MURRAY REGIONAL TOURISM

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN
Released 2023

1.   Introduction

The Murray region boasts an enviable collection of tourism experiences that attracts a significant number of domestic and international visitors.

In recent years the Murray Region Tourism Economy has been significantly impacted by the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, which saw multiple border closures, stay at home orders and restrictions on travel, followed then by the 2022 floods which impacted all sectors of the visitor economy.

Prior to the pandemic Tourism was a significant economic driver for the region. In the year ending December 2019, the tourism industry directly contributed an estimated $2.1 billion to the Murray economy and importantly, directly supported over 18,000 tourism related jobs.

Aside from a 1 in 100 year event like the global COVID-19 pandemic, for the Murray region, crisis events that more regularly impact the region are flood and blue green algae water events, however, instances of insect-borne diseases, bushfires, locusts and drought also occur.

Worldwide and local experience shows that when a crisis occurs, the absence of effective crisis preparation, response and recovery activities can be devastating to local businesses, towns and regions.

The Murray Regional Tourism (MRT) Crisis Management Plan has been developed so that in the event of a crisis, MRT can take a proactive stance and quickly and effectively respond to ensure that impacts on the tourism industry are minimised for the region.

In the event of an incident that impacts on tourism in the region, MRT will work within the structures and procedures required by relevant legislation. MRT will review approved communications and warnings and use this information as the basis for developing and distributing highly targeted, timely and accurate information specifically for visitors, tourism operators, industry associations and the media.

MRT recognizes the precedence and requirements of the **Emergency Management Act 2013 (VIC),** which is running concurrently with the **Emergency Management Act 1986 and the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 (NSW).** While the region is well serviced by Municipal Emergency Management Plans (MEMP) for Victoria and Disaster Plan (DISPLAN) for NSW at an LGA level and by plans prepared and maintained by other agencies, some of these plans do not specifically address the crisis management needs of the tourism industry. It should also be recognised that not all tourism crisis events are emergencies, nor all emergencies are crisis events.

In the recovery phase, MRT will work with local operators to provide an additional voice to government should assistance be required and will endeavour to minimize any long-term reputational damage to the Murray regional tourism industry.

Where a crisis event occurs but is not subject to the umbrella emergency management legislation, MRT may activate elements of this plan to ensure the best possible outcomes for the tourism industry and ensure the region's reputation is protected.

1.1   Context

Murray Regional Tourism covers 13 Local Government areas along the Murray River in Victoria and NSW. The intent of the MRT Crisis Management Plan is to complement MEMP's (VIC)/ DISPLANS(NSW) and provide the Murray Region tourism industry with specific crisis management (including communications) support in the event of a tourism crisis.

Table 1: Murray Local Government Areas (LGAs)

Murray LGAs
Albury City Council
Berrigan Shire Council
City of Wodonga
Edward River Council
Federation Shire Council
Gannawarra Shire Council
Greater Hume Shire Council
Mildura Rural City Council
Moira Shire Council
Murray River Council
Shire of Campaspe
Swan Hill Rural City Council
Wentworth Shire Council

Table 2: Recent Crisis Events in the Murray Region

Crisis Event	Year
Drought	2007 - 2009
Blue Green Algae Outbreak	2009
Locust Plague	2011
Floods	2011
Murray Valley Encephalitis	2011 - 2012
Tornadoes	2013
Blue Green Algae	2016
High River Levels/Mosquitos	2016
COVID -19 Pandemic	2020 - 2023
Floods	2022 - 2023

NOTE: For the purposes of this plan, a crisis is a serious event that can be either perceived or real. A crisis disrupts normal activities and impacts negatively on the operations of a tourism business and/or region in the immediate to short term. Some emergency incidents may develop into a crisis.

1.2   The Crisis Management Plan Overview

The Murray Regional Tourism Crisis Management Plan outlines actions to be undertaken by MRT in partnership with key stakeholders in preparing for, responding to and recovering from, crisis incidents which affect the region's tourism industry. It outlines specific roles and responsibilities for MRT staff and local government tourism managers and focuses on the three major phases of crisis management; **preparedness, response and recovery.**

The plan aims to:
- Minimise confusion amongst visitors about the crisis event, and support their safety;
- Increase understanding of the tourism industry's needs amongst stakeholders who are making decisions in response to the crisis, such as the emergency services agencies;
- Minimise misinformation in the media;
- Reduce booking cancellations and loss of business;
- Help to protect the region's brand/reputation;
- Increase the resilience of tourism operators to manage their business successfully through a crisis;
- Rapidly restore visitor confidence.

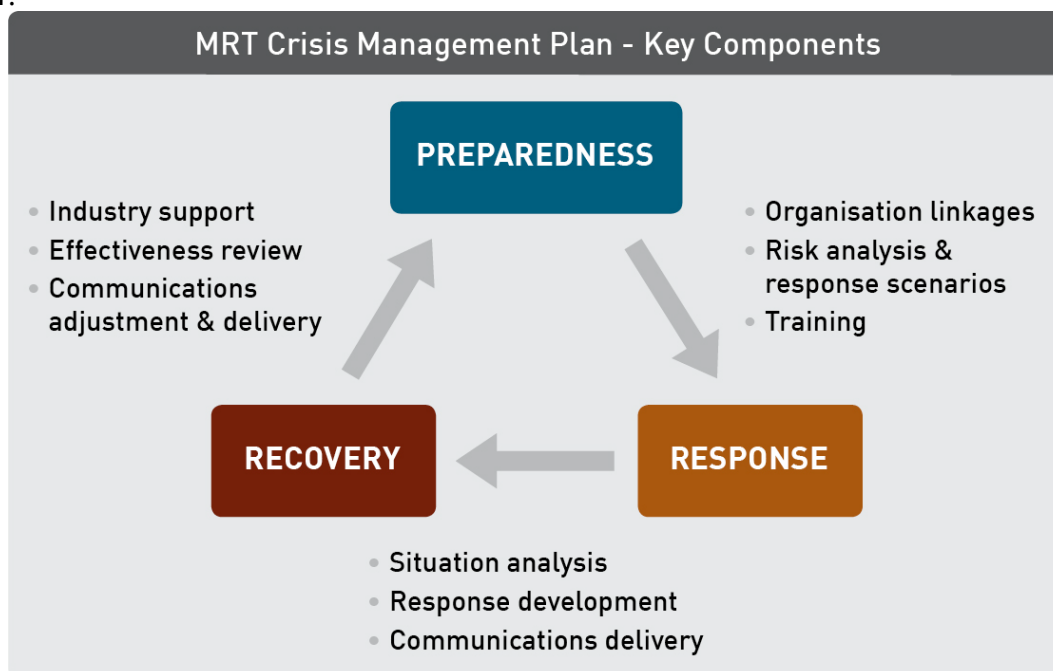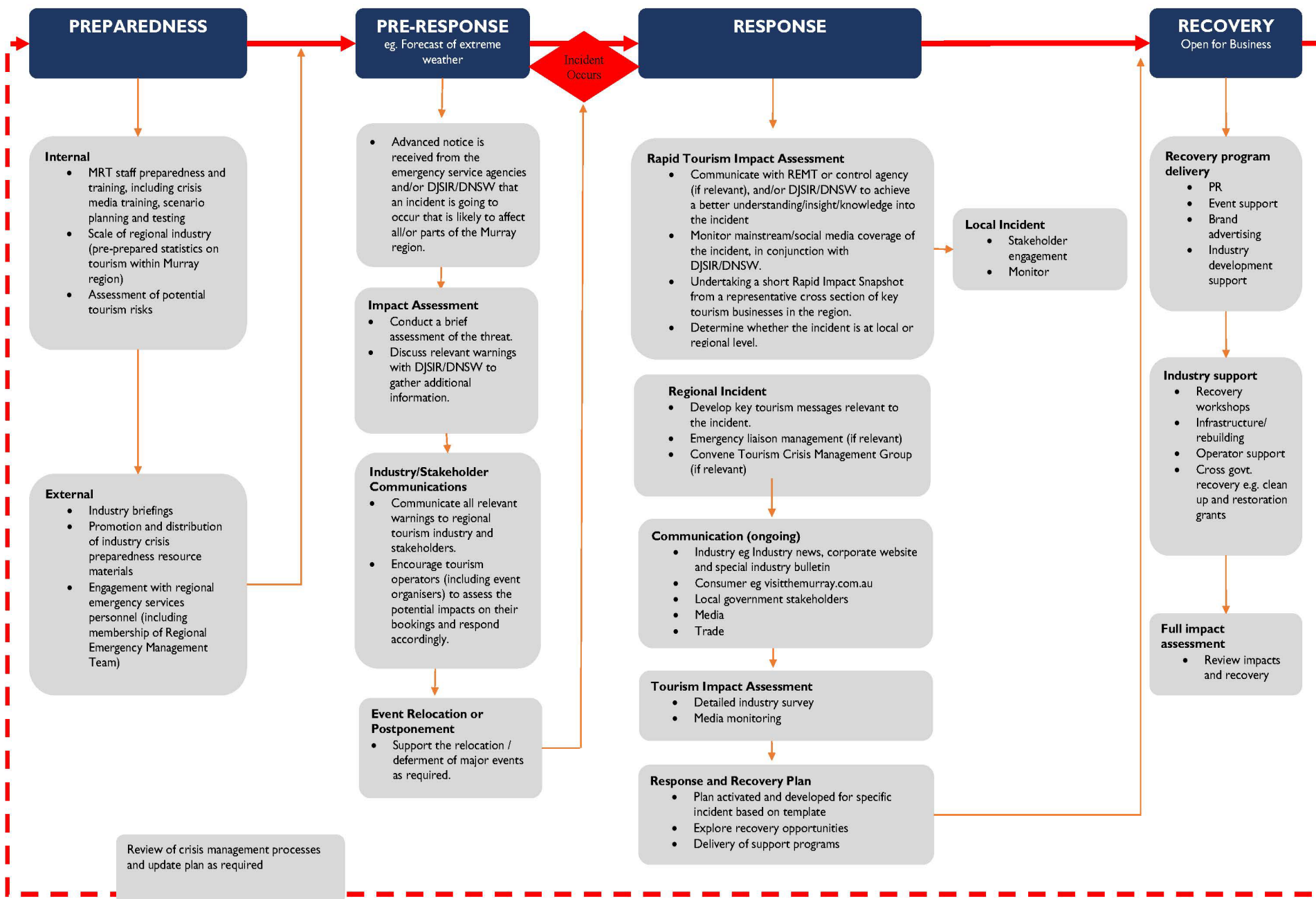There are three main components to the plan:

Figure 1.

Figure 2 below outlines the High-Level Crisis Procedures in a flow chart and provides an overarching snapshot into how MRT will prepare, respond and recover from a high level crisis event.

MRT HIGH LEVEL CRISIS PROCEDURES

PREPAREDNESS

PRE-RESPONSE
eg. Forecast of extreme weather

Incident Occurs

RESPONSE

RECOVERY
Open for Business

Internal
- MRT staff preparedness and training, including crisis media training, scenario planning and testing
- Scale of regional industry (pre-prepared statistics on tourism within Murray region)
- Assessment of potential tourism risks

External
- Industry briefings
- Promotion and distribution of industry crisis preparedness resource materials
- Engagement with regional emergency services personnel (including membership of Regional Emergency Management Team)

- Advanced notice is received from the emergency service agencies and/or DJSIR/DNSW that an incident is going to occur that is likely to affect all/or parts of the Murray region.

Impact Assessment
- Conduct a brief assessment of the threat.
- Discuss relevant warnings with DJSIR/DNSW to gather additional information.

Industry/Stakeholder Communications
- Communicate all relevant warnings to regional tourism industry and stakeholders.
- Encourage tourism operators (including event organisers) to assess the potential impacts on their bookings and respond accordingly.

Event Relocation or Postponement
- Support the relocation / deferment of major events as required.

Rapid Tourism Impact Assessment
- Communicate with REMT or control agency (if relevant), and/or DJSIR/DNSW to achieve a better understanding/insight/knowledge into the incident
- Monitor mainstream/social media coverage of the incident, in conjunction with DJSIR/DNSW.
- Undertaking a short Rapid Impact Snapshot from a representative cross section of key tourism businesses in the region.
- Determine whether the incident is at local or regional level.

