical assistance
- reconnecting families and friends
- emergency financial assistance
- animal welfare
- legal assistance information
- providing advice and referral regarding goodwill, donated goods and services and spontaneous volunteering.

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and Emergency Recovery Victoria are responsible for relief and recovery coordination at the regional and state level respectively.

Roles and responsibilities for other support agencies are outlined in the State Emergency Management Plan. Where required, an incident specific Relief and Recovery Sub-Committee of the MEMPC may be activated to support the governance of relief.

For local arrangements in relief, refer to the Warrnambool and Moyne Joint Emergency Handbook.

5.2 Relief Planning

Warrnambool City Council has a comprehensive Relief Program to support affected communities. This includes the development of plans, guidelines and programs to ensure staff are trained to support relief activities.

5.3 Activation of relief services

Activation of the relief phase of an emergency rest with the IC, in collaboration with the Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM). The level and type of relief required to support affected communities will also be determined through this consultation.

Council is responsible for implementing relief measures and may be assisted by many different government departments and charities depending on the needs of the community. The MRM will coordinate the activation of the selected relief team and respective centre or services as depicted by the needs assessment.

Relief can be provided at a dedicated relief centre, places of community gathering, incident scenes, triage and transfer sites, memorials or other locations as appropriate.

Not all requests for relief will stem from major emergencies. Relief services may also be provided as a result of incidents such as a house fire, over floor flooding or storm damage where there is an immediate need for emergency relief to mitigate hardship. Reports of a non-major emergency may be initiated from a range of sources (e.g. control agency, Victoria Police, MEMO, affected individuals, hospitals and health care centres, ESTA). The agency will notify the MEMO to ensure coordination of relief services at the local level.

Further information on relief services can be found in the Warrnambool and Moyne Joint Emergency Handbook.

5.4 Escalation

A formal request for escalation of relief will be made if the emergency event increases in complexity; exceeds the capacity and/or capability of Warrnambool City Council to respond; or an emergency has affected multiple municipalities within a region or multiple regions. The decision to escalate will be undertaken in consultation with the Incident Controller, MERC, MEMO, MRM and the Regional Emergency Relief Coordinator.

Escalation of relief should build on existing local arrangement rather than replacing them.

Resources to support Council in its response to a local event may be obtained through the MAV Resource Sharing Protocol or through neighbouring councils.

In the event a neighbouring municipality requires support for relief services, including the activation of a Warrnambool City Council emergency relief centre, the MAV resource sharing protocol will be the tool utilised to facilitate this escalation or alternatively a CEO-to-CEO request.

5.5 Emergency Relief Centres (ERC)

Warrnambool City Council is responsible for the planning, management and operations of Emergency Relief Centres (ERC) with the assistance of agencies and local service providers identified at the time of the incident. An ERC is a building or a place that has been activated for the provision of support and essential personal needs for people affected by, or responding to an emergency, and is usually established on a temporary basis to cope with the immediate needs of those affected during the initial response to the emergency.

The decision to activate an ERC is that of either the Incident Controller or the MERC in consultation with Warrnambool's MEMO and MRM. The request may originate from outside the municipality if the MERC or IC believe that it is more suitable for the situation.

Warrnambool City Council has designated and appropriately assessed Emergency Relief Centres that have been identified through a formal Facility Audit process. Refer to the Warrnambool and Moyne Joint Emergency Handbook for details of these facilities.

5.6 Register. Find. Reunite

A critical component of relief is connecting affected persons during and following an emergency. Victoria Police are responsible for the activation of Register. Find. Reunite. and will initiate Australian Red Cross to manage this service on their behalf.

5.7 Relief communication

Dissemination of community information as part of emergency relief assists the community to remain safe and understand support and services available to them.

Relief messaging should be integrated with response messaging, and it should inform the community about relief services and how to get assistance.

Where the formal transition from response to recovery has not yet occurred, the provision of community information remains the responsibility of the Control Agency in consultation with relevant stakeholders to ensure consistent localised emergency relief

information. This may occur through the establishment of an Incident Joint Public Information Committee of which Warrnambool City Council will be a member.

Where transition has occurred, the Council in consultation with the Relief and Recovery Sub-Committee (if established) and relevant stakeholders will coordinate the public information.

5.8 Animal management in emergencies

Councils are the lead for housing displaced companion animals and lost/stray domestic animals, and this includes supporting domestic animals and their owners within an emergency relief centre.

The Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan defines animal welfare support services in relief. This includes livestock, companion animals and wildlife.

Further information relating to domestic animals in emergencies is available through the Warrnambool City Council Municipal Emergency Management Officer. Emergency Animal Welfare is detailed in the Warrnambool / Moyne Emergency Management Handbook.

