State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan

Part 4: Emergency Management Manual Victoria

APPROVED

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Emergency Management Commissioner

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The *State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan* (the Plan) specifies the arrangements for the coordinated planning and management of emergency relief and recovery in Victoria.

The purpose of the Plan is to outline the strategy and arrangements in place to ensure safe, effective and coordinated emergency relief and recovery activities in Victoria.

The aim of relief and recovery is to support communities to successfully deal with the impacts of an emergency on the social, built, economic and natural environments. By doing so, communities help build cohesion and resilience to future emergencies.

1.2 Scope

The Plan:

- describes the principles for relief and recovery from any emergency in Victoria
- clarifies who is accountable and responsible for relief and recovery coordination
- describes the functions of relief and recovery
- specifies the roles and responsibilities of agencies in relief and recovery
- outlines the arrangements for escalating relief and recovery coordination
- describes how available relief and recovery resources are organised.

The Plan does not describe the processes, procedures or available capability used in emergency relief and recovery operations.

- at the state level, these are described in State emergency relief and recovery operational plans.
- at the regional level, these are described in each region's Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan.
- at the local level, these are described in municipalities' Municipal Emergency Management Plan.

Agencies involved in relief and recovery operations should document their capability and capacity to meet its roles and responsibilities.

1.3 Definitions

Emergency is defined in the *Emergency Management Act 2013* as 'the actual or imminent occurrence of an event which in any way endangers or threatens to endanger the safety or health of any person in Victoria or which destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage, any property in Victoria or endangers or threatens to endanger the environment or an element of the environment in Victoria including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing –

a) an earthquake, flood, wind storm or other natural event; and

b) a fire; and

c) an explosion; and

d) a road accident or any other accident; and

e) a plague or an epidemic or contamination; and

f) a warlike act or act of terrorism, whether directed at Victoria or a part of Victoria or at any other State or Territory of the Commonwealth; and

g) a hi-jack, siege or riot; and

h) a disruption to an essential service.

Relief is defined in this Plan as the provision of assistance to meet the essential needs of individuals, families and communities during and in the immediate aftermath of an emergency.

Recovery is defined in the *Emergency Management Act 2013* as 'the assisting of persons and communities affected by emergencies to achieve an effective level of functioning'.

Both relief and recovery begin when an emergency occurs and many response, relief and recovery activities are undertaken concurrently. Typically, relief is provided during and in the immediate aftermath of an emergency. Recovery is generally a longer term process for affected individuals and communities.

Agencies are defined in the *Emergency Management Act 1986* as 'a government agency or a non-government agency'. For the purpose of this Plan, agencies are those listed in Part 7 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria and have either broad or state-wide presence, are government organisations, or private corporations with specific roles.

1.4 Target groups

Relief and recovery are responsibilities that require collaboration and coordination shared between individuals and communities, non-government organisations, businesses, all levels of government and other partners. This plan is intended to support and guide the work of that broad relief and recovery sector and those agencies.

2. Emergency management context

Emergencies of various scales frequently occur in Victoria. These emergencies vary greatly in terms of the size of the event, the geographic area affected, the nature of the hazard that causes the emergency and the consequences on the community. An 'all communities, all emergencies' approach underpins emergency management in Victoria.

Each agency has an obligation to contribute to improving the preparedness, capability and resilience of all communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies before, during and after.

Before an emergency:

This includes the preparation, planning, engagement and knowledge required to understand the risk environment. The people, resources, governance, systems and processes are put in place to build connection through trusted networks and reduce the risk of emergencies.
During an emergency:

The people, resources, governance, systems and processes are in place for services and assistance during or directly after an emergency to save lives, buildings and infrastructure, to ensure public safety and to cater for people's immediate survival needs and lifelines (including information, shelter, food and water).

After an emergency:

The people, resources, governance, systems and processes are in place for services that reduce the consequences after an emergency and reconnect, redesign, rebuild and renew lives, buildings and community connection.

This Plan is developed in accordance with the *Emergency Management Act 1986* (EM Act 1986) and *the Emergency Management Act 2013* (EM Act 2013), which provide the legislative basis for the management of emergencies in Victoria.

This Plan is part of a broader set of arrangements for managing emergencies in Victoria and is published as Part 4 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV). This Plan should be read in conjunction with the entire EMMV. In particular, the EMMV Part 7 – Agency Emergency Management Roles lists the roles and responsibilities of agencies in emergency management, including the roles and responsibilities of agencies in the provision of relief and recovery.

The EMMV Part 3 – the State Emergency Response Plan outlines the Victorian arrangements for the coordinated response to emergencies by all agencies with a role or responsibility in relation to emergency response. The State Emergency Response Plan has a number of sub-plans for specific types of emergencies where the arrangements are more complex or vary from the standard State arrangements.

The EMMV Part 6 – Municipal Emergency Management Planning Arrangements Guidelines for Committees encourages and support a consistent approach to emergency management planning at the municipal level. The guidelines assist municipal emergency management planning committees prepare and maintain a Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP). These guidelines reinforce the multi-agency nature of the planning process and assist the organisational representatives who contribute to the MEMP.

The EMMV Part 7 – Emergency Management Agency Roles lists control and support agencies for the responses to emergencies. It does not list all agencies that may be involved in any particular emergency. Nor does it list all emergencies that may be encountered.

The control agency is responsible for establishing the management arrangements for the collaborative response to an emergency. The control agency will generally be the agency with a role or responsibility that is most closely aligned to the emergency.

2.1 Response, relief and recovery in parallel

The *Emergency Management Act 2013*, fosters a sustainable and efficient emergency management system that minimises the likelihood, effect and consequences of emergencies. It recognises the importance of an "all communities, all emergencies" approach to emergency management based on networked arrangements and greater interoperability. To achieve this, relief and recovery planning occurs before, during and after emergencies.

The response to, and recovery from, a major emergency involves many agencies from across government. The people and agencies with roles and

responsibilities for responding to emergencies work together in emergency management teams at the state, regional and local tiers to ensure a collaborative and coordinated whole of government approach. Emergency relief and recovery activities integrate with emergency response activities and commence as soon as the effect and consequences of the emergency are anticipated. Relief and recovery coordinators/managers should be involved at all tiers and in all teams established to manage the emergency response.

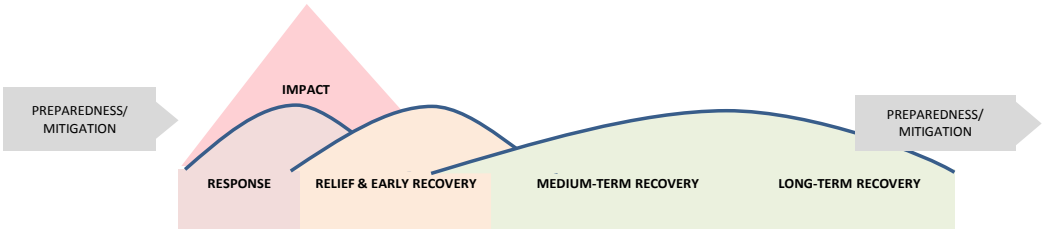

Figure 1: Emergency relief and recovery activities over time

Once emergency response activity has ceased, the management of the emergency will fully transition from response to recovery. The EMMV Part 3 - State Emergency Response Plan explains the transition process. This Plan outlines the arrangements for the delivery of emergency relief and recovery services, including where these integrate with emergency response activities and once the management of the emergency has transitioned from response to recovery.

2.2 Relief and recovery are consequence-driven

Consequence management drives the levelled approach to emergency relief and recovery coordination, with unmanaged risks /consequences escalated to the next level. Consequence management-starts in response and is then managed through recovery. To make appropriate decisions about relief and recovery activities, decision-makers at the local, regional and state level rely on clear, relevant, timely and accurate information about the needs of affected individuals, families and communities. To identify these needs, all tiers of decision-makers must look beyond the immediate impacts of an emergency and consider the consequences of these impacts on individuals, families and communities.

Government and agencies must also assess and manage the effects of their relief and recovery activities on affected communities.

- **initial impact assessment** (24-48 hours after access to the area): Response agencies undertake initial impact assessments which can help inform relief activities.
- **secondary impact assessment** (within four weeks): Impact assessment for relief and recovery requires an additional layer beyond the initial impact assessment, which includes a comparison with base-line information. Those responsible for recovery coordination at each tier are responsible for coordinating the secondary impact assessment, which is a subsequent progressive and more holistic assessment of the impact of the event on the community. It takes into account built and natural environments, social and economic impacts and resulting community needs.

- **post-emergency needs assessment** (can take up to twelve months or more depending on the scale of the event): Those responsible for recovery coordination at each tier are also responsible for coordinating the post-emergency needs assessment. This assessment estimates the longer term psychosocial impacts on a community, displacement of people, the cost of destroyed assets, and the impact that the destruction of assets and business disruption has on how members of a community live and connect with one another. This assessment informs the medium to longer term recovery process, options for development, and builds the knowledge base of the total cost of emergencies that informs risk management.

Municipal councils and the Victorian Government are required to share any information they gather.

2.3 Financial arrangements

Individuals and communities can strengthen their resilience through self-reliance – which includes the ability to fund their own relief and recovery needs, where possible. Individuals, agencies and businesses are expected to maintain adequate insurance to protect their interests.

Municipal Councils and responsible agencies must develop relief and recovery services based on individual and community needs, and these in turn should inform emergency relief and recovery funding considerations.

Funding to deliver relief and recovery assistance is initially sourced internally by responsible relief and recovery lead agencies.

Depending on the scale and impact of an emergency, Regional Recovery Coordinators may be able to facilitate financial assistance and funding for municipal councils, agencies and organisations providing relief and recovery services.

If this funding is exceeded in a large scale emergency, additional funding would be requested:

- where the emergency arises as a result of a natural disaster, Victoria's Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) can, depending on the scale and the impact, provide Natural Disaster Financial Assistance to help ease the financial burden experienced by affected municipal councils, Catchment Management Authorities and State Departments and Agencies. Further details can be found at www.dtf.vic.gov.au/Victorias-Economy/Natural-disaster-financial-assistance
- DTF, the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) will coordinate a request to the Australian Government to approve funding under the *Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements*, to share the cost of significant emergencies. The State's eligible costs under these arrangements can include grants and assistance paid to individuals and households, primary producers, small businesses and not-for-profit organisations and reimbursement provided to local councils and Catchment Management Authorities for particular relief and recovery activities and the restoration of essential public assets.

3. Relief and recovery are community-focused

All Victorians have a collective responsibility to help build and maintain community resilience: individuals, households, neighbourhoods, communities, businesses, not-for-profit organisations, agencies, local, state and national governments.

A resilient community has the capacity to survive adapt and thrive no matter what kinds of chronic stresses or acute shocks they experience[1]. They are often connected and able to work together to manage stresses and cope with emergencies. They are self-reliant and able to manage local issues, together with the ability to draw upon other communities and organisations during times of significant need.

3.1 Relief and recovery are a shared responsibility

Relief and recovery are complex social and developmental processes. All sectors must work together to support the personal, family and community structures and networks typically disrupted by a major emergency

- **Individuals** have a responsibility to seek out information to make informed decisions on how to prepare for emergencies and should help meet their own relief and recovery needs wherever possible. During and immediately following an emergency, individuals and households need to be as self-reliant as possible, because in the first instance, agencies will offer emergency support to the most vulnerable community members.
- **Municipal councils and the Victorian Government** each have a role in ensuring relief and recovery services are effective and well-coordinated. Municipal councils take the lead in delivering 'on the ground' relief and recovery services, because they are the closest to an affected community. The Victorian Government supports municipal councils to fulfil these local responsibilities and is responsible for establishing the state's relief and recovery arrangements, and for coordinating all regional and state level relief and recovery activities
- **Business** can play an important role in emergencies and can provide resources, expertise and essential services to support emergency relief and recovery. Business should have continuity processes in place to plan for emergencies. This is particularly important for the continuity of essential services and critical infrastructure
- **Non-government organisations** and partner agencies play vital roles in supporting affected communities, building on their pre-established community connections to deliver enhanced services during and following an emergency. Through their large **volunteer** base, they have the capacity to coordinate and deliver services in many locations – often simultaneously.

The Victorian community receives significant benefit from the emergency management contributions of a wide range of community sector agencies, volunteer groups and organisations whose operations are either quite specialised and/or available mainly in a specific locality.

[1] Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management (2017) Emergency Management Victoria https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/CommunityResilienceFramework

These groups should be identified in relevant municipal emergency management plans and/or state and regional relief and recovery plans, as appropriate

3.2 Community development

Whilst an emergency is likely to cause disruption, it is important to recognise that relief and recovery activities do not begin with a blank canvas. Activities should be delivered in context of the existing community aspirations and build on community development work (including emergency preparedness) already undertaken. This will include maximising the use of existing local community services and representative structures where possible.

To support effective community resilience, it is crucial that Municipal Councils, in partnership with other agencies and organisations, develop and support community leadership in all relief and recovery activities. Community-led activities can generate ownership of decisions and more sustainable outcomes, and reach higher quality and innovative solutions. The Community Recovery Handbook provides useful insight into community-led recovery.

