
SUMMARY

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) (through Local Government Victoria) has released a directions paper regarding Council's role in emergencies. All Councils have been requested to respond to the paper with feedback regarding the content and proposed changes.

Loddon Shire Council would like to thank LGV for the ability to be able to comment on the "Councils and emergencies directions paper" (the paper). Whilst some of the function may not be undertaken by all Councils, particularly smaller councils, Loddon Shire Council believes it is important to comment on all of the proposed responsibilities and actions.

The paper is an essential element of Phase 1 of the "Council's and Emergencies Project" (part of the "Local Government Capability and Capacity Project") being led by LGV. This project aims to assess and improve the ability of local governments to manage emergencies, clarifying resources, responsibilities and actions. It is imperative that the paper accurately records the spectrum of roles and action in emergencies undertaken by councils ensuring a positive and valid delivery of Phase 2 and 3.

The capabilities and capacity of councils in an emergency varies greatly across the state, yet government and communities expect all councils to respond in a similar way, delivering emergency services in a timely and efficient manner. The community further expect that council's core business will be maintained throughout the emergency.

Whilst Council agrees with many of the responsibilities in the paper, it contains some errors and inaccuracies. Some of these errors are minor omissions or errors in wording such as interpretations of specific legislative requirements. The belief by council regarding the inaccuracies will be address below in this response document.

Council acknowledges the usefulness of using the terms "Before", "During" and "After", rather than Mitigation/Prevention, Response and Recovery. The terms before, during and after recognizes the actual functions undertaken by agencies which tend to blend in to each phase rather than have a distinct separation of functions.

Council further understands the responsibilities in 'BLUE' are those currently undertaken by councils in line with legislation or guidelines and the 'BLACK' whilst not having a legislative or policy requirement is viewed by some councils or agencies as being council's responsibility.

The following table outlines Loddon Position on the 'Council and emergencies direction paper'.

Current responsibilities and actions

	Responsibilities /Actions	Reference	Comments
Planning	Before		
<p>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.</p> <p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils.</p>	<p>1. Lead an all-agencies approach to community-based risk assessment and planning including compliance with relevant legislation and policy at the municipal level.</p>	<p>Emergency Management Act 1986</p> <p>21 Municipal co-ordination and planning</p> <p>(1) A municipal council must appoint a person or persons to be the Municipal Emergency Resource Officer or Officers.</p> <p>(2) A municipal emergency resource officer is responsible to the municipal council for ensuring the co-ordination of municipal resources to be used in emergency response and recovery.</p> <p>(3) A municipal council must appoint a municipal emergency planning committee constituted by persons appointed by the municipal council being members and employees of the municipal council, response and recovery agencies and local community groups involved in emergency management issues.</p> <p>(4) The function of a municipal emergency planning committee is to prepare a draft municipal emergency management plan for consideration by the municipal council.</p> <p>(5) A municipal emergency planning committee must give effect to any</p>	<p>It is imperative to change the wording of “Lead” (as this should be the agency responsible for the operational or tactical approach to meet objectives i.e. Fire – CFA) to coordinate, support and appoint at the municipal level.</p> <p>The legislation does not indicate Councils having a ‘lead’ role and nor should it.</p>

		<p>direction or guidelines issued by the Coordinator in Chief.</p> <p>(6) Subject to the regulations, a municipal emergency planning committee may determine its own procedures.</p>	
	2. Prepare and maintain municipal emergency management plans and sub-plans.	<p>Emergency Management Act 1986</p> <p>20 Municipal emergency management plan</p> <p>(1) A municipal council must prepare and maintain a municipal emergency management plan (MEMP).</p>	Councils are responsible for ensuring the preparation and maintenance of a MEMP, with input by all emergency service organisations.
	3. Appoint a municipal emergency management planning committee.	<p>Emergency Management Act 1986</p> <p>21 Municipal co-ordination and planning</p> <p>(3) A municipal council must appoint a municipal emergency planning committee constituted by persons appointed by the municipal council being members and employees of the municipal council, response and recovery agencies and local community groups involved in emergency management issues.</p>	Under the current legislation councils are responsible for appointing the MEMPC and this is appropriate.
	4. Support hazard-specific risk assessment to inform plans and community resilience-building strategies, using local knowledge and information based on community needs.	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria</p> <p>Part 6 - Municipal Emergency Management Planning Arrangements</p> <p>6.5 Risk Management, page 6-13</p>	Councils do 'supports' the hazard specific risk assessment process, however SES are the current organization tasked with undertaking the process or in the case of fire the CFA (VFRR). Reference in the Paper is out of date.
	5. Lead implementation and coordination of specific risk treatments on private and	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria</p>	Most of the activities of Council listed in Part 7 are carried out in close conjunction with, or with direct