5.9 Impact Assessment

Impact assessments are conducted in the aftermath of an emergency to assess its effect on the community and inform government of immediate and longer-term recovery needs.

Impact assessments must be community focused to ensure that data and information will assist decision making on how to best support affected communities. It is a three-stage process to gather and analyse information following an emergency event.

EMV's Impact Assessment Guidelines cover the three stages of the process.

5.9.1 Initial Impact Assessment (IIA)

An Initial Impact Assessment (IIA) is a preliminary appraisal of the extent of damage, disruption and breakdown to the community and its infrastructure resulting from the emergency. This assessment is initiated and managed by the control agency and can be supported by other agencies and the municipal council, depending upon the type and scale of the emergency. IIA provides early information to assist in the prioritisation of meeting the immediate needs of individuals and the community. It also indicates if further assessment and assistance is required.

5.9.2 Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA)

SIA is the subsequent progressive and more holistic assessment of the event's impact on the community. It considers built and natural environments, social and economic impacts, and resulting community needs. Impact assessment for relief and recovery requires an additional layer of analysis beyond the initial impact assessment.

Coordination of SIA is the responsibility of the MRM. All departments and agencies involved in the collection of SIA should liaise with the MRM to ensure information is coordinated and shared.

To facilitate this process Warrnambool City Council shall, as early as practicable, perform the following tasks:

- Survey the extent of damage, indicating evaluation of financial and material aid needed.
- Provide a priority listing for restoration of community needs, to assist agencies in the performance of their functions.
- Monitor the acquisition and application of financial and material aid needed, or made available, in the restoration period.

The Council may co-opt persons within the community with the appropriate expertise to assist with the above tasks. Should the emergency extend beyond the boundaries of LGA, the post impact assessment may be merged with that of the other affected municipalities.

The Municipal Association of Victoria has two publications on SIAs, Guidelines and Role Statements

5.9.3 Post Emergency Needs Assessment (PENA)

PENA estimates the longer-term psychosocial impacts on a community caused by their displacement, cost of destroyed assets, the changes in the 'flows' of an affected economy caused by the destruction of assets and interruption of business. It provides insight in relation to the length of time it will take the community and economy to recover.

Such assessments inform the medium to longer-term recovery process and build the knowledge base of the total cost of emergencies that, in turn, informs risk assessment and management.

5.10 Transition to Recovery

It is essential to ensure a smooth transition from the response to the recovery phase of an emergency. The early notification of recovery agencies involved post emergency enables the transition of ongoing activities.

The Incident Controller, MERC and MRM should commence transition planning from response to recovery as soon as possible following the start of the emergency. While relief and recovery actions will already have commenced, there needs to be a formal cessation of response activities and handover for recovery coordination and planning.

Considerations include:

- that emergency response has or will soon be concluded.
- the immediate needs of the affected persons are being managed.
- the relevant agencies are ready to start, or continue, providing and/or managing recovery services.
- the Incident Controller (IC) has supplied a current handover document; and
- that sufficient damage/impact information has been passed to council to enable detailed planning forrecovery activities.

If agreement to terminate response activities is reached at that meeting, the IC in consultation with the MERC will advise all agencies of the time at which response terminates and arrangements will be made to maintain municipal emergency coordination functionality for an agreed period.

If the emergency is of significant size the Regional Recovery Coordinator will lead the transition from response and relief to recovery. Further details around the arrangements for the transition from can be found in the SEMP on the Emergency Management Victoria website

5.11 Post Emergency Debriefing Arrangements

As soon as possible following an incident, agencies (including councils) should arrange their own cold debrief that addresses the agency's response and asset recovery operations. Agency and Council debriefs are to take place prior to a multi-agency debrief to ensure that an accurate picture can be portrayed. Through the MERC they are to ensure that the Control Agency organizes an operational debrief with support agencies as soon as practicable after response activities finish.

Any learnings or enhancements are to be recorded and recommended and should be addressed in the MEMP if required. Meetings to assess the adequacy of the MEMP should be chaired by the MEMPC Chairperson.

An additional debrief may be conducted for the Recovery Team to cover specific relief and recovery issues. This will be convened by the MRM and will be in addition to debriefs conducted by the MERC and MEMPC.

6 EMERGENCY RECOVERY

The Municipal Emergency Recovery Arrangements have been developed in accordance with the Emergency Management Act 1986, Emergency Management Act 2103 and align to the SEMP, Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP) and the Regional Relief and Recovery Sub-plan. These arrangements apply to all emergencies that have an impact on the community.

