

Dear Inspector-General,

Between 2012 and 2016 an innovative Relief and Recovery Collaboration Project was funded through the Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme and contributions by local government in the North & West Metropolitan Area. I am bringing this project to your attention because it offers real insights into how capable and sustainable relief and recovery arrangements could be developed and implemented across Victoria.

Black Saturday provided the incentive for the establishment of the project by affected local government practitioners in 2011/12 and the events of 2020 (bushfire and now pandemic) reinforce that systemic reform is probably required if capacity is to be improved and effort sustained.

At the time I was Chair of the Project Governance Group through my role as Director Community Programs for the City of Yarra and over 20 years' experience as Municipal Recovery Manager. I am now in private business but maintain an interest in supporting and building capability within local government.

The project was based on pre-existing work in the Eastern Region of Melbourne and sought to highlight the benefits of a collaborative approach based on common operating platform supporting surge capacity and sustained operations in the relief and recovery space. The project proved that providing collaboration facilitators could markedly improve capacity, capability and operational effectiveness across local government.

Integral to the success of the project were:

- Development of consistent operating procedure, common platform and agreed activation mechanisms
- Strengthening training and development of key EM staff focused on relief and recovery – training and development had been very patchy and inconsistent leading to variable levels of capability
- High level of integration with state agencies (EMV, DHHS, VicPol etc) to support role clarity and alignment with policy
- The appointment and resourcing of Collaboration Coordinator roles that worked across clusters of councils (1.8 EFT across 14 Councils in the NW Project)

The project was highly successful in proving the public value of the concept but it was not picked up for broader implementation and effectively folded in late 2016. The project had been highlighted by the then Commissioner for Emergency Management and was noted in the work of the Bushfire Royal Commission Implementation Monitor.

Attached are three documents:

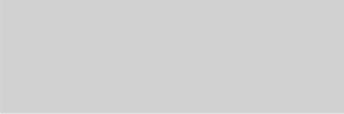
- EMV Transition Discussion Paper – this brief was written in mid-2015 to promote the value of the project for translation into a sustainable state-wide operating model
- Future of Local Government Emergency Collaboration – discussion paper written around the same time to identify high level order of cost – this was an invitation to fund a feasibility study
- Pitch to the Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner (2012) – extension to NW and seeking involvement / engagement

If you want to follow up on the project I would be happy to coordinate a meeting / discussion with others involved in the execution of the project.

Regards,

Craig

Craig Kenny



Northern Region EM Collaboration Model

Meeting with Michael Hallows

OESC

January 2012

Agenda

- Background
- Project Status
- Proposal
 - Request to OESC for support for continuation of project
- Timing and logistics

Background

- OESC funding of \$142,000 to undertake relief and recovery collaboration project with 7 northern metropolitan Councils
- Project in final stage
- Project on-time and on-budget and will achieve objectives
- Significant cooperation and leverage of commitment
- Planning for sustainability and extension

The Objectives

- Build on success of OESC-funded project
- Further develop regional approach to Relief and Recovery to enable resource-sharing
- Develop 'models' of regional resource-sharing that are replicable in Western and Southern regions
- Develop strong linkages with DHS and agencies

The Objective

- Sustainability and benefits realisation
 - Platform providing OESC and DHS assurance regarding training and capacity of local government
 - Develop models that are replicable
 - Eastern to Northern
 - Northern to Western

The Ask

- Move from 'project' to 'pilot'
- Pilot project will fund 1.6 EFT for three years
 - Consolidation of northern region work
 - Extension of work to the west of region
 - Further work on recovery arrangements
 - Capability building across Councils
 - Document control and quality assurance
 - Benefits realisation across 14 Councils

Pilot Budget

- Project officer
 - 1.6 EFT across 14 Councils
 - \$130,000 per annum
- Activity, Training and Materials Funding
 - Estimated at \$100,000 per annum
- Total project cost (est. not yet scoped)
 - \$230,000 p.a. + escalation
 - \$700,000 over 3 years

Focus Areas – Year Zero

- Memorandum of Association signed between participating councils
- Standard Operating Guidelines developed
- Relief and Recovery templates developed
- Shared training exercises conducted
- Emergency exercise conducted Nov 30 to test Standard Operating Guidelines

