



# MURRAY REGIONAL TOURISM CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN 2018-19



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## 1. Introduction

The Murray region boasts an enviable collection of tourism experiences that attracts a significant number of domestic and international visitors to the region, and with a changing economic environment, increases in importance every year.

The tourism industry continues to be a significant economic driver for the region. In the year ending March 2017, the tourism industry directly contributed an estimated \$1.4 billion to the Murray economy and employed approximately 24,100 people (17% of regional employment). Should an emergency or crisis event occur in the region it could have a significant negative impact on the tourism industry.

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.

MTR recognizes the precedence and requirements of the **Emergency Management Act 1986 (VIC)** and the **State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 (NSW)**. While the region is well serviced by emergency management plans at an LGA level and by plans prepared and maintained by other agencies, some of these plans do not specifically address the communication needs of the tourism industry.

In the event of an emergency that impacts on tourism in the region, MRT will work within the structures and procedures required by relevant legislation. It 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 tourists, tourism operators, industry associations and the tourism media.

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

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 the region's reputation is protected.

### 1.1 The Crisis Management Plan Overview

The purpose of this plan is to provide MRT with an effective crisis management plan that may be enacted in the event of a tourism related crisis within the Murray Region. It focuses on the three major phases of crisis management; planning, execution and recovery.

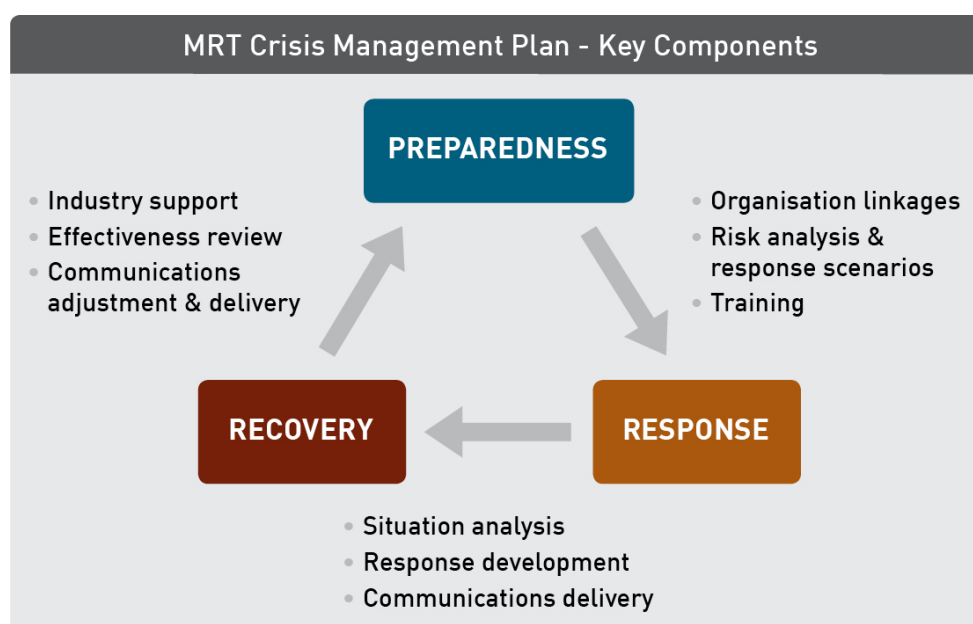
The plan aims to:

- 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. MRT Crisis Management Plan - Key components**



### Preparedness

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

#### **Organisation and Linkages:**

A Tourism Crisis Management Group (TCMG) has been formed to provide input to the plan and to execute the plan on a needs basis. This group draws on the skills and experience of MRT, relevant government, local government and industry representation to ensure the interests of the tourism industry are strongly supported and that appropriate communications response is enacted. *Refer to Appendix 1 - TCMG Members, Appendix 2 - MRT Support Staff, Appendix 3 - TCMG - Terms of Reference, Appendix 4 - TCMG Responsibilities.*

#### **Risk Analysis and Response Scenarios:**

This plan does not include or exclude any form of emergency and, to this end this document has adopted a flexible "all hazards approach". The risk analysis draws on risk data already published in regional VIC LGA Emergency Management Plans and from NSW relevant LGA DISPLANS. This information has been reviewed to establish response scenario priorities.

The plan guides the implementation committee with communications principles to be applied in all situations and with templates to provide a starting point in their deliberations as each crisis will require its own specific response.

#### **Training:**

These activities range from specific crisis training for MRT staff, TCMG members, local government tourism manager briefings, the establishment of issue/crisis based working groups (on a needs basis), communications templates to desktop scenario planning and ongoing monitoring and review of this plan.

## Response

The plan recognizes that each crisis will have its own unique characteristics. The TCMG will need to carefully assess the situation at the time and respond accordingly.

MRT recognises that in the event of a declared emergency, either national, state wide or local, precedence and authority lies with the Emergency Services Act, 1986 (VIC) and/or State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 (NSW).

### **Situation analysis:**

In the event of a crisis that requires action, the MRT CEO will call up the TCMG to enact the plan. If the crisis is localised and does not fit under the emergency services legislation umbrella, only relevant members will be called up.

### **Response development:**

A rapid business impact analysis will be undertaken using questions listed in *Appendix 13*. To ensure a speedy and accurate assessment, the survey will be generally limited to relevant business operatives as listed in *Appendix 14*.

Once the business impact survey is assessed and any external factors are applied by the TCMG, a communications response will be prepared.

