Emergencies Directions Paper - Submission

Bayside City Council supports the issues raised in the MAV submission titled

- MAV Draft Submission LGV Directions Paper March 2017

The following specific comments are made by Bayside Council.

General statements:

- There is a lack of clarity as to the extent of Council involvement in "non-municipal wide emergencies" (i.e. small localised incidents).
- There is no clear distinction between the needs of Council's in high risk and regional areas as opposed to lower risk metropolitan Councils.

Specific Items

- Metropolitan Councils have not been required to develop and maintain a Municipal Fire Prevention Plan. (Item 86)
- Greater focus put on Council's in the recovery phase is not supported
- Bayside Council uses Contractors for some of the items specified as staff. (Item 88, Item 36)
- Council should be required to provide medium or long term housing (Item 149)
- Council should be required to provide financial assistance (Item 150)

LGV Councils and Emergencies

Directions Paper

Draft Submission

March 2017

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1   Introduction

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) welcomes the opportunity to respond to Local Government Victoria's (LGV) *Councils and Emergencies Directions Paper* (the **'Directions Paper'**).

This draft submission was informed by MAV member feedback received in six consultation sessions, as well as the MAV's *Role of Local Government in Emergency Management Position Paper* (attachment 1). The consultation sessions were held in four regional cities and Melbourne; 180 councillors, CEOs and council officers attended.

LGV, through its Directions Paper, is seeking submissions on a list of 154 tasks or responsibilities that are described in the paper as being councils' current emergency management responsibilities and actions[1].

The list is divided into two types of responsibilities: those in blue font are responsibilities that are described as 'requirements', because they have been derived from legislation, regulations, policy and statutory plans, and those in black font, which come from other sources including LGV's 2016 consultation workshops. LGV has requested feedback from councils and the emergency management sector to confirm or suggest amendments to this list and whether the statements are accurate and appropriate[2].

The 154 responsibilities and actions have been grouped under 16 categories, to align with the 21 core capabilities outlined in the State Government's Preparedness Goal. The paper asserts that councils have no responsibilities under the remaining five of the core capabilities.

The MAV and councils have long been advocating for a review of the role of councils in emergency management so that the role better aligns with their core business. While we are disappointed that the remit of this project changed from identifying the future role of councils to defining the current role, we still see this as a critical opportunity to clarify the current role and reduce role creep.

The clear message from attendees at the MAV consultation sessions is that the proposed role statement is not acceptable in its current form. There was also frustration in the inadequate engagement with councils in the drafting of the Preparedness Goal and Framework and a lack of understanding about how the two pieces of work fit together. Further, councils are currently overwhelmed by the number of policies and documents being released for comment or implementation by the State. There is a general feeling that councils have not been engaged early enough in the development of many of these projects, and in the current revenue

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[1] Councils and Emergencies Directions Paper, p 4
[2] Councils and Emergencies Directions Paper, p 36

constrained environment, they are not in a position to put on additional staff to manage the increasing workload.

Rather than addressing all 154 proposed responsibilities, the MAV is focusing on the responsibility descriptors in blue text, and will make comment on their accuracy and appropriateness. We have also identified some of the black text responsibilities which are so significantly inappropriate that they are worthy of comment.

At a more strategic level, we put forward a model for describing councils' role which we feel better reflects the variation in capability and capacity between and within municipalities.

We will also provide comment on the proposed principles.

2   Role description feedback

2.1 MAV position paper

In 2011 and then again in 2015, the MAV worked with councils to develop a consolidated position on what the future role of local government should be in emergency management. The general premise of the position paper is councils' current emergency management role has grown beyond the capacity and capability of many councils.

The position takes into account the sector's current:

- capabilities and strengths
- limitations
- means to increase revenue, and
- need to balance a multitude of competing community priorities

to determine what should be leadership roles, what could be supporting roles and what should be out of scope for future role descriptions.

 'Leadership' does not mean councils undertake the activities on their own, or are solely responsible for the outcomes of emergency management activities. Rather, they are activities in which councils can play a lead role because they are similar to activities being undertaken as part of their normal business. The following were described as future leadership positions.

