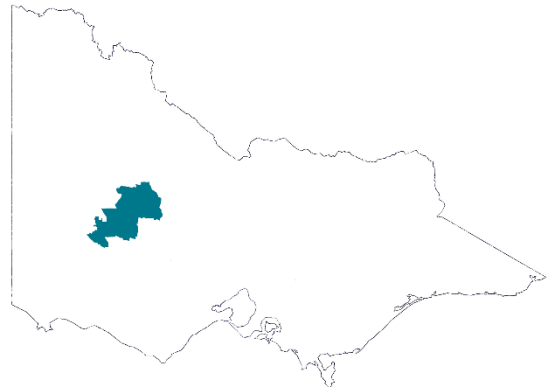


Municipal Emergency Management Planning

Northern Grampians Shire



Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2023-2026

Version 5.1, August 2025

Amendment history

Version Number	Date of Issue	Author(s)	Brief Description of Change
1.0	04/08/2014	NGS MEMPC	Prepared for 2014 -2017 period and adopted by Council.
2.0	10/10/2014	NGS MEMPC - NGSC MERO, Emergency Management Officer	Minor typographical amendments incorporated.
2.1	November 2016	NGS MEMPC - NGSC Emergency Management Officer	Amendment incorporating MEMP Audit recommendations and Red Cross catering changes as well as corrections of minor typographical errors and the update of contact lists.
2.2	March 2017	NGS MEMPC - NGSC MERO, Emergency Management Officer	Minor review and update of MEMP.
2.3	June 2017	NGS MEMPC - MERO, Emergency Management Officer	Minor review and update of MEMP Prepared for 2017-2020 period to be adopted by Council.
3.0	July 2017	NGSC	Adopted by Council.
3.1	October 2017	NGS MEMPC, NGSC Emergency Management Officer	Minor edits on advice from committee and audit.
3.2	May 2018	NGS MEMPC NGSC Emergency Management Officer	Minor edits and Council adoption of defined limit specified in Section 4.8.2.
4.0	June 2020	NGS MEMPC, NGSC Emergency Management Officer	General update. Endorsed by MEMPC 27 April 2020. Adopted by Council 01 June 2020.
4.1	May 2021	NGS MEMPC, NGSC Emergency Management Officer	General update and incorporation of some changes under the <i>Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018</i> .
5.0	June 2023	NGS MEMPC	Rewrite of plan to be more consistent with other Grampians region MEMPs and to align with the new Assurance checklist.
5.1	August 2025	NGS MEMPC, NGSC Emergency Management Officer	General review. Added <i>Critical infrastructure</i> and <i>People</i> information in <i>Part 2 Shire profile</i> .

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Amendment history	2
PART ONE – INTRODUCTION.....	5
1.1 Acknowledgement of Country	5
1.2 Authority	5
1.3 Plan assurance and approval	5
1.4 Plan review	5
1.5 Plan audience, aim and objectives	5
PART TWO – SHIRE PROFILE	7
2.1 Traditional Owners	7
2.2 Topography	7
2.3 Critical infrastructure	7
2.3.1 Roads	7
2.3.2 Rail	7
2.3.3 Transport services	7
2.3.4 Airports	7
2.3.5 Electricity	8
2.3.6 Gas	8
2.3.7 Water	8
2.3.8 Telecommunications	9
2.4 Climate	9
2.5 People	9
2.5.1 Location	9
2.5.2 Age	10
2.5.3 Culture, nationality and language	10
2.5.4 Socio-economic status	10
2.5.5 Health, social and disability	10
2.5.6 Visitors	11
2.5.7 Schools, family and children’s services	11
2.5.8 People who may require additional support	11
2.6 Industry	12
2.7 Municipal map	12
2.8 History of emergencies	14
2.9 Community Emergency Risk Assessment	14
PART THREE – MITIGATION AND PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS	17
3.1 Mitigation	17
3.2 Planning	17
3.2.1 Victoria’s emergency management planning framework	17
3.2.2 The MEMPC, subcommittees and working groups	18
3.2.3 Sub plans and complementary plans	18
3.2.4 Vulnerable Persons and Vulnerable Facilities	18

PART FOUR - RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS.....	20
4.1 Control - Command - Coordination.....	20
4.2 Local emergency response arrangements	21
4.2.1 Arrangements for coordination of single incidents	21
4.2.2 Coordination of other emergency incidents.....	21
4.3 Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre	22
4.4 Control and support agencies	22
4.5 Financial considerations.....	22
4.6 Evacuation.....	22
4.7 Initial Impact Assessment	23
4.8 Community information and warnings	23
4.9 Resource sharing protocols	24
4.10 Debriefing arrangements.....	24
PART FIVE – RELIEF ARRANGEMENTS.....	25
5.1 Relief management and governance.....	25
5.2 Activation of relief services	25
5.3 Escalation.....	25
PART SIX – TRANSITION TO RELIEF AND RECOVERY	26
6.1 Transition from response to relief and recovery	26
6.2 Secondary Impact Assessment	26
PART SEVEN – RECOVERY ARRANGEMENTS.....	28
7.1 Consideration for escalation	28
7.2 Formation, leadership and support of municipal recovery groups	28
7.3 Provision and management of community recovery services	28
7.3.1 Coordination of spontaneous volunteers.....	28
7.3.2 Management of donated goods.....	29
7.3.3 Management of funding arrangements and grants	29
7.3.4 Public health advice	29
7.4 Early recovery planning.....	30
PART EIGHT – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	31
PART NINE – APPENDICES	32
APPENDIX A – MEMPC Terms of Reference	32
APPENDIX B - Acronyms and abbreviations	38
APPENDIX C - Sub plans and complementary plans.....	39

PART ONE – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Acknowledgement of Country

The Northern Grampians Shire Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) acknowledges the Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the Northern Grampians municipality and pays respect to Elders, past and present. Today, the municipality coincides with multiple, diverse Traditional Owner groups, including the Wotjobaluk, Jardawadjali, Djab Wurrung, and Dja Dja Wurrung peoples. This Plan acknowledges the important role of Traditional Owners of this Country.

1.2 Authority

In 2020, the [Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018](#) amended the [Emergency Management Act 2013](#) (the Act) to provide new integrated arrangements for emergency management planning in Victoria, including the obligation for MEMPCs to be responsible for collaborative municipal level emergency planning.

This Plan has been prepared by the MEMPC in accordance with and complies with the requirements of the Act including having regard to the guidelines issued under s77, [Guidelines for Preparing State, Regional and Municipal Emergency Management Plans](#).

1.3 Plan assurance and approval

This Plan was approved by the Northern Grampians Shire MEMPC on 23 June 2023. A Statement of Assurance, including a checklist and certificate, was prepared and submitted to the Grampians Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee (REMPC) pursuant to the Act (s60AG). Minor updates were made to the plan and approved by the MEMPC on 18 September 2025.

This Plan comes into effect on date of signed approval and remains in effect until superseded by an approved and published update. Recipients should remove superseded versions from circulation.

1.4 Plan review

To ensure the plan provides for a current integrated, coordinated, and comprehensive approach to emergency management and is effective, it is to be reviewed at least every three years or as required.

MEMPC member agencies and organisations will have the opportunity to participate in relevant emergency exercises during the three-year plan review period.

Urgent update of this Plan is permitted if there is significant risk that life or property will be endangered if the plan is not updated (the Act s60AM). Urgent updates come into effect when published on the municipal council website and remain in force for a maximum period of three months.

All comments regarding this Plan should be forwarded to:

MEMPC Chair
Northern Grampians Shire Council
PO Box 580
Stawell Vic 3380

1.5 Plan audience, aim and objectives

The audience for this MEMP includes any agency or organisation with a role or interest in emergency management in the Northern Grampians Shire.

The aim of the MEMP is to provide information to emergency services, responsible authorities, other organisations, and the community on how risks will be dealt with and the management arrangements for emergencies, and to promote community safety and develop resilience. It provides detail on risk specific response and recovery arrangements, identifying hazards that are likely to impact the municipality, and the role organisations play in relation to managing emergency events.

This MEMP brings together an integrated network involving the resources of the many agencies and individuals who can take appropriate and timely action to prevent, mitigate, respond to, and recover from emergencies. The planning process includes the identification of risks that are likely to affect people and assets in the municipality. Using information identified in the risk assessment, the MEMPC develops the emergency management mitigation, response, relief, and recovery arrangements.

The broad objectives of this MEMP are to:

- Identify and evaluate emergency risks faced by the Northern Grampians municipal community.
- Implement measures to prevent or reduce the causes or effects of emergencies.
- Detail the arrangements for the activation and coordination of municipal resources in response to emergencies.
- Detail the arrangements for the provision of assistance to the community during recovery from emergencies.
- Complement other local, regional, and state planning arrangements.

PART TWO – SHIRE PROFILE

2.1 Traditional Owners

The Northern Grampians Shire is on the traditional lands of the of the Wotjobaluk, Jardawadjali, Djab Wurrung, and Dja Dja Wurrung peoples.

The MEMPC recognise that this plan lacks detail on caring for Country, and we understand the importance of building partnerships with Traditional Owners in emergency management planning. The MEMPC are committed to meaningful involvement, to listening to guidance on caring for Country, and to adopting approaches to care for areas of cultural significance as highlighted in the Barengi Gadjin Land Council Cultural Plan.

2.2 Topography

The Northern Grampians Shire is in the geographical centre of Western Victoria. The country varies from flat to undulating agricultural and pastoral plains in the north, west, and central areas; and to mountains centred between the Pyrenees Ranges in the east and Gariwerd (Grampians) in the southwest.

The Northern Grampians Shire has an area of 5,918 square kilometres and is bounded by Yarriambiack Shire and Buloke Shire to the north, Loddon Shire, Central Goldfields Shire, and Pyrenees Shire to the east; Ararat Rural City and Southern Grampians Shire to the south; and Horsham Rural City to the west.

2.3 Critical infrastructure

2.3.1 Roads

The Western Highway runs through Stawell and provides the major road link between Melbourne and Adelaide, and experiences large movements of hazardous and general goods and passenger traffic. The Sunraysia Highway runs through St Arnaud 132 kms from Ballarat. The Wimmera Highway also runs through St Arnaud and provides a major link between Bendigo and Horsham. Vehicle access is available to most parts of the Shire through a satisfactory secondary road network consisting of sealed, paved, and unpaved roads.