Local Incident
- Stakeholder engagement
- Monitor

Regional Incident
- Develop key tourism messages relevant to the incident.
- Emergency liaison management (if relevant)
- Convene Tourism Crisis Management Group (if relevant)

Communication (ongoing)
- Industry eg Industry news, corporate website and special industry bulletin
- Consumer eg visitthemurray.com.au
- Local government stakeholders
- Media
- Trade

Tourism Impact Assessment
- Detailed industry survey
- Media monitoring

Response and Recovery Plan
- Plan activated and developed for specific incident based on template
- Explore recovery opportunities
- Delivery of support programs

Recovery program delivery
- PR
- Event support
- Brand advertising
- Industry development support

Industry support
- Recovery workshops
- Infrastructure/ rebuilding
- Operator support
- Cross govt. recovery e.g. clean up and restoration grants

Full impact assessment
- Review impacts and recovery

Review of crisis management processes and update plan as required

2   Key Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Murray Regional Tourism (MRT)

- Be ultimately responsible for the plan's development and on-going maintenance.
- Be the plan's activation authority.
- Lead the industry's risk strategy and contingency activities.
- Ongoing engagement with the emergency services agencies.
- Represent the tourism industry on the Regional Emergency Management Team (REMT).
- If required, establish, and actively participate in and support (in-kind and financial) the Tourism Crisis Management Group (TCMG).
- Key tourism media spokesperson.
- Provide staff to support the work of the TCMG in the media officer and information officer roles. Depending on the scale of the event, MRT may outsource the media liaison role to its external public relations company. Refer to *Appendix 2* for the MRT support staff list.
- Coordinate/facilitate tourism business crisis preparedness activities, in partnership with the Victoria Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (Tourism & Events) Branch Victoria, Destination NSW and the emergency services.
   - o Engage with local emergency services and LGA's to ensure their plans address the tourism industry's requirements such as the safety of visitors.

2.2 Local Government Tourism Managers/Officers – impact intelligence, local coordination, and liaison

- Contribute to the development of council's MEMPlan/Displan.
- Contribute to the development of the TCMG Plan.
- Collect impact intelligence at the business level and forwarding same to TCMG as required.
- Facilitate the dissemination of official emergency information to visitors, tourism businesses and local tourism associations.
- Represent council on the TCMG where applicable.
- Be the communications conduit to other areas of Council (including Mayor's office and the Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre).
- Act as the local tourism liaison point for the incident controller.
- Identify potential risks to the local tourism industry, develop mitigation strategies and contingencies as on-going inputs to the TCMG plan.
- Local coordination of business crisis preparedness activities.

A list of the Murray Region local government Tourism Managers and Economic Development Managers is found in *Appendix 5*.

2.3 Murray Tourism Crisis Management Group (TCMG) – As required.

- Support MRT in the implementation of the CMP for the crisis event.
- The TCMG membership will be fluid based on the needs of the crisis event. Generally, it will include representation from; MRT, DJSIR, DNSW, LGAs,
- Within the scope of the plan
   - o Initiate effective response and recovery activities.
   - o Monitor and respond to the tourism industry's needs.
   - o Collaborate with MRT to deliver a communications strategy and associated collateral that positively manages public perceptions of the region with visitor markets and the media being specific targets.
- Identify potential risks to the tourism industry, mitigation strategies and contingencies as on-going inputs to the plan.

> **NOTE:** Depending on the scale and nature of the incident, it may not be necessary to activate the full TCMG in response to a crisis event. The level of activation will be based on the initial assessment, (refer to Table 6, RESPONSE section 5.3), and in consultation with DJSIR Victoria and Destination NSW.

Murray TCMG members are appointed on the basis of their cluster geographical location as the key contact for that cluster as well as to provide linkages with other organisations which can help guide the tourism industry's response to, and short-term recovery from, a crisis.

2.4 State Crisis Management Group

If the incident is at a State level, Destination NSW or Victorian DJSIR lead the tourism response and recovery effort, in consultation with relevant government departments/ agencies and industry associations. This role includes establishing a State Tourism Crisis Management Group.

Membership of this group includes key department staff, a representative from the peak industry body (NSW Business Chamber or Victoria Tourism Industry Council), relevant emergency services staff and NSW Destination Network GMs and Victorian RTB CEOs from the affected regions. In this context, the MRT CEO may be invited to be a member of the group if the region is affected by the crisis.
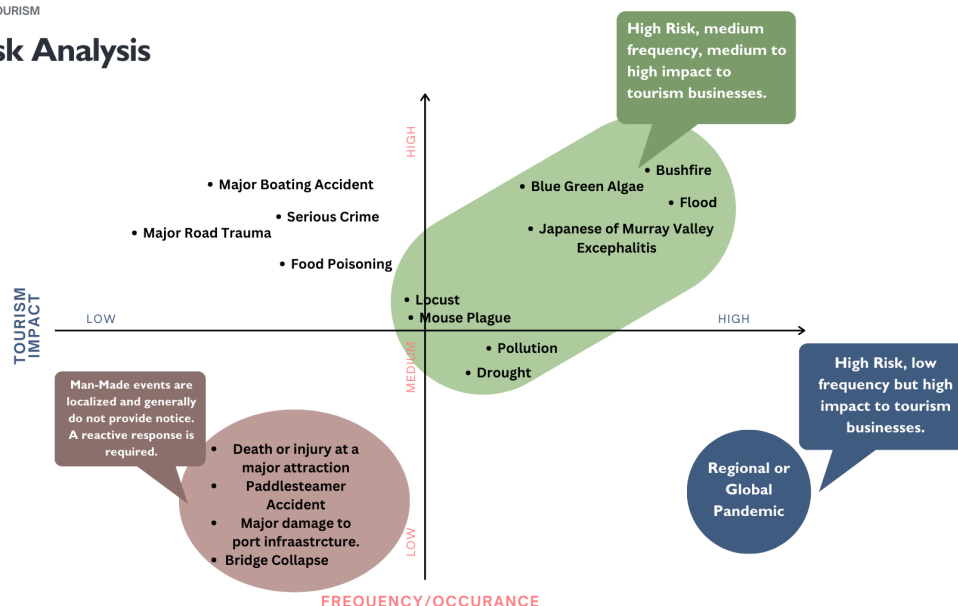
3 Risk Assessment & Management

Overall, the Murray region is a relatively low risk destination. The chart below identifies the current regional situation and is based on a summary of LGA Emergency Management Plans and DISPLANS.

Figure 3: Murray region risk analysis

However, MRT has identified several high-risk incidents that, while the incidents are usually localized, are most likely to affect tourism across the Murray region. These higher risk and higher frequency events are the focus of its preparedness, response, and recovery planning.

A detailed assessment of the likely tourism impacts and consequences of these risks suggested responses and the relevant control agency is found in *Appendix 6*.

4 Preparedness

4.1 Crisis Response Preparedness

MRT recognises that the effectiveness of its response to a crisis event is, to a large degree, governed by its preparedness activities.

Preparedness - People
Responsible Authority: MRT CEO

Core crisis response and recovery staff will regularly undertake training relevant to their respective crisis-related duties.
Training will occur across the following areas;
- Becoming familiar with the CMP
- Crisis/Emergency Management
- Crisis Communications
- Emergency Services and LGA Communication protocols
- Scenario planning and Documentation

Preparedness - Roles and Responsibilities
Responsible Authority: MRT CEO

Roles and responsibilities of MRT and TCMG will be reviewed and adjusted based on a post implementation review of the annual crisis management exercise or an actual crisis event.

Preparedness - Policies and Procedures
Responsible Authority: MRT CEO

Policies, procedures and responsibilities of MRT and TCMG will be reviewed and adjusted based on a post implementation review of the annual crisis management exercise or as the result of an actual crisis event. In addition, any changes made by other responsible authorities' policies and procedures need to
        be
applied to this document as advised.

Preparedness - Partnerships
Responsible Authority: MRT CEO

MRT will undertake formal information and feedback meetings to strengthen understanding, partnerships and relationships with relevant local government, emergency services, state government and tourism industry personnel. These meetings will be held annually unless the need for more frequent meetings is triggered by a crisis event.
Maintaining strong and effective relationships with key personnel will also continue outside the formal information and feedback meetings.

Preparedness - Scenarios and Response Development
Responsible Authority: MRT & TCMG (If relevant)

MRT has prepared draft media releases, statements and key messages based on the potential high-risk crisis events, in association with DJSIR, Destination NSW and relevant emergency services agencies *(Appendix 7-12).* This will allow for crisis communications to be expedited due to MRT's clear and approved position on an issue. The pre-prepared communication pieces will be reviewed annually or following a major crisis event.

Preparedness - Information Maintenance
Responsible Authority: MRT CEO

Critical to effective stakeholder communications is the maintenance of a comprehensive contact database. MRT has established an electronic database that includes the details of all stakeholders as noted in the appendices. General publication of appendices containing the names of people and their contact details is subject to state and federal privacy legislation. Similar restrictions apply to the information held in the contacts database. Access to these appendices and the contacts database will be therefore restricted to MRT management and staff or their delegates.

The stakeholder contact database will be formally updated as a key element of the annual crisis management exercise. If during the year changes are reported to MRTB, updates will also be applied.

Preparedness - Practice and Adjustment
Responsible Authority: MRT CEO

The Crisis Management Plan will be tested annually at the discretion of the MRT so it can remain effective and relevant and improve over time.

After a crisis event, an evaluation of pre-response, response and recovery processes will be undertaken to provide insightful information that can be used to update the plan.

Evaluation questions will include (amongst others):
- How well were the response and recovery processes executed by the TCMG?
- What did and didn't work?
- How effectively were communications co-ordinated between partners?
- How well equipped was the tourism industry to manage their businesses through the crisis?

4.2 Preparedness - Assisting Industry

Local Government Tourism Managers
MRT will provide assistance and advice to local government Tourism Managers, in conjunction with DJSIR and Destination NSW, on crisis management through a suite of activities including:

- The dissemination of Visit Victoria's *Tourism Crisis Management Planning: A guide for destination managers*.
- Specific advice and training on the formation and on-going activities of a local crisis coordination group.
- On a needs basis, in partnership with the responsible Government agency, conducts briefings/training on impending or potential crisis events.

These activities will align with the annual crisis management plan exercise.

Tourism Businesses
MRT will undertake a suite of preparedness activities to build capacity in the region's tourism businesses to better respond and recover from crisis events, focused on the high-risk incidents:

General
- The promotion of DJSIR *Open for Business* crisis management on-line resource and the dissemination of the *Crisis Essentials* publication.

- The inclusion of business crisis planning advice in MRT's regular industry communications, such as information about the TCMG, the benefits of a sole regional spokesman on tourism and the need for protocols in working with the media and using social media.
- In conjunction with local government tourism managers, DJSIR and/or Destination NSW conduct general crisis management workshops/briefings for tourism businesses (i.e. Managing Your Bookings in a Crisis briefings);
- On a needs basis, in partnership with the responsible Government agency and DJSIR/DNSW conducting briefing sessions for tourism businesses on impending or potential crisis events.

High Risk Crisis Events
- Support DJSIR and CFA in the promotion of the *Tourism Business Fire Ready Kit* and associated visitor engagement resources.
- Support CFA/RFS in the delivery of bushfire related briefings for the region's tourism businesses.
- Support VICSES/NSWSES in the promotion of the *Business Floodsafe toolkit* and associated activities.

Regional Accredited Visitor Information Centres
- Support CFA/RFS in the delivery of bushfire related briefings for the region's accredited visitor information centres.

Regionally Significant Tourist Attractions & Events
- Encourage regionally significant tourist attractions and events to undertake crisis management planning, including how this should integrate with the regional approach.

Visitors
MRT will undertake a suite of activities to educate visitors about safety risks relevant to the region, including:

- The provision of safety advice on visitthemurray.com.au and relevant social media platforms.

- In partnership with the relevant Government agencies, conducting risk-specific activities such as the promotion and distribution of the *Beat the Bite* and *Bushfire Safety Tips* for Travellers brochures.

4.3 *Preparedness Pre-response*

If MRT receives advanced notice from emergency service agencies and/or DJSIR/Destination NSW that an incident is going to occur that will affect the region, such as a severe weather forecast, an algal bloom moving down the river, or an approaching bushfire, Catastrophic fire danger warning, it will enact the following steps:

1. Conduct a brief assessment of the threat (based on Table 5).
2. Discuss relevant warnings with DJSIR /Destination NSW to gather additional information.
3. Communicate all relevant warnings to the regional tourism industry.
4. Identify with DJSIR /Destination NSW if travel advisories are required to discourage travel to the affected area, and issue as relevant with DJSIR /Destination NSW.
5. Encourage tourism operators (including event organisers) to assess the potential impacts on their business and the safety of staff and visitors, and manage their bookings accordingly.
6. Gather additional information from the local tourism managers, local tourism associations and accredited visitor information centres.
7. Notify the TCMG members depending on the scale of the potential threat
8. Support the relocation / deferment of major events as required.