Focus Areas – Year One

- Review of Year Zero activities
- Development of regional plans for working with CALD and vulnerable communities
- Extension of Year Zero work to Western Region
- Shared Training for all EM staff
- Shared Emergency Exercise to test ability to look after CALD and vulnerable communities

Focus Areas – Year Two

- Review of Year One activities
- Review of Recovery performance post-Black Saturday
- Development of Recovery Plans with a regional focus and integration with Relief Plans
- Shared Training for all EM staff
- Shared Emergency Exercise to test the integration of Recovery Plans

Focus Areas – Year Three

- Review of Year Two activities
- Development of regional plans for Community Engagement
- Development of regional plans for Volunteers – pre-registered and spontaneous
- Shared Training for all EM staff
- Shared Emergency Exercise to test Volunteer Management plans

Success Factors

- Ownership within local government
- Collaboration drives innovation
- Led by those that will do the work
- Strong bottom-up approach
- Grown from need in the field
- Strength in numbers and achieving economies of scale

Success Factors

- Strengthened professional and personal relationships between Councils
- Performance well beyond single Council capacity (i.e. exercise)
- Increased coordination, drive and discretionary effort
- In kind support – estimated triple the value of the project funding
- > 110 LGA staff attended training

Immediate Requirement

- Commitment to transition funding
 - Maintain project worker
 - Fully scope 'pilot' phase
 - Identify logical funding sources
 - Local government
 - OESC
 - DHS
 - Work with Western region to establish governance structure

Future of Local Government Emergency Collaboration

14 July 2015

Brief description of existing arrangements and current legislation, including roles, responsibilities and institutional arrangements.

The North West Metropolitan Region Emergency Relief and Recovery Collaboration Project (the Project) was established out of needs identified following the Black Saturday bushfire event.

The following extract is from an independent Program Evaluation completed in December 2013:

The Victorian community justifiably expects local government to play a role in relief and recovery efforts following an emergency event. As the closest level of government to communities, their resources and local knowledge can be mobilised to serve local affected persons at times of need. To meet this expectation requires Councils to be adequately resourced, with suitably trained and knowledgeable staff who can be deployed to assist in relief and recovery environments.

Historically the maturity of a Council's approach to emergency management was often dictated by the frequency of events experienced. This meant those who had gone some period of time since an event, were not as prepared as others. To ensure a commonality of approach, a regional model was proposed in the wake of Black Saturday in 2009 from which multiple learnings could be shared for the benefit of all Councils. Such an event and those since, have also highlighted that increasingly emergencies do not affect single municipalities, hence a regional or multi-Council collaboration approach is required.

The decision to collaborate came from a combination of the following factors:

Single councils lack the capacity and capability to support relief and recovery after major events;

Significant impacts to council core services (business continuity);

Limited co-ordination of regional resources and knowledge sharing is creating inefficiencies and inconsistencies;

No common relief and recovery framework.

Given the size of the NWMR (14 participating Councils) two project managers were put in post to co-ordinate the program of work.

Cube Consulting: December 2013

The original Project Investment Logic Map from 2012 is attached as an appendix to this paper.

The essential characteristics of a collaboration model ("Clusters 101")

Transparent governance and engagement with local government and other support agencies at an appropriately strategic level:

- Project [or Program] Reference Group – includes PSG members as well as support agencies and related parties (other Councils etc)
- Project [or Program] Steering Group – key liaison points within cluster Councils – recommend at 2nd level within Councils rather than CEO level;
- Project [or Program] Control Group – tactical and operational guidance for implementation of the strategic plan;
- Project [or Program] Management – essential to the success of any collaboration project is the resources and capacity to coordinate activities and ‘get things done’;
- ‘top down’ and ‘bottom up’ approach to build partnership and trust between stakeholders;

Development of a common operating platform across all local Councils (standard operating guidelines and support systems):

- common role and position descriptions;
- standard operating guidelines which form the basis of activity during events but also inform training and development;
- common site layout and logistics guidelines;
- universal ERC and MECC procedures;
- communication and engagement protocols;

Capability development and interoperability between Councils and participating support agencies / services:

