NEW LEMA TEMPLATE SUITE

INCIDENT SUPPORT HANDBOOK

GUIDANCE

DATE	VERSION	PURPOSE
31 July 2026	1.0	Released for sector use and feedback.

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INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

About this guidance

This Guidance provides information and advice to help local governments prepare an Incident Support Handbook (Handbook) as part of their Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA).

The Guidance is designed to support use of the Incident Support Handbook Template (template). The Guidance provides step by step guidance for completing each section of the template, including:

- Context: explains why the section is included and outlines any relevant legislative or policy requirements.
- How to complete this section: provides guidance on what to include, key considerations, and some example lists or content.
- Examples, including diagrams and flowcharts that could be used and other suggestions to help the local government prepare the content in the Handbook.

The Guidance may also be useful for local governments choosing to use alternative formats for their LEMA documents as it provides information about the incident support roles and responsibilities that must be included in LEMA.

In the Guidance and Template, the phrase “minimum requirements for LEMA” refers to the requirements that local governments must address or include in LEMA to be considered compliant with obligations under the *Emergency Management Act 2005* and the State Emergency Management Policy. More information about the minimum requirements for LEMA is available at EngageWAEM website and the Local Government EM Knowledge Hub (LG EM Hub) at.

Incident Support Handbook

The Handbook is one of the four recommended documents that, together, can meet the minimum requirements for a LEMA and local government’s other emergency management obligations.

The Handbook:

- documents local incident support functions, roles and responsibilities
- provides clear, accessible operational information for use during an incident
- supports coordination with Controlling Agencies and other emergency management partners.

The Handbook is intended for use by local government staff to prepare for emergencies and to manage or support an incident. It should:

- be concise and action oriented
- include checklists, contacts, clear procedures and practical arrangements

- keep text short and instructive – prioritising the information required for decision making or to take action.

The Handbook should align with the local government's strategies and policies as described in the Local Emergency Management Plan and other strategic documents. It should also be consistent with relevant operational procedures of the local government.

As an operational document, the Handbook is approved by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate. Unlike the Local Emergency Management Plan, Council approval is not required under the *Local Government Act 1995*.

The Handbook requires regular review to ensure information remains current accurate and accessible during an emergency.

Incident Support Handbook Template

The Template is designed to support local governments in preparing an Incident Support Handbook. Local governments are encouraged to edit or amend the template as required to suit their individual requirements and style but must ensure the essential requirements for LEMA are included and addressed.

The Handbook template is structured into three parts:

- **Part 1** - Operational information and instructions about roles, responsibilities and actions to take in an emergency.
- **Part 2** - Detailed lists of information needed in an emergency, such as contact details, local facilities and available resources, including details that would not be distributed to the public.
- **Optional Part 3** - Additional supporting information or documents to support operations, such as forms, checklists, workflows and other relevant resources.

The template includes the following types of content, designed by font colour and style.

In the template:

- Black text is recommended model text. This may be altered or rearranged, however local governments should ensure the changes still address the minimum requirements for LEMA.
- [**INSERT**: text] indicates where to include locally specific content. The local government needs to insert content that is specific to their context, requirements and arrangements. The brackets and INSERT should be deleted and blue text changed to black text when it has been edited.
- [**INSTRUCTION**: text] is an instruction for the writer. All instructions must be deleted before finalising the Handbook.
- **[OPTIONAL]** indicates content that is not minimum requirement for LEMA. The local government does not need to include Optional sections, but they are recommended as best practice in emergency management planning. The word [OPTIONAL] should be deleted before finalising the Handbook.

Insertion of local government names is referenced in two ways in the template:

- Local government names indicates, the full names should be inserted, eg Shire of Somewhere
- City/Town/Shire indicates just the shortened reference could be used, eg 'Shire'

Model text is provided in the template for most sections of Part 1 and sample tables are provided for Part 2.

To assist with completing Part 1, consider preparing the Part 2 tables first. The information recorded in these tables can then be referenced throughout Part 1.

Tip: Leave all the references until the document is complete and then update based on the final section numbering. Search "reference" or "section" to find them.

Automatically numbered headings are provided in the templates using styles, this helps to generate and update the Table of Contents. If adding new headings, apply the following heading style to the new text for the headings to re-number:

Heading 1, is used for Parts 1, 2 and 3, it automatically includes 'Part' and the number.

Heading 1 (no number) is used for preliminaries and other un-numbered level 1 headings

Heading 2 is used for numbered sections within each part (eg 1.1, 2.1 etc)

Heading 3 is used for un-numbered sub-section headings. Multi-level numbering could be turned on for this section in the 'styles' menu if preferred.

The Guidance includes some diagrams to indicate images that could be included in the Handbook. If adding graphics to the Plan, it is recommended that the explanatory body text is retained or alt-text is added to the graphic to explain it for vision impaired readers. To add alt-text to a figure or graphic, right-click on the figure and select "add alt-text" from the pop-up menu.

Important Note:

The purpose of an Incident Support Handbook is to provide access to critical information in an emergency, even when power and data services have been disrupted. Whilst it is time consuming to duplicate information in the Handbook that is available elsewhere, the local government should consider including essential information in this document that may be required when there is no access to digital services.

Process to develop or review an Incident Support Handbook

The Handbook is developed and reviewed under the leadership of the local government, usually coordinated by an officer responsible for emergency management. The planning process for developing a new Handbook is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Part 2 of the Handbook should be updated annually, prior to the higher risk weather season. This can be undertaken by the responsible officer with consultation limited to the relevant stakeholders.

