RESPONSE

I n d e x

RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

1.   INTRODUCTION

The State's emergency management arrangements provide the mechanism for the build-up of appropriate resources to cope with emergencies throughout the State. The arrangements outline the process for requests for physical assistance initially from within the municipal district and then, when these are unavailable or exhausted, how to escalate the request.

Most incidents are of local concern and can be resolved with the coordinated provision of municipal resources. However, when these resources are exhausted, requests may be escalated through the regional emergency response plan to seek support from neighbouring municipalities (on a regional basis). When the regional resources are exhausted, requests can be escalated to the State level and ultimately the Commonwealth level.

The **Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO)** is responsible for the co-ordination of municipal resources in responding to emergencies and has full delegated powers to deploy and manage council's resources during emergencies.

The rostered **MEMO** will be contactable **at all times**, including business hours, by fixed line or mobile telephone, or by staff in person.

2.   RESPONSE IMPLEMENTATION

The municipal emergency management arrangements are escalated/implemented by the Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO) or Deputy, at the request of the Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator, (MERC) or Deputy.

Response arrangements should be implemented at the earliest possible opportunity if the effects of emergencies are to be minimised. Although there are no formal phases for response to an emergency, the following groupings of activities may assist in preparing for and responding to an emergency and subsequently handing over to the MRM:

2.1   Before emergencies

In addition to the obvious planning activities undertaken by the MEMPC, upon receipt of a warning, alert or information that an emergency may occur or affect part of the community, the organisation and community must be alerted to ensure its readiness to act if called upon. The following groups or individuals should be briefed about the potential emergency:

- Key municipal personnel
- Members of the Municipal Emergency Management Group.
- MEMO or Deputy MEMO
- MRM or Deputy MRM
- Municipal Emergency Co-ordination Centre (MECC) Manager
- Municipal Operations Centre (MOC) Manager
- Communications Officer
- MERC (if not already aware)
- Chief Executive Officer
- CSG (where the emergency may affect Jewish community)

In addition, consideration should be given to:

- Testing of communications arrangements

- Establishing the flow of information between the Glen Eira City Council and relevant control and support agencies

- Establishing and staffing the MECC, or at the very least preparing a roster in the event of activation, if required. (Refer Part A3)

- Establishing and staffing the Municipal Operations Centre (MOC), or at the very least preparing a roster in the event of activation. (Refer Part A4)

- Preparing equipment and personnel for immediate action to appropriate sub-plans

- Identify assembly areas for marshalling of resources.

- Maintain communication with the MRM in relation to implementation of any emergency relief or recovery services that may be required

- Alerting co-operating outside agencies

- The issuing of public warnings, as authorised by the Control Agency.

2.2   Emergency response (During emergencies)

This is the operational phase of the emergency when control and support agencies are committed to contain or control the emergency. Some operations may necessitate immediately implementing these actions without any pre-warning. Activities that should be considered at this point are:

Primary Activities of Council

- Establish suitable coordination of Council activities, appropriate to the magnitude of the response. This may include establishing the MECC and/or MOC.

- Identify assembly areas for marshalling of resources.

- Identify and establish one or more Emergency Relief Centre(s) as required, including mobilise staff to manage the facility (Refer Part A6)

- Mobilise personnel/equipment as requested.

- Ensure full records are maintained of all communications, including deployments.

- Maintain records of financial commitments made by Council in response to the emergency, or on behalf of requesting agencies in relation to the emergency.

- Produce sitreps on regular basis for relevant authorities and bodies.

- Deploy additional resources as required through

  - Adjoining municipality MEMO's

  - External support agencies

  - Regional assistance via MERC.

Support Activities

To support response personnel whether Glen Eira City Council, other agencies or volunteers, it may be necessary to provide:

- Food and water

- Toilets, wash-up facilities

- Rest areas, seats, beds etc.

- Transport to and from incident.

Staging Areas

Staging areas may be used by emergency response or recovery agencies to assemble physical and human resources. Locations will be determined by the Incident Controller (depending upon the nature, size, and location of the event). The Incident Controller may request, via the MERC, that these be located on Council controlled property and/or in Council controlled facilities. The MEMO and MRM will assist in facilitating any requests for staging areas.

2.3   State Emergency Management Priorities

The State has endorsed a set of emergency management priorities to underpin and guide all decisions made during emergencies in Victoria. The priorities focus on the primacy of life and the issuing of community warnings and information, in order to assist people to make informed decisions about their safety.