- building confidence in the ability to operate through exercises and testing environments;
- working groups created to focus on specific themes and project / program elements;
- creating learning environments and opportunities for extension of professional activity;

Training and development to be created and delivered to ensure staff are confident and capable:

- tailored training and development to build capacity;
- move towards competency based training and formal credentialing of staff involved;
- building confidence in the ability to operate through exercises and testing environments;

Activation and coordination protocols signed off at CEO level:

- appropriate level of engagement with fully authorised officers;
- this has required a level of formal delegation within Councils;

Ensure cooperation and relationships with response and support agencies:

- documented protocols to be established between collaboration
- building confidence in the ability to operate through exercises and testing environments;
- collaborative working groups created to focus on specific themes and project / program elements.

The issues / problems with current arrangements / legislation in terms of supporting the collaboration model.

- lack clarity around local government role in relief and recovery;

- no legislative provisions to facilitate collaboration / shared services;
- little clarity around thresholds of accountability and handover provisions – local government to State Government;
- no statutory definition of the Municipal Recovery Manager role;
- inconsistent MEMP approval and update;
- resourcing and support to local government is not coherent or consistent;
- lack of clarity or crystallisation of the roles for local government in emergency management.

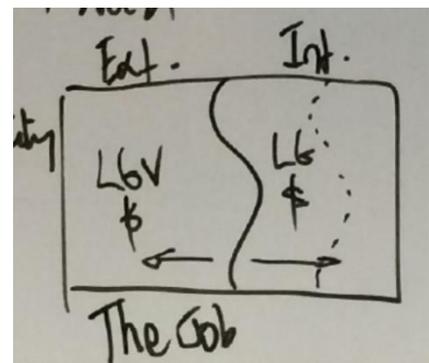
What needs to change in legislation to effectively support the collaboration model?

Any new legislation should:

- be 'light touch' but provide clarity of role and compulsion to act – on basis of reciprocal resourcing and mutual obligations;
- reinforce relief and recovery arrangements and protocols as part of the 'core business' of local government – emergency management needs to be recognised as core business for all local government authorities – currently there is significant inconsistency across the State;
- enable the formation of local government clusters to facilitate collaboration in 'natural' regions or areas of cooperation;
- establish suitable regional and state-wide governance arrangements – need to recognise regional arrangements may vary depending on local conditions and environment;
- stronger role clarity around relief and recovery for local government;
- definition of the role of Municipal Recovery Manager – this role should be mandated in legislation;
- provide clarity around roles of EMV, DHHS, LGV and others;
- facilitation of joint MEMP and MEMPC governance roles;
- head of power for establishing thresholds of accountability – handover between levels of government – these would be best established through regulation or Ministerial Guidelines;
- establish framework for 'community profiling' to enable or facilitate the aggregation of local community intelligence to assist in planning and execution of EM arrangements;
- establish framework for consistent mechanics around MEMP approval and update;
- establish frameworks for resource sharing within and across 'clusters';
- establish clarity around transition from relief to recovery arrangements;
- establish a common planning framework for local government and support agencies;

The legislation should establish funding and resourcing mechanisms, including:

- reciprocal obligations between local government and State Government;
- the complete job is defined by legislation and recognises the need for a symbiotic relationship between entities;
- capability to shift resources depending on local capacity and needs – recognising different starting points in terms of current capacity and prior learning;
- recognise the constrained resource environment that local government is in – particularly rural and regional local governments;



Future financial requirements briefly outlined in a separate section, separated from the requirements for the legal framework?

A future financial model will need to accommodate the elements outlined in the following table.

Element	Estimated Cost **	Notes
Governance	\$250,000	Establishment of state-wide governance structure.
Collaboration / Cluster Support	\$2,500,000	Assume two Regional Collaboration Coordinators per cluster. Assume 10 x clusters across the State. Assume a total of 30 EFT to manage the program including management overhead and leadership of the Regional Collaboration Coordinators.
Standard Operating Guidelines & Quality Assurance	\$400,000	Maintenance of state-wide collaboration 'system' and documentation. Continuous improvement and further revisions of the SOG and system. Includes Quality Assurance and auditing of system. Document control and distribution.
Training Development & Delivery	\$500,000	Develop and maintenance of training modules. Consistent delivery at regional level. Credentialing and training needs analysis.
Total	\$3,650,000	

Note: ** very preliminary estimate only – requires feasibility study.

