

**STRATEGY AND POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE**  
**2 MARCH 2009** **GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE**

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<b>A3</b>	<b>EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT/PANDEMIC PLANNING UPDATE</b>
<b>LOCATION/ADDRESS:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>DAVID YEOUART, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES</b>
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	<b>SAM HEWETT, MANAGER ASSET SERVICES</b>
<b>FILE NO.:</b>	<b>28/02/01-05</b>
<b>ATTACHMENTS:</b>	<b>ATTACHMENT #1 – EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES 2008</b>

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**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1. The Emergency Management Act 1986 and the Local Government Act 1989 states each of the municipal councils is separately responsible for discharging the responsibilities imposed on a municipal council for Emergency Management.
- 1.2. Councils have Emergency Management (EM) responsibilities because they are the closest level of government to their communities and have access to specialised local knowledge about their environment and demographic features of their districts. People also naturally seek help from the local council and emergency management agencies during emergencies and the recovery process.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.3. Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) was audited by the Victorian State Emergency Services in 2008 and was found to comply adequately with the Guidelines and will again be audited in 2010.
- 1.4. Included as part of Council's Emergency Management responsibilities, is the responsibility for Influenza Pandemic Planning.
- 1.5. This report seeks to update Council on the progress of Emergency Management and Pandemic Planning as well as outlining Emergency Management activities undertaken in 2008.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1. That the Strategy and Policy Review Committee recommend that Council resolve to receive the report and note the Emergency Management activities undertaken in 2008.

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<sup>1</sup> Emergency Management Manual Victoria (Part 6)

- 2.2. That Council notes that the Influenza Pandemic Plan will be reported to Council when fully developed and fully operational.

**3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 3.1. The Emergency Management Act 1986 and the Local Government Act 1989 clearly outline local government's responsibilities for Emergency Management.
- 3.2. Included is the responsibility for Pandemic Planning which has been identified as a risk through Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP)

Emergency Management

- 3.3. An emergency in this context is described as any event which in any way threatens to endanger the safety or health of any person, threatens to destroy or damage any property, or threatens to endanger the environment within the City of Port Phillip's municipal boundary. An emergency may include;
- A fire or explosion
  - A flood, earthquake, windstorm, or other natural event
  - A road accident or other accident
  - A plague, epidemic or influenza pandemic
  - A disruption to an essential service
  - A siege, hi-jack, riot, or warlike act.
- 3.4. The broad objectives of Council's responsibilities are to ensure that the following components of emergency management are organised within a structure which facilitates planning, preparedness, operational co-ordination and community participation;
- Prevention, reduction and mitigation - the elimination or reduction of the incidence or severity of emergencies and the mitigation of their effects;
  - Response - the combating of emergencies and the provision of rescue and immediate relief services;
  - Recovery - the assisting of persons and communities affected by emergencies to achieve a proper and effective level of functioning.
- 3.5. Examples of roles and activities of Council for each of the above objectives includes;

Prevention, Reduction and Mitigation

- Traffic and road management planning
- Health inspections and surveillance
- Immunizations programs
- Planning for major identified risks (e.g. Station Pier, St. Kilda Festival etc)
- Flood and drainage management systems
- Warning systems for particular emergencies (wind storms)

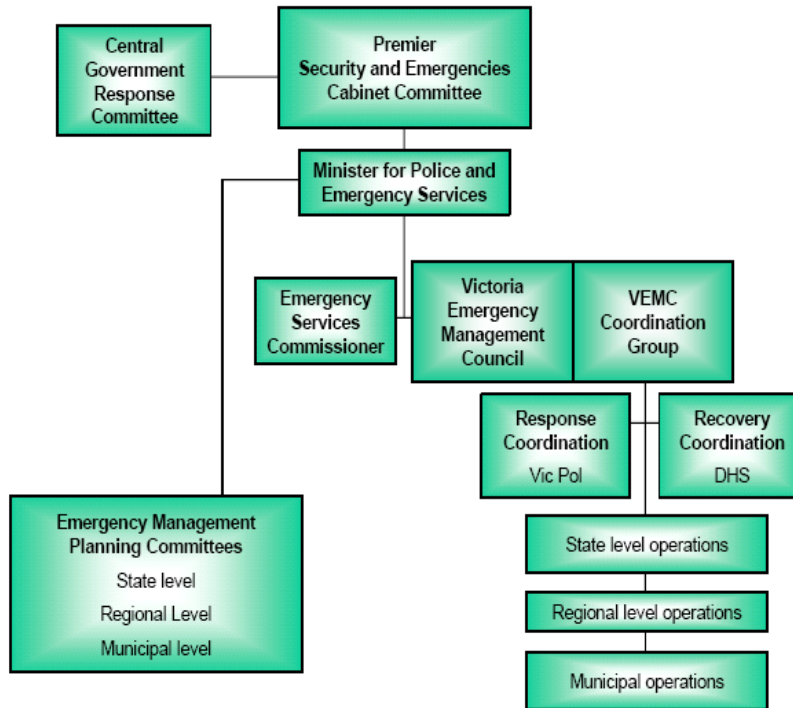
Response

- Provision of staff resources (Municipal Emergency Resource Officer {MERO} etc.)
- Provision of physical resources need by the community and response agencies
- Provision and establishment of the Municipal Emergency Co-ordination Centre (MECC)
- Provision of facilities for emergency services staging areas
- Provision of information to the community and to the public.
- Co-ordination of the provision of emergency relief (catering, material needs)
- Clearance of blocked drains, roads and tree removal.