Communities should be involved in emergency preparedness – including identifying strategies to assist their most vulnerable members. The International Association for Public Participation[2] has useful resources to guide community engagement for relief and recovery.

3.3 Understanding the needs of communities

Creating and maintaining local networks and connections are fundamental to understanding community needs. Local councils are best placed to understand the needs of impacted communities and to tap into existing community networks to gain a deeper understanding of how communities have been impacted by the emergency and what needs they might have. Reviewing municipal profiles and drawing on community knowledge of other departments and agencies, as well as understanding community diversity helps develop targeted relief and recovery services that meet the range of individual and community needs.

Relief and recovery activities should be developed to meet the differing needs of all people – recognising that women, men, children, young people3, older people and people with disabilities may have different needs. Relief and recovery activities should be undertaken with an awareness of the different cultural groups in their communities and should ensure that appropriate relief and recovery services are made available to meet their needs, including relief and recovery information in translated languages.

4. Operational governance

Emergency Management governance arrangements at a state level operate a "tiered" approach for coordination, control, and communications for all emergencies.

[2] Available from www.iap2.org.au
[3] Refer to *Emergency management planning for children and young people- planning guide for local government* http://earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au/files/EM-planning-for-children-and-young-people-web.pdf

Six key teams operate at a state level being[4]:

- **State Coordination Team (SCOT)**
- **State Control Team (SCT)**
- **State Emergency Management Team (SEMT)**
- **State Relief and Recovery Team (SRRT)**
- **Emergency Management Joint Public Information Committee Executive (EMJPIC Exec)**
- **Emergency Management Joint Public Information Committee (EMJPIC)**

During major disasters, the EMJPIC Executive provides WOVG strategic and crisis communication leadership.

4.1 Operational governance relationships

All operational governance teams communicate with each other through the Chairs to ensure seamless integration. The primary function of each team is referred to in the Functions of emergency management operational teams (state level) located in EMMV Part 3, State Emergency Response Plan, and the EMCOP library.

4.2 Relief and Recovery Operational Governance

Municipal councils coordinate relief and recovery at the local level. Coordination is escalated in larger or more complex events, or when a council requests support from the regional level. If escalated, the State Government at regional and state levels coordinate relief and recovery services to support local service delivery and provide additional services as required to affected individuals and communities. This involves bringing agencies and resources together to ensure the effective delivery of all relief and recovery objectives and responsibilities. Relief is functionally coordinated with recovery coordination and done as a part of State level operational governance.

Figure 2 describes the relief and recovery governance between state, regional and local tiers.

[4] State Tier Emergency Governance Arrangements (December 2017) available on EM-COP.

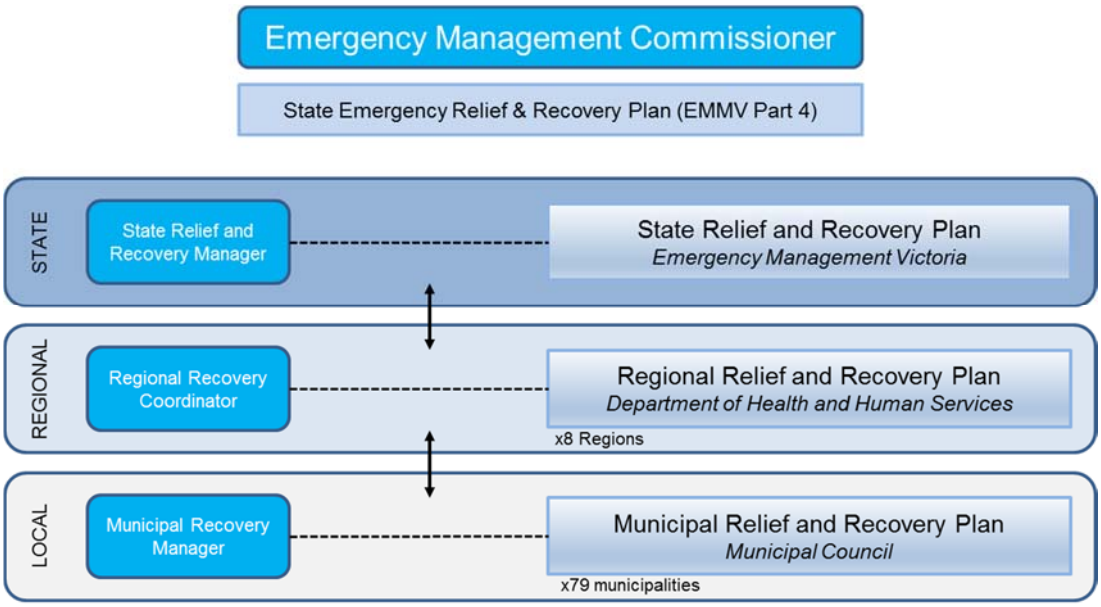

Figure 2: The three levels of relief and recovery coordination in Victoria

4.3 State relief and recovery coordination roles and responsibilities

The State Relief and Recovery Manager (SRRM) reports to and supports the Emergency Management Commissioner (EMC) in the coordination of State relief and recovery activities. EMV provides strategic leadership and coordination of the work of the relief and recovery sector.

State relief and recovery responsibilities to be coordinated include to:

- review and maintain state relief and recovery plans and lead relief and recovery planning processes - including state planning committees
- develop state relief and recovery plans and lead post-incident relief and recovery processes - including operational committees
- lead inter-jurisdictional and national liaison on Victorian relief and recovery
- coordinate existing state resources and activities across the relief and recovery sector, including in support of local and regional relief and recovery coordination
- facilitate the relief and recovery sector's capability assessment, readiness and preparedness
- coordinate state relief and recovery sector public information and messaging in connection with Regional or Incident Joint Public Information Committees as required.
- assess state situation, impacts, risks, progress and resources
- monitor regional situation, impacts, risks, progress and resources
- collate and analyse state information on loss and damage and resulting consequence
- coordinate whole of government relief and recovery funding processes
- coordinate real time relief and recovery intelligence and information to the Victorian State Government

- ensure the effectiveness of funded relief and recovery initiatives are evaluated and fed into forward planning
- lead state transition from response to recovery

4.4 Emergency Management Commissioner

Under the Emergency Management Act 2013, the Emergency Management Commissioner is responsible for the "coordination of the activities of organisations, including agencies, having roles or responsibilities under the state emergency recovery plan in relation to recovery from all emergencies". The Emergency Management Commissioner effectively oversees the management of coordination at every level.

The Emergency Management Commissioner reports to the Minister for Emergency Services on relief and recovery.

The EMC is supported by the State Tier Governance Arrangements, State Relief and Recovery Manager and EMV.

4.4.1 State Relief and Recovery Manager

The SRRM reports to and supports the EMC in ensuring the coordination of State relief and recovery activities.

The State Relief and Recovery Manager:

- ensures the arrangements in this plan are implemented
- facilitates the sharing of information and coordination of resources at a state level to support local and regional activities
- identifies emerging strategic risks and capacity issues
- coordinates state resources and activities to support local and regional relief and recovery coordination
- coordinates state relief and recovery sector public information and messaging
- assesses state situation, impact, risks, progress and resources
- collates and analyses state information on loss and damage and resulting consequence
- coordinates relief and recovery intelligence for use by the Victorian State Government
- leads state transition from response to recovery.

4.4.2 State Relief and Recovery Team

The State Relief and Recovery Manager is supported by the State Relief and Recovery Team in the coordination of state level relief and recovery activities. The State Relief and Recovery Team is chaired by the State Relief and Recovery Manager and supported by the Director, Relief and Recovery, Emergency Management Victoria, and;

- includes State representative of agencies responsible for the management and coordination of relief and recovery functional areas, as well as representatives from other agencies as agreed or required

- implements a State relief and recovery strategy that meets the needs of the community and supports local and regional operations to ensure the coordinated delivery of relief and recovery assistance.

4.4.3 DHHS Senior Liaison Officer

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has a Senior Liaison Officer.

The purpose of this position is to act as a strategic and operational interface between regional and state tiers of relief and recovery coordination.

The Senior Liaison Officer is responsible for:

- providing advice and information to the State Relief and Recovery Manager on strategic and operational matters arising from regional relief and recovery coordination tiers, including emergency preparedness, planning, issues, needs and risks
- providing advice and information to Regional Recovery Coordinators on strategic and operational matters arising from state relief and recovery coordination, including emergency preparedness, planning, issues, needs and risks
- representing regional Relief and Recovery coordination at the state level
- facilitating the flow of information between DHHS staff performing regional Relief and Recovery coordination roles and SRRM.

4.5 Regional relief and recovery coordination roles and responsibilities

DHHS is responsible for coordinating relief and recovery at the regional level. DHHS is supported by Red Cross in regional relief coordination.

Regional relief and recovery responsibilities to be coordinated include:

- review and maintain regional relief and recovery plans, and lead relief and recovery planning processes - including regional planning committees
- develop regional post-incident relief and recovery plans and lead regional post-incident relief and recovery processes - including operational committees
- lead regional transition from response to recovery
- coordinate existing regional resources and activities across the relief and recovery sector, including in support of local relief and recovery coordination
- facilitate the regional relief and recovery sector's capability assessment, readiness and preparedness
- coordinate regional relief and recovery sector public information and messaging
- assess regional situation, impacts, risks, progress and resources
- monitor local situation, impacts, risks progress and resources
- collate and analyse information on loss and damage and resulting consequence

- coordinate regional relief and recovery intelligence to EMC and SRRM
- provide advice to municipal councils to enable them to appropriately coordinate relief and recovery consequences of local level events.

Each Victorian Government administrative region must have a regional relief and recovery plan. Section 5.1 lists all relief and recovery matters that must be addressed in regional plans.

4.5.1 Regional Recovery Coordinators

The Secretary of DHHS appoints Regional Recovery Coordinators to each of the Victorian Government administrative regions:

- Eastern Metropolitan
- North and West Metropolitan
- Southern Metropolitan
- Barwon South Western
- Gippsland
- Grampians
- Hume
- Loddon Mallee.

Regional Recovery Coordinators are responsible for:

- Preparing and maintaining regional relief and recovery plans for their individual regions.
- Engaging with both the Regional Control Team (RCT) and the Regional Emergency Management Team (REMT) to facilitate planning and actions in relation to regional relief and recovery.
- Leading support for Municipal Councils in preparing, establishing and enacting emergency relief and recovery activities
- Leading collation and analysis of impact assessment data to inform recovery activities across all recovery environments
- Ensuring clear lines of communication are established with identified roles including the Regional Recovery Manager and the State Relief and Recovery Manager.
- Leading planning for transition from response to recovery at local and regional level
- Providing advice to local government specifically regarding relief and recovery requirements and communications.
- Overseeing relief and recovery activities as per current arrangements.

Regional Recovery Coordinators may delegate to and are supported by Regional Recovery Managers.

4.5.2 Regional Recovery Managers

The Regional Recovery Manager supports the Regional Recovery Coordinator to fulfil regional recovery responsibilities identified at 4.5.1 as delegated by the Regional Recovery Coordinator.

4.6 Local relief and recovery coordination roles and responsibilities

Municipal councils are responsible for coordinating recovery at the local level for affected individuals and communities. Municipal councils will work with local partners to determine local arrangements to manage relief and recovery activities.

Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees must document these arrangements in Municipal Emergency Management Plans (MEMP). Section 5.1 lists relief and recovery matters that must be addressed by municipal planning. Each MEMP is a multi-agency plan, so they include local risk management, preparedness and response activities (refer to Part 6 of the EMMV).

The Regional Recovery Coordinator can assist by liaising with the relief and recovery functional area lead, where appointed, if requested by municipal councils.

Municipal councils coordinate local relief and recovery public information and messaging, in connection with regional or incident joint public information committees as required.

4.6.1 Municipal Recovery Manager

Each municipal council must appoint a staff member as its Municipal Recovery Manager. Generally, the Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (also a municipal employee) is responsible for notifying the Municipal Recovery Manager of the potential need for relief and recovery services. Together, they consider the relief and recovery needs of the local community– in consultation with response agencies.

5. Relief and recovery planning

Planning is an essential function of relief and recovery coordination. Participation in the planning process builds relationships between agencies and leads to better outcomes for communities through a collaborative and coordinated approach to relief and recovery.

5.1 Municipal, regional and state relief and recovery planning requirements

Municipal, regional and state relief and recovery plans must be aligned. This is achieved through consultation and coordination of information during the development process.

Plans at each level of coordination must specify the agencies responsible for coordinating relief and recovery, for coordinating recovery functional areas and leading and supporting relief and recovery activities.

Plans at each level of coordination must also address the following relief and recovery arrangements:

- managing funding and coordinating activities[5]
- agreements between agencies, businesses and organisations to deliver every type of relief and recovery assistance detailed in sections 6 and 7
- coordinating and managing resources (such as systems and assets)
- understanding and documenting capacity
- communication and community engagement
- understanding the needs of the community through documented community profiles and demographics
- staffing (including relief and recovery managers and coordinators; and paid, contracted and volunteer staff)
- collaboration groups
- integration of response, relief and recovery activities
- testing, exercising and evaluating plans.

If it seems likely that the emergency will exceed the coordinating level's capability, the relief and recovery manager/coordinator will consider organising the preparation of a post-incident relief and recovery plan.

