Community Emergency Management & Disaster Recovery Policy

Policy Number	C20
Responsible Officer(s)	Chief Executive Officer; Manager People & Governance.
Policy Adopted	December 2023
Next Review Date	December 2027
Minutes reference	2023/12-04
Applicable Legislation	*Local Government Act 1999*; *Emergency Management Act 2004; Work Health and Safety Act 2012.*
Related Policies	Risk Management Policy.
Related Documents	Emergency Management Plan; Risk Management Plan; Business Continuity Plan; Incident Operations Manual.

1. POLICY PRINCIPLE

This policy applies to Wakefield Regional Council "Council" in exercising powers and functions under the *Local Government Act* 1999 "the Act" and agreements to which it is a party in the State of South Australia.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVE

2.1. The purpose of this Policy is to:

2.1.1. Define Council's roles and responsibilities in community emergency management and disaster recovery;

2.1.2. Ensure that Council maintains appropriate delegations and authority to undertake its community emergency management and disaster recovery responsibilities;

2.1.3. Ensure that Council prepares and maintains appropriate community emergency management and disaster recovery documents;

2.1.4. Support Council to maintain safe working practices during emergencies; and

2.1.5. Support and maintain effective protection for Council workers, assets and liabilities associated with emergency management activities.

3. DEFINITIONS

Disaster Risk   The potential loss of life, injury or destroyed or damaged assets which could occur to a system, society or a community in a specific period of time, determined probabilistically as a function of hazard, exposure, vulnerability and capacity.

Disaster Risk Reduction   An action to void the creation of new disaster risks, reducing existing disaster risks, and managing any residual risks.

Incident Operations   Actions undertaken immediately before, during and immediately after an emergency.

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i-Responda	An operation platform available to Council for the management incident response.
LGA	Local Government Association.
LGEMF	Local Government Emergency Management Framework.
LGFSG	Local Government Functional Support Group.
Recovery	The process of restoring emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing, reconstructing physical infrastructure and restoring the environment following an emergency.
SEMP	State Emergency Management Plan.

4. POLICY DETAIL

Emergencies have the potential to disrupt the strategic and operational activities of Councils and adversely impact communities.

The roles of local government in emergency management are informed by the State Emergency Management Plan ("SEMP") and the Local Government Emergency Management Framework ("LGEMF"). They are enabled by the Act, which outlines the requirement for Councils to consider risks (including emergency risks) as follows:

- Make informed decisions;

- Take measures to protect their area from natural hazards;

- Provide infrastructure for community and for development;

- Ensure the sustainability of the Council's long-term financial performance;

- Assess the maintenance, replacement or development needs for infrastructure;

- Identify anticipated or predicted changes in any factors that make a significant contribution to the costs of the Council's activities or operations.

Council will undertake the following roles and responsibilities in accordance with SEMP and LGEMF.

4.1. Disaster Risk Reduction

Council will endeavour to:

- Understand and communicate current and emerging disaster risks;

- Build and promote disaster resilience internally and within the wider community;

- Conduct disaster risk assessments;

- Represent community interests in emergency management and disaster recovery to other spheres of government and contribute to decision making processes;

- Integrate disaster risk into existing plans and decision-making (e.g. strategic plans, risk frameworks, asset management plan);

- Partner with local stakeholders in addressing priority emergency risks;

- Support community preparedness measures through public education and awareness, where reasonably practicable.

4.2. Incident Operations

Council will endeavour to:

- Ensure adequate Council emergency response capabilities are in place within the organisation;

- Develop a locally relevant risk-based suite of incident operational arrangements;

- Build capability of Council to participate in the LGFSG;

- Participate in incident operations in accordance with the i-Responda operating platform;

- Ensure resources and arrangements are in place to provide and support emergency relief and recovery services to communities in line with agreed state arrangements or plans and participate in post-emergency assessment and analysis.[1]

4.3. Recovery

- 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 during disaster recovery;

- Provide representation on local recovery committees and at community meetings;

- Provide support in assessing, mapping and informing the community of the impacts of the disaster in the Council area;

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

4.4. Emergency Management Documents

In addition to this policy, Council will maintain an Emergency Management Plan and Incident Operations Manual 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;

- Identifies linkages between emergency management objectives and Council's strategies and business, financial and other plans.

4.5. 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, it will be in accordance with:

- Council's Incident Operations Manual;

- LGASA Mutual Protection guide for incident operations;

- The Local Government Incident Operations Guide (including i-Responda).

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[1] State Emergency Management Plan. Part 2, Arrangements 2.3 Local Government

4.6. Financial spending during emergencies

The Chief Executive Officer will report to Council, as soon as reasonably practicable, any material financial impacts of a disaster risk event which impacts upon Council, its services or the community.

4.7. Local Government Functional Support Group ("LGFSG")

Council is a participating organisation of the LGFSG. The LGFSG has the responsibility of coordinating response from local government during an emergency in accordance with the SEMP.

4.8. Protection

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

- Apply appropriate risk management principles; and

- Have regard to the arrangements of the LGA Asset Mutual Fund, the LGA Workers Compensation Scheme and LGA Mutual Liability Scheme.

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

5. REVIEW

This Policy shall be reviewed every 48 months, or more frequently if required by legislation or Council.

Document history:

Version	Adopted	Description of Change
1.0	August 2020	New Policy
2.0	December 2023	Policy title change; previously Emergency Management to Community Emergency Management & Disaster Recovery.