

Councils and Emergencies

Capability and Capacity Evaluation Report



Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.

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Foreword

In Victoria, we have a goal to build safer and more-resilient communities. From an emergency management perspective, we need to clearly understand the emergency management sector's capability and capacity to plan for, withstand and recover from emergencies.

The Councils and Emergencies Project is a key part of building this understanding. In Phase One, there was strong alignment between this project and the *Victorian Preparedness Framework* which continued during Phase Two. This connection demonstrates the importance of councils in emergency management reform and acts to ensure councils can meaningfully contribute to Victoria's significant emergency management sector reform agenda.

This *Councils and Emergencies Capability and Capacity Evaluation Report* provides a comprehensive overview of the emergency management capability and capacity of Victoria's local government sector. It recognises that each municipality and each council is different, and the level to which a council provides emergency management services depends on its municipal risk profile, on its organisational capacity and capability and on the unique characteristics of the municipality it represents.

Every council devoted significant time, energy and resources to providing the rich data on which this report is based. We sincerely thank every one of Victoria's seventy-nine councils for the effort their officers put into contributing their knowledge and perspectives.

The release of the report marks the completion of Phase Two of the project. The report will help us better understand the capability and capacity strengths and areas for improvement of the local government sector, as well as those of the wider emergency management sector. It will be the basis for proceeding with Phase Three of the project.

In Phase Three, the focus will shift to engagement and consultation with councils and the emergency management sector to develop strategies and action plans to address areas for improvement in councils' emergency management capability and capacity. This report identifies the areas for improvement that will form the basis of that consultation. Phase Three will contribute to broader emergency management reform in Victoria including the planning reform (particularly at the municipal level), the *Resilient Recovery Strategy* and the implementation of the *Victorian Preparedness Framework*.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report and we look forward to your future contributions.



Graeme Emonson

Executive Director
Local Government Victoria



Andrew Crisp

Emergency Management Commissioner
Emergency Management Victoria

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Executive summary

The Councils and Emergencies Project is a multi-year, three-phase project to enhance the capability and capacity of councils to meet their emergency management obligations.

Phase One clarified and confirmed the emergency management responsibilities and activities of councils and produced the *Councils and Emergencies Position Paper*. Phase Two aimed to understand councils' emergency management capability and capacity, based on the needs and risk profile of each municipality and produced this report. In Phase Three, councils and state government agencies will be engaged to develop strategies and action plans to address areas for improvement in councils' emergency management capability and capacity.

Phase Two methodology

For the purposes of this report:

- **capability** is defined as the ability of councils to undertake emergency management responsibilities and activities
- **capacity** is defined as the level of resourcing councils have, to undertake emergency management (including people, resources, governance, systems and processes).

Councils and the communities they represent have widely differing emergency management needs and service responses to those needs. The response of each council is unique to their emergency risks, local circumstances and resourcing.

Accordingly, a maturity model was used to evaluate each council's emergency management capability and capacity. The model involved determining a target maturity and an actual maturity.

A council's:

- **target maturity** indicated the level at which it would like to be able to provide emergency management services to its community
- **actual maturity** indicated the level at which it evaluates it is currently able to provide emergency management services to its community.

To evaluate their target maturity, councils used their relative need and emergency risk to identify a target maturity level of 1 to 5. A council at level 1 aims to undertake its emergency management responsibilities and activities to a basic level only, completing all legislative requirements and other responsibilities only as their limited resources allow. A council at level 5 aims to undertake its emergency management responsibilities and activities to a best-practice level, completing all legislative requirements and other responsibilities.

To evaluate their actual maturity, councils answered ninety questions about their capability and capacity to undertake emergency management. The questions addressed emergency management preparedness and planning activities and responsibilities.

The questions were grouped into six categories:

- Planning with Stakeholders (category A)
- Planning within Council (category B)
- Planning for Activation (category D)
- Planning for Relief coordination (category E)
- Planning for Recovery Coordination (category F)
- Risk Mitigation (category C)

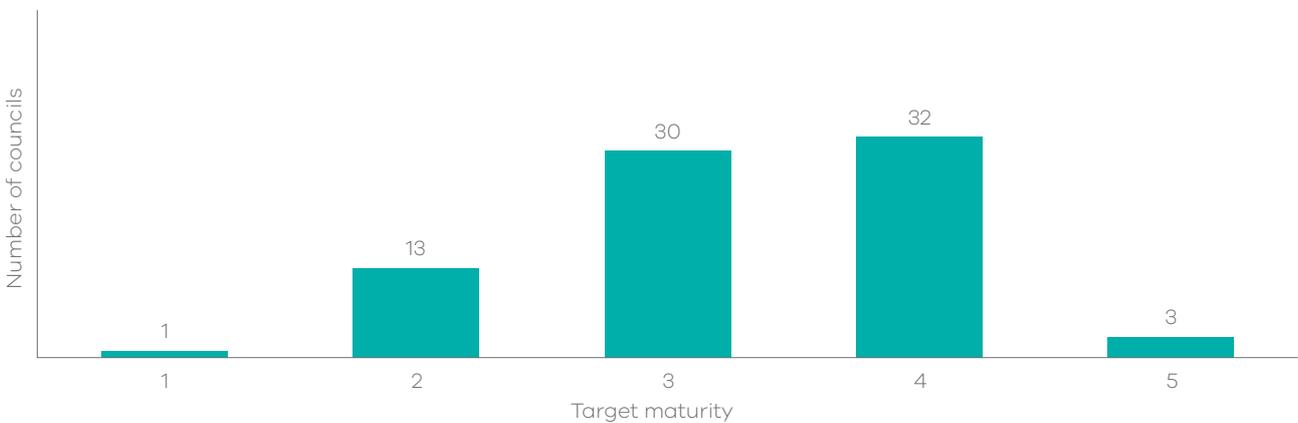
By comparing their actual maturity with their target maturity, councils determined whether they are below, on or above their target. This then provided an understanding of their emergency management capability and capacity.

Summary results

Target maturity

Sixty-two councils (78%) identified a target maturity of 3 or 4. Only one council identified a target of 1, while three councils had a target of 5.

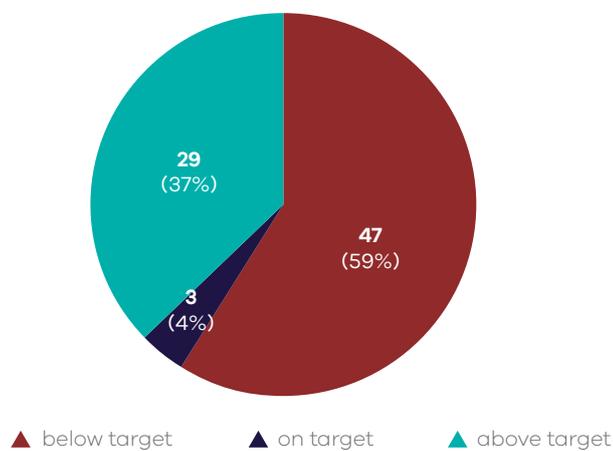
Target maturity - State



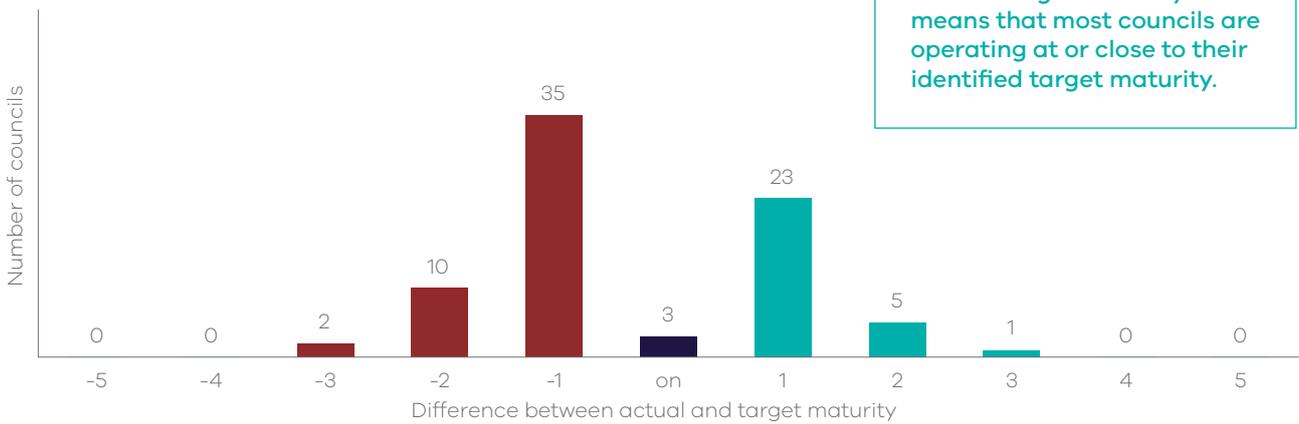
Actual maturity

Overall forty-seven councils (59%) had an actual maturity below their target maturity. The Planning for Recovery Coordination category was a key contributor to this result.

Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, all categories, number and per cent



Difference between actual and target maturity, all categories, state



Sixty-one councils (77%) were on or within one level of their target maturity. This means that most councils are operating at or close to their identified target maturity.

Areas for improvement

The self-evaluation data that councils provided identified the following common areas for improvement within councils’ emergency management capability and capacity. Addressing these areas for improvement should result in councils meeting or exceeding their target maturities, and strategies and action plans to do so will be developed in Phase Three of the project.

Emergency relief and recovery: councils identified a lack of capacity and capability to undertake their emergency relief and recovery responsibilities and activities. Sixty-three councils (80%) were below their identified target maturity in the Planning for Relief or Recovery Coordination categories.

Integration of emergency management into business as usual: councils reported the significant impact that the coordination of emergency relief and recovery imposes on their organisations. Thirty-nine councils (49%) were below their target maturity for integrating emergency planning across their organisation, and forty-three councils (54%) were below their target maturity for planning to maintain their capacity for business-as-usual services during an emergency.

Community engagement for emergency management:

councils reported that emergency management planning with the community is a large capability and capacity gap. Fifty-four councils (68%) were below their target maturity for collaborating with the community to plan for emergency events, and fifty-five councils (70%) were below their target maturity for collaborating with the community to mitigate emergency risk.

Further clarification of council roles in emergency management:

there is still some uncertainty in the emergency management sector about the responsibilities and activities of councils, including the extent to which councils should undertake particular responsibilities or activities and the difference between a lead and support role. Councils have a strong understanding of their legislative responsibilities, however there is less clarity within the emergency management sector around other responsibilities and activities.

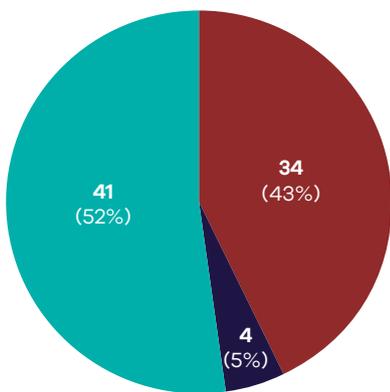
Emergency management budget and funding:

given the wide range of services councils provide to their communities, the budget they can allocate to emergency management is often constrained. Councils largely rely on funding (including the Municipal Emergency Resourcing Program or MERP) to resource their emergency management planning. In some cases, those that do receive MERP funding report that the level of MERP funding is not enough to fulfil their increasing emergency management responsibilities.

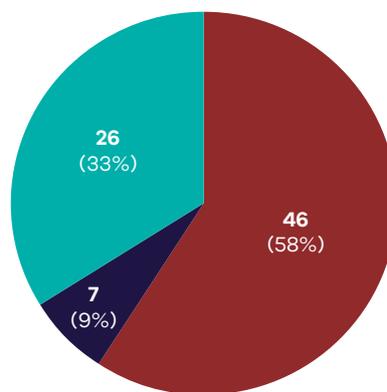
Category results

The summary results for each of the six categories are:

Planning with Stakeholders

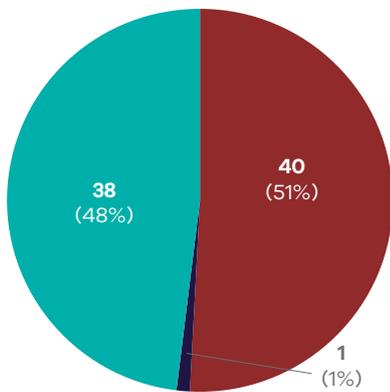


Planning within Council

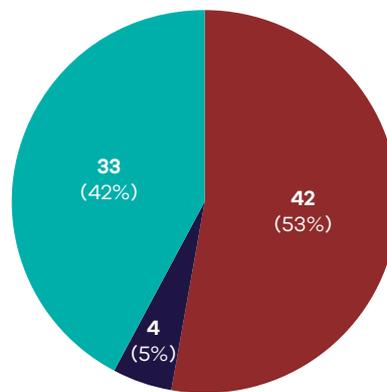


- ▲ below target
- ▲ on target
- ▲ above target

Planning for Activation

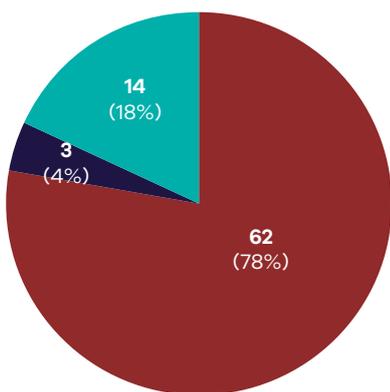


Planning for Relief Coordination

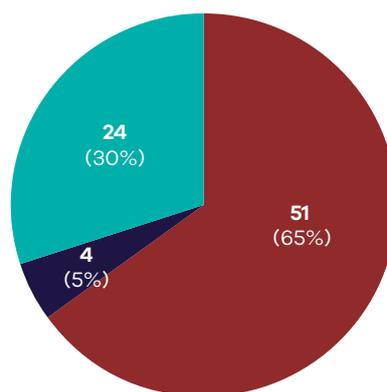


- ▲ below target
- ▲ on target
- ▲ above target

Planning for Recovery Coordination



Risk Mitigation



- ▲ below target
- ▲ on target
- ▲ above target

Summary of issues

The evaluation identified the following issues that commonly challenge councils to meet their target maturity. The most common reason councils identified for not achieving their target maturity was that they lack the capacity to undertake the required range of emergency management responsibilities.

Capacity

People - Staffing (before): the emergency management planning function is commonly undertaken by one or a few staff, sometimes as an additional responsibility to their non-emergency management substantive role. This results in a reduced staffing capacity to plan for emergencies. Councils therefore prioritise emergency management responsibilities required by legislation.

Systems - Budget: for some councils (such as those with a lower emergency risk), emergency management is not as high a priority as other council functions. Councils provide a wide range of services to their communities and allocate their budget accordingly. The emergency management budgets are commonly constrained, which can limit the resources allocated to emergency management.

Governance - Funding: councils that receive funding through MERP reported that although these funds increase their capacity, they are often insufficient to cover the wide range of emergency management responsibilities. Without the funding councils would be unable to undertake some emergency management responsibilities and activities.

Processes - Procedures: councils have formal municipal plans that outline high-level arrangements for emergency management, but they often lack the capacity to develop detailed procedures.

People - Staffing (during and after): lack of staffing capacity is also an issue during and after emergency events, when council staff must be diverted from their normal duties to undertake emergency roles. Councils have limited numbers of staff available to resource emergency management during and after an emergency for these reasons:

- the need to maintain business-critical functions (such as finance and aged care services)
- for a major emergency, the total number of staff within the organisation can be insufficient to maintain business-as-usual services and functions while undertaking emergency management responsibilities in activation, relief and recovery. This issue is amplified in smaller councils which will never be sufficiently staffed to resource a major emergency
- staff are not able to take on an emergency management role because they are not sufficiently resilient to deal with the trauma of affected communities, or they may have been personally affected by the emergency and are not able to undertake an emergency role
- not all councils have formal resource-sharing agreements or detailed procedures about how to activate and carry out a resource-sharing agreement.

Geographic size: councils with large geographic areas reported that the size of their municipalities made it harder to undertake their emergency management responsibilities. Barriers they identified were the distances to travel to local communities, having to deal with a large area for hazard planning and undertaking relief and recovery functions in multiple geographic areas. This issue is amplified in geographically larger municipalities which can have smaller rate bases, have a large amount of assets and have less available council resources.

Population: councils with a large population may find planning for and responding to an emergency more challenging. With larger numbers of people including residents and transient populations affected, more resources are needed to plan with and support communities before, during and after an emergency. People living in urban areas can be more difficult to engage in emergency management planning activities because of their limited direct experience in emergencies.

Capability

People - Organisational knowledge: most emergency management knowledge and expertise is held by only a few people within council. Staff responsible for emergency management have strong capability but that often does not extend to the surge workforce or the wider organisation.

People - Emergency event experience: infrequent emergency events mean there are limited opportunities for staff to gain experience. If there have been few or no emergencies, only those in leadership roles (such as the Emergency Management Coordinator, MERO and MRM) may be activated and gain experience.

Systems - Training: there is little emergency management training available in the sector, and councils reported that a lack of training can lead to a lack of capability in surge staff who have an emergency management role. Although some councils have developed training internally or through an emergency management collaboration, most emergency planning staff lack capability and capacity to do this.

