

LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY 20 OCTOBER 2025



Local Emergency Management Committee Dowerin

Minutes

2:00pm Monday 20 October 2025

Council Chambers, 13 Cottrell Street Dowerin

Abbreviations

Crisis Care

CC

Department of Communities – Emergency Services Unit

DC

Department of Fire & Emergency Services

DFES

Strategy & Emergency Management Command

SEMC

Dowerin Bush Fire Brigade

DBFB

Dowerin Community Resource Centre

DCRC

Dowerin District High School

DDHS

Dowerin Events Management

DEM

Dowerin St John Ambulance

DSJA

St John Ambulance

SJA

Shire of Dowerin

SoD

WA Police

WAP

1. WELCOME, ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

The Chair, Cr Robert Trepp, welcomes those in attendance and declares the meeting open at 2:02pm.

In Attendance:

Robert Trepp

SoD – Chair/President

Manisha Barthakur

SoD – Chief Executive Officer

Kahli Rose

SoD – Manager of Governance and Community Services

Ciara Skinner

SoD – Compliance Officer

Phil Pickering

DBFB – Fire Control Officer

Shelley Matthews

SoD – Community Development Coordinator

Sonia King

DEM – Operations Manager

Peter Richards

SJA – Dowerin Chair

Shane Scott

WAP – Dowerin Police Sergeant Officer-in-Charge

Jeff Walker

WAP – Dowerin Police

In Attendance Via Teams:

Michael Phillips

DC – Regional Coordinator

Shelby Robinson

DFES – District Emergency Management Advisor

Apologies:

Rob Boase

CC – Welfare Coordinator

Danielle Green

DEM – General Manager

Barb Garner

DDHS – Principal

Evyn Jonson

DFES – Area Officer (Upper Wheatbelt)

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 Local Emergency Management Committee Meeting held on 21 July 2025

Attachment 2.1A

Recommendation/Resolution - 2

Moved: Phil Pickering

Seconded: Robert Trepp

1183

That the minutes of the Local Emergency Management Committee meeting held on 21 July 2025, as presented in Attachment 2.1A be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

CARRIED 11/0

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

3.1 – Shire of Dowerin

- Still awaiting outcome of application for disaster ready funding.

3.2 – Dowerin Bushfire Brigade

- Still awaiting generator automatic switch over to be connected to the fire shed.

4. STANDING ITEMS

4.1. AGENCY UPDATES

4.1.1 – Shire of Dowerin

- Department of Communities audit completed on the Dowerin Recreation Centre and Dowerin Community Club on 4 September as part of the process for them to be listed as official evacuation centres.
- Manager of Governance and Community Services and Compliance Officer attended the DEMC Forum in Bruce Rock on 1-2 September, gaining valuable insights from guest speakers and strengthening regional emergency management connections.
- Successful emergency evacuation drill was completed at the depot on the 18 September 2025.

4.1.2 – Department of Communities – Emergency Relief and Support

- Written report provided – [Attachment 4.1.2A](#)
- Emergency evacuation go bags have been received and are awaiting to be put into the Northam emergency trailers. Bags split into two sections – a day pack and night pack.

4.1.3 – Dowerin Bush Fire Brigade

- Radio course was completed by brigade on 8 October.
- Vehicles were serviced mid-year and should be good to go. Need to arrange 2 fittings for the trucks.

4.1.4 – Dowerin Community Resource Centre

- Been working on the vulnerable persons register with Dowerin Home Care and Governance team.

4.1.5 – Dowerin Events Management

- No significant incidents at field days. Had around 17,000 people in attendance over the 2 days.

4.1.7 – WA Police

- Ongoing focus on improving road user behaviour as a key prevention measure to reduce road crashes.
- Upcoming training planned ahead of the high-threat bushfire period, focusing on vehicle control points, which are our key area of expertise in bushfire response.

4.2 CONTACTS AND RESOURCES REGISTER UPDATE

The Contacts & Resources Register was circulated, with members requested to provide updates and amendments on the contents relevant to their agency.

- Councillors will need to be updated
- Add Phil Pickering as FCO.

5. GENERAL BUSINESS

5.1 Local Emergency Management Committee – Annual Plan 2026

Following the DEMC Forum in September, the Shire's Compliance Officer has developed an annual plan for the LEMC, highlighting important training, workshops and exercises for the 2026 calendar year. This plan will ensure the LEMC is achieving its statutory requirements and reasonably prepared to handle emergency situations as they arise.

This item brings the LEMC Annual Plan 2026 before the committee for its formal endorsement and implementation from February 2026 to November 2026.

Attachment 5.1A

- Chair noted it is a legal requirement to hold an annual exercise and queried if one had been conducted this year; advised no. WA Police stated a past event could be reviewed as a tabletop exercise. DFES – District Emergency Management Advisor advised that LEMC governance operates on a financial year basis – Dowerin did not record an exercise last year, but there are currently no implications, and the annual plan ensures coverage for this financial year.

Recommendation/Resolution – 5.1

Moved: Sonia King

Seconded: Phil Pickering

1184 That the Local Emergency Management Committee endorse the LEMC Annual Plan 2026, as presented in Attachment 5.1A

CARRIED 11/0

5.2 Development of Vulnerable Persons Policy and Register

The committee has discussed the development of a vulnerable persons register several times, particularly following the 2024 Wongan Hills bush fires and the extended power outages that followed. This event highlighted the number of vulnerable residents within the shire and the importance of understanding their needs and requirements during an emergency situation.

