



POSITION STATEMENT

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

Under the *Emergency Management Act 2005*, all local governments, regardless of their size and location, have the same responsibilities for emergency management. The City believes a differentiation of responsibilities between regional and remote local governments, and metropolitan local governments is required for the reasons detailed below.

1. Every Hazard Management Agency and every Combat Agency prescribed in the *Emergency Management Regulations 2006* are represented in the metropolitan area. Similarly, every other organisation with a role in emergency management such as Western Power and Water Corporation are also based in the metropolitan area.
2. In the metropolitan area, emergencies such as severe storms, floods, bush fires and heatwaves will likely affect multiple local government areas. Whilst some emergencies such as structure fires or Hazmat incidents may only affect a single local government area, the response to incidents in the metropolitan area will almost always be led by the relevant Hazard Management Agency. Hazard Management Agencies are responsible for planning the response to hazards they own and for testing those plans.
3. The current approach to emergency management in the metropolitan area results in significant duplication for Hazard Management Agencies and Combat Agencies, due to representatives of those agencies being appointed to multiple Local Emergency Management Committees.
4. The City has had inconsistent attendance at its Local Emergency Management Committee meetings by representatives of many Hazard Management Agencies and the operators of critical infrastructure (Western Power, Water Corporation and telecommunications providers). This is likely attributable to the number of Local Emergency Management Committee meetings those agencies and infrastructure operators are invited to attend.

In this context, it is the City's position that emergency management planning in the metropolitan area should occur at least at a District level, if not, at a metropolitan level. Further, that planning should be led by an agency whose sole responsibility is emergency management – either Police or the Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

COUNCIL'S POSITION

1. Responsibility for emergency management planning needs to recognise the differences between metropolitan, and regional and remote areas.
2. Local Emergency Management Arrangements and Local Emergency Management Committees in the metropolitan area deliver limited value to Hazard Management Agencies, local governments or communities.



3. Emergency management planning in the metropolitan area should occur at a District or metropolitan level and be led by an agency whose sole responsibility is emergency management.
4. Local governments in the metropolitan area may contribute to the development of emergency management arrangements but should not be expected to lead or facilitate that process.