Processes - Procedures: a lack of clearly written procedures and other reference documents can result in staff not understanding their role and its requirements. This can restrict their capability to effectively undertake their emergency management role.

People - Organisational changes: staff turnover results in a loss of staff with experience in emergencies, and it reduces the organisation's capability.

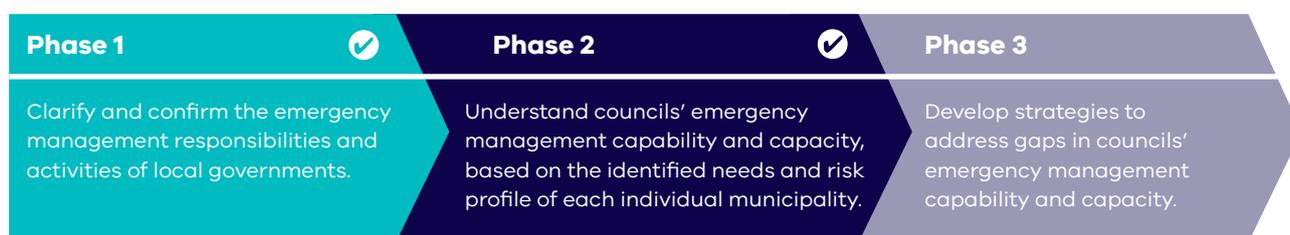
1.1 About the project

The Councils and Emergencies Project is a multi-year, three-phase project to enhance the capability and capacity of councils to meet their emergency management obligations.

The project is listed as a state-wide strategic priority in the *Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan (2018-21)*, after having initially been identified in the *Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry Report*.

Figure 1 shows the three phases of the Councils and Emergencies Project.

Figure 1: Flowchart of Councils and Emergencies Phases



1.1.1 Phase One

Phase One clarified and confirmed the emergency management responsibilities and activities of councils. *The Councils and Emergencies Position Paper* was published in December 2017. It identified ninety-four emergency management responsibilities and activities undertaken by one or more councils, without judgement as to whether they were legislative requirements or simply customary. The position paper categorised the responsibilities and activities as occurring:

- before an emergency (planning)
- during an emergency (response and relief)
- after an emergency (recovery)
- as part of business as usual and with emergency management implications.

The position paper emphasised that community needs differ among councils, and not all councils will or should carry out all the responsibilities and activities.

1.1.2 Phase Two

Phase Two aims to understand councils' emergency management capability and capacity, based on the needs and risk profile of each municipality. The emergency management responsibilities and activities in the *Councils and Emergencies Position Paper* were used to develop the Phase Two methodology. All councils had the opportunity to evaluate their capability and capacity to undertake

emergency management responsibilities and activities, in the context of their organisational and municipal characteristics and needs.

All seventy-nine Victorian councils completed the evaluation.

This report contains the outcomes of the evaluations and marks the completion of Phase Two. The report supports the emergency management sector to better understand councils' emergency management capability and capacity, and it provides accurate, current council data and information for sector reform projects.

The effort councils took to complete the evaluation and their commitment to the project is a strong indication of the importance they put on emergency management. The findings will enable them to better understand their capacity and capability and support better emergency management planning locally.

The Phase Two methodology is explained in Part 2.

1.1.3 Phase Three

In Phase Three, councils, state government agencies and other emergency management organisations will be engaged to develop strategies and action plans to address the areas for improvement in councils' emergency management capability and capacity. The Phase Two capability and capacity findings will be used to provide an evidence base for broader emergency management sector reform.

The strategies and action plans developed in Phase Three will align with other sector reforms including the Victorian Preparedness Framework, Emergency Management Planning Reform and Resilient Recovery Strategy that aim to build safer, more resilient communities. The findings of Phase Three will be developed into a final report which will be used to produce options to address areas for improvement in the emergency management capability and capacity of councils and of the wider emergency management sector.

1.2 Emergency management sector reform

The emergency management sector is currently undergoing major reforms, some of which have been completed. The Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018 is introducing new arrangements for integrated, coordinated and comprehensive emergency management planning at the state, regional and municipal levels. Current municipal planning and audit arrangements will continue until 1 December 2020, when the legislation will be implemented in full.

New Municipal Emergency Management Planning Guidelines are currently being developed and will be released after 1 December 2020 following consultation with councils and the emergency management sector.

This report will help to inform development and implementation of the new planning guidelines as well as the:

- Resilient Recovery Strategy
- Victorian Preparedness Framework
- Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

1.3 Victorian Preparedness Framework

The Victorian Preparedness Framework is a planning tool created to improve understanding of the capability and capacity required through all stages of a major emergency. The framework identifies twenty-one core capabilities required to deliver emergency management responsibilities for a major emergency. The emergency management sector is currently undertaking multi-agency assessments for each of the twenty-one core capabilities to understand the extent of the sector's capability and capacity against capability targets.

The responsibilities and activities listed in the Councils and Emergencies Position Paper were aligned with thirteen of the core capabilities in the Victorian Preparedness Framework to ensure consistency between the capabilities required by state and local governments for delivering emergency management responsibilities.

The Phase Two findings will also be a key source of data for emergency management planning reform in the local government sector and more broadly. The findings will be incorporated into each of the thirteen relevant core capability assessments and contribute to the development of new state, regional and municipal emergency management plans.

1.4 Municipal Emergency Resourcing Program

The Municipal Emergency Resourcing Program (MERP) funds sixty-four Victorian councils to plan and prepare for emergencies. The current program funding agreements expire on 30 June 2020. MERP funding is ongoing and the findings of Phase Two of this project will inform future MERP program guidelines.

2.1 Maturity model

Councils and the communities they represent have widely different emergency management needs and service responses to those needs. The response of each council is unique to its emergency risks, local circumstances and resourcing.

Accordingly, a maturity model was used to evaluate each council's emergency management capability and capacity. The model involved determining:

- a target maturity
- an actual maturity.

By comparing the actual maturity with the target maturity, councils determined whether they were below, on or above their target. This then provided an understanding of their emergency management capability and capacity.

For the purposes of this report:

- **capability** is defined as the ability of councils to undertake emergency management responsibilities and activities
- **capacity** is defined as the level of resourcing councils have to undertake emergency management (including people, resources, governance, systems and processes).

2.1.1 Target maturity

A council's **target maturity** indicates the level at which it would like to be able to provide emergency management services to its community. Council's target maturity was evaluated using relative need and emergency risk.

Relative need indicates how well councils are resourced to undertake their services, including emergency management.

A high relative need indicates a council has limited resources as an organisation and therefore has fewer resources to undertake emergency management. A low relative need indicates a council has greater resources as an organisation and therefore more resources to undertake emergency management.

Relative need was derived using the methodology of the Victoria Grants Commission (VGC), which receives funds from the Commonwealth for

allocation across the seventy-nine Victorian councils. Councils with the least financial capacity are assessed as having the highest relative need and allocated larger grants. Those councils with the greatest financial capacity are assessed to have the lowest relative need and allocated the lowest grants.

To evaluate relative need, VGC 2018-19 general purpose grant amounts per capita for each council were:

- ordered from highest to lowest
- divided into five percentiles and allocated a number on a scale from high need (1) to low need (5).

Emergency risk indicates how the municipality could be affected by an emergency and therefore the level to which council may need to resource emergency management.

A higher emergency risk indicates a council has a greater risk of being affected by an emergency and could allocate more resources to undertake emergency management planning. A lower emergency risk indicates a council has a lower risk of being affected by an emergency and could allocate less resources to undertake emergency management planning.

To evaluate their emergency risk, councils:

- evaluated the consequence of municipal hazards on their organisation
- compared this with the municipal emergency risk assessment of the same hazards
- used this comparison to evaluate their emergency risk on a scale from negligible (1) to extreme (5).

The municipal emergency risk assessment describes the risk of a hazard to the municipality. The consequence to council describes the organisation's ability to maintain business-as-usual services if the municipality is affected by the hazard.

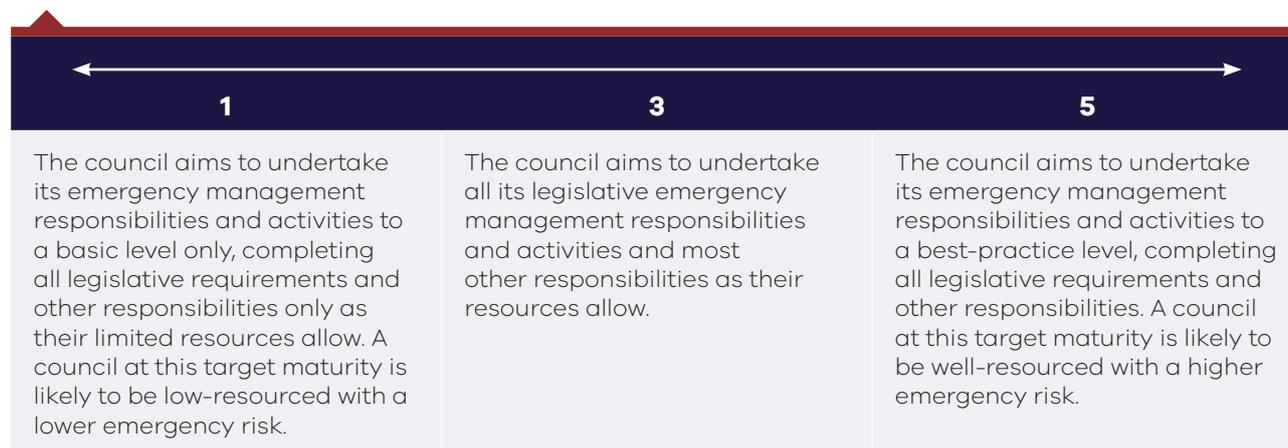
Once relative need and emergency risk were evaluated, the council's **target maturity** was identified using the matrix in Table 1. Councils used the number derived from the matrix as a guide to confirm their target maturity. Councils could accept the target maturity derived from the matrix or could choose another target that better reflected their organisation's target maturity.

Table 1: Target maturity

			Relative need				
			High need (low resourced)		Low need (high resourced)		
			1	2	3	4	5
Emergency Risk	Extreme	5	2	3	4	5	5
	High	4	2	3	4	4	5
	Medium	3	2	2	3	4	4
	Low	2	1	2	2	3	4
	Negligible	1	1	1	2	2	3

Figure 2 describes the target maturity levels of the 1-to-5 continuum derived from Table 1.

Figure 2: Target maturity continuum



2.1.2 Actual maturity

A council's **actual maturity** indicates the level at which it assesses it is currently able to provide emergency management services to its community.

To evaluate their actual maturity, councils answered ninety questions about their capability and capacity to undertake emergency management.

There were three types of actual maturity questions:

- **Type One:** to gauge a council's level of maturity against the responsibilities and activities and associated core capabilities in the *Councils and Emergencies Position Paper*.
- **Type Two:** to gauge a council's perceptions of how well it feels it performs its emergency management functions against its target maturity
- **Type Three:** which required a written response describing a council's capability and capacity to plan for emergencies.

The Type One and Type Two questions are reproduced in tables throughout this report and given a category and numerical code for ease of cross-reference. Type One questions are represented at their first level of maturity only. Local Government Victoria's (LGV) [website](#) has a complete list of all questions, including all Type One maturity level statements.

All the questions asked about emergency management planning rather than emergency management experience because some councils have not been involved in a recent or major emergency and have not been able to test their arrangements during a real event. Councils with recent experience with an emergency event could draw on this experience to answer Type Two questions.

Table 2 provides an example of a Type One question. Each responsibility and activity was divided into four statements and structured in order of increasing maturity. Councils were asked to put a tick or cross against the question and each of the four statements underneath it to indicate whether the question or statement was true or false for their organisation. Actual maturity was evaluated at the level of the last tick, indicating the council had not reached the next level of maturity. Councils with an actual maturity of 5 indicated they undertake all maturity levels.

Table 2: Example of a Type One question

B3: Has council appointed a Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)?	Actual maturity
Council has not appointed a Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)	0
Council has appointed an MRM.	1
One or more deputy MRMs have been appointed.	2
The responsibilities, duties and training requirements of the role are documented. The role allocation is appropriate to the substantive position and the person.	3
All MRMs have developed knowledge and expertise through regular activations or training/ exercising to competently undertake their emergency management role. Council management allocates time for MRMs to undertake training and activations.	4
The activation of the role is considered in business continuity arrangements.	5

Table 3 provides an example of a Type Two question. Councils were asked to respond to the question by choosing a number from the 1–5 scale.

Table 3: Example of a Type Two question

B15: How well does council integrate emergency planning across the organisation?					
0	1	2	3	4	5
Not at all			Area of strength		

2.2 The evaluation

The evaluation was undertaken by all councils from 29 April 2019 to 21 June 2019. LGV conducted regional workshops for all councils at the beginning of the period, and it supported councils with email and telephone assistance throughout.

Councils provided their responses through a purpose-built online evaluation platform.

Questions were grouped into six categories:

- Planning with Stakeholders (category A)
- Planning within Council (category B)
- Planning for Activation (category D)
- Planning for Relief Coordination (category E)
- Planning for Recovery Coordination (category F)
- Risk Mitigation (category C)

A council’s actual maturity for each category was calculated by taking the average score of the Type One and Type Two questions and giving them an equal weight.

Councils were encouraged to complete the evaluation as a whole-of-organisation evaluation, and the council officer responsible for emergency management usually coordinated the process. Council responses were approved by their chief executive officer or delegate before being submitted.

The data on which this report is based has been derived directly from councils’ responses to the evaluation. The report reflects councils’ emergency management capability and capacity according to how councils interpreted and evaluated themselves for each question. It reflects a point in time. The responses have not been verified or audited, but the data is considered to represent an objective self-evaluation by councils.

2.3 Phase Two Project Reference Group

A Project Reference Group was created to provide subject matter expertise to help guide the development of the capability and capacity evaluation. The group comprised representatives of:

- each of the eleven council regional emergency management collaborations
- the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
- Emergency Management Victoria (EMV)
- the Municipal Association of Victoria Emergency Management Committee
- the state Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group (MEMEG)
- the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) Forest Fire and Regions Group
- DELWP’s Barwon South West Region.

2.4 Reporting the findings

The report presents the Phase Two findings primarily by comparing actual maturity to target maturity, and by summarising councils' comments on their emergency management capability and capacity.

To determine a council's capability and capacity, its actual maturity was compared with its target maturity to determine whether the council was below, on or above its target maturity. This comparison was made on a question, category and overall scale.

The report has a repeating structure and results are presented in three levels of detail:

- summary results, which analyse the results of all categories combined
- category results, which analyse the results for each category and the questions within those categories.
- findings, which summarises the comments from most councils but not necessarily from all seventy-nine councils.

Within each part, the data is analysed and reported in three groups:

- state, for all seventy-nine councils in Victoria
- region, using the eight Victorian Government Regions, which are:
 - Barwon South West (nine councils)
 - Eastern Metropolitan (seven councils)
 - Gippsland (six councils)
 - Grampians (eleven councils)
 - Hume (twelve councils)
 - Loddon Mallee (ten councils)
 - North Western Metropolitan (fourteen councils)
 - Southern Metropolitan (ten councils)

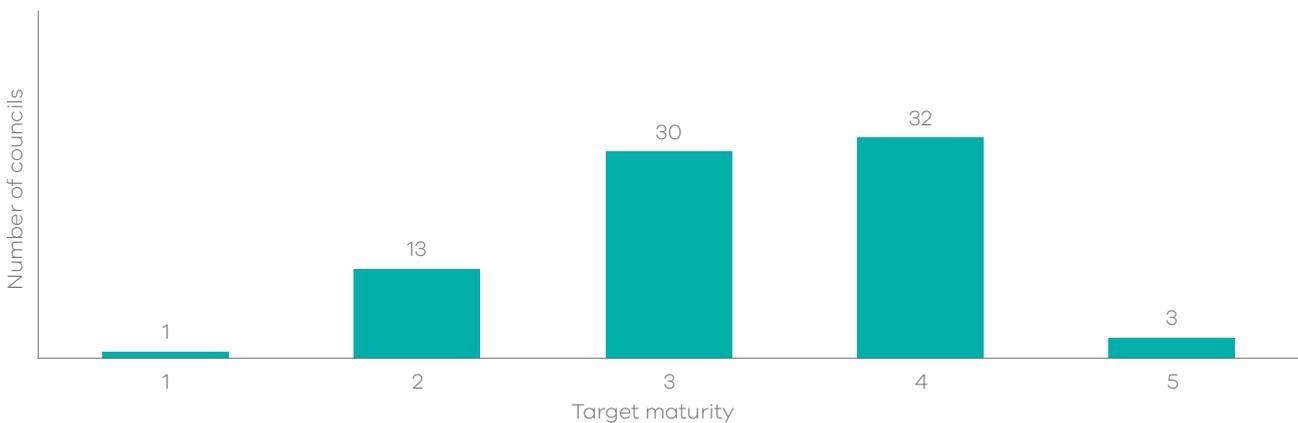
- comparator, using LGV's standardised Victorian Local Government Comparator Groups:
 - Metropolitan, which are the twenty-two metropolitan Melbourne councils
 - Interface, which are the nine Interface Councils members, except for Mitchell Shire Council which is in the Large Shire grouping
 - Regional City, which are the ten Regional Cities Victoria members
 - Large Shire, which are the nineteen Rural Councils Victoria members with more than fifteen thousand people
 - Small Shire, which are the nineteen Rural Councils Victoria members with fewer than fifteen thousand people.