Further comment on each is provided in the position paper (attachment 1).

i.   *Facilitate strategic all hazard planning at the local and sub-regional levels in partnership with other* agencies

ii.   *Provide and coordinate relief services*

iii. *Coordinate local recovery*

iv.   Establish new, or develop existing, structures to promote community engagement in emergency management and advocate on behalf of communities

v.   Assist community recovery by continuing to deliver core community services, including managing and restoring local infrastructure during and after emergencies

vi.   Undertake risk mitigation measures, including the maintenance of municipal owned and/ or managed infrastructure

vii.   Foster partnership and network development

These are generally reflected in LGV's blue-fonted 'core responsibilities', although there are also a number of additional requirements listed (see table below).

There continues to be strong support within the sector for leading relief and recovery at the local level, although concerns about the current funding and reimbursement arrangements were raised in all consultation sessions.

There also continues to be support for facilitating all-hazard planning, and councils are eagerly awaiting the introduction of the proposed Planning Bill which should address the issue that Municipal Emergency Management Plans (MEMPs) are considered council plans, instead of being recognised as multi-agency plans for the municipality.

The following are viewed as supporting roles – activities councils can contribute to that are led by other agencies: *hazard-specific planning; risk assessment; dissemination and communication of information from agencies and service providers (excluding warnings); influence emergency management planning at the regional level; provide municipal resources where available; provide information and advice to support incident management; collaborate with other councils; support volunteer management.*

Most of these also generally align with the LGV paper, with the exception of risk assessment and hazard-specific planning (fire) which are listed as leadership roles. A number of the others are listed in blue which indicates they are requirements. The MAV makes comments in the table below regarding whether these should be requirements (and therefore in blue) or good practice (black) or inappropriate.

2.2 Blue font responsibilities

There are 46 responsibilities in blue font, if all sub clauses are counted. MAV and council analyses of these descriptors and their source references give rise to concern, for a number of reasons:

- Where legislation is the source of the responsibility, it is not quoted verbatim, so the meaning of the statement in the Directions Paper can be interpreted differently to the commonly understood interpretation of the relevant legislation

- Several of the references are inaccurate, for example, the paper appears to reference a previous version of the State Relief and Recovery Plan (EMMV Part 4)

- Some of the descriptors are derived from guidelines or non-statutory documents, meaning they may be expected in certain circumstances, but they are not requirements

- Many of the descriptors reference part 7 of the EMMV, which does not have the same status as Parts 3 and 4. The preamble to the description of councils' role in Part 7 states: *This is an indicative list. The nature and extent of work by councils to deliver activities will depend on their capability, capacity and particular circumstances of an event. Municipal councils will utilise a variety of approaches and local arrangements to best affect the delivery of these responsibilities to meet unique municipal needs. Most of the activities in the list below are carried out by councils in close conjunction with, or with direct support by, government departments and agencies.* Items from this list therefore should not be in blue or described as requirements, unless they have their basis in legislation or another statutory document.

Ahead of providing feedback on the accuracy and appropriateness of each of the blue descriptors, the MAV makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation: If the final role description is to delineate core requirements and non-core tasks, the core requirement descriptors should be specific, not general statements. They should be derived from legislation or statutory documents only – not guidance documents or policies or plans with a lesser status. Furthermore, they should be quoted verbatim so there is less chance of misinterpretation.

Recommendation: Core requirements should also be achievable, irrespective of the size or resources available to the council. Compliance should not be reliant on grant funding (more discussion on this in Section 4 of this submission – maturity model proposal).

The following table provides a brief commentary on each of the blue descriptors, including its accuracy and appropriateness.

