Our reference: ███████

8 May 2017

Councils and emergencies directions paper consultation
Local Government Victoria (LGV)
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
PO Box 500
MELBOURNE, VIC, 8002

To whom it may concern

Submission to the LGV 'Council and emergencies directions paper'

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the 'Councils and emergencies directions paper'.

Please find attached the submission from Mount Alexander Shire Council. We have also provided input into the Municipal Association of Victoria's submission.

Our submission has been informed by our attendance and participation at regional briefings and workshops with senior council officers from across Victoria regarding the Directions Paper. Discussions at a recent Central Victorian Municipal Emergency Management Enhancements Group, consisting of seven municipalities, have also assisted with the development of our submission.

We hope that the outcomes of the Emergency Management Victoria's Resilient Recovery Discussion Paper and the Emergency Management Legislation Amendments (Planning) Bill 2016 are also considered as part of the development process of the Council and emergencies project.

We look forward to participating further in the review of Councils roles in emergency management. Should you have any questions relating to our submission or Council's role in emergencies, please contact ████████████████████████████████ ███.

Yours sincerely

A thriving community working together to create a sustainable and vibrant future

LGV Councils and Emergencies Directions Paper

Mount Alexander Shire Council – Submission

MOUNT ALEXANDER
—— SHIRE COUNCIL ——

Contents

Introduction

Mount Alexander Shire Council appreciates the opportunity to respond to Local Government Victoria's (LGV) Councils and Emergencies Directions Paper (the Directions Paper).

Council has reviewed the Directions Paper, attended regional briefings and participated in LGV and MAV workshops with senior council officers from across Victoria regarding the Directions Paper. Mount Alexander Shire Council has also provided input into submission's from the Municipal Association of Victoria.

Council's role in emergency management has seen a spike in the workload post Black Saturday. State Government and Local Government Victoria's support of Council's through the establishment of the Municipal Emergency Resourcing Program is critical to supporting council in meeting emergency management legislative requirements and additional workload functions.

The Directions Paper (page 13) outlines that:

- councils need to balance community priorities across all service areas including emergency management when budgeting and reviewing service provision

Council strongly supports this comment. With a limited rates base and new rate capping laws coming to affect, Emergency Management is just one of approximately 110 core businesses delivered by Council and is not often viewed as a priority function or service of Council. This view often results in very limited funding becoming available for Emergency Management and makes it difficult to undertake required tasks.

It's important that LGV recognise Council's ability to continue operating at the level it currently does in addition to any new activities listed within the Directions Paper will be severely compromised should the MERP program not continue. Rural municipalities with low rate bases rely heavily on this funding to employ emergency management staff in effort to assist with meeting statutory requirments and community based needs.

Other emergency management reform initiatives

As listed on page 14 of the Directions Paper there is currently a considerable amount of reform in the sector. This includes:

- Emergency Management Acts 1986 and 2013
- Emergency Management Legislation Amendments (Planning) Bill 2016
  - Development of the Ministerial Guidelines
- Resilient Recovery Discussion Paper

Council is concerned that these reforms are occurring in isolation to each other given that some are occurring concurrently or prior to the final version of other reforms (such as the Emergency Management Legislation Amendments (Planning) Bill 2016) being released.

There may be changes that occur in other reforms that ultimately will affect the outcome of this Discussion Paper. LGV need to be aware of this and ensure that additional consultation takes place.