The SEMP states that recovery is "the assisting of persons and communities affected by emergencies to achieve a proper and effective level of functioning."

Effective recovery from emergencies involves the coordination of a range of services provided by government, non-government and community organisations, and the commercial sector. It should be focused on community needs and enable individuals, families and the community to actively participate in their own recovery. Community recovery planning should be guided by community priorities, local knowledge and existing community strengths and resilience.

Emergency recovery activities integrate with emergency response and relief activities and commence as soon as possible following the emergency. Recovery planning and identification of need should commence at the start of the event.

6.1 Objectives of Recovery

Recovery is the coordinated process of supporting emergency affected individuals and communities to reconnect and re-establish a level of functioning, coordination and access to services.

To achieve this objective, the cooperation and coordination of services between all levels of government, non-government organisations, community agencies and the private sector is critical to the process. Key considerations of the arrangements include:

- General Principles of Recovery
- Recovery Planning and Preparedness
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities for lead and support agencies
- Developed Recovery Action plans
- Consideration for long term recovery

Recovery considerations typically fall under four environments that require coordination as part of the recovery process;

- Social - People and Wellbeing
- Economic - Business and Economy
- Built - Building and Infrastructure
- Natural - Environment and Biodiversity

Consideration will also be given to the adaptation of the recovery framework to align with Emergency Recovery Victoria's Recovery Framework. This details their role, and the principles that underpin recovery work and the desired outcomes for communities and includes a fifth pillar,

- Aboriginal Culture and Healing

More information can be found in the Strategy for Aboriginal Community-led Recovery.

6.2 Recovery Principles

The following information is sourced from the National Principles for Disaster Recovery (February 2018), for more information refer to the Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience website.

Disasters can deeply impact lives and livelihoods. Working with communities recovering from disasters is complex and challenging. These principles are a way to guide our efforts, our approach, our planning and our decision-making.

While all the principles are equally critical to ensure effective recovery, understanding the local and broader context and recognising complexity are fundamental.

The descriptions beneath each principle provide further guidance for working with communities in disaster recovery.

- **Understand the context** - Successful recovery is based on an understanding community context, with each community having its own history, values and dynamics

- **Recognise complexity** - Successful recovery is responsive to the complex and dynamic nature of both emergencies and the community
- **Use community-led approaches** - Successful recovery is community-centred, responsive and flexible, engaging with community and supporting them to move forward
- **Coordinate all activities** - Successful recovery requires a planned, coordinated and adaptive approach, between community and partner agencies, based on continuing assessment of impacts and needs
- **Communicate effectively** - Successful recovery is built on effective communication between the affected community and other partners
- **Recognise and build capacity** - Successful recovery recognises, supports, and builds on individual, community and organisational capacity and resilience

ERV's Recovery Framework aligns with the national Principles and has added two additional principles:

- Strengthen Communities –Successful recovery should leave communities stronger by reducing vulnerabilities and building resistance
- and Ensure an Inclusive Approach - Successful recovery recognises communities are made up of many groups and ensures that actions, both intentional and unintentional do not exclude groups of people

6.3 Recovery Arrangements

In reading these arrangements, it is essential to have an appreciation of the assumptions and accepted understandings that underpin them. These assumptions and accepted understandings are:

6.3.1 Resilience of Individuals and Communities is Respected

Recovery services and programs must acknowledge the inherent resilience that affected individuals and communities display.

Individuals, when possessing information about the situation and available services, can make informed choices about their recovery. Communities, when supported with relevant information and adequate resources, can support and manage their own recovery.

6.3.2 Resilient Recovery

Victoria's Resilient Recovery Strategy aims to support community resilience, streamline recovery services and allow individuals and communities to lead and act to shape their future after an emergency. The strategy includes actions to:

- deliver people and community-centred recovery - governments and recovery agencies partner with communities and allow people to play a greater role in their recovery.
- bring communities into the planning process before, during and after an emergency, and enable community involvement, so that recovery activities better reflect community strengths, needs and values.
- improve operating processes and provide more timely resourcing for recovery, thus recovery services and supports are more coordinated and effective.
- support the recovery workforce by better connecting and enhancing existing support and wellbeing programs across the EM sector.

6.4 Roles and Responsibilities of Organisations and Agencies

Warrnambool City Council is responsible for the coordination and management of relief and recovery at municipal level.

Emergency Recovery Victoria, established in 2022, has responsibility at State and Regional levels after a major emergency event.

Recovery is not the exclusive domain of any single party. All agencies and organisations in the recovery process have an important role to play. This recognises that recovery must be a whole-of-government and a whole-of-community process.