3.1 Target maturity

3.1.1 State

Figure 3 shows the target maturity of Victoria's seventy-nine councils. Sixty-two councils (78%) identified a target maturity of 3 or 4. Only one council identified a target of 1, while three councils had a target of 5.

Figure 3: Target maturity, state



Councils could accept the target maturity derived from the matrix or could choose another target that better reflected their organisation. Fifty-five councils accepted the target maturity derived from the matrix and twenty-four chose a different target maturity. Of the councils that changed their target maturity:

- seven councils reduced their target maturity: six councils reduced it by one level and one council reduced it by two levels
- seventeen councils increased their target maturity: fourteen councils increased it by one level and three councils increased it by two levels.

Overall, seventy-five councils (95%) accepted their target maturity or changed it by only one, which demonstrates that the combination of relative need and emergency risk enabled councils to identify an appropriate target maturity.

3.1.2 Region

Table 4 and Figure 4 show the number and percentage of councils at each target maturity level by region and state.

The three metropolitan regions of North Western, Eastern and Southern Metropolitan had almost identical percentages of councils at each target level. These councils had relative need levels ranging from 3 to 4 and emergency risk levels ranging from 1 to 5. One council in each metropolitan region identified a target maturity of 5, with all other councils in the regions identifying target maturities of 3 or 4. All metropolitan councils that identified a target maturity of 4 or 5 had a relative need of 4 or 5, indicating they are well-resourced organisations.

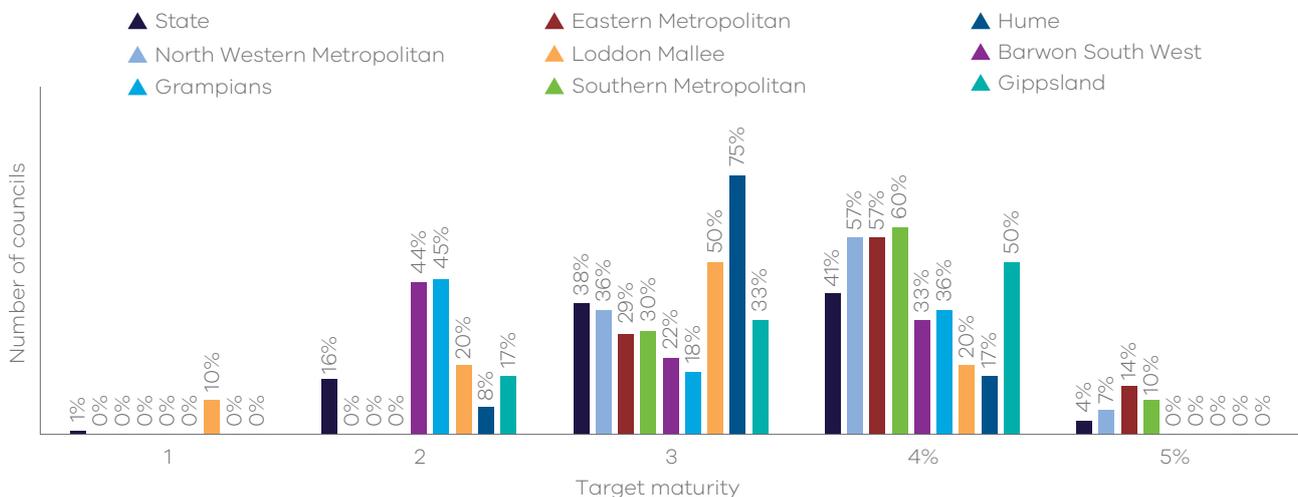
Councils in the remaining regions identified target maturities from 1 to 4. These councils had relative need levels ranging from 1 to 4 and emergency risk levels ranging from 2 to 5. Barwon South West and Grampians had the highest percentage of councils with a target maturity of 2, while Gippsland had the highest percentage of councils with a target maturity of 4.

Only two councils in the state identified an emergency risk of 5 and these are in the Grampians and North Western Metropolitan regions. Twenty-six councils identified an emergency risk of 4 and they ranged across all regions.

Table 4: Target maturity level, state and by region, per cent and number

Target maturity										
	1	2	3	4	5					
State	1%	1	16%	13	38%	30	41%	32	4%	3
North Western Metropolitan	0%	0	0%	0	36%	5	57%	8	7%	1
Eastern Metropolitan	0%	0	0%	0	29%	2	57%	4	14%	1
Southern Metropolitan	0%	0	0%	0	30%	3	60%	6	10%	1
Barwon South West	0%	0	44%	4	22%	2	33%	3	0%	0
Grampians	0%	0	45%	5	18%	2	36%	4	0%	0
Loddon Mallee	10%	1	20%	2	50%	5	20%	2	0%	0
Hume	0%	0	8%	1	75%	9	17%	2	0%	0
Gippsland	0%	0	17%	1	33%	2	50%	3	0%	0

Figure 4: Target maturity, state and by region, per cent



3.1.3 Comparator

Table 5 and Figure 5 show the number and percentage of councils at each target maturity level by comparator group and state.

All Metropolitan, Interface and Regional City councils identified target maturities of 3, 4 or 5. Metropolitan comparator councils had relative need levels of 4 to 5 but emergency risk levels ranging from 1 to 5, reflecting that these councils are generally larger and comparatively better resourced to undertake emergency management even if they have a lower emergency risk.

All Regional City councils identified target maturities of 3 or 4, with relative need and emergency risk levels ranging from 2 to 4 reflecting their higher risk profiles but smaller resource bases.

Large Shire councils identified target maturities of 2, 3 or 4, with the majority identifying a target maturity

of 3. Large Shire councils had relative need levels of 1 to 3 and emergency risk levels from 2 to 4, reflecting that these councils generally have limited resourcing but higher risk.

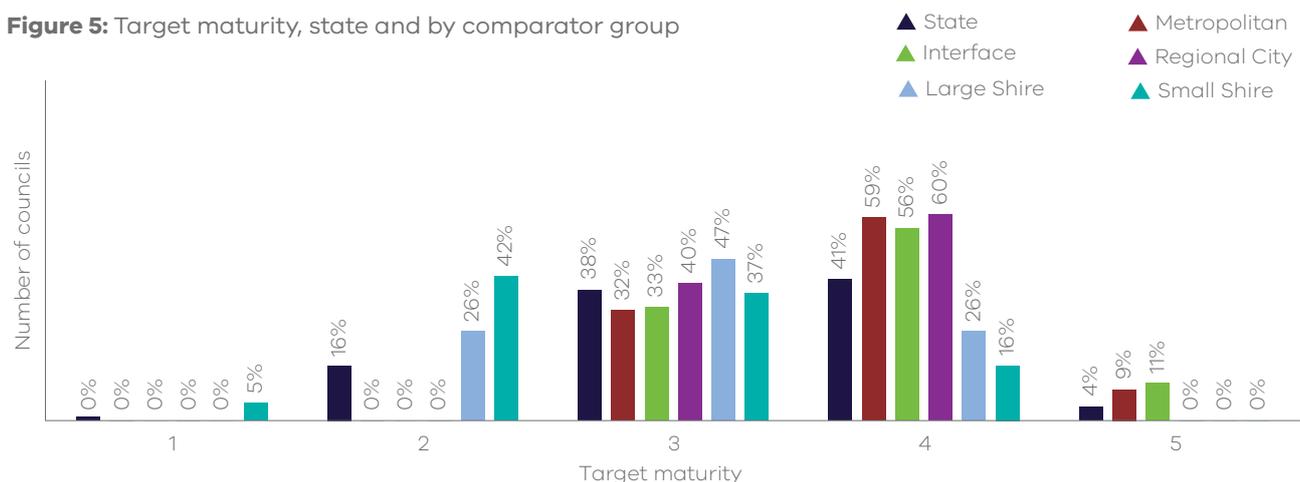
All but one Small Shire council identified target maturities of 2, 3 or 4 with the remaining council identifying a target maturity of 1. These councils are smaller organisations, so they had lower target maturities despite in many cases facing a high or extreme emergency risk level. Two Small Shire councils increased their target maturity to 4, indicating the importance of emergency management to their communities.

Only two councils in the state identified an emergency risk of 5 and these were in the Interface and Small Shire comparator groups. In comparison, twenty-six councils identified an emergency risk of 4, and they ranged across all comparator groups.

Table 5: Target maturity level, by comparator group, per cent and number

	1	2	3	4	5
State	1%	16%	38%	41%	3%
Metropolitan	0%	0%	32%	59%	9%
Interface	0%	0%	33%	56%	11%
Regional City	0%	0%	40%	60%	0%
Large Shire	0%	26%	47%	26%	0%
Small Shire	5%	42%	37%	16%	0%

Figure 5: Target maturity, state and by comparator group



3.2 Actual maturity

3.2.1 State

Figure 6 shows that forty-seven councils (59%) had an actual maturity below their target maturity for each of the categories combined. The Planning for Recovery Coordination category was a key contributor to this result.

Figure 6: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, all categories, state, number and per cent

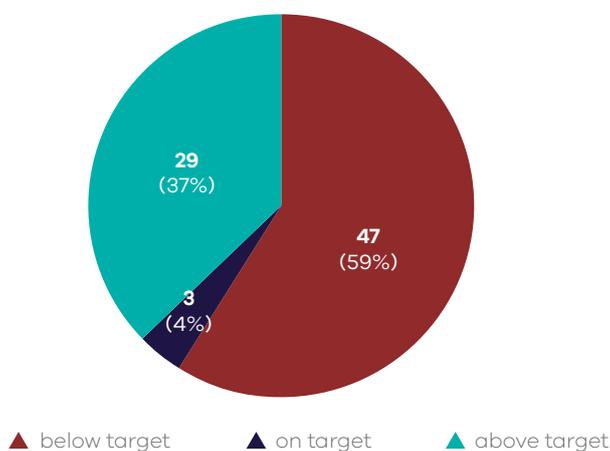
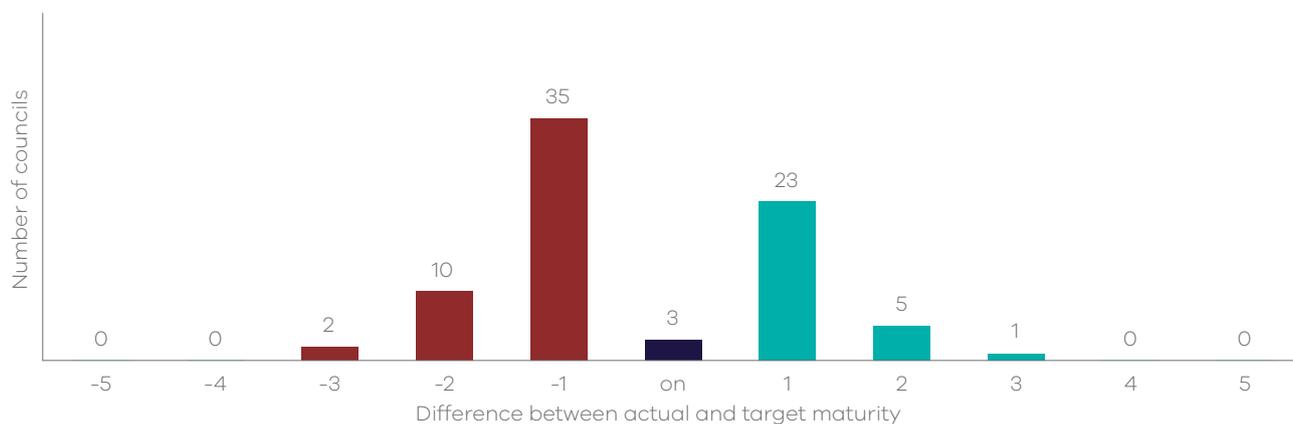


Figure 7 shows the difference between the actual and target maturity for all councils. Sixty-one councils (77%) were on or within one level of their target maturity meaning that most councils are operating at or close to their identified target maturity.

Twelve councils were more than one level below their target maturity. These councils have broader areas for improvement that need to be addressed for them to reach their identified target maturity.

Only six councils identified an actual maturity more than one level above their target maturity.

Figure 7: Difference between actual and target maturity, all categories, state, number



3.2.2 Region

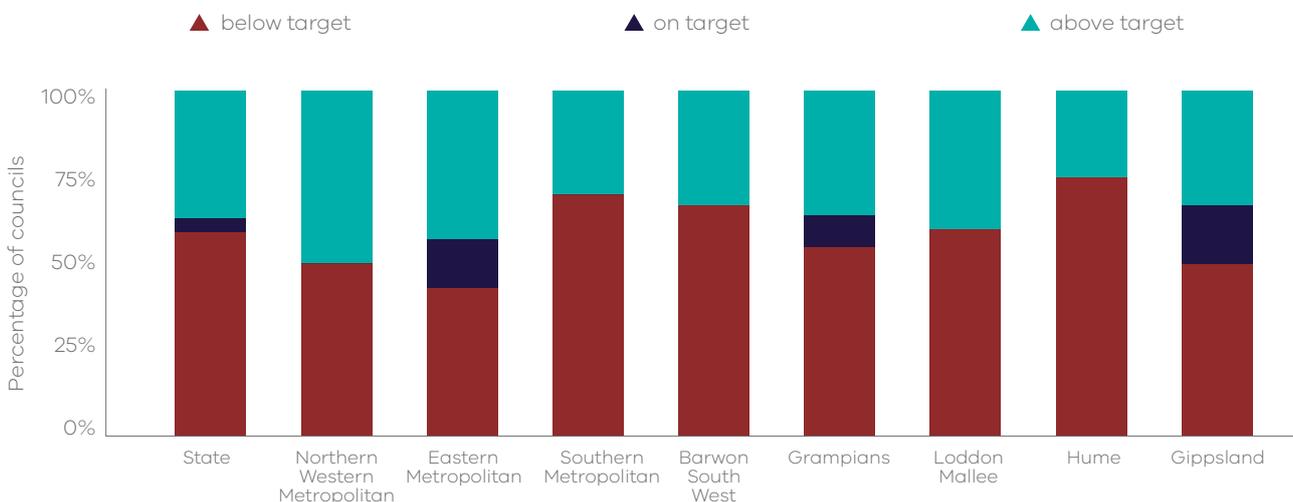
Table 6 and Figure 8 show that the Eastern Metropolitan region was the only region with a majority (57%) of councils on or above their target maturity. The Southern Metropolitan and Hume regions had the greatest number of councils below their target maturity with 70% and 75% respectively.

The Southern Metropolitan region showed 70 to 90% of councils below their target maturity in all six categories. Hume had the highest percentage of councils below their target maturity in the Planning for Relief Coordination category.

Table 6: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, by region, per cent and number

	Below target		On target		Above target	
State	59%	47	4%	3	37%	29
North Western Metropolitan	50%	7	0%	0	50%	7
Eastern Metropolitan	43%	3	14%	1	43%	3
Southern Metropolitan	70%	7	0%	0	30%	3
Barwon South West	67%	6	0%	0	33%	3
Grampians	55%	6	9%	1	36%	4
Loddon Mallee	60%	6	0%	0	40%	4
Hume	75%	9	0%	0	25%	3
Gippsland	50%	3	17%	1	33%	2

Figure 8: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, by region, per cent



Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity

3.2.3 Comparator

Table 7 and Figure 9 show that all comparator groups except for the Regional City comparator councils broadly aligned with the state result. 90% of Regional City comparator councils were below their target maturity. Of this group, 90% of councils were below their target maturity for the Risk Mitigation

and Planning within Council categories, and 100% were below their target maturity for Planning for Recovery Coordination. Small Shire councils were the only group with most councils (53%) on or above their target maturity and they also had the lowest percentage of councils below their target maturity for the Planning with Stakeholders category.

Table 7: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, by comparator group, per cent and number

	Percentage of councils					
	Below target		On target		Above target	
State	59%	47	4%	3	37%	29
Metropolitan	55%	12	0%	0	45%	10
Interface	56%	5	11%	1	33%	3
Regional City	90%	9	0%	0	10%	1
Large Shire	63%	12	5%	1	32%	6
Small Shire	47%	9	5%	1	47%	9

Figure 9: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, by comparator group, per cent



PART 04

Areas for improvement

The self-evaluation data that councils provided identified the following common areas for improvement within councils' emergency management capability and capacity. Addressing these areas for improvement should result in councils meeting or exceeding their target maturities, and strategies and action plans to do so will be developed in Phase Three of the project.

Of Victoria's seventy-nine councils, forty-seven (59%) had an actual maturity below their target maturity. Only six councils were more than one level above their target, indicating that most Victorian councils need to increase their emergency management capability and capacity.

4.1 Emergency relief and recovery

Councils identified a lack of capacity and capability to undertake their emergency relief and recovery responsibilities and activities. Sixty-three councils (80%) were below their identified target maturity in the Planning for Relief or Recovery Coordination categories.