Desc.	Descriptor	Accuracy	Appropriateness
1	Lead an all-agencies approach to community-based risk assessment and planning including compliance with relevant legislation and policy at the municipal level. [1]	Inaccurate. By not quoting directly from the Act, the meaning has changed. Councils do not lead the all-agencies risk assessment – VicSES runs the Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA) process. Council appoints a multi-agency Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) which drafts a MEMP for consideration by the Council. Councils are not responsible for other agencies' compliance with legislation or policy that might be outlined in the MEMP or other plans at the municipal level.	The current descriptor is inappropriate Councils have indicated that facilitating local planning is an appropriate council role, as long as there is administrative support (if required) and legislation and policy makes it clear that local or municipal emergency management plans are not council plans. They are plans for the local, municipal or sub-regional footprint and many agencies are responsible for contributing to, and executing relevant sections of the plan. While many councils believe the facilitation of all hazard planning is a suitable role for councils, the current misconception that the plans are council plans, the lack of support for their administration, and the fact that councils alone are the organisation that must respond to the audit of the plans is not acceptable.
2	Prepare and maintain municipal emergency management plans and subplans. [2]	The MEMPC prepares the draft MEMP for Council consideration. Other agencies often take the lead on subplans.	See comment above
3	Appoint a municipal emergency management planning committee. [3]		See comment above
4	Support hazard-specific risk assessment to inform plans and community resilience-building	This statement does not align to the guidance in EMMV 6-5. On the previous page there are suggestions	Councils, in partnership with other agencies, have a role to play in identifying risks at the local level and working with the other agencies and the community to develop risk reduction

	strategies, using local knowledge and information based on community needs.[4]	about planning committee structure that use similar language, but they are not describing a requirement for councils: 'A planning committee structure may also include a Risk Management Group and sub-committees that are risk/hazard specific, with one focused on understanding and promoting community resilience.'	strategies. Councils can support control agencies with hazard-specific risk assessment and planning. There is no requirement for councils to implement resilience-building strategies, although through the use of the existing community links, councils can integrate emergency management and resilience building strategies into regular community engagement activities. Community engagement regarding specific hazards should be the responsibility of expert agencies.
5	Lead implementation and coordination of specific risk treatments on private and council land in partnership with emergency management agencies, including flood/fire management, maintaining a register of at-risk groups.[5]	This reference is from Part 7 of the EMMV (see comment about the authority of Part 7 above) so it should not be in blue. It has also been paraphrased. The actual reference is: 'implementation/coordination of specific risk treatments for identified risks and exposed elements in the community, including, flood/fire management, maintaining a register of at-risk groups, fire risk reduction (private and council lands).'	Use of 'lead' implies that councils are the lead agency for risk mitigation on private property - which is incorrect and inappropriate. It is unclear what is meant by the register of at-risk groups. This could relate to the Vulnerable Persons Register, which is a policy requirement that only apply to councils in the CFA area. Many councils feel strongly that the Vulnerable People in Emergencies needs a thorough review and that the associated roles for councils are inappropriate.
11	Apply local planning schemes and building controls including development assessments, inspections and advice.[6]	Yes	Yes – noting emergency management overlaps with many parts of council business. LGV should consider how far into usual business the role description will stretch, because keeping references up-to-date may pose a challenge.
12	Prepare local recovery plans after emergencies.[7]	EMMV Part 7 states that municipal councils are responsible for the coordination of local relief and recovery activities, but has no mention of a local recovery plan. EMMV Part 4 describes specific	Councils consistently state that they are best placed to coordinate local recovery. This would generally include the preparation of local plans.

		council responsibilities relating to recovery.	
14	Support agencies to plan, prepare and deliver consistent, all-hazards customised information and messages to the community, using council communication networks.[8]	The Paper references EMMV Part 4, page 32. This is incorrect.	This is an appropriate role, although perhaps not a requirement. The MAV Position Paper lists the following supporting role: *Facilitate the dissemination and communication of information from agencies and service providers to the community. This includes information provision and dissemination on behalf of other agencies before, during and after an event, but excludes issuing warnings.*
16	Identify appropriate and preferred communication channels for the community and particular groups and people (such as those who are vulnerable and those who are culturally and linguistically diverse).[9]	Incorrect reference	This is a subset of descriptor 14 above. It's not necessary to list both and while it could be considered good practice, it is not a requirement.
21.	Support agencies to develop and disseminate information and warnings that are relevant and credible to the community by:[10]	Incorrect reference.	During response, the information councils provide should not relate directly to the emergency or operations (this is clearly a role for the police and control agency). Councils should not be responsible for warnings. However, it may be appropriate for councils to provide local service information.
23.	Deliver timely, coordinated, accessible and tailored information to the community so it understands relief and recovery assistance mechanisms and processes including through community briefings and meetings.[11]	Incorrect reference. Similar to one of the relief principles on EMMV Part 4, page 21.	Appropriate
27.	Provide and staff a recovery centre.[12]	Reference from EMMV Part 7,	This is one recovery strategy that might be appropriate in certain