Recovery

- Provision of information to affected communities
- Provision of recovery and relief centres
- Provision of leadership (staff and expertise)
- Environmental health management (food, sanitation, pest control)
- Provision of temporary accommodation
- Repair and restoration of community infrastructure

- 3.6. Council's responsibility sits within a broader state wide Emergency Management responsibility as shown below.<sup>2</sup>



- 3.7. The City of Port Phillip has a well developed and functioning internal emergency management group with defined roles for EM planning, response and recovery. Membership includes;

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<sup>2</sup> Emergency Management Manual Victoria (Part 1)

**AGENDA - STRATEGY AND POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE - 2 MARCH, 2009**

Name	Emergency Management Role	Title
David Yeouart	Chairperson	Executive Director Community Assets and Services
Sam Hewett	Municipal Emergency Resources Officer (MERO)	Manager Asset Services
Kathy Dillon	1 <sup>st</sup> Deputy MERO	Manager Building Services
Robert Reid	2 <sup>nd</sup> Deputy MERO	Service Co-ordinator Operations
Vacant	Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)	Manager Community Development
Roderick Mclvor	1 <sup>st</sup> Deputy MRM	Coordinator of Ageing Diversity Policy & Partnerships
Noel Kiernan	2 <sup>nd</sup> Deputy MRM	Co-ordinator Meetings and Events
Michael Smith	Municipal Emergency Co- ordination Centre (MECC) Manager	System Development and Support Officer
Steven Baxas	Municipal Building Surveyor	Municipal Building Surveyor
Damien Burgess	Municipal Operations Centre (MOC) Manager	Manager Infrastructure Services
Robert Mellis	Deputy MOC Manager	Waste Management Operations Works Officer
Doug Martin	Coordinator Health Services	Coordinator Health Services
Colin Langham	Manager People and Culture	Manager People and Culture
Liddy Clark	Communications Consultant	Acting Manager Communications and Stakeholder Relations
Jack Crawford	Manager Customer Service	Manager Customer Service

- 3.8. The role of the internal emergency management group includes;
- Development and maintenance of a Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP).
  - Identification and provision of the required municipal resources available for emergency prevention, response and recovery
  - 24-hour on call service to respond in the event of an emergency.
- 3.9. In addition, the City of Port Phillip has a well developed and functioning external Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC). This committee, chaired by the Executive Director Community Assets and Services consists of Council's MEROs and MRMs as well as representatives from;
- Victoria Police
  - Department of Human Services
  - Metropolitan Ambulance Service
  - Metropolitan Fire Brigade
  - Parks Victoria
  - Victorian State Emergency Services
  - Australian Red Cross
- 3.10. The role of the MEMPC is to prepare, review and amend the operational components of Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan.
- 3.11. In 2008, a number of activities or actions were undertaken as part of Council's obligations for Emergency Management and Pandemic Planning. These are outlined in Attachment #1.

#### Pandemic Planning

- 3.12. *"An Influenza Pandemic occurs when a highly infectious new strain of the virus emerges that humans have no immunity to. During a pandemic, the virus spreads rapidly around the world causing high rates of illness and death – resulting in severe social and economic disruption."*<sup>3</sup>
- 3.13. There have been three pandemics in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century – 1918, 1957 and 1968 – the pandemic of 1918 resulted in 50 millions deaths world wide.
- 3.14. Assumptions for Port Phillip City Council regarding the consequences of a pandemic include;

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<sup>3</sup> Human Influenza Pandemic (Victorian Government)

- Staff absences of 30 – 50%,
- Increased levels of uncertainty and fear,
- Increased demand for services such as health, aged care, family and children etc.
- Demand for local leadership from local government
- Enhanced communication from all levels of government

3.15. An Influenza Pandemic is a risk identified in Council's MEMP.

3.16. The Department of Human Services (DHS) finalized the Victorian Human Influenza Pandemic Plan in March 2008. It states that;

*“All levels of government will work together to support communities, to ensure needs are recognized and addressed in pandemic influenza plans. Plans will need to cover roles and responsibilities, planning considerations and preparedness activities”*