The emergency management planning function is commonly undertaken by one or a few staff, sometimes as an additional responsibility to their non-emergency-management substantive role. This results in reduced staffing capacity to undertake relief and recovery planning. Most planning capacity is consumed with developing and updating municipal plans and attending municipal and regional committee meetings. This leaves little time for the remainder of the emergency management responsibilities and activities (such as developing procedures, training staff to undertake their emergency role and engaging with the community).

This lack of capacity at the planning stage is one reason for councils' lack of capability during and after an emergency event. Forty-one councils (52%) were below their target maturity for training staff to competently undertake a role in an emergency. If a council has only a small number of staff trained for an emergency and has only limited or high-level plans rather than procedures to reference, it generally will not have the organisational capability to coordinate emergency relief and recovery.

Relief and recovery coordination can be resource intensive and can require a substantial number of staff. Councils have a limited number of staff they can use in relief and recovery operations at any given time

and they can usually only resource emergency relief for 24 to 48 hours before relying on resource sharing with other councils. Fifty-six councils (71%) were below their target maturity for their capacity to resource a major emergency.

Councils that have not been affected by a major emergency can lack the capability to plan for relief and recovery, as they have no practical experience. Capability issues also arise when councils and the broader emergency management sector are uncertain about relief and recovery roles. This can make it difficult to plan effectively.

4.2 Integration of emergency management into business-as-usual

Councils acknowledged the significant impact that the coordination of emergency relief and recovery imposes on their organisation. Thirty-nine councils (49%) were below their target maturity for integrating emergency planning across the organisation, and forty-three councils (54%) were below their target maturity for planning to maintain their capacity for business-as-usual services during an emergency. If councils don't consider emergency management requirements in business continuity planning, they may not be prepared to allocate enough staff to maintain essential business activities when coordinating emergency relief and recovery. Council business continuity plans do reference emergency events as an incident that would affect business continuity, but this is often limited to a business disruption and it may not consider the additional disruption caused by the activation of relief and recovery responsibilities. Councils attribute this lack of business continuity planning to a lack of capacity which can be caused by competing organisational priorities and limited awareness across council organisations of their roles in emergencies.

4.3 Community engagement for emergency management

Councils reported that emergency management planning with the community is a large capability and capacity gap. Fifty-four councils (68%) were below their target maturity for collaborating with the community to plan for emergency events, and fifty-five councils (70%) were below their target maturity for collaborating with the community to mitigate emergency risk. Emergency management staff often lack the capability to engage with the community, as they do not have enough knowledge of, or training

in community engagement practices. In addition, community engagement staff within councils often lack emergency management knowledge.

Emergency management staff indicated a general lack of capacity and therefore prioritise emergency management planning internally, with agencies and other councils over planning with the community. They indicate that there is a lack of integration of emergency management across the organisation which results in limited communication and collaboration between staff with an emergency management role and staff with a community engagement role.

Difficulties also arise from the community composition with some communities having little appetite for engagement around emergency management planning or being exposed to a lower level of emergency risk in their municipality.

4.4 Further clarification of council roles in emergency management

There is still some uncertainty in the emergency management sector about the responsibilities and activities of councils, including the extent to which councils should undertake particular responsibilities or activities and the difference between a lead and support role. Councils have a strong understanding of their legislative responsibilities, however there is less clarity within the emergency management sector around other responsibilities and activities. Responsibilities are not currently articulated in plain English making it difficult for councils to understand and interpret what is required of them. This lack of clarity leads to differing expectations between councils and agencies. Councils report that agencies and the state expect a higher level of capability and capacity than councils can provide.

Councils have formal municipal plans that outline high-level arrangements for emergency management. The *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018* introduces new arrangements for integrated, coordinated and comprehensive emergency management planning at the state, regional and municipal levels. The Act provides a framework for local planning however due to uncertainty around responsibilities, councils don't often have plans and procedures detailing exactly what they are required to do.

4.5 Emergency management budget and funding

Given the wide range of services councils provide to their communities, the budget they can allocate to emergency management is often constrained. Councils largely rely on funding (including MERP) to resource their emergency management planning. In some cases, those that do receive MERP funding report that the level of MERP funding is not enough to fulfil their increasing emergency management responsibilities. This is evident within the evaluation which shows that forty of the sixty-four councils that receive MERP funding were below their target maturity overall. Forty-two councils (53%) were below their target maturity for the Planning for Relief Coordination category and sixty-two councils (78%) were below their target maturity for the Planning for Recovery Coordination category.

MERP funding is only available to sixty-four councils (81%) in Victoria, and the fifteen councils that do not receive this funding would like to know why they don't.

5.1 Planning with Stakeholders (category A)

This category evaluated councils' capability and capacity to plan with emergency management stakeholders: agencies, other councils and their community. The questions addressed preparedness and planning activities councils should undertake with stakeholders (such as municipal plans, municipal committees and municipal emergency risk assessments).

There were seventeen questions in this category:

- **Type One:** there were thirteen questions to gauge a council's level of maturity against the responsibilities, activities and associated core capabilities in the *Councils and Emergencies Position Paper*

- **Type Two:** there were three questions to gauge a council's perceptions of how well it feels it plans with stakeholders against its target maturity
- **Type Three:** there was one question that required a written response describing a council's capability and capacity to plan with stakeholders.

5.1.1 State

Councils reported greater capability and capacity for the Planning with Stakeholders category than for any other category. Figure 10 and Figure 11 show that forty-five councils (57%) reported they were either on or above their target maturity. The remaining thirty-four councils (43%) were below their target with twenty-one up to one level below and thirteen more than one level below.

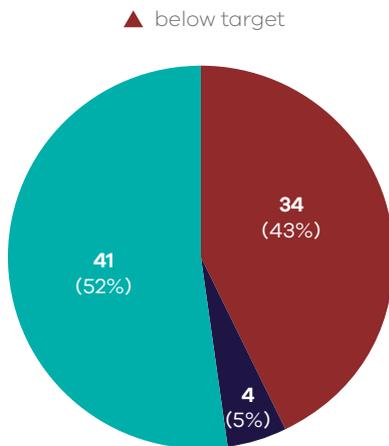


Figure 10: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning with Stakeholders category, state, number and per cent

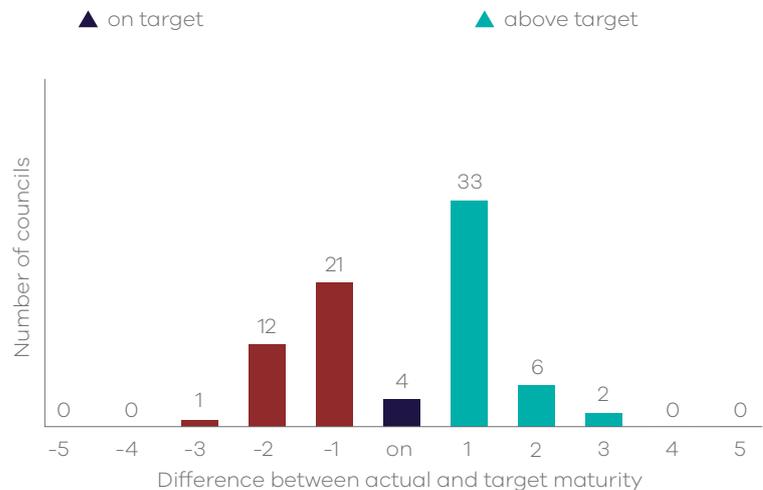


Figure 11: Difference between actual and target maturity, Planning with Stakeholders category, state, number

5.1.2 Region

Table 8: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning with Stakeholders category, by region, per cent and number

	Below target		On target		Above target	
State	43%	34	5%	4	52%	41
North Western Metropolitan	36%	5	14%	2	50%	7
Eastern Metropolitan	29%	2	14%	1	57%	4
Southern Metropolitan	70%	7	0%	0	30%	3
Barwon South West	44%	4	0%	0	56%	5
Grampians	45%	5	0%	0	55%	6
Loddon Mallee	40%	4	0%	0	60%	6
Hume	42%	5	8%	1	50%	6
Gippsland	33%	2	0%	0	67%	4

5.1.3 Comparator

Table 9: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning with Stakeholders category, by comparator group, per cent and number

	Below target		On target		Above target	
State	43%	34	5%	4	52%	41
Metropolitan	41%	9	14%	3	45%	10
Interface	56%	5	0%	0	44%	4
Regional City	70%	7	0%	0	30%	3
Large Shire	37%	7	5%	1	58%	11
Small Shire	32%	6	0%	0	68%	13

5.1.4 Questions

Responsibilities and activities (Type One)

Table 10: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning with Stakeholders category, Type One questions, state, per cent

Questions	N/A ¹	Percentage of councils		
		Below target	On target	Above target
A1		32%	23%	46%
A2		3%	24%	73%
A3		25%	11%	63%
A4		24%	10%	66%
A5		62%	5%	33%
A6		25%	16%	58%
A7		57%	9%	34%
A8		32%	15%	53%
A9	15	27%	20%	53%
A10	26	43%	11%	45%
A11	38	56%	5%	39%
A12	36	23%	7%	70%
A13	16	24%	8%	68%

¹The question was not applicable to the number of councils in this column: the percentages are of the remaining councils.

Perceptions (Type Two)

Table 11: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning with Stakeholders category, Type Two questions, state, per cent

Questions		Below target	On target	Above target
A14	How well does council collaborate with agency partners to plan for emergency events?	18%	33%	49%
A15	How well does council collaborate with other councils to plan for emergency events?	33%	24%	43%
A16	How well does council collaborate with the community to plan for emergency events?	68%	20%	11%

5.1.5 Findings

Strengths

For this category most councils were on or above their target maturity for:

- encouraging and supporting the community to participate in emergency management awareness programs operated by emergency management agencies (76%)
- identifying locations of Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSP) (or Bushfire Place of Last Resort) (76%) – not applicable to all councils
- having a MEMP (97%) and Relief and Recovery Plan (75%)
- undertaking municipal emergency risk assessments (75%).

Councils reported that they prioritise these responsibilities because they are legislated.

The responses to the perception questions in Table 11 show that councils have good relationships with their emergency management agencies and other councils, but they acknowledge that they could improve on planning with their community.

Issues

Most councils were below their target maturity for:

- advocating for their community's emergency management needs and priorities (62%)
- reviewing municipal operations and community consequences after an emergency (57%)

- granting permits to light a fire or fires at any time during the Fire Danger Period (FDP) subject to any conditions or restrictions contained in permits (56%).

Planning with communities

Table 11 shows that fifty-four councils (68%) were below their target maturity for collaborating with the community to plan for emergency events. The Metropolitan and Interface comparator councils had the greatest percentage of councils below their target maturity indicating that larger urban communities are more difficult to engage than rural communities. Councils reported that large, diverse communities have little appetite for engagement around emergency management planning. Councils also engage less with their communities if there is a lower emergency risk.

Councils report they were challenged to meet their target maturity for undertaking emergency management planning with their communities because:

- their current emergency management staff have limited capacity to plan for and undertake community engagement due to their wide range of emergency management responsibilities and activities
- community engagement is a lower priority than meeting legislative requirements
- emergency management staff lack community engagement expertise, and there are no formal community engagement procedures for emergency management

- emergency management engagement is not integrated into existing council community engagement programs
- there is limited coordinated community engagement planning with the MEMPC.

Planning with agencies

Councils report they collaborated better with their agency partners to plan for emergency events than with other councils or their communities. Table 11 shows that only fourteen councils (18%) reported being below their target maturity for collaboration with agency partners. There was no significant difference within comparator groups or regions when collaborating with agency partners.

Councils report they were challenged to meet their target maturity for undertaking emergency management planning with agencies because:

- council and agency staff do not have capacity to engage outside formal committees. Many council and agency staff undertake the role in addition to their substantive role.
- representatives of the CFA, Victoria Police and State Emergency Service always attend the MEMPC and its subcommittees, but representatives of other agencies sometimes do not attend or attend only periodically. Some agencies do not send staff with an appropriate level of planning knowledge to the MEMPC
- some agency staff don't understand councils' role in emergency management, which can lead to agencies having unrealistic expectations and a misalignment of agency and council arrangements
- there is often only a single contact in each agency which limits their capacity to collaborate with councils
- agency contacts can change regularly, leading to a loss of continuity in relationships with councils
- councils take on many of the legislated municipal planning responsibilities with limited administrative support from agencies
- agencies don't engage in municipal initiatives and don't seek input about their plans from councils
- large municipal or regional geographic areas makes it difficult for council and agency staff to travel to meetings.

Planning with other councils

Councils collaborate well with other councils to plan for emergency events. Table 11 shows that only twenty-six councils (33%) reported being below their target maturity for collaboration with other councils. However, some council emergency management collaborations work more effectively than others. Southern Metropolitan region and Interface comparator councils showed a significantly higher percentage of councils below their target maturity compared with the state results, indicating a lower level of collaboration in these areas.

Councils report they were challenged to meet their target maturity for undertaking emergency management planning with other councils because:

- some councils are not members of council emergency management collaborations, often known as Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Groups (MEMEG)
- council emergency management collaborations are largely led by councils with dedicated emergency management staff
- council staff do not have the capacity to engage outside the formal council emergency management collaboration meetings
- council emergency management collaborations are not strategic and lack involvement from council leaders, and they therefore have only basic decision-making capabilities
- some council emergency management collaborations don't have the capability and capacity to develop joint plans or standard operating procedures
- some council emergency management collaborations are not signatories to the MAV Resource Sharing Protocol or have not created their own formal resource-sharing memorandum of understanding signed by their chief executive officers.

5.2 Planning within Council (category B)

This category evaluated councils' capability and capacity to plan for emergencies within their own organisation. The questions addressed responsibilities and activities across the whole council, to determine the level of internal emergency management planning and the integration of emergency management into the whole range of council operations.

The questions asked councils about how they plan to prepare and train their emergency staff, plan for their relief and recovery responsibilities and integrate emergency management into their business continuity arrangements.

There were twenty questions in this category:

- **Type One:** there were thirteen questions to gauge a council's level of maturity against the responsibilities, activities and associated core capabilities in the *Councils and Emergencies Position Paper*
- **Type Two:** there were six questions to gauge a council's perceptions of how well it feels it plans internally against its target maturity
- **Type Three:** there was one question that required a written response describing a council's capability and capacity to plan within their organisation.

5.2.1 State

Figure 12 and Figure 13 show that forty-six councils (58%) reported they were below their target maturity for planning within their organisation. Thirty-one councils were up to one level below and fifteen councils were more than one level below. The remaining thirty-three councils (42%) were on or above their target maturity.

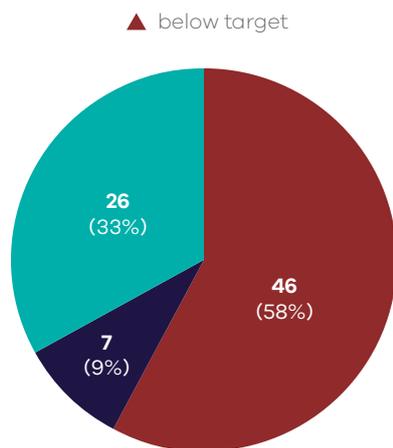


Figure 12: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning within Council category, state, per cent

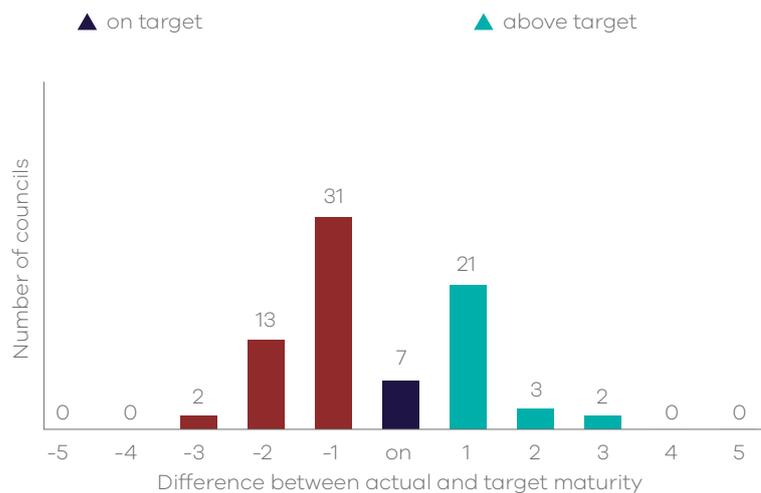


Figure 13: Difference between actual and target maturity, Planning within Council category, state

5.2.2 Region

Table 12: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning within Council category, by region, per cent and number

State	Below target		On target		Above target	
	58%	46	9%	7	33%	26
North Western Metropolitan	36%	5	21%	3	43%	6
Eastern Metropolitan	71%	5	14%	1	14%	1
Southern Metropolitan	70%	7	0%	0	30%	3
Barwon South West	67%	6	0%	0	33%	3
Grampians	64%	7	0%	0	36%	4
Loddon Mallee	60%	6	10%	1	30%	3
Hume	58%	7	0%	0	42%	5
Gippsland	50%	3	33%	2	17%	1

5.2.3 Comparator

Table 13: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning within Council category, by comparator group, per cent and number

State	Below target		On target		Above target	
	58%	46	9%	7	33%	26
Metropolitan	59%	13	14%	3	27%	6
Interface	44%	4	11%	1	44%	4
Regional City	90%	9	0%	0	10%	1
Large Shire	58%	11	11%	2	32%	6
Small Shire	47%	9	5%	1	47%	9

5.2.4 Questions

Responsibilities and activities (Type One)

Table 14: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning within Council category, Type One questions, state, per cent

	Questions	Below target	On target	Above target
B1	Do council staff with an assigned emergency management role have access to emergency management training?	47%	15%	38%
B2	Has council appointed a Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO) under an Instrument of Delegation?	23%	18%	59%
B3	Has council appointed a Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)?	19%	18%	63%
B4	Does council have an emergency coordination system and/or council operational facilities that can be activated during an emergency?	27%	18%	56%
B5	Does council have a register of council, municipal and other resources available for use before, during and after emergencies?	67%	10%	23%
B6	Has council identified, planned for and documented emergency relief centres (ERC) or other locations that will provide emergency relief services in an emergency?	16%	22%	62%
B7	Does council have Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA) and Post Emergency Needs Assessment (PENA) processes and data-collection systems?	73%	9%	18%
B8	Does council plan for emergency housing of displaced and lost/stray companion animals?	52%	10%	38%
B9	Has council identified standards for the clean-up and recovery of council-managed assets?	63%	6%	30%
B10	Has council appointed a Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO) under an Instrument of Delegation?	22%	8%	71%
B11	Has council appointed a Vulnerable Persons Coordinator (VPC) according to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Vulnerable People in Emergencies Policy? ¹	14%	25%	61%
B12	Does council prepare a Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) in accordance with the Planning and Environment Act?	51%	14%	35%
B3	Does council prepare a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) in accordance with the Act?	32%	15%	53%

Note

¹This question was not applicable to 15 councils: the percentages are of the remaining 64 councils.

