

Murrindindi Shire Council

Relief and Recovery Plan

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. MUNICIPAL AND MEMPC ENDORSEMENT

This plan has been produced by and with the authority of Murrindindi Shire Council pursuant to Section 20(1) of the *Emergency Management Act 1986*.

Murrindindi Shire Council understands and accepts its role and responsibilities as described in Part 4 of the *Emergency Management Act 1986*. The Murrindindi Shire Council Relief and Recovery Plan has been produced as a sub-plan to the Murrindindi Shire Council and Lake Mountain Alpine Resort Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMPC).

The plan has also been written with awareness of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* and the State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan (part 4 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria). It is supposed that the 2013 Act will in time supersede the 1986 Act. However, until such time, the *Emergency Management Act 1986* largely dictates local municipal requirements

Murrindindi Shire Council has appointed a Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM) to oversee the Plan, in conjunction with the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC).

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Approved by: **Margaret Abbey**
Chief Executive Officer
Murrindindi Shire Council

Signature

Date

Approved by: **Andrew Derwent**
Councillor
Murrindindi Shire Council
Chair, Murrindindi Shire Council and Lake Mountain Alpine Resort
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee

Signature

Date

1.2.AIM

The aim for the Murrindindi Shire Council Relief and Recovery Plan is to:

- Develop an effective plan that both assists and involves the community in returning to an effective level of functioning after an emergency

1.3.OBJECTIVES

This plan has the following objectives:

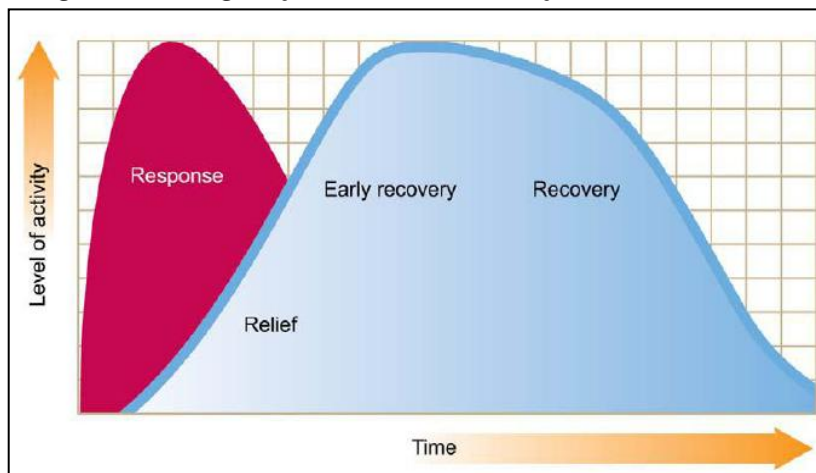
- Involve the community directly in the planning for relief and recovery
- Determine the needs, interests, resources and the capacity of local communities to recover from the effects of an emergency
- Clearly state the capacity and capability of Murrindindi Shire Council in relief and recovery
- Develop and build on partnerships with local, regional and State government organisations, agencies and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) in the delivery of relief and recovery in Murrindindi Shire

1.4.RELIEF AND RECOVERY DEFINED

Part 1 Section 4A(c) of the *Emergency Management Act 1986* defines recovery as “the assisting of persons and communities affected by emergencies to achieve a proper and effective level of functioning”. In contrast emergency relief, a component of the recovery process, is defined as “the provision of essential and urgent assistance to individuals, families and communities during and in the immediate aftermath of an emergency”¹.

Emergency relief is generally only required for approximately the first week after an incident (see figure 1 below) and begins as soon as an emergency impact starts. After the first week post impact the relief process moves into recovery as the need for essential or urgent assistance has generally passed. In contrast to the delivery of relief where needs are immediate and urgent, the delivery of recovery services is usually through a longer term engagement with both individuals and communities.

Figure 1: Emergency Relief and Recovery Activities Over Time²



¹ DHS 2013, 'Emergency Relief Handbook: a planning guide 2013' p7

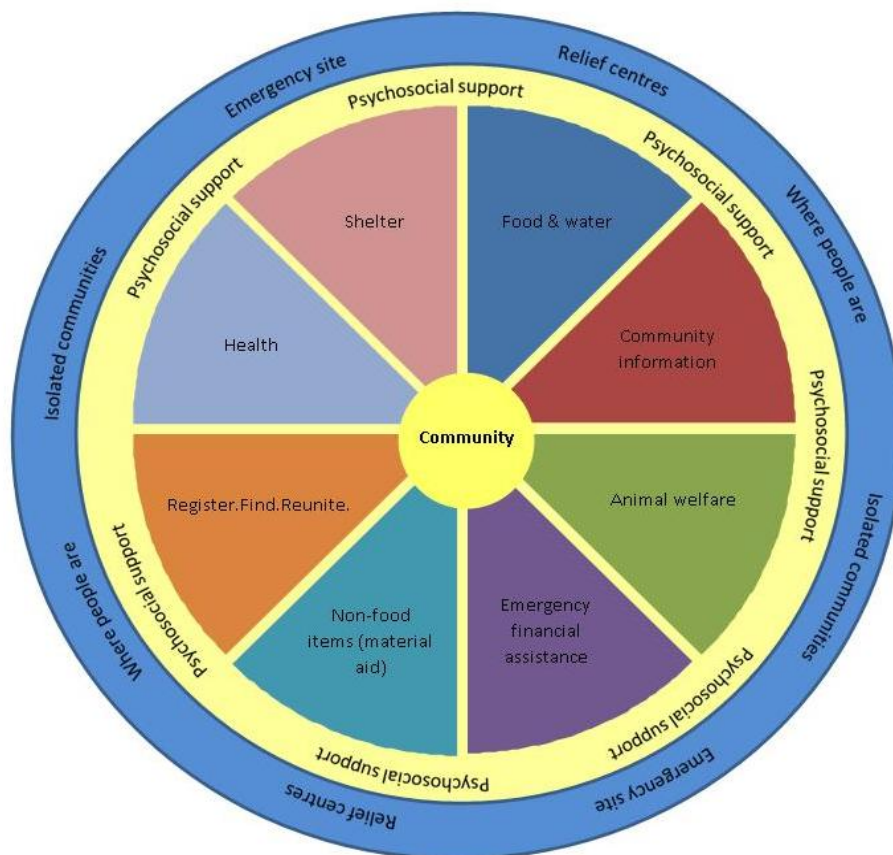
² Office of Emergency Services Commissioner (OESC), 2011, *Emergency Management Manual Victoria, Part IV- State Relief and Recovery Plan*, diagram

Emergency relief consists of a number of activities that should be planned for (Figure 2).
Emergency relief includes:

- Services for Individuals and families such as:
 - Registration (Register.Find.Reunite)
 - Emergency shelter
 - Food and water
 - Drinking water (households)
 - Food supply manufacturing and logistics
 - Non-food items
 - Emergency financial assistance
 - Animal welfare (companion animals)
 - Community information
- Services for Primary producers and rural land managers which includes
 - Rural loss and damage assessment
 - Emergency fodder and water for animals
 - Animal welfare (livestock)

Relief activities have lead agencies that are responsible for carrying out pre-operational planning with government overseeing the coordination of all activities.

Figure 2: Relief activities³



³ DHS 2013, 'Emergency Relief Handbook: a planning guide 2013, p8

1.5.PURPOSE OF RELIEF AND RECOVERY

The purpose of providing recovery services, including initial relief, is to assist the affected community towards management of its own recovery. It is recognised that when a community experiences a significant event, there is a loss of social fabric and therefore a need to supplement the personal, family and community structures that have been disrupted by the event.

The process of 'Recovery' requires practical planning, management and support which is sensitive to community needs and the physical and political environment where there are constantly changing demands. This Relief and Recovery Plan will assist with co-operation amongst participating agencies and ensure support arrangements are adaptable, effective and co-ordinated.

The purpose of this Relief and Recovery Plan is to document, in line with the Emergency Management Manual Victoria and the *Emergency Management Act 1986*, arrangements, procedures and processes to be employed within Murrindindi Shire Council to assist individuals and communities affected by emergencies to return to an approximation of normal life. It is understood by Murrindindi Shire Council that it is not possible for a community or individuals to completely return to 'normal' after the impact of a large scale emergency.

This plan covers the agreements and arrangements between Council, government and related agencies, communities and individuals to ensure the aims of local recovery are achieved via the agreed recovery processes.

1.6.LEVELS OF RECOVERY MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

1.6.1. LOCAL

At a local level the coordinator of relief and recovery is local government. Murrindindi Shire Council has planned for emergencies through the multi-agency Murrindindi Shire Council and Lake Mountain Alpine Resort Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) which is responsible for developing and reviewing emergency management plans, including relief plans, at the local level. Murrindindi Shire Council also works with local partners to determine local arrangements to manage relief and recovery activities.

1.6.2. REGIONAL

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) to provide regional coordination of relief and recovery.

DHHS provides Regional Recovery Coordinators who chair regional committees tasked with relief planning and developing regional relief and recovery plans. Key issues addressed as part of regional relief planning include:

- integration of relief into response operations, including evacuation
- surge planning at the local government and regional level
- support for evacuated vulnerable people

- resupply for isolated communities
- support for communities that cannot immediately return to their homes
- transition from response to recovery

Each regional recovery plan specifies the agencies responsible for coordinating emergency relief. They also specify the agencies responsible for coordinating recovery across the social, built, economic, natural and agricultural environments.

The region is also a key participant in planning interstate relief issues such as large numbers of people arriving from, or moving, interstate.

The DHHS is accountable for coordinating loss and damage reporting for recovery at the regional level. The department coordinates and distributes regional relief and recovery information for the public, through outlets including:

- Victorian Emergency Recovery Information Line (1300 799 232)
- Emergency Relief and Recovery Victoria website (www.recovery.vic.gov.au)
- Nurse-on-Call (1300 606 024)
- Other specialised communication and media channels, as required (e.g. DHHS twitter and YouTube channels, etc).

DHHS also:

- Sources, maintains and distributes community profile information on each local government area (as requested by Emergency Management Joint Public Information Committee (EMJPIC), to support a whole-of-Victorian Government communications and community engagement strategy) EMJPIC is a state body that aims to facilitate effective multi-agency responses to, and mitigating the consequences of emergencies through the efficient collection, analysis and dissemination of information.⁴
- Can assist a municipal council with its initial (short-term) public information and communication – if requested or required.

The DHHS, EMV and other agencies also offer some training for agencies in relief and recovery management and coordination if requested.

1.6.3. STATE

The State Crisis and Resilience Council, supported by the Recovery Subcommittee is responsible for developing the emergency relief components of the State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan in part 4 of Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV). Key issues include:

- the development and implementation of emergency relief-related guidance, direction and policy
- inter-agency coordination at a state level
- support of local and regional emergency relief planning
- conducting strategic risk and consequence management

⁴A. Leadbeater, 2010, *Speaking as one: the joint provision of public information in emergencies*, Australian Journal of Emergency Management, Vol 25, Issue 3, 2010

- establishing processes for requesting supplementary resources from the private sector and Commonwealth Government.

1.6.3.1. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMISSIONER

Under the *Emergency Management Act 2013*, the Emergency Management Commissioner is accountable for state recovery coordination, and for maintaining the State plan. Relief is functionally coordinated with recovery coordination. The Emergency Management Commissioner reports to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services on matters of relief and recovery.

1.6.3.2. DIRECTOR RELIEF AND RECOVERY EMV

The Emergency Management Commissioner has delegated the responsibility of State coordination of relief and recovery to the Director Relief and Recovery EMV. The Director Relief and Recovery is responsible for:

- Coordinating and facilitating preparedness and incident-specific planning for relief and recovery at the state level
- Ensuring the arrangements in the state plan are implemented
- Issuing guidance on local, regional and state relief and recovery planning
- Advising the State Crisis and Resilience Council's Relief and Recovery Sub-committee
- Maintaining a State relief coordination plan, and State recovery coordination plan
- Assisting liaison with the Commonwealth Government on relief and recovery activities.
- The Director Relief and Recovery is supported by the following agencies, coordinating recovery across five inter-related environments:
 - Social recovery
 - DHHS.
 - Built environment recovery
 - Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR).
 - Economic recovery
 - Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)
 - Natural environmental recovery
 - DELWP
 - Agricultural recovery
 - DEDJTR.

2. RELIEF AND RECOVERY PREPARATION AND PLANNING

Municipalities have a responsibility to plan for and provide resources from within the municipal area in the event of an emergency, both in response and recovery, in accordance with the *Emergency Management Act 1986*, Part 4 (s18-21A) “Responsibilities of Municipal Councils”.

2.1. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following are the guiding principles that underpin all activities of relief and recovery and they need to be considered when planning for those elements of an emergency. Agencies working within Murrindindi Shire aim to approach the delivery of their services during an emergency within this framework.

Murrindindi Shire Council, as the coordinating agency, will endeavour to establish structures and work with communities to ensure these principles are met.

The following headings have been considered as part of the development of this plan

Community led process

- The active involvement of the community, directly and indirectly affected, is essential.
- We will recognise differing community needs and work in partnership with the community. We will develop sound processes that are flexible and adaptive to the changing needs of the community.
- We will recognise that different people will be at different stages of their recovery and that decision making involves grief and will take time.
- A diversity of opportunities and choices must be available for people at different states of the grief and recovery process.

Individuals and communities are resilient

- Individuals, when provided with information about the situation and available services, are able to make informed choices about their recovery. Communities, when supported with information and resources, are able to support and manage their own recovery.

Levels of recovery operations

- Whilst recovery agencies are committed to the Victorian Emergency Management arrangements, operational and strategic decisions relating to the recovery process will be made through already existing governance procedures.
- Recovery operates at multiple levels of government. All agencies and organisations involved in management, coordination or service delivery will endeavour to undertake activities in a collaborative manner, within the agreed framework.
- Coordination and communication between the community, key agencies and Federal, State and Local Governments will assist in ensuring the success of recovery activities for the affected community.

Roles of organisations and agencies

- Recovery is not the exclusive domain of any single agency. All agencies and organisations willing to participate have an important role to play.

- Recovery is a whole-of-government and a whole-of-community process.
- The recovery process will build on existing structures and relationships.
- Effective recovery requires the establishment of planning and management arrangements that are understood and accepted by recovery agencies, control agencies and the community.
- Planning and management arrangements are more effective if training programs and exercises have prepared recovery agencies and personnel for their roles.

2.2. PREPARATION FOR RECOVERY

Effective recovery work is based on partnerships and community-led decision-making. It is the preparation before an event that builds these two key aspects. Key recovery partners have been identified and engaged as part of the preparation of this plan (listed in Appendix A). During an emergency event everyone involved should be able to complete their roles successfully and slot directly into their required roles under the guidance of the MRM.

There is an onus of responsibility on communities to identify their key leaders – these are the people who may lead a recovery committee should an event occur that requires one. They are also the people that may be involved in between events working with Council and other agencies and communities to build networks, nurture resilience and develop community all hazards management plans.

The responsibility of Councils is to support this community resilience, to make strong connections with local communities and to include communities in emergency management and recovery decision-making.

Key to Council's preparation is a comprehensive training strategy and support for skilled emergency management staff to be better able complete jobs expected of them. This plan is also integrated directly with Council's Business Continuity Plan to make the transition from emergency to business continuity more effective and efficient.

2.3. A DISASTER RESILIENT COMMUNITY

It is impractical to plan for recovery without acknowledging the existing resilience of the Murrindindi Shire community and the types of programs already in place that build community strength.

Community resilience can be defined in many ways. Characteristics of disaster resilient communities, individuals and organisations are:

- Functioning well while under stress
- Successful adaptation
- Self-reliance, education and awareness and
- Social capacity

Resilient communities also share the importance of social support systems, such as neighbourhoods and family networks, social cohesion, mutual interest groups, and mutual self-help groups.

2.4. ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

‘Asset-based community development’ refers to the practice of using and building on existing local networks and strengths in the community. In many instances effective outcomes may be achieved through use of (and by complementing) the resources already available within an affected community. Murrindindi Shire Council has attempted to utilise this approach in the production of this plan.

Communities have a range of trusted community groups/networks, which can be used to implement a range of community development recovery activities. These groups understand the local community dynamics and are best placed to provide on-going sustainable community recovery support.

Although an assets-based approach is the optimum way to implement a disaster recovery community development process, the local capacities to meet the on-going service needs of communities as well as to address recovery needs, also need to be assessed.

2.5. MANAGING, FUNDING AND COORDINATING ACTIVITIES

Significant resources are required to manage recovery processes for the community, often over an extended period of time. Council, agencies and the affected community will work together to analyse expenditure requirements and advocate for further external funding to ensure that due consideration is given to emerging needs and issues.

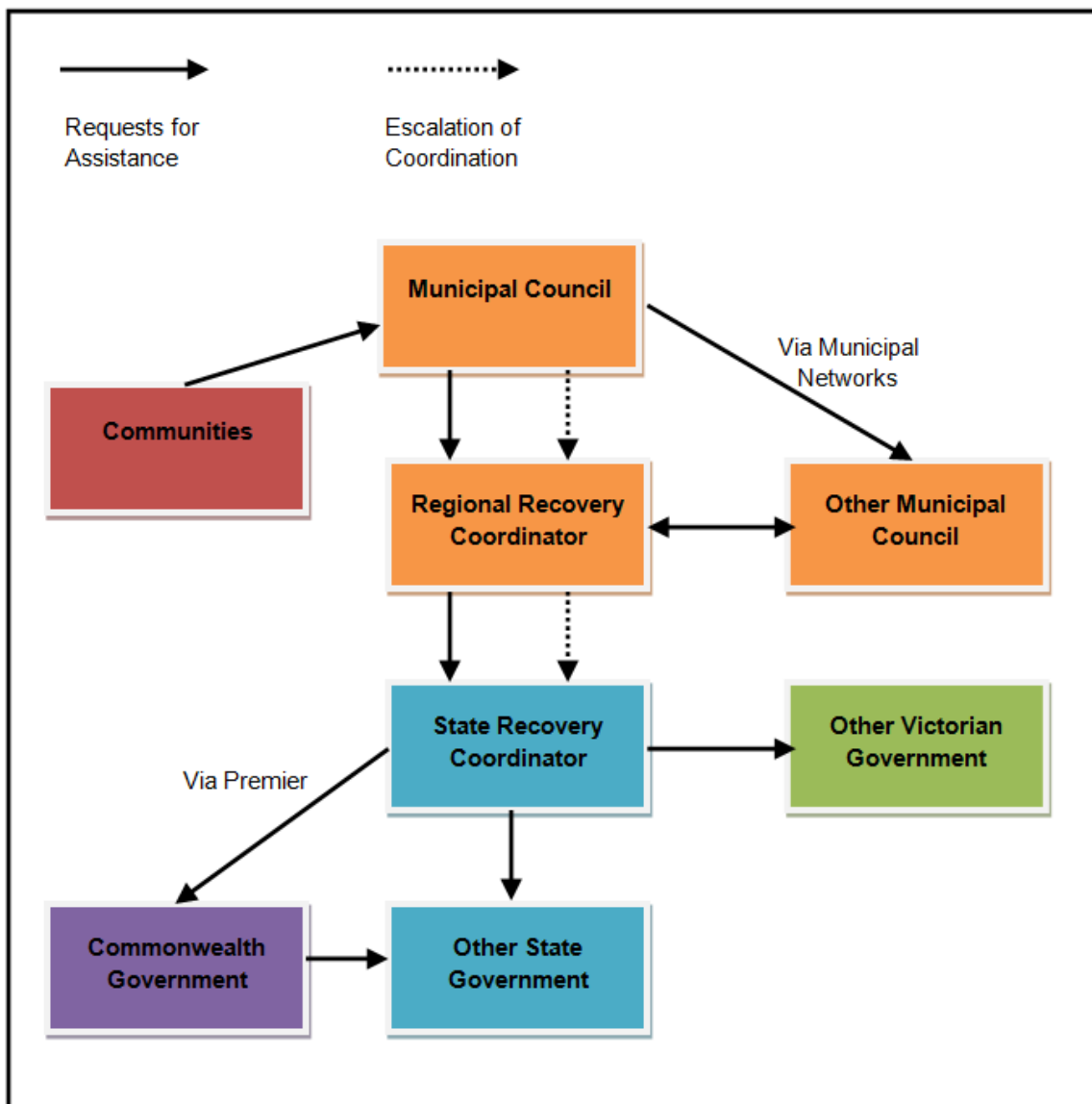
2.5.1. MUNICIPAL RESOURCES

Municipalities have a responsibility to plan for and provide resources from within the municipal area in the event of an emergency, both in response and recovery, in accordance with the *Emergency Management Act 1986*, under Part 4 -Responsibilities of Municipal Councils.

If Murrindindi Shire Council is unable to supply a relief or recovery need locally they will make contact with other municipalities and the DHHS as required.

Local support agencies must where possible use resources of their own agency first before drawing on other agency resources. The following diagram (figure 3) shows the system for requesting resources.

Figure 3: Interactions between different levels of government to deliver emergency relief and recovery support⁵



2.5.2. PROTOCOL FOR INTER-COUNCIL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RESOURCE SHARING

Emergencies sometimes require councils to source additional resources to ensure that the affected community is restored to normal functioning as efficiently as possible. The MAV and the State MEMEG identified a need to determine an agreed position between councils regarding the provision of council resources to assist other councils with response and recovery tasks during emergencies and a protocol was developed. Murrindindi Shire Council is a participating member of the protocol.

The purpose of this protocol is to provide an agreed position between councils for the provision of inter-council assistance for response and recovery activities. This protocol applies to requests for human resources, equipment and /or facilities in relation to response or recovery activities

⁵ Adapted from: Emergency Management Manual Victoria, Part 4, State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, p 4-8, October 2014

associated with an emergency. The protocol can potentially increase the capacity and capability of Murrindindi Shire Council in responding to an emergency by the provision of additional staff and resources from other Victorian municipalities. A copy of this protocol is can be found on the MAV website at:

- <http://www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/emergency-management/Pages/resource-sharing-protocol.aspx>.

Council has signed the recent renewal of the protocol for another five years, valid from November 2014.

2.5.3. COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS' RESOURCES

Many community organisations have valuable resources for use in an emergency. It is the responsibility of Murrindindi Shire Council to provide the management system to coordinate offers of assistance from these organisations. All of the organisations that have offered resources are included in the contacts section of this document (Appendix A5 and A6) and are divided by type where possible.

2.5.4. NATURAL DISASTER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (NDFA)

The Victorian Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) provide Natural Disaster Financial Assistance (NDFA) at their discretion for local councils to assist in the recovery process. Assistance is available for approved emergency protection works and the approved restoration of municipal and other essential public assets in most emergency events. Approval for assistance is assessed by a Vic Roads auditor on behalf of the DTF. They will liaise with Councils on request to discuss eligibility of activities including inspections of damaged assets.

Councils can claim any extraordinary salaries, wages or other expenditure which would not have been incurred had the emergency not occurred. Details regarding the eligibility criteria and lodging of a claim for financial assistance are available via the DTF website (<http://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/Victorias-Economy/Natural-disaster-financial-assistance/Eligibility-of-natural-disaster-expenditure>)

2.5.5. NATURAL DISASTER RELIEF AND RECOVERY ARRANGEMENTS (NDRRA)

Joint arrangements between the Australian and Victorian Governments provide funding through the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) to help pay for natural disaster relief and recovery costs. Based on the type of emergency, municipal councils, agencies and departments may be eligible for reimbursement through the NDRRA.