MRT may undertake relevant marketing activities, such as promoting parts of the region and activities that will not be affected by the incident. This would include providing fact sheets to visitor information centres and tourism operators to convey information to visitors.

The following table provides examples of types of incidents that may require a pre-response effort. It also provides examples of when communication to industry and visitors may be required at the pre-response stage. It should be noted that this is not a prescriptive list, but nonetheless provides a guide for decisions relating to preparing industry/visitor communication when there is warning that an incident is likely to occur.

Table 5: Pre-Response – Examples of Threats

Likely to receive warning that an incident is expected to occur And Highly likely to require communication to industry and visitors	• Bushfires e.g high temperatures and high winds forecast • Flooding e.g. major flooding in a tourist region is forecast • Severe storm e.g if more than 100ml of rainfall is forecast during a storm
Likely to receive warning that an incident is expected to occur And Could require communication to industry and visitors, depending on the nature of the incident	• Pest plagues e.g. rodents, insects • Regional health crisis • Outbreak of disease
Unlikely to receive warning that an incident is expected to occur Or Unlikely to require communication to industry or visitors	• Drought • Water pollution • Earthquake • Air pollution • Oil spill or other hazardous material accidents • Blue green algae outbreak • Food poisoning • Major transport accident • General safety • Drowning • Safety queries re. tourist activities • Major crime • Terrorist incident • Media exposure of repeated bad service and poor tourist experiences • High profile criticism e.g. from a celebrity • Publicity which portrays the region as unwelcoming or racist

Comparison to Australian Warning System

The Australian Warning System is a new national approach to information and warnings during emergencies like bushfire, flood, storm, extreme heat and severe weather. The System uses a nationally consistent set of icons, like those below. The AWS has been designed based on feedback and research across the country and aims to deliver a more consistent approach to these types of emergencies, no matter where you are. Read full details in Appendix 22.

How to the Australian Warnings Relate to the Crisis Management Plan?

The Murray Region crisis management plan key components are still the same, however they are aligned to the Australian Warning system for clarity for all users:

MRT Component	Calls to Action	Australian Warning System Level	Calls to Action (AWS)
PREPAREDNESS	*Organisation linkages *Risk analysis & response scenarios *Training	⚠️ (yellow)	*Prepare now *Stay informed *Monitor conditions *Stay informed/threat is reduced *Avoid the area
RESPONSE	*Situation analysis *Response development *Communications Delivery	⚠️ (orange)	*Prepare to leave/evacuate *Leave/evacuate now (if you are not prepared) *Prepare to take shelter *Move/stay indoors *Stay near shelter *Walk two or more streets back *Monitor conditions as they are changing *Be aware of ember attacks *Move to higher ground (away from creeks/rivers/coast) *Limit time outside (cyclone, heat asthma) *Avoid the area *Stay away from damaged buildings and other hazards *Prepare for isolation *Protect yourself against the impacts of extreme heat
RESPONSE		⚠️ (red)	*Leave/evacuate (immediately, by am/pm/hazard timing) *Seek/take shelter now *Shelter indoors now *Too late/dangerous to leave
RECOVERY	*Industry Support *Effectiveness Review *Communications adjustment and delivery.	**NO AWS Equivalent**	**NO AWS Equivalent**

5 Response

5.1 Incident Reported

MRT will be notified that an incident has occurred through various channels, including:

- REMT or control agency;
- DJSIR or Destination NSW;
- Media monitoring by DJSIR /Destination NSW; or
- other.

This will provide a signal to the organisation to examine the incident and its potential impact on tourism.

5.2 Initial Tourism Impact Assessment

Within the first 24 hours of the incident occurring MRT will undertake an initial tourism impact assessment to determine the nature and scale of the incident to the regional tourism industry. This assessment will include:

- Communicating with REMT or the control agency, and relevant local Tourism Managers to achieve a better understanding/insight/knowledge into the incident;

- Monitoring the media coverage of the incident, in conjunction with DJSIR and Destination NSW;

- Undertaking a short Rapid Impact Snapshot to attain feedback on the initial tourism impact of the incident from a representative cross section of key tourism businesses in the region. A series of pre-prepared questions are found in *Appendix 13* and may require modification depending on the nature and scale of the crisis. Liaise with Tourism Managers and Economic Development Units (*Appendix 4*) to circulate rapid impact information to select tourism businesses identified by each area based on the crisis event and rapid snapshot information required at the point in time.

5.3 Determining Level of Response

Using the information collected, the classification of the incident (local or regional) and appropriate level of response (including who leads the response) will be determined based on the indicators found in table 5 (*page 14*) and in consultation with DJSIR/or Destination NSW. This process will also inform the decision to undertake immediate communications or not (using the checklist found in Appendix 13).

NOTE: The level of response chosen depends on the specific incident and needs to be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Table 6: Criteria for Determining Level of Response

Local	Regional (Activate Full TCMG)
Incident occurs in a localised area only	Incident occurs covering a significant part of the Murray region
Limited safety risk for visitors and locals	Extreme health or safety risk for visitors and locals Fatalities
Restrictions on visitor access to local area only. Other parts of the region remain safe and accessible	Potential recovery efforts required for the tourism industry within the Murray region. e.g. significant environmental or infrastructure damage present within region.

Little or no local media coverage	Significant Melbourne metropolitan media coverage, although limited world media coverage.
Little or no financial impact on tourism businesses (i.e. limited booking cancellations)	Potential financial impact on tourism businesses within the Murray region (i.e. widespread booking cancellations)
Little or no impact to the Murray brand	Potential to impact on the Murray brand. The region's tourism reputation may be threatened.

6. Local Response

Table 7: Local response: Tasks & responsibilities

Task	MRT CEO	MRT support staff	MRT media staff	TCMG	LGA Tourism Managers	Tourism operators	Emergency Services	RTAs	STOs
Situation analysis	R,A	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
State & scope of emergency	I	R					C		
Business impact snapshot	I	R				C			
Local business intelligence	I	R			C			C	
Convene TCMG	R	S	S	C,I					
Communications response	A		S	R	I	I	I	I	I
Monitor the situation	I	R	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Adjust communications response if required	A	I	S	R	I	I	I	I	I

R=Responsible, A=Approval, S=Support, I=Inform, C=Consult

<u>Within the first 24 hours of the incident occurring</u>

If the incident is classified as LOCAL, MRT will act in an advisory/ support role to the local government Tourism Manager and local tourism association and encourage them to follow their LGA crisis communication protocols.

If the incident is at a regionally significant attraction/event MRT will contact the operator and offer support and assistance.

<u>Ongoing</u>
MRT CEO

- MRT will maintain regular contact with the local government Tourism Manager and local tourism association representative (and tourism operator if affecting the region) and offer support at a personal level as there is a high degree of "burnout" in dealing with the stress of a crisis.

- MRT, together with STOs, will continue to monitor the threat or incident and if it escalates, MRT will elevate the response to a regional level.

7. Regional Response

Table 8: Regional Response: Tasks & responsibilities

Task	MRT CEO	MRT support staff	MRT media staff	TCMG	LGA Tourism Managers	Tourism operators	Emergency Services	RTAs	STOs
Situation analysis	R,A		C				C		C
State & scope of emergency	I	R					C		
Business impact snapshot	I	R				C			
Local business intelligence	I	R			C			C	
Convene TCMG	R	S	S	C,I					
Communications response	A		S	R	I	I	A	I	I
Monitor the situation	I	R	C	I	I	I	I	I	C
Adjust communications response if required	C	I	S	R	I	I	A	I	I

R=Responsible, A=Approval, S=Support, I=Inform, C=Consult

7.1 Immediate regional response
If the incident is determined as requiring a REGIONAL response, MRT will undertake the following actions:

7.1.1 Determine the Appropriate Regional Response
MRT CEO

- <u>Within the first 24 hours of the incident occurring:</u> The appropriate regional response will be determined based on the type and scale of the incident and informed by detailed assessment of the likelihood and consequences of high-risk events and information collected during the initial impact assessment phase.

7.1.2 Activate the Tourism Crisis Management Group if relevant
MRT CEO

- Contact/alert TCMG members and arrange to meet within the next few hours.
- Regularly update TCMG regarding media interest and attitudes, as well as any community feedback via talkback radio and social media.

7.1.3 Emergency Services/Control Agency Liaison
MRT CEO/Media Officer

- Liaise with the emergency service agency/ies or control agency via REMT or relevant coordinating body or if necessary, the Regional Controller.
- Represent Tourism on REMT or related response committee meetings.
- Liaise with emergency service agencies communications staff/public information unit.

7.1.4 Key Message Development
MRT CEO/Media Officer

- Modify existing templates (*Appendices 8-12)* to develop key messages to inform consumers and the tourism industry about the incident, based upon information collected in the initial impact assessment phase. These messages will be prepared in liaison with the emergency services agencies and DJSIR/Destination NSW. The messages will be distributed via MRT's electronic database/network (e.g. email, corporate website, consumer website, social media).
- Depending on the scale of the incident, liaise with the neighbouring regions to assist with the development of their own messages to industry and consumers.
- If appropriate, consult with other organisations involved to ensure consistent messages and conformity of responses.

> **NOTE:** The messages will reflect the broader emergency services or control agency messaging, leadership role, and resource status. They should attempt to reinforce the positive and be action/solution oriented if possible. The Media Officer will clear key messages with the responsible control agency before distribution via the various communication methods.
>
> In addition, the emphasis of the message will change throughout the response phase from visitor safety information in the initial stages to the "open for business" focus in the final response stage.

7.1.5 Media Monitoring and Management/Relations
Media Officer

- Set up media monitoring of local, state and national media (as feasible), including social media, to gauge the ongoing impact of the event on public perceptions.
- Refer all initial media queries and requests back to the emergency service (control) agency dealing with the crisis or incident unless there is a specific tourism focus.
- Work with the key incident spokesperson or their support staff to integrate key tourism messages into their messaging, when appropriate.
- Based on the approved key messages, prepare a holding statement, talking points / Q&As and send to media outlets.
- All media contact should conform to the established media protocols *(Appendix 6)*.

- If media are seeking comment from impacted tourism operators, they will be referred to a crisis media trained operator as listed in *Appendix 17;* or if not provided or pending relevance to the crisis event, to the LGA Tourism Manager or Economic Development Manager in *Appendix 2.*
- If warranted, develop answers to specific questions that may be asked by the media.
- Log and document all media inquiries.

NOTE: It is important to recognise that MRT or the TCMG is unlikely to be a prominent media commentator in the event of a crisis.

7.1.6 Stakeholder Communications
Media Officer/support staff

- All media releases, holding statements, Q&As will be disseminated to regional tourism stakeholders, the State Tourism Organisations and industry associations as soon as possible after being issued.
- Victorian DJSIR and Destination NSW will be kept updated on the impact of the crisis on the tourism industry, as well as response and recovery activities. This will assist the State Governments to develop appropriate responses to assist the region.
- Refer to stakeholder communications matrix in *Appendix 15.*

7.1.7 Tourism Operator Communications
Media Officer/support staff

- All media releases, holding statements, Q&As will be disseminated to regional tourism operators as soon as possible after being issued. Dissemination will be via the Corporate Website, Industry Newsletter and LGA Tourism Managers.
- Modify existing industry communique template to suit the particular incident and disseminate to the region's tourism operators. Information on communicating with existing bookings, the established media and social media protocols will be included in this communique.

7.1.8 Visitor Communications
Media Officer/support staff

- Post approved key messages on visitthemurray.com.au website and social media channels, according to the established protocols.
- Provide links to relevant emergency service websites on tourism consumer websites to update visitors and friends/relatives.
- Re-Sharing via appropriate social media channels therelevant emergency services information.
- Send all holding statements, media releases to the intermediaries communications network (i.e. visitor information centres).

7.1.9 Review Marketing Activities
MRT CEO/support staff

- Revise or suspend any current marketing programs for the region (or affected areas) immediately until an appropriate recovery strategy has been determined.

