

Protocol for Inter-Council Emergency Management Resource Sharing

December 2018

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Acronyms and Definitions

Reference	Description
AFAC	Australasian Fire Authorities Council
Assisting Council	Council providing resources under this protocol
Assisting Support Agency	Agencies with specific capability to support the primary support agency
GM	General Manager
MEMC	Municipal Emergency Management Committee
LGAT	Local Government Association of Tasmania
EMA	Emergency Management Australia
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
Primary Support Agency	Provides functional support for activities across the Prevention and Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery (PPRR) spectrum.
Receiving Council	Council that requests and receives resources under this protocol
REMC	Regional Emergency Management Committee
REMP	Regional Emergency Management Plan
Response Management Authority	The organisation responsible for providing guidance for aspects of comprehensive emergency management.
TEMA	Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements

1. Introduction/Background

Emergencies sometimes require councils to source additional resources to ensure that the affected community is restored to normal functioning as efficiently as possible. Some The Tasmanian Government has a State Special Plan for Interoperability that allows them to plan appropriately for responding to large scale or complex emergencies, and this protocol is intended to provide a similar agreement for local councils. Council emergency management resources are generally sourced from within the municipal boundaries where the emergency occurs, which can impact significantly on the resources of the responsible council, particularly for larger or more complex emergencies.

The Tasmanian protocol for inter council emergency management resource sharing has been in place since 2012.

The protocol is based on the protocol developed by the Municipal Association of Victoria. This protocol is not intended to inhibit, or diminish the effectiveness, of any existing inter-council resource sharing arrangement. Councils should however review any such existing arrangements to ensure that issues identified in this protocol are addressed.

It is recognised that Local Government personnel who perform duties at another council in relation to an emergency event may gain valuable skills and experience. This knowledge will provide an opportunity for the council that provided personnel to refine their MEMP and enhance performance for future emergency events.

In order to be effective this protocol will require the support and commitment of council executive staff.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this protocol is to provide an agreed position between councils for the provision of inter-council assistance for response and recovery activities during an emergency. This protocol details the process for initiating requests for resources from another council and identifies associated operational and administrative requirements.

The application of this protocol is expected to enhance the capability of councils to provide the best possible outcomes for emergency management and to enhance the arrangements for the deployment of additional support as detailed in the Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan (TEMP). This protocol will facilitate appropriate and timely deployment of council resources..

3. Emergency Management Legislation and Policy

This protocol is consistent with the intent of *the Emergency Management Act 2018* (the Act) and the Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan.

The protocol operates within the context of the broader Tasmanian emergency management arrangements as set out in various plans, including the TEMP and Regional Emergency Management Plans. The application of the protocol will be consistent with the established resource command, control and coordination arrangements specified in the Act, TEMP, regional plans and municipal plans.

The protocol works to support and complement the statutory functions and powers of Regional Controllers, Regional Committees, Municipal Committees and Municipal Coordinators relating to the requesting and coordination of resources.

4. Scope of Activities

This protocol applies to requests for human resources, equipment and/or facilities in relation to response or recovery activities associated with an emergency. Duties undertaken by council staff seconded to another council for assisting with response and recovery operations should be within the scope of the requesting councils' emergency management responsibilities as set out in the Act, TEMP, REMP, MEMP, and any relevant sub-plans and associated plans.

5. Memorandum of Understanding

Some council's may prefer to enter memoranda of understanding with neighbouring councils to formalise resource sharing arrangements, although this is not considered to be a requirement.

6. Commencement Date

Arrangements based on this protocol will commence operation immediately following the endorsement and agreement to operate within its framework by more than one council.

7. Requests for Assistance

Resources can be requested at any time during an emergency including the recovery stages. Requests for assistance may be initiated by the GM (or person acting in this role), the Municipal Coordinator, the Recovery Coordinator or by any person nominated by the GM at the receiving council. Requests should be directed to the GM, or any person nominated by the GM, at the assisting council. It is noted that in many cases the person nominated by the GM will be the Municipal Coordinator or Recovery Coordinator at both the assisting and receiving council.

