

MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN ASSURANCE

Report Author: Manager Community Wellbeing
Responsible Officer: Director Communities
Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

SUMMARY

Under the Emergency Management Act 2013, the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) is reviewed and updated every three years under the auspice of the multi-agency Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC).

In December 2020 the requirements for the MEMP endorsement changed to an assurance process that takes holistic consideration of MEMP arrangements enabling all emergency management agencies to engage with the review and assurance of the MEMP.

In March 2023 the MEMPC submitted the Yarra Ranges MEMP 2023-26 for assurance endorsement to the endorsing authority, the Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee (RMEPC). The MEMPC was notified of the RMEPC endorsement of assurance statement on 16th March 2023.

The Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) presents the 2023-26 MEMP for noting at this Council meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note

- 1. The Yarra Ranges Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2023-2026 has been endorsed by the Eastern Region Emergency Management Planning Committee.***
- 2. Successful endorsement establishes locally informed Emergency Management Planning arrangements for all hazard emergencies in Yarra Ranges.***

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

There are no related Council decisions relevant to this item.

DISCUSSION

Purpose and Background

A MEMP working group made up of members from the MEMPC conducted a review of the MEMP in July 2022, including a detailed document review involving a MEMPC member feedback survey and content scan.

A revised and updated Draft MEMP was developed, and an initial Assurance Statement was prepared in accordance with State Government guidance outlined in the Municipal Emergency Management Plan – assurance advisory guidelines.

The guidelines require the MEMPC to use a checklist to inform content and emergency management arrangements. The checklist has 20 components, 18 of which link directly to sections of the Emergency Management Act 2013, and two that create opportunities to include additional information that could be shared to strengthen the capability of other MEMPC's.

The first draft Assurance Statement was prepared by Council's Emergency Management Team and tabled for the consideration at a MEMP Working Group meeting on 19 January 2023. Feedback and additional evidence provided by working group members was subsequently incorporated into a second draft of the Statement. This version was circulated to working group members for further comment.

The Yarra Ranges MEMPC endorsed the updated 2023-26 MEMP on 15th February 2023 for submission and endorsement of MEMP assurance to REMPC in March 2023.

The MEMPC was notified of the REMPC endorsement of assurance statement on 16th March 2023.

Options considered

The MEMP review process is required to meet legislative requirements and is guided by state legislation. Alternate options that do not meet these requirements would not achieve a Statement of Assurance and were therefore not considered.

Recommended option and justification

The 2023-26 MEMP (Attachment One) meets legislative requirements and local context that is relevant to the disaster risk profile of the Yarra Ranges municipality and has an endorsed Statement of Assurance from the REMPC.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

There are no financial considerations regarding the recommendations outlined in this report.

Council's commitment to emergency management and the arrangements outlined within the MEMP are supported through Council's adopted operational budget, as well as state and federal government grant funding.

Additional costs to Council may be incurred through the activation of the MEMP as a result of a natural hazard emergency. In these instances, Council will seek out eligible funding support through the federal and state government National Disaster Response Funding, a nationally recognised disaster cost sharing arrangement.

APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES

This report contributes to the following strategic objective(s) in the Council Plan:

- Healthy and Connected Communities, and
- High Performing Organisation.

The report also contributes to meeting the objectives of the:

- Yarra Ranges Health & Wellbeing Plan
- State Emergency Management Plan arrangements; and
- Emergency Management Victoria EM Guidelines – roles and responsibilities.

RELEVANT LAW

Emergency Management Act 2013

A Gender Impact Assessment of the MEMP will be completed within six months of assurance endorsement as part of ongoing Plan maintenance and updating.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic Implications

In outlining local emergency management planning, the MEMP seeks to identify risks and reduce likely impacts of those risks in order to minimise their likely severity. This includes reducing economic impact on community, local businesses and community services.

Social Implications

The MEMP as a requirement, seeks to highlight and document Yarra Ranges social vulnerabilities that need to be considered as part of the local community context. Local information and focus, ensures that all emergency management agencies engage and support this cohort before, during and after emergencies.

Environmental Implications

The MEMP by the very nature of planning for impacts of natural hazards, seeks to set out clear roles and responsibilities of the agencies named within the Plan, and to reduce impacts on the environment before, during and after emergencies.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As a multi-agency document the MEMP is maintained by a collective of local and state emergency management agencies through MEMPC.

It was agreed by the MEMP working group that with a nuanced and specialist topic, this document review was to be shared with key community leaders and Community Emergency Groups for comment and feedback.

This consultation occurred in January and early February of 2023 and suggested feedback has been included in the MEMP.

COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The MEMP is a multi-agency document and as such consultation and collaboration on its review and updates is a legislated and established practice between the MEMPC member agencies.

Recent consideration and changes included in the 2023-26 MEMP were also taken from the most recent October 2022 storm and flash flood impacts, to reflect current local practices and community impacts.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The MEMP is a multi-agency document that looks to plan and prepare for impacts of emergencies and is part of an overall state emergency management approach, that addresses emergency arrangements including key roles and responsibilities as well as stating processes for addressing and reviewing locally identified emergency risks.

The development and assurance process of the MEMP seeks to reduce and mitigate identified risks through coordinated and collaborative approaches as recognised within the MEMP.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officers and/or delegates acting on behalf of the Council through the Instrument of Delegation and involved in the preparation and/or authorisation of this report have any general or material conflict of interest as defined within the *Local Government Act 2020*.

ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT

1. Yarra Ranges Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2023–2026