'EM an on business of LG'

LEGISLATION

- * enabling cluster/collaboration
 - compliance / mandatory
- * stronger role clarity - relief (for LG)
 - recovery
 - MRM
- * joint MEMR + governance
 - role in relation to Council
- * definition of LG role - recovery (advisory) SAs
 - relief
 - (Scale of activity (S, M, X, L)) xxx
- * thresholds of accountability
 - head of power
 - defined in regulation / ministerial guidance
- * community profiling/intelligence
 - community development / resilience
- * consistent mechanics around MEMR approval and update

FUNDING

- * reciprocal obligation → scaling of resources
- * capability to shift resources based on capacity + need
- * rate capping
 - impact on LG capacity

The Gap

- * protocol for resource sharing
- * role of local government at regional level - MAY representative role
- * transition arrangements
 - response to restructuring
- * regional governance arrangements
- * statutory governance arrangements
- * replicable across all Councils

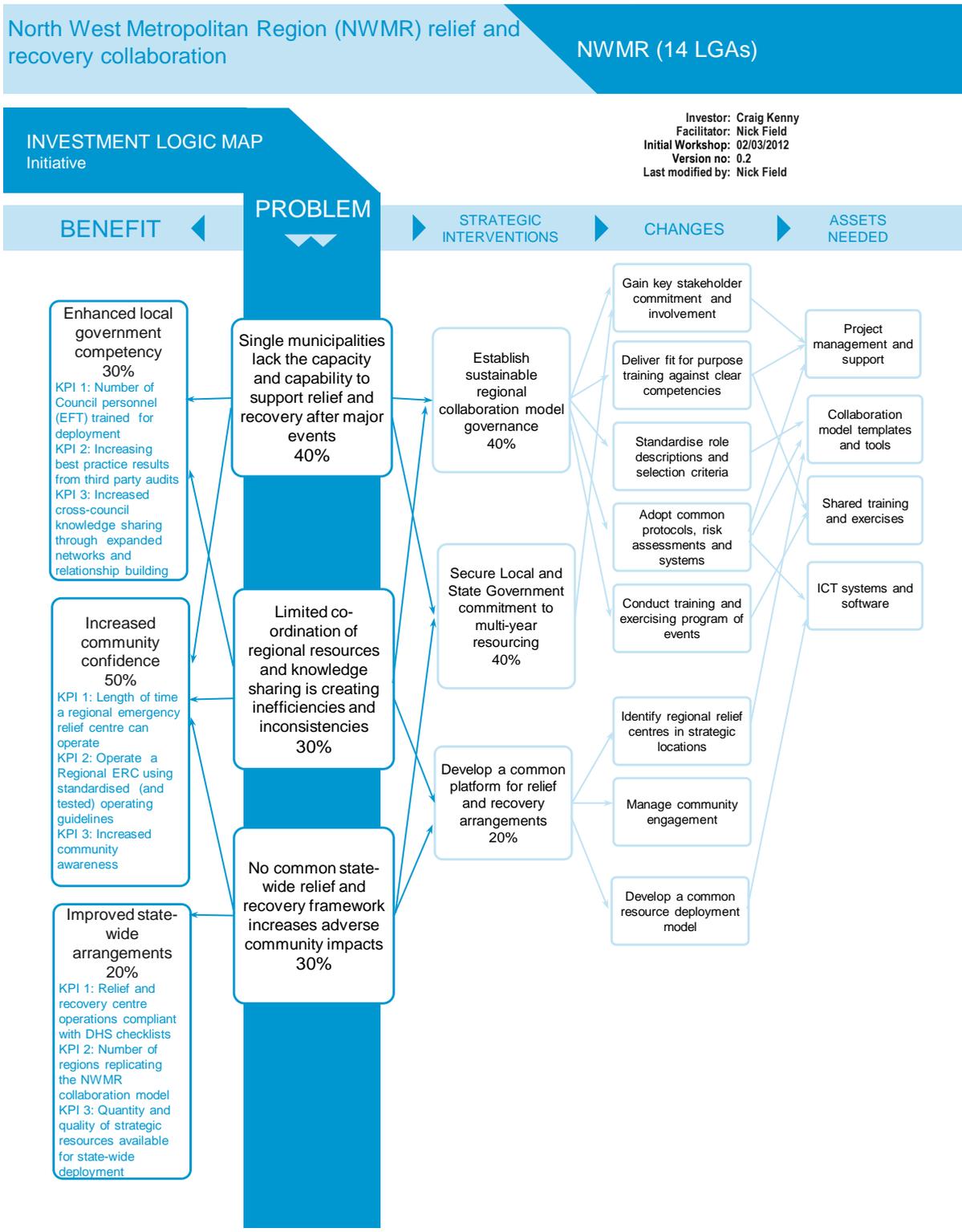
NDGRS - YEAR 4 !? PILOT → PROGRAM TRANSITION

