

Inquiry into Fire Season Preparedness for City of Wodonga Council.

The City of Wodonga Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee is responsible for providing a strategic and integrated approach to fire management within the City of Wodonga.

The population of the municipality is approximately 38,000 people, of which the majority live within the Wodonga urban area. The municipality has an area of 430 square kilometres, with over 70 % of which is private land and encompasses the two military areas of Bandiana and Bonegilla which are managed by the Department of Defence. There are approximately 98 separate reserves that make up the environmental estate within the Wodonga local government area.

City of Wodonga is responsible for the management of all council owned land, as well as ensuring that private land holders appropriately manage their land through planning controls. Council MFPO inspect properties within the municipality to assess the potential risk of a bushfire and where necessary may issue Fire Prevention Notices under section 41 of the CFA Act.

The nature and level of emergency response from the City of Wodonga Council is set out in Part 8 in the Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2015 – Version 1 which is attached to this document.

Fuel Reduced Corridors have been identified within the Municipal Fire Management Plan as listed.

The following Primary Fire Defence Lines have been identified:

Brigade Area	Road	Treatment	Responsibility
Wodonga West Rural Fire Brigade	Dansons Road - The Primary Fire Defence Line is located in West Wodonga between Coyles Road and Plunketts Road.	Annual inspection – works as required	CoW

Fuel Reduced Corridors

Fuel Reduced Corridors must be sufficiently fuel-reduced to provide a safe corridor for the travelling public, provide a means of establishing a control line, reduce the time of travel to low-risk areas, and to slow the spread of fire on the road reserve.

Fuel Reduced Corridors should have the fine fuel reduced for a distance of 1 to 3 m behind the guideposts of on either side of the road where practical. All overhanging obstructions less than 5 m above the road pavement must be removed, and dangerous trees/limbs need to be removed to allow the safe passage of fire fighting appliances. They must be inspected annually by the controlling road authority and maintained prior to the fire danger period.

The fire prevention work to be carried out by the Wodonga City Council will vary, depending on the condition and nature of the roadside and surrounding country. It is not possible to lay down precisely the actual work which should be carried out as, generally each case will have to be treated on its



However, the following directions are given as a guide :-

- (a) The cutting and/or slashing of vegetation up to 5 metres but not less than 3 metres behind the line of the guide posts, where practicable;
- (b) The removal of fallen timber, logs and old stumps from the road reserve as regularly as practicable;
- (c) Table drains to be kept clear of an excessive accumulation of fallen leaves and other inflammable materials;
- (d) Burning off will be permitted in special circumstances;
- (e) Adjoining landowners together with local fire brigades, to be encouraged to undertake fuel reduction on private property adjacent the road reserve boundary - particularly in instances where it is not practical to undertake roadside clearing and mowing within the road reserve boundaries;
- (f) A continuous effort be maintained to alleviate obstacles that may inhibit the effective removal of fire hazard material.
- (g) It should be noted that herbicide spraying is not permitted on roadsides without prior consultation with DSE.

Appendix E contains a diagram for typical works on Fuel Reduced Corridors.

The following Fuel Reduced Corridors have been identified:

- Allans Flat Road
- Baranduda Boulevard
- Baranduda Drive
- Beechworth Road
- Boyes Road
- Coyles Road
- Cochranes Road
- Fire Trail to South of Willow & Federation Parks
- Fire Trail Along Base of Baranduda Range, Lower Section
- Huon Creek Road
- Ingrams Road
- John Boyes Road
- Kiewa River
- Kiewa Valley Highway
- Lindsays Lane
- Murray Valley
- Martins Road
- Highway
- Parkers Road
- Plunketts Raod
- Probyns Road
- Sheathers Road – Railway Line to Murray River
- Wodonga-Yackandandah Road
- Streets Road

The following Fuel Reduced Corridors have been identified for annual clearing and grading:

- Beechworth Road
- Boyes Road
- Cochranes Road
- Howards Road : Boyes Road to Baranduda Range
- Martins Road : Beechworth Road to Streets Road
- Plunketts Road
- Stock Route adjacent southern and eastern boundaries of Army land
- Yackandandah Road

The following Fuel Reduced Corridors have been identified for clearance and mowing:

