Emergency Management Policy

Strategic Reference	Outcome 3 - Community Strategy 4.2 – Work with key stakeholders including State departments to provide safe communities
File reference	AR20/2248
Responsibility	Roads & Infrastructure Department
Revision Number	2
Effective date	May 2020
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Next review date	March 2029
Applicable Legislation	Emergency Management Act 2004 Local Government Act 1999
Related Policies	Risk Management Policy
Related Documents	Business Continuity Plan Coorong District Council Emergency Management Plan Coorong District Council Recovery Plan Employee Emergency Response Support Register Emergency Services Plant and Equipment Register Incident Operational Arrangements ("i-Responda" Plan) "i-Responda Framework" LGA 2014 State Emergency Management Plan

1. Purpose

Emergencies have the potential to disrupt the strategic and operational activities of Council and adversely impact communities. The roles of local government in emergency management are informed by the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP), the Local Government Act 1999 and the Local Government Emergency Management Framework (LGEMF).

The purpose of this policy is to define roles and responsibilities in emergency management based on a comprehensive approach (Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery) and ensure that Council:

- Contributes to South Australia's emergency management arrangements based on available capacity and resources
- Prepares and maintains appropriate emergency management documents, registers and records
- Participates in emergency management training and exercises (internal and cross-sector)

- Manages risks to Council and Council employees
- Maintains safe working practices and applies good decision-making during emergency management activities

2. Scope

This policy applies to Council in exercising powers and functions under the various Acts and arrangements to which it is a party in the state of South Australia along with internal, local and zone emergency management plans and arrangements.

This policy does not apply to a person responding to an incident in their role as a registered volunteer with external agencies (eg. SA Country Fire Services or SA State Emergency Service).

Emergency management in the Coorong District Council is enabled and supported by a number of pieces of legislation (and subsequent delegations as listed in its Delegations Register, refer Appendix 1).

3. Definitions

"Capability" means the ability to achieve a defined outcome applying a defined set of skills and assets.

"Capacity" means the ability to deploy a defined capability at a sustained level over a defined period of time.

"Comprehensive approach" refers to emergency management considering planning for all phases of emergencies – prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

"Control" means the overall direction of emergency management activities in an emergency. Authority for control is established in the SEMP and carries the responsibility for tasking organisations in accordance with the needs of the situation.

"Control Agency" means an agency that exercises control of an emergency as designated by the SEMP.

"Council staff" means any Council employee and does not include any person who separately undertakes duties (paid or voluntary) as a registered emergency service volunteer (ie. Country Fire Service).

"Council i-Responda Plan" (formerly Incident Operations Manual) describes how a council will organise itself and take actions immediately before, during and immediately after an emergency incident. It defines the scope of incident operations for the council, provides delegation and authority for Council Commander(s) and describes arrangements.

"Emergency" means an event that causes or threatens to cause the death of, or injury or other damage to the health of, any person; or the destruction of, or damage to, any property; or a disruption to essential services or to services usually enjoyed by the community; or harm to the environment, or to flora or fauna.

"Emergency management" means a range of measures to manage risks to communities and the environment. The organisation and management of resources for dealing with all aspects of emergencies. Emergency management involves the plans, structures and arrangements established to bring together government and non-government agencies in a comprehensive and coordinated way to deal with the emergency needs including prevention, risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery.

"Emergency support" means the provision of resources support Control Agency response.

"Functional Support Group (FSG)" means a grouping of participating organisations coordinated by a lead agency that performs a functional role as part of the State Emergency Centre arrangements to support response and recovery options for an emergency.

"Incident management" means the processes, decisions and actions taken to resolve an emergency incident and support recovery that will enable the community to return to normality.

"Incident Management Team (IMT)" means a group of Control Agency incident management personnel including an Incident Controller, established for incident management.

"i-Responda" means the approach applied within the South Australian local government sector to prepare for and respond to requests for support during emergencies.

"Local Government Association (LGA)" means the voluntary membership-based organisation providing councils will access to services, resources and support.