The Shire's Community Development Coordinator and Home Care Coordinator, in conjunction with the Manager of Governance and Community Services have developed a suite of documents enabling the Shire to collect, maintain and store personal information of these people for use in emergency situations only. This information may be shared with emergency service when considered critical.

Opting-into this program is voluntary and may be rescinded at any time. Persons interested in being involved will be required to complete a form allowing the Shire to store their information and provide this in exceptional circumstances to relevant bodies as outlined within the Policy.

Policy 2.8 – Vulnerable Persons Register will be presented at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 28 October 2025 and subsequently implemented prior to the 2025/2026 high risk weather period.

[Attachment 5.2A – DRAFT - Policy 2.8 Vulnerable Persons Register](#)

[Attachment 5.2B – Procedure 2.85 – Vulnerable Persons Register](#)

[Attachment 5.2C – Vulnerable Persons Information Sheet](#)

[Attachment 5.2D – DRAFT – Vulnerable Persons Application Form](#)

- The DFES District Emergency Management Advisor raised considerations regarding a Vulnerable Persons Register, including service expectations, reliability, shared responsibility, privacy, and liability. Emergency service agencies generally do not support such registers due to sensitivities around privacy, organisational expectations, and the potential to reduce community resilience by creating reliance on services. Concerns were also noted regarding the Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act, effective July next year, which may affect how data can be managed, making any register premature until policies are clarified. Continuity planning should also be considered if the Shire's risk appetite changes, including how to responsibly discontinue the register. Alternative approaches suggested included "Get to Know Your Neighbour" initiatives and working with existing service providers who have established connections with vulnerable people. It was also highlighted that some individuals in need may not identify as vulnerable and could be missed by a register. Ultimately, it is up to the Local Government and LEMC to determine the appropriate approach.
- The chair noted that the information sheet explains the register and addresses privacy concerns, and that the application form includes a consent section.
- SoD CEO acknowledged the points raised, confirmed intent to do the right thing, noted that other Shires have adopted similar registers, and stated that, with PRIS, all documents will be monitored and regularly reviewed.

Recommendation/Resolution – 5.2

Moved: Manisha Barthakur

Seconded: Robert Trepp

1185 That the Local Emergency Management Committee support the shire's Vulnerable Person's policy, procedure and framework.

CARRIED 9/2

5.3 Local Emergency Relief and Support Plan (LERSP) Endorsement

The Department of Communities has developed a Local Emergency Relief and Support Plan (LERSP) for each local government area to support existing Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA). The plan outlines how the Department of Communities, the Hazard Management Agency (HMA), and the Shire will work together during an emergency that requires the activation of an evacuation centre or the provision of community welfare support.

The LERSP is structured around three stages – Alert, Activation, and Stand Down – and outlines the communication process between agencies during each phase of response. It also identifies six key functional areas of responsibility under the State Support Plan – Emergency Relief and Support (SSP):

- Emergency accommodation
- Emergency food
- Emergency clothing and personal requisites
- Emergency personal support services
- Registration and reunification
- Financial assistance

The LERSP also includes information on local evacuation centres and those within neighbouring Shires to support coordination and cross-boundary response if required.

The Department of Communities has requested that the Committee review and endorse the LERSP as an addendum to the Shire of Dowerin's Local Emergency Management Arrangements.

Attachment 5.3A – Local Emergency Relief and Support Plan

Recommendation/Resolution – 5.3

Moved: Michael Phillips

Seconded: Phil Pickering

That the Local Emergency Management Committee:

- 1186**
1. Notes the information provided on the Local Emergency Relief and Support Plan(LERSP); and
 2. Endorses the LERSP as an addendum to the Shire of Dowerin's Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA).

CARRIED 11/0

5.4 Update to Local Emergency Management Arrangements

The Department of Communities has advised that all references to '*Welfare Centre*' within Local Emergency Management Arrangements are to be replaced with '*Evacuation Centre*'.

Where the term relates to support functions (such as food, clothing, or financial assistance), it should be updated to '*Emergency Relief and Support*'.

These updates ensure consistency with current State terminology and will be reflected in the next LEMA review.

- DC – Regional Coordinator asked if the LEMC supported listing the Dowerin Community Club as the primary evacuation centre as it is a new facility with emergency relief and support facilities already on site.
- Manager of Governance and Community Services advised that a previous audit issue with the Dowerin Community Club has now been resolved, and the LEMC is in full support.

Recommendation/Resolution – 5.4

Moved: Michael Phillips

Seconded: Manisha Barthakur

1187

That the Local Emergency Management Committee supports the terminology updates within the Shire of Dowerin's Local Emergency Management Arrangements to replace *Welfare Centre* with '*Emergency Evacuation Centre*' and '*Welfare Support*' with '*Emergency Relief and Support*'.

CARRIED 11/0

6. FUTURE MEETING DATES

The date for the next meeting is yet to be confirmed.

7. MEETING CLOSED

There being no further business the Chair thanked those in attendance and closed the meeting at 2:36pm.