7.1.10 Convene the Tourism Crisis Management Group (as required)
MRT CEO

- Hold a TCMG inception meeting. Provide a verbal / written update on the situation. Report on communications to date. Confirm plans for communications and other crisis management response activities. A draft agenda is found in *Appendix 14*.
- Communicate outcomes of the TCMG meeting with DJSIR and Destination NSW.
- TCMG continues to meet on a daily or weekly basis (as required).

7.1.11 Emergency Services/Control Agency Liaison
MRT CEO

- Continue to liaise with emergency service agency/s via REMT or relevant coordinating body and, if necessary directly with Regional Controller.
- Continue to represent Tourism on REMT or related response committee.
- Refer to *Appendix 18 – Key Emergency Services Personnel*

7.1.12 Media Monitoring and Management
Media Officer

- Continue media monitoring of local, state and national media (as feasible), including social media, to gauge the ongoing impact of the event on public perceptions.

7.1.13 Update Key Messages
Media Officer

- Update key messages as new information is gathered.

> NOTE: In addition, the emphasis of the message will change throughout the response phase from visitor safety information in the initial stages to the "open for business" focus in the final response stage.

7.1.14 Media Management/Relations
Media Officer

- Work with the key crisis spokesperson/s or their support staff to integrate key tourism messages into their messaging, when appropriate.
- Based on the updated key messages, update talking points / Q&As and send to media outlets.

7.1.15 Stakeholder/Industry Communications
Media Officer/support staff

- Send updated media releases, Q&As to key industry stakeholders, including tourism operators.
- Update industry communique to include information on opportunities to access government funds and services (i.e. small business mentoring services) to assist with the recovery process.

7.1.16 Keep Visitors Informed
Media Officer/support staff

- Update messages on visitthemurray.com.au website and social media channels, according to the established protocols.
- Send updated media releases, Q&As to intermediaries via electronic communications network (i.e. Visitor Information Centres and tourism operators).

7.2 Short-Medium Term Regional Response (up to 14 days after event)

NOTE: The period of 'short to medium term' response to a crisis event can vary depending on the impact of the event. Typically, it can be up to 14 days. However, it can be longer if several businesses have been directly affected and require a significant level of work to reopen.

7.2.1 Reconvene the TCMG or Regularly liaise with LGA Tourism Managers
- MRT will meet as regularly as required with LGA Tourism Managers or the TCMG to guide the region's response activities.

7.2.2 Ongoing Impact Assessment
- Regularly liaise with Rapid Impact Snapshot businesses to monitor the industry's performance over time.

7.2.3 Update Key Messages
- Continue to update the key messages to reflect the specifics of the event.

7.2.4 Work with the media
- Continue to work closely with the media to manage consumer perceptions.

7.2.5 Keep visitors informed
- Update messages on visitthemurray.com.au website and social media channels, according to the established protocols.
- Send updated media releases, Q&As to intermediaries communications network (i.e. Visitor Information Centres and tourism operators).

7.2.6 Stakeholder/Industry Communications
- Send updated media releases, Q&As to key industry stakeholders, including tourism operators.
- Update industry communique to include information on opportunities to access government funds and services (i.e. small business mentoring services) to assist with the recovery process.
- Appendix *19* – State Tourism Organisations, *Appendix 17* – Stakeholder Communications Matrix.

8. Recovery

MRT recognises that it is essential that the region deliver marketing messages as quickly and effectively as possible when the region re-opens for business (the recovery phase) to regain consumer confidence and counter any negative or inaccurate perceptions of the region.

Table 9: Regional recovery: Tasks & responsibilities

Task	MRT CEO	MRT support staff	MRT media staff	TCMG	LGA Tourism Managers	Tourism operators	Emergency Services	RTAs	STOs
Business impact analysis & recovery plan	A		C						C
Business impact analysis	C	R		C	C	C		C	C
Recovery resource identification & commitment	C	R		C	C			C	C
Recovery schedule	C	R		C	C	C		C	C
Business monitoring	I	R	I	C					I
Communications monitoring	I	I	R	C	I	C		C	
Adjustments to communications	A	R	C	I	I	I	I	I	C
Deactivate TCMG	A	I	I	R	I	I	I	I	I

R=Responsible, A=Approval, S=Support, I=Inform, C=Consult

The region will be open for business and in the 'recovery' phase when:
- A range of visitor services and products are operating again
- Vital infrastructure is restored, including access routes and transport services if they are critical for visitation
- It is safe and enjoyable to visit.

NOTE: Not all businesses must be operating for the region to be considered open for trade but it's important that there's a choice of facilities and services such as accommodation, dining, attractions, etc.

It's important to note that the MRT and affected LGAs will often be under pressure to promote a region and encourage visitation before it's ready. However, be sure the visitor experience is satisfactory before re-opening.

8.1 Taking stock

MRT with support from the TCMG or LGA Tourism Managers, will undertake a detailed Tourism Impact Survey to establish the impact of the crisis on the tourism industry (pre-prepared questions are found in *Appendix 12.)*

An up-to-date position paper will be prepared that details emergency authorities' activities and the status of the region's tourism industry based on the detailed tourism impact survey.

8.2 Business Recovery Assistance

- MRT will liaise with Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR), Destination NSW, Service NSW, Small Business Victoria, Regional Development Victoria and other relevant agencies to identify appropriate cross-Government business assistance programs.

- Potential assistance (where appropriate) includes:
    - Deployment of the Small Business Mentoring Service through Small Business Victoria (SBV)
    - Clean Up and Restoration Grants and Loans from the Rural Finance Corporation for directly affected businesses.
    - Access to the VECCI Business Relief Fund (via SBV)
    - NSW Department of Industry and Emergency NSW Disaster Assistance

8.3 Restoration of Key Visitor Infrastructure and Public Attractions

MRT will be required to participate in planning by relevant Government agencies to restore key visitor infrastructure and public attractions, including membership on regional recovery committees, often led by the Victorian Department of Human Resources and Emergency NSW. This is vitally important as it ensures that these agencies are influenced in priority setting where tourism is impacted e.g. road or park re-openings.

8.4 Maintaining communication with stakeholders

Key messages will be updated and sent via the electronic communications database to inform tourism operators, Visitor Information Centres, government and other stakeholders about the recovery process and keep up-to-date with information from emergency services. Opportunities for tourism operators to access government and charitable funds and services will be included in this information.

Refer to *Appendix 15* for the stakeholder communications matrix.

8.5 Contingency Support

MRT may need to respond quickly to changed visitor perceptions of the region or to correct misinformation that is circulating, which can require immediate access to funds for communications activities.

The MRT Board have agreed to set aside funds for this purpose (or divert funds from other programs). These funds may be used to appoint extra temporary staff, contract a public relations company or implement new marketing campaigns.

Conversely, funds may be required to maintain "business as usual" activities while key staff members are managing the crisis event.

MRT may also advocate for additional funding support from State and Commonwealth Government to assist the affected tourism industry recover from the impact of a crisis events.

8.6 Monitoring public perceptions

MRT will continue to monitor public perceptions and media coverage of the region.

8.7 Prepare and Implement Recovery Marketing Activities

Consumer website information will be updated with a "concluding statement" about recovery from the crisis and outdated media releases removed.

A suite of marketing activities will be undertaken to relaunch the region to all key visitor markets with MRT working closely with their partners and both State Governments, to implement regional recovery marketing campaigns across the region.

8.8 Deactivate the Tourism Crisis Management Group

While the timing will vary depending on the nature of the crisis, the responsibility for long-term strategic recovery activities will be with MRT however if a TCMG is activated for a particular crisis event, deactivation occurs at the completion of the TCMG's tactical recovery activities.

Links to additional information

Visit Victoria:
- *https://business.vic.gov.au/business-information/tourism-industry-resources/tourism-crisis-management-guide*
- *Crisis Essentials Guide for Tourism Businesses*
- *Tourism Crisis Management Planning – A guide for destination managers*

Destination NSW:
- *Get Back to Business – A guide to Recovering from Disaster*
- *Tourism Resilience – Recovery after bushfires and natural disasters*
- *https://www.destinationnsw.com.au/tourism/business-development-resources/nsw-first-workshops-program*

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I

MRT RESPONSIBILITIES

The suggested actions below are indicative of the responsibilities required during a crisis event and actions that should be assigned by MRT to those appropriate to the crisis event.

CEO
1. Make an initial assessment of the probable scale of the crisis.
2. Activate the TCMG if relevant and arrange for members to be contacted.
3. Arrange for verbal/written briefing on situation status for TCMG.
4. Determine the TCMG's support requirements.
5. Decide what extra specialist personnel should be involved in the management of the crisis e.g.: issues and crisis management consultants.
6. Determine resource requirements to effectively address the crisis.
7. Advise senior stakeholders e.g.: Ministers, DJSIR Victoria, Destination NSW as required.
8. Refer to Crisis Management Plan and determine what is applicable.
9. Immediately revise, cancel, or suspend advertising.
10. Determine media strategy and authorise all media statements on the crisis.
11. Act as regional spokesperson regarding tourism issues for significant media interviews.
12. Authorise regular situation updates for visitors, regional tourism operators and staff, other relevant stakeholders.
13. Coordinate planning for longer term recovery.
14. Once crisis has passed, review the effectiveness of the Crisis Management plan and other actions taken.

Information & Strategy
1. Establish and maintain contact with emergency response team for regular information updates.
2. Feed authoritative information into the TCMG and other key groups and personnel as required.
3. Assess immediate implications for regional tourism, including initial economic impacts.
4. Determine key themes and messages for all communications.
5. Determine most appropriate tools of communications to reach key stakeholders and audiences.
6. Coordinate regular stakeholder information updates and review any proposed media statements or releases.
7. Participate in debrief process and advise on gaps in provision and dissemination of information.

Planning
1. Assess potential implications for regional tourism.
2. Start planning process to mitigate potential impacts.
3. Consult with regional tourism operators as appropriate.
4. Consider need to reschedule/make special preparations for any upcoming public events (e.g. seminars, conferences etc).
5. Assist with media and website management.
6. If appropriate, send letters of appreciation to relevant staff and organisations that assisted the TCMG.

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APPENDIX 2
Murray local government Tourism Managers & Economic Development Units
(as at April 2023)

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Council	Name	Contact Detail	Email Address
Greater Hume	Kerrie Wise	02 6036 0186	kwise@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au
	Marg Killalea	02 6036 0100	mkillalea@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au
Albury City Council – Visit Albury Wodonga	Sue Harper	02 60238262	sharper@alburycity.nsw.gov.au
	Economic Development Team	02 6023 8111	info@alburycity.nsw.gov.au
Federation / North of the Murray	Luke Bobilak	02 6033 8988	luke.bobilak@federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au
Moira / Sun Country on the Murray	Louise Munk Klint	03 5871 9222	lklint@moira.vic.gov.au
	Economic Development Team		info@moira.vic.gov.au
Berrigan Shire	Merran Socha	03 5888 5100	MerranS@berriganshire.nsw.gov.au
	Economic Development Team	03 5888 5100	mail@berriganshire.nsw.gov.au
Echuca Moama Tourism	Karen Colvin	03 5480 7555	karen@echucamoama.com
Campaspe Shire	Astrid O Farrell	0419 325 902	a.ofarrell@campaspe.vic.gov.au
Murray River / River Country	Julia Druitt	1300 087 004	jdruitt@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au
Edward River / Visit Deni	Ellen Hay	03 5898 3000	ellen.hay@edwardriver.nsw.gov.au
	Economic Development Department	03 5898 3000	council@edwardriver.nsw.gov.au
Gannawarra Shire	Jodie Hartley	03 5450 9333	jodie.hartley@gannawarra.vic.gov.au
	Economic Development Unit	03 5450 9333	council@gannawarra.vic.gov.au
Swan Hill Rural Council	Marcia Pollington	035036 2338	mvpol1@swanhill.vic.gov.au
	Economic Development Unit	03 5036 2333	ecodev@swanhill.vic.gov.au
Swan Hill Incorporated	Tameeka Hankin	0407 826 177	marketing@visitswanhill.com.au
Mildura Regional Development	Sarah Gilmore	03 5021 0599	sarah@milduraregion.com.au
Mildura Rural City Council	Sara Wrate	03 5018 8100	sara.wrate@mildura.vic.gov.au
	Economic Development Unit	03 5018 8100	mrcc@mildura.vic.gov.au
Wentworth Shire Council	Lexie Stockman	03 5027 5027	Lexi.Stockman@wentworth.nsw.gov.au
	Economic Development	03 5027 5027	council@wentworth.nsw.gov.au

