



Environmental Health
Professionals Australia

The EHO Role in Emergencies

Daniela Failla

EHPA Emergency Management

Special Interest Group

Improve - Maintain - Protect

What is an emergency?

“Means an emergency due to the **actual** or **imminent** occurrence of an event which in any way **endangers** or **threatens to endanger** the safety or health of any **person** in Victoria or which destroys or damages or threatens to destroy or damage any **property** in Victoria, or endangers or threatens to endanger the **environment** or an element of the environment in Victoria.” *S3 Definitions Emergency Management Act 2013*



Changing nature of emergencies



Environmental Health
Professionals Australia

- Floods
- Bushfires
- Windstorms/hailstorms
- Droughts
- Chemical Incidents
- Transport Accident
- Single home flood/fire
- Essential Services Disruptions
- Hostage Situations
- International Events (9/11, Tsunami)
- Bombings/Terrorism
- CBR incidents
- Influenza Pandemic /Infectious disease outbreaks (Ebola)
- Extreme weather/heatwaves
- Witnessed Murder



Improve - Maintain - Protect

EHO involvement in emergencies



Environmental Health
Professionals Australia

EHO's have provided much assistance in past and recent emergencies:

- Black Saturday Bushfires 2009
- H1N1 Influenza A (Swine Flu) 2009
- Pakistan Floods 2010
- Haiti Earthquake 2010
- Victorian Floods 2010-11
- Queensland Floods 2010-11
- Typhoon Haiyan 2013
- Hazelwood Mine Fires 2014
- Nepal Earthquake 2015
- Ebola Outbreak West Africa 2015
- Wye River/ Separation Creek/Scotsburn Bushfires Dec 2015



Improve - Maintain - Protect

EM Legislation



Environmental Health
Professionals Australia

- Emergency Management Act 1986
- Emergency Management Act 2013
- * Emergency Management Legislation Amendment
(Planning) Bill 2016 Exposure Draft
- Public Health & Wellbeing Act 2009
- *Div 3 Emergency Powers*



Guidelines:

- Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV)
- *Part 7 : Agency Roles – Control and Support Agencies*
- Disaster Recovery Tool Kit for Local Government
www.emv.gov.au

Improve - Maintain - Protect

EM Legislation



Environmental Health
Professionals Australia

There are three key roles that each council must have under state legislation:

- the MERO, required under the *EM Act 1986*
- the MFPO, required under *MFB Act 1958* and the *CFA Act 1958*, and
- the EHO, required by the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*

Councils have a wide range of emergency management obligations under other Victorian legislation. These include:

- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*,
- ***Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008***,
- *Building Act 1993*,
- *Electricity Safety Act 1998*,
- *Water Act 1989 / Safe Drinking Water Act 2003*
- *Local Government Act 1989*
- *Food Act 1984*

These obligations are summarised in the Municipal Association of Victoria's *Local Government Emergency Management Handbook* www.mav.asn.au

Improve - Maintain - Protect

Local Government roles and responsibilities



Environmental Health
Professionals Australia

Roles:

Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)

- Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP)
- Municipal Emergency Resources Officer (MERO)
- Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO)
- Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM)
- Emergency Management Coordinator **MEMO*

Planning & Mitigation (Prevention)

- Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA)
- Community resilience *“all community, all hazards”*

Relief support

- Emergency Relief Centres /shelter
- Emergency food & water
- Psychological First Aid