Perceptions (Type Two)

Table 15: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning within Council category, Type Two questions, state, per cent

Questions	Below target	On target	Above target
B14 How well does council undertake planning for an emergency?	27%	48%	25%
B15 How well does council integrate emergency planning across the organisation?	49%	30%	20%
B16 How well does council understand its emergency management roles and responsibilities?	30%	35%	34%
B17 How well are council staff trained to competently undertake a role in an emergency?	52%	28%	20%
B18 Does council have the capacity to resource a major emergency?	71%	20%	9%
B19 How well does council plan to maintain capacity of 'business as usual services' during an emergency?	54%	30%	15%

5.2.5 Findings

Strengths

For this category most councils were on or above their target maturity for:

- appointing a Vulnerable Persons Coordinator in accordance with the DHHS Vulnerable People in Emergencies Policy (86%)
- identifying, planning for and documenting emergency relief centres (ERC) or other locations that will provide emergency relief services in an emergency (84%)
- appointing an Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM) (81%) and appointing a Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO) under an Instrument of Delegation (77%).

Issues

The responses in Table 15 to the perception questions show that while councils have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities, emergency management is not well-integrated across the organisation, and council staff are not trained to competently undertake a role in an emergency. Most councils do not have the capacity to resource a major emergency while maintaining business-as-usual services.

Most councils were below their target maturity for:

- possessing Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA) and Post Emergency Needs Assessment (PENNA) processes and data-collection systems (73%)
- possessing a register of council, municipal and other resources available for use before, during and after emergencies (67%)
- identifying standards for the clean-up and recovery of council-managed assets (63%)
- planning for emergency housing of displaced and lost/stray companion animals (52%)
- preparing a Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) in accordance with the Planning and Environment Act (51%).

Planning for an emergency event, understanding roles and training

Table 15 shows that most councils understand their emergency roles and responsibilities and plan well for emergencies. Only twenty-one councils (27%) were below their target for planning for an emergency and only twenty-four councils (30%) were below their target for understanding their emergency roles and responsibilities. Staff training was also an issue with forty-one councils (52%) below their target for staff trained to competently undertake a role in an emergency.

The Interface comparator councils had the greatest percentage of councils below their target maturity for planning for an emergency. The Large Shire and Regional City comparator councils and the Gippsland and Eastern Metropolitan regions had the greatest percentage of councils below their target maturity for staff trained to competently undertake a role in an emergency. Councils reported that a lack of training opportunities makes planning for and undertaking emergency management roles and responsibilities challenging.

Councils report they were challenged to meet their target maturity for undertaking emergency management planning within their organisation because:

- the emergency management planning function is commonly undertaken by one or a few staff sometimes as an additional responsibility to a non-emergency-management substantive role
- emergency management planning staff have limited capacity to undertake the wide range of emergency management responsibilities and activities
- the MEMP and sub plans set out emergency management arrangements at a high level but there is a lack of documented procedures that detail MEMP arrangements
- emergency management planning staff (such as an emergency management officer) have limited capacity and capability to develop procedures, training and exercising, which means that staff with an assigned emergency role (such as the MERO and the MRM) and the emergency surge workforce have little or no access to resources to help them learn and carry out their emergency roles
- as staff with emergency management roles have little access to training, they generally learn from others in the same position or through emergency activations
- staff with an assigned emergency role (such as the MERO and the MRM) and the emergency surge workforce have very little capacity to commit to emergency management planning and training, given the demands of their substantive position
- council staff (such as animal management officers and environmental health officers) understand their roles in an emergency, but there is little understanding of how the scale and complexity of roles would expand during and after an emergency event

- business-as-usual practices will be used during an emergency, so emergency-specific procedures have not been created
- councils' senior management and executive staff may have limited direct experience of emergency events, which may reduce the extent of the organisation's planning and resource allocation.

Integration of emergency management planning across the organisation

Table 15 shows that thirty-nine councils (49%) were below their target maturity for integration of emergency planning across the organisation. The Regional City comparator councils and the Eastern Metropolitan and Gippsland regions had the greatest percentage of councils below their target maturity for integration of emergency planning across the organisation. Councils reported that emergency management is not well integrated into their organisation and it is difficult to retain existing council staff in and attract new staff to emergency management roles.

Councils are required to prepare a Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP). All councils have these documents, but some reported that they don't contain emergency management considerations and are not reviewed in consultation with staff with emergency management knowledge.

Councils report they were challenged to meet their target maturity for integrating emergency management into the organisation because:

- given the range of services councils provide to their communities, there is often little budget in the organisation for emergency management
- emergency management planning staff have little capacity to implement council-wide emergency awareness programs
- council staff have very little capacity to commit to emergency management training and exercising given the demands of their substantive position
- emergency surge workforce roles are usually optional for staff, leading to limited role uptake
- some council staff do not have the personal resilience to undertake an emergency role
- turnover of council staff and infrequent emergency activations reduce the capability of staff
- lack of procedures is a barrier to staff undertaking an emergency management role.

Planning to maintain business continuity during an emergency

Table 15 shows that forty-three councils (54%) were below their target maturity for their ability to plan to maintain capacity of 'business-as-usual services' during an emergency. The Regional City comparator councils and the Eastern Metropolitan region had the greatest percentage of councils below their target maturity for planning to maintain capacity of 'business-as-usual services' during an emergency. Councils acknowledged that emergency management is generally referred to in business continuity plans either at a very high level or is not considered at all.

Councils report they were challenged to meet their target maturity for planning to maintain capacity of 'business-as-usual services' during an emergency because:

- they have not documented the impacts to business continuity that may occur from emergency activations, including impacts to personnel, resources and services
- they don't have procedures or identified actions to maintain and restore business-as-usual activities and services as well as divert staff from their substantive positions to undertake an emergency role
- they lack capacity to maintain business-as-usual activities and services when responding to a major and/or prolonged emergency
- they don't have procedures for deploying staff and backfilling positions.

Councils' capacity to resource a major emergency is examined in the activation, relief and recovery categories.

5.3 Planning for Activation (category D)

This category evaluated councils' capability and capacity to plan for emergency activation. The questions addressed how a council prepares and plans to support response agencies during an emergency.

There were eight questions in this category:

- **Type One:** there were five questions to gauge a council's level of maturity against the responsibilities, activities and associated core capabilities in the *Councils and Emergencies Position Paper*

- **Type Two:** there were two questions to gauge a council's perceptions of how well it feels it plans for activation against its target maturity
- **Type Three:** there was one question that required a written response describing a council's capability and capacity to plan for activation.

5.3.1 State

Figure 14 and Figure 15 show there was an almost-even split between the number of councils below their target maturity and the number on or above their target maturity for planning for activation. Forty councils (51%) were below their target maturity with twenty-eight of those up to one level below and twelve more than one level below. The remaining thirty-nine councils (49%) were on or above their target maturity.

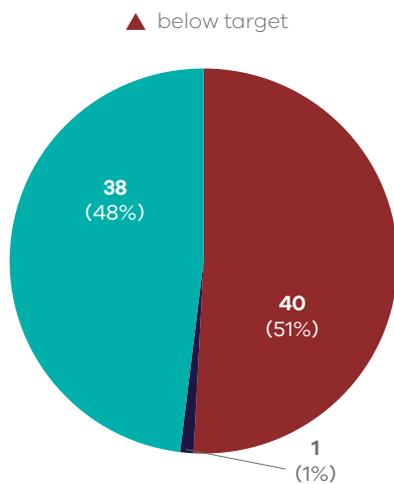


Figure 14: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Activation category, state, per cent

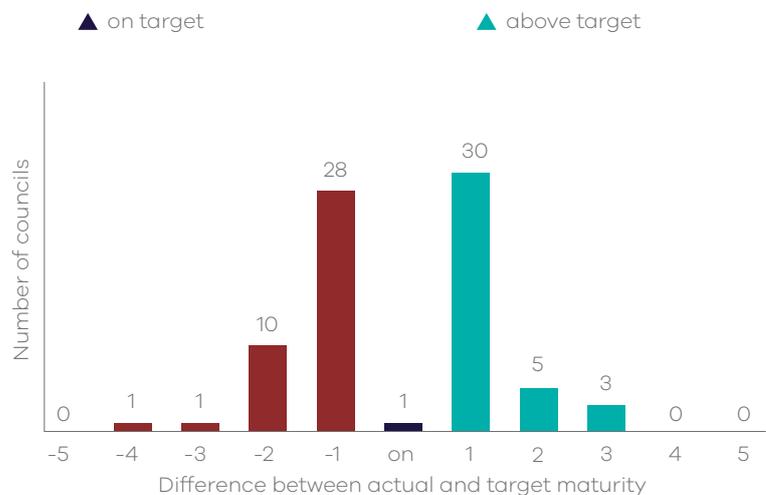


Figure 15: Difference between actual and target maturity, Planning for Activation category, state

5.3.2 Region

Table 16: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Activation category, by region, per cent and number

State	Below target		On target		Above target	
	51%	40	1%	1	48%	38
North Western Metropolitan	29%	4	0%	0	71%	10
Eastern Metropolitan	43%	3	0%	0	57%	4
Southern Metropolitan	70%	7	0%	0	30%	3
Barwon South West	56%	5	0%	0	44%	4
Grampians	55%	6	0%	0	45%	5
Loddon Mallee	40%	4	0%	0	60%	6
Hume	58%	7	8%	1	33%	4
Gippsland	67%	4	0%	0	33%	2

5.3.3 Comparator

Table 17: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Activation category, by comparator group, per cent and number

State	Below target		On target		Above target	
	51%	40	1%	1	48%	38
Metropolitan	45%	10	0%	0	55%	12
Interface	44%	4	0%	0	56%	5
Regional City	70%	7	0%	0	30%	3
Large Shire	47%	9	5%	1	47%	9
Small Shire	53%	10	0%	0	47%	9

5.3.4 Questions

Responsibilities and activities (Type One)

Table 18: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Activation category, Type One questions, state, per cent

Questions	Below target	On target	Above target
D1 Can council support emergency management teams (EMTs) and agencies by providing local information to assist in decision-making?	34%	13%	53%
D2 Can council support response agencies by providing council resources as requested?	42%	27%	32%
D3 Can council support agencies, where requested, with the dissemination of warnings to the community?	35%	24%	41%
D4 Can council close council-managed land affected by an emergency?	77%	6%	16%
D5 Does council maintain stream gauges whose sole purpose is to serve as an element in a total flood warning system (TFWS) service? ¹	64%	9%	27%

Note

¹This question was not applicable to 57 councils: the percentages are of the remaining 22 councils.

Perceptions (Type Two)

Table 19: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Activation category, Type Two questions, state, per cent

Questions	Below target	On target	Above target
D6 How well does council plan to activate for a non-major emergency?	24%	30%	46%
D7 How well does council plan for activation for a major emergency?	27%	41%	33%

5.3.5 Findings

Strengths

For this category most councils were on or above their target maturity for:

- supporting emergency management teams (EMT) and agencies by providing local information to assist in decision-making (66%)
- supporting agencies, where requested, with the dissemination of warnings to the community (65%).

Issues

The responses to the perception questions in Table 19 show that councils feel they plan well to coordinate activation for non-major and major emergencies but they report that their capacity to resource a major emergency would only last for a very short time (24 to 48 hours).

In the Planning within Council category (B), councils were asked, 'Does council have the capacity to resource a major emergency? Fifty-six councils (71%) were below their target maturity. This indicates that although councils feel they can plan for activation, they don't have the capacity to implement their plans.

For the perception questions in Table 19, most region and comparator group results aligned with the state results but there were some significant variances.

The Southern and Eastern Metropolitan regions and Interface comparator councils had the greatest percentage of councils below their target maturity for planning for activation for a major emergency.

The Grampians region had the lowest percentage of councils below their target maturity for the category.

Most councils were below their target maturity for:

- closing council-managed land affected by an emergency (77%)
- maintaining stream gauges whose sole purpose is to serve as an element in a Total Flood Warning System (64%).

Councils report they were challenged to meet their target maturity for undertaking planning for emergency activation because:

- some councils and response agencies do not understand councils' role in activation or their organisational capability and capacity to undertake activation, which can lead to agencies making unreasonable requests to councils and councils undertaking additional or unreasonable activities
- council staff (such as operations officers and communications officers) understand their role in activation, but there is little understanding

of how the scale and complexity of roles would expand during an emergency event and this is not addressed in procedures

- there is no readiness roster system for emergency staff (excluding the MERO and the MRM) as emergency management planning staff don't have the capacity to coordinate this function
- there is often limited organisational budget allocated to emergency management, which can mean the emergency management planning function is undertaken by one or a few staff sometimes as an additional responsibility to a non-emergency-management substantive role
- MEMPs and sub-plans set out emergency activation arrangements at a high level
- councils can lack the capacity to undertake large-scale activation responsibilities and activities (such as multiple road closures)
- emergency management planning staff (such as an emergency management officer) have little capacity and capability for developing activation procedures, and for developing and conducting training and exercising
- staff with an assigned emergency role (such as the MERO and the MRM) and the emergency surge workforce (such as the communication officer) have little or no access to procedures to help them learn and carry out their activation roles, which can be a barrier to retaining staff, keeping them engaged and recruiting new staff
- staff with an assigned emergency role (such as the MERO and the MRM) and the emergency surge workforce have little access to training, so they generally learn from others in the same position or through emergency activations
- when training and exercising opportunities do arise, staff have very little capacity to commit time, given the demands of their substantive position
- experienced staff leave the organisation and/or staff participate in emergency events infrequently which leads to fewer capable, experienced staff
- emergency roles are usually optional for council staff, which can lead to a limited uptake and low capacity to undertake prolonged emergency activation
- business continuity plans don't detail or include procedures about how emergency activation will affect the organisation, including the loss of diverted staff, loss of staff who have been personally affected by the emergency, loss of diverted equipment and loss or disruption of business-as-usual services.

5.4 Planning for Relief Coordination (category E)

This category evaluated councils' capability and capacity to plan for emergency relief coordination. The questions addressed how a council prepares and plans to support their community during and after an emergency and how the council would work with stakeholders to provide relief services.

There were thirteen questions in this category:

- **Type One:** there were ten questions to gauge a council's level of maturity against the responsibilities, activities and associated core capabilities in the *Councils and Emergencies Position Paper*

- **Type Two:** there were two questions to gauge a council's perceptions of how well it feels it plans for relief coordination against its target maturity
- **Type Three:** there was one question that required a written response describing a council's capability and capacity to plan for relief coordination.

5.4.1 State

Figure 16 and Figure 17 show that most councils reported being below their target maturity for planning for relief coordination. Forty-two councils (53%) reported they were below their target maturity with thirty-two up to one level below and ten more than one level below. The remaining thirty-seven councils (47%) were on or above their target maturity.