MECHANICS / SYSTEM

- * as per discussion paper
 - coordinated @ state
- * collaboration coord - employed at pilot
 - funded by state
 - supported by pilot
- * architecture - at state level
 - professional development
- * governance - local governance amongst
- * 'right size' → no standard
 - natural relationships
 - 4 ↔ 7?
 -

* common planning framework

- region
- plan coverage



Template version: 4.0

1. Background

The North West Metropolitan Relief and Recovery Project (the Project) has over the past three years successfully tested the concept of collaboration to effectively and efficiently develop the capability of local government to maintain and deliver relief and recovery arrangements.

The concept for the Project was born out of the events of Black Saturday in February 2009, this was Australia's worst natural disaster with the loss of 173 human lives and destruction of 2,029 homes. The events of 2009 placed significant strain on existing post event arrangements and within weeks it was clear that sustaining effort for relief and recovery 'services' was beyond the resources available within any local government area.

In 2010 a small group of emergency management professionals from the seven Northern Metropolitan Councils formed a working party to explore the potential for the development of a collaboration model that would more effectively develop and maintain capability. A successful application was made to the 2012 National Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme for the original pilot phase.

The key characteristics of the original project proposal were:

- transparent governance and engagement with local government at an appropriately strategic level;
- development of a common operating platform (standard operating guidelines and support systems) that would be the basis for capability development and interoperability between Councils and participating support services;
- training and development to be developed and delivered to ensure staff are confident and capable;
- activation and coordination protocols to be signed off at CEO level; and
- ensure cooperation and relationships with response and support agencies.

After the first twelve months the Northern Region collaboration project approached the Western Region to submit a joint application to extend the pilot to cover the 14 Councils of the North West Metropolitan Region (NWMR), an area with a population of 1.68m people and very significant diversity. This 3 year project extension was first funded in 2013 and the 2015 calendar year is the final year of funding.

The Project has now successfully operated for over three years and transition planning has been on the agenda for the past 15 months. It is envisaged that the NWMR Collaboration Project would provide a very sound basis for a future state-wide model and a draft governance and operational structure was developed in early 2014 and circulated for comment and discussion.

This Transition Discussion paper provides the basis for further dialogue on possible conversion of arrangements to a broader geographic platform.

2. Key Outcomes – NWMR Project – Years One to Three

Develop a best practice relief and recovery service delivery model utilising the established learnings from recent work incorporating a governance framework and supporting documentation that can be replicated in other areas.

The following outcomes have been achieved:

- Consistent Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) reflecting best practices in Emergency Relief Centres (ERCs) across NWMR;
- Consistent auditing of ERC facilities across NWMR;
- Designated resource teams, structures, decision making and infrastructure for providing regional relief and recovery services across multiple municipalities following an emergency, with clearly understood activation procedures;
- Regularly trained personnel throughout the NWMR (who have undertaken recent, simulated emergency scenario training) to deliver emergency relief and recovery services;
- Establishment of Regional Recovery Guidelines applicable across NWMR (specifying the key activities and associated timeframes of emergency relief and recovery services, with a focus on the first six weeks);
- Development of Post Impact Assessment tool for all municipalities across NWMR (a standardised tool, user guide and training package for assessing, recording, storing of information to aid in the planning for recovery services); and
- Enhanced overall capacity and capability of NWMR councils to provide relief and recovery following an emergency (due to shared planning, resources and improved work practices);
- Conducting an annual regional Relief and Recovery Collaboration Forum for all MRMs, MEROs, EM Officers, EM Coordinators and key agency staff. The purpose of the Forum is to strengthen the links between response, relief, recovery and build networks and relationships.