Relief and recovery services, including establishing and operating a Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC) are not automatically eligible for reimbursement. However, the DTF can determine, on a case-by-case basis, if these costs may be reimbursed.

Vic Roads will also assess any claims under the NDRRA process in conjunction with the DTF.

2.6. AGREEMENTS BETWEEN AGENCIES, BUSINESSES AND ORGANISATIONS TO DELIVER SERVICES

Unless otherwise stated, service delivery by agencies in Murrindindi Shire will align with the agency requirements set out in Part 7 of the EMMV, 'Emergency Agency Roles'.

Murrindindi Shire Council has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the DHHS and Nexus Primary Health for the delivery of supported Community Health Services (CHS) during an emergency. This MOU covers service delivery response to those community members affected by an emergency by Nexus Primary Health staff. The MOU includes CHS providers from across the Hume region.

Murrindindi Shire Council also has a number of agreements with local agencies for service delivery during emergencies. These include Red Cross, Victorian Council of Churches (VCC) and Rotary Clubs of Murrindindi Shire. Red Cross will coordinate the supply of food and water during relief and recovery. This includes supplying food and water to Emergency Relief Centres (ERCs) during an emergency. Red Cross will also be supplied a current list of local agencies and groups (e.g.: sporting clubs or Lions etc.) by Murrindindi Shire Council that can assist them in this delivery. VCC will fulfil the role of frontline psychological support by providing outreach services to residents affected by a trauma or emergency where required as determined by the Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM). VCC will also have a presence at ERCs when requested.

Murrindindi Shire Council has an agreement with the Rotary Clubs of Murrindindi Shire to coordinate the management of donated goods on behalf of the Council at the local level. If their capacity is exceeded, the Salvation Army will assist in coordinating donated goods.

2.7. COORDINATING AND MANAGING RESOURCES

Activities associated with the Relief and Recovery Plan are generally managed by the MRM although the Municipal Emergency Resources Officer (MERO) also shares some responsibility regarding resource delivery for recovery activities. Together the MERO and MRM consider the relief and recovery needs of a community in discussion with response agencies.

Murrindindi Shire Council is the lead for the provision of local public information to affected individuals in relief and recovery (See sections 2.10 and 3.3 below) Murrindindi Shire Council also participates and coordinates local relief and recovery impact assessments and shares any gathered information with Victorian Government agencies as requested (see section 4.4 below)

2.8. UNDERSTANDING AND DOCUMENTING CAPACITY

A key element of developing a Relief and Recovery Plan is benchmarking and documenting the capacity of all involved agencies. Capacity in this plan has been captured in a number of ways. Internally, Murrindindi Shire Council has attempted to document its own capacity to be able to respond to a given event. See section 10 below for a breakdown of Murrindindi Shire Council capacity and capability in emergency management.

External and community agency capacity is more difficult to predict. For example, a community agency such as the Lions Club may be able to supply 3 food trailers for 3 consecutive days during an emergency event. However this may be predicated on the ability to

source staff that may be impacted by the emergency event. The type of event may also impact on their ability to complete their documented capacity. For example a fire or flood may block travel to an impacted area and therefore not allow the Lions Club to staff their catering trailer. As a result documented capacity (contained within Appendix A6) is based on an agency being able to work to its full potential with the understanding that this may be impacted by a number of uncontrollable considerations or situations.

2.9.COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Effective community engagement is essential to the success of the Relief and Recovery plan. Without the support and involvement of the community in developing the plan, Murrindindi Shire Council would not be able to delivery effective or efficient relief and recovery services. Similarly without effective engagement with the community there is the potential for wastage and potential doubling-up of service delivery during an emergency. As is required under the EMMV, Murrindindi Shire Council is the municipal level coordinator of relief and recovery. Council sees its role therefore as coordinating all of the potential services that may be activated during the relief and recovery phases of an emergency.

A communications plan for the Relief and Recovery Plan (Recovery Communication Plan) has been developed that aims to:

- seek community and service provider input into the revised recovery plan to ensure it represents community capacity
- improve community awareness of emergency preparedness and recovery planning

2.10. COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

Murrindindi Shire Council has developed a *Recovery Communication Plan* as a sub-plan to the Municipal Emergency Management Plan. This plan's purpose is

“To have a strategic and coordinated approach to Council’s communications in the recovery stage of an emergency situation”

The plan aims to create relief and recovery communications that are relevant, clear, targeted and timely. The plan covers communication in community meetings, recovery newsletters, situation updates, radio, fact sheets, websites, social media and other communication methods.

This Plan is available via the MRM or downloadable from Crisisworks (<https://murrindindi.mecccentral.com>) for those on the MEMPC or emergency service agencies.

2.11. MUNICIPAL RECOVERY PERSONNEL

This section details emergency recovery functions carried out by designated Murrindindi Shire Council personnel for the provision of emergency relief to support emergency recovery arrangements. (For detailed role statements see the “Murrindindi Shire Council and Lake Mountain Alpine Resort Municipal Emergency Management Plan”)

2.11.1. EMERGENCY RELIEF CENTRE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following roles may be involved in setting up and operating the centre:

- Municipal Emergency Response Co-ordinator (MERC)
- Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO)
- Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)
- Emergency Relief Centre Manager (ERCM)
- Deputy Relief Centre Manager
- Other Municipal Council Staff

The roles, responsibilities and management structures will reflect the size and scale of the emergency event.

For full descriptions of all emergency positions, please see the MEMP available either on the Murrindindi Shire Council website

(http://www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Your_Council/Emergency_Management/Municipal_Emergency_Management_Plan) or at Crisisworks for MEMPC members or authorised emergency agencies (<https://murrindindi.mecccentral.com>)

2.12. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POSITIONS

The following is a summary of the responsibilities of emergency management positions at Murrindindi Shire Council. For a comprehensive list of responsibilities, please refer to the MEMP (section 3.5)

2.12.1. MUNICIPAL RESPONSE CO-ORDINATOR (MERC)

All resource allocations or approvals (e.g. setting up an Emergency Relief Centre) have to be approved by the MERC from Victoria Police. Additionally, their role in relief and recovery includes:

- Co-ordinating the provision and allocation of resources as requested by the control and support agencies (including all relief and recovery requirements)
- Ensuring that the public is alerted to any potential dangers arising from the emergency

2.12.2. MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY RESOURCE OFFICER (MERO)

The MERO is a senior representative of the council, whose role in recovery includes:

- Coordinating and providing council resources when requested by emergency services or Victoria Police for response activities and the Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM) for recovery activities.
- Liaising with the MERC and the Municipal Recovery Manager (also known as the Emergency Management Coordination group) on the best use of municipal resources in an emergency
- Maintaining effective liaison with emergency agencies

- Ensuring that requests for assistance are being received, recorded, actioned and updated
- Ensuring that regular contact is made with field staff

2.12.3. MUNICIPAL RECOVERY MANAGER (MRM)

Murrindindi Shire Council has delegated the function of the MRM to ensure a responsive and co-ordinated approach to the delivery of relief and recovery services and activities across the Shire.

The MRM has responsibility for the coordination of Shire resources to assist emergency recovery activities, and maintains overall responsibility for the establishment and use of the emergency relief centre and provides direction to all other centre staff. They are also responsible for the Murrindindi Shire Council Relief and Recovery Plan and are required to take an active role in ongoing emergency planning as an emergency continues. The MRM may delegate duties to provide for effective management of recovery functions.

The MRM is assisted in the role by designated Deputy MRMs, who will assume the role of MRM in the absence of the MRM.

It is essential that the MRM becomes involved in the emergency as soon as possible. The MRM then:

- Determines the nature and extent of the emergency through discussions within the Emergency Management Co-ordination Group (EMCG) consisting of the MRM, MERO and MERC.
- The MRM then determines the potential recovery needs including human needs, infrastructure and environment restoration and management requirements.
- Advises the Regional Recovery Manager (from DHHS) of the event and provides personal contact details.
- Contacts municipal council staff members as required for briefing and assigning of tasks
- Oversees the running of both emergency relief and recovery centres

2.12.4. EMERGENCY RELIEF CENTRE MANAGER (ERCM)

The primary role of the ERCM is the operational co-ordination resources and services within an ERC in providing life support and essential needs to affected persons impacted by an emergency.

An ERC Manager is a critical role which is likely to require the following skills

- Good analytical and strong communication (written and verbal) skills including effective listening skills
- Strong leadership in a team environment
- Ability to manage multiple priorities and tasks simultaneously
- Ability to manage staff and the public with heightened levels of stress and anxiety
- Oversee the delivery of a range of emergency relief functions
- Ability to adapt to change, negotiate compromise and tolerate ambiguity

- Organise work activities, delegate work and directly supervise a diverse work unit, including volunteers and employees.
- Competently use computer resources to support work team
- Ability to professionally interact and negotiate with external organisations and colleagues and
- Ability to promote, develop and maintain productive and amicable working relationships with diverse individuals and groups.

The ERC Manager, or deputy, also acts as a liaison person between the MECC and the ERC. The position will provide at least 3 regular briefings in person or via phone to the MRM per day.

Further detail on the role of ERCMs is described in the “Emergency Relief Centre Managers Handbook”. Copies are available from the MRM.

See section 10.1.1 below for more information on Murrindindi Shire Council’s capacity to run ERCs.

2.12.5. DEPUTY ERC MANAGER

There are four deputy ERCMs to support the ERCMs in the delivery of their roles. The deputy managers can act on behalf of the ERCM where required including briefing the MRM in the MECC.

2.12.6. ERC STAFF

ERC volunteers from within MSC will be directed in their duties by the ERC manager or one of their deputies. ERC staff may be required to fulfil a number of roles at the ERC including

- Set up the ERC and monitor ERC Kits
- Meet and greet community members and answer questions
- Fill out Personal Information Form (PIF) - See Appendix C6 for a copy of the form.
- Administration support on Crisisworks including adding people to the People and Property Tab
- Provide water and other services to community

Further details on the roles of ERC volunteers are contained in the “Emergency Relief Centre Volunteers Handbook” available from the MRM or deputies or downloadable from Crisisworks (<https://murrindindi.mecccentral.com>) for MEMPC members or emergency agency representatives.

See section 10.1.1 below for more information on Murrindindi Shire Council’s capacity to run ERCs.

2.12.7. MURRINDINDI SHIRE COUNCIL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATION GROUP (EMCG)

In order to carry out emergency management functions, Murrindindi Shire Council has an EMCG. The EMCG is the municipal decision making group with responsibility for the overall

coordination of municipal resources for use within an emergency and is given power directly from the CEO. The EMCG also has the permission of the CEO to act on behalf of Murrindindi Shire Council in an emergency, including expenditure of funds and allocation of resources as it sees fit in the completion of its duties in responding to an emergency. This group will consist of:

- MERO
- MRM
- MERC

The EMCG has a number of responsibilities and is the primary coordination group for Council's response to an emergency. The EMCG also coordinates Post Impact Assessments and Initial Impact Assessments

2.12.8. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND RECOVERY TEAM

Murrindindi Shire Council has an EMRT who are directed by the EMCG. The EMRT is Council's internal emergency management team with a broad role that includes functions such as aiding the MERO in planning for emergency management activities and carrying out Council's internal emergency management functions as required in an emergency. During the summer period, the EMRT will meet monthly to discuss emergency management matters. During the cooler months, the EMRT will generally meet bimonthly.

The EMRT includes key council personnel who, in the recovery sphere, can provide expertise and community contacts to enable the administration and implementation of emergency recovery functions. The Committee focuses on the planning needs of the five recovery environments and the activities developing from them.

EMRT membership will generally consist of:

- MERO and Deputies
- MRM and Deputies
- MEMPC Executive Officer
- MECC Manager
- MFPO and Deputies
- Emergency Management Fire Coordinator (EMFC)
- Communications Staff
- Local Laws Staff
- Representatives from all departments (when required)
- And others as required e.g.:
 - Environmental Health Officer
 - Building Inspector
 - Material Aid Coordinator (Rotary Clubs of Murrindindi Shire)
 - Food and Water Coordinator (Red Cross)

Murrindindi Shire Council will recruit additional resources to the EMRT when required in an emergency to ensure the recovery effort is timely, responsive to community needs, and continues as long as required. The number and types of positions established will depend upon the scale of emergency, and the recovery requirements of impacted communities. Council will recruit personnel to dedicated positions, and/or delegate responsibility for specific recovery activities relevant to functional areas within Council.

2.13. STAFFING DURING AN EMERGENCY

As a consequence of an emergency additional staff sourced from other municipalities may be required to enable Murrindindi Shire Council to meet its relief and recovery responsibilities. In determining additional staffing requirements the demands of recovery operations as well as the ongoing operational needs of the organisation should be considered. Staffing needs should be assessed at the earliest possible time so that adequate resources can be obtained and made available.

The most common mistake in determining staffing requirements is to underestimate the duration of recovery operations. The recovery process following an emergency may be lengthy and some services may be required for a period of months or even years after the event has taken place. Overloading of staff will occur if adequate arrangements have not been made to perform their normal duties. This will exert enormous pressure on recovery workers to finish their tasks prematurely and return to day to day agency tasks.

Staffing arrangements and the need for additional staff will be entirely dependent on the level of impact of a given event. Larger, more complex and longer duration emergency events will require more staff than small, simple and shorter duration emergencies. Until the scale of an event is known or communicated to Councils' operations centre by the Incident Control Centre (ICC, it is difficult to predict staffing requirements.

At the earliest possible time, staffing needs will be assessed by the relevant managers, MRM and MERO so that adequate resources can be obtained and made available.

2.13.1. PAID STAFF

Decisions will need to be made as to whether additional staff should be used in recovery operations, leaving normal staff to carry out their existing duties, or whether the additional staff should be used in normal agency duties to free up existing staff to carry out recovery operations.

Recovery operations can be periods of high stress for workers, particularly in their early stages. It is therefore essential that managers be aware of the strains that may be placed upon them and their staff and that suitable arrangements are made to avoid or manage these stresses. Managers should consider the capacity of their staff to work under pressure in a rapidly changing environment, prior to appointing them to a recovery role. Arrangements should also be made for adequate rostering and rest periods

2.13.2. FATIGUED STAFF

With the potential high stress environment that staff may be placed in, with possible fatigue occurring, it is important that debriefings to staff do occur to ensure they are kept informed and involved in the recovery process. Additional to these debriefings, the Human Resources (HR) department will make Counsellors available to impacted staff. These counsellors will provide confidential counselling and guidance to those experiencing a personal or work related difficulty. The support is available in a number of areas, e.g.

- Stress
- Trauma related issues

- Coping with change
- Critical incidents
- Harassment or abuse.

It is identified that to provide a safe, healthy and harmonious workplace Council is committed to ensuring, as far as is reasonably practicable, both the physical and emotional wellbeing of its staff. This applies even in the event of an emergency when council services may be inundated but the welfare of staff is paramount.

2.14. CRISISWORKS

Crisisworks is the emergency management software that Murrindindi Shire Council utilises during an emergency to record its response, relief and recovery information. This software is used by the majority of all other Victorian Municipalities in the management of Council responses to emergencies. Only authorised persons, that include MEMPC members and those from emergency agencies, may access Crisisworks. Those without authorisation will not be able to access Crisisworks via the hyperlinks in this document. To access Crisisworks, MEMPC members and emergency agency representatives need to register their interest with the MEMPC Executive officer (refer to Contact List Appendix A3 for MEMPC Executive Officer contact details). See section 3.1.6 below for information on how Crisisworks is used in relief and recovery.

2.15. COLLABORATION GROUPS

Murrindindi Shire is part of the Hume Region Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group (MEMEG) which is a collaborative group set up in the Hume region that focuses on emergency management at the municipal level. It is predominantly a local government forum but invites other emergency agencies to participate when required. The MEMEG has been running in Hume Region for approximately 18 months.

Murrindindi Shire Council also has excellent working relationships with its neighbouring Shire Councils and could call on them for assistance during an emergency if so required.

Murrindindi Shire Council coordinates a range of networks that facilitate collaborative working relationships with other service providers including the Murrindindi Community Services Network, the Children's Services Network, the Murrindindi Youth Partnership and the Access and Inclusion Group. These networks provide regular opportunities to review capability and capacity for emergency response.

2.16. TESTING, EXERCISING AND REVIEWING PLANS

This Plan will be exercised annually and reviewed every three years (in line with the review of the MEMP). The MRM is responsible for testing, exercising and reviewing this plan. Tests can include, but are not limited to, an ERC exercise that involves the ERC volunteers register.

2.17. ADMINISTRATION AND TRAINING

The MRM ensures the recovery section of the MEMP is regularly reviewed and updated and that this plan is regularly reviewed and up to date. The responsible authority will audit the MEMP every three years (see MEMP section 3.4 for further details).

The MRM should ensure at least two deputy MRMs are trained and available to provide management support to recovery centres, MECCs or represent Council at recovery meetings if required.

The MRM and Deputy MRMs must receive appropriate training prior to undertaking their respective roles. Training is to be specified by the MRM.

An annual recovery exercise should be conducted to confirm the capacity of local recovery providers. The MRM is to ensure that a recovery component is included in all local emergency management exercises.

- The MRM, or delegate, is to ensure that the recovery contact list is maintained and accurate
- The MRM is to attend Regional Recovery Committee meetings twice yearly
- The MRM in liaison with the MERO should organise local recovery agencies to meet annually to confirm or update this plan as required

2.18. BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Murrindindi Shire Council has developed a Business Continuity Plan (BCP). This plan is not a response manual to all potential business interruption events; rather it is a reference document for the Council to provide guidance in making informed decisions about how best to respond to a given business interruption. Business interruptions, and the activation of the BCP, may not necessarily constitute an emergency and involve the MEMP or its sub-plans. Generally however activities included in the MEMP or its sub-plans will have a direct impact on business continuity. If a given business interruption is declared an emergency, actions defined in the MEMP and its sub-plans take precedence over business continuity actions in the BCP.

The BCP is developed as an “all hazards” approach to any given event and examines and defines required business response and recovery actions. It has been designed to assist Murrindindi Shire Council to respond to business interruption events affecting the operations and business of Council.

The aim of the BCP is to:

- Minimise the duration of a serious disruption to business operations
- Identify weaknesses and implement a major business interruption prevention program
- Facilitate effective co-ordination of recovery tasks and
- Reduce the complexity of the recovery effort

Relief and Recovery Plans provide details of agency responsibilities in regard to the provision of resources for emergency management purposes. However during an emergency event staffing and the use of volunteers may require specific attention by the Municipal Recovery Manager and Human Resource Officer.

2.19. HUME REGIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Currently the region is trialling the Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee (REMPC) model. Governance arrangements are currently being developed and this section of the plan will be updated when these become available.

3. RELIEF

The delivery of relief services is essential to the wellbeing of the community post impact. Initial relief management is always undertaken at the municipal level. Requests for emergency relief to support communities should, in the first instance, be directed to the municipal council via the MERC. Council has an internal arrangement in place to commit council resources to support local relief and recovery activities. Should the impact of an event lead to community needs that exceed the capacity of Murrindindi Shire Council, Council may seek to escalate the level of assistance to regional through the MERC. Further escalation to State level of assistance may be required for very large or complex events. The organisations responsible for ensuring the relief functions are carried out within the Murrindindi Shire are listed in Table 1 below

Table 1: Relief Functions and Responsibility (from EMMV Appendix 7)

Recipient	Service Provided	Primary Provider	Secondary Support
Individuals and families	Registration (RFR)	Victoria Police	Red Cross
	Emergency shelter	Municipal councils	DHHS
	Food and water	Red Cross	Salvation Army, Foodbank Victoria
	Drinking water (households)	Local water authority	DELWP
	Food supply manufacturing and logistics	DELWP	DEDJTR
	Non-food items	Rotary Clubs of Murrindindi Shire, escalation to Salvation Army where required	St Vincent de Paul, Foodbank Victoria
	Emergency financial assistance	DHHS	Centrelink
	Animal welfare (companion animals)	Municipal councils	DEPI, RSPCA, Australian Veterinary Association
Primary producers and rural land managers	Rural loss and damage assessment	DELWP	Victorian Farmers' Federation, RSPCA, Australian Veterinary Association
	Emergency fodder and water for animals		
	Animal welfare (livestock)		

3.1. EMERGENCY RELIEF CENTRES (ERC)

An ERC is a building or a place that has been activated for the provision of life support and essential personal needs for people affected by, or responding to an emergency. An ERC is usually established on a temporary basis to cope with the immediate needs of those affected by the initial response to the emergency. ERCs are listed in Appendix C1.

Murrindindi Shire Council has responsibility for management of ERCs in the municipality. Council has a recovery team, led by the MRM, who have been trained and resourced to manage ERCs. The MRM may seek the support of other surrounding municipalities to staff ERCs when staffing resources are limited or exhausted.

Many ERCs are Council owned buildings, however where owned by third parties, Council will work in partnership with the venue managers and agencies delivering the services in the ERC.

If the MERC becomes satisfied that the event exceeds the capacity of the council to perform this function, a request to DHHS to co-ordinate emergency relief at the regional level will be made.

To ensure a smooth transition of responsibility, a council should notify the MERC and DHHS as soon as it becomes apparent an event will exceed its local municipal capacity.

3.1.1. ERC LOCATIONS

ERC locations, descriptions and floor plans are included in appendix C1. Their location is not able to be advertised outside of an emergency.

Each of the ERC buildings is assessed annually to ensure that it passes the Murrindindi Shire Council ERC checklist. For maps and ERC information, please see Appendix C

Murrindindi Shire Council also has a number of secondary relief centres. These are not assessed annually but may be utilised (with owner permission) if the capacities of the primary relief centres are exceeded. Secondary ERCs are located in Appendix C2

3.1.2. ERC KITS

ERC Kits contain a collection of items that are immediately required to set up an ERC including consumables etc. The MRM (or their delegate) is responsible for establishing and regularly checking ERC Kits.

ERC kits are located in the Alexandra, Yea and Kinglake Shire offices. ERC kit contents checklists are in Appendix C5

3.1.3. FOOD AND WATER AT ERCS

As per the EMMV Part 7, Red Cross will coordinate the food and water for Murrindindi ERCs. A number of other local agencies and groups can provide assistance with the provision of food and water. These groups, listed in the contacts list below (Appendix A5) will be coordinated by the Red Cross who will report back to the MRM.

3.1.4. RECONNECTING FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

The reconnection of families and friends is primarily facilitated through the Register.Find.Reunite service. Victoria Police is responsible for the control and coordination of the service and Red Cross for its management and operation. Voluntary registration can be done in a relief centre, by phone at an inquiry centre, or online (<https://register.redcross.org.au/>).

3.1.5. REGISTRATION USING A PERSONAL INFORMATION FORM AT AN ERC

A quadruplicate 'Personal Information Form' (PIF) was released by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) to facilitate the registration of persons at an ERC (see Appendix C5 for a

copy of the form). Copies of these forms are located in the ERC kits. The front page of this form is for the retention of Council and details recorded on this form will be entered into Crisisworks' 'People and Property Tab' by Council staff (see 3.1.6 below).

The remaining carbon copies are to be passed onto the Red Cross (if present at an ERC) to aid in the entry of data into the national Register.Find.Reunite database. The quadruplicate form aims reduce the paperwork impacted persons are required to fill out.

