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## **ITEM 26 - NOVEMBER 2022 FLOODING EVENTS**

### **REPORT IN BRIEF**

<b>Reason For Report</b>	To provide a report on the organisational response and ongoing recovery following the flooding events of 14 November 2022.
<b>Policy Implications</b>	Nil
<b>Budget Implications</b>	Nil
<b>IPR Linkage</b>	1.1.1.1e - Manage risks.
<b>Annexures</b>	Nil
<b>File Number</b>	\\OFFICIAL RECORDS LIBRARY\EMERGENCY SERVICES\REPORTING\FLOODS - NOVEMBER 2022\GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE - 1460818

### **RECOMMENDATION**

THAT Council:

1. Note the contents of the report.
2. Endorse the establishment of the Local Recovery Committee in line with Resilience NSW guidelines.

## **DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER - CABONNE INFRASTRUCTURE'S REPORT**

### **Introduction**

The Cabonne Shire Local Government Area was impacted by unprecedented flooding events on 14 November 2022. These floods have had devastating impacts across the community with lives lost, homes and business destroyed and critical infrastructure sustaining major damage.

The Molong Creek rose to levels above the 2005 flood with a wider impact on business and residences and infrastructure in Bank Street, Betts Street, Gidley Street and Mitchell Highway.

In Eugowra flood waters rose quicker and higher than previously seen with the entire town decimated in a very short space of time. Following an assessment on Saturday, 26 houses have been destroyed, 120 uninhabitable and 112 inundated. 98 vehicles have been removed by the ADF.

Residents in Cudal and Canowindra suffered flood inundation and property damage.

Sewerage infrastructure was comprised in Canowindra, Cudal, Manildra, Molong and Eugowra.

Cabonne Council has played a critical role in the immediate response phase of this disaster, working to restore essential infrastructure, reopen roads and support emergency services and will continue to do so in the recovery phase while the impacts of the flood are assessed.

### **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – RESPONSE PHASE**

As the flooding reached major flood level, the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) took over the regional approach to disaster management response. EOC is chaired by NSW Police and has representatives from all key emergency services. The EOC role is to address immediate safety concerns and mobilise emergency response effort. Council's DGMI as Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO) played a key part in this Committee with the centre based at the Canobolas RFS Headquarters in Orange.

As the situation moves from "response" to "recovery" the emergency response is managed through the LEMC and daily briefings are held virtually at 1pm daily. This includes key agencies who continue to have a role in recovery. Council representative is Matthew Christensen.

### **IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Council assets across the shire have been significantly impacted. We need to rapidly conduct Impact Assessments on the damaged infrastructure to develop a priority repairs program and also for insurance claims and potential funding applications.

A summary of the impact as at 21<sup>st</sup> November is:

#### **Roads**

As at Monday afternoon there are still 44 roads closed.

Council has engaged additional resources to conduct full impact assessment of the road network commencing next week. Our internal roads inspectors have been out all week doing first initial inspection.

#### **Urban Infrastructure/Buildings:**

Significant damage was sustained across affected villages to urban infrastructure such as pools, parks, gardens, sporting fields.

### **INTERNAL COUNCIL OPERATIONS AND RESPONSE**

The initial response phase has been coordinated by the Acting General Manager and DGMI (Matt Christensen) Leader – Urban Infrastructure (Charlie Harris), Acting DGM – Services (Nathan Stubberfield) and Leader Transformation (Donna Galvin) with the strong involvement of the Department Leaders.

The Department Leader – Community Engagement (Rebecca Johnson) took the lead role in supporting the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in the media and communications activities and meetings with Ministers and other government agencies.

A control centre has been established at Molong office involving Department Leaders of Transport, Urban Infrastructure, Plants & Depots and Environmental Services to ensure a coordinated and prioritised approach to deploying crews and resources. Additional capacity in waste management has also been a priority.

Cudal office staff were relocated to Molong office due to water damage at the temporary office at the Cudal Health Centre and a centralised customer service centre taking and registering an enormous amount of customer requests. A spreadsheet has been established to triage and coordinate our response to the community and to track and assign tasks. This also records and tasks activities that were being directed to Council through the EOC.

Surrounding Councils, particularly Orange City Council have provided staff and heavy equipment for the initial clean up throughout the shire.

