EMERGENCY RECOVERY VICTORIA

Emergency Recovery Victoria
Recovery Framework

VICTORIA
State
Government

Contents

About Emergency Recovery Victoria
Supporting stronger communities after emergencies

Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) is a permanent and dedicated recovery agency focused on building stronger and more resilient individuals, communities, and regions through community recovery.

ERV leads state and regional recovery coordination and state relief coordination on behalf of the Victorian Government and works in partnership with all levels of government, businesses and not-for-profit organisations to ensure recovery enables people, places and the environment to be stronger and more resilient after emergencies.

ERV strives to ensure that all disaster impacted individuals, groups and communities are ready for and have access to and receive the recovery support they need throughout their recovery journey. Communities are at the centre of everything we do, and we strive to simplify recovery for communities and partners by creating an enabling environment for resilient recovery, before and after emergencies. We promote place-based leadership and seek to hold ourselves and partners to account on community recovery outcomes through transparent assurance, monitoring and evaluation.

ERV's responsibilities include (but are not limited to) operational relief and recovery coordination, leading and coordinating recovery strategy, policy, planning and investment across the emergency management sector, assurance that community recovery needs are managed, and delivery of recovery services as required (including state-coordinated clean-up operations).

ERV was established in October 2022, a decision arising from the Victorian Government response to the Inspector-General for Emergency Management (IGEM) Inquiry into the 2019-20 Victorian Fire Season – Phase 2 report. ERV builds on the work, expertise and experience of Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV), which was established on 6 January 2020 to coordinate recovery from the 2019-20 Eastern Victorian Fires.

Acknowledgment of Country

Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) proudly acknowledges the First Peoples of Victoria and their ongoing strength in practising the world's oldest living culture. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Our Vision

Supporting stronger communities after emergencies

People, places and the environment are stronger and more resilient after emergencies

Our Mission

Expert coordination

We lead and enable integrated coordination of recovery activities across the sector, and we deliver state-coordinated recovery services where no other department has accountability or where there is a gap.

Standard setting and assurance

We set evidence-based standards for strategy, policy, investment and decision making as communities prepare for and recover from emergencies and provide assurance to government that community recovery needs are managed.

Advocacy and advisory

We advise on community need and advocate for improved capability and capacity in the recovery system using expert insights and evaluation.

Principles

ERV's approach to recovery is underpinned by eight principles, which support flexible, locally driven and locally delivered action and can be applied to deal with complex issues and support needs as required. These are based on the National Principles for Disaster Recovery.

Understand the context
Successful recovery is based on understanding the community context—the unique history, values and dynamics of a community.

Recognise complexity
Successful recovery responds to the complex and dynamic nature of disasters and the community.

Communicate effectively
Successful recovery is built on effective communication between the affected community and other partners.

Recognise and build capacity
Successful recovery recognises, supports and builds on individual, community and organisational capacity and resilience.

Strengthen communities
Successful recovery should leave communities stronger by reducing vulnerabilities and building resilience.

Use community-led approaches
Successful recovery is community centred, responsive and flexible, and it relies on community engagement to support them to move forward.

Ensure an inclusive approach
Successful recovery recognises that communities are made of many groups and ensures that actions, both intentional and unintentional, do not exclude groups of people.

Coordinate all activities
Successful recovery requires a planned, coordinated and adaptative approach between community and partner agencies, based on continuing assessment of impacts and needs.