	<p>council land in partnership with emergency management agencies, including flood/fire management, maintaining a register of at-risk groups.</p>	<p>Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 - 77</p>	<p>support by government departments and agencies. 'Lead' is not consistent with the intent of Part 7 and should be altered to Coordinate or support. Using 'lead' also contradicts EMMV Part 6, p6-14 - "<i>The responsibility for treatment of risks is shared by all agencies and the community.</i>"</p>
	<p>6. Lead the maintenance and administration of the Vulnerable Persons Register (VPR).</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>DHHS 'lead' this role and formulates policy for agencies to identify vulnerable people. The policy states that Council role is coordinating local implementation of the VPR. The EMMV Part 3, page 3-24; "<i>Municipal councils oversee the maintenance of a Vulnerable Persons Register</i>" Again the term 'Lead' needs to be altered 'Coordinate and maintain'</p>
	<p>7. Support the profiling of the community to identify and record what makes people vulnerable in emergencies and work with Red Cross, DHHS and other agencies to establish a plan to support vulnerable</p>	<p>Vulnerable people in emergencies Guideline 1 - Planning and screening</p>	

	people in the community.		
	<p>8. Develop council business continuity plans detailing procedures and systems to maintain core business and emergency management activities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 		<p>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, particularly small councils like Loddon.</p> <p>It is incumbent on councils to manage phases of an emergency event and thus it should be viewed as a core risk to Council.</p> <p>Capacity by small councils is very limited and it is important to increase capacity through funding and working closely with adjoining councils i.e. clusters.</p>
	<p>9. Improve recovery plans and procedures by exercising and reviewing them.</p>	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria</p> <p>Part 6 - Municipal Emergency Management Planning Arrangements</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Audit Questions – Q16</p> <p>Explain and demonstrate where the MEMP addresses the frequency of and details for exercises, which test elements of the MEMP.</p>	<p>Whilst exercising and reviewing plans is imperative, actual events i.e. flooding has necessitated the delaying of exercising. However the experience gained through actually undertaking activities resulting from an emergency is outweighs exercising and this should be an alternative to exercising.</p>
	<p>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</p>		<p>Councils undertake this however it requires the support of CMA's and CFA etc. and support at State level ensuring legislation gives councils the necessary ability to ensure strategic planning and appropriate development.</p>

	overlays).		
	11. Apply local planning schemes and building controls including development assessments, inspections and advice.	s212 Building Act 1993 , BMO, clause 52.47 Bushfire protection: planning requirements (BF5) & clause 44.06 Planning provisions	Councils undertake this however it requires the support of CMA's and CFA etc. and support at State level ensuring legislation gives councils the necessary ability to ensure strategic planning and appropriate development
	During		
	12. Prepare local recovery plans after emergencies. ⁷	Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 - 77	Council do undertake local recovery plans but it would be beneficial if an appropriate template was created to assist councils and ensure uniformity.
	13. Assess capability and capacity needs for undertaking relief and recovery activities, determine councils' ability to meet these needs and plan to obtain additional staff and resources as required.	Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 5. Relief and Recovery Planning, page 16-19	Capacity by small councils is very limited and it is important to increase capacity through funding and working closely with adjoining councils i.e. clusters.
	Before		
Community information and warnings			
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.	Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 7.4.5 Community development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal councils will lead community information (including community briefings and meetings). Municipal councils are responsible for promoting a 	It needs to be emphasized that councils only support other agencies particularly the responding agency i.e. CFA for fire, who are the responsible authority for issuing warning and information. This is often not conveyed to councils by the relevant agency.

<p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils.</p>		single point of contact for residents to obtain information about the support, services and assistance that could be available.	
	15. Plan, together with neighbouring councils and regionally, community information.		<p>Loddon Shire Council is part of the Northern Victorian Cluster which includes Campaspe, Loddon, Mt Alexander and Bendigo City.</p> <p>It is recognized that in order to ensure some capacity clustering of councils should be supported and encouraged. This also ensure that personnel with the appropriate training and experience can undertake the tasks in emergency management.</p>
	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	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria</p> <p>Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan</p> <p>3.3 Understanding the needs of communities</p>	<p>Note: The reference in the Paper is incorrect.</p> <p>Council and agencies delivering/supporting community have a shared responsibility to prepare and deliver community safety messages – Council already 'supports' and/or provides information to the community.</p>
	17. Support agencies to develop emergency management communications that are relevant and credible to the community.		The response to the same to Q. 14.
	18. Support implementation of flood warning systems in at-risk areas of the municipality.		Loddon currently belongs to the Northern Regional Water Monitoring Partnership and helps pay for monitoring stations. This however puts an impost on council limited

			funding and is not a normal council responsibility. Council also does not have access to 'Flood Zoom' utilized by agencies i.e. SES to keep informed. Council cannot really support when information is not forthcoming.
	19. Support a whole-of-government approach to emergency preparedness and awareness campaigns.		An important function but one that requires full inclusion into strategic planning. Campaigns are really developed at State level and councils currently have limited capacity particularly in small councils.
During			
	20. Communicate with elected councillors and the senior/executive management team to keep them informed and up-to-date.		A function that is vital but unless the responding agencies keep the EMLO fully informed and involved in the ICC the function cannot be adequately undertaken.
	21. Support agencies to develop and disseminate information and warnings that are relevant and credible to the community by. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 an event on behalf of the Control Agency. Council can assist with tailoring the message for local community needs, but only when agencies fully involve and recognize the importance of council in the ICC/RCC.
	22. Respond to community calls for local relief and recovery assistance (including assistance with equipment,		Most councils would currently undertake this function, however capacity again comes into ensuring an efficient and effective outcome.