		therefore is guidance.	scenarios, but it is not and should not be a requirement.
30.	Appoint a municipal emergency resource officer.[13]	yes	The appointment of a MERO was more relevant when all councils owned plant and equipment (particularly heavy earth moving equipment) that could be used during and after an emergency event.
31.	Appoint a municipal recovery manager.[14]	Correct reference is EMMV part 4, page 13	Yes
33.	Support agencies to develop procedures to use council resources.[15]	This should quote the Act	Yes – where available
34.	Lead risk-mitigation measures through business-as-usual works by: • where council is a road authority, managing vegetation on roadsides to ensure a safe, efficient road network[16]	Reference (*Road Management Act 2004, s20, 34 and 40)* is incorrect.	Yes – noting emergency management overlaps with many parts of council business. LGV should consider how far into usual business the role description will stretch, because keeping references up-to-date may pose a challenge.
41.	Support response agencies to effectively deliver emergency response services locally by[17]: after consultation, making council resources, facilities and services available to agencies during response, relief and recovery phases • providing council resources as requested by agencies to secure affected areas • providing a council liaison officer (emergency management liaison	Part 7 reference – which would be guidance only, however the list in black font is not from the EMMV	Providing support to response agencies within capability and capacity constraints, and where it is safe to do so is appropriate, but the descriptor should be in black.

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	officer) - share knowledge, data and information about community needs and consequences - ensure council is consulted and involved in emergency decisions that will affect the council and community.		
43.	Provide agencies with resources and information to partially or fully close roads and determine alternative transport routes.[18]	Part 7 reference – guidance only	Yes
44.	Conduct local recovery activities.[19]	Very general statement and reference.	Councils see themselves as the appropriate lead agency for coordinating local recovery activity. However, capability and capacity will vary and quick and reliable funding for some activity will be necessary.
48.	Scope requirements for planning to establish a municipal / community recovery committee and if necessary form, lead and support the committee.[20]	More authoritative reference is EMMV Part 4, p 33	Yes
59.	Clear blocked drains and local roads including by removing trees on council land and on roads.[21]	Part 7 reference	Partly appropriate. Councils clear blocked council-owned drains, but do not clear private drains or drains belonging to other authorities
61.	Support agencies to coordinate volunteer efforts after emergencies.[22]	Incorrect reference	Councils vary in their capacity to support the coordination of volunteers. This should not be a requirement. Further, new references to councils and volunteers in EMMV Part 4 (Dec 2015) appear to have been added without direct

			consultation with councils, as was previously common practice.
62.	Coordinate animal welfare within council resources.[23]	Part 7 – guidance only.	Councils should have a support role only. New references to council responsibilities regarding animals were added to EMMV Part 4 without consultation with councils.
63.	Support agencies to coordinate and manage services to meet the immediate needs of affected livestock locally.[24]	Part 7 - Reference to livestock refers to disposal of dead livestock only.	Many councils do not have the capacity. This should not be a requirement.
74.	Undertake municipal functions as required by local government, building, electricity, water and land use planning legislation and regulations.[25]	Very general statement.	This may be a more appropriate way to capture the overlap between emergency management and other parts of council business rather than citing all relevant Acts and Regs.
75.	Proactively enforce relevant regulations and laws that relate to emergency management.[26]	Unclear what this statement is referring to in the EM Act.	
85.	Engage the community in developing and delivering recovery activities including by appointing community development and/or community recovery officers.[27]	Reference incorrect: needs updating to latest version of EMMV Part 4. The EMMV does not state that councils need to appoint community development and/or community recovery officers	Many municipalities do not have a community development officer or the resources to self-fund community recovery officers. Depending on the scale of the emergency, these roles may be incorporated into existing council roles. Delays in State-Commonwealth funding for recovery officers has been a barrier to recovery.
86.	Support agencies in line with relevant fire legislation and regulations by: • appointing a municipal fire prevention officer[28]	Unclear why these are combined into one point. Would work better to separate them. Part 6A of the EMMV should be	Councils can play a supporting role in fire management, however they have no role in suppression. Councils would like to see a review of the Neighbourhood Safer Places legislation and shelter options policy.

