



Blackall-Tambo **Regional Council**

Business Continuity and Recovery Plan

Contents

1. Document Control
2. Purpose and Objectives
3. Scope of the Plan
4. Definitions and Glossary
5. Governance and Business Continuity Management
6. Business Continuity Team
7. Activation of the Plan
8. Business Continuity and Recovery Coordination Centre
9. Critical Business Functions
10. Business Impact Analysis
11. Risk Assessment and Treatment
12. Incident Response Framework
13. Emergency Communications
14. Event Log
15. Recovery Plan
16. Version Control

1. Document Control

Distribution List

Copy No.	Name	Position	Location
001	Andrew Martin	Mayor	Tambo
002	David Hardie	Deputy Mayor	Blackall
003	Mike Lollback	Chief Executive Officer	Blackall
004	Alison Lamb	Director Organisational Performance	Blackall
005	Shalveen Dayal	Chief Financial Officer	Blackall
006	Jaimee-Lee O'Brien	Director Lifestyle and Communities	Blackall
007	Kaylene Carroll	Accountant	Blackall

Document Owner - Chief Executive Officer

Plan Custodian - Chief Financial Officer

Approval Authority - Chief Executive Officer

Review Frequency - Annually or following activation of the Plan.

2. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this Business Continuity and Recovery Plan (BCRP) is to provide a structured framework for responding to and recovering from events that significantly disrupt Council services.

The Plan aims to:

- Protect employees, contractors, visitors and the community.
- Maintain critical Council functions during disruption.
- Facilitate a coordinated response to significant incidents.
- Minimise operational, financial and reputational impacts.
- Restore services within identified Recovery Time Objectives (RTOs).
- Support legislative, regulatory and contractual obligations.
- Provide clear recovery responsibilities.
- Ensure continual improvement through review and testing.

3. Scope of the Plan

This Plan applies to all:

- Council facilities.
- Staff, contractors and volunteers.
- Information technology systems.
- Essential services.
- Community-facing services.
- Administrative and finance functions.

A significant disruption may include:

- Fire.
- Flood.
- Storm.
- Utility failure.
- Pandemic or disease outbreak.
- Cyber incident.
- Loss of ICT services.
- Building inaccessibility.
- Major equipment failure.
- Theft or malicious damage.

4. Definitions and Glossary

Business Continuity Planning	A process that helps develop a plan document to manage the risks to a business, ensuring that it can operate to the extent required in the event of a crisis/disaster.
Business Continuity Management Plan	A document containing all the information required to ensure that your business can resume critical business activities should a crisis/disaster occur.
Business Impact Analysis	The process of gathering information to determine basic recovery requirements for your key business activities in the event of a crisis/disaster.
Key business (services) activities	Those activities essential to deliver outputs and achieve business objectives.
Recovery Time Objective (RTO)	The time from which you declare a crisis/disaster to the time that the critical business functions must be fully operational to avoid serious financial loss.
Resources	The means that support delivery of an identifiable output and/or result. Resources may be money, physical assets, or most importantly, people.
Risk Management	Is the process of defining and analysing risks, and then deciding on the appropriate course of action to minimise these risks, whilst still achieving business goals?

Associated Plans and Documents

- ICT Business Continuity Plan
- Enterprise Risk Management Framework
- Risk Registers
- Local Disaster Management Plan
- Workplace Health and Safety Procedures
- Emergency Management Procedures
- Records Management Policy

5. Governance and Business Continuity Management

Council adopts a risk-based approach to business continuity planning.

Business continuity management encompasses:

- Prevention
- Preparedness
- Response
- Recovery
- Review and Improvement

The Plan operates alongside:

- Risk Management Policy
- Enterprise Risk Management Framework
- ICT Business Continuity Plan
- Disaster Management Plans
- WHS Documentation
- Risk Registers
- Internal Control Policy

6. Business Continuity Team

The Business Continuity Team will act as Council's immediate response and recovery group undertaking such functions as are required by the organisation, establishing priorities, organising and directing Council's resources and providing information to Council employees, members of the public and insurers as required. The Business Continuity Team will assemble upon the instructions of the CEO or the nominated Chairperson at the nominated Business and Continuity Recovery Coordination Centre.

