



# Local Government Emergency Management Handbook

## Position Descriptions

2024

# Emergency Management Position Descriptions

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*Disclaimer: the below position descriptions are designed to be guidance only. While care has been taken to ensure that the information provided is consistent with relevant emergency management legislation, individual councils must ensure they are meeting current legislative requirements and are addressing any unique local circumstances, including risk profiles and resourcing.*

## Introduction

There are many roles, responsibilities and functions that need to be undertaken in the event of an emergency. In some circumstances these roles are defined by legislation. In addition to these roles, councils are responsible for determining the most appropriate organisation structure and banding classification of roles to enable the successful delivery of emergency management services. For example, some councils may employ Emergency Management Coordinators, Managers or Officers who also assume a statutory role as part of their functions.

The below position descriptions are provided as general guidance and demonstrate examples of the types of roles that may be implemented at council.

Please note the example roles do not consider council banding classification processes; this should be taken into consideration when assessing and implementing these roles within council.

## Attributes and skills for key roles

For all positions there will be some key attributes, skills and experience requirements. The following can be applied and amended for each role, with specific qualifications and/or experience relevant to each role:

- Experience and/or qualifications in emergency management or public safety
- Good working knowledge of council resources and operations and the municipality's geography, natural disaster risk environments, infrastructure, services and communities
- Demonstrated ability to provide give clear direction, build strong relationships and work collaboratively with external and internal stakeholders
- Demonstrated ability to work in a calm and efficient manner and to develop innovative solutions while under extreme pressure
- Demonstrated experience in leading, managing and motivating staff to achieve outcomes
- Demonstrated ability to deliver outcomes under limited supervision or available guidance
- Experience using incident and data management systems, such as Crisisworks
- Demonstrated understanding of Federal, State and local emergency management legislation and arrangements
- Demonstrated understanding of relief and recovery principles outlined in the State Emergency Management Plan
- Availability to work after hours on a roster
- A willingness to undertake additional training to ensure currency of skills and knowledge in emergency management
- Current Victorian Drivers License
- Current Victoria Police Check (subject to internal council requirements)
- Current Working with Children Check (subject to internal council requirements)

# Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO)

**Background:** In 2020, the Municipal Emergency Management Response Officer (MERO) was superseded by the Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO). Under the Emergency Management Act 2013, councils must appoint one or more MEMO.

The key responsibilities of the MEMO under the Act are:

- Liaising with agencies in relation to emergency management activities for the municipal district; and
- Assisting in the coordination of emergency management activities for the municipal council.

Councils approach the MEMO role in different ways depending on capacity and risk profile. In some councils, liaison will include facilitating planning and participation in Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees. In others, the agency liaison and coordination functions are limited to operational roles. It is up to each council to determine how broad or narrow the role is before, during and after an emergency, provided the council is meeting its obligations under the Emergency Management Act and outlined in the SEMP Council Role Statement.

Below are some indicative key responsibilities of the MEMO.

## Key responsibilities:

- Support the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) with the development, implementation and review of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP)
- Act in accordance with relevant local, state and federal legislation, guidelines, policies and manuals to contribute to and/or lead the development of council emergency management arrangements
- Provide advice and support to the Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM) and Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO) in the development and continuous improvement of council's emergency management planning and/or operational functions
- Maintain an up-to-date contact database of agency, contractor and key council personnel including after hour contact details and duty officer rosters
- Coordinate and allocate council-managed resources during and after an emergency in consultation with the Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)
- Respond to emerging themes and issues in the community, influence council policy and practice and, be responsive to local needs in relation to emergency management
- Accountable for the implementation and maintenance of sound risk management within the areas of responsibility and in accordance with council's Risk Management Policy
- Ensure procedures and systems are in place to monitor and record expenditure by council in relation to emergencies with awareness of recovery funding requirements
- Carry out other duties commensurate with skills and abilities as deemed reasonable and appropriate to the role as directed from time to time

# Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)

**Background:** In 2020, the Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM) was formalised with responsibility for coordinating recovery activities at the municipal level. Under the Emergency Management Act 2013, councils must appoint one or more MRM.

The key responsibilities of the MRM under the Act are:

- Coordinating, in consultation with agencies, the resources of the municipal council and the community for the purposes of recovery;

- Liaising with any municipal emergency management officer (MEMO) appointed for the municipal district in relation to the use of the municipal council's resources for the purposes of recovery; and
- Assisting any municipal emergency management officer (MEMO) appointed for the municipal district with planning and preparing for recovery.

Below are some indicative key responsibilities of the MRM.

**Key responsibilities:**

- Plan for and coordinate municipal and community resources for community support, relief and recovery in collaboration with the Municipal Emergency Management Officer, including input into recovery plans
- Liaise with the Municipal Emergency Management Officer and Emergency Relief Centre Manager to determine the best use of council resources to support recovery coordination
- Establish emergency relief and recovery services, centres and staffing, as required, in consultation with the Municipal Emergency Management Officer and Emergency Relief Centre Manager
- Establish a public information and co-ordination centre or function at the council offices or a location appropriate to the affected area/s
- Co-ordinate the dissemination of accurate recovery information to council's senior management and the public, in consultation with appropriate staff (for example council's communications officer or team)
- Activate and oversee the coordination, collation and evaluation of information gathered in the secondary and post-impact assessment to deliver tailored recovery services for the community
- Liaise, consult and negotiate with relevant external partners and recovery agencies, such as the Regional Recovery Committee (where appropriate), the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, and Emergency Recovery Victoria, including on behalf of affected communities
- Manage the timely and planned transition of recovery services and restoration of community services and needs
- Ensure procedures and systems are in place to monitor and record expenditure by council in relation to emergencies with awareness of recovery funding requirements
- Other specific recovery activities as deemed reasonable and appropriate to the role as directed from time to time

## Emergency Relief Centre Manager (ERC)

**Position Objective:** Oversees the daily operations of the Emergency Relief Centre (ERC) to ensure the provision of support and essential needs in a safe, appropriate environment. This includes supporting the activation and deactivation of ERCs. Has the authority to deny access to the ERC to individuals.