The Handbook also requires a major review at least every five years, in accordance with the State EM Policy.

Figure 1 Planning process to develop or review an Incident Support Handbook



1. Plan and prepare

Review this Guidance to confirm:

- the intent of the Handbook and the purpose of each section
- how the Handbook fits within the LEMA
- who needs to be consulted and when (LEMC, Elected Members, internal business units, external stakeholders)
- approval requirements.

2. Gather information

Gather and confirm existing information to inform the draft Handbook. This stage focuses on consolidating verified, current content. Identify:

- information already available within the local government
- information requiring update, development or local customisation
- sections that may not be applicable or require adaptation
- additional information required to reflect local risks, vulnerabilities and capability

3. Consult

Consultation ensures the information included in the Handbook is correct and useful.

Consultation is typically undertaken with the LEMC, relevant local government business units, Elected Members and other stakeholders as appropriate. It is recommended local governments also engage with DEMC members, Hazard Management Agencies and Support Organisations to identify the required information for various support functions.

Consultation may occur through meetings or targeted discussions.

4. Initial draft

Draft the Handbook using the template and verified local information.

Incorporate the outcomes of any consultation. Continue to seek input from relevant local government business units to ensure the Handbook reflects local arrangements, risks, priorities and interdependencies, and aligns with other strategic and operational documents.

Existing emergency related plans, procedures and operational documents should be referenced where relevant.

5. Feedback and Review

Circulate the draft Handbook to relevant local government business units and the LEMC members to review and confirm local content and arrangements. Provide a copy to the District Emergency Management Advisor (DEMA) to review the content for consistency with the State EM Framework and provide advice on district and inter-agency considerations where required. The DEMA may facilitate further advice from DEMC members on an as-required basis.

Feedback is used to confirm accuracy, clarity and ensure that the Handbook is practical and fit for purpose during emergency operations.

6. Approval

Once finalised, present the Handbook to the LEMC to confirm that the LEMC endorses the Handbook and its alignment with local arrangements.

The Handbook is then submitted to the designated approver following the internal approval process.

The approved Handbook should be distributed to the Executive Leadership Team and all other personnel and teams within the local government who have a role in incident management and support. It should also be shared with the LEMC, the Local Emergency Coordinator and the DEMC for information.

As it is an operational document, the Handbook does not need to be progressed to SEMC for noting.

A copy of the Handbook may also be provided to other key stakeholders if deemed appropriate by the local government, noting that Part 2 contains personal contact information. The local government may choose to make Part 1 available to the community on request, but it is recommended Part 2 remain internal only.

7. Update and Review

The Handbook should be updated annually, particularly Part 2, to ensure contact details and facilities information remain current and accurate.

The Handbook also requires a major review at least every five years from formal approval and should be reviewed earlier if required following a significant emergency or major change to the State EM Framework. A major review should involve consultation with:

- the local government's management teams and business units
- members of the LEMC and DEMC
- other stakeholders as appropriate.

Further information about review processes is available in the State EM Framework.

The following sections align directly with the structure and content of the Incident Support Handbook Template.

PRELIMINARIES

Context

This part provides a record of the Handbook's approval and review to maintain governance and operational reliability.

It describes the approval pathway and validates that the Handbook has successfully met local governance requirements. Including a distribution list helps confirm that all key emergency management partners have access to the same current information.

This section also establishes a clear review timeline to keep the plan current and aligned with evolving community risks over time.

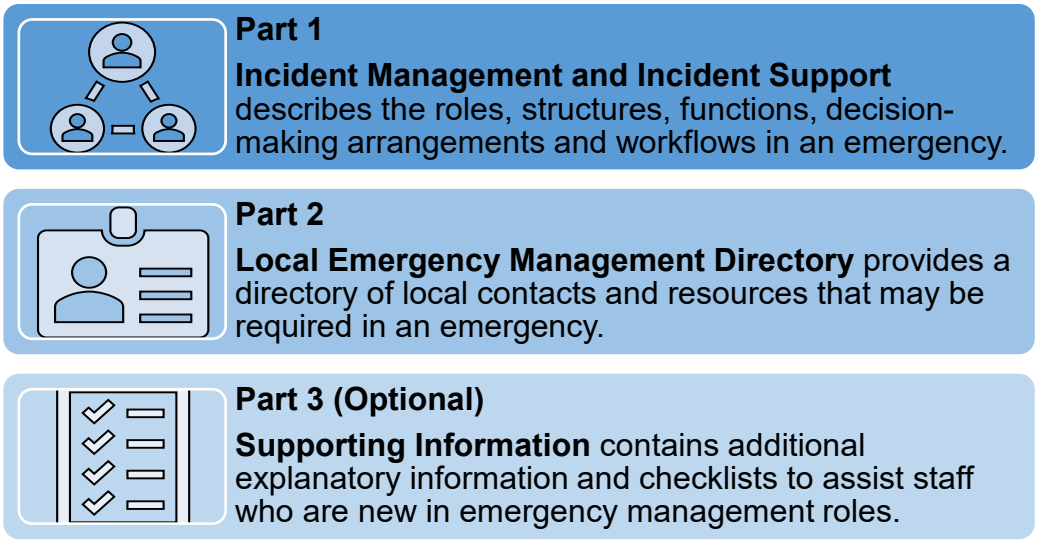
How to complete this section

Include information about when the Handbook was approved and about the distribution of the Handbook. Model text is provided in the template.

Other preliminary information may be included in accordance with the local government's policies and style guide – such as Foreword(s), Acknowledgements or disclaimers.