Core Membership

Position	Role
CEO	Chairperson
Mayor	Strategic Oversight
CFO	Finance and Business Recovery Lead
Director Organisational Performance	Infrastructure Recovery Lead
Director Lifestyle and Communities	Community Services Recovery Lead
Accountant	Financial Support
ICT Provider	ICT Recovery Lead
Executive Assistant	Administration and Coordination

Responsibilities

The Business Continuity Team will:

- Direct the response and recovery effort.
- Determine service priorities.
- Approve resource allocation.
- Coordinate communications.
- Monitor recovery progress.
- Provide updates to Mayor and Councillors.
- Review lessons learned.

7. Activation of the Plan

The Plan may be activated by:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Acting Chief Executive Officer

Activation occurs when:

- Critical services cannot operate normally.
- Council facilities become unavailable.
- ICT systems are significantly disrupted.
- Community services are materially affected.

Activation Levels

Level	Description
Level 1	Localised disruption
Level 2	Significant service interruption
Level 3	Major Council-wide disruption

8. Business Continuity and Recovery Coordination Centre

Primary Recovery Centre

Blackall Cultural Centre

Facilities available:

- Meeting spaces
- Kitchen facilities
- Bathrooms

- Communication capability
- Storage areas

Secondary Recovery Centre

Council Depot or other nominated facility as determined by the CEO.

Coordination Centre Functions

- Business Continuity Team meetings
- Communications hub
- Recovery coordination
- Financial control
- Incident documentation

9. Critical Business Functions

Critical business functions are those services and operational activities essential to maintaining Council's legislative obligations, protecting public health and safety, supporting community wellbeing, safeguarding Council assets, and enabling the continued delivery of services during and following a disruption. Recovery priorities are determined through consideration of operational, financial, regulatory and community impacts.

Priority	Function	RTO
1	Information Technology	1 Day
1	Accounts Payable	1 Day
1	Cleaning of Critical Facilities	1 Day
2	Payroll	1 Day
2	Stores	1 Day
2	Rubbish Collection	1 Day
3	Water	2 Days
3	Sewerage	2 Days
4	Customer Service	1 Day
5	Environmental Health	1 Week
5	Workshop Operations	1 Week

10. Business Impact Analysis

Key Services	Impact	Responsible Officer	Description	Impact of Disruption	Recovery Priority
Information Technology	Medium	Chief Financial Officer	Supports all Council systems, communications, financial operations, service delivery platforms, records management and remote access capability.	Loss of ICT significantly impacts all business operations, customer service, communications and regulatory reporting.	Restore network connectivity, critical applications, cloud services, telephony and cyber security controls.
Accounts Payable	Low	Chief Financial Officer	Processes supplier invoices and payments to maintain essential services, contractors and operational commitments.	Delayed payments may result in disruption to supply chains, contractor services and reputational damage.	Re-establish financial systems, banking access and payment approval processes.
Cleaning of Critical Facilities	High	Director Organisational Performance	Ensures operational facilities remain safe, hygienic and suitable for staff and public use.	Inability to maintain sanitary facilities may create health and safety risks and limit operational capacity.	Prioritise cleaning resources for recovery centres, administration buildings and critical infrastructure sites.
Payroll	Medium	Director Organisational Performance	Ensures employees are paid accurately and on time.	Delayed payroll can affect workforce wellbeing, morale and employee availability during recovery activities.	Restore payroll systems, employee records and banking interfaces.
Stores	Medium	Chief Financial Officer	Provides access to materials, tools, fuel and consumables required for	Recovery efforts may be delayed due to lack of	Establish inventory access and alternative procurement arrangements.