2.3.2 Rail

The main Melbourne to Adelaide railway line also passes through Stawell and forms a major arterial link between the two capital cities. The Mildura/Ballarat railway line services the area surrounding St Arnaud and provides an important means of transporting goods.

2.3.3 Transport services

The V/Line bus network services Northern Grampians townships including Stawell, Great Western, Halls Gap, and St Arnaud and travels to Ballarat, Melbourne and other major regional towns. Stawell and St Arnaud also have town / community bus services and taxi services. There are 12 Tesla supercharging stations in Stawell.

2.3.4 Airports

There are two council-managed aerodromes in the shire. The aerodrome west of Stawell has two runways, one of which is equipped with night landing lights. The other aerodrome on the western side of St Arnaud is also equipped with night landing lights and is licensed for all weather use. The Stawell aerodrome is located on Aerodrome Road, approximately 6 km southwest of the township of Stawell.

There are two sealed runways operating in north/south and northwest/southeast directions. The Stawell aerodrome is a strategic Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action firefighting

location with infrastructure located on the eastern edge of the north/south runway. Infrastructure includes:

- Buildings which house operational areas including briefing, communications, and crew rest areas.
- Accommodation and recreation facilities.
- Mixing shed and tanks.
- Refuel facilities.

The Northern Grampians municipal area is also under one of the main flight paths used by commercial airlines between Melbourne and Adelaide, north of St Arnaud and in the southern part of the shire over Mount William.

2.3.5 Electricity

Most of Victoria's electricity is generated by brown coal generators in the La Trobe Valley and transmitted via high voltage power lines to terminal substations, where it is reduced in voltage for further transmission and distribution. Powercor is the distribution business servicing the municipality.

The electricity infrastructure in the Northern Grampians Shire includes:

- Electrical substations: Halls Gap, Lake Fyans, Great Western, Stawell, Mt Drummond, St Arnaud.
- [Major transmission lines](#): Roughly southeast-northwest from Ballarat to Horsham (220KV); roughly southeast-northwest from Ballarat to Horsham via Stawell, roughly aligned with Western Highway (66kV).
- Wind farms: Bulgana Wind Farm, 56 turbines (east of Stawell), Ararat Wind Farm, 5 turbines (east of Great Western) (remaining 70 turbines are in the Ararat municipality, northeast of Ararat).

2.3.6 Gas

The Carisbrook – Horsham gas pipeline runs through the shire roughly southeast to northwest, to the north of Stawell.

2.3.7 Water

The area forms part of the Wimmera, Avon-Richardson, and Avoca catchments with the main watercourse being the Wimmera River. The municipality contains water storages including Lake Bellfield, Lake Fyans, Lake, Lake Lonsdale, Moora Moora Reservoir, and Lake Wartook. These sites are all popular for recreational activities including camping, swimming, fishing, boating and picnicking. Other recreational sites include Teddington Reservoir, situated in the Pyrenees Ranges, and Lake Batyo Catyo and Walkers Lake which are part of the Avon-Richardson River system.

Lake Bellfield is located in the eastern Grampians near Halls Gap and has an inlet from Fyans Creek. The lake supplies Halls Gap and Pomonal townships, farms, recreational lakes and environmental wetlands covering 10% of Victoria. It's also the main source of supply for the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline system.

Lake Fyans is a small off-stream reservoir with a small natural catchment which supplies water to Ararat, Stawell and Great Western.

Lake Lonsdale is a large, shallow reservoir on Mt William Creek. The lake fills from its own catchment and is reliant on natural inflows. Although the catchment can be a substantial producer of water during wet years because of its very large area, it isn't reliable during times of drought. Given its relatively shallow depth, the lake has high evaporation losses over summer months. Since the introduction of the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline, the lake is no longer used by GWMWater for domestic or stock water supply. However, Lake Lonsdale is still a key environmental water source.

Moora Moora Reservoir is a small reservoir in the heart of the Grampians National Park. Located in the upper reaches of the Glenelg River catchment, Moora Moora is an important resource on the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline.

Lake Wartook is located on the MacKenzie River in the central Grampians and is the primary water source for Horsham and Natimuk, as well as being an important resource on the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline. The lake also provides important environmental flows.

2.3.8 Telecommunications

The quality and resilience of telecommunications infrastructure across the municipality is highly variable. The populated areas in and around Stawell and St Arnaud generally have excellent access to mobile and fixed telecommunications services, whilst the smaller communities experience less reliable coverage. In isolated communities, prolonged power outages may result in associated outages to telecommunications infrastructure, preventing any outside communication from impacted communities.

The telecommunications infrastructure in the Northern Grampians Shire includes (*Vicmap Features of Interest*):

- Digital TV transmitter sites: Mt William, Halls Gap (Lakeside Tourist Park).
- Broadcast radio sites: St Arnaud, Stawell.
- Radio communication sites: Bellfield, Halls Gap, Reids Lookout, Zumsteins, Stawell, Great Western, Deep Lead, Glenorchy, Navarre, Campbells Bridge, Greens Creek, Wallaloo, Marnoo, Traynors Lagoon, St Arnaud, Stuart Mill
- Telephone exchanges: Halls Gap, Great Western, Stawell, Deep Lead, Landsborough, Greens Creek, Glenorchy, Callawadda, Navarre, Wallaloo East, Beazleys Bridge, Marnoo, Gre Gre, Banyena, Traynors Lagoon, Emu, Carapooee, St Arnaud, Cope Cope, Coonooer Bridge.

2.4 Climate

The area has a temperate climate with an average rainfall of 450 mm per year ranging from 400 mm in the northern plains to 600 mm in the Teddington area to 850 mm per year along the Grampians (Gariwerd) fringe. Most of the rainfall occurs from autumn through to spring. Under the State Government [climate change projections](#), the Wimmera Southern Mallee region is predicted to experience:

- Year round increases in temperatures
- Less rainfall in the cooler months
- More intense extreme rainfall events
- Hotter and more frequent days and nights
- Longer, more intense heatwaves.

Additionally, the state of Victoria can expect:

- Fewer frosts
- An increase in fire weather
- Increased flood risk.

The impacts of climate change need to be continually monitored and the MEMP reviewed accordingly to ensure that relevant risks are properly addressed.

2.5 People

2.5.1 Location

The Northern Grampians Shire has a population of 11,948 (*Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] 2021*) with most of the population situated in the following town centres:

Town	Location	Population
Stawell	Western Highway 233 km or 3 hours' drive from Melbourne	6,220
St Arnaud	Sunraysia Highway 132 kms from Ballarat	2,318
Halls Gap	29 km southwest of Stawell	495
Great Western	14 km southeast of Stawell	425
Navarre	Borders Pyrenees Shire to the northeast	99
Marnoo	52 km north of Stawell	99
Glenorchy	16 km northwest of Stawell	131

Several smaller communities are scattered throughout the shire and the remaining population live on farming properties and lifestyle blocks.

2.5.2 Age

According to the [Western Victoria Public Health Network \(WVPHN\) Health Needs Assessment 2025-2028](#), the shire has a significantly older population compared to the state, with 26.8% of the population aged 65 or older. This older population is reflected in a median age of 49 within the Shire, which is significantly higher than the Victorian median of 38.

Young people (aged 10 to 24) make up almost 15% of the population in the municipality. Based on population forecasting, this is predicted to decline due to reduced fertility rates and young people moving outside of the area for employment and education, placing increased pressure on the workforce and skills shortages.

2.5.3 Culture, nationality and language

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples make up 1.9% of the shire population (ABS 2021). Languages other than English are spoken in 5.6% of households, and top languages spoken are Mandarin, Tagalog, Filipino, Punjabi, and Spanish (ABS 2021). Note that this data may not include the transient or migrant workforces employed by the healthcare sector as well as other large industry employers such as Thomas Foods in Stawell. Other language groups to consider include Fijian, Tetum, Bislama, and Japanese.

2.5.4 Socio-economic status

The Australian Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) ranks areas according to their relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage using Census data. Northern Grampians has a low SEIFA score, which can indicate many households with low income, many people with no qualifications, and many people in low skill occupations. In 2021, the localities of Stawell and St Arnaud had some of the lowest SEIFA scores in the shire.

The rate of people experiencing homelessness (rate per 10,000 of the population are based on the Census count of people) in the shire has risen from 20 in 2016 to 26 in 2021 (ABS 2021). Northern Grampians statistics on homelessness are lower than the state and region rates (ABS 2021), however the rate of people living in crowded dwellings is higher than the WVPHN average ([WVPHN Health Needs Assessment 2025-2028](#)).

2.5.5 Health, social and disability

Northern Grampians Shire has higher levels of chronic disease and obesity, alcohol-related incidents, self-reported fair or poor health, higher rates of psychological distress and lower levels of psychology services than either the Western Victorian region or Victoria ([WVPHN Health Needs Assessment 2025-2028](#).)

In 2021, 36% of people in the shire reported having long term health conditions, including arthritis, asthma, cancer, dementia, diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, lung condition, mental health condition, and stroke (*ABS 2021*). Nearly 59% of residents aged 65 and over have two or more chronic conditions, significantly higher than the state average (*ABS 2021*).

There is an increased risk of mental ill-health in the Shire, with 43% of people in the Grampians Wimmera Southern Mallee region diagnosed with depression or anxiety, compared to a state average of 34.2%. Amongst young people in the shire, mental health is the leading chronic health issue, with 14.7% having a diagnosed mental health condition. Residents in the Wimmera Grampians are more likely to report access to mental health services as poor compared to those across Victoria and Australia. ([WVPHN Health Needs Assessment 2025-2028](#).)

Studies show that family violence and gender-based violence increase after a disaster ([Gender & Disaster Australia, 2025](#); [Respect Victoria, 2025](#)). Family violence incidents recorded in Northern Grampians Shire are more than double the state average, according to the [Crime Statistics Agency Victoria](#). In 2023-24 there were 3,077 police-recorded family violence incidents in the shire, compared to the state average of 1,418 incidents.

Fifty-five young people (4.7 percent) aged from 12 to 24 have a disability that requires them to seek daily assistance with communication, mobility, and/or self-care. Almost 8% of the population (all ages) have a severe or profound disability, which is higher than the state average of 6.1%. ([WVPHN Health Needs Assessment 2025-2028](#).)