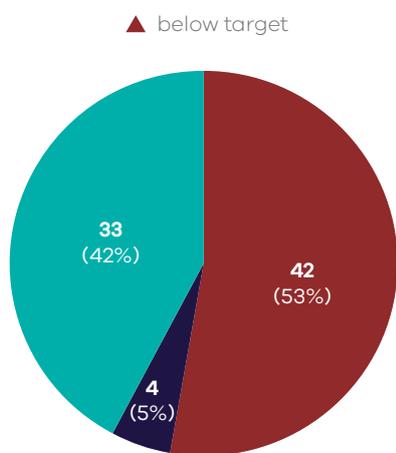


Figure 16: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Relief Coordination category, state, per cent

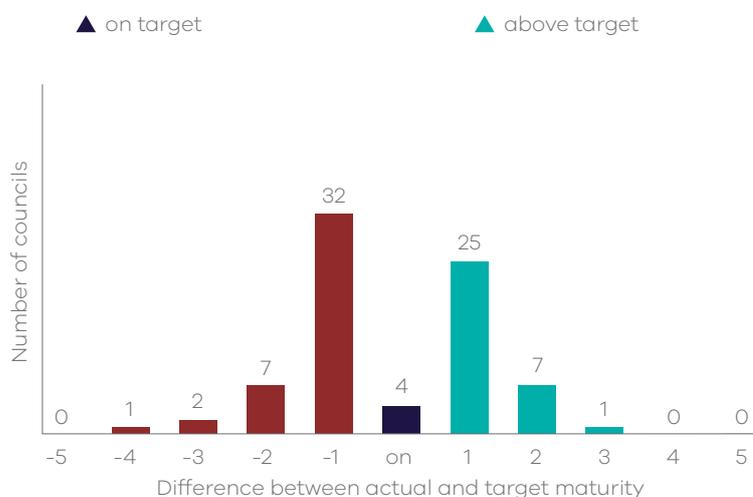


Figure 17: Difference between actual and target maturity, Planning for Relief Coordination category, state

5.4.2 Region

Table 20: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Relief Coordination category, by region, per cent and number

State	Below target		On target		Above target	
	53%	42	5%	4	42%	33
North Western Metropolitan	36%	5	14%	2	50%	7
Eastern Metropolitan	29%	2	14%	1	57%	4
Southern Metropolitan	70%	7	0%	0	30%	3
Barwon South West	44%	4	0%	0	56%	5
Grampians	36%	4	9%	1	55%	6
Loddon Mallee	80%	8	0%	0	20%	2
Hume	83%	10	0%	0	17%	2
Gippsland	33%	2	0%	0	67%	4

5.4.3 Comparator

Table 21: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Relief Coordination category, by comparator group, per cent and number

State	Below target		On target		Above target	
	53%	42	5%	4	42%	33
Metropolitan	45%	10	9%	2	45%	10
Interface	44%	4	11%	1	44%	4
Regional City	80%	8	0%	0	20%	2
Large Shire	47%	9	0%	0	53%	10
Small Shire	58%	11	5%	1	37%	7

5.4.4 Question

Responsibilities and activities (Type One)

Table 22: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Relief Coordination category, Type One questions, state, per cent

	Questions	Below target	On target	Above target
E1	Can council coordinate relief following an emergency?	28%	43%	29%
E2	Can council provide a single point of contact for residents affected by an emergency that are seeking support, services and assistance?	54%	16%	29%
E3	Can council coordinate secondary impact assessment?	73%	9%	18%
E4	Can council establish and manage Emergency Relief Centres?	16%	22%	62%
E5	Can council support relief and recovery agencies (incl. DHHS, Victoria Police, Red Cross) to provide services to the community following an emergency?	19%	22%	59%
E6	Can council coordinate the housing of displaced, lost and stray companion animals (other than wildlife) in collaboration with Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)?	52%	10%	38%
E7	Can council conduct safety assessments of council-owned essential assets and infrastructure?	52%	15%	33%
E8	Can council survey and determine the occupancy of damaged buildings following an emergency?	43%	18%	39%
E9	Can council provide support to VicRoads for partial/full road closures and determination of alternative routes?	63%	15%	22%
E10	Can council coordinate clean-up activities after an emergency?	63%	6%	30%

Perceptions (Type Two)

Table 23: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Relief Coordination category, Type Two questions, state, per cent

	Questions	Below target	On target	Above target
E11	How well does council plan for the coordination of relief for a non-major emergency?	24%	32%	44%
E12	How well does council plan for the coordination of relief for a major emergency?	25%	48%	27%

5.4.5 Findings

Strengths

For this category most councils were on or above their target maturity for:

- establishing and managing emergency relief centres (ERC) (84%)
- supporting relief and recovery agencies including DHHS, Victoria Police and the Red Cross to provide services to the community following an emergency (81%)
- coordinating relief following an emergency (72%).

The responses to the perception questions in Table 23 show that councils plan well to coordinate relief for non-major and major emergencies but councils reported their capacity to resource a major emergency would only last for a very short time (24 to 48 hours). This could account for the low percentage of councils (27%) above their target maturity for planning for relief coordination in a major emergency. This low maturity differs from the responses to the perception questions in the previous categories.

In the Planning within Council category (B), councils were asked, 'Does council have the capacity to resource a major emergency?' Fifty-six councils (71%) were below their target maturity. This indicates that although councils feel they can plan for relief, they do not have the capacity to implement the plans.

For the perception questions in Table 23, most region and comparator group results aligned with the state results, but two groups showed significant variances. The Southern Metropolitan region and Interface comparator councils had the highest percentage of councils below their target maturity for planning for the coordination of relief for a major emergency.

Issues

Most councils were below their target maturity for:

- coordinating secondary impact assessment (73%)
- providing support to VicRoads for partial/full road closures and determination of alternative routes (63%)
- coordinating clean-up activities after an emergency (63%)
- coordinating the housing of displaced, lost and stray companion animals (other than wildlife) in collaboration with DJPR (52%)

Councils report they were challenged to meet their target maturity for undertaking planning for emergency relief coordination because:

- business continuity plans don't detail or include procedures about how emergency relief will affect the organisation, including the loss of diverted staff, loss of staff who have been personally affected by the emergency, loss of diverted equipment and loss or disruption of business-as-usual services.
- some councils and response agencies do not understand councils' role in relief or their organisational capability and capacity to undertake relief, which can lead to agencies making unreasonable requests to councils and councils undertaking additional or unreasonable activities
- there is a lack of documented relief procedures and plans. Where there are procedures and plans, they are high level and lack detail
- emergency management planning staff (such as an emergency management officer) have little capacity and capability for developing relief procedures, and for developing and conducting training and exercising
- staff with an assigned emergency role (such as the MRM) and the emergency surge workforce (such as the communication officer) have little or no access to procedures to help them learn and carry out their relief roles, which can be a barrier to retaining staff, keeping them engaged and recruiting new staff
- staff with an assigned emergency role (such as the MRM) and the emergency surge workforce have little access to relief training, so they generally learn from others in the same position or through emergency activations
- when training and exercising opportunities do arise, staff have very little capacity to commit time, given the demands of their substantive position
- council staff (such as operations officers and communications officers) understand their role in relief, but there is little understanding of how the scale and complexity of roles would expand during an emergency event and this is not addressed in procedures

- there is no readiness roster system for emergency relief staff (excluding the MRM) as emergency management planning staff don't have the capacity to coordinate this function
- experienced staff leave the organisation and/or staff participate in emergency events infrequently which leads to fewer capable, experienced staff
- emergency relief roles are usually optional for council staff, which can lead to a limited uptake and low capacity to undertake prolonged emergency relief
- Other factors, out of council's control, such as the remoteness of the emergency-affected area can also affect council's capability and capacity to coordinate relief with communities.

5.5 Planning for Recovery Coordination (category F)

This category evaluated councils' capability and capacity to plan for emergency recovery coordination. The questions addressed how a council prepares and plans to support its community after an emergency and how council will work with stakeholders to provide recovery services.

There were eighteen questions in this category:

- **Type One:** there were fifteen questions to gauge a council's level of maturity against the responsibilities, activities and associated core capabilities in the *Councils and Emergencies Position Paper*

- **Type Two:** there were two questions to gauge a council's perceptions of how well it feels it plans for recovery coordination against its target maturity
- **Type Three:** there was one question that requires a written response describing a council's capability and capacity to plan for recovery coordination.

5.5.1 State

Figure 18 and Figure 19 show that over three-quarters of councils reported being below their target maturity for planning for recovery coordination. Sixty-two councils (78%) reported they were below their target maturity. Thirty-four councils were up to one level below and twenty-eight were more than one level below. The remaining seventeen councils (22%) were on or above their target.

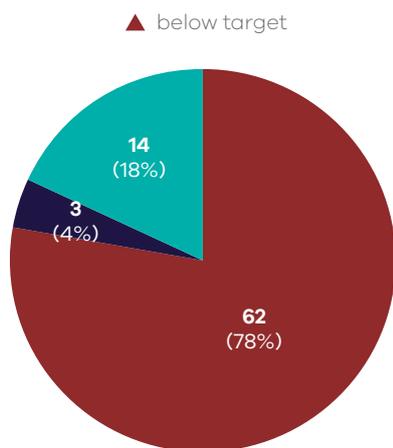


Figure 18: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Recovery Coordination category, state, per cent

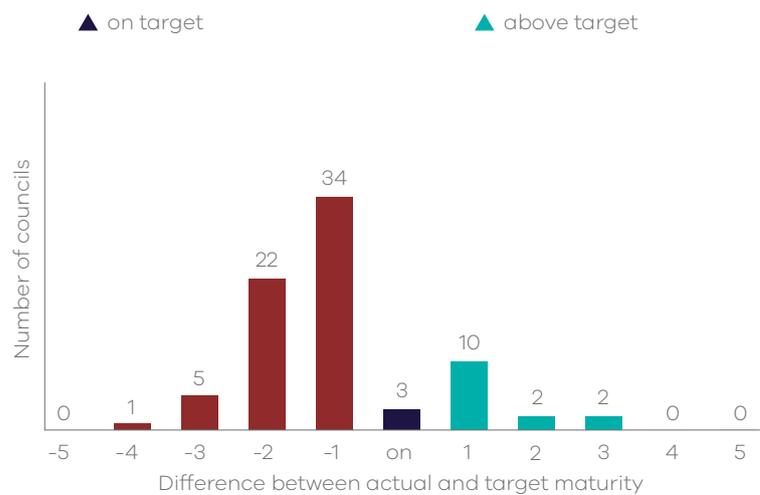


Figure 19: Difference between actual and target maturity, Planning for Recovery Coordination category, state

5.5.2 Region

Table 24: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Recovery Coordination category, by region, per cent and number

State	Below target		On target		Above target	
	78%	62	4%	3	18%	14
North Western Metropolitan	57%	8	7%	1	36%	5
Eastern Metropolitan	86%	6	0%	0	14%	1
Southern Metropolitan	90%	9	0%	0	10%	1
Barwon South West	78%	7	11%	1	11%	1
Grampians	82%	9	0%	0	18%	2
Loddon Mallee	90%	9	0%	0	10%	1
Hume	83%	10	8%	1	8%	1
Gippsland	67%	4	0%	0	33%	2

5.5.3 Comparator

Table 25: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Recovery Coordination category, by comparator group, per cent and number

State	Below target		On target		Above target	
	78%	62	4%	3	18%	14
Metropolitan	73%	16	5%	1	23%	5
Interface	78%	7	0%	0	22%	2
Regional City	100%	10	0%	0	0%	0
Large Shire	84%	16	5%	1	11%	2
Small Shire	68%	13	5%	1	26%	5

5.5.4 Questions

Responsibilities and activities (Type One)

Table 26: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Recovery Coordination category, Type One questions, state, per cent

	Questions	Below target	On target	Above target
F1	Where council is the appropriate recovery coordinator, can council participate in the transition from response to recovery?	57%	16%	27%
F2	Can council coordinate post-emergency needs assessments (PENAs)?	73%	9%	18%
F3	Can council collaborate with the community in the development and delivery of recovery activities, including establishing a recovery committee?	53%	18%	29%
F4	Can council provide and staff a recovery centre?	51%	16%	33%
F5	Can council lead the provision of recovery information to the community?	51%	19%	30%
F6	Can council coordinate social recovery services?	63%	15%	22%
F7	Can council lead the management of environmental health issues at the local level?	52%	19%	29%
F8	Can council support DHHS to coordinate their recovery services?	65%	13%	23%
F9	Can council support agencies to coordinate spontaneous volunteers after an emergency?	77%	8%	15%
F10	Can council support the DJPR to coordinate economic recovery services?	81%	6%	13%
F11	Can council coordinate, assess, rehabilitate and monitor council-managed natural and cultural heritage assets after an emergency?	85%	8%	8%
F12	Can council coordinate the rebuilding and redevelopment of council assets and infrastructure?	66%	13%	22%
F13	Can council support agencies to restore essential assets and infrastructure affected by an emergency?	85%	4%	11%
F14	Can council advocate for planning scheme exemptions for people affected by an emergency?	90%	3%	8%
F15	Can council transition local recovery activities back to business-as-usual (BAU) activities and services?	77%	5%	18%

Perceptions (Type Two)

Table 27: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Planning for Recovery Coordination category, Type Two questions, state, per cent

	Questions	Below target	On target	Above target
F16	How well does council plan for the coordination of recovery for a non-major emergency?	33%	35%	32%
F17	How well does council plan for the coordination of recovery for a major emergency?	46%	35%	19%

5.5.5 Findings

Strengths

Across the state, councils showed no significant strengths in recovery coordination, with sixty-two councils (78%) below their target maturity for the category.

Issues

The responses to the perception questions in Table 27 show that only fifteen councils (19%) were above their target maturity for planning for the coordination of recovery for a major emergency. Their limited ability to plan for recovery is demonstrated by more than 50% of councils being below their target maturity for all questions in Table 26.

In the Planning within Council category, councils were asked, 'Does council have the capacity to resource a major emergency?' Fifty-six councils (71%) were below their target maturity. This indicates that although councils feel they can plan for recovery, they don't have the capacity to implement the plans.

For the perception questions in Table 27, most region and comparator group results aligned with the state results. The Southern Metropolitan region showed the most significant variance and had the greatest percentage of councils below their target maturity for planning for the coordination of recovery for a major emergency.

Most councils were below their target maturity for all recovery responsibilities and activities. Areas with the greatest percentage of councils below their target were:

- coordinating post-emergency needs assessments (73%)

Built Recovery:

- advocating for planning scheme exemptions for people affected by an emergency (90%)
- supporting agencies to restore essential assets and infrastructure affected by an emergency (85%)

Natural Recovery:

- coordinating, assessing, rehabilitating and monitoring council-managed natural and cultural heritage assets after an emergency (85%)

Economic Recovery:

- supporting DJPR to coordinate economic recovery services (81%)
- supporting agencies to coordinate spontaneous volunteers after an emergency (77%)
- transitioning local recovery activities back to business-as-usual activities and services (77%)

Councils report they were challenged to meet their target maturity for undertaking planning for emergency recovery coordination because:

- recovery is complex and responsibilities and activities are not well documented and understood by councils and the broader emergency management sector
- some councils and recovery agencies do not understand councils' role in recovery or their organisational capability and capacity to undertake recovery, which can lead to agencies making unreasonable requests to councils and councils undertaking additional or unreasonable activities

- business continuity plans don't detail or include procedures about how emergency recovery will affect the organisation, including the loss of diverted staff, loss of staff who have been personally affected by the emergency, loss of diverted equipment and loss or disruption of business-as-usual services
- emergency management planning staff (such as an emergency management officer) have little capacity and capability for developing recovery procedures, and for developing and conducting training and exercising
- there is a lack of documented recovery procedures and plans. Where there are procedures and plans, they are high level and lack detail
- staff with an assigned recovery role (such as the MRM) have little or no access to procedures to help them learn and carry out their recovery roles, which can be a barrier to retaining staff, keeping them engaged and recruiting new staff
- staff with an assigned recovery role (such as the MRM) have little access to recovery training so they generally learn from others in the same position or through emergency activations
- when training and exercising opportunities arise, emergency recovery staff have very little capacity to commit time, given the demands of their substantive position
- experienced staff leave the organisation and/or staff participate in emergency events infrequently which leads to fewer capable, experienced staff
- emergency recovery roles are usually optional for council staff, which can lead to a limited uptake and low capacity to undertake prolonged emergency recovery
- council staff (such as community engagement officers and statutory planning officers) understand their role in recovery, but there is little understanding of how the scale and complexity of roles would expand following an emergency event and this is not addressed in procedures
- there is little or no organisational budget allocated to recovery due to the uncertain nature of emergency management. External funding is available through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, but councils cannot always meet the criteria to access this funding.

5.6 Risk Mitigation (category C)

This category evaluated councils' capability and capacity to work with stakeholders and within their organisation to mitigate emergency risk. The questions addressed risk mitigation measures and programs councils should undertake with stakeholders.

There were fourteen questions in this category:

- **Type One:** there were nine questions to gauge a council's level of maturity against the responsibilities, activities and associated core capabilities in the *Councils and Emergencies Position Paper*
- **Type Two:** there were four questions to gauge a council's perceptions of how well it feels it undertakes risk mitigation against its target maturity
- **Type Three:** there was one question that required a written response describing a council's capability and capacity to undertake risk mitigation.

The questions asked councils to evaluate how they undertake risk mitigation for functions that are business-as-usual for council, but which have emergency management implications. These included functions to mitigate the risks of fires (such as managing roadside vegetation management and programs to prevent fire).

Many questions in this category were not applicable to all councils. This meant fewer councils answered each question, so the percentages are based on smaller numbers of councils and do not necessarily represent the whole state.

5.6.1 State

Figure 20 and Figure 21 show that almost two-thirds of applicable councils reported they were below their target maturity for emergency risk mitigation. Fifty-one councils (65%) reported they were below their target with thirty-four up to one level below and seventeen more than one level below. The remaining twenty-eight councils (35%) were on or above their target.