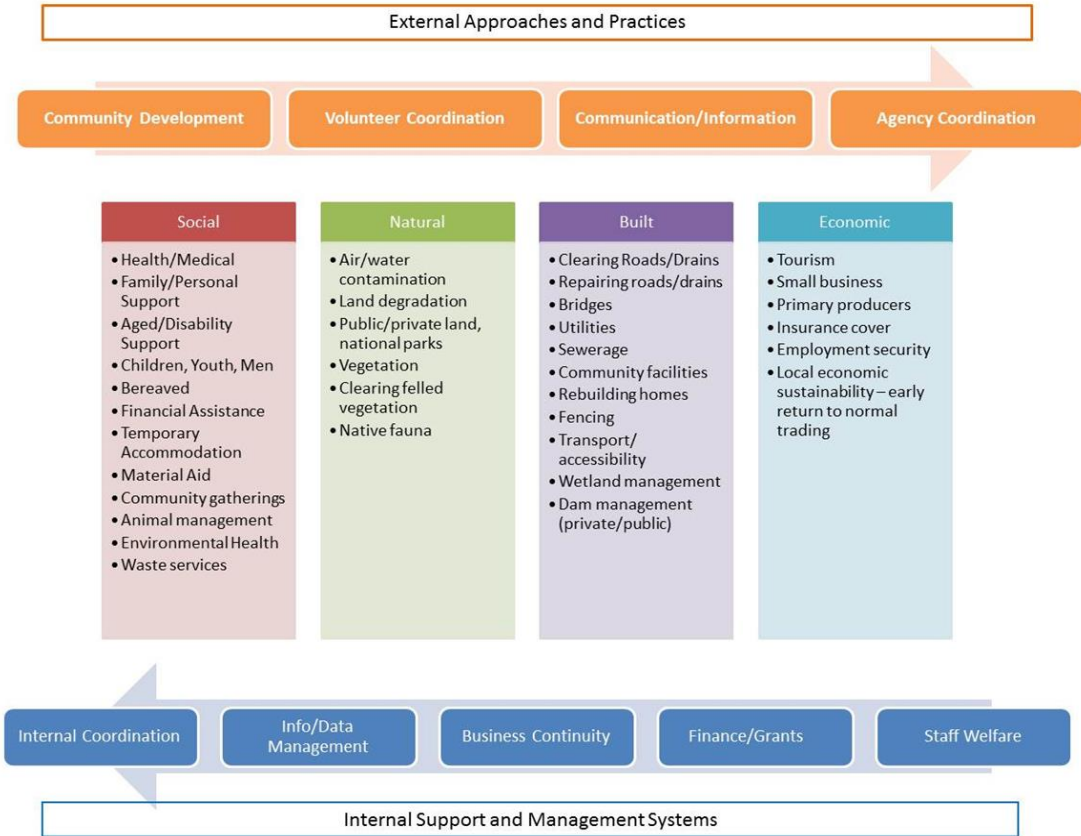


Improve - Maintain - Protect

Local Government roles and responsibilities

Recovery - 4 Pillars of Recovery

Social Economic Built Environment



Environmental Health Professionals Australia

“The purpose of providing recovery services is to assist the affected community towards management of its own recovery. Where a community experiences a significant emergency or disaster there is a need to supplement the personal, family and community structures that have been disrupted.”

(Australian Emergency Management Institute, 2011)

Emergency Management Cycle

FIGURE 1: EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CYCLE¹

Note: This model is adapted from the Victorian Emergency Management Manual. Some councils might be using a Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery framework which covers the same tasks.