Core Capabilities

The Directions Paper lists 21 core capabilities that the EM sector need to meet. Council has reviewed these capabilities and descriptors as listed in the Paper. Following review those listed below are thought to be inaccurate and Council has provided feedback on each. Those not listed are supported by Council

Table one – Mark up of Victorian Preparedness goal core capabilities descriptions

Core capability	When	Description	Council comment
Community information and warnings	Before, during, after	Deliver public information and warnings that are authoritative, consistently constructed and relevant for all Victorians and visitors in all emergencies. Provide timely and tailored information that supports the community to make informed decisions before, during and after emergencies.	Current wording implies that Council have a core capability regarding community information and warnings. Council does not provide official warnings via our media channels. Any information we issue regarding emergencies is either educational or in relation to our role in relief and recovery phases during or after an emergency. These are not warnings regarding active emergencies such as Watch and Act or Emergency warnings.
Fire management & suppression	Before, during	Provide firefighting capabilities to manage and suppress fires of all types, kinds, and complexities while protecting lives, property, and the environment in the affected (land and water) area.	Councils do not provide firefighting capabilities. Councils currently have a role in supporting fire services through the provision of plant equipment such as water trucks or graders. These activities do not involve active firefighting. Council acknowledges the roles we play in compliance, education and land management prior to an emergency.

Critical transport	*No council involveme nt*	*Plan for and provide response and recovery services during emergencies that affect the road network including alternative routes, emergency permits and escorts for responders, clearing, restoration of damaged roads. Provide response to major public transportation emergencies including infrastructure access and accessible transportation services to ensure community movement including coordination of all private rail, tram and bus services to support response priority objectives.*	*Councils are road managers and therefor do have a role in critical transport.* *We are required to amongst other requirements :* • *Assist with clearing and restoration of Council roads* • *Establish alternative routes on Council roads*
Health protection	Before, during, after	The coordination and implementation of legislation, programs and monitoring procedures to minimize public health risk from infectious disease, contaminated food, and contaminated drinking water supplies, radiation and human environmental health hazards. This includes the development and implementation of strategies to promote and protect public health.	Council is involved in health protection before, during and after emergencies through the role of Environmental Health Officers.
Health emergency response	*During*	*The planning, provisioning, response and coordination of pre hospital and health emergency care, including triage, treatment and distribution of patients, in a timely and structured manner, using all available resources to maximise positive health outcomes.*	*Council has a role in health emergency response through our Environmental Health Officers. Roles include assisting with outbreaks of pandemic influenza, and epidemics such as gastroenteritis outbreaks.*
Environmental response	*Before, during*	*To assess and manage the consequences to the community, environmental values, domestic animals and livestock of a hazardous materials release, naturally occurring pests or biological hazard.*	*Council through our Local laws team support Ag Vic for stock disposal, burial sites EHO's would undertake a supporting role at the request of DHHS*
Economic recovery	After	Return economic and business activities (including food and agriculture) to a healthy state and develop new business and employment opportunities that result in a sustainable and economically viable community.	Council works with business in the before, during and after emergencies. This includes raising business resilience prior to an emergency.

Councils' current emergency management responsibilities and actions

Council also provides feedback where relevant on the 154 identified current emergency management responsibilities. It should be noted that Mount Alexander Shire Council does not currently undertake all of these responsibilities and would not be in a position to do so with current resourcing.

Current responsibilities and actions			
	Responsibilities and/or Actions	**Reference**	**Comments**
Planning	**Before**		
Conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community as appropriate in the development of executable strategic, operational, and/or tactical level approaches to meet defined objectives.	1. Lead an all-agencies approach to community-based risk assessment and planning including compliance with relevant legislation and policy at the municipal level. [1]	***Emergency Management Act 1986* 21 Municipal co-ordination and planning**	Councils do not 'lead', they 'support' and 'appoint' at the municipal level. The legislation does not indicate Councils having a 'lead' role. VicSES is responsible for undertaking the risk assessment process and the MEMPC is responsible for drafting the MEMP which contains the risk assessment and planning. The MEMPC will then submit the MEMP to Council for endorsement. The MEMP is not a Council Plan. The MEMP contains responsibilities of other agencies of which Council are not responsible for delivering.
	2. Prepare and maintain municipal emergency management plans and subplans. [2]	***Emergency Management Act 1986* 20 Municipal emergency management plan**	As above
	3. Appoint a municipal emergency management planning committee. [3]	***Emergency Management Act 1986* 21 Municipal co-ordination and planning**	As above