	<p>food, clothing, accommodation and health needs) and be the central point to identify resources and information.</p>		<p>Funding and support is vital particularly in large emergencies. Consistency of funding must also be ensured as this can leave some councils in different emergencies being criticized by their community.</p>
	<p>After</p>		
	<p>23. Deliver timely, coordinated, accessible and tailored information to the community so it understands relief and recovery assistance mechanisms and processes including through community briefings and meetings.</p>	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 7.4.5.1 Community information, page 32</p>	
	<p>24. Assess community needs, to inform recovery information.</p>		<p>Agencies that carry out the rapid assessments and Government departments i.e. Agriculture need to work closely with council and recovery committees rather than undertake a silo survey.</p> <p>This really should be support assessing community needs as other agencies undertake this function as well and it needs to be a coordinated approach.</p>
	<p>25. Organise local broadcasts through the mayor and/or chief executive officer (for example, recovery newsletters).</p>		
	<p>26. Support agencies to provide community-led recovery information (for example using social media or notice boards).</p>		<p>Refer to answers above regarding community information.</p>

	27. Provide and staff a recovery centre.	Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 - 77	An important function but capacity impacts on this function, particularly when a large and protracted process. Support and funding is paramount to ensure limited impact on council's core business services.
	28. Support agencies to analyse community needs to inform recovery messages and planning from a range of sources (such as public meetings, a call centre, a recovery centre and debriefings).		Refer to Q.24 & 27.
	29. Support evaluators and researchers to better understand community information needs and the effectiveness of local warnings.		A worthwhile role but capacity and funding again is required particularly for a small shire rate base like Loddon.
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.	30. Appoint a municipal emergency resource officer.	Emergency Management Act 2013 s59G Amendment Bill to the <i>2013 Emergency Management Act</i> , this section replaces s21 (1) of the <i>Emergency Management Act 1985</i> 21 Municipal co-ordination and planning	Self-explanatory and should continue.

<p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils.</p>		(1) A municipal council must appoint a person or persons to be the municipal emergency resource officer or municipal emergency resource officers.	
	31. Appoint a municipal recovery manager.	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria</p> <p>Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan</p> <p>4.4.1 Municipal Recovery Manager</p>	This is an important role that should be recognized through legislation as is the MERO.
	32. Identify council-owned and-operated resources, assets and services available for emergency prevention, response or recovery; specify their preparedness; and plan to deploy them.		This is function is currently carried out by the MERO
	33. Support agencies to develop procedures to use council resources.	<p>Emergency Management Act 2013</p> <p>S20(2) – Municipal emergency management plan</p>	
	34. Lead risk-mitigation measures through business-as-usual works by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> where council is a road authority, managing vegetation on roadsides to ensure a safe, efficient road network¹⁶ mitigating risks to council-owned assets and infrastructure. 	<p>Road Management Act 2004</p> <p>s20 Principal object and management principles</p> <p>s34 General functions</p> <p>s40 Statutory duty to inspect, maintain and repair public roads</p> <p>CFA Act 1985</p> <p>Role of the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer</p>	<p>A function of the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer in CFA areas.</p> <p>Funding is an issue regarding which roads to slash within budget constraints and in years of heavy growth a second cut can seriously impact on councils budget.</p>

	35. Manage and maintain a council emergency coordination system and/or council operations and facilities that can be used during emergencies.		<p>Refers to the Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC) facility has been removed as a requirement in the EMMV, but the function still applies.</p> <p>There is an expectation that Council will be able to provide some sort of operation centre to manage Council operations during an emergency event to coordinate and deliver services to the community.</p>
	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).		<p>Council is obliged to ensure its staff have the knowledge and skills to perform the tasks required of them.</p> <p>There are limited opportunities or dedicated training programs for staff to develop their emergency management knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Training of staff is paramount but by having an emergency management professional it greatly assist councils to perform function to a higher level. However as with all this training and performing the emergency management role funding becomes important.</p>
	37. Develop response, relief and recovery activities and participate in those led by agencies and other councils.		<p>Important function and by forming clusters it allows councils to have a core group of trained personnel to perform these functions, but funding is paramount particularly for smaller council rate bases.</p>
	38. Engage relevant stakeholders in gathering, analysing and sharing recovery information.		<p>Refer to the communication section in this report (above).</p>