Examples

The structure of the document could also be depicted graphically in this section, as shown below. (Alt-text has been attached to this diagram).



PART 1 ARRANGEMENTS FOR INCIDENT MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

This part outlines the key processes, roles and operational arrangements that need to be undertaken in an emergency. It is intended to provide a ready-reckoner and reference for local government elected members, executive and officers, as well as emergency management partners.

1.1 Emergency Notification Process and Contacts

Context

Clear processes for notifying of an emergency reduce delays, minimise confusion and improve coordination between the local government and emergency management agencies. This is especially important in the early stages of an incident, when decisions must be made quickly and information may be limited.

How to complete this section

This section should provide clear, practical instructions about who to contact when an emergency occurs. It must be concise, easy to follow under pressure.

Model text is provided in the template.

1.2 Preparing for an Imminent Emergency

Context

There are numerous actions a local government should undertake immediately when an emergency occurs, or commence when an emergency is anticipated, to support effective response and help reduce impacts on the community.

Clear preparation actions ensure the local government, its staff, facilities, services and community are ready to respond and support emergency management agencies.

How to complete this section

This section should include a quick checklist of actions to be taken (or procedures to be followed) when an emergency commences or is imminent. It should support staff to quickly understand what needs to happen and who is responsible.

The checklist should cover the key actions required to:

- activate internal awareness, response and business continuity arrangements
- coordinate with the Hazard Management Agency (HMA) or Controlling Agency
- prepare staff, facilities and services
- support the community with timely information and readiness measures
- transition from business-as-usual operations to emergency readiness

Model text is provided in the template. Edit the checklist items to suit the local government's procedures and edit references as required.

If existing plans and procedures are already in place, this model text may be replaced or supporting checklists included in Part 3 to avoid duplication.

Consider also nominating the position or team responsible for initiating each of the activities in the list.

1.3 State Incident Management Arrangements

Context

The State Emergency Management Plan (State EM Plan) establishes a model for how all emergencies are managed in Western Australia, regardless of the Hazard Management Agency.

Local governments should understand these incident management arrangements and identify how their personnel, roles and responsibilities align with them.

How to complete this section

The section should describe the incident management arrangements as described in the State EM Plan, and how the local government interacts with those roles, including the roles and responsibilities of key positions and groups established in an emergency.

The template includes model text, which is explained below:

Incident management structures

Include the model text and figures describing the State incident management arrangements. Avoid editing this content to ensure consistency with the State EM Framework.

Roles and functions

Include the table explaining the key roles and groups in an emergency. Edit the local government role wherever indicated by **[INSERT**: text] to reflect the local government's responsibilities for fire suppression. Where other parts of the Handbook are referenced, check that the references match the final version of the local government's Handbook.

Incident levels

Model text is provided to explain incident levels and how the incident complexity affects coordination arrangements and local government involvement.

To ensure consistency with the State EM Framework, edits are not recommended.

1.4 Arrangements for Managing Fire Incidents

Context

Local governments have a legislated responsibility for the emergency management activity of fire suppression under the *Emergency Management Regulations 2006*.

Under the State EM Framework and State Hazard Plan – Fire, local governments, Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) are designated Controlling Agencies for fire.

Local governments are responsible as Controlling Agency for the initial response to fires within their district that occur outside of Gazetted Fire Districts and DBCA managed land. They also have associated prevention, preparedness and recovery responsibilities in support of this role. Refer to the State Hazard Plan – Fire for further information.

Local governments are required to have local laws and/or policies and operating procedures outlining their arrangements for fire risk management, fire suppression and management of local brigades, appropriate to their responsibilities. They must maintain the resources and capabilities necessary to fulfil their responsibilities and have clearly designated roles and arrangements for incident escalation and for the provision of public information for incidents under their control.

How to complete this section

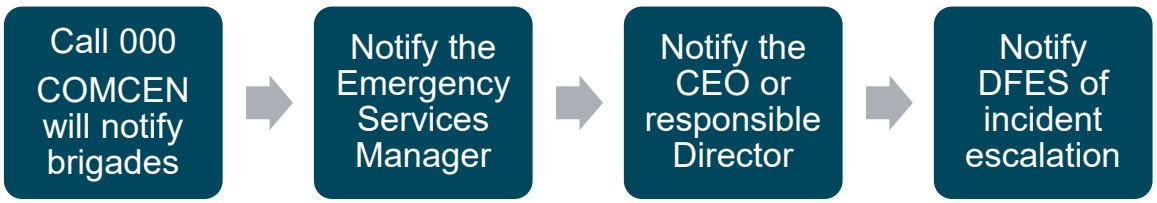
This section should describe the local government's responsibilities for fire suppression and provide a clear, localised workflow showing the escalation and roles for how fire incidents are managed. It is intended to provide a quick reference of the key responsibilities, roles and arrangements to inform local government officers.

It is not intended as an operational procedure for an Incident Controller or Bush Fire Brigades, which should be described in the relevant local laws, policies and operating procedures. To avoid uncertainty or misinformation, this section should reference rather than duplicate or restate existing policies and procedures.

Amend the Model Text and table to suit the local government or delete if not applicable.

Example

A graphic may be included to illustrate escalation of fire incident – a sample is provided below.



1.5 Local Incident Support Arrangements and Resources

Context

Emergency management planning enables the local government to establish clear internal arrangements, so personnel understand their roles, responsibilities and escalation pathways during an emergency. Some arrangements will be included in existing operational policies and procedures, which should be referenced in the Handbook, and others will be unique to emergency situations and should be described in the Handbook.