3.1.6. CRISISWORKS USE IN RELIEF AND RECOVERY

Crisisworks has a relief/recovery specific area known as 'People and Property'. This is where Council will enter any impacted persons or property during an emergency from information provided on the PIF. Data entry is required so that the MRM can monitor the number of people at an ERC remotely and for ease of reporting. For further details, contact the MRM or a Crisisworks administrator

3.1.7. ANIMAL WELFARE AT ERCS

At the onset of an emergency, Council's Local Laws officers may establish animal admission facilities in conjunction with the ERC depending on identified need. The roles of Local Laws personnel staffing an animal admission facility will be to:

- Identify and record details of animals presented
- Identify menacing, dangerous or restricted breeds and redirect to the pound or other facility designed to hold this type of animal
- Contain animal/s
- Separate animals as appropriate to ensure their safety and welfare;
- Assess all animals presented, whether or not they are owned
- Arrange or administer first aid
- Arrange for transfer of animals which require ongoing care or significant treatment to an external veterinarian, in consultation with the owner where possible; and
- If an animal is assessed as being fit and healthy, it may be:
 - Retained on site in the care of the owner in facilities arranged by the council
 - Transferred to accommodation of the owners choice or if the owner is not present or does not have a preference, to a facility which can care for the animal. If possible this will be to a shelter with which the council has pre-existing arrangements for the provision of such services.

3.1.8. EMERGENCY SHELTER FOR ANIMALS AT AN ERC

The following conditions apply in relation to animals brought to an emergency relief centre:

- All animals are held at the owner's risk
- Owners are required to feed the animals
- Water will be provided for the animals
- Housing is only short term. Animals that remain at the shelter after eight days may be processed as un-owned animals
- Animals must be confined or on a leash at all times

- Animals with special needs will need to be managed by the owner to ensure they do not cause harm or discomfort to other animals or people
- Animals must not be moved from their designated crate/pen without notification to the person in charge of the animal shelter.
- Animals cannot be loose within an emergency animal shelter. Personnel engaged in animal welfare roles at an ERC or an emergency shelter should use cages, crates, tethers, fencing and other appropriate methods of restraint to house all animals on site.
- Animals should be protected from the weather.
- Animal housing should be removed from public areas to help reduce the amount of stress that they are subjected to.
- Separate areas should be designated for dogs, cats and other animals. Owned animals may be housed apart from stray animals. Ideally each group of animals should be contained within a larger area to ensure that if an animal gets loose it cannot escape.
- An area will be required for animal food. The animal food staging, distribution and preparation area should be in a location where the food is protected from vermin and will not get wet. The animal food preparation area will require food utensils.
- Animal supplies and other resources including food dishes, litter boxes, cat litter, scoops, cages, toys, leashes, collars, muzzles, flea treatment, brushes, newspaper, towels, and blankets must be stored securely so they will not get wet and are available as needed.
- A water storage area will be needed when normal water resources are not operating or the tap water is not suitable for drinking. The water storage should be in a central location within the facility, with easy access for delivery trucks.
- An animal's crate, box or pen should be cleaned daily. These should not be washed in the food preparation area. The animal cage cleaning area needs to be set up near a water source and not somewhere that the runoff will cause other parts of the facility to flood or contaminate ground being used by humans for accommodation.
- Staff health must be protected. Staff and volunteers dealing with animals must have or be provided with:
 - Properly fitting personal protective clothing
 - Washing facilities with disinfectant soap
 - Adequate information and training on health, hygiene and safety
 - Arrangements for washing personal protective clothing
 - Tetanus immunisation

For further information on animal welfare during emergencies, see the Murrindindi Shire Council Animal Welfare in Emergencies Plan (available as a download from Crisisworks for MEMPC Members or emergency agencies <https://murrindindi.mecccentral.com>).

3.2.RELIEF ACTIVATION

3.2.1.ACTIVATION, ESCALATION AND DEACTIVATION OF RELIEF ACTIVITIES

Incident controllers determine the need to activate relief services, with advice from the emergency management team. The escalation process is for municipal councils to request regional assistance, which can be escalated to the state level, if needed. This need is determined by the MRM. The deactivation of relief services will be determined by the MRM and based on reduced levels of demand and need for such services

Part 3 of the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria* specifies that the following people have the authority to activate the provision of emergency relief services by affected municipal councils based on an Incident Controller's determination (which may include the activation of emergency relief centres):

- The MERC (Victoria Police officer)
- The MERO
- The MRM

Murrindindi Shire Council is responsible for establishing and managing relief centres locally. The DHHS will support municipal councils as required to ensure people affected by an emergency are receiving appropriate relief support services.

3.2.2. MURRINDINDI SHIRE COUNCIL RELIEF ACTIVATION AND ESCALATION

The MERC will advise the emergency to the other members of the EMCG (MRM and MERO). The MRM or delegate is to initiate recovery and/or preparation activities as documented in these arrangements, as soon as practicable, after an emergency; or when advance notice of an impending emergency is known.

In the event of an emergency the MERC is to advise and brief the MERO and MRM as soon as practicable. On receiving advice of an emergency, the MRM will bring together the responsible agencies to ensure that relief and recovery services and activities are provided in a coordinated manner, thus activating relief arrangements.

3.2.3. TRANSITION FROM RESPONSE TO RECOVERY

The transition from response to recovery may occur during the relief phase (in the first few days post incident) or later on in the recovery phase (from this first week on). It is essential to ensure a smooth transition from the response phase to the recovery phase of an emergency at the municipal level. Whilst recovery activities will have commenced shortly after impact, (and often at the ERCs), there are a number of issues which require the formal cessation of response activities. This will occur when the MERC, in conjunction with the Control Agency and MERO declares "Stand Down" of response. The early notification of recovery agencies involved in the emergency will ensure a smooth transition of ongoing activities from response to recovery.

Murrindindi Shire Council utilises the DHHS template "An Agreement for Transition of Co-ordination Arrangements from Response to Recovery". See Appendix E for a copy of the form.

This transition agreement is endorsed by the following agencies in consultation with the local government areas affected, and reflects the state, regional and local levels of interest in emergency response and recovery: Victoria Police, Control Agency, DHHS and Murrindindi Shire Council.

This is pursuant to the roles and responsibilities detailed in the *Emergency Management Act 1986* and the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria* (part 6).

3.2.4. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAMS AND EMLOS

Emergency management teams (EMTs) are established at Incident Control Centre (ICC). Under Part 3 of the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria*, an EMT's responsibilities include relief and recovery. These responsibilities include considering relief and recovery in the development of the incident strategy, together with the incident controller and emergency management team. It is the responsibility of the Incident Controller to ensure relief and recovery agencies are appropriately represented on emergency management teams.

Council will have an Emergency Management Liaison Officer (EMLO) representing its interests in an EMT at the ICC where possible. If no EMLO is available to attend the ICC in person, EMTs will be attended via phone hook-up.

3.3.COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Information regarding the event itself (e.g. fire conditions) will be managed and controlled by the Incident Controller through the Public and Information Office (PIO) at the Incident Control Centre (ICC). Council does not play a role in media for the 'response' phase of an emergency other than directing people to approved media sources. For a current list of approved radio, newspaper, television, social media and other resources, please see sections 5.12 (Public Information and Warning) and 5.12.5 (Methods) of the MEMP.

Once the Incident Controller determines that the emergency has transferred from the response to recovery phase, recovery agencies are responsible for providing further community information. If an emergency is local in nature, messages will be coordinated by Council as the local coordinator of relief and recovery. If it any emergency is deemed a regional or state emergency (by the control agency/Incident Controller) DHHS will coordinate community messaging on relief and recovery with input and guidance from Council.

Community information and briefings are vital components that assist in the recovery of emergency affected individuals and communities. Community information sessions will be conducted as soon as possible after an emergency in partnership with emergency services.

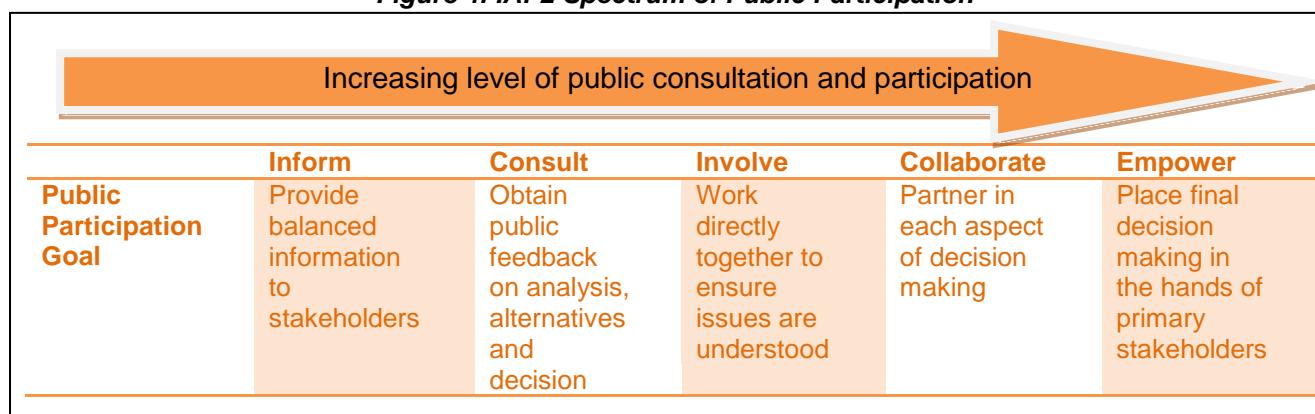
The development of relevant and appropriate community resources and activities empower the community and enhance their resilience, thereby assisting their recovery process. Murrindindi Shire Council will actively engage the community through a range of mechanisms including media releases, advertisements, newsletters, local radio (UGFM), Council's website and local service networks and public meetings or forums. The MEMP section 5.12 lists approved dissemination methods.

3.3.1. LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Communication-related activities with the community can aim for varying levels of engagement. It is important to consider what level of engagement is appropriate when selecting tools/activities. It is important to identify the applicable target audiences and messages to be conveyed. Murrindindi Shire Council uses the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) communications spectrum when designing and discussing public participation. This spectrum (see figure 4 below) ranges from *informing* the community, to *consulting* with the community, *involving* and *collaborating* with the community throughout

decision making and finally to *empowering* the community to implement their decisions and actions.

Figure 4: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



The benefits of consulting and engaging effectively with the community include:

- Reassurance that preparations have been made with the community's welfare as a key priority.
- That the municipality is responsible for co-ordinating a recovery effort so the public will know where to seek assistance.
- Reduce negative public perceptions built around ignorance.
- Enable people to make correct decisions on their wellbeing because knowledge is empowering.
- Assist the emergency affected community towards management of its own recovery.
- Ensure provision of basic and necessary community services to affected individuals, families and communities as efficiently as possible and at appropriate times so as to support recovery.
- Ensure programs and services are in place to assist the recovery process.
- Ensure mechanisms exist to build community involvement and ownership of the recovery process.

3.3.2. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

The MRM will, in liaison with the Manager Communications, maintain a relief and recovery communication strategy that aligns with the guidelines contained in the *Recovery Communication Plan* (see section 2.10 for further details). This strategy will allow for the quick and timely dissemination of information regarding relief and recovery to the community during emergency events. Particular emphasis should be placed on using the current Murrindindi Shire Council networks and emergency broadcasters (see MEMP section 5.12 for approved broadcasters) to ensure quick and maximum dissemination of information.

3.3.3. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Emergency recovery may involve a large proportion of Council staff. Key messages will be disseminated to all Council staff via email or the intranet (Murri). The flow of information will take into account the existing protocols for informing staff. Staff will also be advised when the emergency has finished.

3.3.4. COMMUNICATION WITH EMERGENCY RELIEF CENTRES / RECOVERY CENTRES

At any given ERC in Murrindindi Shire there will be a designated ERC Manager and Deputy Manager who will liaise directly with the MRM in the MECC. At least three briefings a day to the MRM will be required to ensure that the MRM has up to date information on the status of any ERC. At the discretion of the MRM, these briefings will either be done in person (if phone networks are down and road travel is possible) or by phone/email/Crisisworks.

3.3.5. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

One of the key elements of emergency recovery is effective information management. The media profile given to most emergencies, particularly those on a large scale, means that public and political interest in the recovery process will generally be high. Added to this is the need for adequate information to be provided to affected communities and individuals regarding the effects of the event and the availability of recovery services.

3.3.6. REGULAR UPDATES

During the emergency, community information sessions are convened by the control agency. They provide information about the risk and consequences of the hazard to the community. Local government attends these meetings to provide information about recovery services that may be required.

The Control Agency will continue to attend meetings post the impact/response phase. This will be jointly convened with Council. DHHS will provide support and assistance as required, including specialist information on family, public and community health.

Emergency management agencies have an important role to play in community engagement. This includes providing the opportunity to share their experiences and to have these heard and acknowledged, and by providing an understanding of how the incident was managed. Community information sessions also provide an opportunity to start identifying issues that may require additional advice or clarification as part of the recovery process.

One of the underlying principles of recovery management is the empowerment of individuals and communities to participate in the management of their own recovery. It is critical that regular and accurate information be provided regarding such things as the cause and effects of the emergency, the type and availability of recovery services and any other relevant information.

This information should be made available in as many languages as necessary to meet the needs of people affected by the event who are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD). This will enhance the capacity of the community to participate in the management of their own recovery.

Given the media, political and public profile of emergencies there will also be a need for the provision of up-to-date, accurate information regarding recovery services and advice on the state of the affected community to a range of sources. This need will be particularly prevalent

in the early stages of the recovery process, the time at which recovery managers will be under most pressure.

Consequently, it is important that effective information management systems be established as soon as possible following an emergency.

Ideally systems and protocols for the dissemination of information should have been developed as part of the recovery process and should only require minor adjustments to facilitate the flow of information after an emergency has occurred.

3.3.7. MEDIA

During emergencies the press, radio and television have a legitimate interest in obtaining prompt and accurate information. The media is also a vital link between recovery agencies and the public and provides an effective means of disseminating information.

Due to the fact that the recovery process will generally involve a range of different organisations there is a need for co-ordination of information to the media to avoid confusion or conflict. The most effective means of dealing with this issue is through a nominated media liaison person to represent the overall recovery process. This includes the media's interest in interviewing event affected people at relief and recovery centres.

3.3.8. APPROVED DISSEMINATION METHODS

For a current list of approved radio, newspaper, television, social media and other resources, please see sections 5.12 (Public Information and Warning) and 5.12.5 (Methods) of the MEMP.

3.4. EMERGENCY SHELTER

An alternative to evacuation in some circumstances may be to shelter in a suitable home, building, structure, or other safe area. Sheltering should be considered as an alternative when the associated risks with evacuation are considered to be greater than the risks of taking shelter. Sheltering however, will often not be without risk.

Emergency shelter options coordinated by Murrindindi Shire Council consist of ERCs (see section 3.1 above). Neighbourhood Safer Places – Place of Last Resort (NSPs), also coordinated by Murrindindi Shire Council, are not defined as shelter in place options⁶; rather they are “options of last resort (where other plans have failed or cannot be followed) where a person's prospect of survival may be better than other places, but cannot be guaranteed”.

There are some distinct differences between ERCs and NSPs.

- ERCs are never set up where they may be impacted by an emergency.
- Service delivery (food, shelter, water and access to emergency assistance) is available at an ERC.
- ERCs will offer some form of assistance with pets and companion animals.
- NSPs are only for shelter from a passing fire front.
- No services will be made available at a NSP.

⁶ Emergency Management Manual Victoria, Part 3, Neighbourhood Safer Places – Places of Last Resort (bushfire only) S3.11.4, p3-32

- Pets will not be catered for at a NSP.
- NSPs are generally open areas such as football or cricket ovals.
- The location of ERCs is not advertised outside of an emergency as directed by DHHS. This is to prevent people travelling into an impact zone unnecessarily.
- The location of NSPs is advertised widely. A current list of NSPs is available from any of Council's customer service centres (Yea, Kinglake and Alexandra), the Murrindindi Shire Council website (www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Neighbourhood_Safer_Places), the Murrindindi Shire Council and Lake Mountain Alpine Resort MEMP (http://www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Your_Council/Emergency_Management/Municipal_Emergency_Management_Plan) or the CFA website (<http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/neighbourhood-safer-places/>).

There are no registered Community Fire Refuges in Murrindindi Shire.

3.5.FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING PUBLIC APPEALS

Emergency financial assistance is intended to help eligible individuals meet their basic needs in a dignified manner. The DHHS is responsible for:

- Providing information about financial assistance to the community
- Administering relief payments from the Personal Hardship Assistance Program.

Once an emergency has occurred, the Commonwealth Government will determine if it will make available additional financial assistance beyond the cost-shared Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements. This may include the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment, the Disaster Recovery Allowance, ex-gratia assistance or a crisis payment. The Commonwealth Department of Human Services (Centrelink) administer these payments.

Murrindindi Shire Council does not give financial assistance to impacted persons or communities but is responsible for overseeing local appeals. Local appeals will generally be coordinated by a third party such as Bendigo Bank or Red Cross). In larger scale events, the Department of Premier and Cabinet is responsible for establishing public fundraising appeals.

3.5.1. DHHS EMERGENCY RELIEF ASSISTANCE

Emergency relief assistance payments are available to reduce personal hardship following an emergency, by helping to meet the immediate essential health, safety and wellbeing needs of affected Victorians. Impacted persons have one week after the initial impact of an emergency to apply for a personal hardship assistance payment from DHHS.

Emergency relief assistance is provided on a needs assessment basis, and is available to assist households after house fires, and after the following natural emergency events:

- bushfires
- floods
- severe storms and
- earthquakes

If you need further information about eligibility for emergency relief assistance, please contact the Victorian Emergency Recovery Information Line on: 1300 799 232.

It is important to remember that there may be finite timelines associated with all relief assistance payments from DHHS.

3.5.2. CENTRELINK CRISIS PAYMENTS

Crisis Payment may be available to assist those in severe financial hardship who have been forced to leave their home and establish a new one because of an extreme circumstance (domestic violence or their house burning down).

Contact Centrelink for more information:

- Financial Information Services (Available Mon-Fri 8am-5pm) on: 132 300

3.6.ACCOMMODATION

Individuals are encouraged to make their own accommodation arrangements if they cannot return to their homes. Friends, family, community, business, or government could provide emergency shelter if needed. Municipal councils can offer accommodation at relief centres or alternative locations. The Department of Health and Human Services can arrange emergency shelter and accommodation when requested by municipal councils.

It is advised however for people to stay with relatives and friends if their residence is impacted or if they are isolated from their residence because of an emergency. By surrounding themselves with friends and family, impacted persons have a better chance of recovering more fully from an impact.

Post emergency accommodation comes in two forms: 'Emergency Accommodation' and 'Longer Term Accommodation'. Red Cross can provide emergency accommodation (for people impacted by single house fires) for up to 3 nights.

3.6.1. EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION - RED CROSS

Red Cross assists with immediate needs to help affected people for the first few days following an incident to their principal residence. These emergencies are known as single incident emergencies. The Red Cross emergency accommodation service is designed to assist for the immediate term only until insurance and other services may be contacted and made available. This service is available 24 hours a day however there is a budgetary limit that can be spent per person.

Where possible it is recommended for affected people to stay with friends and relatives; this provides emotional support much needed at a traumatic time. However Red Cross can assist with short term accommodation if this is not possible.

Services provided include:

- Accommodation (2-3 nights motel accommodation)
- Clothing – new essential items per household member
- Toiletries (including towels) and groceries
- Bedding – new essential items per household member (sheets, quilt, quilt cover, pillow, pillow case)
- Emotional support and assistance contacting other organisations when required.

3.6.2. PATHWAYS (THE SALVATION ARMY)

Pathways provides a range of support services and programs for disadvantaged and marginalised families, single adults, families experiencing financial difficulty or needing professional support, the homeless and those at risk of homelessness and families with multiple and complex needs.

Pathways Seymour Ph: (03) 5735 2055

3.6.3. RURAL HOUSING NETWORK

The Rural Housing Network is a community housing agency providing assistance to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The service includes financial assistance, transitional housing, advocacy and assistance with both public and private housing applications. The service is free and available to all Hume region residents.

Rural Housing Network Seymour Ph: (03) 5735 2000

3.6.4. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The DHHS 24-hour state-wide toll free number is 1800 825 955. Impacted persons can phone DHHS to speak directly with a housing and support worker. The 1800 number will direct calls to a service closest to the impacted person, or if the call is outside business hours, it will be directed to Salvation Army Crisis Services.

3.6.5. HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SAFETY

DHHS will coordinate the provision of health services, such as continuity of care for existing patients, clinical health services and preventative health services.

Landowners are responsible for securing damaged buildings and maintaining the safety of their properties.

3.7. ANIMAL WELFARE

Companion animals, livestock and wildlife impacted by emergencies could need containment, food, water, veterinary treatment or humane destruction and disposal. DEDJTR is responsible for assisting with urgent animal welfare needs.

Murrindindi Shire Council will work alongside DEDJTR in any required response effort. To that end, Murrindindi Shire Council has developed an Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (EAWP, available as a download from Crisisworks for MEMPC Members or emergency agencies <https://murrindindi.mecccentral.com>). The EAWP is designed to capture the capacity and capability of Council's ability to respond to crisis that affect stock and companion animals.

Native animals that are impacted by an emergency are managed and planned for by DELWP.

The EAWP includes standard operating procedures for post emergency stock disposal and identifies triggers for activation of the plan.

The EAWP's aims are:

- Contribute to enhanced public safety and community resilience through effective planning and management of animals in emergencies, and
- Ensure animals are better considered and protected from suffering during and immediately following emergencies.

To achieve these aims, the Murrindindi Shire EAWP has the following objectives. The Murrindindi EAWP will:

- Support and assist the principal MEMP
- Define the roles and responsibilities of key agencies and stakeholders and update these if and when they change
- Identify triggers for activation
- Co-ordinate Local Laws functions and animal rescue and/or shelter during an emergency
- Encourage and facilitate community awareness about the need for self-managed animal plans during an emergency
- Increase community knowledge and confidence that animal welfare will be considered and managed during an emergency
- Identify and prioritise the requirements of groups at risk during emergencies
- Facilitate the hygienic management and disposal of animal waste and carcasses during an emergency
- Secure the assistance of community members with animal handling skills
- Provide immediate animal welfare assistance at ERCs
- Ensure business continuity of the Local Laws team

For further information on the management of animal welfare, see section 9 on the Agricultural recovery environment below.

3.8.HEALTH AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Ambulance Victoria is responsible for first aid and establishing field primary care clinics in an emergency.

At a local level, Murrindindi Shire Council is the coordinator for environmental health issues, such as food, water, sanitation, and vector (disease carrying pests) control. At the regional level, this requirement falls to the DHHS

3.9.PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

Psychosocial support: a framework for emergencies 2014 guides the delivery of psychosocial support in Victoria. A copy of the framework can be found at:

- http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/emergencies-and-preparedness/emergency-recovery/web_Psychosocial-support-a-framework-for-emergencies.pdf

Psychosocial support could range from personal support, community information and individual and group counselling, to specialised mental health services.