During		
	39. Implement council's business continuity plan.	A function that need to be implemented but the development of a high quality plan relies on having the expertise available.
	40. Implement collaborative plans and arrangements to maintain council's capacity, including by using neighbouring (partner) councils' resources.	<p>Municipal Association of Victoria</p> <p>Protocol for Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing</p> <p>This is currently being undertaken by the Northern Victorian Integrated Cluster (Loddon, Loddon, Campaspe, Mt Alexander and Bendigo City).</p>
	<p>41. Support response agencies to effectively deliver emergency response services locally by:¹⁷</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - share knowledge, data 	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria</p> <p>Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles</p> <p>Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77</p> <p>Note: Various other references in the EMMV.</p> <p>Council currently provides resources on request (if available and this may depend on location of resource). Each council's ability to provide equipment will depend on whether they have the correct equipment or if they contract out some of the functions rather than owning equipment.</p> <p>It is paramount that ICC's and RCC's recognize the importance of involving the EMLO in the EMT (as this does not always occur). This is changing but the culture of agencies stills need further understanding of council's ability to assist.</p> <p>This will only develop further through</p>

	<p>and information about community needs and consequences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure council is consulted and involved in emergency decisions that will affect the council and community. 		State led policies and procedures.
	42. Support response agencies to access affected areas.		
	43. Provide agencies with resources and information to partially or fully close roads and determine alternative transport routes.	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria</p> <p>Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles</p> <p>Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77</p>	<p>Considered as part of normal business for Council controlled roads.</p> <p>Council does not have a significant role in determine alternative transport routes, Police may seek advice from the Council as a road manager.</p>
	After		
	44. Conduct local recovery activities.	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria</p> <p>Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan</p>	<p>This is conducted usually with DHHS support. However funding for recovery needs to be clear for each emergency and clearly defined to councils. Recovery can take a considerable amount of time but an early injection of funds can ensure more effective and timely response to recovery needs.</p>
	45. Support the transition from relief to recovery with relevant emergency management teams.		<p>A role that should fully involve councils and appears to be improving with agencies cooperation and involvement in recovery.</p>

	46. When safe, deploy council staff to affected communities to deliver recovery services.		This is currently undertaken and can also involve other agencies working with council staff to undertake 'Outreach' programs in large events.
	47. Work with the community and recovery agencies to adapt recovery plans to reflect newly identified or changing community needs and priorities.		This is a role for a recovery committee to form utilizing all agencies.
	48. Scope requirements for planning to establish a municipal / community recovery committee and if necessary form, lead and support the committee. ²⁰	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria</p> <p>Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles</p> <p>Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77</p> <p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria</p> <p>Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan</p> <p>7.4.5.2 Formation, leadership and support of Municipal/Community Recovery Committees</p>	<p>A role that the MRM currently undertakes, but can be daunting in large events. The Cluster of councils will allow for more assistance by personnel with an emergency management background.</p> <p>Clustering of councils should be supported by all agencies and government, with legislation reflecting the ability for council to cluster and work closer together without one council dominating the others.</p>
	49. Support agencies to analyse community needs for the planning of service provision.		A function of a Recovery Committee.
	50. Establish processes to gather information from a range of sources (such as public meetings, a call centre, a recovery centre and debriefings) to inform recovery planning.		<p>A Recovery Committee which will ensure that all government agencies work cooperatively, ensuring appropriate sharing of information with better outcomes for the community.</p> <p>Guidelines to all agencies for recovery committees functioning.</p>

	51. Continually assess recovery needs, redeploy staff to recovery roles and implement surge arrangements to fill gaps.		Clustering of councils. Refer to Q.48
	52. Establish a recovery centre, coordinating across agencies to ensure sufficient staff, resources and equipment.		Clustering of councils. Refer to Q.48
	53. Support recovery case management and gather data from relevant agencies locally.		Clustering of councils. Refer to Q.46 - 50.
	54. Conduct post-emergency needs assessments, coordinating with response and recovery agencies locally.		Clustering of councils. Refer to Q.46 - 50.
	55. Coordinate local outreach with relief and recovery agencies to undertake the initial assessment of relief needs.		Clustering of councils. Refer to Q.46 - 50.
	56. Work with local services including psychosocial services to utilise existing services and programs to support recovery efforts and reassure the community.		Clustering of councils. Refer to Q.46 - 50.
	57. Support agencies to take a coordinated approach to recovery at the regional level.		Clustering of councils. Refer to Q.46 - 50.
	58. Conduct the transition of local recovery arrangements back to the previous management arrangements.		Clustering of councils. Refer to Q.46 - 50.

