OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

Objectives

- To maintain compliance with current Disaster Management legislation (Disaster Management Act 2003).
- To outline the Council of the City of Gold Coast (Council)’s commitment in providing adequate resources and trained officers to achieve the necessary capability and capacity for prevention, preparedness, response and recovery across the entire city in the advent of a disaster event.
- To implement a formalised process to reduce residents and visitors vulnerability in the event of a disaster within the city via the City of Gold Coast Local Disaster Management Plan.

Performance measures

- Compliance of the City of Gold Coast Local Disaster Management Plan with State planning guidelines and the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience
- Frequency of meetings of the City of Gold Coast Local Disaster Management Group
- Readiness of the Council’s Local Disaster Coordination Centre to maintain 24 hour operations for an extended duration.
- Alignment with the Inspector General Emergency Management (IGEM) Framework.

Risk assessment

High

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy provides a framework which outlines Council’s compliance with the State’s disaster management legislation (Disaster Management Act 2003), and readiness to respond to and recover from disaster events that might occur within the Gold Coast. It recognises the importance of consistency with the State’s Disaster Management Strategic Policy Framework and supports comprehensive disaster management through programs that address prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

In accordance with Division 2, 4A (c) of the Disaster Management Act 2003 (the Act), Council notes that it is primarily responsible for managing disaster events that occur within the Gold Coast. In accordance with Division 3, Subdivision 1, 57 (1) of the Act, City of Gold Coast must prepare a plan (a local disaster management plan) for disaster management in the local government area.

In accordance with this legislation, Council prepares and approves a disaster management plan for the Gold Coast, establishes a multi-agency Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) and maintains a disaster response capability including an operationally-ready Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC).

Council also recognises the importance of having a prepared community, and provides community education and awareness programs in accordance with the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience.
In the event of a disaster, managers are to endeavour to make available sufficient resources for required response and recovery measures as requested by the Local Disaster Management Group and/or the Local Disaster Coordination Centre. Managers shall release Local Disaster Coordination Centre staff for disaster events, mandatory disaster management training and exercise activities when requested.

This policy aligns to Council’s Corporate Plan – Gold Coast 2020. 3.1 Our city is safe Ensuring the integration of disaster management planning and preparations are in place for the management of the Commonwealth Games to ensure the safety of visitors and residents.

Council notes that it is important that Council’s disaster management arrangements align with the State’s disaster management arrangements for disaster management to be effective. Council ensures information about an event or disaster within the Gold Coast is promptly shared with the Gold Coast District Disaster Coordinator (DDC).

The policy supports the role of Council’s Disaster Management Unit in building and maintaining the Disaster Management Capability & Capacity Development Framework through the commitment and continuing support from the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and all levels of management across all of Council.

Council will apply effective corporate governance strategies that allow the continuous improvement of disaster management policy, programs, practices and service delivery to promote safety and enhance disaster resilience within the community.

SCOPE
This policy applies to disasters events – natural and/or non-natural – that occur within the boundary of the City of Gold Coast and as determined in accordance with the Act.

DEFINITIONS
Council – Council of the City of Gold Coast

City of Gold Coast Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) – A multi-agency group established by Council in accordance with Division 3, Subdivision 1 29 of the Act to assist Council with its disaster management. The functions are outlined in 3, Subdivision1 30 of the Act.

City of Gold Coast Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC) – A Senior officer of Council appointed by the Chair of the City of Gold Coast Local Disaster Management Group, following consultation with the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Gold Coast. The LDC is responsible for the coordination of disaster operations for the LDMG; reporting regularly to the LDMG about disaster operations; and ensuring, as far as practicable, that any strategic decisions of the LDMG about disaster operations are implemented.

Disaster – A serious disruption in a community, caused by the impact of an event, that requires a significant coordinated response by State and other entities (including Council of the City of Gold Coast) to help the community recover from the disruption.

Disaster Management Arrangements – Plans, processes, systems and actions to manage the impacts and/or potential adverse effects of an event. This includes arrangements for mitigating, preventing, preparing for, responding to and recovering from a disaster.
Event – An “event” may be natural or caused by human acts or omissions, and may include any of the following:

- a cyclone, earthquake, flood, storm, storm tide, tornado, tsunami, volcanic eruption or other natural happening;
- an explosion or fire, a chemical, fuel or oil spill, or a gas leak;
- an infestation, plague, epidemic or pandemic;
- a failure of, or disruption to, an essential service or infrastructure;
- an attack against the State
- any other event similar to an event mentioned above.