2.5.6 Visitors

Northern Grampians receives 1.1 million overnight visitors a year (REMPLAN, 2025). Victoria accounts for 53% of visitors, while 27% come from interstate. International visitors make up 20%, with the top countries of origin being India, China, and European countries (*Northern Grampians Visitor Information Centre, 2025*).

2.5.7 Schools, family and children's services

Primary schools are in Concongella, Great Western, Halls Gap, Marnoo, Navarre, Stawell, and St Arnaud. Secondary schools are in Stawell and St Arnaud. Kindergarten and long day care is available in Stawell and St Arnaud. Playgroups operate in Stawell, St Arnaud, Navarre, Halls Gap, and Great Western.

2.5.8 People who may require additional support

There are many in the community who may be considered vulnerable or at risk during an emergency depending on the type of event. These may include the elderly, children, people with a disability, First Nations people, LGBTIQ+ people, and members of the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse community. Consideration also needs to be given to groups defined by socioeconomic situation, physical and mental health, being a visitor to a region, experiencing homelessness, or living in homes of poor design.

In the Northern Grampians Shire, places where people who may require additional support are likely to gather have been identified in council's internal Vulnerable Facilities Register. Such places include aged care facilities, hospitals, schools, kindergartens, childcare centres, community health facilities, and disability group homes. This register is available to emergency agencies planning or responding to an incident.

For information on Vulnerable Persons as defined in the DHHS *Vulnerable People in Emergencies Policy*, see [section 3.2.4](#) of this plan.

2.6 Industry

The communities within the municipality have a wide range of industries, activities, and interests including agriculture, Landcare and catchment management, tourism, wine production, and gold mining. The commercial centres of Stawell and St Arnaud and tourism hub Halls Gap are vitally important to the region.

The Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park is a major domestic and international tourist destination. The shire has a diverse and growing economic base. Agricultural activities include cropping, sheep, cattle, pigs, and poultry growing as well as extensive viticulture.

The Stawell Gold Mine has operated at its current location since 1981, which has involved the progressive mining of gold in a series of open pits and extensive underground workings. Other important industries around Stawell include the home and community care sector, and the Thomas Foods Abattoir.

In St Arnaud and the surrounding area, Ridley Agri Products, Goldacres spray manufacturers, Gilmac Hay Exports, Rivalea Piggeries and Baiada Turkeys are significant industries.

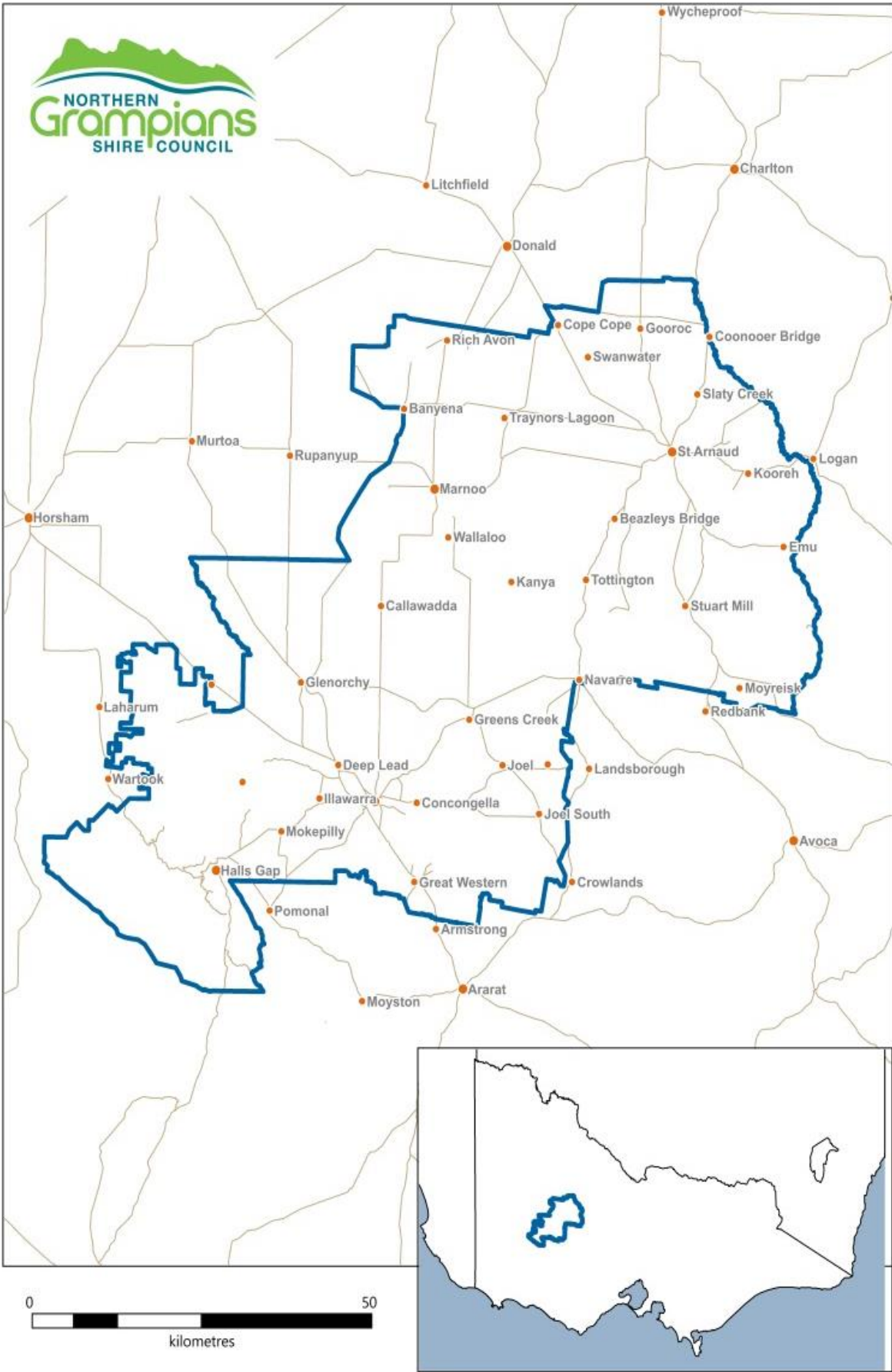
New additions in the shire include the development of the Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory, the Bulgana Green Power Hub (wind farm) in the Stawell area, and the acetylene cylinder decommissioning plant in Stawell.

2.7 Municipal map

Council's public mapping portal [Pozi](#) provides information on emergency services. Bushfire Place of Last Resort locations, bus routes, and vulnerable facilities such as schools and hospitals.

Council's internal geographic information system (GIS) mapping layers can also provide property owner details, and locations of strategic fire breaks, fire hydrants, and fire tanks.

Comprehensive GIS mapping is available through the Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO). The following map details the area covered by the MEMP.



2.8 History of emergencies

Major emergency incidents which have occurred in the last 10 years, or which have provided significant learnings informing this plan are detailed in the following table.

Date	Event	Description
December 2024 to Jan 2025	Fire	Yarram Gap Road bushfire. Minimal burnt area in NGS. Caused road closures, evacuation of Halls Gap, relief centre opened in Stawell. Psychosocial and financial (loss of business) impacts for Halls Gap community.
February 2024	Fire	Bellfield / Pomonal bushfire. No burnt area in NGS. Caused road closures, evacuation of Halls Gap, relief centre opened in Stawell. Psychosocial and financial (loss of business) impacts for Halls Gap community.
February 2024	Fire	Dadswells Bridge bushfire. Closure of Western Hwy, 12ha burnt in NGS west of Glenorchy. Minor stock and fencing loss.
October 2022	Flood	Shire-wide. Caused road closures, significant damage to local road network, and notable agricultural losses (crops and fencing). 5 buildings with above-floor flooding in Glenorchy. Access cut to some areas for several days.
March 2020 to October 2022	Pandemic	Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic. Significant economic impacts due to lockdowns, business closures and loss of tourism. Over 4,000 COVID-19 related deaths recorded in the state of Victoria.
November 2021	Flood	Flash flooding affecting St Arnaud residential property and assets, and shops and local businesses. Internal building damage to 4 businesses and 8 houses.
September 2016	Flood	Shire-wide. Caused road closures, significant damage to road infrastructure, and some crop inundation.
December 2014	Fire	Northern Grampians Complex fire. Impacted communities of Wartook, Roses Gap, and Dadswells Bridge. Burnt approx. 56,590 ha, with 3 primary residences lost.
December 2014	Fire	Black Range - Bunjils Cave Rd fire. Significant disruption to the community. No destruction to property or stock.
September 2010 - January 2011	Flood & Storm	Significant state and regional flooding. 190 landslides were recorded across the Grampians National Park / Gariwerd, with significant impacts on Halls Gap.
February 2010	Fire	Affected communities of Roses Gap and Ledcourt.
January 2006	Fire	Mount Lubra fire. Impacted Halls Gap. Burnt approx. 120,000 ha; lost 2 lives, 40 primary residences, 200 other buildings, 100,000 stock; and affected 300 properties.
December 2005	Fire	Deep Lead / Black Range fires. Burnt approx. 7,500 ha, lost 9 primary residences, 70 other buildings, 300 kms fencing, 200 stock, and affected 260 property owners.

2.9 Community Emergency Risk Assessment

The Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA) process enables MEMPCs to identify and assess emergency risks and to help inform and drive responsive actions. It is underpinned by definitions outlined within the Act and the *International Organisation for Standardisation ISO 31000:2009 Risk management - Principles and guidelines*.

The Northern Grampians Shire MEMPC reviews the municipal risks as an ongoing responsibility via the CERA process, led by the Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES). The review process looks at the consequence and likelihood of the identified risks as well as current controls and mitigation strategies. The MEMPC plays an important role in prevention by identifying potential risk areas.