The agreed duties of agencies under these arrangements is contained in the SEMP Roles and Responsibilities document.

There are also existing plans, guidelines and frameworks developed by agencies which will assist with the issues that can arise in communities following emergencies.

6.5 Transition Arrangements

Recovery should begin as soon as possible when an emergency occurs. It is therefore essential to ensure high levels of understanding and cooperation between response and recovery coordinators at each of the levels of operation.

See 5.10

6.6 Escalation

Warrnambool City Council is responsible for the coordination and management of recovery at a municipal level until capacity of Council resources is exceeded by the scale of the event. ERV is responsible for recovery coordination at the regional and state level.

Recovery coordination may escalate from Council coordinated recovery to regional recovery rapidly or over time depending on the emergency context, capacity, recovery environment and community requirements. The following factors may indicate the need for escalation of recovery and formalised regional coordination arrangements:

- The emergency is expected to exceed Local Government Authority capacity to manage recovery coordination.
- The recovery agencies intend to draw on regional or state-tier resources for the foreseeable future in relation to the emergency.
- An increasing scale or changing nature of the actual or expected recovery effort.
- Significant consequences.
- Escalating recovery costs and funding opportunities.

Additional considerations to activate regional recovery coordination in the Barwon South-West Region include:

- State border closure with South Australia.
- Initial impact assessments indicate that the damage to private property exceeds the Annual rates base of the municipality.
- High numbers of non-resident landowners impacted by the event.
- International tourists affected by the emergency, and diplomatic assistance is required.

Recovery escalation is undertaken in consultation with the MRM, MEMO, MERC and Emergency Recovery Victoria.

6.7 Management Structure

Where the need for formal recovery is identified, the Warrnambool MEMPC may establish an incident specific, time limited, recovery committee. The initial responsibilities of the incident specific recovery committee is to formalise the governance structure, oversee the transition from response to recovery, establish working groups and develop an Incident Specific Recovery Plan.

It is also the responsibility of this Committee to ensure that affected communities are represented in the recovery arrangements which may be through Community Recovery Groups.

Appendix list

Appendix 1	Version Control
Appendix 2	MEMPC Membership - (Redacted in Public facing versions)
Appendix 3	Vulnerable Facilities List - (Redacted in Public facing versions)
Appendix 4	Recent Exercises

Appendix 1 – Version Control

Amendment			Effected	
No	**Date**	**Pages affected**	**Author**	**Release date**
1	01/09/2014	Complete Review of MEMP following audit	Director – City Infrastructure	1 September 2014
V2.1	31/03/2016	Update contact details & gov't department changes. Item 4.3 Prevention Plans – add flood plans. Item 8 – remove Red Cross as primary agency for catering.	Neil Holland	
V2.2	10/11/2016	Amendments identified through the annual review process, endorsed by the MEMPC	Justin Hinch	20th December 2016
V3	23/8/2016	Distribution list update – Ambulance Victoria	Sue Rondeau	
V3	25/11/2016	Distribution list update – Salvation Army	Sue Rondeau	
V3	6/3/2017	Contact List update - Powercorp	Sue Rondeau	
V3	9/5/2017	Review of entire document	Sue Rondeau	
V3	30/5/2017	Part 1:Wannon Water updated contact details	Sally Obst	1 July 2017
V3.1	23/8/2017	WCC EM contact details updated as per audit recommendation	Sue Rondeau	23 August 2017
V3.2	28/10/19	WCC EM Contact Details Agency Contact Details Introduction replaced prevention with Mitigation Agency Distribution List updated	Mat Deans	
V3.3	07/09/2022	Amended Australian Fire Danger Rating System	Paul Turner	
V4	12/09/2022	Review of entire 15 March 2024 document	Paul Turner	15 March 2024

Appendix 2 – MEMPC Membership details – (Redacted in Public Facing Versions)

REDACTED IN PUBLIC FACING VERSIONS

Appendix 3 – Vulnerable Facilities List – (Redacted in Public Facing Versions)

REDACTED IN PUBLIC FACING VERSIONS

Appendix 4 – Recent Exercises

Exercise name	Exercise date
Exercise - “Tiburon”	2015
Exercise – Warrnambool ICC Hot Starts	2016
Exercise – “Poldark” (Airport)	2017
Exercise – “Ready Vac” (Pandemic)	2017
Exercise - ERC	2017
St Patrick’s Day Fires (South West Complex)	2018
Russell’s Creek Flood Walls	2019
ERC Opening and Walk Through	2019
Covid 19 Pandemic – Response and Relief	2020 - 2022
BSW Desktop Exercise	2021
Exercise – “Tempest” – relief and recovery exercise	July 2023