Brigade Area	Road	Treatment	Responsibility
			COW
	Ingrams Road	Mowing	COW
	Coyles Road	Mowing	COW
	Huon Creek Road	Mowing	COW
Wodonga West Rural	Probyns Road	Mowing	COW
Fire Brigade	Parkers Road	Mowing	COW
	Plunkets	Mowing	COW
	Sheathers Road	Mowing	Vic Roads
	Hume Freeway	Mowing	
	Beechworth Road		
Leneva Rural	Boyes Road	Mowing	COW
Fire Brigade	(Beechworth Road to Streets Road)	Mowing	COW
			COW
	John Schubert Drive	Mowing	COW
	Baranduda Boulevard	Mowing	COW
	Boyes Road (Kiewa	Mowing	
	Valley Highway to		
	Streets Road)		Vic Roads
Baranduda Rural	Kiewa Valley Highway	Mowing	
Fire Brigade	Murray Valley Highway (Wodonga		Vic Roads
	to Kiewa	Mowing	
	River)		
	Bromley Lane	Mowing	COW
	Fitzpatrick Lane	Mowing	COW
	Yackandandah Road	Mowing	COW
	Patrice Vale/Bromley Lane	Mowing	COW

	Bonegilla Road	Mowing	COW
	McIntosh Road	Mowing	COW
Bonegilla Rural Fire Brigade	Murray Valley Highway (East of Kiewa River)	Mowing	Vic Roads
	Pollards Road	Mowing	COW
Wodonga Urban Fire Brigade	Stock Route (Beechworth Road to Toolles Road)	Mowing	COW

Barnawartha Rural
Fire Brigade

Fire Access Roads

The following Fire Access Roads have been identified:

Access road to DeKerilleau Homestead	Ennis Road	Phillips - Edneys Road
Ashworth Lane	Ewarts Road	Plunkett Road
Bakers Lane	Felltimber Creek Road	Probyn Road
Boundary Road	Gilberts Road	Ryans Road
Boyes Road	Goynes Road	Spring Gully Road
Brewers Road	Howards Road	Stock Route (South of Bandiana Military Area)
Castle Creek Road	Huon Creek Road	Streets Road
Chapple Road	Ingrams Road	Streets Road
Cochranes Road	Jacks Track	Upper&Lower Fire Tracks behind Dwellings
Coyles Road	Klings Road	Whytes Road
Drapers Road	Lemkes Stock Route	Wilson Road
Echidna Court	Martins Road	
Edwards Road	McFarland Road	
	McGaffin Road	

Fire Access Road	Responsibility	
	Inspection	Maintenance
Edneys Road to Phillips Road	COW	COW
Felltimber Creek Road to Coyles Road	COW	COW
Felltimber Creek Road to Gilberts Road :-		
- off East End of McGaffins Road South Federation Park	AWC	AWC
- off McGaffins Road at approximately mid length	AWC	AWC
Mahers Hill Range		
Spring Gully Road to Brewers Road	AWC	AWC
- refer to road agreement with Shire of Indigo	COW/Shire of Indigo	COW/Shire of Indigo

Fire Access Roads

An annual program of fire trail and tracks maintenance is conducted within the Wodonga City Council to ensure that vehicle access to off road areas is maintained for the fire danger period.

Recommended management actions on specific environmental lands managed by CoW.

It is council's intention to undertake the following actions prior to December 1 to maintain fuel loads consistent with the recommendations in the fire plan for the City of Wodonga's environmental lands. Specific dates for required works are not provided as this will be dependent on seasonal conditions. Council will continue monitoring sites and undertaking works as necessary to maintain fuel loads throughout the fire season. If works are still outstanding at Dec 1 they will be addressed as a matter of priority

WREN Reserves

Site	Fuel hazard management	Notes	Treatments prior to Dec 1.
A-1A	Graze as required	Wet site – grazing delayed to avoid damage.	
A-1B	Graze as required	Wet site – grazing delayed to avoid damage.	
A-1C	Perimeter slash boundary and strategic breaks		
A-2A	Graze as required		
A-2B	Graze as required	Wet site – grazing delayed to avoid damage.	
A-2C	Graze as required		
A-3A	Graze as required		
A-3B	Slash patches of high exotic grasses	Rocky gully, unsuitable for slashing with tractor	
A-4B	Slash patches of high exotic grasses.	Investigating candling of <i>E. macrorhyncha</i> . Slashing to focus on eastern boundary	
A-5A	Graze as required		
A-5B	Slash patches of high exotic grasses		
B-3A	Slash patches of high exotic grasses if required	Site very rocky in places- unsuitable for slashing with tractor	
B-4B1	Slash patches of high exotic grasses	Wet site, unsuitable for slashing with tractor	
C-1	Perimeter slash behind residential development on south western boundary	Site very rocky in places- unsuitable for slashing with tractor	

