

ADVERSE EVENT PLAN

MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL

MAY 2021



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1. OVERVIEW

Mid-Western Regional Council ('Council')s Adverse Event Plan is designed to assist Council and the region's community to prepare an effective response to adverse events that may impact the Mid-Western Region – its activities, events or infrastructure in which Council has full or partial vested interest or a participatory role.

Adverse events may include events such as fire, flood, severe weather and disease or pandemic, or other adverse events such as drought and/or sudden and unforeseen trade restrictions resulting from an unanticipated adverse event.

Planning and preparedness for any arising adverse event is a considered an ongoing pursuit by Council to ensure the safety, well-being and economic sustainability of the community.

Council's Adverse Event Plan is for use by Mid-Western Regional Council staff and Councillors, the Mid-Western Region community and the Australian Government.

The Mid-Western Region



The Mid-Western Region covers 875,279 ha (approx 8,737 square kilometres).

The major populated centres are:

- Mudgee (Administrative centre for Mid-Western Regional Council)
- Gulgong
- Kandos
- Rylstone
- Plus numerous villages and rural localities



Village settlements located within the area:

- Birriwa
- Bylong
- Cooyal
- Clandulla
- Charbon
- Goolma
- Grattai
- Hargraves
- Ilford
- Running Stream
- Lue
- Olinda
- Tambaroora
- Turill
- Ulan
- Windeyer
- Wollar

and intervening rural areas.



Mudgee is the major centre in the local government area.

Mudgee is located 261 kilometres North-West of Sydney.



The Mid-Western Regional area is located within the Weather Forecast District (BOM) of Central Tablelands, and is located within the NSW Fire Area (RFS) of Central Ranges.

2. DEFINITION OF AN ADVERSE EVENT

An adverse event means an event or incident that has a negative impact on the well-being of the Mid-Western community.

3. SCOPE OF PLAN

Council's Adverse Event Plan relates to adverse events that may directly affect the Mid-Western Region, events or infrastructure in which Council has full or partial vested interest.

It establishes best practice, strategies and plans to provide detailed guidance to Council staff and the community by which they can prevent (where possible), prepare and recover from adverse events that may impact the Mid-Western Region – its activities, events or infrastructure that Council is either fully or partially responsible for.

Council's Adverse Event Plan may consider the following:

- **Natural resource management** (i.e. managing water supply, ground cover, trees, erosion, biodiversity)
- **Economic diversification and community resilience** (i.e. infrastructure planning, tourism investment, diversifying local industries, capacity building for local leadership)
- **Communication and coordination** (i.e. how to let people know what is available – now, and in the future; how do you communicate in hard times and for recovery).

Additionally, the Adverse Event Plan considers the following Council plans and documents:

- Community Strategic Plan
- Mid-Western Regional Local Emergency Management Plan (Local EMPLAN)
- Industry Closure Strategy
- Pollution Incident Response Management Plan
- Water Asset Management Plan
- Mid-Western Regional Economic Development Plans (REDS)
- Mid-Western Regional Economic Development Strategy
- Drinking Water Management Plan
- MWRC WHS Framework

4. COUNCIL'S VISION AND VALUES

OUR VISION

A prosperous and progressive community we proudly call home.

OUR VALUES

Respect



We respect ourselves, our team mates and our organisation as a whole.

When we talk or write to each other we show respect by being positive, polite and truthful; really listening; responding politely; and providing honest feedback.

We never tolerate bullying and discrimination in the workplace.

Integrity



We are all accountable for our own actions and also for assisting and supporting our fellow workers.

We seek solutions, we don't cast blame.

We work for the community and we are proud to show our care for the place in which we live.

We are committed to action – we do what we say we will do.

We are honest with each other in everything we say and do, and we are committed to open, two-way communication.

Recognition



We are committed to a healthy, safe and constructive working environment where everyone's well-being is our major focus.

We work together to develop employment policies and practices that are adaptable to individual circumstances.

We celebrate our achievements and recognise that everyone's contribution is essential to this Council's success.

In supporting each other and working together we create the right environment in which we all can achieve our very best.

We seek continuous improvement both individually and collectively.

We admit our mistakes and focus on getting better.

We strive to achieve our personal best and be industry leaders.




5. AIM OF THE PLAN

The aim of Council’s Adverse Event Plan is to show leadership, capability and resilience by adapting and managing the unexpected stresses associated with adverse events in the Mid-Western Region by prevention of, preparation for, response to, and recovery from emergencies within the LGA.

Key steps to meeting the proposed aims

Prevention



Gaining experience and knowledge from adverse events and consequently make service improvements as appropriate

Preparation



Relevant preparation (where possible) for an adverse event by ensuring that all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities should an adverse event occur



Reporting various disaster scenarios to the community e.g Local Emergency Management Plan



Developing a consistent and coordinated approach to identifying and responding to adverse events



To dovetail where necessary into the current Mid-Western Regional Council plans and documents

Response



Effective determination of the appropriate Council response to an adverse event



The provision of support to staff whilst managing adverse events in a timely, efficient, and effective manner



The provision of relevant, effective and up to date information across the community

Response and Recovery



The provision of a centralised source of information regarding the Council resources available for use during and in recover from an adverse event.