			operational and emergency response activities.	critical supplies and equipment.	
Rubbish Collection	High	Director Organisational Performance	Maintains public health, environmental standards and community amenity through waste removal services.	Accumulated waste creates health hazards, community complaints and environmental impacts.	Resume collection services and establish temporary disposal arrangements if required.
Water Services	High	Director Organisational Performance	Provides safe drinking water and supports public health, community wellbeing and firefighting capability.	Extended outages can create significant public health and emergency management issues.	Restore treatment, pumping, monitoring and distribution systems.
Sewerage Services	High	Director Organisational Performance	Protects public health and the environment through wastewater collection and treatment.	Service disruption may cause environmental contamination and health risks.	Restore treatment processes, pumping infrastructure and monitoring systems.
Funeral Services	High	Director Lifestyles and Communities	Supports burial operations and community expectations during times of bereavement.	Delays may cause significant community concern and reputational impacts.	Maintain access to cemetery operations, records and essential service providers.
Customer Service	Low	Director Organisational Performance	Provides the primary point of contact for residents, ratepayers, customers and stakeholders.	Reduced communication may affect public confidence and hinder dissemination of important information.	Restore telephone, email, website and counter service functions.

Environmental Health	Low	Director Organisational Performance	Supports compliance, public health monitoring and response to environmental incidents.	Extended disruption may affect regulatory responsibilities and community health outcomes.	Prioritise urgent inspections, public health issues and compliance activities.
Workshop Operations	Low	Chief Financial Officer	Maintains Council fleet, plant and equipment necessary for service delivery and disaster recovery activities.	Reduced maintenance capability may limit operational response and restoration activities.	Restore access to workshop facilities, tools, parts and technical staff.

11. Risk Assessment and Treatment

Effective business continuity relies on the identification, assessment and management of risks that may adversely affect Council operations. Council maintains risk treatment strategies designed to minimise service interruptions, protect critical assets and infrastructure, support public health and safety, and ensure the timely recovery of essential services. The risks identified within this section are reviewed regularly and following significant incidents to ensure the continued effectiveness of controls and recovery arrangements.

Information, Communications and Technology risks are outlined within the ICT Business Continuity Plan and are managed by the Chief Financial Officer.

Risk Description	Risk Rating	Impact	Existing Controls	Responsible Officer
Power Outage	Medium	High to Very High	Council relies upon the ERGON supplied power to the Council Offices. The power is regulated to their premises, where the Air-Conditioning control panel are also located. Although the ERGON power is considered reliable, constant 'brown-outs' are a major concern to Council. The Blackall Admin Server has been set-up to allow for a generator cut-over system to subsidise power.	Director Organisational Performance

			Generators are present on site at the Blackall Administration Office, Blackall Depot along with 2 mobile generators available for use across the region.	
Cyclone	Low	High to Very High	The Council Chambers are not built for cyclonic conditions, but the safe room can be utilised for additional protection. Council have emergency ICT shutdown procedures in place and practiced, should the need arise.	CEO
Flood	Medium	High to Very High	Council maintains flood response procedures, disaster management arrangements and emergency communications processes. Critical records are stored electronically with cloud-based backups. Alternate work locations may be activated if Council offices become inaccessible. Road and infrastructure inspections are undertaken following flood events.	CEO / Director Organisational Performance
Fire	Medium	High	Fire detection and suppression systems are maintained at Council facilities. Emergency evacuation procedures are implemented and regularly reviewed. Critical records are electronically stored and backed up. Insurance arrangements are maintained for Council assets and infrastructure.	Director Organisational Performance
Cyber Incident	High	Very High	ICT systems are protected through firewalls, anti-virus software, multi-factor authentication, user access controls and regular system updates. Daily backups are maintained and monitored. ICT recovery procedures are documented within the ICT Business Continuity Plan.	CFO
Pandemic	Medium	High	Remote work arrangements, hygiene controls and workforce management procedures support business continuity. Critical functions are cross-trained to minimise reliance on individual employees.	CEO
Building Inaccessibility	Medium	High	Recovery arrangements include relocation to the Blackall Cultural Centre, Council Depot or another nominated site. Remote access capability is available for administrative staff where practical.	CEO

