



Halls Gap Resilience Group

Terms of Reference

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience* requires all of society to take responsibility for preparing for disasters. This includes

1. industry, including critical infrastructure providers, tourism, and agriculture, recognising the potential risk of emergencies to their businesses and customers, and planning for continued service provision,
2. local government (including the Northern Grampians Shire Council (NGSC)) and communities (including Halls Gap) planning and preparing for emergencies, and
3. Halls Gap residents and visitors taking responsibility for themselves and those in their care, and actively planning and preparing for emergencies.

To fulfill the Halls Gap community's responsibilities for disaster resilience, a Halls Gap Resilience Group (hereafter referred to as the Resilience Group) is required.

1.2 Purpose

This document is intended to provide a basis for the operations of the Resilience Group.

1.3 Audience

The audience for this document is those organisations involved in disaster planning and management for Halls Gap. and the Community Association of Halls Gap.

1.4 Acknowledgements

The content of this document borrows heavily from the

- Terms of Reference template, REMPC sub-committee or working group, <https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/publications/rempc-subcommittee-and-working-group-governance-subcommitteeworking-group-terms-of>
- Advisory material MEMPC Terms of Reference, <https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/publications/advisory-material-mempc-terms-of-reference>

2 Terms of Reference for the Resilience Group

2.1 Overview of the Resilience Group

2.1.1 What Resilience Is

Resilience is the capacity of Halls Gap to respond positively to emergency events. It is the ability of the community to prepare for, and react to, emergencies in a sustainable way. A resilient community is one that can survive, adapt and grow in the face of stresses (everyday challenges) and shocks (emergency events). It is self-sufficient and able to maintain systems and structures without being wholly dependent on external help.

Halls Gap is vulnerable to floods, landslides, bushfires and other threats. They adversely affect the local economy and the health and wellbeing of residents and tourists. The severity of the adverse impact depends on the scale of the disaster and the level of preparedness to respond to the emergency. Developing community resilience to emergency events will

- minimise the adverse impact,
- contribute to a quicker, more effective, response and recovery, and
- make for a safer community.

2.1.2 What the Resilience Group Is

The Resilience Group is a subcommittee of the Community Association of Halls Gap Inc (CAHG.) The Resilience Group is accountable to, and contributes to the work of, the CAHG which is the umbrella organisation for multiple groups and activities in the Halls Gap community.

The Resilience Group is a forum for agencies and community representatives to develop strategies and frameworks to support the resilience of the Halls Gap community. It will help both residents and tourists to

- understand the nature of various emergency events, and
- actively prepare/plan for, and mitigate against, the adverse impacts of emergency events.

The Resilience Group has the power to do all things necessary or convenient in the performance of its functions, subject to CAHG approval. However it cannot direct any external agency, organisation or other community group, so must work cooperatively with these external parties to achieve the Group's goals.

2.1.3 What the Resilience Group Does

The Resilience Group will identify community resilience issues and concerns, identify gaps in the management of emergencies, and where appropriate, advocate and lobby agencies (including the shire council), and/or apply for grants or other funding, to implement the programs and initiatives required to address the identified concerns or gaps.

Expected deliverables from the Group include:

1. Development and maintenance of a *Halls Gap Threat & Risk Assessment* to identify the emergency events which the community should prepare for and build resilience against.
2. Preparation and maintenance of specific plans, in conjunction with relevant agencies, to address those emergency events which do not already have plans, or to fill any gaps which exist in existing plans.
3. Implementation of the plans, in conjunction with relevant agencies, through development and maintenance of emergency protocols, recruitment of assistance and/or funding from external agencies and community members, and promotion of emergency response materials to Halls Gap residents, businesses, accommodation providers, and tourists.

The Resilience Group will review the currency and accuracy of risk assessments and emergency plans and materials every three years, unless otherwise agreed.

The Group may establish time-limited working groups to investigate or address specific issues or undertake key tasks.

2.2 Membership

2.2.1 Representatives

The Resilience Group is intended to be made up of community representatives, and representatives from local emergency and support agencies:

- Community representatives will be recruited to the Resilience Group by CAHG.
- Local emergency services agencies may nominate a representative to serve on the Resilience Group.
- The Resilience Group may invite or recruit people with key skills or knowledge to join the Resilience Group, or to join a working group of the Resilience Group, as necessary.

Representatives may be from

- Northern Grampians Shire Council
- Ambulance Victoria
- Country Fire Authority
- Forest Fire Management/ DELWP
- Parks Victoria
- Victoria Police
- Victoria State Emergency Service
- Other relevant bodies.

The Resilience Group may also broaden participation beyond community and agency members, and invite experts, universities, or other institutions to provide technical input or to discuss relevant issues, when needed.

The Resilience Group will review its membership on a yearly basis, or more frequently if needed.

Each member shall have one vote.

2.2.2 Quorum

A Quorum will be made up of at least 50% of the Committee including the Chair or Deputy Chair (see later.)