The post-incident relief and recovery plan will include:

- arrangements for relief and recovery coordination
- a description of the emergency situation
- the expected or potential relief and recovery needs of affected communities
- the capacity of councils/regions/state
- relief and recovery services required.

5.2 Understanding relief and recovery capability

Agencies with agreed relief and recovery roles and responsibilities (refer to EMMV Part 7- Emergency Management Agency Roles) need to develop and maintain their own internal operational plans that detail their capacity and strategies for undertaking these roles and responsibilities. They should develop these in consultation with communities, and regularly test them.

Developing an understanding of local, regional and state capability (which includes capacity) is critical as it enables relief and recovery coordinators to request assistance before being overwhelmed and being unable to deliver the required services. Documenting the relief and recovery capability at each level of coordination is a planning requirement.

There will always be a time lag between a request for assistance and the delivery of assistance, so developing triggers to recognise capability shortfalls before they become a service delivery issue can be very useful. Triggers serve as a red flag warning that additional resources need to be requested. Triggers can be based on a range of factors such as the

[5] Refer EMMV Part 7

percentage of volunteers activated or the percentage of goods dispersed, depending on the appropriate measure of capacity for each relief service.

Relief and recovery agencies, emergency management agencies and the broader sector, need to work together to:

- identify the relief and recovery resources that are identified in multiple MEMPs. It is common for providers of food and water, psychosocial support and first aid to work across multiple municipalities
- support relief and recovery organisations to develop a shared understanding of relief and recovery capability and capacity
- identify opportunities to create efficiencies by streamlining services and sharing resources
- support relief and recovery agencies to develop agency profiles which document their capability and capacity to provide relief services for emergencies of varying scale and duration
- monitor local, regional and state capability and capacity, identifying risks and trends (e.g. accommodation shortages during peak tourist season or diminishing numbers of volunteers over time) and escalating capability and capacity issues as required
- plan and conduct emergency exercises to identify current strengths and areas for improvement
- identify capability and capacity issues at the local, regional and state level through the post emergency debriefing process
- improve planning to link potential community needs with capability and capacity
- encourage an honest and transparent process of measuring capability and capacity that is supportive and non-judgmental
- utilise existing mechanisms such as municipal collaboration groups and local, regional and state committees to discuss capability and capacity issues
- work with the business sector to better understand how they can enhance local, regional and state capability and capacity.

Understanding local, regional and state relief and recovery capability and capacity is a shared responsibility and a long term challenge. Building relationships is the essential first step in understanding relief and recovery capability and capacity.

5.3 Interactions between levels of coordination

All levels of relief and recovery coordination are required to share information with each other at all times. Additionally, State and regional levels of relief and recovery coordination monitor and oversee the situation at the next level down at all times, even when coordination has not formally escalated. The regional tier acts as a communication conduit between local and State Government, with the Regional Recovery Coordinator and the State Relief and Recovery Manager facilitating the sharing of information with municipalities about locally coordinated events and State Government activities. The interactions between levels of coordination is depicted in Figure 5.

5.3.1 Escalation for large or complex emergencies

Relief and recovery coordination commences at the local level through Municipal Councils. As required, these relief and recovery functions may escalate to regional or state level:

- when requested, because capability is exceeded, or expected to be exceeded; or
- where an emergency has affected multiple municipalities in one region, or multiple regions within the state; or
- where an emergency has a significant community-wide impact or consequence, in which case the Victorian Government may establish an event-specific relief or recovery coordination structure to oversee a whole-of sector response.

Escalation (from local to regional to state) operates on the following principles:

- wherever possible relief and recovery coordination should remain at the local level, supported by regional and state-based activities as required
- escalation builds on existing local arrangements, rather than replacing them.
- responsibility is retained locally, but is aided by additional support
- specific relief and recovery activities within recovery functional areas or relief and recovery coordination may be escalated
- the escalation of specific relief and recovery activities does not necessitate the escalation of recovery coordination.

Where escalation of the relief and recovery coordination function occurs, a primary objective should be the maintenance of a single recovery plan for that incident, which consolidates the required actions (whether local, regional or state-based), risk mitigation activities and accountabilities, drawing on analysis of community profiles and needs. Wherever possible, local decision making should be maintained.

To support escalation arrangements, DHHS may seek additional regional resources from other agencies if its regional resources are exceeded.

Where capability has been exhausted within Municipal Councils, DHHS and across other agencies at the regional level, a request for relief and recovery coordination assistance to the state will be made.

Where an emergency has affected multiple regions within the state, or where the emergency has significant consequences for communities or the government of the day, state relief and recovery coordination will be activated. State level relief and recovery coordination activity will focus on sector coordination and the management of risks and consequences to help inform the regional response to the emergency.

5.3.2 Escalation to Australian Government

Under cooperative arrangements with the states and territories, the Australian Government provides:

- national coordination functions
- assistance to states or territories, when requested

- financial assistance as cost sharing arrangements for relief and recovery expenditure, through the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements
- financial assistance as grants to individuals, and income support to individuals
- Australian Defence Force assistance under Categories 1, 2 and 3 of the arrangements for Defence Aid to the Civil Community.

Australian Government advice and assistance is coordinated through the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Arrangements.

5.3.3 Cross-border arrangements

The *Guidelines for Interstate Assistance (Community Recovery) 2015* developed under the aegis of the Australia New Zealand Emergency Management Committee Recovery Sub-Committee (the national body with functional responsibility for community recovery services following a disaster event) have been designed to support agencies arranging assistance between neighbouring jurisdictions so that the emergency relief or immediate needs of communities are met following a disaster.

Elements covered include:

- requesting assistance from a neighbouring jurisdiction
- coordination and management of evacuation centres/immediate relief under such a request
- cost recovery arrangements
- communication requirements
- reporting requirements
- jurisdictional responsibilities.

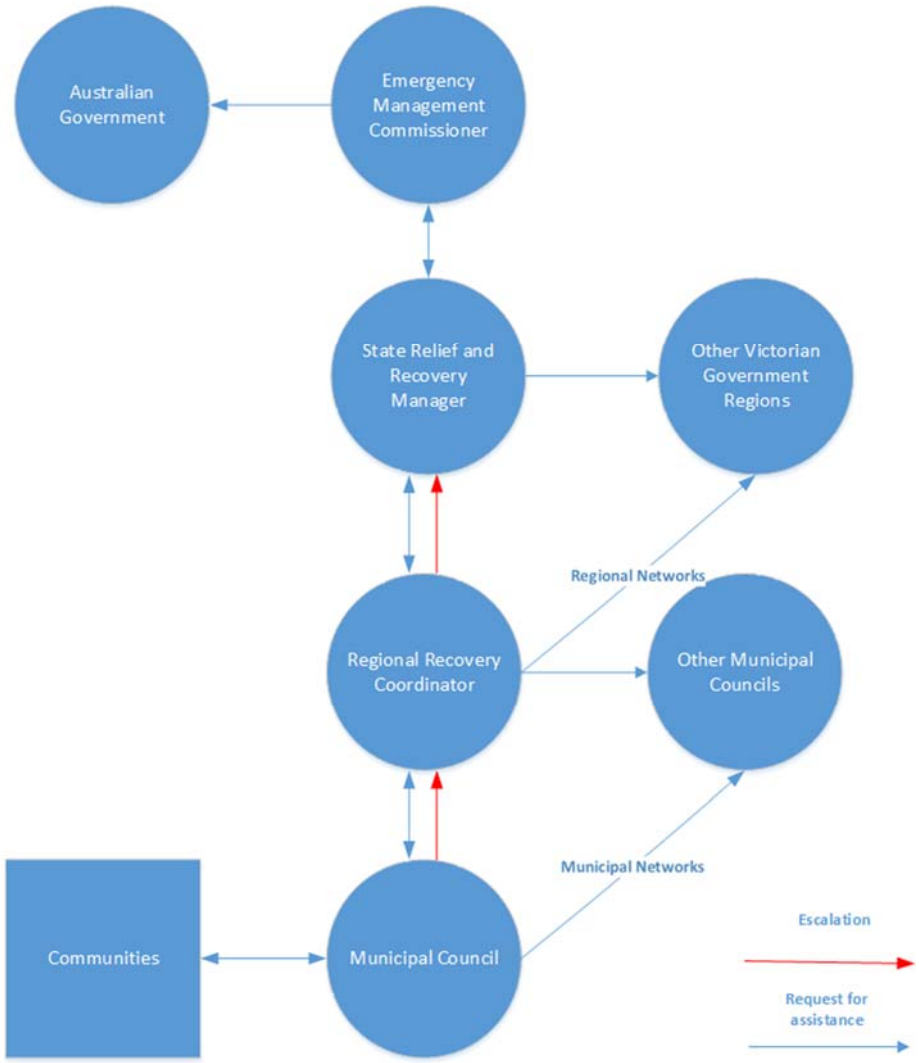

Figure 3: Interactions between different levels of government to deliver emergency relief and recovery support

6. Relief assistance

Emergency relief provides for the essential needs of individuals, families and communities during and in the immediate aftermath of an emergency.

6.1 Relief principles

The principles for the coordination and delivery of relief in Victoria are:

- emergency-affected communities receive essential support to meet their **basic** and **immediate** needs
- relief assistance is delivered in a **timely** manner, in response to emergencies
- relief promotes **community safety**, and minimises further physical and psychological harm
- relief and response agencies **communicate** clear, relevant, timely and tailored information and advice to communities about relief services, through multiple appropriate channels
- relief services recognise **community diversity**
- relief is **adaptive**, based on continuing assessment of needs
- relief supports community responsibility and **resilience**
- relief is **well coordinated**, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- relief services are **integrated** into emergency management arrangements.

Agencies with relief responsibilities must incorporate these principles into their own planning and delivery of services.

6.2 Activation and deactivation of relief assistance

Incident controllers determine the need to activate relief services, with advice from the emergency management team.

Part 3 of the *EMMV* specifies positions with authority to activate at the local level.

The deactivation of relief services will be based on reduced levels of demand and need for such services.

6.3 Organisation of relief assistance

The state agency leads for each of the eleven relief activities are presented in Figure 4. They are responsible for relief activities that provide direct assistance to individuals, families and communities or indirect assistance through the resupply of essential goods or services to communities isolated in an emergency.

The lead agency is supported by support agencies, as detailed in EMMV Part 7 - Emergency Management Agency Roles. The lead agency for each of the relief responsibilities is responsible for:

- coordinating strategic information sharing, to facilitate activities within that accountability
- monitoring relief issues, risks, progress and capacity issues

- determining and implementing appropriate communication and information sharing mechanisms with relevant departments, agencies and key stakeholders to facilitate the above
- reporting progress and issues to the State Relief and Recovery Manager.

All agencies with relief responsibilities are expected to have appropriate arrangements, policies and capability in place (guided by the *Emergency Relief Handbook: A planning guide 2013*).

Agencies should also ensure that significant providers of relief goods and services have their own business continuity arrangements in place.

The arrangements depicted in Figure 4, where not replicated at the local or regional level, the regional recovery coordinator will liaise with the state relief functional area lead coordinating agency.

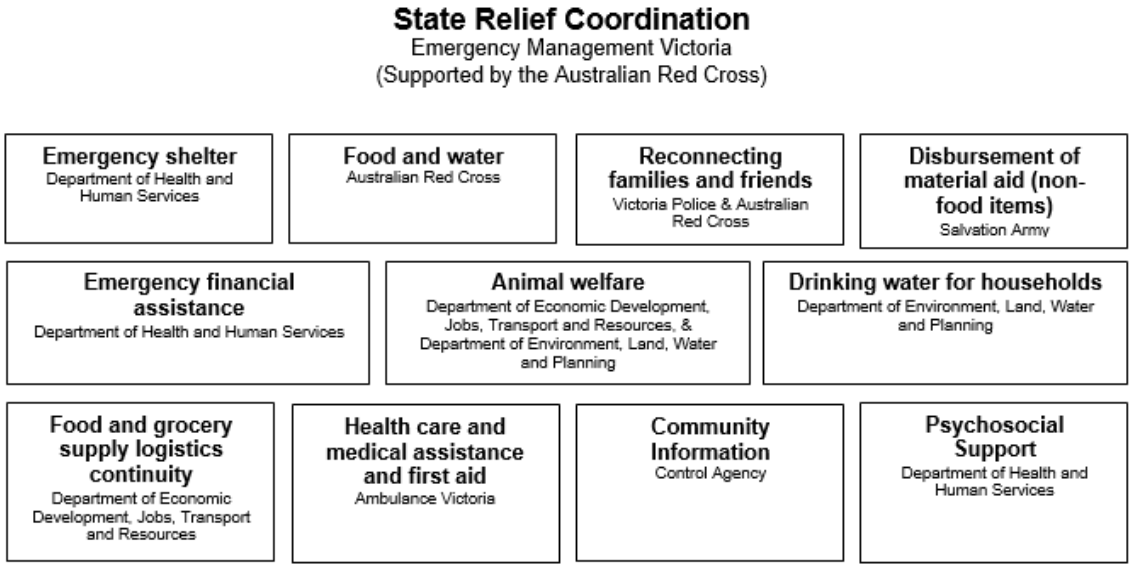

Figure 4: Lead agencies with state relief activity responsibilities

6.3.1 Emergency shelter

Individuals are encouraged to make their own accommodation arrangements. Friends, family, community, business, or government could provide emergency shelter if needed. Municipal councils can offer accommodation at relief centres or alternative locations. Where municipal councils cannot meet demand, request for support can be escalated to DHHS. This request is made by contacting DHHS via established local escalation processes.