	4. Support hazard-specific risk assessment to inform plans and community resilience-building strategies, using local knowledge and information based on community needs.[4]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 6 - Municipal Emergency Management Planning Arrangements 6.5 Risk Management, page 6-13	As stated Council 'supports' the hazard specific risk assessment process. Council does not own the risk assessment/management process or the risks being assessed as described in Action 1 above.
	5. Lead implementation and coordination of specific risk treatments on private and council land in partnership with emergency management agencies, including flood/fire management, maintaining a register of at-risk groups.[5]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 - 77	Most of the activities of Council listed in Part 7 are carried out in close conjunction with, or with direct support by, government departments and agencies. Council does not lead risk mitigation on private property. Using 'lead' also contradicts EMMV Part 6, p6-14 - *"The responsibility for treatment of risks is shared by all agencies and the community. Treatment of specific risks for the municipality is not the sole responsibility of the Council."*
	6. Lead the maintenance and administration of the Vulnerable Persons Register (VPR).	**Vulnerable people in emergencies policy – May 2015** 6.2 The role of municipal councils in coordinating local implementation of Vulnerable Persons Registers 7.1 The role of municipal councils in developing and maintaining a list of local facilities where vulnerable people are likely to be situated **Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 3 - State Emergency Response Plan	Questionable if Council 'lead' this role. The policy states that Council role is coordinating local implementation of the VPR. This implies a 'support' role to DHHS in managing the VPR. The EMMV Part 3, page 3-24; *"Municipal councils …………. oversee the maintenance of a Vulnerable Persons Register"*

	8. Develop council business continuity plans detailing procedures and systems to maintain core business and emergency management activities, including: • backfilling for staff with emergency management expertise when they are on leave • planning to identify and address gaps in council's emergency knowledge and action.		There is a strong link between business continuity and emergency management for Council. An emergency event, depending on scale and consequence can affect Council service delivery. There is a view that emergency events are a core risk to Council.
	10. Develop settlement and issue-based policies and strategies in planning schemes that clearly express and give direction to urban change, including implementing risk-mitigation strategies (such as flood and bushfire management overlays).		Councils role in relation to risk mitigation strategies and planning schemes is often limited to implementation of the schemes. Government agencies such as DELWP are often responsible for development of these schemes.
	During		
Community information and warnings	**Before**		

Deliver public information and warnings that are authoritative, consistently constructed and relevant for all Victorians and visitors in all emergencies. Provide timely and tailored information that supports the community to make informed decisions before, during and after emergencies.	14. Support agencies to plan, prepare and deliver consistent, all-hazards customised information and messages to the community, using council communication networks.[8]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan *7.4.5 Community development* • Municipal councils will lead community information (including community briefings and meetings). Municipal councils are responsible for promoting a single point of contact for residents to obtain information about the support, services and assistance that could be available.	It is important to note that Councils cannot provide support in delivering official warnings in a timely manner. We are not a response agency and do not have the resources to undertake this role.
	15. Plan, together with neighbouring councils and regionally, community information.		Council communications departments across the Victoria Central MEMEG have a working group which shares resources, information, processes, etc. Council is also a part of the Northern Victorian Cluster group of Councils who work together across all aspects of emergency management.
	16. Identify appropriate and preferred communication channels for the community and particular groups and people (such as those who are vulnerable and those who are culturally and linguistically diverse).[9]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 3.3 Understanding the needs of communities	The reference in the Paper is incorrect.
	18. Support implementation of flood warning systems in at-risk areas of the municipality.		Clarification on what this entails is required. There are known areas where communities would benefit flood warning systems but what is Council's role here. We are not in a position to fund this.

