



VICTORIA POLICE

State Emergency Response Coordination Division
State Emergency and Security Command

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Reference: Council and Emergencies Directions Paper

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Councils and Emergencies Directions Paper.

The document has been broadly circulated for consultation within Victoria Police. Responses indicate that in general terms the Directions Paper encompasses the roles and functions of Councils within the emergency management domain incorporating the Emergency Management Act 1986, Emergency Management Act 2013 and the Emergency Management Manual Victoria, in particular Part 6 of EMMV – Municipal Emergency Management Planning Arrangements.

After consultation with your office and our internal stakeholders, Victoria Police would like to provide the following feedback for consideration in refining the Directions Paper:

Planning

2 – Details Councils obligation to prepare and maintain MEMPs and sub-plans. Part 6 of EMMV talks of maintaining the plan but also refers to monitoring and reviewing MEMPs which includes the conducting of exercises. Nothing in the existing statement indicates such activities will be undertaken. It is acknowledged that this function will be performed by the committee incorporating other agency personnel, though it is incumbent on the Council as the managers of the MEMP to ensure it occurs. It should be noted that this activity requires evidence for compliance with question 16 of the MEMP Workbook audit tool.

After – Noted there are no “After” actions here as planning is implied to be a pre-event activity. It is suggested that planning for future events occurs as an activity of reviewing actual events. It would also be an opportune time to review the existing MEMP and assess the plans capability in an authentic context.

Operational management

32 – This should include identifying resource gaps and developing alternative contingencies to mitigate such gaps. Identifying other non-council resources that could be made available and establishing protocols to access those resources in the event of emergencies should be part of this function and is a legislative requirement under section 20 (2) (a) of the EM Act 1986. The EMMV states there is an expectation of councils to be responsible for sourcing supplementary response resources. Question 2 of the MEMP Workbook audit tool necessitates this to be evidence to attain compliance.

46 – The deployment to affected communities should consider consultation with the incident control agency and/or the EMT. From a police perspective this access could be restricted due to ongoing investigation activities and subject to crime scene restrictions which may prevent or limit accessibility beyond safety considerations.

Intelligence and information-sharing

71 – Consideration should be given to managing the dissemination of community information to ensure validation and consistency of messaging from across all agencies.

Victoria Police note the key role Councils play in leading relief and recovery activities, the management of relief centres and maintenance and administration of the Vulnerable Persons Register. These crucial functions should not be understated and it is encouraging to see the Discussion Paper articulates that Councils will focus and build on undertaking these roles.

Again Victoria Police would like to thank you for this opportunity to provide advice to Councils for their emergency management activities. We look forward to continuing our ongoing relationships through the various functional roles and committees and working towards a safer Victoria.

Sincerely