Recovery phases

From the initial mobilisation following a disaster, to the achievement of outcomes – recovery is a long process that requires planning in phases and across multiple levels – community, municipal, state and national. Recovery phases assist in coordinating timelines for activities, which can scale up or down according to the different needs of the emergency.
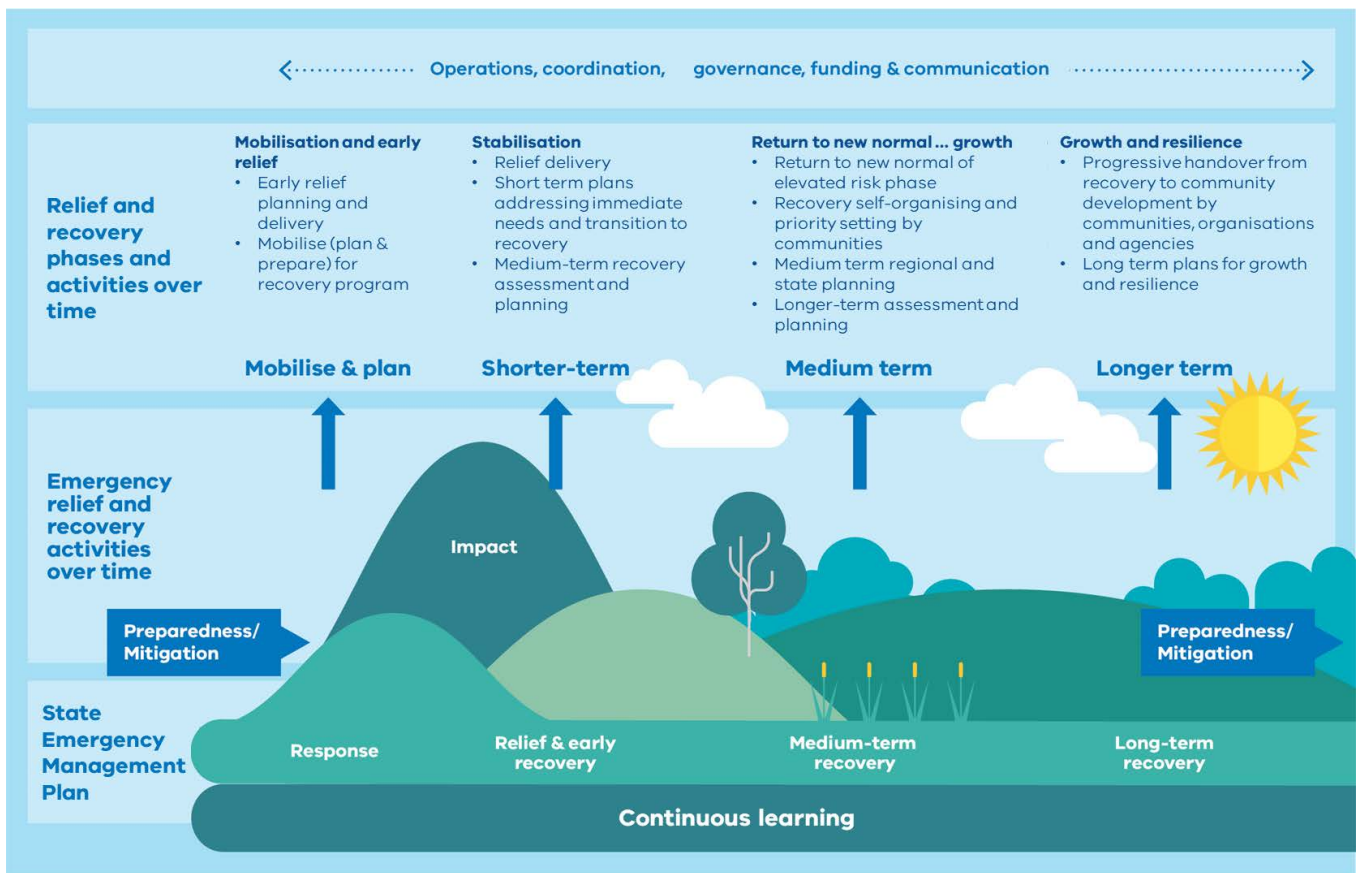
Coordination and governance

Victoria has well-established emergency management arrangements, to ensure a coordinated approach across government agencies to support emergency management efforts. These arrangements are described in the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP).