	• developing and maintaining a municipal fire prevention plan[29] • identifying, designating, signing, maintaining and annually reviewing bushfire safer places and their plans, and (for councils in Country Fire Authority [CFA] areas) reporting back annually to the CFA[30] • issuing permits to burn[31] • taking all practicable steps (including with planned burning) to prevent the occurrence and spread of fires and minimise their danger on land that council manages or is responsible for[32] • providing pillar fire hydrants in reticulated areas when the CFA issues written notice to do so[33] • meeting the costs of providing, installing, marking and maintaining all fire plugs in the municipality.[34]	referenced as the requirement to develop and maintain a fire prevention plan can be met by a multiagency municipal fire management plan. Councils in the MFB area do not have to develop a Municipal Fire Management (Prevention) Plan. Councils in the CFA area are authorised to issue permits to burn, however it is not a requirement. It is not correct that councils are responsible for meeting the costs of providing, installing, marking and maintaining all fire plugs in the municipality. Section 165(2) of the Water Act it states that a council must meet the costs of providing, installing, marking and maintaining all fire plugs that the council requires under subsection (1) to be installed in its municipal district. A planning permit requirement does not equate to a council request.	Many councils have also argued for a review of the Schedule 13 'permit to burn' arrangements. It is not appropriate for councils to pay for all fire plugs.
93.	Collect secondary impact-assessment data about the scale and characteristics of the impact on the social, economic, built and natural environments.[35]	Reference should be EMMV Part 4 page 6	Yes

94.	Initially assess impacts on essential infrastructure and services.[36]	Reference incorrect. Councils are not responsible for initial impact assessment	Inappropriate – should be deleted
99.	Undertake municipal functions as required by public health and wellbeing legislation and regulations.[37]		See comments re D74
104.	Coordinate relief agencies and the community to develop local relief plans.[38]	Reference incorrect. Not an activity listed in Part 7 of the EMMV	Councils believe they are the most appropriate agencies to coordinate emergency relief services. Relief is delivered in partnership with other specialist health agencies, community service organisations and in some cases other councils. There are no specific requirements around developing local relief plans. If there is an expectation that relief services will be delivered in a consistent and State-prescribed way this requires stronger support from the State Government and a certainty of reimbursement for council expenditure.
115.	Coordinate relief services locally.[39]	References incorrect	See comment above
116.	Establish and manage relief centres where appropriate, including:[40] • register relief centre attendees • coordinate the provision of food, water and materials to affected communities[41] • provide temporary shelter options for displaced local people • coordinate and manage services to meet the physical and	This should reference EMMV Part 4 rather than Part 3 and 7.	See comment above

	psychosocial needs of affected local people.[42]		
136.	Survey and determine the occupancy of damaged buildings.[43]		
140.	Coordinate the rebuilding and redevelopment of council and private assets.[44]	Incorrect statement. Part 4 of the EMMV (pp46-47): Respective asset managing agency [sic] undertake the assessment, restoration, clearing and rehabilitation of assets within portfolios e.g. roads, bridges, sporting facilities, public amenities schools, hospitals, managed by respective agencies within their service / asset portfolios. Municipal councils oversee and inspect rebuilding/ redevelopment.	Councils have some control over the rebuilding of private assets through issuing planning and building permits, however these are not referenced here. Councils should not be responsible for the coordination of rebuilding or redevelopment of private assets.
141.	Restore council-owned assets, prioritising business operations and commercial or community facilities essential for community wellbeing or recovery activities.[45]	This statement is incorrect	Councils should determine their own priorities for restoration of municipal assets. If the asset is not covered by the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (the Commonwealth-State funding program), councils may not be in a position to restore some assets at all.
142.	Coordinate clean-up activities including the disposal of dead animals.[46]	Reference from Part 7 – guidance only	Councils are responsible for cleaning up council land. Any policy relating to clean up of private property must be underpinned by the principles of equity and encouraging adequate insurance.

2.3 Black font descriptors

The MAV does not have the resources to comment on each of the proposed responsibilities in black font. The absence of comment on all of the black descriptors should not be interpreted as acceptance.

