



Community Emergency Management Policy

Reference Number:	2.5
Type:	Council Policy
Category:	Corporate Governance & Finance
Relevant Community Plan Outcome:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalise on partnerships, build community resilience and sense of belonging. • Educate and regulate to enable a safe and healthy environment. • Continue to implement climate change mitigation and adaptation solutions. • Adaptive and sustainable management of City’s finances.
Responsible Officer(s):	Manager Governance & Operational Support
First Issued/Approved:	July 1999
Minutes Reference:	CoS 5/08/2019, Item 3.36
Last Reviewed:	August 2019
Next Review Due:	August 2021
Applicable Legislation:	Emergency Management Act 2004 Local Government Act 1999 Public Health Act 2011
Related Policies:	Risk Management Policy
Related Procedures:	Community Emergency Management Plan EB Agreements i-Responda Framework National Guidelines for Managing Donated Goods

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish Council’s commitment in relation to emergency management within the City of Charles Sturt community.

2. Scope

This policy covers management of Community emergencies within the City of Charles Sturt area.

3. Policy Statement

The City of Charles Sturt will develop prevention, preparedness, response and recovery strategies to mitigate the negative impact of emergencies on the safety and/or welfare of people, property and the environment.

Legislative & Strategic Context

Given the increasing regularity and severity of natural disasters, Australian Governments have recognised that a National, coordinated and cooperative effort is required to enhance Australia's capacity to withstand and recover from emergencies and disasters. In consideration of this National approach the City of Charles Sturt recognises the shared responsibility that it has to help protect and assist its community to respond and recover from disasters.

The *Local Government Act 1999* identifies that a function of a Council is to provide for the welfare, well-being and interests of individuals and groups within its community (section 7(c)). Another function of a Council is to take measures to protect its area from natural and other hazards and to mitigate the effects of such hazards (section 7(d)).

Section 298 of the *Local Government Act 1999* provides the Council with specific powers to act in the event of an emergency that relates to flooding.

Council's link to the State emergency management arrangements is through the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP). The SEMP is prepared pursuant to section 9 of the *Emergency Management Act 2004*. While Council is not the lead agency, the SEMP lists the local government sector as a "Functional Support Group. The lead representative for the Local Government Functional Support Group is the LGA. The main function of the Functional Support Group is to prepare and implement procedures to be able to deliver required support to the lead agency in times of emergency. The SEMP also advises that the State Recovery Office works in partnership with local government to ensure state disaster recovery plans are ready to operate in an emergency. The SEMP recognises local government has a role in the broader recovery operations

The Public Health Act 2011 references the Emergency Management Act 2004 (section 90) and it clarifies both Acts contribute in the event of an emergency. Council's Regional Public Health Plan identifies Council's commitment to the implementation of our Community Emergency Management Plan which identifies the role of public health in emergency and disaster management.

Community Emergency Management Plan

A Community Emergency Management Plan has been developed which is based on the principles detailed in the International Risk Management standard (ISO31000:2009). This plan will also incorporate the National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (NERAG).

The current Community Emergency Management Plan covers all phases of emergency management (including prevention, preparedness, response and recovery). The response section details scales and types of events, the nominated control agency, contact details, internal procedures and key responsibilities.

The Community Emergency Management Plan should be read in conjunction with any Council or Regional Public Health Plan. Regard should be given to the State Public Health Plan if performing duties in accordance with the Community Emergency Management Plan whilst exercising functions or powers in accordance with the *Public Health Act 2011*.

Western Adelaide Zone Emergency Management Committee & Plan

The Western Adelaide Zone is made up of the City of Charles Sturt, City of West Torrens and part of the City of Port Adelaide Enfield. The Western Adelaide Zone Emergency Management Committee (WAZEMC) is responsible for the local planning in the Western Adelaide region to support the State Emergency Management Plan. The WAZEMC will take into account local issues, the nature and level of risk to the local Zone and local resources available to deal with the risk.

Local Government Functional Support Plan

The City of Charles Sturt will continue to assist LGA in their planning and implementing of the Local Government Functional Support Plan for the local government sector.

Emergency Incident or Disaster Response

The City of Charles Sturt will support and participate in emergency incident or disaster events and work with other councils as well as emergency services as and when requested in accordance with the *Emergency Management Act 2004* and the State Emergency Management Plan. Staff will work proactively with other agencies to ensure effective response systems are in place.