### **MEDIA/COMMUNICATIONS**

Throughout the week the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Leader – Community and Economy have been on the ground in Molong, Eugowra, Cudal, Manildra and Canowindra meeting with community members, conducting media interviews and meeting with Ministers and other government representatives.

The following State and Federal Ministers and staff have visited the Eugowra and Molong towns:

- His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley, Governor General
- Premier Hon Dominic Perrottet
- Deputy Premier Hon Paul Toole
- Leader of Opposition, Chris Minns
- Minister for Regional Transport & Roads, Sam Farroway
- Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, Hon Stephanie Cook
- Federal Minister for Emergency Management and Agriculture, Hon Murray Watt
- Member for Calare, Hon Andrew Gee
- Member for Orange, Hon Phil Donato

Meetings are continuing this week with various supporting agencies to progress a range of matters.

## **FUNDING**

A number of funding options will be available to assist Council in recovery.

Council will receive \$5M Category D Disaster Recovery Funding and half of this has already been provided. This funding can be used for roads, equipment, plant and emergency response costs.

Further grant funding will be forthcoming through Resilience NSW.

Council's grants staff will be coordinating and applying for any funding available.

## **PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES**

Next two weeks:

- Having adequate staff to cope with the business as usual as well as recovery response.
- Staff fatigue and welfare.
- Complexity with the transition of recovery management from LEMC and SES/Police control onsite in Eugowra moving to Council managed and resourced.
- Agreement on Local Recovery Committee and sub-committee structure and representation.
- Tip operation and waste management particularly with asbestos and hazardous materials.
- Information for the affected communities on the way forward – will require clear direction and leadership and carefully managed and facilitated community meetings/engagement.
- Complete impact assessments and prepare initial report and cost estimates.
- Establish operational centre at Eugowra for council use.

## **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – RECOVERY PHASE**

As the situation moves from Response Phase to Recovery Phase Council will be required to take lead on the ongoing recovery activities. The Resilience NSW Recovery Plan outlines the roles and responsibilities in the recovery phase of disaster management with council playing a key role in managing local recovery, providing services and assistance to the community and providing advice to State Government.

We will need to establish a Local Recovery Committee (LRC) which is the strategic decision-making body for local recovery. It provides visible leadership

and plays a key role in restoring confidence to the community by assessing the consequences of the emergency and coordination activities to rebuild, restore and rehabilitate the social, built economic and nature environments of the affected.

The LRC should include local representatives from participating agencies (government and non-government) as well as representatives of community groups. It is established to represent the local community, guide decisions about local priorities, resource allocation and management.

It will be critical for councillors to be involved on the LRC as community representatives.

Due to the extensive and vast nature of the flooding in Cabonne and the different communities affected we may need to establish a number of these committees to ensure each of the communities have representation and a Recovery Action Plan specific to their needs.

The LRC may have several subcommittees as outlined below. The number and type of subcommittees would be determined on the key actions to be addressed within the Recovery Action Plan.