We do, however, make the following general statements:

In the MAV consultation sessions, many council officers expressed disappointment in the LGV workshop process and the translation of the actions identified in the brainstorming sessions into the list of proposed responsibilities (described by some as the creation of a 'wish list'). Many were also disappointed that council officers were not present in the agency workshops, so that proposed responsibilities could have been challenged before being listed in the Directions Paper.

As LGV is aware, there is great variation in the capability and capacity of councils. Some of the statements in workshops may have been made by councils with the resources to be able to undertake them; some may have been undertaken once, because the responsible agency was not present and councils did what had to be done to support their community; some may have been done on behalf of another agency through an agreement. Just because a council undertakes an activity does not make it a current responsibility.

There was also the view that it is now more difficult to be certain of reimbursement for recovery activities through the Natural Disaster Funding Arrangements, and this coupled with rate capping and a freeze on indexation of Federal Assistance Grants, means that an activity that may have been undertaken in the past will not be possible in the future.

Further, many of the proposed responsibilities are repetitive, inaccurate or partially inaccurate. This could be in part because they have been written to align with the language of the Victorian Preparedness Goal and Framework.

Some examples of inaccuracies highlighted in the MAV consultation sessions are:

D88. *Maintain and store essential equipment and materials to support emergency management activities and meet the needs of affected communities (such as sandbags).*

Comment: This statement does not align with the Statewide Guideline relating to sandbags, which suggests councils procure sandbags to protect municipal assets. It is unclear what other 'essential equipment and materials' are being referred to. The language aligns with the critical tasks from the Victorian Preparedness Goal but does not reflect councils' current role.

D98. *Conduct longitudinal mapping of the impact focusing on wellbeing, liveability, sustainability and viability.*

Comment: This reflects proposed future State policy, not a current council emergency management activity.

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D130. *Coordinate remediation and stabalisation works on public and private land*

Comment: Councils are only responsible for these works on council land. While some councils may have played a coordination role for public/ private land remediation in the past, or may have undertaken some works as a Committee of Management or on behalf of the relevant agency, this should not be listed as a council responsibility.

D149. *Provide access to short, medium and long term housing options*

Comment: The MAV understands that this wording aligns with the Victorian Preparedness Framework. There is room for misinterpretation in the language used. While councils provide emergency shelter through relief centres, and may support displaced community members to identify longer term housing options, it has never been a council role to provide housing options.

D150. *Assess and deliver financial re-establishment assistance*

Comment: The MAV understands that some councils have undertaken this role on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) when DHHS has been unable to do so; it is not a council responsibility.

2.4 Core Capabilities categorisation

Councils have had very little engagement in the Victorian Preparedness Goal project, with the exception of a small group of officers, so there was a low understanding of the background to the 21 core capabilities and the 16 for which it had been determined councils have a role.

Without having background in the project and an understanding of the current work underway to define critical tasks for the emergency management sector under each of the categories, the breakdown of councils' responsibilities to fit into the core responsibilities and align with the critical tasks caused confusion. For example, councils were baffled by the Fire Management & Suppression heading and core capability description[3], when they have no firefighting or suppression role.

There was also feedback from councils that they do have a role in three more core capabilities: Critical Transport, Health Emergency Response and Environmental Response.

Recommendation: That LGV works with the MAV and councils to develop agreed descriptions of councils' responsibilities under each of these categories.

3 Proposed principles

There was broad support for the principles listed on page 35 of the document and it was noted that they closely align with the sector-endorsed principles in the MAV Position Paper.

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[3] Councils and Emergencies Directions Paper p 25

Councils support the use of these as the basis to determine whether future proposed role changes are appropriate.

However, councils would have liked these to be used as a filter for the 154 responsibilities listed in the directions paper so that some of the proposed tasks that were put forward in the workshops were eliminated before being published in the paper.

It was suggested another principle could be added which acknowledges the need to respect the relationship that councils have with their community, along the lines of 'State intervention should recognise local government as the closest level of government to the community and work through the council to make decisions'.

4 Maturity model proposal

One of the biggest challenges with determining the role of councils in emergency management is the capability and capacity variation between councils, and also the communities they support.

