



Incident Management Policy

1. Purpose

This policy establishes the City of Tea Tree Gully's commitment to effective emergency management and business continuity management to protect the community, Council operations and employees.

Emergencies and business disruptions may adversely impact the community and interrupt Council's strategic and operational activities.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) Clearly define Council's roles and responsibilities in emergency management and business continuity
- b) Ensure that Council establishes and maintains appropriate emergency management and business continuity arrangements and supporting documents
- c) Minimise risks to Council, employees and the community
- d) Support safe working practices and sound decision-making during incident management activities.

2. Policy

Council is committed to managing emergencies and business disruptions in a coordinated, safe and effective manner. Council will work in partnership with government, emergency management agencies and the community to reduce risk, respond effectively to incidents and support recovery, while maintaining continuity of critical services.

2.1. Emergency management

Emergency management involves preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies that may affect the community and endanger life, property or the environment.

Australian governments recognise that a coordinated national effort is essential to strengthen the ability to withstand and recover from emergencies. Council shares responsibility for protecting and supporting its community across all phases of emergency management: Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery.

Council's emergency arrangements align with South Australia's all-hazards, comprehensive approach, which emphasises coordinated action across government, businesses, non-government organisations and the community.

Council is committed to working in partnership with the Government of South Australia and local emergency management stakeholders to:

- a) Foster collaboration across government and organisations to share good practices and resources
- b) Build community awareness, preparedness and resilience
- c) Integrate emergency management considerations into standard practices to strengthen organisation and community resilience
- d) Identify and allocate resources to support emergency management initiatives
- e) Work collaboratively with, and provide coordinated support to, emergency management agencies during response and recovery activities.

Council's role in emergency management is informed by the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP), the Local Government i-Responda Framework, and relevant responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 1999*. Council's emergency management arrangements ensure that Council:

- a) Contributes to South Australia's emergency management arrangements based on available capacity and resources
- b) Maintains appropriate emergency management documents, registers and records
- c) Participates in relevant emergency management training and exercises
- d) Identifies and manages risks associated with emergency management activities
- e) Maintains safe working practices and applies good decision-making during emergency management operations.

2.1.1. Prevention

Council contributes to disaster mitigation and risk reduction through its routine operations, including risk management, asset management, strategic planning and the management of trees, waterways and other infrastructure. These business-as-usual activities form a key component of Council's prevention efforts.

Council is committed to understanding disaster risk, reducing the likelihood of an event occurring, and minimising the consequences should an event occur. Council will:

- a) Collaborate with local emergency management stakeholders, including the Northern Adelaide Zone Emergency Management Committee (NAZEMC) to identify and mitigate local emergency risks
- b) Contribute to disaster resilience by developing and maintaining Council-owned assets and infrastructure in a manner that avoids creating new risk, reduces existing risk and manages residual risk
- c) Partner with local stakeholders to address priority emergency risks and pursue cost-effective measures to mitigate the effects of emergencies within the Council area.

2.1.2. Preparedness

Council takes proactive measures to strengthen resilience, planning capability and workforce readiness for emergency events. To support effective preparedness, Council will:

- a) Provide representation of the NAZEMC and contribute to Zone emergency management planning
- b) Support local, Zone and regional emergency planning processes (e.g. Zone Emergency Management Plans, Bushfire Management Plans, Regional Public Health Plans) within available resources
- c) Integrate emergency management into Council plans, processes and decision-making where appropriate
- d) Undertake business continuity and workforce planning to minimise the likelihood and impact of disruptions
- e) Promote public awareness of emergency management responsibilities, policy initiatives and preparedness actions that strengthen community resilience
- f) Maintain and prepare Council's capability and capacity to support emergency response, relief and recovery
- g) Identify emergency management training needs and ensure relevant employees participate in i-Responda and other required training
- h) Confirm financial and administrative arrangements to ensure emergency-related expenditure and supporting evidence are appropriately captured.

2.1.3. Response

Council is a participating organisation of the Local Government Functional Support Group (LGFSG). Under the SEMP, the LGFSG is responsible for:

- a) Ensuring coordinated operational support from local government during response and recovery
- b) Supporting the preparedness of the local government sector including building the capacity of councils to participate in emergency management.

Council resources, including staff and equipment, may be requested to support external agencies such as Control Agencies, emergency services, or other councils during an emergency. The provision of these resources will be managed in accordance with:

- a) Council's incident management arrangements
- b) Local Government Association of SA Mutual i-Responda Risk Management & Protections Guide
- c) LGFSG incident operations arrangements, including the i-Responda Framework.