	<p>59. Clear blocked drains and local roads including by removing trees on council land and on roads.</p>	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77</p>	
	<p>60. Lead the management of environmental health issues (such as food and sanitation safety, vector control and animal disposal) with relevant agencies.</p>		<p>Clustering of councils. Refer to Q.46 - 50.</p>
	<p>61. Support agencies to coordinate volunteer efforts after emergencies.</p>	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 7.4.5.7 Coordination of spontaneous volunteers</p>	<p>Note: The reference in the Paper is incorrect. Utilising Volunteering Victoria will ensure this occurred.</p>
	<p>62. Coordinate animal welfare within council resources.²³</p>	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77</p>	<p>A local Laws function. Clustering of councils. Refer to Q.46 - 50.</p>
	<p>63. Support agencies to coordinate and manage services to meet the immediate needs of affected livestock locally.²⁴</p>	<p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 6.3.11 Animal welfare</p>	<p>A local Laws function in support of DEJTR. Clustering of councils. Refer to Q.46 - 50.</p>

	64. Support agencies to monitor emerging needs and adapt services to minimise the long-term consequences on health and wellbeing.		Clustering of councils. Refer to Q.46 - 50.
Intelligence and information-sharing	Before		
<p>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.</p> <p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils.</p>	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying data needs for relief provision and planning for data management establishing data-sharing agreements and procedures with agencies. 	<p>Municipal Association of Victoria Protocol for Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing</p>	<p>The Northern Victorian Cluster is currently developing a single Crisisworks system for the cluster but this has cost councils and funding for further development is not available.</p>
	<p>66. Collect, analyse and share information about current and emerging local risks, hazards and consequences with agencies, businesses, service providers, the community and other emergency management partners.</p>		<p>This function should occur through the MEMPC and the sub-committees.</p> <p>This role should be a 'Support' agencies.</p>

	67. Clarify and communicate council's emergency management role locally, to develop a shared understanding of emergency management activities with agencies and the community.		This can be undertaken through the development of Township Action Groups and some have been developed in Loddon through a funded project, however further funding is required to expand the initiative and assist communities to become more resilient.
	68. Work with other organisations to integrate information systems, tools and networks of trained personnel to deliver intelligence requirements (such as by using Crisisworks and Emergency Management Common Operating Picture ([EM-COP])).		Refer to Q65-67.
	69. Support regional and state information-sharing forums, committees and meetings.		Capacity is the only issue but an important function.
	During		
	70. Support agencies by providing council-owned data and intelligence about properties, residents, assets, facilities, community demographics, needs and consequences.		Privacy Legislation may impact on this depending at what stage the emergency is occurring. It may need clarity through legislation.
	71. Capture, process and manage large volumes of data from multiple sources to share with the community and stakeholders.		Comment: Experience has shown that most Councils have limited capacity to perform this function. Crisisworks can support the management of data related to the emergency event, but needs access to Council data to work effectively.

	After		
	72. Capture and analyse lessons, share the findings with other councils and agencies, and work cooperatively to identify and implement solutions.		Comment: Councils have limited capacity to perform this task. Recovery Committee should enhance this but limited.
	73. Conduct ongoing intelligence-gathering and information-sharing activities about local mitigation and recovery activities.		MEMPC and Sub-committee functions not just council. Should read 'Support and coordinate'.
Public order and community safety	Before, during & after		
<p>Provide a safe, secure and orderly society through the active prosecution of regulations and laws related to the prevention of serious emergencies and to afford a safe environment for those communities affected by an emergency and any responding personnel engaged in emergency operations.</p> <p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils.</p>	74. Undertake municipal functions as required by local government, building, electricity, water and land use planning legislation and regulations.	<i>Emergency Management Act 1986</i> <i>Emergency Management Act 2013</i> <i>Local Government Act 1989</i> <i>Country Fire Authority Act 1958</i> <i>Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008</i> <i>Water Act 1989</i> <i>Water Industry Act 1994</i> <i>Electricity Safety Act 1998</i> <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> <i>Building Act 1993</i>	Some legislation should be amended such as in the Water Act 1989
	75. Proactively enforce relevant regulations and laws that relate to emergency management.	<i>Emergency Management Act 1986</i> <i>Emergency Management Act 2013</i> <i>Country Fire Authority Act 1958</i> EMMV	Some functions are carried out now by Local Laws, EHO's and Fire Prevention Officer.

Building community resilience	Before		
<p>Communities strengthen their lifelines by better connecting and working together with appropriate support.</p> <p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils.</p>	76. Build local partnerships with businesses and not-for-profit organisations.		Capacity is the limitation and a clear outcomes/objectives need to be developed.
	77. With other partners, support agencies to empower individuals and the community to exercise choice about and take responsibility for risks.		Capacity and funding with experience emergency management practitioners.
	78. Encourage and assist the community to participate in emergency management education and training programs provided by council and agencies.		Refer to Q.77.
	79. Advocate for community needs at the regional and state level including for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community preparedness and local leadership • adequate emergency management funding and resources • compatible and consistent emergency management information systems • consistent and streamlined legislation that supports council's role in emergency management at all stages of an emergency. 		MAV endeavor's to advocate for councils and council personnel sit on some state bodies, but at times it appears that council's views are not heeded.