The priorities are:

- Protection and preservation of life is paramount. This includes

    o Safety of emergency services personnel; and

    o Safety of community members including vulnerable community members and visitors/tourists located within the incident area

- Issuing of community information and community warnings detailing incident information that is timely, relevant and tailored to assist community members make informed decisions about their safety

- Protection of critical infrastructure and community assets that supports community resilience

- Protection of residential property as a place of primary residence

- Protection of assets supporting individual livelihoods and economic production that supports individual and community financial sustainability

- Protection of environmental and conservation assets that considers the cultural, biodiversity and social values of the environment.

The State emergency management priorities provide a framework for the emergency managers to identify the priority roles and actions of agencies in an emergency response, especially where there are concurrent risks or competing priorities.

2.3.1 Operational Tiers

Emergency response operations is managed through the following operational tiers:

- State
- Regional
- Incident

Not all tiers will be active for every emergency. In general, the state and regional tiers are active only for major emergencies or where major emergencies are anticipated to occur. Non-major emergencies are managed only at the incident tier.

2.4 Response–To-Recovery Hand Over

Smooth Transition

The process of transition from response to recovery is an ongoing one and commences from the time of impact of the emergency. However, an agreement for handover from emergency response coordination to emergency recovery coordination is required to achieve a seamless transition of information, management, resources and coordination activities. For this to occur, the control agency, MERC, MEMO and MRM should consult to reach agreement on the timing and process of the 'stand down' of response. Refer to Part A5, Annex C for a guide to the transition process. Key considerations in reaching an agreement on the timing of the handover include:

- The nature of the hazard or threat and its potential to continue or re-occur.
- The extent of impact on communities, which may determine if a prolonged transition, is required where some areas or affected groups are handed over before others.
- The extent of loss or damage and the extent of emergency relief.
- The anticipated demand on resources during recovery.

Hand Over of Goods and Facilities

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for certain facilities and goods obtained during emergency response to be utilised in recovery activities. In these situations, there would be an actual hand over to the MRM of such facilities and goods. This hand over will occur only after agreement has been reached between response and recovery managers.

2.5 After Emergencies

When the control agency and emergency response coordinator are satisfied that the response to the emergency has been completed, a number of actions are required to complete the emergency response activities.

Actions may include:

- Recall of personnel and equipment
- Inform public if appropriate
- Conduct de-briefings

- Initiate procedures for payment/compensation, including seeking reimbursement for authorised expenditure either from requesting agencies or the State government depending on circumstances and eligibility. Refer to Part B8, section 16 and EMMV Part 8, Appendix 1 for more details.

- Prepare reports

3. CONTROL AND SUPPORT AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR EMERGENCIES

Part C10 details an agreed set of control and support agency responsibilities for the response to identified emergencies within the City of Glen Eira. These arrangements have been tailored to meet local response capabilities based on the agencies available within the municipality.

Support agencies may be able to offer varying levels of support from 'on ground' resources to information. It may be appropriate to consult with a number of identified support agencies for advice in relation to any given emergency.

It is the prerogative of the control agency to formulate action plans for a given emergency in consultation with support agencies.

4. SUPPLY OF RESOURCES

Where Council labour or Council owned equipment is used in an emergency in response to a request from a control agency such resources will be supplied at no cost. This includes the provision of emergency relief measures provided to emergency-affected people.

Where equipment or personnel need to be resourced from external providers on behalf of a number of organisations, the cost must be borne by the control agency. Agreement to pay must be obtained from the control agency before the resources are requisitioned.

Accounts and financial commitments made during the **Response** to an emergency are the responsibility of the **MEMO** through the Municipal Emergency Management Plan arrangements.

5. EVACUATION

5.1   Decision to Evacuate

The decision to evacuate rests with the control agency in conjunction with police and available expert advice, unless time constraints prevent this consultation. Once the decision is made, the police are responsible for carrying out the evacuation.

Consideration must be given to the area, which is to be evacuated, the route to be followed, the means of transport and the location to which evacuees will be asked to attend.

5.2   Implementation

Once the decision to evacuate has been made the **MEMO** should be contacted to assist in the implementation of the evacuation.

The Glen Eira City Council will provide advice regarding the most suitable Emergency Relief Centre.

The MEMO will arrange;

- An **Assembly** area if required.

- Transport

- Refer Contact Directory for transport resources.

- If the number of people to be moved would swamp the municipal resources (owned and operated, or available within the municipality), then the **MEMO** will request assistance through the **MERC.** The **MERC** will escalate the request through the **RERC.**

- One or more Emergency Relief Centres to be activated via the **Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM).** Refer Parts A5 and A6.

- Particular attention should be given to special needs groups such as schools, homes for the elderly or infirm, non-English speaking etc.