How to complete this section

This section should identify the support functions the local government can provide in an emergency and the nominated position holder(s) for each function.

The template includes the following sub-sections.

Incident support roles and structures

A table is provided listing typical support roles or functions in an emergency. Edit the table to provide information about position holders within the local government that can support these roles and functions. Some examples are provided in the Template.

The allocation of responsibility for a role or function should reflect reporting lines and authorities in the local government.

Smaller local governments may choose to reduce the overall number of roles/functions in the table, noting there are fewer staff. An alternative example table is provided at the end of this section.

Decision making authority and escalation in emergencies

This section should briefly describe how decisions are made and escalated within the organisation in an emergency, including requests from the Incident Management Team (IMT).

Model text is provided which the local government should edit and expand as required to reflect existing administrative policies and procedures. The section should address:

- The types of decisions made at operational, management and executive levels
- Matters that require escalation (e.g. major expenditure, evacuation centre activation, public messaging)
- How requests are received (e.g. via IMT liaison, ISG)
- Who prioritises and approves requests

Facilities, resources and supplies for use by emergency management agencies

This section should summarise the categories of facilities and resources the local government has identified for incident support and identify where that information can be found.

It should remain short and refer the reader to the relevant section in Part 2 or other available local government resources.

Model text is provided in the template including a list of the recommended categories of support information and references to the information.

The categories listed in this section should match the table headings in Part 2. Update references as required to match the structure of the local government's Handbook.

Agreements and partnerships for resource sharing and support [OPTIONAL]

This section should list the services and resources that may be available through agreements or partnerships with other local governments, local service providers or community organisations.

Model text is provided in the template. The local government should add a brief description of the type of support available and where further details can be found. It is recommended that detail of the agreements is outlined in Part 2 or a reference to the location of the agreement is provided.

The section is optional and can be deleted if the local government does not have relevant agreements.

Example Text

An alternative table of Incident Support Roles and Structure table for smaller local governments is provided below:

Role/Function	**Designated Position Holder(s) to Support the Role/Function**
Emergency Services Manager	CESM
Decision maker/authorise expenditure/authorise IMT requests Liaison Officer Incident Management Team / ISG / OASG Media Liaison Officer	CEO
Spokesperson	Mayor/President
Local Recovery Coordinator (Deputise on ISG/OASG when needed)	Manager Community Services

Impact Statement Contribution	Coordinated internally by Administration Officer Contribution approved by Manager Community Services
Activation of evacuation centres and community support services	Manager Community Services
Animal Management & Environmental Health	Manager Ranger or Environmental Health Services
Waste, Traffic, Roads and Infrastructure	Manager Works
Information communication technology (ICT) support	Manager Corporate Services
Finances	Manager Corporate Services

1.6 Special Considerations – People, Places and Premises at higher risk

Context

Local governments are required to identify groups within the community that may require special consideration or arrangements during an emergency. They may also need to identify places, premises and infrastructure that are at increased risk due to their function, the people who use them, the materials or activities they contain, or their importance to maintaining essential services and function.

Identifying these people, places and premises in the Handbook ensures the information is readily available to advise emergency management agencies during an emergency. This supports timely decision-making and planning to protect people, critical assets, essential services and vulnerable locations within the community.

Emergency management is a shared responsibility. Owners and operators of premises are responsible for understanding their risks and maintaining appropriate emergency arrangements. Individuals, households, carers and service providers are responsible for the safety, wellbeing and support of those in their care.

Local governments are encouraged to engage with owners and operators of higher-risk places and premises before an emergency to clarify roles, responsibilities and arrangements for emergency preparedness, response and recovery.

How to complete this section

This section should summarise the information available about community groups, local infrastructure, assets and premises that may be at higher risk and require additional support in an emergency to assist the Incident Controller to plan the response.

Start by identifying key groups of people, assets, services and locations that may require additional protection or support in an emergency using the categories listed in the model text as prompts. The first five categories must be addressed as minimum requirements for LEMA. Populate the tables in Part 2 with addresses, contact details and other details for the identified premises. Further information is provided below and in Part 2.6 and 2.7 of the Guidance.

In Part 1, use the model text to summarise the premises identified, with references to the tables in Part 2. Example text is provided at the end of this section to assist.

Below is a list of the recommended categories with a brief description of the types of premises that may be included in each category. Consider providing maps to illustrate where the premises are located.

Hospitals and Aged Care Premises

List all hospital and aged care facilities in the local government area, with contact details and noting whether evacuation plans are in place/known.

Schools and Childcare Premises

List all schools and childcare premises in the local government area, with contact details and noting whether evacuation plans are in place/known.

Supported Living Premises

List all supported living premises and boarding houses in the local government area, to the extent they are known, with contact details.

Caravan Parks and Campgrounds

List all caravan parks and camping areas in the local government areas, with addresses and contact details.

Essential Services Infrastructure

Consider infrastructure sites that are particularly vulnerable to hazards and cause significant disruption to the community when impacted. This may include infrastructure such as water treatment plants or storage, waste management premises and mobile phone towers.

Do not include infrastructure networks that are well-known and cannot be protected, for example the power supply network.

Heavy Industry & Hazardous Materials Sites

List major industrial sites, particularly those that may contain hazardous materials, and/or industrial precincts.

Localities with Higher Asbestos Risk

Consider identifying suburbs or precincts that have a higher incidence of older buildings that are likely to contain asbestos containing materials.

Heritage Sites

Consider identifying heritage sites and places that are significant to the community and may require special consideration in response or clean-up.

