

# Assistance During Emergency Events Policy

## 1. Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to define how City of Playford will support the emergency services and other Councils in responding to an emergency. In particular:

- Safety and welfare of people
- arrangements that will allow the participation of Councils staff and associated use of Council equipment;
- the availability of Council employees who agree and are selected through a selection process to participate;
- the availability of Council owned plant and equipment; and
- the scope of works that might be undertaken.

## 2. Scope

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 Playford recognises the shared responsibility that it has to help protect and assist its community to respond to and recover from disasters.

This policy applies to Council staff and provides a Council position on what assistance will be provided to emergency service organisations and other Councils in the event of an emergency.

## 3. Definitions

**Council staff** means Council employees and within this policy does not include any person who separately undertakes duties as a registered emergency service volunteer e.g. CFS firefighter or SES volunteer.

**Incident Management Team** means a team of Council staff identified to respond to an emergency

	Policy No.:	Leave blank for future use	Version No.:	1
	ECM Document Set No.:	2060616	Initial Date of Adoption:	26 May 2015
	Authorised by:	Council	Date of Current Version:	26 May 2015
	Document Maintained by:	Corporate Consulting, Risk and WHS	Next Review Date:	May 2019

**I-Responda** relates to a framework developed to assist Councils in planning and implementation of their response to emergency incidents. The Framework ensures Council personnel can participate safely and are appropriately managed in during emergency incidents.

**Other Council** means other Local Government Councils in South Australia or Interstate

**Emergency** means an event that causes, or threatens to cause:

- a) the death of, or injury or other damage to the health of, any person; or
- b) the destruction of, or damage to, any property; or
- c) a disruption to essential services or to services usually enjoyed by the community; or
- d) harm to the environment, or to flora or fauna. (EM Act 2004 S3)

#### 4. Legislation and References

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 (s7(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 (s7(d)).

Council's link to the State emergency management arrangements is through the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP). The SEMP is prepared pursuant to s9 of the *Emergency Management Act (2004)*, which lists Councils as *Participating Organisations* to six of the thirteen Functional Services that are established under the SEMP.

Functional Services are groupings of participating agencies coordinated by a lead agency that perform a functional role as part of the State Emergency Management Plan arrangements to support response and recovery operations for an emergency. This policy has been prepared within the context of supporting the emergency services in emergencies.


#### 5. Policy

##### 5.1 Preparedness

##### 5.1.1 Arrangements and communication

Council will endeavour to meet periodically (at least annually) with the relevant emergency services to confirm critical coordination arrangements. These will include:

- contact protocols;
- details of Council resources that could be made available;
- the arrangements for accessing such resources; and

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- the scope of work that could be performed.

### 5.1.2 Availability of Council employees

To support this policy the Council will establish and maintain an 'Employee Emergency Response Support Register'. The Council will ensure that the employees that are listed on the Register are adequately trained:

- to operate the plant and equipment that might be required to support an emergency response; and
- in work health and safety procedures that are pertinent to staying safe in an emergency.

Council will:


- Select relevant employees through an Expression of Interest process who are interested in participating in Council response(s) to emergency support requests under this policy and list such employees on the Employee Emergency Response Support Register;
- not obligate any Council Employee to be listed on the Employee Emergency Response Support Register, nor obligate any Council employee listed on the register to respond to a particular incident;
- ensure all Council Employees who will be required to participate or operate Council vehicles or plant and equipment in the event of an emergency undertake annually the i-Responda program;
- maintain the integrity of the Employee Emergency Response Support Register; and
- reserve the right, in accordance with the i-Responda framework, not to release Council employees to support an emergency event should extenuating circumstances exist (as deemed by the CEO or delegate).

### 5.1.3 Availability of Council Plant and Equipment

Council will establish and maintain an 'Emergency Services Plant and Equipment Register' which will identify Council owned plant and equipment that can be made available to the emergency services for the purpose of being used in an emergency response operation. The Emergency Services Plant and Equipment Register will be available for viewing on Councils secure Emergency Management website.

Council will:

- provide a list of vehicles, plant and equipment, maintained in operational condition, that may be available for the purpose of utilisation in an emergency;

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- liaise with the Control Agency about how the delivery of, or access to, any vehicles, plant and equipment will be achieved;
- have available at all times a list of persons on the Employee Emergency Response Support Register that are competent to operate the various items of plant and equipment; and
- reserve the right not to release Council plant and equipment for emergency response operations should extenuating circumstances exist.