Despite the latter phases of the LGV project focusing on capability and capacity, the core requirements of councils in emergency management must be able to be met by the lowest-resourced council, in the current revenue-constrained environment. The sector has seen the cost-shifting pattern too many times to accept a new role as core business with the promise of a grant to support its implementation.

To deal with the capability and capacity challenge, the MAV used its consultation sessions to propose a maturity model approach to defining councils' role in emergency management. This approach would also deal with another issue raised in the sessions – that apart from the blue and black font, there is no weighting given to the items on the list. Some are very specific activities and others are general catch-all statements.

Attendees at the sessions provided positive feedback on the model and as such it is something the MAV wishes to pursue further with LGV, with council input.

4.1 Maturity model example

Under this model, council responsibilities would be split into '**essential**', '**good practice**' and '**extended**'.

Essential responsibilities would reflect the core responsibilities discussed in section 3.2 of this paper – the blue font requirements. They would be a direct reflection of legislation or statutory responsibility. They would be specific so that councils could be easily audited or self-audit. Being statutory responsibilities, they should be prioritised within council budgets and should be achievable without ad hoc grant funding.

Good practice tasks – these would be broadly accepted as activities or tasks that all councils should aim to undertake. They may be outlined in State guidance documents or non-statutory policy documents. They would often be delivered in collaboration with other councils or agencies. The descriptors for these tasks could be more general than the essential

requirements because councils would undertake them in different ways, depending on the resources available to them and the needs of their communities.

Extended tasks – these would be tasks that are beyond scope for a majority of councils because they do not have the resources and/or the risk profile to justify the time and expense. They may also be services that are only delivered to select communities within a municipality because of a high risk profile. The descriptors for these tasks could be more general again, because they would probably be reliant on innovation, targeted grants, and be tailored to the environment/ community.

Recommendation: that LGV works with MAV and councils to further develop the maturity model proposal.

To support this proposal, the MAV used the Relief Assistance page of the Directions Paper as an example in the consultation sessions (see table below). We chose relief because councils have consistently advised us that they are best placed to lead coordination of relief services at the local level.

The below table shows how the tasks listed in the Directions Paper could be split into the three levels under the model. Each council would be expected to meet the essential responsibilities but may undertake tasks in the other two columns to different degrees, depending on their resources and risk profile. It was also suggested in one of the sessions that there could be a fourth column – 'out of scope'. This would prevent unwanted role creep.

Core Capability - Relief assistance

Provide well-coordinated, integrated and timely assistance to meet the immediate health, wellbeing and essential needs of affected communities during and immediately after an emergency event, to support social cohesion and build resilience.

	*Essential Council t*ask or role (by legislation or Statutory document)	*Good practice t*ask or role	*Extended* task or role *where resources allow and/ or justified by risk profile
Before	Coordinate relief agencies and the community to develop local relief plans	Develop protocols and procedures that are agreed with relief agencies. Design a scalable organisational structure to deliver relief services. Contribute to regional relief planning. Identify, plan and document relief centres or other locations to provide emergency relief services that meet health and other community needs. Develop plans and procedures for emergency shelter. Develop surge arrangements for relief, recovery and business-as-usual activities in the short, medium and long-terms.	Plan for the needs of domestic animals as part of relief activities. Support service providers and local groups to educate the community about donated goods and volunteering and develop messages and procedures about donated goods and volunteers. Work with health practitioners to understand the health and psychosocial implications of emergencies and the implications for relief. Work with other councils to develop a collaborative approach to relief.
During	Coordinate relief services locally. Establish and manage relief centres where appropriate, including: • coordinate the provision of food, water and materials to affected communities • provide temporary shelter options for displaced local people	Register relief centre attendees Support a coordinated approach to relief at the regional level. Inform the community about financial hardship assistance payments. Support efforts to reunify family and others separated during an emergency.	Start recovery case management by gathering data from relevant agencies Manage enquiries about donations of goods and offers to volunteer.

	Essential Council task or role (by legislation or Statutory document)	Good practice task or role	Extended task or role *where resources allow and/ or justified by risk profile
	• coordinate and manage services to meet the physical and psychosocial needs of affected local people.		