Site	Fuel hazard management	Notes	Treatments prior to Dec 1.
C-P2	Perimeter slash behind residential areas and road frontage on Wickham Crt	Site very rocky in places- unsuitable for slashing with tractor	
C-4A	Perimeter slash boundary and strategic breaks		
C-5B	Perimeter slash boundary and strategic breaks	Wet site, timing to avoid bogging tractor and reserve damage critical	
D-2	Perimeter Slash boundary		
D-4A	Perimeter slash boundary and strategic breaks of planted sections Graze as required unplanted areas.		
D-4B	Perimeter slash boundary and strategic breaks		
D-4C	Slash patches of high exotic grasses as required.	Wet site, unsuitable for slashing with tractor. Slashing to focus on Fredrick St road frontage	
E-1A	Graze as required		
G-1	Perimeter slash boundary and strategic breaks		
G-2	Perimeter slash boundary and strategic breaks		
G-4	Perimeter slash boundary and strategic breaks		
G-5A (Avalon Rd)	Graze as required		
G-5A (Boyes Rd buffer and Boulevard strip)	Perimeter slash boundary and strategic breaks	Avoid slashing Boulevard strip when wet.	
G-5B (Telstra block and Boulevard frontage)	Telstra Block – Slash patches of high exotic grasses Boulevard frontage – Perimeter slash boundary and strategic breaks		
G-P6A	Slash patches of high exotic grasses	Offset area, surrounded by road frontage	
G-7A	Slash patches of high exotic grasses	Investigating small patch burn to reduce <i>Themeda triandra</i> thatch	
H-3A	Graze as required	Set up of electric fence required	

Site	Fuel hazard management	Notes	Treatments prior to Dec 1.
J-1A	Graze as required or slash patches of high exotic grass	May be slashed as alternative to grazing for environmental reasons.	
J-1B	Perimeter slash boundary and strategic breaks	Site rocky in places-unsuitable for slashing with tractor	
J-1C	Perimeter slash boundary and strategic breaks of planted sections Graze as required unplanted areas	Further planting planned for northern section.	
J-2A	Graze as required		
J-2B	Graze as required	Wet site – grazing delayed to avoid damage.	
J-4	Graze as required	Set up of electric fence is required	
K-1A	Slash patches of high exotic grasses	Offset areas	
K-1B	Slash patches of high exotic grasses		
K-2A	Slash patches of high exotic grasses		
K-3A	Slash patches of high exotic grasses if required		
K-3B	Slash patches of high exotic grasses if required		
K-4B	Graze as required	Wet site – grazing delayed to avoid damage.	
L-1A	Slash patches of high exotic grasses if required		
L-1B	Perimeter slash boundary and strategic breaks		
L-1C	Slash patches of high exotic grasses		
L-2A	Slash patches of high exotic grasses in planted sections Graze as required unplanted areas.	Can be wet area, avoid grazing until dry.	
L-3A	Graze as required	Wet site – grazing delayed to avoid damage.	
L-3B	Graze as required	Wet site – grazing delayed to avoid damage.	

Hilltop Reserves

Site	Fuel hazard management	Notes	Treatments prior to Dec 1.
Federation Hill	Grazing rotated through paddocks Grazing excluded from offset paddocks as required under agreement from DEPI.	Looking to increase stock numbers during October/November. Fire trail on northern boundary to be kept <200mm	Continuous grazing has occurred throughout the year.
Klings Hill	Grazing rotated through paddocks Grazing excluded from offset sites and paddocks as required under agreement from DEPI	Looking to increase stock numbers during October/November if required	
Mahers Hill	Grazing rotated through paddocks		
Huon Hill	Graze as required Picnic area at top of reserve to be excluded from grazing and added to regular parks mowing Walking tracks slashed as required.	Looking to increase stock numbers during October/November if required	

Other Environmental land reserve

Site	Fuel hazard management	Notes	Treatments prior to Dec 1.
Silky Oaks Reserve 1 (McCauliffe St reserve)	Slash patches of high exotic grasses around perimeter as required. Maintain treeless zone under powerlines at southern end of reserve.	Accidental fire in reserve (2013/2014) has reduced much of <i>Themeda triandra</i> thatch on eastern boundary.	
White Box Rise Offset reserves.	Slash patches of high exotic grasses around perimeter as required. Grazing excluded from offset paddocks as required under agreement from DEPI	Native perennial grasses common in undisturbed areas, low fuel hazard.	

8. RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

8.1. Introduction

The emergency response concept provides the mechanism for the build up of appropriate resources to cope with emergencies in Wodonga. It also provides for requests for physical assistance from the commonwealth when state resources have been exhausted.

Minor incidents are of local concern and will be responded to by council staff. Council's operational staff are available 24 hours a day to attend to minor or non threatening incidents such as trees on roads, small grass fires, windstorm, minor flood and in these cases it is not necessary to contact the MERO or activate this MEMP.