### **Communications response and delivery:**

The communications response will be tailored to address the issues that have emerged from the business impact snapshot analysis. Draft media releases, statements and key responses as detailed in *Appendix 7-12* and will be used as a guide and starting point.

The communications delivery will follow the Media Protocols as detailed in *Appendix 18*.

## Recovery

The plan provides a checklist of recovery activities that would need to be considered by the response committee in their deliberation.

### **Industry support:**

TCMG will assist relevant government agencies to restore key visitor infrastructure and public attractions. It will liaise with State Governments to determine a suitable recovery package for industry.

### **Effectiveness review:**

TCMG will regularly check recovery progress and voice any industry concerns that may arise. A formal assessment of each phase of the crisis will be conducted and learning applied to this document within 3 months of crisis declaration by MTB.

### **Communications adjustment and delivery:**

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) in order to regain consumer confidence and counter any negative or inaccurate perceptions of the region.

## 1.2 Context

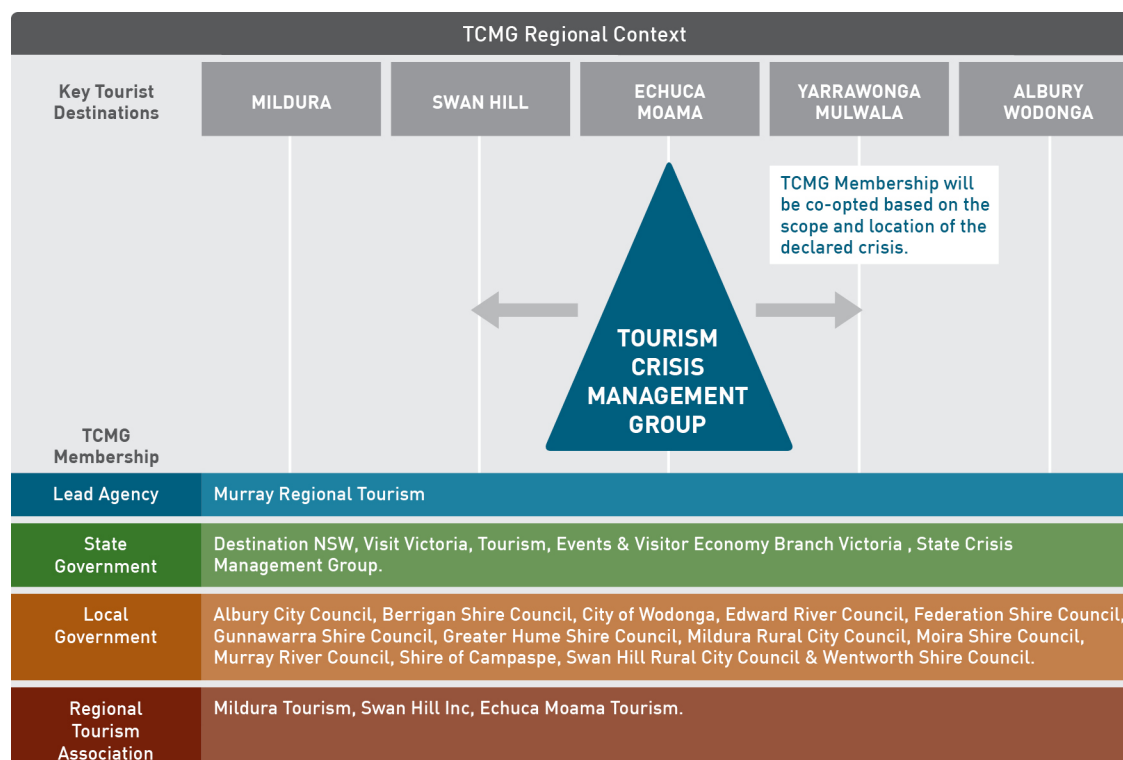
MRT covers 13 municipalities along the Murray in Victoria and NSW and recognises that each of these LGA's has well prepared Emergency Management Plans. These plans also integrate with the emergency management plans of relevant state governments and other agencies. The intent of the MRT Crisis Management Plan is to supplement MEMP's(VIC)/DISPLANS(NSW) and provide the Murray Region tourism industry with specific communications support in the event of a 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

As noted above, the TCMG must engage with many stakeholders to effectively implement this plan. Fig 2 below identifies the regional context, key organisations and their interaction and relationship with TCMG.

**Figure 2: TCMG Regional context**



While the overall regional risk profile may be assessed as relatively low, crisis events do happen that have challenged the tourism industry. These are detailed in Table 2 below. While the majority of these events have been localized, they have all had far-reaching and deeply felt impacts on many tourism operators.

**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

**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.

## 2 Key Roles and Responsibilities

### 2.1 Murray Regional Tourism (MRT)

- Establish and actively participate in and support (in-kind and financial) the Tourism Crisis Management Group.
- 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)
- 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.

### 2.2 Murray Tourism Crisis Management Group

The Murray Tourism Crisis Management Group (TCMG) has been established to perform a vital role in overseeing the implementation of this plan when a regional crisis occurs, particularly the crisis response and short-term recovery activities.

#### Key Roles and Responsibilities

- Implement the plan when authorised by MRT.
- Within the scope of the plan
  - Initiate effective response and recovery activities.
  - Monitor and respond to the tourism industry’s needs.
  - Deliver a communications strategy and associated collateral that positively manages public perceptions of the region with visitor markets and the media being specific targets.
- Handle media inquiries and coordinate a response with MRT.