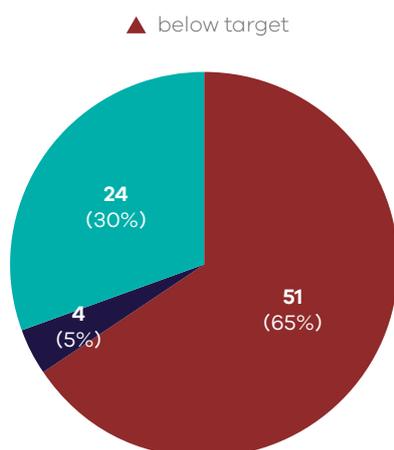


Figure 20: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Risk Mitigation category, state, per cent

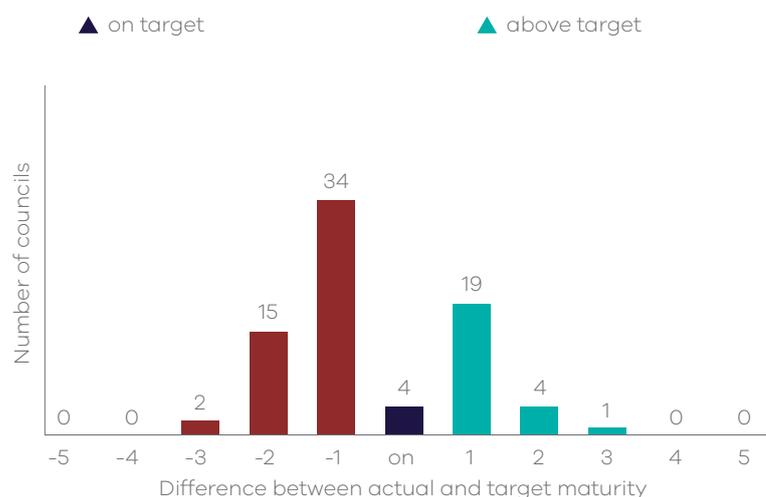


Figure 21: Difference between actual and target maturity, Risk Mitigation category, state

5.6.2 Region

Table 28: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Risk Mitigation category, by region, per cent and number

State	Below target		On target		Above target	
	65%	51	5%	4	30%	24
North Western Metropolitan	50%	7	7%	1	43%	6
Eastern Metropolitan	71%	5	0%	0	29%	2
Southern Metropolitan	80%	8	0%	0	20%	2
Barwon South West	56%	5	22%	2	22%	2
Grampians	64%	7	0%	0	36%	4
Loddon Mallee	70%	7	0%	0	30%	3
Hume	67%	8	8%	1	25%	3
Gippsland	67%	4	0%	0	33%	2

5.6.3 Comparator

Table 29: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Risk Mitigation category, by comparator group, per cent and number

State	Below target		On target		Above target	
	65%	51	5%	4	30%	24
Metropolitan	64%	14	5%	1	32%	7
Interface	67%	6	0%	0	33%	3
Regional City	90%	9	0%	0	10%	1
Large Shire	63%	12	11%	2	26%	5
Small Shire	53%	10	5%	1	42%	8

5.6.4 Questions

Responsibilities and activities (Type One)

Table 30: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Risk Mitigation category, Type One questions, state, per cent

Questions	N/A	Below target	On target	Above target
C1 Where council is a road authority, does council ensure a safe, efficient network of roads is maintained, taking into account obligations under the Victoria Planning Provisions for managing roadside vegetation?		43%	11%	46%
C2 Does council operate a fire prevention program with its residents?	13	26%	8%	67%
C3 Does council require Water Authorities to "fix fire plugs to any of the works of the Authority within the water district in suitable locations for the supply of water for fire-fighting purposes"?	15	50%	11%	39%
C4 Does council "provide a pillar hydrant or hydrants at any specified place or places in or near a public street or road within the municipal district" when requested by the CFA?	16	81%	3%	16%
C5 Does council manage a registered aerodrome? ²	58	10%	5%	86%
C6 Does council manage a certified aerodrome? ²	73	17%	17%	67%
C7 Does council manage a port (either a local port or commercial trading port)?	73	33%	0%	67%
C8 Does council operate a mine or a quarry?	59	30%	10%	60%
C9 Does council conduct fire prevention activities on council owned or managed land or roads to "prevent the occurrence of fires and minimise the danger of the spread of fires"?	9	36%	14%	50%

Notes

¹ The question was not applicable to the number of councils in this column: the percentages are of the remaining councils.

² 21 councils indicated they operated a registered aerodrome, there are only 20 in Victoria. Six councils indicated they operated a certified aerodrome, but there are only two according to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (as at June 2019).

Table 31: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, Risk Mitigation category, Type Two questions, state, per cent

Questions		Below target	On target	Above target
C10	How well does council undertake emergency risk mitigation?	28%	45%	27%
C11	How well does council collaborate with all agency partners to mitigate emergency risk?	34%	37%	29%
C12	How well does council collaborate with other councils to mitigate emergency risk?	49%	25%	25%
C13	How well does council collaborate with the community to mitigate emergency risk?	70%	20%	10%

5.6.5 Findings

Strengths

For this category most councils (where applicable) were on or above their target maturity for:

- managing a registered aerodrome (91%)
- managing a certified aerodrome (83%)
- operating a fire prevention program with residents (74%)
- operating a mine or a quarry (70%)
- ensuring a safe, efficient network of roads is maintained, taking into account obligations under the Victoria Planning Provisions for managing roadside vegetation (where council is a road authority) (57%) – *this is the only risk mitigation type one question that is applicable to all councils*

Councils reported that they prioritise these responsibilities because they are legislated.

Table 31 shows that most councils feel they undertake emergency risk mitigation well. Only twenty-two councils (28%) were below their target maturity for undertaking risk mitigation and only twenty-seven councils (34%) were below their target for collaborating with all agency partners to mitigate emergency risk.

For the perception questions in Table 31, most region and comparator group results aligned with the state results, but several groups showed significant variances. The Eastern Metropolitan region had the greatest percentage of councils below their target maturity for undertaking emergency risk mitigation. The Southern and Eastern Metropolitan regions had the greatest percentage of councils below their target maturity for collaborating with all agency partners to mitigate emergency risk. The Southern Metropolitan region had the greatest percentage of councils below their target maturity for collaborating with other councils to mitigate emergency risk and the Gippsland region had the smallest percentage of councils below their target maturity. The Eastern Metropolitan region and the Interface comparator councils had the greatest percentage of councils below their target maturity for collaborating with the community to mitigate emergency risk.

Issues

For the perception questions in Table 31, fifty-five councils (70%) were below their target for collaborating with the community to mitigate emergency risk. Thirty-nine councils (49%) were below their target for emergency risk mitigation with other councils.

Most councils were below their target maturity for:

- providing a pillar hydrant or hydrants at any specified place or places in or near a public street or road within the municipal district" when requested by the CFA (81%).

Councils report they were challenged to meet their target maturity for undertaking emergency risk mitigation because:

- staff with an assigned emergency role (such as the MERO and MRM) and other council staff (such as the parks team) have very little capacity to commit to emergency risk planning, given the demands of their substantive position
- emergency risk mitigation is isolated from other business-as-usual activities with risk mitigation functions (such as statutory planning)
- risk mitigation is complex and cannot be undertaken by a single agency
- MEMPCs and sub committees undertake emergency risk assessments using the Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA) tool or its equivalent and the Victorian Fire Risk Register process. This can lead to high-level emergency risk planning only and risk mitigation can remain in the early identification and planning stage without being implemented (except for fire and flood)
- council and agency staff do not have capacity to engage around risk mitigation outside formal committees
- there is a lack of funding for very expensive mitigation strategies (such as infrastructure solutions).

PART 06

Core capabilities

The responsibilities and activities in the *Councils and Emergencies Position Paper* were aligned with the core capabilities in the *Victorian Preparedness Framework*. The framework provides the foundation for Victoria's emergency management preparedness system, and the Councils and Emergencies Project is aligned with the framework to ensure consistency between the capabilities required by the emergency management and local government sectors.

Table 32 shows the percentage of councils with actual maturities below, and, on or above, their target maturities. The core capabilities where most councils had actual maturities below their target maturities were Economic Recovery, Impact Assessment, Built Recovery and Critical Transport. These results align to the Planning for Relief and Recovery Coordination category results.

The core capabilities where most councils had actual maturities on or above the target maturities were Planning, Intelligence and Information Sharing, Relief Assistance and Fire Management and Suppression. These results align to the Planning with Stakeholders, Planning within Council and Risk Mitigation category results. The data for the Relief Assistance core capability was aligned with questions where a high percentage of councils were on or above their target maturity and therefore, the results show a higher maturity than those in the Planning for Relief Coordination category.

To understand these results, refer to the relevant category findings. Appendix 2 has a breakdown of the evaluation questions that were used to produce these results.

Table 32: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, by Victorian Preparedness Framework core capability

Core capability	Below target	On or above target	Relevant Categories
Economic Recovery	77%	23%	F
Impact Assessment	71%	29%	B, E, F
Built Recovery	67%	33%	E, F
Critical Transport	65%	35%	E
Social Recovery	57%	43%	F
Assurance and Learning	48%	52%	A
Community Information and Warnings	46%	54%	D, E, F
Operational Management	45%	55%	B, D, F
Building Community Resilience	42%	58%	A
Fire Management and Suppression	35%	65%	A, C
Relief Assistance	35%	65%	E
Intelligence and Information Sharing	34%	66%	D
Planning	33%	67%	A, B, C

The evaluation identified the following issues that commonly challenge councils to meet their target maturity. A summary of the issues is detailed against capability and capacity below. Each issue is aligned with one of the core capability elements in the *Victorian Preparedness Framework*.

The most common reason councils identified for not achieving their target maturity was that they lack the capacity to undertake the required range of emergency management responsibilities.

7.1 Capacity

People - Staffing (before): the emergency management planning function is commonly undertaken by one or a few staff, sometimes as an additional responsibility to their non-emergency management substantive role. This results in a reduced staffing capacity to plan for emergencies. Councils therefore prioritise emergency management responsibilities required by legislation.

Systems - Budget: for some councils (such as those with a lower emergency risk), emergency management is not as high a priority as other council functions. Councils provide a wide range of services to their communities and allocate their budget accordingly. The emergency management budgets are commonly constrained, which can limit the resources allocated to emergency management.

Governance - Funding: councils that receive funding through MERP reported that although these funds increase their capacity, they are often insufficient to cover the wide range of emergency management responsibilities. Without the funding councils would be unable to undertake some emergency management responsibilities and activities.

Processes - Procedures: councils have formal municipal plans that outline high-level arrangements for emergency management, but they often lack the capacity to develop detailed procedures.

People - Staffing (during and after): lack of staffing capacity is also an issue during and after emergency events, when council staff must be diverted from their normal duties to undertake emergency roles. Councils have limited numbers of staff available to resource emergency management during and after an emergency for these reasons:

- the need to maintain business-critical functions (such as finance and aged care services)
- for a major emergency, the total number of staff within the organisation can be insufficient to maintain business-as-usual services and functions while undertaking emergency management responsibilities in activation, relief and recovery. This issue is amplified in smaller councils which will never be sufficiently staffed to resource a major emergency
- staff are not able to take on an emergency management role because they are not sufficiently resilient to deal with the trauma of affected communities, or they may have been personally affected by the emergency and are not able to undertake an emergency role
- not all councils have formal resource-sharing agreements or detailed procedures about how to activate and carry out a resource-sharing agreement.

Geographic size: councils with large geographic areas reported that the size of their municipalities made it harder to undertake their emergency management responsibilities. Barriers they identified were the distances to travel to local communities, having to deal with a large area for hazard planning and undertaking relief and recovery functions in multiple geographic areas. This issue is amplified in geographically larger municipalities which can have smaller rate bases, have a large amount of assets and have less available council resources.

Population: councils with a large population may find planning for and responding to an emergency more challenging. With larger numbers of people including residents and transient populations affected, more resources are needed to plan with and support communities before, during and after an emergency. People living in urban areas can be more difficult to engage in emergency management planning activities because of their limited direct experience in emergencies.

7.2 Capability

People - Organisational knowledge: most emergency management knowledge and expertise is held by only a few people within council. Staff responsible for emergency management have strong capability but that often does not extend to the surge workforce or the wider organisation.

People - Emergency event experience: infrequent emergency events mean there are limited opportunities for staff to gain experience. If there have been few or no emergencies, only those in leadership roles (such as the Emergency Management Coordinator, MERO and MRM) may be activated and gain experience.

Systems - Training: there is little emergency management training available in the sector, and councils reported that a lack of training can lead to a lack of capability in surge staff who have an emergency management role. Although some councils have developed training internally or through an emergency management collaboration, most emergency planning staff lack capability and capacity to do this.

Processes - Procedures: a lack of clearly written procedures and other reference documents can result in staff not understanding their role and its requirements. This can restrict their capability to effectively undertake their emergency management role.

People - Organisational changes: staff turnover results in a loss of staff with experience in emergencies, and it reduces the organisation's capability.

PART 08

Next steps

Phase Two of the Councils and Emergencies Project has completed a comprehensive evaluation of the emergency management capability and capacity of Victoria's seventy-nine councils. It has identified strengths and areas for improvement to be addressed to improve capability and capacity across the local government sector.

During Phase Three of the project, councils, state government agencies and other emergency management organisations will be engaged to develop strategies and action plans to address the areas for improvement in councils' emergency management capability and capacity identified in this report. Key areas for improvement are:

- emergency relief and recovery
- integration of emergency management into business as usual
- community engagement for emergency management
- further clarification of council roles in emergency management
- emergency management budget and funding

In Phase Three, councils, agencies and other emergency management organisations will have the opportunity to review and discuss the areas for improvement and develop strategies and action plans to address them.

The findings of Phase Three will be developed into a final councils and emergencies report, which will identify options to address areas for improvement in councils' capability and capacity and support wider emergency management sector reform. These will inform other sector reforms including the [Victorian Preparedness Framework](#), [Emergency Management Planning Reform](#) and [Resilient Recovery Strategy](#) that aim to build safer, more resilient communities.

CERA	Community Emergency Risk Assessment
CFA	Country Fire Authority
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DJPR	Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions
EMT	Emergency Management Team
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
ERC	Emergency Relief Centre
FDP	Fire Danger Period
LGV	Local Government Victoria
MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria
MEMEG	Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
MEMPC	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
MERO	Municipal Emergency Resource Officer
MERP	Municipal Emergency Resourcing Program
MFMP	Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee
MFPO	Municipal Fire Prevention Officer
MPHWP	Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
MRM	Municipal Recovery Manager
MSS	Municipal Strategic Statement
NSP	Neighbourhood Safer Place
PENA	Post-Emergency Needs Assessment
SES	State Emergency Service
SIA	Secondary Impact Assessment
TFWS	Total Flood Warning System
VGC	Victoria Grants Commission
VPC	Vulnerable Persons Coordinator

Table 33 shows all Type One questions, sorted by the percentage of councils with an actual maturity below their target maturity. Activities councils reported as strengths (those with a very small percentage of councils below target) are at the top of the table,

and the activities that require the most improvement are at the end of the table. The letter and number in the '#' column refer to the category of question and its number.