	During		
	21. Support agencies to develop and disseminate information and warnings that are relevant and credible to the community by:[10] • disseminating information through council communication channels and local networks • developing accurate, timely risk information tailored to community needs.	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 - 77	Council has a 'support' role in the delivery of information and warnings during and event on behalf of the Control Agency. Council can assist with tailoring the message for local communities needs. It is important to note that Councils cannot provide support in delivering official warnings (i.e advice messages, watch and act and emergency warning messages) in a timely manner 24/7. We are not a response agency and do not have the resources to undertake this role.
	After		
Operational management	**Before**		
Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities, including operational communications.	35. Manage and maintain a council emergency coordination system and/or council operations and facilities that can be used during emergencies.		Refers to the Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC) which has been removed as a requirement in the EMMV. There is an expectation that Council will be able to provide some sort of Crisis centre to manage Council operations during an emergency event to coordinate and deliver services to the community. Our Council has also made a commitment through the Northern Victorian Cluster Councils to provide an EMLO to the ICC where possible during actual emergencies to support municipal coordination.
	36. Ensure council staff are trained to safely undertake emergency management roles and responsibilities (such as traffic management, emergency management liaison officer and municipal recovery manager).		Council is obliged to ensure its staff have the knowledge and skills to perform the tasks required of them. There are limited opportunities or dedicated training programs for staff to develop their emergency management knowledge and skills

		During		
	40. Implement collaborative plans and arrangements to maintain council's capacity, including by using neighbouring (partner) councils' resources.	**Municipal Association of Victoria** Protocol for Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing	Many Councils across the state have created partnerships through localised MEMEGs or the Northern Victorian Cluster to support each other in emergency management.
	41. Support response agencies to effectively deliver emergency response services locally by:[17] • after consultation, making council resources, facilities and services available to agencies during response, relief and recovery phases • providing council resources as requested by agencies to secure affected areas • providing a council liaison officer (emergency management liaison officer) to an emergency management team to: - share knowledge, data and information about community needs and consequences	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77 **Note:** Various other references in the EMMV.	Council has limited capacity to provide physical resources i.e. plant (graders, water tankers, etc.). Some Council plant has limited off-road capacity and does not meet the DELWP Plant Standards for working in a bushfire operational area. Control agencies need to develop agreements with contractors able to comply and supply authorised plant for a bushfire operational area. There are limitations as to when Council can supply an EMLO. There should not be an expectation that one will be supplied to an ICC every Total Fire Ban Day.

- ensure council is consulted and involved in emergency decisions that will affect the council and community.		
43. Provide agencies with resources and information to partially or fully close roads and determine alternative transport routes.[18]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77	Considered as part of normal business for Council controlled roads. Council does not have a significant role in determine alternative transport routes, Police may seek advice from the Council as a road manager
After		
44. Conduct local recovery activities.[19]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan	Note – This review needs to be undertaken alongside the Resilient Recovery Discussion Paper.
48. Scope requirements for planning to establish a municipal / community recovery committee and if necessary form, lead and support the committee.[20]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77 **Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 7.4.5.2 Formation, leadership and support of Municipal/Community Recovery Committees	Note – This review needs to be undertaken alongside the Resilient Recovery Discussion Paper.
59. Clear blocked drains and local roads including by removing trees on council land and on roads.[21]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77	Council will only undertake works on Council managed infrastructure. This does not extend to private property.

	61. Support agencies to coordinate volunteer efforts after emergencies.[22]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 7.4.5.7 Coordination of spontaneous volunteers	**Note:** Incorrect reference
Intelligence and information-sharing	**Before**		
To provide timely, accurate and actionable decision support information, resulting from the planning, collecting, processing, analysis and evaluation from multiple data sources, which is needed to be more proactive in anticipating hazard activity and informing mitigation, response or recovery activities. It also includes the assessment of risks, threats and hazards so that decision makers, responders, and community members can take informed action to reduce their entity's risk and increase their resilience.	65. Implement standardised systems and processes to facilitate surge arrangements and exchange staff between neighbouring (partner) councils to maintain capability and capacity during and after emergencies by: • identifying data needs for relief provision and planning for data management • establishing data-sharing agreements and procedures with agencies.	**Municipal Association of Victoria** Protocol for Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing	Many Councils across the state have also created partnerships through localised MEMEGs or the Northern Victorian Cluster to support each other in emergency management.
	During		
	71. Capture, process and manage large volumes of data from multiple sources to share with the community and stakeholders.		Experience has shown that most Councils have limited capacity to perform this function.
	After		
	72. Capture and analyse lessons, share the findings with other councils and agencies, and work cooperatively to identify and implement solutions.		Councils have limited capacity to perform this task.