- Practise the plan to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.
- Identify potential risks to the tourism industry, mitigation strategies and contingencies as on-going inputs to the plan.
- Engage with local emergency services and LGA's to ensure their plans address the tourism industry's requirements such as the safety of visitors.
- Coordinate/facilitate tourism business crisis preparedness activities, in partnership with Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria, Destination NSW and the emergency services.

**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 Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria and Destination NSW.

Murray TCMG members have been 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.

The current list of TCMG members, including contact details and key positions are listed in *Appendix 1*. In the event of a crisis event requiring a regional response, TCMG members will be notified via phone and email and subsequent meetings scheduled as appropriate.

The Murray TCMG Chair may appoint other personnel relevant to a particular crisis on an as-needs basis. Consequently, 1-2 positions will remain vacant and will be filled depending on the nature of the crisis event and the expertise required.

### **2.3 TCMG Support Staff**

MRT will 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.

MRT support staff and external PR Agency contacts are listed in *Appendix 2*.

### **2.4 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 officers is found in *Appendix 5*.

## 2.5 State Crisis Management Group

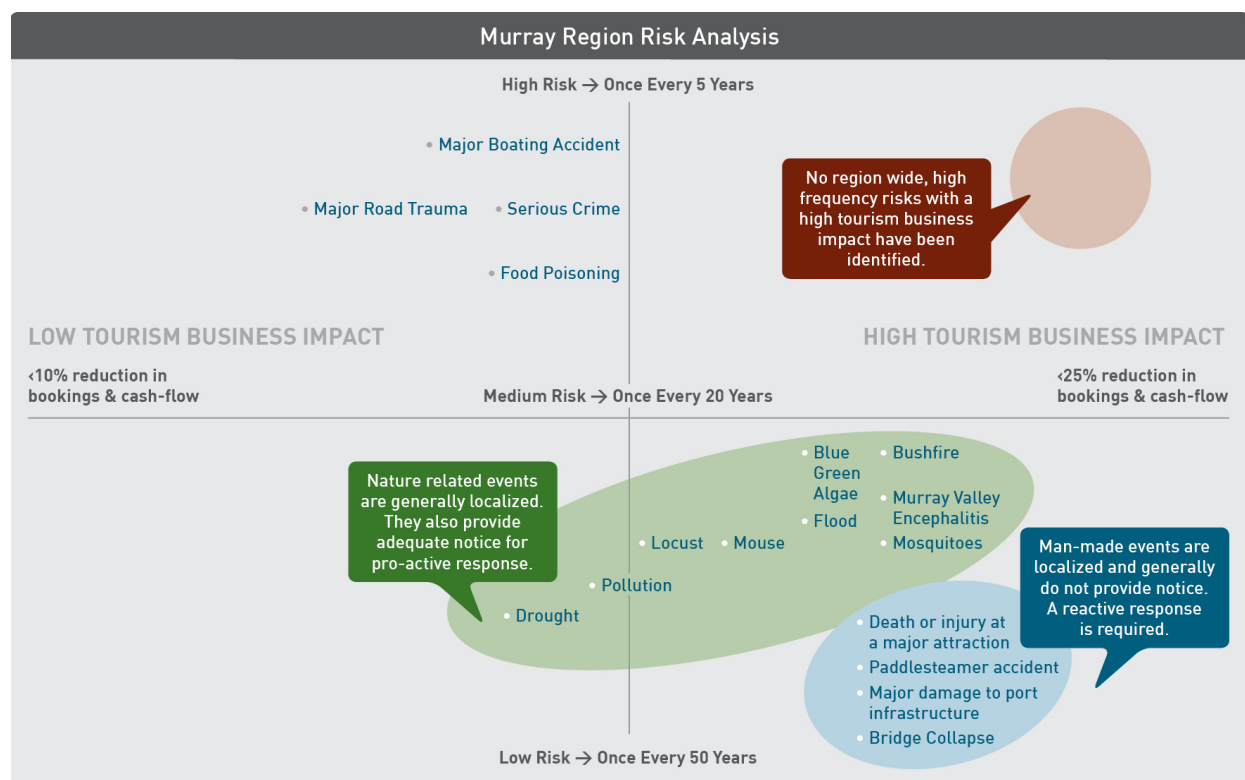
If the incident is at a State level, Destination NSW or the Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria lead the tourism response and recovery effort, in consultation with relevant government departments/ agencies and industry associations. This role includes establishing a State Tourism Crisis 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 are usually localized, are most likely to affect tourism across the Murray region. These higher risk and higher frequency events are the focus 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 Murray Regional Tourism/TCMG Preparedness

MRT recognises that the effectiveness of the TCMG's response to a crisis event is, to a large degree, governed by its preparedness activities. The table below summarises our preparedness objectives.

**Table 3: Preparedness Objectives**

Item	Objective	MRT	TCMG	Emergency Services/LGA	Tourism industry	Action/Check
People	Having committed people who know what to do by when, why they are doing it, how to communicate it and who to call on for help.	R			S	Group candidate selection and training
Roles & responsibilities	Having well documented and easy to comprehend roles and responsibilities.	A	R			Plan review by expert external agency
Policies & procedures	Having well documented, easy to interpret and well known policies and procedures covering essential elements of crisis communications management.	A	R	C		Plan review by expert external agency
Partnerships	Having strong positive relationships with relevant support organizations.	R		C	S	Ongoing
Scenarios & response development	Having thought through and documented template communications responses to likely tourism related crisis events.	A	R	C	C	Ongoing
Information maintenance	Having a network in place to ensure all contact details are current.	R			C	Annually
Practice & adjustment	Having regular practice to maintain familiarity and provide for currency	R		C	C	Annually

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

## **Preparedness - People**

*Responsible Authority: MRT CEO*

Core crisis response and recovery staff will regularly undertake training relevant to their respective crisis-related duties, as found in Table 4.