Areas with Critical Ecological Values

Consider identifying sites that contain high or critical ecological values requiring additional consideration.

Example – Alternative Text for Part 1.6:

The Shire of Exampleton has identified infrastructure, assets and premises that may be at increased risk in an emergency. The owners and operators are responsible for developing and enacting emergency plans for their assets and premises. The Shire maintains contact information for the identified sites to inform and assist the Incident Controller and to ensure a coordinated response.

Hospitals and Aged Care

There is a hospital and aged care facility in Community A and a nursing post and day respite centre in Community B.

Addresses and contact details are included at Section 2.x

Schools and childcare

There are two schools and two childcare centres located in Community A and one school and one childcare in Community B.

Addresses and contact details are included at Section 2.x

Supported living premises

There are two premises with on-site carers that may require additional support in an emergency. For confidentiality reasons the contact details are not published and are available by the Emergency Services Manager.

Essential services infrastructure

This category includes sites such as water storage and waste management infrastructure in Community A and Community B and mobile phone towers across the Shire.

Details are included at Section 2.x

Heavy industry & hazardous material sites

There are two heavy industry site and three mine sites within the Shire, all with significant quantities of hazardous chemicals and waste stored on site. Hazardous materials are also disposed at the Shire's waste management facility.

Addresses and contact details are included at Section 2.x

Localities with higher asbestos risk

A precinct in Community A bounded by North, South, East and West streets contains a significant number of houses built between 1950 and 1980, many of which contain asbestos. Further information is available on the Shire's asbestos register.

Heritage sites

There are six sites in the Shire included on the State or Local Government heritage register. There are also Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Places which require engagement with the Registrar of Aboriginal Sites and local custodians.

Further information is provided at Section 2.x

Areas with critical ecological value

There are three sites with significant ecological values in the Shire:

- Special Nature Reserve

- Important National Park, noted for its unique biodiversity

- Fabulous Reserve, which includes habitat that is home to two endangered species

Further details are provided in Section 2.x

1.7 Community Support, Evacuation and Refuge

Context

During an incident, people may be required to evacuate, shelter or access relief services. The HMA has overall responsibility for managing evacuation.

The HMA or the Controlling Agency, where authorised, makes the decision to evacuate during an emergency and provides community warnings and public information about the actions that community should take. The HMA/Controlling Agency will consult with the local government and Department of Communities to determine the location of suitable evacuation centre/s, with consideration of the location and nature of the hazard.

The Department of Communities is responsible for coordinating the provision of reception and support services at the Evacuation Centre. They may seek support and assistance from the local government.

The State EM Plan requires that LEMA must include arrangements and information that will assist the Controlling Agency and HMA to undertake evacuation planning. Local governments support evacuation planning by identifying suitable premises, providing information about people and premises that may require additional support, providing advice about local roads and access, assisting with initial activation and operations at evacuation centres where required, and providing local knowledge to support community needs.

How to complete this section

Information about people and places that may require additional support in evacuation is provided at Section 1.6.

Table 2.2 in the template should include local government positions who can provide advice about local roads to inform evacuation planning.

This section should provide information about the arrangements for evacuation, refuge and community support during an emergency, including the operation of facilities that may be used as evacuation centres or places of refuge. Content should

be concise, action-focused and aligned with State arrangements. It should also provide links to information in Part 2 that supports evacuation planning.

It is recommended the relevant sections in Part 2 are completed at the same time as compiling this section.

The Department of Communities and relevant local government personnel responsible for community support and recovery functions should be consulted in the preparation of this section.

Avoid duplicating detailed procedures—provide clear references to where they are located.

The following headings are included in the template.

Evacuation centres

This section outlines the process and authorities for opening an evacuation centre.

Model text is provided, outlining the arrangements for opening an evacuation centre as per the State EM Plan. The local government should edit the text as required to describe the local arrangements and reference local procedures or checklists, including:

- Who is responsible for authorising the opening of a local government facility
- Who is responsible for coordinating the opening and liaising with Department of Communities
- Any special considerations or requirements in relation to the identified evacuation centres

A list of evacuation centres, including addresses, contact names and numbers and characteristics of the facility, should be provided in Part 2.

Refuge centres / community hubs [OPTIONAL]

This section outlines the circumstance and arrangements for a local government to open a refuge centre or community hub to support residents in an emergency, such as a heatwave.

It is optional and may be deleted if no arrangements exist.

Model text is provided in the template. The local government should edit the text and describe the local arrangements, with reference to local procedures or checklists, including:

- Who is responsible for authorising the opening of a refuge centre/community hub
- Who is responsible for opening and operating the refuge centre/community hub
- Arrangements in place to support the operation of a refuge centre/community hub

A list of suitable facilities for refuge centres can be included in Part 2.

Community support providers [OPTIONAL]

This optional section should identify the types of services available locally to provide support services for community evacuation and relief in an emergency.

Model text is provided in the template, including a list of the type of support that can be provided. Common needs include:

- Catering
- Mental Health First Aid
- Personal support
- Volunteer coordination
- Management of donated goods
- Translation services

The local government may choose to edit/expand this information.

It is recommended the full details of the organisations and suppliers is provided in Part 2.

Managing and Sharing Personal Information

In an emergency, the local government may be requested to share information about residents to assist emergency services. There are legislative requirements for the management and sharing of personal information, including arrangements for emergencies. The local government should understand these arrangements and have policies in place.

This section should explain the local government's policies and arrangements for information sharing and management in an emergency.