	Before, during & after		
	74. Undertake municipal functions as required by local government, building, electricity, water and land use planning legislation and regulations.[25]	*Emergency Management Act 1986* *Emergency Management Act 2013* *Local Government Act 1989* *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* *Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958* *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* *Water Act 1989* *Water Industry Act 1994* *Electricity Safety Act 1998* *Planning and Environment Act 1987* *Building Act 1993*	Some of this is business as usual.
	75. Proactively enforce relevant regulations and laws that relate to emergency management.[26]		Clarification is required as to what this statement is referring to in the EM Act? Is this statement aimed towards the CFA Act 1958?
Building community resilience	**Before**		
Communities strengthen their lifelines by better connecting and working together with appropriate support.	76. Build local partnerships with businesses and not-for-profit organisations.		This is business as usual for Councils. Additional work may be required to collaborate around emergency management.
	78. Encourage and assist the community to participate in emergency management education and training programs provided by council and agencies.		There is limited training available for the community outside of educational programs such as Fire Safe K ids or Fire Ready Victoria Sessions in emergency management.
	During		

	After		
	85. Engage the community in developing and delivering recovery activities including by appointing community development and/or community recovery officers.[27]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 7.4.5.2 Formation, leadership and support of Municipal/Community Recovery Committees	**Note:** The reference in the Paper is incorrect. Council's resources are limited in this area. We do not have any standalone Community Development Officers nor do we have the financial ability to self-fund a role during recovery from an emergency. Experience shows that State and Commonwealth funding for recovery officers is often delayed resulting in delays to implementing key recovery actions following an emergency.
Fire management & suppression	**Before & during**		Council does not undertake in fire suppression roles
Provide firefighting capabilities to manage and suppress fires of all types, kinds, and complexities while protecting lives, property, and the environment in the affected (land and water) area.	• developing and maintaining a municipal fire prevention plan[29]	***Country Fire Authority Act 1958*** s55A, Municipal fire prevention plans	Similar to the approach of the MEMP, the development and maintenance of the MFMP is an all agencies' approach not just Council.
	• identifying, designating, signing, maintaining and annually reviewing bushfire safer places and their plans, and (for councils in Country Fire Authority [CFA] areas) reporting back annually to the CFA[30]	***Country Fire Authority Act 1958*** s50G Municipal councils to identify and designate neighbourhood safer places s50H Appropriate signage for designated neighbourhood safer places s50I Maintenance of designated neighbourhood safer places	Council would like to see a review of the current Neighbourhood Safer Places legislation and shelter options undertaken. This review should incorporate whether Council's are the most appropriate agency to be responsible for undertaking these responsibilities.

		s50J Annual assessment of designated neighbourhood safer places	It would make more sense that this responsibility lies with the MFMPC not Council
	• issuing permits to burn[31]	*Country Fire Authority Act 1958* s38 Lighting fires in accordance with permit	Number of Councils are querying why Council have this responsibility, especially as Councils are not fire management agencies or have suitably qualified staff. If this is to remain with Councils, further training opportunities and update or review of the current MFPO course is required to ensure skills and knowledge of officers and persons undertaking burn programs are adequate.
	• taking all practicable steps (including with planned burning) to prevent the occurrence and spread of fires and minimise their danger on land that council manages or is responsible for[32]	*Country Fire Authority Act 1958* s43 Duties and powers of councils and public authorities in relation to fire *Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958* s5 Duties and powers of councils and public authorities in relation to fire	**Comment:** Requires Council to manage the fuel on land under its control, fire prevention/management plans for council reserves serves this requirement.
	• providing pillar fire hydrants in reticulated areas when the CFA issues written notice to do so[33]	*Country Fire Authority Act 1958* s36 Authority may require certain municipalities to provide hydrants in streets etc.	Council does not believe it should be their responsibility to pay for the installation and maintenance of fire hydrants. This responsibility should be that of the water authority . Council strongly believe review of the CFA Act and Water Act in relation to this responsibility should be undertaken.
	• meeting the costs of providing, installing, marking and maintaining all fire plugs in the municipality.[34]	*Water Act 1989* s165(2) Fire plugs and free water	As above