**Table 4: Preparedness: Training**

Training	MRT CEO	MRT support staff	MRT media staff	TCMG	LGA Tourism Managers	Selected tourism operators	Emergency Services/LGA
Introduction to plan	C	P	P	P	P	P	I
Crisis/ Emergency Management	P	P	P	P			C
Crisis Communications Management	P		P	P	P	P	C
Emergency services & LGA communications protocols	P	P	P	P	P	P	C
Scenario planning & documentation		P	P	P	P		C

P=Participate, I=Inform, C=Consult

## **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 of 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. The meetings will coincide with the annual crisis management exercise to provide relevance and focus.

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: TCMG*

MRT has prepared draft media releases, statements and key messages based on the potential high-risk crisis events, in association with Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria, 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 MTB, 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 Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria and Destination NSW, on crisis management through a suite of activities including:

- The dissemination of Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch 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 Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria's *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, Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria 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 Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria, conducting briefing sessions for tourism businesses on impending or potential crisis events.

##### *High Risk Crisis Events*

- Support Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria 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](http://visitthemurray.com.au)
- 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 Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/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 a river, or an approaching bushfire, Code Red 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 Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/Destination NSW to gather additional information.
3. Communicate all relevant warnings to the regional tourism industry.
4. Identify with Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/Destination NSW if travel advisories are required to discourage travel to the affected area, and issue as relevant with Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/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**

<p>Likely to receive warning that an incident is expected to occur</p> <p>And</p> <p>Highly likely to require communication to industry and visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bushfires e.g high temperatures and high winds forecast</li> <li>• Flooding e.g. major flooding in a tourist region is forecast</li> <li>• Severe storm e.g if more than 100ml of rainfall is forecast during a storm</li> </ul>
<p>Likely to receive warning that an incident is expected to occur</p> <p>And</p> <p>Could require communication to industry and visitors, depending on the nature of the incident</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pest plagues e.g. rodents, insects</li> <li>• Regional health crisis</li> <li>• Outbreak of disease</li> </ul>

<p>Unlikely to receive warning that an incident is expected to occur</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Unlikely to require communication to industry or visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drought</li> <li>• Water pollution</li> <li>• Earthquake</li> <li>• Air pollution</li> <li>• Oil spill or other hazardous material accidents</li> <li>• Blue green algae outbreak</li> <li>• Food poisoning</li> <li>• Major transport accident</li> <li>• General safety</li> <li>• Safety queries re. tourist activities</li> <li>• Major crime</li> <li>• Terrorist incident</li> <li>• Media exposure of repeated bad service and poor tourist experiences</li> <li>• High profile criticism e.g. from a celebrity</li> <li>• Publicity which portrays the region as unwelcoming or racist</li> </ul>
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## 5 Response

### 5.1 Incident Reported

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

- REMT or control agency;
- Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria or Destination NSW;
- media monitoring by Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/Destination NSW (e.g. theage.com.au); 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 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 Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria 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. The contact details of these businesses are found in *Appendix 14*.



### 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 and in consultation with Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria and/or Destination NSW.

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.

Once the scale of the incident has been determined, an appropriate response will be implemented, especially concerning communications.

## 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

### Within the first 24 hours of the incident occurring

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 encourages 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.

### Ongoing

#### *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*

- Within the first 24 hours of the incident occurring: 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

*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.
- Disseminate a copy of initial media statement to TCMG members.

#### 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 Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/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 18*).
- If media are seeking comment from impacted tourism operators, they will be referred to a crisis media trained operator as listed in *Appendix 20*.
- If warranted, develop answers to specific questions that may be asked by the media.
- Log and document all media inquiries on the standard Media Request Log (*Appendix 22*).

**NOTE:** It is important to recognise that 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.
- Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria 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 17*.

### **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.
- 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-tweet etc relevant 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**

*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 15*.
- Communicate outcomes of the TCMG meeting with Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria 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 21* – 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 spokesperson 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)**

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 a number of businesses have been directly affected and require a significant level of work to reopen.

### **7.2.1 Reconvene the TCMG**

- TCMG will meet as regularly as required 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) in order 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 considered to 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 TCMG 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**

TCMG 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 16.*)

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**

- TCMG will liaise with Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria, Destination 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**

TCMG 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 lead 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 17* for the stakeholder communications matrix.



### ***8.5 Liaising with Government***

TCMG will continue to liaise with the relevant State Government to determine a suitable recovery package (which may or may not include funding from MRT).

### ***8.6 Monitoring public perceptions***

TCMG will continue to monitor public perceptions and media coverage of the region will continued to be monitored.

Support the media to write post-crisis feature stories.

### ***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 transferred to MRT at the completion of the TCMG’s tactical recovery activities.