"LGA Mutual" means the South Australian Local Government Mutual Risk Schemes and Services delivered in partnership by the LGA Mutual Liability Scheme, LGA Workers Compensation Scheme and LGA Asset Mutual Fund.

"Local Government Emergency Management Framework (LGEMF)" means the LGA's emergency management framework outlining the broad roles of the South Australian local government sector in emergency management.

"Local Government Functional Support Group" means the Functional Support Group comprised of LGA as the Lead Agency and all 68 councils and regional local government associations as participating organisations, performing functional roles and capability that support the agencies responsible for managing and coordinating emergency response and recovery.

"Preparedness" means all activities undertaken in advance of the occurrence of an incident to decrease the impact, extent and severity of the incident and to ensure more effective response activities.

"Prevention" means the undertaking of activities to understand disaster risk and reduce the likelihood of a disaster event occurring or the consequences of an event should it eventuate.

"Recovery" means the process of restoring or improving the livelihood and health and the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets, systems and activities of a disaster-affected community. It is a complex process that provides an opportunity to enhance community resilience and to 'build back better' to avoid or reduce future emergency/disaster risk.

"Relief" means the provision of material aid and emergency medical care necessary to save and preserve human lives and enable families to meet their basic needs for shelter, clothing, water and food (including the means to prepare food).

"Resilience" means the readiness and ability to withstand, adapt, respond or recovery from adversity across many remits such as an individual level, to teams, organisations, community, assets, infrastructure, environment, economy, systems.

"Response" means measures taken in anticipation of, during or immediately after an emergency to ensure that the effect of the emergency is minimised and that affected individuals are given immediate relief and support

"State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP)" means the plan outlining South Australia's emergency management arrangements developed and maintained by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

4. Policy Statement

Council will undertake the following roles and responsibilities in accordance with the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) and Local Government Emergency Management Framework (LGEMF):

4.1 Disaster Risk Reduction

4.1.1 In accordance with the SEMP, Council will:

- Promote disaster resilience;
- Systematically take proper account of risk assessment in land-use planning to reduce hazard risk; and
- Represent community interests in emergency management to other spheres of government and contribute to decision-making processes.

4.1.2 In accordance with the LGEMF, Council will:

- Understand and communicate current and emerging disaster risks;
- Integrate disaster risk into existing plans and decision making (ie. strategic plans, risk frameworks, asset management plan);
- Partner with local stakeholders in addressing priority emergency risks; and
- Strengthen disaster resilience in communities through community development.

4.2 Incident Operations

4.2.1 In accordance with the SEMP, Council will:

- Ensure an adequate local Council emergency response capability is in place; and
- Participate in post-emergency assessment and analysis.

4.2.1 In accordance with the LGEMF, Council will:

- Develop locally relevant incident operational arrangements;
- Build capability of Council to participate in the Local Government Functional Support Group; and
- Participate in incident operations in accordance with the i-Responda operating platform.

4.3 Recovery

In accordance with the SEMP, Council will address:

4.3.1 Leadership

- Provide senior representation on local recovery committees;
- Provide representation at community meetings;
- Identify community impacts;
- Liaise with the State agencies to determine potential recovery services;
- Act as media spokesperson for local recovery issues; and
- Work with local recovery organisations to appoint a local recovery coordinator.

4.3.2 Community Liaison

- Create open lines of communication with local recovery service providers;
- Establish communications with the community;
- Support relief/recovery centres;
- Provide support in assessing, mapping and informing the community of the impacts of the disaster on the council area;
- Support liaison between the local recovery coordinator and the local recovery committee; and
- Provide support and coordination to local volunteer efforts.

4.3.3 Community Development

In accordance with the LGEMF, Council will:

- Support State agencies to identify impacts and areas of need;
- Provide leadership, coordination and advocacy when the community is impacted by disasters;
- Plan for recovery to establish the principles, structures, partnerships and approaches that will guide Council; and

- Advocate for grants and other funding assistance to support disaster recovery.