6.3.2 Food and water to individuals

People and communities must have access to food and water to support their immediate and basic needs. Food and water can be provided in a variety of settings including relief centres or via the distribution of relief packs to communities who are isolated or sheltering in place.

The Red Cross is responsible for coordinating the provision of food and water, supported by agencies including Foodbank Victoria and the Salvation Army.

6.3.3 Reconnecting families and friends

The reconnection of families and friends and their communities is facilitated through the *Register.Find.Reunite* service. Victoria Police is responsible for the control and coordination of the service and Red Cross for its management and operation. Voluntary registration could be done in a relief centre, by phone at an inquiry centre, or online.

Control agencies are responsible for encouraging people to register with *Register.Find.Reunite* and should also remind people to use their existing communication networks to connect with their family and friends, to provide assurance about their safety and wellbeing.

6.3.4 Disbursement of material aid (non-food items)

Individuals, families and communities affected by emergencies could require essential material aid (non-food items) such as clothing, bedding materials and personal necessities, to help ensure their personal comfort, dignity, health and wellbeing.

The Salvation Army will coordinate the provision of material aid (supported by agencies including St Vincent de Paul and Foodbank Victoria).

6.3.5 Emergency financial assistance

Emergency financial assistance is intended to help eligible individuals meet their basic needs in a dignified manner. DHHS is responsible for administering emergency relief payments from the Personal Hardship Assistance Program.

At its discretion, the Australian Government Department of Human Services (DHS) can determine to make other forms of financial assistance available.

6.3.6 Animal welfare

Companion animals, livestock and wildlife impacted by emergencies could need access to adequate feed and water, provision of shelter, housing and adequate space, freedom from pain, injury, disease and obvious discomfort, and freedom from unnecessary fear and distress. *The Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan* defines animal welfare support services in relief.

Key animal welfare considerations include:

- maintaining acceptable animal welfare standards for all animal species
- destruction of the minimum number of animals during the emergency response
- best use of available resources (personnel, infrastructure, feed and water).

Companion animals and livestock welfare (other than wildlife) support services:

- DEDJTR is the lead agency
- it is supported by the Victorian Farmers Federation, the RSPCA, the Australian Veterinary Association and municipal councils
- Municipal councils are responsible for the housing of displaced animals and lost/stray animals.

Wildlife welfare services

- DELWP is the lead agency to respond to wildlife welfare caused by a defined emergency, including wildlife affected by fire
- It is supported by the RSPCA, the Australian Veterinary Association and municipal councils.

6.3.7 Drinking water for households

Where local resources are unable to meet the demand, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) will coordinate emergency drinking water supplies and sewerage services to affected areas (following public health advice from DHHS).

6.3.8 Food and grocery supply logistics continuity

The Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) will support food and grocery supply logistics continuity planning and operations with the major food distribution operators.

6.3.9 Health care and medical assistance and first aid

The State Health Emergency Response Plan describes the command, control and coordination arrangements, roles and responsibilities for an integrated health emergency response.

Ambulance Victoria, as Health Commander, is responsible for pre-hospital assistance.

DHHS, as Health Coordinator, has responsibility for coordination across the broader health system and control of public health emergencies.

6.3.10 Community information

Control agencies are responsible for providing information to assist communities to make informed decisions about their safety. This can be via the Victorian Public Warning System, public meetings, newsletters, advertising and media releases. Announcements from response, relief and recovery agencies must be consistent.

All agencies are responsible for considering the information needs of community sectors with additional needs.

Municipal councils coordinate and lead the provision of local public information to affected individuals in relief and recovery.

Prior to formal transition to recovery, control agencies also are responsible for the provision of local public information, which includes relevant relief and recovery information.

6.3.11 Psychosocial support

DHHS is the functional lead and coordinating agency for psychosocial support. At the incident/local level, this is lead through Municipal Councils, supported by Red Cross and Victorian Council of Churches - Emergency Ministry (VCC-EM). It includes Psychological First Aid and emotional-spiritual care, and is delivered through relief and recovery centres and through community outreach programs. Where municipal councils cannot meet demand, request for support can be escalated to DHHS.

6.3.12 Other relief assistance

Other relief assistance can include **legal aid** or the coordination of goodwill, including donated goods and services and **spontaneous volunteer management**. These are further detailed in sections 7.4.3 and 7.4.5.7.

6.4 Distribution of relief assistance

Relief services could be provided at:

- the site of an emergency
- a dedicated relief centre operated by a municipal council
- places of community gathering
- isolated communities
- transit sites, or
- other safe locations, as appropriate.

A **relief centre** is a building or place established by a municipal council to provide immediate and basic services to people affected by an emergency. Services provided in a relief centre (or surrounding area) could include shelter; food and water; non-food items, such as bedding and clothing; reconnecting friends and families; and health services, including psychological first aid.

There will be times when the provision of relief services to the community will extend beyond the activation of a static relief centre such as the town hall or local community centre. Where communities are isolated as a result of an emergency, the control agencies have a role to support the delivery of relief services through **outreach** activities

Relief is the first stage of recovery, and must be seamlessly integrated with all other early recovery activities.

7. Recovery assistance

Recovery from emergencies is a developmental process of assisting individuals and communities affected by emergencies to achieve an effective level of functioning.

Recovery planning must ensure there is a clear understanding of the community context (prior to the emergency), and is based on continuing assessment of impacts and needs.

Recovery is part of the management of emergencies and if done well, it:

- reduces the effect and consequences of emergencies
- restores essential services, infrastructure and lifelines that our communities need to function
- adapts to the interruption to normal day to day business
- provides tailored services that are able to adapt when our community needs it most
- brings together people, resources, skills and capability.

7.1 Recovery principles

The nationally recognised disaster recovery principles that are fundamental for successful recovery involve:

- Understanding the context
- Recognising complexity
- Using community-led approaches
- Coordinating all activities
- Communicating effectively
- Recognising and building capacity.

7.2 Activation of recovery activities and transition to mainstream services

Recovery activities should begin at the first available opportunity, and continue beyond when relief ceases.

As long as an emergency continues to threaten a community, the control agency and Response Coordinator will maintain control over the overall coordination of all activities. However, this should not affect the delivery of relief and recovery services. Part 3 of the *EMMV* details the formal transition of overall coordination from response to recovery.

Planning for recovery is integral to emergency preparation, and mitigation actions may often be initiated as part of recovery. Recovery can provide an opportunity to improve beyond previous conditions, contributing to a more resilient community.[6]

Incident-specific recovery assistance is time limited. People and communities must be engaged and supported to lead their own recovery. After time, community recovery programs should transition into regular mainstream services and activities that shift the focus from recovery, to community development.

Shifting the focus to community development is an important phase that requires careful consideration and planning. Recovery agencies should consult communities on this transition of services, to ensure adequate support for the most vulnerable.

7.3 Organisation of recovery assistance

Recovery assistance aims to support individuals and communities to manage the re-establishment of those elements of society necessary to ensure an effective level of functioning. Recovery assistance is organised by environments, functional areas and activities.

7.3.1 Recovery environments

The four recovery interrelated environments described below provide a framework within which recovery can be planned, reported, monitored and evaluated. They do not, however, have a single agency responsible for their coordination.

[6] National Principles for Disaster Recovery

The four environments, which align with the *Community Recovery Handbook*[7] are:

- **Social environment** – The social environment considers the impact an event may have on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. This environment is primarily concerned with safety, security and shelter, health and psychosocial wellbeing.
- **Built environment** – The built environment considers the impacts that an event may have on essential physical infrastructure including essential services, commercial and industrial facilities, public buildings and assets and housing.
- **Economic environment** – The economic environment considers the direct and indirect impacts that an event may have on business, primary producers and the broader economy.
- **Natural environment** – The natural environment considers the impact that an event may have on a healthy and functioning environment, which underpins the economy and society. Components of the natural environment include air and water quality; land degradation and contamination; plant and wildlife damage/loss; and national parks, cultural and heritage sites.

Recovery initiatives could address specific elements of one recovery environment, or they could operate across multiple environments.

7.3.2 Functional areas and activities

Functional areas describe a community need and bring together a number of related recovery activities. They provide the sector and broader public with a clear understanding of relief and recovery services and the agency responsible for coordinating. There are fourteen functional areas across the four environments.

The coordinating agency for a recovery functional area will be responsible for:

- overseeing the service delivery of recovery elements for that function
- monitoring and reporting risks, consequences, progress and capacity issues to ensure service delivery is being achieved to impacted communities in a timely manner
- determining and implementing appropriate communication and information sharing mechanisms with relevant departments, agencies and key stakeholders to facilitate the above
- working with regional and local levels, reporting progress and issues to the State Relief and Recovery Manager.

Each functional area has a number of recovery activities. An activity is a defined recovery program, service or product that is delivered to assist community in its recovery. Delivery of every activity is undertaken locally. The government lead agency and other agencies will support delivery

[7] Community Recovery Handbook, Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (2018) https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/handbook-2-community-recovery/

through the local or regional tiers. Community needs will determine if the recovery activity is required.

The functional areas (under their corresponding environments) and the coordinating agencies are presented in Figure 5 and further detailed in the next sections.

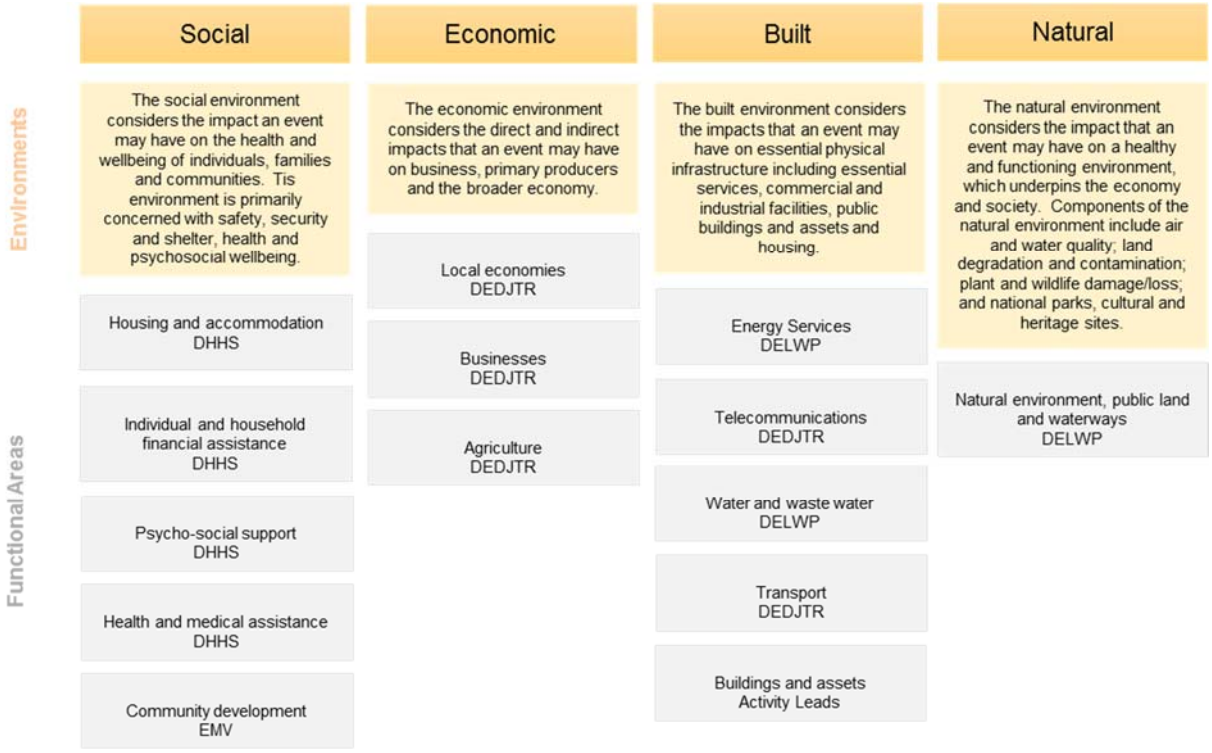

Figure 5: Recovery environments and functional areas

7.4 Social recovery environment

The social environment considers the impact an event may have on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. This environment is primarily concerned with safety, security and shelter, health and psychosocial wellbeing. Social recovery is closely inter-related to the other three recovery environments.

Social recovery activities ensure people have access to the support, services and resources they need to address the impacts of the disaster; prevent the escalation of needs; and long-term negative impacts on health and wellbeing.