Model text is provided in the template. The local government should edit this to align with its internal policy and procedures for the management of personal information, applicable legislation and any existing information sharing agreements.

1.8 Animal Welfare

Context

Animal welfare issues can arise when animals are displaced, injured or at-risk during emergencies. While owners have primary responsibility for their own animals, additional support may be required where impacts are significant.

If the Incident Controller identifies significant animal welfare issues in an emergency that are beyond the capacity of individual owners and local arrangements, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) may be requested to coordinate animal welfare consistent with the State Support Plan for Animal Welfare in Emergencies.

While local governments are not the lead agency for animal welfare, they have important regulatory responsibilities for animal management and control. DPIRD may request local government support for animal welfare – such as providing local intelligence, staff, logistics, or facilities.

Local arrangements help ensure animal welfare needs are identified, coordinated and supported effectively during an emergency.

How to complete this section

This section should describe how the local government can support animal welfare during an emergency.

Include information about capacity, facilities and arrangements for animal welfare. This may be recorded in the Incident Support Handbook; a separate plan is not essential.

Model text is provided in the template. It should be edited to reflect the local government's capacity, facilities and arrangements to support, including:

- reference to any local plans or procedures (e.g. Animal Welfare in Emergencies Plan)
- the level of support the local government can provide based on capacity and resources
- how animal welfare activities are coordinated internally
- the position responsible for coordinating support for animal welfare and liaison with the Incident Controller, IMT and DPIRD about animal welfare matters

Examples of how a local government may support animal welfare during an emergency include:

- provide contact information for local facilities, vets and carers
- accommodate animals at local government facilities, such as the showgrounds or animal pound
- facilitate deliveries of feed
- collect stray or abandoned animals
- provide a liaison officer to support and advise DPIRD
- share information.

Localities that may require additional support for animal welfare include low density residential areas with higher rates of horse ownership, stables and intensive animal husbandry operations such as poultry farms, piggeries and feedlots.

The local government's Rangers or animal control teams should be consulted about this section for accuracy of information and to ensure alignment with internal policies and legislative requirements.

Detailed information and contact details for facilities and support providers should be included in Part 2.

1.9 Public Information and Communications

Context

Early and coordinated public information and communications helps the community understand what is happening, what actions to take and where to find reliable information during an emergency.

The Controlling Agency or Hazard Management Agency is responsible for emergency public information. Where the local government is the Controlling Agency for a fire, they are responsible for providing advice on public information to DFES. In all other emergencies, local governments support the Controlling Agency or Hazard Management Agencies and are responsible for communicating impacts about local government services.

How to complete this section

This section should provide clear, practical instruction on how the local government manages and supports public information during an emergency.

This section should be developed in consultation with personnel within your local government who are responsible for public information and communications during an emergency.

If the local government has a Plan or Procedure for communication in emergencies, it should be referenced in this section with a high-level summary and/or checklist of key actions and responsibilities. Avoid duplication.

The template includes the following sub-sections.

Emergency public information

This section should outline local government arrangements to manage and support emergency public information during an emergency.

The model text describes the local government responsibilities for public information, including:

- when the local government is the Controlling Agency and responsible for emergency public information
- when it supports the Controlling Agency or Hazard Management Agency (HMA)
- responsibility for communicating impacts to local government services

The local government should edit the text to reflect existing procedures and capacity, and to identify:

- roles responsible for preparing and supporting communications
- authorised spokesperson(s)

The local government should also prepare a list of media channels that it can use to share information with the community in an emergency, such as:

- local government website and social media
- local media (radio, newspapers)
- community networks and stakeholder groups
- physical channels (e.g. noticeboards, community meetings)

Include contact details for each channel at Part 2.

Internal Communication [OPTIONAL]

This section should describe local government arrangements for internal communications, based on the local government's usual practices and channels. Consider including arrangements for:

- regular internal briefings
- communication to operational, customer-facing and leadership staff
- processes to share emerging issues, risks and updates internally
- internal incident management

Generic model text is provided and should be edited and expanded to suit.

Media engagement

This section should provide key information about the local government's media protocols.

Model text is provided in the template and should be edited to reflect relevant local government roles or positions, including:

- who is authorised to speak to the media
- how media enquiries are received and referred
- how spokespersons are briefed and supported
- any restrictions on staff communicating publicly

Public meetings

This section provides information about the conduct of public meetings.

The local government should expand the model text to describe how the local government can support the Controlling Agency or HMA to conduct a public meeting, including identification of suitable locations or venues for public meetings.

1.10 Procurement and expenditure in an emergency

Context

During emergencies, local governments may need to procure goods and services quickly and incur unplanned expenditure to support response activities. Local Government procurement and expenditure in an emergency must remain compliant with *Local Government Act 1995* and purchasing policy requirements.

Local Government preparedness planning and associated resource identification includes identifying the local government's currently contracted suppliers from whom goods or services may be obtained in response to each type of hazard likely to cause an emergency. Creating and maintaining schedules of current contractors, that detail the services and supplies available through each contract and the method by which the contract is accessed in an emergency, ensures supplies and services are fast tracked without need for a procurement process.

Emergency response may, in some circumstances, require procurement of unforeseen goods or services and may require unbudgeted expenditure to be incurred. The *Local Government (Functions and General) Regulations 1996* prescribes tender exemptions where a S*tate of Emergency* has been declared.

Unbudgeted expenditure can only be incurred if authorised in advance by the Mayor / President, with records of the request and decision retained so that the authorisation and the extent of expenditure incurred can be reported to the next

Ordinary Council meeting (*Local Government Act, s.6.8)*. Budget variations (amendments) require Council decision by absolute majority.