3.17. Council's risk mitigation responsibilities includes;

- The appointment of a Pandemic Co-ordinator (appointed in November 2008). This position has developed some preliminary documents for the consideration of a Pandemic Working Group and has a timeline of developing a fully operational plan by the second half of 2009.
- Reviewing business continuity plans (currently being reviewed by auditors Arnold Risk Consulting)
- Pandemic risk mitigation – protect the health of staff, contractors, volunteers and residents through policies that can prevent influenza spreading.
- Development of a pandemic communications plan

3.18. Council's Response and Recovery (should an influenza pandemic occur) includes;

- Provide information to affected communities
- Vaccinate Port Phillip's population
- Establish and staffing a community support service
- Conduct a post impact assessment
- Provide and co-ordinate volunteer helpers
- Provide support services such as Counselling and advocacy
- Provide material aid and in home support
- Assisting with public appeals

3.19. Once fully developed, the Pandemic Plan will be managed under the auspices of the internal EM group.

#### **4. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS**

The people who have been engaged with in relation to this issue are:

- All Emergency Management personnel
- Influenza Pandemic Co-ordinator
- New Year's Eve Planning Group.
- Acting Manager Community and Stakeholder Relations.

All Emergency Management personnel are clear about their role in mitigating risks, and planning for a response and recovery process in the event of an emergency.

The external people and/or organisations who have been engaged with in relation to this issue are:

- The Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
- Key stakeholders from the Port of Melbourne Authority on risks associated with Station Pier.
- St. Kilda Festival organizers
- Grand Prix Corporation
- Department of Planning and Community Development
- City of Melbourne
- Council contractor representatives from Fulton Hogan and CitiWide.

Council conducted a number of exercises and responded to a number of emergencies during 2008. This collaborative approach is the only possible way to effectively manage emergencies.

Council still has a role in drawing up a specific 'Station Pier Risk Plan and Response' document as a result of the Station Pier major exercise conducted late in 2008.

## **5. DISCUSSION**

### **5.1 OPTIONS**

Council's legal obligations are clear so no alternative options exist.

### **5.2 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Council has obligations under the Emergency Management Act 1986 and the Local Government Act 1989 and is meeting these obligations through;

- The Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP),
- The appointment of a Municipal Emergency Resources Officer (MERO),
- The regular meeting of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)
- Council's MEMP is regularly audited by the Victorian State Emergency Service, and
- Developing an Influenza Pandemic Plan.

### **5.3 FINANCE / RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Council meets the cost of a 24-hour response service to its community through the provision of 6 on-call staff.

In addition, Council supports the operations of the local State Emergency Service through the lease of 2 vehicles.

### **5.4 LEGAL & RISK IMPLICATIONS**

There are significant risks associated with Emergencies and Pandemics. Council spends a great deal of energy trying to mitigate these risks and plan response and recovery scenarios to prepare staff and contractors in the event of an incident.

The MEMP includes a Community Emergency Risk Management Model – Risk Register, Treatments and Action Plans which is regularly updated by the MEMPC.

## 5.5 SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

### SOCIAL EQUITY

Risk planning and preparedness are responsible processes to ensure the effects of any emergency or a pandemic are mitigated should they occur. Council is in a strong position to assist communities by responding and recovering should an emergency occur.

### ECONOMIC VIABILITY

Effective planning for emergencies and pandemics are likely to reduce the costs of emergencies if they arise. This includes Council's investment in communication strategies, infrastructure upgrades, staff training, and resources available to respond to any emergency that might arise.

### ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

The risk to the environment from some emergencies can be catastrophic as evidenced by Victoria's recent bushfires. In Port Phillip, the emergencies most likely to occur are flooding, storm surges, significant traffic accidents, building fires, and extreme weather conditions. Council has an obligation to prepare the municipality to be able to withstand emergency conditions like ones listed above.

### CULTURAL VITALITY

In the event of an emergency, it is important that Council is able to help all communities recover and return to some sense of normality. The responsibility includes ensuring an effective communication strategy with all Port Phillip communities, particularly those who speak a language other than English.

## **6. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

### 6.1 TIMELINE

Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) is well managed by Council's internal EM group. The next audit for the MEMP will be conducted in 2010.

Council's Influenza Pandemic Plan is being developed. To date, some preliminary documents have been prepared which will require significant review by the key internal stakeholders.

It is anticipated that the Influenza Pandemic Plan will be fully operational by the second half of 2009. At that time a report will be presented to Council on the final Influenza Pandemic Plan.

6.2 COMMUNICATION

The Pandemic Co-ordinator will continue to work on the Pandemic Plan and begin to draw together the key stakeholders in order to finalise the action plan. These key stakeholders will include responsibilities for Executive Management and Control, Immunisation, Community Recovery and Support and Communications.

A Pandemic Communications Strategy is critical to an effective plan. Council's Acting Manager Communication and Stakeholder Relations has already been briefed on this matter and will work together with Council's MERO to formulate the communications strategy.