All Victorian Government departments play a role in leading or supporting relief and recovery at the state and regional levels.

ERV coordinates state and regional recovery efforts, and state relief efforts. The SEMP describes "coordination" as the bringing together of people, resources, governance, systems and processes, to ensure effective response to and relief and recovery from an emergency.
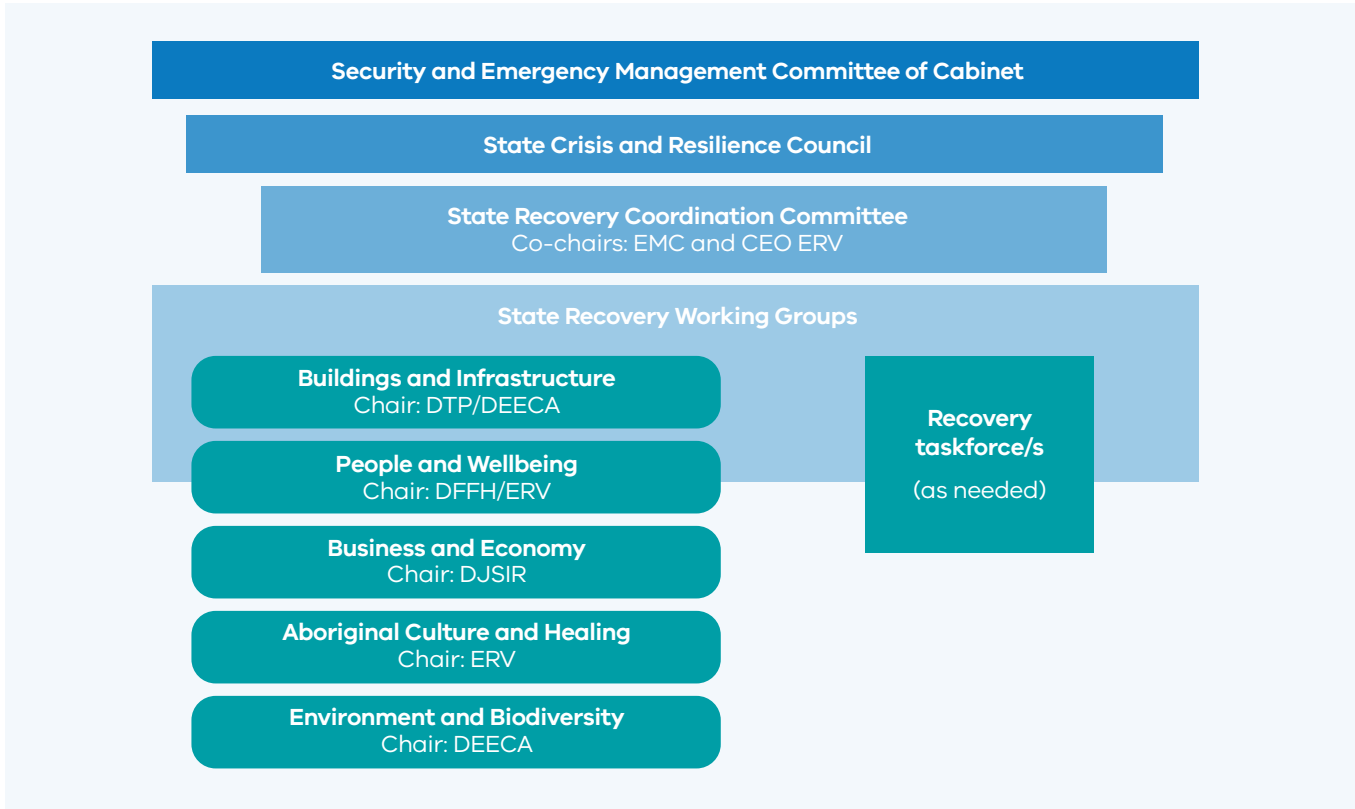
ERV has place-based teams across Victoria to work closely with councils and communities.