## APPENDIX 1

### TCMG MEMBERS

(as at 12/12/2018)

Position	Name	Position	Organisation	Contact Details
Chair	Mark Francis	CEO	Murray Regional Tourism	0429 509 455 <a href="mailto:ceo@mrtb.com.au">ceo@mrtb.com.au</a>
State Government Victoria Representative <sup>1</sup>	Stuart Toplis	Manager Industry Sustainability	Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria	9653 9810 0412 541 460 <a href="mailto:Stuart.toplis@tourism.vic.gov.au">Stuart.toplis@tourism.vic.gov.au</a>
State Government NSW Representative	To be confirmed			
Local Government (Albury Wodonga Greater Hume cluster)	Kerrie Wise	Executive Assistant/ Tourism and Promotions Officer	Greater Hume Shire Council	02 6036 0186 0448 099 536 <a href="mailto:kwise@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au">kwise@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au</a>
Local Government (Sun Country, Berrigan and Federation cluster)	Merran Socha	Economic and Industry Development Liaison	Berrigan Shire Council	03 5888 5100 0409 974 493 <a href="mailto:merrans@berriganshire.nsw.gov.au">merrans@berriganshire.nsw.gov.au</a>
Local Government	Fiona Gormann	Economic and Community Development Manager	Swan Hill Rural City Council	03 5036 2392 0429 138 309 <a href="mailto:fgormann@swanhill.vic.gov.au">fgormann@swanhill.vic.gov.au</a>
Regional Tourism Association	Kathryn McKenzie	CEO	Echuca Moama Tourism	03 54807555 0429228900 <a href="mailto:kathryn@echucamoama.com">kathryn@echucamoama.com</a>
Regional Tourism Association	Kirsten Lloyd	Senior Communications and Marketing Advisor	Mildura Regional Development	03 5021 0599 0499 110 607 <a href="mailto:kirsten@milduraregion.com.au">kirsten@milduraregion.com.au</a>
Crisis Management Coordinator/ Deputy Chair	TBC	Tourism Project Manager	Murray Regional Tourism	

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<sup>1</sup> Representation will depend on the phase of the crisis event (i.e. Industry Development Unit – Preparedness & Response, Regional Marketing – Recovery)

## APPENDIX 2

### MRT SUPPORT STAFF

*(as at 05/12/2018)*

Position	Name	Contact Details	
Admin Assistant	Nancy Minicozzi	03 5480 7110	<a href="mailto:ea@mrtb.com.au">ea@mrtb.com.au</a>
PR – Chatterbox Marketing	Nigel Preston	0412 692 468	<a href="mailto:nigel@chatterboxmarketing.com.au">nigel@chatterboxmarketing.com.au</a>

## APPENDIX 3

### TCMG TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### **Function of the Tourism Crisis Management Group**

The function of the TCMG is to take responsibility for the crisis communications management issues associated with crisis management events in the Murray region. The TCMG is responsible for

#### **Role of the Committee**

- Develop a Tourism Crisis Management Plan prior to an event occurring.
- Implement the plan.
- Update and practise the Plan.
- Get involved in 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.
- 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.
- Handle media inquiries.
- Monitor and respond to the tourism industry's needs.
- Coordinate/facilitate tourism business crisis preparedness activities, in partnership with Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria, Destination NSW and the emergency services.

**Members of the TCMG are listed in Appendix 1.**

#### **Minutes and Meeting Papers**

The MRT Tourism Project Manager 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 quarterly with this to increase to more 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 4

### TCMG RESPONSIBILITIES

The suggested actions below are indicative of the responsibilities and actions that should be assigned within the TCMG.

#### **Chair/Deputy Chair**

1. Make an initial assessment of the probable scale of the crisis
2. Activate the TCMG 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 TCMG eg: issues and crisis management consultants
6. In conjunction with TCMG members, determine resource requirements to effectively address the crisis
7. Advise senior stakeholders eg: Ministers, Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria, Destination NSW as required
8. Refer to Crisis Management Plan and determine what is applicable
9. Immediately revise, cancel or suspend advertising
10. In conjunction with TCMG members, initiate immediate actions required
11. In conjunction with TCMG members, determine media strategy and authorise all media statements on the crisis
12. Act as regional spokesperson regarding tourism issues for significant media interviews
13. Authorise regular situation updates for visitors, regional tourism operators and staff, other relevant stakeholders
14. Coordinate planning for longer term recovery
15. 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
3. Assess immediate implications for regional tourism, including initial economic impacts
4. Canvass any immediate actions required
5. Determine key themes and messages for all communications
6. Determine most appropriate tools of communications to reach key stakeholders and audiences
7. Coordinate regular stakeholder information updates
8. Review any proposed media statements or releases
9. Contribute to the effective operation of the TCMG
10. 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 (eg seminars, conferences etc)
5. Assist with media and website management

6. Contribute to the effective operation of the TCMG
7. Once crisis is over, participate in debrief process
8. As required, update procedures and coordinate stakeholder de-briefings
9. If appropriate, send letters of appreciation to relevant staff and organisations that assisted the TCMG.