In an emergency, depending on the scale of the event, the MRM may choose to deploy Victorian Council of Churches (VCC) outreach services or Nexus Primary Health community health services or a combination of both. The VCC service includes doorknocking affected residents and producing a report for the MRM on the mental health of affected residents. All VCC volunteers and Chaplains have completed psychological first aid training and are equipped to support people affected by trauma as a result of an emergency or disaster.

Locally, Murrindindi Shire Council also has an MOU with Nexus Primary Health for the delivery of community health services including psychological support during and after an emergency event (see section 2.6 above for further details). If people are identified as potentially requiring ongoing support by the VCC outreach program they will also be referred by the MRM to Nexus Primary Health.

Different groups will have different relief needs, and this is nowhere more evident than in psychosocial support post emergency. Sections 5.5 and 5.6 in 'Social Recovery' below have detailed information on the different psychosocial needs of a variety of community groups.

3.10. LEGAL AID

Victoria Legal Aid (<https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/>) is responsible for coordinating support from the legal community to individuals and communities affected by emergencies through Disaster Legal Help Victoria (DLHV). DLHV provides free information through a telephone help line, a website (<http://www.disasterlegalhelp.org.au/>), fact sheets and information kits. Depending on the nature of the emergency DLHV also provides a legal presence at ERCs and facilitates pro bono legal referrals. The emphasis of services is on resolving disputes between insurance companies and clients.

3.11. MAINTAINING FOOD AND WATER SUPPLIES

Maintaining the continuity of food and water supplies in an emergency is essential for the health and wellbeing of the community as it reduces the requirements on the established relief system. DELWP is responsible for ensuring the security of the supply of food including the continuity of the supply chain and the coordination of industry arrangements with both the food manufacturing and distribution sectors.

Red Cross is the local coordinating agency for food and water supplies for relief and recovery including supply for ERCs. They are responsible for maintaining food supplies to ERCs and will liaise with DHHS on any potential impacts to the supply chain.

3.12. REPLACEMENT OF ESSENTIAL WATER USED IN RESPONSE

DELWP is the control agency for water and waste water service disruption according to Part 7 of the EMMV and the "Victorian Government Essential Water Replacement Scheme". Under the direction DHHS, DELWP will coordinate the restoration of mains water and sewerage connection with the relevant water authorities post emergency.

Under the Victorian Government Essential Water Replacement Scheme, active since 2007, Victoria's fire agencies are able to take water from any waterway or water source on public or private land for fire fighting purposes. Where water is removed, any owner may request the replacement of 'essential water' via their local Municipality.

According to the Scheme, 'Essential Water' is defined as:

"enough water for people, stock, and crops. Stock and domestic water will be replaced to provide for essential stock and domestic needs only. Water taken from licensed/registered dams used for irrigation will be replaced to provide for agricultural and horticultural crops or permanent plantings".⁷

Murrindindi Shire Council is the local coordinating agency for the replacement of essential water used in response for the geographic area of Murrindindi Shire. Murrindindi Shire Council aligns its water replacement policy with the Victorian Government Essential Water Replacement Scheme. This scheme only covers 'essential' water taken by fire agencies during fire suppression of a bushfire, not to all water taken by fire agencies. The scheme does not apply to single house fires or structural incidents.

The guidelines associated with the Victorian Government Essential Water Replacement Scheme state that local water authorities will not charge for the water used to replace water used in bushfire fighting and that DELWP will pay for any cartage fees that may apply.

If Murrindindi Shire Council's capacity to coordinate the replacement of essential water is exceeded, DELWP will take over coordination as the regional and state coordinators as per the EMMV, part 7.

3.13. REPLACEMENT OF ESSENTIAL DRINKING WATER FOR HOUSEHOLDS

Locally, Murrindindi Shire Council will coordinate the replacement of fire-contaminated drinking water held in rainwater tanks for communities impacted by fire. If community members believe their tank water has been contaminated during an emergency, they can phone the Alexandra shire office and report it on 5772 0333. If required, Council will then have the water tested for contaminants and flush and replace drinking water where necessary.

The Victorian Government Essential Water Replacement Scheme "Guidance Document" (November 2011) states that water authorities will not charge for drinking water used to replace essential water (of which drinking water is a part) contaminated by bushfire response efforts or fire related contaminants. The Guidance Document also states that DELWP will pay for any cartage costs required.

3.14. DONATED GOODS AND NON-FOOD ITEMS (MATERIAL AID)

Murrindindi Shire Council requests, as per the *National guidelines for managing donated goods*, for monetary donations over donated goods. Material donations are discouraged as financial donations can provide a greater level of choice can more accurately target any identified needs and help circulate money in affected communities. When communicating during an emergency, Murrindindi Shire Council will endeavour to promote the donation of money over material aid.

Murrindindi Shire Council has limited capacity to be able to coordinate donated goods and services. As a result, Council has developed an agreement for the local Rotary Clubs of Murrindindi Shire to coordinate donated goods and services in the geographical area of the Shire.

⁷ State Government Victoria "Guidance Document - Essential Water Replacement Scheme ", Version 30 November 2011

Contact information for Rotary is supplied in Appendix A5. A number of other agencies and volunteer groups have some capacity in helping store and distribute material goods. These agencies and groups will provide assistance to, and be directly coordinated by the Rotary Clubs of Murrindindi Shire. For a list of material aid support agencies, see the contact list below (Appendix A5).

Rotary will report back to the MRM regarding material aid requirements (storage, capacity, etc) on an as-needs basis.

3.15. COORDINATING OFFERS OF ASSISTANCE

Murrindindi Shire Council will coordinate offers of assistance internally with delegation via the MRM. Crisisworks will be utilised to record and monitor offers of assistance.

In this document, “offers of assistance” is understood to include the following:

- Corporate offers of assistance directed to local government (this includes financial, goods, services and offers of staff time) – Note that goods will be managed as per 3.13 above.
- Public offers of assistance directed to government (this includes financial, goods and services) – Note that goods will be managed as per 3.13 above.
- Members of the public offering to volunteer their time to assist affected communities, government or non-government organisations involved in the response and recovery effort
- Community groups or organisations offering to assist affected communities, government or non-government organisations with the response and recovery effort

The role of Council in managing offers of assistance is to:

- Facilitate activities that assist in the coordination of offers of services
- Direct offers of volunteering through appropriate channels
- Ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place for the registration, referral, training and health and safety of volunteers and community groups (see 3.15 below)
- Provide consistent and accurate messages to the public.

The following standards apply to the coordination of offers of assistance

- Offers of assistance are channelled through the customer service centres.
- There is an integrated system for coordinating offers of assistance via Crisisworks.
- There are clear and consistent messages and all dealings with affected people and local communities are undertaken in a courteous, helpful and ethical manner.
- All offers of assistance are handled in a timely and effective manner

3.16. VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

3.16.1. SPONTANEOUS VOLUNTEERS

Spontaneous volunteers are people that turn up during or after an event willing to help but are not affiliated with any group or club. Traditionally, spontaneous volunteers have been difficult to coordinate for municipalities as they may require training, accommodation, food and close management or supervision.

Council has recently developed an MOU with Volunteering Victoria for the supply of a trained Municipal Spontaneous Emergency Volunteer (MSEV) coordinator to be put in place during and immediately after an emergency impact. Under this MOU, Volunteering Victoria will provide a trained coordinator to Council who will focus predominantly on the coordination of the spontaneous volunteers. Council in return will coordinate accommodation if possible, food and office space for the coordinator.

The development of this MOU has increased the capacity of Murrindindi Shire Council to appropriately coordinate and place spontaneous volunteers in productive relief and recovery roles.

Volunteering Victoria is building a workforce of trained MSEVs who can assist (as volunteers) Local Councils to effectively manage SEVs in relief and recovery activities.

Working within existing emergency management structures, the MSEV could assist with relief and recovery activities, generally within the first 3 – 4 weeks of an event when the cohort of spontaneous volunteering is at its peak.

DEPLOYMENT PROCESS

In the event of emergency MSEVs could be requested to assist Council in relief or recovery activities. This need would be identified via the MRM or delegated person and a request submitted to Volunteering Victoria by phone, with details confirmed back in email. Volunteering Victoria will access the MSEV database to identify an appropriate and available MSEV to be deployed. This MSEV would report directly to the MRM

3.16.2. OTHER VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers play a significant part in any recovery operation, particularly after large-scale, highly publicised emergencies. This section of the Relief and Recovery plan examines volunteers who are affiliated with a specific organisation such as service clubs, community agencies and other non government organisations. Volunteers who are affiliated with an organisation will be directed by that organisation and are likely to have specific skills to undertake previously assigned roles.

Voluntary organisations, that are appropriately insured, may be directed by either the MERO or MRM in the completion of a broad set tasks post emergency. These tasks could range from re-fencing, rebuilding, assisting in catering or other services etc. .

Any clubs interested in registering interest in assisting in the relief and recovery process should contact the MRM through the Council offices.

4. RECOVERY

4.1. RECOVERY COORDINATION

Recovery coordination refers to the arrangements that will be used in any situation where more than one department, agency or organisation is required to provide services to assist communities and individuals recover from the impact of an emergency. Recovery coordination arrangements should provide for:

- Assessment of impacts;
- Input of affected community into decision making;
- Coordination of service provision; and
- Communication strategies.

The responsibility of municipal recovery coordination will rest with the MRM. The role of the MRM is fully detailed in section 2.13.2 above.

4.2. FUNCTIONAL AREAS OF RECOVERY

There are five functional areas that require co-ordination as part of the recovery process:

- Social, health and community environment;
- Economic environment
- Natural environment; and
- Built environment
- Agricultural environment

Each of these functional areas overlaps considerably; each also has a specialist skill requirement to address issues arising after an emergency. Individual functional areas require internal co-ordination and collaboration as well as co-ordination with external agencies and areas to address issues presented by an emergency.

Based on the five functional areas (as per Table 2 below), Murrindindi Shire Council has identified key functions that require resolution in the event of an incident. As part of Council's Co-ordination role, agencies have been identified and have agreed to provide the services specified in the Recovery Functions Table located in Appendix D.

Table 2: Five functional areas of recovery⁸

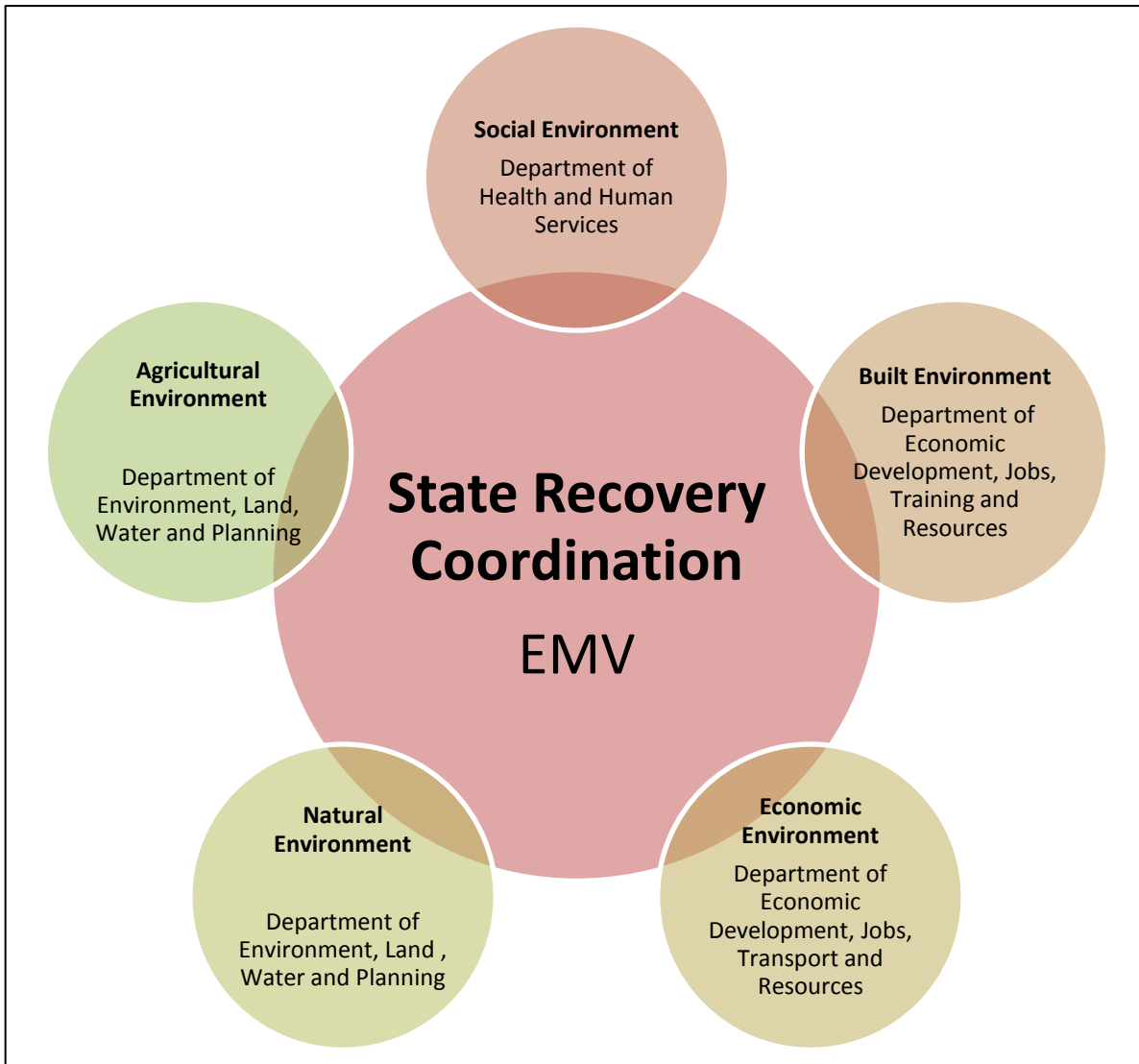
Social Recovery	Built Environment	Economic environment	Natural environment	Agricultural Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for individuals (including service coordination and case support) • Accessing information • Financial assistance • Health, wellbeing and safety • Interim and temporary accommodation • Psychosocial support (including counselling and advocacy) • Targeted recovery programs for the bereaved; men and women; children and youth; vulnerable groups; and displaced and dispersed people • Community programs • Community engagement (including sponsorship and advocacy) • Community recovery committees • Recovery centres (such as locations and staffing) • Community service hubs (such as locations and staffing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact assessments • Assessment of damaged buildings • Clean up and demolition of damaged structures (including removal, transport and disposal) • Building advice and information • Essential utilities and services (including banking, education, and health) • Critical infrastructure (including water, electricity, gas and telecommunications) • Communications (including telephone, mobile, radio, internet and cable) • Roads and transport (including public transport, arterial routes, supply chains and bridges) • Water and wastewater (including drinking water and sewerage) • Waste and pollution (including garbage) • Rebuilding private homes • Community and public buildings and assets (including schools, child care, places of spiritual worship, recreation facilities and entertainment venues) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local economic sustainability • Support for individuals and households • Support for businesses (including information and advice) • Business continuity planning • Promotion of local employment opportunities • Supporting local tourism • Monitoring broader economic impacts and coordinating responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting water quality and supply • Controlling and preventing erosion • Protecting threatened habitats (including controlling the spread of invasive species) • Surveying and protecting threatened species (including bird, marsupial, aquatic and plant species) • Surveying and protecting aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems • Regenerating forests (including for ecological purposes and future timber use) • Restoring public land (such as walking tracks, fencing, and recreational and visitor facilities) • Surveying and protecting sites of cultural heritage significance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal welfare (including livestock, companion animals and wildlife) • Loss and damage assessment (for Farming, Rural Activity, Rural) • Needs referral and case management • Emergency fodder • Restoring damaged fencing (including private, bordering parks and as a result of emergency response) • Wellbeing and economic recovery of rural communities • Rehabilitation of productive land

⁸ Emergency Management Manual Victoria, Part 4 ' State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan', p4-42, October 2014, text

4.2.1. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATING THE FIVE ENVIRONMENTS

The responsibility for coordination of the five recovery environments at the local level rests with local government, EMV at the State level and DHHS at the regional level⁹. Figure 5 below shows the coordinating agencies at the state level for the five environments directed by DHHS.

Figure 5: Agencies with Recovery Coordination Responsibilities across the Five Environments¹⁰



4.2.2. SHORT, MEDIUM AND LONG-TERM RECOVERY

There are five primary phases or steps in emergency recovery operations that are related to a continuum relative to small, medium and large scale emergencies. Community and individual needs will vary in each phase, so it is important that clear and specific plans are developed for each phase to ensure the correct recovery services are able to be delivered.

⁹ Emergency Management Manual Victoria, Part 4 'State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan', p4-14, October 2014

¹⁰ Adapted from: Emergency Management Manual Victoria, Part 4 'State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan', p4-26, October 2014

The following table (Table 3) is an example of recovery time continuum for large scale emergency. The time continuum for small and medium emergencies may differ from those outlined below.

The phases are:

- 1 During the incident (24 hours) (the response phase)
- 2 Immediately after the incident (1 to 7 days)
- 3 Short Term (2 to 3 weeks)
- 4 Medium Term (1 to 4 months)
- 5 Long Term (4 to 6 months and onwards; up to 18 months or 2 years depending on impact of the incident)

Table 3: Five Recovery Phases

1. During the Incident		
Activity	Primary Responsibility	Secondary Assistance
Conduct an Initial Impact Assessment	EMV, Coordinated by IC Planning Department	
Activate emergency relief arrangements (MEMP Appendix C)	MERC MRM	
Assess the need, and plan for, an Emergency Relief Centre (ERC) based upon data collected from Initial Impact assessment.	MRM Planning Department	
2. Immediately after the incident (1 day to 2 weeks)		
Activity	Responsibility	Secondary Assistance
Continue the needs assessment and impact assessment to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What needs to be done - Who will undertake those tasks - How will they be co-ordinated (who will do what, how where and when. 	MERC, MERO, MRM, Planning Department	DHHS
Establish a mechanism for the provision of essential needs in the impacted area e.g. resources (financial, human & equipment), water, stock feed, temporary fencing, fuel, food and material aid.	MERC, MERO, MRM	DHHS
Activate an ERC in the impacted area if necessary	MRM.	DHHS
Initiate the Recovery planning process including the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of the Community Recovery Committee - Development of a Community Recovery Plan 	MRM,	DHHS, DSE, DPI, DPCD,
Agencies to implement their own Business Continuity and Staff Welfare plans to prevent worker burnout and fatigue	All Agencies, MRM	
If the recovery effort is broader than	DHHS, MRM, MERO	

Murrindindi Shire, the Regional Recovery Committee (RRC) may be activated to co-ordinate regional resources.		
Commence Planning for the development of a Transition Strategy to enable the timely and appropriate withdrawal of relief services and activities from an ERC. Transition to existing and/or new community support services such as an Emergency Recovery Centre	MERC, MERO, MRM	
Complete preliminary impact assessment of impacted Council infrastructure and assets.	Relevant Municipal Officer	
3. Short Term – 2 to 4 weeks		
Activity	Primary Responsibility	Secondary Assistance
Continue to monitor needs through the impact assessment process and community feedback.	Community Recovery Committee	
Continue the Recovery Planning Process including the Community Recovery Plan developed through engagement with the community.	MRM,	DHHS
Utilise community development workers and community engagement through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - information sharing - consultation - supporting community initiatives; and - active participation 	MRM	
Start to compile Initial impact assessment data and notify the Department of Treasury and Finance of impacts and potential application for reimbursement.	MERO, MRM, Relevant Municipal Officers	
4. Medium Term – 1 to 4 months		
Activity	Primary Responsibility	Secondary Assistance
Continue to implement Community Recovery Plan	MRM, Community Recovery committee	
Commence planning for the development of a Transition Strategy to enable the timely and appropriate withdrawal of dedicated recovery services and activities, and transition to existing community support services.	MRM, CRC	DHHS
Apply for/Approval for NDRRA application (through DTF), obtain approval for works, arrange contractors/contracts	MERO, MRM, Relevant Municipal Officers	
5. Longer Term – 4 months and onwards		
Activity	Primary Responsibility	Secondary Assistance
Monitor, review and evaluate the Community Recovery Plan	MRM, Community Recovery Committee	
Continue the development of the Transition Strategy to support a seamless transition of recovery activities (council and support	MRM, Community Recovery Committee.	

agencies) into core business. Commence implementation of Transition Strategy.		
Implementation of works and restoration of assets agreed to by DTF/NDRRA. Completion of works and acquittal of funds within required time frame (may be as short as two years)	MERO, MRM, Relevant Municipal Officers	

Initial recovery management is undertaken at a municipal level. In the event that an emergency exceeds the capacity of Murrindindi due to the:

- scale
- complexity
- geographic area
- level of human impact; or
- dispersion of the affected population

DHHS will assume the role of coordinating agency for recovery at the regional level whilst EMV has taken over coordination at the state level.

A debrief is to be taken as soon as is practicable for the Relief and Recovery Team after the closure of and ERC. This is an additional debrief to that convened by the MERC and will be convened by the MRM to cover specific relief and recovery issues. Learning from the event is to be documented.

4.2.3. ROLES OF ORGANISATIONS AND AGENCIES

Recovery is not the exclusive domain of any single agency. All agencies and organisations willing to participate have an important role to play. This recognises that recovery must be a whole-of-government and a whole-of-community process. Table 4 below indicates the range and types of services, which can be needed in a recovery process and the principal sources of those services.

Table 4: Roles of Organisations and Agencies

TYPE OF SERVICE	CO-ORDINATED BY
Information Services	Murrindindi Shire Council Lake Mountain Alpine Resort
Material Aid	Rotary Clubs of Murrindindi Shire
Financial Assistance	Murrindindi Shire Council locally and DHHS at the regional level
Temporary Accommodation	Murrindindi Shire Council locally and DHHS at the regional level
Language Services	Murrindindi Shire Council locally and DHHS at the regional level
Rebuilding & Utility Restoration	Murrindindi Shire Council in conjunction with the statutory authority responsible for the affected utility.
Community Development	Department of Health and Human Services (Hume Region) in conjunction with the Municipal Recovery Manager / Community Recovery Committee.
Personal Support Services	Murrindindi Shire Council locally and DHHS at the regional level

4.3.LOSS AND DAMAGE REPORTING - IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Since 2006 Impact Assessment has been a component of the emergency management arrangements of Victoria. The collection of data and reporting to government was originally the responsibility of the Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner. In March 2012, ownership of the function was transferred to Victoria Police.

With the advent of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* the collection of Impact Assessment data is now the responsibility of EMV.

The first two phases of Impact Assessment, Initial Impact Assessment (IIA) and Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA), should provide a foundation for a more in-depth assessment during the transition from initial to post impact assessment. Generally the assessment timeline commences once access can be gained to an affected area following an emergency (refer Figure 6 below).