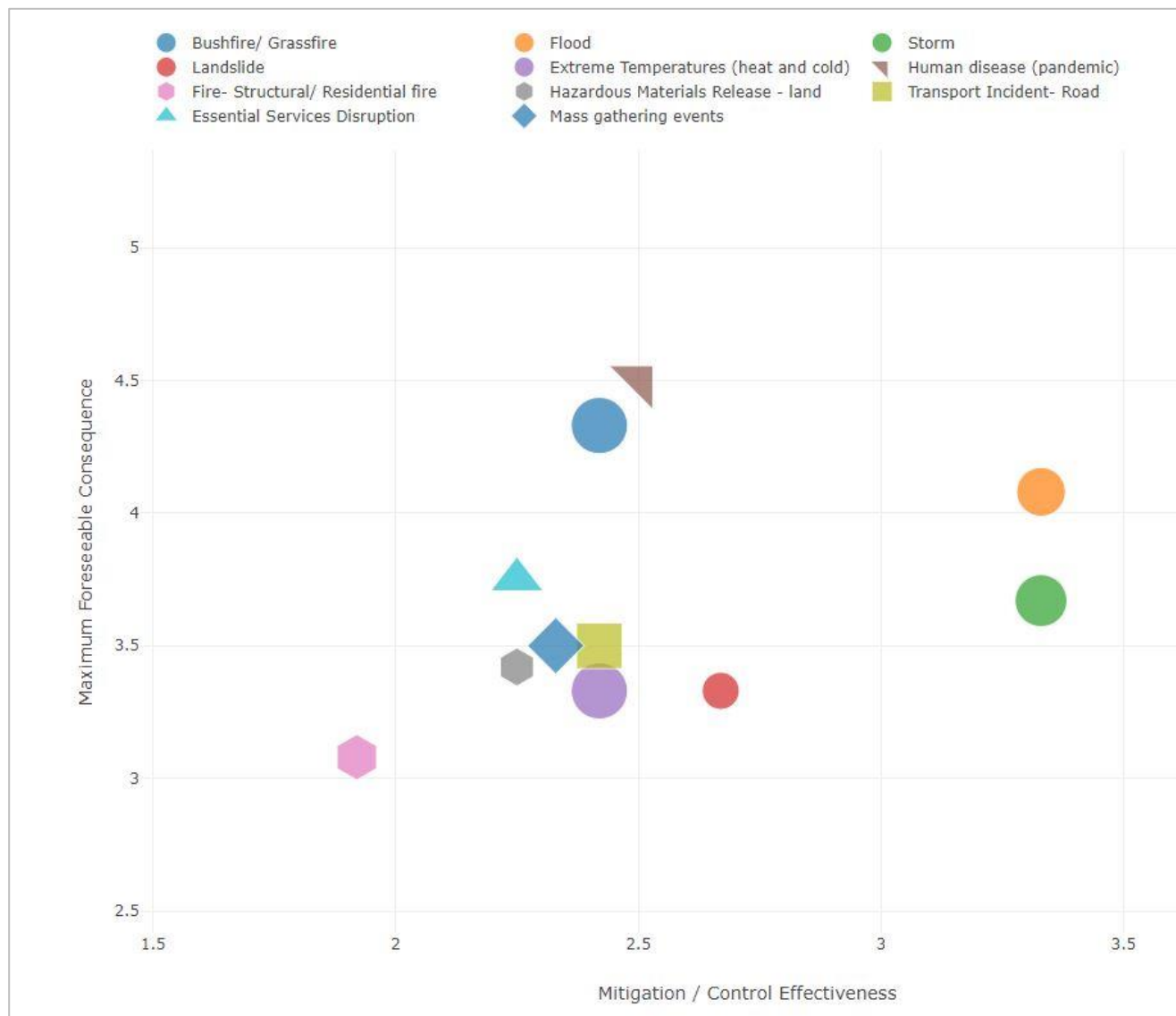


Figure 1 NGS Community Emergency Risk Assessment output (2023).

As indicated by the above output (*Figure 1*), the CERA process has identified the following hazards as having **High** risk rating in the Northern Grampians Shire.

- Bushfire / Grassfire
- Transport Incident – Road
- Flood
- Extreme Temperatures (heat and cold)
- Essential Services Disruption
- Storm

- Human Disease (pandemic)

The CERA process has identified the following hazards as having **Medium** risk rating in the Northern Grampians Shire.

- Landslide
- Fire - Structural
- Hazardous Materials Release - land
- Mass gathering events

Additional planning to mitigate and respond to risks (with a focus on the **High** risk hazards) has been undertaken by the MEMPC with the assistance of emergency response agencies and partner organisations. Control agencies for each of the above hazards have their own plans in place detailing relevant mitigation and response.

PART THREE – MITIGATION AND PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 Mitigation

The [State Emergency Management Plan](#) (SEMP) defines mitigation as “the elimination or reduction of the incidence or severity of emergencies and the minimisation of their effects”. Emergency mitigation may be achieved at the local level through:

- land-use planning and building regulations
- building, operating and maintaining infrastructure
- community resilience building initiatives.

Examples of mitigation activities in the Northern Grampians Shire include the following.

- A comprehensive understanding of our municipal profile ([Part 2](#)).
- The CERA ([section 2.10](#)).
- Multi agency exercises.
- Agency community education programs.
- Fuel reduction works.
- Review and testing of this plan.

3.2 Planning

3.2.1 Victoria's emergency management planning framework

This Plan supports holistic and coordinated emergency management arrangements within the region. It is consistent with and contextualises the [SEMP](#) and [Regional Emergency Management Plan](#) (REMP) for the Grampians region. The REMP is a subordinate plan to the SEMP and the MEMP is a subordinate plan to the REMP.

To the extent possible, this Plan does not conflict with or duplicate other in-force emergency management plans that exist.

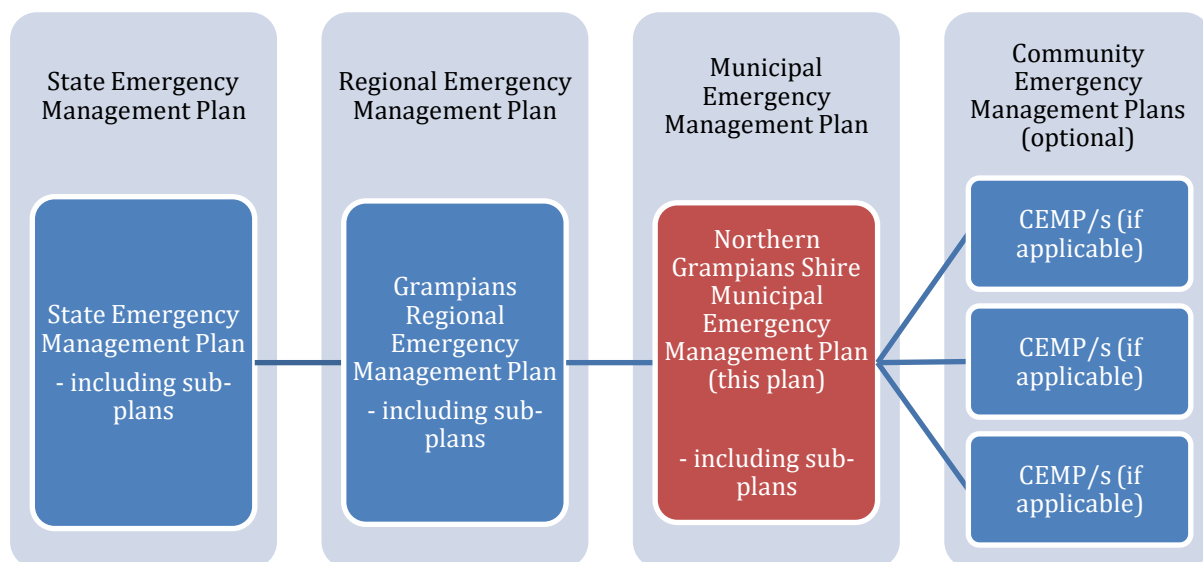


Figure 2 Plan hierarchy.

Figure 2 outlines this Plan's hierarchy. This Plan should be read in conjunction with the SEMP and the Grampians REMP.

At the time of writing this plan, there are no known community emergency management plans in the Northern Grampians Shire. However, the MEMPC is aware that some communities may be working towards this type of planning.

3.2.2 The MEMPC, subcommittees and working groups

The MEMPC is formed under Part 6 of the Act. The functions of the MEMPC are to:

- Prepare and review the MEMP.
- Ensure the MEMP is consistent with the SEMP and the relevant REMP.
- Provide reports and recommendations to the REMPC.
- Share information with the REMPC and with other MEMPCs to assist effective emergency management planning in relation to the prevention, response, and recovery for emergencies within the Northern Grampians Shire.

The MEMPC Terms of Reference outlines the committee scope, functions, membership, meeting regularity, and administrative requirements ([Appendix A](#)).

3.2.3 Sub plans and complementary plans

Sub plans are prepared under Part 6A of the Act to provide integrated, coordinated arrangements for emergency management at state, regional or municipal levels.

The MEMPC will determine if a sub plan is required to detail more specific or complex arrangements that either enhance or contextualise this Plan. All sub plans are multi-agency plans and may be hazard specific where the consequences are likely to be significant.

All sub plans to this Plan are subject to the same preparation, consultation, assurance, approval, and publication requirements as this Plan, as outlined in Part 6A of the Act. A list of sub plans to this Plan are included at [Appendix C](#).

Complementary plans are any plans that are prepared outside Part 6A of the Act by industry/sectors or agencies for emergencies. These plans are often prepared under other legislation, governance, or statutory requirements for a specific purpose. Complementary plans do not form part of this Plan and are not subject to approval, consultation, and other requirements under the Act.

A list of complementary plans that have significance to the comprehensive, coordinated, and integrated emergency management arrangements in the municipal district are included at [Appendix C](#).

3.2.4 Vulnerable Persons and Vulnerable Facilities

The [DHHS Vulnerable People in Emergencies Policy](#) defines Vulnerable Persons and Vulnerable Facilities as follows.

A 'vulnerable person' is someone living in the community who is:

- frail, and /or physically or cognitively impaired, and
- unable to comprehend warnings and directions and/or respond in an emergency situation.

A 'vulnerable person' may be identified for inclusion on a Vulnerable Persons Register (VPR) if they additionally cannot identify personal or community support networks to help them in an emergency.