## APPENDIX 5

### MURRAY LOCAL GOVERNMENT TOURISM MANAGERS

(as at 05/12/2018)

Council	Position	Name	Contact Details	
Wodonga City Council	Team Leader Tourism Development	Cellina Little	clittle@wodonga.vic.gov.au	02 6022 9222
Swan Hill Rural City Council	Economic & Community Development Manager	Fiona Gormann	fgormann@swanhill.vic.gov.au	03 5036 2392 0429 138 309
Murray River Council	Manager Economic Development & Tourism	Stephen Pykett	jharvie@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au	02 5481 0909 0448 029 352
Berrigan Shire Council	Economic and Industry Development Liaison	Merran Socha	merrans@berriganshire.nsw.gov.au	02 5888 5100 0409 974 493
Albury City Council	Tourism Team Leader	Sue Harper	sharper@alburycity.nsw.gov.au	02 6023 8262 0400 891 578
Edward River Council	Manager Economic Development & Tourism	Michelle Cobb	michelle.cobb@edwardriver.nsw.gov.au	03 5898 3029
Murray River Council	Economic Development Officer	Beck Hayward	bhayward@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au	02 5884 3302 0427 560 934
Gannawarra Shire Council	Manager Economic Development	Roger Griffiths	roger.griffiths@gannawarra.vic.gov.au	03 5450 9333
Wentworth Shire Council	Wentworth Visitor Information Centre	Karen Arnold	karen.arnold@wentworth.nsw.gov.au	02 5027 5080 0438 256 205
Shire of Campaspe	Investment Attraction Manager	Astrid O'Farrell	a.ofarrell@campaspe.vic.gov.au	03 5481 2822 0428 322 901
Federation Council	Tourism Coordinator	Kyla Carpinelli	kyla.carpinelli@federationcouncil.nsw.gov.au	02 6033 8988
Moira Shire Council	Tourism Development Officer Economic Development	Donna Russell	drussell@moira.vic.gov.au	03 5871 9438
Mildura Regional Development	Chief Executive Officer	Daryl Buckingham	daryl@milduraregion.com.au	03 5021 0599
Mildura Regional Development	Senior Communications and Marketing Advisor	Kirsten Lloyd	kirsten@milduraregion.com.au	03 5021 0599 0499 110 607
Mildura Rural City Council	Visitor Information Centre Team Leader	David Zachar	david.zachar@mildura.vic.gov.au	03 5018 8370 0400 576 795
Mildura Rural City Council	Events & Projects Coordinator	Kate Henschke	kate.henschke@mildura.vic.gov.au	03 5018 8418 0408 214 005
Echuca-Moama Tourism	Chief Executive Officer	Kathryn McKenzie	kathryn@echucamoama.com	03 54807555 0429 228900
Greater Hume Shire Council	Executive Assistant/Tourism Promotions Officer	Kerrie Wise	kwise@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au	02 6036 0186 0448 099 536

## APPENDIX 6

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

#### FLOOD

Risk / Impact	Consequence	Treatment/Mitigation	Responsible Agency/ies
Restrictions on commercial and recreational boating activities due to high water levels/strong currents.	<p>Reduced visitor experience.</p> <p>Booking cancellations/downturn in forward bookings</p> <p>Media coverage of industry criticism etc of authority warnings Subsequent death of visitor/s from drowning etc leading to heightened media coverage.</p> <p>Business continuity/viability issues</p>	Key tourism messaging focused on reinforcing on activities which are not restricted.	Roads & Maritime Services NSW
Closure of parts of the Murray River to commercial and recreational boating activities due to high water levels/strong currents/debris	<p>Loss of trade</p> <p>Booking cancellations/downturn in forward bookings</p> <p>Media coverage of industry criticism etc of authority warnings Subsequent death of visitor/s from drowning etc leading to heightened media coverage</p> <p>Business continuity/viability issues</p>	<p>Key tourism messaging focused parts of the Murray unaffected by the event and the importance of visitor safety.</p> <p>Crisis management training for houseboat operators etc</p> <p>Increased skills on river navigation</p> <p>Establishment of Protocols/Guidelines of River Closures/Warnings with tourism industry input.</p>	Roads & Maritime Services NSW / NSW SES



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

Settlement)	for nearby tourism businesses and tour operators. Business continuity/viability issues	training. Managing your bookings forum 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 bookings.	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 communications activities.	VicRoads / NSW RMS

	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/ies
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 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.	VIC and NSW Department of Primary Industries
Drinking and bathing water contamination issues	Reduced visitor experience. Booking cancellations/downturn in forward bookings. Media coverage of industry criticism etc of authority	Visitor education about water safety risks via website and regional visitor information centres.	NSW Health, Dept. Health and Human Services VIC

	warnings. Subsequent illness of visitor/s from exposure to blue green algae leading to heightened media coverage.  Business continuity/viability issues.		
Water supply/contamination issues - for businesses dependent on water from Murray River.	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. Negative impact on "Brand Murray".  Booking cancellations & decline in forward bookings.  Business continuity/viability issues	Activation of Murray Tourism Crisis Comms Mgt Group.  Incorporation of tourism messaging into broader emergency messaging, when appropriate.  Recovery marketing  Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training	MRT

## BUSHFIRES

Risk / Impact	Consequence	Treatment/Mitigation	Responsible Agency/ies
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/Fairwork 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  Work Cover investigation	Crisis planning/business resilience resources & training (including crisis communications)	Small Business VIC/NSW, Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/ 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