ERV functions as a standalone business unit within a broader DJCS Emergency Management Group and is designed to fit within the existing Victorian emergency management governance arrangements. This model enables ERV to effectively engage and coordinate across government and outlines the recovery functions for lead and support agencies in relevant legislative frameworks.

Departmental responsibilities

Department of Health (DH)
- Advice on accommodation standards for interim accommodation
- 'Whole-of-health' advice, information and assistance
- Maintain community access to primary and acute health services, including mental health and wellbeing services
- Public health (health protection) advice
- Repairing and rebuilding DH-managed buildings and assets

Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS/ERV)
- Legal aid and support
- Statewide recovery coordination
- Recovery support program (for this event)
- Emergency and temporary accommodation (for this event)

Department of Transport and Planning (DTP, previously DoT)
- Restoration of airport access, port infrastructure, rail, tram, contracted ferries, and bus services
- Assessment, restoration, clean up and rehabilitation of DTP owned public buildings, roads, bridges, and tunnels
- Support municipal councils with undertaking the assessment, restoration of essential municipal assets including roads, bridges, and tunnels under municipal council responsibility
- Built environment including land use planning, building regulations and registered heritage assets

Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR, previously DJPR)
- Local and regional economies
- Businesses
- Tourism
- Food and grocery supply continuity

State Government Recovery Partner and portfolio agencies

Department of Education (DE, previously DET)
- Advice and support to schools and early childhood services
- Repairing and rebuilding DE-managed buildings and assets
- Support for impacted students

Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA, previously DELWP)
- Energy services
- Reticulated water and wastewater services
- Natural environment, public land and waterways, including public assets
- Agriculture and primary production
- Protection and rehabilitation of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites on public land

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)
- Financial assistance (individual and household)
- Housing and accommodation
- Psychosocial support
- Family violence prevention and support

Department of Government Services (DGS, new department)
- Local government
- Consumer affairs
- Public telecommunications

As a distinct phase of emergency management, there are specific state-level governance arrangements in place to support recovery following a major emergency.

Security and Emergency Management Committee of Cabinet

State Crisis and Resilience Council

State Recovery Coordination Committee
Co-chairs: EMC and CEO ERV

State Recovery Working Groups

Buildings and Infrastructure
Chair: DTP/DEECA

People and Wellbeing
Chair: DFFH/ERV

Business and Economy
Chair: DJSIR

Aboriginal Culture and Healing
Chair: ERV

Environment and Biodiversity
Chair: DEECA

Recovery taskforce/s
(as needed)

State Recovery Coordination Committee

The State Recovery Coordination Committee (SRCC) is a Victorian Government senior officials committee providing governance of recovery activities both following major emergency events and during a steady state. SRCC supports recovery agencies to undertake their responsibilities and resolve cross-government strategic issues. SRCC is co-chaired by the Emergency Management Commissioner (EMC) and the CEO of ERV.

As required, SRCC provides advice to the State Crisis and Resilience Council (which includes Secretaries from each Victorian Government department, the Chief Commissioner of Police, the Emergency Management Commissioner and the CEOs of Emergency Management Victoria and Emergency Recovery Victoria) on the recovery needs and priorities of Victorian communities.

State Recovery Working Groups

SRCC is supported by five State Recovery Working Groups (SRWGs), which comprise executives from relevant Victorian Government departments and external stakeholders. Their role is to guide the effective implementation of recovery activities, connect initiatives with department recovery services, and foster partnerships with government and non-government stakeholders.

The SRWGs report on the status of initiatives and activities that align to their respective lines of recovery. They provide strategic direction, coordination, reporting and program development advice.

Recovery taskforces

Following a major emergency, the Victorian Government may choose to establish one or more dedicated taskforces to coordinate efforts around specific issues, needs or places. After previous events time-limited taskforces have been established to support activities such as clean-up and housing.