Donated Goods

Public generosity and care following a disaster plays a significant role in individual and community recovery. It reflects broader community sentiment and helps those affected to feel supported, and more positive and confident about the rebuilding tasks ahead.

The influx of donated goods in an emergency often quickly exceeds actual need. The sheer quantity of donations stretches resources and infrastructure, diverting efforts from other aspects of disaster response and recovery. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that donated goods may not meet, or may exceed, the specific needs of the affected community, may be impractical or substandard in quality.

The result is that critical resources are required to manage large quantities of donated goods that cannot be used, however significant effort is still required for the administration of these goods i.e. unpacking, sorting, storing, distribution and disposal, diverting resources away from supporting disaster affected people. Money is the most useful donation because it provides flexibility and choice to meet immediate needs. It also circulates in the affected community, stimulating faster recovery for the local economy.*

The City of Charles Sturt will utilise the 'National Guidelines for Managing Donated Goods' in establishing the strategy for the donation of goods in an emergency. This guideline provides a planned and cohesive national approach to support appropriate and timely donations. This ensures people wishing to help are encouraged to do so without unintentionally undermining recovery efforts, and enables the City of Charles Sturt to more effectively address the needs of disaster affected people. In the event of an emergency, the City of Charles Sturt will communicate the donation of goods strategy to the community for that particular emergency. This may include referral to relevant agencies or organisations already established for the management of donated goods.

* Source: Government of South Australia - Department for Families and Communities, 2011, National Guidelines for Managing Donated Goods

Spontaneous Volunteers

During and after an emergency event members of the public may spontaneously volunteer to assist with recovery efforts. These charitable efforts can assist greatly with a community recovering from an emergency event.

However, people's willingness to volunteer can outweigh the system's capacity to utilise them effectively.* Therefore as the spontaneous volunteers are generously offering their time, resources and committing themselves to help, they need to be managed effectively so the recovery process is not negatively impacted.

The City of Charles Sturt will utilise the 'State Emergency Management Plan' (the Plan) in establishing the strategy for managing spontaneous volunteers. The Department for Communities and Social Inclusion has recommended use of the Volunteers SA system for the consistent management of volunteers.

In the event of an emergency, the City of Charles Sturt will communicate the spontaneous volunteers strategy to the community for that particular emergency. This may include providing spontaneous volunteers with details on how to register on Volunteers SA and/or referral of spontaneous volunteers to relevant agencies, Departments or organisations and/or provide assistance and/or advice with regard to managing the volunteer effort.

* Source: Managing Volunteers in Times of Disaster – The synergy of structure and good intentions; Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network cited in Spontaneous Volunteers in SA presentation, Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, Government of South Australia, presented by Georgina Goodrich, Project Manager to Western Adelaide Zone Emergency Management Committee on 28 February 2013.

Responsibilities

Specific responsibilities for emergency management are:

- **Chief Executive Officer**- ensuring emergency response obligations are met.
- **Manager Governance & Operational Support** - facilitating the development and maintenance of the Community Emergency Management Plan, and establishing the liaison with other emergency response agencies.
- **General Manager Asset Management Services** - ensuring equipment is available and personnel are trained as per the Community Emergency Management Plan.
- **Leadership Team** – ensuring that relevant staff are aware and trained in their emergency management responsibilities.

Other responsibilities are detailed in the Community Emergency Management Plan

Funding Commitments

The Council will commit sufficient resources to meet its statutory and community obligations regarding emergency management. This will include the development and maintenance of the emergency management plan, contingency materials and training costs.

4. Definitions

Key Term – Acronym	Definition
Functional Services	Functional Services are groupings of participating agencies coordinated by a lead agency that perform a functional role as part of the SEMP arrangements to support response and recovery operations for an emergency.
Donated Goods	<p>The term 'donated goods' refers to goods donated by the public or corporate sector following a disaster. Goods may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • material items (new or second-hand); • vouchers to buy goods; • goods on tenure (for example, hire cars); and/or • tickets for entertainment or for holidays. <p>Goods do not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers of services e.g. plumbing etc. • Offers of accommodation e.g. caravans etc.
Spontaneous Volunteer(s)	<p>The term 'spontaneous volunteer(s)' refers to volunteers from the public or corporate sector who specifically want to volunteer their time and/or resources to assist with recovery efforts following an emergency. Spontaneous volunteers may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing City of Charles Sturt volunteers. • Members of the public or corporate sector who are not City of Charles Sturt volunteers. • City of Charles Sturt staff. • City of Charles Sturt Elected Members.