<p>Destruction of/significant damage to key nature-based tourism sites/nodes/attractions)</p>	<p>Loss of appeal</p> <p>Short to medium term decline in visitation to surrounding area.</p> <p>Licensed tour operators unable to operate/reduction in trade.</p> <p>Impact on regional brand</p>	<p>Work with Parks Victoria/public land manager to ensure key nodes are restored as a priority / alternative sites promoted.</p>	<p>Parks Victoria / Public Land Manager</p>
<p>Scale and tone of media coverage of the event</p>	<p>Visitor misperceptions of the scale and nature of the event.</p> <p>Decline in visitation to affected and unaffected areas.</p> <p>Negative impact on “Brand Victoria”.</p> <p>Booking cancellations &amp; decline in forward bookings.</p> <p>Business continuity/viability issues</p>	<p>Establish State and/or regional Tourism Crisis Mgt Group.</p> <p>Incorporate tourism messaging into broader emergency messaging, when appropriate.</p> <p>Recovery marketing</p> <p>Crisis planning/business resilience resources &amp; training</p>	<p>Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/ DNSW</p>
<p>Destruction/significant damage/closure of key tourist roads/touring routes</p>	<p>Accessibility restrictions / disruption to visitor travel plans</p> <p>Visitor/business confusion regarding road closures</p> <p>Coach tour operators unable to operate scheduled tours etc.</p> <p>Booking cancellations &amp; decline in forward bookings.</p> <p>Business continuity/viability issues</p>	<p>Register of key tourist roads &amp; touring routes. Work with VicRoads to ensure that repair/re-opening of tourist roads etc are given priority treatment.</p> <p>Coach operators implement crisis management plans (including alternative route options).</p> <p>Promote VicRoads website in all communications activities.</p>	<p>Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria/DNSW</p> <p>VicRoads/ Roads &amp; Maritime Services NSW</p>
<p>Destruction/significant damage to critical utility infrastructure (i.e. power outages, water shortages, telecommunications outage)</p>	<p>Loss of perishable goods/stock.</p> <p>Booking cancellations &amp; decline in forward bookings.</p> <p>Business continuity/viability issues</p>	<p>Insurance advice</p> <p>Crisis planning/business resilience resources &amp; training</p> <p>Mentoring</p>	<p>NSW Health, Dept. Health and Human Services VIC, NSW/VIC Emergency Management, NSW/VIC SES</p>

## DISEASE (I.E. MURRAY VALLEY ENCEPHALITIS)

Risk / Impact	Consequence	Treatment/Mitigation	Responsible Agency/ies
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/Fairwork 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

## APPENDIX 7

### MEDIA RELEASE TEMPLATE

#### **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 Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch 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 8

### KEY MESSAGES - MEDIA EXAMPLE

#### BLUE GREEN ALGAE

- Some parts of the Murray River 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 River 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unaffected areas list</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swimming</li> <li>• Jetskiing</li> <li>• Paddle boarding</li> <li>• Canoeing &amp; kayaking</li> <li>• Water skiing</li> </ul>
Affected areas	Things to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affected area 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List safe visitor activities for each affected area. I.e.</li> <li>• Sailing</li> <li>• Play golf</li> <li>• Picnics and BBQs</li> <li>• Boat cruising</li> <li>• Camping</li> <li>• Cycling and walking trails</li> <li>• Hiking/bushwalking</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affected area 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe local visitor activities list</li> </ul>

- 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 9

### KEY MESSAGES - INDUSTRY EXAMPLE

#### BLUE GREEN ALGAE

- Some parts of the Murray River 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, a picnic or BBQ on one of our many beaches such as Thompson's Beach, houseboating or horse riding.
- 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.gmwater.com.au](http://www.gmwater.com.au).

## APPENDIX 10

### EXAMPLE MEDIA RELEASE

#### BLUE GREEN ALGAE

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

Some parts of the Murray River 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 14 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](http://www.visitthemurray.com.au).

\*Correct as at 3 March 2016. For the most up-to-date information on affected areas please visit [www.gmwater.com.au](http://www.gmwater.com.au).

## APPENDIX 11

### 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](http://www.website.com.au)] or by calling FREECALL [number].

## APPENDIX 12

### 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 River Murray 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](mailto: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](http://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 13**

**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 14

### RAPID IMPACT SNAPSHOT TOURISM OPERATORS

(as at 19/07/2017)

Name	Business	Contact Details	Type of Business	LGA
Ainsley O'Bryan	Big 4 Riverside Park Swan Hill	ainsley@big4riversideswanhill.com.au 03 5032 1494	Accommodation	Swan Hill
Lauren Schmidt	Spoons	marketing@mdclubs.com.au 03 5032 2601	Restaurant	Swan Hill
Janelle Earle	Pioneer Settlement	jearle@swanhill.vic.gov.au 0428 315 558	Attraction	Swan Hill
Daryl Allen	Catalina Flying Boat Museum	flyingboat@iinet.net.au 0488 577 872	Attraction	Swan Hill
Chris Ashby	Robinvale Riverside Caravan Park	info@robinvaleriverside.com.au 0431 651 132	Accommodation	Swan Hill
Kristy-lee Watt	Riverland Motel	kristyandclint@gmail.com 03 5453 2811	Accommodation	Barham
Kay & Greg Bassett	Barham Caravan	barhamcaravan@bigpond.com 03 5453 2553	Accommodation	Barham
Greg Roberts	Murray Downs Club	gregr@mdclubs.com.au 03 5033 1966	Club	Barham
David Grubb	Luxury on the Murray Houseboats	chillout@luxboats.com.au 03 5483 6244	Houseboats	Moama
Brad Davidson	Picnic Point Caravan Park	picnicpointcp@bigpond.com 03 5884 3375	Accommodation	Mathoura
Danny Powell	Border Inn Hotel	admin@borderinn.com.au 03 5480 9966	Pub	Moama
Jane Arrowsmith	Pacdon Park	jane@pacdon.com.au 03 5480 0844	Food (manufacturing and retail)	Moama (and shop in Echuca)
Jenny Green	Moama on Murray Resort	jenny@moamaonmurray.com.au 03 5480 3031	Holiday park	Moama
Andrew Lohead	Century 21 Real estate / Chair of the Echuca Moama Business and Trades Association	andrew.lochhead@century21.com.au 03 5482 3433	Retail	Echuca
Alex Smit	The River Deck	alex@riverdeckcafe.com.au 0404 830 050	Restaurant	Albury
Nolene & Stephen Jones	Quality Resort Siesta	stephen@siesta.com.au nolene@siest.com.au 02 6025 4555	Accommodation	Albury
Julianne Hanel	Flyfaire Winery	julianne@flyfaire.com 0407908499	Winery/Cafe	Woomargama
Daryl Buckingham (CEO)	Mildura Regional Development	daryl@milduraregion.com.au 03 5021 0599	RTO - to distribute to relevant operators	Mildura

