

Summary of Council's Emergency Management Legal Responsibilities

Extract

Local Government Emergency Management Handbook

Councils' key emergency management responsibilities stem primarily from Part 4 of the Emergency Management Act 1986, which requires councils to:

- establish a municipal emergency management planning committee (MEMPC)
- facilitate the development and maintenance of the municipal emergency management plan (MEMPlan) by the MEMPC, for consideration and endorsement by council
- allow the audit of the plan, and
- appoint at least one municipal emergency resource officer (MERO) to coordinate the use of council resources for emergency response and recovery.

Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMPlan)

- (1) A municipal council must prepare and maintain a municipal emergency management plan.
- (2) A municipal emergency management plan must contain provisions-
 - (a) identifying the municipal resources (being resources owned by or under the direct control of the municipal council) and other resources available for use in the municipal district for emergency prevention, response and recovery; and
 - (b) specifying how such resources are to be used for emergency prevention, response and recovery; and
 - (ba) in the case of a municipal district that is located wholly or partly in the country area of Victoria within the meaning of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* –
 - identifying all designated Neighbourhood Safer Places in the municipal district or, if no places have been designated under the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*, recording that fact; and
 - designating any places in the municipal district that are community fire refuges within the meaning of Part IIIA of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*; and
 - (c) relating to any matter prescribed for the purposes of this subsection.

Municipal coordination and planning

- A municipal council must appoint a municipal emergency planning committee constituted by persons appointed by the municipal council being members and employees of the municipal council, response and recovery agencies and local community groups involved in emergency management issues.
- The function of a municipal emergency planning committee is to prepare a draft municipal emergency management plan for consideration by the municipal council.

Audit of municipal emergency management plans

- (1) A municipal emergency management plan must be audited during the period commencing 1 July 1995 and ending 31 December 1996 and thereafter at least once every 3 years by the Chief Officer, Operations of the Victoria State Emergency Service to assess whether the plan complies with guidelines issued by the Minister.
- (2) The Chief Officer, Operations of the Victoria State Emergency Service must during the audit invite submissions on the municipal plan from the regional emergency response committee and the regional recovery committee.
- (3) A municipal council must within 3 months of receiving an audit report forward a copy of its written response to the audit report to the Chief Officer, Operations of the Victoria State Emergency Service.