APPENDIX 3

DETAILED LIKELIHOOD AND CONSEQUENCE ASSESSMENT OF IDENTIFIED REGIONAL HIGH RISK CRISIS EVENTS

FLOOD

Risk / Impact	Consequence	Treatment/Mitigation	Responsible Agency/ Agencies
Restrictions on commercial and recreational boating activities due to high water levels/strong currents.	Reduced visitor experience. Booking cancellations/downturn in forward bookings Media coverage of industry criticism etc of authority warnings Subsequent death of visitor/s from drowning etc leading to heightened media coverage. Business continuity/viability issues	Key tourism messaging focused on reinforcing on activities which are not restricted.	Roads & Maritime Services NSW
Closure of parts of the Murray Region waterways to commercial and recreational boating activities due to high water levels/strong currents/debris	Loss of trade Booking cancellations/downturn in forward bookings Media coverage of industry criticism etc of authority warnings Subsequent death of visitor/s from drowning etc leading to heightened media coverage Business continuity/viability issues	Key tourism messaging focused parts of the Murray unaffected by the event and the importance of visitor safety. Crisis management training for houseboat operators etc Increased skills on river navigation Establishment of Protocols/Guidelines of River Closures/Warnings with tourism industry input.	Roads & Maritime Services NSW / NSW SES Goulburn-Murray Water MDBA
/Closure/restrictions of the Murray Region waterways to river-based activities (swimming, fishing)	Reduced visitor experience. Booking cancellations/downturn in forward bookings Media coverage of industry criticism etc of authority warnings Subsequent death of visitor/s	Key tourism messaging focused parts of the Murray unaffected by the event and the importance of visitor safety. Highlight alternative swimming (i.e. local pools) and fishing opportunities.	Roads & Maritime Services NSW / NSW SES Goulburn-Murray Water MDBA

	from drowning etc leading to heightened media coverage.		
	Business continuity/viability issues		
Property Loss &/or damage to individual businesses due to flood inundation.	Temporary/permanent business closure (staff laid off etc)	Provision of recovery grants, insurance and IR advice, Small Business mentoring	DHS/RDV/SBV
	Business continuity/viability issues	Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training/Floodsmart training	Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/ Destination NSW
			VIC/NSW SES
Damage of boating infrastructure (pontoons, jetties)	Temporary/permanent business closure (staff laid off etc)	Work with "River Manager" to ensure infrastructure is repaired/replaced as a priority	Roads & Maritime Services NSW
	Business continuity/viability issues		Gourlburn-Muray Water
			MDBA
Visitor death or injury	International media coverage/requests resulting in flow on tourism impacts (i.e. negative impact of the region's safe tourism destination status.)	Visitor education about flood and storm safety risks via website and regional visitor information centres	Victoria/NSW Police
	Coroner's inquest		Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/ Destination NSW
	Victorian Work Cover Authority investigation		VIC/NSW SES
Visitor evacuation due to flood inundation of caravan parks	Displacement of visitors, temporary loss of business to affected operators.	Work with caravan park operators on emergency planning.	Victoria/NSW Police
		Ensure visitors/tourism industry included evacuation planning.	
Destruction/damage to major tourist attractions (i.e., Port of Echuca, Swan Hill Pioneer Settlement)	Downturn in visitation to affected region/area.	Crisis management plans for key tourist attractions	MRT
	Booking cancellations & decline in forward bookings for nearby tourism businesses and tour operators.	Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training. Managing your bookings forum	LGA
	Business continuity/viability issues	Mentoring	

		Work with attraction operator and government stakeholders to ensure priority repairs/reconstruction of attraction.	
Postponement / cancellation of events.	Short term decline in visitation to affected region. Ticket refund issues.	Crisis mgt plans for Event organisers. Education on consumer rights regarding ticket refunds etc.	Event organiser
Destruction of/significant damage to key nature-based tourism sites / nodes/ attractions.	Loss of appeal Short to medium term decline in visitation to surrounding area. Licensed tour operators unable to operate/reduction in trade. Impact on regional brand	Work with Parks Victoria/NSW Parks and Wildlife/public land manager to ensure key nodes are restored as a priority / alternative sites promoted.	Parks Victoria / NSW Parks and Wildlife / Public Land Manager
Scale and tone of media coverage of the event	Visitor misperceptions of the scale and nature of the event. Decline in visitation to affected and un-affected areas. Negative impact on "Brand Murray". Booking cancellations & decline in forward bookings. Business continuity/viability issues	Establishment of State and/or regional Tourism Crisis Comms Mgt Group. Incorporation of tourism messaging into broader emergency messaging, when appropriate. Recovery marketing Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training	Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/ Destination NSW MRT
Destruction/significant damage/closure of key tourist roads/touring routes	Accessibility restrictions / disruption to visitor travel plans Visitor/business confusion regarding road closures Coach tour operators unable to operate scheduled tours etc. Booking cancellations & decline in forward	Register of key regional tourist roads & touring routes. Tourist roads etc are given priority repair treatment. Coach operators implement crisis management plans (including alternative route options). Promote VicRoads/RMS websites in all	VicRoads / NSW RMS

	bookings.	communications activities.	
	Business continuity/viability issues		
Destruction/significant damage to critical utility infrastructure (i.e., power outages, water shortages, telecommunications outage)	Loss of perishable goods/stock. Booking cancellations & decline in forward bookings. Business continuity/viability issues	Insurance advice Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training Mentoring	NSW Health, Dept. Health and Human Services VIC, NSW/VIC Emergency Management, NSW/VIC SES

BLUE GREEN ALGAL BLOOM

Risk / Impact	Consequence	Treatment/Mitigation	**Responsible Agency**/Agencies
Health warnings against swimming and engaging in other water-based activities, including recreational boating activities.	Reduced visitor experience. Loss of trade. Booking cancellations/downturn in forward bookings. Media coverage of industry criticism etc of authority warnings Subsequent illness of visitor/s from exposure to blue green algae leading to heightened media coverage. Business continuity/viability issues.	Key tourism messaging focused parts of the Murray unaffected by the event and the importance of visitor safety.	NSW Health, Dept. Health and Human Services VIC
Health warnings against fishing.	Reduced visitor experience. Booking cancellations/downturn in forward bookings. Media coverage of industry criticism etc of authority warnings. Subsequent illness of visitor/s from exposure to blue green algae leading to	Key tourism messaging focused parts of the Murray unaffected by the event and the importance of visitor safety.	VIC and NSW Department of Primary Industries

	heightened media coverage. Business continuity/viability issues.		
Drinking and bathing water contamination issues	Reduced visitor experience. Booking cancellations/downturn in forward bookings. Media coverage of industry criticism etc of authority warnings. Subsequent illness of visitor/s from exposure to blue green algae leading to heightened media coverage. Business continuity/viability issues.	Visitor education about water safety risks via website and regional visitor information centres.	NSW Health, Dept. Health and Human Services VIC
Water supply/contamination issues - for businesses dependent on water from Murray River or other Murray Region waterways	Temporary/permanent business closure (staff laid off etc) Increased business operating costs due to sourcing fresh water. Business continuity/viability issues	Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training (including crisis communications)	LGAs, NSW Health, Dept. Health and Human Services VIC
Visitor injury/illness	Media coverage/requests resulting in flow on tourism impacts (i.e., negative impact of region's safe tourism destination status.)	Implement Murray Crisis Comms plan actions, including development of key messages and industry/consumer communications.	MRT
Postponement / cancellation of water-based events.	Short term decline in visitation to affected region. Ticket refund issues.	Crisis mgt plans for Event organisers. Education on consumer rights regarding ticket refunds etc.	LGAs, MRT
Scale and tone of media coverage of the event leading to perceptions that the entire river was 'unhealthy'.	Visitor misperceptions of the scale and nature of the event. Decline in visitation to affected and un-affected areas.	Activation of Murray Tourism Crisis Comms Mgt Group. Incorporation of tourism messaging into broader emergency messaging, when appropriate.	MRT

	Negative impact on "Brand Murray".	Recovery marketing	
	Booking cancellations & decline in forward bookings.	Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training	
	Business continuity/viability issues		

BUSHFIRES

Risk / Impact	Consequence	Treatment/Mitigation	Responsible Agency/ Agencies
Property Loss &/or damage to individual businesses	Temporary/permanent business closure (staff laid off etc)	Recovery grants, insurance and IR advice, mentoring Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training	DHS/RDV/SBV/IR/Fair Work Ombudsman Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/Destination NSW
Visitor death or injury	International media coverage/requests resulting in flow on tourism impacts (i.e. negative impact of Victoria's safe tourism destination status.) Coroner's inquest Work Cover investigation	Implement Murray Tourism Crisis Comms manual actions, including development of key messages and industry/consumer communications. Visitor education about bushfire safety risks through Bushfire Tourism Preparedness program	Victoria/NSW Police Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/DNSW NSW RFS/CFA
Business (tourism) owner death or injury	Temporary/permanent business closure Work Cover investigation	Implement Murray Tourism Crisis Comms manual actions, including development of key messages and industry/consumer communications.	Victoria/NSW Police Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/DNSW
Employee death or injury	Staff resourcing issues	Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training (including crisis communications)	Small Business VIC/NSW, Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/

	Work Cover investigation		DNSW, Work Cover Authority
Visitor evacuation	Displacement of visitors, temporary loss of business to affected operators.	Visitors/tourism industry included evacuation planning.	Victoria/NSW Police
Postponement / cancellation of events	Short term decline in visitation to affected region. Ticket refund issues.	Crisis mgt plans for Event organisers. Education on consumer rights regarding ticket refunds etc.	LGAs
Destruction of/significant damage to key nature-based tourism sites/nodes/attractions)	Loss of appeal Short to medium term decline in visitation to surrounding area. Licensed tour operators unable to operate/reduction in trade. Impact on regional brand	Work with Parks Victoria/public land manager to ensure key nodes are restored as a priority / alternative site promoted.	Parks Victoria / Public Land Manager
Scale and tone of media coverage of the event	Visitor misperceptions of the scale and nature of the event. Decline in visitation to affected and un-affected areas. Negative impact on "Brand Victoria". Booking cancellations & decline in forward bookings. Business continuity/viability issues	Establish State and/or regional Tourism Crisis Mgt Group. Incorporate tourism messaging into broader emergency messaging, when appropriate. Recovery marketing Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training	Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/ DNSW
Destruction/significant damage/closure of key tourist roads/touring routes	Accessibility restrictions / disruption to visitor travel plans Visitor/business confusion regarding road closures Coach tour operators unable to	Register of key tourist roads & touring routes. Work with VicRoads to ensure that repair/re-opening of tourist roads etc are given priority treatment. Coach operators implement crisis management plans (including alternative	Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/DNSW VicRoads/ Roads & Maritime Services NSW

	operate scheduled tours etc. Booking cancellations & decline in forward bookings. Business continuity/viability issues	route options). Promote VicRoads website in all communications activities.	
Destruction/significant damage to critical utility infrastructure (i.e. power outages, water shortages, telecommunications outage)	Loss of perishable goods/stock. Booking cancellations & decline in forward bookings. Business continuity/viability issues	Insurance advice Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training Mentoring	NSW Health, Dept. Health and Human Services VIC, NSW/VIC Emergency Management, NSW/VIC SES

DISEASE (I.E. MURRAY VALLEY OR JAPANESE ENCEPHALITIS)

Risk / Impact	Consequence	Treatment/Mitigation	**Responsible Agency/** Agencies
Restrictions on nocturnal recreational activities.	Temporary/permanent business closure (staff laid off etc)	Recovery grants, insurance and IR advice, mentoring Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training	DHS/RDV/SBV/IR/Fair Work Ombudsman Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/Destination NSW
Restrictions on recreational activities involving exposure to bushland or other mosquito habitat, such as bushwalking, camping and picnicking	Loss/reduction in available tourism experiences Loss of appeal	Key tourism messaging focused parts of the Murray unaffected by the event and the importance of visitor safety. Visitor education about water safety risks via website and regional visitor information centres.	Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/Destination NSW

Visitor death or injury	International media coverage/requests resulting in flow on tourism impacts (i.e., negative impact of region's safe tourism destination status.)	Development of key messages and industry/consumer communications. Visitor education about mosquito borne safety risks	Victoria/NSW Police Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/Destination NSW
Scale and tone of media coverage of the event	Visitor misperceptions of the scale and nature of the event. Decline in visitation to affected and un-affected areas. Negative impact on "Brand Victoria". Booking cancellations & decline in forward bookings. Business continuity/viability issues	Establish State and/or regional Tourism Crisis Mgt Group. Incorporate tourism messaging into broader emergency messaging, when appropriate. Recovery marketing Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training	Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/Destination NSW