For emergencies that are beyond local capabilities or when local resources are exhausted, the MEMP provides for further resources to be made available, firstly from neighbouring municipalities (by agreement through the Municipal Association of Victoria) and then, secondly on a state-wide basis.

8.2. Phase of activation

Response arrangements should be implemented at the earliest possible opportunity if the effects of emergencies are to be minimised. For this reason several phases of activation have been accepted. These are:-

Alert

Upon receipt of warning or information that an emergency may occur or affect the relevant area of responsibility, the organisation must be alerted to ensure its readiness to act if called upon. Some of the activities that should be considered in this phase are:

- Warning for key personnel;
- Testing of communications arrangements; and
- Establish flow of information between municipality and control/support agencies.

Stand by

As the threat, or the effects of the emergency, becomes imminent, members of the relevant organisation or sections are placed on standby, thus being ready to move immediately if they are required. Some of the activities that should be considered in this phase are:

- Staff respective emergency centres;
- Prepare equipment and personnel for immediate action; and
- Identify assembly areas.

Action

This is the operational phase of the emergency when controlling and support agencies are committed to contain or control the emergency. Some operations may necessitate moving to the "Action phase" immediately without the "Alert" and "Standby" phases being implemented. For this reason, it is mandatory that all organisations that have a role in this plan be in a state of preparedness at all times. Some of the activities that should be considered in this phase are:

- Mobilise personnel/equipment as requested;
- Produce situation reports on regular basis for higher authorities;
- Deploy additional resources as required; and
- Ensure casual emergency workers are registered.

Stand down

After consultation with the control authority and any other relevant agency and the MERC is satisfied that the response to the emergency has been completed, he/she will advise all participating agencies of "Stand down".

8.3. Control and support agencies

It is the prerogative of the control agency to formulate action plans for a given emergency in consultation with support agencies. Control and support agencies for various types of emergencies are listed in the EMMV, Part 7 (see oesc.vic.gov.au).

A control agency is an agency identified to control the response activities to a specified type of emergency. The control agency may change as the emergency response progresses or is clarified.

A support agency is an agency which provides essential services, personnel, or material to support or assist a control agency or affected persons. A key support agency is an agency that has specific skills and resources to support response for a particular type of emergency.

The following table is based on the table in Part 7 of the EMMV, however has been locally modified to only include the emergencies and threats that are more likely to occur in Wodonga and the names of the local agencies (see Part 8: Contacts for agency contact details).

Accident/incident	Control agency	Key support agencies
Aircraft	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Maritime Safety Authority • Australian Transport Safety Bureau
Biological materials	Department of Health and Human Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country Fire Authority

Termination and Hand Over

Accident/incident	Control agency	Key support agencies
Gas leakage	Country Fire Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gas distribution companies
Hazardous materials, high consequence dangerous goods or dangerous goods	Country Fire Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment Protection Authority Ambulance Victoria WorkSafe (workplace storage facilities and transport)
Lifts, cranes or scaffolding and amusement structures	Country Fire Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WorkSafe
Military aircraft and ships	Australian Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Maritime Safety Authority Victoria Police Airservices Australia
Radioactive materials	Department of Health and Human Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country Fire Authority
Rail	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Transport (public transport division) V/Line Australian Rail Track Corporation Country Fire Authority VICSES
Road	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country Fire Authority VICSES VicRoads Council

Agricultural	Control Agency	Key Support Agencies
Chemical contamination of livestock or agricultural produce (agricultural or veterinary)	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primesafe
Exotic animal disease (includes bees and	Department of Environment Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Environment Land

Termination and Hand Over

Agricultural	Control Agency	Key Agencies	Support Agencies
aquaculture)	Water and Planning	Water and Planning	
Plant pest of disease	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning 	
Drought	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning		

Environmental	Control Agency	Key Agencies	Support Agencies
Marine pollution, oil and chemical spills in local ports or state rivers	Department of Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning • Environment Protection Authority • Australian Maritime Safety Authority • Parks Victoria • Victorian Regional Channels Authority • Country Fire Authority 	
Oiled wildlife	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks Victoria • Department of Transport • Australian Maritime Safety Authority 	
Exotic marine pest incursion	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning • Parks Victoria 	
Vertebrate pest/plagues	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning • Parks Victoria 	
Pollution of inland waters	Environment Protection Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks Victoria 	