Fuel Supply Interruption	Low to Medium	High	Fuel stocks are monitored and supply agreements maintained with external providers. Essential services and emergency response activities receive priority allocation during shortages. Council has dedicated fuel stores along with Fuel Pods on various Council vehicles, of which levels are reviewed and topped up weekly.	Director Organisational Performance
Water Supply Failure	Medium	Very High	Backup pumping arrangements, emergency repairs and operational monitoring systems support continuity of supply. Contractors and suppliers can be engaged to assist with restoration activities.	Director Organisational Performance

12. Incident Response Framework

Immediate Priorities

1. Protect life and safety.
2. Contact emergency services.
3. Evacuate if required.
4. Activate continuity arrangements.
5. Notify the Business Continuity Team.
6. Establish the Recovery Coordination Centre.
7. Begin event logging.
8. Incident Response Plan

Incident Response Plan

Immediate Response Checklist

INCIDENT RESPONSE	☐	ACTIONS TAKEN
Have you:	☐	
• assessed the severity of the incident?	☐	
• evacuated the site if necessary?	☐	
• accounted for everyone?	☐	
• identified any injuries to persons?	☐	
• contacted Emergency Services?	☐	
• implemented your Incident Response Plan?	☐	
• started an Event Log?	☐	
• activated staff members and resources?	☐	
• appointed a spokesperson?	☐	
• gained more information as a priority?	☐	
• briefed team members on incident?	☐	
• allocated specific roles and responsibilities?	☐	
• identified any damage?	☐	
• identified critical business activities that have been disrupted?	☐	
• kept staff informed?	☐	
• contacted key stakeholders?	☐	
• understood and complied with any regulatory/compliance requirements?	☐	
• initiated media/public relations response?	☐	

Evacuation Procedures

Summary of staff to be relocated in the event of an emergency

Position	Council Corporate Offices	Works Depot
Mayor	✓	
Chief Executive Officer	✓	
Executive Assistant	✓	
Chief Financial Officer	✓	
Director Organisational Performance	✓	✓
Director Lifestyle and Communities	✓	
Finance Manager	✓	
Workshop Supervisor and staff	✓	✓
IT Provider	✓	
Other Administration and Finance Staff	✓	
Visitors	✓	✓

Staff Relocation and Alternate Work Arrangements

Primary Relocation Site

Blackall Cultural Centre

Work Arrangements

- Office relocation
- Remote work
- Mobile operations
- Depot-based operations

Relocation Matrix

Function	Primary Location	Alternate Location
Executive Team	Chambers	Blackall Cultural Centre
Finance	Chambers	Blackall Cultural Centre
Customer Service	Chambers	Blackall Cultural Centre
ICT	Cloud/Remote	Recovery Site
Management Team	Chambers	Blackall Cultural Centre

Proposed Relocation Sites

Team	Location	Details
Administrative Staff	Blackall Cultural Centre	Cultural Centre is a Council owned facility with a large amount of available space, kitchen and bathroom facilities.
Management / ELT	Blackall Cultural Centre	It is desirable that separate facilities are available in the relocated building for the management team in case of an emergency closing the Council Office.