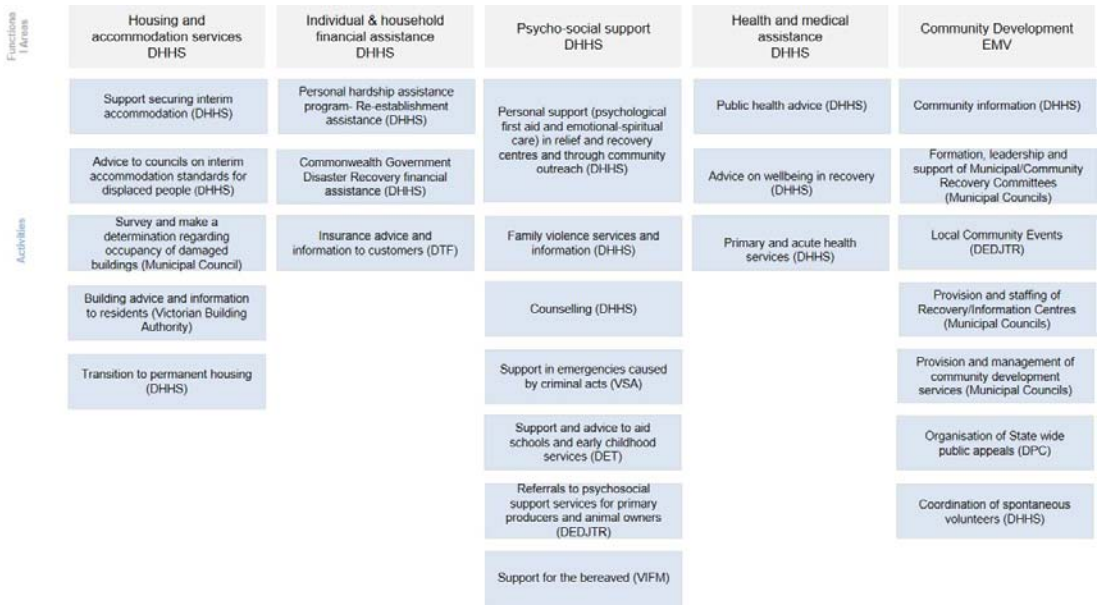

Figure 6. Social recovery environment: functional areas and activities

7.4.1 Housing and accommodation

Objective: *Assist people displaced by the emergency to access temporary accommodation, and return to permanent housing as soon as possible.*

Residential losses can contribute significantly to individual, family and community disruption. Residential damage affects:

- provision of shelter
- protection of household contents
- the feeling of belonging that is 'home'
- vulnerable sectors of the community
- coordination of recovery and reconstruction operations.

Accommodation arrangements can range from short-term to longer-term. Individuals are expected to make arrangements to meet their own ongoing accommodation needs. Friends, family, community, business or government agencies could provide interim accommodation.

Where municipal councils cannot meet demand, request for support can be escalated to DHHS. This request is made through the MRM to the DHHS Regional Recovery Coordinator.

The coordination of interim accommodation assistance is provided by Municipal Councils at the local level.

7.4.1.1 Support securing interim accommodation

- DHHS is the lead for this activity. Municipal Councils and Community Housing Services provide support to deliver the activities required to acquit this.
- When municipal councils or other referring agencies are unable to meet demand, DHHS as the State Government lead agency, can coordinate interim accommodation options.

7.4.1.2 Advice to councils on interim accommodation standards for displaced people

- DHHS provide advice to municipal councils on accommodation standards.
- DHHS provide advice to municipal councils on interim accommodation standards.

7.4.1.3 Survey and determine occupancy of damaged buildings

Municipal councils survey and make a determination regarding the occupancy of damaged buildings and secondary impact assessment.

7.4.1.4 Building advice and information to residents

The Victorian Building Authority, supported by the municipal council, provides building maintenance and safety information to affected persons.

7.4.1.5 Transition to permanent housing

DHHS support households to prepare housing plans for transition back to permanent housing, supported by Community Housing Agencies.

7.4.2 Psycho-social support

Objective: *Support the emotional, spiritual, cultural, psychological and social needs of affected people and communities during an emergency and as they resume their normal life.*

Psychosocial support includes aspects of personal support, psychological first aid, emotional and spiritual care, case management, counselling and mental health services, community information sessions and community engagement. The *Psychosocial Support: A Framework for Emergencies* includes the principles and considerations that should underpin a psychosocial recovery process and how to identify the potential range of impacted people. Figure 7 uses a pyramid structure to show the varying layers of support services that could be established.

Emergencies do not impact everyone in the same way and vulnerable community members are often the hardest hit. Municipal councils are responsible for working with individuals and communities to develop appropriate recovery programs that recognise and respond effectively to the diverse needs of the community.

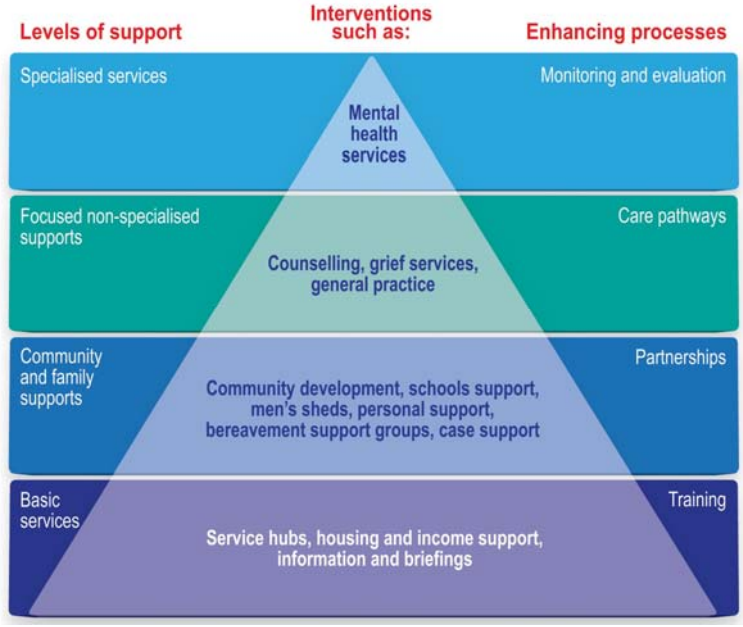

Figure 7. Levels of intervention pyramid for psychosocial support

Activities:

7.4.2.1 Personal support (psychological first aid and emotional-spiritual care) in relief and recovery centres and through community outreach

Personal support can include the provision of information, practical assistance, assessment of immediate needs and referral to other support agencies and services. It can be provided in relief and recovery centres, and through community outreach.

Outreach involves targeted visitation in community or home settings.

Personal support is initiated in relief operations and can continue as part of recovery, alongside a range of individualised support programs. All agencies must consider support recovery activities for isolated communities, and displaced and dispersed people in other communities.

DHHS leads and is supported by the Australian Red Cross and VCC-EM and other agencies.

7.4.2.2 Support for the bereaved

- Victorian Institute for Forensic Medicine (VIFM) will coordinate this support
- The Coroners Court, with the Victims Support Agency (VSA), DHHS and VCC-EM facilitates support and counselling for families of the bereaved.

7.4.2.3 Support in emergencies caused by criminal acts

- The Victim Support Agency (VSA) will lead this support.
- They will provide practical assistance to help victims recover from the effects of crime, represent their voice in the justice system and coordinate a whole of government approach to services.

7.4.2.4 Support and advice to aid schools and early childhood services

- The Department of Education and Training (DET) provides specialist support services to students and school staff at government and non-government schools, as well as early childhood services to overcome immediate impacts, including psychological first aid and psycho-education.

7.4.2.5 Referrals to psychosocial services for primary producers and animal owners

The impacts of the loss of companion animals, pets and livestock on wellbeing of individuals, households and farmers must be considered in the development of recovery programs.

- DEDJTR gathers information on affected primary producers and other animal owners' properties to assess the impact, loss and damage. Relevant information is shared with municipal councils and appropriate departments
- DEDJTR supports the needs of affected primary producers and animal owners with referrals to support for assistance.
- DHHS refers affected primary producers and other animal owners to available services as needed.

7.4.2.6 Family Violence services and information

Research has demonstrated an increased risk of escalating family violence after emergencies. It is well recognised that specific vulnerabilities exist for women, men and people with diverse gender identities, and that additional vulnerabilities such as age, culture, and disability, can further impact the experience of family violence and access to support services.

- DHHS supports specialist family violence services, mental health services, including private providers, to provide services.

7.4.2.7 Counselling

- DHHS coordinates the provision of counselling and targeted psychosocial support through mental health services and providers.

7.4.3 Individual and household financial assistance

Objective: *Assist households to minimise the financial impact of the emergency by providing advice and financial assistance where eligible.*

The financial consequences of emergency events for individuals and households can include impacts on:

- employment security (either the availability of work or the ability of people to undertake work)
- payment of salaries or wages
- ability to service debts
- access to bank accounts, liquefiable assets and insurance payouts.

Individuals and households are expected to actively protect their own property and assets (e.g. through adequate insurance), to minimise the financial impact of emergencies, and support their recovery.

Recovery programs are generally in the form of advice and services for affected individuals and communities, rather than direct financial support.

Recovery programs will focus on supporting individuals and households to return to their pre-existing livelihoods or establish alternative livelihoods.

DHHS coordinates this functional area.

Activities:

7.4.3.1 Personal hardship assistance program- Re-establishment assistance

The personal hardship assistance program emergency re-establishment assistance is income tested financial assistance for alternative accommodation, removal of debris, repairs, rebuilding and replacement of essential household accounts. It helps eligible households re-establish as quickly as possible in their own homes.

The availability of emergency re-establishment assistance is subject to approval by the Premier or the Minister for Emergency Services.

- DHHS is responsible for administering this assistance
- DTF will support DHHS as the lead agency for this activity.

7.4.3.2 Australian Government Disaster Recovery financial assistance

- DHHS is the lead liaison between the State Government and Centrelink and advocates to Centrelink on income support issues
- The Australian Government will determine if it will make additional financial assistance available. This may include the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment, the Disaster Recovery Allowance, ex-gratia assistance or a crisis payment
- The Australian Government Department of Human Services administers these payments.

7.4.3.3 Insurance advice and information to customers

- DTF is the lead liaison between the State Government and the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA), and advocates to the ICA on insurance issues
- The ICA provides a single point of contact to assist policyholders, and provides information to insurers, governments, the media and other parties. It assists the insurance industry to respond to claims in an efficient, fair and timely manner through the coordination of insurers, adjusters and intermediaries as appropriate
- The Victorian Managed Insurance Authority (VMIA) supports DTF as the lead agency for this activity
- Victorian Legal Aid coordinates support from the legal community to individuals and communities affected by emergencies. The emphasis of services is on resolving disputes between insurance companies and clients.

7.4.4 Health and medical assistance

Objective: *Ensure that health and medical emergency responses are coordinated and appropriate.*

The State Health Emergency Response Plan (SHERP) describes the principles, command and coordination arrangements, and roles and responsibilities for a health emergency response.

SHERP is an all-hazards, scalable plan for responding to incidents that go beyond day-to-day business arrangements, for coordinating health and medical response to emergencies. The health sector includes pre-hospital care, public health services and private hospitals, mental health services, primary health, aged care, and protection of public health.

DHHS coordinates this functional area.

Activities:

7.4.4.1 Public health advice

DHHS provides advice to councils on safe water, safe food, waste disposal, adequate washing/toilet facilities.

7.4.4.2 Advice on wellbeing in recovery

DHHS provides 'whole-of-health' advice, information and assistance to community. At the request of DHHS, municipal Councils and Australian Red Cross may provide support.

7.4.4.3 Primary and acute health services

DHHS maintains community access to acute and primary health services through coordination of services.

7.4.5 Community development

Objective: *Support communities to share responsibility in recovery activities.*

EMV coordinates this functional area.

Activities:

7.4.5.1 Community information

Individuals are encouraged to obtain information and services that will support their recovery.

- Municipal councils will lead community information (including community briefings and meetings). Municipal councils are responsible for promoting a single point of contact for residents to obtain information about the support, services and assistance that could be available
- The provision of tailored information services to affected communities, using e.g. information lines, newsletters, community meetings and websites can assist municipal councils if requested, will be led by DHHS when escalated to regional coordination, or by EMV if escalated to state coordination.
- Relief and recovery information for the public is distributed through outlets including:
  - Vic Emergency website (www.emergency.vic.gov.au)
  - Vic Emergency Hotline (1800 226 226)
  - Nurse-on-Call (1300 60 60 24)
  - Other specialised communication and media channels, as required (e.g. social media, municipal council's website).
- Once escalated, municipal councils will support EMV and DHHS as the lead agency for this activity.

7.4.5.2 Formation, leadership and support of Municipal/Community Recovery Committees

Community recovery committees are the primary method for supporting community recovery after an emergency.

- Municipal councils are responsible for establishing and leading a municipal/community recovery committee as soon as possible
- It is critical that municipal councils consult closely with affected communities about the nature and type of committee that suits each community – this needs to be a community-led or directed activity as much as possible
- DHHS can advise municipal councils on community recovery committee matters.

7.4.5.3 Local community events

DEDJTR can provide seed funding to municipal councils for community events that aid recovery through restoring social networks and functioning.

7.4.5.4 Provision and staffing of Recovery/Information Centres

In some cases, a municipal council could transition a relief centre into a recovery centre, or establish a standalone recovery centre. Recovery centres provide a single point of entry for affected persons for an 'all agency, all stakeholders' integrated recovery process. The council could then request various recovery support agencies to attend the recovery centre to provide advice and guidance.