The identification and assessment of Vulnerable Persons is an ongoing process. Once identified, Vulnerable Persons who have consented are listed on council's VPR, which is stored in Crisisworks. The VPR allows Victoria Police access to a vulnerable person's location in the event of an emergency

and assists in the development of evacuation plans. Evacuation of vulnerable individuals within the community cannot be guaranteed in emergencies and any assistance in an emergency or evacuation will be dependent on the capacity and ability of emergency services organisations to safely provide it. The Northern Grampians Shire VPR is coordinated by the Community Care team at NGSC.

Vulnerable Facilities can include:

- buildings where vulnerable people are likely to be situated, including aged care facilities, hospitals, schools, disability group homes and childcare centres.
- Consideration should also be given to Senior Citizens Centres, or retirement villages, rooming houses and caravan parks where there are long-term residents who are vulnerable (not a primarily tourism-based caravan park).

The Northern Grampians Shire Vulnerable Facilities Register is maintained by council's emergency management team and is available to Victoria Police via request to the MEMO.

Note that the Red Cross can provide emergency planning support for vulnerable people in emergencies. This free service includes an EmergencyRedi preparedness session, tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of the individual and/or family. If the individual and/or family cannot identify personal or community support networks, Red Cross can also refer, with the individual's consent, back to council for further assessment for inclusion on the Vulnerable Person's Register (if they aren't already included). Red Cross does not conduct this assessment.

PART FOUR - RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS

The emergency management concept provides the mechanism for the deployment of appropriate resources to cope with emergencies throughout the state. It also provides for requests for physical assistance at the federal level when state resources have been exhausted.

Most incidents are of local concern and can be coordinated from local municipal resources. However, when local resources are exhausted, emergency response provides for further resources to be made available, firstly from neighbouring municipalities (on a regional basis) and then secondly on a state-wide basis.

The [SEMP](#) defines response as the action taken immediately before, during and in the first period after an emergency to reduce the effects and consequences of the emergency on people, their livelihoods, wellbeing and property; on the environment; and to meet basic human needs.

The State Emergency Management Priorities focus on the primacy of life and the issuing of community warnings and information, and provide a framework for emergency managers to identify the priority roles and actions of agencies in an emergency response, especially where there are concurrent risks or competing priorities ([Emergency Management Victoria](#) [EMV]).

Particular effort has been made by the municipality to ensure that relationships have been formed with the neighbouring municipalities and local and regional emergency control and support agencies in the event of an emergency.

4.1 Control - Command - Coordination

Function	Description
Control	Control involves the overall direction of response activities in an emergency, operating horizontally across agencies. Control of an emergency situation is the responsibility of the designated agency or authority for that type of emergency. The control agency is required to appoint an Incident Controller, who will control operations.
Command	Command involves the internal direction of personnel and resources of an agency (e.g., council) in the performance of that organisation's role and tasks and operates vertically within it.
Coordination	Coordination is the bringing together of agencies and resources to ensure effective preparation for, response to and recovery from emergencies. The Act stipulates that police officers must be appointed as emergency response coordinators at state, regional, municipal, and incident levels.
IERC (Incident Emergency Response Coordinator)	The most senior police officer present at the scene of an emergency has the responsibility of coordinating resources to provide the most effective support to the control agency and the functional service agencies.
MERC (Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator)	The Station Commander at the Stawell Police Station is the MERC for the Northern Grampians Shire. Any control agency requiring municipal support will request that support through the MERC, who will liaise with the MEMO.

RERC (Regional Emergency Response Coordinator)	Will receive and action any requests from the MERC for further assistance when municipal resources are unavailable, have been fully committed or exhausted.
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The functions of Control, Command and Coordination are familiar and traditional mechanisms in emergency and incident management. However, an additional three Cs are now broadly accepted and acknowledged within the Victorian emergency management sector as follows.

Function	Description
Consequences	The management of the effect of emergencies on individuals, the community, infrastructure, and the environment.
Communication	The engagement and provision of information across agencies and proactively with the community to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.
Community Connection	The understanding of and connecting with trusted networks, trusted leaders, and all communities to support resilience and decision making.

The combination of these 'six Cs' emphasises an emergency management approach that is inclusive and community focused, and that supports resilience in communities and in the sector.

Understanding the impact of an emergency, the consequences of the impact and how we reach in and acknowledge the community connections before, during and after an emergency is vital to building a sustainable emergency management system. This approach is supported by the State Emergency Management Priorities which include "primacy of life" and issuing of information and warnings to communities as non-negotiables, and a focus on protection of property, infrastructure, economics and environment assets and values. See the [EMV website](#) for more on the 'six Cs'.

4.2 Local emergency response arrangements

4.2.1 Arrangements for coordination of single incidents

A single incident emergency is defined as an event that has occurred on a small scale, where individuals or families may have had their home or possessions severely damaged or destroyed, through an incident such as a house fire, localised flood, storm, burst pipes or vandalism.

As outlined in the SEMP, municipal councils are responsible for coordination of relief for single incidents. NGSC internal arrangements for notification processes between emergency service organisations and council are that the MEMO should always be the first point of contact regarding single incidents.

4.2.2 Coordination of other emergency incidents

For other than single incidents, notification of an emergency should be to the MERC. In consultation with the Incident Controller and MEMO, the MERC will determine the level of response required from the relevant agencies in managing the emergency event.

In some situations, the emergency may be managed by the MERC, MEMO, and Incident Controller via phone, in an office, or at the scene, and escalated when required. The Municipal Emergency

Coordination Centre (MECC) may also be activated immediately as an emergency occurs; however, this will be dependent on the impact of the emergency on the community, the number of external resources required to manage the event, and the expected duration. The MERC may be located either at the MECC or where the control agency is exercising control, depending on the situation.

The MERC is required to take an active role in emergency planning at the local level and has the responsibility for the coordination of resource provision as requested by control and support agencies during the response to an emergency.

4.3 Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre

The MECC will coordinate the provision of human and material resources relating to council internal operations during emergencies. The MECC may also become operational during support operations to a neighbouring municipality. Administrative staff for the MECC will be drawn from NGSC employees.

MECC activation is at the MEMO's discretion, in consultation with the MERC. Council's MECC Operations Plan (complementary plan) will be shared with the MERC.

4.4 Control and support agencies

A 'control agency' is assigned to control the response activities for a specific type of emergency. A 'support agency' provides essential services, personnel, or material to support or assist a control agency or affected person. Control and support agencies for different emergencies are identified in the [SEMP](#).

4.5 Financial considerations

As per the [SEMP](#), agencies are responsible for the costs of activities they carry out to fulfil their own responsibilities. An agency cannot transfer its responsibility for the cost of undertaking its roles and responsibilities if the activity is in compliance with the direction or request of a response controller from another agency. When a Control Agency requests services and supplies on behalf of a number of supporting agencies, the Control Agency will be responsible for the costs.

The [SEMP](#) provides detail on the financial responsibilities of municipal councils, state agencies, non-government organisations and volunteer groups, Commonwealth agencies, and private organisations. If agreed to in advance by the Incident Controller or Control Agency, non-government organisations and volunteer groups will be reimbursed by a Control Agency for services or costs incurred.

In accordance with the [Sourcing Supplementary Emergency Resources Practice Note](#), it is recognised that as municipal councils have limited budgets, defined limits can be set in the MEMP. The provision of municipal resources to response agencies beyond a municipal council's defined limit may be charged to the response agency. The NGSC have set a limit of \$5,000 for the provision of municipal resources in response to an emergency.

4.6 Evacuation

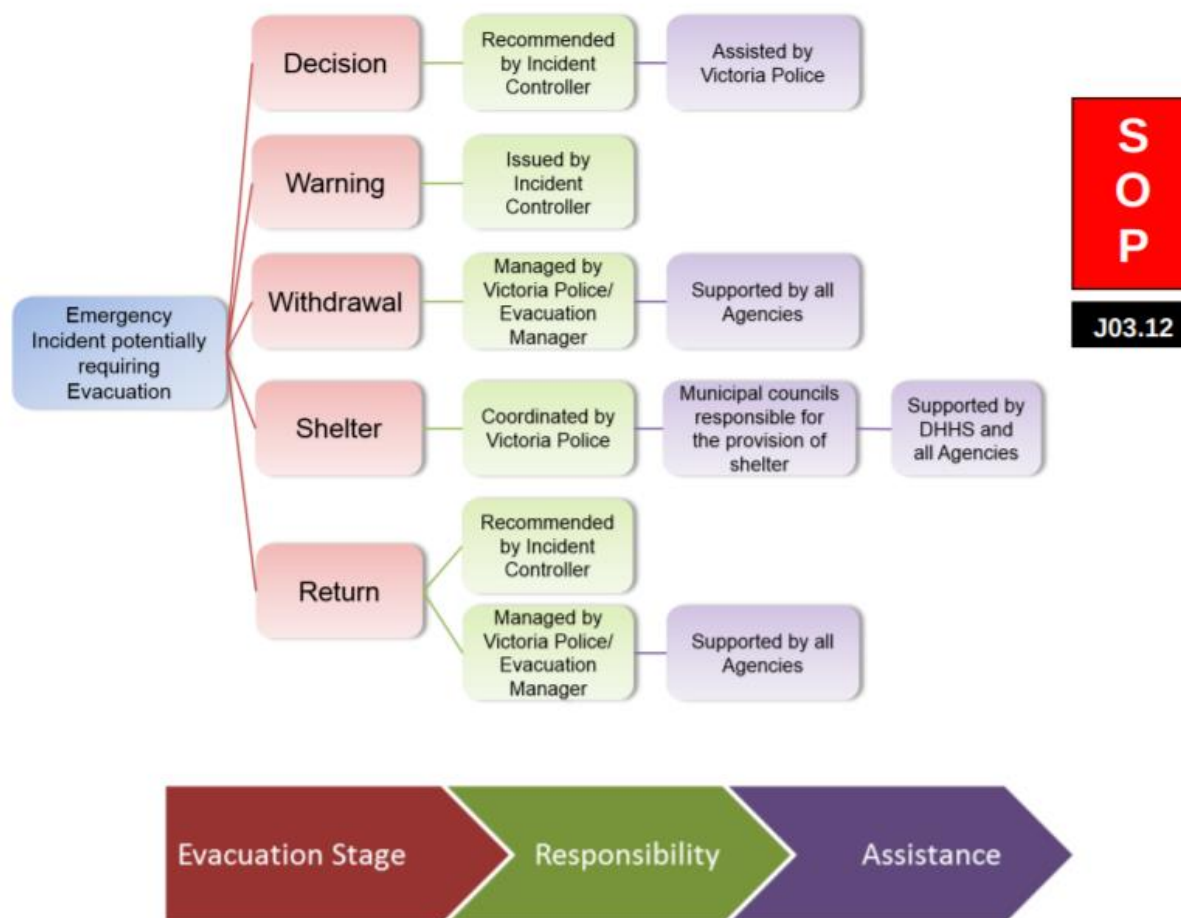
Victoria Police are the responsible agency for evacuation. The evacuation process is scalable and may be applied to individuals, a house, a street, a suburb, or a large town. Evacuation involves the movement of people to a safer location.