4.2 Quality assurance

The current MEMP audit regime is relatively inflexible. This has resulted in a number of councils receiving a 'do not comply' finding for their audit. The current audit process review should go some way to addressing these issues.

Any future audit regime should take into consideration variation in agency (not just council) capability and capacity, and recognise that communities have different needs, so emergency management services will be delivered in different ways.

The current Directions Paper includes several general activity descriptions, which could be interpreted in many ways. These statements give little indication of scale or scope, for example, D90 - *Manage, coordinate, supply and deliver resources promptly and efficiently using best-practice methods locally*.

If the MAV maturity model approach is adopted, the core/ essential responsibilities would be clear, discreet tasks or requirements. However, the good practice and extended activity would be tailored to the needs of the community and resources available to the councils, so the evidence used to demonstrate activity would vary from council to council.

At the consultation sessions the MAV suggested that councils choosing to deliver services in the good practice and extended columns could develop quality assurance mechanisms by identifying the types of evidence they would be able to produce to demonstrate they are meeting their commitments.

Recommendation: If the maturity model approach is adopted, the MAV could work with LGV, Inspector General Emergency Management and councils to develop a self-audit and quality assurance framework.

5 Conclusion

There are 154 proposed responsibilities or tasks listed in the Directions Paper. As this submission has identified, there is significant work required to ensure that the tasks are accurately sourced and articulated, as well as presented in a way that reflects the variation in capability and capacity across the sector and offers flexibility to target community needs.

There is a need to present the final role description as part of the broader emergency management arrangements, because tasks that have been identified as inappropriate or inaccurate cannot just disappear – they will need to be addressed by another agency. Councils need greater involvement in the development of State policy so they 'travel the development journey' and understand how the various pieces of new policy fit together.

Until councils have seen an updated role description, that takes these matters into account, the MAV does not believe there will be sector support for the role description. For this reason the MAV strongly urges LGV and EMV to continue to work with councils to address these matters ahead of a further round of consultation.

Legislation, policy and plan references (source of blue responsibilities)

1 s59B Amendment Bill to the *Emergency Management Act 2013* will change this to support, but until then as per s21 of the *Emergency Management Act 1986* councils lead this function by developing and maintaining the municipal emergency management plan

2 s20(1) *Emergency Management Act 1986*

3 s21(3) *Emergency Management Act 1986*

4 MEMPC guidelines, EMMV Part 6, p.6–5

5 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

6 s212 *Building Act 1993*, BMO, clause 52.47 Bushfire protection: planning requirements (BF5) & clause 44.06 Planning provisions

7 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

8 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, p.32

9 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, Appendix 2, p. 4–23

10 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

11 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, pp.32

12 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

13 s59G Amendment Bill to the *2013 Emergency Management Act*, this section replaces s21 (1) of the *Emergency Management Act 1985*

14 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4 p.4–8

15 s20(2) *Emergency Management Act 1986*

16 s20, s34, s40 *Road Management Act 2004*

17 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

18 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

19 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4

20 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

21 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

22 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, Appendix 6, p.4–39

23 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

24 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

25 *Emergency Management Act 1986, Emergency Management Act 2013, Local Government Act 1989, Country Fire Authority Act 1958, Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958, Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, Water Act 1989, Water Industry Act 1994, Electricity Safety Act 1998, Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the *Building Act 1993*

26 *Emergency Management Act 1986, Emergency Management Act 2013* and the EMMV

27 State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, Appendix 2, p. 4–23

28 s96A *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* and s5A *Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958*; MEMPC guidelines, EMMV Part 6, p.6–28

29 s55A, *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*

30 ss50G, H, I & J *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*

31   s38 *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*

32   s5 *Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958*, s43 *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*

33   s36 *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*

34   s81 *Water Industry Act 1994*

35   State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, p.4–8

36   State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, p.4–26

37   s24 *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*

38   Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

39   State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, EMMV Part 4, pp.4–11, 4–20 & 4–32

40   State Emergency Response Plan, EMMV Part 3, pp.3–15 & 3–36

41   Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

42   Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

43   Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

44   Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

45   Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

46 Emergency Management Agency Roles, EMMV Part 7, pp.7–76 & 77

6 Attachments

- MAV Role of Local Government in Emergency Management Position Paper (2015)
- Victorian Preparedness Goal overview