- Municipal councils are responsible for providing and staffing Recovery/Information Centre(s)
- When required municipal councils may seek support from DHHS and the Australian Red Cross through Municipal Recovery Committees to assist with recovery centre operations.

7.4.5.5 Provision and management of community development services

Recovery programs should use (and extend) existing community networks to deliver information, identify needs and support those affected.

- Municipal councils are responsible for engaging community members in the development and delivery of shared community activities. Municipal councils provide and manage community development services and activities. This can include the appointment of community development officers
- Where requested, DHHS can assist municipal councils with community development services.

7.4.5.6 Organisation of State-wide public-appeals

As per the *National guidelines for managing donated goods*, monetary donations are preferred over donated goods. Material donations should be discouraged. Financial donations provide choice; can more accurately target needs; and help circulate money in affected communities – which in turn stimulates local economic recovery.

- Municipal councils may establish local appeals
- DPC is responsible for setting up and allocating the management of state wide public appeals and appeal funds

- The Australian Red Cross collects donations of state-wide public appeals.

7.4.5.7 Coordination of spontaneous volunteers

During and after an emergency, there will often be a surge of spontaneous offer of assistance and services to communities and response and recovery agencies. Volunteers should develop associations with community organisations prior to an emergency.

- DHHS is responsible for capturing and provide offers of spontaneous emergency volunteers to municipal councils
- Australian Red Cross supports DHHS in this activity.

7.5 Economic recovery environment

The economic environment considers the direct and indirect impacts that an event may have on business, primary producers and the broader economy. This may include impacts on individuals and households, primary producers, businesses, industries, tourism and the broader economy. They range from immediate and intense, such as loss of personal income or damage to business premises, to long-term and chronic, such as loss of workforce due to displacement, loss of productive land or reluctance of tourists to travel to hazard-prone areas.

Early consideration of the economic consequences of an event is critical for community recovery. The viability of communities affected by emergencies can be dependent on the ability of local businesses and primary producers to recover. In turn, the viability of local businesses and primary producers can impact on decisions within the broader community about whether or not residents will return.

It is the responsibility of individuals and businesses to maintain adequate insurance and establish continuity plans to help reduce the impact of emergencies.

Support may be available to assist with the immediate economic impact of an emergency on individuals and households. These arrangements for individuals and households are identified in section 7.4.3 Individual and Household Financial Assistance.

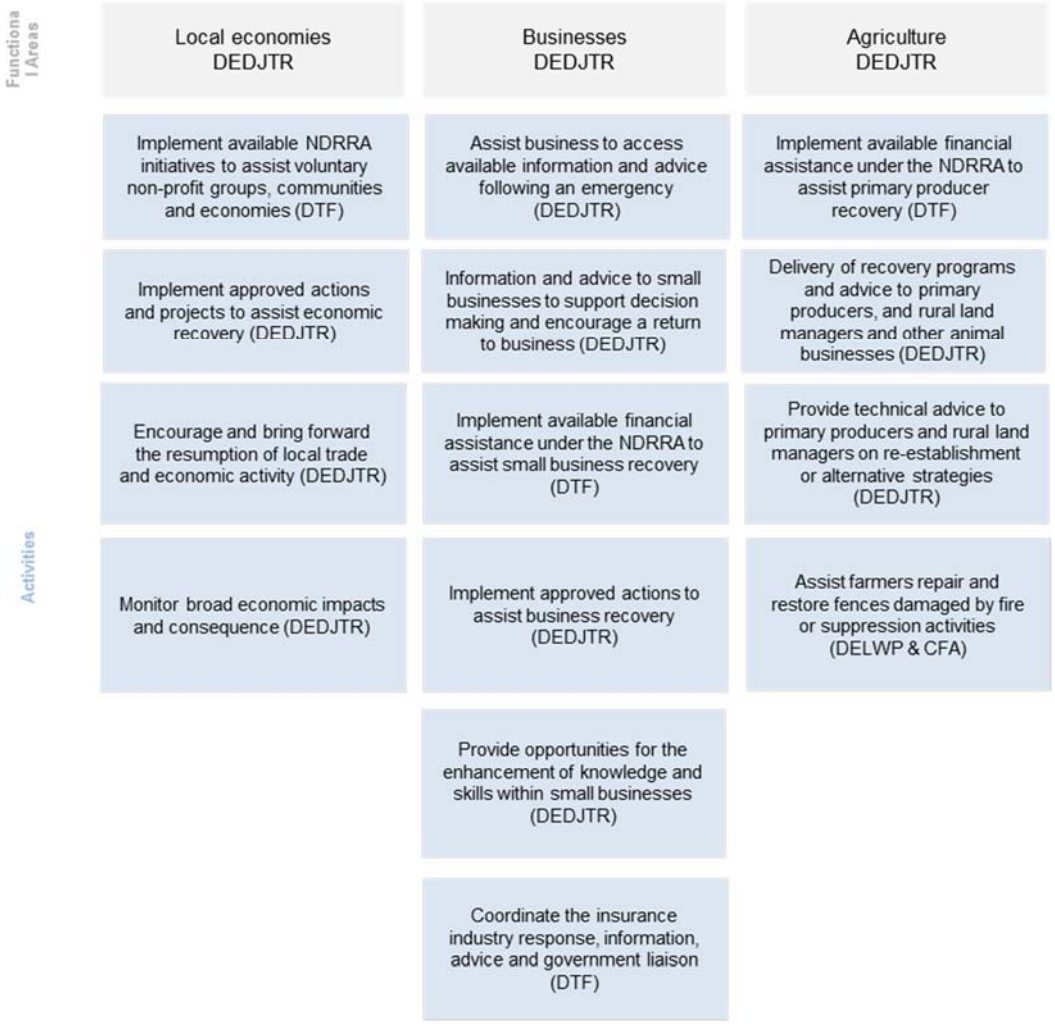

Figure 8. Economic recovery environment: functional areas and activities

7.5.1 Local economies

Objective: *Mitigate the impact of emergencies on economic activity in affected communities.*

Emergency events can have broader economic impacts, including:

- reputational damage to an industry or geographical region
- reduction in tourism and visitation levels
- reduction in investor and consumer confidence
- trade ramifications.

Municipal councils are responsible for the local management and delivery of economic recovery activities. Where required, DEDJTR leads and coordinates State Government assistance to municipal councils at a regional and state level. Broad economic recovery activities will aim to restore the confidence of stakeholders in the sustainability of affected businesses and local economies. Direct intervention in local economies will be considered where there is a clear likelihood of market failure and preventable hardship.

Information on the economic impact of emergencies may also assist in determining priority actions under other recovery environments, including the restoration of critical economic infrastructure within the built environment.

Activities:

7.5.1.1 Implement available NDRRA initiatives to assist voluntary non-profit groups, communities and economies

- DTF administers under the *Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements* (NDRRA) initiatives:
  - a low-interest concessional loan scheme to voluntary non-profit bodies
  - recovery grants to voluntary non-profit bodies, subject to approval by the Australian Government.
- The Rural Assistance Commissioner administers the low-interest concessional loans and clean-up and restoration grants through an agreement with The Bendigo and Adelaide Bank under the Trade Mark Rural Finance.
- EMV and DTF support DPC in providing advice to the Premier on requesting the activation of Categories C and D.
- Subject to the severity and nature of the disaster, DEDJTR may administer a Community Recovery Fund following a successful request from the Premier to the Prime Minister for activation of Category C under the NDRRA.

7.5.1.2 Implement approved actions and projects to assist economic recovery

- DEDJTR works with municipal councils to develop and implement appropriate actions and projects that support local and regional economy recovery priorities. Initiatives are tailored to address the specific consequences of an emergency
- DEDJTR delivers a wide range of marketing/public relations and industry/product development activities, in partnership with regional tourism boards, to assist the affected tourism region/s and businesses recover, including "Open for Business" messaging and campaigns.

7.5.1.3 Encourage and bring forward the resumption of local trade and economic activity

- DEDJTR works with municipal councils to implement appropriate actions and initiatives that encourage and bring forward the resumption of local economic activity, including:
  - tourism visitation when safe to do so
  - the use of local business in recovery activities
  - buy-local initiatives
  - events that attract visitation
  - other relevant activities.

7.5.1.4 Monitor broad economic impacts and consequences

- DEDJTR, in partnership with other agencies, organisations and municipal councils, monitors the broad economic impacts and consequences of an emergency and:
  - ensures this information is shared across Government to inform responses

- works with agencies to prioritise planned activities in order to minimise economic consequences

7.5.2 Businesses

Objective: *Information, advice and support to businesses to facilitate good decision making and assist their recovery.*

The economic consequences of emergency events for businesses can include:

- unavailability of workers
- damage to physical premises and/or inventory
- reduction in trade for individual businesses
- impact on cash flow and viability.

Municipal councils are responsible for the local management and delivery of businesses recovery activities. Where required, DEDJTR leads and coordinates State Government assistance to municipal councils at a regional and state level.

Targeted recovery activities will primarily focus on the provision of information and advice to businesses to support decision making and encourage a return to business. They may also involve the use of local businesses in recovery activities and other relevant support of locally affected businesses.

The Business Victoria website provides guidance on business preparedness, risk mitigation and business continuity (www.business.vic.gov.au).

The Tourism Victoria website includes a series of downloadable resources to assist businesses and local and regional tourism organisations plan for, respond to and recover from emergencies (www.tourism.vic.gov.au/business-tools-support).

Activities:

7.5.2.1 Assist businesses to access available information and advice following an emergency

DEDJTR provides accessible information to businesses in relation to available information, advice and support following an emergency, including from:

- Australian Tax Office
- Financial Institutions
- Australian Securities & Investment Commission
- Centrelink
- Victorian Government
- other sources and resources.

7.5.2.2 Information and advice to small businesses to support decision making and encourage a return to business

- DEDJTR provides support to small businesses that assists them in decision making and, where appropriate, encourages a return to business. This may include:
  - Mentoring and Business Counselling

  - Support through the Small Business Bus
  - Connection to other services/
- Small Business Mentoring Services supports DEDJTR as the lead agency for this activity.

7.5.2.3 Implement available financial assistance under the NDRRA to assist small business recovery

- DTF administers under the NDRRA initiatives, subject to activation by the State and Australian Governments:
  - a low-interest concessional loan scheme to small businesses; and
  - recovery grants for small businesses, subject to approval by the Australian Government.
- DEDJTR gathers impact and loss information for small businesses and provides this information to DTF and EMV.
- The Rural Finance administers the low-interest concessional loans and clean up and restoration grants through an agreement with the Bendigo and Adelaide Bank under the Trade Mark Rural Finance.
- DPC and EMV supports DTF as the lead agency for this activity by advising the Premier to request that the Prime Minister requesting the activation of Category C recovery grants for primary producers and/or small businesses where the NDRRA criteria are met. Under the NDRRA Category D Exceptional Circumstances, co-funding may also be available, subject to Australian Government approval.

7.5.2.4 Implement approved actions to assist business recovery

- DEDJTR works with municipal councils to develop and implement appropriate actions and initiatives that support business recovery. Initiatives will be tailored to address the specific consequences of an emergency.

7.5.2.5 Provide opportunities for the enhancement of knowledge and skills within small businesses

- DEDJTR supports the delivery of small business workshops and training, with a particular focus on resilience and business continuity.

7.5.2.6 Coordinate the insurance industry response, information, advice and government liaison

- DTF is the lead liaison for this activity. It provides advocacy to the ICA and liaison between the State Government and the ICA regarding insurance issues
- The ICA provides a single point of contact to assist policyholders affected by the disaster:
  - On behalf of the insurance industry, establish contact with government at all levels and participate on any external committee
  - Provide information to insurers, governments, the media and other interested parties and maintain statistics showing the final insured cost of the event

  - Assist the insurance industry to respond to claims in an efficient, fair and timely manner through the coordination of insurers, adjusters and intermediaries as appropriate.
- The VMIA supports DTF as the lead agency for this activity.

7.5.3 Agriculture

Objective: *To assist the agriculture sector to recover and minimise long term social and economic impact on primary producers and other animal owners.*

The focus of a DEDJTR rural recovery program is on:

- supporting the wellbeing of rural communities
- revitalising the economy of rural communities through reestablishment of agricultural enterprises
- rehabilitation of productive land and the surrounding environment.

DEDJTR coordinates this functional area.

Animal welfare assistance is presented in section 4.5.3.

Activities:

7.5.3.1 Implement available financial assistance under the NDRRA to assist primary producer recovery

- Under the NDRRA, DTF administers:
  - a low-interest concessional loan scheme to primary producers
  - recovery grants for primary producers, subject to approval by the Australian Government.
- DEDJTR gathers impact and loss information for primary producers and provides this information to DTF and EMV.
- The Rural Assistance Commissioner administers the low-interest concessional loans and clean up and restoration grants through an agreement with The Bendigo and Adelaide Bank under the Trade Mark Rural Finance
- EMV supports DTF as the lead agency for this activity by advising the Minister for Emergency Services to request that the Treasurer activate Category B direct concessional loans and/or consequential effect concessional loans for primary producers where the NDRRA criteria are met; and/or the Premier request the Prime Minister activate Category C Clean up grant funding where the NDRRA criteria are met. Under the NDRRA Category D Exceptional Circumstances, co-funding may also be available, subject to the Prime Minister's approval.

