

Council Participation in Emergency Response Operations Policy

Strategic Reference	Objective 1: A caring, healthy & resilient community. Strategy 1.2; Enhance the quality of life of our communities by advocating, supporting and/or undertaking health, recreation development, ageing in place, library services, community development, safety and transport initiatives. Strategy 1.7; Achieve or implement the statutory and core responsibilities of Council.
File reference	AR18/4695
Responsibility	Community & Corporate Department
Revision Number	1
Effective date	February 2016
Last revised date	April 2018
Minutes reference	066/18, 021/16
Next review date	Every two years, April 2020
Applicable Legislation	Emergency Management Act (2004) Local Government Act (1999)
Related Policies	Human Resource Policy, Risk Management Policy
Related Documents:	Employee Emergency Response Support Register Emergency Services Plant and Equipment Register "i-Responda Framework" LGA 2014 State Emergency Management Plan

1. 1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define how Coorong District Council will support the emergency services in responding to an emergency. It includes:

- arrangements that will allow the participation of Council's staff and associated use of Council equipment;
- the availability of Council employees who agree to participate;
- the availability of Council owned plant and equipment; and
- the scope of works that might be undertaken.

2 Definitions

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In this policy **Council staff** refers to Council employees. The policy does not refer to persons who separately undertake duties as a registered SA Country Fire Service fire fighter/volunteer.

3 Background

3.1 National Strategy for Disaster Resilience

Given the increasing regularity and severity of natural disasters, Australian Governments have recognised that a national, coordinated and cooperative effort is required to enhance Australia's capacity to withstand and recover from emergencies and disasters. In consideration of this National approach the Coorong District Council recognises the shared responsibility that it has to help protect and assist its community to respond to and recover from disasters.

3.2 Legislative Context

The *Local Government Act (1999)* identifies that a function of a Council is to provide for the welfare, well-being and interests of individuals and groups within its community s7(c). Another function of a Council is to take measures to protect its area from natural and other hazards and to mitigate the effects of such hazards (s7(d)).

Council's link to the State emergency management arrangements is through the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP). The SEMP is prepared pursuant to s9 of the *Emergency Management Act (2004)*, which lists Councils as *Participating Organisations* to six of the thirteen Functional Services that are established under the SEMP.

Functional Services are groupings of participating agencies coordinated by a lead agency that perform a functional role as part of the State Emergency Management Plan arrangements to support response and recovery operations for an emergency. This policy has been prepared within the context of supporting the emergency services in emergencies.

4 Preparedness

4.1 Arrangements and communication

Council will endeavour to meet periodically (at least annually) with the relevant emergency services to confirm critical coordination arrangements. These will include:

- contact protocols;
- details of Council resources that could be made available;
- the arrangements for accessing such resources; and
- the scope of work that could be performed.

4.2 Availability of Council employees

To support this policy Council will establish and maintain an 'Employee Emergency Response Support Register'. Employees listed on the Register will receive adequate training:

- to operate the plant and equipment that might be required to support an emergency response; and
- in work health and safety procedures that are pertinent to staying safe in an emergency.

Coorong District Council will not obligate any Council Employee to be listed on the Employee Emergency Response Support Register, nor obligate any Council employee listed on the register to respond to a particular incident;

Council will:

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- identify relevant employees who are interested in participating in Council response(s) to emergency support requests under this policy and list such employees on the Employee Emergency Response Support Register;
- ensure all Council Employees who will be required to operate Council vehicles or plant and equipment undertake the i-Responda program annually;
- maintain the integrity of the Employee Emergency Response Support Register; and
- reserve the right, in accordance with the i-Responda framework, not to release Council employees to support an emergency event should extenuating circumstances exist (as deemed by the CEO).

4.3 Availability of Council Plant and Equipment

Council will establish and maintain an 'Emergency Services Plant and Equipment Register' which will identify Council owned plant and equipment that can be made available to the emergency services for the purpose of being used in an emergency response operation. Attached to the Register will be the terms and conditions of availability and use of the plant and equipment.

