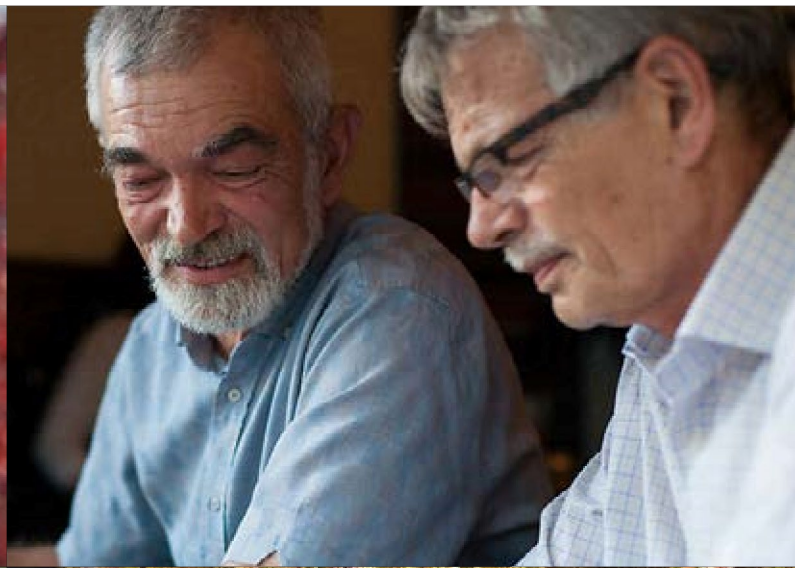


# *Council Policy*

## Emergency Management



# COUNCIL POLICY



## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

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| <b>Policy Number:</b>   | ENV-07   |
| <b>Responsible Department(s):</b>   | Sustainability, Waste and Emergency Management   |
| <b>Relevant Delegations:</b>  | As per the Delegations Register and as detailed in this Policy   |
| <b>Other Relevant Policies:</b>   | Risk Management<br>Tree Management<br>WHS & IM<br>Burning Permit   |
| <b>Relevant Procedure(s):</b>   | Emergency Management Plan<br>Incident Operations Manual<br>Recovery Operations Manual<br>Workforce Operations Manual (under development)<br>Bushfire Mitigation Strategy (under development) |
| <b>Relevant Legislation:</b>  | Local Government Act (SA) 1999<br>Emergency Management Act (SA) 2004   |
| <b>Policies and Procedures Superseded by this policy on its Adoption:</b> | Nil  |
| <b>Adoption Authority:</b>  | Council  |
| <b>Date of Adoption:</b>  | 14 November 2023   |
| <b>Effective From:</b>  | 14 Days after Council Meeting  |
| <b>Minute Reference for Adoption:</b>                                     | Item 12.5, 289/23  |
| <b>Next Review:</b>   | No later than October 2026 or as required by legislation or changed circumstances  |



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## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Emergencies have the potential to disrupt the strategic and operational activities of Adelaide Hills Council and adversely impact communities.
- 1.2 The roles of local government in emergency management are informed by the *State Emergency Management Plan* (SEMP) prepared in accordance with the *Emergency Management Act (SA) 2004*, and the *Local Government Emergency Management Framework* (LGEMF) prepared by the Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA).
- 1.3 The participation of local government in emergency management is enabled by the *Local Government Act (SA) 1999*, which outlines the requirement for councils to consider risks (including emergency risks) as follows:
- Make informed decisions (section 6)
  - Take measures to protect their area from natural hazards (section 7)
  - Provide infrastructure for community and for development (section 7)
  - Ensure the sustainability of the council's long-term financial performance (section 8)
  - Assess the maintenance, replacement or development needs for infrastructure (section 122)
  - Identify anticipated or predicted changes in any factors that make a significant contribution to the costs of the council's activities or operations (section 122).
- 1.4 In addition, the Local Government Act (SA) 1999 requires councils to “give due weight, in all its plans, policies and activities to regional, state and national objectives and strategies concerning the economic, social, physical and environmental development and management of the community” (section 8).

