



ACT Multi Hazard Advisory Council Minutes

Date: 5 October 2022

Time: 4 pm – 7 pm

Location: ESA HQ, 9 Amberley Avenue Fairbairn, Webex

Attendance	
Chair	Dylan Kendall – Deputy Chair, ACT Multi Hazards Advisory Council
Attendees	Sally Troy – Chair, ACT Multi Hazards Advisory Council (online) Tony Bartlett – Member John Brickhill – Member Kylie Coe – Member (online) Len Morris – Member Asha Naznin – Member (online) Marta Yebra – Member (online from 5.30pm)
Apologies	
Guests	Wayne Phillips, Assistant Commissioner, ESA (online) Rohan Scott – Chief Officer, ACT Rural Fire Service (online) Matthew Mavity – Chief Officer, ACT Fire and Rescue (online) Tony Scherl, EPSDD (online) Cameron Beresford – EBM, Emergency Management, SEMD Jacki Schirmer – Professor, University of Canberra (online)
Secretariat	Mylinh Li – ACT Emergency Services Judith Bielleman – HorizonOne Recruitment (Minute taking)

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Deputy Chair acknowledged the traditional owners of the land on which the council was meeting, the people of the Ngunnawal and Ngambri nations, and paid his respects to elders past, present and emerging.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Acceptance of Minutes from 7 September meeting

The draft minutes were accepted with the proposed amendments from Dr Bartlett.

4. Review of Council Action items

Council action items were reviewed and updated.

5. Correspondence for noting



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The Deputy Chair advised correspondence had been received from:

- CSD with their definition for community recovery and their timeframe for developing the community recovery framework.
- ESA with a link to the recording of the SES pre-season bushfire briefing.
- ESA with a response to the question concerning the high-level schedule of the SBMP governance and assurance plan.
- SES Chief Officer in relation to questions around flash flooding ratings, location of properties at risk and coordination of flood rescues between police and SES.

6. High Level Overview of Community resilience from SEMD

The Deputy Chair welcomed Mr Cameron Beresford from the ACT Security and Emergency Management Division to discuss the work of his area.

Mr Beresford explained his area is responsible for promoting a Whole-of-Government strategic approach to emergency management and draws on the Sendai and national frameworks in relation to resilience, disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness. The approach aims to improve governance, standards, systems and processes across Government with shared priorities around enhancing emergency management capability, improving emergency management awareness and training, and reducing community vulnerability. A Centre of Excellence is being built within SEMD to provide strategic advice to Government on all hazards integrated emergency management, progress SEMSOG policies and build a community of practice.

Mr Beresford also identified his area's responsibility for managing business continuity, building community connections, developing partnerships with non-Government organisations and building better practices. The aim is to establish a strategic approach to improve emergency management planning, facilitate access to Commonwealth Government funding and embed the National Disaster Risk Reduction framework throughout agencies and in all policy decision making. He also outlined the strategic plans and frameworks that will be developed in this financial year and in coming years.

The Council questioned how SEMD was proposing to develop community connections. Mr Beresford advised a working group would be established to determine a coordinated approach to community engagement. There has already been some work with volunteer groups and part of the implementation plan will be extending consultation to other areas. He acknowledged the Territory-wide risk Assessment does not identify built assets and that part of ongoing engagement would be to build shared responsibility for risk management. He also acknowledged that previous efforts to empower the community and support vulnerable people had been sporadic and uncoordinated, and that this was part of the reason for bringing together the disparate elements. He further noted the role the Council could play as a vehicle for ongoing collaboration with communities and outlined the initial products and plans currently in development. Dr Troy advised the Council would like as much advance warning as possible to incorporate this into MHAC planning.

The Deputy Chair thanked Mr Beresford for his presentation.

Action: Secretariat to seek a copy of Mr Beresford's presentation.

Person responsible: Secretariat



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7. Presentation on Community Resilience by Professor Schirmer UC

The Deputy Chair welcomed Professor Jacki Schirmer from the University of Canberra to discuss the work of the Regional Wellbeing Survey.