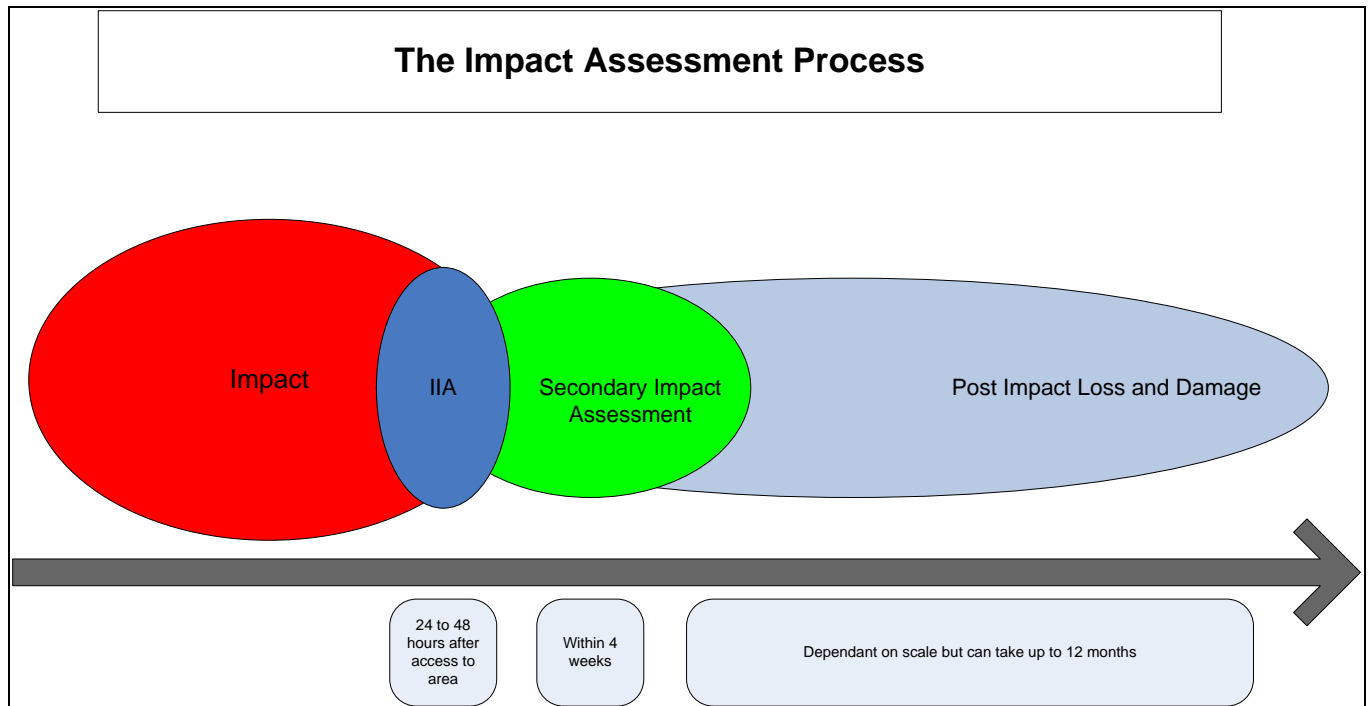
Impact Assessment is not the responsibility of a single agency; it encompasses data drawn from a number of different agencies and government departments. Whilst the IIA phase is essentially a visual inspection by first responders, the post impact phases utilise data drawn from agencies such as the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), local government, education sector, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Vic Roads and subject matter experts depending on the nature and scale of the event.

In general terms, first responders conduct IIA, generating an immediate picture of the extent of damage and loss of life. Secondary Impact Assessment entails a higher level of data collection that can be generated from a number of agencies, departments and local government sources. Post Impact (Loss) Assessment is a far more detailed process involving analysis and input by experts.

The Incident Controller is responsible for initiating the impact assessment process. Once it is initiated the Incident Controller will request the appointment of a coordinator to manage the first phase of assessment. Once IIA transitions to Secondary and Post Impact Assessment a Recovery Co-ordinator is to be appointed to coordinate these phases.

The MRM will determine the staffing requirements of the team required to carry out any Council impact assessment. The composition of the impact team will depend on the type and scale of impact. Smaller impact assessments may be completed in house but larger scale events may require Council to request assistance from other municipalities. If this assistance is not available, the MRM may need to source assistance by employing third party agencies.

Figure 6: The Impact Assessment Process¹¹



4.3.1. INITIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An Initial Impact Assessment (IIA) is an initial appraisal of the extent of damage, disruption and breakdown to the community and its infrastructure resulting from the emergency or disaster. IIA is initiated and coordinated by the control agency.

The purpose of IIA is to provide an immediate assessment of an impacted area during the initial stages of an emergency by:

- Determining the impact and scale of the emergency;
- Gathering information to assist response, relief and recovery activities;
- Providing information to the government and the community on the impact of the emergency to promote confidence in the management of the incident; and
- Establishing a standard process for gathering, recording and reporting on impact related information

During IIA data about the impact of an emergency is gathered and verified during the first 48 hours of an emergency. The Incident Control Centre (ICC) should pass this information onto Councils as it comes to hand. Assessments for relief and recovery can be informed by IIA reports and can build upon the information received as a result of response activities.

The information from an IIA is provided to the MECC to enable the MERC, MERO and MRM to plan for current and future response and recovery activities.

¹¹ Sourced from EMV "Impact Assessment Guidelines 2015"

IIA data is used to assist recovery agencies to plan for potential relief and recovery requirements of communities by identifying the following impacts (not an exhaustive list):

- Community/ township built environment (sewage, water, electricity access);
- Injured/ deceased persons;
- Damage to local businesses vital to the community (suppliers of food);
- Damage to government facilities of community significance (schools, hospitals);
- Residential damage indicating displaced people, and
- Damage to essential road and rail transport connections that results in isolation of communities, homes, businesses.

In addition, the data will assist in informing local, regional and state budget holders regarding potential financial assistance requirements.

The MRM in conjunction with the MERO and MERC is to assess the impact of the incident and determine any requirement for recovery support in accordance with local resources.

The magnitude of the event and the subsequent recovery activities will be determined by the data collected during the post impact assessment.

4.3.2. SECONDARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA) builds on the observational information gathered through the IIA phase to provide an additional layer of analysis and evaluation. A secondary assessment is more detailed and the information supports understanding the type and level of assistance needed by affected communities. The Incident Controller will initiate the transition from IIA to SIA in consultation with the IIA Coordinator and Recovery Coordinator.

The SIA phase considers resources available within an affected community and identifies those needs and priorities that can only be met with outside assistance. The management of this phase will change from the incident, regional and state level IIA Coordinator to the Recovery Coordinator.

The following points should be considered when transitioning from IIA to either the Secondary or Post Impact Assessment Phase:

- Review incident risk assessments so that necessary measures are put in place for the safety and wellbeing of personnel that will be operating in the secondary and post impact assessment phases (such information would contribute to the development of operational briefings);
- Determine the need to conduct secondary impact assessment, or transition directly to local government where local resources are activated for the conduct of post impact assessment;
- Confirm the process of IIA data exchange from the Incident Controller to DHHS, recovery agencies and local government (an agreed process should be developed and documented which ensures that any further impact assessment information collected by the relevant controller is clearly identifiable and flows seamlessly to those agencies and organisations involved in recovery operations);

- Determine what resources are required during the secondary and post impact phases and for what period of time (resources could be sourced from agencies actively involved in IIA or by redirecting first responders where there is the capacity to do so and where such an approach would maintain continuity of understanding);
- Confirm which resources will be stood down and which resources will be activated such as Local Government, Red Cross and the Victorian Council of Churches;
- Map and understand key geographical areas within the area of impact where Secondary and Post Impact Assessment operations should be concentrated and prioritised, e.g. key infrastructure, isolated communities and community icons;
- Development of key messages to the community which can be included within the broad suite of warning methods, and
- Understand the complications associated with the return of the community to the impacted area and develop a suitable plan where the community members are informed and supported.

This secondary assessment process will have the recovery teams engaging with community members and obtaining impact information in greater detail. Returning residents may have had contact with IIA teams already, so subsequent assessors will need to keep this in mind and try to minimise ‘assessment fatigue’ by avoiding repeating the same questions that IIA responders may have previously asked.

Ideally secondary assessment teams will be deployed as soon as the Incident or Regional Controller declares the impact area safe. From past experience the timeframe for secondary assessment is within four weeks of the onset of the emergency event.

4.3.3. POST IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A Post Impact Assessment (PIA) estimates the cost of destroyed assets of an emergency across the five recovery environments. The assessment should inform the medium to longer-term recovery process, and guide planning that focuses on building structures and designing environments that enhances community resilience and assists in mitigating the impact of future emergencies.

A PIA draws upon information gathered from the Initial Impact Assessment and Secondary Impact Assessment and is an appraisal of the extent of damage, disruption and breakdown to the community and its infrastructure resulting from the emergency or disaster. Estimates are made for both physical and financial losses, such as the loss of business output.

A PIA will:

- Survey the extent of damage and evaluate financial and material needs:
 - Provide a priority listing to assist agencies in the performance of their functions to address community needs;
 - Monitor the acquisition and application of financial and material aid provided or required during the recovery period; and
 - Create a clear, implementable, and timely Recovery Plan as required (large scale emergency)

PIA is conducted primarily after the emergency when it is safe enough for trained personnel to enter the affected area.

Council will coordinate the PIA for Council owned or managed property and assets. Other agencies may also be involved in PIA (e.g. DEDJTR when rural and farming enterprises are impacted, and DELWP where state owned land is impacted). Should the emergency extend beyond the boundaries of the municipality, PIA will be coordinated by DHHS.

4.4.MUNICIPAL RECOVERY COMMITTEE

Dependent on the scale of the emergency it may be essential to establish a Municipal Recovery Committee (MRC)

In establishing a MRC it is important to consider the functional areas of recovery (social, built, economic, natural and agricultural environments). It must also support a flexible approach that reflects the scale of the emergency and the diverse range of community needs.

The decision to form a Committee rests with Murrindindi Shire Council in consultation with the MRM.

4.4.1. MUNICIPAL RECOVERY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The composition of the MRC will vary depending on the affected area. The membership of the committee should include community leaders and representatives of:

- MRM
- Councillor
- Government agencies
- Council managers/officers as required
- Lake Mountain Alpine Resort representative
- Community groups
- Affected persons with appropriate expertise
- Non-government agencies
- Economic Development Officer

4.4.2. MUNICIPAL RECOVERY COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS

- Monitor the overall progress of the recovery process in the affected community.
- Identify community needs and resource requirements and make recommendations to appropriate recovery agencies, municipal councils and the State's recovery management structure;
- Liaise, consult and negotiate, on behalf of affected communities, with recovery agencies, government departments and municipal councils;
- Liaise with Department of Health and Human Services as Co-ordinator through the designated Regional Director.
- Undertake specific recovery activities as determined by the circumstances and the Committee.

In the performance of these tasks, the Committee has direct access to the designated DHHS Regional Director who should have access to resources under the regional recovery planning arrangements.

4.5.COMMUNITY RECOVERY COMMITTEES

Where required, one or more CRCs may be established within the affected area. The decision to form a Committee rests with Murrindindi Shire Council in consultation with the MRM and the Regional Recovery Coordinator, DHHS.

It is important that whatever recovery structure is implemented that all members of the affected community are provided the opportunity to give feedback and express their opinion in relation to the recovery process. Thus ensuring broad and diverse community input.

4.5.1. COMMUNITY RECOVERY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The composition of the committee will vary depending on the affected area. The membership of the committee should include:

- MRM
- Councillor
- Government agencies
- Lake Mountain Alpine Resort
- Other Council managers/officers as required

Community groups

- Affected persons with appropriate expertise (e.g.: primary producers or local business people)
- Non-government agencies
- Economic development officer

4.5.2. COMMUNITY RECOVERY COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS

The functions of the CRC are to:

- Monitor the overall progress of the recovery process in the affected community.
- Identify community needs and resource requirements and make recommendations to the Murrindindi MRRPC or MEMPC
- If directed to do so by the MRRPC or MEMPC, liaise with the DHHS as coordinator through the designated Regional Recovery Coordinator or delegate.
- Undertake specific recovery activities as determined by the circumstances and the MRRPC or MEMPC.

In the performance of these tasks, the committee has direct access to the designated DHHS Regional Recovery Coordinator whom should have access to resources under the regional recovery planning arrangements.

A suggested term of reference document for CRCs is located in the Appendix F.

4.5.3. COMMUNITY-BASED RECOVERY PLANNING

Community Recovery Plans (CRPs) are a process for the community to identify community recovery issues. This community led process can include:

- Consultation, visioning and priority setting workshops
- Development of draft priorities
- Submission of community priorities to funding bodies and coordinating agencies
- Establishment of working groups to support these priorities and
- Close consultation with local government and relevant approval agencies.

Key points to consider when supporting communities to undertake this process are to:

- Determine and clarify the role of the community recovery committee (if established);
- Determine what support the community wants or needs from the relevant agencies in facilitating the process
- Provide good facilitation and structure of the planning process
- Ensure the four areas of recovery are addressed
- Ensure relevant approval agencies are included as early as possible in the process i.e. local government, Goulburn Valley Water, DELWP etc
- Ensure good community consultation and engagement practices are undertaken, give community a range of times and mechanisms to contribute to the planning process;
- Develop a model for setting priorities
- Provide clear, consistent and transparent messages about what is and is not possible;
- Determine how the results will be communicated to community members and other agencies and
- Plan for need rather than according to funding availability.

CRPs may outline a wide range of priorities but are an important mechanism to identify and express how the communities can be supported by Murrindindi Shire Council, State and Federal Governments, local agencies and other philanthropic organisations.

The CRPs must be flexible documents that allow for regular review by each committee. The timeliness of the implementation of these priorities will be different for each community and may be hindered by availability of funding. There must be a long-term commitment by all agencies involved.

5. SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The social recovery environment addresses the impact an emergency could have on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. Social recovery is closely inter-related to the other four recovery environments.

At the local level, Municipal councils are responsible for coordinating the social recovery environment. At the regional and state level, DHHS is the Coordinator.

5.1.SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS AND HOUSEHOLDS

Municipal councils are responsible for locally managing and delivering recovery services for affected individuals and communities. Murrindindi Shire Council will consider appropriate support strategies, including how individuals will access information, the coordination of services, and case support for a given emergency. The Department of Health and Human Services can assist if requested by municipal councils.

5.1.1. CASE MANAGEMENT

The primary goal of case management is to create a single point of contact/co-ordination for support and service provision to individuals and families impacted by an emergency¹². In order to identify the need for case management it is essential that as soon as possible following an incident affecting an area and/or community an Initial Impact Assessment (IIA) process is undertaken to ascertain the extent of disruption and damage across social, built, economic, natural and agricultural environments to help identify the assistance required.

The Case Management Service:

- is an individualised, relationship based service that seeks to support and empower individuals, strengthening their capacity over time
- is an individualized service delivery based on comprehensive assessment, which is used to develop a case plan, developed in collaboration with the individual or family, reflective of their choices and preferences for the service arrangements being developed
- facilitates and works on behalf of the individual or family to obtain services, grants or information where individuals or families find it difficult to act on their own behalf
- provides personal support, attends to immediate needs, provides information, assesses current circumstances and undertakes referral and application processes for other services as needed
- advocates on behalf of the individual, couple or family in accessing housing, medical, financial and other types of assistance, as needed
- Continuously updates the assessment and support plan to address new and changing needs.

¹² Victorian Bushfire Case Management Service, 'Practice Guide and Operational Instructions' November 2009

5.1.2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS

Depending upon the type and impact of a disaster the physical impact upon the community may be a key determinant in the community's recovery¹³. The physical impact of events such as earthquake or bushfire will significantly impact upon the capacity of an affected community. Consequently they may be useful indicators of the need to initiate community development activities.

Community development may be required when:

- The emergency has a demonstrated impact upon community networks
- Where an affected area is experiencing or is likely to experience socio-economic disadvantage as a result of the emergency
- The nature of the emergency incurs a high degree of stress within the community that will impact upon its health and wellbeing

After time, community recovery programs should transition into regular mainstream services and activities that shift the focus from recovery, to community development¹⁴. Recovery agencies should consult communities on this transition of services, to ensure adequate support for the most vulnerable.

Often multiple community development activities will be taking place in an affected community. The use of a Community Development Officer to co-ordinate these activities and provide a point of contact for the affected community may be beneficial

Community Development Officers involved in community development recovery from a disaster have a very clear role to support and facilitate individual and community recovery. The underlying principle is the empowerment of individuals and communities to manage their own recovery.

5.2.ACCESSING INFORMATION

Individuals are encouraged to obtain information and services that will support their recovery. 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. At Murrindindi Shire Council, this single point of contact is the MRM. In a complex event where one on one contact with the MRM is not possible, the MRM will coordinate and oversee all information provided to the community with support provided by the Manager Communications.

DHHS can assist local government if requested.

5.3.FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Recovery programs are generally in the form of advice and services for affected individuals and communities, rather than direct financial support. Individuals and households are expected to actively protect their own property and assets (e.g. through adequate insurance), to minimise the financial impact of emergencies, and support their recovery.

¹³ Emergency Management Australia , 'Community Development in Recovery from Disaster', September 2003

¹⁴ Emergency Management Manual Victoria, Part 4, S4.5.3 'Activation of Recovery Activities and Transition to Post Recovery', p4-15, October 2014

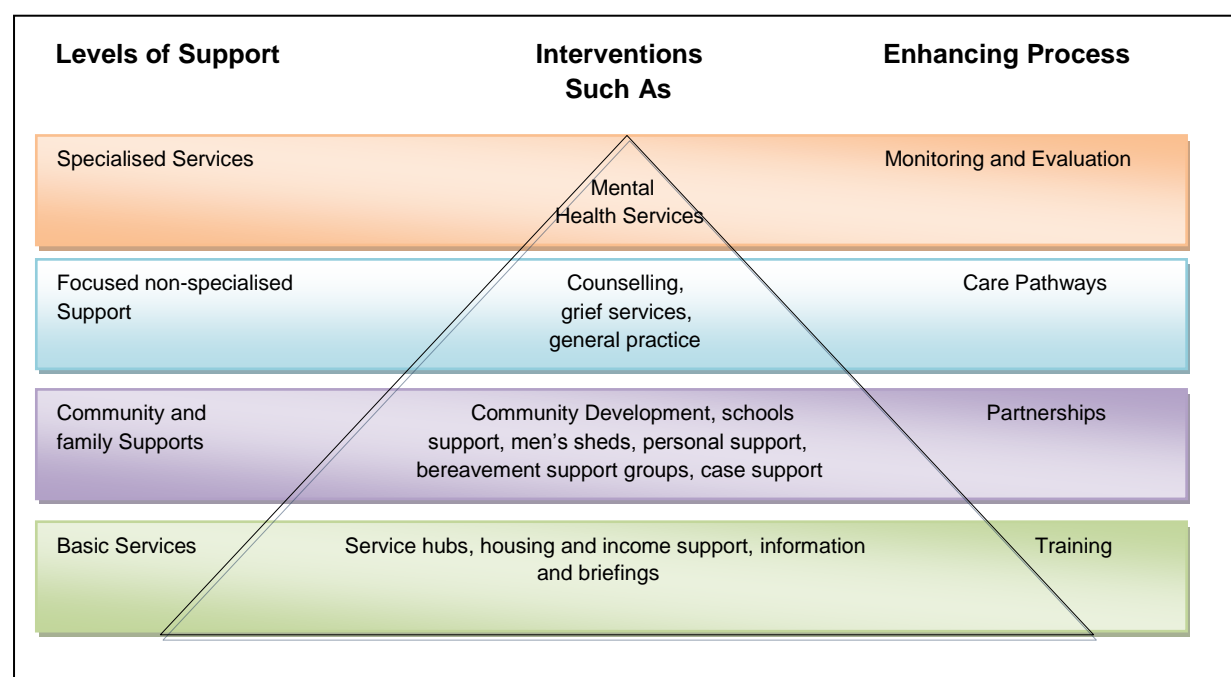
The Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for administering income-tested personal hardship assistance re-establishment payments to help eligible households re-establish as quickly as possible.

5.4.PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (INCLUDING COUNSELLING AND ADVOCACY)

Psychosocial Support includes supporting the emotional, spiritual cultural, psychological and social needs of individuals. A range of accessible support is needed to address the various ways people are typically affected by emergencies.

Figure 7 uses a pyramid structure to show the varying types of support services that could be established.

Figure 7: Levels of Intervention Pyramid for Psychosocial Support¹⁵



5.4.1. PERSONAL SUPPORT

Personal support is initiated in relief operations and can continue as part of recovery, alongside a range of individualised support programs. Various government and non-government agencies can provide personal support, including the Victorian Council of Churches (VCC), Red Cross, The Salvation Army, and DHHS.

Locally, Murrindindi Shire Council has an agreement with VCC and an MOU with Nexus Primary Health for the delivery of outreach services that target residents impacted by a trauma or emergency event.

5.4.2. COMPANION ANIMALS

The benefits of companion animals and pets to the wellbeing of individuals and households must be considered in the development of recovery programs. Animal welfare arrangements are detailed in the

¹⁵ Adapted from: Emergency Management Manual Victoria, Part 4 'State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan', p4-23, October 2014

Murrindindi Shire Council Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (copies are available from the MFPO or via Crisisworks (<https://murrindindi.mecccentral.com>) for MEMPC members or emergency services).

5.5.TARGETED RECOVERY PROGRAMS FOR THE BEREAVED

In their planning, communications and community engagement, all agencies and groups involved in recovery must recognise the diverse needs of affected individuals and communities. As highlighted in the *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience*, emergencies do not impact everyone in the same way and vulnerable community members are often the hardest hit.

Murrindindi Shire Council has endeavoured to plan for all groups and community types within the municipality of Murrindindi.

5.5.1. GENDER AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Men and women respond to emergencies differently, so recovery programs must be aware of gender differences. Municipal councils are responsible for working with individuals and communities to develop appropriate recovery programs that recognise and respond effectively to gender differences. Men and women may have different needs and priorities in relief and recovery phases of an emergency. The different needs of men and women need to be taken in to account when developing recovery support options, communication methods and consultation mechanisms.

Evidence shows that the incidence of family violence increases post-disaster. Men are more likely to die in floods and bushfires than women and men strongly influence family decisions to stay and defend homes during bushfires, sometimes with tragic results. To positively affect such outcomes, the influence of gender roles and differences must be understood and addressed.

Murrindindi Shire Council has utilised the Municipal Association of Victoria's "Gender and Emergency Management Strategy" to aid in the development of this plan (<http://www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/emergency-management/Pages/gender-emergency-management.aspx>).

The Strategy states that in Australia specific research into the effect gender differences and roles have on how individuals and communities prepare for, responds to and recover from disaster is sparse. However from what research exists in Australia and internationally a few general conclusions can be drawn:

- Relationship violence, child abuse and divorce have increased in the wake of overseas disasters¹⁶
- Men are more likely to die in floods and bushfires than women¹⁷
- Men strongly influence family decisions to stay and defend homes during bushfires, sometimes with tragic results¹⁸
- Men in a given household often have greater knowledge of formal emergency procedures than women¹⁹

¹⁶ In the US, a 2009 study showed a four-fold increase in intimate partner violence following Hurricane Katrina. The increase was driven by first-time occurrences of violence amongst displaced people. Additionally New Zealand police also reported a 53 per cent increase in call-outs to domestic violence incidents over the weekend of the Christchurch earthquake on 4 September 2010.

¹⁷ Amanda Ripley, 2008, *The Unthinkable: Who Survives When Disaster Strikes - and Why*, New York, Three Rivers Press

¹⁸ Haynes K, Handmer J, McAneney J, Tibbits A, Coates L, 2010, Australian bushfire fatalities 1900-2008: exploring trends in relation to the "prepare, stay and defend or leave early" policy, 13 (3), *Environmental Science and Policy*, 185-194.