Local and regional arrangements

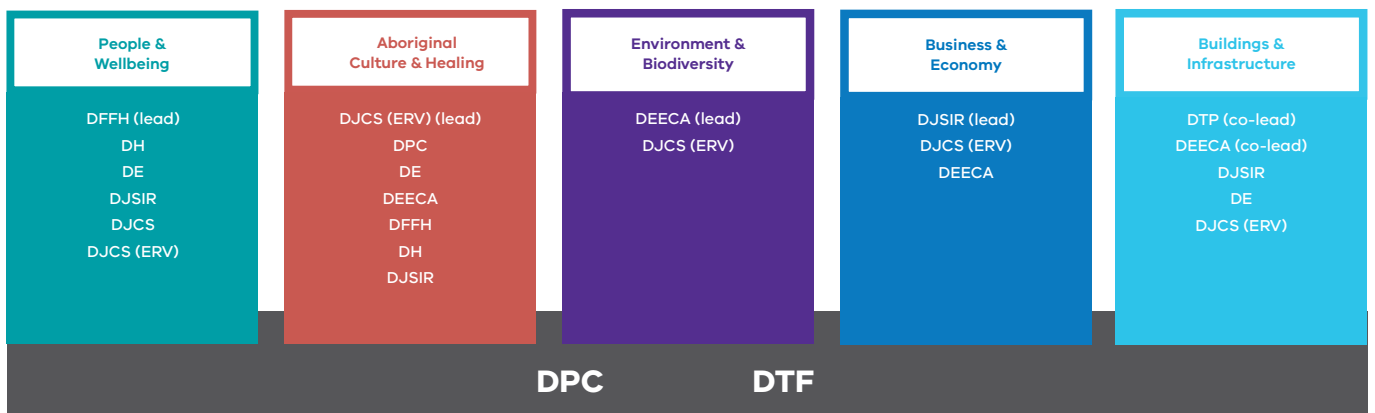Recovery can also be managed by new or existing governance at the community, municipal and/or regional levels, with issues escalated to the state tier as required.

Lines of recovery

The SEMP identifies four recovery environments – social, economic, built and natural – which together provide a framework within which recovery can be planned, coordinated, delivered, monitored and evaluated. Each environment contains one or more functional areas that bring together related recovery roles that address specific community needs.

ERV's approach to recovery builds on the SEMP, identifying five lines of recovery that both align to the SEMP recovery environments and include a separate line of recovery for Aboriginal Culture and Healing.

This is because ERV is committed to embedding Aboriginal self-determination into our practices to improve strengthened recovery outcomes, in line with Victorian Government commitments under the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023 and Self-Determination Reform Framework.

Aboriginal people's relationships to country, culture and community are not only interconnected but intrinsically linked and enmeshed within identity. Incorporating Aboriginal knowledge into the recovery system benefits all Victorians. Aboriginal ways of knowing encourage us to live in connection with the land, and for communities to see themselves as part of that land and place, rather than separate.

People & Wellbeing	Aboriginal Culture & Healing	Environment & Biodiversity	Business & Economy	Buildings & Infrastructure
DFFH (lead)	DJCS (ERV) (lead)	DEECA (lead)	DJSIR (lead)	DTP (co-lead)
DH	DPC	DJCS (ERV)	DJCS (ERV)	DEECA (co-lead)
DE	DE		DEECA	DJSIR
DJSIR	DEECA			DE
DJCS	DFFH			DJCS (ERV)
DJCS (ERV)	DH			
	DJSIR			

DPC   **DTF**

Recovery Outcomes Framework

The Recovery Outcomes Framework describes the desired outcomes for disaster-affected communities and individuals across each of the five lines of recovery (recovery outcomes) and the recovery system that exists to support them (system outcomes).