Attached to this paper at Appendix One is the latest Business Case for the NWMR Collaboration Project (V.3).

3. Proposed Transition Arrangements

3.1 Sustaining the NWMR Collaboration Project – NWMR Extension Project

The NWMR Collaboration Project has soon to be secured funding to operate until the end of the 2015 calendar year. The funding includes \$250,000 from the NDRGS and \$70,000 cash contribution from the 14 participating Councils.

Additional NDGRS Funding will likely not be available beyond December 2015 and therefore it is recommended that the 'project' transition to the auspice of Emergency Management Victoria or Local Government Victoria for 2016 to ensure momentum is maintained and intellectual property preserved.

The existing governance structure would cease and a new structure implemented to oversee the transition process. This governance structure would include representatives from state government, local government and other stakeholders.

The key objectives of the NWMR Extension and transition process are:

- to preserve the intellectual property and capacity that has been developed over the past four years;
- to further develop the project documentation, procedures, systems and protocols with 'wrap around' quality assurance to enhance system integrity and dependability;
- to extend the work of the project into areas such as community profiling, application of social media, document management and distribution and other priorities as established by the governance group; and
- initiate the process of integrating the project work into EMV and LGV administrative structures.

Recommendation One:

That the NWMR Collaboration Project transition to an Extension Phase at the start of the 2016 calendar year to prepare intellectual property and materials for the state-wide approach to collaboration. (Estimated cost: \$350,000 (full year))

3.2 State-wide Engagement on Future Collaboration Model – a Deliberative Process

It is assumed that there is a desire for some form of collaboration model to be applied at a state-wide level given the positive outcomes from the 4 year pilot project and the directions provided by a range of formal review processes in recent years.

The NWMR Collaboration Project developed a discussion draft for a future state-wide collaboration model in April 2014 (see attached). This draft proposal was discussed with a range of stakeholders during 2014 as a means of promoting a broader conversation about future collaboration arrangements.

The model assumes the following:

- transition of some responsibilities to State Government (funding, document control, quality assurance, employment of collaboration coordinators; training and credentialing, coordination between ‘clusters’);
- establishment of appropriate joint governance and advisory structures to provide oversight and good governance for the collaboration model; and
- establishment of ‘clusters’ of Councils that would be supported by collaboration coordinators employed and deployed by the State.

It is strongly recommended that a period of deliberative engagement be undertaken in the back half of the 2015 calendar year to gain a deep understanding of the issues and concerns of stakeholders, particularly regional and rural Councils and support agencies. The engagement process would be governed by a joint steering committee comprising key stakeholder representatives including EMV / LGV, Councils, existing collaboration structures, EM Professionals, MEMEG etc.

Recommendation Two:

That EMV/LGV fund and support a deliberative engagement process to effectively consult with key stakeholders in the period July to December 2015 to inform final decision making on a state-wide model for supporting and resourcing collaboration structures. (Estimated cost: \$80,000 – \$20k establishment and \$60k implementation – engagement and governance support.)

3.3 Implementation of State-wide Model 2016/17

It is anticipated that implementation of the state-wide collaboration model would commence in the 2016/17 financial year and have a three year horizon to achieve minimum standards of capacity and interoperability.

The implementation at a state-wide level assumes:

- a combination of ‘top down’ and ‘bottom up’ approaches to ensure true partnership and to build trust between stakeholders;
- ‘light touch’ legislation that clearly outlines the reciprocal obligations of local government, state government and support agencies;
- funding, employment and coordination of collaboration coordinator positions by the State Government but implementation moderated by local governance structures to ensure local conditions are understood and respected;
- appropriate joint governance structures to ensure implementation is responsive to emerging and identified needs of all stakeholders; and
- a commitment by all stakeholders to resource sharing and interoperability to provide greater assurance at times of significant stress.