Server and Telecommunications	Blackall Cultural Centre	Council have two generators as a back-up power supply for use in an emergency. Council will utilise mobile phones if the land lines are not available. Internet / email communications will be enabled using cloud support.
Document Storage	Blackall Depot	It is essential to have a secure area where damaged documents can be stored prior to their restoration.
Equipment Storage	Blackall Depot	It is desirable that an area is available for the storage of damaged equipment and furniture

Relocation Requirements

Issue	Process
Office Equipment	The relocation would include desks, each with connections to a local LAN, telephone and mains power. An additional area will be needed for a photocopier. A server will be required for the LAN, and this will require mains power.
Stationery Supplies	An emergency supply of stationery items is to be acquired for immediate use after an emergency. This supply should include: • 20 reams of paper • 500 Council letterhead • 500 envelopes • 2 copies of each form used by council • Manual receipt forms • Manual order books or copies of printed forms • 10 A4 pads • 50 pens • Phone Charger

GO-Pack

The following items and equipment are to be prepared in a pack held in the Council Chambers safe. This pack must be updated annually with the plan to ensure contents are current and accurate.

Item	Detail
Business Continuity Plan	Copy of this document and associated checklists
Employee List	Names and contact details
Councillor List	Names and contact details
Insurance	Contact details for insurances held: LGMS – JLT Public Sector 07 3000 5555
Stationery	Branded letterhead, note pads, flip chart, marker pens, general stationery
Equipment	Spare Keys Torch & Spare Batteries
Contractor List	Pre-qualified Suppliers

Roles and Responsibilities

Who	Detail
Mayor	1. Oversee the running of Council activities at an acceptable level. 2. To handle media queries in conjunction with the CEO

CEO	1. To manage Council activities and the provision of essential services at an acceptable level. 2. To ensure that normal operation is restored as soon as practicable. 3. To advise the Mayor on media queries. 4. To maintain the morale of Council staff.
CFO	1. To resolve issues raised by a major emergency. 2. To ensure that Council continues to meet its statutory obligations. 3. To attend meetings of management at site of serious emergencies. 4. To ensure that, if the emergency involves relocation of services the widest circulation is given to the changed information. 5. To provide rating services and make creditor payments. 6. To answer property information queries. 7. To ensure that alternative accommodation is available for staff displaced by an emergency. 8. To assist with negotiations in connection with any Council building affected by an emergency.
Director Organisational Performance	1. To assist the CEO in resolving issues raised by a major emergency. 2. To maintain work on urgent Council projects. 3. To provide payroll services. 4. To report injury or fatality to WorkCare.
Environmental Health Officer	1. To assist the CEO in resolving issues raised by a major emergency. 2. To ensure compliance with health and environmental regulations
Accountant	1. To manage budget issues raised by or during the emergency. 2. To ensure that accounting procedures and practices are in place to ensure the proper financial management of an emergency.
GM People Safety and Culture	1. To arrange counselling for staff after an emergency. 2. To manage safety issues
GM Council & Corporate Services	1. To assist the CEO in managing a return to normal operation. 2. To consult with GM People Safety and Culture for the provision of next-of-kin information. 3. To ensure, as far as practical, that all Council meetings continue to be held in accordance with the published schedule.
Administration Officers	1. To ensure that all Council's business functions are met as far as possible.

13. Emergency Communications

Communications on Progress of the Emergency

The procedures make substantial provision for the updating of the management team by the Emergency Controller. This is done using a telephone tree.

- The Chief Executive Officer calls the Mayor and Directors.
- The Mayor calls the Councillors.
- The Directors call any affected staff.
- The Chief Executive Officer briefs the Mayor, who then briefs the media.
- The Director Organisational Performance handles any Work Care issues.
- The Directors will deal with any staff welfare and health issues, and specifically with the counselling of staff after an emergency by way of referral to professionals (Employee Assistance Program).
- The Chief Financial Officer will deal with any insurance issues.
- The Chief Executive Officer keeps the telephone tree completely informed.