Committee activities may be conducted without a quorum present; however, a quorum must be present for the purpose of decision making.

Where an agency has responsibility or accountability as a result of a motion/ resolution, that agency's representative must be part of the quorum for that agenda item.

In the event that a matter arises requiring a decision to be made outside of the meeting schedule, the Chair may initiate an 'out of session' process whereby the matter is considered by e-mail or other communication processes as determined by the Group. All members will be provided the opportunity to participate. Out of session decision-making will have the same quorum and other requirements as face-to-face meetings. A record of the out of session decision will be documented and formally presented to the next face-to-face meeting for endorsement and inclusion in the minutes.

2.2.3 Change of Representative

Members should advise the Chair if they decide to resign from the Resilience Group and should give a date on which this will take effect. The member may recommend an appropriate replacement for consideration by the Resilience Group. As soon as practical, the Chair will advise the Resilience Group in order to allow the identification and appointment of a replacement member.

Similarly, the relevant agency, organisation, or community group should advise the Chair of any formal changes to their nominated representative.

2.2.4 Proxies

Members should prioritise the Resilience Group meetings wherever possible. In the event a member is unable to personally attend a specific meeting, they are encouraged to identify a suitably skilled and authorised proxy. The proxy is considered to have the same voting rights as the substantive Resilience Group member unless the Chair is advised otherwise.

Members may choose to identify a standing proxy who is empowered to represent the member at any time. The member will notify the Chair of the details of this person and the duration of the appointment as a standing proxy.

A member will advise the Chair of the name, role, and contact details of their nominated proxy, as early as possible before a meeting. This advice should be in writing for the purpose of record keeping and will include any limitations to the voting rights of the proxy for that meeting.

If a member is unable to provide advice to the Chair of the details of a proxy and their voting rights before the meeting, the attendee will be considered an observer for the meeting.

2.2.5 Observers

An observer may attend a meeting for any number of reasons. Group members will advise the Chair of the attendance of an observer before a meeting, where possible.

Observers must respect all confidentiality and operating protocols of the Resilience Group, and must not

- vote on motions,
- intrude on the procedures of the Resilience Group, or
- take part in the meeting proceedings without the invitation of the Chair.

2.2.6 Non-voting members

If deemed necessary for transparency and equity, the Group can invite additional members who may not have voting rights. Where this is the case, the membership list will reflect the voting status.

Members of working groups (see below) do not have Resilience Group voting rights unless they are also members of the Resilience Group.

2.2.7 Working Groups

The Resilience Group will determine the need to establish working groups to investigate and report on specific issues that will assist the Resilience Group in meeting its goals.

The Resilience Group will determine the Terms of Reference and reporting timeframes for the working groups. The Resilience Group can delegate this task to the working group but must endorse or accept the proposed Terms of Reference at a Resilience Group meeting.

The membership of any working group may consist of agencies and organisations represented on the Resilience Group, and other representatives as deemed necessary.

The working group will refer any actions to be undertaken, or recommendations that will need to be referred to external agencies, to the Resilience Group.

Minutes will be taken at all working group meetings and will be distributed in accordance with the Resilience Group meeting minutes and agendas.

If the function of a working group is completed, the working group can be disbanded at a meeting of the Resilience Group.

2.3 Roles and Responsibilities

2.3.1 Resilience Group Officers

The Resilience Group must include a Chair, Deputy Chair and Secretary.

These officers may be appointed by the CAHG, or elected by the Resilience Group. If elected, the appointment should then be approved by the CAHG.

Where necessary (e.g. due to limited resources) the Resilience Group roles may be combined e.g. the Chair may also act as the Secretary.

2.3.2 Chair Responsibilities

The Chair has the following responsibilities:

- Chairing Resilience Group meetings.
- Facilitating Resilience Group operations and ensuring it operates in accordance with these Terms of Reference.
- Confirming the agenda for each meeting.
- Managing acceptance/advice of last-minute papers or agenda items prior to the Resilience Group meetings.
- Ensuring that the Resilience Group meets according to its schedule.
- Ensuring that Resilience Group meetings are efficient and effective.
- Providing leadership to the Group in its deliberations.
- Facilitating frank and open discussion.
- Ensuring that all members can participate equally.
- Providing a written report to each CAHG regular meeting, or more often as required, on any matter that affects, or may affect, the resilience of the Halls Gap community.
- Referring issues or matters of concern identified by the Group to external agencies, including providing information and recommendations to external agencies.
- Signing correspondence on behalf of the Resilience Group.
- Representing the Resilience Group in other forums where appropriate.
- Coordinating out of session matters.

2.3.3 Deputy Chair Responsibilities

The Deputy Chair has the following responsibilities:

- Receiving delegated responsibilities of the Chair as agreed with the Chair.
- Undertaking the role of the Chair if the Chair is absent or is otherwise unable to perform their responsibilities.