Risk and insurance considerations

To ensure effective risk management, workers compensation and liability coverage during emergency operations, Council will:

- a) Apply appropriate risk management principles
- b) Have regard to the arrangements of the LGA Asset Mutual Fund, the LGA Workers Compensation Scheme and the LGA Mutual Liability Scheme

When providing emergency support to an external agency, Council will:

- a) Enact Council's Incident Operations Manual to guide all support activities in line with the i-Responda Framework
- b) Maintain a Council Incident Management Team (CIMT) to coordinate incident management activities
- c) Provide representation in the Zone Emergency Support Team (ZEST) to contribute local knowledge, resource sharing and impact awareness
- d) Make operational decisions in line with the i-Responda Framework to maximise safety and minimise risk exposure
- e) Maintain records of Council support, decisions and actions in accordance with Council policies, procedures and work health and safety requirements
- f) Ensure employees have appropriate supervision and communication channels to safeguard health and safety
- g) Retain the right to decline or withdraw employee participation in emergency events where extenuating circumstances exist
- h) Seek to understand the impacts and consequences of the emergency to inform restoration of Council assets and recovery planning
- i) Provide timely, clear and consistent communications to stakeholders through established channels
- j) Implement lessons management processes to support continuous improvement.

i-Responda Employee Support Team Register

Council will maintain a register of employees who may be requested to provide support emergency response activities. This register:

- a) Records employees who are suitable and interested in providing emergency support
- b) Confirms that employees are appropriately trained to undertake identified capabilities
- c) Does not obligate any employee to be listed on the register, nor obligate listed employees to respond to a specific incident

- d) Ensures Council employees who may be requested to provide emergency support participate in relevant i-Responda training.

2.1.4. Recovery

Council is committed to supporting recovery agencies and its community following emergency events, acting in accordance with its capacity and available resources. Recovery activities will be aligned with State and local recovery arrangements and may extend over the short, medium and long term.

Council will:

- a) Provide leadership, coordination and advocacy during recovery by planning for recovery and establishing principles, structures, partnerships and approaches to guide Council actions
- b) Provide representation on Local Recovery Committees and share information on impacts, resources and local knowledge
- c) Participate in community meetings to support community-led recovery and communicate Council recovery activities
- d) Support emergency relief and recovery centres where required
- e) Notify the State Recovery Office of disaster damage and support mapping and communication of impacts to the community
- f) Collaborate with recovery service providers to secure grants and advocate for funding to deliver recovery actions
- g) Amplify key messages and recovery opportunities from local recovery providers
- h) Promote public awareness of ongoing service outages and Council's recovery actions
- i) Provide information to the community on how to support those affected by emergencies, in line with advice from the recovery organiser.

2.2. Business Continuity

Council is committed to safeguarding people and maintaining critical business functions during periods of disruption. Council will minimise impacts of disruptions wherever practicable and plan and prepare for the timely restoration of services to the community.

2.2.1. Business Continuity Management System

Council will maintain a Business Continuity Management System (BCMS) to protect against, reduce the likelihood of, and support recovery from disruptive incidents. The BCMS provides a structured approach to identifying disruption-related risks and building organisational capacity to respond effectively, ensuring continued delivery of key business services and achievement of critical business objectives.

The BCMS is an integral component of Council's broader risk management program contributing to good governance and organisational resilience.

Council will implement and maintain an effective BCMS by:

- a) Undertaking and maintaining a business impact analysis to identify critical functions and required resources
- b) Documenting cost-effective business continuity arrangements for critical functions to minimise disruption to Council and service delivery to the community
- c) Ensuring that plans addressing disruption-related risks are kept up to date and subject to regular review, testing and continuous improvement
- d) Aligning business continuity arrangements with Council's organisational risk management program and other relevant strategies and plans.

Council's approach to business continuity management aligns with relevant standards and recognised best practice. The scope, governance, and key roles and responsibilities of the BCMS are established in Council's Incident Management Framework.

2.2.2. Business Continuity Plan

Council's Business Continuity Plan (BCP) provides a structured framework for responding to disruptions that impact operations and service delivery. As part of the BCMS, the BCP supports a coordinated and systematic approach to continuity planning to ensure critical services are maintained at predefined levels during periods of disruption.

The BCP establishes the structures, protocols, processes and resources required to enable an effective response to business interruptions that may affect Council's objectives. It focuses on building resilience and response capability within business functions identified as critical.

Treatments for non-critical functions are identified and documented at a departmental level. This whole-of-organisation approach supports flexibility and adaptability, recognising that the nature, scale and duration of disruption events may change rapidly.

2.3. Incident management documents

Council will maintain supporting incident management documentation that outlines the strategies, structures and operational actions required to implement this policy.

Supporting documentation must be consistent with this policy and relevant legislative and framework requirements. Where resource commitments are identified, these will be subject to Council's normal strategic, financial and business planning processes.

In developing and maintaining incident management documentation, Council will consider any relevant local, regional and State plans and arrangements, including the SEMP.

Incident management documentation will be reviewed and updated periodically to ensure alignment with current guidance, plans, strategies, frameworks and best practice.

2.4. Financial spending during incidents

The CEO will report to Council, as soon as reasonably practicable, any material financial impacts arising from an emergency or disruption that affects Council, its services or community.

Where costs associated with preparedness, response or recovery are likely to exceed delegated expenditure limits, or involve expenditure not commonly encountered in Council's operations, a Council decision may be required to approve specific financial allocations.

Council will consider opportunities for cost recovery of incident-related expenditure as and when such opportunities become available.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

Business continuity

The capability of Council to continue delivery of products and services within acceptable timeframes at a predefined capacity during a disruption.