Internal Communications

- Staff notifications
- Councillor briefings
- Management updates
- Recovery Team meetings

External Communications

- Residents
- Media
- Suppliers
- Insurers
- Government agencies

Spokespersons

Role	Responsibility
Mayor	Media spokesperson
CEO	Operational spokesperson
CFO	Insurance and financial matters

Key Internal Contacts

Title	Name	Contact No.	Alternate
Chief Executive Officer	Mike Lollback	0488 574 035	Director Organisational Performance and Services Chief Financial Officer
Mayor	Cr Andrew Martin	0427 574 114	Deputy Mayor
Deputy Mayor	Cr David Hardie	0488 695 192	
Chief Financial Officer	Shalveen Dayal	0447 621 600	Accountant
Director Organisational Performance	Alison Lamb	0488 574 252	Blackall Works Supervisor Tambo Works Supervisor
Director Lifestyle and Communities	Jaimee-Lee O'Brien	0498 880 398	GM Community Policy & Programs

Key External Contacts

Name	Address	Phone
Barcoo Independent		0448 015 390
Grassland Whisperer	Arthur Street, Tambo	07 4654 9343
ABC Radio	Longreach	1300 540 222
4VL	Charleville	07 4654 1444
Police	Blackall	07 4652 5151
Police	Tambo	07 4652 5116
Ergon Energy	Blackall	13 22 96
Fire Brigade	Blackall	07 4657 4518
Hospital	Blackall	07 4650 7700
Ambulance Service	Blackall	07 4621 7100

14. Event Log

To be maintained by Council Officers across the response.

Date	Time	Information / Decisions / Actions	Initials

15. Recovery Plan

Critical Business Activities	Preventative/Recovery Actions	Resource Requirements/ Outcomes	Recovery Time Objective	Responsibility	Completed
Water	Planned maintenance regular inspections	Skilled staff and appropriate funds budgeted	Two days	Director Organisational Performance	
Sewerage	Planned maintenance regular inspections	Skilled staff and appropriate funds budgeted	Two days	Director Organisational Performance	
Rubbish Collection	Maintain rubbish collection truck regularly	Skilled mechanics and appropriate budget	1 Day	Director Organisational Performance	
Information Technology	Council employs a Microsoft Engineer	Adequate budget for maintenance and capital requirements	1 Day	Chief Financial Officer	
Payroll	Two staff members are trained in payroll	User friendly software	1 Day	Director Organisational Performance	
Cleaning offices amenities parks	Council contracts skilled cleaners and has replacements as required.	Cleaning materials adequate budget	1 Day	Director Organisational Performance	
Environmental Health	Council has employed a skilled EHO	Adequate working materials and budget.	A week to source a temporary replacement	Director Organisational Performance	

Workshop	Council has well-qualified and experienced staff.	Adequate working materials and budget.	1 Week	Chief Financial Officer	
Accounts Payable	Council has two staff trained in this area	Continuous training user friendly software	1 Day	Chief Financial Officer	
Stores	Council has two staff trained in this area	Continuous training user friendly software	1 Day	Chief Financial Officer	
Customer Service	Council has at least five staff competent in this area	Continuous training	1 Day	Director Organisational Performance	

Incident Recovery Checklist

INCIDENT RESPONSE	☐	ACTIONS
Now that the crisis is over have you:	☐	
• refocused efforts towards recovery?	☐	
• deactivated staff members and resources as necessary?	☐	
• continued to gather information about the situation as it affects you?	☐	
• assessed your current financial position?	☐	
• reviewed cash requirements to restore operations?	☐	
• contacted your insurance broker/company?	☐	
• developed financial goals and timeframes for recovery?	☐	
• kept staff informed?	☐	
• kept key stakeholders informed?	☐	
• identified information requirements and sourced the information?	☐	
• set priorities and recovery options?	☐	
• updated the Recovery Plan?	☐	
• captured lessons learnt from your individual, team and business recovery?	☐	

16. Version Control

Version	Date	Description	Approved By
1.0	April 2022	Original Plan	CEO
2.0	July 2026	Review and update	CEO

Appendix A – Blackall-Tambo Regional Council Critical Incident Management Plan

1. Introduction

Council uses a systematic approach to the management of incidents or issues that seriously affect or may affect Council's employees, operations or reputation. Where possible, this approach uses existing infrastructure and procedures.