2.3.4 Secretary Responsibilities

The Secretary's responsibilities include:

- Scheduling meetings.
- Providing Group members with the meeting agenda.
- Recording minutes of meetings.
- Distributing minutes of meetings to members.
- Inducting new Group members.
- Preparing and sending correspondence for and on behalf of the Resilience Group.
- Maintaining the contact list of the Resilience Group members..

2.3.5 Member Responsibilities

The representatives described in Section 2.2.1 are responsible for

- seeking to understand the resilience needs of the Halls Gap community,
- providing representation at the appropriate level on behalf of their agency, organisation or community,
- providing advice or making decisions in the best interests of the Halls Gap community,
- advocating for and reporting back to their agencies, organisations or communities on Resilience Group outcomes and decisions,
- preparing for, prioritising, and attending scheduled meetings,
- proactively contributing to the work of the Resilience Group,
- provide meeting papers to the Secretary at least one week prior to a meeting,
- respecting confidential and privileged information,
- representing all areas of their agency, organisation or community,
- reporting on recent agency, organisation or community activity relating to Halls Gap community resilience, with a focus on emerging risks or opportunities,
- where a decision or action is outside the authority of the member, engaging with relevant personnel within their agency, organisation or community to obtain approval to commit resources and undertake tasks,
- identifying and liaising with subject matter experts or key representatives from within their agency, organisation or community in order to participate in the Resilience Group, or its working groups.

If a Resilience Group member or their proxy has a direct or indirect interest in a matter to be decided by the Resilience Group, they must declare their conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest and must not vote on the issue. The member should be excluded from the related proceedings.

2.4 Meetings

The Group will meet either in person, or by the use of any technology that allows members to clearly and simultaneously communicate with each other, on the Monday two weeks before the quarterly meeting of the CAHG.

The Chair may schedule additional meetings, or reschedule quarterly meetings due to the operational constraints of members, as required.

In person meetings will be held in the Supper Room of the Centenary Hall, starting at 4.00pm.

2.4.1 Meeting Principles

Meetings will be conducted on a formal basis, with proceedings recorded and action items documented in formal minutes which will be distributed to all members.

Any member can submit items to be included on the agenda. The Chair will confirm the agenda prior to each meeting.

Members are to receive meeting agendas and information at least 7 days prior to an upcoming meeting.

All efforts will be made to ensure meeting technology runs efficiently and smoothly.

Draft meeting Minutes will be issued no later than 7 days after the meeting. Meeting Minutes will clearly allocate action items to responsible parties with deadlines for completion.

All proceedings and documentation of the Resilience Group are confidential until the Resilience Group agrees otherwise, or where the provider of the information advises that it is publicly available, or that no restrictions apply to its release.

2.4.2 Decision making processes

In general, the Resilience Group will adopt a consensus approach to decision-making, where a majority of members agree, with the remainder content to give way. The Chair may seek further advice from the members and attendees or through external subject matter experts to support decision making.

Where consensus cannot be achieved, decisions will be made by majority vote. In the event of a tie the Chair will cast the deciding vote.

The Chair will ensure that all members are provided with the opportunity to participate in discussions and decision making.

Each Resilience Group member has one (1) vote on any matter decided by the Group unless that member is identified as a non-voting member. To vote, a Resilience Group member must be present at the meeting or formally represented by a proxy.

Where the Resilience Group must reach a decision between Resilience Group meetings, this can be undertaken by a circular resolution via e-mail, or other written communication process. All members will be notified of the proposed resolution, with a collective decision reached where the majority of respondents vote in the affirmative. Decisions made by circular resolution will be confirmed by the Group at the next Resilience Group meeting.

2.4.3 Issue Escalation

The Chair may escalate any matters of significance to the responsible agency, organisation or community for advice or decision. Members of the Resilience Group may also seek to escalate items to the responsible agency, organisation or community, through the Chair, where efforts to resolve a matter at the local level have not been successful, or where the consequences of a decision will unduly impact the agency, organisation or community.

Issues requiring escalation should be well documented and may include:

- A description of the issue or advice sought and the consequences if it remains unresolved.
- Actions taken to date to resolve the issue.
- Recommended actions or options that may assist resolution.

2.5 Administration

2.5.1 Financial Management

Accounting for the Resilience Group will be performed by the CAHG Treasurer.

Initial funds and resources have been committed for the operation of the Resilience Group. The group may raise additional funds through applying for grants, requesting donations, or similar activities. The Group does not have any financial delegation beyond the funds it raises itself, and cannot expend monies beyond the funding it raises.

External agencies may agree to commit funds to a Resilience Group activity or event, in which instance the expenditure is considered expenditure of the agency and not the Resilience Group. The member agency is responsible for all aspects of financial management within their existing governance arrangements. The Resilience Group does not accept liability for any agency-led initiatives.

2.5.2 Reporting

The Resilience Group will provide a quarterly report on its activities and progress to CAHG. This will be provided at least 7 days prior to each CAHG quarterly meeting.