The State EM Policy (s5.12) provides that the local government may be entitled to reimbursement for response activities directed by the HMA or Controlling Agency and not covered by existing agreements or legislated responsibilities. Capacity to claim expenses incurred in response to an emergency, where applicable, is dependent on records that evidence validly incurred costs and compliance.

How to complete this section

This section describes how the local government undertakes procurement and approves expenditure during an emergency.

Brief model text is provided in the template, which references the local government's existing policies and procedures.

It is recommended this section be developed in consultation with the local government's finance, governance and procurement teams to ensure alignment with internal policies, procedures and legislative requirements.

If a policy or procedure exists, it should be referenced at this section rather than duplicating information.

Section 2.4 provides a schedule of resources, service providers and supplier contracts available to support emergency response activities and should include existing contractual arrangements and the authorised officers responsible for activating those arrangements during an emergency.

If not already documented elsewhere in local government policy or procedures, consider including additional information about the following:

- how costs are incurred and is authorised during an emergency, including approving officers and after-hours arrangements
- circumstances in which escalation may be required, e.g. where a proposed procurement will not comply with legislative or policy requirements.
- requirements for written scope of work or supply, quotations and authority to incur the liability
- coordination with the Incident Controller and requirements to seek approval prior to incurring costs where reimbursement from an external Controlling Agency may apply
- processes for engaging existing and, where necessary, new suppliers
- how purchase orders are raised and cost codes assigned
- use of purchasing cards
- how expenditure, resource use and contractor hours and works performed are monitored and tracked
- requirements for supporting evidence (e.g. logs, invoices, photos pre and post incident)
- processes for approving, monitoring and recording overtime or surge staffing
- use of cost centres or emergency cost codes

Provide references for relevant procurement policies and procedures.

1.11 Early Recovery Arrangements

Context

Local governments have a legislated role to manage recovery after an emergency impacting the community (s.36(b) EM Act).

Early recovery activities must be initiated by the HMA when there are known or expected community impacts. The HMA shall transition coordination of recovery activities to the local government at the conclusion of response activities.

Local governments should also activate their local recovery arrangements as set out in their Local Recovery Plan during the response phase and begin planning for the transition of recovery activities from the HMA following the emergency.

The State Recovery Coordinator at DFES is available to support and advise local governments.

If the Department of Communities has been activated to provide emergency relief and support services, they will also have a role in planning early recovery.

How to complete this section

This section describes how the local government prepares for and initiates local recovery activities and manages the transition of recovery coordination from the Incident Controller to the local government.

Content should be concise, action-focused and aligned with the Local Recovery Plan. Do not duplicate the Local Recovery Plan—reference it and provide a high-level summary of key actions and responsibilities for the information of officers involved in response.

Initiation and transition of recovery

Model text is provided to describe how recovery is initiated during the response phase and how responsibility transitions to the local government.

The local government may want to include further information about how and when recovery arrangements will be activated and how the Local Recovery Coordinator will engage with the Incident Controller, Incident Management Team (IMT) and State Recovery Coordinator

Impact Statement

This section should describe how the local government contributes to and uses impact information to inform recovery planning.

Model text is provided; the local government might include further information about:

- The position responsible for coordinating the local government contribution to an Impact Statement
- The internal process for collecting impact information across local government business units (e.g. infrastructure damage, service disruption, community impacts) and the roles responsible for compiling, reviewing and approving information

- How and by whom the Impact Statement is reviewed and approved

Relief Centre / Early Recovery Hub [OPTIONAL]

This optional section describes how and when the local government may establish facilities that provide early recovery services to the community.

Brief model text is provided in the template. The local government may expand this to describe:

- The circumstances, conditions or thresholds that may trigger the establishment of a relief centre or early recovery hub (e.g. significant or prolonged community impacts)
- The local government's role in supporting or establishing these facilities
- Identification of agencies and organisations that may partner with the local government for a recovery hub (e.g. Department of Communities and other support services)
- The types of services that may be provided (e.g. information, referrals, financial assistance access, wellbeing support)
- Reference to the Local Recovery Plan or supporting procedures

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements

This section should explain the arrangements for recovery funding and identifies the position(s) that will complete this work on behalf of the local government.

Consider including:

- Reserve funding arrangements, if any
- How and when external funding (e.g. State or Commonwealth disaster recovery funding) is sought
- The position responsible for initiating funding requests (e.g. Preliminary Event Notification)
- Roles responsible for coordinating funding applications, claims and reporting
- Linkages to internal financial management processes (refer to Section 1.10 where relevant)
- Evidence requirements

1.12 Continuous Improvement

Context

Undertaking regular reviews of emergencies, exercises and recoveries helps the local government understand what worked well and what can be improved. Capturing and applying lessons supports continuous improvement of plans, procedures and capability, and strengthens coordination with emergency management agencies.

Review and lessons management is important for the whole emergency management sector, including local governments.

How to complete this section

This section should describe the local government's arrangements for reviewing emergencies to support continuous improvement.

Where the local government has formal lessons management or review process exists, it can be referenced with only a high-level summary of key actions and responsibilities in this section.

Model text is provided in the template. Local governments should consider including:

- the position responsible for facilitating reviews and capturing lessons
- who might be involved in a review
- how observations will be captured and who is responsible for gathering input
- how lessons and findings are document and actioned
- the arrangements for reporting review findings to the Council and/or the LEMC
- coordination with the Controlling Agency where a multi-agency review is undertaken

PART 2 CONTACTS AND RESOURCES DIRECTORY

This part includes tables and lists of contacts, resources and other information of use in an emergency.