6. MANAGING AN ADVERSE EVENT

It is understood that every adverse event would usually vary in many ways, and therefore will be managed in different ways. Differences may be identified and ranked by:



It is therefore implicit that the response to and management of every adverse event will be proportionate to the adverse event’s specific risks, scale, scope, and complexity.

Council’s risk management framework sets out five steps in the risk management process:

- STEP 1 ➤ Hazard identification
- STEP 2 ➤ Risk assessment
- STEP 3 ➤ Identification and control/elimination of the risk
- STEP 4 ➤ Allocation of responsibilities
- STEP 5 ➤ Monitoring and review

If and where necessary, additional resources or support may be obtained from reliable sources such as The Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub (<https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/>) and Resilience NSW (<https://resilience.nsw.gov.au>) through the course of managing an adverse event or in preparation for one should warning be provided.

7. MEDIA PROTOCOLS

As per Council's Media Protocols (section 5.9) the timeliness of reporting an adverse event is critical. Prompt reporting to, and liaison with the Continuity Management Team (CMT) allows for the preparation of an appropriate response/action strategy. The Media Protocol Plan should be referred to in-depth should media interest be realised in relation to an Adverse Event.

In the case of an adverse event, which triggers the Business Continuity Plan, it can be referred to so as to commence an appropriate communications strategy.

The following additional resources may be utilised by approved personnel as necessary to ensure appropriate media protocol has been maintained:

- BCI 3 Media Enquiry Record Form
- BCI 4.1 Media Release – Council Service Disruption
- BCI 4.2 Media Release – Council Travel Advisory

Communications

Communication procedures in relation to adverse events will be managed in accordance to the type of adverse event and the need to work with or to involve additional stakeholders and third parties (i.e local or national emergency services).

The Corporate Communications Coordinator is required to assist the CMT Director in the management of media contact and enquiries during an adverse event. The Coordinator must be highly familiar with the Business Continuity Plan, team responsibilities and the Plan itself. The Coordinator's responsibilities include supporting the CMT Director, liaising with senior executives, managing media visits and organising the monitoring and recording of all media.

8. INTERNAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

General Manager

It is the General Manager's responsibility to ensure that the Adverse Event Plan is effective, current, and regularly reviewed, and that Council successfully meets all obligations arising from an adverse event under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

Directors

All Council Directors must exercise due diligence in responding to an adverse event, ensuring that Council is complicit with all relevant WHS duties. Directors' duties include:

- Actively support staff in response to an adverse event
- Ensure Council has effective processes for obtaining, receiving, considering, and responding to relevant information regarding incidents, hazards and risks
- Ensure that Council complies with any responsibilities and obligations as per the WHS Act 2011 or associated codes of practice and regulations
- Where possible, maintain effective Council operations whilst understanding relevant hazards and risks
- Ensure Council has effective resources to minimise risks associated with an adverse event
- Ensure Council uses appropriate resources and process to minimise any potential hazards and risks

NB: Directors may also be considered workers under the WHS Act 2011.

Managers and Supervisors

Council's Managers and Supervisors, contractors to Council and other affiliated groups of Council are responsible for:

- Ensuring that any adverse event is reported immediately
- Investigating any reports of adverse events thoroughly
- Implementing and monitoring WHS policies and procedures within their working environment and team
- Identifying and managing workplace hazards and risks
- Responding to an adverse event in an appropriate and effective manner.

Corporate Communications Coordinator

The Corporate Communications Coordinator is required to assist the CMT Director in the management of media enquiries and contact during an adverse event. The Corporate Communications Coordinator must be familiar with the Business Continuity Plan, Critical function Sub Plans and team responsibilities in addition to the Adverse Event Plan. Responsibilities include:

- Support CMT director regarding interviews/media briefings/public statements
- Liaise with other senior executive with regards to staff briefings
- Where appropriate, manage media visits
- Organising the monitoring and recording of all media related broadcast during the period of the adverse event.

Staff/Workers

All Council workers are responsible for:

- Reporting an adverse event promptly to the appropriate personnel, within Council's approved plans and procedures
- Taking steps to manage and monitor their own health and safety
- Complying, where possible to any instruction that is given by Council to allow Council to respond adequately to an adverse event
- Taking responsibility of his/her actions to not adversely affect the health or safety of a fellow worker, director, manager or supervisor, third party stakeholder or community member.

Others

The term Others consider persons who may be affected but are not already covered in the above Council Structure. Others must:

- Take steps to manage and monitor their own health and safety
- Take responsibility of his/her actions so as to not adversely affect the health or safety of others including directors, managers or supervisors, third party stakeholders or community members
- Comply, where possible to any instruction that is given by Council to allow Council to respond adequately to an adverse event.

9. RISKS, EXTERNAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES SUMMARY

Where necessary, Council will work with the following third-party stakeholders to best manage the relative actions required around the following types of adverse event. Relevant strategies and plans will also be referred to as required.