REGIONAL OR WORLDWIDE PANDEMIC (I.E., COVID-19)

Risk / Impact	Consequence	Treatment/Mitigation	**Responsible Agency/** Agencies
Restrictions on movement, border control measures in place	Temporary/permanent business closure (staff laid off etc) Complete loss of visitor economy Staff or business owners unable to access their business or place of work due to movement controls	Recovery grants, insurance and IR advice, mentoring Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training	DHS/RDV/SBV/IR/Fair Work Ombudsman / Vic Pol / NSW Pol / Cross Border Commissioners Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/Destination NSW
Region or business becomes a "super	Damage to regional or business	Establish State and/or regional Tourism	Relevant Health Agencies – VIC

spreader" location	"Brand" Complete or partial loss of visitor economy Health measures are enforced	Crisis Mgt Group. Incorporate tourism messaging into broader emergency messaging, when appropriate. Recovery marketing Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training Appropriate training to businesses on the importance of vaccinations, safety measures, such as mask wearing, sanitisation and social distancing	Health / NSW Health Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/Destination NSW
Visitor death or infection	International media coverage/requests resulting in flow on tourism impacts (i.e., negative impact of region's safe tourism destination status.) Regional Hospitals unable to cope with patient / infection influx	Development of key messages and industry/consumer communications. Visitor education about pandemic health measures where appropriate – i.e., mask wearing, vaccinations, hand hygiene	Victoria/NSW Police Relevant Health Agencies – VIC Health / NSW Health Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/Destination NSW
Scale and tone of media coverage of the event	Visitor misperceptions of the scale and nature of the event. Decline in visitation to affected and un-affected areas. Negative impact on "Brand Victoria". Booking cancellations & decline in forward bookings. Business continuity/viability issues	Establish State and/or regional Tourism Crisis Mgt Group. Incorporate tourism messaging into broader emergency messaging, when appropriate. Recovery marketing Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training	Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/Destination NSW

Appendix 4

KEY MESSAGES - MEDIA EXAMPLE

BLUE GREEN ALGAE

- Some parts of the Murray Region Waterways have been identified as being contaminated with blue-green algae making those areas unsuitable for primary contact with the water by domestic users and livestock.

- Affected areas of the Murray region are (locations affected by algae).

- In affected areas people are still able to enjoy on water activities that do not require primary contact such as paddlesteamers, houseboating and cruises.

- Unaffected areas are safe for recreational use including swimming, water skiing and fishing. They include (locations not affected by algae).

- Murray Regional Tourism (MRT) has ensured tourism managers and operators in affected regions have been made aware of the alert, asking they communicate to locals and visitors that it is unsafe to enter, bathe in or drink the water in certain sections of the Murray River.

- As a precaution, MRT has notified unaffected local councils and tourism managers in the region of the situation to be prepared should the contamination area change.

Unaffected areas	Safe activities on the river
• Unaffected areas list	• Swimming • Jetskiing • Paddle boarding • Canoeing & kayaking • Water skiing
Affected areas	Things to do
• Affected area 1	• List safe visitor activities for each affected area. I.e. • Sailing • Play golf • Picnics and BBQs • Boat cruising • Camping • Cycling and walking trails • Hiking/bushwalking
• Affected area 2	• Safe local visitor activities list

- MRT advises people on the river to be cautious and report any visible surface scum to the blue-green algae hotline on (insert phone number).

APPENDIX 5

KEY MESSAGES – INDUSTRY/CONSUMER EXAMPLE

BLUE GREEN ALGAE

- Some parts of the Murray Region waterways are currently affected by high levels of blue-green algae.

- The affected areas of the river are (affected locations)

- While visitors are advised not to undertake any activity that involves direct skin contact with the water in the affected area, there are many experiences on and along the river that can be still enjoyed, such as paddle steamer cruises, boat cruising, or a picnic or BBQ on one of our many beaches.

- Aside from river activities, the Murray region is filled with key experiences for visitors to enjoy such as golf, hiking and bushwalking, bike riding, events and festivals and wonderful food and wine experiences from riverside dining, to farmers markets and farm gate trails.

- Appropriate water treatment is in place by the respective local water utilities and town water supplies remain unaffected and safe to drink.

- Unaffected areas are safe for recreational use including swimming, water skiing and fishing. They include (unaffected locations).

- Accredited visitor information centres in the region are a great source of advice on ways you can safely explore the best of the Murray region this autumn.

- Due to the changing weather conditions it is impossible to predict if and when Blue Green Algae will disperse.

- Industry mechanisms have been activated to provide timely and responsible advice for holidaymakers to ensure their safety and to allow them to keep on enjoying their visit.

- We encourage you to continue to monitor blue-green algae alerts and public warnings. Visit www.gm-water.com.au.

KEY MESSAGES – INDUSTRY/CONSUMER EXAMPLE

FLOODS

- Some parts of the Murray Region waterways are currently experiencing high river levels due to recent rain events.

- There are no conditions that would prevent holidaymakers travelling to and enjoying time in the region and townships are not affected. The region continues to offer paddle-steamer cruises, boat cruising, and house boating as key on-river experiences this Spring, with the high river levels providing for a stunning backdrop.

- All Murray region destinations are open for business, offering high quality food and wine experiences, golf, arts and cultural experiences. For more information on visiting the region, please visit www.visitthemurray.com.au.

- While the Murray looks beautiful is this state, it is important for river users to pay special attention to safety messages with fast flows and the probability of either floating or submerged debris common in these events. Further information about water safety http://www.royallifesaving.com.au/programs/respecttheriver/rivertips

- Some parks and local roads are affected by the high river levels. Please check the links below for details of changed conditions or contact the respective Visitor Information Centre in the town that you will be visiting.
    - emergency.vic.gov.au/respond
    - traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au
    - parkweb.vic.gov.au/safety/fire,-flood-and-other-closures/flood-affected-areas

APPENDIX 6

MEDIA PROTOCOLS

A consistent, strategic and carefully managed approach to media interaction is absolutely vital in the event of a crisis. The manner in which the region is perceived to respond in a crisis situation will be remembered long after the crisis itself has passed.

The region's authorities must be portrayed as a responsible, professional and responsive, placing the interests of the community as well as visitors first and foremost. They must also be seen to be open and accountable. For this reason, it is essential that all media contact by the tourism industry conforms to the following protocols:

- The MRT CEO should be notified immediately of a crisis with the potential to impact on tourism and receive an initial briefing;
- All initial media queries and requests should be referred back to the lead agency dealing with the crisis or incident unless there is a specific tourism focus.
- No speculation or unauthorised comments should be made on any basis;
- MRT is responsible for notifying relevant parties, switchboards and receptions of contact numbers for the Crisis Management Centre once it has been established;
- All subsequent media queries and requests must be transferred or directed to the MRT CEO;
- If activated, the TCMG should be notified as soon as practicable about any media contact;
- If media attend the scene of a crisis incident, MRT should make contact with the lead agency's media liaison coordinator to ascertain whether tourism-specific queries are being raised;
- MRT or delegates will provide the media with authorised factual updates on the situation relating to tourism as quickly as possible;
- If further or specifically requested information is not immediately available, the media should be told why;
- The TCMG must be regularly updated regarding media interest and attitudes, as well as any community feedback via various forms of communication platforms, social media platforms etc;
- Clear and concise messaging should be formulated by MRT before any media interview or statement;
- All media releases should be disseminated to regional tourism stakeholders as soon as possible after being issued;
- As far as practicable, the MRT CEO will be the public face of the region's tourism sector and will take part in all significant radio and television interviews and media conferences;
- If appropriate, the TCMG will identify appropriate local experts or tourism operators to make "third party" comments.

APPENDIX 7

EXAMPLE MEDIA RELEASE

BLUE GREEN ALGAE

There's something for everyone along the Murray River this autumn

Some parts of the Murray Riegion waterways are currently affected by high levels of blue-green algae as announced by Goulburn Murray Water earlier this week but there are still plenty of locations along the river that are safe for recreational use.

Murray Regional Tourism (MRT) encourages water lovers to head to unaffected areas downstream of Koondrook Barham to Kerang, Murrabit, Swan Hill (with the exception of Lake Boga) and Robinvale Euston through to Mildura Wentworth where it is safe to go swimming, water skiing and fishing. Other unaffected areas where on-water activities are safe include Lakes Charm and Kangaroo near Kerang as well as Lake Cooper and Greens Lake south of Echuca Moama.

Affected areas of the Murray River include Albury Wodonga, Howlong, Corowa, Lake Mulwala, Yarrawonga Mulwala, Cobram, Nathalia, Barmah, Echuca Moama, Torrumbarry and Gunbower as well as Lake Boga and the Edward River from Picnic Point to Old Morago, including Deniliquin and Gulpa Creek at Mathoura*.

In affected areas MRT Chair, Wendy Greiner advises there is an abundance of things to do that don't require direct contact with the water.

"We encourage people to still plan to visit the Murray, with plenty of locations for people to get out on the water and in affected areas there is so much happening out of the water so that there's something for everyone to enjoy.

"Tomorrow Echuca is playing host to the Regional World's Longest Lunch as part of Melbourne Food and Wine Festival and the Sun Country Food and Wine Festival kicks off offering various delicious food and wine experiences to visitors and locals and people are still able to enjoy paddle steamer rides, cruises and houseboats stays which our river is world famous for," Ms Greiner said.

Visitors to Albury Wodonga can experience an arts and culture hit by heading to MAMA's first block buster exhibition Marilyn: Celebrating an American Icon to learn more about the 1950's Hollywood sex symbol or they can go to Wodonga's Bonegilla Migrant Experience to hear the stories of those who have passed through.

Wine lovers in the Corowa region can enjoy local wineries in neighbouring Rutherglen where there are 21 cellar doors in close proximity to explore, or for thrill seekers Corowa Jump Shack offers skydiving with spectacular views of the river.

Lake Mulwala is still the perfect spot for river cruising, camping, bird watching, bushwalking, cycling, picnics and barbeques in a tranquil setting surrounded by nature.

The Murray River is Australia's top golfing destination with travellers able to tee off at a number of high calibre courses such as Black Bull Golf Course and Yarrawonga Mulwala Golf Club Resort. Barmah is an ideal camping destination for keen hikers who are able to explore the Barmah National Park or Barmah Lakes Loop Track while Mathoura is the gateway to one of the world's largest Red Gum forests that is waiting to be explored.

Deniliquin's Bush Tucker Trail is a true-blue experience every visitor to the region should enjoy. Visitors can camp in the region and test their skills at rustling up their own bush tucker or just sit back and take in the glorious river sights.

Hitch a ride to a winery lunch on-board a stunning old paddle steamer in Echuca Moama before wandering the historic port of Echuca. Explore the phenomenal food and wine options in this gorgeous historic town and spend a night on a houseboat.

MRT advises people on the river to be cautious and report any visible surface scum to the blue-green algae hotline on (phone number).

MRT works in partnership with Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria, Destination New South Wales and 13 local government areas and regional tourism associations to drive the development of the tourism industry within the Murray region.

For further information visit www.visitthemurray.com.au.

*Correct as at 3 March 2016. For the most up-to-date information on affected areas please visit www.g-mwater.com.au.

APPENDIX 8

MEDIA RELEASE TEMPLATE

Insert Letterhead logo

Date / Time

(Name of region) has moved quickly to ensure the safety of / reassure international, interstate and local visitors following (description of event) which occurred (time, date) affecting (description of specific area /operations).

In line with a well-established action plan, a senior tourism group is undertaking necessary measures to
provide clear and concise information to people regarding their travel and accommodation plans.

The Government and other key agencies such as The Department of Jobs, Skills Industry and Regions Victoria and/or Destination NSW are being briefed on the situation and further details of any interim tourism measures will be released as soon as they become available.

(TCMG Chair) said that the region's tourism sector was extremely concerned about the loss of life / destruction of property / disruption caused by the (description of event).

The (event) is restricted to the ( ) area of the region.

"We have well-developed contingency plans to deal with these types of incidents /issues and will offer every possible assistance to tourists currently in (name of region)," said (TCMG Chair).

"Visitors can be reassured that authorities are doing everything possible to ensure safety and minimise
disruption to travel plans in the region."