Model tables are provided in the Template and can be modified to suit the local government's arrangements. They can also be replaced with existing tables or lists or extracts from contact records if the local government has the data in other formats. Tables that are not required can be deleted or amalgamated with other tables; extra tables can be added if required.

[SUGGESTIONS] are provided in some tables to prompt the local government with things that could be included.

Recommended table headings are provided as suggestions only and can be adapted by the local government.

It is recommended that all tables in Part 2 are referenced in the relevant section of Part 1 to assist in navigating the document. The local government should check all references in Part 1 when Part 2 is complete.

This Guidance provides a short description of each section in Part 2.

2.1 Incident Management Contacts

This section is a minimum requirement for LEMA.

A sample table is provided for capturing contact details for key local and district incident management and emergency management agencies, such as Hazard Management Agencies, Controlling Agencies, local emergency services, utilities and other critical stakeholders.

For each entry, provide clear operational details including the organisation or role, relevant contact numbers (including emergency and after-hours where applicable), and any notes.

This is different to the emergency numbers provided at Part 1.

2.2 Local Government Emergency Contacts

This section is a minimum requirement for LEMA.

A sample table is provided for capturing contact details for all local government positions that have a role in incident response, support and coordination.

For each entry, identify the incident support function, the responsible position holder, current contact number (including after-hours where applicable) and email. Where possible, identify deputies and any cover arrangements for fatigue management.

Entries in this section should align with the local government roles and responsibilities described in Sections 1.1 and 1.4 to 1.10.

2.3 Facilities for Incident Support

This section is a minimum requirement for LEMA.

This section should provide information about local government facilities that are suitable to support emergency operations, including evacuation centres, facilities for public meetings, facilities that could accommodate an Incident Management Team (with secure power and data) and facilities the local government has identified for refuge centres or recovery hubs.

If the local government has no suitable facilities, that should be stated here.

This section should align with information provided in Part 1.5 and 1.7.

2.4 Incident Support Resources

This section lists the resources, cache, businesses and service providers available to support an emergency response and the Incident Management Team.

Where relevant, it should include details of existing contractual arrangements relevant to procurement in an emergency, including the scope of services or supplies available under those arrangements, and the internal contract manager authorised to activate the supply during an emergency response.

Model tables are provided for collation of information about the available resources for incident support. The following headings are suggested in the template, which the local government can edit to match their requirements:

- Plant and Equipment
- Emergency Power and ICT
- Resources and Emergency Cache
- Local Contractors and Services

Examples of contractors and services may include:

- food supplies, accommodation and catering
- fencing contractors
- hazardous material specialists
- plant and equipment hire
- transport, freight and logistics
- specialist services
- traffic management
- fuel suppliers and distributors
- food and essential goods suppliers

Entries in this section should align with the arrangements described in Section 1.5.

2.5 Resource Sharing Agreements and Arrangements [OPTIONAL]

This section should list any formal or informal resource sharing agreements and arrangements with other local governments, agencies or organisations that support access to additional capability during an emergency.

For each entry, provide key operational details including the organisation name, the services or support covered by the agreement, relevant contact details, and where the agreement is stored or can be accessed.

Entries in this section should align with the arrangements described in Section 1.5.

2.6 Essential Services Infrastructure and Industrial Sites

This site should list critical infrastructure and utilities within the local government area that may require additional consideration in an emergency. It is also an option to include key industrial sites, and other sites where hazardous materials are likely, such as swimming pools.

In completing this section, consider information that may assist the Incident Controller with planning, prioritisation and decision-making during an emergency, such as sites with known risks or vulnerabilities.

Examples of infrastructure or sites that may be included are provided in blue text in the template.

Where possible provide contact details for the facility and notes about emergency planning if known to the local government, to assist the Incident Controller contact the facility.

Entries in this section should align with the arrangements described in Section 1.6.

2.7 Places and Premises Requiring Special Consideration

This section is a minimum requirement for LEMA.

This section should provide information about premises and locations that require special consideration to support people who may be at increased risk during an emergency, such as:

- aged care facilities
- hospitals
- disability services or facilities
- schools and childcare centres
- caravan parks and campgrounds
- other relevant community sites.

For each entry, provide key operational details including the facility name, description, address, contact details and any relevant notes.

2.8 Community Support Services [OPTIONAL]

This section should list organisations and service providers in the local area that can provide community support during evacuation or assist with relief services, such as:

- emergency relief and support providers
- community organisations
- housing and disability services
- multicultural or specialist support services
- Aboriginal controlled organisations.

For each organisation, provide key operational details including the organisation name, the type of services provided, contact details (including after-hours where available), and any notes on availability or limitations.

Entries in this section should align with the local community support arrangements described in Section 1.7.

2.9 Animal Welfare

This section should list organisations and facilities that can support animal welfare services in an emergency, such as vets, feed suppliers, stables, kennels and wildlife carers

Ensure services listed here align with local support arrangements described in Section 1.8.

2.10 Communication Channels [OPTIONAL]

This section should list the main channels that can be used to provide public information to the community in an emergency, such as:

- local government website and social media platforms
- local media (radio, newspapers)
- community networks and stakeholder groups
- physical channels (e.g. noticeboards, community meetings)

Ensure information listed here directly supports the communication arrangements described in Section 1.9.

PART 3 Attachments [OPTIONAL]

No guidance is provided for this section. Local governments can use this section to attach documents that can assist incident management.