Council has developed this approach to meet its legal requirements, standards of good governance and to minimise the risk to Council employees, contractors, service provider and ratepayers.

The Council's approach brings together four elements:

- emergency response (making people safe and minimising damage to assets);
- emergency management (coordinating the emergency response and managing the recovery);
- crisis management (addressing strategic business and reputation issues);
- business continuity (maintaining business operations).

The application of these four elements will depend upon the situation and the good judgement of Council's managers and employees. For example, a major fire would involve all four elements whilst a major public controversy may only involve crisis management.

It will be rare that a Critical Incident Management team will be required. It is more likely that issues or incidents will be managed and resolved by (emergency) response teams at the operational level. Matters will go no further than monitoring by the Manager responsible. Council has put in place arrangements to handle the full range of incidents and issues.

2. Responsibility

The CEO, as Council's Critical Incident Coordinator, is responsible for the establishment, operation and review of Council's Critical Incident Management Plans.

3. Risk management

The Critical Incident Management Plan provides a framework for the appropriate risk management of serious incidents and issues that may disrupt the operations of Council. This document is supported by plans that have been developed to address a range of risks that have been identified through the Council's Risk Registers. The plans also contain sufficient flexibility to manage unforeseen situations. The plans are reviewed after incidents as well as being reviewed periodically.

Appropriate infrastructure and resources have been developed to support these plans. Other resources that may be necessary in a major incident such as a call center and media teams have also been identified.

4. Recognising a critical incident

A critical incident is any event or business continuity issue that significantly threatens the commercial position or operability of Council. Critical incidents will involve all or a substantial part of Council's operation and have major actual or long-term consequences. Critical incidents require a coordinated operational response that deals with the control of the emergency situation and the restoration of normal business operations.

A critical incident can be triggered by a physical event such as a bushfire, chemical spill, gas leak, major fire or explosion, power outage, fatality or serious injury although it is possible that it may develop over time from smaller and possibly unconnected events. It will frequently involve some media interest and may be driven by perceptions rather than facts.

The plan describes Council's arrangements to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a range of major physical emergencies.

5. Recognising a major critical incident

A major critical incident (crisis) may be triggered by a physical emergency such as a major fire, but most major critical incidents evolve gradually from less dramatic events. The crisis may be triggered by internal or external issues such as public safety, health concerns, major fraud, mismanagement or controversial academic activities. Routine or seemingly harmless activities may develop into a crisis after attracting the attention of government, regulators, interest groups, the public or the media. In addition, a simple emergency or minor issue can be turned into a crisis by being insensitively or poorly managed.

Crises can often be difficult to identify and can escalate very rapidly. They will almost always involve media interest on a national scale and will frequently be driven by perceptions rather than facts.

6. Notification process

Effective management of incidents and issues requires prompt communication to the appropriate level of management. Where an immediate emergency response is required to an incident, the plan prescribes the notification arrangements.

All incidents requiring an immediate emergency response are reported directly to the CEO. Where an immediate response is not required, incidents and issues will be brought to the attention of ELT through the normal management structure. All major critical issues or incidents must be reported to the relevant ELT member. The relevant ELT member will consult with the CEO, as the Council's Emergency Coordinator, and provide advice to the CEO relating to the activation of a Crisis or Emergency Management team.

7. Activation of a Critical Incident Management team

The principle of prudent over-reaction and rapid de-escalation applies when considering the level of activation of a Critical Incident Management team. It is easier and usually more effective to scale down an over-reaction than it is to ramp up an under-reaction.

Where an immediate emergency response to a health and safety risk is required, the arrangements in the plan will apply.

Where no immediate response is required, or where an emergency has ongoing effects, activation of the plan is at the discretion of the CEO or nominee.

In response to an incident or issue, a Critical Incident Management team may be convened. Members of the team may be drawn from the ELT, Council employees and Emergency Services personnel from across the region. The Critical Incident Management team may direct the establishment of operational teams to provide support or handle aspects of the emergency or crisis.