Essential Service Disruption	Control Agency	Key Agencies	Support Agencies
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Essential Service Disruption	Control Agency	Key Agencies Support
Food supply, critical infrastructure damage or disruption	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning
Electricity	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (Energy Sector Development Division)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Energy Market Operator • AusNet Services • Energy Safe Victoria • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning
Natural gas	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (Energy Sector Development Division)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Energy Market Operator • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (Minerals and Petroleum) • Energy Safe Victoria • Elgas • Origin Energy • TruEnergy
Petroleum and liquid fuels	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (Energy Sector Development Division)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Environment Land, Water and Planning (Minerals and Petroleum) • WorkSafe • Oil companies
Roads / bridges / tunnels	VicRoads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council • Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resource, (Security and Emergency Management Division)
Water and sewerage	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North East Water • Department of Health and Human Services • Council

Fire and / or Explosion	Control Agency	Key Agencies	Support
Aircraft	Country Fire Authority		
Boilers and pressure vessels	Country Fire Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WorkSafe 	
Explosion	Country Fire Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning • WorkSafe 	
Explosive device	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country Fire Authority 	
Fire	Country Fire Authority or Department of Environment Land Water and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks Victoria • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning • Australian Volunteer Coast Guard • WorkSafe • Bureau of Meteorology 	

Human Disease / Illness	Control Agency	Key Agencies	Support
Retail food contamination	Department of Health and Human Services		
Food / drinking water contamination	Department of Health and Human Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning 	
Human disease	Department of Health and Human Services		
Natural Event	Control Agency	Key Agencies	Support
Earthquake	VICSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 	
Flood	VICSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning • North East Catchment Management 	

Human Disease / Illness	Control Agency	Key Agencies	Support
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority • Council • Country Fire Authority • Bureau of Meteorology • Parks Victoria 	
Storm	VICSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureau of Meteorology • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning • Parks Victoria • Country Fire Authority 	

Rescue	Control Agency	Key Agencies	Support
Building, structure	Country Fire Authority or VICSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Commission • Ambulance Victoria • Victoria Police • Work Safe 	
Land	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VICSES 	
Lift, crane, scaffolding or amusement structure	Country Fire Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria Police • VICSES • Work Safe • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning 	
Mine / quarry	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEDJTR • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning • Country Fire Authority • VICSES • Work Safe 	
Rail, aircraft and industrial	Country Fire Authority or VICSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Maritime Safety Authority (aircraft only) • Work Safe (rail and industrial only) 	

Rescue	Control Agency	Key Agencies	Support
Road	Country Fire Authority or VICSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambulance Victoria 	
Trench or tunnel	Country Fire Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambulance Victoria 	
Water	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VICSES 	

Search	Control Agency	Key Agencies	Support
Land and water	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VICSES • Others (per police register) 	
Overdue aircraft	Australian Maritime Safety Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria Police • VICSES • Air services Australia 	

Other	Control Agency	Key Agencies	Support
Dam safety	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North East Catchment Management Authority • North East Water • Council • Goulburn Murray Water 	
Other threats against persons, property or environment	Victoria Police		

The following table is a list of generic support services that may also be required at the response phase of an emergency.

Support Service	Primary Agency	Key Agencies	Support
Animal welfare (livestock and companion)	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSPCA • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning 	
Food and water	Red Cross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salvation Army 	
Commonwealth resources	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Management Australia 	
Communications	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telstra • Council communications staff 	
Deceased persons: identification	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coroner 	
Detection of Emergency Locator Transmitter	Australian Maritime Safety Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air services Australia 	
Emergency call taking and dispatch	Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telstra • Council community focus staff 	
Emergency medical care and / or transport	Ambulance Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority • Department Human Services 	
Emergency relief centres or shelters	Wodonga Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Health and Human Services 	
Environmental impact assessment	Environment Protection Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning • Parks Victoria 	
Evacuation	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VICSES • Council 	
First Aid	Ambulance Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St John Ambulance • Red Cross 	

Support Service	Primary Agency	Key Agencies	Support
Food	Vic Relief Foodbank		
Food supply manufacturing and logistics	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development • Department of Transport 	
Material Aid	Salvation Army	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vic Relief Foodbank (mattresses and blankets) 	
Mapping services / information including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital and hardcopy maps; • Aerial photography acquisition; • Satellite imagery acquisition; and, • GPS positioning and locating 	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning		
Media relations	Control agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria Police • Council communications staff 	
Produce (food) contamination by chemicals of security concern	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning		
Psychological First Aid	Department of Health and Human Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victorian Council of Churches • Red Cross 	
Public warnings	Control agency or Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureau of Meteorology • Council communications staff • Telstra (emergency alert) 	
Registration and inquiries	Victoria Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Cross 	