Recommendation Three:

- (i) That design and implementation of a state-wide model of collaboration to support relief and recovery is based on the outcomes of the deliberative engagement process and appropriate governance processes are in place to protect the interests and sovereignty of each level of government.

- (ii) That the model for collaboration is agreed and that there is a fair allocation of financial and resource burden between the project partners.

3.4 Framework for Transition

The following summary Gantt Chart outlines the transition model at the highest level.

ID	Task Name	Start	Finish	2015												2016												2017	
				May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb				
1	NWMR Collaboration Project	01/06/2015	31/12/2015	[Bar from May to Dec 2015]																									
2	NWMR Collaboration Extension Phase	01/01/2016	30/12/2016													[Bar from Jan to Dec 2016]													
3	State-wide Deliberative Engagement	30/06/2015	30/12/2015	[Bar from Jul to Dec 2015]																									
4	Development of State-wide Model	01/02/2016	30/06/2016													[Bar from Feb to Jun 2016]													
5	Implementation of State-wide Model	01/08/2016	30/07/2018													[Bar from Aug 2016 to Jul 2017]												[Bar for Jan and Feb 2017]	

The proposed next steps in the current discussion phase are:

- EMV / LGA agreement in-principle to the outline transition process;
- May to June 2015 – preliminary engagement with stakeholders (LGA, existing collaboration arrangements; LGV, EMV, support and response agencies);
- detailed project planning and definition of outcomes for each project element;
- secure funding for NWMR pilot extension into 2016 calendar year;
- initiate planning and costing for deliberative engagement process to occur in period July to December 2015; and
- establish interim governance structures for overseeing the transition process.

4. Conclusion

The work of the NWMR Collaboration Project has been widely recognised as being progressive and valuable in supporting effective responses to relief and recovery in reviews of emergency management arrangements in recent years.

The project was established as a pilot in the northern region and for the past three years has operated across a much broader geographic region in the north west of Melbourne.

There is significant learning from the operation of the pilot and other regions that have adopted the methodology without appropriate levels of project resourcing that would demonstrate there is significant value for the community of Victoria in pursuing transition of the pilot project to an effective and efficient state-wide model.

Appendix A: Regional Emergency Relief & Recovery Collaboration Project – Proposed Structure

29 April 2014

Background

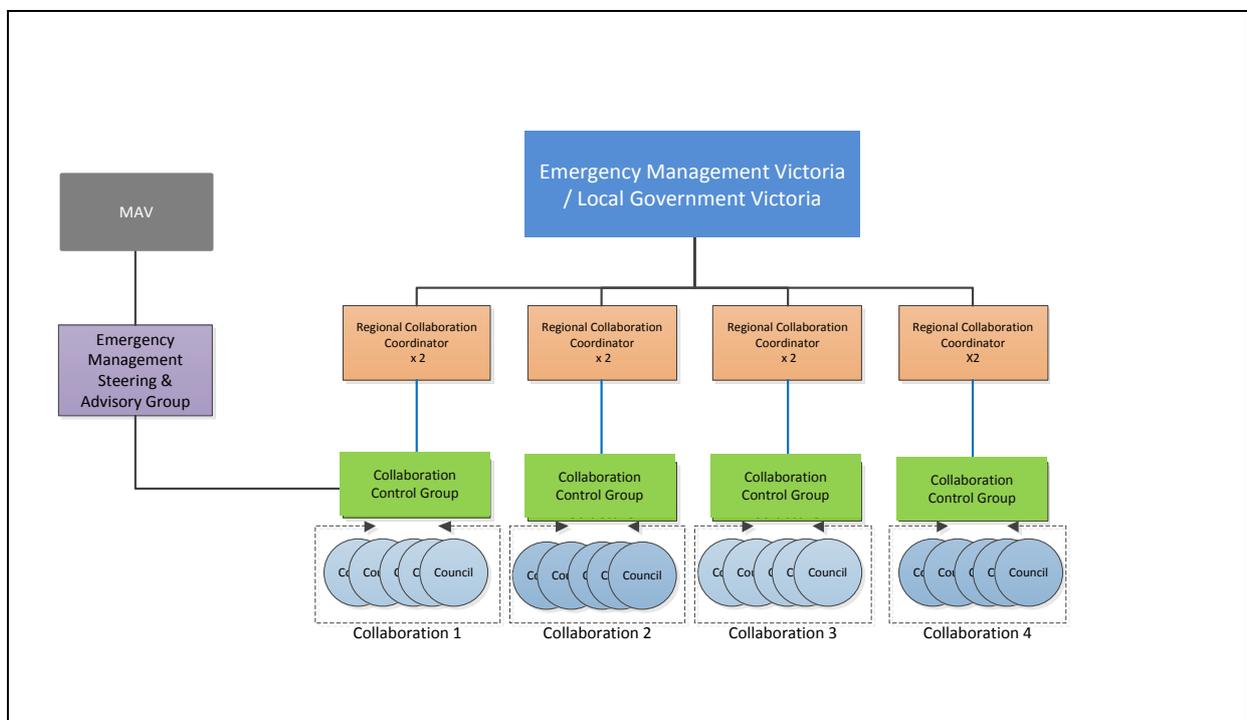
The Project Control Group of the Northern Western Regional Emergency Relief and Recovery Collaboration Project has continued to explore options for sustainable future structure that would be able to support:

- the sustainability of the project governance structure and project methodology as it might be applied across the entire State;
- appropriate levels of quality assurance and document control to ensure consistency in application;
- levels of resourcing that will ensure the model is sustainable and implemented evenly across metropolitan, rural and regional Council areas.

The following structure has been developed to promote discussion of options and issues and is not presented as a final draft for consideration.

Discussion Draft - Structure

Outlined below is a draft structure presented for discussion purposes only.



A brief description of the structure follows:

EMV – Emergency Management Victoria has been established as an over-arching integrated management structure for ensuring better collaboration and coordination between

emergency services. The draft structure assumes that there will be a natural point of connection between EMV and any future state-wide local government collaboration program. The EMV would take on the following roles:

- legislative reform;
- quality assurance of systems and processes;
- document control of standard operating procedures and associated protocols;
- maintenance of training and credentialing of emergency management professionals within local government;
- coordination between regions;
- funding and sustainability of the state-wide model.

MAV – the Municipal Association of Victoria has played an important role in Emergency Management in Victoria in recent years and is potentially well placed to take on a strong future role in the future governance and coordination between all Victorian Councils, EMV and other agencies. This might mean that the MAV might need to consider the most appropriate form of organisational structure that it would need to develop to support this role and function.

Regional Collaboration Coordinator – the structure assumes that Regional Collaboration Coordinator (RCC) roles would be appointed and funded by the State Government through EMV to support the implementation of the program across the various collaboration regions. The roles of the RRC would be to:

- implementation of the ‘model’ at the local level;
- supporting the local program governance structure within each collaboration region; and
- monitoring and reporting on progress to achieve required standards.

There is a view that the RRC positions could be either:

- appointed and employed by EMV (with input from the collaboration clusters);
- appointed and employed by the MAV (with input from EMV and the collaboration clusters);
- appointed and employed by collaboration clusters (with input from the EMV).

Emergency Management Steering and Advisory Structure – this steering group will be established with membership drawn from each of the regional clusters, the MAV, EMV and will be supported by Regional Collaboration Coordinators. The role of the group will be to provide an overall governance framework for the collaboration program and act as an advisory group to the MAV and EMV for amendments to the overall system and process.

Collaboration Clusters – the report does not make any assumptions about how regional clusters would be organised or what might best serve the needs of EMV. One of the successes of the pilot project has been the stronger relationships between Councils in the cluster and capacity to provide interoperability and surge capacity between operating areas. Some observations include:

- it is noted that the pilot program has experienced some level of difficulty in scaling operations from 7 Northern Region Councils to 14 Northern & Western Regional area;
- this issue of scale might indicate that clusters might best be established at between 5 and 7 subject to consideration of factors such as risk factors, hazard profile, logistics and distance.

Regional Collaboration Program Structure – outlined overleaf is a proposed program management structure that would sit above to manage the local implementation of the program. These structures would be formed to reflect local provisions and resource capacity. It is acknowledged that there will be variations across the state due to the existence of different levels of risk, capacity and other local conditions.