## APPENDIX 15

### TCMG AGENDA TEMPLATE



#### Murray Tourism Crisis Management Group Meeting

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

Date:

Time:

Location:

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#### AGENDA

##### Attendance

- Tourism Project Manager, Murray Regional Tourism
- Mark Francis, Murray Regional Tourism
- Stuart Toplis, Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria
- NSW State Government representative to be confirmed
- Kerrie Wise, Greater Hume Shire Council
- Kathryn McKenzie, Echuca Moama Tourism
- Merran Socha, Berrigan Shire Council
- Emma Cramer, Swan Hill Rural City Council
- Sarah Gilmore, Mildura Regional Development

1. Welcome

2. Murray TCMG Terms of Reference

For Adoption

3. Crisis Management Update

For Discussion

4. General Business

## APPENDIX 16

### 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

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

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

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

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

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
- Advice 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

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

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

**APPENDIX 17  
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 18

### 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. They should then be handled by the TCMG Chair;
- No speculation or unauthorised comments should be made on any basis;
- The MRT CEO Executive Assistant 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 TCMG;
- The TCMG should be notified as soon as practicable about any media contact;
- If media attend the scene of a crisis incident, the TCMG should make contact with the lead agency's media liaison coordinator to ascertain whether tourism-specific queries are being raised;
- The TCMG 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 talkback radio;
- Clear and concise messages should be formulated by the TCMG 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 TCMG Chair 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 19

### STATE TOURISM ORGANISATION - KEY CRISIS PERSONNEL

*(as at 19/07/2017)*

State Tourism Organisation	Role	Contact	Status of MRT Relationship/Engagement
Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria	Manager Industry Sustainability	Stuart Toplis 03 9653 9810 0412 541 460	Very Good
NSW State Government Representative	To be confirmed		

**APPENDIX 20**

**CRISIS MEDIA TRAINED BUSINESSES**

*(as at 12/12/2018)*

Name	Business	Contact Details	Type of Business	LGA
Michael Alexander (CEO)	Club Barham	ceo@clubarham.com.au	Club	Barham
Gary Hunt	RACV Cobram	Gary_Hunt@racv.com.au 0417 013 640	Accommodation	Moira
Ros Vodusek	Rich Glen Olives	info@richglenoliveoil.com 0428 711 107	Attraction	Moira
Shane & Julie Preer	Action Bike & Ski / Deputy Chair – Tourism Advisory Committee	julie@actionbikeski.com.au 03 5744 3522	Retail/Tour Operator	Moira
Wayne Limbrick	Chair – Tourism Advisory Committee	wayne@limoshardware.com 0402 869 304	Retail - Home Hardware	Moira
Daryl Buckingham	CEO Mildura Regional Development	daryl@milduraregion.com.au 03 5021 0599	RTO - to coordinate all media enquiries	Mildura
Janelle Earle	Pioneer Settlement	jearle@swanhill.vic.gov.au 0428 315 558	Attraction	Swan Hill
Chris Ashby	Robinvale Riverside Caravan Park	info@robinvaleriverside.com.au 0431 651 132	Accommodation	Swan Hill
Vicky Lowry (GM)	Deni Ute Muster	gm@deniutemuster.com.au 0448 832 104	Event	Deniliquin
Deb O'Callaghan (MD)	DC on the Lake	Info@dconthelake.com.au 03 5744 1393	Accommodation	Federation
Daniel Peacock (GM)	Corowa Golf Club	daniel@corowagolfclub.com.au 02 6033 1466	Golf	Federation



## APPENDIX 21

### KEY EMERGENCY SERVICES PERSONNEL (as at 19/07/2017)

Control Agency	Contact	Status of MRT Relationship/Engagement
Loddon Mallee Regional Control Centre (VIC)	Executive Officer 03 5438 1100 Rcclmr.eo@rcc.vic.gov.au	Good
Hume Regional Control Centre (VIC)	Executive Officer Rcchum.eo@rcc.vic.gov.au	Advanced
State Control Centre	Stuart Toplis Tourism, Events and Visitor Economy Branch Victoria stuart.toplis@tourism.vic.gov.au	Advanced
Riverina Murray Emergency Management Region (NSW)	Owen Plowman Emergency Management Officer (02) 6922 2612 plow1owe@police.nsw.gov.au	None
Far West Emergency Management Region (NSW)	Greg McMahon Emergency Management Officer (08) 8082 7210 mcma1gre@police.nsw.gov.au	None

**APPENDIX 22**  
**MEDIA REQUEST LOG**

**Media Inquiry Log Template**

Date: ..... Time: .....

Handled by: .....

Journalist: .....

Representing: .....

Telephone: ..... Email: .....

Date of Response: ..... Time: .....

Questions:

Response given:

Follow-up required?