For further information, contact: (name & number)

APPENDIX 9

ADVISORY NOTICE/UPDATE TEMPLATE

[Time & Date]

Visitor Information Update

The following are the latest details available regarding the [crisis/incident] and its impact on travel and holiday plans in the region.

1. Status of the situation

2. Casualties and damage

3. Areas specifically affected

4. Disruption to travel eg: roads

5. Accommodation affected

6. Disruption to tourist activity eg: beaches, waterways

7. Relief operations

8. Areas and activities not affected

Please Note: Further information is available at [www.website.com.au]
or by calling FREECALL [number].

APPENDIX 10

INDUSTRY BULLETIN - EXAMPLE

BLUE GREEN ALGAE

What is the current situation?

Goulburn Murray Water (GWM) and the Murray Regional Algal Coordinating Committee advise that high levels of blue-green algae have been detected in the Murray River from downstream of the Hume Weir Albury Wodonga to Torrumbarry Weir. This includes Lake Mulwala, Echuca Moama, as well as the Edward River from Picnic Point to Old Morago, including Deniliquin and Gulpa Creek at Mathoura.

Refer to map of high Alert Areas attached.

A red alert warning for blue-green algae is now in place for the Murray River in this zone with a Class 2 State Emergency called.

These red alert level warnings indicate that waters are unsuitable for recreational activities involving direct contact and may also pose a threat to livestock and pets.

The species of blue-green algae identified are potentially toxic and may cause gastroenteritis in humans if consumed and skin and eye irritations after contact. Boiling the water does not remove algal toxins.

People are advised not to enter the water, not to drink untreated water or bathe in water drawn from the river while this red alert level warning is in place.

Appropriate water treatment is in place by the respective local water utilities and town water supplies remain unaffected and safe to drink.

It is not possible to predict how long the algae will remain at high levels.

Regular monitoring will continue, and the alert will be lifted as soon as the high levels of algae dissipate.

For current information visit http://www.visitthemurray.com.au/travellers-tips/alerts-fact-sheets or phone the blue-green algae hotline on 03 5826 3785

What is MRT's role?

- MRT plays a strong leadership role in supporting the tourism industry to prepare, respond, and recover from a crisis event.
- MRT are involved in leading the preparedness activities and ongoing engagement with emergency services agencies Mark Francis is representing the tourism industry on the Regional Emergency Management Team as the key spokesperson and primary regional liaison point with State Government and other key industry stakeholders.
- MRT will be investing in a short lead campaign as part of their current 'Its on in the Murray' pilot, to further communicate positive messaging around all the key experiences, events and festivals happening in the region from now until the end of the school holidays.

What is being done?

- GMW and the Murray Regional Algal Coordinating Committee are monitoring the situation closely. Water testing is being conducted every two days in the river system across the region.
- Warning signs are being positioned at key recreational areas and will remain in place while high levels of blue-green algae are present. However, due to the expanse of the bloom it is impracticable to erect warning signs at every public access point.
- An incident emergency management team has been established to manage the impacts of the bloom consisting of a range of government agencies, MRT is representing the tourism sector.
- Daily updates are being received and MRT will provide regular bulletins with the most up to date information so that stakeholders can deal with and understand all issues and queries that may arise. IMPORTANT: Industry speculation and uninformed comment will not be helpful. If you receive media enquiries, please feel free to direct these to Murray Regional Tourism in line with the Regional Crisis Management Plan.
- MRT and Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria are working in partnership to monitor media messaging about bloom and will respond as appropriate.

Reinforcing Key Messages for Visitors

Murray Regional Tourism suggests the following key information should be consistently delivered by local tourism operators:-

- Some parts of the Murray River are currently affected by high levels of blue-green algae.
- The affected areas of the river are from downstream of the Hume Weir Albury Wodonga to Torrumbarry Weir. This includes Lake Mulwala, Echuca Moama, as well as the Edward River from Picnic Point to Old Morago, including Deniliquin and Gulpa Creek at Mathoura.
- While visitors are advised not to undertake any activity that involves direct skin contact with the water in the affected area, there are many experiences on and along the river that can be still enjoyed, such as paddlesteamer cruises, boat cruising, golf, hiking and bushwalking, bike riding, events and festivals and wonderful food and wine experiences from riverside dining to farmers markets and farm gate trails. a picnic or BBQ on one of our many beaches and National Parks
- Appropriate water treatment is in place by the respective local water utilities and town water supplies remain unaffected and safe to drink.
- Unaffected areas are safe for recreational use including swimming, water skiing and fishing. They include Lake Hume, Albury Wodonga, Gunbower, Koondrook Barham, Kerang, Murrabit, Swan Hill (with the exception of Lake Boga) Robinvale Euston and Mildura Wentworth.
- Accredited visitor information centres in the region are a great source of advice on ways you can safely explore the best of the Murray region this autumn.
- Due to the changing weather conditions it is impossible to predict if and when Blue Green Algae will disperse.
- Industry mechanisms have been activated to provide timely and responsible advice for holidaymakers to ensure their safety and to allow them to keep on enjoying their visit.
- We encourage you to continue to monitor blue-green algae alerts and public warnings. Visit http://www.visitthemurray.com.au/travellers-tips/alerts-fact-sheets

What can you do?

- Learn about Riveria Nautic's successful approach to managing bookings during the 2011 Gippsland Lakes Blue Green Algae outbreak. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vaMCPJYH4CY

- Provide support to your operators around insurance policies and cancellation policies along with directing them to key messaging as outlined above, and to further information via the fact sheets and information online. Consumers Affairs Victoria and Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria have developed a guide which outlines operators' rights and responsibilities in relation to booking cancellations; see the below link.
- http://www.tourism.vic.gov.au/business-tools-support/crisis-management-guide/plan/booking-cancellations.html

- Remember, social media can be a strong and instantaneous means of information dissemination for operators across the region. For your operators engaged with social media, consider advising them to focus on official information sources and a sense that our authorities are highly experienced. Keep messages informative and try to avoid emotive language (e.g. "scary", "I wonder what's happening out there?", etc.) and images that may be misconstrued.

- If you are being contacted at a local level from various media, please inform Murray Regional Tourism (marketing@mrtb.com.au) so all media enquiries can be provided to the Regional Emergency Management Team for monitoring.

- MRT will be making contact with Tourism Managers around gaining some 'Top 5' and 'Must Do' experiences for your destination and surrounds over the Easter period. Please provide this information as soon as is possible so this can be collated and content generated for use in the campaign.

- If you have any packages/deals for the Easter/school holiday period, please feed these through to MRT to highlight through the digital and social campaign and also via the visitvictoria.com website. This is a free service.

Stay Informed

For the most recent blue-green algae alerts and public warnings head to http://www.visitthemurray.com.au/travellers-tips/alerts-fact-sheets or phone the blue-green algae hotline on 03 5826 3785

APPENDIX 11

RAPID IMPACT SNAPSHOT QUESTIONS

TOURISM INDUSTRY URGENT INFORMATION REQUEST

The following information will greatly assist in providing an initial snapshot and enable the on-going monitoring of the impact of the ******on the region's tourism industry. Please complete as soon as possible and email back to ******. All information will be treated as strictly confidential.

Name of business

Location and main contact

Type of business

Have you been unable to trade during this current crisis? Yes / No

If yes, please explain?

At this point in time [insert date range], what is impact of the incident on your revenue, as compared to the same time last year?

%_____ down   %_____ up

At this point in time [insert date range], can you predict the impact of the incident on your future revenue (as a percentage)?

%_____ down   %_____ up

If relevant, has your business experienced booking cancellations, as a percentage of existing bookings? _____%

Have you experienced a decline in forward bookings over the next three months, compared to the same time last year?

Have you been required to lay off staff (as a percentage of total staff numbers)? _____%

Thank you for your time & input.

APPENDIX 12

To Communicate or Not Communicate?

There are a number of interdependent factors which you will need to consider in responding to an incident. For instance, an incident that has resulted in mass casualties and property loss will generate significant, prolonged media coverage.

This checklist will assist you in making the decision to undertake communications activities in response to an incident. Noting that these activities will ultimately depend on the type of the incident (i.e. natural disaster cf. man-made event).

	Information Source	**Questions**	**Yes**	**No**	**Unsure**
Geographical coverage of the incident	**Emergency services**				
		Is the incident covering, or has the potential to cover, a significant part of the destination/region?	☐	☐	☐
Loss of Life/ Serious Injury and property	**Emergency services**				
		Has the incident resulted in significant loss of life and/or serious injuries?	☐	☐	☐
		Has the incident resulted in significant loss of life and/or serious injuries to visitors?	☐	☐	☐
		Has the incident resulted in significant loss of property?			
Frequency					
		Has an incident of this type recently occurred in the region/destination?	☐	☐	☐
Safety Risk for Visitors and Local	**Emergency services**				

		Is the incident presenting safety risks for visitors and locals?	☐	☐	☐
Travel restrictions & accessibility	**Emergency services**				
		Is the incident resulting in restrictions on visitor access to the affected area?	☐	☐	☐
		Is the incident impacting visitor access/movability to the broader region/destination?	☐	☐	☐
Status of incident	**Emergency Services**				
		Is the incident escalating?	☐	☐	☐
		Is adverse weather forecasted to occur within the next seven days?	☐	☐	☐
Mainstream Media coverage	**Media Monitoring**				
		Is the incident appearing on the front/home page of Melbourne metropolitan news channels?	☐	☐	☐
		Is the incident appearing on the front/home page of interstate and international news channels?	☐	☐	☐
		Is the media coverage misrepresenting the nature and scale of the incident?	☐	☐	☐
		Has the media coverage been prolonged over a series of days?	☐	☐	☐

		Are you receiving media enquiries?	☐	☐	☐
Social Media	**Social Media Monitoring**				
		Is the incident generating significant social media activity?	☐	☐	☐
Financial impact on tourism businesses	**Industry Barometer**				
		Are tourism businesses or local visitor information centre receiving a significant number of enquiries concerning the incident?	☐	☐	☐
		Are tourism businesses in the affected area experiencing significant booking cancellations and/or decline in forward bookings?	☐	☐	☐
		Are tourism businesses in non-affected areas experiencing significant booking cancellations and/or decline in forward bookings?	☐	☐	☐
Regional Brand Impact	**Media Monitor**				
		Does the scale and tone of the media coverage risk negatively impacting the destination/region's reputation/brand?	☐	☐	☐
Loss of Appeal/Attraction	**Emergency Services**				
		Is there significant environmental or infrastructure damage present within the	☐	☐	☐

		destination/region?			
Regional/Major Events	**Emergency Services**				
		Is it necessary to cancel or relocate a regionally significant event?	☐	☐	☐
Current Marketing Activities					
		Is it necessary to revise or suspend any current marketing activities due to the incident?	☐	☐	☐

If you have answered YES to a majority of these questions, it is highly likely that you will need to undertake appropriate and timely communications activities.

If you have answered NO to a majority of these questions, it is highly unlikely that the incident will create significant tourism impacts but may still require regular monitoring and review.

If you have answered UNSURE to a majority of these questions, it is highly likely that you will be required to obtain further information/intelligence and regular review the situation.

APPENDIX 13

CRISIS EVENT IMPACT SURVEY QUESTIONS

Name of Business

Address of Business

Main Contact Person

In which local council area is your business located?

Type of Business

1. Did the {crisis event} impact your business during the alert period {insert dates}

2. What was the impact of the {crisis event} to your business? – options provided (examples below)

   - Cancellations
   - Reduced visitation
   - Complaints from visitors
   - Reduction to bookings
   - Reduction in turn over

3. Based on the impact areas selected, include some specific questions to those impacts such as 'if your revenue has been impacted, by approx. what percentage did the revenue increase or decrease during this crisis event

4. Do you have any additional comments or feedback you would like to provide regarding the impact of the {crisis event} on your business?

5. How satisfied were you with the following aspects of communication during the {crisis event} (Examples of options below)?

   - Overall communication to the tourism industry
   - Overall communication to visitors
   - Advise you received on how to respond to visitor enquiries
   - Frequency of updates to the tourism industry
   - Support from MRT via the Murray Region Crisis Management Plan

6. Would you be interested in receiving training or further advise on how to prepare for future events that may negatively impact your business?

7. If a similar event occurs in the future, what is your preferred method for receiving communication updates?

Appendix 14

TCMG TERMS OF REFERENCE

Function of the Tourism Crisis Management Group
The function of the TCMG if activated, is to support Murray Regional Tourism with crisis communications management issues and industry intelligence associated with crisis management events in the Murray region.