Table 33: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, by Type One questions and percentage of councils below target maturity, Victoria, number and per cent

#	Responsibility or activity	N/A ¹	Below target		On target		Above target	
A2	Does the municipality have a Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) that has been 'considered by the municipal council' (including associated sub plans)?		2	3%	19	24%	58	73%
C5	Does council manage a registered aerodrome?	58	2	9%	1	5%	18	86%
B11	Has council appointed a Vulnerable Persons Coordinator (VPC) according to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Vulnerable People in Emergencies Policy?	15	9	14%	16	25%	39	61%
B6	Has council identified, planned for and documented emergency relief centres or other locations that will provide emergency relief services in an emergency?		13	16%	17	22%	49	62%
E4	Can council establish and manage Emergency Relief Centres?		13	16%	17	22%	49	62%
C6	Does council manage a certified aerodrome?	73	1	17%	1	17%	4	66%
B3	Has council appointed a Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)?		15	19%	14	18%	50	63%
E5	Can council support relief and recovery agencies (incl. DHHS, Victoria Police, Red Cross) to provide services to the community following an emergency?		15	19%	17	22%	47	59%
B10	Has council appointed a Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO) under an Instrument of Delegation?		17	21%	6	8%	56	71%

#	Responsibility or activity	N/A ¹	Below target		On target		Above target	
B2	Has council appointed a Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO) under an Instrument of Delegation?		18	23%	14	18%	47	59%
A12	Does council have a Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSP) Plan (or bushfire place of last resort plan)?	36	10	23%	3	7%	30	70%
A13	Has council identified locations for Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSP) within its municipal district and applied to the CFA to have them assessed and certified?	16	15	24%	5	8%	43	68%
A4	Does council encourage and support the community to participate in emergency management awareness programs operated by emergency management agencies?		19	24%	8	10%	52	66%
A3	Has the municipality undertaken an Emergency Risk Assessment (such as the Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA) or equivalent)?		20	25%	9	11%	50	63%
A6	Does the municipality have a relief and recovery plan?		20	25%	13	17%	46	58%
C2	Does council operate a fire prevention program with its residents?	13	17	26%	5	8%	44	67%
A9	Does the municipality have a multi-agency Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC)?	15	17	27%	13	20%	34	53%
B4	Does council have an emergency coordination system and/or council operational facilities that can be activated during an emergency?		21	26%	14	18%	44	56%
E1	Can council coordinate relief following an emergency?		22	28%	34	43%	23	29%
C8	Does council operate a mine or a quarry?	59	6	30%	2	10%	12	60%
A1	Does the municipality have a multi-agency Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)?		25	32%	18	23%	36	46%
A8	Does council have arrangements in place to collaborate with other councils and agencies to support surge requirements and share information during emergencies?		25	32%	12	15%	42	53%

#	Responsibility or activity	N/A ¹	Below target		On target		Above target	
B13	Does council prepare a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) in accordance with the Act?		25	32%	12	15%	42	53%
C7	Does council manage a port (either a local port or commercial trading port)?	73	2	33%	0	0%	4	67%
D1	Can council support emergency management teams (EMTs) and agencies by providing local information to assist in decision-making?		27	34%	10	13%	42	53%
D3	Can council support agencies, where requested, with the dissemination of warnings to the community?		28	35%	19	24%	32	41%
C9	Does council conduct fire prevention activities on council owned or managed land or roads to "prevent the occurrence of fires and minimise the danger of the spread of fires"?	9	25	36%	10	14%	35	50%
D2	Can council support response agencies by providing council resources as requested?		33	42%	21	26%	25	32%
C1	Where council is a road authority, does council ensure a safe, efficient network of roads is maintained, taking into account obligations under the Victoria Planning Provisions for managing roadside vegetation?		34	43%	9	11%	36	46%
E8	Can council survey and determine the occupancy of damaged buildings following an emergency?		34	43%	14	18%	31	39%
A10	Does councils fire prevention officer grant permits to light a fire or fires at any time outside of the Fire Danger Period (FDP) subject to any conditions or restrictions contained in the permit?	26	23	44%	6	11%	24	45%
B1	Do council staff with an assigned emergency management role have access to emergency management training?		37	47%	12	15%	30	38%
C3	Does council require Water Authorities to "fix fire plugs to any of the works of the Authority within the water district in suitable locations for the supply of water for fire-fighting purposes"?	15	32	50%	7	11%	25	39%

#	Responsibility or activity	N/A ¹	Below target		On target		Above target	
B12	Does council prepare a Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) in accordance with the Planning and Environment Act?		40	51%	11	14%	28	35%
F4	Can council provide and staff a recovery centre?		40	51%	13	16%	26	33%
F5	Can council lead the provision of recovery information to the community?		40	51%	15	19%	24	30%
B8	Does council plan for emergency housing of displaced and lost/stray companion animals?		41	52%	8	10%	30	38%
E6	Can council coordinate the housing of displaced, lost and stray companion animals (other than wildlife) in collaboration with the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)?		41	52%	8	10%	30	38%
E7	Can council conduct safety assessments of council-owned essential assets and infrastructure?		41	52%	12	15%	26	33%
F7	Can council lead the management of environmental health issues at the local level?		41	52%	15	19%	23	29%
F3	Can council collaborate with the community in the development and delivery of recovery activities, including establishing a recovery committee?		42	53%	14	18%	23	29%
E2	Can council provide a single point of contact for residents affected by an emergency that are seeking support, services and assistance?		43	54%	13	16%	23	29%
A11	Does councils fire prevention officer grant permits to light a fire or fires at any time during the Fire Danger Period (FDP) subject to any conditions or restrictions contained in the permit?	38	23	56%	2	5%	16	39%
A7	Does council review municipal operations and community consequences after an emergency?		45	57%	7	9%	27	34%
F1	Where council is the appropriate recovery coordinator, can council participate in the transition from response to recovery?		45	57%	13	16%	21	27%

#	Responsibility or activity	N/A ¹	Below target		On target		Above target	
A5	Does council advocate for its community's emergency management needs and priorities?		49	62%	4	5%	26	33%
B9	Has council identified standards for the clean-up and recovery of council-managed assets?		50	63%	5	6%	24	31%
E10	Can council coordinate clean-up activities after an emergency?		50	63%	5	6%	24	30%
E9	Can council provide support to VicRoads for partial/full road closures and determination of alternative routes?		50	63%	12	15%	17	22%
F6	Can council coordinate social recovery services?		50	63%	12	15%	17	22%
D5	Does council maintain stream gauges whose sole purpose is to serve as an element in a total flood warning system (TFWS) service?	57	14	64%	2	9%	6	27%
F8	Can council support DHHS to coordinate their recovery services?		51	65%	10	13%	18	23%
F12	Can council coordinate the rebuilding and redevelopment of council assets and infrastructure?		52	66%	10	13%	17	22%
B5	Does council have a register of council, municipal and other resources available for use before, during and after emergencies?		53	67%	8	10%	18	23%
B7	Does council have Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA) and Post Emergency Needs Assessment (PENA) processes and data-collection systems?		58	73%	7	9%	14	18%
E3	Can council coordinate a secondary impact assessment?		58	73%	7	9%	14	18%
F2	Can council coordinate post-emergency needs assessments (PENA)?		58	73%	7	9%	14	18%
D4	Can council close council-managed land affected by an emergency?		61	77%	5	6%	13	17%
F9	Can council support agencies to coordinate spontaneous volunteers after an emergency?		61	77%	6	8%	12	15%
F15	Can council transition local recovery activities back to business-as-usual (BAU) activities and services?		61	77%	4	5%	14	18%

#	Responsibility or activity	N/A ¹	Below target		On target		Above target	
C4	Does council "provide a pillar hydrant or hydrants at any specified place or places in or near a public street or road within the municipal district" when requested by the CFA?	16	51	81%	2	3%	10	16%
F10	Can council support DJPR to coordinate economic recovery services?		64	81%	5	6%	10	13%
F11	Can council coordinate, assess, rehabilitate and monitor council-managed natural and cultural heritage assets after an emergency?		67	85%	6	8%	6	8%
F13	Can council support agencies to restore essential assets and infrastructure affected by an emergency?		67	85%	3	4%	9	11%
F14	Can council advocate for planning scheme exemptions for people affected by an emergency?		71	90%	2	3%	6	8%

Note

¹The question was not applicable to the number of councils in this column: the percentages are of the remaining councils.

Core capability evaluation question alignment

Table 34 expands Part 6 to show the *Victorian Preparedness Framework* core capability description and the capability and capacity evaluation Type One questions that relate to the core capability.

Table 34: Actual maturity below, on or above target maturity, by Victorian Preparedness Framework core capability, with contributing evaluation Type One questions

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target		Contributing questions
Planning 	Conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community as appropriate in the development of executable strategic, operational, and/or tactical level approaches to meet defined objectives	33%	67%	A1	Does the municipality have a multi-agency Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)?
				A2	Does the municipality have a Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) that has been "considered by the municipal council" (including associated sub plans)?
				A3	Has the municipality undertaken an Emergency Risk Assessment (such as the Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA) or equivalent)?
				A6	Does the municipality have a relief and recovery plan?
				A8	Does council have arrangements in place to collaborate with other councils and agencies to support surge requirements and share information during emergencies?
				B1	Do council staff with an assigned emergency management role have access to emergency management training?
				B5	Does council have a register of council, municipal and other resources available for use before, during and after emergencies?

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target	Contributing questions
				B6 Has council identified, planned for and documented emergency relief centres or other locations that will provide emergency relief services in an emergency?
				B8 Does council plan for emergency housing of displaced and lost/stray companion animals?
				B9 Has council identified standards for the clean-up and recovery of council-managed assets?
				B11 Has council appointed a Vulnerable Persons Coordinator (VPC) according to the DHHS Vulnerable People in Emergencies Policy?
				B12 Does council prepare a Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) in accordance with the Planning and Environment Act?
				B13 Does council prepare a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) in accordance with the Act?
				C1 Where council is a road authority, does council ensure a safe, efficient network of roads is maintained, taking into account obligations under the Victoria Planning Provisions for managing roadside vegetation?
				C5 Does council manage a registered aerodrome?
				C6 Does council manage a certified aerodrome?
				C7 Does council manage a port (either a local port or commercial trading port)?
				C8 Does council operate a mine or a quarry?
				F1 Where council is the appropriate recovery coordinator, can council participate in the transition from response to recovery?

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target	Contributing questions	
Community Information and Warnings 	Deliver public information and warnings that are authoritative, consistently constructed and relevant for all Victorians and visitors in all emergencies. Provide timely and tailored information that supports the community to make informed decisions before, during and after emergencies.	46%	54%	D3	Can council support agencies, where requested, with the dissemination of warnings to the community?
				D5	Does council maintain stream gauges whose sole purpose is to serve as an element in a total flood warning system (TFWS) service?
				E2	Can council provide a single point of contact for residents affected by an emergency that are seeking support, services and assistance?
				F5	Can council lead the provision of recovery information to the community?

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target	Contributing questions	
Operational Management 	Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities, including operational communications (the communications within and between emergency management agencies, when responding to emergency incidents, performing business as usual activities in the field or responding to multi-agency, large scale emergency events)	45%	55%	B2	Has council appointed a Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO) under an Instrument of Delegation?
				B3	Has council appointed a Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)?
				B4	Does council have an emergency coordination system and/or council operational facilities that can be activated during an emergency?
				D2	Can council support response agencies by providing council resources as requested?
				D4	Can council close council-managed land affected by an emergency?
				E1	Can council coordinate relief following an emergency?
				F4	Can council provide and staff a recovery centre?
				F7	Can council lead the management of environmental health issues at the local level?
				F9	Can council support agencies to coordinate spontaneous volunteers after an emergency?
				F15	Can council transition local recovery activities back to business-as-usual (BAU) activities and services?

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target	Contributing questions	
Intelligence and Information Sharing 	<p>Provide timely, accurate and actionable decision support information, resulting from the planning, collecting, processing, analysis and evaluation from multiple data sources, which is needed to be more proactive in anticipating hazard activity and informing mitigation, response or recovery activities. It also includes the assessment of risks, threats and hazards so that decision makers, responders, and community members can take informed action to reduce their entity's risk and increase their resilience</p>	34%	66%	D1	<p>Can council support emergency management teams (EMT) and agencies by providing local information to assist in decision-making?</p>

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target	Contributing questions	
Building Community Resilience 	<p>Building community safety and resilience includes working together at the local level. Communities can strengthen their lifelines by better connecting and working together with appropriate support from organisations. Build on combined community and organisational strengths before, during and after emergencies</p>	42%	58%	A4	<p>Does council encourage and support the community to participate in emergency management awareness programs operated by emergency management agencies?</p>
				A5	<p>Does council advocate for its community's emergency management needs and priorities?</p>

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target		Contributing questions
Fire Management and Suppression 	Provide firefighting capabilities to manage and suppress fires while protecting lives, property, and the environment in the affected (land and water) area	35%	65%	A9	Does the municipality have a multi-agency Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC)?
				A10	Does councils fire prevention officer grant permits to light a fire or fires at any time outside of the Fire Danger Period (FDP) subject to any conditions or restrictions contained in the permit?
				A11	Does councils fire prevention officer grant permits to light a fire or fires at any time during the Fire Danger Period (FDP) subject to any conditions or restrictions contained in the permit?
				A12	Does council have a Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSP) Plan (or bushfire place of last resort plan)?
				A13	Has council identified locations for Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSP) within its municipal district and applied to the CFA to have them assessed and certified?
				B10	Has council appointed a Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO) under an Instrument of Delegation?
				C2	Does council operate a fire prevention program with its residents?
				C3	Does council require Water Authorities to "fix fire plugs to any of the works of the Authority within the water district in suitable locations for the supply of water for fire-fighting purposes"?
				C4	Does council "provide a pillar hydrant or hydrants at any specified place or places in or near a public street or road within the municipal district" when requested by the CFA?
				C9	Does council conduct fire prevention activities on council owned or managed land or roads to "prevent the occurrence of fires and minimise the danger of the spread of fires"?

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target	Contributing questions	
Critical Transport 	Plan for and provide response and recovery services during emergencies that affect the road network including alternative routes, emergency permits and escorts for responders, clearing and restoration of damaged roads. Provide response to major public transportation emergencies including infrastructure access and accessible transportation services to ensure community movement including coordination of all private rail, tram and bus services to support priority response objectives	65%	35%	E9	Can council provide support to VicRoads for partial/full road closures and determination of alternative routes?

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target	Contributing questions	
Impact Assessment 	Provide all decision makers with relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard, and any potential consequences during and after an emergency to ensure efficient, timely and appropriate support for communities	71%	29%	B7	Does council have Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA) and Post Emergency Needs Assessment (PENA) processes and data-collection systems?
				E3	Can council coordinate secondary impact assessment?
				F2	Can council coordinate post-emergency needs assessments (PENA)?
				F11	Can council coordinate, assess, rehabilitate and monitor council-managed natural and cultural heritage assets after an emergency?

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target	Contributing questions	
Relief Assistance 	The provision of 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, with the aim to support social cohesion and build resilience	35%	65%	E4	Can council establish and manage Emergency Relief Centres?
				E5	Can council support relief and recovery agencies (incl. DHHS, Victoria Police, Red Cross) to provide services to the community following an emergency?
				E6	Can council coordinate the housing of displaced, lost and stray companion animals (other than wildlife) in collaboration with DJPR?
				E10	Can council coordinate clean-up activities after an emergency?

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target	Contributing questions	
Economic Recovery 	Return economic and business activities (including food and agriculture) to a healthy state and develop new business and employment opportunities that result in a sustainable and economically viable community	77%	23%	F10	Can council support DJPR to coordinate economic recovery services?

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target	Contributing questions	
Built Recovery 	Restore critical and community infrastructure and establish safe areas during and following an emergency, ensuring the provision of facilities and services to support and benefit communities	67%	33%	E7	Can council conduct safety assessments of council-owned essential assets and infrastructure?
				E8	Can council survey and determine the occupancy of damaged buildings following an emergency?
				F12	Can council coordinate the rebuilding and redevelopment of council assets and infrastructure?
				F13	Can council support agencies to restore essential assets and infrastructure affected by an emergency?
				F14	Can council advocate for planning scheme exemptions for people affected by an emergency?

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target		Contributing questions
Social Recovery 	The longer-term provision of assistance and access to services that allows individuals, families and communities to achieve an effective level of functioning after an emergency event. This includes safety, security, shelter, health and psychosocial wellbeing and re-establishment of those elements of society necessary for well-being	57%	43%	F3	Can council collaborate with the community in the development and delivery of recovery activities, including establishing a recovery committee?
				F6	Can council coordinate social recovery services?
				F8	Can council support DHHS to coordinate their recovery services?

Core capability	Description	Below target	On or above target		Contributing questions
Assurance and Learning 	Support continuous improvement to improve emergency management practice and community safety by extracting understanding from experience and research, reviewing community consequences, investigating causes and outcomes, providing assurance and translating lessons into behaviour change	48%	52%	A7	Does council review municipal operations and community consequences after an emergency?

Table 35 shows the core capabilities in the Victorian Preparedness Framework for which there were no associated responsibilities and activities in the Councils and Emergency Position Paper and therefore no associated evaluation questions.

Table 35: Victorian Preparedness Framework core capabilities not within the Councils and Emergencies Position Paper or evaluation

Core capability	Description
Public Order and Community Safety	 <p>Conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community as appropriate in the development of executable strategic, operational, and/or tactical level approaches to meet defined objectives</p>
Fatality Management	 <p>Provide fatality management services, including search, recovery, victim identification (following Interpol Standards), and repatriation. As well as the sharing of accurate and timely information with other agencies and the community, and the provision of support to the bereaved</p>
Logistics and Supply Chain Management	 <p>Deliver essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted communities and survivors, to include emergency power and fuel support, as well as the coordination of access to community staples. Synchronize logistics capabilities and enable the restoration of impacted supply chains, including removal of debris</p>
Search and Rescue	 <p>Deliver traditional and atypical search and rescue capabilities, including people and resources with the goal of saving the greatest number of endangered lives in the shortest time possible</p>
Health Protection	 <p>Promotes and protects the public health of Victorians by monitoring notifiable disease outbreaks in order to control and minimise the risk of infection. This includes regulating the safety of food, drinking water and human environmental health hazards such as radiation, legionella and pesticides. Includes informing the community and health providers about public health risks and promoting behaviours and strategies to mitigate and avoid risk. It also includes the development of national policies, standards and strategies to promote improvements in public health generally and supports the health system to respond to national public health risks</p>
Health Emergency Response	 <p>The planning, provisioning, response and coordination of pre-hospital and health emergency care, including triage, treatment and distribution of patients, in a timely and structured manner, using all available resources to maximise positive health outcomes</p>
Environmental Response	 <p>Assess and manage the consequences to the community, environmental values, domestic animals and livestock of a hazardous materials release, naturally occurring pests or biological hazard</p>
Natural and Cultural Heritage Rehabilitation	 <p>Protect natural and cultural heritage resources through appropriate planning, mitigation, response, and recovery actions to preserve, conserve, rehabilitate, and restore them consistent with post-disaster community priorities and best practices in compliance with applicable environmental and heritage preservation laws</p>



Environment,
Land, Water
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