

Shire of Denmark Minutes



LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING: COVID-19

HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE
TUESDAY 7th APRIL 2020, COMMENCING AT 4.00PM

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VISION

For the Shire of Denmark's residents, ratepayers and businesses to be adequately protected, risks are minimised and recovery operations coordinated swiftly and efficiently.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

To implement the objectives of the Western Australian Emergency Management Arrangements Public Statement number 7, that is;

1. To advise and assist the local government in ensuring that local emergency management arrangements are established for its district;
2. To liaise with public authorities and other persons in the development, review and testing of local emergency management arrangements; and
3. To carry out other emergency management activities as directed by the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) or prescribed by the Emergency Management Act or Regulations.
4. Prepare an annual report on Committee activities for submission to the District Emergency Management Committee.
5. The local emergency management arrangements are to set out —
 - a. the local government's policies for emergency management;
 - b. the roles and responsibilities of public authorities and other persons involved in emergency management in the local government district;
 - c. provisions about the coordination of emergency operations and activities relating to emergency management performed by the persons mentioned in paragraph (b);
 - d. a description of emergencies that are likely to occur in the local government district;
 - e. strategies and priorities for emergency management in the local government district;
 - f. other matters about emergency management in the local government district prescribed by the regulations; and
 - g. other matters about emergency management in the local government district the local government considers appropriate.
 - h. Local emergency management arrangements are to be consistent with the State emergency management policies and State emergency management plans.
 - i. Local emergency management arrangements are to include a recovery plan and the nomination of a local recovery coordinator.

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING / WELCOME TO COUNTRY

The Presiding Person opened the meeting at 1604hrs

I acknowledge the land on which this meeting is being held on and the traditional custodians of the land, the Bibbulmun and Minang people and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Ms Gearon requested that members of the committee only provided new information and responded to identified issues in order to keep the meetings relevant, focused and efficient.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE**MEMBERS:**

Cr Ceinwen Gearon	Shire President & Presiding Person
Cr Mark Allen	Council Representative
Mr Matt Hartfield	Denmark Police, Officer in Charge
Mr David Rae	St. John Ambulance Community Paramedic
Ms Julie Hollingworth	Denmark Health Service
Mr Wes Bailye	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Mr Neville Blackburn	Department of Communities

STAFF:

	(non voting)
Mr Scott Medhurst	Community Emergency Services Manager
Mrs Charmaine Shelley	Senior Ranger
Mr Lee Shelley	Pandemic Response Team
Mrs Angela Simpson	Executive Manager Community Services
Mrs Renee Wiggins	Communication & Engagement Officer

APOLOGIES:

Mr Adam Smith	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Mr Paul Moore	Walpole Police, Officer in Charge
Ms Kylie Spencer	Denmark Health Service
Ms Melanie Haymont	Bushfire Risk Planning Coordinator
Mr David Schober	Chief Executive Officer, Acting

ABSENT:

Ms Marnita Sletten	Silverchain Walpole
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VISITORS:

Mr Robert Ohle	Shire of Denmark Environmental Health Officer
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3. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING

Nil

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**4.1 MINUTES OF THE LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE****OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

ITEM 4.1

Moved: **Neville Blackburn**Seconded: **Matt Hartfield**

That the minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee held on the 25th March 2020, be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

Carried: **Unanimous****5. PREPAREDNESS****5.1 Communication / public information**

Police – The focus remains on communicating dynamic changes out as often as possible and provide clear guidance surrounding them to the community the focus continues to be on education and support however compliance will be enforced when required.

5.2 Business continuity plans

Denmark Health Service – Denmark is currently a Green zone and the focus is on remaining one. Surge Planning is ongoing however currently well situated to support surge. There will be a meeting tomorrow about how to support the Blue Wren Lodge facility. Currently there are no volunteers working in the Hospital and no applications can be accepted for the Health Service due to ongoing restrictions

St John Ambulance – Business Continuity Plan to ensure Ambulance coverage around the state. Plan has not been distributed widely yet but it has been approved and will be communicated out as appropriate.

5.3 Identification of vulnerable people

Denmark Health Service - GP's have contacted Health Service for advice on what to do when vulnerable people that are not being identified through current practices currently in place. GP's have been advised to contact the Shire for non-health related support in the first instance for an appropriate referral. This is for Social isolation and other related issues where people cannot get support. Health will continue to be the contact for all health related vulnerabilities. Shire have identified a single point of contact for GP's to assist them in ensuring an efficient process.

Department of Communities – Currently restricted to supporting those in home isolation there is a dedicated helpline for these people and they are actively engaging with them. The department are trying to work with partner agencies to obtain assistance and extend these services to those that find themselves homeless.

5.4 Community actions to promote resilience

The committee discussed avenues in place to support people currently wanting to volunteer and where more information could be obtained about this. The Denmark Community Resource Centre is supporting the volunteering effort with assistance from the Shire which is likely to continue and evolve. The Shire are currently seeking funding opportunities to support Emergency Services getting further into the community and start recovery projects. Also have started the Connected Communities program which

supports local business and provides opportunities for the community to engage in educational activities it has been very well received.

Also commencing soon is a Volunteer Shopping Assistance in conjunction with the CRC this will see volunteers complete shopping for those not able to and deliver it to them to support those in isolation or without assistance.