Support Service	Primary Agency	Key Agencies	Support
Relocation	Control Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria Police • VICSES • Council 	
Rural loss and damage assessment	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning		
Transport, engineering and services support	Vic Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Others as per Transport, Engineering and Services Support Plan 	
Weather information and forecasting	Bureau of Meteorology		
Wildlife welfare	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Environment Land Water and Planning • Parks Victoria • RSPCA 	
Workplace/work-related investigations and technical support	Work Safe		

8.3.1. Neighbourhood Safer Places (places of last resort)

Wodonga Council has adopted the following locations as neighbourhood safer places. These locations do not have any facilities. They are places that people may evacuate to as a place of last resort in case of fire.

Birallee Park	Marshall St, Wodonga
Kelly Park	Dagleish St, Wodonga
Martin Park	Gordon St or Vermont St, Wodonga

8.3.2. Vulnerable person's facilities list

The 2009 Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission examined community safety and recommended that MEMPs must contain information on vulnerable people. The MEMP must contain:

- Information about community organisations already working with vulnerable people at a municipal level;

- A register of facilities where vulnerable people are likely to be situated; and,
- A register of 24/7 contact details of funded agencies with identified vulnerable people.

A list of local facilities where vulnerable people are likely to be situated is coordinated and maintained by Wodonga 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, MEMPC members and other emergency agencies on Crisisworks at: wodonga.mecccentral.com

8.3.3. Aged and disabled person's list

A list of aged and disabled persons is available on request from the aged and disability staff at Community Services, Wodonga Council. This is an internal register of aged and disabled persons in the city of Wodonga that consists of clients that are registered with Wodonga Council as receiving council service. Some of these people may require assistance in an emergency situation.

8.3.4. Vulnerable person's register

In accordance with the requirements of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Wodonga Council has implemented and coordinated the requirements of the Vulnerable People in Emergencies (VPE) Policy, November, 2012, including the creation of the Vulnerable Person's Register (VPR). The electronic VPR has been implemented and is maintained by Wodonga Council on Crisisworks.

8.4. Resource management

One of the key responsibilities of the council during an emergency is the provision of equipment and resources to support emergency agencies. Resources will be required from the very early stages of an emergency, right through to the completion of recovery and might include such things as:

- Traffic management equipment;
- Materials to absorb or contain spills or floods;
- Heavy equipment for moving materials and debris;
- Clearing of roads and drains; and
- Transport of people at risk.

Where activities are contracted out, the council is still expected to be able to ensure a continuous emergency capacity is maintained. This expectation is built into relevant contracts. The council is also in an excellent position to source local supplies and equipment through its day to day contacts and preferred contractors.

Most incidents are of local concern and can be coordinated from local municipal resources. However, when local resources are exhausted, the Emergency Response Plan provides for further resources to be made available, firstly from

neighbouring municipalities and shires (on a regional basis) and then, secondly on a state wide basis.

Comprehensive information about council resources, services and contacts is provided in Sub Plan 1: Resources.

8.5. Community engagement - response and recovery

It is expected that in most major emergencies with a widespread community impact, response and recovery will be initiated immediately and that both phases will operate concurrently. In the event of any need to allocate scarce resources, response activities to protect life and restore critical services will take priority.

The *Wodonga Council Plan 2013-2014 to 2016-2017* outlines the key strategic priorities that the council will deliver over the life of the plan.

It is used to plan for the community – its priorities, major projects, services and budget allocations.

The council plan was developed around three key areas:

1. Our city – Planning for growth and development;
2. Our people – Providing a great lifestyle; and
3. Our future – Managing our business to support our community.

This strategy supports the implementation of a large number of key priority activities identified in the council plan, as well as directly addressing the following:

- Review and implement a community engagement strategy;
- Review and update the council’s communication strategy, using a wide range of mediums to convey messages in a timely and appropriate way;
- Develop a social media plan which maximises the interaction between council and the community; and
- Develop a customer focus strategy for the delivery of outcomes and services to the community.

For the purposes of this strategy, the four actions above have been covered in the community strategy to maximise use of resourcing and community benefit.

Community engagement is a planned process with the specific purpose of working with identified groups of people, whether they are connected by geographic location, special interest, affiliation or identity to address issues affecting their well-being.¹

Effective community engagement allows the council to tap into wider perspectives, sources of information and potential solutions to improve decisions and services.