7.5.3.2 Deliver recovery programs and advice to primary producers, and rural land managers and other animal businesses

- DEDJTR:
  - ensures effective communication between various agencies, organisations and communities
  - provides advice on ongoing treatments
  - provides advice about fencing (for safe ongoing containment), feed planning and pasture management, water supplies including dam management, and animal health considerations.

7.5.3.3 Provide technical advice to primary producers and rural land managers on re-establishment or alternative strategies

DEDJTR provides technical advice and services to primary producers, rural land managers and other animal businesses on strategies for the re-establishment of rural enterprises, rehabilitation of productive land and economic recovery.

7.5.3.4 Assist farmers repair and restore fences damaged by fire or suppression activities

It is the responsibility of the owner of private land to fence their property and secure stock within their boundary. Landholders are expected to manage risks to their assets from the potential impact of emergencies. All landholders are expected to have appropriate levels of insurance cover for boundary and internal fences.

The Victorian Government will pay 100 per cent of the restoration costs of fences damaged on private land as a result of machinery used by fire agencies to control bushfires. This includes damage to fences by machinery such as bull-dozers entering the property and/or constructing fire control lines, and other fire emergency vehicles obtaining access.

The Victorian Government will meet half the cost of materials to replace or repair fencing between private land and all national parks, state parks and state forests destroyed or damaged by bushfires.

Further details can be found at www.delwp.vic.gov.au/fences

- DELWP and the Country Fire Authority are the lead agencies for this activity, supported by Municipal Councils. They:
  - determine eligibility of damaged fences for Victorian government funding
  - restore/repair/replace fences damaged by fire bordering national or state parks or state forest
  - restore/repair/replace fences damaged by fire agencies, i.e. machinery/cutting
  - coordinate payment to landholders for materials to repair/replace affected fences.
- DEDJTR normally collects impact information from affected primary producers after most emergencies. During this process, DEDJTR may identify primary producers who have had their fences damaged by fire or suppression activities. DEDJTR will refer these primary producers to:
  - municipal councils to coordinate local volunteer efforts after emergencies, for private fencing damage
  - to DELWP for damaged fences on public land boundaries.

7.6 Built recovery environment

The built recovery environment considers the impacts that an event may have on essential physical infrastructure including essential services, commercial and industrial facilities, public buildings and assets and housing.

Infrastructure assists individuals and communities in the management of their daily lives and underpins the ability of private and public community services to function. If essential infrastructure and services are affected by

an emergency, its restoration is considered a priority to ensure that response, relief and recovery activities are not compromised.

Community recovery is underpinned by the restoration of essential infrastructure and services. The restoration of essential infrastructure also enables the resumption of essential business operations and services, such as banking, education, health, and retail trade.

Local infrastructure may also form an important part of community identity and connectedness. For example, some public buildings have an important symbolic role and their loss can have a severe negative impact on community morale.

Built environment impacts include, but are not limited to:

- energy services
- telecommunications
- roads and transport (including supply chains)
- buildings and assets
- water and wastewater management.

Initial assessment of impacts on essential infrastructure and services should be coordinated at the local level by the municipal council or agency identified in local MEMPs and undertaken as soon as practicable.

Restoration of essential infrastructure and services must be undertaken with an awareness of the needs of vulnerable individuals and communities. In restoring infrastructure, responsible agencies should:

- understand the community's priorities
- keep the community informed of recovery progress
- wherever possible, restore to a better standard (betterment)
- utilise the VMIA to assist in the assessment and restoration of damaged assets.

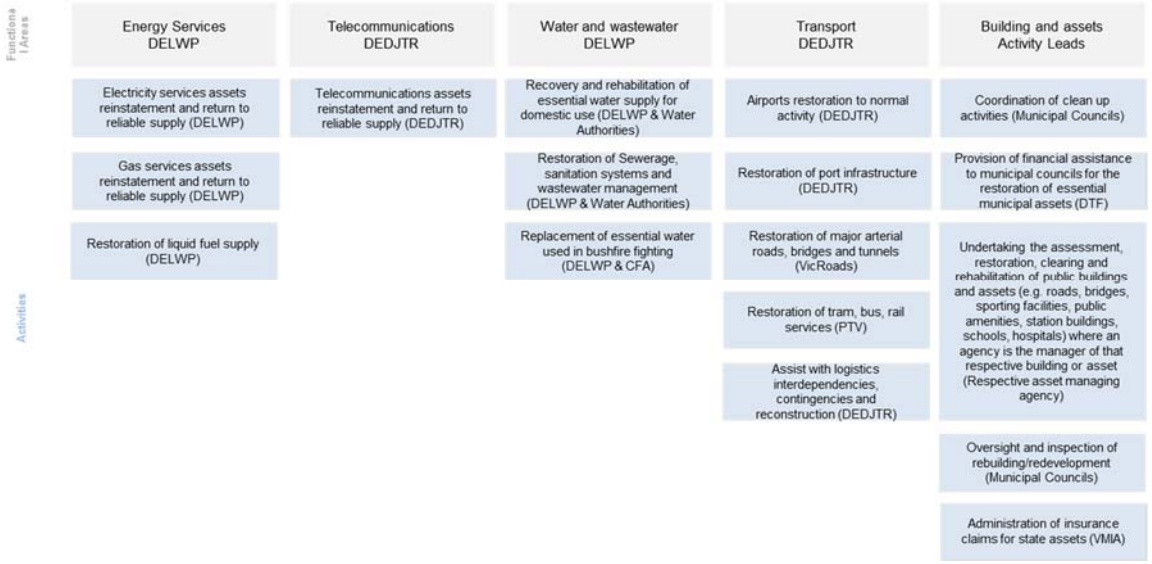

Figure 9. Built recovery environment: functional areas and activities

7.6.1 Energy services

Objective: *To build resilience within communities and the energy sector from emergencies and minimise the impact on Victoria's economy and communities.*

Damage and loss to energy systems has far reaching implications for infrastructure in other sectors, upon which it is dependent, in whole or in part:

- transportation systems: impact on rail systems (such as electrified networks, ticketing systems and signals), traffic signals and liquid fuel supplies
- water: loss of pressure from pump failure, contamination issues and sewerage systems
- communication systems: impact on cellular services, computer systems, internet and cable television.

In addition, loss of energy supplies to industry and businesses in affected areas leads to closure and economic impacts. Health and education services will also be affected.

Loss to domestic customers affects basic needs in terms of the provision of heating, cooling and light, which will have health implications. Vulnerable members of the community are most at risk.

Restoration of services is often a complex task involving a diversity of stakeholders and priorities should be determined as quickly as possible.

DELWP coordinates this functional area.

Activities:

7.6.1.1 Electricity services assets reinstatement and return to reliable supply

- DELWP liaises with industry and advises Government on the use of emergency powers and progress of restoration of services
- The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) manages electricity system security emergencies
- Electricity businesses restore infrastructure and electricity supply.

7.6.1.2 Gas services assets reinstatement and return to reliable supply

- DELWP liaises with industry and advises Government on the use of emergency powers and progress of restoration of services
- The AEMO manages gas system security emergencies within the Victorian Declared Transmission System (DTS). Other pipeline operators manage non DTS segments of the system
- Gas businesses and the AEMO restore infrastructure and gas supply.

7.6.1.3 Restoration of liquid fuel supply

- DELWP liaises with industry and advises Government on the use of emergency powers and progress of restoration of supply
- Fuel companies restore fuel stocks at distribution sites.

7.6.2 Telecommunications

Objective: *To build resilience within the telecommunications sector from emergencies and minimise the impact on Victoria's economy and communities.*

The loss of telephone services, both cabled and cellular, will adversely impact other infrastructure operators, in addition to general commerce and the function of communities. Any disruption to internet services can be expected to have a like effect.

Loss of television and radio services can be anticipated to have a negative bearing on the psyche of impacted communities.

DEDJTR coordinates this functional area.

Activity:

7.6.2.1 Telecommunications assets reinstatement and return to reliable supply

- DEDJTR coordinates information regarding restoration of services
- Telecommunications carriers restore services and alternate communications networks where required

7.6.3 Water and wastewater

Objective: *Restoration of water supplies and wastewater services for domestic use.*

When a community is affected by an emergency, they often require the provision of emergency water and wastewater management to support health and wellbeing.

- DELWP coordinates this functional area. When the size and complexity of emergency recovery exceeds the local resources, coordination of emergency drinking water supplies and sewerage services becomes its responsibility
- DHHS is responsible for providing advice about the safety of drinking water (refer to section 4.6.4).

Activities:

7.6.3.1 Recovery and rehabilitation of essential water supply for domestic use

- DELWP leads the restoration of essential water supply for domestic use for areas where reticulated water services are not in use. It also oversees activities undertaken by water corporations
- Water Authorities lead the restoration of water supply for domestic use when reticulated water supply is available.

7.6.3.2 Restoration of sewerage, sanitation systems and wastewater management

- DELWP leads the restoration of sewerage /sanitation systems/wastewater systems for domestic use for areas where when reticulated services are not available. It also oversees activities undertaken by water corporations
- Water Authorities lead the restoration of sewerage /sanitation systems/wastewater systems for domestic use when reticulated water supply is available.

7.6.3.3 Replacement of essential water used in bushfire fighting

Victoria's fire agencies have legislative authority to take water from any waterway or water source on public or private land for firefighting purposes. Where water is removed, the water owner can request essential water replacement (via their municipality) under the *Victorian Government Essential Water Replacement Scheme.*

- DELWP and the Country Fire Authority replaces essential water taken from private landholders during bushfire suppression activities
- DELWP and the Country Fire Authority are the lead agency for this activity, supported by municipal councils and water authorities.

7.6.4 Transport

Objective: *To build resilience within the transport sector from emergencies and minimise the impact on Victoria's economy and communities.*

Multimodal transport networks which include air, sea, road, rail, and water transport systems provide mobility for passengers as well as the movement of goods from one point to another. These systems can often be interrupted and destroyed from the impact of a multiplicity of hazards.

Disruption to transport systems affects communities and impedes relief and recovery efforts, and can delay restoration of critical infrastructure and services.

In any major recovery effort, the situation requires a high level of planning and coordination of activities to ensure strategies effectively deliver the following outcomes:

- the restoration of arterial routes, providing access and egress to the affected areas (road and rail, including local roads and bridges)
- the restoration and re-establishment of public transport services
- prioritisation and re-instatement of critical supply chains.

DEDJTR coordinates this functional area, with Transport for Victoria (TfV) developing strategic policy and investment advice to the transport agencies on recovery.

Activities:

7.6.4.1 Airports restoration to normal activity

- DEDJTR leads the liaison between the Victorian Government and airport operators/owners
- Airport owners and operators:
  - assesses impacts on their airport infrastructure and services
  - rebuild, upgrade (betterment) or re-locate their infrastructure.
- Airport owners and operators are supported by several agencies and organisations including airlines, airport operators and owners, Airservices Australia, Victoria Police, the AFP, Australian Border Force, Air cargo terminal operators, the MFB, the CFA and the Australian Government. Specifically, support includes:
  - restoration of airport infrastructure (airport operators and owners)

- return of airline services (airlines and Airservices Australia)
- restoration of Australian government operations (Australian Government)
- restoration of aviation fuel supplies to airport fuel tank storages by pipeline or road transport (airport operators, pipeline operators and fuel suppliers).

- DEDJTR coordinates information regarding restoration of services and land transport network links to airports (with support from VicRoads).

7.6.4.2 Restoration of port infrastructure

- DEDJTR leads the liaison between the Victorian Government and port managers
- Port managers, as nominated or appointed under provisions of the *Port Management Act 1995*, of either trading ports or local ports nominated or declared under that Act:
  - assesses impacts on their port infrastructure and services
  - rebuild, upgrade (betterment) or re-locate infrastructure.
- Port managers are supported by several agencies, including DEDJTR, Victoria Police, port tenants, vessel and freight operators, industry operators, infrastructure operators and, as appropriate, the VMIA
- DEDJTR coordinates information regarding restoration of services
- DEDJTR is supported by several agencies and organisations, including, port managers, Victoria Police, Australian Federal Police, Australian Border Force stevedores, the MFB, the CFA and the Australian Government. Specifically, support includes:
  - restoration of port infrastructure
  - restoration of Australian Government operations (Australian Government)

7.6.4.3 Restoration of major arterial roads, bridges and tunnels

- VicRoads leads this activity:
  - under the Road Management Act 2004, VicRoads has operation and maintenance responsibilities. VicRoads undertakes assessments of impacts on infrastructure in relation to major arterial roads, bridges and tunnels
  - VicRoads rebuilds, upgrades (betterment) or re-locates infrastructure associated with major roads, bridges and tunnels.
- DEDJTR coordinates information regarding restoration of services with TfV developing and providing strategic policy and investment advice to VicRoads on transport recovery.
- Infrastructure operators and the VMIA support VicRoads as the lead agency for this activity

7.6.4.4 Restoration of tram, bus, rail services

- Public Transport Victoria (PTV) leads this activity. It:
  - undertakes an assessment of the impacts on infrastructure and services and provide professional and technical advice and assistance as required

  - coordinates the delivery of alternate transport for the duration of the post event recovery phase
  - coordinates the rebuilding, upgrading (betterment) or re-locating of infrastructure.
- DEDJTR coordinates information regarding restoration of services with TfV developing and providing strategic policy and investment advice to PTV and other agencies on transport recovery.
- DEDJTR coordinates information regarding restoration of services.