The Recovery Outcomes Framework defines our aspirations and what success looks like in supporting impacted communities. It helps to understand what is important now and in the long-term, guides investment decisions and informs interventions and whether they need to be re-calibrated.

Line of Recovery	People & Wellbeing	Aboriginal Culture & Healing	Biodiversity & Environment	Business & Economy	Buildings & Infrastructure
Long-term/ WoVG Outcomes	• People are healthy and well • People are safe and secure • Communities are cohesive and people connected	• Aboriginal land, water and cultural rights are realised • Systems and structures support self-determination • Aboriginal Victorians enjoy social and emotional wellbeing	• Natural environments are healthy, resilient and biodiverse • Natural environments have high levels of amenity • Natural Environments are productive and accessible	• Businesses, industries and sectors thrive • People participate in and contribute to the economy • Communities shape their economy	• Utilities and transport are effective and appropriate • Public infrastructure is quality and relevant • The built environment is safe and quality
Recovery Outcomes	People are managing their physical and mental health	Aboriginal people's unique experiences of trauma are addressed, and healing supported	The natural habitat and processes that support threatened and iconic species and ecological communities are restored and protected	Industries and businesses recover and leverage economic strengths and opportunities	Utilities and transport routes are restored and strengthened
	People have timely access to a safe, stable, and secure home	Recovery and resilience of the whole community are strengthened through Aboriginal culture, knowledge, traditions, and connection to country	The community benefits of parks, forests, and catchments are restored	People participate in established and new employment opportunities	Public infrastructure is resilient and supports recovery
	Communities recover and build resilience together	Aboriginal communities have increased capability to lead recovery and build resilience	Capability to support environmental recovery and resilience is strengthened	Local economies have increased capacity to respond and adapt to any future disaster	Residential, commercial, and agricultural property is rebuilt and improved

System Outcomes	People get the recovery supports they need in a timely, safe, and readily accessible way
	Communities are actively involved in decisions affecting their recovery
	Aboriginal people are the authorisers and central to decision making for their recovery
	Recovery delivery is efficient, coordinated, and evidence informed
	Recovery responses strengthen community capability to manage their own recovery and resilience to future disasters
	The recovery workforce has the capabilities and support needed to respond to community needs

Community recovery

When a significant emergency strikes an area, it is the people who make up that community who are the hardest hit. They are also the ones who have intricate knowledge of their community and can provide local insights as to what is needed to support recovery. It is important to support an approach to community recovery that gives communities greater opportunity to be involved in decisions and processes that contribute to reshaping and rebuilding their lives in ways that work for them.

Communities can be place-based, interest-based or impact-based, with a geographic location not always the most appropriate way to define a community affected by an emergency.

Emergency management in Victoria positions local governments as the lead agencies responsible for recovery coordination at the local level, recognising they are best placed to understand the unique context and provide for the needs of their communities. In events where complexity and scale require regional or state coordination, local governments still lead at the local level, delivering community-facing services and collaborating with partners.

Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (including Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, Land Councils and Traditional Owner groups) are pivotal in leading and supporting successful recovery outcomes for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Community Recovery Toolkit

ERV has developed a Community Recovery Toolkit that provides guidance and tools to support communities impacted by emergencies to establish and shape their community recovery processes.

The toolkit provides practical advice on:

- The process for recovery and approaches that a community may adopt in preparing for recovery planning.
- Tools and templates to support each step of the community recovery process

How we work to support community recovery

We **enable local leadership** by working with and through local government to support their community recovery approaches and by sharing information to improve recovery service delivery.

We **coordinate** recovery activities by **collaborating** as a partner with councils, government agencies and non-government organisations to respond to the recovery needs of communities in locally driven and delivered ways.

We are **people-centred and trauma informed** to be sensitive to the changing needs of people along their recovery journey. We proactively solve problems, advocate to remove barriers, and promote equity in service delivery.

We are **agile** to be responsive to the unique, complex, and dynamic needs of communities during recovery.