	80. Gather knowledge about local assets, values and support systems including about the community's history and what people value as important, now and for the future.		Refer to Q.77.
	81. Develop and deliver emergency management and community resilience training for council staff.		Refer to Q.77.
	82. Monitor and evaluate the community's engagement with emergency management and its capacity to prepare for, act during and recover from emergencies.		Refer to above answers.
	During		
	83. Support emergency management teams by ensuring local information and contacts are provided as part of community decision-making during emergencies.		
	After		
	84. Conduct community engagement activities to implement lessons learned about community resilience.		Refer to Q.77 and other answers.
	85. Engage the community in developing and delivering	Emergency Management Manual	Note: The reference in the Paper is

	recovery activities including by appointing community development and/or community recovery officers.	Victoria Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 7.4.5.2 Formation, leadership and support of Municipal/Community Recovery Committees	incorrect. Refer to Q.77 and other answers re-funding.
Fire management & suppression	Before & during		
<p>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.</p> <p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils.</p>	<p>86. Support agencies in line with relevant fire legislation and regulations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appointing a municipal fire prevention officer 	<p>Country Fire Authority Act 1958 s96A Municipal fire prevention officers and assistants</p> <p>Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958 s5A Municipal fire prevention officers and assistants</p> <p>Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 6 - Municipal Emergency Management Planning Arrangements Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO), page 6-28</p>	<p>Adequate training and guidelines needs to occur to ensure MFPO can adequately undertake the role.</p> <p>An appropriate but comprehensive course needs to be developed.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing and maintaining a municipal fire prevention plan 	<p>Country Fire Authority Act 1958 s55A, Municipal fire prevention plans</p>	<p>This should commence with ‘Support agencies to’ as the CFA need to undertake a more leading role.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<p>Country Fire Authority Act 1958 s50G Municipal councils to identify and designate neighbourhood safer places s50H Appropriate signage for designated neighbourhood safer places</p>	<p>This is a joint function of CFA & Council.</p>

	the CFA	s50I Maintenance of designated neighbourhood safer places s50J Annual assessment of designated neighbourhood safer places	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> issuing permits to burn 	<p>Country Fire Authority Act 1958</p> <p>s38 Lighting fires in accordance with permit</p>	<p>Number of Councils are querying why Council have this responsibility, especially as Councils are not fire management agencies or have suitably qualified staff.</p> <p>If the function remains with councils then MFPO's require a more comprehensive training course.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<p>Country Fire Authority Act 1958</p> <p>s43 Duties and powers of councils and public authorities in relation to fire</p> <p>Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958</p> <p>s5 Duties and powers of councils and public authorities in relation to fire</p>	<p>Council are required to manage the fuel on land under its control, fire prevention/management plans for council reserves serves this requirement.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing pillar fire hydrants in reticulated areas when the CFA issues written notice to do so 	<p>Country Fire Authority Act 1958</p> <p>s36 Authority may require certain municipalities to provide hydrants in streets etc.</p>	<p>This should be reference to the Water Act 1989 and should become the responsibility of the Water Authorities.</p> <p>It is an old legacy of when councils were water authorities.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> meeting the costs of providing, installing, marking and maintaining all fire plugs in the municipality.³⁴ 	<p>Water Act 1989</p> <p>s165(2) Fire plugs and free water</p>	<p>Note: The reference in the Paper is incorrect.</p> <p>Changes to the Water Act 1989 and should become the responsibility of the Water Authorities .</p> <p>It is an old legacy of when councils were water authorities.</p>

Logistics and supply chain management	Before		
<p>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.</p> <p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils.</p>	87. Develop emergency management resource-sharing protocols between councils.	Municipal Association of Victoria Protocol for Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing	Refer to the answers referring to the Cluster of councils and government support through legislation to allow this to fully occur. i.e. a single joint MEMPC for a cluster.
	88. Maintain and store essential equipment and materials to support emergency management activities and meet the needs of affected communities (such as sandbags).		Sandbags are an SES issue and should not be a Councils responsibility. Sand can readily be requisitioned through councils.
	During		
	89. Support agencies to source and supply personnel, equipment, materials, services and facilities to support emergency management activities and meet the needs of affected communities.		MERO and MERC role
90. Manage, coordinate, supply and deliver resources promptly and efficiently using best-practice methods locally.		MERO role if equipment available, however manage is a function of the agencies ICC and council are there to support only.	
Impact assessment	Before		