6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Local / Regional Impacts

Denmark Health Service – No noticed impacts currently on the health service but would like input from other committee members regarding influx of people in town. Committee members spoke to the question providing feedback surrounding the amount of people in town. Numbers are extremely low for this time of the year. Accommodation providers are not accepting new occupants and those currently housed are all people of no fixed address.

Shire of Denmark- Retail outlets are having staffing issues due to withdrawal of workforce due to concerns around COVID-19 and how it may spread, retailers are seeking assistance with it but there is limited assistance that can be offered. Shire is currently investigating opportunities to assist them.

6.2 What is the response to someone fulfilling the case definition?

Response to all cases will be as per the response guidelines provided by the WA health department and all agencies are aware of this process and protocol.

7. RECOVERY

7.1 Potential for significant, prolonged business disruptions

Advice is that this is likely to continue for 6 months and the main focus is currently to support staff and the community through this by identifying new, practical and achievable methods. Dept of Communities advise that they are currently starting to work with local governments in the recovery space and they expect this to grow exponentially.

Shire of Denmark is continuing to support business continuity with dedicated staff to support actions as outlined within the Business Continuity Plan as well as reactive responses as required.

7.2 Implications for psychosocial impacts

The committee discussed the far reaching implications of psychosocial impacts that will be felt and continue to be felt throughout the region as a result of COVID19. The committee agreed that it is an ever evolving space. Consistent messaging from a single source of truth and engaging the community in the delivery of that message will be key to building community resilience towards psychosocial impacts now and in the future.

8. AGENCY REPORTS RELATING TO:

- Agency Preparations
- Anticipated Impacts
- Issues of Concern
- Information Requirements

8.1 DENMARK HEALTH SERVICE

Ms Julie Hollingworth spoke to the recently published heat map provided by the Department of Health and the potential impact it may have on the community, Shire of Denmark advised that they are already communicating this to the community and it has so far been well received.

8.2 WA POLICE

Sgt Hartfield reported on the following.

Demand on Police has increased with the new procedures that have been put in place as well as local crime incidents. However are continuing to support the community and provide education wherever possible.

Community behaviour has been good however there is still the ongoing need to provide advice to the residents.

Hypervigilance from residents is leading to a lot more contacts from the public to the police which is good but creates and increased demand on resources.

8.3 DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES

Nil

8.4 DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Nil

8.5 ST JOHN AMBULANCE

Nil

8.6 SHIRE OF DENMARK

Ms Angela Simpson reported on the following.

Continued support of remote communities with daily.

Ranger Patrols have been increased and additional staff have been dedicated to assist with an increased focus on education and visibility.

The Shire have dedicated a large number of staff to assisting the community and supporting other agencies where required.

9. OTHER BUSINESS**9.1 Health Presentation – Robert Ohle, Environmental Health Officer Shire of Denmark**

Mr Ohle provided an update to the committee of actions taken from the Shire of Denmark Environmental Health. Including education and support surrounding COVID-19

90 premises were attended from Schools to Food Businesses. Signage and general support has been given as well as supply chain assistance where possible to obtain relevant supplies.

9.2 Local Supply Chain issues – (Food, Water, Fuel, Gas, accommodation and as Identified)

Status - Ongoing - Current advice is that All supplies are currently ok, Supermarkets are concerned due to being supplied at 40% of normal but currently are keeping up.

9.3 Local communications – Committee identified communications gaps/successes

Status – Ongoing Committee discussion took place surrounding current communications

A clear gap was identified with local General Practitioners who had not been receiving accurate information the Shire of Denmark will be providing a dedicated contact for GP's to receive relevant and up to date information when it is required, Denmark Health Service will support this with communicating valuable information from LEMC to GP's via already established networks.

9.2 Motion to contact Department of Biodiversity Conservations & Attractions requesting suspension of the Hazard Reduction Burning program within the Shire of Denmark for the duration of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Status - Completed – Response from DBCA is that they will be denying the request and continuing with the burn program albeit with the smaller burns an increased communications plan and additional controls in place to limit impacts. The committee will review this as required.

9.3 Motion to restrict the issuing of Permits under section 33 of the Bush Fires Act and revocation of “approved places” for camping and cooking fires within the Shire.

Status - Completed – Further information, The FES Commissioner extended the Restricted Burning Period for the South of the State. The net result is that this has no impact on Denmark however indicates a strong position of support for increased control over fire throughout the state during this time. A new item will be raised in relation to the extension of the restricted burning time at a future meeting.

9.4 Advice for travellers of no fixed address to relocate to major centres more capable of supporting them during a greater community spread of COVID19

Status – Completed Advice received from DEMC, the current advice is for these people to remain in situ and not travel, maintaining appropriate social distancing and hygiene practices. Shire of Denmark and Support agencies will support this small group of people as required.

9.5 Aircraft movements in breach of regional border restrictions

Status – New/Ongoing Query regarding messaging to Recreational Aviators surrounding flying and avoidance of regional travel restrictions. This has been raised to DEMC with a request to do a NOTAM similar messaging as per Dept of Transport for mariners.

10. NEXT MEETING

Scheduled for Tuesday 14th April by video link hosted by Shire of Denmark due to COVID-19 restrictions, commencing at 4.00pm

11. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Presiding Person closed the meeting at 1715hrs.