The Traffic Manager in the Incident Control Centre will establish traffic control and the evacuation route.

5.3   Warning Systems

Warnings should be used under specific circumstances where community action is necessary primarily to protect lives, and also for the protection of property or the environment. Sections 42 and 43 of the EM Act 2013 provide for warnings and information in relation to fires in Victoria. The provision of these warnings and information must be consistent with any guidelines, procedures and protocols developed by the Emergency Management Commissioner. For all other emergencies the control agency should issue warnings and provide information to the community.

The method of alerting people to the need for evacuation will depend on a number of factors. Consideration should be given to:

- The type of emergency

- The number of people affected

- The ethnic origins of the affected people

- The requirements of any Special Needs Groups.

- Refer Part A7 Communications.

5.4   Medical and Welfare

The health and well-being of evacuees will need to be considered, especially for aged, very young, disabled or injured. Appropriate medical or welfare staff should attend assembly areas and transport activities.

5.5   Domestic and Companion Animals

Consideration should be given to the management of domestic and companion animals (pets) during evacuations. If time permits, information provided to the affected community should include options for the management of pets during the process of evacuation.

For additional information about the management of pets at Emergency Relief Centres, see Part A6.

6.   RESOURCE SUPPLEMENTATION

6.1   Supplementary Supply Starts

Supplementary supply at municipal level occurs when functional services, or control agencies, exhaust their own avenues of supply and there is a requirement for continued supply.

6.2   Requests

Functional Service agencies supplying a service and requiring additional resources will put their request to the **MEMO**.

The control and support agencies will make their request through the **MERC.**

6.3   Resourcing

The **MEMO** will endeavour to obtain resources through existing municipal arrangements.

Should this be unsuccessful, Glen Eira City Council is a signatory to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Protocol for Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing. The Protocol is available on the MAV web site at http://www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/emergency-management/Pages/resource-sharing-protocol.aspx. If this protocol is enacted, the MERC and RERC should be informed. This is particularly critical if the resources are drawn from neighbouring municipalities within the region, so that the RERC is aware that the resource has been committed.

If the **MEMO** is unsuccessful obtaining, the request will be passed through the **MERC** to the Regional Emergency Response Co-ordinator **(RERC)**.

6.4   Payment for Supplementary Emergency Response Resources

The State emergency management arrangements indicate that municipal councils are expected to provide municipal resources for emergency response operations without charge to the response agency. However, it is recognised that this is subject to limits and constraints. Glen Eira City Council will monitor any such expenditure and determine when its limit has been reached.

When this limit is reached, or the resource is simply not available, any additional costs incurred may be charged to the requesting agency.

Response agencies are responsible for meeting the cost of resources sourced by a municipal council that are not municipal resources, i.e. other resources.

The MEMO will alert the response agency(s) making such requests where it is likely that the cost of supplementary emergency response resources (sourced through the municipal council) will be charged for.
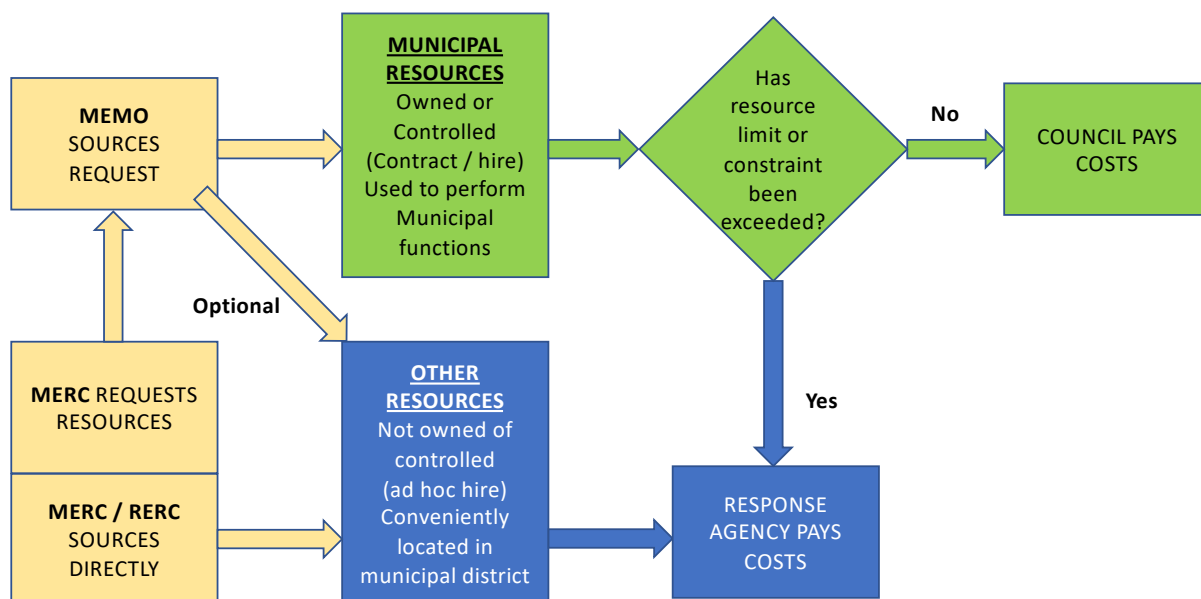
It should be noted that emergency relief and recovery expenditure, including expenses for 'emergency protection works', MECC operation and the like, may be reimbursable. For more information refer to Part B8 of this plan and Appendix 1 to Part 8 of the EMMV.