Such requests may be oral or in writing, however oral requests must be confirmed in writing as soon as is practicable. Requests for assistance should include the following information:

- A description of the emergency for which assistance is needed;
- The functional responsibilities that the resources will be used to fulfil;
- Specific tasks the resources will undertake;
- The required number and type of resources (personnel, equipment and/or facilities) required;
- An estimated time as to how long the resources will be required;
- The location and time for the staging of the resources and a point of contact at that location; and

- Administrative arrangements for the human resources should they be required eg transport, accommodation, feeding etc.

Any request for assistance by a council should be consistent with arrangements specified in relevant regional and municipal emergency management plans. The MEMC should be consulted or kept informed about the transfer of resources between councils. The level of consultation will be determined by the scale of the event.

The Municipal Coordinator must be contacted before the resources are moved.

It is anticipated that a receiving council will initially seek assistance from surrounding councils. This will reduce travel times and expenses for assisting councils to respond and return.

Limitations

A council that has committed to this protocol and is requested to provide assistance should endeavour to provide the resources requested unless such resources are required for that council's own purposes.

A council that provides resources that are later required for that council's own purposes, may request such resources to be returned prior to the agreed time-frame. The receiving council will release those resources in accordance with the assisting councils requirements.

8. Operation

Command, Control and Co-ordination

The receiving council will command all resources, including those from assisting councils, involved in the execution of the receiving councils emergency response and recovery responsibilities.

The Response Management Authority will control municipal resources assigned as a support agency to response activities.

The receiving council must afford the same powers, duties, rights and privileges to staff from the assisting council as its own staff performing equivalent roles or functions.

The assisting council will provide the receiving council with a point of contact for liaison purposes for the duration of the resource sharing arrangement.

Authority to Perform Duties

Where staff from an assisting council are requested to perform duties in specific roles, those staff must be competent, experienced and appropriately authorised to undertake the role prior to commencement.

Induction / Work Health & Safety

The statutory and common law obligations which require the receiving council to provide for the health and safety of its own employees apply equally in relation to those personnel deployed from an assisting council.

The Response Management Authority will be responsible for the work health and safety (OH&S) of all council personnel deployed in emergency response roles.

The Primary Support Agency will be responsible for the WH&S of all council personnel deployed in recovery roles. Prior to the deployment of personnel from assisting councils the receiving council will make arrangements for such personnel to be appropriately briefed and debriefed. The briefing must include details of hazards and safety requirements and any measures required to respond to these, an overview of the emergency, the tasks/activities to be performed and reporting lines including the process for reporting WH&S concerns or incidents. A representative from the management authority should participate in the induction briefing sessions and it should be recorded that this induction took place.

The receiving council will be diligent in assigning appropriate roles to the personnel from an assisting council. The performance of some duties may require personnel to possess specific qualifications or accreditation. Personnel from an assisting council will not be assigned to a role if uncertainty exists regarding the competency of the person to perform those duties. Personnel from an assisting council may be reassigned to alternative duties that are consistent with their competency and experience or stood down at any time.

The receiving council will assume an employer's normal responsibilities for the wellbeing of personnel from the assisting council/s. This responsibility covers issues such as rostering, fatigue, psychological well-being, and all work health and safety requirements.

The assisting council will be responsible for the payment of workers compensation premiums for their own staff and for the payment of any accident compensation payments to their own staff. The assisting council is responsible for ongoing staff support and should ensure that any notifiable workplace incidents under the Work Health and Safety Act 2012 that may have occurred during the emergency event are reported to an inspector.

Payment of Expenses

The council receiving assistance will be responsible for the reimbursement, or payment, of all expenses incurred by the assisting council, including salaries, overtime, penalties, travel and accommodation expenses and consumables utilised in conjunction with the resources provided.

The assisting council will calculate expenses and provide a detailed account for all reasonable costs incurred by the seconded staff. Salaries, overtime and penalty rates will be calculated at rates applicable to the assisting council. The assisting council may at its absolute discretion waive any part of these costs.

Claims for Reimbursement of Expenditure from the State

Where activated by the State Government, reimbursement of eligible expenditure under the Local Government Relief and Recovery Policy from the State Government may include costs incurred by the receiving council under Protocol, subject to the requirements under the Local Government Policy being met by the receiving council.