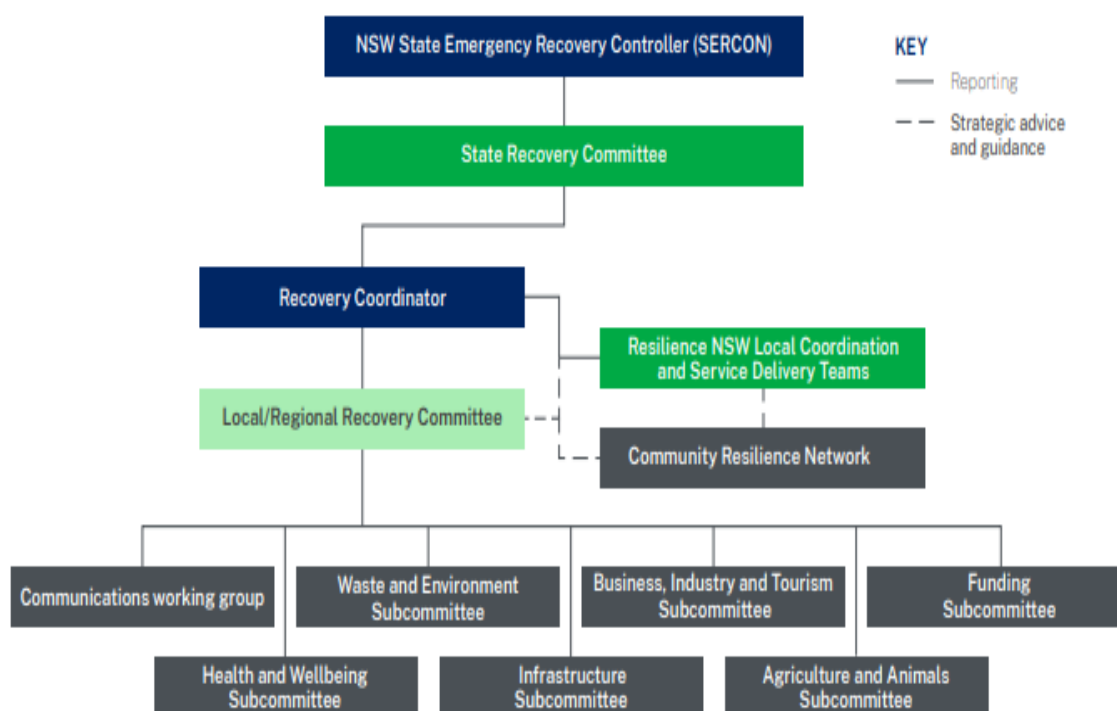
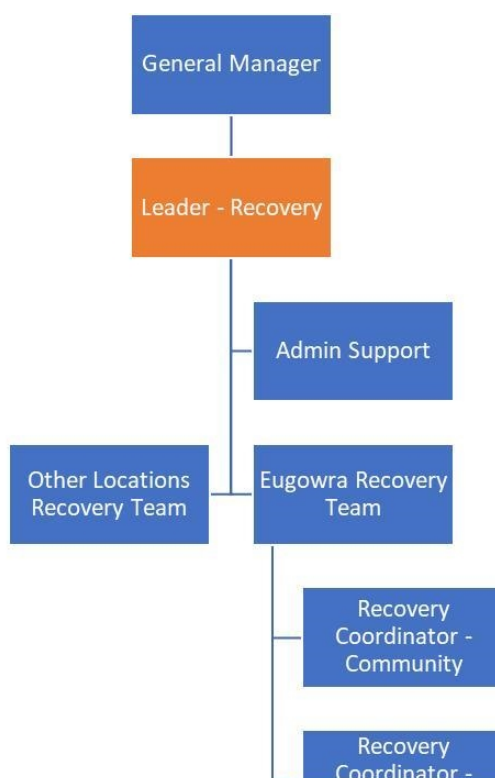


Figure 2 - Components of the recovery operations management framework

Additionally, Community Resilience Networks can be established. The purpose of these networks is to:

- Enable members of the community to provide input to the recovery process. This includes people affected by the event or representatives of local committees
- Advise on local issues
- Assist with recovery initiatives
- Can be a link from the LRC to community

Operationally Council will have to appoint a Recovery Coordinator and team. Early models and positions are being considered with the ELT but there is no doubt that this will place an enormous strain on our staff capacity whilst still ensuring our business as usual functions and services are still maintained.



***Leader – Recovery***

- Overall management and coordination of the recovery phase
- Develop Recovery Action Plans for each location
- Member of the LRC providing updates on activities in the Action Plan
- Able to refer actions/tasks to the operational departments of Council as needed and in consultation with the Department Leaders and ELT

***Recovery Coordinator – Community \****

This position will be based in Eugowra for at least the next 2 weeks and work closely with the other agencies onsite, predominantly Resilience NSW.

- Welfare, community services, support, engagement, coordination between community and LRC/Council
- Short term – initial recovery and then

*(\* Resilience NSW will provide funding for a 2-year position for ongoing community welfare/recovery programs and support. We are seeking more detail and access to this as a priority)*

***Recovery Coordinator - Operations***

This position will be based in Eugowra for at least the next 2 weeks.

- Coordinate the on-ground activities of Council staff
- Be the Council link to other agencies in operational/technical activities (such as ongoing clean up, infrastructure rebuild, plant and equipment)
- Work with the Coordinators and Leaders of the roads, urban services, environmental services to ensure we have the right number of staff on ground