<p>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.</p> <p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils.</p>	91. Develop impact-assessment processes and data-collection systems.		This needs to be an agencies and council development as different impact assessments are undertaken by agencies and only the post impact assessment is undertaken by council. It would be better being conducted by a Recovery Committee involving all agencies.
	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.	Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 2.2 Relief and recovery are consequence-driven	Refer to Q. 91.
	94. Initially assess impacts on essential infrastructure and services.	Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 2.2 Relief and recovery are consequence-driven	This need to be clarified as councils cannot assess infrastructure such as electricity services etc.
95. Support agencies to gather information about how the		Refer to previous Q regarding animals.	

	emergency is affecting animals.		
	96. Support agencies to use council's spatial data to verify property losses.		
	After		
	97. Conduct a process to gather incident and impact intelligence from initial and secondary impact assessments to inform relief and recovery planning.		Refer to Q. 91.
	98. Conduct longitudinal mapping of the impact focusing on wellbeing, liveability, sustainability and viability.		Refer to Q. 91.
Health protection	Before, during & after		
<p>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.</p> <p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils.</p>	99. Undertake municipal functions as required by public health and wellbeing legislation and regulations.	Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 s24 Function of Councils	
	100. Include emergency management in council plans including in the municipal public health and wellbeing plan and the council plan.		
	101. Establish programs to detect and identify risks to public health locally (such as through heatwave planning).		This should be 'support' agencies has DHHS or Ambulance have responsibilities here.
	102. Conduct epidemiological and other investigations.		Reefer to Cluster answer as large scale emergency would impact capacity.
	103. Communicate information		

	about public health locally.		
Relief assistance	Before		
<p>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.</p> <p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils.</p>	104. Coordinate relief agencies and the community to develop local relief plans.	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	Capacity and funding. Loddon has developed some local community plans but it takes time and dedicated staff to ensure a good outcome. This was achieved through project funding from government.
	105. Develop protocols and procedures that are agreed with relief agencies.		Refer to answers regarding the Northern Victorian Cluster
	106. Design a scalable organisational structure to deliver relief services.		Refer to answers regarding the Northern Victorian Cluster
	107. Work with other councils to develop a collaborative approach to relief.		Refer to answers regarding the Northern Victorian Cluster
	108. Contribute to regional relief planning.		An important role but need a dedicated emergency management person i.e. MERP funding.
	109. Identify, plan and document		Relief and Recovery SOP's.

	relief centres or other locations to provide emergency relief services that meet health and other community needs.		
	110. Develop plans and procedures for emergency shelter.		Sub-plans
	111. Plan for the needs of domestic animals as part of relief activities.		Animal Welfare Sub-plan.
	112. Support service providers and local groups to educate the community about donated goods and volunteering and develop messages and procedures about donated goods and volunteers.		Capacity and funding in order to have this function undertaken.
	113. Work with health practitioners to understand the health and psychosocial implications of emergencies and the implications for relief.		This is a DHHS function and council would only support.
	114. Develop surge arrangements for relief, recovery and business-as-usual activities in the short, medium and long-terms.		Refer to answers regarding the Northern Victorian Cluster
	During		
	115. Coordinate relief services locally.	Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 4 - State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan 4.4 Local relief and recovery coordination roles and responsibilities	Note: The reference in the Paper is incorrect. MRM whose position should be legislated similar to the MERO and MERC.

		6.4 Distribution of relief assistance 7.4.5 Community development	
	116. Establish and manage relief centres where appropriate, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • register relief centre attendees • coordinate the provision of food, water and materials to affected communities • provide temporary shelter options for displaced local people • coordinate and manage services to meet the physical and psychosocial needs of affected local people. 	Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 3 – State Emergency Response Plan 5.2.6 Provision of relief Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77	Registering attendees is a Victoria Police role with the aid of Australia Red Cross.
	117. Start recovery case management by gathering data from relevant agencies.		This is entered into Crisisworks and a single system for the Cluster has been developed.
	118. Inform the community about financial hardship assistance payments.		This is undertaken in conjunction with DHHS. Council's are in a position to provide information to the community about the grants availability, but Councils are being used to screen community members seeking grants, and are not in the best position to understand the eligibility criteria to undertake this triage. In a time when resources are at capacity dealing with the incident

			at hand, this is an additional step in a task that could be eliminated by the establishment of a direct dial number to DHHS for people to access when enquiring about grants post emergency.
	119. Manage enquiries about donations of goods and offers to volunteer.		MRM and Recovery Committee.
	120. Support efforts to reunify family and others separated during an emergency.		A function of Victoria Police and Australia Red Cross.
	121. Support a coordinated approach to relief at the regional level.		
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 understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils	122. Help affected businesses to access information and advice locally.		MRM role and Recovery Committee.
	123. Support the community to work with insurers.		Not a council role and would become very time consuming.
	124. Support organisations to offer technical advice about re-establishing local businesses.		MRM role and Recovery Committee.
	125. Assess business and economic needs.		MRM role and Recovery Committee.
Natural and cultural heritage rehabilitation	Before		
Protect natural and cultural heritage resources through	126. As part of emergency planning, identify at-risk cultural heritage		Councils do not have access to most listings and this is a DELWP function