¹⁹ Enarson E and Morrow H (eds), 1998, *The Gendered Terrain of Disaster: Through Women's Eyes*, Praeger, Santa Barbara.

- If women receive and understand disaster warnings, they play an important role in spreading the message through informal social networks²⁰
- There is generally an increased burden of care-giving in the recovery and reconstruction phases and this is disproportionately shouldered by women.
- The many informal processes of rebuilding a sense of safety, community and resilience are also largely undertaken by women²¹
- Women face exclusions or have limited participation in some forums
- women experience more economic vulnerability post-disaster than men
- Men are less likely to access support to deal with trauma

5.5.2. CHILDREN AND YOUTH

All agencies need to address the unique needs of children and youth in relief and recovery, in consultation with the Department of Human Services' *Emergency management planning for children and young people guide*.

A copy of the guide is available at:

- <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/plans-and-strategies/emergency-management/emergency-management-planning-for-children-and-young-people>

Children and young people account for around a quarter of Australia's population. They have unique needs and are particularly vulnerable in emergency events. Children are different from the adult population physically, psychologically and developmentally and their needs in emergencies and disasters should form an integral part of emergency management plans and the review process.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is responsible for managing and coordinating school activities that address child and youth recovery.

Murrindindi Shire Council has used the DHHS guide in the preparation of this document and recognises that:

- Though all people are affected by an emergency, children and young people are uniquely vulnerable and require targeted and specialised interventions to help ensure the best opportunity to achieve a successful recovery
- Generally, there is a lack of advocacy for children and young people in the emergency management sector.
- Children are not 'little adults' and should not be managed in the same way as adults.
- Children and young people do not fit a "one-size-fits all" approach to emergency management planning. Instead, emergency management plans should consider the developmental stage of those affected.
- Children and young people can contribute to the emergency management planning process, and should be encouraged to do so

²⁰ (ibid)

²¹ (ibid)

5.5.3. AGED AND DISABLED PERSONS LIST

A list of Aged and Disabled persons is available on request from the Aged and Disability Staff at Community Services, Murrindindi Shire Council. This list is an internal register of aged and disabled persons in Murrindindi Shire Council that consists of clients who are registered with Murrindindi Shire Council as receiving a Council service. Some of these people may require assistance in an emergency situation.

5.5.4. VULNERABLE PERSONS REGISTER

In accordance with the requirements of the DHHS, Murrindindi Shire Council has implemented the Vulnerable People in Emergencies (VPE) Policy 2012 including the creation and management of a Vulnerable Persons Register (VPR). This has included identifying vulnerable persons not receiving services and detailed for screening for the VPR. The electronic VPR has been implemented and is maintained and coordinated by Murrindindi Shire Council.

For further information on either the VPE 2012 policy or the VPR, please contact DHHS or visit their website: www.dhs.vic.gov.au

5.5.5. VULNERABLE FACILITIES LIST

The VPE 2012 also requires that a list of local facilities where vulnerable people are likely to be situated is coordinated and maintained by Council. This list includes hospitals, schools, Aged Care Facilities and child care centres. An updated copy of this document is maintained and available to Victoria Police and other agencies on Crisisworks (<https://murrindindi.mecccentral.com/>)

5.5.6. DISPLACED AND DISPERSED PEOPLE

All agencies must consider support recovery activities for isolated communities, and displaced and dispersed people in other communities. Murrindindi Shire Council works closely with isolated communities to support vulnerable people through the Vulnerable Persons Register and that the broader community is aware of potential emergency risks and have personal bushfire plans in place.

Council will work with other municipalities, the Red Cross and other support agencies to assist displaced and dispersed populations who are within Murrindindi Shire at the time of an emergency to repatriate them to their communities of origin.

Council will work with DHHS and local support agencies to support homeless people and people in tenuous housing at the time of an emergency.

5.6.COMMUNITY RECOVERY COMMITTEES AND SOCIAL RECOVERY

A function of CRCs (see 4.6.2 above) is to consider the social aspect of the recovery process.

Community recovery committees are the primary method for supporting community recovery after an emergency. Municipal councils are responsible for establishing a community recovery committee as soon as possible.

5.7.RECOVERY CENTRES

Once the relief effort has passed (after a few days to a week) impacted persons may still need centralised access to services. Council may choose to establish a recovery centre to support this access. In some cases, Murrindindi Shire Council may transition a relief centre into a recovery centre, or establish a standalone recovery centre. Recovery centres provide a single point of entry for affected persons for an 'all agency, all stakeholders' integrated recovery process. Murrindindi Shire Council will specifically request various recovery support agencies to attend the recovery centre to provide advice and guidance. These agencies may include DHHS, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Nexus Primary Health and other local support providers. Services available through recovery centre include: food, clothing, legal advice, counselling support, insurance, interpreter services and essential services.

Recovery centres will run until it is determined by the MRM that a recovery centre is no longer required. Recovery is the lengthy process that follows emergency relief and it can take years in some instances to recover to an 'approximation of normal'. Recovery involves repatriation, reconstructing permanent homes and infrastructure and enabling income-generating activities so that communities can once again operate independently.

During recovery, people displaced by a disaster are assisted in returning to their homes. At every stage of emergency management, protection is required for those at risk and during the repatriation process, women and children can be particularly vulnerable.

As people begin to return home, healthcare facilities, schools and water supplies need to be rebuilt. New jobs may need to be created and access to micro-credit loans provided so that individuals can establish or re-establish their own businesses.

While emergency relief is essentially providing people with whatever they need to survive, recovery means enabling them to get back on their own two feet. Most people are eager to become self-sufficient – to feel confident that once the aid workers leave, they will have a viable and secure future.

If resources are exhausted Murrindindi Shire Council may request help from DHHS and other municipalities to establish, or continue running, a recovery centre.

5.8.COMMUNITY SERVICE HUBS

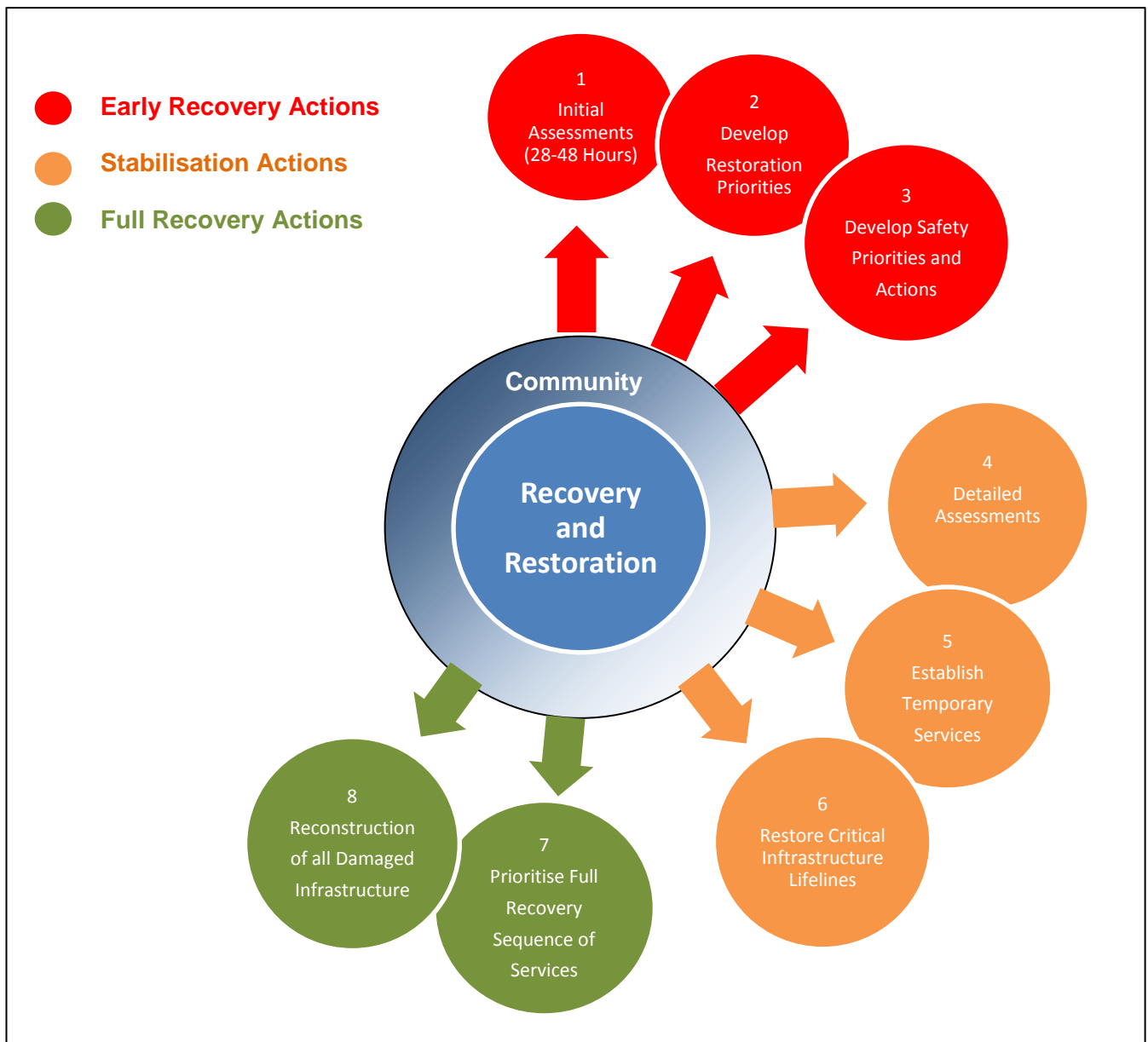
Community service hubs are similar to recovery centres, but they are established by DHHS and typically run over a longer period. The type, size and complexity of an emergency will determine the need to establish a community service hub.

6. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

6.1.INTRODUCTION

Infrastructure underpins the ability of private and public community services to function and assists impacted communities in their daily lives. Restoring impacted infrastructure post emergency, quickly and efficiently, assists communities in returning to an effective level of functioning more swiftly. Similarly to be able to deliver effective relief and recovery services to impacted individuals and communities the restoration of essential infrastructure and services that supports the delivery of relief and recovery needs to be prioritised.

Figure 8: Cross Sector Coordination Model²²



²² Emergency Management Manual Victoria, Part 4 ' State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan', p4-26, October 2014

Local infrastructure may also form an important part of community identity and connectedness. For example, some public buildings have an important symbolic role and the loss of such buildings can have a negative impact on community morale.

The Cross Sector Coordination Model (see figure 8 above) provides a framework that guides and supports the restoration and recovery of essential infrastructure and services.

Built environment impacts include (but are not limited to):

- Essential utilities and services
- Water, electricity, gas and telecommunications
- Roads (including bridges) and transport (including supply chains)
- Residential buildings
- Water and wastewater management
- Waste and pollution management
- Community and public buildings and assets.

6.2.CRISISWORKS IMPACT ASSESSMENT MODULE

Murrindindi Shire Council uses the Crisisworks Impact Assessment module to allow near real-time impact assessments by Council officers on Council Assets post emergency. The Impact Assessment module comes in the form of a customisable application that is downloaded to any smart device. The application allows officers to record event impacts to Council infrastructure by using GPS location data, photographs of the damage, an entered description of the damage and initial estimates of resources required to make safe or repair for later review. The application is a cloud based solution and can be used in areas without telecommunications as the information is stored on the device and uploaded once a reconnection to a network has been re-established. The application also allows for the real time tracking of the impact assessment team by the MERO in the MECC.

6.3.ASSESSMENT OF DAMAGED BUILDINGS

6.3.1. RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Residential losses can contribute significantly to individual, family and community disruption. Residential damage affects:

- Provision of shelter
- Protection of household contents
- The feeling of belonging that is 'home'
- Vulnerable sectors of the community
- Coordination of recovery and reconstruction operations.
- Damage may be a combination of structural and non-structural damage that may:
 - render the residence dangerous for entry
 - allow entry but prevent occupation of the building
 - require building repairs
 - be fixed by minor work
 - involve damage to contents.

Data regarding the impact to personal assets (homes, buildings, infrastructure, livestock etc) will be documented where possible when registering people at ERCs.

Timely assessment and repair of homes is critical to expediting the return of people to approximate normal life functioning. It is the responsibility of the Householder and Property owner to be adequately insured so that the clean up, repair and reconstruction of damaged property can take place. The Victorian Building Authority provides building advice and information and in some cases can assist in speeding up the building cycle after an emergency event.

The Department of Health and Human Services can support households arrange interim accommodation and assist with planning future housing arrangements.

Should the state need to assist in respect of clean up and demolition Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Training and Resources will coordinate, as appropriate.

6.4.CLEAN UP AND DEMOLITION OF DAMAGED STRUCTURES

Council will coordinate the clean up and demolition of its own damaged assets. It is the responsibility of the householder, private owner or insurance company to clean up and dispose of privately owned damaged structures.

A Council building inspector will be available to offer advice, including demolition and clean up, and assessments of buildings if required.

Council can apply to the Environment Protection authority to seek emergency disposal of waste, which may enable partial or complete waiving of disposal fees for ratepayers

6.5.BUILDING ADVICE AND INFORMATION

Impacted persons who believe that they may have asbestos on site or who need an assessment of personal buildings impacted by an emergency are encouraged to contact council's building department.

When rebuilding, information on building standards in Murrindindi Shire is available online (at http://www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Your_Property/Building_and_Construction) and by phoning the Murrindindi Shire Council building department on 5772 0366

If temporary homes are required post emergency, Murrindindi Shire Council will coordinate their location and construction with assistance from the DEDJTR

Section 5.4 above lists emergency accommodation providers for impacted residents

6.6.ESSENTIAL UTILITIES AND SERVICES (INCLUDING BANKING, EDUCATION, AND HEALTH)

Buildings that supply the community with essential services such as education, health care and banking, will be considered a priority for restoration by Murrindindi Shire Council.

6.7.CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Each of the main infrastructure suppliers in Murrindindi Shire (electricity, water, gas and telecommunications) has a plan for dealing with impacts to their services. It is beyond the scope of this plan to capture that information.

Murrindindi Shire Council will still be required to perform a number of essential community services during an emergency (e.g.: meals on wheels, client care etc). As a result, the Alexandra Office (Perkins St, Alexandra) has a backup generator to provide power during power outages.

6.8.COMMUNICATIONS

The loss of telephone services, both cabled and cellular, will adversely impact other infrastructure operators, in addition to general commerce and the function of communities. Any disruption to internet services can be expected to have a like effect.

All of the communications providers have plans in place to help in the restoration of impacted assets. The timing and restoration of these assets is entirely the responsibility of the communication providers and it is beyond the capacity of this plan to describe these processes.

Loss of television and radio services can be anticipated to have a negative influence on the psyche of impacted communities.

6.9.POWER AND GAS

Damage and loss to energy systems has far reaching implications for infrastructure in other sectors, upon which it is dependent, in whole or in part:

- Transportation systems:
 - Rail systems (such as electrified networks, ticketing systems and signals), traffic signals and liquid fuel supplies.
- Water
 - Loss of pressure from pump failure, contamination issues and sewerage systems.
- Communication systems
 - Cellular services, computer systems, internet and cable television.

In addition, loss of energy supplies to industry and businesses in affected areas leads to closure and economic impacts. Health and education services will also be affected.

Loss to domestic customers affects basic needs in terms of the provision of heating, cooling and light, which will have health implications. Vulnerable members of the community are most at risk. Restoration of services is often a complex task involving a diversity of stakeholders and priorities should be determined as quickly as possible. The Department of State Development and Business Innovation is the portfolio department responsible for power and gas supplies.

6.10. ROADS AND TRANSPORT

Transportation systems, including rail, road and air, provide mobility for passengers as well as the movement of goods from one point to another. Highways are among the oldest of infrastructure lifeline systems. These systems can often be interrupted and destroyed from the impact of a various number of hazards. Bridges represent a particularly vulnerable link in transport systems.

Disruption to transport systems affects communities and impedes recovery efforts, such as the restoration of other critical infrastructure and services. In any major recovery effort, the situation demands simultaneous actions at an accelerated pace.

In Murrindindi Shire, restoration of roads and transports will focus on:

- The restoration of arterial routes and local road infrastructure, providing access and egress to the affected areas (including local roads and bridges)
- The re-establishment of public transport services where possible
- Prioritisation and re-instatement of critical supply chains such as road access to allow deliveries of food, fuel and other essential community needs.

The Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Training and Resources is the portfolio department with responsibility for transport and transport services.

6.11. WATER AND WASTEWATER

When a community is affected by an emergency, they often require the provision of emergency water and wastewater management to support health and wellbeing.

When the size and complexity of emergency recovery exceeds the local resources, coordination of emergency drinking water supplies and sewerage services becomes the responsibility of DELWP. Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for providing advice about the safety of drinking water.

6.12. WASTE AND POLLUTION

As a direct result of an emergency or due to the emergency response, considerable quantities of additional waste and disruption to waste collection and disposal systems can occur. The waste management system is dependent on the functioning of other municipal systems, in particular road networks and communications. These dependencies can result in the impacting of the emergency on waste services to properties directly affected, and also those not directly involved.

Air, water pollution and soil contamination can result from the waste derived from an emergency, which may generate larger volumes of waste, and more hazardous waste, than under normal conditions. The Environment Protection Authority is responsible for leading the development of strategies dealing with pollution management, including:

- Removal, transport and disposal of solid waste and debris
- Mitigation of the impact of wastewater on catchments, waterways, marine environments and human health
- Response to the health, visibility and amenity impacts of air pollution caused by smoke, dust, chemicals and unpleasant odours
- Supplementation of disrupted systems and facilities to manage the ongoing generation of human waste (sewerage) and garbage.

Council has responsibility for delivering waste collection and disposal services from households, businesses and public places. During and after any emergency Council will remain responsible for ongoing collection and disposal of household garbage via the kerbside service. This service will continue to the fullest extent possible during the emergency. In the early recovery and stabilisation phases the focus will be on ensuring all ratepayers have bins or access to bins for disposal of household and putrescibles rubbish. If necessary communal collection points can be established as a first response, to be followed by full re-instatement of the kerbside collection service as soon as practicable.

Waste will continue to be delivered to the Alexandra Landfill, unless it has been compromised by the emergency in which case an alternative disposal arrangement would be sought with another nearby

landfill, either the Hildene Landfill (Seymour) operated by Mitchell Shire Council or the Hanson (Wollert) private landfill.

Council's transfer stations will continue to operate to the fullest extent possible during and after the emergency. Council will determine as soon as possible after the emergency what level of assistance will be provided to ratepayers. This may include discounted or free disposal of waste and debris for affected ratepayers.

Large volumes of inert waste can be disposed direct to the Alexandra Landfill. The site contains a cell constructed specifically for that purpose after the 2009 wildfires which was only partially filled. Depending on the scale and classification of the emergency, an emergency waste discharge permit can be sought from EPA which can make disposal more convenient and reduce the costs to Council and ratepayers.

Council is able to facilitate provision of waste services at staging grounds in the form of wheelie bins or skip bins. Due to the fact that increased cleanup waste volumes may have a significant financial impact on Council, recovery agencies need to discuss waste disposal arrangements at the earliest opportunity for significant events. Council will be responsible for establishing and communicating tipping fees, and for maintaining an account of costs incurred.

For local and regional events, management of the waste issues within the municipality will remain with the waste officer. For events of state or national significance, the event and recovery may be managed at a state level, with coordination by DEDJTR as required.

The provision of waste services to the community at all phases of an emergency presents opportunities to communicate with the public, including use of collection vehicles as travelling billboards and use of resource recovery centres as information and social hubs.

6.13. COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND ASSETS

The state government, local councils, community and private sector all have responsibilities when community facilities are damaged or destroyed.

Damaged facilities can include:

- Community/neighbourhood centres and places for congregation
- Schools and learning institutions
- Kindergartens and child care facilities
- Places of spiritual worship (including churches, mosques, graveyards and memorials)
- Sporting and recreational facilities and clubs
- Cultural centres
- Entertainment venues
- Restaurants and cafes.

Each of these facilities has the potential to assist the community in its recovery process, but if damaged would be unable to perform their community functions. The damage may be structural damage to buildings or damage to furnishings and contents, or both. The property manager is responsible for ensuring adequate insurance is in place to enable the restoration of community facilities. Critical public buildings, infrastructure and facilities are pre-identified as priorities in the recovery planning process and adequate arrangements developed for their restoration or replacement if required.

If a large scale emergency occurs where considerable amounts of infrastructure are impacted, all levels of government will work together on the restoration, not only rebuilding like for like, but also taking the opportunity to restructure community infrastructure if required (for example, co-location of pre-schools, playgroups and kindergartens etc)

Departments are responsible for the restoration of critical infrastructure that sits within their portfolio, in conjunction with the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority and relevant private operators. Local councils are similarly responsible for council owned and managed assets and infrastructure, working with local businesses where appropriate.

7. ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The economic recovery environment addresses the economic impact of an emergency, which may include impacts on individuals and households, small and large businesses, industries, tourism and the broader economy. Economic impacts range from immediate and intense, such as loss of personal income or loss or damage to business premises, to long-term and chronic, such as loss of workforce due to displacement, loss of workplace and/or resource (e.g. a forest) or reluctance of tourists to travel to hazard-prone areas. Early consideration of the economic consequences of an event is critical for community recovery. The viability of communities affected by emergencies can be dependent on the ability of local businesses to recover. Often local community leaders are also local business leaders. The viability of local businesses can impact on decisions within the broader community about whether or not residents will return.

7.1. LOCAL ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

It is the responsibility of individuals and businesses to maintain adequate insurance and establish continuity plans to help reduce the impact of emergencies, though, history shows that this is often not the reality.

Locally, Murrindindi Shire Council is the coordinator of the activities required in the economic recovery environment. At the regional and state level, DEDJTR is responsible. Local economic rebuilding and recovery is essential to the effective recovery of the wider community as the community and the economy are very closely linked.

The immediate challenge for an impacted community is to restore markets and access to markets for goods, services and labour affected by the emergency. Coherent and comprehensive strategies for post-emergency employment promotion are essential as post emergency employment supports short-term stability, reintegration, economic growth and the recreation of a sustainable economy.

7.2. SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS AND HOUSEHOLDS

The economic consequences of emergency events for individuals and households can include impacts on:

- Employment security (either the availability of work or the ability of people to undertake work)
- Family income - payment of salaries or wages
- Ability to service debts
- Access to bank accounts, liquefiable assets and insurance payouts

Individuals and households are responsible for maintaining insurance and other risk mitigation strategies to minimise the economic impact of emergencies.

A variety of programs may be made available to assist with the immediate economic impact of an emergency on individuals and households. These relief arrangements for individuals and households are identified in Section 3 above. Recovery programs will focus on supporting individuals and households to return to their pre-existing livelihoods or establish alternative livelihoods. Recovery programs are generally in the form of advice and services, rather than direct financial support.

7.3.SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES

The economic consequences of emergency events for businesses can include:

- unavailability of workers
- damage to physical premises and/or stock
- reduction in trade for individual businesses
- impact on cash flow and viability.

Individual businesses are responsible for maintaining insurance and business continuity plans to minimise the economic impact of emergencies.