CEO

Refers to the Chief Executive Officer (including their delegate) of the City of Tea Tree Gully.

Control Agency

An agency designated under the SEMP as having control of an emergency.

Critical function

A business function, or part of a function, identified as essential to the achievement of Council's objectives. Disruption to a critical function may result in serious legal, financial, regulatory, reputational or other material consequences.

Disaster risk

The potential loss of life, injury, damaged to assets that may occur within a system, community or society, determined as a function of hazard, exposure, vulnerability and capacity.

Disaster risk reduction

Actions undertaken to avoid the creation of new disaster risks, reduce existing disaster risks, and manage any residual risk.

Disruption

An event that interrupts normal business functions, operations or processes, whether anticipated or unanticipated.

Disruption-related risk

Risk arising from the possibility of disruption event occurring.

Emergency

An event that causes or threatens to cause the death of, or injury or other damage to the health of, any person; or the destruction of, or damage to, any property; or a disruption to essential services or to the services usually enjoyed by the community; or harm to the environment, or to flora and fauna.

Emergency management

The organisation and management of resources, plans and arrangements to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

Emergency support

Provision of Council resources to support an external agency's emergency response.

Employee

For the purposes of this policy, employee means Council staff only; volunteers and contractors are excluded.

Incident management

The processes, decisions and actions taken to manage and incident and support recovery.

Incident Operations Manual

A document describing how Council organises itself and undertakes actions immediately before, during, and after an emergency incident, including delegations, authority and operational arrangements.

i-Responda Framework

The framework applied across the South Australian local government sector to prepare for and respond to requests for support during emergencies.

Local Government Association South Australia (LGA)

A voluntary membership-based organisation representing South Australian councils and providing access to services, resources and sector support.

LGA Mutual

The South Australian Local Government Mutual Risk Schemes and Services delivered in partnership by LGA Mutual Liability Scheme, LGA Workers Compensation Scheme and LGA Asset Mutual Fund.

LG Emergency Management Framework (LGEMF)

The framework developed by the Local Government Association of SA (LGA) to guide emergency management planning within the local government sector.

Local Government Functional Support Group (LGFSG)

A functional support group established under the SEMP, led by the LGA and comprising all South Australian councils and Regional LGAs, to support emergency response and recovery.

Preparedness

Activities undertaken in advance of an incident to reduce its impact and support effective response.

Prevention

Activities undertaken to understand disaster risk and reduce the likelihood or consequences of an emergency event.

Recovery

The process of restoring or improving the social, economic, physical, cultural and environmental assets of a disaster-affected community, providing opportunities to build resilience and reduce future risk.

Resilience

The ability to withstand, adapt to, respond to and recover from adversity at individual, organisational and community levels.

Response

Actions taken before, during or immediately after an emergency to minimise impacts and provide immediate relief and support.

State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP)

The plan outlining South Australia's emergency management arrangements, developed and maintained by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

4. Legislative framework

4.1. Reference to legislation

Local Government Act 1999

Section 7(c) requires Council to provide for the welfare, well-being and interests of individuals and groups within its community. Section 7(d) requires Council to take measures to protect its area from natural and other hazards and to mitigate the effects of such hazards. Section 8 requires Council must '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'.

State Emergency Management Act 2004

This Act outlines the State's strategies and systems for emergency management, including the role of local government. It provides the legislative basis for the creation of the State Emergency Management Committee and the State Emergency Management Plan.

State Emergency Management Plan

Council's link to the State emergency management arrangements is through the SEMP. The SEMP is prepared under section 9 of the Emergency Management Act 2004, and establishes the roles and responsibilities of local government in emergency management.

The LGFSG is established under the SEMP.

4.2. Other references

Council's documents including:

- a) Incident Management Framework
- b) Emergency Management Plan
- c) Business Continuity Plan
- d) Incident Operations Manual

External documents including:

- a) LGASA Emergency Management Framework
- b) LGASA Mutual i-Responda Risk Management & Protections Guide.

5. Strategic Plan 2030

5.1. Strategic objectives

The following strategic objectives and aspirations in Council's Strategic Plan 2030 are the most relevant to this report:

Strategic Objective		Comments
3.	Our Environment We are leaders in how we manage and care for our environment and resources.	
3.3.	We are resilient to extreme weather events, bushfires and environmental risks.	The Incident Management Policy ensures Council's commitment to reducing disaster risks, managing incidents, and supporting recovery, strengthening resilience to extreme weather, bushfires and environmental hazards.

5.2. Organisation Plan

Our Strategic Plan is supported by an Organisation Plan which focuses on four key themes of customer care, trust, teamwork and growth. The key theme most relevant to this policy is trust.

6. Policy Implementation

This Policy will be implemented by the Chief Executive Officer or relevant portfolio General Manager and managed in accordance with Council's scheme of delegations.

Record number	D25/93969
Responsible Manager	Manager Corporate Governance
Other key internal stakeholders	General Manager City Operations General Manager Corporate Services General Manager Community Services
Last reviewed	30 June 2026
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Delegations	N