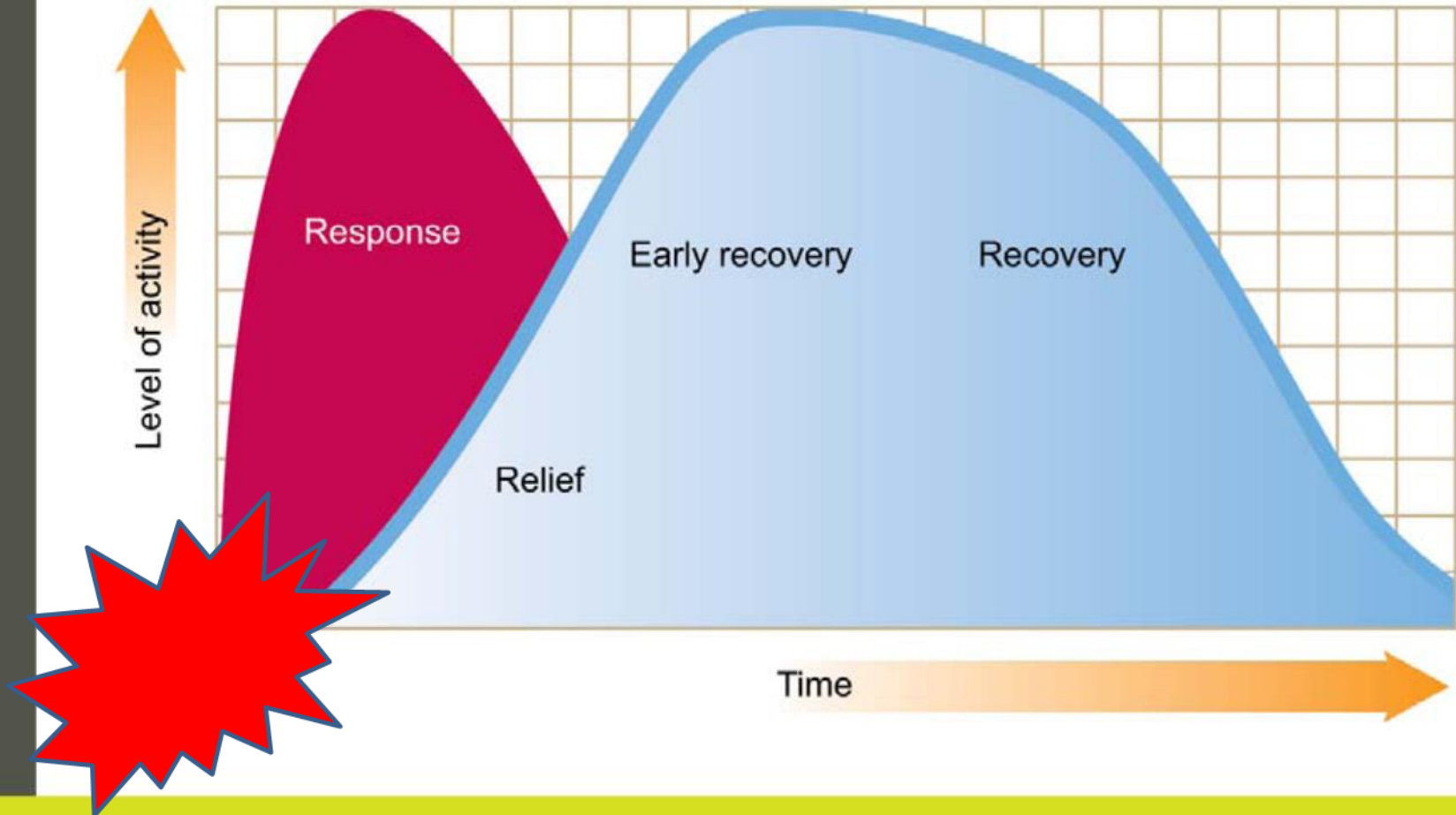


Improve - Maintain - Protect

Response – Relief – Recovery Interface



Environmental Health
Professionals Australia



Improve - Maintain - Protect

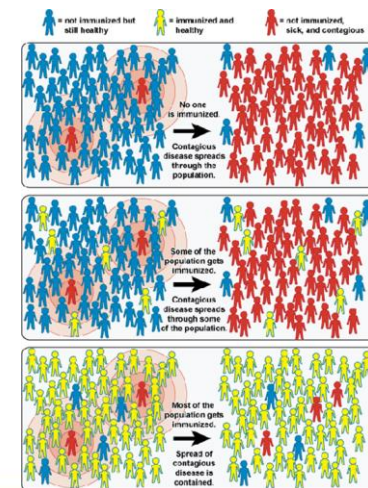
Public Health EM Planning



Environmental Health
Professionals Australia

WHY:

- Protect the community and emergency management public health personnel from health risks generated by an emergency or incident
- Be proactive in taking preventative action to minimise the spread of public health risks
- Increase awareness and knowledge of community public health risks to build community resilience



Improve - Maintain - Protect

Public Health EM Planning



Environmental Health
Professionals Australia

HOW:

- Development of a Public Health EM Plan (sub-plan)
- Development of SOPs / supporting operational strategies
- Participation in CERA process and review
- Establish stakeholder and agency networks (REHO, DHHS Regional EM Coordinator)
- MOU Agreements/ MAV resource sharing agreement
- Information & communication management
- Equipment – maintenance and suppliers
- Training/exercises/review
- Incident/Emergency Debriefs



Improve - Maintain - Protect

Public Health Issues in Emergencies

- Provision of safe and adequate water
- Shelter
- Food and food related issues
- Emergency ablution facilities
- Wastewater treatment
- Refuse collection and disposal
- Vermin and vector control
- Infectious disease control
- Disinfection and cleaning
- Environmental hazards
- Community recovery mass gathering events



Environmental Health
Professionals Australia



Improve - Maintain - Protect

Role of the EHO in emergencies



Environmental Health
Professionals Australia

- Emergency Relief Centre Venue assessment and management
- Donated goods/foods
- Emergency affected housing
- Secondary impact assessments
- Issues management
- Information provision
- MECC/EMLO role
- Other public health duties
- Community recovery planning



Improve - Maintain - Protect



Environmental Health
Professionals Australia

**We don't need to be super heroes,
just do what we do, the best way possible**

Improve - Maintain - Protect

Reference Resources



Environmental Health
Professionals Australia

- Emergency Management Victoria
www.emv.vic.gov.au
- Department of Human Services – emergency recovery
www.dhs.vic.gov.au
- Australian Red Cross – disaster preparedness
www.redcross.org.au
- Municipal Association of Victoria
www.mav.asn.au
- EHPA PHEMP and Emergency Management Booklet (Green book)
www.ehpa.org.au
- State Emergency Services
www.ses.vic.gov.au
- Australian Emergency Management Knowledge Hub
www.emknowledge.gov.au

Improve - Maintain - Protect