6.5   Insurance for Supplementary Emergency Response Resources

The owners of resources are responsible for providing adequate insurance for resources used for supplementary emergency response.

Private owners of equipment used for emergency response operations on a non-contracted (ad hoc) basis may be insured for a range of risks under the Emergency Resource Providers Support Scheme (EmRePSS). EmRePSS is special insurance cover provided by the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority (VMIA) for all municipal councils and number of participating State government agencies with emergency management responsibilities (refer to <www.vmia.vic.gov.au> or EMMV part 8, appendix 11 for further information).

State government agencies not participating in EmRePSS may have similar insurance that extends to cover for privately owned resources used in emergency response operations.

7.   OTHER FUNCTIONAL AREAS

7.1   Communications

General

All agencies having a role in these arrangements are responsible for the provision of their own communications systems during emergencies. Any agency requiring communications will put their request to the **MERC.**

Telephone Communications

The Telstra line network will be the initial and primary means of communication in the event of an emergency, when it is available, and should be utilised to capacity

where possible. When locations earmarked for use as MECCs, Assembly Areas and Emergency Relief Centres, were identified consideration was given to the communications facilities already in place at those locations.

Telstra can provide additional telephones, upon request to the **MERC** who will, in turn, submit such requests to the Regional Emergency Response Co-ordinator for action.

All costs, related to such installations, are the responsibility of the requesting organisation, but **may** be reimbursed by State Government upon application by the Glen Eira City Council, so long as the installations have been authorised in writing by the **MERC.**

WICEN

WICEN can provide a volunteer operated radio network.

It is activated by the **MERC**. Refer Contact Directory (Part A1) for contact details.

7.2   Health

Aim

The aim of these arrangements is to identify the Health and Medical facilities available within the Glen Eira City Council and identify the arrangements for activation.

Health

The responsibilities of Environmental Health Officers in emergencies include:

- Advice on water supply

- Ensuring hygienic food handling - safe production, storage and distribution

- Supply of sanitary and hygienic accommodation when required

- Advice on pest control

- Control of infectious diseases (immunisation)

The municipal health arrangements should be considered in conjunction with the Regional and State Health Emergency Response Plans.

7.3   Medical

Implementation of the medical arrangements will be automatic where people are injured or require medical assistance. This automatic response will be by the Ambulance Victoria and hospitals within the municipality.

Ambulance Victoria will be responsible for contacting additional first aid support when required (e.g. Hatzolah, St. John Ambulance and Red Cross).

Medical response management at an emergency scene will be carried out in accordance with the arrangements documented in the State Health Emergency Response Plan (SHERP).

7.4 Technical, Transport and Engineering

The Municipal Operations Centre (MOC) will be responsible for transport and engineering matters.

Requesting Procedure

All requests for transport and engineering resources should be directed to the **MERC**, who will request them through the **MEMO.**

Municipal resources should be used in the first instance, prior to engaging commercial providers.

Refer Contact Directory Technical Resources for listing of commercial 'Technical, and Transport and Engineering Resources', and Part A4 for Council plant and equipment.

Management of Resources:

Responsibility for the management of resources shall rest with the **MEMO.**

8. DEBRIEFING

A debrief should take place as soon as practicable after an emergency.

The Municipal or Regional Emergency Response Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the control agency for the emergency organises an operational debrief with participating agencies as soon as practicable after cessation of response activities.

All agencies, including recovery agencies, which participated in those activities, should be represented with a view to assessing the adequacy of the response and to recommend any changes to the relevant agencies plan(s) and future operational response activities.

The purpose of a debriefing is to:
- Ensure participating agencies understand what happened during the operation or emergency, and
- Identify problems and highlight areas that were handled well, in order to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and safety of future operations or emergencies.