Once the decision to evacuate has been made, the MEMO should be contacted to assist in the implementation of the evacuation. Council will provide advice regarding the most suitable Emergency Relief Centre (ERC) site and other resources that may be required (e.g., public health, emergency relief considerations or requirements and special needs groups).

Full details of the evacuation process (including the diagram below) can be viewed in the [Joint Standard Operation Procedure J03.12 – Evacuation for Major Emergencies](#).

Schedule 5

Evacuation Responsibilities Flow Chart



4.7 Initial Impact Assessment

An Initial Impact Assessment (IIA) (sometimes called a Rapid Impact Assessment) should be undertaken by the Incident Control Centre / Control Agency to determine the level of damage and disruption to the community because of the emergency.

The intent of the IIA is to capture the nature and scale of an emergency in the first 48 hours to support funding arrangements. The assessment is to determine the impact on people, community infrastructure, and economic, natural, and built environments. The IIA prioritises the requirements of the Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA) and enables the targeted delivery of recovery support to enable community, economy, and environment to move forward.

While the control agency is responsible for ensuring the IIA is completed, EMV is responsible for the overall coordination of this process. To ensure that the process is undertaken in a timely manner, all agencies and organisations may be tasked to collect, confirm, and exchange information.

4.8 Community information and warnings

The [SEMP](#) identifies the responsible parties for communication depending on the type of emergency.

The National Broadband Network (nbn) has a range of mobile [Temporary Network Infrastructure](#) available to help maintain network resilience and keep communities connected during natural disasters. Requests for temporary infrastructure are submitted to nbn by the Incident Controller at either the local, regional or state level depending on the scale of the incident. Contact details for such requests are via phone on 1300 626 267 or email to community_wifi_support_centre@nbnco.com.au.

Special considerations need to be given to warning persons with a disability and/or non-English speaking groups. In the case where information or communication is required with persons unable to speak English, an interpreter service such as the Telephone Interpreter Service may be able to assist. Early engagement of the Ballarat and District Multicultural Centre may also assist to channel communications through multiple mediums.

Depending on the type of emergency, the provision of public information and warnings is the responsibility of the Incident Controller, the Emergency Management Commissioner, or the Chief Commissioner of Police. More detail on communications responsibilities is available in the [SEMP](#).

4.9 Resource sharing protocols

NGSC is a signatory to the Municipal Association of Victoria's *Municipal Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing Protocol* to ensure resource continuity, both externally to support neighbouring councils and internally to support the Northern Grampians Shire should resources become limited and/or unavailable. NGSC will also draw on existing relationships with the Grampians region councils to support resource continuity during an emergency.

4.10 Debriefing arrangements

An After Action Review (AAR) should take place as soon as practicable after an emergency. The MERC will convene the meeting and all agencies who participated should be represented with a view to assessing the adequacy of the MEMP and to recommend any changes. Such meetings should be chaired by the chairperson of the MEMPC.

It may also be appropriate to conduct a separate recovery AAR to address recovery issues. This should be convened and chaired by the Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM).

PART FIVE – RELIEF ARRANGEMENTS

Relief is defined as the provision of essential needs to individuals, families, and communities in the immediate aftermath of an emergency. Relief is considered part of the response phase and interconnected with recovery.

Agencies with emergency relief responsibilities incorporate the principles of relief as outlined in the [SEMP](#). Relief is focused on consequence management, and initially informed by the impacts of the emergency and community needs as identified through IIA data, and assessment of needs (see [4.7 Initial Impact Assessment](#))

Relief can be provided at a dedicated ERC, places of community gathering, incident scenes, triage and transfer sites as appropriate, memorials, or other locations as appropriate.

Further information and operational guidance can be found the council's internal NGSC ERC Operations Plan.

5.1 Relief management and governance

NGSC is responsible for relief coordination at the municipal level and plays a key role in the coordination of relief by partnering with agencies and organisations to develop and support community leadership in all relief and recovery activities. This includes planning, management, and operation of ERCs with the assistance of agencies and local service providers identified at the time of the incident.

Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) are responsible for relief and recovery coordination at both the regional and state level.

The relief coordination responsibilities for municipal, regional and state levels can be found in the [SEMP Relief Services and Coordination section](#).

5.2 Activation of relief services

In the event of requirement for any or all the functional services of emergency relief, the request must be channelled through the MERC to the MRM. The MRM will activate the required functional services. All functional services will operate and report back to the MRM.

The MEMO, MRM and the MERC will determine the level of response required to manage the event, which may include the activation of the MECC.

5.3 Escalation

Escalation of relief should build on existing local arrangements rather than replacing them.

A formal request for escalation of relief will be made if the emergency event increases in complexity; exceeds local capacity and/or capability; or an emergency has affected multiple municipalities within a region or multiple regions. The decision to escalate will be undertaken in consultation with the Incident Controller, MERC, MEMO, MRM, and the Regional Emergency Relief & Recovery Coordinator. Escalation may include resource sharing (see [4.9 Resource Sharing Protocols](#)).

PART SIX – TRANSITION TO RELIEF AND RECOVERY

Consequence management drives the levelled approach to emergency relief and recovery coordination, with unmanaged risks or consequences escalated to the next tier (see [5.4 Escalation](#)). To make appropriate decisions about relief and recovery activities, decision makers rely on clear, relevant, timely and accurate information about the needs of affected individuals, families, and communities.

6.1 Transition from response to relief and recovery

In most incidents, the response does not trigger significant recovery concerns or programs. Therefore, the response phase transitions, or deescalates, to business as usual for the municipality without the requirement for a formal event-specific response to recovery transition document. Formal transition from response to recovery is not required when there are no substantial regional or state coordination requirements in multiple recovery pillar coordination environments.

Where the incident has triggered a regional response, there may need to be a formal transition of coordination from response to recovery from the Incident Controller to the MRM. This may occur when:

- the threat of the incident has subsided
- the extent of impact on communities and level of loss and damage has been validated through impact assessments
- the extent of community relief needs has been validated, and
- the resources required for recovery have been mapped to support the municipality to develop early recovery planning, focussing on operational recovery activities.

The transition from response to early recovery process is effective when the response agency and Incident Controller / Regional Controller engage the municipality early within the incident to determine situation, impact, and early indicators of need. The council Emergency Management Liaison Officer (EMLO) may support this with information from the impact assessment process. This collaborative information flow positions the municipality to understand impact and recovery needs of impacted area, to initiate early recovery planning processes. The Regional Emergency Relief & Recovery Coordinator can provide guidance throughout these processes to improve recovery outcomes and consequence management for individual, community and regions moving forward.

6.2 Secondary Impact Assessment

Data-informed decision-making for relief and recovery is critical to understanding the type of services required to support and enable effective community outcomes in the short, medium, and long term.

As timely, accurate, and progressively comprehensive impact information becomes available (through the Incident Control Centre if activated), the understanding of the need and priorities for relief and recovery coordination and services across the various environments is developed. Where impact assessment information is not available, and the council is able to identify the impacted localities, MRMs or delegates are encouraged to commence Secondary Impact Assessments (SIAs) as soon as possible.

SIAs build on information from the IIAs (see [4.7 Initial Impact Assessment](#)) and describe the impact on the social, built, economic, and natural environments and will likely require building and environmental health inspections. SIAs are coordinated by the council to determine the short, medium, and long-term needs of the community, validate IIA data, set the priorities for relief and recovery planning, and assist in consequence management and risk mitigation. This information estimates damage data and costs, identifies underlying issues within affected communities and informs government budget estimates and potential recovery fund activation for the State and Commonwealth.

Uploading SIA data on the Crisisworks platform and subsequently through the State Impact Assessment (IA) Portal (in [EM-COP](#)) enables state agencies to access the data and prepare the required agency support. This process minimises multiple information requests on the council during the response, relief, and recovery phases, as the information is readily available through the IA Portal.

Funding and Grants		One day +	One week +	Six Months +	One year +
Community	Informs eligibility for state financial assistance**		Informs eligibility for state financial assistance **	Informs eligibility for state financial assistance**	
Local			Informs eligibility for Commonwealth grant funding and financial assistance (community members and businesses)*		
Regional / State			Supports LGA to explore relevant possible funding streams Informs LGA eligibility for DRFA funding*	Informs State government agency (Pillar Leads) decision making on funding streams	
Relief and Recovery Planning		One day +	One week +	Six Months +	One year +
Local	Supports community and individual needs assessment Enables council to coordinate and manage resources, including EM agencies		Can inform request for Regional or State level escalation (incl. ADF)	Informs Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA) Informs mitigation planning for LGA and State	Can inform priorities for MEMPC
Regional / State	Informs agency preparedness in readiness for regional escalation for relief and early recovery.		Informs relief and early recovery activation and forward planning for State and regional tiers.	Informs capability and capacity planning for government and non-government agencies	Can inform priorities of REMPC (incl. Sub-Committees) Informs capability and capacity planning for government and non-government agencies

* There are additional information streams required to confirm eligibility

** Generally, this is administered through the DFFH Personal Hardship Assistance Program (PHAP)

Figure 3 How impact assessment data can influence funding opportunities and inform relief and recovery planning (source: developed by DFFH and ERV).

The above Figure 3 represents the ways in which IIA and SIA data may influence funding opportunities and inform relief and recovery planning.

PART SEVEN – RECOVERY ARRANGEMENTS

Recovery after an emergency or incident can be a lengthy and complex experience for everyone involved. Embedding recovery arrangements in the local government processes prior to an incident enables a predictable, coordinated approach that targets the recovery needs. These may include supporting people and communities to reconnect, re-establish access to services and restore economic activity and the built environment.