Logistics and supply chain management	**Before**		
Deliver essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted communities and survivors, to include emergency power and fuel support, as well as the coordination of access to community staples. Synchronize logistics capabilities and enable the restoration of impacted supply chains, including removal of debris.	87. Develop emergency management resource-sharing protocols between councils.	**Municipal Association of Victoria** Protocol for Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing	Many Councils across the state have also created partnerships through localised MEMEGs or for our Council also the Northern Victorian Cluster to support each other in emergency management.
	88. Maintain and store essential equipment and materials to support emergency management activities and meet the needs of affected communities (such as sandbags).		Inaccurate – reference to SES Statewide Guideline – Sandbag required.
	During		
Impact assessment	**Before**		
Provide all decision-makers with relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard and any potential consequences during and after an emergency to ensure efficient, timely and appropriate support for communities.	92. Lead council's impact-assessment processes, systems and tools for core council services.	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 2.2 Relief and recovery are consequence-driven	Council role is to coordinate, not necessarily lead.
	During		
	93. Collect secondary impact-assessment data about the scale and characteristics of the impact on the social, economic, built and natural environments.[35]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 2.2 Relief and recovery are consequence-driven	While Council supports this requirement it should be noted that the task itself is often quite difficult as insufficient data is sent to Council by those responsible for undertaking Initial Impact Assessments.
	94. Initially assess impacts on essential infrastructure and services.[36]		As above, Council is not responsible for undertaking initial impact assessments. Also agencies are responsible for their own infrastructure not Council

	After		
	98. Conduct longitudinal mapping of the impact focusing on wellbeing, liveability, sustainability and viability.		This appears to reference the Resilient Recovery Discussion Paper that is currently out for comment? If this is the case then this is not a current policy.
Health protection	**Before, during & after**		
The coordination and implementation of legislation, programs and monitoring procedures to minimise public health risk from infectious disease, contaminated food, and contaminated drinking water supplies, radiation and human environmental health hazards. This includes the development and implementation of strategies to promote and protect public health.			
Relief assistance	**Before**		
The provision of well-coordinated, integrated and timely assistance to meet the immediate health, wellbeing and essential needs of affected communities, during and immediately after an emergency event, with the aim to support social cohesion and build resilience.	104. Coordinate relief agencies and the community to develop local relief plans.[38]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77 **Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 3.2 Community development	There are no specific requirements to develop local relief plans.

	During		
	115. Coordinate relief services locally.[39]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 4.4 Local relief and recovery coordination roles and responsibilities 6.4 Distribution of relief assistance 7.4.5 Community development	**Note:** The reference in the Paper is incorrect.
	118. Inform the community about financial hardship assistance payments.		Council's role is to support the Department of Health and Human Services. Council is not the lead agency as implied here.
Economic recovery	**After**		
Return economic and business activities (including food and agriculture) to a healthy state and develop new business and employment opportunities that result in a sustainable and economically viable community.	**Before**		
Natural and cultural heritage rehabilitation	**Before**		
Protect natural and cultural heritage resources through appropriate planning, mitigation, response, and recovery actions to preserve, conserve, rehabilitate, and restore them consistent with post-disaster community priorities and best practices and in	126. As part of emergency planning, identify at-risk cultural heritage sites.		This is not a role of Council. Municipal Fire Management Planning Committees undertake this role through the Victorian Fire Risk Register. Many of these sites are unknown to Council as they are not publicised. If anything this roles should sit with DELWP.
	After		
	127. Coordinate natural environment rehabilitation works locally..		DELWP is also responsible for this depending on the location.
	128. Restore local cultural heritage		Council would not restore an asset unless