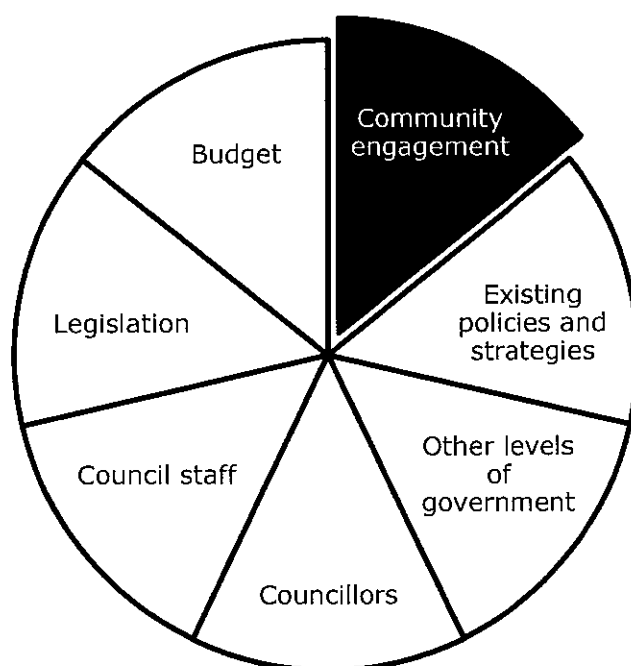
It also provides the basis for productive relationships, improved dialogue and deliberation, and ultimately, better democracy.

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More importantly, perhaps, those involved in the process may have had a new experience of positive involvement with the council and public decision-making which may have taught them to distinguish between their private interests and concerns and issues of the greater public good².

Community engagement is not the sole determinant in a decision-making process. There are many other stakeholders and factors that need to be taken into consideration. Some of these are shown in the chart below.

Emergency relief and supplementary supply response functions are detailed in Part 3.17 Management Arrangements and Part 6 of the Recovery Plan.



When is community engagement used?

Community engagement is used in a variety of issues and situations, all requiring different engagement levels and methods. Some such situations are:

- Site specific – Matters about a particular site such as a change in use or sale of a property, excluding matters that need to be decided under the *Planning and Environment Act*;
- Area improvement – Matters that affect people in a specific area or neighbourhood, e.g. a change in service delivery, township strategy or structure plan;

- Service planning for entire municipality – To develop or improve a service that would see a significant change in the level of service;
- Policy development – To develop or improve policies or the council’s position on particular matters. This does not include internal operating matters;
- Key strategic issues/major development – A project that, because of its size, could impact on the finances or the future of the whole municipality;
- Strategic plans for the city – Establishing the decision-making framework for the council, e.g. the council plan; and
- Legislative requirements – This refers to all prescribed activity under the *Local Government Act (1989)* and any other relevant Acts.

The council **must** use community engagement methods when:

- It is required by legislation; and
- An issue may have potential impacts on the health, safety or well-being of any community member.

Wodonga Council **should** use community engagement methods when:

- Any proposed changes will impact on current users or customers of a council service or facility;
- Any proposed changes will affect the rights or entitlements of community members including minority groups;
- There is potential impact on surrounding neighbours;
- It wants to identify community issues, needs and priorities;
- Any proposed changes are inter-generational in nature;
- Any proposed changes impact the greater public good;
- It wants to monitor customer satisfaction with council’s services facilities; and
- There is a level of controversy, conflict or sensitivity about a particular issue.

It is essential to ensure a smooth transition from the response phase to the recovery process, in any emergency at municipal level. While it is recognised that recovery activities will have commenced shortly after impact there will be a cessation of response activities and a hand over to recovery agencies. The early notification of recovery agencies involved in the emergency will ensure a smooth transition of ongoing activities from response to recovery.

The Police Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator is responsible for advising all agencies involved in the emergency of the time at which response terminates (EMMV, Oct 09, p3-31). The MRM needs to plan for this transition and have his Community Recovery Committee ready to step in and manage the recover 'phase'. This Community Recovery Committee needs to focus on the four recovery 'environments'.

Accounts and financial commitments made during the response phase are the responsibility of the MERO through the MEMP arrangements.

8.6. Communication and community engagement

8.6.1. Roles and responsibilities

During an emergency, the control agency is responsible for coordinating community information and engagement, which will include information to the community regarding the activation of emergency relief centres and general support services available to the community. Such information is integrated within emergency warnings.

The control agency, affected municipal councils and the regional recovery coordinator must work together to develop strategies to ensure that affected communities are well informed about the support and services available from all levels of government and partner agencies. Affected communities need consistent, repeated and coordinated information that spans immediate needs in line with the functions delivered by relief and recovery agencies.

The Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for coordinating and distributing regional and state relief and recovery information for the public. Municipal councils lead the provision of local public information to affected individuals and communities.