5. Emergency Management Documents

In addition to this policy, Council will maintain an internal Emergency Management Plan, Incident Operations Arrangements, Recovery Arrangements and any other supporting documentation that:

- Describes the strategies and actions that Council will take to implement this policy;
- Identifies relevant local, regional and state emergency management plans and arrangements that impact upon Council;
- Responds to guidance for Council provided by the SEMP and other emergency management plans, strategies, frameworks and guidelines; and
- Identifies linkages between emergency management objectives and Council's strategies and business, financial and other plans.

Council will maintain its commitment to locally relevant plans developed in consultation with Council. Where Council resource commitments are made in these plans, they will be subject to normal strategic and business planning processes of Council.

Council's emergency management documentation will be reviewed in line with Council's internal document review schedule.

6. Financial Spending During Emergencies

Arrangements for financial spending during emergencies will align with the principles set out in Council's:

- Corporate Credit Card Policy
- Procurement Policy

Records of all expenditure incurred during emergencies and in the recovery phase will be retained. All expenditure will be subject to quarterly budget review cycles.

Council will follow the principles outlined in Commonwealth and/or State disaster funding (where available/applicable) to assist in obtaining funding and/or cost recovery following a natural disaster in the Council area.

7. Support to Control Agencies and Emergency Services

Council works within the requirements of the Work Health and Safety Act 2012. Occasionally, Council staff and/or equipment will be requested to support control agencies and emergency services in managing an emergency.

When Council resources are made available to support control agencies and emergency services, this will be in accordance with:

- Council's incident operations arrangements
- LGASA Mutual Protection guide for incident operations
- The Local Government Incident Operations guide (including i-Responda)

7.1 Local Government Functional Support Group

Council is a participating organisation of the Local Government Functional Support Group (LGFSG). The LGFSG has the responsibility of *'coordinating response from local government during an emergency'* in accordance with section 2.2 of Part Two of the State Emergency Management Plan.

7.2 Protection

To maintain effective workers compensation and liability coverage, Council, when supporting the emergency services and control agencies in incident operations will:

- Apply appropriate risk management principles; and
- Have regard to the arrangements of the Local Government Association Asset Mutual Fund, the Local Government Association Workers Compensation Scheme and Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme.

To achieve this, Council resources will operate in line with the i-Responda operational platform and LGFSG operational arrangements.

7.3 Arrangements and Communication

Council will endeavour to meet periodically with the relevant emergency agencies through the Zone Emergency Management Committee to confirm critical regional coordination arrangements. The media spokesperson for emergencies of Council will be the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer, given the spokesperson under the Act is the Mayor. The spokesperson is not formally part of Council's Incident Operations Management Team, but will liaise directly with the team via the Commander.

8 Availability/Accessibility

This Policy is available for inspection at Council's offices during normal business hours & Council's website and will be emailed to interested parties on request (please lodge request in writing via email to council@coorong.sa.gov.au)

9 Document History

This Policy will be reviewed at least every five (5) years or more frequently if legislation or Council requires.

Version	Adopted	Minute No	Description of change(s)
1	19 May 2020	099/20	New policy

2	17 March 2026	061/26	Cyclical review Policy scope and purpose separated and further refined Definitions completely refined Clause 4 enhanced to provide context to the various stages of emergency management Regional liaison/coordination referenced at clause 7.3

Appendix 1 – Legislation (Acts) containing Delegations

Emergency management is supported by the following pieces of legislation (Acts) where delegations exist. While summarised below, Council's Delegations Register provides full details.

Legislation	Delegations?
Local Government Act 1999	Yes
Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005 (bushfire)	Yes
Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005 (via State Emergency Management Plan)	Yes
Public Health Act South Australian Public Health (Legionella) Regulations 2013 South Australian Public Health (Wastewater) Regulations 2013 South Australian Public Health (General) Regulations 2013	Yes
Work Health and Safety Act 2012	Yes
Food Act 2001	Yes
Road Traffic Act 1961 Road Traffic (Miscellaneous) Regulations 2014 Road Traffic (Road Rules – Ancillary and Miscellaneous Provisions Regulations 2014)	Yes
Environment Protection Act 1993 Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy 2010	Yes
Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016	Yes
Burial and Cremation Act 2013 Burial and Cremation Regulations 2014	Yes