Professor Schirmer outlined the survey team's work to assess wellbeing, resilience and liveability in the ACT and the use of indicators to support the ACT Government's Wellbeing framework. Professor Schirmer also outlined some of the survey's findings around resilience in the community and the difference in people's response to disasters due to levels of exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity. She identified some of the challenges in trying to translate community resilience into practice, noting the cumulative effect of events and the need to build capability, make actions affordable and promote a shared responsibility. She also provided some data on how some groups in Canberra are experiencing declines in liveability, which will affect their preparedness and their capacity to respond to emergencies.

The Council discussed the findings from the survey and thanked Professor Schirmer for her excellent presentation. They noted some of the difficulties faced by different groups in building their resilience and the challenges around lack of social connection, declining volunteerism and the inability of some groups to link into Government services. Professor Schirmer recommended vulnerable groups be given priority for support as they are more isolated and less likely to have a high degree of preparedness. Mr Beresford confirmed that facilitating contacts with different groups and providing them with the tools to build resilience are also key components of his area's approach. He acknowledged that systems need to be strong and adaptive and confirmed that a more mature approach to hazards, risks and maintaining business continuity was essential in the practical delivery of emergency services.

The Deputy Chair thanked Professor Schirmer for her presentation.

Action: Secretariat to seek a copy of Professor Schirmer's presentation.

Person responsible: Secretariat

8. Workshop – Community Resilience Document

The Deputy Chair proposed that, in light of the presentations received in the meeting, the discussion on the Community Resilience document be held off to the next meeting, with edits to be made by council members out of session. The next meeting will potentially include representatives from Red Cross and other community organisations which may also affect the document outcomes.

The Council discussed the option of delivering a presentation to community stakeholders in the December meeting to gain feedback before providing advice to the Minister and noted the importance of hearing from different perspectives. Dr Troy advised the Weston Creek Community Council had been contacted and were keen to participate in consultations. They have proposed a smaller working group with some Council members prior to the next MHAC meeting in November.

Action: Small working group meeting to be organised with Weston Creek Community Council prior to the next meeting.

Person responsible: Secretariat and Council members



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Action: Community Resilience document to be made available in Microsoft Teams and any issues with Council member access to presentations to be resolved.

Person responsible: Secretariat

9. Council Workplan 12-18 Months

Dr Troy outlined the Council Workplan which has been developed based on advice from the different ACT directorates. She noted the significant work through to April and suggested the Council identify now which strategic priority should be considered following completion of the work on community resilience. The Council noted the upcoming work on Urban Planning and bushfire hazard management would allow some consideration of the theme of Urban Development. The Council discussed the other strategic priorities that could be focused on from April and agreed that Agency Resilience be the next priority.

Dr Bartlett noted the Workplan table should include a discussion in the December meeting on the Council's report on bushfire hazard management since 2003. The date for the December meeting and options for the MHAC Field Trip in April 2023 were also discussed. A survey will be established for Council members to vote on the preferred date.

Action: Wording in the Council Workplan to be updated to reflect the consideration of bushfire hazard management since 2003.

Person responsible: Secretariat

Action: Review voting for December meeting and determine a date.

Person responsible: Secretariat

Action: Dates for field trip in April to be determined.

Person responsible: Secretariat

10. Council Member Updates

No council member updates were provided.

11. Confirmation of presenters/topics for the next two meetings (Nov / Dec)

The Council discussed plans for the next meetings. Mr Tony Scherl confirmed a representative from EPSDD would attend to discuss land management, prescribed burning and to present a briefing on the coming season. Separate to the next meeting, information will also be required from EPSDD for the MHAC's response to the 2003 anniversary.

Action: Chair and Dr Bartlett to confirm the information required from the EPSDD for the next meeting and the 2003 response.

Person responsible: Chair and Dr Bartlett



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12. Any other business

The Council noted that comments on the Flood plan have not yet been sent to EPSDD. Dr Troy advised she would review it prior to submission and provide some over-arching comments on the plan.

13. Confirmation of Communique

The draft meeting communique was discussed and agreed.

On 5 October 2022, the ACT Multi-Hazard Advisory Council (formerly ACT Bushfire Council) met with Mr Cameron Beresford from the ACT Government Directorate of Justice and Community Safety and Professor Jacki Schirmer from the University of Canberra to discuss current and planned initiatives that could contribute to community resilience to natural disasters. The Council also discussed feedback on the draft ACT Flood-plan.

14. Meeting Close

Next meeting 2 November 2022 – ESA HQ, 9 Amberley Avenue Fairbairn