Role of the Committee
- Implement the Crisis Management plan under the guidance of MRT.
- Support and understand emergency planning at the regional level to ensure that the tourism industry's requirements are incorporated into planning arrangements, such as the safety of visitors.
- Support MRT to initiate response and recovery activities in the event of a crisis, especially a communications strategy targeting visitor markets and the media to manage public perceptions of the region.
- Monitor and respond to the tourism industry's needs.
- Coordinate/facilitate tourism business crisis preparedness activities, in partnership with MRT, DJSIR, Destination NSW and the emergency services.

Members of the TCMG
Members will depend on the crisis event, its location and the phase of the crisis event (i.e. Industry Development Unit – Preparedness & Response, Regional Marketing – Recovery). Members will be appointed by the MRT CEO.

Minutes and Meeting Papers
MRT will prepare the agendas and minutes for each TCMG Meeting. Full copies of the Minutes, including any attachments will be provided to all TCMG members no later than 10 working days following each meeting.

Frequency of Meetings
The TCMG shall meet frequently as a crisis event occurs. A meeting schedule will be set at the inaugural TCMG meeting.

Quorum Requirements
A minimum of 5 members of the implementation committee are required for the meeting to be recognised as an authorised meeting for recommendations to be valid.

APPENDIX 15

TCMG AGENDA TEMPLATE

Murray Tourism Crisis Management Group Meeting

The next meeting of the Murray TCMG is scheduled as follows:

Date:
Time:
Location:

AGENDA

Attendance (For example)

- CEO Murray Regional Tourism
- DJSIR Tourism & Events
- NSW State Government representative
- Tourism Manager representation x 3-4

1. Welcome

2. Murray TCMG Terms of Reference   For Adoption

3. Crisis Management Update   For Discussion

4. General Business

APPENDIX 16
STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS MATRIX

Audience / Stakeholder Group	Responsibility	Method	Timing and Frequency	Information Needs
TCMG members	Chair	Phone Email Industry bulletins Media releases	Immediately, then every two days, then weekly as required	The nature and extent of the crisis. Industry impact information Communications activities for all audience / stakeholder groups
Emergency service agencies	Information Officer	Phone Email	Immediately, then every two days, then weekly as required	Key messages to visitors and media
Tourism businesses	Information Officer	Industry bulletins Media releases Briefings / meetings	Initially within two days then every 5-7 days as required	The nature and extent of the crisis and suggested alternatives and key information for visitors Response and recovery activities
Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria,	Chair	Phone Email	Initially within two days then weekly as required	The nature and extent of the crisis Industry Impact information Key messages for stakeholder dialogue.
Tourism industry and Travel trade	Information Officer	Industry bulletins	Initially within two days then fortnightly as required	The nature and extent of the crisis and Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria's response to the crisis
Intermediaries, eg. VICs, etc.	Information Officer	Email	Initially within two days then fortnightly as required	The nature and extent of the crisis and suggested alternatives and key information for visitors
Consumer/ General public	Media Officer Information Officer	Consumer websites (local, regional, state) Travel bulletins Social media	Initially within two days then fortnightly as required	Up-to-date factual information and alternative activities and locations, preferably within the region
Media	Media Officer	Holding statement Media release Media interviews	Initially within two days then fortnightly as required	Up-to-date factual information and alternative activities and locations, preferably within the region

APPENDIX 17

STATE TOURISM ORGANISATION - KEY CRISIS PERSONNEL
(as at April 2023)

State Tourism Organisation	Role	Contact	Status of MRT Relationship/Engagement
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR)	Manager Industry Sustainability	Stuart Toplis 03 9653 9810 0412 541 460	Advanced
NSW State Government Representative	To be confirmed		

APPENDIX 18

CRISIS MEDIA TRAINED BUSINESSES
(as at April 2023)

LGA	Name	Business	Contact Details	Type of Business
Moira	Ros Vodusek	Rich Glen Olives	info@richglenoliveoil.com	Attraction/Retail
	Steve Tatnall	RACV Cobram Resort		Accommodation
	Shayne Preer	Airtree Resort	shayne@airtreeresort.com.au	Accommodation/Events
	Wayne Limbrick	Hardware Store/ involved with Local Tourism Authority	wayne@limoshardware.com	Retail/Tourism Authority
	Andrew – CEO	Sebel Yarrawonga		Accommodation
Deniliquin	Donna Taylor	Deniliquin Business Chamber	admin@deniliquinchamber.com.au	Chamber
	Vicky Lowry	Deni Ute Muster	gm@deniutemuster.com.au	Event
	Frank White	Big 4 Deniliquin	frank@big4deniliquin.com.au	Accommodation
	Adam Connally	Harry Pepper Coffee	adam@harrypeppercoffee.com	Food & Bev
Mildura	Media Rep/Mayor/CEO	Mildura Rural City Council	C/- Mildura Tourism Manager contact	All Representation
	CEO/Tourism Manager	Mildura Regional Development	C/- Mildura Tourism Manager contact	All Representation
	Director/Manager of Comms	Lower Murray Water	C/- Mildura Tourism Manager contact	Water
	Manager of Comms	Mallee Catchment Management Authority	C/- Mildura Tourism Manager contact	Water
	Local area manager/Manager of Comms	Parks Victoria	C/- Mildura Tourism Manager contact	Parks and Wildlife
	Media rep/Mayor/CEO	Wentworth Shire Council	C/- Mildura Tourism Manager contact	All Representation
Berrigan Shire	Bobby Brooks CEO	Barooga Sporties	Bobby.brooks@sporties.com.au	Club/Accommodation
	Tony Tranter Business Manager	Barooga Sporties	Tony.tranter@sporties.com.au	Club/Accommodation
	Matt Henderson Director	Tocumwal Aviation Museum	Matt.henderson@bigpond.com	Attraction
	Rick Shaw	Finley Country Club Hotel	rick@finleycc.com.au	Food & Bev/Accommodation

APPENDIX 19

KEY EMERGENCY SERVICES PERSONNEL

(as at May 2023)

Control Agency	Contact
Loddon Mallee Regional Control Centre (VIC)	Executive Officer 03 5438 1100 Rcclmr.eo@rcc.vic.gov.au
Hume Regional Control Centre (VIC)	Executive Officer Rcchum.eo@rcc.vic.gov.au
State Control Centre	DJSIR Tourism & Events stuart.toplis@tourism.vic.gov.au
Riverina Murray Emergency Management Region (NSW)	Emergency Management Officer (02) 6922 2612 plow1owe@police.nsw.gov.au
Far West Emergency Management Region (NSW)	Emergency Management Officer (08) 8082 7210 mcma1gre@police.nsw.gov.au

APPENDIX 20

The Australian Warning System

The Australian Warning System is a new national approach to information and warnings during emergencies like bushfire, flood, storm, extreme heat and severe weather. The System uses a nationally consistent set of icons, like those below. The AWS has been designed based on feedback and research across the country and aims to deliver a more consistent approach to these types of emergencies, no matter where you are. Australia's fire and emergency services aim to provide you with timely and relevant information during emergencies.

How the system has been developed?
The Australian Warning System has been developed based on community research and input from Australia's emergency services and hazard agencies. As part of the Multi Hazard Warnings Social Research conducted by Metrix, more than 14,000 people were surveyed or interviewed to assess community perceptions of existing warning systems and improvements which could make warnings clearer and lead people to take action during hazard events.

Context
The Australian Warning System sits within a broader context of public information and warnings:

- general preparedness and pre-season messaging (e.g. community engagement campaigns)
- information and advice about increasing hazard danger or impact (e.g. short-term forecasts, weather products, fire danger ratings)
- general information about hazard or planned events which are not posing a threat or do not require specific community action
- information and advice on reduced threats (i.e closure of hazard event, or when a hazard is no longer posing a threat to the community)
- relief and recovery information commencing during the hazard event
- ongoing information and messaging (i.e. routine information about recovery or preparing for future hazard events).

What is a Warning?
A warning provides point-in-time information about a hazard that is impacting or is expected to impact communities. It describes the impact and expected consequences for communities and includes advice on what people should do.

What are the warning levels?
There are three warning levels:

Advice (Yellow)
An incident has started. There is no immediate danger. Stay up to date in case the situation changes.
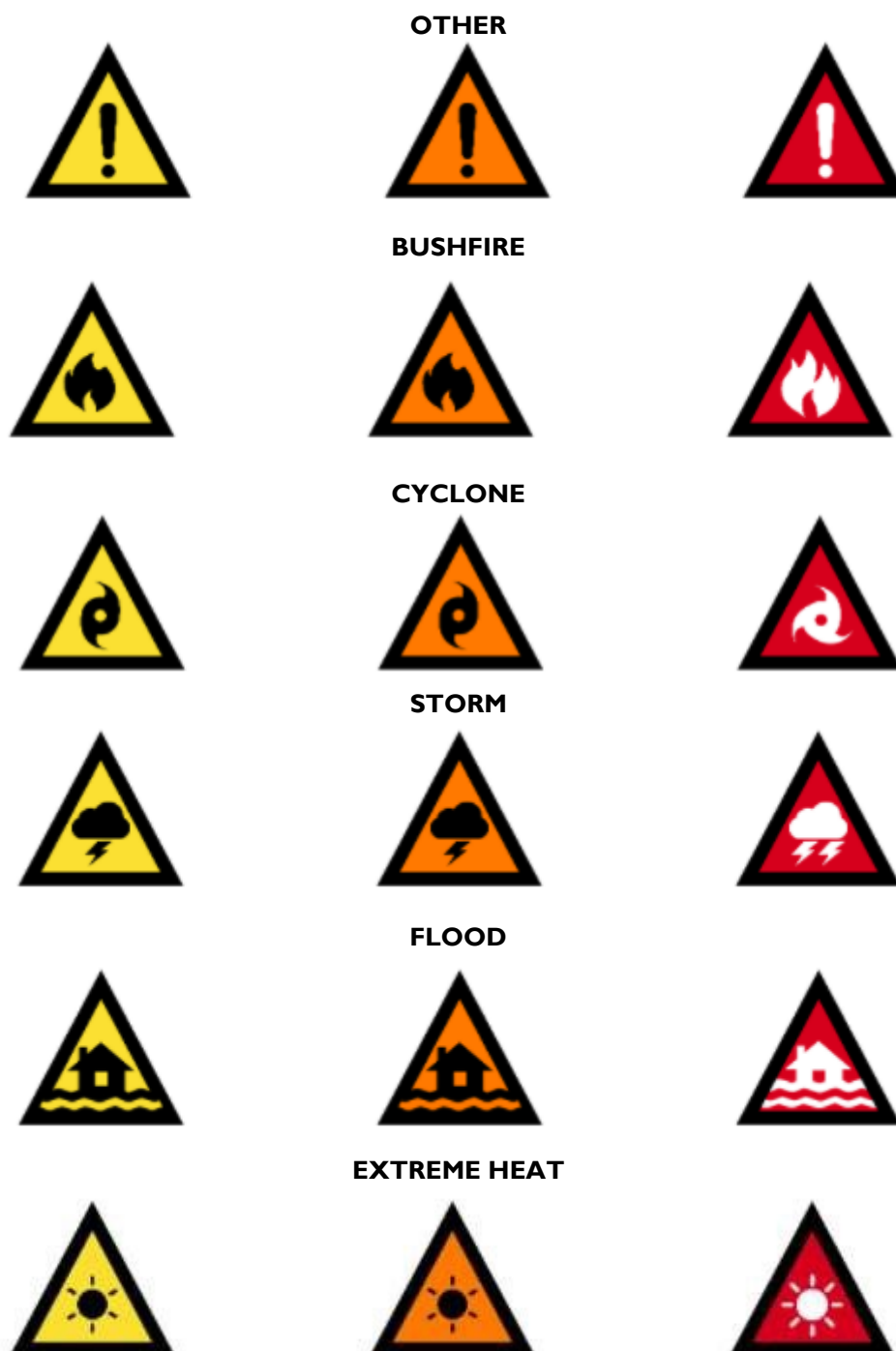**Watch and Act (Orange)**
There is a heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing and you need to start taking action now to protect you and your family.
Emergency Warning (Red)
An Emergency Warning is the highest level of warning. You may be in danger and need to take action immediately. Any delay now puts your life at risk.

Australian Warning Symbol Standards

OTHER

BUSHFIRE

CYCLONE

STORM

FLOOD

EXTREME HEAT

Source - https://www.australianwarningsystem.com.au/#