The cooperation between all levels of government, non-government organisations, community and the private sector is key to achieving the best outcome for post incident recovery. Planning for recovery is integral to emergency preparation and mitigation actions may be initiated as part of the recovery process. This plan highlights the recovery coordination requirements for municipalities as per the roles and responsibilities outlined in the SEMP and linked with the Grampians Region Sub-Plan for Relief and Recovery (2023).

The NGSC is responsible for recovery coordination at the municipal level, and most emergencies are managed locally by the council through the MRM, or delegate, who coordinates the council and community resources to support recovery activities, with advice from the MEMO and regional guidance from ERV and recovery sector leads when required. (For details on the MRM role, refer to the [State Emergency Management Plan \(SEMP\) - Municipal Recovery Manager role](#)).

Where an emergency is likely to exceed the capacity of the council to coordinate recovery or specific components of recovery (i.e., Economic, Built and Natural Environments, and Aboriginal Culture and Healing), the council can request regional recovery coordination support or escalate to regional coordination.

7.1 Consideration for escalation

Escalation of recovery coordination may transition from the NGSC coordinated recovery to regional recovery rapidly or over time depending on the incident context, capacity, recovery environment and community requirements.

Recovery escalation is undertaken in consultation with the MRM, MEMO, MERC and ERV.

7.2 Formation, leadership and support of municipal recovery groups

The NGSC, with support from ERV if required, leads the formation of situation-relevant recovery groups that may build upon existing community groups for post-event sustainability.

Where the need for formal recovery is identified, the MRM may establish an incident specific recovery committee. The initial responsibilities of the incident specific recovery committee are to formalise the governance structure, oversee the transition from response to recovery plan, establish working groups and develop an Incident or incident-specific Recovery Plan. It is the responsibility of the incident-specific recovery subcommittee to ensure that affected communities are represented in the recovery arrangements. These may link with Community Recovery Groups that ideally build on established community networks, ensuring sustainability in the medium to long term.

7.3 Provision and management of community recovery services

The council and other recovery agencies obtain and pay for goods/services through their own internal supply systems. ERV can guide the MRM to coordinate the acquisition and supply of funds/goods/services that cannot be provided by the council or supporting agencies. When goods can only be obtained in such a manner, pre-approval for payment from the Incident Controller or ERV is required.

7.3.1 Coordination of spontaneous volunteers

Volunteers work across the five recovery pillars to support people impacted by an emergency. The NGSC will manage the volunteers it is responsible for in accordance with its policy and plans. Other volunteers will be managed in consultation with existing volunteer organisations. Key considerations for volunteer management include ensuring that:

- volunteer activity is managed and coordinated
- volunteers are inducted and suitably trained for the work undertaken
- activities such as fencing and environmental work are carried out by appropriate groups with trained and insured volunteers, and
- community development resources and administrative support is provided to support the local volunteer groups to sustain involvement in the recovery process.

7.3.2 Management of donated goods

The NGSC supports monetary donations in preference to donated goods. Financial donations provide a level of choice and personal dignity, accurately target identified needs, and help circulate money in impacted communities. The MRM will liaise with appropriate organisations that have established processes for managing financial donations, as well as the potential recipients of this support. The NGSC Recovery Committee will develop criteria for distribution of these funds if necessary.

7.3.3 Management of funding arrangements and grants

State and Federal government assistance may be available in the recovery efforts following a declared event. The type of support available will depend on the level of impact. The council is responsible for the cost of emergency relief measures provided to an impacted community and can claim expenditure through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements ([DRFA](#)) financial arrangements for local councils (for eligible disasters that have an Australian Government Reference Number [AGRN]). For events with an AGRN, financial assistance available to individuals following an emergency will be available via the [ERV website](#).

State agencies involved in emergency response and recovery activities as part of their normal activities will initially fund them from within their budgets including for supplies (such as catering) purchased from contractors or volunteer agencies.

Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and volunteer groups deliver response and recovery activities within the limit of their means. NGOs and volunteer groups may self-nominate and fund the provision of services to support a control agency in response or as part of recovery co-ordination. If agreed to in advance by the Incident Controller or Control Agency, NGOs and volunteer groups will be reimbursed by a Control Agency for services or costs incurred.

Local resources including privately-owned resources must be fully committed before Commonwealth assistance is sought. There is no charge for Australian Defence Force resources used to save human life, alleviate suffering, or prevent the extensive loss of animals or property.

Private organisations that provide resources for emergency response or recovery activities would expect to be paid by the agency using the resources.

7.3.4 Public health advice

In collaboration with the Department of Health, councils are to ensure timely and broad-reaching information is disseminated to the community through multiple mediums with conscious approaches to ensure all communities at risk have ready access to the relevant information.

7.4 Early recovery planning

The NGSC is responsible for developing a relief and recovery plan specific to the incident where there are extensive recovery requirements that would benefit from a coordinated planned approach. This plan should include:

- A description of the emergency event
- Profile of affected communities, with consideration for at risk communities, as well as economic, built, and natural environment consequences
- Impact assessment information
- Early recovery identified needs (based on damage evaluation from impact assessments)
- Arrangements for relief and recovery coordination
- Recovery services required
- Capacity and capability to provide local level service delivery, identifying trigger points for escalation to regional or state level
- Consider de-escalation of dedicated recovery services to ensure absorbed by existing community support services, and
- Community recovery service debriefs.

For further information on early recovery planning refer to: [EMV Disaster Recovery Toolkit for Local Government – Recovery Tools and Other Resources](#).

PART EIGHT – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This plan aligns to agency roles and responsibilities detailed in the [SEMP](#).

Council's internal MECC and ERC Operations Plans detail locally specific arrangements, emergency roles and responsibilities, and contacts.

PART NINE – APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – MEMPC Terms of Reference

1. CONTEXT

The *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018* amended the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (the Act) and various other acts to establish a new integrated and coordinated framework for emergency management planning at state, regional, and municipal levels.

At the municipal level, the Act as amended creates an obligation for a reformed Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) to be established in each of Victoria's municipal districts. This amendment transfers responsibility for municipal emergency management planning from the council to the multi-agency MEMPC.

The Northern Grampians Shire MEMPC is formed pursuant to Section 59F of the Act. The MEMPC is a multi-agency collaboration group whose members bring organisation, industry, or personal expertise to the task of developing a comprehensive Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP).

This Terms of Reference is an appendix to the Northern Grampians Shire MEMP and will be reviewed and updated in line with the full plan.

2. SCOPE

The MEMPC is a multi-agency committee for the municipality, operating strategically to ensure comprehensive, collaborative, and integrated emergency management planning occurs at all levels. It is the intent of its emergency planning process to develop a coherent plan that is known and understood by all agencies, MEMPC members, senior officers, all staff who have emergency management responsibilities, and community to build a shared responsibility in emergency planning.

The MEMPC maintains an awareness of existing municipal capability and capacity to support the effective conduct of mitigation, response, and recovery activities and supports embedding best practice into the MEMP review planning process. The committee may facilitate or assist with activities that support capability and capacity uplift.

3. FUNCTIONS

The MEMPC is the peak planning body for the municipal district and operates as a forum for government and non-government agencies to develop policies, procedures, strategies, and frameworks to support coordinated emergency management planning for the municipality.

In line with Section 59D of the Act, the function of the MEMPC is to:

- a) Be responsible for the preparation and review of its municipal emergency management plan (MEMP).
- b) Ensure that its MEMP is consistent with the state emergency management plan and the relevant regional emergency management plan.
- c) Provide reports and recommendations to the Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee (REMPC) for the region in which the municipal district is located, in relation to any matter that affects, or may affect, emergency management planning in that municipal district.
- d) Share information with the REMPC for the region in which the municipal district is located and with other MEMPCs to assist effective emergency management planning in accordance with Parts 6 and 6A of the Act.
- e) Collaborate (having regard to relevant Guidelines under the Act) with any other MEMPC that the MEMPC considers appropriate in relation to emergency management planning, including preparing municipal emergency management plans.

- f) Perform any other function conferred on the MEMPC by or under the Act or any other legislation.

Additional functions of the MEMPC are to:

- Support and validate risk assessment data that underpins the emergency management planning process.
- Contribute to outcome focussed discussion on mitigation and resilience to reduce the impact of emergencies as relevant to agency remit at the municipal level.
- Actively contribute to the coordinated readiness and provision of assistance at the municipal level.

4. MEMBERSHIP

4.1 Core membership

Section 59A of the Act specifies the minimum membership requirements of the MEMPC as follows.

- Municipal council (Northern Grampians Shire Council [NGSC])
- Victoria Police
- Country Fire Authority (Fire Rescue Victoria)
- Ambulance Victoria
- Victoria State Emergency Service
- Australian Red Cross
- Department of Families, Fairness & Housing
- Department of Health
- Community representative

In addition to the above list, the Northern Grampians Shire MEMPC has nominated the following agencies and organisations to form the core membership.

- Agriculture Victoria
- Department of Energy, Environment & Climate Action
- East Wimmera Health Service
- Emergency Recovery Victoria
- Grampians Community Health
- Grampians Health Stawell
- Salvation Army
- Victorian Council of Churches – Emergencies Ministry

4.2 Chairperson

Section 59A of the Act specifies the MEMPC Chairperson as the municipal council CEO or delegated council employee. The NGSC CEO has delegated the Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO) for this role.

To ensure consistency and redundancy, the MEMPC has elected the Northern Grampians Shire Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator (MERC) as Deputy Chairperson.

4.3 Member responsibilities

The agencies prescribed in the Act and additional invited committee members will provide representation at the appropriate level and with the authority to commit resources and make decisions on behalf of their organisation or community.

Members are asked to participate in the MEMPC as a partnership and provide advice or make decisions in the best interest of the municipal community. The MEMPC acknowledges and respects members' existing responsibilities, accountabilities, and associated levels of resourcing.