Source of Risk	Risk Level	Combat Agency (Key Support Agency)
BUSHFIRE (Grass/bushfire impinging on residential areas and/or environment)	E	NSW Rural Fire Service
MINES EMERGENCY	E	LEOCON (Mines Safety – Trade & Investment)
PANDEMIC (human/animal)	E	Department of Health
FLOOD – Flash (Mudgee/Rylstone/Kandos)	H	NSW SES
STORM	H	NSW SES
HAZMAT (Rail)	H	Fire and Rescue NSW
AGRICULTURAL DISEASE – Animal (exotic stock/animal disease)	H	DPI (Local Land Services)
AGRICULTURAL DISEASE – Plant (grapes)	H	DPI (Local Land Services)
UTILITIES FAILURE – Electricity (sub stations / transmission lines)	H	LEOCON (Essential Energy/ Endeavour Energy)
TRANSPORT EMERGENCY – AIR (regular passenger aircraft)	H	LEOCON (NSW Police Force)
HAZMAT (major storage facilities; Orica explosives plant; Robert Oatley Winery)	H	Fire and Rescue NSW
HAZMAT (road transport routes)	H	Fire and Rescue NSW
EXPLOSION	H	Fire and Rescue NSW
UTILITIES FAILURE – Telecommunication	H	LEOCON
UTILITIES FAILURE – Water	H	LEOCON (Mid-Western Regional Council)
TRANSPORT EMERGENCY – ROAD (passenger and school coach/bus)	H	LEOCON
TRANSPORT EMERGENCY – ROAD (Animals)	H	NSW Police Force

Source of Risk	Risk Level	Combat Agency (Key Support Agency)
FIRE – COMMERCIAL or INDUSTRIAL (warehouses; industrial; Orica explosives plant, gas storage/ shopping centres; aged care, hospitals)	H	Fire and Rescue NSW
DAM FAILURE (Windamere and Rylstone Dams)	H	NSW SES (Water NSW/ MWRC)
DROUGHT	M	NSW DPI and Local Land Services
FLOOD (major to max probable)	M	NSW SES
BUILDING COLLAPSE	M	LEOCON / NSW Police Force
LANDSLIDE (Charbon area)	M	LEOCON
UTILITIES FAILURE - Sewage	M	LEOCON (Mid-Western Regional Council)
EARTHQUAKE	L	LEOCON
TRANSPORT EMERGENCY – RAIL (Coal Train)	L	LEOCON / NSW POLICE FORCE JHR / ARTC
FIRE RESIDENTIAL TRANSPORT EMERGENCY – RAIL (Coal Train)	L	Fire and Rescue NSW; NSW Rural Fire Service LEOCON/NSW Police Force; JHR/ ARTC
FIRE RESIDENTIAL	L	Fire and Rescue NSW NSW Rural Fire Service

E = Extreme | **H** = High | **M** = Medium | **L** = Low

Name	Contact number
NSW Rural Fire Service	02 6372 4434
LEOCON	02 6372 8599
State Emergency Service (SES)	132 500
Fire and Rescue NSW	02 6339 8500
Department of Health	02 6881 8567 (24/7 basis)
Local Land Services (LLS)	02 6378 1717
NSW Police (Mudgee)	02 6372 8599
Essential Energy	1800 641 424
Endeavour Energy	131 003
Mines Rescue	1300 015 551

10. ADVERSE EVENTS PROCESSES

The successful management of an adverse event will rely on a combined effort by staff/workers, directors, managers and supervisors to ensure that the relevant strategies and plans are adhered to and implemented should an adverse event occur.

As necessary, additional strategic guidance will come from existing strategies and plans, including (but not limited to):

- Mid-Western Regional Local Emergency Management Plan (Local EMPLAN)
- Community Strategic Plan
- Industry Closure Strategy
- Pollution Incident Response Management Plan
- Water Asset Management Plan
- Mid-Western Regional Economic Development Plans (REDS)
- Mid-Western Regional Economic Development Strategy
- Roads Asset Management Plan
- Asset Management Strategy
- Building Asset Management Plan
- Comprehensive Land Use Strategy
- DIAP – Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Mid-Western Regional Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Open Space and Recreational Asset Management Plan
- Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan
- Pesticide Use Notification Plan
- Plant and Equipment Asset Management Plan
- Privacy Management Plan
- Sewer Asset Management Plan
- Solid Waste Asset Management Plan
- Stormwater Asset Management Plan

11. POLICY REVIEW

The Adverse Event Plan will be reviewed by the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) every three years or immediately following any of the following:

- Legislative changes that subsequently affect the plan
- At the end or during an adverse event, to ensure the plan's effectiveness and relevance, or

when deemed necessary as part of a test of policy strength and relevance or policy/strategy upgrading.

12. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Supplementary Mid-Western Regional Council Plans:

- Emergency Management Plan
- Business Continuity Plan
- Bushfire Recovery Plan

The Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub (<https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/>)

Relevant Third-Party Stakeholders Policies