Targeted recovery activities will focus on the provision of information and advice to businesses to support decision making and encourage a return to business. They may also involve the use of local businesses in recovery activities, development and promotion of local employment opportunities, local tourism and support of locally affected businesses.

Murrindindi Shire Council is responsible for the local management and delivery of economic recovery activities for businesses in the Shire of Murrindindi. At the state and regional level DEDJTR can assist municipal councils with this role. In the case of major disasters, such as the 2009 bushfires, a specialist authority may be established (such as the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority) to coordinate rebuilding and recovery initiatives.

Figure 9: Emergency phases that businesses need to be aware of and plan for



7.3.1. MITIGATION AND PLANNING FOR EMERGENCIES

Preparing business communities for disaster is a critical pillar of overall community planning and resilience. Investment into building local business capacity is never a bad investment as whether it is a natural disaster or an economic crisis, sound planning can provide a buffer and a solid building block for recovery.

7.3.2. RESPONSE PHASE - IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND ONGOING DATA GATHERING

Obtaining early and accurate information regarding the impact of an event is a core expectation on local government. Impacts on individuals, infrastructure and the community are generally measured and managed initially through municipal emergency recovery arrangements.

In terms of business recovery, a rapid impact assessment is a critical step that can help facilitate the appropriate response from government. Data gathering methods will vary given the scale and the timing of the assessment - phone calls, inspections, surveys and self reporting via insurance claims, media regulatory channels and the like. Initial assessment is of a 'top line' nature - for example best estimates of how many commercial businesses have incurred physical damage and from this there can be some extrapolation of impacts on employees, suppliers, etc.

7.3.3. RECOVERY – ESTABLISHING A BUSINESS RECOVERY CENTRE

Establishing a business centre is an integral feature of planning for business response to an emergency. Upon presenting at a relief centre to attend to personal needs, business operators will then be directed to a suite of business case management services.

In the early days of relief centre establishment, an area will be quarantined for a business support presence. Individual needs will of course take precedence but referral for business related needs must be streamlined and accessible. The need for a dedicated business support area is a point that cannot be made strongly enough - there are many barriers to business owners seeking support from perceptions such as their issues not being as important or fear of backlash i.e. “I have nowhere to live and you are worried about your business” to assumptions that they have no entitlement to support or no-one can remedy their issues.

Following the initial recovery referral area, the business support 'space' can transform into a hub for coordinated business case management from suitably qualified agencies working in partnership. At an appropriate time, a separate location to the emergency relief centre is ideal (see 7.6 below for further information on the creation of a business recovery group).

7.3.4. BUSINESS RECOVERY

The structure of recovery teams varies greatly from council to council based on scale of event, organisational structure and the level of resourcing available.

There is no recommended single effective structure; however there are a number of principles which optimise effectiveness:

- Economic development cannot be a lone ranger nor can it be an afterthought, the folio must be well represented in the adopted structure.

- Core business is not different from recovery; it is just a matter of priority shifting.
- Temporary resources can deliver highly effective project output freeing up time for permanent resources to make best use of their local networks to support the recovery effort. (NOTE Temporary resources can only be effective if solid plans/templates are in place).

7.3.5. BUSINESS RECOVERY RESOURCES

Murrindindi Shire Council developed a “Restore Your Business Community – Practitioners Handbook” post the 2009 fires, that captures lessons learned, tips and resources to guide Economic Development practitioners in helping their business communities through disaster planning, response and recovery .

The Guide is downloadable from the Murrindindi Shire Council Website

(http://www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Tourism_and_Business_Industries/Business_Support_and_Advice)

Business Victoria’s website provides guidance on business preparedness, risk mitigation and business continuity (www.business.vic.gov.au). CPA Australia also has a toolkit for business recovery post disaster (<http://www.cpaustralia.com.au/professional-resources/business-management/business-recovery/disaster-recovery-toolkit>)

The Tourism Victoria website includes a series of downloadable resources to assist businesses and local and regional tourism organisations plan for, respond to and recover from emergencies

(<http://www.tourism.vic.gov.au/component/content/article/17-business-tools-and-support/433-crisis-resources.html>).

7.3.6. MURRINDINDI INC

Murrindindi Incorporated (Inc) is the peak business and tourism body in the Shire. The Murrindindi Inc Board is made up of key executive members from:

- Alexandra Traders & Tourism Association
- Eildon Action
- Kinglake Ranges Business Network
- Lake Eildon Houseboat Industry Association
- Marysville Triangle Business & Tourism Inc.
- Victorian Caravan Parks Association – Eildon Division
- Yea Business & Tourism Association

Murrindindi Inc is a representative body that takes a strategic approach to industry development and business support. Murrindindi Inc aims to nurture and strengthen local tourism businesses by liaising with regional authorities and state bodies on behalf of operators and by providing a number of resources and opportunities to assist business operators with their day-to-day business activities.

Murrindindi Shire Council and Murrindindi Inc have a strong partnership and work in collaboration on a range of matters and through their combined databases and networks would be very useful in disseminating information and providing a business perspective leading up to during and following an emergency or natural disaster.

7.4.FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Natural Disaster Financial Assistance is sometimes made available to help alleviate the financial burden experienced by individuals and businesses following a natural disaster. This is administered in accordance with the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements or alternative delivery arrangements.

7.5.BUSINESS RECOVERY GROUP

If the circumstances warrant, Murrindindi Shire Council will assist in the creation of a business recovery group to coordinate local business recovery actions. The recovery initiatives should be undertaken and coordinated through an established local organisation and/or regionally developed 'economic' recovery group. Key Stakeholders may include (but not be limited to):

- Local Business and Tourism Association
- Regional Development Victoria
- Office of the Victorian Small Business Commissioner
- Small Business Mentoring Service
- Agribusiness association (regional)
- Rural Finance Corporation
- Council

This group should be established to assist with:

- Consultation and stakeholder engagement, develop knowledge and information systems that identify the medium to long term recovery needs of businesses affected by the event;
- Developing and coordinating local, regional and metropolitan programs and events that will assist the recovery of businesses affected by the event
- Informing and influencing Government and associated agencies in relation to programs and funding needs to aid business recovery
- Publicising and facilitating access to support services that will assist the recovery of businesses affected by the event and
- Monitoring and reporting to stakeholders and Government on the outcomes of business recovery programs.

Murrindindi Shire Council will maintain involvement throughout the 'economic' recovery process and will:

- Support the development of an Economic Recovery Strategy
- Advocate for the use of local contractors/businesses in the recovery process and, if unable, develop strategies to support local contractors/businesses
- Conduct local networking meetings and information sessions
- Where funding permits, recruit Business Support Officers to provide independent business development advice to Murrindindi Shire businesses impacted by the event and
- Support access to the small business mentoring service to businesses either directly or indirectly impacted

8. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

8.1. INTRODUCTION

A third of Victoria is public land comprising parks, forests and reserves. Emergencies that occur on this land have multiple consequences for biodiversity and ecosystem, economic and social values. Actions to recover from these emergencies may start while the emergency is still underway, and can continue for many months or years.

Locally, Murrindindi Shire has approximately 50% tree cover and much of this area comprises State Forests, Parks and National Parks. Recovery of these areas post emergency is a long process; large areas of the Shire are still recovering from the impacts of the February 2009 bushfires.

8.2. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.2.1. DELWP'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY

DELWP is responsible for coordinating natural environment recovery activities at the local, regional and state level, by working closely with partner agencies such as Parks Victoria, the EPA, catchment management authorities and communities. The *Code of Practice for Bushfire Management on Public Land* (2012) outlines how the DELWP approaches recovery after bushfire; a similar approach is taken for other emergency events. A copy is downloadable from

http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/179783/Code-of-Practice-for-Bushfire-Management-on-Public-Land.pdf

DELWP has a number of key responsibilities post bushfire or emergency which include:

- Protecting threatened habitats (including controlling the spread of invasive species)
- Surveying and protecting threatened species (including bird, marsupial, aquatic and plant species)
- Surveying and protecting aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems
- Regenerating forests (including for ecological purposes and future timber use)
- Restoring public land (such as walking tracks, fencing, and recreational and visitor facilities)
- Surveying and protecting sites of cultural heritage significance (Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal)

8.2.2. COUNCIL'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY

Council's main role in the natural recovery environment is as a support agency to government and community agencies and landholders. Local Government is able to link community members, groups and agencies to state departments and is also able to lobby for and connect groups and landholders with funding arrangements to carry out post impact restoration works in the natural recovery environment.

Council has actively worked with many community groups and agencies in fire recovery in the past such as 'friends-of' groups and Landcare groups and has been able to advocate on their behalf to State government agencies for resources and funding. Council has also worked with and offered advice to impacted landholders in the Shire.

8.3.BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM IMPACTS

Generally the natural environment will recover from emergencies over time without the need for intervention, but sometimes assistance is needed to help ecosystems recover, and the activities that can be undertaken include:

- Repairing the damage caused by the emergency or emergency response
- Protecting water quality and supply
- Controlling and preventing erosion after emergencies
- Protecting threatened habitats by controlling the spread of invasive species of plants and animals within the impacted area/s (this includes marine, coastal and waterway habitats)
- Surveying and protecting threatened bird, marsupial and aquatic species
- Surveying and protecting threatened plant species
- Surveying and protecting aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems
- Regenerating forests for ecological purposes
- Wildlife rescue.

These activities are undertaken by the DELWP, Parks Victoria, catchment management authorities or municipal councils as appropriate after emergency events.

8.4.ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Emergencies on public land or the marine environment can lead to impacts on the economies of communities and regions through the direct damage to the forestry, fishing, aquaculture, apiary and farming industries and indirectly to other industries such as nature based tourism, cultural based tourism and recreational tourism. Activities that can be undertaken to assist restore the economic viability of impacted industries includes:

- restoring access to impacted public land
- reopening the road network
- restoring visitor facilities
- monitoring and surveying impacted habitats
- regenerating forests for future timber use
- assisting farmers restore boundary fences between farms and public land (note, this service is only available after bushfire events).

These activities are undertaken by the DELWP, Parks Victoria, VicForests and municipal councils as appropriate after emergency events.

8.5.SOCIAL IMPACTS

Natural environments have value to communities as they provide opportunities for recreation and a sense of connectedness to the environment and land. By undertaking recovery activities, the social values that have been impacted can start to be restored. Social impact recovery actions can include:

- Reopening / repairing walking tracks
- Restoring / repairing recreational facilities
- Surveying and protecting sites of cultural heritage significance.

These activities are undertaken by the DELWP, Parks Victoria and municipal councils as appropriate after emergency events in consultation with local communities.

8.6.PROTECTING WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY

Bushfires particularly can affect the quality and supply of drinking water by contaminating catchment areas. Most critical effects occur if there is heavy rain soon after fire as loss of vegetation and altered soil structure can make fire-affected soil more erodible. Runoff can carry sediments and pollutants that affect aquatic environments, drinking water quality and agricultural industries.

The extent to which water quality is affected is dependent on a number of factors including

- The size and extent of the fire
- The type of surrounding vegetation
- Soil and erosions
- The geographical features and size of the catchment and
- The time period between the last fire and a significant rain event

8.7.CONTROLLING AND PREVENTING EROSION POST BUSHFIRE

DELWP is the responsible agency for the control and prevention of erosion post bushfire on public land in Victoria. Council may assist DELWP if and when required.

The Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) will coordinate programs and support for the agricultural community regarding control and prevention of erosion on private land post bushfire. This may include field days and demonstration days that educate landholders on erosion control techniques suitable for use on impacted properties.

For landholders that are fire affected, Landcare produces a fact sheet on erosion control after bushfires (<http://www.landcarevic.net.au/resources/for-land-managers/bushfire-recovery-resources-for-landholders/soil-erosion/landcare-after-the-fires-erosion-control>)

8.8.COUNCIL MANAGED LAND

8.8.1. SURVEYING POST FIRE, DURING RECOVERY AND POST RECOVERY

Council's role is to take responsibility in surveying its own land, but limited funding available post recovery makes it difficult to resource and undertake comprehensively. Other agencies have been more successful in securing funding for this purpose, and so partnerships with these agencies are important, largely Landcare and the GBCMA. An example of a successful project post Black Saturday was 'Focus on Fauna'.

8.8.2. RESTORING COUNCIL MANAGED PUBLIC LAND

There is a need to prioritise areas that require restoration, concentrating on areas that have the greatest environmental significance coupled with the consideration of social and economic impacts on people.

This process will either result in projects to refurbish existing, or construct new assets all of which has an impact on the natural environment. Projects need to ensure appropriate environmental impact

assessments are undertaken, and that strategies to manage impacts are adopted into design, planning, delivery and finalisation of each project. The impact needs to be viewed in two ways

1. Impact of construction process on the natural surroundings of the environment: this includes, soil, existing vegetation, waterways and other environmental constraints. Council has its own policy and procedures to follow (Environmental Standards in Infrastructure Works Policy). In addition these processes may require other approvals such as planning scheme approvals or permits through state and federal legislation.
2. If it is a built asset, consideration of energy efficient and sustainable design: this includes refurbishment or construction of new structures considering building envelope, lighting, orientation, heating and cooling systems, and opportunities to generate renewable energy. Council has its own policy around energy management, and is conscious of long term operational costs of managing refurbished or new assets post an emergency event.

9. AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

9.1. INTRODUCTION

The agriculture relief and recovery environment refers to the impact that an emergency may have on the welfare of livestock, companion animals and wildlife, and the loss and damage suffered by primary producers.

9.2. RESPONSIBILITY

DEDJTR is responsible for policy development, state-wide coordination and operational delivery in this environment.

The following agencies are responsible for coordinating activities:

- Local level – DEDJTR with assistance from Murrindindi Shire Council
- Regional and state level – DEDJTR

After bushfire and floods DEDJTR has a primary support role in the recovery of rural enterprises. DEDJTR mainly focuses on:

- Assessing losses of agricultural assets and livestock, and the needs of affected persons and communities
- Assessing injured stock and provide advice on options such as humane destruction, emergency slaughter or treatment
- Assisting with humane destruction of burnt livestock where feasible
- Advising individuals, communities and governments agencies on re-establishing rural enterprises or alternative strategies for economic recovery
- Advising local councils and shires on disposal of dead or injured stock
- Advising distribution bodies (such as the Victorian Farmers Federation) on needs for donated fodder
- Delivering recovery projects identified by government to support the short and medium term recovery of individuals, communities and industries.

9.3. OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The DEDJTR aims to coordinate the safe, effective, efficient and timely relief services to those affected by:

- Establishing effective communication channels between various agencies, organisations and communities
- Scoping livestock, companion animal and wildlife welfare impacts, issues and responding to identified needs
- Collecting and providing loss and damage assessment information to inform immediate priorities and recovery programs
- Providing an avenue to refer individuals' needs to relevant agencies.

Murrindindi Shire Council will support this process where required.

9.4. ANIMAL WELFARE

The DEDJTR will coordinate all animal welfare (livestock, companion animals and wildlife) and work with municipal councils, Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Australian Veterinary Association and volunteer groups involved with assisting the recovery of animals after emergencies. This includes access to adequate feed and water, provision of shelter, housing and adequate space, freedom from pain, injury, disease and obvious discomfort, and freedom from unnecessary fear and distress. Key animal welfare considerations include:

- Maintaining acceptable animal welfare standards for all animal species
- Destruction of the minimum number of animals during the emergency response
- Best use of available resources (personnel, infrastructure, feed and water).

9.4.1. EMERGENCY ANIMAL WELFARE PLAN

To aid in the delivery of its responsibilities Murrindindi Shire Council has developed an Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (EAWP) which is designed to help mitigate the impact of emergency incidents on stock or animal welfare at a local level and to ensure post event recovery flows as smoothly as possible. The EAWP is a sub-plan to the Murrindindi Shire Council and Lake Mountain Alpine Resort MEMP. The plan is available for MEMPC members and emergency agency representatives on Crisisworks (<http://murrindindi.mecccental.com>).

The EAWP describes local arrangements for animal and stock welfare management in an emergency and addresses the following risk areas:

- Bushfire
- Domestic and wildlife welfare
- Disease
- Wind/Storm Damage
- Flood Events
- Drought

The plan includes contact directories, activation and communication procedures and roles and responsibilities of municipal Local Laws Officers and other external agencies providing animal/stock welfare and related services in the event of an emergency situation. It covers planning, training of staff and available resources. Facilities where animals may be housed for the duration of an emergency and local contact information are included in the plan.

At the State level, DEDJTR has developed the *Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan* that details DEDJTRs response to animal welfare. Copies of the State EAWP are available at <http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/emergencies/response/victorian-emergency-animal-welfare-plan>

The DEDJTR will also assess and assist with urgent animal welfare (livestock, companion animals and wildlife) needs of rural land managers, with emphasis in the first instance on the relief of animal suffering. Where it is not possible for DELWP staff to attend an emergency, Murrindindi Shire Council staff can assess and dispose of stock if required.

The DEDJTR and Environment Protection Authority (EPA) are also able to provide direction to municipal councils regarding the location of stock disposal sites. Potential stock disposal sites in Murrindindi Shire Council are captured in the Murrindindi Shire Council EAWP.

9.5.LOSS AND DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

In significant incidents, the DEDJTR will attempt to contact all affected properties within the Farming, Rural Activity, Rural Conservation and Green Wedge Zones of the affected area to assess the impact of all agricultural losses and damage, commence remediation activities and further plan for recovery. Where it is not possible or practical for DEDJTR to contact people in these zones Murrindindi Shire Council Local Laws staff can be activated to complete these tasks in negotiation with DEDJTR.

9.6.REFERRAL OF NEEDS

If any urgent needs are identified during relief activities, the DEDJTR or Murrindindi Shire Council Local Laws staff will refer these needs to the appropriate agency.

9.7.EMERGENCY FODDER

The DEDJTR and the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) may provide emergency fodder for a maximum of four weeks following an emergency where significant amounts of pasture and/or fodder has been lost. The DEDJTR and VFF will jointly consider the need on a case-by case basis. Murrindindi Shire Council may also have some capacity to assist the DEDJTR and VFF locally through the use of Council land or depots for the delivery and storage of fodder.

9.8.RECOVERY ARRANGEMENTS

Following significant incidents, the DEDJTR may establish a longer term recovery program. The DEDJTR is a key support agency that takes a lead role in the provision of recovery services to commercial primary producers and rural land managers. The operational objective of a recovery program is to support primary producers in improving productivity after natural disasters and emergencies through the design and implementation of appropriate assistance programs.

The focus of a DEDJTR rural recovery program is on:

- supporting the wellbeing of rural communities
- revitalising the economy of rural communities through reestablishment of agricultural enterprises
- rehabilitation of productive land and the surrounding environment.

9.9.CASE MANAGEMENT

Where primary producers are impacted the MRM will liaise with the DEDJTR to determine what level of case management deployment the department will activate, to ensure coordination and minimise duplication.

9.10. FENCING

It is the responsibility of the owner of private land to fence their property and secure stock within their boundary. Landholders are expected to manage risks to their assets from the potential impact of emergencies. All landholders are expected to have appropriate levels of insurance cover for boundary and internal fences. Assistance can often be provided to rural landholders by volunteer groups to assist in dismantling damaged fences and reconstructing fences. Murrindindi Shire Council, with support from DEDJTR and other agencies, will coordinate local volunteer efforts after emergencies.

The Victorian Government will pay 100 per cent of the restoration costs of fences damaged on private land as a result of machinery used by fire agencies to control bushfires. This includes damage to fences by machinery such as bull-dozers entering the property and/or constructing fire control lines, and other fire emergency vehicles obtaining access.

The Victorian Government will meet half the cost of materials to replace or repair fencing between private land and all national parks, state parks and state forests destroyed or damaged by bushfires.

9.11. WELLBEING AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY OF RURAL COMMUNITIES

The recovery and economic wellbeing of rural communities is managed and coordinated at the local level by both DEDJTR and Council. DEDJTR has responsibilities regarding the recovery of agriculture and industry. Council has more of a focus on personal support but can also provide business advice through its economic development department that supports both local business and tourism.

9.12. REHABILITATION OF PRODUCTIVE LAND

It is the responsibility of DEDJTR to work with local land holders in the rehabilitation and restoration of productive land. Murrindindi Shire Council will assist where possible and when requested to do so.

10. MURRINDINDI SHIRE COUNCIL CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY

The following section is an attempt to gauge the capacity and capability of Murrindindi Shire Council in its ability to deliver relief and recovery services. Please note that any capacity or capability outlined may be significantly impinged depending on the type and scale of emergency. For example, any impact or emergency that affects potential staffing resources (e.g. staff personally impacted by an event) will reduce the capacity of Murrindindi Shire Council in the delivery of relief and recovery services.

Capacity and capability have been listed as accurately as possible so that external agencies and other municipalities may be able to gauge when and if Murrindindi Shire Council may call on them for assistance.

10.1. RELIEF CAPACITY

10.1.1. MURRINDINDI SHIRE COUNCIL ERC CAPACITY

Murrindindi Shire Council has determined its own capacity to run ERCs for both large and small emergency event sizes. It is assumed in the prediction of event size that there will be a sliding scale – the larger an event, the longer an ERC will need to run and the more staff required.

The difficult part in documenting capacity is predicting how large an impact will be as smaller impacts will require less staffing than larger emergencies. Also, different impacts will have different impacts on staff requirements for Murrindindi Shire. Fire and flooding are the two largest risks in Murrindindi Shire that may necessitate setting up an ERC. Flooding however will generally have a more confined impact area than fire in Murrindindi Shire due to the location of rivers and mountainous terrain confining the spread of any flood. It follows therefore that more staff will be impacted by fire than flood in Murrindindi Shire and the Council's capacity to staff relief centres during a fire will be more restricted than for a flood.

At the time of printing, Murrindindi Shire Council has 30 staff on its ERC volunteer register. Three of these volunteers are ERC managers; three are Deputy Managers whilst the remaining 24 are regular ERC volunteers.

Murrindindi Shire Council's capacity to staff ERCs differs depending on the type of emergency impact. As many Murrindindi Shire Council staff live outside of the urban areas of Alexandra and Yea, many of the people on the registers may not be able to work in ERCs due to being personally impacted by an event or being unable to attend work due to an emergency blocking their travel routes. Also, depending on the scale of the impact, many staff have internal business continuity roles that would take them away from working in an ERC. Generally however, business continuity practices would occur many days after an impact whereas operating an ERC would occur immediately following an impact.

The following table (Table 5) is an attempt to gauge the capacity of Murrindindi Shire Council to run ERCs depending on the number of ERCs required and the length they are to be run.

The red section in Table 5 below represents the capacity of Murrindindi Shire Council ERC staffing resources being exceeded. Anything in this category is not sustainable and external resources will be required. If additional ERC resources are required, these will need to be sourced from other municipalities or agencies via the MERC. Due to the confined nature of flooding in Murrindindi, more ERC staff will be available during a flood as compared to a fire.

Murrindindi Shire Council will be able to provide approximately 1 or 2 ERCs, staffed with 3 people for 4 days before it potentially exhausts its staffing reserves. An ERC shift is 8 hours and there are 3 shifts per 24 hours. If an event required 3 ERC staff per shift over 4 days (at three shifts per day), it would constitute 56 shifts for the event.

Flood impacts will generally be more confined in nature than fire impacts in Murrindindi Shire. Therefore more staff from the volunteer's roster may be available to fill shifts during a flood event than if impacted by fire as less staff will be personally impacted by the event.