The Department of Health and Human Services can assist municipal councils with initial (short-term) public information and communication – if requested or required. All communication plans should strive to ensure a high level of community engagement and encourage local connection using appropriate engagement strategies such as community meetings and forums.

Relief and recovery agencies need to commit to open and honest communication throughout the emergency and relief and recovery phases.

To assist in the implementation of communications and community engagement in the Hume region, consideration may be given to the appointment of a Regional Recovery Communications Officer where required to work directly with the councils and other agencies, to ensure the identification and achievement of regional relief and recovery communication objectives. The Regional Recovery Communications Officer may take the role of Public Information Officer as part of the Incident Management Team.

Should a Regional Recovery Communications Officer be appointed, they will be responsible for coordinating whole of Victorian Government recovery communication and engagement in the region, including identifying public and stakeholder communication needs, developing targeted communications to meet these needs and liaising directly with municipalities and stakeholders working in

recovery. It is the responsibility of other government departments and service-delivery agencies to inform the Regional Recovery Communications Officer or nominated officer to assist with whole of Victorian Government recovery communication.

8.6.2. Communication objectives

Relief and recovery communications will work towards achieving the following overarching objectives:

- Inform affected people in the region of the assistance available to them to assist in their relief and recovery.
- Inform affected people in the region of the progress of relief and recovery and processes established to address relief and recovery issues.
- Develop and implement targeted communications relevant to the Hume region incorporating regional and local demographics and using existing communication channels to assist with the strategic distribution of communication.
- Liaise with stakeholders and relief and recovery partners to promote a coordinated approach to communication and consistent messages to affected people.

Guidelines for public communication in emergencies have been developed³. The guidelines identify key principles of public communication that should be considered in situations of community stress.

8.6.3. Audience

Relief and recovery information should be closely aligned with available services and should be updated as they change and evolve. Communication should be targeted to meet the relief and recovery needs of the relevant audience.

The following table provides examples of the type of information that may be provided to relevant groups:

Table 7 Information for different groups

Audience group	Possible impact	What do they need information about?
Individual / families (consider the community diversity and the needs of vulnerable people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage to home (rented or own home) • Displaced from home • Interruption from work and income (due to closure, access or damage to home) • Health and safety • Disruption to local services and roads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial assistance • Accommodation options • Health and safety information • Psychosocial support. • Cleanup and rebuilding information • Up-to-date local information on recovery progress
Agriculture and business, for example, tourism operators, farmers, local shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage to land, business or livestock • Loss of income • Health and safety • Disruption to local services and roads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanup and rebuilding information • Health and safety information • Financial assistance • Industry specific information for recovery • Psychosocial support • Up-to-date information on recovery progress
Government and community services, for example, local council, recovery support agencies, schools, health services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affected directly by emergency (damage / access restriction) • Increased demand for services due to emergency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on all supports available so they can manage and refer requests (available in different languages as required) • Up-to-date information on recovery progress
Community groups, industry peak bodies and local networks, for example, ethnic groups, sports groups, critical incident support services, Citizens Advice Bureau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affected directly by emergency (damage / access restriction) • Increased demand for services due to emergency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on all supports available (to distribute to their members) in different languages as required • Up-to-date information on recovery progress

Note: a person in an affected community could potentially belong to one or more of the above groups.

8.6.4. Communication tools

The following communication tools/outlets are used as required during and after emergencies to effectively communicate to affected people and communities:

- Online: Emergency Relief and Recovery Victoria (websiterecovery.vic.gov.au) and social media (for example, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube).
- Phone: Victorian Emergency Recovery Information Line (1300 799 232) and Nurse-on-Call (1300 60 60 24)

- Print materials: information brochures, fact sheets, services and resource guides, flyers, posters, multi-lingual information and fact sheets – the Department of Health and Human Services holds a supply of fact sheets related to social recovery.
- Advertising: print, radio, TV, internet.
- Newsletters: specific to recovery operations, third party publications.
- Direct mail: quarterly contact with affected people.
- Media: regular releases, responses, develop relationships with ABC and localised media. Monitor and provide information as relevant to Victorian, National and International media.
- Events: visits to the region by VIPs, information sessions.

8.6.5. Phases of communication

An effective communications plan is vital. Generally there are three phases which should be considered when developing the plan:

- Phase One: Awareness building (short term)
- Phase Two: Maintaining support and assistance (medium term)
- Phase Three: Transition and continuing support (long term)

Information obtained from Regional Recovery Plan.

¹ *Guidelines for public communication in emergencies*
recovery.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/Guidelines%20for%20public%20communication%20in%20emergencies.pdf