In the event it is requested by another Council to utilise City of Playford resources, plant and or equipment the relevant Practice Manager and or Service Coordinator will make a decision based on available resources.

#### 5.1.4 Spontaneous Volunteers

The Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, in partnership with Volunteering SA-NT, have arrangements to manage the coordination of spontaneous volunteers. The Director, State Recovery Office, may activate these arrangements when the need to register and manage spontaneous volunteers is evident.

Council (including members of the Incident Management Team) will not supervise or direct Spontaneous Volunteers in the event of an emergency. Spontaneous Volunteers should be directed to the relevant Control Agency.

#### 5.1.5 Scope of Works

Council will advise the emergency services of the types of work that it is prepared to allow its plant to be used for from time to time. In general terms the scope will reflect that contained in the publication Supervision of Machinery Used in Bushfire Operations Government of South Australia, Edition 2, March 2011.


### 5.2 Risk Management

#### 5.2.1 Application of Risk Management

The Council when supporting the emergency services and other Councils in responses operations will:

- apply appropriate risk management principles; and
- have regard to the arrangements of the LGA Asset Mutual Fund, the LGA Workers Compensation Scheme and LGA Mutual Liability Scheme.

The Council will act in a manner that ensures the various activities that might be undertaken in an emergency response situation are managed in such a way that the safety and health of its workers and community are paramount.

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### 5.2.2 i-Responda Framework

The i-Responda framework has been developed in consultation with the LGA and Local Government Risk Services. It addresses issues such as incident management protocols, operational arrangements in emergency response situations and fulfils the legislative requirement of the Work Health and Safety Act to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of the Council worker.

Implementation of the framework will equip Council employees with information and tools that will enable a confident response to requests for Councils to provide support to emergencies.

Council will:

- implement the i-Responda framework, to ensure that all emergency response activities are undertaken within a consistent and robust risk assessment framework guiding practical decisions and actions pursuant to the Schemes' Rules; and
- establish, implement, monitor and review work health and safety policy and procedures consistent with the i-Responda framework and Council policies and procedures relating to Risk and WHS

## 5.3 Insurance


### 5.3.1 Local Government Association Asset Mutual Fund (LGAAMF)

The LGAAMF will continue to provide coverage to Council owned property, plant and machinery (mobile or otherwise) while it is being used in preventing, preparing, or responding to an emergency on the following basis:

- the plant, vehicle, or machinery must be operated by Council staff and in accordance with the i-Responda framework; and
- Council is responsible to ensure all property, vehicles, plant and machinery (mobile or otherwise) provided to support an emergency is fit for purpose and consistent with the emergency response.

### 5.3.2 Local Government Association Workers Compensation Scheme (LGAWCS)

Council's membership of the LGAWCS ensures that all staff are covered for workers compensation (as required by the Worker's Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 1986) where the activity being carried out with Council plant and equipment is ordinary Council business, so the activity forms part of the employee's ordinary employment.

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Pursuant to workers compensation legislation, the compensability arises from injury sustained 'in the course of employment'. The i-Responda framework establishes that at all times in responding to an emergency incident or disaster, the Council, the CEO and the relevant employee/s will be undertaking ordinary activity 'in the course of employment' controlled and directed by Council, including in an extraordinary event.

Council employees will retain workers compensation cover when supporting the emergency services by operating Council plant and equipment in the conduct of Council business.

### 5.3.3 Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme (LGAMLS)

For the purpose of the i-Responda framework, the Council as a member of the Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme is entitled to civil liability cover including proactive risk management support, pursuant to the LGAMLS Rules.

The i-Responda framework establishes that all existing insurance arrangements will continue (workers compensation, public liability and asset insurance) subject to the normal terms and conditions.

## 6. Responsibilities

The Risk and WHS team in the Corporate Consulting Unit will be responsible for communication, implementation and monitoring of this policy.

## 7. Relevance to Council Plan


Relates to Strategy 1 of Councils Strategic Plan which states "Our foundations – services, city presentation and community pride"

## 8. Supporting Documentation

- Community Emergency Management Policy
- City of Playford Emergency Management Plan
- Emergency Services Plant and Equipment Register
- Employee Emergency Response Support Register

## 9. Approval and Change History

Version	Approval Date	Approval by	Change
1	26 May 2015	Council Resolution	New Policy

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