Table 5: Murrindindi Shire Council Capacity to run ERCs

Number of ERCs	Type of Impact ²³	No. Days ERC required to run	Small Event			Large Event		
			No. of Staff at each ERC per shift ²⁴	No. Shifts per 24 hours	Total Number of Shifts	No. of Staff at each ERC per shift	No. Shifts per 24 hours	Total Number of Shifts
1	Flood	2	3	12	24	6	24	48
1	Fire	2	3	12	24	6	24	48
1	Fire	4	3	12	56	6	18	72
1	Flood	6	3	12	72	6	18	108
2	Fire/Flood	4	3	24 (over 2 ERCs)	96	8	36 (over 2 ERCs)	144
3	Fire/Flood	4	3	36 (over 3 ERCs)	144	10	60 (over 3 ERCs)	240

10.1.2. COMMUNICATIONS STAFF CAPACITY

At the time of printing, there are two permanent fulltime staff in the Communications team. These are the Manager Communications, Library and Customer Service and the Online Communications Officer. The ability of the Communications Team may be stretched in a small to medium sized event that runs for more than a few days in the delivery of the team's responsibilities (as outlined in section 3.2 above).

10.1.3. REPLACEMENT OF ESSENTIAL WATER CAPACITY

Council will actively attempt to coordinate the local replenishment of essential water as outlined in section 3.14 and 3.15 above. However due to low staffing levels in the infrastructure/operations team, a small to medium event will exceed the capabilities of Murrindindi Shire Council to coordinate this service. Assistance from other municipalities or agencies may be needed.

10.1.4. COORDINATING GOODWILL CAPACITY

Murrindindi Shire Council has an agreement in place with the local Rotary Clubs of Murrindindi Shire for the local coordination of donated goods and services. If Rotary's capacity is exceeded or predicted to be exceeded by the size of an emergency, the MRM will contact the Salvation Army for assistance.

²⁴ Staff per 8 hour shift. Note that there are three shifts per 24 hours

10.1.5. VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

Council does not currently possess a volunteer coordinator or have a staff member solely dedicated to volunteer management. Council is entirely reliant on the support of Volunteering Victoria and the MOU for spontaneous volunteers (section 3.18.1 above) in the management and coordination of any volunteers during an emergency event.

10.1.6. LOCAL LAWS CAPACITY IN RELIEF

Council has two local laws officers. If they are required to coordinate animal welfare in general (stock disposal etc), coordinate animal welfare at an ERC and respond to requests from the MECC, their capacity can be exceeded in a relatively short time period. As a result, the Local Laws unit has developed close associations with the North East Local Laws Group, a group of Local Laws officers that regularly meet to discuss animal management issues. If required, additional resources from this group may be available to assist Murrindindi Shire Council in the management of animal welfare at ERCs.

10.2. RECOVERY CAPACITY

10.2.1. SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT CAPACITY

Murrindindi Shire Council delivers a range of essential community services including Aged and Disability Services, Maternal and Child Health Services and Home Based Child Care Services. During times of recovery, essential service delivery will need to continue.

In the case of a small event, Murrindindi Shire Council will have enough staffing resources to redeploy personnel to key emergency relief and recovery roles.

In the event of a medium to large and/or protracted event additional assistance will be required from other municipalities or agencies.

The MRM and Deputy MRM positions are held by personnel with key roles within the organisation. A large scale event may require assistance to back fill to maintain their substantive positions to support operational management and business continuity.

10.2.2. BUILT ENVIRONMENT CAPACITY

10.2.2.1. RESIDENTIAL AND COUNCIL BUILDINGS

Murrindindi Shire Council has two building inspectors who are available to inspect personal properties and Council buildings and facilities damaged by an emergency event. During a protracted event, Council will require further support from other Councils or agencies to complete assessments in a timely fashion.

10.2.2.2. COUNCIL ASSETS

Council has a small infrastructure operations team with one coordinator and limited on-ground staff. Small events have the ability to exceed Council capacity to assess impacted assets such as bridges, roads, culverts, footpaths etc. Additional assistance will be required from other municipalities or agencies in a moderate to large emergency.

10.2.3. ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT CAPACITY

Murrindindi Shire Council has a small Business and Tourism team and its capacity will be exceeded by anything other than a small localised emergency. Council is able to provide assistance to businesses as outlined in section 7.3 above. In medium to large events, Council will request support from other tourism and business agencies and business and tourism staff from other Councils.

10.2.4. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CAPACITY

Council has two environment officers and will require external assistance with environmental recovery on Council managed land in anything other than a small localised emergency. This support can come through other local government areas or State agencies.

Council's environment officers will also play an active role by being members of Community Recovery Committees were required to provide professional advice and information.

10.2.5. AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT CAPACITY

Murrindindi Shire Council will assist DEDJTR with the recovery of the agricultural environment at the local level where possible. Council has two local laws staff and their capacity in a large event could be quickly exceeded (see 10.1.6 above). Longer term assistance may be required from other agencies and local government areas if protracted use of Local Laws staff is required during the recovery process. Assistance may also be provided through the North East Local Laws group as mentioned above in section 10.1.6.

11. REFERENCES, ACRONYMS AND GLOSSARY

11.1. ACRONYMS

AA	Airservices Australia
ADF	Australian Defence Force
AEMI	Australian Emergency Management Institute
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator
AFAC	Australian Fire and Emergency Services Authority Council
AGCDTF	Australian Government Counter Disaster Taskforce
AGD	Attorney-General's Department
AIIMS	Australian Inter-Service Incident Management System
AMSA	Australian Maritime Safety Authority
ARCV	Australian Red Cross Victoria
ARFF	Aviation Rescue and Firefighting (part of Airservices Australia)
ATSB	Australian Transport Safety Bureau
AusSAR	Australian Search and Rescue
AV	Ambulance Victoria
AVCG	Australian Volunteer Coast Guard
BC	Building Commission
BOM	Bureau of Meteorology
CBR	Chemical, Biological, Radiological
CBRIE	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Incendiary Explosive
CCP	Chief Commissioner of Police
CCoV	Coroners Court of Victoria
CERA	Community Emergency Risk Assessment
CERM	Community Emergency Risk Management
CFA	Country Fire Authority
CGRC	Central Government Response Committee
CHS	Community Health Service
CI	Critical Infrastructure
CMA	Catchment Management Authority
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
COMDISPLAN	Commonwealth Government Disaster Response Plan
CWA	Country Women's Association
DACC	Defence Assistance to the Civil Community
DEDJTR	Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Training and Resources
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
DET	Department of Education and Training
DFACA	Defence Force Aid to the Civil Authority
DFSV	Dairy Food Safety Victoria
DGEMA	Director-General Emergency Management Australia
DH	Department of Health
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DIIRD	Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development
DJR	Department of Justice and Regulation
DPC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
DPI	Department of Primary Industries
DTF	Department of Treasury and Finance
DPCD	Department of Planning and Community Development
DVI	Disaster Victim Identification
EMA	Emergency Management Australia
EMLO	Emergency Management Liaison Officer
EMC	Emergency Management Commissioner

EMJPIC	Emergency Management Joint Public Information Committee
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EMT	Emergency Management Team
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
ERC	Emergency Relief Centre
ERCC	Emergency Response Coordination Centre
ERDO	Emergency Response Development Officer
ESTA	Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority
FERC	Field Emergency Response Coordinator
GIS	Geospatial Information System
IIA	Initial Impact Assessment
ICA	Insurance Council of Australia
ICC	Incident Control Centre
IDRO	Insurance Disaster Response Organisation
IGEM	Inspector General Emergency Management
IMF	Incident Management Facility
IFMP	Integrated Fire Management Planning
IMS	Incident Management System
IMT	Incident Management Team
LGV	Local Government Victoria
LMAR	Lake Mountain Alpine Resort
LSV	Life Saving Victoria
Marine EMT	Marine Emergency Management Team
MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria
MECC	Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre
MEMEG	Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group
MEMPC	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
MERC	Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator
MERO	Municipal Emergency Resource Officer
MEST	Major Emergency Strategy Team
MFB	Metropolitan Fire Brigade
MFESB	Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board
MFPO	Municipal Fire Prevention Officer
MRM	Municipal Recover Manager
MSC	Murrindindi Shire Council
MSV	Marine Safety Victoria
NCTP	National Counter Terrorist Plan
NDRRA	Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements
NEMC	National Emergence Management Committee
NEWS (EL)	National Emergency Warning System (Emergency Alter)
NPW	Nuclear Powered Warship
NRIS	National Registration & Inquiry System
NSP-PLR	Neighbourhood Safer Place – Place of Last Resort
OESC	Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner
PIA	Post Impact Assessment
POC	Police Operations Centre (D24)
PV	Parks Victoria
RDV	Regional Development Victoria
Red Cross	Australian Red Cross
REMI	Regional Emergency Management Inspector
RERC	Regional Emergency Response Coordinator
RERCC	Regional Emergency Response Coordination Centre
RFCV	Rural Finance Corporation Victoria
RR	Road Rescue

RRPC	Regional Recovery Planning Committee
RSPCA	Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
SBSC	Small Business Counselling Service
SCC	State Control Centre / State Crisis Centre
SCN	Security and Continuity Network
SECC	Security and Emergencies Committee of Cabinet
SEMC	State Emergency Mitigation Committee
SEMT	State Emergency Management Team
SERCC	State Emergency Response Coordination Centre
SEWS	Standard Emergency Warning Signal
SHERP	State Health Emergency Response Plan
SII	Spatial Information Infrastructure
TAC	Transport Accident Commission
TESS	Transport, Engineering and Services Support
TPP	Township Protection Plan
USAR	Urban Search and Rescue
VCC	Victorian Council of Churches
VEMC	Victorian Emergency Management Council
VGC	Victorian Grants Commission
VicPol	Victoria Police
VICSES	Victoria State Emergency Service
VRCA	Victoria Regional Channels Authority
VWA	Victorian WorkCover Authority (WorkSafe)
WICEN	Wireless Institute Civil Emergency Network

11.2. GLOSSARY

Name	Definition
Action	The executive command to mount an operation whereby all required personnel are called to their posts.
Affected Area	An affected area for the purposes of managing response and recovery is the entire geographic area affected in any significant way by an emergency.
Agency	Means a Government agency or a non-Government agency.
Alert	That period when the Regional or Local Emergency Response Co-ordinator, or the Chief Officer of a control agency, believes an emergency may occur and requires all, or designated, Functional Services specified in EMMV to increase their level of preparedness to cope with the emergency.
Assembly Area	A designated location used for the assembly of control or support personnel.
Civil Defence	The term Civil Defence means the performance of humanitarian tasks intended to protect the civil population of Victoria against the dangers of and to help it recover from, the immediate effects of a war-like act.
Class 1 Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a major fire, or any other major emergency for which the control agency is the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB), Country Fire Authority (CFA) or Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES). Under the <i>EM Act 2013</i>, the EMC is the coordinator for Class 1 emergencies.
Class 2 Emergency	<p>Is a major emergency that is not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a Class 1 emergency, or a warlike act or act of terrorism, whether directed at Victoria or at any other state or territory of the Commonwealth, or a hi-jack, siege or riot. Under the <i>EM Act 2013</i>, the EMC is the coordinator for Class 2 emergencies.
Co-ordination	<p>The bringing together of agencies and elements to ensure effective response to emergencies and is primarily concerned with the systematic acquisition and application of resources (agency, manpower and equipment) in accordance with the requirements imposed by the emergency or emergencies. Co-ordination relates primarily to resources and operates;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vertically, within an agency, as a function of the authority to command, horizontally, across agencies as a function of the authority to control.
Co-ordinator	At Regional level, a Police Officer appointed by the State Emergency Response Co-ordinator as Regional/Deputy Regional Emergency Response Co-ordinator. At local level, it shall be the Officer in Charge of the Police Station or the senior member of the Police Force at the scene of the emergency who shall act as the Emergency Response Co-ordinator.
Control Agency	The agency identified in EMMV which is primarily responsible for responding to a specified emergency.
Command	The direction of members and resources of an agency in the performance of the organisation's role and tasks. Authority to command is established in legislation or by agreement within an agency. Command relates to agencies and operates vertically within an agency.
Community Recovery Committee	A committee which may be convened after an emergency to provide a management forum for the recovery process in respect of an affected area or a specific community.
Community Development Officer	A person appointed to initiate and co-ordinate activities in an affected community to assist its development in recovering from an emergency.
Control	The overall direction of response activities in an emergency situation. Authority for control is established in legislation or in an emergency response plan, and causes with it the responsibility for tasking and co-ordinating other agencies in accordance with the needs of the situation. Control relates to situations and operates horizontally across agencies.
Community Information Guides	CIGs (formerly Township Protection Plans) provide a planned response to a wildfire within, or in close proximity to a township that has the potential to impact on the local community.

Counselling	The provision of psychological support and advice to persons affected by an emergency.
Emergency	<p>Emergency means an emergency due to the actual or imminent occurrence of an event which in any way endangers or threatens to endanger the safety or health of any person in Victoria or which destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage any property in Victoria, including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an earthquake, flood, windstorm or other natural event; and • a fire; and • an explosion; and • a road accident or any other accident; and • a plague or an epidemic; and • a warlike act, whether directed at Victoria or a part of Victoria or at any other State or Territory of the Commonwealth; and • a hi-jack, siege or riot
Emergency Affected Persons	People, other than emergency management personnel, who experience losses or injury or are affected by an emergency. Usually understood to exclude the deceased.
Emergency Area	Means an emergency area declared under Section 36A of the Emergency Management Act.
Emergency Co-Ordination Centre (ECC)	The Centre established at Regional or Municipal level to co-ordinate resources and conduct operations ancillary to the control agency, during the response phase.
Emergency Grant	The provision of finance to affected persons as dictated by Government Policy, during Emergency Relief.
Emergency Management Group	The group formed to assist the municipality in the performance of its Municipal Emergency Management functions.
Emergency Management Joint Public Information Committee (EMJPIC)	State body that aims to facilitate effective multi-agency responses to, and mitigating the consequences of emergencies through the efficient collection, analysis and dissemination of information
Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)	The centre established by each agency for the command/control function within their own agency. eg. Police Operations Centre (POC), Fire Control Centre (FCC).
Emergency Relief	Relief is the provision of immediate life support and human needs of persons affected by, or responding to, an emergency.
Emergency Relief Centres	Centres established to provide groups of persons with any or all of the services, of the functional areas of emergency relief.
Emergency Services Liaison Officer	An Officer designated by his agency to represent it and who is empowered to commit or to arrange the commitment of resources of the agency to the countering of emergencies, and to provide a communication link with his agency.
Emergency Shelter	Group shelter provided for affected persons in a community hall or suchlike, including "relief centres". It is provided during the emergency relief stage and is separate to temporary accommodation.
Emergency Supply	The provision of resources to a control agency when that agency is unable to procure same through its normal resource system.
Emergency Management Commissioner	The Emergency Management Commissioner has legislated coordination and control responsibilities over all major emergencies in the state of Victoria.
Emergency Management Liaison Officer (EMLO)	<p>An EMLO is a person appointed by an agency, who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • represents his/her agency in another agency's facility utilised to manage an emergency response; or • a coordination centre; or • an emergency management team; and • is empowered to commit, or to arrange the commitment, of resources of the agency to the response to an emergency; and • represents the interests of the agency and provides advice in relation to impacts and consequence management. <p>The EMLO may be named Emergency Services Liaison Officer (ESLO) by some agencies</p>
EMMV	The abbreviated title of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria.

EMMV Agency	Means a government or non-government agency committed to EMMV.
EMMV Committee	The emergency response planning committee ensuring the Co-ordinated response to emergencies by all agencies having roles and responsibilities under EMMV.
Evacuation	The planned relocation of persons from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas to safer areas and eventual return. The decision to evacuate rests with the control agency in conjunction with police and available expert advice.
Evacuation Centre	See Assembly Area and/or Emergency Relief Centre.
Field Emergency Response Co-ordinator	Senior member of the Police Force at the scene of an emergency.
Financial Assistance	See Emergency Grant.
Functional Areas	The categorisation of services required for Emergency Relief for the purposes of allocating responsibility to nominated agencies. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catering • Community Organisations • Emergency Accommodation • Emergency Grants, Counselling & Temporary Accommodation • Material Needs • Registration (National Registration & Inquiry System, NRIS)
Government Agency	Means- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any body corporate or unincorporated constituted by or under any Act for a public purpose; and • Any member or officer of such a body. • Any person in the service of the Crown in the right of the State of Victoria upon whom any function, power, duty or responsibility is conferred by or under the Act
Incident Control Point	The control point established by the Control Agency in proximity to the emergency and used by the incident controller for forward command/control functions.
Incident Controller	An officer appointed by the control authority responsible for the resolution of an emergency. This title shall also extend to the person appointed under the provisions of Section 16 of the Emergency Management Act.
Lead Agency	The agency designated to co-ordinate the provision of a functional area of emergency relief and supplementary supply
Material Needs	Clothing, bedding and other personal requisites provided to emergency-affected persons.
Municipal Emergency Response Co-ordinator	The Officer in Charge of the local Police Station or the senior police officer at the scene of the emergency.
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)	The Committee which, at municipal level, is responsible for the formation and maintenance of a Municipal Emergency Management Plan.
Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO)	The person appointed by the Municipality responsible to council for the co-ordination of municipal owned or controlled resources in emergencies.
Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)	The person appointed by the Municipality responsible to council for the co-ordination of municipal recovery activities after emergencies.
Municipality	The area contained within the defined boundaries for local Government responsibility of a Shire, Borough, Town or City.
Neighbourhood Safer Place (NSP)	NSPs are places of last resort during the passage of a bushfire, and are intended to be used by persons whose primary bushfire plans have failed.
Non Government Agency	Means a voluntary organisation or any person or body other than a government agency.
Primary Support Agency	The agency to be first considered by a Emergency Response Co-ordinator for support in a EMMV role.
Recovery	The process by which affected persons and communities are helped to recover to a proper level of functioning. It commences as soon as practicable after the impact of an emergency, and usually continues long after cessation of response activities. Refer also to the State Disaster Recovery Plan.
Recovery Agency	A recovery agency is an agency or person which assists individuals, families and communities to attain a proper level of functioning, by providing information, specialist services and resources, and may include Commonwealth, State and local

	government and non-government agencies.
Recovery Centre	A Recovery Centre is a building in which a coordinated process of support to affected communities in the restoration of their emotional, social, economic and physical well-being is provided. This support will include provision of psychological (e.g. counselling), infrastructural (e.g. temporary accommodation), environmental (e.g. public health), and economic (e.g. financial assistance) services. The Recovery Centre will ensure that all agencies and stakeholders are properly integrated into the recovery process, at a single point of entry.
Region	A geographic area comprising a number of municipal districts and specific Victorian waters.
Regional Emergency Response Plan	The Emergency Response Plan prepared by the Regional Emergency Response Planning Committee.
Regional Emergency Response Planning Committee	The committee which at regional level is responsible for the formation and maintenance of a regional emergency response plan for response to emergencies, the chairman being the Regional Emergency Response Co-ordinator or, in his absence, his Deputy Emergency Response Co-ordinator.
Registered Emergency Worker	Means a person registered under Section 26 of the Emergency Management Act 1986.
Register.Find.Reunite	The Commonwealth/State's arrangements for the recording of emergency victims and for satisfying inquiries regarding the whereabouts of persons so affected. Coordinated by Red Cross on behalf of Victoria Police
Relief	The provision of life support and essential needs to persons affected by, or involved in the management of, an emergency. See also definition of Relief Centre.
Relief Centres	Centres established to provide groups of persons with any or all of the services, of the functional areas of Emergency Relief.
Relief Stage	The immediate post impact stage of an emergency, preceding the recovery phase. For the purposes of this Plan, the end of relief will be when "stand down" is advised by the Emergency Response Co-ordinator.
Response	The combat of an emergency and the provision of emergency relief, including rescue and the needs of affected persons.
Staging Area	A location designated and used during emergencies for the assembly of control or support personnel prior to deployment.
Stand-Down	The order given by the Regional or Municipal Emergency Response Co-ordinator that allows personnel to cease operations reflecting the termination of the emergency.
Standby	That period normally following alert when the Regional or Municipal Emergency Response Co-ordinator, or the Chief Officer of a control agency, believes that the occurrence or the effects of the emergency, are imminent. Members of the relevant agencies are placed on "Standby", thus being ready to respond immediately.
Supplementary Supply	Those resources requested under emergency supply unable to be obtained by EMMV Support Agencies.
Support Agency	A government or non-government agency which provides essential services, personnel, or material to support or assist a control agency or affected persons.
Temporary Accommodation	Accommodation provided for individuals or families affected by an emergency. It is separate to emergency shelter. This accommodation includes caravans and suchlike, and will normally be arranged by the recovery agency. In some cases this will occur during the Response Phase.
Volunteer Emergency Worker	Means a volunteer worker who engages in emergency activity at the request (whether directly or indirectly) or with the express or implied consent of the chief executive (however designated), or of a person acting with the authority of the chief executive, of an agency to which EMMV or the state emergency recovery plan applies.

11.3. KEY REFERENCES

11.3.1. LEGISLATION

- *Emergency Management Act 1986*
- *Emergency Management Act 2013*
- *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*
- *Road Management Act 2004*

11.3.2. POLICY DOCUMENTS

- Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV)

11.3.3. PLANS/HANDBOOKS/GUIDELINES

- DHS Hume Region Emergency Recovery Plan
- DHS Emergency Relief Handbook: A Planning Guide, Third Edition, 2013
- EMV "Impact Assessment Guidelines 2015"
- Murrindindi Shire Council and Lake Mountain Alpine Resort Municipal Emergency Management Plan
- Murrindindi Shire Council Communication in Recovery Plan
- Murrindindi Shire Council and Lake Mountain Alpine Resort Municipal Fire Management Plan
- Murrindindi Shire Council Plan 2014-2016
- State Government Victoria "Essential Water Replacement Scheme"
- Victorian Bushfire Case Management Service, 'Practice Guide and Operational Instructions' November 2009

11.3.4. REFERENCES

- Leadbeater, A. 2010, *Speaking as one: the joint provision of public information in emergencies*, Australian Journal of Emergency Management, Vol 25, Issue 3, 2010
- Emergency Management Australia, 'Community Development in Recovery from Disaster', September 2003
- Enarson E and Morrow H (eds), 1998, *The Gendered Terrain of Disaster: Through Women's Eyes*, Praeger, Santa Barbara.
- Haynes K, Handmer J, McAneney J, Tibbits A, Coates L, 2010, 'Australian bushfire fatalities 1900-2008: exploring trends in relation to the "prepare, stay and defend or leave early" policy', 13 (3), *Environmental Science and Policy*, 185-194.
- Ripley, A. 2008, *The Unthinkable: Who Survives When Disaster Strikes - and Why*, New York, Three Rivers Press

11.3.5. LINKS

The following links contain important information on Recovery Management.

- Department of Health and Human Services: www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/emergency
- Country Fire Authority: www.cfa.vic.gov.au/local_government/municipal_emp.htm
- Municipal Association of Victoria: www.mav.asn.au

- Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner: www.oesc.vic.gov.au
- Emergency Management Australia: www.ema.gov.au
- Bureau of Meteorology www.bom.gov.au

APPENDICES

PUBLIC VERSION, NO APPENDICES INCLUDED.