### 2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of this policy are to:
- Define Adelaide Hills Council's roles and responsibilities in emergency management
  - Ensure that Adelaide Hills Council maintains appropriate documentation (including delegations) to enable it to effectively fulfil its emergency management roles and responsibilities
  - Support Adelaide Hills Council to maintain safe working practices during emergencies, and ensure protection for council workers, assets and liabilities associated with emergency management activities.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

**“Control Agency”** means an agency that exercises control of an emergency as designated by the SEMP.

**“Disaster”** means a serious disruption to community life that threatens or causes death or injury in that community and/or damage to property which is beyond the day-to-day capacity

of the prescribed statutory authorities and which requires special mobilisation and organisation of resources other than those normally available to those authorities.

An emergency that has occurred, is occurring or is about to occur and is declared to be a disaster by the Governor (Section 24 of the Act)<sup>1</sup>.

**“Disaster resilience”** means the ability to survive, adapt and grow, no matter what happens<sup>2</sup>.

**“Disaster risk reduction”** is the practice of intentionally taking action to avoid the creation of new disaster risks, reducing existing disaster risks, and managing any residual risk. Effective disaster risk reduction minimises the need to respond to and recover from emergencies.

The terms “disaster risk reduction”, “mitigation” or “prevention” are sometimes used interchangeably. Prevention measures seek to eliminate the impact of hazards, and/or reduce susceptibility to them. Mitigation measures accept that the event will occur and seek to reduce the impact by both physical means (e.g. flood levees) and by increasing the resilience of the community exposed to the impact of those hazards. Prevention and mitigation are both part of disaster risk reduction.<sup>3</sup>

Note – This is not limited to naturally occurring events (such as earthquakes, floods or storms) but would, for example, include fires, explosions, accidents, epidemics, pandemics, emissions of poisons, radiation or other hazardous agents, hijacks, sieges, riots, acts of terrorism and hostilities directed by an enemy against Australia.<sup>4</sup>

**“Emergency management”** means a range of measures to manage risks to communities and the environment. The organisation and management of resources for dealing with all aspects of emergencies. Emergency management involves the plans, structures and arrangements which are established to bring together the normal endeavours of government, voluntary and private agencies in a comprehensive and coordinated way to deal with the whole spectrum of emergency needs including prevention, risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery<sup>5</sup>.

**“Incident Operations”** refers to actions undertaken by the local government sector immediately before, during and immediately after an emergency incident. In incident operations, councils typically take action to provide support:

- To their community
- To other councils
- To the Control Agency and other involved parties through the South Australian emergency management arrangements<sup>6</sup>.

**“Local Government Functional Support Group” (LGFSG)** is established under the SEMP with responsibilities to:

- Ensure coordinated operational support from local government during response and recovery.
- Support the preparedness of the local government sector including building the capacity of councils to participate in emergency management.

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<sup>1</sup> State Emergency Management Plan.

<sup>2</sup> South Australia’s Disaster Resilience Strategy 2019-2024.

<sup>3</sup> Local Government Emergency Management Framework.

<sup>4</sup> Emergency Management Act 2004.

<sup>5</sup> State Emergency Management Plan.

<sup>6</sup> Local Government Emergency Management Framework.

The LGA is lead agency of the LGFSG and all 68 councils and regional LGAs are participating organisations<sup>7</sup>.

“**Recovery**” means the coordinated process of supporting emergency affected communities in reconstruction of the physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical well-being.<sup>8</sup>

#### 4. SCOPE

- 4.1 The policy relates to the prevention of, preparedness for and response to, and recovery from, emergencies that impact the communities of the Adelaide Hills Council. It does not relate to internal business disruption events that are managed through Adelaide Hills Council’s business continuity arrangements, unless these events are the direct result of an emergency.
- 4.2 The policy acknowledges the interrelationship between climate change and emergency management. Climate change is expected to increase exposure to disaster risk owing to more frequent and intense natural hazards. Actions taken by Council to mitigate climate risk, and adapt to the impacts of climate change, will contribute towards disaster risk reduction. Similarly, efforts to reduce disaster risk, build resilience for emergencies and strengthen the capacity and capability to respond and recover to emergencies, are important climate change adaptation measures.

