Dear [Name],

Bass Coast Shire Council’s Submission to Local Government Victoria re the Councils and Emergencies Directions Paper

Introduction

Representatives from Bass Coast Shire Council (Council) have attended a number of sessions linked to Local Government Victoria’s (LGV) Councils and Emergencies Directions Paper (the Directions Paper):

- Councils and Emergencies workshop held in the City of Whitehorse in June 2016 pre the release of the Directions Paper
- The Municipal Association of Victoria’s (MAV) consultation session in Traralgon in February 2017
- Gippsland Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group’s Councils and Emergencies workshop in April 2017

Council officers have also reviewed each of the 154 tasks or responsibilities described in the paper. We believe this involvement has given us a broad perspective re the thoughts of local government in Gippsland and beyond regarding the content of the Directions Paper and the aspirations of Council re their role in emergency management.

Comments

Council strongly supports MAV’s Directions Paper submission prepared following the peak body’s state-wide consultation process. We believe it captures the concerns of local government.

Of particular concern to Council is the number of blue font responsibilities not quoted verbatim where legislation is the source of responsibility; the reference quoted is incorrect or not current or comes from guidelines or non-statutory documents, There are also a number of references where councils are attributed roles where they have no responsibility.
eg descriptor 86 ie firefighting and suppression role.

Council supports MAV’s recommendations:

1. If the final role description is to delineate core requirements and non-core tasks, the core requirement descriptors should be specific, not general statements. They should be derived from legislation or statutory documents only – not guidance documents or policies or plans with lesser status. Furthermore they should be quoted verbatim so there is less chance of misinterpretation.

2. Core requirements should also be achievable, irrespective of the size or resources available to the council. Compliance should not be dependent on grant funding.

With a greater understanding of the Victorian Preparedness Goal project through the Directions Paper analysis, Council would like to ask for a review of all 21 core capabilities to clarify and confirm the emergency management roles councils may have. We see MAV as local government’s peak body to be an appropriate partner to assist in this review.

Council supports MAV’s recommendation:

3. That LGV works with MAV and councils to develop agreed descriptions of councils’ responsibilities under each of these categories.

MAV’s maturity model received great support at the Gippsland MAV Directions Paper workshop and Gippsland MEMEG’s session to prepare its joint submission as the maturity model takes into account the varying levels of capacity and capability across councils. It would provide opportunities for sharing ideas, collaboration and specific responses to meet the individual needs of communities.

Council supports MAV’s recommendation:

4. That LGV works with MAV and councils to further develop the maturity model proposal.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Councils and Emergency Directions Paper.

Yours sincerely

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