



Mitchell Shire Council Emergency Management Policy

Policy Owner	Manager Community Amenity and Emergency Management Community Amenity and Emergency Management
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Please check Council's Intranet to ensure this is the latest Revision.

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Purpose

The Mitchell Shire Emergency Management Policy outlines how Mitchell Shire Council plans to meet its responsibilities under the [Emergency Management Act 2013](#) and provides for a service delivery model that demonstrates its commitment to ensuring it has adequate resources, structures and processes in place to prepare for, prevent, respond to and recover from emergency incidents that affect the Mitchell Shire Community.

Scope

This policy applies to all Mitchell Shire Council employees, Councillors, contractors, and volunteers.

Policy

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that Mitchell Shire Council has a comprehensive Emergency Management Framework in place, bringing together policies, plans and procedures from across all departments that relate to Emergency Management activities, as well as staff in place to ensure compliance with all legislated roles and responsibilities.

This includes ensuring there is provision of an appropriate governance and management structure within Mitchell Shire Council to work with community and emergency services to build community resilience and capacity, to plan for, mitigate, and manage emergency management activities including those associated with relief and recovery as required under the [Emergency Management Act 2013](#), [Emergency Management Act 1986](#), the [Country Fire Authority Act 1958](#), and any other relevant Acts and Regulations as required.

Background

The Victorian Emergency Management Sector is continually changing and evolving, with learnings from large-scale emergency events driving both legislative and procedural changes.

The revised [Emergency Management Act 2013](#) (in force from December 2020) sees Mitchell Shire Council assigned a variety of [roles and responsibilities](#) across all stages of emergency management – from promoting community resilience, undertaking mitigation activities, to supporting response and relief, and co-ordinating recovery. This includes supporting all requirements outlined in the [Mitchell Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2021-2024](#).

Mitchell Shire Council needs to develop, review, and have in place policies, plans, and procedures to ensure that we are operationally ready should the need arise and to ensure that legislated Emergency Management roles/positions within Council staff are well defined and integrated into the 'whole-of-business' service delivery model.

There are many 'day-to-day' Council activities that contribute to emergency management – with almost every department involved in making Mitchell Shire a safer place through our programs and actions. It is important that all of these actions are considered and documented as part of the Emergency Management Framework, rather than just focusing on how Council operates during, and immediately after, an emergency event.

Policy Statement

A Policy to ensure the development, maintenance and implementation as required, of an 'Emergency Management Framework' based on best practice benchmarks. This framework is to embrace the 'all-communities, all-emergencies' approach detailed in the objectives of the [Emergency Management Act 2013](#).

The Mitchell Shire Emergency Management Framework will include detail of:

- Strategies aimed at building community resilience to the impacts of emergency events.
- All Council activities that contribute to the mitigation/prevention of emergency events
- Council's role in supporting response activities during an emergency event (including provision of relief measures)
- Council's role in the development and delivery of recovery strategies aimed at helping the community recover from emergency events.
- Effective and efficient activation and escalation protocols to respond to emergencies within Councils normal service delivery area, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, including business continuity contingencies in larger scale emergencies.
- Development of appropriate protocols/procedures to manage the limited resources of council, and where council capacity and capability is exceeded during an emergency, appropriate arrangements to activate mutual aid agreements with neighbouring councils, and regional and state agencies.
- Delegation, as necessary by appropriate instrument, to relevant Council officers for the management of funds and utilisation of Mitchell Shire Council resources to meet operational requirements.
- The method of appointment of all Council Emergency Management [legislated roles](#) (including council representation on various committees and panels) and positions.

This includes the roles of:

- Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO)
 - Municipal Recovery Manager(s) (MRM)
 - Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO)
 - Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee Chair
 - Environmental Health Officer (EHO)
 - Representatives to Sub-Committees, Working Groups and Response teams (as required)
- How emergency management roles relating to planning, mitigation, response, relief, and recovery activities will be integrated into the Mitchell Shire Council Organisational Structure
 - How emergency management activities are to be monitored and evaluated for effectiveness, ensuring best use of Council resources, taking into account the potential effects of ongoing climate change.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chief Executive Officer to implement and have oversight of the Mitchell Shire Council Emergency Management Policy and Framework, and appoint a director to manage and maintain this policy and framework.

Definitions

[Emergency Management Act 2013](#) defines –

Emergency

means an emergency due to the actual or imminent occurrence of an event which in any way endangers or threatens to endanger the safety or health of any person in Victoria or which destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage, any property in Victoria or endangers or threatens to endanger the environment or an element of the environment in Victoria including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing—

- a) an earthquake, flood, wind-storm or other natural event; and
- b) a fire; and
- c) an explosion; and
- d) a road accident or any other accident; and
- e) a plague or an epidemic or contamination; and
- f) a warlike act or act of terrorism, whether directed at Victoria or a part of Victoria or at any other State or Territory of the Commonwealth; and
- g) a hi-jack, siege or riot; and
- h) a disruption to an essential service;

Emergency Management means the arrangements for, or in relation to—

- (a) the mitigation of emergencies; and
- (b) the response to emergencies; and
- (c) the recovery from emergencies;

Mitigation means the elimination or reduction of the incidence or severity of emergencies and the minimisation of their effects;

Response means the combating of emergencies and the provision of rescue services;

Recovery means the assisting of persons and communities affected by emergencies to achieve a proper and effective level of functioning;

Municipal emergency management officers

- (1) A municipal council must appoint one or more municipal emergency management officers for its municipal district.
- (2) A municipal emergency management officer is responsible for—
 - (a) liaising with agencies in relation to emergency management activities for the municipal district; and
 - (b) assisting in the coordination of emergency management activities for the municipal council.

Municipal recovery managers

- (1) A municipal council must appoint one or more municipal recovery managers for its municipal district.
- (2) A municipal recovery manager is responsible for—
 - (a) coordinating, in consultation with agencies, the resources of the municipal council and the community for the purposes of recovery; and
 - (b) liaising with any municipal emergency management officer appointed for the municipal district in relation to the use of the municipal council's resources for the purposes of recovery; and
 - (c) assisting any municipal emergency management officer appointed for the municipal district with planning and preparing for recovery.

[Country Fire Authority Act 1968](#) defines -

Municipal fire prevention officers and assistants

- (1) Each municipal council, the municipal district or part of the municipal district of which is in the country area of Victoria—
 - (a) must appoint a person to be the fire prevention officer for that council for the purposes of this Act;
 - (b) may appoint any number of persons it thinks fit to be assistant fire prevention officers.

- (2) A fire prevention officer may, by written instrument, delegate to an assistant fire prevention officer, either generally or as otherwise provided in the instrument, any power or duty of the fire prevention officer under this Act or the regulations except this power of delegation.

Applicable Legislation and Regulation

[Country Fire Authority Act 1968](#)

[Emergency Management Act 2013](#)

Charter of Human Rights and Social Impact

This Policy has considered and complies with the human rights and responsibilities contained in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*.

Related Documents

- Mitchell Shire Council Emergency Management Framework
- Electricity Safety Act 1998* S2A 86(b)
- Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020
- Emergency Management Act 1986*
- Local Government Act 1989*
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* s24, s28
- Water Act 1989* s165
- Water Industry Act 1994* s81

Revision History

Version	Authorised by	Authorisation Date	Regulatory Policy	Policy Category
1	Council adopted	14 July 2014	Yes	Community Policy
2	Council adopted	October 2017	Yes	Community Policy
3	Council adopted	22 November 2021	Yes	Community Policy