

CP 22 Emergency Management Policy

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Policy Objective

The purpose of this policy is to outline Councils' responsibilities with respect to the emergency management services which are provided to the community.

The key objectives of this policy are to ensure:

- That the Benalla Rural City Council establishes an emergency management policy framework based on best practice benchmarks.
- The provision of an appropriate governance and management structure to plan for and manage emergency management response, relief and recovery activities as required in the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria*.
- An effective and efficient activation and escalation protocol to respond to emergencies within Councils' normal service delivery area 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- Provision of timely and coordinated response, relief and recovery activities with its' resources to assist in community emergencies as defined in the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) and supporting sub-plans.

Policy Statement

The overarching framework for the management of all types of emergencies in Victoria is provided by the *Emergency Management Act 1986 and 2013*, the State Emergency Response and Recovery Planning arrangements and the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria*.

Benalla Rural City Council accepts responsibility for management of municipal resources and the coordination of community support to counter the effects of an emergency during the response to and recovery from emergencies.

This includes:

1. Council will comply with the relevant provisions of the:

- **Emergency Management Act 1986;*
- **Emergency Management Act 2013;*
- *Country Fire Authority Act 1958;* and
- Other Acts and Regulations relevant to the requirements of the MEMP

** Note that section 4(1) of the Emergency Management Act 2013 (Vic) provides that this Act must be read and construed as one with the Emergency Management Act 1986 (Vic).*

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2. Council will establish and maintain a governance structure to oversee and manage development, implementation and review of the MEMP and its sub-plans. The basic governance structure consists of:

- Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)
- Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMP)
- Emergency Management Coordination Group (EMCG)
- Sub-committees, working groups and response teams as required/authorised by the MEMPC.

Council applies the “all hazards, all agencies” approach to emergency management planning based on recognised risk management principles and standards.

The Chief Executive Officer shall delegate as necessary authority to relevant Council Officers the management of funds and utilisation of Benalla Rural City Council resources to meet the operational requirements of the MEMP and its sub-plans.

The Chief Executive Officer shall ensure that the Benalla Rural City Council has an appropriate response, activation and escalation protocols to management works within limited resources of the Council. Where Council capacity and capability is exceeded during an emergency, appropriate arrangements are in place to activate mutual aid agreements with neighbouring councils and regional and state agencies.

The Chief Executive Officer shall ensure that the legislated positions of Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO), Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO), and Environmental Health Officer (EHO) are allocated to appropriate Council Officers, and the position of Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM), Municipal Emergency Liaison Officer (EMLO) and other positions required to meet Council’s emergency management commitments are identified and allocated to appropriate Council Officers and appointed as an Authorised Officer under the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Council will ensure that the community can contribute and participate in emergency management planning via an appropriate framework that recognises the local knowledge and needs to the community. Council also supports a broad range of activities led by the community to enhance their resilience.

The Responsible Manager controls the policy, its maintenance, evaluation, consultation for amendments and the provision of advice on the application of the policy.

Responsibilities

Council shall nominate two Councillors to represent it on the MEMPC.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring that Council complies with legislative requirements of the relevant provisions of the *Emergency Management Act 1986**, *Emergency Management Act 2013**, *Country Fire Authority Act 1956* and other relevant Acts and Regulations as required by the MEMP.

** Note that section 4(1) of the Emergency Management Act 2013 (Vic) provides that this Act must be read and construed as one with the Emergency Management Act 1986 (Vic).*

All directors, managers and coordinators are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the MEMP and its sub-plans are understood by all staff and that Benalla Rural City Council has the capacity and capability to comply with its statutory obligations.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for delegating by appropriate instrument to a relevant Council Officer the responsibility for management of the Council's emergency management responsibilities and accountabilities.

Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) as required, and within 6 months of a new Council being elected – effectively every four years.

Authorisation

This policy requires the endorsement of the Council within 6 months of a new Council being elected.

Governance Structure

Benalla Rural City Council accepts responsibility for management of municipal resources and the coordination of community support to counter the effects of an emergency during the response to and recovery from emergencies. It will achieve this by an emergency management governance structure which will oversee and manage the development, implementation and review of the MEMP and its sub-plans.

- **Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)**

This Committee is formed pursuant to Section 21(3) & (4) of the *Emergency Management Act 1986*, to formulate a plan for the Council's consideration in relation to the prevention of, response to and recovery from emergencies within the Benalla Rural City Council district.

The Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee is a multi-agency committee for the municipal district. It is the intent of its emergency planning process to develop a coherent plan that is known and understood by all agencies, MEMPC members, senior Council Officers and all staff who have emergency management responsibilities.

Management of the MEMPC is the responsibility of the MERO.
Refer to MEMPC Terms of Reference.

- **Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMP)**

The role of the Benalla Rural City Council Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMP) is to provide a municipal level forum to build and sustain organisational partnerships, generate a common understanding and shared purpose with regard to fire management and ensure that the plans of individual agencies are linked and complement each other.

The MFMP also has two key deliverables as outlined in the Integrated Fire Management Planning Framework:

- Produce the Municipal Fire Management Plan (MFMP) for consideration by MEMPC and Council
- Monitor, review and report to Council and community through the MEMPC on issues in this area

- **Emergency Management Coordination Group (EMCG)**

The Emergency Management Coordination Group is a key municipal decision making group that can include, but not limited to, the Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator (MERC), Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO and Deputy MERO/s), Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM and Deputy MRM/s), Emergency Management Liaison Officer (EMLO), and Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC).

The Group provides a link between the Incident Control Centre, Council and the BRCC Emergency Management Team. EMLOs ensure that requests for resources and any other related requirements can be addressed.

This group meets on a monthly as part of normal Council business, however during an emergency the Group or part thereof will be convened as appropriate when the scale of the emergency dictates the requirement for the provision of any of the functions outlined above.

- **BRCC Emergency Management Team (BRCC EMT) (incident specific)**
The BRCC Emergency Management Team manage the key Benalla Rural City Council operational and recovery service areas and are responsible for the provision/coordination of those emergency management services. This structured approach assigns responsibility to managers and coordinators for operational and recovery service provision and streamlines the approval process. This team is activated during an emergency (incident specific) and includes BRCC emergency management positions as required.

- **Benalla Rural City Council Municipal Recovery Committee (incident specific)**
A Municipal Recovery Committee (incident specific) may be formed in response to an emergency that affects the municipality. A Municipal Recovery Committee (incident specific) is the primary method for supporting recovery arrangements following an emergency. The decision to form this Committee will be made by Councils MRM in consultation with a representative from DHHS, Council and other agencies as appropriate. The MRM is responsible for establishing this Committee.

- **Community Recovery Committee/s (incident specific)**
A Community Recovery Committee/s (incident specific) may be established in response to large scale events that impact the municipality and allows all members of affected communities to contribute to the municipal recovery processes. This ensures broad and diverse community input including into recovery monitoring. The decision to establish this Committee/s rests with Council in consultation with the MRM, the Regional Recovery Coordinator, DHHS and the Municipal Recovery Committee. The Municipal Recovery Manager is responsible for establishing this committee/s. This Committee/s doesn't duplicate the roles and functions of the Municipal Recovery Committee, in a larger scale emergency event it provides a mechanism for community in affected areas direct access to the formal recovery processes at both municipal and regional levels.