



April 2017

Local Government Victoria

Councils and Emergencies Directions Paper – Submission

Please find provided Gippsland Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Groups' (MEMEG) submission in relation to Local Government Victoria's (LGV) *Councils and Emergencies Directions Paper* (referred to as the '**Directions Paper**').

Although the submission has been developed by the MEMEG members that represent the six Gippsland Councils; it should be noted that each Council will forward submissions to the Directions Paper to reflect their own positions.

Representatives of MEMEG attended information sessions by LGV in relation to the Directions Paper submission process which has assisted in forming this submission. In addition MEMEG representatives also attended and provided feedback at a consultation session facilitated by the Municipal Association Victoria (MAV) in relation to the Directions Paper.

Feedback provided at these consultation sessions have formed a MAV draft submission which Gippsland MEMEG strongly supports. However, this is subject to feedback provided to MAV by MEMEG Gippsland concerning the five listed recommendations within their draft submission. A summary of which is as follows:

- *Recommendation: if the final role description is to delineate core requirements and non-core tasks, the core requirements descriptors should be specific, not general statements or policies or plans with a lesser status. Furthermore, they should be quoted verbatim so there is less chance of misinterpretation.*

Strongly supported by Gippsland MEMEG

- *Recommendation: Core requirements should be achievable, irrespective of the size or resources available to the council. Compliance should not be reliant on grant funding.*

Strongly supported by Gippsland MEMEG

- *Recommendation: That LGV works with the MAV and councils to develop agreed descriptions of council's responsibilities under each of the Core Capabilities categorisation.*

Strongly supported by Gippsland MEMEG however suggest clarity around the roles of LGV, MAV and council for the process in achieving this recommendation. It is also

identified that using terminology such as 'agreed descriptions' in the recommendation is confusing as it may assume that it is referring to the descriptions used to describe the Victoria Preparedness Goal 21 Core Capabilities.

- *Recommendation: that LGV works with MAV and councils to further develop the maturity model proposal.*

Strongly supported by Gippsland MEMEG. MEMEG also identifies that the model provides opportunities for further improvement of emergency management responsibilities and practices for councils. MEMEG would also like to understand if other emergency services and agencies are considering the 21 core capabilities identified in the Victoria Preparedness Goal and how this is been achieved. This would assist to support and further enhance collaboration to ensure multi-agency Municipal Emergency Management Plans.

- *Recommendation: If a maturity model approach is adopted, the MAV could work with LGV, Inspector General Emergency Management and councils to develop a self-audit and quality assurance framework.*

Strongly supported by Gippsland MEMEG however recommends that the word 'could' needs to be replaced with 'will'.

MEMEG Gippsland strongly supports the conclusion within the current MAV draft submission. However it is identified that neither the Directions Paper nor the MAV draft submission to the Direction Paper have acknowledged the required training and development to support a maturity model approach or more broadly the role of councils in an emergency.

For example; training is provided for Council officers to undertake Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO) training which the CFA has developed to meet current legislative requirements. Gippsland MEMEG strongly recommends the development of a specific course for core emergency management roles within council as a matter of priority.

Lastly, MEMEG Gippsland recognises the principles of a Councils and Emergencies Directions Paper however strongly supports MAV's position that council's need be provided an updated role description of councils in the broader emergency management arrangements before the final paper is produced.

Should you wish to discuss further please do not hesitate to contact me on [REDACTED] or email [REDACTED]@southgippsland.vic.gov.au.

Kind regards

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