7.6.4.5 Assistance with food supply, logistics interdependencies, contingencies and reconstruction

- DEDJTR leads this activity by coordinating food supply, logistics interdependencies, contingencies and reconstruction
- DEDJTR is supported by several agencies, including freight operators, warehouse operators, port operators, airport operators, railway operators, VicRoads, PTV, the ADF, Red Cross and NGOs
- VicRoads will provide clearing, restoration and rehabilitation works on Arterial Roads and Bridges which fall under VicRoads operation and maintenance responsibility as per *Road Management Act 2004*.

7.6.5 Building and assets

Objective: *Management of risks and facilitating restoration of buildings and assets.*

Buildings and assets can be publicly or privately owned, such as residences or public assets.

Residential damage may be a combination of structural and non-structural damage that may render the residence dangerous for entry; allow entry but prevent occupation of the building; require building repairs; be fixed by minor work and/or involve damage to contents.

Assessment and repair of homes is critical to expediting the return of people to normal life functioning. Households and property owners are responsible for having adequate insurance protection (or other means) to enable the clean-up, repair and reconstruction of damaged property. Housing and accommodation assistance is detailed in section 4.6.4.

The State Government, local councils, community and private sector all have responsibilities when community facilities are damaged or destroyed. Damaged facilities can include:

- community/neighbourhood centres and places for congregation
- schools and learning institutions
  - kindergartens and child care facilities
  - places of spiritual worship (including churches, mosques, graveyards and memorials)
  - sporting and recreational facilities and clubs
  - cultural centres
  - entertainment venues
  - restaurants and cafes.

Each of these facilities has the potential to assist the community in its recovery process, but if damaged would be unable to perform their

community functions. The damage may be structural damage to buildings or damage to furnishings and contents, or both.

The property manager is responsible for ensuring adequate insurance is in place to enable the restoration of community facilities.

Critical public buildings and assets need to be pre-identified as priorities in the recovery planning process and adequate arrangements developed for their restoration or replacement if required.

Recovery activities should also recognise the key elements of the built environment that have social value, such as landmarks and significant community sites, which are symbolically and functionally important in community recovery.

Activities:

7.6.5.1 Coordination of clean-up activities

- municipal councils coordinate clean-up activities, including disposal of dead animals (domestic, native and feral)
- DELWP (Local Government Victoria) provides targeted support where required to assist municipal councils in their delivery of relief and recovery activities, including clean-up
- EMV coordinates clean up and demolition activities where state assistance is required.

7.6.5.2 Provision of financial assistance to municipal councils for the restoration of essential municipal assets

- DTF leads this activity by providing financial assistance to municipal councils for eligible natural disaster expenditure including counter disaster operations and the restoration of essential municipal assets
- VicRoads supports by providing advice to municipal councils on the restoration of local roads, bridges and tunnels under municipal council responsibility.

7.6.5.3 Restoration, clearing and rehabilitation of public buildings and assets managed within agencies' portfolios

- Respective asset managing agency undertake the assessment, restoration, clearing and rehabilitation of assets within portfolios e.g. roads, bridges, sporting facilities, public amenities schools, hospitals, managed by respective agencies within their service / asset portfolios
- VicRoads provides supports through clearing, restoration and rehabilitation works on Arterial Roads and Bridges falls under VicRoads operation and maintenance responsibility as per *Road Management Act 2004*, to facilitate access.

7.6.5.4 Oversight and inspection of rebuilding/redevelopment

- Municipal councils oversee and inspect rebuilding/redevelopment.

7.6.5.5 Administration of insurance claims for state assets

- VMIA insurance claims for the restoration of State Government assets damaged or destroyed in an emergency and liability against State agencies.

7.7 Natural recovery environment

The natural environment considers the impact that an event may have on a healthy and functioning environment, which underpins the economy and society. Components of the natural environment include air and water quality; land degradation and contamination; plant and wildlife damage/loss; and national parks, cultural and heritage sites.

A third of Victoria is public land comprised of parks, forests and reserves. Emergencies that occur on this land have multiple consequences for biodiversity and ecosystem, economic and social values. Actions to recover from these emergencies may start while the emergency is still underway, and can continue for many months or years.

Emergencies on public land or the marine environment can lead to impacts on the economies of communities and regions through the direct damage to the forestry, fishing, apiary and farming industries, and indirectly to other industries such as nature based tourism, cultural based tourism and recreational tourism.

Natural environments have value to communities as they provide opportunities for recreation and a sense of connectedness to the environment and land. By undertaking recovery activities in the natural environment, the social values that have been impacted can start to be restored. Recovery actions can include:

- reopening / repairing walking tracks
- restoring / repairing recreational facilities
- surveying and protecting sites of cultural heritage significance.

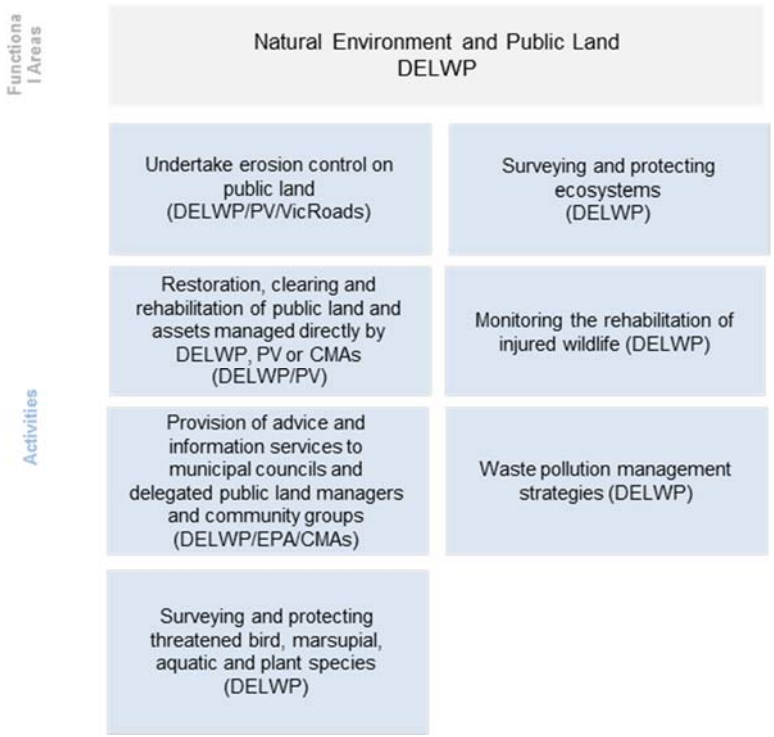

Figure 10. Natural recovery environment: functional areas and activities

7.7.1 Natural environment and public land

Objective: *Manage consequence and mitigate risk to the natural environment on public land.*

DELWP coordinates this functional area, with support from the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) in assessing and monitoring the environmental impacts of emergencies.

The *Code of Practice for Bushfire Management on Public Land* (2012) outlines how the DELWP approaches recovery after bushfire, a similar approach is taken for other emergency events.

Generally the natural environment will recover from emergencies over time without the need for intervention, but sometimes assistance is needed to help ecosystems recover. Activities that can be undertaken are listed below.

Activities:

7.7.1.1 Undertake erosion control on public land

- DELWP and Parks Victoria investigate and carry out erosion control works on DELWP managed land
- VicRoads investigates and carries out restoration works associated with roads, bridges and culverts within the arterial road reserve
- DELWP, Parks Victoria and VicRoads are supported by municipal councils.

7.7.1.2 Restoration, clearing and rehabilitation of public land and assets managed directly by DELWP, PV, or CMAs

- DELWP and Parks Victoria lead this activity
- DELWP clears and restores assets and rehabilitates disturbance on public land it or Parks Victoria directly manages
- Parks Victoria recovers and rehabilitates natural values, cultural values, tourism and visitor assets affected by an emergency on parks, reserves, rivers, waterways and local ports it manages. Parks Victoria:
  - clean-up following oil or chemical pollution incidents in collaboration with DELWP (or their agents) and the EPA
  - clean-up fish kill incidents in collaboration with the EPA and DELWP.
- Parks Victoria may, at the request of DELWP, support in the recovery and rehabilitation of other Victorian public land affected by emergencies.
- Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs):
  - clear and restore assets and rehabilitation of disturbance on land and waterways that they manage
  - restore impacts of river erosion where there is an immediate danger of the formation of river breakaways and/or immediate danger to CMA assets
  - implement balanced flood recovery programs consistent with allocated funding.
- VMIA supports DELWP/Parks Victoria.

7.7.1.3 Provision of advice and information services to municipal councils and delegated public land managers and community groups.

- DELWP, EPA and CMAs lead this activity.
- DELWP:
  - advises communities on reforestation of native forest (not plantations)
  - advises on native flora and fauna (including within aquatic and terrestrial environments).
- EPA provides advice and information services to municipal councils and delegated public land managers and community groups by ensuring that appropriate disposal methods are adopted
- CMAs develop and prioritise flood recovery programs for their assets and waterways.

7.7.1.4 Emergency approvals

- The EPA provides Emergency Approvals in line with the Environment Protection Act 1970 where required, e.g. mass animal burial sites, water discharges, etc.

7.7.1.5 Surveying and protecting threatened bird, marsupial, aquatic and plant species

- DELWP surveys and mitigates risks to protecting threatened bird, marsupial, aquatic and plant species affected by emergencies on land within its portfolio and provides advisory services to others.

7.7.1.6 Surveying and protecting ecosystems

- DELWP surveys and mitigates risks to ecosystems species affected by emergencies on land within its portfolio and provides advisory services to others.

7.7.1.7 Monitoring the rehabilitation of injured wildlife

- DELWP leads the development of policy, programs and training for responding to incidents of wildlife affected by marine pollution, and develops partnerships and agreements with key organisations that will support this response.

7.7.1.8 Waste pollution management strategies

- DELWP leads this activity and coordinates the development of strategies dealing with waste pollution management
- EPA supports DELWP by:
  - Ensuring that appropriate waste disposal methods are adopted and environmental clean-up activities conducted
  - Advising recovery services on the properties and environmental impacts of hazardous materials.

8. Plan administration

8.1 Authority

Under the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (the EM Act 2013) the Minister for Emergency Services must arrange for the preparation and review of a *State Emergency Recovery Plan*. This responsibility has been delegated to the Emergency Management Commissioner.

The *EM Act 2013* introduces the first stage of amendments to implement the Victorian Government's emergency management reform agenda. It is proposed that the *Emergency Management Act 1986 (EM Act 1986)* be repealed following further legislative amendments; however, until this occurs, the EM Act 2013 is to be read and interpreted together with the EM Act 1986.

Under section 46 of the EM Act 2013, the Emergency Management Commissioner is responsible for the coordination of agencies with responsibilities under this plan.

The State Crisis and Resilience Council and agencies involved in relief and recovery activities have been consulted in the preparation of this plan. The Emergency Management Commissioner has approved the plan.

Victoria's emergency management arrangements are in effect at all times and do not require specific formal activation.

Section 60 of the EM Act 2013 requires this plan to contain certain provisions (or references) that are detailed in this table:

Emergency Management Act 2013	**Reference**
60(a) Specify the roles of agencies in emergency recovery	Sections 6 and 7
60(b) Specify the department or agency with responsibility for coordinating particular aspects of recovery, including recovery at the regional level	Sections 4 and 5
60(c) Relating to the coordination of the activities of agencies	Sections 4.5, 6.3 and 7.3
60(d) Defining regions for the purposes of regional recovery coordination	Section 4.5

8.2 Plan review

This plan (and its appendices) should be reviewed:

- before 31 October every two years
- as needed to address relevant changes in legislation, machinery-of-government or responsibility, or
- if required after a major emergency.

8.3 Plan resources

This plan should be read in conjunction with:

- *Emergency Management Act 1986*
- *Emergency Management Act 2013*
- Other parts of the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria*
- *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience* https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/national-strategy-for-disaster-resilience/
- *National Principles for Disaster Recovery* https https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/recovery.pdf
- *Community recovery handbook* https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/4108/handbook-2-community-recovery.pdf
- *Communicating in recovery* guide www.redcross.org.au/communicating-in-recovery.aspx
- *Emergency relief handbook 2013: A planning guide* http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/612372/Final_Emergency-relief-handbook_2013_WEB.pdf
- *IAP2 Guidelines* https://www.iap2.org.au
- *Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan* http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/emergencies/response/victorian-emergency-animal-welfare-plan
- *Psychosocial support: A framework for emergencies* http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/905575/web_Psychosocial-support-a-framework-for-emergencies.pdf
- *State Health Emergency Response Plan* https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/emergencies/shera
- *Code of practice for bushfire management on Public Land (2012)*
- *Emergency management planning for children and young people- planning guide for local government* http://earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au/files/EM-planning-for-children-and-young-people-web.pdf
- Supporting local, regional and state relief and recovery plans.