**Key responsibilities:**

- Ensure the health and safety of staff, residents, visitors and other agencies through adherence to Workplace Health and Safety guidelines
- Ensures the primary health needs of attendees are being monitored and liaises with the Municipal Recovery Manager to ensure appropriate service response
- Oversees the equipment needs of the ERC to ensure adequate supplies of essential items within the ERC
- Identify impacted persons for referral (if required) for Personal Hardship Assistance Program or other financial supports
- Supervise the maintenance of up-to-date community information boards for the ERC
- Liaises with the Municipal Recovery Manager to identify issues of concern, update on activities of the ERC and in relation to media attendance and requests for information

- Ensures staff are organised to work at the ERC during an emergency, including through staff rosters if required
- Undertake briefings for staff at the start and welfare checks at the end of shifts at the ERC
- Reports OHS matters to relevant council or agency staff member

## Emergency Management Liaison Officer (EMLO)

**Background:** While not all councils will be in a position to resource an EMLO, it is an important role especially in prolonged emergencies. Some councils will have several EMLOs trained.

**Position Objective:** Represents the interests of council at the State Control Centre, Regional Control Centre or Incident Control Centre to facilitate information sharing between the centre/s and the Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO) and other senior council representatives as required. Seeks situational awareness and intelligence to inform relief and recovery requirements, community information, council operations and secondary impact assessment. An EMLO serves as the primary contact for “support agencies” assisting at an incident.

### Key responsibilities:

- Represent council, and provide advice concerning council activities to other agencies, at the relevant Incident Control Centre, Incident Emergency Management Team and Regional Emergency Management Team
- Act as a conduit between council and agencies by providing intelligence and advice relevant to your knowledge of the local area and communities, including consequence management
- Participate in briefings, planning meetings and debriefings
- Commit to or arrange to commit the resources of council to respond to an emergency
- Maintain ongoing communications with council during an emergency
- Carry out other duties commensurate with skills and abilities as deemed reasonable and appropriate to the role as directed from time to time

## Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee Chair

**Position Objective:** Section 59B of the Emergency Management Act 2013 provides that each council must nominate a chairperson of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee. This person can be the Chief Executive Officer of the council, a member of the council staff or an employee of the Alpine Resort Victoria.

### Key responsibilities:

- Chairing meetings of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
- Facilitating the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee to perform its functions
- On behalf of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee, providing information and recommendations to the Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee for the region that includes the municipal district

## Environmental Health Officer (EHO)

**Position Objective:** Section 29 of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* provides that each council must appoint one or more EHO.

In relation to emergency management, the EHO may have a role in the following:

- Initial and secondary impact assessments following an emergency

- Safe and adequate water supply
- Emergency shelter and accommodation
- Food safety (including donated food)
- Providing emergency sanitary facilities
- Wastewater management including septic tanks
- Refuse collection and disposal
- Vermin and vector control
- Infectious disease control
- Environmental hazards
- Disinfection and cleaning
- Assessing emergency affected housing
- Emergency relief centres
- Public health risks arising from an emergency or incident, including extreme heat events
- Non-major emergencies for example single house fires, building/structure fires incorporating registered premises.

## Municipal Building Surveyor (MBS)

**Position Objective:** Councils are tasked with administering and enforcing parts of the *Building Act 1993* through section 212. Local Government powers within the Building Act are split between those that fall to council, and those that are assigned directly to a Municipal Building Surveyor appointed by that council.

In relation to emergency management, the MBS may have a role in the following:

- Initial and secondary impact assessments following an emergency
- Issuing building notices and orders requiring building work to be made safe
- Requiring the evacuation of unsafe buildings
- Approving the temporary use of buildings for alternative uses such as emergency shelter or relief centres
- Attending non-major emergencies for example single house fires, vehicles crashing into structures
- Inspecting Essential Safety Measures
- Issuing building permits for replacement structures
- Inspecting (private) emergency accommodation buildings

## Council Emergency Operations Centre (CEOC) or Municipal Emergency Operations Centre (MEOC)

Councils may establish Council Emergency Operations Centres or Municipal Emergency Operations Centres, particularly in the event of a prolonged emergency. This is a facility for:

- The local coordination of response, relief and recovery activities
- Providing accurate logging of information, communications and decisions for recording, debriefing and planning purposes
- Collating community information about relief and recovery support available and where appropriate disseminating the information in consultation with the control or other relevant agencies
- A place to receive and transmit information on the emergency to the Incident Control Centre and/or Regional Control Centre
- Provide an administrative and management base for the local emergency response