Liability for Loss or Injury

It is agreed and understood that each individual council (assisting/receiving council) will be responsible for its own potential liabilities in respect to any losses arising out of activities associated with "Resource Sharing" under this protocol on the assumption that common law will prevail.

It is further agreed and understood that each council's MAV Insurance, Liability Mutual Insurance Policy is extended to indemnify those councils providing the resource service/equipment (principal/assisting council) in respect of any claim able to be indemnified under the policy brought in respect of personal injury or damage to property caused by an occurrence, or for breach of professional duty arising directly and solely out of the negligent acts, errors or omissions of those councils receiving the resource service/equipment. This extension does not extend to any negligent acts, errors or omissions of the principal council, its staff or agents themselves.

Withdrawal from Protocol

A participating council may withdraw from the arrangements based on this protocol at anytime by providing written notice to the LGAT.

Participating Councils

A list of participating councils will be maintained by the LGAT and attached to the protocol and available on the LGAT website. The LGAT will notify all councils of any changes to the protocol membership. Membership will be reviewed and confirmed on a three yearly basis by the LGAT.

Councils are requested to formally commit to this protocol by signing and returning the attached letter template for this purpose.

Appendix 1- Council agreement to participate in the protocol

(Insert Council Letterhead)

[Name]

Senior Policy Officer

Local Government Association of Tasmania

GPO Box 1521

Hobart TAS 7000

Dear [salutation],

Re: Protocol for Inter-council Emergency Management Resource Sharing

The _____ Council confirms its commitment to this protocol. The purpose of this protocol is to provide an agreed position between councils for the provision of inter-council assistance for response and recovery activities during an emergency. This protocol details the process for initiating requests for resources from another council and identifies associated operational and administrative requirements.

The application of this protocol is expected to enhance the capability of councils to provide the best possible outcomes for emergency management.

The co-ordination of responding agencies involves the systematic acquisition and application of resources (personnel, equipment and facilities) in accordance with the requirements of the emergency. This protocol will facilitate appropriate timely mustering of resources ready to discharge municipal functions.

Signed General Manager or Delegated Officer.

Appendix 2 – Checklist

Requesting Assistance or Resources from another Council

Action to Complete	Yes/No
GM (or person acting in this role) or person nominated by the GM at the receiving council to direct request for resources to the GM at the assisting council either verbal or in writing.	
<p>Request for resources must be confirmed in writing and should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the emergency for which assistance is needed; • The required number and type of resources (personnel, equipment and/or facilities) required; • The functional responsibilities that the resources will be used to fulfil • Specific tasks the resources will undertake. • An estimated time as to how long the resources will be required; • The location and time for the staging of the resources and a point of contact at that location; • Administrative arrangements for the human resources should they be required eg transport, accommodation, feeding etc. 	
<p>The Municipal Emergency Management Coordinator (MEMC) should be contacted before resources are moved. The Regional Commander must be notified of the council's intention to send resources.</p>	
<p>Receiving council to manage municipal resources assigned to response activities. Receiving council to endeavour to afford the same powers, duties, rights and privileges to staff from the assisting council as its own staff performing equivalent roles or functions.</p>	
<p>Staff from an assisting council must be appropriately authorised to undertake roles prior to commencement.</p>	
<p>Personnel from assisting council should be registered and appropriately briefed prior to being deployed. Any briefing should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of hazard and safety requirements; An overview of the emergency; The tasks/activities to be performed; and Reporting lines including for OH&S incidents. <p>A representative of the management authority should participate in this briefing.</p>	
<p>Receiving council should reimburse, or directly pay, for all expenses incurred by the assisting council including salaries, overtime, penalties, travel and accommodation expenses and consumables utilised in conjunction with the resources provided as outlined by the assisting council. The assisting council will calculate expenses and provide a detailed account for all reasonable costs incurred.</p>	
<p>Assisting council should ensure that appropriate debriefing and support services are available for their staff. The assisting council should also ensure that any workplace incidents that may have occurred during the emergency event are recorded and that Workcover is advised</p>	

Participating Councils