compliance with applicable environmental and heritage preservation laws.	sites		it's our own Council asset
	129. Assess impacts to natural and cultural heritage sites.		Other than Council owned heritage sites, we are not responsible for restoring these sites.
	130. Coordinate remediation and stabilisation works on private and public land.		This is not a Council role unless it is on Council owned land. Some Council's may support CFA by organising for land rehabilitation works to be undertaken where a Council plant equipment was used to establish firebreaks but ultimately CFA/DELWP are responsible for this including payment for works. Council also wouldn't undertake this role on public land.
	131. Monitor natural and cultural heritage sites.		Council is only responsible for undertaking this role on Council owned land.
	132. With the support of Heritage Victoria, develop ways to mitigate or avoid adverse impacts to cultural heritage sites during recovery, reconstruction or rehabilitation works.		This activity implies a lead role function for Council, however it is more about managing compliance than 'leading'.
Built recovery	**Before**		
To restore essential infrastructure and establish safe areas during and following an emergency, ensuring the provision of facilities and services to support and benefit communities.	**After**		
	140. Coordinate the rebuilding and redevelopment of council and private assets.[44]		Councils have some control over the rebuilding of private assets through issuing planning and building permits. Council aren't responsible for the coordination or redevelopment of private assets.

	141. Restore council-owned assets, prioritising business operations and commercial or community facilities essential for community wellbeing or recovery activities.[45]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77	Due to changes to the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements not all Council owned assets are covered. Sporting facilities, walking trails etc. cannot be claimed and are at risk of not being restored due to limited shire funds.
	142. Coordinate clean-up activities including the disposal of dead animals.[46]	**Emergency Management Manual Victoria** Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77	Although we are responsible for the coordination we cannot act until Agriculture Victoria/vets have authorised removal and burial of animals and that EPA have approved burial location.
Social recovery	**After**		
The longer term provision of assistance and access to services that allows individuals, families and communities to achieve an effective level of functioning after an emergency event. This includes safety, security, shelter, health and psychosocial wellbeing and re-establishment of those elements of society necessary for well-being.	149. Provide access to short-, medium- and long-term housing options for displaced people.		Council's role to be determined regarding medium to long term housing options. Council can assist with providing short term options such as Emergency Relief Centres or provide alternative accommodation at caravan parks , motels etc for single incidents such as individual house fires,. Council is not in a position to provide other housing options.
	150. Assess and deliver financial re-establishment assistance.	**DHHS Personal Hardship Assistance Program**	Not a Council role.

Conclusion

Mount Alexander Shire Council welcomes the review into the role of Councils in emergencies. Further work is required in refining this document to ensure that the 154 proposed responsibilities accurately cover the responsibilities that Council currently holds and delivers or is proposed to undertake into the future.

As stated in the introduction Council advocates to LGV that the finalisation of this paper is delayed until other reforms in the sector are completed or that LGV ensures that the findings from this paper are included in the other sector reforms that are currently occurring. This includes the development of the Ministerial Guidelines under the Emergency Management Legislation Amendments (Planning) Bill 2016 when legislated.

In closing, Council continues to strongly advocate for the permanent funding for the Municipal Emergency Resourcing Program administered by LGV.

This funding is vital to municipalities with small rates base in funding the Emergency Management Coordinator position to deliver councils emergency management responsibilities. Without this funding Council would not be in a position to continue to undertake the work at the standard it is currently delivered and would not be in a position to undertake 154 different actions as listed in the Discussion Paper.