Serious disruption – loss of human life, or illness or injury to humans; widespread or severe property loss or damage; and/or widespread or severe damage to the environment.

RELATED POLICIES AND DELEGATIONS
Nil.

LEGISLATION
Disaster Management Act 2003.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS
City of Gold Coast Local Disaster Management Plan and Sub-plans
City of Gold Coast Disaster Management Capability and Capacity Development Framework
Disaster Management Policy Guidelines – Attachment A
Disaster Management Regulation 2014
Disaster Management Strategic Policy Framework – Queensland Government
Disaster Management Unit Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

RESPONSIBILITIES

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VERSION CONTROL

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Comprehensive disaster management involves four key strategic phases. These strategic phases form the basis of Council’s approach to disaster management and provide strategic objectives that align with the requirements of the Local Disaster Management Plan.

Each of these four phases detailed below provide guidance as to the activities that Council may undertake to achieve effective disaster management.

**Prevention**

Prevention refers to the regulatory and physical measures taken to ensure that emergencies are prevented or their effects mitigated. Activities that support prevention include:

- Supporting disaster management planning key objectives with appropriate resources.
- Ensuring the integrity of disaster management risk assessments through alignment to AS/NZS ISO 31000.
- Continually improving disaster management systems and processes to reflect technological improvements in disaster management.
- Utilising post-disaster assessments to review the effectiveness of disaster management.
- Taking a lead role in the operation and maintenance of the Local Disaster Management Group ensuring both legislative compliance and all necessary resources are applied to support this group.
- Consulting, advising and communicating with the local community and local community groups to ensure that an appropriate level of awareness exists on any potential risks and mitigation strategies concerning the local residents.
- Maintenance of city infrastructure.

**Preparedness**

Preparedness is having ‘arrangements or plans to deal with a threat situation or a disaster, that is, the mobilisation of the disaster response structure and resources’. Activities that support preparedness include:

- Ensuring alignment of local disaster management plans to district and state disaster management plans.
- Reviewing and implementing best practise management systems to adequately respond to and manage any disaster event occurring in the city.
- Reviewing and improving disaster management plans on identified risks that potentially could affect the city.
- Conducting annual testing of disaster management plans in accordance with the Disaster Management Plan Testing and Evaluation Framework.
- Providing an appropriate level of staff training to all identified personnel who have or may have a role or function during a disaster event in accordance with the Disaster Management Training Framework.
- Conducting annual management reviews of the City of Gold Coast Local Disaster Management Plan in accordance with adopted procedures.
- Reviewing and recommending updates to the City’s Local Disaster Management Plan.
- Actioning or delegating issues raised in other forums.
- Reviewing debriefs after large scale incidents.
- Enhancing community disaster resilience through the implementation of community education and awareness programs.
Response

The principal purpose of response is the preservation of life and property, minimisation of the impact and effect to the community, infrastructure, the economy and the environment. Response is defined as the ‘actions taken in anticipation of, during, and immediately after a disaster to ensure that its effects are minimised’.

During the response phase, the Local Disaster Coordinator and/or delegate shall coordinate disaster operations on behalf of the City of Gold Coast Local Disaster Management Group.

Actions that support response include:

- Timely activation of the City’s Local Disaster Management Group, disaster management plans, processes and procedures for coordination of an event.
- Operating the Disaster Coordination Centre and ensuring that it is adequately resourced.
- Providing interim support for the community e.g., (shelter, food and water) in partnership with other agencies.
- Implementing communication and information plans to the community and relevant State and federal government agencies as appropriate.
- Undertaking actions to make safe assets damaged during an event, and to minimise the risk of further damage or injury to persons.

Recovery

The primary aim of recovery is to assist the affected community to regain an effective level of functioning following a disaster as quickly as possible. Activities that support recovery include:

- Human-social recovery actions.
- Actions to recover the City’s essential public assets (e.g., roads).
- Actions to recover non-essential but important infrastructure.
- Minimising further environmental harm or impact.
- Facilitating economic recovery.
- Debris collection and removal.

Recovery will involve engagement with State and federal agencies, especially if Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements funding may be available to assist the Gold Coast community recover from a disaster event.