Council will:

- provide a list of vehicles, plant and equipment, maintained in operational condition, that may be available for the purpose of utilisation in an emergency;
- liaise with the Control Agency about how the delivery of, or access to, any vehicles, plant and equipment will be achieved;
- have available at all times a list of persons on the Employee Emergency Response Support Register that are competent to operate the various items of plant and equipment; and
- reserve the right not to release Council plant and equipment for emergency response operations should extenuating circumstances exist (as deemed by the CEO).

4.4 Scope of Works

Council will advise the emergency services of the types of work that it is prepared to allow its plant to be used for from time to time. In general terms the scope will reflect that contained in the publication Supervision of Machinery Used in Bushfire Operations Government of South Australia, Edition 2, March 2011.

5 Risk Management

5.1 Application of risk management

When supporting the emergency services in responses operations Council will:

- apply appropriate risk management principles; and
- have regard to the arrangements of the LGA Asset Mutual Fund, the LGA Workers Compensation Scheme and LGS Mutual Liability Scheme.

Council will act in a manner that ensures the various activities that might be undertaken in an emergency response situation are managed in such a way that the safety and health of its workers and community are paramount.

5.3 i-Responda Framework

The i-Responda framework has been developed in consultation with the LGA and Local Government Risk Services. It addresses issues such as incident management protocols, operational arrangements in emergency response situations and fulfils the legislative requirement of the Work, Health and Safety Act to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of the Council worker.

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Implementation of the framework will equip Council's Chief Executive, managers and staff with information and tools that will enable a confident response to requests for Council to provide support to emergencies.

Council will:

- implement the i-Responda framework, to ensure that all emergency response activities are undertaken within a consistent and robust risk assessment framework guiding practical decisions and actions pursuant to the Mutual Liability Scheme's Rules; and
- establish, implement, monitor and review work health and safety policy and procedures consistent with the i-Responda framework.

6 Insurance

6.1 Local Government Association Asset Mutual Fund (LGAAMF)

The LGAAMF will continue to provide coverage to Council owned property, plant and machinery (mobile or otherwise) while it is being used in preventing, preparing, or responding to an emergency on the following basis:

- the plant, vehicle, or machinery must be operated by Council staff and in accordance with the i-Responda framework; and
- Council is responsible to ensure all property, vehicles, plant and machinery (mobile or otherwise) provided to support an emergency is fit for purpose and consistent with the emergency response.

6.2 Local Government Association Workers Compensation Scheme

Council's membership of the LGAWCS ensures that all staff are covered for workers compensation (as required by the Worker's Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 1986) where the activity being carried out with Council plant and equipment is ordinary Council business, so the activity forms part of the employee's ordinary employment.

Pursuant to workers compensation legislation, the compensability arises from injury sustained 'in the course of employment'. The i-Responda framework establishes that at all times in responding to an emergency incident or disaster, Council, the CEO and the relevant employee/s will be undertaking ordinary activity 'in the course of employment' controlled and directed by Council, including in an extraordinary event.

Council employees will retain workers compensation cover when supporting the emergency services by operating Council plant and equipment in the conduct of Council business.

6.3 Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme

For the purpose of the i-Responda framework, Coorong District Council, as a member of the Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme, is entitled to civil liability cover including proactive risk management support, pursuant to the LGAMLS Rules.

The i-Responda framework establishes that all existing LGA LGRS insurance arrangements will continue (workers compensation, public liability and asset insurance) subject to the normal terms and conditions.

7 Further information

This policy will be available for inspection at the Council offices listed below during ordinary business hours and available to be downloaded, free of charge, from Council's website: www.coorong.sa.gov.au.

Council Participation in Emergency Response Operations Policy

Coorong Civic Centre

95-101 Railway Terrace
Tailem Bend
Phone: 1300 785 277
Fax: 8572 4399

Meningie Information Hub

49 Princes Highway
Meningie
Phone: 1300 785 277

Tintinara Customer Service Centre

37 Becker Terrace
Tintinara
Phone: 1300 785 277

Copies will be provided to interested parties upon request. Email council@coorong.sa.gov.au.

Any grievances in relation to this policy or its application should be forwarded in writing addressed to the Chief Executive Officer of Council.