All MEMPC members will:

- Prepare for, prioritise, and attend scheduled meetings.
- Proactively contribute to the work of the MEMPC.
- Provide meeting papers to the Chairperson at least 7 days prior to a scheduled meeting.
- Respect confidential and privileged information.
- Represent all areas of their agencies and associated entities.
- Report on relevant agency activity relating to emergency management mitigation, response, or recovery activities with a focus on emerging risks or opportunities.
- Where a decision or action is outside the authority of the member, engage with relevant personnel within their agency to obtain approval to commit resources and undertake tasks.
- Identify and liaise with subject matter experts or key representatives from within their agencies to participate in the MEMPC, its subcommittees or working groups.
- Advocate for and report back to their agencies on MEMPC outcomes and decisions.

4.4 Proxies

Representatives of core member agencies / organisations who are unable to be present at MEMPC meetings must nominate a suitably skilled and authorised representative from their agency / organisation a minimum of 24 hours to the MEMPC Chairperson, in writing, before the meeting is scheduled to occur. This proxy is considered to have the same voting rights as the substantive MEMPC member, unless the MEMPC Chairperson is advised otherwise.

4.5 Community representation

Section 59A of the Act specifies that one or more community representatives must be appointed, as invited by the Chairperson on behalf of the MEMPC.

The Northern Grampians Shire MEMPC has deemed that community representatives may be chosen from the following sectors. There may be more than one representative from a given sector, and representation from each sector is not required.

- Industry/Production
- Business/Retail
- Tourism
- Agriculture/Viticulture
- Education/School Camps
- Youth - young leader/s (16 years +)

The MEMPC will call for written expressions of interest from members of the community to fill the community representative positions. The call for expressions of interest will be advertised in local media (print media and relevant social media platforms and channels).

Expressions of interest will be assessed against the following selection criteria.

- Genuine interest in providing positive community emergency management outcomes.
- Confidence and capability to communicate between community and committee environments.
- Understanding or ability to learn/interpret emergency management dialogue.
- Ability to provide community perspective regardless of personal bias.

- Good understanding and knowledge of the local and broader Northern Grampians Shire community.

A selection panel will consist of no more than 3 MEMPC members who are selected by the committee. Ideally these members will represent local government, response, and relief and recovery areas of emergency management. The panel will undertake the assessment of submissions, interview applicants (at its discretion), and select and appoint community representative/s to the committee.

Whilst selection will be based on merit, the panel will attempt to ensure geographical representation from across the municipal district.

Community representative/s will have a term of 2 years on the MEMPC. After this time, the MEMPC can vote to keep the community representative/s for another term, or existing community representative/s may reapply.

4.6 Additional representation

Section 59A of the Act specifies that the core MEMPC may invite additional representation from other agencies or organisations with key skills and knowledge to join the MEMPC as necessary.

These members will not have right to propose or vote on motions requiring a decision by the MEMPC, but are welcome to contribute knowledge, information, and insight on behalf of their organisation to the MEMPC.

The following agencies and organisations may be invited to meetings when required. Their contribution and attendance are of particular relevance when each emergency risk relevant to the agency or organisation is reviewed.

- AusNet Services
- Department of Transport
- Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water
- National Emergency Management Agency
- Parks Victoria
- Powercor
- Stawell Gold Mines
- VicTrack
- Wimmera Catchment Management Authority

4.7 Observers

Observers to MEMPC meetings may attend at the discretion of the MEMPC Chairperson and must be nominated in writing a minimum of 24 hours prior to the scheduled meeting to the MEMPC Chairperson.

Observers must respect all confidentiality and operating protocols of the MEMPC, and must not:

- Propose or vote on motions.
- Intrude on the procedures of the MEMPC.
- Take part in the meeting proceedings without the invitation of the MEMPC Chairperson.

5. MEETING FREQUENCY

The MEMPC is required to meet a minimum of 4 times per year. The specific dates and times of MEMPC meetings are to be determined on a yearly basis for the following calendar year at the discretion of, and agreement by the MEMPC.

The MEMPC may meet following emergencies involving the municipality, or as required at other times.

6. MEETING VENUE

Northern Grampians Shire MEMPC meetings will be held in the Stawell Council Chambers unless determined otherwise by the committee. Online meeting options will be enabled to support remote access as needed.

7. QUORUM

A quorum is greater than 50% (50% + 1) attendance of the current voting members and includes the MEMPC Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson.

The MEMPC may meet in the absence of a quorum being present, however no decision-making processes, such as motions, may be actioned until a quorum is present.

8. VOTING RIGHTS

The core member agencies and organisations (section 4.1) are allocated 1 vote per agency / organisation for the purposes of decision making within the MEMPC. The Chairperson has a casting vote if votes on a matter are equal. Additional representatives (section 4.6) and observers (section 4.7) do not have voting rights for the purposes of decision making within the MEMPC.

9. SUBCOMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

The MEMPC will determine the need to establish subcommittees / working groups to investigate and report back on specific issues that will assist the MEMPC in meeting its obligations under the relevant legislation.

The MEMPC will determine the terms of reference and reporting timeframes for those committees and working groups. The membership of any subcommittee or working group will consist of agencies and organisations represented on the MEMPC and other representatives deemed necessary by the MEMPC.

The Chairperson of each subcommittee or working group is required to report to the MEMPC at each scheduled meeting on their proceedings and raise any issues or areas of concern to the MEMPC for consideration.

A standing subcommittee of the MEMPC is the Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee.

10. ADMINISTRATIVE AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The administration of the MEMPC includes maintaining the committee contact list, scheduling meetings, providing committee members with the meeting agenda, and documenting and distributing minutes and other relevant correspondence. This role is currently performed by council's Emergency Management Support Officer.

The proceedings, information, and documentation of the MEMPC is considered confidential unless determined by the MEMPC, however these records remain discoverable under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

Any member can submit items to be included on the agenda. The agenda will be confirmed prior to each meeting. Minutes of MEMPC meetings will be forwarded to all representative members of the MEMPC (including additional members, excluding observers) and to the Regional Emergency Response Coordinator. Updated versions of the MEMPC will also be distributed to the MEMPC core membership and the Regional Emergency Response Coordinator.

Core member organisations and agencies of the MEMPC are asked to submit a written report a minimum of 7 days prior to the scheduled MEMPC meeting. Written reports may be presented verbally to the MEMPC during the scheduled meetings and will be recorded within the minutes of the meeting.

Representatives of additional member agencies and organisations may submit a written report to the MEMPC Chairperson if the issue or topic is considered of importance to the MEMPC, otherwise a verbal report may be submitted at the MEMPC and will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Any issues that require escalation to the Grampians REMPC will be conveyed by the MEMPC Chairperson as the nominated REMPC representative for the Northern Grampians Shire MEMPC.

11. EXPECTED / DEFINITE LIFE OF THE MEMPC

The life of the MEMPC is considered to be ongoing. Representatives of core member agencies and organisations are required to notify the MEMPC Chairperson (in writing) of any material or substantive changes to the representation of their agency or organisation if it affects the operation of the MEMPC as soon as practicable.

12. REFERENCES

Emergency Management Act 1986

Emergency Management Act 2013

Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018

Northern Grampians Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan - previous versions

APPENDIX B - Acronyms and abbreviations

AAR	After Action Review
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AGRN	Australian Government Reference Number
CERA	Community Emergency Risk Assessment
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFA	Country Fire Authority
DFFH	Department of Families, Fairness & Housing
DHHS	Department of Health & Human Services
DRFA	Disaster Recovery Financial Assistance
EM-COP	Emergency Management Common Operating Picture
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
ERC	Emergency Relief Centre
ERV	Emergency Recovery Victoria
GIS	Geographic Information System
HAZMAT	Hazardous Materials incident
IA	Impact Assessment
IERC	Incident Emergency Response Coordinator
IIA	Initial Impact Assessment
MECC	Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
MEMPC	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
MERC	Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator
MEMO	Municipal Emergency Management Officer
MERO	Municipal Emergency Resource Officer
MRM	Municipal Recovery Manager
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NGS	Northern Grampians Shire
NGSC	Northern Grampians Shire Council
REMP	Regional Emergency Management Plan
REMPC	Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee
RERC	Regional Emergency Response Coordinator
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indices For Areas
SEMP	State Emergency Management Plan
SIA	Secondary Impact Assessment
The Act	<i>Emergency Management Act 2013</i>
VICSES	Victoria State Emergency Service
VPR	Vulnerable Persons Register
WVPHN	Western Victoria Primary Health Network

APPENDIX C - Sub plans and complementary plans

Plan	Version / Date	Review Date	Lead agency	Status
SUB PLANS				
Municipal Fire Management Plan	2023-26 V4.1 / Sep 2023	30/06/2026	CFA	Current
Municipal Flood Emergency Plan	V9.3 / Dec 2016		VICSES	In progress
Emergency Animal Welfare Plan	2023-26 V3 Apr 2024	31/03/2026	NGSC	In progress
COMPLEMENTARY PLANS				
NGSC MECC Operations Plan	V2 / Mar 2023	Mar 2024	NGSC	In progress
NGSC ERC Operations Plan	V2 / Oct 2024	Oct 2025	NGSC	In progress
NGSC Stawell Airport Manual	V1.1 / Jun 2024	Jun 2025	NGSC	Current
NGSC St Arnaud Airport Manual	V1.0 Oct 2024	Jun 2025	NGSC	Current
NGSC Influenza Pandemic Plan	V2 / July 2019	30/09/2021	NGSC	Current
NGSC Municipal Public Health Emergency Management Plan	V2 / Sept 2019	30/09/2021	NGSC	Current
NGSC Extreme Heat Plan	V2 / Jan 2024	Jan 2027	NGSC	Current
Halls Gap Local Flood Guide	Jan 2022		VICSES	Current
Glenorchy Local Flood Guide	Jan 2022		VICSES	Current
VicRoads Emergency Detour Routes Western Region	July 2016		Regional Roads Vic	Current
ADDITIONAL PLANS				
Stawell Gold Mines Pty Ltd Tailings Dam No. 2 Emergency Response Plan	V6 / Aug 2023		Stawell Gold Mines	Current
Stawell Gold Mines Emergency Response Plan	V5 / May 2024		Stawell Gold Mines	Current
Stawell Gold Mines Emergency and Crisis Management Plan	V7 / Mar 2023		Stawell Gold Mines	Current
Bulgana Green Power Hub Emergency Response Plan	V2.9 / Mar 2025		Siemens Gamesa	Current