<p>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 compliance with applicable environmental and heritage preservation laws.</p> <p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils</p>	sites.		not council.
	After		
	127. Coordinate natural environment rehabilitation works locally.		This should be support as it is led by DELWP.
	128. Restore local cultural heritage sites		Refer to Q. 126.
	129. Assess impacts to natural and cultural heritage sites.		Refer to Q. 126.
	130. Coordinate remediation and stabilisation works on private and public land.		Refer to Q. 126.
	131. Monitor natural and cultural heritage sites.		Councils do not have access to most listings and this is a DELWP function not council.
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		
<p>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.</p> <p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils</p>	133. Identify community needs and priorities for restoring the built environment including essential services, commercial and industrial facilities, public buildings and assets and housing.		This cannot just be council as essential services needs to be assessed by utilizes and public buildings may be State Government owned. Should read "Support" agencies to identify.....
	134. Identify standards for clean-up		This should be done through the

	and recovery.		Recovery Committee and DHHS.
	135. Identify likely resource and equipment requirements for council recovery activities in the short, medium and long terms and determine supply chains in consultation with other agencies to ensure adequate resourcing.		This should be done through the Recovery Committee and DHHS.
	After		
	136. Survey and determine the occupancy of damaged buildings.	Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77	Building Surveyor and EHO.
	137. Conduct stabilisation and remediation works on council or community infrastructure and land to prevent further damage to the built environment.		
	138. Support safety assessments for essential and critical assets and infrastructure.		This should be done through the Recovery Committee and DHHS.
139. Working with the community, prioritise the restoration of local assets and infrastructure, ensuring the restored assets and infrastructure are		This should be done through the Recovery Committee and DHHS.	

	sustainable and more resilient to future emergencies.		
	140. Coordinate the rebuilding and redevelopment of council and private assets.	Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77	There is no reference in the EMMV Part 7, page 7-76 & 77 which includes the coordination of rebuilding and redevelopment of private assets.
	141. Restore council-owned assets, prioritising business operations and commercial or community facilities essential for community wellbeing or recovery activities.	Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77	This should be done through the Recovery Committee and DHHS.
	142. Coordinate clean-up activities including the disposal of dead animals.	Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles Municipal Roles. Page 7-76 – 77	This is a function of Local Laws with guidance from Agriculture Vic and EPA.
	143. Support the restoration of private and non-council assets within the scope of existing council services.		This should be done through the Recovery Committee and DHHS.
	144. Review physical infrastructure needs and establish long-term recovery infrastructure where necessary.		This should be done through the Recovery Committee and DHHS.
	145. Support agencies to restore essential assets and infrastructure.		This should be done through the Recovery Committee and DHHS.

	146. Establish planning scheme exemptions for emergency accommodation and clean-up works, and streamline planning and building construction approvals.		
Social recovery	After		
<p>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.</p> <p>Council understands this is a generic strategy applicable to all agencies and not just councils.</p>	147. Coordinate health programs to ensure the continuity and availability of advice and activities.		EHO & DHHS functions working with the Recovery Committee.
	148. Assess and deliver services for the medium- to long-term psychosocial needs of the community.		MRM & Recovery Committee.
	149. Provide access to short-, medium- and long-term housing options for displaced people.		MRM
	150. Assess and deliver financial re-establishment assistance.	DHHS Personal Hardship Assistance Program	Not a Council role.
	151. Support community services to provide shelter, food, counselling and other assistance to people at socioeconomic disadvantage.		DHHS and Recovery Committee.

The location of the 6 principles within the paper is of concern to Council. It would be far more appropriate to see these principles expressed at the beginning of the document rather than at its end (see page 35) as they are a key element to understanding Council's emergency roles and responsibilities.

The various roles that local government plays within community, can often be expected to take on responsibilities during emergency periods that are not core responsibilities of Council.

There needs to be clearer definitions of the role of Council during these periods and an acknowledgement of the following:

- The role of Councils during emergencies is an escalation to normal business
- Councils should not take on new roles or activities during emergencies
- Recognition of the need for continuity of essential Council services
- Councils should not be seen as emergency response organisations
- Funding needs to flow immediately for any increase in services caused by an emergency
- Councils role in recovery needs to be recognised in funding and reimbursement programs
- Arrangement for funding needs to be put in place at both State and Federal Levels to give councils a clear guideline for funding in order to give councils confidence in what can be claimed regardless of the emergency.
- The MRM role needs to be legislated in line with the MERO and MERC.
- Government funding needs to be provided to enable smaller councils to function at a higher level for emergency event and planning

Loddon Shire Council would like to again thank Local Government Victoria for enable comment on the directions paper and the Council looks forward to viewing the outcome of this process.