#### 5. POLICY STATEMENT

##### Disaster risk reduction

- 5.1 In accordance with the SEMP and LGEMF, Adelaide Hills Council will contribute to disaster risk reduction by:
- Understanding and communicating current and emerging emergency risks
  - Integrating current and future emergency risk information into local government governance and decision-making
  - Building and maintaining infrastructure and delivering services that reduce emergency risk
  - Partnering with stakeholders in addressing priority emergency risks
  - Strengthening disaster resilience in communities
  - Increasing community preparedness by amplifying communication messages
  - Undertaking requirements of the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005 (SA)*, including delivery of fire prevention programs
  - Representing community interests in emergency management to other spheres of government and contributing to decision-making processes.
- 5.2 Adelaide Hills Council will maintain an Emergency Management Plan that:
- Establishes Adelaide Hills Council’s strategic direction for emergency management
  - Identifies relevant local, regional and state emergency management plans and arrangements that impact upon the Adelaide Hills Council

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<sup>7</sup> State Emergency Management Plan

<sup>8</sup> Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience Glossary

- Evaluates emergency risks in the Adelaide Hills Council area and their impacts on the community, and documents the strategies council has or will adopt to manage these emergency risks
- Describes the strategies and actions that Adelaide Hills Council will take across disaster risk reduction, incident operations and recovery, and the implementation and monitoring arrangements for these.

### Incident operations

5.3 In accordance with the SEMP and LGEMF, Adelaide Hills Council will contribute to incident operations by:

- Ensuring an adequate local council emergency response capability is in place, including through the training of council staff
- Maintaining a state of readiness and situational awareness
- Providing support to its community, other councils, control agencies and emergency services immediately before, during and immediately after an incident
- Consider, and when safe to do so, respond to requests for in accordance with the i-Responda Framework
- Providing assistance to other councils, Control Agencies and other involved parties through the South Australian emergency management arrangements as a participating organisation of the LGFSG

5.4 Adelaide Hills Council will maintain an *Incident Operations Manual* that describes how it will organise and take practical action immediately before, during and immediately after an emergency, including arrangements for:

- Activation Triggers
- Command and Council Incident Management Team (CIMT) structure
- Functions and tasks
- Resources, including people, places, technology, plant and equipment
- Communication with internal and external audiences
- Support to Control Agencies and other involved parties through the South Australian emergency management arrangements

5.5 In Incident Operations, Adelaide Hills Council staff and/or equipment may be requested to support Control Agencies and other emergency services. When council resources are made available to support control agencies and emergency services, this will be in accordance with:

- Adelaide Hills Council *Incident Operations Manual*
- LGASA *Mutual Protection Guide for Incident Operations*
- LGA *i-Responda Framework*

### Recovery

5.6 In accordance with the SEMP and LGEMF, Adelaide Hills Council will contribute to recovery by:

- Participating in the whole-of-community recovery effort in a coordinated way
- Adapting council service delivery to meet recovery needs
- Restoring and recovering impacted council assets following an emergency

The level of priority placed on recovery relative to regular Council activities and services will be determined based on risk, council's capacity and impact to the community.

- 5.7 Under the *State Recovery Coordination Framework* (annexed to the SEMP), State Government has responsibility for ensuring recovery coordination occurs, but not to necessarily lead recovery coordination in each instance.

When State Government coordinates recovery, AHC will actively participate in the process and share information about its community and AHC's recovery actions.

When State Government does not coordinate recovery, AHC will ensure that there is a level of coordination of local recovery efforts. This may include AHC coordinating the overall recovery effort. If AHC does not undertake recovery coordination, it will ensure that another body is able to do so by, for example, providing support to a community based organisation, or advocating for a State Government agency to do so.

- 5.8 Adelaide Hills Council will maintain a *Recovery Operations Manual* that details the scope of AHC's role in disaster recovery, and the associated arrangements for fulfilling this role. To support the effective implementation of this Manual, AHC will ensure an adequate recovery capability is in place, including through the training of Council staff.

## 6. DELEGATIONS

- 6.1 The Chief Executive Officer has the delegation to:

- Approve, amend and review any procedures that shall be consistent with this Policy (including the *Emergency Management Plan*, *Incident Operations Manual* and *Recovery Operations Manual*)
- Make any legislative, formatting, nomenclature or other minor changes to the Policy during the period of its currency.

- 6.2 The CEO is authorised to spend funds of up to \$100,000 to enable council's participation in incident operations and early recovery until such a time as a budget, if required over and above this amount, can be prepared and provided to Council for approval.

## 7. AVAILABILITY OF THE POLICY

- 7.1 This Policy will be available via the Council's website [www.ahc.sa.gov.au](http://www.ahc.sa.gov.au).